



Advocacy Committee Terms of Reference

1. Authority

The Advocacy Committee operates under the authority granted in Article Four of the University Bylaws and is accountable to the Board of Governors.

2. Mandate / Purpose

2.1. This committee adheres to the Bylaws of St. Mary's University. Its purpose is to support the Board of Governors in fulfilling its governance responsibilities by providing focused advice, strategic guidance, and oversight on matters of advocacy and external engagement. The Committee's role is to:

- 2.1.1. Clarify and advance the University's advocacy priorities in alignment with its mission, vision, and strategic plan.
- 2.1.2. Strengthen relationships with government, community, and industry stakeholders to support institutional growth and sustainability.
- 2.1.3. Monitor the external policy environment and advise the Board on opportunities and risks affecting the University.
- 2.1.4. Ensure that advocacy efforts are coordinated, evidence-based, and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the Board's decision-making.

2.2. Through these activities, the Committee contributes directly to the Board's responsibility for stewarding the reputation, influence, and long-term interests of St. Mary's University.

3. Chairperson and Membership

The Committee shall consist of the Chair and at least two other Governors, the President and/or designate, and up to three external individuals who bring relevant expertise, networks, or experience in areas such as government relations, communications, higher education policy or community engagement. All members shall be confirmed by the Board of Governors.

Committee members should demonstrate knowledge of advocacy practices, governance, and stakeholder engagement, as well as a commitment to advancing the mission, vision, and values of St. Mary's University. External members should be free of conflicts of interest and able to contribute independent perspective and specialized expertise.

Approval Authority	Responsible Office	Effective Date	Date Last Revisited	Review Frequency
Board of Governors	Governance & Nominating Committee	December 4, 2025		Annual

4. Limits on Authority

The Committee does not have decision-making authority except where, and to the extent that, such authority has been expressly delegated or assigned by the Board in these Terms of Reference or by a resolution of the Board.

5. Reliance on Management and Experts

The Committee may enlist the assistance of any member of the University and any professional that it deems useful in its work. Prior to engaging any professional services, the Committee must obtain Board approval.

6. Limitations on Committee's Duties

In contributing to the Committee's work, each member of the Committee shall be obligated only to exercise the care, diligence, and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances. No Committee member is subject to a standard of care or diligence that is in any way more onerous or extensive than the standard to which all Governors are subject.

7. Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least quarterly per year, or more frequently at the call of the Chairperson as required to fulfill its mandate. The Chairperson, in consultation with the President and/or Board Chair, is responsible for setting the agenda. Meetings may be called by the Chairperson or upon request by a majority of Committee members.

The Governance Officer, or a designate, shall be responsible for recording formal minutes or high-level notes that capture key decisions, recommendations, and action items. Draft minutes or notes will be circulated to Committee members within 10 business days of each meeting for review, and final copies will be retained as part of the University's official records. All documentation will be maintained by the Governance Officer. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the appointed members of the Committee.

8. Decision-Making Process

The Committees will vote on motions with a simple majority required. The Chair shall only vote in the event of a tie. All Committee motions serve as recommendations to the Board of Governors.

9. Reporting to the Board

The chair will provide a written and/or verbal report for each Board Meeting and as required.

10. Annual Work Plan

The Committee shall develop and approve an annual work plan to be provided to the Board for information.

11. Review of Terms of Reference

The Committee shall review its Terms of Reference annually and recommend any necessary revisions to the Board of Governors for approval.