

California State University, Stanislaus

13/AS/16/SEC CSU Stanislaus - Joint Statement on Shared Governance

Be it Resolved: That the Academic Senate of California State University, Stanislaus approve the attached “Joint Statement on Shared Governance,” And be it further

Resolved: That this Joint Statement be effective immediately and be included in the Faculty Handbook, And be it further

Resolved: That this Joint Statement be shared with all candidates for university administrative and faculty positions, And be it further

Resolved: That this Joint Statement be distributed annually at the initial meeting of the Academic Senate as a reminder of our common understanding of shared governance.

Rationale: Conceptions of shared governance at CSU Stanislaus have been guided by several sources including the American Association of University Professors’ Red Book, the California Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA), pronouncements of the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU), formal statements of the Board of Trustees of the California State University, and the CSU Stanislaus Constitution of the General Faculty. Even with that guidance, faculty and administration have not always been of one mind regarding the scope and limits of shared governance, nor the means by which consultation should occur. This joint statement, developed among campus faculty and administrators, affirms our commitment to shared governance and consultation, enhancing and complementing other documents that inform our work.

As referenced in the statement, section 3561 b. of the California Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA), (Education Code Section 3560, et. seq.) indicates in part, "The Legislature recognizes that joint decision-making and consultation between administration and faculty or academic employees is the long-accepted manner of governing institutions of higher learning and is essential to the performance of the educational missions of such institutions, and declares that it is the purpose of this act to both preserve and encourage that process....”

The Academic Senate of the CSU and the CSU Board of Trustees each adopted statements in 1985 on collegiality that further affirm the importance of shared governance and the primacy of faculty in addressing core aspects of university functioning. The Board of Trustees statement indicated in part, “*Collegial governance assigns primary responsibility to the faculty for the educational functions of the institution in accordance with basic policy as determined by the Board of Trustees.* This includes admission and degree requirements, the curriculum and methods of teaching, academic and professional standards, and the conduct of creative and scholarly activities.” Our “Joint Statement” is both a result of collegial practice and an affirmation of the means by which collegial governance will occur.

It is expected that we can call upon this statement to guide institutional processes, inform faculty and administrative actions, and inform current and future members of the campus community of our commitments.

Unanimously approved by the Academic Senate on February 14, 2017
Approved by President Ellen Junn on March 17, 2017

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An effective system of shared governance within a university recognizes that the President ultimately has authority and responsibility for decisions affecting the institution. The same system recognizes that the university benefits from a process of joint decision-making, consultation, and a spirit of collegiality wherein mutual responsibility is essential. This collaborative work manifests primarily as shared governance informed by robust consultation.

Shared Governance

in a manner consistent with shared governance as defined in HEERA¹, the CSU's "Statement on Collegiality," and "The Responsibilities of Academic Senates in a Collective Bargaining Contract," the faculty and the President should consult robustly, and routinely seek opinions, recommendations, and advice. In this context, shared governance refers to a process of joint decision-making and consultation between administration and faculty. In matters pertaining to curriculum, academic personnel and other academic concerns, the faculty voice has primacy. Robust consultation between the administration and the Academic Senate should provide concurrence, and adverse review or final decision should be exercised only in exceptional circumstances, and for reasons communicated to the faculty². The faculty also is to be consulted on fiscal matters that affect the instructional program of the University.

At California State University, Stanislaus, the faculty and the administration have determined that the Academic Senate is the official representative body of the General Faculty on campus. Consultation between the Academic Senate and the administration regarding fiscal matters that affect the instructional program is achieved through Academic Senate representation on, e.g., the University Budget Advisory Committee and the Faculty Budget Advisory Committee.

Consultation

Consultation is the key component of effective shared governance. Consultation between the faculty 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. The consultation shall take place early and regularly, thus enabling the joint decision-making required by HEERA.

Effective, meaningful consultation to which the Academic Senate, on behalf of the faculty, and the administration must be committed should 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.

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¹ Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act of 1984

² American Association of University Professors. "Policy Documents and Reports." Johns Hopkins Press, 2015.