Annual Orientation and Training for New and Returning Committee Members

The Academic Senate Council recommends annual committee orientation and training for new and returning members of standing Academic Senate Subcommittees. The movement of Academic Senators among various subcommittees is accompanied by an adjustment period during which continuing, and newly joined members reorient to the purpose of the committee and ‘rediscover’ the operations within each committee. For example, processes for taking action vary by committee as does the 10+1 area of focus for each committee.

It has been noted that each August and/or September many questions are asked about how individual committees function, what prior/existing knowledge is of most value to members, and what types of work or recommendations are expected from the specific committees. This practice of ‘reorientation’ is common among continuing committee members and provides a venue for new members to hear something about how each committee functions. This allows new members to gain some understanding of the committee focus and how members operate within the committee. However, the practice seldom provides clear information about the committee focus, operational processes, committee expectations of members, or the roles and responsibilities for each member.

The Academic Senate Council noted the annual review of committee charters and goal setting as an opportune time for providing a structured training/(re)orientation for all committee members.

[See example – 2021.9.2 Budget Committee Training Agenda with notations in the comment balloons.]