

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY

(VERSION 040617)

Principles and Practice of Shared Governance[†] Youngtown State University

Prepared by the YSU Excellence Steering (YES) Committee: Martin Abraham (Co-Chair), Rayann Atway (Student), Chet Cooper (Co-Chair), Ramesh Dangol (Faculty), Rosalyn Donaldson (Staff), Adam Earnhardt (Faculty), Meghan Fortner (Part-time Faculty), Connie Frisby (Staff), Holly Jacobs (Administration), Neal McNally, (Administration), Maura Picciano (Staff), Ted Roberts (Board of Trustees), Carole Weimer (Board of Trustees), Mary Yacovone (Faculty)

Shared Governance is the process by which the University community (i.e., faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and students) has the opportunity to influence decisions on matters of policy and procedure, and/or an opportunity to present alternatives on such matters. The objective of shared governance is to foster mutually reinforcing relationships that expand the opportunities for cooperation and leadership while facilitating judicious, yet creative, university governance.

Shared Governance includes issues of values, culture, management, and administration, as well as operating frameworks, such as legislation, which are externally imposed. The intent of this process is to balance efficiency and effectiveness with equity and fairness.

At the core of successful Shared Governance is open communication among the components of the University. Seeking input, listening to it, and considering it as part of a decision making process strengthens confidence among the various components of the University to mutually benefit each other and the University.

Principles of Shared Governance

- In an environment of shared governance, those who will be affected by a decision on policy or procedures should be informed and have the opportunity to influence governance decisions.
- A climate of shared governance relies upon consistent, trustworthy communication that is multidirectional and reciprocal.
- All participants in the shared governance process are accountable for the proper execution of their roles in a timely manner.
- Shared governance should permeate all levels of decision-making within the University community.
- Full and active participation at all levels of shared governance should be encouraged without fear of retribution.
- Shared governance reflects the need for separation of powers within the University's decentralized structure for better functional policy-making.
- Recommendations made through shared governance processes should be taken seriously and have actual influence in university decision making.

[†] Adapted, in part, from "Principles and Practices of Shared Governance" from the University of Louisiana at Monroe (<http://www.ulm.edu/sharedgovernance/>)

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Practice of Shared Governance

- A. The University should have written procedures and formal structures that provide for appropriate collaboration and communication between and among administration, faculty, staff, and students. The structures and procedures shall be developed cooperatively, disseminated widely prior to adoption, and reviewed periodically according to procedures and timelines established in the documents governing institutional practice.
- B. Identification of subject matter appropriate for administration, alumni, faculty, staff, and student's participation in the shared governance process shall recognize:
 - 1. The responsibility of administrators for forming and articulating a vision for the institution, providing strategic leadership, and managing its human resources, finances, and operations;
 - 2. The central role of the faculty, including part-time faculty, in the institution's teaching, research, and service, including the assessment of the quality of these activities through peer review;
 - 3. The essential support provided by staff in facilitating the institution's operations and the legitimate interest of the staff in participating in the development of policies and procedures;
 - 4. The institution's main educational focus on its students and their legitimate interest in matters pertaining to student life and the academic environment; and
 - 5. The role of each constituency in the search for selection of key institutional administrators.
- C. Given the dynamic nature of institutional governance, it is understood that there may be infrequent occasions when institutional leaders must act in the best interest of the institution on major issues affecting the institutional constituencies without full benefit of the shared governance process. In such cases, the representative bodies shall be informed in a timely manner and have an opportunity to comment on the actions taken.
- D. Shared governance requires a commitment of resources and time from the institution. The University must provide an appropriate level of resources to faculty, staff, and students to allow them to carry out their shared governance responsibilities effectively.
- E. While participation in governance by faculty, staff, and students is necessary and important for the well-being of the University, the final responsibility for decision-making rests with the President and the Board of Trustees, who are ultimately held accountable by the public and its elected leaders.
- F. Collective bargaining is an avenue of input separate and distinct from Shared Governance.