

GUIDELINES FOR SHARED GOVERNANCE AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

Memorandum of Understanding Entered into by the Faculty and the Administration of The University of Arizona

I. OVERVIEW

A. Shared Governance

Arizona Revised Statute [§ 15-1601](#) enshrines shared governance in State law, mandating faculty participation and shared responsibility, through elected representatives, in the governance of public universities:

Subject to the responsibilities and powers of the board and the university presidents, the faculty members of the universities, through their elected faculty representatives, shall share responsibility for academic and educational activities and matters related to faculty personnel. The faculty members of each university, through their elected faculty representatives, shall participate in the governance of their respective universities and shall actively participate in the development of university policy.

The University of Arizona upholds this mandate by actively including faculty who are elected (or appointed under the provisions of this Memorandum of Understanding) in shared governance in activities such as:

- Campus, college, and unit-level decision-making, including the development of academic programs and curricula, policies, and strategic plans; academic reorganizations or mergers; major financial decisions and overarching budget allocation modelling, principles, and strategies; and any other decisions that would be reasonably expected to have a significant impact on the university;
- The recruitment, selection, and review of continuing status academic professionals and of faculty, both on and off the tenure track;
- The development of the criteria, principles, and processes for faculty review and compensation;
- The recruitment, selection, and review of heads of departments, academic unit directors, assistant/associate/deputy deans, deans, vice provosts, and senior vice presidents, among others.

While the ultimate authority for policy setting and decision-making rests with the President of the University and the Arizona Board of Regents, shared governance **is not optional**. Accordingly, the participation and advice of elected faculty shared governance bodies shall be appropriately solicited and carefully considered by administration before decisions are made. Any decisions involving shared governance participation that significantly depart from majority recommendations of an established shared governance body must be explained to the faculty, as described in this Memorandum of Understanding.

B. Shared Leadership¹

The University of Arizona community values and actively leverages the collective intelligence and expertise of our faculty. We believe that our institution is strengthened through the improved decision-making and leadership that comes from appropriately involving established disciplinary experts and

¹ This concept comes from Pearce, Craig L., Bob G. Wood, and Christina L. Wassenaar. 2018. The Future of Leadership in Public Universities: Is Shared Leadership the Answer? *Public Administration Review* 78(4): 640-644.

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scholars from within the University community. While drawing on this disciplinary expertise to improve strategic, administrative, managerial, or other decisions may not constitute, and shall not substitute for shared governance from a statutory perspective, it is no less critical to our collective success and should not be undervalued. Leveraging internal expertise should always be considered by administration before engaging consultants or experts from outside the University. This form of faculty participation is distinguished from statutory shared governance in that it is not elected or appointed through the processes spelled out in this Memorandum of Understanding.

C. Diversity and Inclusion

Ensuring that the broad perspective of lived experience informs decisions and decision-making is also critical, whether that diversity arises from differences in culture, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation or expression, or from differences in academic discipline, tenure status, or faculty type, among others. Every attempt should be made to be diverse and inclusive in appointments of faculty for the purpose of shared governance and shared leadership. Toward this imperative, flexibility has intentionally been written into the processes outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding for shared governance appointments.

D. Engaging Campus in Governance

While not required by statute, the University administration and elected faculty shared governance bodies such as the Faculty Senate or the Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee (SPBAC) should routinely provide opportunities at all levels for faculty, students, and non-faculty employees to provide input on different issues facing the university through mechanisms such as ad hoc committees, focus groups, surveys, and town halls.

E. Consistency with Other Documents

The following guidelines do not constitute a legal contract but are intended to inform the process through which elected faculty representatives and administration work together to address issues. They do not supersede [Arizona Board of Regents policies](#), including the Conditions of Service and ABOR 6-910 and 6-201(J), the [University Handbook for Appointed Personnel](#), the applicable provisions of the [Constitution of the Faculty of the University of Arizona](#), or the [Revised Statutes of the State of Arizona](#).

II. SHARED GOVERNANCE

This Memorandum of Understanding, agreed to by faculty and administration, outlines principles of shared governance at The University of Arizona and is entered into freely by a faculty and an administration committed to a common vision and mission. This memorandum supersedes those previously signed by Presidents and the faculty dating back to 1997.

The success of the University and the positive morale of the faculty and administration are dependent upon the collective knowledge and wisdom of the university community in planning and decision-making. To succeed, shared governance requires shared confidence between faculty members and administrators that is fostered through transparency, forthrightness, the extensive sharing of information, and the goodwill that faculty representatives and administrators achieve through ongoing shared governance dialogue.

Subject to this Memorandum of Understanding, Arizona Board of Regents policy, and State law, the administration may choose to weigh the counsel of various faculty groups or members differently. The administration may also consult with students and staff through their respective governance bodies.

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However, the primary faculty shared governance bodies with which the administration must routinely consult are the Faculty Senate and the Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee (SPBAC). Both of these bodies have significant elected faculty representation and are chaired or co-chaired by a member of the General Faculty.

A central goal of shared governance is ensuring mutual and equitable participation in policy development and decision making. Decisions on changes in policies under the purview of shared governance, or the development of and decision on new policies, should normally be reached only after there is general acceptance of the policy proposal in its final form by both the administrator(s) and the appropriate elected shared governance body for the issue in question. The President or designee(s), however, may make and announce a final decision without “general acceptance” provided they believe that every reasonable effort has been made to reach a common position through consultation and that such a decision is necessary and in the best interests of the University. In these exceptional circumstances, the President or designee(s) shall explain the position taken to the faculty through the Faculty Senate.

III. STRUCTURE AND PROCESS FOR SHARED GOVERNANCE

A. Budget and Strategic Planning

The Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee (SPBAC), comprised of elected faculty, administrators, and individuals from other sectors of the University community as detailed in the [Faculty Bylaws](#), shall be the university-level forum for shared governance on strategic planning and budget, including budgetary policy and strategy.

Because shared governance frames the context within which major operational decisions are made, any decisions with the potential for significant impact should always be presented to and discussed at SPBAC, whether the intent is to inform, to consult, or to partner with and share in accountability or responsibility for the outcomes. If there is uncertainty about whether a major decision (operational or otherwise) rises to this level, the President, Provost, or Chief Financial Officer should consult with the Chair of the Faculty and/or SPBAC Chair(s) before proceeding.

B. Academic and Academic Personnel Policies

Subject to the authority and responsibilities of the Arizona Board of Regents and the President, academic and curricular policies rest primarily with the faculty, as represented by the Faculty Senate or other shared governance bodies. The creation, reorganization, merger, or elimination of programs and academic units; academic personnel, research, or student affairs policy; and guidelines on faculty reviews and compensation are all within the jurisdiction of shared governance. An initial proposal to change these policies may come from any source, but the formal consideration and development of such policy changes shall always be undertaken through shared governance processes.

C. Selection and Review of Academic Administrators and Academic Vice Presidents

The faculty and administration will play a collaborative role in the recruitment, selection, and review of academic administrators. This includes heads of departments, academic unit directors, assistant deans, associate/deputy deans, deans, vice provosts, and senior vice presidents. It is expected that these personnel decisions will take place only after shared governance dialogue with appropriate

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representatives of the faculty, who are expected to serve this role largely through membership on search or review committees. It is the responsibility of all search and review committees to ensure open faculty input, including the input of the appropriate elected faculty body (e.g., Senate or the relevant College Advisory Council – see UHAP 7.09 [Resolution on College Governance](#), etc.)

Faculty representatives shall comprise half or more of each search or review committee. At least half of the faculty representatives must be chosen as per Section E below; the remainder may be appointed by the designated administrator (for the purposes of Shared Leadership and Diversity and Inclusion, as described in the Introduction to this MOU). Shared governance participation in searches for or reviews of administrators not listed here may take different forms, to be determined through consultation between the appropriate faculty officer (e.g., Chair of the Faculty, Chair of a College Advisory Council, etc.) and the immediate hiring supervisor.

D. Position Searches

The authority to hire University employees has generally been delegated by the Arizona Board of Regents to the President. Tenured and tenure-eligible faculty, continuing and continuing-eligible academic professionals, and academic administrative appointments (such as unit heads and those with dean, provost, or president in their title) will be made following open, competitive searches, preferably drawing from a national or international pool of candidates, and with selection based on merit and due consideration of diversity and inclusion. This statement is not intended to prohibit “laureate” or otherwise uniquely qualified appointments made on the basis of approved non-competitive searches. Nevertheless, regardless of whether a search is competitive, shared governance participation must be sought and considered as part of the hiring decision. While career track appointments may draw from a more limited pool of candidates, these same principles shall apply to those searches.

E. Faculty Representation

Faculty members, especially those who are members of the General Faculty, have the right and responsibility to participate in shared governance. In work assignments and performance reviews, their participation shall be recognized as service and shall be given the support necessary to ensure its success.

Representation of the faculty at all levels of University shared governance will be the responsibility of members of the faculty who:

- Have been chosen by direct election by the faculty or a faculty elected body;
- Are appointed by an elected faculty officer; or
- Are appointed by an administrator from a list of several who have been nominated by an elected faculty officer or elected faculty committee.

Administrators who are also members of the General Faculty may serve as shared governance representatives, assuming they are also selected through one of the above processes.

F. Process of Consultation

1. The overarching shared governance groups are the Faculty Senate and the Strategic Planning and Budget Advisory Committee. The President and Provost or designee should normally also interact

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with other individuals and organizations, including University Staff, the officers of the Associated Students of the University of Arizona, and the officers of the Graduate and Professional Student Council. When any such group or the administration wants to suggest a policy or a change in an existing policy, there should be initial consultations involving leaders from all the representative groups with a stake in the matter, as detailed in the University's Procedures for Creating and Revising University Policies <https://policy.arizona.edu/process-creating-and-revising-university-policy>]

2. The overarching shared governance groups and the administration are responsible for ensuring that any proposed policy, wherever it originates, shall be developed pursuant to this Memorandum of Understanding, as well as to University and Arizona Board of Regents policy.
3. When differences arise between the administration and the appropriate overarching shared governance body concerning a policy recommendation in any area covered by these guidelines, the administration and that shared governance group will work to resolve those differences so as to attain an outcome that is generally accepted. If general acceptance cannot be reached among the parties involved, and the President or designee(s) believes that every reasonable effort has been made to be responsive and reach a common position, the President or designee(s) may proceed, provided they determine that action is necessary and in the best interests of the University.-In these exceptional circumstances, the President or designee(s) shall explain the position taken to the faculty through the Faculty Senate.
4. Shared governance principles do not typically extend to routine management decisions (e.g., the carrying out or implementation of established strategy or policy). However, as detailed above [Section III, A.], if there is ever a question as to whether a major operational or managerial decision might require shared governance input, the President, Provost, Chief Financial Officer, or other administrator should consult with the Chair of the Faculty and/or SPBAC Chair(s) before any decisions are made.
5. If there is a dispute over whether the adoption of a policy or its implementation has followed the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding, a consultation will take place between the administration and the appropriate shared governance bodies subject to the terms of F.3 above and Section G, below.
6. If the President or designee(s) believes, or the law requires, that an academic, educational, or faculty personnel policy change (or other decision whose outcome directly affects the faculty) must be expedited to the point of abbreviating normal shared governance procedures, the President or designee(s) will notify the Chair of the Faculty. They will develop an expedited shared governance process to ensure the principles outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding are met to the greatest degree possible.
7. If a substantial minority (more than one third) of any shared governance body or committee disagrees with any action taken by that committee, their position should be included as part of the committee's report or recommendations.
8. With regard to personnel or other confidential matters, administrators and elected faculty leaders and representatives have the right to determine the degree to which the specifics that are discussed may be shared more broadly with constituents and agree in advance to mutually honor that

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confidentiality. Whenever appropriate, such as in search committees, faculty representatives must abide by confidentiality requirements.

G. Shared Governance Review Committee

The Shared Governance Review Committee is responsible for monitoring the health of shared governance at the University and shall report out on it to the Faculty Senate annually, or more frequently as requested by Faculty Senate. The report should typically include the following as it relates to shared governance: an overview of major operational domains, the outcome(s) of major decisions, areas of concern, and any priorities or areas of focus for faculty and administration to work together on for the coming year (e.g., budget allocations, compensation, recruitment and financial aid, etc.). The committee may also make recommendations toward the more effective working of shared governance, as needed. The Shared Governance Review Committee shall meet at least once a semester during the academic year and on an ad hoc basis as relevant issues arise. Ad hoc meetings may be called by the Chair of the Faculty, the Vice Chair of the Faculty (who serves as Chair of the Shared Governance Review Committee), the President, or by majority vote of the Faculty Senate. The committee's membership is detailed in the [Faculty Bylaws, Article VI, Section 1](#).

H. Continuing Structure and Process

The principles of shared governance outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be fostered within the colleges and units, in a form appropriate to the circumstances of each college and unit, but consistent with the aims and objectives of shared governance, including State Law and UHAP 7.09, [The Resolution on College Governance](#). Given their relevance to governance at all levels, Sections C, D, and E of Part III, Structure and Process for Shared Governance, shall be observed in Colleges and units.

Whenever there is turnover in administration or in the Chair or Vice Chair of the Faculty, or the text of this Memorandum of Understanding is under revision, the remaining signatories commit to adhering to the spirit of shared governance manifest in the most recently signed version. Before the Memorandum of Understanding is signed due to turnover among senior administrators or the Chair or Vice Chair of the Faculty, the Shared Governance Review Committee shall meet in order to ensure that all signatories are well versed on established shared governance practices and expectations at the University as laid out in this Memorandum of Understanding, University Handbook for Appointed Personnel, the Faculty Bylaws and Constitution, and Arizona Revised Statute § 15-1601.