

# Committee Chair Handbook

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## Duties and Responsibilities

Committee chairs assure that committees in the participatory governance system execute their assigned roles and responsibilities. Duties are identified and assigned by the oversight committee, and roles and responsibilities are defined in the committee operating agreement, the college strategic plan and other planning documents, and through college priorities.

Operational duties and responsibilities of committee chairs include:

- Schedule dates, times, and location for meetings
- Build the agenda for each meeting
- Collect relevant documents in advance of the meeting
- Distribute agenda, relevant documents, and previous meeting minutes 3-5 days in advance of the meeting
- Officiate and conduct meetings
  - Ensure that the purpose of the committee is to identify improvements to college processes and make recommendations to its oversight committee on ways to implement those improvements
  - Oversee the writing of minutes and ensure that the minutes are complete, accurate, and reviewed at the next meeting
  - Ensure that committee members are aware of their obligations
  - Ensure there is sufficient time during the meeting to fully discuss all agenda items
  - Ensure that discussion on agenda items is on topic, productive, and professional
- Oversee the completion of the [annual committee assessment form](#) each year, including:
  - Annually review and update the committee operating agreement
  - Recommendation of any changes to the operating agreement, including purpose, membership or procedures based on the evaluation of the committee assessment
- Collect and post the data/evidence that supports the campus accreditation efforts towards the standards identified in the operating agreement

## Operating Agreement

The committee Operating Agreement must use the approved template [*find on SharePoint*] and must define the following:

- I. Meetings
  - a. Meeting times, location
  - b. Definition of a quorum
  - c. Indication of whether meetings will be open or closed
  - d. How Meetings will be Conducted
  - e. Selection and Duties of committee chairs
- II. Agenda
  - a. Order of items on the agenda
  - b. How items may be placed on the agenda
- III. Decision Making/Recommendations
  - a. How decisions are made
  - b. Process for how recommendations are made, placed on agenda, and voted upon
- IV. Communications
  - a. How and when agenda, minutes, reports will be distributed members
  - b. Responsibilities of members, especially in regards to how they will distribute information from the meeting
  - c. How and when annual assessment report will be written and approved
- V. List of Committees/Subcommittees/Task Forces/Workgroups
- VI. Responsibilities
  - a. How committee fits into the *New Model for Governance* structure
  - b. Oversight of campus plans
  - c. Oversight of specific accreditation standards

## Taking Minutes

Minutes are an important part of the committee's business. Minutes at LACC are recorded in a template that is distributed to committee chairs and includes the information necessary for the conduct of participatory governance and to provide evidence for accreditation purposes. The following guidelines should be followed when recording minutes:

### How To Write Effective Meeting Minutes

*Based on Wild Apricot: available at <http://www.wildapricot.com/membership-articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes>*

#### Why meeting minutes are important

You shouldn't be intimidated by the term "minutes" since it's actually a little misleading. After all, your committee or Board doesn't want or need a record of its meeting proceedings minute by minute! But it is important to capture the essence of the meeting, including details such as:

- decisions made (motions made, votes, etc.)
- next steps planned
- identification and tracking of action items

Minutes are a tangible record of the meeting for its participants and a source of information for members who were unable to attend. In some cases, meeting minutes can act as a reference point, for example:

- when a meeting's outcomes impact other collaborative activities or projects within the organization
- minutes can serve to notify (or remind) individuals of tasks assigned to them and/or timelines

#### What's involved with meeting minutes?

There are essentially five steps involved with meeting minutes:

##### **1. Pre-planning:**

At the very least, it's important to get a copy of the meeting agenda and use it as a guide or outline for taking notes and preparing the minutes – with the order and numbering of items on the minutes matching those of the agenda. In addition, the agenda and/or meeting notice also provides information that will need to be included in the minutes, such as:

- the names of all the meeting attendees, including guests or speakers
- documents that are sent out with the agenda or handed out in the meeting – copies (digital or hard copy) of handouts should be stored with the meeting minutes for future reference and for sharing with those who were unable to attend the meeting (and others as determined by the meeting's Chair).

##### **2. Record taking - what should be included?**

Before you start taking notes, it's important to understand the type of information you need to record at the meeting. As noted earlier, your organization may have required content and a

specific format that you'll need to follow, but generally, meeting minutes usually include the following:

- Date and time of the meeting
- Names of the meeting participants and those unable to attend (e.g., “regrets”)
- Acceptance or corrections/amendments to previous meeting minutes
- Decisions made about each agenda item, for example:
- Actions taken or agreed to be taken
- Next steps
- Voting outcomes (if necessary, details regarding who made motions; who seconded and approved or via show of hands, etc.)
- Motions taken or rejected
- Items to be held over
- New business
- Next meeting date and time

Tips that might help your note taking:

1. *Create an outline* – as discussed earlier, having an outline (or template) based on the agenda makes it easy for you to simply jot down notes, decisions, etc. under each item as you go along. If you are taking notes by hand, consider including space below each item on your outline for your hand-written notes, then print these out and use this to capture minutes.
2. *Check-off attendees as they enter the room* - if you know the meeting attendees, you can check them off as they arrive, if not have folks introduce themselves at the start of the meeting or circulate an attendance list they can check-off themselves.
3. *Record decisions or notes on action items* in your outline as soon as they occur to be sure they are recorded accurately
4. *Ask for clarification if necessary* – for example, if the group moves on without making a decision or an obvious conclusion, ask for clarification of the decision and/or next steps involved.
5. *Don't try to capture it all* – you can't keep up if you try to write down the conversation verbatim, so be sure to simply (and clearly) write (or type) just the decisions, assignments, action steps, etc.
6. *Record it* – literally, if you are concerned about being able to keep up with note taking, consider recording the meeting (e.g., on your smart phone, iPad, recording device, etc.) but be sure to let participants know they are being recording. While you don't want to use the recording to create a word-for-word transcript of the meeting, the recording can come in handy if you need clarification.

### **3. The Minutes Writing Process**

Once the meeting is over, it's time to pull together your notes and write the minutes. Here are some tips that might help:

- Try to write the minutes as soon after the meeting as possible while everything is fresh in your mind.
- Review your outline and if necessary, add additional notes or clarify points raised. Also check to ensure all decisions, actions and motions are clearly noted.

- Check for sufficient detail:
  - *include a short statement of each action taken by the board and a brief explanation of the rationale for the decision*
  - *when there is extensive deliberation before passing a motion, summarize the major arguments*
- Edit to ensure brevity and clarity, so the minutes are easy to read

What **NOT TO INCLUDE**:

- *Be objective.*
- *Write in the same tense throughout*
- *Avoid using people’s names except for motions or seconds. This is a business document, not about who said what.*
- *Avoid inflammatory or personal observations. The fewer adjectives or adverbs you use, the better.*
- *If you need to refer to other documents, attach them in an appendix or indicate where they may be found. Don’t rewrite their intent or try to summarize them.*

#### **4. Distributing or Sharing Meeting Minutes**

As the official “minutes-taker” or Secretary, your role may include dissemination of the minutes. However, before you share these, be sure that the Chair has reviewed and either revised and/or approved the minutes for circulation.

#### **5. Filing/Storage of Meeting Minutes**

Most committees and Boards review and either approve or amend the minutes at the beginning of the subsequent meeting. Once you’ve made any required revisions, the minutes will then need to be stored for future reference. Store these online at your SharePoint site and also back these up on an external hard drive. You may also need to print and store hard copies as well or provide these to a staff member or Chair for filing.

In closing...enjoy your new role. Meeting minutes are important—*they capture the essential information of a meeting.*

## Annual Committee Assessment

The committee will complete an annual assessment at the end of each academic year. Review of the committee assessment from the previous year takes place at the first meeting of the committee in the new academic year. This assures the year-to-year transition of the committee’s work.

The assessment will use the following template (*College President approved College Council recommendation in June 2015*):

Meeting Log							
Month	Meeting Date(s)	Members in Attendance	Guest in Attendance	Agendas Posted on LACC Web Site?	Minutes Posted on LACC Web Site?	Reports to Appropriate College/ District Council/ Committee/ Etc.	Recommendations to Appropriate College/ District Council/ Committee/ Etc.

Committee Membership		
Name	Constituency	Number of Meetings Attended

### Assessment Narrative

1. Does the committee have an operating agreement? Yes No
  - a. If so, is it posted on the committee website? Yes No
  - b. If so, does it need to be revised? Yes No

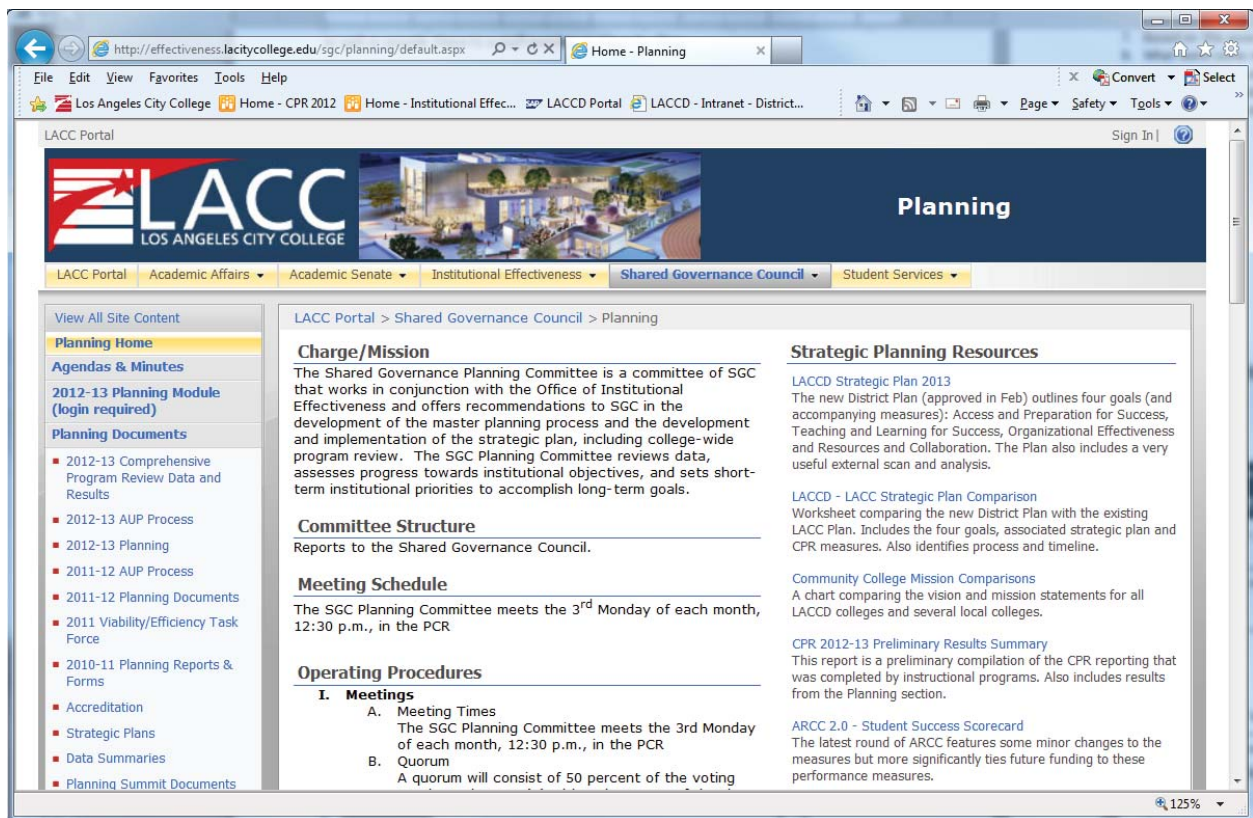
If yes, explain
2. Are all agendas posted online? Yes No  
 Were they posted in a timely manner after being approved? Yes No
3. Are all minutes posted online? Yes No  
 Were they posted in a timely manner after being approved? Yes No
4. Are all documents distributed at committee meetings posted online? Yes No
5. List data reviewed by the committee
6. List reports made to other committees
7. List changes to established committee policies in the committee operating agreement or in other committee supporting documentation
8. List changes to established committee procedures in the committee operating agreement

9. List recommendations and the committee to which they were forwarded. For each, say whether the recommendation was approved, implemented, and posted online?
10. If the committee has oversight on ESMP measures (from the implementation grid), were progress reports and updates documented in the online SharePoint system?  
Yes No N/A
11. Is the committee membership in alignment with the operating agreement and collective bargaining agreements? Yes No  
If no, explain
12. Are the actions and recommendations of the committee consistent with the committee's operating agreement? Yes No  
If no, explain
13. What were some of the committee challenges?
14. Commendations for the committee?
15. What are the committee's priorities for next year?
16. Other recommendations for the committee?

## Organizing and Posting Committee Work to SharePoint

All college committees have a SharePoint website. A major function of the committee chair is to make sure that the website is up to date with the latest minutes, agendas, operating agreement, and other committee documents. Committee Chairs have access rights to post documents and create folders for their committee’s website. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Teaching and Learning Center provide support for SharePoint use.

Committee websites can be accessed through the “Faculty/Staff” page. Once on the committee website, Chairs can log into SharePoint by using their assigned college email account and password. Use the “Sign In” link in the upper right-hand corner of the website homepage.



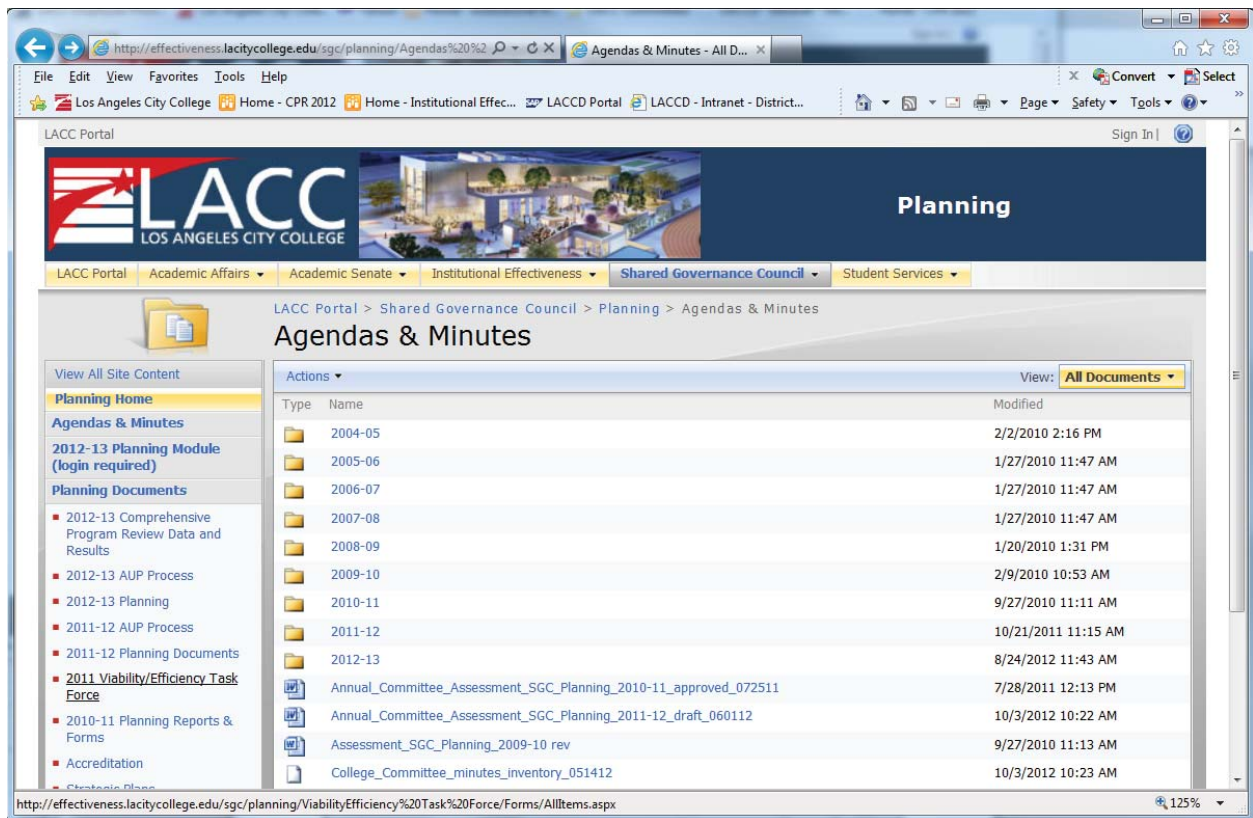
### Committee Homepage

The committee website’s homepage should contain information from the most recent operating agreement as outline earlier. The homepage will also contain links to the Agendas and Minutes and Committee Documents libraries (see the left-side menu). Additional information may be added as identified by college or committee needs.



## Agendas and Minutes

All agendas and minutes for the committee should be posted in the “Agendas & Minutes” library included on each committee website. Documents should be organized by academic year, as follows:



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the LACC Portal. The page title is "Agendas & Minutes" and it is part of the "Shared Governance Council" section. The page features a navigation menu with options like "LACC Portal", "Academic Affairs", "Academic Senate", "Institutional Effectiveness", "Shared Governance Council", and "Student Services". The main content area displays a list of documents organized by academic year, with columns for "Type", "Name", and "Modified".

Type	Name	Modified
Folder	2004-05	2/2/2010 2:16 PM
Folder	2005-06	1/27/2010 11:47 AM
Folder	2006-07	1/27/2010 11:47 AM
Folder	2007-08	1/27/2010 11:47 AM
Folder	2008-09	1/20/2010 1:31 PM
Folder	2009-10	2/9/2010 10:53 AM
Folder	2010-11	9/27/2010 11:11 AM
Folder	2011-12	10/21/2011 11:15 AM
Folder	2012-13	8/24/2012 11:43 AM
PDF	Annual_Committee_Assessment_SGC_Planning_2010-11_approved_072511	7/28/2011 12:13 PM
PDF	Annual_Committee_Assessment_SGC_Planning_2011-12_draft_060112	10/3/2012 10:22 AM
PDF	Assessment_SGC_Planning_2009-10_rev	9/27/2010 11:13 AM
PDF	College_Committee_minutes_inventory_051412	10/3/2012 10:23 AM

## File naming conventions

- When possible, save and upload documents in pdf format
- Name the file with a clear description and date of the document, such as “Planning Agenda Sept 1 2015”
- Create folders to organize large document collections or specific projects