Standing Committees

About the Standing Committee Structure of the FAS

Each standing committee of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has been established by a vote of the Faculty to perform a specific continuing function. Standing committees can be dissolved only by a vote of the Faculty, or, with the agreement of the committee, by the Dean of the Faculty and the Faculty Council. The Dean recommends the membership of each committee annually.

Lists of the Faculty’s Standing Committees

For a list of standing committees (including their current membership) in alphabetical order, click here.

For a list of standing committees (including their current membership) by category, click here.

Types of Standing Committees

Standing Committees with Curricular Responsibilities

Curricular Committees for Undergraduate Degree Programs

These committees administer undergraduate concentrations outside of the departmental structure. Ordinarily, such committees offer tutorials, but not other courses, and supervise and coordinate the work of the concentrators in departmental courses. Only on-ladder members of the FAS (i.e., assistant, associate, or full professors) and Head Tutors, who may or may not be on-ladder appointees, serve on undergraduate degree committees. They set requirements for the concentration, offer tutorials, serve as tutors, read senior honors theses, make up and grade the general examination, and review and recommend degrees with honors in the field. Some committees also give and grade junior general examinations and oral examinations.

Curricular Committees for Graduate Degree Programs

The several dozen graduate degree programs not centered in a department are administered by standing committees. Only on-ladder faculty (i.e., assistant, associate, or full professors) serve on these committees. Programs offered in conjunction with other Harvard faculties involve on-ladder faculty from each school.

Instructional Program Committees

These committees were established to give courses and tutorials in areas outside of departmental offerings and curricular standing committee concentrations. Ordinarily, only on-ladder faculty (i.e., assistant, associate, or full professors) serve on these committees.

Interdisciplinary Coordinating Committees

The goal of these committees is to inform students of various intellectual opportunities available to them that may not be immediately obvious from reading the list of courses. They are usually established around a geographical region or a topic, and, through pages in Courses of Instruction, bring together relevant courses in a comprehensive list. They may also sponsor discussions, exhibits, and speakers. Most members of these committees are full FAS professors. Some of these committees include professors from other Harvard faculties and other members of the FAS.

Other Types of Standing Committees
Research Committees

These standing committees are charged with monitoring various aspects of research and of research facilities in the FAS. Some are mandated by federal legislation and their members may include on-ladder faculty, administrators, and representatives from Cambridge community. Others have been legislated by the FAS.

Undergraduate Committees—Non-Curricular

Various aspects of undergraduate life are addressed by these committees, from admissions and financial aid to athletics. Their members are faculty of all ranks and senior administrators, plus students where mandated by FAS legislation.

Administrative Committees

These committees administer or oversee various standing concerns of the FAS that do not otherwise fall within the previously listed categories.