

Major Initiatives Subcommittee (MISC)

Rationale. Growth and change are a vital to the health of any great university. When proposals are made for major new initiatives and programs, a consultative process helps establish a sense of faculty-administration cooperation in moving the University forward. Faculty review and ultimately Senate endorsement on behalf of the faculty can greatly help new programs be successful through helpful suggestions and most important, broad campus support and engagement. Proposed major University initiatives and programs should be reviewed by the Faculty Senate's Major Initiatives Subcommittee (MISC). This review should occur before the initiative or program's final approval, and before considerable effort is invested in planning deployment.

Charge. The MISC subcommittee will review major programs and initiatives referred to it by the Senate Executive Committee, who might learn of such initiatives from members of the administration, faculty, students, or staff. MISC will review proposals at two stages: at an early "possible-idea" stage, and most important, as a fully developed proposal that gives sufficient details to assess possible financial, programmatic, and staffing impacts and concerns. Programs reviewed by MISC will generally be new but could include existing programs proposed for major changes.

Scope. What is a "major" program or initiative will be left to the judgment of the Senate Executive Committee. Generally, such programs will be:

- cross-departmental or cross-College
- involve and impact a significant number of faculty, staff and students
- involve significant budget changes that could have broader impacts
- significantly change the culture and operations of the University
- not fit within the scope of any single existing Senate or Faculty committee.

Operation. MISC will consult broadly with administrators and the Lehigh faculty at large, as well as those Senate and University committees concerned with areas relevant to the proposal (e.g., Graduate and Research Committee, Personnel Committee, Senate Research Committee, and Educational Policy). MISC should act in a timely fashion to issue a report and / or prepare a recommendation.

Key Principles. In assessing new opportunities associated with major initiatives, it will be important to analyze each opportunity for their explicit fit with Lehigh's priorities and vision for the future. Two key principles will guide discussion of how the new opportunity contributes to Lehigh's long-term future:

- Is the opportunity consistent with Lehigh's focus on the highest standards of academic rigor?
- Is the opportunity consistent with our vision of what Lehigh's research portfolio should be in the future?

Practical Considerations. There are a number of practical considerations that might be examined by the committee. For example:

- Would the new initiative work best as a College-level or a Provost-level initiative?
- What are the criteria under which new investments in faculty or staff should be considered in connection with the proposed initiative?
- How would the new initiative mesh with or complement existing research centers or academic programs?
- What budget impacts will the initiative have and what revenue streams will support the initiative?
- Have potentially impacted constituencies been extensively and substantively consulted?

Outcomes. MISC will draft a report that provides a concise assessment of the proposed initiative or program, possible suggestions for modifying the proposal, and in some circumstances, a recommendation for a Senate or whole-faculty vote of either endorsement or rejection of the proposal. The Executive Committee will make any report available for general faculty comment, and bring the results of any Senate or faculty vote to the senior leadership.

Membership. Core membership of the subcommittee consists of three members of the Faculty Senate. For any particular initiative, MISC can choose to expand its membership to include informed members of the faculty at large, including faculty who are advocates of initiatives as well as those who are impacted or express serious concerns.