Shared Governance

*At the end of last year, Presidents’ Council established a task force on shared governance. The task force was charged with developing a well-defined and widely accepted vision of shared governance to serve as a guide for future decision-making at CCC. This document, developed by the task force and revised based on extensive input from Presidents’ Council, summarizes the principles which the task force believes are at the heart of shared governance. We are now seeking input from a broader cross-section of students and staff. Comments and suggestions should be directed to seanp@clackamas.edu.*

Preamble

Clackamas Community College’s long-standing commitment to broad-based decision making forms the core of its institutional culture. Its purposes are and always have been to optimize the quality of the decisions made, to maximize the degree to which they are understood and accepted by the campus community, and to promote an institutional climate of mutual respect, trust, and shared purpose that allows the college to focus its attention on the needs of the students it serves and the effectiveness of the services it provides them.

Shared governance assumes that the decision making process begins with the consideration of the problem itself and includes, when appropriate, framing the questions leading to its solution. Beyond this, however, there is wide latitude in the design of the structures, processes, and procedures by which shared governance can be implemented, but a strong commitment to shared governance exists at all levels and is a core theme within the college. This document attempts to identify the key principles that characterize a robust and effective system of shared governance. The principles it identifies are intended to form a solid basis on which the college community can begin to review, evaluate, and revitalize its efforts to make its shared vision a reality.

Principles

I Inclusion

Who should be involved/represented

* Those affected by the decision
* Those with necessary background and expertise
* Those ultimately responsible for making the decision
* Those responsible for implementing the decision

II Consensus

All those identifiedin section I (not necessarily all individuals) are in agreement that

* all who should be involved or represented have been
* due diligence has been exercised
* the critical issues highlighted during discussions have been honestly considered by all participants
* consensus has been reached based on a shared set of criteria that help participants visualize what the ideal conditions would be like after implementing the best solution.

In the event no consensus emerges, those ultimately responsible for making the decision must come to a decision, informed by the discussions of the group.

III Responsibility

Participants’ responsibilities

* Engage in active and continuous communication with their constituents
* Come to meetings prepared
* Facilitate robust, two-way decision-making by participating actively in discussions
* Accurately represent the concerns of their constituents
* Make sure that the principles of shared governance are applied consistently and in a spirit of consensus-building
* Remain true to the college’s mission and values
* Actively support implementation of the consensus decision

IV Transparency

Decisions subject to shared governance

Organizational and policy decisions that result in a rule, guideline, process, procedure, or plan that affects a significant portion of the campus community. Examples include but are not limited to

* Instructional policies
* Registration and other student service procedures
* Formal document creation (e.g., Visions to Reality, Strategic Priorities, Institutional Activities, catalog, budget documents)
* Administrative regulations
* Academic regulations
* Implementation of new programs and processes
* Implementation of legal mandates

Decisions not subject to shared governance

* Disciplinary actions involving college staff
* Contract negotiations
* Resolution of interpersonal issues
* Maintenance of the physical plant
* Maintenance of the current level of IT infrastructure
* Legal requirements
* Board policy

V Communication

Forums for communication

Perhaps more than any other factor, the success of shared governance depends on successful communication between the formal decision-making body and the broader campus community. Communication must occur in both directions and it must be open, inclusive, accurate, and timely. Responsibility for seeing that these standards are met must be universal. Communication forums and channels include but are not limited to

Formal:

* Presidents Council
* College Council
* Vice-President meetings
* Department Chair meetings
* The budget advisory group
* Association meetings

Informal

* Department meetings
* Other committee meetings
* Informal conversations with students and colleagues
* Document sharing
* FYI, the Monthly President’s Message, and other means of disseminating information

VI Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Measures of success

It is important that the college continually assess the success its efforts to apply the principles of shared governance and the quality of the decisions that result. Questions that address these two dimensions are

* Was the process open?
* Were the right people involved? (see I)
* Was the decision widely anticipated?
* Were there few or no significant unintended consequences?
* Was there little or no push-back?