CHAPTER IX

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The most significant feature of modern democracy, is the committee system. Where the volume of work is definitely great, the most effective way by which business can be transacted is by the committee system. It is the best means for the expeditious disposal of business. Even the Executive Council which is definitely small in size requires the assistance of the committee system.

Committees are appointed for two purposes, though separate but interlocking purposes. A committee may be appointed for examining a particular subject in great detail and make recommendations thereon so that the authority concerned may make an appropriate decision. This is not possible if the entire Court or the Academic Council or even the Executive Council is entrusted with the responsibility for the investigation of the subject.

The second purpose for which the committees are constituted is the administration of a particular service with delegated functions. Such Committees are the agents of the authority that appoints them. For instance, the Academic Council appointed an Examination Committee for
the moderation of the results. It is not possible for the Academic Council to moderate the results of the various examinations. If the Academic Council is to decide this matter it must meet at least 20 times a year. If the members are summoned twice a month, they may not turn up at all. Further it is expensive. Finally all the members of the Council may not be interested in every subject. The only way by which these difficulties could be got over is by constituting a committee for the purpose, consisting of persons who are interested in the subject and who are likely to attend its meetings at frequent intervals, and delegate the function to it. If the Committee does not function effectively, the Academic Council may withdraw its power and constitute another committee.

Committees are of two kinds, statutory and non-statutory. Statutory Committees are those which the university must appoint for the administration of the subject concerned. All matters relating to them are first referred to the committee concerned before they are taken up by the authority for consideration.

Non-statutory committees are those which are formed at the discretion of the authority concerned. The diffe-
rence between the statutory committee and the non-statutory committee is that in the case of the first, its constitution, powers and functions are determined by the statute itself. In the case of the second, they are determined by the authority concerned. We shall now consider the statutory committees.

Finance Committees:

All the four universities in this region have a Finance Committee. It is a statutory committee. But the authority to appoint differs from place to place. In Gauhati the Executive Council 'shall appoint a Finance Committee'. In Dibrugarh the Act itself laid down that 'there shall be a Finance Committee'. In the Agricultural University it is constituted by the Board of Management. In the Hill University it is created under the Statutes of the University. But the composition of the Committee varied from place to place and from time to time. Under the Gauhati University Act of 1947, the Treasurer was the Chairman of the committee. In 1960, the Act was amended and the Treasurer was removed from the Chairmanship and the Vice-Chancellor was made a member and Chairman of the Committee, and he still continues to be the Chairman. In all other
universities also the Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman of the Committee.

The 1947 Act did not fix the strength of the Committee. It simply said, 'the other members of the committee shall be appointed by the Executive Council'. But certain restrictions were placed on the Executive Council. They were that one of the members of the committee shall be a member of the Executive Council elected by the Court. This provision was made so that the Court could have a voice in the financial administration of the university.

In 1960, the strength of the Finance Committee was fixed at seven including the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman. Of the remaining six members the Treasurer shall be the Secretary of the Committee and the Registrar was one of the members of the Committee. These two officers are included because they have a comprehensive knowledge of the financial administration of the university. Without them the Finance Committee would be like Hamlet without the Prince. The remaining four members were elected by the Executive Council. Of the four one shall be a person elected to the Executive Council by the Court.
In 1965, the constitution of the finance committee was amended. While the Vice-Chancellor and the Treasurer continued to be the Chairman and the Secretary of the Committee, two members were elected by the Executive Council from amongst its members and the other two were nominated by the Government, one from the Education Department and the other from the Finance Department. This amendment enabled the Government to obtain a decisive voice. The representatives of these two departments were the Secretaries of the Departments. These two officers by virtue of their position exercised profound influence over the framing of the Budget. Their views were generally accepted by the Committee. For sometime both the Departments were held by the Chief Minister. If their views were not accepted by the committee they could block the free flow of finance from the Government to the University. One of the top officers of the university said that the presence of these two officers in this Committee the Finance Committee tended to diminish the autonomy of the university. But then who pays the piper calls the tune. Since the Government pays annually a total grant of nearly Rs. five million, there should be some one on the committee to see that the amount is spent judiciously, economically and profitably. We think that this was the main reason why the Government placed these two
officers in the Committee. The University did not protest against this provision.

In Dibrugarh, the Finance Committee consists of the Vice-Chancellor as the President, two members elected by the Court from among its members, two elected by the Executive Council and two members nominated by the State Government, one from the Finance and the other from the Education Departments.

In the Agricultural University, the Finance Committee consists of the Vice-Chancellor, the Secretaries to Government in the Finance, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Departments, the Comptroller and one member chosen by the Board of Management from amongst its non-official members. The Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman of the Committee.

In the Hill University the Finance Committee consists of the Vice-Chancellor, a Pro Vice-Chancellor appointed by the Executive Council, three persons nominated by the Executive Council of whom at least one shall be a member of the Executive Council and three persons nominated by the Visitor. We think that the Finance Officer should
be an ex-officio member of the Committee. It may be that he will assist the committee but he is not under a legal obligation to do so if he is not a member of the committee.

From the above it is clear that the composition of the Finance Committee is satisfactory. We only suggest that it should be specifically laid down that the Vice-Chancellor should be an ex-officio member and chairman of the committee and the Registrar should be a member.

Powers and functions:

The Gauhati University Act, 1947 does not enumerate the powers and functions of the Committee. But the Dibrugarh University Act says that the Finance Committee shall examine the annual budget estimates and advise the Executive Council thereon and make recommendations to the Executive Council as regards the finances of the University. It shall examine all proposals for new expenditure exceeding ten thousand rupees, review the financial position and suggest ways and means for its improvement, recommend the revision of pay scales of new posts to the Executive Council and deal with all matters relating to financial administration of the university.
The Agricultural University Finance Committee performs similar functions with a slight difference, namely that in the case of new expenditure no monetary limitation has been placed. All proposals involving expenditure for which there is no budget provision must be referred to the Finance Committee for its opinion and recommendation. Otherwise there is no difference between the different finance committees in regard to their functions.

The Development Committee:

From 1949 to 1962 there was another committee in Gauhati University euphemistically known as the Development Committee, for the construction of buildings. In 1947, the Executive Council was the proper authority for undertaking the construction of buildings, roads and other structures for the University. In 1949-50 it constructed 20 Assam Type of houses and a hostel at a cost of Rs. 2 lakhs. There was bitter criticism of this expenditure. Therefore the Executive Council resolved to hand over this work to the Government. The Gauhati University Act was amended and the Development Committee was created for the construction of buildings and other structures. This was a novel arrangement which attracted the critical attention of no less a man
The Development Committee consisted of the Minister for Education as the Chairman and four other members to be nominated by the Chancellor.

In regard to the functions of the Development Committee, it was responsible for receiving funds from Government, private individuals and associations for the construction of buildings, roads and other structures for the University.

The Development Committee did yeomen's service at the initial stages and erected several massive two storied buildings and Assam Type residential quarters. Money was no problem as the Minister for Education of the State was the Chairman. But it was not possible for him to devote much time to this part of his responsibility and there was serious criticism of the functioning of the Committee. Therefore the Act was amended and the Development Committee was abolished in 1961. There was no such Committee in any other university.
Construction Committee:

Since the Development Committee was abolished some other person must carry out the functions hither to performed by the Development Committee. The amended Act of 1960 brought into existence the Construction Committee. The Construction Committee consists of seven members including the Vice-Chancellor who is the Chairman of the Committee. The Registrar is the Secretary and the Treasurer in an ex-officio member of the Committee. The remaining four members shall be elected by the Executive Council from among its members with power to co-opt experts. The co-opted members have a voice but no vote. As in the case of the Finance Committee, one of the members of the Construction Committee shall be from among the members elected to the Executive Council by the Court.

The function of the Construction Committee is to advise the Executive Council on the purchase and acquisition of land and property movable and immovable as required and necessary for the construction and maintenance of buildings, roads, tanks, pipelines and other structures of the University. It is responsible for the preparation of plans and estimates and their approval. It must invite tenders
and select suitable rates and agencies.

The Construction Committee must meet one a month or as often as possible. The quorum is four. The proceedings of the Construction Committee should be placed before the Executive Council for its approval. Therefore the Construction Committee is not an autonomous body. Its decisions may be challenged and set aside by the Executive Council. Further, in the preparation of estimates for all works, the committee should observe the standards prescribed by the Assam Public Works Department.

The Committee must prepare an annual budget estimates of income and expenditure for incorporation in the budget of the university and submit it to the Finance Committee. The latter has power to revise the budget prepared by the Construction Committee.

The Construction Committee is authorised to accept and approve estimates of the value of more than Rs. 25,000 but less than 50,000. If the estimate of any work exceeds Rs. 50,000 it must be placed before the Executive Council for its approval.
The term of office of the members other than the ex-officio members of the Committee is three years and they must retire when they cease to be members of the Executive Council.

There is no Construction Committee in other Universities. In Dibrugarh and Hill Universities, the Executive Council looks after the construction work. In the Agricultural University there is a Director of Physical Plant working under the control of the Board of Management for the purpose of construction of buildings.

We think that in all universities there should be one Committee known as the Building Committee responsible for the construction of buildings and other structures of the University. It may consist of the Chief Engineer or Superintending Engineer of the State Government as an ex-officio member besides the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman, the Registrar as Secretary and the Finance Officer as member. It should include one member of the Executive Council elected by the Court and another elected by the Executive Council. The Executive Council should be empowered to determine its powers.
Selection Committee:

Next to the Constitution Committee, the Selection Committee is the most important one. It is at the gate way of personnel administration. It is responsible for the recruitment of teachers for the teaching departments and some top officers of the university. This committee exists in all the universities though its composition varied from time to time and from place to place. We shall now consider the composition, powers and functions of the Selection Committees in all the four universities.

At first, in Gauhati, the Selection Committee was not provided in the Act. It was brought into existence by the Statutes framed under the Gauhati University Act, 1947. The Statute laid down that no person would be appointed or recognised as a teacher of the university, except on the recommendation of the Committee of Selection. The Committee should consist of the Vice-Chancellor, a person not connected with any college elected by the Academic Council, a person nominated by the Chancellor, an expert in the subject not connected with any college appointed by the Executive Council, the Head of the Department concerned in the case of lecturers and finally a person not connected with any
college appointed by the Executive Council. Thus the committee consisted of seven members. For the recruitment of Professors and Readers an expert was appointed by the Executive Council. The Head of a Department who was a Reader was not a member of the committee for the selection of Professors and Readers. Thus, the composition of the committee was rather clumsy. Further, the Dean of the Faculty concerned was not a member of the Committee. Although he was not a member of the Committee, the Dean attended the meetings of the Committee at the invitation of the Vice-Chancellor. When H.C. Bhuyan became the Vice-Chancellor he did not invite the Deans. Therefore, a statute was framed and approved by the Executive Council reconstituting the Selection Committee consisting of the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman, the Dean of the Faculty concerned, a person elected by the Academic Council, one person appointed by the Executive Council, a person nominated by the Chancellor, and a person appointed by the Executive Council as an expert for the selection of Professors and Readers and the Head of the Department concerned for the selection of a teacher other than a Professor or a Reader.

Even this reconstituted committee was not found to be satisfactory. Therefore in the 1965 amendment it was
reconstituted. The reconstituted committee consisted of the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman, two persons one nominated by the Chancellor and another nominated by the Executive Council, both of them should not be connected with the university, two experts for the selection of Professors nominated by the Executive Council in consultation with the Academic Council, and the Head of the Department and one expert for the selection of Readers and Lecturers. If the Head of the department himself was a candidate another expert should be included in the selection committee. As a general rule the experts should be selected from the panel approved by the Academic Council. All the members of the committee have a voice and a vote. If a member of the committee was unable to attend the meetings of the committee he might communicate his views to the Vice-Chancellor and such opinion must be taken into consideration by the committee in making its recommendations. The expert selected as a member of the committee must have expert knowledge in the subject. Ordinarily, Professors who are heads of the Departments concerned of other universities are nominated. For each discipline there is a panel of five names or more which is prepared periodically by the Academic Council. The Vice-Chancellor selected one or two as required from the panel. The panel is prepared in consultation with the Head
of the Department concerned. Thus, neither the Vice-Chancellor nor the Executive Council has freedom to select any one as an expert. They must select the persons from the panel.

Before 1965, the Selection Committee was created by the Statute made under the Act. In 1965, it became a part of the Act and thereby the Executive Council was deprived of its power to alter its composition. Further, in 1965, the Dean was removed from the Selection Committee. The composition of the committee was far better than the previous ones.

In 1975, the composition of the Committee was revised. At present the Selection Committee consists of the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman, three persons, not connected with the University in any way, one to be nominated by the Chancellor, one by the State Government and another by the Executive Council. The Registrar who was not a member of the Committee hitherto was made an ex-officio member and secretary of the committee. In addition to these three persons, the Committee consists of for the selection of professor, the Head of the Department if he is a professor, one professor of the Department to be nominated by the
Vice-Chancellor and two persons not in the service of the university to be nominated by the Executive Council out of a panel of not less than five persons recommended by the Academic Council who are experts in the subject in which the Professor is to be appointed. For the selection of Readers and Lecturers and other teachers, of the university the Selection Committee should co-opt the Head of the Department concerned, one professor of the Department to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor and two experts in the subject for which the Readers or the Lecturers are to be appointed.

The 1975 amendment enabled the Government to have a voice and vote in the selection of teachers and other officers of the university which it had not all these years. Perhaps this was intended to secure social justice and protection to the minorities.

The composition of the Selection Committee of Dibrugarh was the same as in Gauhati.

The composition of the Selection Committee of the Agricultural University is very simple. It consists of only four members, the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman, one ex-
expert nominated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, one nominated by the Chancellor and another nominated by the Vice-Chancellor.

The composition of the Selection Committee in the Hill University differs from that of others. For Professors, the Head of the Department concerned if he is a Professor, one Professor to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor, three persons not in the service of the university nominated by the Executive Council out of a panel of names recommended by the Academic Council for their special knowledge of the subject with which the Professor will be concerned. Thus the Selection Committee consists of six members.

For the selection of Readers and Lecturers the selection committee consists of the Head of the Department concerned, one Professor to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor, two persons who are experts nominated by the Executive Council out of a panel of names recommended by the Academic Council for their special knowledge.

For the selection of Librarian the committee consists of two experts and a person nominated by the Executive Council.
For the selection of Principals of colleges maintained by the university, the committee consists of three persons who are experts - one nominated by the Academic Council and two by the Executive Council.

In addition every selection committee constituted for any of the posts mentioned above shall consist of the Vice-Chancellor a Pro Vice-Chancellor and a nominee of the Visitor.

We have studied the composition of the selection committees of the four universities. We come to the conclusion that it is not unsatisfactory. In Dibrugarh and Gauhati the Registrar is a member of the Selection Committee. We think that the Registrar should be the Secretary of the Committee and not a member except in the case of selection of officers below his own rank. There need not be any nominee of the Government. Subject to these the composition of the committee should be of the model of that of the Gauhati University.

Powers and functions:

In 1947, the Selection Committee had power to select
teachers only. In 1965, the jurisdiction of the Selection Committee was extended to Professors, Readers, Lecturers, Registrar, Treasurer, Librarian and other officers of the University as may be provided by the Statutes. Who are the other officers? Until 1969 no statutes were framed for the other officers. So the Selection Committee had power to select professors, readers, lecturers, Registrar, Treasurer, and the Librarian. Can the selection committee select any other officer? It cannot, unless the Executive Council by a specific resolution has authorised the Selection Committee to do so. If any other officer is to be recruited, the Executive Council should constitute a committee for the purpose (1). Thus in Gauhati, and Dibrugarh, the Selection Committee has no power to select a Secretary or the Controller of Examinations or the Academic Registrar. In 1969 the Gauhati University made a statute for the Secretary University classes, the Inspector of Colleges and the Librarian. It defined their powers and functions. In 1975, the University made another statute for the Academic Registrar-cum-Controller of Examinations and some other officer. The Selection of candidates for these posts henceforth came within

(1) Sec. 13(f) of Gauhati University Act as amended till 1968.
the powers of the Selection Committee. Some other officers have still been left out of the statutes and the Executive Council appointed Selection Committees for such posts. We suggest that the Selection Committee may be authorised by Statute to recruit all university personnel whose salary exceeds certain amount. The composition may vary so far as the recruitment of teachers is concerned. The core members of the committee may be the Vice-Chancellor, one nominee of the Chancellor, a nominee of the Chairman of the U.G.C. and a nominee of the Executive Council.

The recommendations of the Selection Committee shall be placed before the Executive Council. If the Executive Council accepts the recommendation it shall make the appointment. If it does not the matter must be referred to the Chancellor who shall appoint or recognise such persons as he thought fit. In 1962, there was a slight change in the procedure described above. If the Executive Council did not accept the recommendation of the Selection Committee, it should return the case to the selection committee for reconsideration and if the Executive Council did not accept the reconsidered view of the committee, the matter should be referred to the Chancellor who appointed such person or persons as he thought fit. The amendment of 1962 was not
a happy one. It resulted in controversy between the Executive Council and the Selection Committee apart from delay in making appointments and consequent inconveniences in the teaching departments. Therefore, the 1965 Act laid down the procedure which existed before 1962. But when the Executive Council refers the matter to the Chancellor it must give reasons for not agreeing with the recommendation of the selection committee. On several occasions the Chancellor returned the cases to the Executive Council asking it to state the reasons clearly.

In the Agricultural University a different procedure is prescribed. First, the Selection Committee must scrutinise the applications and prepare a list of candidates to be called for interview. If the selection Committee feels that the number of candidates is not sufficient or are not adequately qualified, it may re-advertise the posts. The selection committee must recommend at least three persons for each post in order of preference to the Board of Management for final approval. In case of difference of opinion between the Selection Committee and the Board of Management what should be done? The Statute is silent. Can the Board reject the recommendations of the Selection Committee. It can. Thus the procedure prescribed by the Agricultural
University Act is not sound. We suggest that the Chancellor should decide all disputed cases.

In the Hill University the procedure prescribed is more or less the same as in Gauhati and Dibrugarh. If the Executive Council is unable to accept the recommendations made by the Selection Committee, it shall record its reasons and submit the case to the Visitor whose decision is final.

In the Hill University selections for temporary appointments are made by a local committee consisting of the Dean of the School concerned and the Head of the Department and a nominee of the Vice-Chancellor. In case the same person holds the office of the Head of the Department and of the Dean, the Selection Committee may consist of two nominees of the Vice-Chancellor.

Further, the Executive Council may invite a person of high academic distinction and professional attainments to accept a post of Professor or Reader or any other academic post in the university as the case may be. It can also appoint a teacher or any other academic staff for undertaking a joint project. It may also appoint a person
for a fixed term. Under these provisions several persons have been appointed as Professors in the Hill University.

The Board of studies:

In all Universities there is a Board of Studies. In the Dibrugarh and Hill Universities there are two Boards, one for undergraduate studies and another for post-graduate studies. In Gauhati there is a Committee of Courses and Studies in each department. There is no Board of Studies as in Dibrugarh and Hill Universities. In the Agricultural University there is a Board of Studies for each Faculty.

The Board of Studies of the Faculty of Agriculture shall consist of all the Professors of the college of Agriculture and two teachers co-opted by the Board. The Board of Studies in Veterinary Science consists of all the Professors of the College of Veterinary Science and two teachers co-opted by the Board.

The Post-graduate Board of Studies in Dibrugarh consists of fifteen members, the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman, the Rector, six persons who are Professors and heads of the Post-graduate department, two members of the
Academic Council who are not Professors or heads of the departments of the university, four others to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor, and one member from the Examinations Committee to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor. The under-graduate board consists of the Vice-Chancellor, the Rector, three persons from among the professors and heads of the departments of the university, six Principals elected by the Academic Council, three persons nominated by the Vice-Chancellor, ten persons to be elected by the teachers of the affiliated colleges and one member of the examination committee.

But in the Hill University each department has two Boards of Studies, one for post-graduate studies and the other for under-graduate studies with the head of the department as the Chairman.

In Gauhati there is a committee of courses and studies in each department. It is constituted by the Academic Council. The Head of the Department is the convener of the committee. It should consist of not less than seven members. Some of the members are appointed from the affiliated colleges.
The functions of the Boards of Studies and of the Committees of Courses and Studies in all the universities are the same. It may recommend to the Academic Council through the Faculty, if any, the pattern of the post-graduate courses and the under-graduate courses, to prepare the syllabi for the different papers to be taught in the department, to suggest a list of examiners for different papers.

The Board of Studies performs greater functions than the committee of courses and studies.

The arrangement made for the preparation of syllabi and for recommending examiners in Gauhati is unsatisfactory. The committee consisting of university teachers and teachers of under-graduate courses in the affiliated colleges is held responsible for the preparation of syllabi for both post-graduate and under-graduate courses and also for the preparation of lists of examiners for both under-graduate and post-graduate examinations. We think that there should be two boards, one for post-graduate and another for under-graduate studies. But the Chairman of both the bodies should be the Head of the University Department concerned.
Faculties:

In Gauhati there are six Faculties, Arts, Science, Commerce, Law, Medicine and Engineering. In the Hill University there are Schools. In Dibrugarh there are Boards of Studies, one for the Post-graduate and another for the undergraduate departments. In the Agricultural University there are two Faculties, Agriculture and Veterinary science.

The Faculties and the Boards of Studies have greater number of functions than the Departmental Boards of Studies. They are framing of syllabus, approval of the list of examiners and the framing of conditions under which degrees should be awarded.

The Faculty, like the Board of Studies, is only an advisory body. It is not the final authority. All proposals of the Faculties should be submitted to the Academic Council for approval.

The strength of each Faculty is determined by the Act. The 1975 amendment of the Gauhati University Act has included ten teachers of affiliated colleges representing different subjects to be elected to each Faculty. In the Faculties of Commerce, Law, Medicine and Engineering the
subjects are not at present well defined. There is the possibility of teachers of the same area of study being elected to the Faculty leaving important areas unrepresented. We suggest that the Vice-Chancellor should be authorised to nominate to the Faculty at least one teacher of affiliated colleges to represent each broad area of studies to be named by the Academic Council.

Planning Board:

The Hill University has a Planning Board which consists of the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman and not more than eight persons of high academic standing appointed by the Visitor. The Visitor may determine a date with effect from which the Planning Board shall be dissolved. The functions of the Board are to advise on the Planning and development of the University and keep under review the standard of education and research in the University. In addition to it has the right to advise the Executive Council and the Academic Council on any academic matter.

Library Committee:

In Gauhati, the Library Committee is a statutory
Standing Committee constituted by the Academic Council to look after the administration of the library. The Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman of the Committee and the Librarian is the Secretary. It includes some Heads of the Departments and other teachers. It meets according to the convenience of the Vice-Chancellor.

Admission Committee:

The Admission Committee of Gauhati University consists of the Dean of the Faculty concerned as Chairman and one Principal. There are admission committees for Arts, for Science, for Commerce and for Law Faculties. They are standing committees consisting of all the heads of the departments comprising the Faculty. The Secretary of the University Classes is the member Secretary of the Admission Committee. In the other universities there are no admission committees.

Students' Advisory Council:

In Gauhati, Dibrugarh and Agricultural Universities there are committees to look after the welfare of students. They were established after 1975. In Gauhati and Dibrugarh
the Students' Advisory Council consists of a Chairman to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor, the Director of Students' Welfare, the President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Post-graduate Students' Union and of the Law Students' Union, 10 students from ten affiliated degree colleges to be selected by the Executive Council, one student from each teaching Faculty of the university and five students from Sports, National Service Scheme, National Cadet Corps, Cultural activities, national discipline scheme and four lady students.

In the Agricultural University the Students' Welfare Council consists of all the Deans in the Campus and some others.

The term of office of the members is one year.

The functions of the Council are advisory. The Vice-Chancellor may consult the Council on any matter relating to Students' Welfare.

Non-Statutory Committees:

We shall now consider the non-statutory Committees. They may be standing committees or adhoc committees. They are constituted by the Court, the Academic Council and the
Executive Council.

Research Council:

One of the most important non-statutory committees in the Gauhati University is the Research Council consisting of the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman, the Deans of the Faculties of Arts, Science and Commerce, three professors, and some others. The main function of the Research Council is to promote and co-ordinate research in all the faculties and in all the branches of study in each faculty, to allot funds to research schemes, call for periodical reports from those to whom funds are allotted for carrying on research.

The Ph.D. Committee:

The Ph.D. Committee is constituted by the Academic Council. For a long time there was no Committee to deal with applications for registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The Executive Council dealt with the applications received from candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. In course of time the number of applications for registration for the Ph.D. Degree increased. Therefore the Academic Council appointed a Standing
Committee consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, the Dean of the Faculty concerned, the Head of the Department concerned and the guide, if any. Its main function is to scrutinise the applications received from candidates for registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and recommend registration of suitable candidates.

Examination Committee:

The Examination Committee is a standing committee appointed by the Academic Council for the moderation of the results of different examinations. At first this work was done by the Academic Council; but it was found to be not practicable. Therefore a separate committee was created for the purpose. The Committee consists of the Vice-Chancellor as the Chairman and some members of the Academic Council.

Loans and Advances Committee:

The Executive Council of Gauhati University constituted a Loans and Advances Committee. This Committee is a standing committee whose main function is the scrutiny of the applications from the employees of the university for loans. The Treasurer is the convener of the committee.
Purchase or Tender Committee:

The Gauhati University has a Tender Committee with the Registrar, Treasurer and a number of members of Executive Council. It is authorised to examine all tenders and quotations for supply of goods and services to the teaching and administrative departments and accept suitable prices and agencies. The Committee meets as often as necessary. In the other universities there are purchases committees for the same purpose.

Affiliation Committee:

The Executive Council of Gauhati University appointed a Committee with the Registrar and some members of the Executive Council to examine all reports on inspection of colleges and to recommend affiliation or withdrawal of affiliation. The Dibrugarh University has a similar committee.

Plan Review Committee:

The University Grants Commission recommended setting up Planning Boards in the Universities for co-ordination of planning in the Universities and its colleges. The Gauhati
University Executive Council set up a Plan Review Committee with the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman, the Registrar as member Secretary, the Treasurer as a member and other from the Executive Council members, Heads of University Departments and a few Principals of affiliated colleges (1). The Gauhati University constituted a standing Accounts Committee for scrutinising the irregularities in financial transaction of the University pointed out by the auditors.

The Executive Council constituted a committee for allotment of residential accommodation to the employees; a committee to examine the cases of students reported to have adopted unfair means in examinations; a fellowship committee to select candidates for award of research fellowship and scholarships, a co-ordination Committee for production of text books in the regional languages; a town advisory committee for advising the Executive Council on maintenance of the essential services and beautification of the campus; an advisory Committee for the university press and another for publication of learned works by the University. The Executive

(1) G.U.E.C.R. No.37/3/76 dated 27.2.76.
Council appoints a Sports Board every year to organise sports, games and cultural activities of the students of the University and its affiliated colleges. A Residence, Health and Discipline Board has been constituted to look after the health and hygiene of the students and for maintenance of discipline among students of the University. These are standing committees and Boards and the members have a term of three years. In addition, the various authorities appoint adhoc committees from time to time for specific purposes. Such committees are dissolved after their reports are submitted to the respective authorities.

The Dibrugarh University has similar standing committees and Boards to assist the authorities of the University in proper functioning.

The Agricultural University has a research advisory committee, a farm advisory committee, a planning advisory committee, a library committee, a fellowship committee, a house allotment committee and a Vice-Chancellor's consultative committee in students' affairs. All these committees consist of the Vice-Chancellor as Chairman, the Adviser to the Vice-Chancellor, Deans concerned and other members depending on the powers and functions of the committee.
The Hill University has a number of Boards and committees constituted by the Executive Council. One of them is the planning board. A campus development committee and a works and building committee are constituted for integrated planning and development of the campuses.

**Working of the Committee System**

We have so far noted the various Boards and Committees that were established from time to time, and also their powers and functions. How far the committee system functioned effectively? A close study of the working of the committee system induces us to come to the conclusion that no joint committees were constituted. The Acts did not provide for the constitution of Joint Committees. The joint committee system would have enabled the universities in the region to provide greater number of services to the members of the university. For instance, water supply and lighting; these two services could have been provided more effectively if the Guwahati Municipal Corporation and the Guwahati University had provided a single water supply system. Thus Joint Committees would have facilitated joint investigation, joint planning and joint execution and management of schemes economically and efficiently. We therefore suggest the constitution of joint committees
whenever necessary.

The Act did not provide co-option of outsiders. The basis of co-option is that there is a reservoir of knowledge and public spirit in some who are not members of the university authorities and who are not prepared to submit themselves to the grilling of an election. Yet the contribution they make for the promotion of human happiness is no less valuable than that of the elected members. May sometimes they render greater service than the elected members. Thus co-option enables the university to exploit the reservoir of knowledge and public spirit that is available at no cost.

Co-option has also another virtue. It links up the university with other bodies which perform kindred functions. Thus, the presence on the committees of some who have expert knowledge will have tremendous effect on those who have no such knowledge.

If this argument is accepted provision should be made in the Acts providing for co-option. It has sometimes been argued that co-option is an undemocratic method. It must be remembered that democracy does not mean that all members of the committee should be elected. All the authorities of a
university contain a substantial number of members nominated by the Chancellor and several of them are ex-officio members. It is sufficient that a majority of members should be elected. Further, there is no guarantee that democratic method will always secure the best men. To safeguard the democratic principle certain conditions may be laid down. First, the proportion of co-opted members should not exceed one fourth of the total strength of the committee. Second, a co-opted member should not have the right to become the chairman of the committee. Third, the committee consisting of a number of co-opted members should not deal with financial matters. Fourth, a person may be co-opted by an absolute majority of votes of the other members of the committee. Above all, the co-opted members should not suffer from any of the disqualifications prescribed for the members. Finally co-option should be limited to experts.

Again, there is a tendency on the part of the university authorities to select one and the same person for several committees. As a consequence one and the same person is a member of several committees. In other words there is no restriction on the number of committees on which a member may serve. We suggest that a restriction should be imposed on the number of committees on which a member may serve.
This is desirable because there will be good attendance at the meetings of the committees. It may be remembered that the members have their own professions to look after and they may not be able to spare time to attend all the meetings of all the committees of which they happen to be members.

Again there is no committee to co-ordinate the activities of all the committees in the university. For some time there was a Board of Co-ordination in the Gauhati University consisting of the Vice-Chancellor as its Chairman, the Deans of the Faculties and the Registrar as the member secretary to co-ordinate the activities of the departments and to assign lecture rooms, laboratories and other rooms to the Faculties. But this Board never functioned. All these functions were performed by the Secretary in consultation with the Deans. We suggest that the Chairmen of the several committees may meet once in a quarter and discuss common problems and avoid duplication of effort, waste of public funds and promote efficient administration.

Some of the adhoc committees never functioned because there was no convener to convene the meetings of the committees. For instance, a committee was appointed to frame
regulations for the introduction of the M. Phil course in the Gauhati University. This committee never met. The Academic Council which appointed it did not pursue the matter. When the U.G.C. insisted that the M. Phil course should be introduced the Academic Council appointed another committee for the same purpose forgetting for the moment that a committee had already been appointed and that it did not submit its report. We suggest that there should be a committee of assurances like the one in the legislature which should report to the university authority on the action taken by the administration on the proposals accepted by them.

Further, where committees were constituted the composition, the powers and functions, the Chairmanship and the time within which a report should be submitted were not always determined. As a consequence, some committees did not meet at all.

Although the committee system was not free from defects, by and large the committees functioned effectively. The selection committee, the construction committee, the tender committee, the finance committee to mention only a
few functioned effectively in all the four universities. The meetings of the committees were frequent. The term of office of the elected members was reasonable. The attendance of the members at the meetings of the committee was good. The functions entrusted to them were relevant.