

**Master of Health Science in Anesthesia Program
Bluefield University – Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine**

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MHSA Policy on the Principles, Rules, and Guidelines for Committees

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1. PREAMBLE

The Master of Health Science in Anesthesia Program at VCOM-Bluefield is committed to fostering a collaborative, inclusive, and transparent governance structure that supports the program's mission, values, and objectives. Recognizing the pivotal role of committees in shaping policy, advancing academic excellence, promoting professional development, and ensuring institutional effectiveness, this preamble outlines the foundational principles, rules, and guidelines that govern the formation, function, and responsibilities of committees within our esteemed program.

This preamble serves as a foundational framework that underscores our institutional commitment to fostering a culture of shared governance, collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement. Grounded in the principles of equity, inclusivity, transparency, and stakeholder engagement, our Policy on Principles, Rules, and Guidelines for Committees aims to provide clear expectations, responsibilities, and mechanisms for effective committee governance, decision-making, and stakeholder participation.

Acknowledging the multifaceted nature, diverse constituencies, and evolving priorities of our Program, this policy emphasizes the importance of establishing committees that reflect the program's values, expertise, and strategic objectives. By delineating clear principles, rules, and guidelines for committee formation, composition, operation, and evaluation, we seek to empower committees to fulfill their respective mandates, contribute meaningfully to programmatic goals, and enhance stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and accountability.

Furthermore, this policy reflects our unwavering dedication to fostering a culture of excellence, innovation, responsiveness, and shared responsibility within the MHSA Program. By aligning committee practices with accreditation standards, best practices in higher education governance, and the unique needs and aspirations of our program, we aim to cultivate a governance structure that is adaptive, equitable, transparent, and responsive to the evolving landscape of anesthesia education, practice, and scholarship.

In essence, this preamble reaffirms our program's commitment to upholding the highest standards of governance, accountability, collaboration, and excellence within the MHSA Program. As stakeholders in this esteemed educational community, we collectively embrace the principles, responsibilities, and values articulated in this policy, fostering a culture of trust, respect, collaboration, and shared commitment to advancing the mission, vision, and values of our anesthesia education program.

2. PURPOSE

MHSA Program committees create a framework for shared governance by advising administrators and fulfilling requirements for the Program. Committees are composed of faculty, administrators, staff, and students who invest in the well-being of the Program through this service. The MHSA Policy on Principles, Rules, and Guidelines for Committees governs the method by which the work of Program committees is conducted.

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND CHARGES

The Dean will have the authority to establish, continue, and/or abolish committees to carry out the work of the Program. The Dean will provide committees with policies, procedures, and charges. The committee members may make recommendations to the Dean regarding the work of the committees and/or procedures.

3.1 Committee Membership

The Dean will determine the required administrative appointments for the committees and appoint the faculty and student members for each open position as prescribed in the Committee make-up and membership.

Expertise, interest, and diversity of membership will be considered when making appointments to committees. In addition, serving on a committee helps to enrich the faculty member's knowledge of Program decision making and the Dean will assure a rotation of faculty on committee membership to engage the opinions of many and to assure the education of faculty and students on the decision-making process of the Program.

3.1.1 Faculty Eligibility and Membership

Faculty committee membership will be selected from full- or part-time academic or clinical faculty. In general, committee membership from clinical faculty is selected from those who have been a clinical preceptor of the MHTSA Program for at least one (1) year prior to beginning committee services. The exception to this is when a specific faculty or administrative position is required on a committee, which necessitates faculty serving prior to being employed for one year. Faculty representatives have full voting rights unless serving in an ex-officio role on the committee.

Except where noted in committee guidelines, faculty appointments will be for two (2) academic years. The eligibility for up to one (1) additional consecutive year-appointment may be determined by the Dean, extending the term on the committee to a total of four (4) academic years.

3.1.2 Staff Eligibility and Membership

Staff committee membership will be selected from full-time staff. Part-time staff working less than 32 hours per week are not eligible to serve as a staff representative on any MHTSA committee. Staff representatives have full voting rights unless serving in an ex-officio role on the committee.

3.1.3 Student Eligibility and Membership

The MHTSA Program provides opportunities for students to participate in deliberations of select committees. Student representatives must be in good academic standing at the time of and throughout their appointment. Student appointments will be for one (1) year, which may be extended at the discretion of the Dean and upon recommendation of the Committee Chair.

Student representatives are considered full members of the committee, with full voting rights in most cases. Student representatives may be excluded from certain deliberations that must be carried out in executive session or which may discuss identifiable student information.

3.1.4 Membership Replacement

If a member of a committee fails to complete an appointment term, a replacement will be appointed as soon as possible to complete the unexpired term. The regular appointment calendar and rotation will not be changed.

Committee members who fail to attend meetings or to actively engage in the business of the committee may be removed by the Dean. Such removals for cause will be considered during the faculty or staff member's annual review.

3.2 Role of Committee Members

Program committees should approach issues from both a program-wide perspective and act in the best interest of the Program as a whole. A range of information presented to these committees as well as deliberations shared by members inform committee discussions, votes, and recommendations. Members should refrain from advocating specifically for their department in favor of the collective good for all considerations. They also should not unduly restrict committee progress on issues due to lack of response or input.

Committee members are required to participate actively in committee business and provide appropriate contributions to decision making for the betterment of the Program. Committee members are expected to attend and participate in all meetings, carry out tasks as assigned by the Chair, and offer advice based on their experience and expertise.

Committee members are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the institutional policies related to professional conduct. Rank within the Program or institutional sponsors does not exist during a committee session and the opinions of all members must be heard and valued.

Committee members who represent constituents on a committee should make every attempt to canvas the views and opinion of that group to bring back to the discussion of the committee, assuring decisions support all constituents.

3.2.1 Role of the Committee Chair

The Chair directs the committee's business, identifying tasks that fall within the committee charge, initiates discussions, formulates proposals from the input, and submits recommendations for approval to administration on behalf of the committee.

The Chair, working with the committee Recorder, also is responsible for assuring accurate minutes, keeping the Dean informed about committee activities, requests, proposals and reports. Responses submitted by the Chair should accurately reflect the character of the committee's discussion, its final consensus, and any minority opinion.

Chairs are responsible for ensuring these rules for the operation of committees are followed including the appropriate recording of decisions and actions.

Chairs will ensure meetings are conducted fluently so members understand the matters at hand and can discuss them, and the voting processes and resolutions are clear. Chairs should try to ensure the active participation by all members of the committee.

Chairs have a responsibility to ensure the business before the committee is current, relevant, and communicated effectively to relevant areas of the College. Chairs should familiarize themselves with the working of the committee system.

Chairs should provide all new members with an orientation to the Committee. Where possible, this should occur well before the member's first attendance at a meeting of the committee. It is recommended that briefing material provided to new members includes:

- Information on the history and the charges of the committee and Program committee structure.
- The Principles, Rules, and Guidelines of Committees.
- The Code of Conduct (Robert's Rules of Order) of committee members.
- Committee meeting schedule per year and proposed dates.
- Major items of business of the committee accomplished in the previous year.
- Commonly used acronyms and abbreviations which might be used in the conduct of the committee's business.

3.2.2 Role of the Recorder

Unless otherwise identified by the Dean in establishing the membership of the committee, the Administrative Assistant will serve as the Recorder of the committee.

The Recorder, under the direction of the Chair, shall be responsible for scheduling meetings, for collecting and coordinating all materials from administration and membership and to assure dissemination occurs in proper form prior to the meeting. The Recorder shall provide all information required in advance, shall assist in the preparation and dissemination of the agenda for all meetings, shall record the proceedings of the committee, and store minutes of meetings as outlined by retention policies as set forth by the institution.

3.2.3 Role of Student Representatives

Student representatives on Program committees represent the interests of the entire class on the committee and must report on the actions of those committees to the Class Officers and on occasion to the class. Students serving on committees must call for input from the class when they receive a call for agenda items from the committee Chair. The student is responsible for submitting these agenda items to the Chair.

4. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Membership of a Program committee is an important role and brings with it key responsibilities and obligations. The specific membership requirements for committees have been prepared to promote good practice and give committee members a summary of their obligations and provide guidance on ethical conduct.

Where members are unsure of their obligations or responsibilities under the College Committee Member's Code of Conduct, the member should contact the Chair of the committee for assistance.

The Committee Member's Code of Conduct that follows sets forth those general standards that serve as a reminder of the variety of responsibilities assumed by all members.

Committee Member's Code of Conduct

- Become familiar with and committed to the responsibilities of the committee on which one is serving,
- Carefully prepare for, regularly attend, and actively participate in committee meetings and assignments.
- Participate constructively in committee activities in a lawful, ethical, and justifiable manner. Silence implies agreement, so if you do not agree, express that opinion respectfully in the committee, not disrespectfully and not after the meeting.
- Always focus on issues, not individuals.
- Ensure decisions are consistent with any statutory and legal requirements.
- Ensure resources, funds and staff are used effectively and economically for committee business.
- Stay informed about relevant matters affecting the committee's business.
- Make judgments always based on what is best for the Program as a whole; yet be willing to support the majority decision of the committee and work with fellow members in a spirit of cooperation. Recognize that it is okay to disagree internally in a respectful manner and once a committee decision is reached, the committee should speak with one voice to individuals outside of the committee. Ensure adequate procedures are followed for documenting decisions and actions of the committee.
- Maintain confidentiality of committee business, ensuring confidential records are subject to appropriate storage and access procedures.
- Respect confidential discussions and not misuse any information obtained through membership of the committee.
- Openly declare any matters of private interest and record any issues with the potential for conflict or perceived conflict to ensure they are transparent and capable of review. Where appropriate, disqualify themselves from committee discussions and decisions where a conflict of interest occurs.
- Facilitate appropriate communication between the committee and the campus, and at the same time maintain the confidential nature of committee work and avoid acting as a spokesperson for the entire committee unless specifically authorized by the committee Chair to do so.
- Refrain from actions that might compromise the Program or institutional sponsor's reputation or standing in the community.

5. RULES FOR THE OPERATION OF COMMITTEES

5.1 Schedule of Meetings

Each committee is approved to meet a specified number of times during the academic year. However, all committees will meet as often as necessary to accomplish their charge.

The Chair is responsible for establishing regular meeting times and announcing the date and time of meetings in advance. When committees include clinical faculty, meeting times must be held at "clinically friendly" times. Faculty should speak directly with the Chair if the times posted are not clinically friendly.

For some committees, meetings are set on certain days of the month and by certain month. Committee Chairs may ask to change some dates if they conflict with previously scheduled engagements and committee members will try to accommodate these requests. Meetings are generally scheduled Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm.

The Chair should announce the regularly scheduled meeting date at the beginning of the academic year or a minimum of 30 days in advance of the meeting and shall do so in writing.

5.2 Quorum

A quorum of a committee is such a number as must be present in order that business can be transacted. The quorum refers to the number of members present with voting positions.

Sixty-six percent (66%), or two-thirds, of the full membership of the committee shall constitute a quorum. Meetings should only commence with the appropriate quorum. If the meeting is inquorate the meeting must be rescheduled.

5.3 Conduct of Meetings

General parliamentary rules will be observed in conducting the business of the committee except as may be modified by policy or procedure adopted by the committee.

Items brought to the committee for a decision for noting or for communication should be relevant to the business or role of the committee. Consideration should be given to holding a joint meeting of two committees when there is an item of interest for more than one committee.

There should be an opportunity at the start of each meeting for members to declare any potential or perceived conflict of interest in respect of any item and where appropriate to absent themselves from discussion and/or the room while the item is being considered.

Audio or video recordings of committee meetings are not permitted (unless specifically directed by the Dean), and all reports must be electronically typed.

5.4 Rules of Order

Unless otherwise specified in these rules of procedure, *Robert's Rules of Order*, in its most recent edition, shall govern. No rule governing the procedure of committees shall be suspended unless two-thirds of the members present shall consent thereto. Nor shall any rule be repealed or amended without a notice of motion given during the previous meeting.

5.5 Voting Rights and Consensus

All committee members, excluding ex-officio members and recorders, have full voting rights, unless otherwise specified by the rules governing a specific committee. Voting rights are limited to those committee members present at the time of the vote. Proxy votes are not permissible.

Decisions are by consensus, unless agreement cannot be made, then a 66% (or two thirds) majority of those attending the meeting decide. All reasonable effort should be made to reach consensus. In the case of a tie, the Chair has a casting vote.

When a 66% agreement cannot be achieved, the matter in question will be referred to Dean for decision making.

5.6 Executive Session and Confidentiality Issues

Committee Chairs are encouraged to designate time on each meeting agenda for closed "executive" session. By majority vote, committees may call for an executive session at any point during a meeting. Only committee members may participate in an executive session of the committee. Proceedings of these sessions are not recorded in the minutes, although action items may be noted.

When confidential discussions occur or confidential documents are circulated, the committee Chair must ensure members understand that information is not to be shared with their constituents or anyone else outside of the meeting. All items regarding specific students and other confidential matter contained in minutes, reports, or the agenda are to be clearly marked CONFIDENTIAL and shall be kept in a confidential file. All committee agendas, working papers, and resource documents are assumed to be privileged materials for the sole use of the intended recipients unless otherwise stated. Unless a document has already been circulated widely, any distribution to others is strictly prohibited.

5.7 Meeting Agendas and Committee Documents

Distribution of committee agendas, draft minutes, and in-progress documents is done via email and is restricted to committee members (including ex-officio). The committee Chair must approve any exception to these distribution rules. In setting a meeting agenda the following guidelines must be followed:

- Prior to establishing the meeting agenda, an agenda call will be sent to the Dean and committee members. Those wishing to have items placed on the agenda of a regular meeting of the committee must give written notice to the Recorder and Chair.
 - o Students serving on committees must call for input from the class when they receive a call for agenda items from the committee Chair, if the agenda calls for decisions that will impact students. The student is responsible for submitting these agenda items to the Chair.
- The agenda and information materials for meetings must be distributed to members at least one (1) week before the meeting. Deadlines for placing formal items on the agenda should be enforced by the Chair.
- All items regarding specific students and other confidential matter contained in minutes, reports, or the agenda are to be clearly marked CONFIDENTIAL and may be redacted in any materials distributed for approval.
- Agendas of meetings must:
 - o Be simplified, including only the titles of agenda items. Supporting documents may be posted at the discretion of the committee Chair. Explanatory agenda notes are not to be included; however, referral to relevant materials may be made. If items have been discussed previously, a chronology of key elements of the discussion should be attached.
 - o Be divided into eight (8) parts:
 - Part 1: Call to Order
 - Part 2: Formal Motion to Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting
 - Part 3: Reports and Presentations
 - Part 4: Business in Progress
 - Part 5: New Business
 - Part 6: Old Business
 - Part 7: Good of the Order
 - Part 8: Adjourn and Next Meeting Notification

The primary purpose of minutes is to create an official record of the actions taken at a meeting. Minutes serve to both memorialize the actions taken for those attending the meeting as well as for those who were unable to attend the meeting. The minutes are not intended to serve, nor should they serve, as an exact account of who said what and when, or who disagreed with whom. Minutes should record the decisions made, not the surrounding discussion. In addition, remember that minutes also are a legal document, thus raising another set of criteria as to their appropriate content.

Minutes of meetings must:

- Be written precisely, accurately, clearly, and succinctly. Minutes should follow the meeting agenda and each item in the agenda should have a corresponding action item in the minutes.
- Contain a record of attendance and absence of all members and the presence of a quorum.
- Contain a summary of events, in bullet form wherever possible, rather than a detailed account of every contribution. In general, names of individuals should not be recorded in the discussion.
- Contain any presentations or reports presented and the name of the party giving the presentation/report.
- Contain all resolutions and agreements, whether reached formally through motions or through consensus, including the name of the mover or seconder of a motion. The overall vote of the committee is to be recorded by number approved and the number voting to not approve. It is not necessary to record who voted against a motion; however, each member does have the right to have their dissenting vote recorded.
- Contain a statement of the action to be taken in relation to each item, including the person responsible for the action and a timeline for completion, where appropriate.
- Be marked CONFIDENTIAL when noting business regarding specific students, individuals, and other confidential matter.

5.7.1 Approval and Retention of Minutes

Within 10 working days following a meeting, the committee Recorder completes and submits to the committee Chair the draft minutes. It is the responsibility of the Chair to review the minutes and attest to their accuracy. The Chair should review, correct, and approve the draft minutes as soon as possible following the meeting. The Chair is responsible to move pending items forward and to prepare the members before the next committee meeting.

Once approved by the Chair, the draft of the minutes is sent to the rest of the committee for approval. Draft minutes of the most recent meeting(s), except for confidential material, should be circulated to committee members as early as possible following the meeting. This allows members who were present at the meeting, an opportunity to inform the Recorder of any changes in factual content. A draft of the minutes is also sent to the Dean's office. Approved minutes of each Committee meeting shall be signed by the Chair and the Recorder prior to submission to the Dean's Office.

A formal motion to approve the minutes of a previously held meeting will take place during the next scheduled meeting of the committee by unanimous consent. Reading of the minutes during the meeting is not necessary.

Committee minutes must be kept by each committee Recorder, after the minutes have been reviewed and approved by the committee. The Recorder must also submit, in a timely manner, a copy of the final minutes to the Dean's office for review and retention and to act upon where appropriate.

6. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOMES

6.1 Recommendations

The committee Chair is responsible for forwarding recommendations and, where appropriate, decisions of the committee to Program administration for consideration. The Chair is also responsible for following up on and reporting actions or results back to the committee.

6.2 Recognition of Committee Service

Committee service is important to accomplish the mission of the Program; therefore, the committee Chair will send a letter to the Dean's office in December of each year for inclusion in the faculty and staff member's annual activity report. The letter will provide information concerning the faculty member's attendance at committee meetings and engagement with committee responsibilities. Committee service will be considered in the annual assessment of faculty and staff, including renewal, promotion, and pay for performance increase.

7. DURATION OF POLICY

This Policy on the Principles, Rules and Guidelines for Committees for the Master of Health Science in Anesthesia Program established by MHSa Program Administration and is effective as of the date above and shall remain effective until amended or terminated by the President and Provost.

A. Publication

This policy shall be widely published and distributed to the Program community to ensure publication and distribution thereof. The Office of the Dean of Anesthesiologist Assistant Programs will make every effort to:

- Communicate the policy in writing, electronic or otherwise, to the MHSa Program community within 14 days of approval by the Program Oversight Board
- Submit the policy for including in the online *MHSa Program Student Handbook* within 14 days of approval by the Program Advisory Council
- Post the policy on the appropriate audiences on the policy's content, as necessary; and
- Educate and train all stakeholders and appropriate audiences on the policy's content, as necessary.

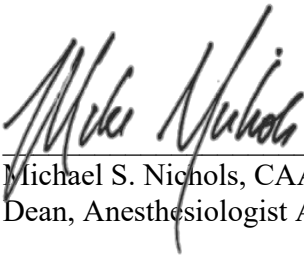
Failure to meet the publication requirements does not invalidate this policy.

B. Review Schedule

List the following:

Next Scheduled Review Date:	11/01/2025
Approval by, Date:	Advisory Council, March 30, 2023
Revision History:	11/01/2022. 12/30/23.
Supersedes:	Not applicable

C. Related Documents



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