



## Overview of Senate Actions, 2022-2023

Below is a summary of actions taken by the University Senate that have ramifications for BSOS faculty, staff, and students.

### Proposal to Revise the Excused Absence Policy

**Change:** In December, the Senate approved minor revisions to the University of Maryland Policy on Excused Absence intended to more clearly communicate to students that mental health was covered under the policy. References to “medically necessitated absences” were changed to “health-related absences, including mental and physical health.” The term “physician” was also replaced with “health care provider.”

**Background:** In August 2021, the Senate received a proposal to revise the Policy on Excused Absence to better address student mental health needs and change requirements surrounding physician-signed notes, which the proposal argues can present equity issues. The Senate’s Academic Procedures & Standards Committee was charged with considering the proposal.

**More Detail:** [Senate Document #21-22-04](#)  
[Minutes from the 12.7.22 Senate Meeting](#)  
[University of Maryland Policy on Excused Absence](#)

### Review of a Policy Regulating the Naming of Facilities and Programs

**Change:** In March 2023, the Senate approved revisions to the interim University of Maryland Policy and Procedures on the Naming of Facilities and Programs. The revisions preserved the substance of the interim policy, which must align with policy at the University System of Maryland (USM) level. In addition to technical and organizational changes, the revisions include:

- The creation of a new Program Naming Committee to consider proposals to name an academic or related program. The committee confidentially considers proposals directed to it by the Provost and makes recommendations.
- Provisions for dealing with situations where a donor does not follow through on their financial commitment, which include removing a name or identifying an alternate naming opportunity appropriate to the size of the gift received.
- A slight loosening of the eligibility criteria for naming a facility or program after an individual. Rather than meeting all of the criteria, individuals must now meet a majority of them.
- Allowing service to the state of Maryland (in addition to the university or the USM) to qualify an individual for a naming opportunity.

- Adding exceptions to a provision requiring individuals to be separated from any connection to the university or USM for a period of one year before being eligible for a naming opportunity.
- Allowing programs to be named for corporations or foundations, providing other eligibility criteria are met.

**Background:** In September, the Senate's Educational Affairs Committee was charged with reviewing a revised University Policy and Procedures on the Naming of Facilities and Programs. The university adopted this revised policy on an interim basis pending Senate review in response to a directive from the University System of Maryland. The policy covers procedures for naming new or existing facilities, major outdoor areas, or academic programs (which include colleges, departments, centers, and academic programs). It also establishes procedures for removing an existing name. The policy distinguishes between namings associated with a philanthropic gift and those that do not have a monetary component but are intended to honor a distinguished individual.

**More Detail:** [Senate Document #22-23-03](#)  
[Minutes from the 3.8.23 Senate Meeting](#)  
[University of Maryland Policy and Procedures on the Naming of Facilities and Programs](#)

## Changes to the Faculty Workload Policy

**Change:** In April 2023, the Senate approved revisions to the Policy on Workload and Responsibilities for Full-Time Tenured, Tenure-Track, Permanent Status, and Permanent Status Track Faculty (these are awaiting final approval by the President). The revisions largely preserve the interim policy and its substance, which emphasized flexibility for units in developing their own workload policies within the broader provisions established in university and USM policy. In addition to technical changes, the revisions include:

- Adding language ensuring that faculty with full or partial extension appointments are explicitly addressed in unit workload policies.
- Emphasizing flexibility by adding language recommending that units consider whether course equivalents can be accumulated over a three-year period.
- The Senate also recommended that the Office of Faculty Affairs revise and expand its guidance in light of the changes made in the interim policy.

**Background:** In June 2019, the USM revised its policy governing full-time faculty workload and responsibilities. In March 2022, the President approved on an interim basis a revised Policy on Full-Time Faculty Workload and Responsibilities, pending Senate review. In October 2022, the Senate's Faculty Affairs Committee was charged with reviewing the interim policy and proposing revisions as necessary.

**More Detail:** [Senate Document #22-23-12](#)