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Joint Statement on Shared Governance

Introduction

The California State University, Dominguez Hills is an academic institution committed to educating and preparing students to fulfill their intellectual, personal, and professional goals. As we aspire to be an institution that transforms lives, we recognize the necessity to create a singular, unified, and unique definition of shared governance at California State University, Dominguez Hills to ensure an efficient completion of CSUDH's commitments and aspirations. The collective vision of shared governance will guide the creation and implementation of institutional policies and the management of practices in a climate where all stakeholders in our academic enterprise have a say in how the affairs of the institution are managed.

An effective system of shared governance within a university recognizes that the President, has ultimate authority and responsibility for decisions affecting the institution. The same system recognizes that the university benefits from a process of collaboration, meaningful consultation, and a spirit of collegiality wherein trust, collaboration, transparency, inclusiveness, honesty, integrity, and broad communication are essential. Effective shared governance creates a "healthy campus, strengthens the quality of leadership and decision making ... enhances its ability to achieve its vision and to meet strategic goals, and increases the odds that the very best thinking by all parties to shared governance is brought to bear on institutional challenges."¹ This collaborative work manifests primarily as shared governance informed by robust consultation.

Policy Statement

In a manner consistent with shared governance as defined in HEERA,² the CSU's "Statement on Collegiality,"³ and "Shared Governance Reconsidered: Improving Decision-Making in the California State University,"⁴ as well as the American Association of University Professors' "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities,"⁵ the faculty and the President should consult robustly, and routinely seek opinions, recommendations, and advice. And as highlighted by the American Association of University Professors, "a substantive contribution can be made

¹ Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, "Shared Governance: Changing with the Times," 2017, https://agb.org/sites/default/files/report_2017_shared_governance.pdf

² Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act of 1984.

³ See "Collegiality in the California State University System," approved by the Academic Senate of the California State University in March, 1985 and reprinted online at:

<http://senate.sonoma.edu/governance/resources/collegiality-california-state-university-system>

⁴ See "Shared Governance Reconsidered: Improving Decision-Making in the California State University," approved by the Academic Senate of the California State University on March 29, 2001 and reprinted online at:

<https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/faculty-staff/academic-senate/Documents/reports/SharedGovReport.pdf>

⁵ American Association of University Professors, "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities" available at: <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>

when student leaders are responsibly involved in the process.”⁶ At California State University, Dominguez Hills, our core values recognize the value of collaboration of all segments of the campus; thus, we include staff in our vision of shared governance.⁷ In this context, shared governance refers to a process of joint decision-making and consultation between administration and faculty but also staff and students through our shared governance structures of the Academic Senate and the Associated Students, Inc. and related committee structures such as the University Budget Committee. As emphasized by the American Association of University Professors, “the faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter, and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process” due to faculty expertise.⁸

Robust consultation between the administration and the Academic Senate and the Associated Students, Inc. and when appropriate other related committees should provide consensus, and adverse review or final decision should be exercised only in exceptional circumstances, and for reasons communicated to the faculty, staff, and students.⁹ Faculty, staff, and students also are to be consulted on fiscal matters that affect the instructional program of the University as delineated through the University Budget Committee but also through appropriate shared governance structures.¹⁰

At California State University, Dominguez Hills, the faculty and the administration have determined that the Academic Senate is the official representative body of the General Faculty and the Associated Students, Inc. is the official representative body of students on campus. Both representative bodies include membership of faculty, students, staff, and administrators. Consultation between the Academic Senate, Associated Students, Inc., and the administration regarding fiscal matters that affect the instructional program is achieved through Academic

⁶ American Association of University Professors, “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities” available at: <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>

⁷ See Our Mission, Our Vision, Our Core Values available at: <https://www.csudh.edu/about/history-mission-vision/>

⁸ “Faculty status and related matters are primarily a faculty responsibility; this area includes appointments, reappointments, decisions not to reappoint, promotions, the granting of tenure, and dismissal. The primary responsibility of the faculty for such matters is based upon the fact that its judgment is central to general educational policy. Furthermore, scholars in a particular field or activity have the chief competence for judging the work of their colleagues.” Regarding faculty assessment AAUP goes further to say:

“Determinations in these matters should first be by faculty action through established procedures, reviewed by the chief academic officers with the concurrence of the board. The governing board and president should, on questions of faculty status, as in other matters where the faculty has primary responsibility, concur with the faculty judgment except in rare instances and for compelling reasons which should be stated in detail.”

See American Association of University Professors, “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities,” Section 5. The Academic Institution: The Faculty available at: <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>.

⁹ See American Association of University Professors, “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities,” Section 5. The Academic Institution: The Faculty available at: <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>.

¹⁰ Membership of the University Budget Committee is to include representation of students, staff, faculty and administrators. See Presidential Memo 2014-04 available at: <https://www.csudh.edu/Assets/csudh-sites/pm/docs/2014-04.pdf>.

Senate and Associated Students, Inc. representation on, e.g., the University Budget Committee and other such committees in Academic Affairs and the colleges as they are constituted.¹¹ In this context, shared governance refers to a process of joint decision-making and consultation between administration and faculty but also staff and students through our shared governance structures of the Academic Senate and the Associated Students, Inc. and related committee structures such as the University Budget Committee. As emphasized by the American Association of University Professors, “the faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter, and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process” due to faculty expertise.¹²

Consultation

Consultation, trust, and respect for each other’s roles and responsibilities are key components of effective shared governance. Consultation between the faculty, staff, students, and the administration within this context is defined as a mutual exchange of information, ideas, opinions, and recommendations from initial formulation to final determination of policy and procedures affecting the operations of those areas where primary responsibility rests with the faculty. Consultation is meaningful if input provided is able to influence outcomes of decision-making and reflects the mutuality of all stakeholders’ efforts to ensure success. The consultation shall take place early and regularly, thus enabling the joint decision-making required by HEERA. “Exceptional circumstances” are understood to be limited to circumstances that can be reasonably agreed upon by all stakeholders as necessitating immediate action without sufficient time for meaningful consultation.

Effective and meaningful consultation, to which the Academic Senate, on behalf of the faculty, staff, students, and administration, must be characterized by openness and transparency, respectful dialogue, mutual responsibility, evidence-based problem-solving, and a commitment to being informed about and prepared to discuss relevant issues. Above all else, a mutual commitment to and respect for the process must be evident if consultation is to enable optimal outcomes for our university. Collectively these will create and foster the atmosphere of trust essential to the functioning and success of the university and its constituents. Effective leadership is a function of healthy, frequent and timely consultation, focusing always on the best outcomes for student success.

¹¹ See Our Mission, Our Vision, Our Core Values available at: <https://www.csudh.edu/about/history-mission-vision/>

¹² “Faculty status and related matters are primarily a faculty responsibility; this area includes appointments, reappointments, decisions not to reappoint, promotions, the granting of tenure, and dismissal. The primary responsibility of the faculty for such matters is based upon the fact that its judgment is central to general educational policy. Furthermore, scholars in a particular field or activity have the chief competence for judging the work of their colleagues.” Regarding faculty assessment AAUP goes further to say:

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See American Association of University Professors, “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities,” Section 5. The Academic Institution: The Faculty available at: <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>.

History

No previous University policy regarding shared governance.

Related Information

See footnotes.



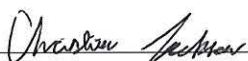
Thomas A. Parham, Ph.D.

President



Charles Thomas, J.D.

Chair, Academic Senate



Christian Jackson

President, Associated Students, Inc.