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Descriptors-Administration, \*Administrative Policy, \*Committees, \*Governance, \*Higher Education, Institutional Administration, Participation, \*Student Participation, Student Role, Students

This study was conducted to determine the prevalent practices of selected institutions of higher education concerning student membership on academic committees, and on certain other governing groups. Questionnaires were sent to 85 institutions and 59 were returned and analyzed. More than 85% of those that replied indicated that students serve on one or more academic committees, and almost half reported that students also serve on other governing groups. Students are most often involved on committees concerned with the admissions and financial aid programs, curriculum, library, calendar, and guidance programs of the university. Almost 60% of the institutions reported that student committee members are elected by the student body. The general trend regarding qualifications is the requirement that a student be a full-time undergraduate, and an upperclassman. Student participation is generally successful, as 43 of 52 institutions reported that student contributions were "moderate" or "substantial." Approximately 90% of the institutions indicated that student membership on academic committees was initiated at their schools after 1960. Tables document responses to the questionnaires and appendices include a copy of the questionnaire and names of the institutions to which they were sent. (DS)

ED0 32855

A Survey of Practices  
Related to Student Membership  
on Academic Committees

By the  
Office of Institutional Research  
John B. Davis, Jr. Director

For the  
Faculty Senate Committee on Committees  
East Carolina University

February, 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE  
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HE 001/53

## Purpose

This study was conducted to determine the prevalent practices of selected institutions of higher education concerning student membership on academic committees, and on certain other university governing bodies.

## Procedure

On November 20, 1968, a questionnaire was forwarded to 85 institutions of higher education, with a request that the completed instrument be returned by December 12, 1968. Institutions on the mailing list were selected from a list of universities and colleges within the United States, based on their geographical location and on their status as to private or public control. (A list of the institutions is included in Appendix A).

The questionnaire contained six sections, each composed of items designed to solicit responses from the institutions relevant to their practices concerning student membership on academic committees, and on certain other university/college bodies. Items on the questionnaire were addressed to the topics of institutional practice as to student membership on academic committees in general, student membership on specific academic committees (number of students on varying committees, voting or non-voting status), student membership on other institutional bodies, qualification for students who serve on academic committees, method of selection of students for service on academic committees, and evaluation of student membership on academic committees. Provision was also made for general comments on the practice of students serving on academic committees.

By January 30, 1969, fifty-nine of the 85 questionnaires (69.4%) had been returned. An analysis of the data from the returned questionnaires provided information on prevalent practices relative to student membership on academic committees.

## Findings

General:-The results of the analysis of the data from the questionnaires indicated that, of the 59 institutions replying to the questionnaire, 52 (88.1%) reported student membership on some academic committee. Forty-five (76.2%) of the 59 institutions reported that students held voting memberships on these committees. Thirty-eight (64.4%) of the schools replying reported student voting participation on at least two committees, and 26 of the 59 institutions (44%) indicated that students were voting members on at least 3 academic committees. Ten (16.9%) of the 59 schools reported that students were serving and voting on 6 or more academic committees. (Table I).

Student Membership on Other Governing Bodies:-Student membership on other university/college governing bodies was also reported. (Table II). Thirteen (22%) of the 59 institutions that replied to the questionnaire indicated that students were serving on the faculty senate. Eleven (18.6%) reported student membership on an academic council (policy-making body), 24 (40.6%) indicated that students served on a planning board, and 2 schools indicated that students were members of a committee concerned with the dismissal of faculty. No schools reported student membership on a board of trustees.

More than three-fourths of the institutions that replied to the questionnaire reported student membership on some academic committee, and almost half indicated that students also serve on other university governing bodies. Therefore, based on the sample of the study, it would appear that student participation in the academic governance of American universities is not unusual.

Qualifications for Students Serving on Academic Committees:-Qualifications for students to be eligible to serve on academic committees varied consider-

ably. (Table III). Of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation (voting or non-voting) on academic committees, 36 (69.2%) indicated that academic classification (freshman, sophomore, etc.,) was immaterial. For those institutions that did use this criterion, all but one school required that the student be an upperclassman to be eligible to be a member of an academic committee. Twelve schools (23%) provided for graduate student participation.

Of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation in academic governance, 29 (55.7%) indicated that grade point average was immaterial as a qualifying condition for student service on academic committees. However, based on a 4.0 system, 12 (23%) of the 52 schools required a 2.0 average, and 2 institutions required that the student have a 3.5 GPA to be eligible to serve.

Thirty-seven (71.7%) of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation indicated that a student must be full-time to be eligible to serve on an academic committee, while 6 schools (11.5%) reported that attendance classification was immaterial. (Table III).

Selection of Students for Service on Academic Committees:-Students who serve on academic committees were usually selected by the students, acting alone. Thirty-three (63.4%) of the 52 institutions reported that this procedure was used. (Table IV). Eight schools (15.3%) indicated that selection was accomplished by joint action of the students and the administration: the typical case providing for nomination by the students and approval by the administration. Three institutions reported student selection by a student-faculty-administration process, two indicated selection by the faculty, two by the administration, and two by a faculty-student procedure.

The trend is toward the requirement that a student be a full-time undergraduate, and an upperclassman, to be eligible to serve on an academic committee. At most of the institutions, students were selected for service on academic committees through the independent action of the students. About 20% of the institutions required that such selection by the students be subject to the approval of the administration.

Historical Development:-Student membership on academic committees is generally a recent development. Of the 52 institutions reporting some student participation on academic committees, 29 (55.7%) had implemented the practice within the past three years. (Table V). Seven (13.4%) of the 52 schools, however, reported that students were serving on academic committees prior to 1960.

Initiation of the policy of student membership on academic committees most often involved the administration. (Table IV). Sixteen (30.7%) of the 52 institutions reported that the practice was originated by the administration, acting alone. Ten schools (19.2%) indicated that the policy was instigated by administration-student action, and 7 (13.4%) reported origination by joint efforts of the administration and the faculty. Five schools (9.6%) indicated that the program for student participation in academic affairs was first suggested by a student-faculty-administration combination.

Evaluation of Student Participation on Academic Committees:-Most of the institutions judged that students had made significant contribution as members of academic committees. Twenty-five (46.1%) indicated that the students had contributed 'moderately', and 18 (34.6%) reported that the contribution had been 'substantial'.

Student membership on academic committees, then, while generally a recent development, was a policy in effect at several schools prior to 1960. Initiation of such programs most often involved the administration, acting alone as reported by about one-third of the schools, and in combination with students and/or faculty at about one-half of the institutions. Contribution of the students as members of academic committees was judged as significant (moderate or substantial) by 43 of the 52 institutions.

Student Membership on Specific Committees:-The responding institutions reported student membership on a variety of academic committees. (Table VI). In addition to the student participation indicated on those committees listed on the questionnaire, institutions also reported student service on a wide variety of committees unique to their own academic organization.

Voting memberships predominated on each of the committees listed in Table VI. Of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation, 24 (46.1%) indicated that students were serving and voting on a curriculum committee. Twenty-two (42.6%) of the 52 schools reported that students were voting members on a library committee, and 21 (40.3%) indicated similar student status on a student scholarship, fellowship, and financial aid committee. Students as voting members on an admissions committee and on a calendar committee were reported by 16 institutions.

A few schools reported that students were serving on other committees on the list. For example, one school indicated that students had voting rights on a faculty recruitment committee, and 2 institutions reported students as voting members on a faculty welfare committee. No institutions reported student membership (voting or non-voting) on a faculty affairs committee.

The trend in student membership on various academic committees seems to be toward more student involvement on those committees associated

with activities that are primarily student-orientated (library, curriculum, calendar, etc.,) and less participation on committees associated with matters that are primarily related to the faculty.

Analysis of Public Institutions in the South:-A separate analysis was made of the data reported by the public institutions in the South. Of the 32 questionnaires sent to these institutions, 21 (65.6%) had been returned by January 30. Seventeen (80.9%) of the 21 institutions reported that students had membership on some academic committee. These two percentages compare closely with corresponding figures from the analysis of the data of the national sample. On the other dimensions used in the analysis of the nation's institutions, the general trends detected in the southern public institutions appeared to be consistent with the national pattern.

Analysis of The 'Non-Respondents':-An inspection was made of the list of the 26 institutions that did not reply to the questionnaire. This 'survey' analysis failed to provide any characteristic of the 'non-respondents' that would imply a counter-trend to the conclusions indicated in the analysis of the responding institutions. Therefore, there is no reason to expect that the trends detected in the analysis of the returned questionnaires would have changed significantly had all the instruments been available for consideration.

## Summary

A questionnaire was forwarded to 85 institutions of higher education within the United States in an effort to determine prevalent practices concerned with student membership on academic committees, and on certain other university governing bodies. Fifty-nine of these instruments were returned, and analyzed in terms of certain concepts relevant to student participation in academic governance.

More than three-fourths of the institutions that replied to the questionnaire had a policy that provided for student membership on some academic committee, and almost half of the schools indicated that students also serve on other university bodies.

Qualifications for students to serve on academic committees varied, but the trend was toward the requirements that a student be a full-time undergraduate, and an upperclassman. At most of the institutions, students were selected for service on academic committees through the independent action of the students, but about one school in five indicated that the selection would be subject to the approval of the administration.

Student membership on academic committees is generally a recent development, but the policy was in effect at several schools prior to 1960. Initiation of student-participation policies most often involved the administration, acting independently at about one-third of the schools, and in combination with students and/or faculty at about one-half of the institutions. Student contribution as members of academic committees was judged as significant (moderate or substantial) by 43 of the 52 institutions that reported some student participation.

The trend in student membership on various academic committees seems to be toward more student involvement on those committees that are associated with activities which are primarily student-oriented, and less

involvement on those committees closely related to matters that are primarily faculty-oriented.

A separate analysis of the questionnaires that were returned by the public institutions in the South did not produce any trends that were significantly different from those detected in the national pattern.

Table I

Number of Institutions Reporting  
Students as Having Voting Memberships on Varying  
Numbers of Academic Committees

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Number of Committees	Number of Universities
Students serving on	
At least one committee	45
At least two committees	38
At least three committees	26
At least four committees	21
At least five committees	18
At least six committees	14
More than six committees	10

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Note.-Analysis based on data from 59 institutions that responded to the questionnaire. A total of 85 questionnaires were mailed out.

Table II  
 Number of Institutions  
 Reporting Student Membership  
 on Certain University Governing Bodies

Governing Body	Number of Universities
Students serving on	
Academic committees	52
Faculty Senate	13
Board of Trustees	0
Academic Council (Policy-making body)	11
Dismissal hearing committee for tenured faculty	2
Planning body (fiscal, physical plant, etc.,)	24

Note.-Analysis based on data from 59 institutions that responded to the questionnaire. A total of 85 questionnaires were mailed out.

Table III  
 Number of Institutions  
 Reporting Various Qualifications  
 for Student Membership on Academic Committees

Qualification	Criterion					
	Number of Institutions					
	Immaterial	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate
Academic Classification	36	1	6	10	12	12
.....						
	Immaterial	2.0/4.0	2.25/4.0	3.0/4.0		
Grade Point Average	29	12	1	2		
.....						
	Immaterial			Full-time		
Attendance Classification	6			37		

Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

Table IV

Number of Institutions Reporting Action by Various  
University Groups Toward Two Aspects of Student Membership on  
Academic Committees: Selection of Students and Initiation of Policy

University Group(s)	Number of Institutions	
	Student Selection	Policy Initiation
Students alone	33	3
Faculty alone	2	2
Administration alone	2	16
Student-faculty	2	3
Student-administration	8	10
Faculty-administration	0	7
Student-faculty- administration	3	5

Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

Table V

Number of Institutions  
Reporting Various Dates of Initiation of the  
Policy of Student Membership on Academic Committees

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Dates Initiated	Number of Institutions
Before 1960	7
1960-61	3
1961-62	0
1962-63	2
1963-64	1
1964-65	3
1965-66	2
1966-67	9
1967-68	14
1968-69	6

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Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

Table VI  
 Number of Institutions  
 Reporting Voting or Non-Voting Student  
 Membership on Certain Academic Committees

Academic Committee	Number of Institutions	
	Voting	Non-Voting
Admissions	16	3
Calendar	16	0
Continuing Education	3	0
Credits	3	0
Curriculum	24	3
Faculty Affairs	0	0
Faculty Welfare	2	0
Gifted Students	8	0
Library	22	4
Student Guidance	15	0
Student Recruitment	7	1
Student Scholarship, Fellowship, and Financial Aid	21	2
Teacher Education and Career	8	0
Faculty Recruitment	1	0

Note.-Analysis based on data from the questionnaires that were returned from the 52 institutions reporting some student participation.

APPENDIX A

Names And Addresses Of The  
Eighty-five Institutions On The Mailing List  
For  
A Questionnaire Related To Student Membership On Academic Committees  
East Carolina University      February, 1969

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Appalachian State University  
Boone, North Carolina 28608

East Texas State University  
Denton, Texas 76203

Ball State University  
Muncie, Indiana 47306

Eastern Illinois University  
Charleston, Illinois 61920

Baylor University  
Waco, Texas 76706

Eastern Michigan University  
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Bradley University  
Peoria, Illinois 61606

Elizabeth City State College  
Elizabeth City, North Carolina 27909

Brown University  
Providence, Rhode Island 02912

Emory University  
Atlanta, Georgia 30322

Butler University  
4600 Sunset Avenue  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

Fisk University  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Clemson University  
Clemson, South Carolina 29631

Florida Agricultural and  
Mechanical University  
Tallahassee, Florida 32307

Colorado State College  
Greeley, Colorado 80631

Florida State University  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306

Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Furman University  
Greenville, South Carolina 29613

Delaware State College  
Dover, Delaware 19901

Georgia Southern College  
Statesboro, Georgia 30458

Drake University  
26th Street and University Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50311

Georgia State College  
33 Gilmer Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Duke University  
Durham, North Carolina 27706

Guilford College  
Greensboro, North Carolina 27410

East Tennessee State University  
Johnson City, Tennessee 37601

Howard University  
2400 Sixth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Indiana State University  
Terre Haute, Indiana 47809

North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27607

Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701

North Texas State University  
Denton, Texas 76203

Johns Hopkins University  
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Old Dominion College  
Norfolk, Virginia 23508

Kutztown State College  
Kutztown, Pennsylvania 19530

Portland State College  
P. O. Box 751  
Portland, Oregon 97207

Lehigh University  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18015

Sacramento State College  
6000 J. Street  
Sacramento, California 95819

Memphis State University  
Memphis, Tennessee 38111

Sam Houston State College  
Huntsville, Texas 77340

Miami University  
Oxford, Ohio 45056

San Francisco State College  
1600 Holloway Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94132

Montclair State College  
Montclair, New Jersey 07043

Seattle University  
Seattle, Washington 98122

Morehouse College  
223 Chestnut Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30314

Shaw University  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

Morgan State College  
Hillen Road and Cold Spring Lane  
Baltimore, Maryland 21212

Slippery Rock State College  
Slippery Rocky, Pennsylvania 16057

North Carolina Agricultural &  
Technical State University  
Greensboro, North Carolina 27411

South Carolina State College  
Orangeburg, South Carolina 29115

North Carolina College at Durham  
Durham, North Carolina 27707

Southeast Missouri State College  
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701

St. Andrews Presbyterian College  
Laurinburg, North Carolina 28352

University of Maryland  
College Park, Maryland 20740

St. Lawrence University  
Canton, New York 13617

University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

Stanford University  
Stanford, California 94305

University of North Carolina  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28205

State University of New York at  
Buffalo  
3435 Main Street  
Buffalo, New York 14214

University of North Carolina  
Greensboro, North Carolina 27412

Towson State College  
Towson, Maryland 21204

University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Tufts University  
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

University of Oregon  
Eugene, Oregon 97403

Tuskegee Institute  
Tuskegee Institute, Alabama 36088

University of the Pacific  
Stockton, California 95204

University of Denver  
2199 South University Boulevard  
Denver, Colorado 80210

University of Pittsburgh  
5th and Bigelow Streets  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213

University of Detroit  
4001 West McNichols Road  
Detroit, Michigan 48221

University of Rhode Island  
Kingston, Rhode Island 02881

University of Florida  
Gainesville, Florida 32601

University of Richmond  
Richmond, Virginia 23173

University of Georgia  
Athens, Georgia 30601

University of San Francisco  
2130 Fulton Street  
San Francisco, California 94117

University of Maine  
Orono, Maine 04473

University of South Carolina  
Columbia, South Carolina 29208

University of Miami  
Coral Gables, Florida 33124

University of South Florida  
4202 East Fowler Avenue  
Tampa, Florida 33620

University of Tennessee  
Cumberland Avenue  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

University of Virginia  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Vanderbilt University  
21st Avenue and West End  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Virginia State College  
Petersburg, Virginia 23806

Wake Forest University  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27109

Washington University  
St. Louis, Missouri 63130

Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, North Carolina 28723

Wisconsin State University - Oshkosh  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

**APPENDIX B**

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY  
Office of Institutional Research  
P. O. Box 2721  
Greenville, North Carolina 27834

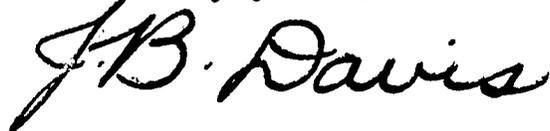
November 20, 1968

Dear Sir:

The Faculty Senate at East Carolina University is interested in securing information in regards to students serving on Academic Committees at various colleges and universities.

If you would complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope, then we could get some insight into what other schools are doing in respect to this policy. We shall be happy to forward a copy of the results of this survey to you if you would like to receive them.

Sincerely yours,



John B. Davis  
Director  
Institutional Research

JBD/eh

Enclosures  
Questionnaire &  
Return Envelope

Thank you for your assistance.



II. Composition of Academic Committees

Please <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> appropriate box	Student Membership				<u>Number On Committee</u>		
	Yes	No	Voting	Non-Voting	Adminis-trators	Faculty	Students
1. Admissions							
2. Calendar							
3. Continuing Educ.							
4. Credits							
5. Curriculum							
6. Faculty Affairs							
7. Faculty Welfare							
8. Gifted Students							
9. Library							
10. Student Guidance							
11. Student Recruitment							
12. Student Scholarship, Fellowship and Financial Aid							
13. Teacher Ed. and Career							
14. Faculty Recruitment							
15. Other(s) (Please Specify)							



VI. Evaluation of Student Membership On Academic Committees

1. When was student membership initiated on your campus?

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Who initiated student membership?

a. Administration \_\_\_\_\_

b. Faculty \_\_\_\_\_

c. Students \_\_\_\_\_

d. Other(s) (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Student Contribution As Members On Academic Committees

a. Contributed nothing \_\_\_\_\_

b. Contributed little \_\_\_\_\_

c. Contributed moderately \_\_\_\_\_

d. Contributed substantially \_\_\_\_\_

e. Contributed harmful effect \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please make any comments that you might have on students serving on

academic committees: \_\_\_\_\_

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