

Governance Forum  
February 6, 2019  
Models and Components: What to Keep and What to Change  
Evaluation and Parts of the System

32 attendees  
(Including presenters)

Led by Jessica Alvarado, College Council Chair, and Paul Jarrell, VP of Academic and Student Affairs

The governance subcommittee learned the basics of different governance models from Elijah Herr and shared some of those materials in the forum.

There are two evaluative criteria for all governance systems:

- Is the process by which decisions are made seen as legitimate?
  - For instance, are the rules of conduct clear? Is there buy in from all stakeholders in the process? Are the outcomes communicated to all?
- Is the system effective at solving problems?
  - Did recommendations address the problem at hand? Was it effective at reaching its stated goal? What are the unintended consequences and how should they be addressed?

In a typical scenario, a problem is considered by a committee, and the decision is made by the president. The governance process is what happens in between. The functional things that have to occur within that system is what we need to figure out.

- Determination of membership
- Who is a stakeholder and how do we know it?
- Agenda setting
- How are issues identified and prioritized?
  - Not a lot of reference to this in our current system
  - How do we prioritize?
  - How do we be sure we have the right people involved?
- Policy formation
- How is information gathered, assessed and options determined?
- Legitimation
  - The process by which recommendations are approved or declined
  - Do we believe in the process that has led to that outcome?
- Assessment
  - How are recommendations to be evaluated in terms of time and criteria?
  - How do we assess whether or not decisions made were good decisions?

These are all components of a governance system – no matter which one we land on.

There is no perfect system; there will always be tradeoffs. If you have some components that are more important, there will be less of something else.

There is no system that can be all things to all people:

- Inclusion vs efficiency  
Example: the governance task force - too many people, difficult to make decisions, not enough time to discuss everything. Can include everyone, but that will reduce efficiency. However, if you exclude some, it will lose legitimacy and feedback from all stakeholders.
- Transparency vs. confidentiality  
If a lot of people are in the room it may be hard to even draft a policy. If the policy starts in a smaller group, it is more confidential, but not as transparent.
- Equity vs. expertise  
But if everyone is equal, there no need for experts.  
Clarity vs. flexibility  
The more flexibility, the more difficult to communicate processes.
- Accountability vs. complexity  
The more complex the process, the more difficult it is to determine accountability, and who is responsible for implementation.

The end goal is twofold:

- Even if people do not agree with the recommendation, they can accept that the process is fair.
- The outcomes are effective at solving problems.

The governance system is evaluated by the seven criteria in BP 325:

1. Clarity;
2. Wide and explicit communication;
3. Effectiveness;
4. Efficiency and timeliness;
5. Processes that encourage employee and student participation in problem solving and decision-making;
6. Processes that assure that decisions are made at the appropriate level, by the appropriate group with the needed expertise; and
7. Recognition of the support needed for employees and students to participate and contribute meaningfully.

No matter what model, these criteria are still the things we need to consider. If these seven criteria are present, the process will be legitimate.

## SMALL GROUPS

Attendees were given ten minutes in small groups to look at how the current governance system is designed.

## REPORT OUT FROM SMALL GROUPS:

- Chaos theory  
Official and unofficial channels
- Structure: Board of Education -> President -> College Council  
The biggest point of contention in this group was that the administration makes many decisions and that is a small group of people – they have two avenues: directly to the president and to the whole council system. Jarrell commented that some decisions do not need to go through the governance system; Hamilton commented that she is not involved in many decisions that are made at the college.
- Overlap and Duplication  
Governance councils are making decisions that float up to College Council, but no representatives sit on College Council. Then College Council can change what the other council has spent several months on.  
The president is sitting on College Council where that material is supposed to go up to the president.  
Other decisions are made outside of College Council.  
There is a Finance Council and also a College Council Budget Subcommittee. The governance manual states that councils should be addressing core themes but are more operational.
- Silos  
Board, president, college council, other councils  
Cabinet and other groups  
Faculty council
- Newer employees are not as clear on how the system is supposed to work  
The system can be confusing because decisions are made by the board, president, councils, committees, departments, and other areas
- Structure from board down to councils  
Breadcrumb trail from problems identified to becoming a policy
- A lot of influence from LCCEA and HR  
We are trying to work toward being an academic community
- How each stakeholder group handles each piece of the “problem” - policy vs. procedure vs. problem

## NEXT TASK

The small groups were asked to consider the intersection of the following:

Elements of governance  
Trade-offs in legitimation design  
Criteria outlined in BP 325

What will make this system more legitimate?  
What will make the system more effective?

## REPORT OUT

- Added some problem solving
  - Added ISM - Issue sorting machine- hears the issue and sorts it out, who hears it
  - Renaming college council to be council of councils
  - Individual councils will be autonomous but should be some loop back mechanism in case something goes awry
  - Should some procedural work be included if it effects the college as a whole?
- Make sure the responsibility and charges of committees are clear and that they have the appropriate authority
  - E.g. How federal rules are made – propose a decision and limited comment period
- Legitimate flows into effectiveness
  - Set up councils to be sure they address the college's mission, values, goals and core themes
  - To be effective, have the right people with the right expertise in the room
  - Equity and inclusion
  - Checks and balances
- Paths need to be easy to navigate
  - Consolidate where appropriate
  - Agencies for feedback and course correct
  - Inclusiveness for council membership
  - Will to do the work and new perspectives
  - Student activity within the governance structure
  - Teams vs. councils
- Respect for diverse perspectives, including students and clear responsibility regarding decisions
  - Disciplinary chairs and division chairs rotating
  - Delegation built into the system
  - Two kinds of expertise: management/classified and faculty
  - Faculty = disciplinary expertise
- Condensing and streamlining councils to address core themes
  - Put committees in the council where they belong

Give councils autonomy and authority

- Who is involved
  - Process of identifying the right people
  - Who vets when a decision needs to be made?
  - How do we prioritize?
  - How does brainstorming process move forward to final decision making
  - We struggle with timeframes and get stalled in final decision-making process
  - What factors go into final decision-making?
  - Who implements the decisions?
  - What are the impacts of the decisions?