

2018

Overview of Shared Governance at Radford University

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Purpose and Principles of Shared Governance

“Shared governance is a system of open communication aimed at aligning priorities, creating a culture of shared responsibility for the welfare of the institution, and creating a system of checks and balances to ensure the institution stays mission-centered” (Bahls 2014).

At Radford University, shared governance addresses issues related to the core academic mission and also the administrative functions and policies related to implementing that mission. Radford University is strongly committed to shared governance that includes all stakeholders because the resulting decisions will be better-informed and more sustainable than ones derived from one individual or from a cadre representing only one constituency. Decisions and recommendations that are best for the welfare of the university as a whole are based upon processes in which individuals listen to all ideas, respect competing concerns, and evaluate alternatives.

Certain fundamental principles are vital in order to foster a healthy system and culture of shared governance. An open and effective system of shared governance will:

- clearly delineate pathways for decision-making,
- clearly identify participants in decision-making,
- clearly describe the scope of the role played by each participant in decision-making,
- allow for open discussion in which participants will feel free to voice their perspectives, and,
- regularly review shared governance.

This document describes the organization of shared internal governance, identifies the participants, and outlines the processes to be followed. It includes a set of guidelines about the various roles and authority of the various stakeholders such as, the Board of Visitors, faculty, administration, staff and students, in decision making.

This document also is intended to foster something less tangible than structures and procedures but equally important: a culture of transparency and trust in which all stakeholders—administrators, faculty, staff, and students—are encouraged to share the knowledge and insights that will allow the University to address complex issues and adapt to

changing needs. In addition to the above, an open and effective system of shared governance will be receptive to change. This university continues to evolve—embracing new populations of learners, incorporating new technology, and responding to new or changing disciplines. Therefore, procedures for amending the Shared Internal Governance system described in this document allow this to be a living document for a university that is continually renewing itself.

Constituent Elements of Shared Governance

The Shared Governance Structure provides a broad framework for governance, with the inclusion of the President, the President's Cabinet, the Leadership Council, the Student Government Association, the Faculty Senate, the Administrative Senate, and the Staff Senate, as well as necessary committees and/or councils. Each division may have additional elements of shared governance for decisions at that level.

Board of Visitors

As public trustees, the members of the Board have the overall responsibility and authority, subject to constitutional and statutory limitations, for the continued operation and development of the institution as a comprehensive state university and for the evolving policies within which it must function. The By-Laws of the Board of Visitors delegate the authority for implementing the internal governance system to the president of the university.

The President

For the continuing operation and development of the institution, much of the authority of the Board of Visitors is delegated to the President, who serves as agent of the Board and chief executive officer of the University. Delegated authority includes the approval of revisions to the Shared Governance System.

President's Cabinet

The President, Vice Presidents, and the Chief of Staff comprise the President's Cabinet. The Cabinet is an Advisory group that meets at the request of the President. The Cabinet's function is to review and make recommendations regarding actions affecting the operation and development of the University. The President may delegate decision-making authority to the President's Cabinet or to individual members when appropriate.

Members may delegate decision-making authority when appropriate in keeping with the philosophy that decision-making authority should be delegated to the lowest appropriate level.

The Leadership Council

The Leadership Council serves as an advisory group for the President and is comprised of the members of the President's Cabinet as well as the Deans of the colleges and the library, and the Director of Athletics.

University Committees and Councils

Standing and ad hoc committees and councils may be established as necessary for the purpose of advising the President, the President's Cabinet, and other administrators; considering and making recommendations regarding a variety of university policies and procedures; and/or carrying out those policies and procedures.

Representative Bodies

Teaching and Research Faculty

The Teaching and Research Faculty shall maintain a representative body, the Faculty Senate, that shall speak for its members as a whole on matters of curricula and programs, co-curricular offerings and resources, and professional standards and activities, as well as on other issues that may affect the welfare of the university community.

As appropriate, this Senate shall (1) initiate, (2), approve, or (3) review and comment upon proposals. Pathways for curricular, policy and structural changes in Academic Affairs are presented in the Academic Governance document. Procedures for changes in the Faculty Senate Constitution are described in that document. Procedures for changes in the Teaching and Research Faculty Handbook are described in that document.

This Senate also shall be responsible for appointing faculty to represent their constituencies on Shared Governance committees except in cases where it is specified that members will be elected or chosen by some other means.

Administrative and Professional Faculty

The Administrative and Professional (AP) Faculty shall maintain a representative body, the AP Senate that shall speak for its members as a whole on matters of policies and procedures affecting the employment and working conditions of administrative and professional faculty, as well as on other issues that may affect the welfare of the university community.

As appropriate, this Senate shall (1) initiate, (2), approve, or (3) review and comment upon proposals. This Senate also shall be responsible for appointing faculty to represent their constituencies on Shared Governance committees except in cases where it is specified that members will be elected or chosen by some other means.

Students

Every student becomes a member of the Student Government Association (SGA) upon matriculation in the University. The SGA Senate serves as the primary legislative body for the students and serves as a body for student expression and participation in campus policy decisions. The SGA Senate shall speak for graduate and undergraduate students on matters of curricula and programs, co-curricular offerings and resources, and policies and procedures for student evaluation of faculty, as well as on other issues that may affect the welfare of the university community.

As appropriate, the SGA Senate shall (1) initiate, (2), approve, or (3) review and comment upon proposals. The association also shall be responsible for appointing students to represent its constituencies on Shared Governance committees except in cases where it is specified that members will be elected or chosen by some other means.

Classified Employees

Classified and wage employees (1500 hours) shall maintain a representative body, the Staff Senate, that shall speak for their constituency on matters pertaining to safety and working conditions and campus environment, as well as on other issues that may affect the welfare of the university community.

As appropriate, this Association shall (1) initiate, (2), approve, or (3) review and comment upon proposals. The association also shall be responsible for appointing wage employees to represent its constituencies on Shared Governance committees except in cases where it is specified that members will be elected or chosen by some other means.

Other Stakeholders

Nothing in this document shall preclude stakeholders subsumed by the above categories from organizing associations, councils, or other bodies to represent their interests, but in terms of Shared Governance, only the senates and committees identified in this document shall be the bodies authorized to formally (1) initiate, (2), approve, or (3) review and comment upon proposals. Stakeholders wishing to introduce a proposal must submit it to the first level in the proposal pathway.

Constitutions

Each Senate shall maintain a constitution and/or bylaws that shall specify, at a minimum,

Charges: What matters or issues fall under the purview of this body?

Electors: Who is eligible to vote for representatives to this body?

Membership: How many representatives are members of this body? How is representation apportioned? How and when are representatives selected? What are the lengths of terms?

Leadership: Who are the officers and what are their duties? How are they selected? What are the lengths of terms for each officer?

Structure: What are the standing committees and what issues are under their purview?

Amendments: What procedure shall be followed to amend the body's constitution and bylaws?

Copies of constitutions and bylaws shall be posted at the Shared Governance website. Whenever a constitution is amended, an updated copy of the constitution shall be conveyed by the chief officer of the body to the Executive Assistant to the Provost so that the website may be updated.

University Standing Committees

University level committees fall into three categories:

- Academic affairs
- Student affairs
- Administrative

Academic Affairs

These committees have responsibilities primarily related to curriculum and professional standards and awards for Teaching and Research faculty and Administrative and Professional faculty. Therefore, committees in Academic Governance are subdivided into two categories:

Curriculum and Program, including:

- Academic Policies and Procedures
- Academic Program Review
- Core Curriculum Advisory
- Graduate Affairs Council

Professional Standards, Awards and Activities, including:

- Administrative/Professional Faculty Grievance
- Faculty Appeals
- Faculty Awards
- Faculty Grievance
- Intellectual Property
- Scholarly Activities
- Student Evaluations of Faculty

Student Affairs

These committees have responsibilities primarily related to student life. The Vice President for Student Affairs or a designee serves as the Designated Administrator for these committees.

- Committee on Clubs and Organizations
- Outstanding Student Worker Committee
- Student Activities and Facilities Committee
- Student Affairs Executive Council
- Student Athlete Appeals Committee
- Student Awards Committee
- Student Health Advisory Committee
- Student Media Steering Committee

Administrative

These committees have charges related to carrying out management functions at the university.

Committee	Responsible Administrator
Bookstore Advisory Committee	VP for Finance and Administration
Dining Services Committee	VP for Finance and Administration
Diversity Equity and Action Committee	VP for Academic Affairs
Financial Aid Advisory Committee	VP for Enrollment Management
Information Technology Advisory Committee	VP for Information Technology
Institutional Animal Care & Use	Dean College of Graduate Studies and Research
Institutional Effectiveness	Assistant Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Improvement
Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects	Dean College of Graduate Studies and Research
Intercollegiate Athletics Committee	President
Library	Dean of the Library
Parking and Traffic	VP for Finance and Administration
Risk Advisory Committee	VP for Student Affairs
Systems Operations Committee	VP for Information Technology
Sustainability Steering Committee	President

Additionally, ad hoc and advisory committees may be established.

The membership, officers and charges should be reported to the Assistant Provost for Academic Operations for posting on the shared governance website.

Amending the Shared Governance Documents

Editing the documents in response to administrative changes

The designated administrator for an administrative position, unit, or division must notify the University Internal Governance Review Committee (UIGRC) of any of the following:

- a modification of the title or name of a position, unit, or division,
- a modification or realignment of responsibilities that affects one or more positions,
- a modification or realignment of functions that affects one or more units or divisions, and
- the elimination of a position, unit, or division.

The chair of the UIGRC must be notified within ten business days of any such changes that would require corresponding edits to the Shared Governance Documents.

Within twenty business days of notification, the UIGRC will determine whether the changes will require edits and will make the necessary edits both to the document and to the Internal Governance website.

Amending the documents in response to proposals from Representative Bodies

At any time, any individual, unit or division may suggest amendments to the Shared Governance Document. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the representative body, as appropriate. If recommended for approval the proposal will be forwarded to the UIGRC. The presidents of the other representative bodies may present the proposed amendment to their members for review and comment. Twenty business days during the regular academic year will be allowed for review and comment.

Within ten business days of the expiration of the period allowed for review and comment, the chair of the UIGRC will convene the committee to consider the comments from the Representative Bodies and to vote upon the proposed amendment. A simple majority will be required for passage.

Upon passage, the committee's recommendation will be forwarded to the President.

Upon notification of approval by the President, UIGRC will make the necessary edits both to the document and to the Internal Governance website. The nature and date of each amendment will be recorded in the Appendix.

Regular Review of Shared Governance

Every four years, the UIGRC will conduct a review of the documents. Each college, administrative unit, and Representative Body will be notified that the review is underway and

will be invited to identify structures, policies and processes that may no longer be appropriate as the university evolves. The UIGRC also will survey the shared governance committees to determine whether membership and charges continue to be appropriate.

As a result of the review, the UIGRC may determine that amendment(s) may be necessary. Any proposed amendment will be communicated to the presidents of the Representative Bodies. The presidents will present the proposed amendment(s) to their members for review and comment. Twenty business days in the regular academic year will be allowed for review and comment. Thereafter the process described in the section above will be followed.

University Internal Governance Review Committee

Charges

- Review and approve any proposals for changes in the Internal Governance structure and document coming from any IG constituency. Forward approved proposals to the President of the University for final approval. Upon final approval, make necessary changes in the Internal Governance structure and document.
- Conduct a quadrennial review of Internal Governance, including committee memberships, charges and approval pathways. Identify updates and revisions of the Internal Governance structure that would strengthen its effectiveness and make necessary changes in the Internal Governance structure and document.
- Any changes arising from the above will be communicated to the Administrator of the Internal Governance website.
- Provide an annual report to the Designated Administrator and Senate Presidents for dissemination to their constituents.
- Receive notifications of changes in position titles and personnel employed in order to update memberships in Internal Governance committees as changes are made.

Membership

The University Internal Governance Review Committee will be composed of:

- Presidents of the Faculty Senate, Administrative & Professional Faculty Senate and the Staff Senate;

- Chair, Faculty Senate Governance Committee
- Chair, Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee
- Three tenured faculty appointed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for three year terms, staggered
- Provost
- Two other Vice Presidents designated annually by the University President.
- Two at-large members designated annually by the University President.

Designated Administrator

The Designated Administrator will be the Chief of Staff for the University President.

Procedures for Standing Committees

The term ‘committee’ refers to both ‘committee’ and ‘council’ and encompasses bodies on the department, college, and university level. In this document, the term ‘university committee’ refers to shared governance committees with membership beyond the college level.

Membership on committees

Unless otherwise noted, appointed committee members are selected in the following fashion:

Student appointments are made by the SGA Senate.

Faculty appointments are made by the Faculty Senate Executive Council. For faculty elected, election results will be reported to the Assistant Provost for Academic Operations by week 13 of the spring semester.

Administrative and professional faculty appointments are made by the AP Senate.

Classified and wage (1500 hours) staff appointments are made by the Staff Senate.

Members of the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects and the Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee are selected by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies in Research in accord with federal policies governing these.

When individuals are representing specific units or offices, appointments are made by the appropriate vice president.

Persons who serve by virtue of position may appoint a designee.

Terms of service on committees

Unless otherwise indicated, terms of service on standing committees are two years for all non-student members beginning on the Monday two weeks prior to the fall semester. To ensure continuity, terms of non-student members should be staggered.

The term of appointment for students is one year.

Members, whether student or non-student, may be reappointed or reelected.

If a substitute is appointed or elected to complete the term of any committee member, the substitute's term shall expire at the end of the original term.

Timeline for constituting and convening committees

All appointments to university committees are to be submitted to the Designated Administrator no later than four weeks prior to the start of the fall semester. Confirmation letters will be sent out two weeks prior to the fall semester.

All university committees must convene and elect officers no later than the end of the fourth week of the fall semester. Committees that meet only as business dictates must convene by the deadline to elect officers.

Election of officers

Unless otherwise indicated, the following officers of university committees are elected annually by the members of the committee:

- chair
- vice chair, and
- recording secretary

Election of officers will be reported by the newly elected chair to the Administrator of the Shared Governance website no later than the fifth week of the fall semester.

Timetable for actions

Action	Date
Elected faculty positions reported to Assistant Provost for Academic Operations	Friday of the thirteenth week of the spring semester
Senate appointments are reported to the Designated Administrators and the Assistant Provost for Academic Operations	Four weeks prior to the start of the fall semester
Student appointments are reported to the Designated Administrators and the Assistant Provost for Academic Operations	Friday of the thirteenth week of the spring semester
Committees must convene and elect officers with results reported to the Designated Administrators and the Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs	Friday of the fourth week of the fall semester
Membership and officers posted on the shared governance website	Friday of the fifth week of the fall semester
Annual reports due to the Designated Administrator	Friday of the week following spring semester's final exams

Designated Administrators

For each committee, a designated administrator has been identified. Designated administrators are chosen because the committees' charges fall under their purview. They are responsible for facilitating the business of the committees. They convene or designate a convener for the first meeting of the committee, serve as a resource for the committee, and receive and forward the committee's midyear and annual reports. Designated administrators will be thoroughly familiar with shared internal governance documents as they apply to their designated areas of responsibility.

Guidelines for Designated Administrators

- Convene the first meeting of the committee by the fourth week of the fall semester after consulting the schedules of the members. If possible, the meeting should be scheduled at a time that is mutually convenient for all members of the

- committee/council. Work with the committee to establish a regular meeting time.
- By the fourth week, if the committee has not already done so, facilitate the election of the chair, vice chair and recording secretary by members of the committee. The designated administrator will then notify the Administrator of the Internal Governance website of the name, university address, phone number, and e-mail address of the committee's officers via a form on the Internal Governance website.
 - Arrange for new committee members to be informed about the function and procedures of the committee.
 - Serve as a resource for the chairperson and the committee (e.g., communication with all appropriate university stakeholders, preparation of proposals using the appropriate forms and format, routing of proposals, other guidelines and procedures).

The designated administrator may choose to participate fully in meetings of the committee as a non-voting member except in cases of committee meetings in which appeals or grievances are being considered (i.e. committees in which appeals are being considered that may later be considered by the designated administrator).

Reporting Responsibilities

Governance committees, except for the Faculty Appeals, Faculty Grievance, and AP Faculty Grievance, the committees' annual reports are due to their designated administrators by the Friday of the week following spring semester's final exams. Designated Administrators are responsible for forwarding all reports to the Administrator of the Internal Governance website for posting. Report any changes in position titles or personnel to the University Internal Governance Review Committee.

Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order, in the form of its most recent edition, will govern all committee proceedings. Additionally, committees that have or develop internal policies for carrying out their responsibilities will submit those documents and any subsequent revisions to the appropriate Designated Administrators for review and approval. A copy of these documents is to be filed with the Designated Administrator.

Attendance

All members are expected to attend meetings of their respective committee. In the case of excessive absences, the appointing senate/official will be asked by the committee chair to appoint someone who can and will attend regularly. Committee members may identify substitutes for a particular meeting. Substitutes retain the voting rights of the committee members. Proxy votes, however, are not acceptable, as per Robert's Rules.

Meetings

Except when personnel matters are being considered, such as grievances and appeals, all committee meetings are open to the public. Observers may request permission of a committee to make statements. A quorum shall be based on a majority of the voting membership of the committee, excluding any membership positions that are vacant after the end of the fifth week of the fall semester.

Minutes

Each shared governance committee will keep and distribute the minutes to the members of the committee and the appropriate administrators. Copies of the minutes and supporting documents will be maintained on the currently adopted university-wide platform by the designated administrator or designee for the current and previous academic years at a minimum.

Confidential Discussions and Documents

Shared Governance committees will not withhold any documents or records of discussions (except those protected by federal and state law) from any individual or group. [Virginia Code 2.2-3705.7](#) allows the working papers and correspondences of the chief executive officer of any public institution to be kept confidential for deliberative and personal uses. In accordance with the principles of the shared governance system, when working papers and correspondences are submitted to committees they will be treated as public documents.

Pathways for Proposals

Proposals may be initiated by any potential stakeholder in the action. The pathways for proposals for university-wide changes begin with one of the shared governance committees or senates listed herein. Copies of the initial proposal may also be sent simultaneously for information purposes to other constituencies in the approval pathway. For some actions,

specific formats may be required, e.g. new course proposals. If not, the proposal should at a minimum include a title for the proposed change, a description of the change and the contact information for the initial author(s) as well as a rationale for the change. If appropriate, include an analysis of the impact of the proposal on affected stakeholders, programs and offices. When changes are proposed to senate handbooks, constitutions, and/or bylaws, specify the sections and language to be altered. If the proposal includes any fiscal impacts, a budget should also be included. The proposal must include a signature block with lines for each reviewing and approving authority required in the pathway and lines for the dates the action is required and when it occurred.

Pathways for approval of proposals are approved by the UIGRC. For Academic Affairs committees, the pathways are found in the Academic Governance document. The VP for Student Affairs recommends approval pathways for proposals from student affairs committees. Designated Administrators for other committees recommend approval pathways for proposals for their committees. The UIGRC will have these posted on the Shared Governance website.

Categories of action

Each constituent in a pathway (committee, senate, or administrator) may take one of the following types of actions with respect to a proposal:

Review and Recommend: constituents shall review the proposal, may call in the proposer or other affected parties, and will recommend approval as submitted, approval subject to recommended changes, or rejection of the proposal. Their recommendation, along with any justification for recommended changes or rejections will be forwarded to all constituents in the pathway. The recommendations may include separate consideration of related actions. If a proposer does not agree with any parts of a recommendation, they may attach comments to be included in the proposal's documentation as it moves forward.

Approve: the constituents have the authority to approve or disapprove the proposal. If the proposal is approved it is forwarded, along with any comments and recommendations received, to the next constituent, if any. If the proposal is not approved, it shall not be forwarded. If the proposal contains amendments (changes in wording, deletions or additions), the proposer may withdraw the proposal within ten class days during the regular academic year. All constituencies in the path up to this point shall be notified of the decision and the rationale for the decision. In the case of disapproval, the proposer may seek an appeal following the appeal process described below or may revise and resubmit the proposal in light of any recommendations.

Move through: the constituent is responsible for ensuring that the proposal moves on to the next level for review and comment or approval.

Informed: Other affected parties that are not constituents in the pathway shall be informed upon final approval of a proposal.

Timeline

The initial author(s) of the proposal is responsible for tracking the progress of the proposal and moving the proposal forward through each step in the pathway, including any suggestions or recommendations already made. Constituents with a role in reviewing and recommending or with approval authority shall have up to 20 class days during the regular academic year to fulfill their function. Faculty Senate, however, has 40 class days during the regular academic year to allow for review by sub-committees and full review by the Senate. Proposals intended to be considered by Faculty Senate must be delivered to Faculty Senate Executive Council no later than 40 class days prior to their final spring meeting (link to Faculty Senate calendar.) If no action is taken within the specified time period, the proposal shall be forwarded to the next constituent with an indication that no action was taken at the previous level.

Proposals that must be approved by the Board of Visitors and/or state level authorities have their own timelines; author(s) should be cognizant of timelines and deadlines of the authorizing board/council/agency and submit proposals with sufficient lead-time to insure timely action.

Appeal

The author(s) may appeal the decision to disapprove in full or in part. The appeal shall be to the constituent who initially disapproved. The appeal shall be in writing with a rationale that responds to the reasons for disapproval. If the appeal does not result in a change in the decision at this level, the proposer may appeal to the next level up of approving authority, up to the President, if any. The decision at this level shall be final.

REFERENCES

Bahls, Steven C. 2014. *Shared Governance in Times of Change: A Practical Guide for Universities and Colleges*. Washington, DC: AGB Press.