

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY

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Principles and Practice of Shared Governance[†]

Youngtown State University

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Shared Governance is the transparent process by which the University community (i.e., faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and students) influences decisions on matters of policy and procedure, and/or to present alternatives on such matters. Shared governance fosters mutually reinforcing relationships that expand cooperation and develop leadership while facilitating judicious, yet creative, university governance.

Shared Governance includes issues of values, culture, management, finance, and administration. The intent of this process is to balance efficiency and effectiveness with equity and fairness within the context of our operating frameworks, such as legislation or accreditation. Consideration and utilization of data is paramount.

At the core of successful Shared Governance is open communication among the constituents 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

- Shared governance expects those who will be affected by a decision on policy or procedures will be informed and will influence governance decisions.
- 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 permeates all levels of decision-making within the University community.
- Full and active participation at all levels of shared governance is encouraged.
- Recommendations made through shared governance processes will influence in university decision making.

Practice of Shared Governance

- A. The University shall have procedures and formal structures providing for appropriate collaboration and communication between and among administration, faculty, staff, and students. The structures and procedures shall be developed cooperatively,

[†] 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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disseminated widely prior to adoption, and reviewed periodically according to procedures and timelines established in the documents governing institutional practice.

- B. Recognizing the institution's main educational focus on its students, identification of subject matter appropriate for administration, alumni, faculty, staff, and student 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 human resources, finances, and operations;
 - 2. The central role of faculty, including part-time faculty, in teaching, scholarship, and service, including assessment of these activities through peer review;
 - 3. The essential support provided by staff in facilitating operations and in participating in the development of policies and procedures;
 - 4. The students' interests in matters pertaining to student life and the academic environment; and
 - 5. The role of each constituency in the selection of key institutional administrators.
- C. Exigent circumstances may require institutional leaders to act promptly in the best interest of the institution without full benefit of shared governance. In such cases, representative bodies shall be informed and will comment on actions taken.
- D. Shared governance requires a commitment of resources and time from the institution. The University shall support faculty, staff, and students in their responsibilities to shared governance.
- E. The final responsibility for decision making, including solicitation of input through shared governance, 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.