

## **RAS Procedures** **(revised May 2012)**

**Duties of RAS.** As described in the Handbook, the “Resource Allocation Committee is a subcommittee of the Committee on Academic Policy and Planning. The Resource Allocation Committee considers those departmental requests for new faculty forwarded to the Resource Allocation Committee by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and sends to the Committee on Academic Policy and Planning their recommendations concerning granting or not granting requests. RAS shall be appointed by the Committee on Academic Policy and Planning as needed.”

**Responsibility of Members.** RAS’s procedures are designed to encourage a free discussion of all aspects of a request and to produce a fair set of rankings. The members of RAS serve as representatives of the University, not of their individual departments. When considering a proposal from his or her department, a member of RAS is expected to avoid even the appearance of advocacy for the proposal during deliberations and voting.

**Confidentiality.** RAS frequently receives sensitive information in the position requests, in supporting materials, during interviews, and from the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). It is essential that this information is treated confidentially. The members of RAS must not discuss any specifics of the committee’s discussion with other members of the community, and the committee’s minutes must remain confidential. Department and program representatives and observers who are interviewed by RAS may discuss with the members of their department or program the issues raised; however, they should refrain from discussing specific comments regarding personnel in their department or program raised in the discussions with RAS. Final copies of the minutes are kept only by the VPAA and the chair of the committee.

**Information Gathering and Preliminary Discussion.** RAS members read all proposals in preparation for the first meeting. Each proposal is discussed in turn and the committee formulates questions for the interviews with each department’s or program’s representative. Two RAS members take the lead in asking the committee’s questions during the interview with the department’s or program’s representatives. Interviews are scheduled for thirty minutes for a single position request; multiple position requests are allocated more time. After each interview, the committee discusses the strengths of and concerns about the request based on the available information, including the written request, the interview, information supplied by OIR and the Registrar (e.g., enrollments, demand analyses, majors, class sizes, advising loads, etc.), scheduled retirements and staffing issues provided by the VPAA, and any information supplied by CAPP (e.g., summaries of departmental self-studies and the reports of visiting evaluators).

Although a RAS member in a department with a proposal under consideration is present during the interview, he or she does not participate in the pre-interview discussion and is not present during the formulation of questions or the post-interview discussion. This makes it possible for other committee members to express concerns without fear of hurting the feelings of a member of the department or imposing undue burdens of confidentiality.

**Deliberations and Initial Straw Poll.** After collecting all available information for each proposal, the committee discusses their relative merits. When this discussion is complete, a non-binding straw poll is taken. Each member anonymously ranks the proposals numerically with one being the highest rating. Results of this straw vote are tabulated in two ways. First, the ranks are summed for each position giving a rank order in which the lowest total score is ranked highest. A second rank order is determined by omitting the highest and lowest score for each request and summing the remaining seven scores. This rank order eliminates the possibility of a single outlier distorting the ranking.

The committee then discusses the results of the straw poll, focusing particularly on proposals ranked in the middle range and those with greater variability in their rankings. Because in most years the line separating positions that are eventually funded from those that are not funded is near the middle of the list, that area is of particular concern to the committee. Although discussion is initially guided by the straw poll, the committee may revisit any proposal.

**Final Ranking.** RAS uses a secret ballot to determine the final rank ordering of the positions. The first ballot determines which request is placed in the lowest (last) rank. At least four votes are required to set a position in the rank order. In the event of a 4-4-1 vote, additional discussion is required before taking another vote. After determining the lowest ranked proposal, the committee continues this process, ending with the highest ranked proposal. Any member may pause the voting at any time for discussion, with voting continuing after the discussion.

After the final ranking is complete, every effort is made to allow the members of RAS to think about the result before finalizing it. Usually the committee adjourns and reconvenes the following day to approve the final ranking. Again using a secret ballot, the committee affirms or rejects the ranking. Rejection of the overall ranking requires a two-thirds majority (6 of 9). If the ranking is rejected, the discussion and ranking procedure is started again.

**Final Discussion.** The committee discusses the final ranking and drafts the documents it will forward to CAPP. The committee reviews and finalizes the reports of strengths of and concerns about each proposal; each department or program submitting a proposal receives only the report regarding its proposal. Otherwise the lists of strengths and concerns are kept confidential, to be shared only if needed with CAPP, the VPAA and the President. Discussion also addresses issues of concern and any changes to be made in the following year's call for requests.

In addition to reporting on the strengths and weaknesses of an individual proposal, CAPP encourages RAS to give feedback in a more global way about the plans and projections that guide the department's sense of itself and its mission. This sort of feedback must be limited (RAS is not a self-study team), positive (RAS will get nowhere scolding departments/programs), and specific.