

Implementing the 2011 Shared Governance Task Force Recommendations: Updated by the OSU Faculty Senate, Spring 2019

Definition of Shared Governance

Shared governance is the process by which faculty and administrators share responsibility and accountability for reaching decisions on policy and procedure. **The purpose of shared governance is to create a university community based on open communication, accountability, and mutual respect, for the sake of best advancing the institution's missions.** Shared governance should permeate the campus, reaching into all levels of decision-making.

Oregon State University honors and celebrates a robust tradition of shared governance going back through many decades. A consistent system of faculty review and input provides checks and balances to administrative and academic governance. The OSU Faculty Senate consults and collaborates with university administrators on matters that affect the success of the institution in fulfilling its missions including:

- institutional planning;
- academic programs;
- curriculum and academic regulations;
- faculty and administrative hiring;
- university, college, and unit spending priorities;
- promotion and tenure;
- administrative appointments and reappointments; and
- alumni relations and development.

By longstanding mutual agreement with administrators, and according to its own bylaws, the Oregon State University Faculty Senate has primary responsibility with respect to academic policies, educational standards, curricula and academic regulations.

Shared governance mandates that administrators seek faculty input on these matters, weigh that input carefully, and report back to the faculty on the reasons for arriving at the final decisions. For faculty, shared governance requires careful consideration of the issue, deciding on the process by which faculty input will be made, deciding on the content and form of the input, communicating input through the channels made available, and attending to the communication from administrators regarding the final decision. The immediate goal of shared governance is to reach agreement between administration and the Faculty Senate on matters vital to the institution and its internal and external stakeholders, or, where disagreements remain, to assure those on the dissenting side that their views were heard and fully considered.

Basic Principles of Shared Governance at Oregon State University

1. Administrators and faculty share responsibility and accountability in all steps of decision-making on policy and procedure.

2. Shared governance requires broad participation from both faculty and administrators.
3. Shared governance requires a “full-cycle” approach in soliciting, formulating and making decisions on policy and procedure. For administrators, a full-cycle approach requires soliciting faculty input, weighing that input, arriving at decisions, and reporting back to the faculty on the rationale for those decisions. For faculty (in matters where faculty do not make the final decision), a full-cycle approach requires decision on process, form, and content of faculty input, and then requires effective communication between administrators and faculty. In matters where faculty have primary responsibility, a full-cycle approach requires regular and effective communication to relevant administrators concerning the actions of the Senate and its committees.
4. Shared governance should inform decision-making at all levels: the *institutional*, *college*, and *unit* levels.

Practices and Procedures for Decision-making at OSU

A. Institutional Planning

Any committee/task force formed by the president and/or provost to help guide institutional planning shall ideally have at least 20% of its membership appointed or vetted by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

The committee/ task force recommendations shall be presented to the Faculty Senate for discussion, input, and endorsement prior to final decisions.

B. Faculty Senate Governance

The principle of “full-cycle” governance will guide administrators’ interactions with the faculty in general and the Faculty Senate in particular. Administrators should solicit faculty input, weigh that input, arrive at decisions, and report back to the faculty on the rationale for those decisions.

- i. Reports to the Faculty Senate, including those by the Faculty Senate committees, will be substantive (i.e., comprising specific actions and/or recommendations). Senators and their guests should be afforded time and opportunity to discuss these reports and, when appropriate, vote on action items arising from them. and
- ii. The Senate will act as an official mouthpiece for faculty feedback to the President/Provost/Deans after discussion of items on the Faculty Senate Agenda. Mechanisms will be developed to provide more meaningful input such that “the sense of the Senate” is obtained and shared with the administration.

Increased participation of academic and professional faculty in the Faculty Senate and its committees is desired. Mechanisms for increasing participation include increasing the importance and value of faculty service as recognized in P&T policies, periodic reviews, administrative (re)appointments, and merit-based salary increases.

- i. The University must value participation in the workings of the Faculty Senate. Position descriptions at the dean and department head levels should include a statement related to the importance of fostering faculty participation in Faculty Senate and university committees.
- ii. Due to the importance and value of service in the Faculty Senate and on university committees, administrators will review and enforce the requirements of such

- service in the current promotion and tenure policies will recognize and reward university level service on the Faculty Senate and its committees
- iii. Annually, the Faculty Senate should work with Institutional Research to produce a summary of the composition of the Faculty Senate and its committees by apportionment unit, faculty status, and rank, to be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee should monitor the question of whether the current structure of the Faculty Senate serves adequately and equally well the interests of both academic (teaching, research, extension, and clinical) and professional faculty. If necessary or desirable, the Senate Executive Committee may appoint a task force and/or ad hoc committee to review the current structure.

C. University, College, and Unit Spending Priorities

Committees or task forces formed by the president and provost to help guide budget allocation and planning ideally shall have at least 20% of its membership appointed or vetted by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

The president and provost will bring to the Faculty Senate, for discussion and input, budget priorities for the University prior to implementation.

Each college and unit will have a transparent budget allocation process developed through consultation by the dean/department chair or head with the faculty.

D. Faculty Compensation and Advancement

The president and provost working with the United Academics of Oregon State University will inform the Faculty Senate of any plans for salary or benefit adjustments once they are collectively agreed upon by the two bodies.

E. Administrative Appointments

There should be a broad commitment by both the administration and Faculty Senate to follow the Standing Rules of the Administrative Appointments Committee.

All units and colleges will have written policies, agreed upon by faculty and administrators, that define the process by which faculty can provide input on the qualification of candidates and the performance of the current administrator, without concern for negative repercussions for themselves. Faculty representatives will be included on all search committees for administrative appointments. Faculty should have meaningful input into decisions about the appointment and reappointment of academic administrators, and their input should be listened to and valued.

Units will have written policies, agreed upon by faculty, that describe processes for including faculty at all stages of the hiring process, including the identification of hiring priorities, the development of position descriptions, the selection of search committee members, and the evaluation of candidates. The majority of search committee members must be faculty from the academic unit(s) for which the position is affiliated. In units where faculty do not vote on hiring decisions, search committees should make an unranked list of the potential candidates listing each individual's strengths and weaknesses.