

**University Council Minutes**  
**February 3, 2020**  
**3:30 PM**  
**145 Steger Hall**

**Present:** Cyril Clarke (presiding) for Tim Sands, Monty Abbas, Lynn Abbot, Diane Agud, Janice Austin, Blake Barnhill, Dan Thorp for Laura Belmonte, David Bieri, Richard Blythe, Johnathan Bradley, Urs Buehlmann, Greg Daniel, Greg Fansler, John Ferris, Bryan Garey, Guru Ghosh, Velva Groover, Edwin Jones for Alan Grant, Conaway Haskins, Khaled Hassouna, Jia-Qiang He, John Hole, Kimberley Homer, Eric Kaufman, Bettina Koch, Lee Learman, George Davis for Mary Marchant, Alan Michaels, Scott Midkiff, Ken Miller, Brandy Morse, Sally Morton, Lori Buchanan for April Myers, Cayce Myers, Kelly Oaks, Kim O'Rourke, Kase Poling, Menah Pratt-Clarke, Dwayne Pinkney, Robin Queen, Kerry Redican, John Lesko for Julie Ross, Glenda Scales, Tara Frank for Frank Shushok, Collin Shelton, Tamarah Smith, Don Taylor, David Tegarden, Tyler Walters, Kim Akers for Lisa Wilkes, Paul Winistorfer, Anthony Wright de Hernandez

**Absent:** Hani Awni, Jayme Bibbins, Conrad Briles, LaTawnya Bureson, Kaitlyn Cole, Karen DePauw, Jennifer Earley, Michael Friedlander, Matthew Gabriele, Inga Haugen (with notice), Daniel Hindman, Alexis Hruby, Ryan King (with notice), Chris Lawrence, Katrina Loan, Teresa Lyons, Steve McKnight, Timothy Sands (with notice), Adi Sircar, Jack Shebat, Ebone Smith, Sharon Stidham, Robert Sumichrast, Sue Teel (with notice), Madelynn Todd, Serena Young (with notice)

**Guests:** Grant Bigman, Stephen Edwards, Kari Evans, Jack Finney, Mitch Gerhardt, Dee Harris, Rachel Holloway, Byron Hughes, Kay Hunnings, Jeannette Judenberg, Donald Kaye, Jacob Levin, Sue Kurtz, Dor Kwiatek, Robin McCoy, Rachel Mirsen, Ethan Myers, Scott Nachlis, Jackson Ribler, Briana Schwam, Lisa Shelor, Tarryn Winik

Provost Clarke called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. A quorum was present.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion carried.

**2. Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of December 2, 2019**

Dr. Clarke noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Governance website: <https://governance.vt.edu>.

**3. Reports from Commission Chairs**

Dr. Clarke asked the Commission chairs to present their goals for the academic year. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs did not provide an update at the meeting, but the information has been included in the minutes.

1. Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs – Greg Fansler, Chair

- a. Presenting the resolution for A/P Faculty Community Service Leave.
  - b. Presenting the resolution to form an A/P Faculty Senate. Should the resolution receive Council approval, the commission will form a taskforce to develop the Senate Constitution and By-laws.
2. Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity – Kimberley Homer, Chair
- a. Meeting with Ombudsperson, Reese Ramos.
  - b. Working with caucuses to determine responsibilities to one another.
  - c. Working on the Principles of Community Awards.
  - d. Engaging mental health support peers and professionals on campus and in the New River Valley to reduce stigma for persons who have been marginalized through veteran status, geography, racism, sexism, xenophobia, disability, poverty, or other lived experience.
3. Commission on Faculty Affairs – Bob Hicok, Chair
- a. Revising Chapter 3 of the Faculty Handbook covering promotion and tenure.
  - b. Revising Chapter 5 of the Faculty Handbook on collegiate faculty in effort to make a global classification change in which non-tenure-track Faculty will be referred to as Career Track Faculty.
  - c. Reviewing Policy 6100: Department Head or Chair Appointments, and Policy 6105: Periodic Evaluation of Academic Deans and Vice Presidents
  - d. Proposing changes to the University Council Constitution regarding terms of service.
  - e. Conducting a discussion to receive faculty input on the implementation of E-FARS.
4. Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies – John Hole, Chair
- a. Drafting a resolution to create a process to revoke grad degrees in case of research fraud.
  - b. Receiving report from Graduate Studies Task Force, in order to determine how the Commission will have to assist in implementing based on their findings.
  - c. Meeting with the mental health working group for graduate students to discuss findings and possible policies that need to be implemented as a result.
5. Commission on outreach and International Affairs – Urs Buehlmann, Chair
- a. Fundraising for study abroad scholarships offered by the Global Education Office.
  - b. Engaging global alumni.
6. Commission on Research – Alan Michaels, Chair
- a. Proposing an update to Policy 13005: Centers and Institutes, with a resolution intended to be presented for first reading at the February 17 meeting.
  - b. Reviewing the Faculty Handbook and possibly creating an independent chapter for post doctorates.

- c. Reviewing Policy 13000: Policy on Intellectual Property for open publications.
7. Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs – Serena Young, Chair
- a. Reviewing pay increase practices for staff.
  - b. Improving communication to better inform staff in relation to matters that affect them.
  - c. Reviewing education benefits for staff.
  - d. Reviewing additional retirement benefits for staff, such as cash match, etc.
8. Commission on Student Affairs –Collin Shelton, Chair
- a. Assisting with Board of Visitors Representative recruitment and hosting mock interviews as done in the past.
  - b. Reading and voting on UCSO constitutions.
  - c. Discussing current government structure and how student voice can be adequately represented.
  - d. Receiving presentations on various topics including the Student Budget Board, student conduct and the Hokie Handbook, as well as from the steering committee and their proposal to ban tobacco use on campus.
9. Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies – Kerry Redican, Chair
- a. Receiving an update on the academic relief policy that includes student re-admission, re-enrollment, the current W grade policy, retro-active timeline, and appearance of coursework on the transfer.
  - b. Reviewing academic policy clean-up. Revisions include discontinuances, revised policy source, and updates to current practice.
  - c. Date of graduation to date of entry implementation and transition.
10. Commission on University Support – Jonathan Bradley, Chair
- a. Working with the Information Technology Services and Systems Committee to speed up the software procurement process.
  - b. Reviewing the winter closing and leave, working closely with other committees and commissions who have done so previously.
  - c. Requesting an update on Innovation Campus Development

#### **4. Old Business**

##### **Commission on Faculty Affairs**

Resolution CFA 2019-20A

Resolution on Accommodating Religious Observances

A motion was made and seconded for approval of the resolution. Bob Hicok presented the resolution for second reading. Professor Hicok was joined by Byron Hughes, Dean of Students, and Jackson Ribler, President of the Jewish Student Union. Professor Hicok provided a brief overview of revisions that were made to the resolution per discussion at its first reading,

including support statements from the Black Organizations Council and the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity; the removal of the clause relating to the student honor system enforcing academic integrity; and the updating of the Therefore Be It Resolved statements to note that absences can be submitted to the Dean of Students for verification and that the office can provide continued advocacy throughout the verification process.

Kimberley Homer, Chair of the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity, pointed out that some religious observances are not based on the calendar but on meteorological events, which makes it difficult to adhere to the requirement to request religious absences within the first two weeks of classes. In response to this concern, the Dean of Students disclosed that religious-based absences will go through the Dean of Students' verification process along with all other absence verification requests. Therefore, the student isn't necessarily required to disclose the information within the first two weeks.

Clarification was requested regarding the definition of "meaning-making events" and how they are verified. The Dean of Students defined "meaning-making" as a sincerely held belief that a student possesses, and relayed that the verification process involves meeting and conversing with the student to determine the need, confirm identity, and catch any red flags suggesting the policy might be abused. Concern was also raised that faculty are going to be encouraged to make accommodations for religious observances, but not in other instances such as jury duty. In response it was reiterated that these issues can also be brought to the Dean of Students for verification. Additionally, the question of what "continued advocacy" means was raised, with concern that faculty will be inundated with emails advocating for students. The Dean of Students reiterated that it has always been communicated to students that the final decision rests with the faculty member, and that continued advocacy means the office will hold another conversation with the student and potentially reach out to the faculty member to simply confirm the absence has been verified. The question of religion vs. irreligion was also raised, suggesting that those who are religious would be privileged over those who are not. In response, it was noted that a number of peer institutions have a similar policy in relation to religious observances.

Members of the Jewish student community, Mitch Gerhardt and Briana Schwam, provided their personal experiences when requesting accommodations for religious observances.

Following discussion, a vote was taken on the approval of the resolution, and the motion passed with the majority in favor and one opposing vote.

### **Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies**

Resolution CUSP 2019-20E

Resolution for the establishment of the School of Communication and Digital Media

Kerry Redican made a motion for approval of the resolution, and the motion was seconded.

Following discussion, a vote was taken on the approval of the resolution, and the motion passed.

## **5. New Business**

## **Commission on Administrative and Profession Faculty Affairs**

Resolution CAPFA 2019-20A

Resolution to Grant Administrative and Professional Faculty Community Service Leave

Greg Fansler presented the resolution for first reading. He noted that AP Faculty currently have to take annual leave in order to perform community service, which goes against DHRM policy 4.40 and practices of our peers. The commission has met with the Budget Office, Human Resources, Faculty and Staff Senates, and the Provost's Office to discuss this issue. Statistically, only 20% of staff have utilized their community service leave over the past three years, which calculates to approximately 700 employees completing 11,200 hours or 1,400 days of service a year. If that practice were to be mirrored by A/P faculty that would translate to an additional 400 employees performing 6,400 hours, or 800 days. While a budget implication is forecasted, granting these additional hours of leave would not impact the work product. Granting these hours would allow the community to highlight Virginia Tech to the state, as well as live out our motto of *Ut Prosim*. It was also noted that the commission took the Staff Senate's initial comments and have amended the resolution accordingly to address their concerns.

After considerable discussion about potential cost and whether A/P faculty already had the flexibility to participate in community services. Dr. Pinkney clarified that the initial quoted cost of implementing additional leave hours was much less than the 1.4 million noted. In fact, it is more likely to cost between 200 and 300 thousand annually. Therefore, Dr. Pinkney suggested that more work should be done regarding cost impact before the second reading of the resolution, and that the commission should consult with Vice President for Human Resources, Brian Garey.

As a result of discussion, Dr. Clarke suggested that the commission delve further into the details, working closely with HR to address concerns before second reading.

## **Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs**

Resolution CAPFA 2019-20B

Resolution to Approve the Establishment of an Administrative and Professional (A/P) Faculty Senate

Greg Fansler presented the resolution for first reading. As A/P faculty represent over 2,000 employees, there is a need for representation throughout the governance system. For example, there are only two positions specifically designated for Professional Faculty on University Council. Therefore, there is a significant need for representation for an employment class that makes up 37% of all faculty.

It was noted that both the Faculty and Staff Senate are in favor of the resolution. Faculty Senate President John Ferris reiterated the senate's support, pointing out that the comments made on the resolution were simply items that the commission might consider in moving forward with the formation of the new senate.

## **Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies**

Resolution CUSP 2019-20F

Resolution to Approve New Major, Data-Centric Computing, in Bachelor of Science in Computer Science

## **Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies**

Resolution CUSP 2019-20G

Resolution to Approve New Major, Secure Computing, in Bachelor of Science in Computer Science

Kerry Redican presented the resolutions for first reading. A question was raised regarding the availability of any new courses to other computer science students outside of the majors. Stephen Edwards clarified that the intent is for courses to be open to any computer science majors or minors as space allows. There is potential for the creation of major-specific capstones in the future that could lead to preferential access because it's required, but to the extent that space allows they are intended to be open for other students.

### **6. Announcements of acceptance and posting of Commission Minutes**

Dr. Clarke noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and will be posted on the University web (<https://governance.vt.edu/>). Note that the purpose of voting on Commission Minutes is to accept them for filing. University Council By-laws require that policy items be brought forward in resolution form for University Council action.

- Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty and Affairs  
November 13, 2019  
December 11, 2019
- Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity  
November 19, 2019
- Commission on Faculty Affairs  
November 15, 2019
- Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies  
November 20, 2019
- Commission on Outreach and International Affairs  
November 21, 2019  
December 12, 2019
- Commission on Research  
April 10, 2019  
May 8, 2019  
September 12, 2019  
October 10, 2019  
November 7, 2019
- Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs  
April 23, 2019  
September 24, 2019  
October 22, 2019

November 26, 2019

- Commission on Student Affairs  
April 4, 2019  
April 18, 2019  
September 26, 2019  
October 24, 2019
- Commission on University Support  
October 17, 2019

**7. For Information Only**

Minutes of the University Advisory Council on Strategic Budgeting and Planning November 21, 2019, Meeting.

**8. Update on President Committee on Governance**

Dr. John Ferris provided an update on the President's Committee on Governance (presentation attached).

**9. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:42 p.m.

# Update of the President's Committee on Governance

John B. Ferris  
February 3, 2020

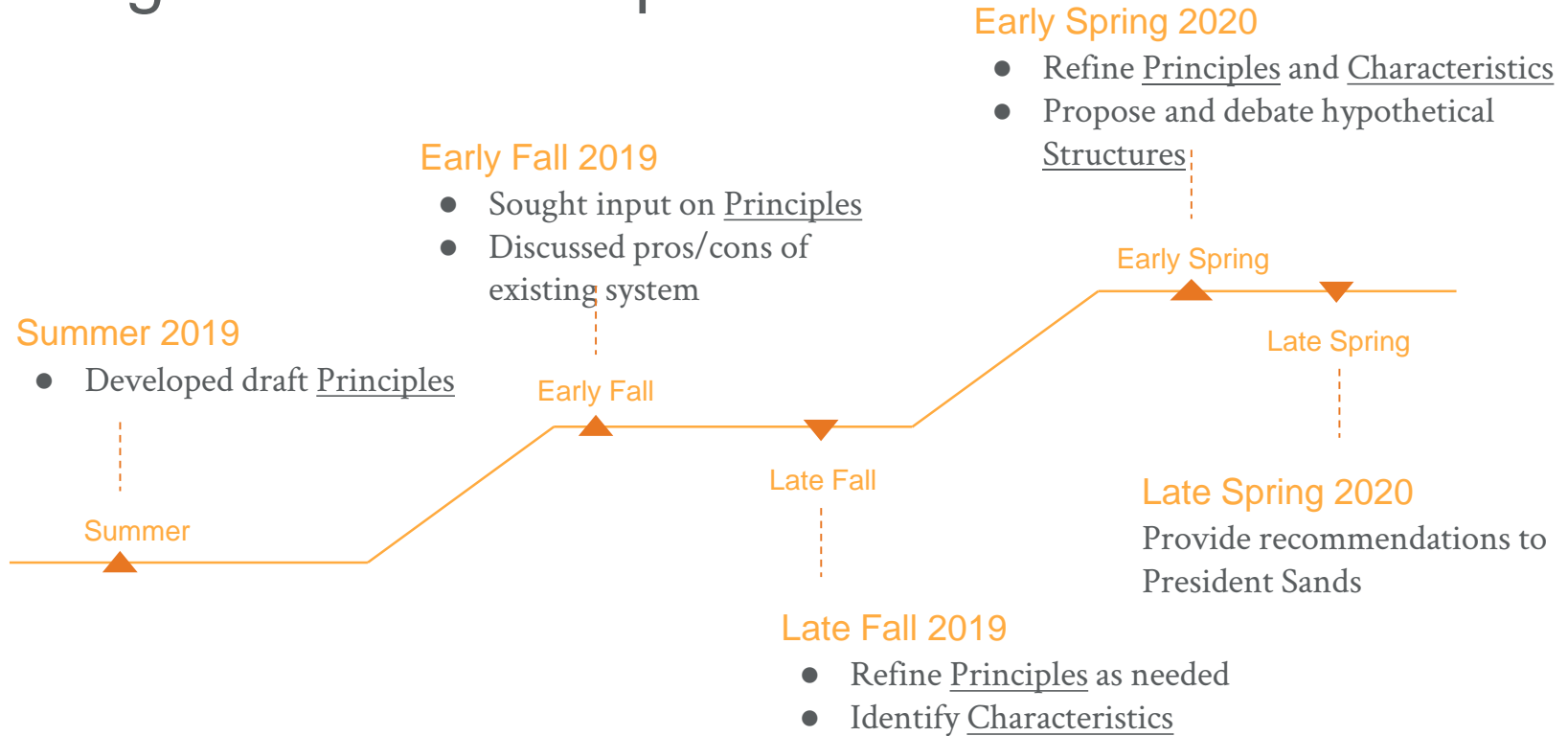


# Charge and Roadmap

## Charge from President Sands

- Input from all
- Make changes?
- (Details available. Circulated and discussed, Oct 2019)

# Charge and Roadmap



# Products

- Principles of Shared Governance
- Characteristics that our Shared Governance should possess
- Process by which shared governance functions
- Structures that embody those and Principles, Characteristics, & Process

Principles circulated and discussed, Oct 2019

Characteristics and Revised Principles ready for comment



Today's discussion

# Process Flow - Overview

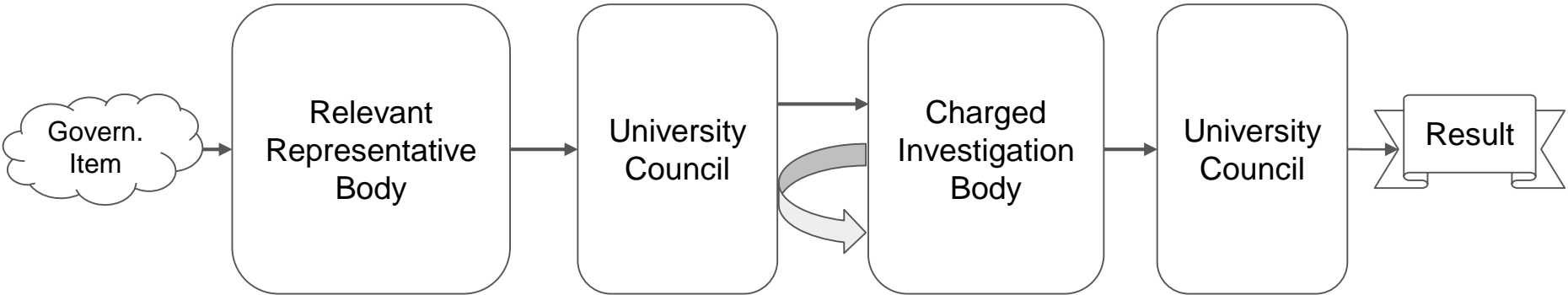
1. Ideate

2. Vet,  
Advocate

3. Charge,  
Steer

4. Investigate

5. Approve



Part 1: Initiate

Part 2: Deliberate

# Process Flow - Ideation

## 1. Ideate

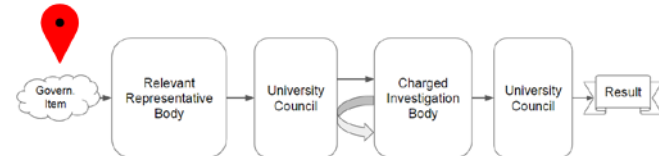


Broadly speaking, consider three types of “Items”

- Information  
(e.g., internal actions of a senate or commission)
- Routine Action  
(e.g., a department wants to add a major)
- Uncommon Action  
(e.g., Experiential Learning)

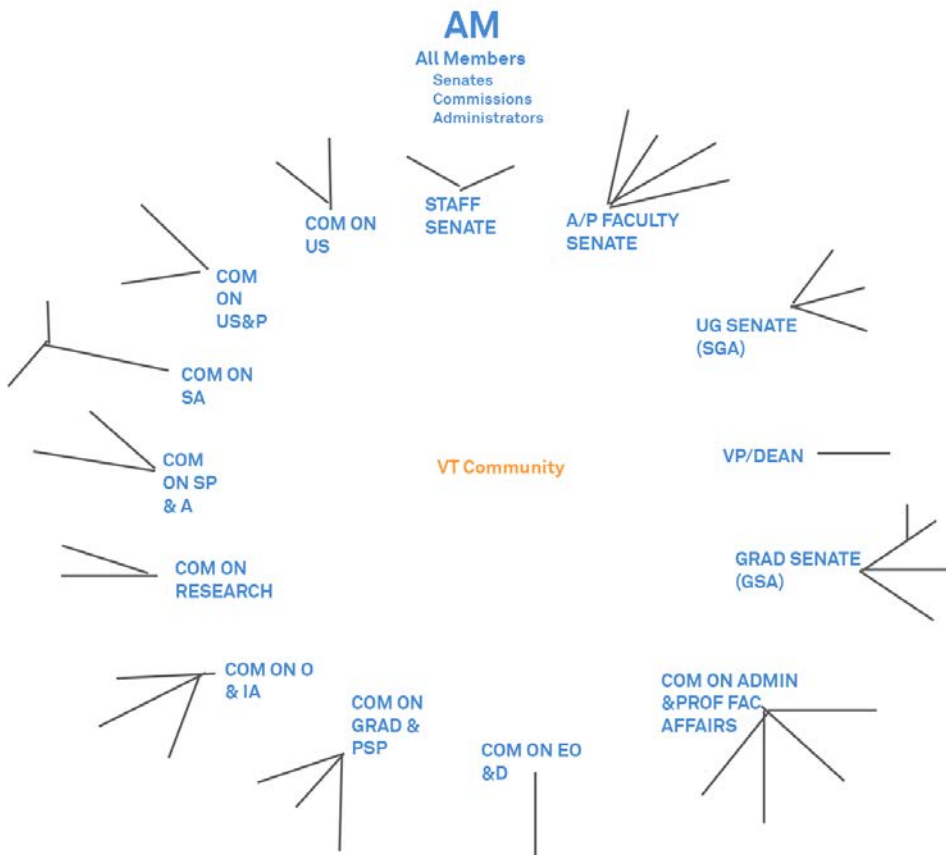
All handled in the governance process

All handled *differently* in the governance process, which we will see...



# Process Flow - Relevant Representative Body

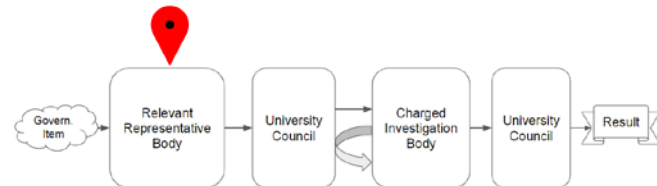
## 2. Initial Vetting and Advocating



All members of the Virginia Tech community have at least one initiating body that can act on a member's behalf.

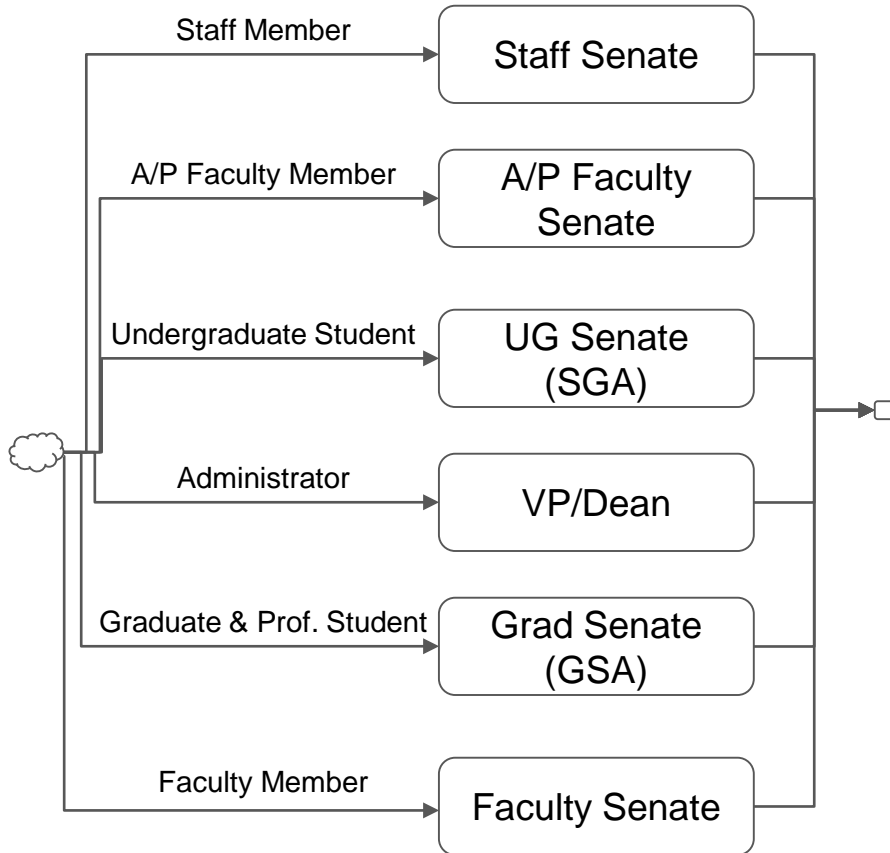
The initiating body, either a senate or commission, also has a duty to vet ideas that are presented to them.

“Trees” are to Working Groups and Subcommittees



# Process Flow - Relevant Representative Body

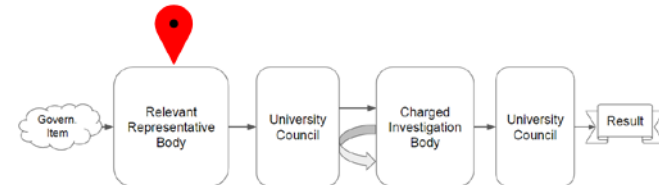
## 2. Initial Vetting and Advocating



### Senates

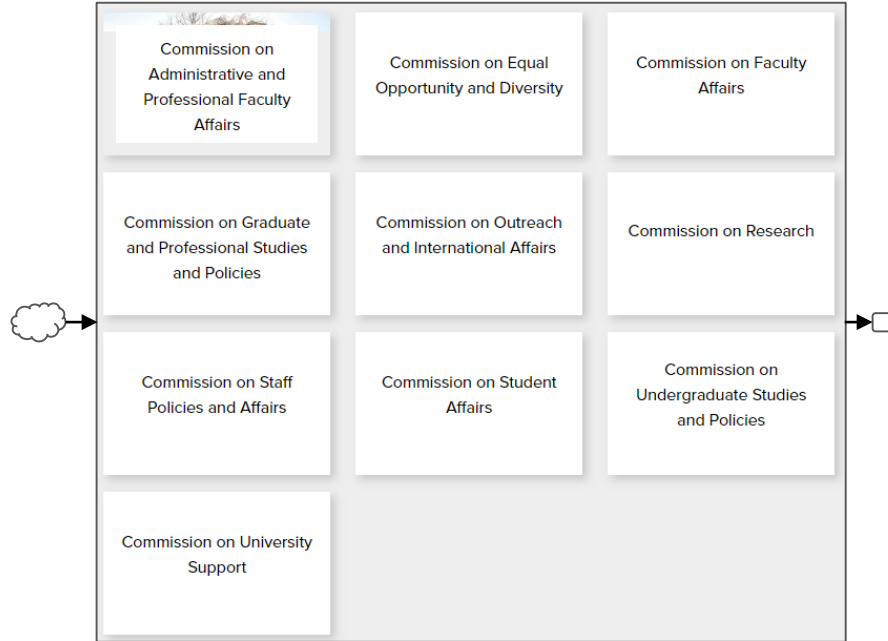
- Broadly defined
- All members of community have access to at least one
- Act as a first point of contact
- Vetting and garnering support

Communication between “senates” is key



# Process Flow - Relevant Representative Body

## 2. Initiation and Initial Vetting

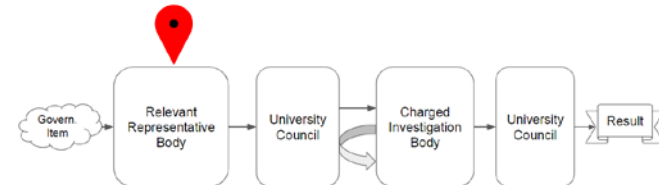


### Commissions

- Likely need modification to
  - Number
  - Charge
  - Coordination with senates
  - Coordination with administrators

Can we leverage the natural alignments between some commissions and some senates?

- e.g., CFA and FS?



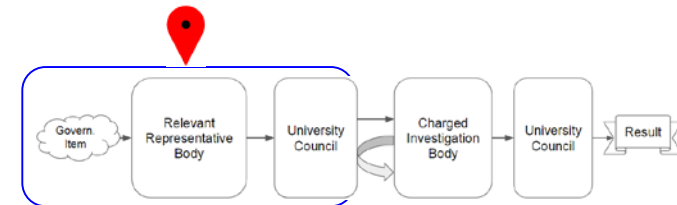
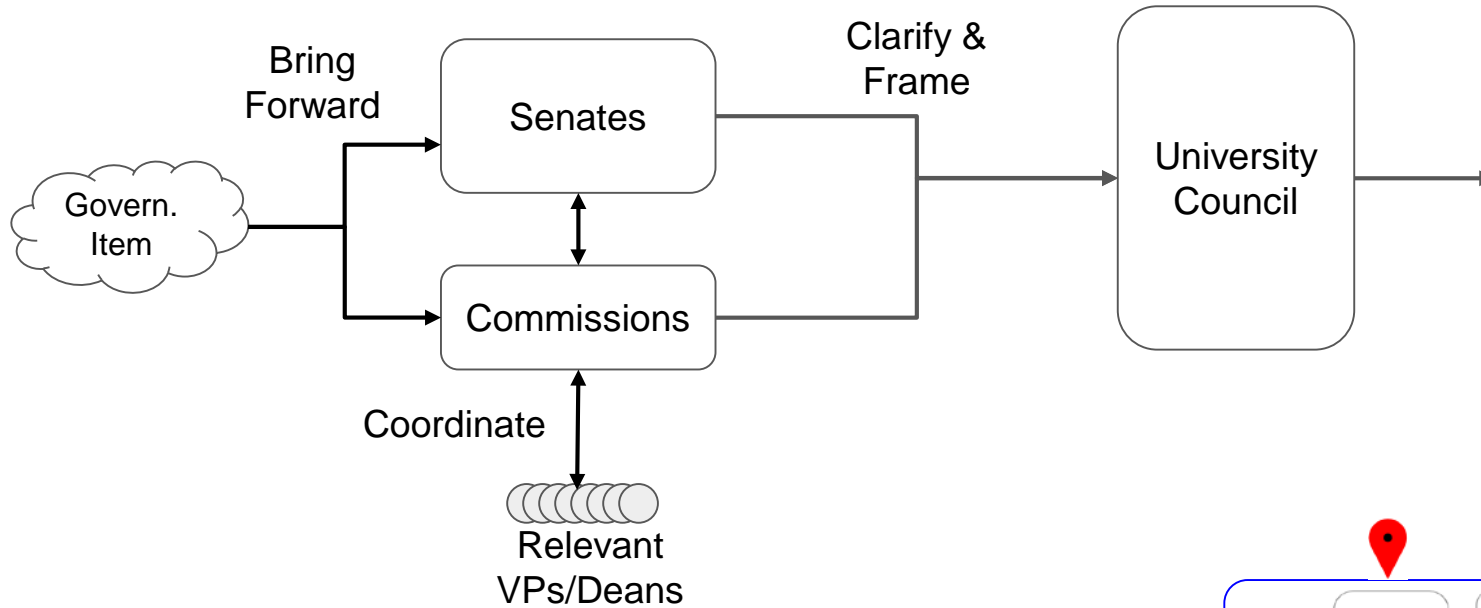


# Process Flow - Overview - Part 1: Initiation

1. Ideate

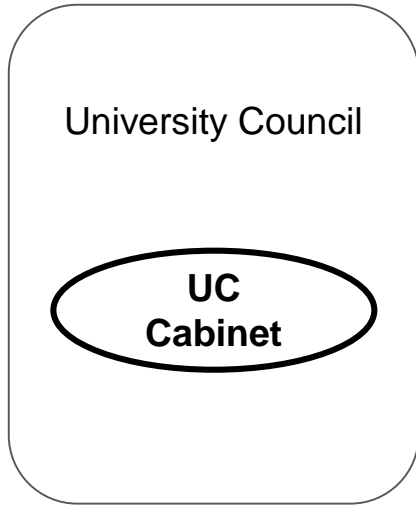
2. Vet, Advocate

3. Charge, Steer



# Process Flow - University Council 2.0

## 3. Charge, Steering



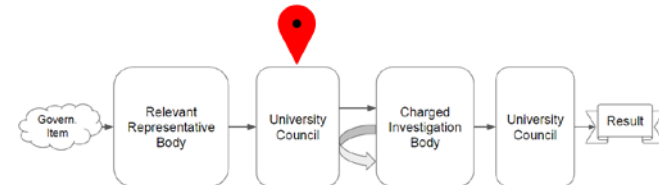
### UC Cabinet

Why?

- Done for UC meeting efficiency.
- Makes recommendations, not vetoes
- Frames governance item for UC

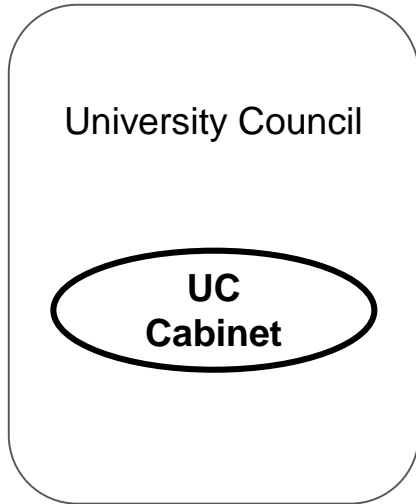
Broadly, 3 types of items

- Information  
(e.g., internal actions of a senate or commission)
- Routine Action  
(e.g., a department wants to add a major)
- Uncommon Action  
(e.g., Experiential Learning)



# Process Flow - University Council 2.0

## 3. Charge, Steering



### UC Cabinet

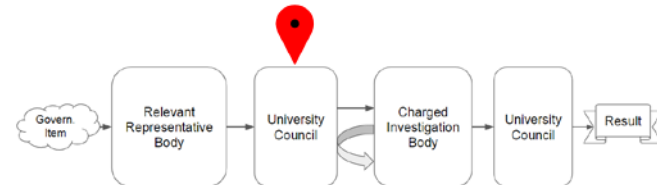
Brought to UC for information

Why

- Simply serving notice to members of UC of *internal* group intentions and actions.
- Done to facilitate constituent group communication and collaboration.

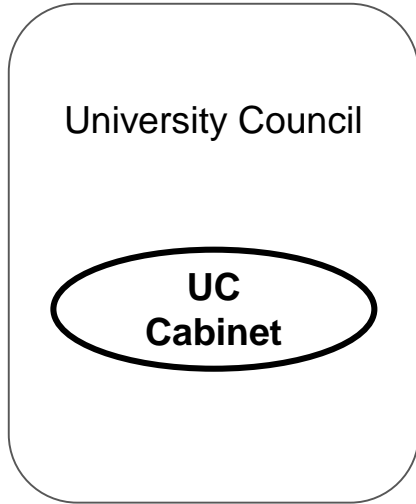
What

- Info posted as announcement at the beginning of the UC meeting
  - there is *no discussion*.



# Process Flow - University Council 2.0

## 3. Charge, Steering



### UC Cabinet

Brought to UC for Routine Action

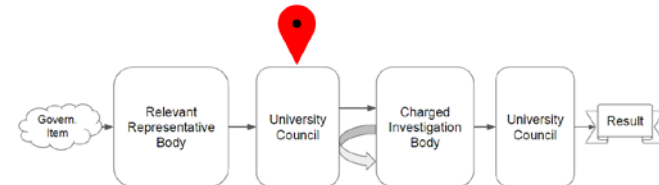
- Place on Consent Agenda

Brought to UC for Uncommon Action

- Do some framing before UC deliberation
  - o Who: Recommend Charged Investigation Body
  - o What, When: Recommend a Charge

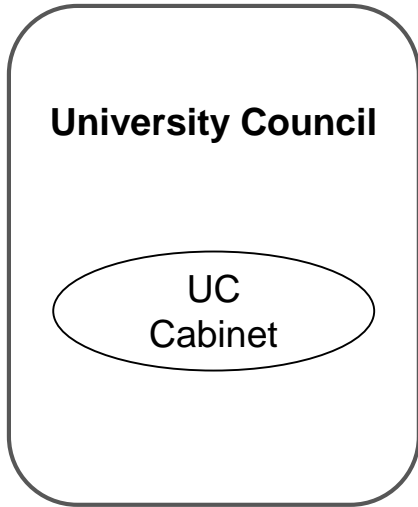
Routine vs. Uncommon depends on desired action and scope/scale

Charge should include: deliverables and timing, intermediate milestones, resources, membership



# Process Flow - University Council 2.0

## 3. Charge, Steering



## University Council 2.0

UC meetings are meant for:

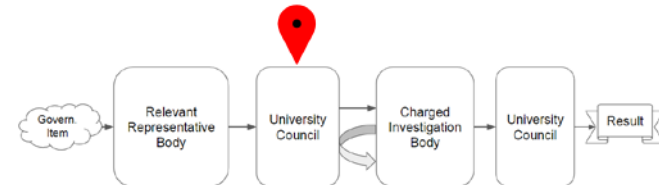
- Deliberation of concepts and requirements at the highest level

UC meetings are *not* meant for:

- One-way communication
- Debating the phrasing of resolutions

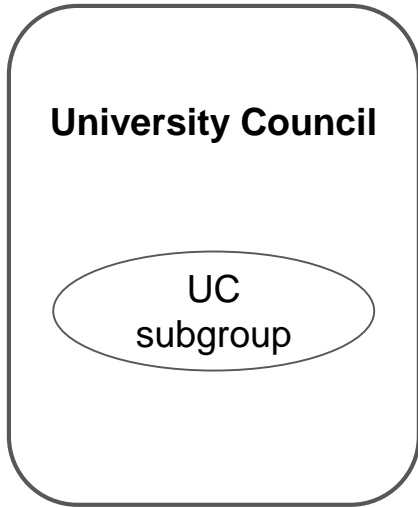
UC purpose is to

- Charge Investigation Body to address a specific item
- Review progress and revise charge as necessary
- Recommend Investigation results (deliverables, resolutions...) to the President



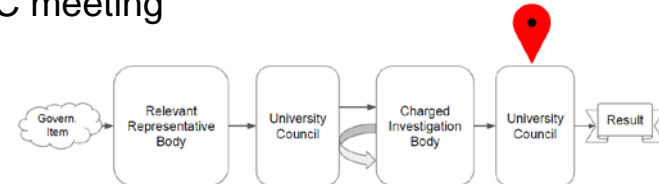
# Process Flow - University Council 2.0

## 3. Charge, Steering



## UC Agenda - Deliberation is the main use of time

- **Announcements** (not discussed) - information only
- **Consent Agenda** - routine action items
  - Items are only pulled from the consent agenda for deliberation if so moved by a council member
- **Deliberation Items**
  - Placed on agenda by UC cabinet or pulled from Consent Agenda
  - Deliberation focused on delivering/updating investigation charge
- **Investigation Updates**
  - Status reports, as needed, followed by discussion
  - Review/update charge, receive deliverables
  - Not group updates at every UC meeting
- **New Items** (UC can initiate)

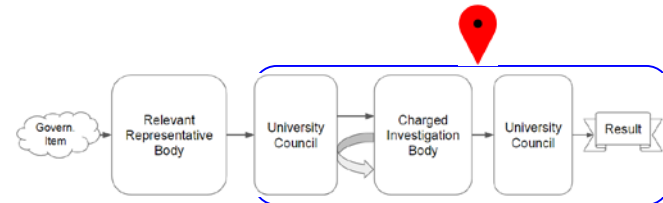
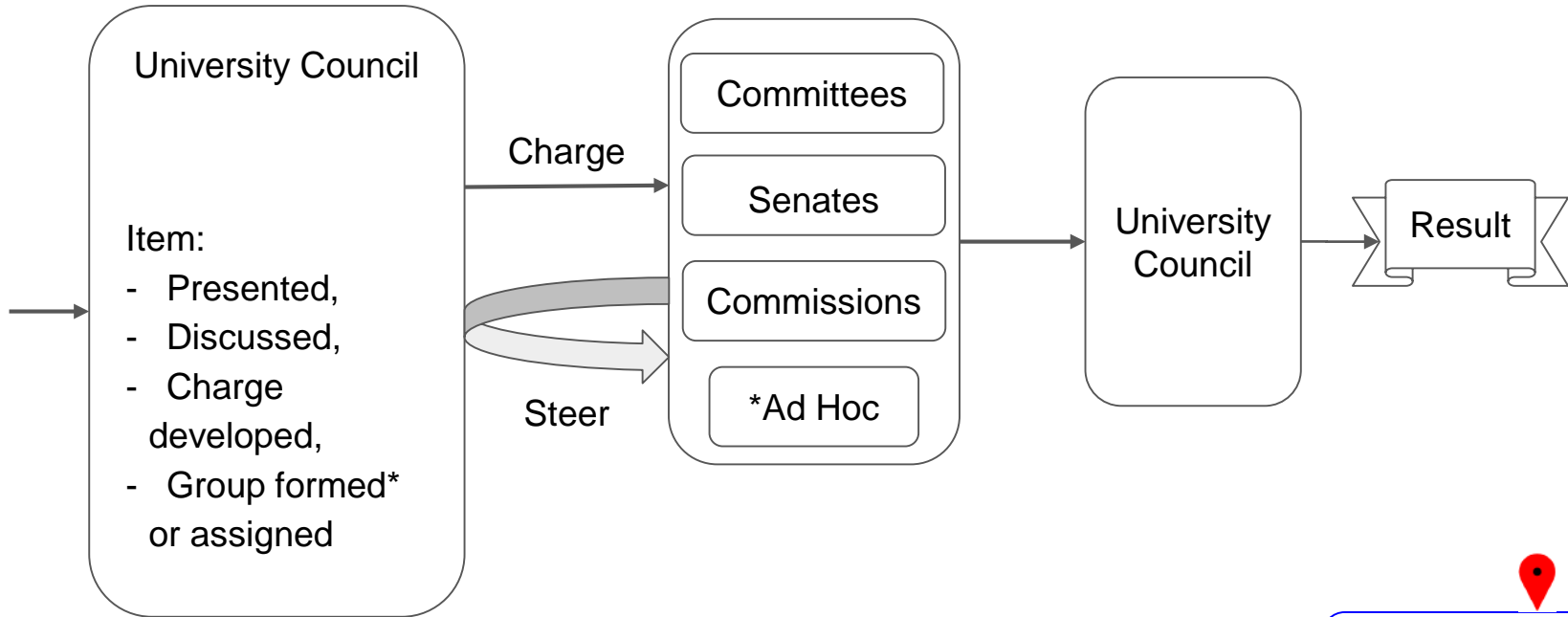


# Process Flow - Overview - Part 2: Deliberation

3. Charge, Steer

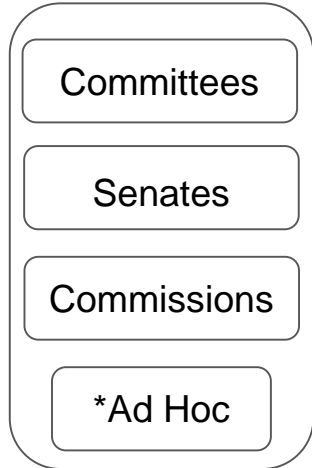
4. Investigate

5. Approve



# Process Flow - Investigate

## 4. Investigate

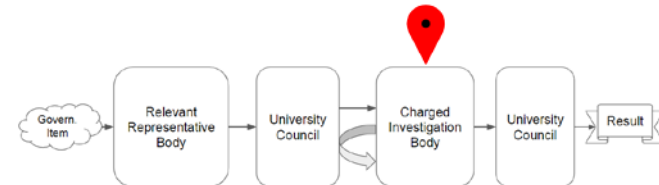


### University Council

- Identify or form\* appropriate investigation body depending on scale/scope and novelty/routineness
  - Committees
  - Senates (may form work group)
  - Commissions
  - \*Ad Hoc Committees
- Establishes Charge

### Charged Investigation Body reports and responds to UC as needed

- Deviation from charge
- According to milestones in charge
- As deliverables are completed





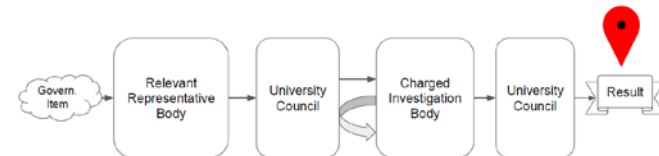
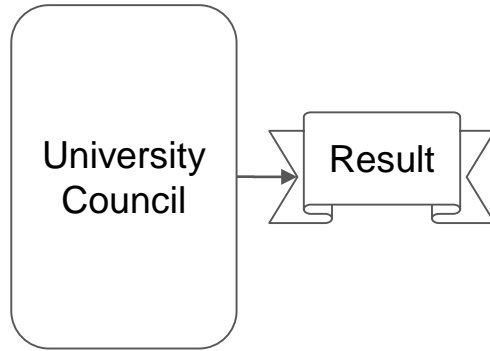
# Process Flow - Elements - Result

## 5. Approve

University Council takes appropriate action

- Makes recommendation to President
- (Other action as defined in the Charge)

As is done today, but (hopefully) with larger scope, more transparency, communication, collaboration, and efficiency



# Process Flow - Overview

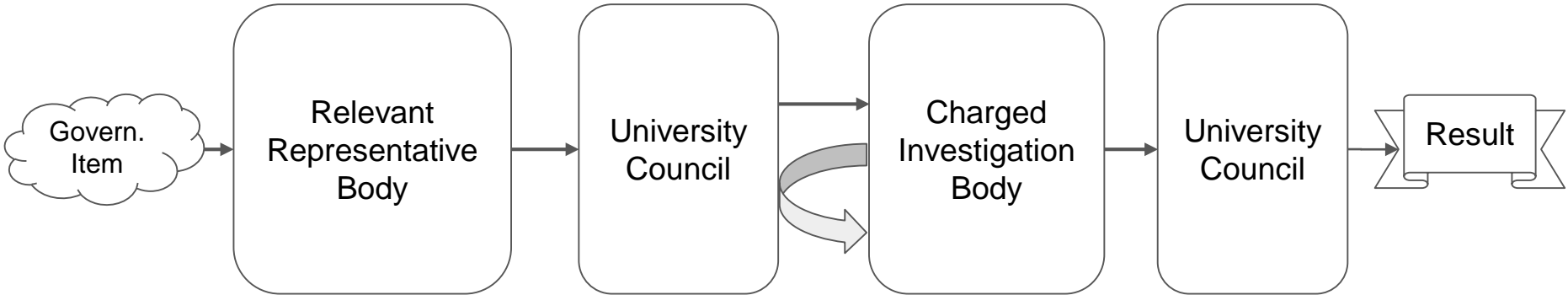
1. Ideate

2. Vet,  
Advocate

3. Charge,  
Steer

4. Investigate

5. Approve



**(More) Questions?**