

## Functional Area Committee (FAC) Responsibilities and Process of Review

The Functional Area Committee (FAC) process is a cornerstone of inclusive, transparent strategic planning at Lewis-Clark State College. Designed to integrate diverse perspectives into institutional decision-making, the FAC structure invites participation from representatives of the Classified Staff Organization (CSO), Professional Staff Organization (PSO), and Faculty Association. This collaborative model not only supports the College's commitment to shared governance but also ensures that frontline insights inform the evaluation and prioritization of resource requests.

### Committee Structure and Purpose

The FAC process is organized around the strategic planning cycle and structured by functional areas across the College—such as Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Student Affairs, and Direct Reporting Units (to the President). Each of these units holds an annual FAC meeting during which department heads and directors present their resource requests and potentially their Unit Action Plans (UAPs). These presentations include data-driven progress updates, highlight ongoing initiatives, and identify both one-time and recurring resource needs aligned with institutional priorities. These requests may include personnel, equipment, software, facilities, or programmatic enhancements that support goals such as enrollment growth, student retention, instructional quality, and operational effectiveness.

The FAC committee members are assigned to observe one of these area-specific meetings. Members include representatives from each campus governance body—CSO, PSO, and Faculty—and are selected based on their familiarity with institutional planning processes and their ability to represent the interests and values of their respective constituencies. Each observer plays a dual role: to support and clarify the information being presented and to relay insights back to their constituent group for broader engagement and feedback.

### Observer Responsibilities

As a FAC observer, the primary responsibilities include:

- **Active Participation:** Observers attend their assigned FAC meeting(s) and actively engage by listening attentively, taking detailed notes, and asking clarifying questions. These questions may help presenters articulate the strategic impact or instructional value of their proposals more effectively and offer observers an opportunity to gain deeper insights into institutional needs.
- **External Perspective:** While not directly part of the presenting unit, observers provide a valuable external lens. Their role is not evaluative but exploratory—they are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions that help surface connections to institutional goals or identify potential overlaps or efficiencies with other campus initiatives.
- **Constituent Reporting:** Following the FAC meetings, observers are responsible for reporting back to their respective groups—PSO, CSO, or Faculty—with summaries of key proposals, strategic initiatives, and potential implications. These updates help foster transparency and communication across campus, allowing for greater awareness and engagement among staff and faculty in budgetary and planning decisions.

- **Recommendation Development:** Observers may also choose to express support for specific initiatives that align closely with LC State’s mission, strategic plan, or student success goals. These expressions of support are included in summary reports that reflect constituent priorities.

## **Synthesis and Final Report**

Once all FAC meetings have been completed—typically by early February—the observers reconvene in a joint meeting to share their observations and discuss the themes, priorities, and requests that emerged across functional areas. This debriefing session is critical in synthesizing the full spectrum of input gathered throughout the FAC process and in identifying common threads, shared concerns, or high-priority needs.

Following this collaborative review, a representative from each governance body (e.g., the PSO Chair or designee) compiles the feedback into a formal summary report. This report identifies the initiatives, resource requests, and strategic directions that their constituent group supports. The findings are then presented to the Executive Cabinet before final budget decisions are made for the upcoming fiscal year.

## **Impact and Institutional Value**

The FAC process reinforces the values of collaboration, transparency, and accountability. By empowering staff and faculty representatives to contribute directly to institutional planning, the College ensures that decisions are informed by those closest to instruction, operations, and student engagement. This structure also facilitates communication across campus divisions, builds mutual understanding of institutional priorities, and strengthens the alignment between planning, resource allocation, and strategic objectives.

Ultimately, the FAC committee serves as a vital mechanism for shared governance and cross-functional dialogue. Its participatory model exemplifies LC State’s commitment to inclusive planning, thoughtful stewardship of resources, and the continuous improvement of programs and services in service of students, employees, and the broader community.