

Nominations Committee Guide

by Nikki Santiago
last edited in 2013

The Basics

- What is Nom Com?
- How Does Nom Com Work?
- Popular Vote?
- What is Luucy Buuth?
- Who Should Be on Nom Com?
- Who Shouldn't Be on Nom Com?

The Complexes

- CONFIDENTIALITY
- Covenant
- Interviews
- Choosing Council
- The Ballot
- The Election
- Luucy Buuth Procedure

Leading Nom Com

- Your Responsibilities and Powers
- Communication
- Transparency
- The Box
- The Room
- Nom Com Meetings
- Timing Is Keyl
- Take Care of Yourself
- Monday Morning

Segments of Official Documentation Relating to Nom Com Council Positions

The Basics (What Every Con Attendee Should Understand)

What is Nom Com?

Nom Com is short for Nominations Committee. Within PCD YRUU, that is a group of 8 to 12 youth and 1 adult. During the annual elections conference, this group will meet during touch group time and other conference activities. Nom Com will create a slate of candidates of new Council.

How Does Nom Com Work?

Nom Com leaders will create and set out a nominations box, usually in front of the Nom Com room. While Nom Com is accepting nominations, anyone can nominate someone for Council. This includes self nominations or just anyone who would be a good fit for Council. During orientation, the Nom Com leaders will explain what Nom Com is, and very briefly how the election works. They then ask for volunteers, and form their committee. Nom Com will create interview questions and then interrogate nominees. After interviews are over, Nom Com will spend a very long time discussing which people fit best into which council positions. They will use consensus to create a slate. Nom Com leaders will facilitate an election. During the election, the con community at large gets to see what Council candidates Nom Com has proposed. For each council position there will be two options: Approval of Candidate or Luucy Buuth. After the election nom com will discuss Luucy Buuths.

So the election isn't a popular vote?

No. Nom Com chooses one candidate for each council position. If, during the election, someone has a principled objection to one of the candidates being on Council, that person would chose the Luucy Buuth option on his/her/zer ballot.

What Is Luucy Buuth?

Luucy Buuth is the prototype con goer, or your average con attendee. To select Luucy Buuth over the chosen candidate for a council position means you think any average con attendee could do a better job than the selected candidate.

Who should be on Nom Com?

An ideal person for Nom Com is someone who is well integrated into the con community and wants to help choose new Council

Who shouldn't be on Nom Com?

Anyone running for council cannot be on Nom Com. There should be as few essential leaders to the conference on Nom Com as possible. Ideal or nonideal though, nobody can be barred from joining Nom Com, as that would be disrupt the democratic process.

The Complexes (What Every Nom Com Member Should Understand)

CONFIDENTIALITY

This is extremely important for every Nom Com member to understand. All things said and done during Nom Com are confidential. Even after the conference is over, Nom Com things remain confidential. Nom Com does not have to explain why they chose who they chose for Council.

Covenant

Nom Com is an intentional group with purpose. The UU thing to do in a group like this is to form a covenant together. The covenant should act as the social contract that every Nom Com member agrees to. Good things to have on the covenant:

- Nom Com will not meet during _____ (Decide this together. It's nice to not meet during meals and worships)
- CONFIDENTIALITY
- No yelling
- Use modified consensus method
- All other things you would put on a normal youth group covenant (respect, no talking over each other, etc.)

Interrogations Interviews

How will you know whether someone is suited for council or not? By interviewing them! Start by creating interview questions. Interview questions should be broken into 2 sections: General Questions (all nominees are asked) and Specific Questions (questions based on potential council position)

General Questions should be reveal if a nominee is interested and fit for council.

Some sample questions are:

- Did you nominate yourself?
- Do you want to be on council?
- How would you get to council?
- How busy are you?
- etc.

Specific Questions are tailored for each Council Position. They should reveal if the nominee has potential to be good at that position.

Some sample questions are:

Treasurer

- Can you count?
- Will you be around for the next 2 years?

Registrar

- Can you go to every single con?

- Do you enjoy spreadsheets?

You get the point.

Silly Questions are also good to ask to break up the monotony of interviews. Sample silliness:

- What is your favorite Buffy the Vampire Slayer character?

Once Nom Com has created interview questions, Nom Com members should assemble into teams of 2. Nom Com should discuss which teams should interview which nominees so that all interviews are conducted impartially. Nom Com members find and pull nominees from their touch groups (or whatever con activity is occurring) to interview them.

Choosing Council

Now you have all your nominees interviewed! It's time to get down to business and choose candidates for each position. There will probably be some positions with many many nominees, and some positions with few to none. Nominees will have to be shifted around, and not every nominee can (or should) be put on Council. Although the nomination/interview/slate creation process is best done in the linear way laid out in this guide; if at this point you realize that there are too few nominees for some positions, it is okay to reinterview some some people. It is okay to move backwards in the process, because you want to ensure the best damn council your committee can select.

While considering who to put in each position, consider each nominee's:

- Commitment level and attitude towards cons and council
- Ability to go to council meetings
- Ability to participate in group discussions
- Ability to fulfill their position well
- Overall reliability
- Responsibility level
- Ease of communication
- Length of time left in the community
- Maturity

While considering positions that are two year and staggered (treasurer and cococo), also consider:

- How the nominee and continuing treasurer/cococo get along
- If the nominee will learn well from the continuing person
- If the nominee will be able to teach another person how to do his/her/zer job
- How the nominee does working in groups

While creating Council, also keep in mind:

- Youth group diversity
- Gender diversity

Conventionally, every council position will be filled by one nominee with no person in more than one role. However, sometimes conventions have to be broken.

You may:

- Decided to leave a council position unfilled (See Article 6 Section 11 of PCD YRUU Policies and Procedures)
- Nominate one person to take on the role of two council positions (See Article 4 Section 5 of PCD YRUU Bylaws)
- Have 2 people share the role of one council position

You should have a very good reason to do any of the aforementioned things

The Ballot

Once a tentative slate of Council has been finalized by Nom Com, one ballot should be created for each con attendee. On the ballot should be each candidate and their position as well as any Policies and Procedures, Bylaw, or Covenant changes.

The Election

The elections is Nom Com's revealing of their decisions and the con community's chance to respond to that.

Things that should be announce to the con community during the election:

- Each candidate selected for each council position
- What the heck Luucy Buuth is
- Principled vs Personal Objection
- How to have their Luucy Buuth reasoning heard
- How Nom Com responds to Luucy Buuths
- What each documentation change is
- By what majority each document change has to pass by

Luucy Buuth Procedure

During the election, conference attendees may offer a vote of no confidence, a Luucy Buuth, to any of the selected candidates. In order for a Luucy Buuth to be discussed with Nom Com, the con attendee must write her names on her ballots. After the election, Nom Com will go through the ballots and find all ballots with Luucy Buuths on them. Anonymous Luucy Buuths are discarded. One or more members of Nom Com will find each person who has submitted a Luucy Buuth and bring them to the Nom Com room. Each person who signed their Luucy Buuth will have an opportunity to individually and privately explain to Nom Com why they have Luucy Buuth'd a candidate. While a con attendee is explaining their reasoning for Luucy Buuth, one person should be taking notes. Every other member of Nom Com should be *silent*. While hearing Luucy Buuths, Nom Com is in no way obligated to defend their candidate choices. Nom Com may ask the con attendee clarifying questions, but otherwise should be quiet. After all Luucy Buuths are heard, Nom Com discusses them. If the Luucy Buuths have swayed Nom Com's opinion, they may select a new candidate for a council position. If this happens, Nom Com leaders would facilitate a second election Monday morning.

Leading Nom Com

(From this point on I assume the reader is a Nom Com leader)

Your Responsibilities and Powers

You will be in charge of facilitating and guiding Nom Com on its quest to creating a good Council. Every Nom Com member's quest will include interviewing, discussing, slating, and hearing Luucy Buuths. For you, this quest also includes gathering supplies, facilitating each Nom Com meeting, making sure physical ballots are made, facilitating the election, being on top of the con schedule, communicating effectively with the deans, making sure Nom Com morale isn't too low, and keeping our democratic principle alive and well.

Thing You Can Do as Nom Com Leader:

- Call a Nom Com meeting at anytime
- Kick off a Nom Com member who is disruptive or is actively making Nom Com worse and less productive

Things You Can't Do (or that you really really shouldn't):

- Have a Nom Com meeting during times you covenanted to not have a meeting
- Kick someone off Nom Com for having a differing opinion than you
- Kick someone off Nom Com just for blocking consensus
- Treat the Deans poorly

Communication

To run things smoothly, you have to communicate effectively with many people. Talk to the Deans and the Facilitator of Council.

When talking to the deans, make sure the schedule fits your needs. You will need:

- Time to talk during orientation about what Nom Com is
- Time early saturday to explain what each Council position is
- Time somewhere to explain the Nom Com process more fully, perhaps with a mock Nom Com meeting
- The election to be late Sunday
- Time built into the schedule on Monday in case there is a second election

When talking to the Facilitator of Council, make sure to get all documentation changes from the last year (Policy and Procedure, Bylaw, and Covenant)

Transparency

Let's be real. Nom Com isn't very transparent. Nom Com meets in a closed room, makes decisions, and then isn't responsible for defending those decisions. Although anyone can be on Nom Com, a problem is that Nom Com is either fully transparent to those on it, or is completely opaque to those not on it. Having a mock Nom Com meeting in front of the community, or more fully explaining what Nom Com actually does and how candidates are selected is a way to try

and remedy this. Having copies of this guide available at the Elections Con could also help with transparency. Always be willing to answer people's questions about the election and nomination process.

The Box

During orientation, tell people where the nominations box will be. It would behoove you to make sure that next to the box there are pens, slips of paper, and a list of every council position. Tell the community when you will stop accepting nominations and will pull the box. It is appropriate to stop accepting nominations anytime from after lunch Saturday through Sunday morning. You can begin the interview process before closing nominations.

The Room

The Nom Com room, your base of operations, is super important. Ideally, the Nom Com room has no other purpose but for being for Nom Com. Some church's lack of space prohibit that. If your room doubles as a quiet room or any other room, find somewhere to store confidential papers when Nom Com isn't meeting. If Nom Com has to meet and the room is unavailable, have a contingency plan.

Nom Com Meetings

Even with a Nom Com filled with awesome people and good intentions, the best Council possible will not be elected if you don't plan out meeting time for the con well and efficiently.

Your schedule regarding the con should look something like this:

Pre Con:

- Gather supplies, like: pens, a ballot box, slips of paper for ballot box, big paper, and paper.
- Talk to the current Facilitator of Council to get all bylaw changes, policy and procedure changes, and covenant changes from the past year.
- Talk to your Co Nom Com Leading Buddy, and plan things, like a schedule for Nom Com meetings
- Talk to the Deans of the con and set up channels of communication

Friday Night:

- Set up your base of operations in the Nom Com room
- Tell Con Community about Nom Com and the Election
- Get Nom Com volunteers

1st meeting:

- Make sure everyone on Nom Com understands the election process and Nom Com
- Make a covenant
- Make a list of snacks for the gofer
- Play a name game
- Get to know each other

2nd meeting:

- Create Interview Questions

3rd meeting:

- Finish Making Interview Questions

Pull Ballot Box and Stop Taking Nominations

4th meeting - until it's done

- Interview all nominees

Rest of your meetings:

- Talking about nominees and how interviews went
- Creating a slate of new council

Election

Hearing Luucy Buuths

Second election (if necessary)

Nom Com Closing

Timing is Key

Wow. That may seem like a lot to do during one con! And it is. Timing everything is crucial. It would be very difficult to get all of things Nom Com has to do done just during touch group time.

This is something that you must stress while gathering people for Nom Com: **being on Nom Com means giving up other activities at con**. If you guys work well, then less activities can be skipped. However, to get everything done, it is suggested that you at least consider having extra Nom Com meetings during some of the following:

- Any free time that will last more than half an hour
- Workshops
- Coffee House
- After Worship
- Cleaning on Sunday Morning*

People may grumble at having extra meetings. But you have to get Council nominations selected during the con under very limited time constraints. If any Nom Com members feel strongly about missing any of the activities you are meeting through, they may chose to attend the activity instead. But they have to realize that Nom Com will move forward and will make decisions without them.

* If you meet through Sunday cleaning, talk to the touch group coordinator to make sure he/she/ze is aware and does not assign Nom Com to clean something

Take Care of Yourself

Leading Nom Com is super stressful. If a Dean or a Cook messes up, they mess up that one con. If Nom Com messes up, they can potentially ruin cons for an entire year. Leading Nom Com is high stakes and high stress, so make sure to practice self care. Get chaplained if necessary. Make Nom Com take energy breaks when discussions get too heated. Get enough sleep.

Monday Morning

Sometime during Monday morning announce which document changes passed or failed and that new Council has successfully been elected. Congratulations! It's over. Now go lead an awesome Nom Com closing and relax.

Segments of Official Documentation Relating to Nominations Committee

Policies and Procedures Article 6: The Elections Process and the Nominating Committee

Section 1: Council shall choose the chairpersons of the Nominating Committee (NomCom) during a session closed to individuals who wish to become NomCom chairpersons.

Section 2: The chairperson shall be responsible for explaining NomCom at orientation and for recruiting membership. The chairperson shall also be responsible for working with council to explain council positions and the elections process.

Section 3: Any conferee who is not running for council may volunteer for the Nominating Committee.

Section 4: The Nominating Committee must include at least one adult member.

Section 5: NomCom shall meet in a secluded room, ideally with a locked door. All NomCom proceedings are confidential.

Section 6: The Nominating Committee shall operate on the Modified Consensus policy.

Section 7: NomCom shall create a box for nominations. Self-nomination is okay.

Section 8: NomCom shall review the nominations and interview each nominee privately. After interviews have been conducted, NomCom shall create a slate.

Section 9: NomCom will present a slate of candidates by the evening of the last full day of the conference.

Section 10: Attendees may either vote their approval for a candidate, or vote for 'Luucy Buuth' or 'Buuster Buuth'. A 'Luucy Buuth' or 'Buuster Buuth' is construed as a vote of no confidence.

'Luucy Buuth' and 'Buuster Buuth' are generic Unitarian Universalists, essentially "anybody else."

Section 11: If there is no appropriate nominee for a position, NomCom may choose to leave the position open and support council in filling that position.

Section 12: If there are three or more Luucy Buuth votes for a candidate, NomCom discusses concerns about that candidate. In addition, NomCom will address and discuss any reasonable concerns brought to the committee by a conference attendee.

Section 13: NomCom may, if they deem it necessary, reform the ballot. If the slate is changed, there must be a new all-con election. If there is a new all-con election, NomCom does not discuss the reason with the larger Con community.

Bylaws Article 4: Governing Body

Section 5: The maximum term of office is no more than two consecutive one-year terms in the same position, unless the Council makes an exception by unanimous vote. The Co-Treasure and Conference Co Coordinator positions cannot be held for more than one full two-year term, unless the Council makes an exception by unanimous vote.

One person shall not hold more than one council position at one time, unless the Council makes an exception by unanimous vote.

Council Positions

See PCD YRUU Bylaws Article 5 PCD YRUU Council Structure for more details

Facilitator: The Facilitator is in charge of setting the agenda and facilitating meetings. This means it is especially important that the facilitator attends all of the meetings. They are also expected to act as the chief administrator. Facilitators will work with the Energy Chair to book sites for meetings, and will notify Council Officers at least one month prior to the meeting date.

Energy chair: The energy chair keeps track of the emotional and energy level of meetings and conferences. They plan brief closing and opening rituals for each meeting, and are in charge of worship for council retreats. They are also expected to remind Council Officers of commitments and maintain an overall view of the workings of the council. The Energy Chair will work with the Facilitator to book sites for meetings, and will notify Council Officers at least one month prior to the meeting date.

Treasurer: The Treasurers work with the Administrative Advisor to keep full and accurate accounts of all the financial transactions of PCD YRUU, and prepare an annual PCD YRUU Council Budget to be approved by Council and presented to the PCD Board. Treasurers should prepare financial records of cons on the last day of each conference, and mail out receipts on the day immediately following the conference. At least one treasurer must be present at each con. Treasurer is a two-year staggered position.

Secretary: The Secretary keeps minutes of all meetings where official business is conducted and mails copies of the minutes to all Council Officers. They maintain all of the non-financial records of PCD YRUU, and keep the archives. They are also in charge of all official Council correspondence.

Social Action Coordinator: The Social Action Co keeps PCD YRUU members aware of social action opportunities inside and outside the district. They plan social action activities for Summer Con and coordinate social action workshops at conferences.

GRUUST Editors: Gruust Editors develop a publication for the youth of PCD YRUU. Gruust will contain a calendar of upcoming events, a report on past events, and items of interest to the UU youth of PCD.

Officer of RE Outreach: The Officer of RE Outreach maintains contact with DREs and the PCD RE Committee. They represent YRUU at district activities.

YRUU Board Liason: The YRUU Board Liaison represents PCD YRUU at

appropriate district activities and maintains a working connection between the PCD Board and YRUU.

Co-Conference Coordinators: Co-Conference Coordinators find sites for PCD YRUU events, participate in basic planning for conferences, and recruit YELLers. They book sites for conferences six months in advance, and must confirm sites three months prior to the conference using the agreements made by the previous year's CoCoCos. This is a two-year staggered position.

Registrar: The Registrar keeps the mailing list current, send out fliers six weeks in advance of PCD YRUU events, and act as registrar for all conferences.

Adult Coordinator: The Adult Co develops and maintains a list of adult advisors. They must contact, recruit, and coordinate the required number of adults for PCD YRUU events. The Adult Co facilitates an adult orientation at the beginning of each Con.

Resource Master: The Resource Master is in charge of organizing and making available documentation for conferees. In addition, the Resource Master is in charge of updating and maintaining the website.

Board Representative : Board Representative is *not a member of council* but is chosen during the elections conference. Board Rep goes to District Board meetings and is a voting member of the Board.