

ENHANCING OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: THE ROLE OF SECRETARIES IN UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES, PANELS, AND BOARDS

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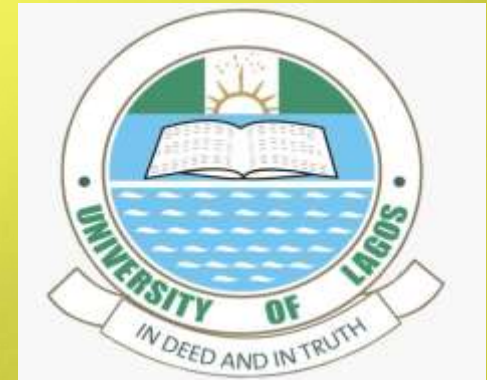
INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

- ❖ Committees play a vital role in the governance and administration of Nigerian universities.
- ❖ They serve as platforms for inclusive decision-making, shared responsibilities, and participatory governance.
- ❖ Committees help distribute workload, bring diverse perspectives, and ensure transparency.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen understanding of university governance structures
- Clarify committee roles and secretary responsibilities
- Share best practices for effective committee secretarial support



DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES



DEFINITION OF A COMMITTEE

- ❖ A **committee** is a group of individuals appointed or elected to perform a specific function or set of functions within an organization.
- ❖ Formal bodies established to manage specific university affairs

PURPOSE

- Ensure inclusive decision-making
- Support academic and administrative functions
- Promote transparency, accountability, and effectiveness



- ❖ **To Emphasize the strategic role of committees in upholding the university's mission**

ORGANS OF THE UNIVERSITY

1. **Governing Council** : This is the highest policy-making and governing organ of the university. Its Functions include but not limited to:

- Determines the university's strategic direction.
- Oversees financial management, major appointments, and capital development.
- Approves budgets and major policies.

❖ **Composition:** Includes the Pro-Chancellor (Chair), Vice-Chancellor, external members (appointed by government), representatives from Senate, Congregation, and Convocation.

❖ **Council Sub Committees**

2. Senate : This is the highest academic decision-making body.

Its Functions include but not limited to:

- Oversees academic planning and regulation.
- Approves curricula, examinations, and conferment of degrees.
- Handles matters related to admissions, discipline, and academic standards.

Composition: Vice-Chancellor (Chair), Deans, Professors, elected representatives of academic staff and external members .

❖ **Senate Sub Committees**

ORGANS OF THE UNIVERSITY CONTINUED

3. **Congregation:** This an assembly or a Body of all academic and senior administrative who are University graduates. Its Functions include:

- Elects representatives to the Council and Senate.
- Serves as a forum for staff input on university affairs.

4. **Convocation:** Comprises all graduates (alumni) of the university and some staff.

Its functions include:

- Participates in university ceremonies (e.g., convocation).
- Elects representatives to the Governing Council.

5. **The University Management:** This Includes:

- **Vice-Chancellor (VC):** Chief Executive and Academic Officer.
- **Deputy Vice-Chancellors (DVCs):** Assist the VC in specific areas (Academics, Administration, Development Services.).
- **Registrar:** Chief administrative officer and secretary to Council and Senate.
- **Bursar:** Chief financial officer.
- **University Librarian:** Head of library services.
- The Provost of CMUL
- Director Academic Planning
- Director Quality Assurance and Servicom
- Director of Works



ORGANS OF THE UNIVERSITY CONTINUED

- ✓ **Faculty Boards:** This Oversees academic and administrative affairs at the faculty level
- ✓ **Departmental Boards:** This Handles curriculum delivery, assessments, and research at the department level
- ❖ Admissions Committee
- ❖ Research and Publications Committee
- ❖ Students' Welfare Committee



SUMMARY TABLE

Organ	Core Role	Key Members
Governing Council	Policy and financial oversight	Pro-Chancellor, VC, external and internal reps
Senate	Academic governance	VC, Deans, Professors, Academic Reps
Congregation	Staff representation and input	Academic & senior administrative staff
Convocation	Alumni participation	Graduates, VC, staff
University Management	Day-to-day administration	VC, DVCs, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian plus others
Faculty/Dept Boards	Academic planning and delivery	Deans, HODs, academic staff

TYPES AND FUNCTIONS OF COMMITTEES

TYPES OF COMMITTEES

- Standing Committees
- Ad-hoc Committees
- Panels and Boards (e.g., Disciplinary Panels, Review Boards)

FUNCTIONS OF COMMITTEES

- Policy formulation and review
- Academic program assessment
- Staff and student matters
- Financial and infrastructure planning
- Conflict Resolution on disputes among staff, students, or between both.

ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS OF SECRETARIES TO COMMITTEES

1. Preparation and Planning

- **Develop an annual calendar of meetings** for key university organs (Council, Senate, Committees).
- **Circulate agendas and documents early** (preferably 7 days before meetings).
- **Confirm venue, logistics, and quorum requirements** in advance.
- **Review minutes of previous meetings** to track outstanding issues or follow-up actions.

2. Professional Minute-Taking

- **Use a structured format:** include agenda item, discussion summary, decision/resolution, and person responsible for follow-up.
- **Be objective and concise;** avoid personal opinions or commentary.
- **Record action points and timelines** clearly.

3. Confidentiality and Integrity

Maintain **strict confidentiality** of sensitive discussions and documents. Secure storage and handling of minutes, correspondence, and personnel files.

Uphold **neutrality**, especially in cases involving conflict or disciplinary matters.



ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS OF SECRETARIES TO COMMITTEES CONTINUED

4. Legal and Statutory Compliance

- Be well-versed in:
 - University Laws and Statutes
 - Conditions of Service
 - NUC regulations and government circulars
- **Guide chairs and members** on procedural rules (e.g., quorum, voting, conflict of interest).

5. Follow-Up and Implementation

- Prepare a **decision/action matrix** after each meeting.
- Ensure that resolutions are **communicated to responsible units**.
- ❖ Monitor and report **implementation status** at subsequent meetings
- Record-keeping and archiving
- ❖ Ensuring compliance with university policies rules and external regulatory guidelines (e.g., NUC directives)



COMMON CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

- Poor attendance → Use reminders
- Delays in action → Track follow-ups with timelines
- Conflicting opinions → Maintain professional
neutrality

CASE SCENARIO / GROUP ACTIVITY

- Present a realistic scenario (e.g., a poorly managed meeting)
- ❖ A case of Assistant Secretary getting to the venue of a meeting some minutes after the scheduled time only to find out that she was at a wrong venue
- ❖ A case of chairman requesting the secretary to forward the soft copy of the report only for it to be re written and processed for submission without the secretary having a copy

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ❖ Committees are pillars of university governance
- ❖ Secretaries ensure efficiency and continuity
- ❖ Best practices enhance credibility and effectiveness

CONCLUSION

- Committees are indispensable to the smooth operation of Nigerian universities.
- When effectively managed, they promote transparency, accountability, and efficiency in decision-making and policy implementation.
- Reforms and capacity building are essential to improve committee performance and university governance



Q&A / OPEN DISCUSSION

- Participants to ask questions and or share real-life experiences
- Encourage sharing of strategies that work in their departments

Thank
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