

# Academic Sustainability Task Force

An Ad Hoc Committee Formed within the Senate Executive Committee

## Purpose and Operations

### Task Force Formation and Charge

Per [Faculty Senate Charter](#) Section IV.E., an ad hoc committee may be appointed “in response to a need which [Senate Executive Committee] has identified”. In the November 2025 Senate Executive Committee meeting, Faculty Senate Chair Dan Clark formed a task force to follow up on the resolution put forth by the Academic Quality Committee at the May 2025 Faculty Senate meeting and assess university performance using metrics outside of recruitment, retention, and tuition revenue.

Specifically, the Academic Sustainability Task Force is charged with the following:

- Identify areas of overlap in faculty concerns and proposals across the Senate standing committees that necessitate more collaborative discussion and investigation across the different groups.
- Request and examine data relevant to points of faculty concern represented by the [Resolution from the Academic Quality Committee Regarding Academic Quality](#) as well as other committee reports posted during the last five years.
- Explain discrepancies between how key terms are used or defined in administrative documentation versus how faculty interpret them to develop clearer communication through shared vocabulary.
- Document evidence and findings for current and future Faculty Senate members, leading to collaboration with the Provost’s Office to propose solutions which address both the outstanding resolution set forth by the Academic Quality Committee in the spring of 2025 and other issues that may emerge during the data evaluation process.

### Task Force Membership and Meeting Schedule

The Academic Sustainability Task Force shall be comprised of the Faculty Senate officers and Faculty Regent as well as select standing committee chairs, with the ability to appoint one or more ad hoc members as needed to address special tasks or topics.

Faculty Senate Chair – Dan Clark, Ogden College of Science and Engineering (Mathematics)

Faculty Senate Vice Chair – Brooke Gross, University Libraries (Library Public Services)

Faculty Senate Secretary – Sheila Flener, College of Health and Human Services (Applied Human Services)

*Document compiled by Brooke Gross, Faculty Senate Vice Chair.*

*Approved by Dan Clark, Faculty Senate Chair, November 12, 2025.*

Faculty Regent – Shane Spiller, Gordon Ford College of Business (Management)

Colonnade Committee Chair – Andrew Mienaltowski, College of Science and Engineering (Psychological Sciences)

Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee Chair – Ashley Orehek-Rossi, University Libraries (Library Public Services)

Academic Quality Committee Chair – Melissa Travelsted, College of Health and Human Services (School of Nursing and Allied Health)

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Chair – Ashley Fox, College of Health and Human Services (Communication Sciences and Disorders)

Graduate Council Chair – John [Kirk] Atkinson, College of Business (Information Systems)

Budget and Finance Committee Chair – Eric Kondratieff, College of Arts and Letters (History)

The Academic Sustainability Task Force will have standing meetings once per month, in line with the Senate Executive Committee schedule, beginning December 2025 and continuing through May 2026 with the option to extend activities into further semesters if needed.

## Objectives and Methodology

The Academic Sustainability Task Force will be in communication with each other as well as other faculty senators, standing committee members, and administrators on an as-needed basis to avoid task force activities being completed in a vacuum. A representative from the group will provide a progress report at each Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Senate meeting beginning in January 2026.

The primary objectives of the Academic Sustainability Task Force are as follows:

- Determine whether concerns and anecdotal evidence surrounding faculty welfare are supported by data.
  - If so, identify areas of potential improvement and propose solutions that address the most prevalent issues.
  - If not, work to establish processes and resources through which faculty can better understand the role data metrics play in university decision-making as it relates to faculty welfare.
- Bridge the gap between ways in which faculty think about student success, faculty support, student support, academic quality, etc. and how those are measured by official university standards.

*Document compiled by Brooke Gross, Faculty Senate Vice Chair.  
Approved by Dan Clark, Faculty Senate Chair, November 12, 2025.*

- Determine whether there are ways and/or metrics with which the Resource Allocation, Management, and Planning [RAMP] budget model could better account for academic quality, faculty welfare, and faculty success.
- Unite standing committee chairs in pursuit of a common goal (as described above) so that overlapping and/or recurring faculty concerns are assessed from multiple perspectives.
  - Strengthen the voice of the faculty overall by setting a precedent for more collaborative committee work as needed in the future.

The Academic Sustainability Task Force will meet these goals by...

1. Putting Senate standing committee chairs in frequent communication with one another as well as the Senate officers and Faculty Regent.
2. Identifying what types of data are needed to address frequent faculty concerns.
  - a. From Western Kentucky University – Data sets will be requested through Academic Affairs and other administrative bodies as needed.
  - b. From Benchmark and/or Peer Institutions – Our performance metrics will be compared to those of similar institutions, which will be determined in collaboration with the Office of the Provost.
3. Evaluating university performance, support, growth, and related metrics using qualitative and quantitative data not currently measured under the RAMP model.
4. Documenting findings through a variety of means to present to faculty and administration in order to determine next steps and possible solutions.