



Sacramento State Shared Governance Agreement

This document serves as an agreement between the President and the Faculty, defining and reaching consensus on the characteristics and operational protocols for shared governance between these parties at Sacramento State.

Shared Governance

The successful and efficient functioning of a complex, multipurpose university system depends on a spirit of collegiality that both embodies and encourages mutual respect among all its members. Collegiality involves both a mindset and a collaborative process in which individuals recognize that all university constituencies share responsibility for the institution's success.

Collegiality, a central tenet of shared governance, reflects the collective responsibility of the President, administrators, governing bodies, boards, faculty, staff, students, and other stakeholders to steward the university. It promotes active participation from groups based on their expertise, institutional roles, and relevant interests.¹ Fundamentally, shared governance relies on established bodies whose informed deliberations uphold the university's mission.

At the higher levels of shared governance processes, differences in the weight of each group's voice on a particular issue should be determined by the extent of its responsibility for and expertise on that issue. Throughout the process, participants should remain attentive to the perspectives of others to avoid unilateral actions.

This document clarifies the expectations for how shared governance functions between the President and the Faculty.² The roles and definitions are generally outlined below.

The President

California State University, Sacramento, recognizes that the President ultimately has authority and responsibility for all decisions affecting the institution.

¹ The term "collegiality" and its relationship to shared governance practices referred to in this document was influenced by a number of sources including the AAUP Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities found at <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities> and a Sonoma State White Paper, now a part of the Sonoma State Senate website at <https://senate.sonoma.edu/collegiality-california-state-university-system>.

² The California Government Code, which is part of the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA), legally recognizes and protects the system of shared governance in California's public higher education systems, including the California State University (CSU) campuses. The code acknowledges that higher education is properly governed through joint decision-making and consultation between administrators and faculty.

The Administration

The Administration refers to the university's senior leadership, such as the Provost, Vice Presidents, other executive officers, and Academic Affairs leaders who help steward the university on behalf of the President.

The Faculty

The Faculty refers to all employees of California State University, Sacramento who are represented by Unit 3.

Faculty play a vital role in advancing the university's academic mission, with the curriculum serving as its primary expression. Authority over educational matters is appropriately delegated to the Faculty and academic departments, whose disciplinary expertise best supports informed decision-making and upholds the academic integrity of the institution.

Faculty also actively engage in matters related to faculty status. This area encompasses policies and procedures for establishing faculty status (e.g., appointments, retention, tenure, and promotion), in alignment with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The faculty has the authority to develop, review, revise, and recommend policies and procedures to the President. This authority encompasses all academic matters delegated to the President by law, by the Board of Trustees, and by the Chancellor of The California State University. The scope of this duty includes, but is not limited to, decisions related to academic issues, recognizing that areas such as personnel, fiscal, and other topics may significantly impact academic outcomes.

The authorities and duties mentioned above are delegated to the **Faculty Senate** and its delegate bodies (collectively referred to as **the Faculty** in this document.)

The Faculty Senate

At California State University, Sacramento, the Faculty Senate serves as the primary representative body and the official voice of the Faculty. As such, the Faculty Senate's input is recognized as authoritative and distinct from that of individual faculty members or informal faculty groups.

Faculty Representative Committees (Faculty Senate Delegate Bodies)

Both Faculty Senate committees and Faculty Senate delegate bodies, such as department and college curricular and personnel committees, provide additional ways for faculty to contribute to the institution's governance. These committees are integral to the functioning of the academic mission.

The Obligation of Shared Governance

For decisions with curricular implications, the President or their Administrative Designee has an obligation to engage with the Faculty through the Faculty Senate. While it is recognized that times of urgency or crisis may necessitate making decisions with limited or no engagement with the Faculty in shared governance, it is also recognized that these are precisely the times when shared governance often yields the greatest

benefit. Accordingly, during such times, the President or their Administrative Designee and the Faculty should make every effort to engage in shared governance.

Joint Effort in Shared Governance

Joint effort, which can take a variety of forms, recognizes collective work efforts on matters of shared governance between the Faculty and the President or their Administrative Designee.³ Such joint effort serves as the highest level of shared governance.

An example *of joint effort in action* is collaborative participation in official committees, task forces, and advisory bodies working together to develop well-informed recommendations for the President. In some cases, the primary work starts with the Faculty—particularly in areas like academic policy or the curriculum—where they engage in deliberation and analysis before submitting formal recommendations to the President or the relevant administrative office. Conversely, when work begins with the President or their Administrative Designee, there is an expectation that the Faculty will be involved in collective efforts to ensure decisions and actions reflect faculty input and joint engagement.

These processes exemplify shared governance in action, where collaborative effort guarantees that faculty expertise and informed judgment, along with the administrative expertise, inform decisions.

Consultation in Shared Governance

Consultation, as a fundamental practice of shared governance, reflects the ongoing exchange of ideas and informed perspectives between the Faculty and the President or their Administrative Designee in shaping university decisions and policies. This document clarifies two distinct types of consultation processes.

Participatory Consultation involves periodic engagement between the President or their Administrative Designee and the Faculty at key points in the decision-making process. This form of consultation focuses on administrative leaders gathering meaningful information, perspectives, and recommendations from the Faculty to inform their decisions. While the final decision may rest with the President or their Designee, this process ensures that faculty input is considered before key determinations are made.

Advisory Consultation is an opportunity for the President or their Administrative Designee and the Faculty to seek input before a final decision is made.

Examples include

- Faculty are consulted to review and provide feedback (examples: soundness, feasibility, and alignment with institutional values and academic priorities).
- Shared governance structures like the University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC) and the Academic Affairs Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee.

³ AAUP Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities. <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>. Joint effort is based on the AAUP definition to better describe the operationalized “interdependence among governing board, administration, faculty, students, and others.”

- Strategic advisory bodies, which include faculty, staff, and students.

While the final decision-making authority ultimately rests with the President or their Administrative Designee, this consultation promotes transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to faculty perspectives. Effective consultation, whether participatory or advisory, depends on shared respect for governance principles, including constructive discourse, transparency, mutual responsibility, and informed deliberation. It must be conducted in a timely manner to ensure input is integrated before decisions are finalized.

Where the form of shared governance is already established through **university policy and delegation of authority**, that structure shall guide engagement. When matters arise outside those frameworks, or in areas where policy does not yet exist, the President or their Administrative Designee and the Faculty will determine, whenever possible or suitable at the start, how shared governance will be employed. The type of engagement chosen should align with the nature of the issues, the extent of delegated authority, and the influence on the academic mission or institutional operations.

This ensures mutual understanding of roles, responsibilities, and how input will inform final decisions.

Best Practices in Shared Governance

Stakeholder Input

Stakeholder input is a form of shared governance that involves listening to university members' concerns and perspectives on **all** institutional topics, particularly those that affect the academic enterprise. Examples include town halls, listening sessions, and formal surveys, during which a governing body collects feedback from various community members. Stakeholder input also occurs when individuals raise concerns about specific issues.

In this area, faculty input represents a form of faculty engagement, offering a way for faculty to express their views on broader university topics or concerns.

Trust and Confidentiality

Shared Governance is best advanced when there is mutual trust and a reciprocal commitment to respecting the confidential nature of the information. There are many cases in which confidentiality is critical, such as search committees, personnel matters, Senate Executive sessions, etc.

As the requisite level of confidentiality varies by case, all parties shall, in advance, make explicit their respective expectations regarding confidentiality. Doubts about maintaining confidentiality, when they arise, shall be discussed and mitigated.

Communication

Open, transparent, and consistent communication builds trust, facilitates informed participation, and ensures that the Faculty and the President or their Administrative Designee are aligned in pursuing institutional goals. In shared governance, communication serves not only as a means for transmitting decisions but as an essential process for shaping them, inviting input, fostering accountability, and promoting a culture of collaboration and mutual respect across the university community.

Communication is characterized by ongoing, structured, and purposeful dialogue. It includes regular updates from the President or their Administrative Designee on emerging issues, timely distribution of relevant data, and a clear articulation of decision timelines and opportunities for faculty input. Faculty, in turn, engage by providing informed feedback, raising concerns with recommendations, and participating through established channels. This two-way communication emphasizes transparency, responsiveness, and mutual respect, ensuring that both parties stay informed and engaged in decisions that enhance student success and the long-term vitality of the university.

Additional Resources

California State University, Sacramento Faculty Senate Constitution

California State University, Sacramento Policy on Policies

Statement on Shared Governance and Consultation at California State University, Sacramento
Faculty Senate Responsibilities Within a Collective Bargaining Context

Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) Board of Directors' Statement on Shared Governance at [https://agb.org/wp-](https://agb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2017_statement_sharedgovernance.pdf)

[content/uploads/2019/01/2017_statement_sharedgovernance.pdf](https://agb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2017_statement_sharedgovernance.pdf)

AAUP Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities (1966) at <http://www.aaup.org/report/1966-statement-government-colleges-and-universities>

California Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA, 2013) at

<http://www.perb.ca.gov/laws/HEERA.aspx>

California State University Report on the Board of Trustees Ad Hoc Committee on Governance, Collegiality, and Responsibility in the CSU (1999-2000) at

<http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Records/Resolutions/19992000/documents/2491att.pdf>

AAUP Shared Governance Assessment Tool

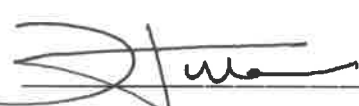
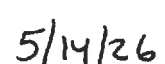
Shared Governance statements and documents from other CSU campuses

Statement on Shared Governance at San José State University (2013)



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Chair, Faculty Senate	Date	President	Date