The University Senate, an integral part of the University's system of shared governance, has representation from all segments of the campus community: faculty, staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students. Participation in the Senate or any of its 10 Standing Committees is an honor and a responsibility.

The full Senate meets approximately nine times a year to consider matters of concern to the institution, including academic issues, university policies, plans of organization, facilities, and the welfare of faculty, staff, and students. The Senate advises the president, the chancellor, or the Board of Regents, as appropriate. To become an undergraduate student senator, students must be elected by students in their college or school or the Office of Undergraduate Studies in centralized, online elections. Elections are held every year during the spring semester. All students are also encouraged to participate in Senate Standing Committees, such as Student Affairs and Campus Affairs. These committees draw membership from the campus community at large and cover every aspect of campus life and function. Details about the election and committee volunteer processes can be found at www.senate.umd.edu.