RE: January 11th Faculty Governance Retreat

ATTACHMENT

Pre-Reading: Core Readings

AGB (2016). Shared governance: Is OK good enough? Retrieved from:
http://agb.org/sites/default/files/survey_2016_shared_governance.pdf

Bahls, S. (March/April 2014). How to make shared governance work: Some best practices. *Trusteeship*. Retrieved from: http://agb.org/trusteeship/2014/3/how-make-shared-governance-work-some-best-practices

CFAR. (2012). *Decision charting and governance.*

Miller, M. T., Smith, E. A. & Daniel P. Nadler, D. P. (2016). Debate and discourse: The role of the faculty senate on the modern American campus. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice* 16(3), pp. 22-29. *ProQuest.* Web. 2 Nov. 2016.

Minor, J. T. (2003). Assessing the senate: Critical issues considered. *American behavioral scientist* 46(7), pp. 960-977. *ProQuest.* Web. 15 Nov. 2016.

Shared Governance:
Is OK Good Enough?

AGB ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNING BOARDS
OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Shared Governance:
Is OK Good Enough?

About AGB

Since 1921, the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) has had one mission: to strengthen and protect this country's unique form of institutional governance through its research, services, and advocacy. Serving more than 1,300 member boards, 1,900 institutions, and 40,000 individuals, AGB is the only national organization providing university and college presidents, board chairs, trustees, and board professionals of both public and private institutions and institutionally related foundations with resources that enhance their effectiveness.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The TIAA Institute helps advance the ways individuals and institutions plan for financial security and organizational effectiveness. The Institute conducts in-depth research, provides access to a network of thought leaders, and enables those it serves to anticipate trends, plan future strategies, and maximize opportunities for success.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the diverse ways that colleges and universities, their faculty, and their boards are organized, nearly all have shared governance in common. Shared governance—the principle that acknowledges the final institutional authority of governing boards and distributed authority to the administration and faculty—is a basic tenet in higher education. When working well, it brings a wealth of ideas to critical conversations and creates a sense of inclusiveness that strengthens support for decisions.

In a time of serious challenges to higher education—among them declines in enrollment and funding, shifting demographics, and public critiques of value—shared governance can be an essential institutional asset.

But how well is shared governance working today? Is it holding up in the face of changes in the faculty workforce, shifting market demands, and scarce resources? Do the traditional partners in shared governance—presidents and chancellors, faculty, and governing boards—understand each other, respect each other's roles, and have constructive dialogues? Are shared governance policies and practices sufficiently clear and current to provide effective guidance and transparency for institutional decision making? Or is shared governance in some places a 20th-century practice that is ill-suited for 21st-century challenges?

To understand how well shared governance currently functions, AGB conducted two surveys: one of presidents and chancellors (hereafter, "presidents") and one of governing board members. Both surveys focused on policies, practices, and perceptions related to shared governance. More than 300 presidents completed the first survey. Nearly 2,250 governing board members completed the second. Respondents to both surveys represented AGB members from public and independent institutions and systems of higher education. Table 1 describes the survey respondents.

TABLE 1

SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY SECTOR

	Independent Institutions	Public Institutions
Board Members	84%	16%
Presidents and Chancellors	72%	28%

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The key finding from the surveys is that most presidents and board members from both public and independent institutions believe that shared governance is working adequately but could be more effective. More than 95 percent of board members reported that shared governance is a very important or moderately important component of decision making at their institutions. Similarly, more than 95 percent reported that it is very important or moderately important to higher education overall.

Most presidents and board members reported that the board and faculty recognize and support each other's authority—the board's authority for overseeing the entire institution or system and the faculty's for overseeing academic programs. The majority of presidents and board members also reported that discussions of difficult matters among the board, faculty, and administration are conducted in good faith and with trust. The survey also made clear that presidents think boards and faculty could significantly improve their understanding of each other's roles.

The survey identified one specific area of concern in how the changing academic workforce affects shared governance. Full-time faculty now account for just over half of all U.S. faculty, down from over three-quarters a generation ago. Tenure-track and tenured faculty account for only about one-quarter of faculty. Despite these trends, more than 50 percent of presidents and chancellors at public and independent institutions reported that board policies related to shared governance have not changed.

The report that follows provides a more detailed look at the survey results, displaying them by public and independent respondents. It also highlights where presidents and board members hold similar views, and where they see things differently. Those distinctions deserve attention.

According to the survey data, shared governance is not perfect but it is generally "OK" on most campuses. Yet that raises the question: In today's challenging environment, is "OK" good enough?

BOARD, PRESIDENT, AND FACULTY SUPPORT OF SHARED GOVERNANCE

The Shared Governance They Want

A number of experts have examined shared governance in the broader context of challenges facing higher education. Augustana College President Steven C. Bahls provides a useful framework for how shared governance functions in his recent book *Shared Governance in Times of Change* (AGB Press, 2014). Figure 1 on page 4 shows board member and president characterizations of the current state of shared governance in their institutions based on Bahls' four "Shared Governance Perspectives."

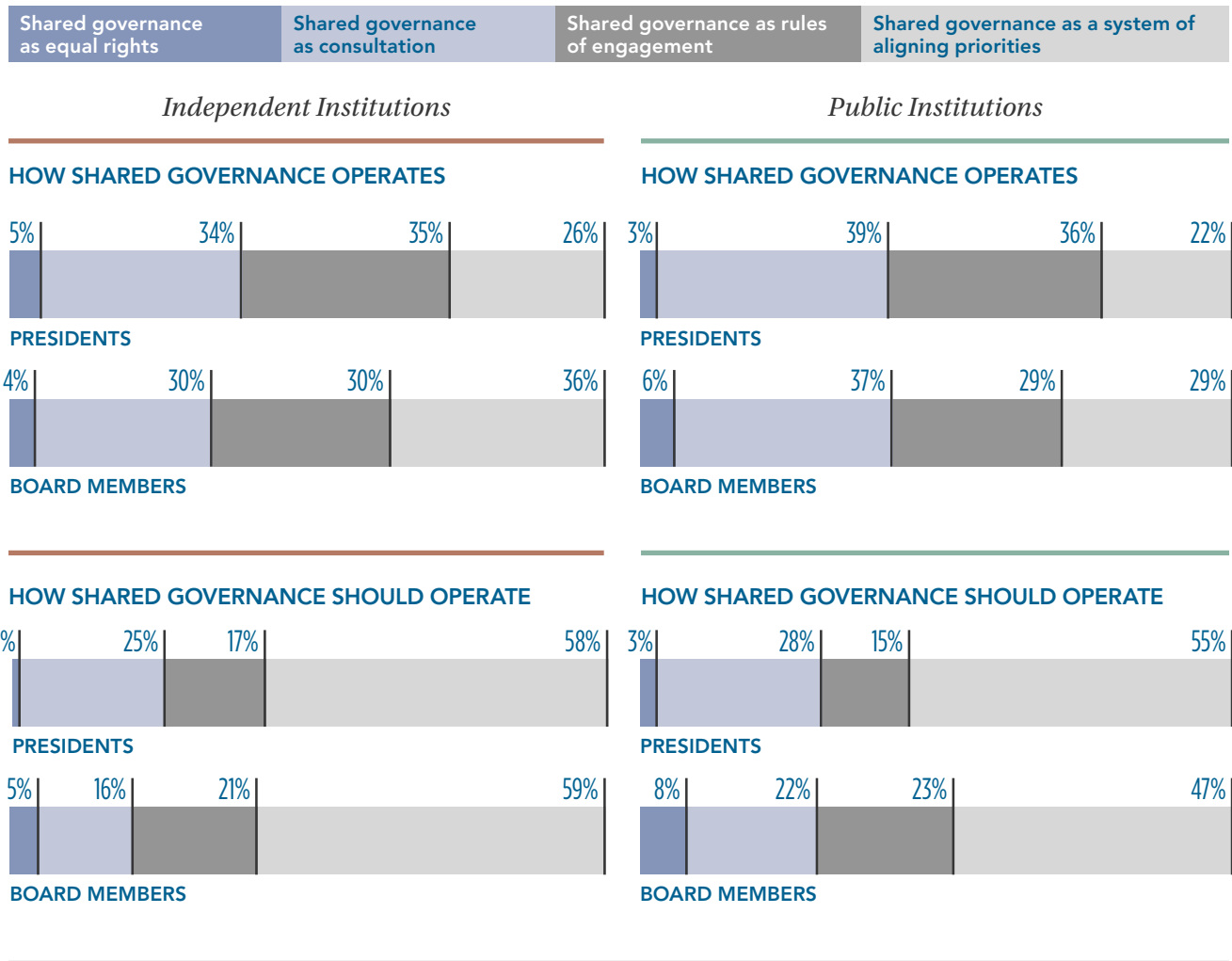## Shared Governance Perspectives

In *Shared Governance in Times of Change: A Practical Guide for Universities and Colleges*, Steven C. Bahls offers four perspectives on shared governance that the survey questions referenced. Each of the perspectives was defined as follows in the surveys:

A. **Shared governance as equal rights.** Shared governance ensures that faculty, staff, and administration have equal say in all governance matters, including budgets, academic directions of the institution, and strategic planning. Decisions are not made until a consensus is achieved.

B. **Shared governance as consultation.** Shared governance requires that those parties responsible for making decisions consult with others and consider their positions.

C. **Shared governance as rules of engagement.** Shared governance is a set of rules about the various roles and authority of the board, faculty, and administration in such things as academic decisions, budget decisions, selection of the president, and other operational decisions. Shared governance also describes rules of engagement when faculty, board members, and administrators disagree.

D. **Shared governance as a system of aligning priorities.** 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.

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FIGURE 1

HOW DOES SHARED GOVERNANCE OPERATE AND HOW SHOULD IT?

Shared governance as equal rights	Shared governance as consultation	Shared governance as rules of engagement	Shared governance as a system of aligning priorities

Independent Institutions

HOW SHARED GOVERNANCE OPERATES

5%   34%   35%   26%

PRESIDENTS

4%   30%   30%   36%

BOARD MEMBERS

HOW SHARED GOVERNANCE SHOULD OPERATE

1%   25%   17%   58%

PRESIDENTS

5%   16%   21%   59%

BOARD MEMBERS

Public Institutions

HOW SHARED GOVERNANCE OPERATES

3%   39%   36%   22%

PRESIDENTS

6%   37%   29%   29%

BOARD MEMBERS

HOW SHARED GOVERNANCE SHOULD OPERATE

3%   28%   15%   55%

PRESIDENTS

8%   22%   23%   47%

BOARD MEMBERS

Board members and presidents of independent institutions differed in their assessment of how shared governance functions at their college or university. Over one-third of board members said they believe shared governance operates as a system of aligning priorities. A little over one-quarter of presidents said they think shared governance now operates that way. However, nearly identical proportions of board members and presidents—well over 50 percent—said shared governance *should* function as a system of aligning priorities.

In public institutions, there is little difference between board members' and presidents' views of how shared governance currently operates. However, as with the independent board chairs and presidents, a much greater proportion in both public groups asserted shared governance *should* operate as a system of aligning priorities. The number of public presidents who said shared governance should operate as a system of aligning priorities was roughly two-and-a-half times the number who said it currently operates that way.

Board members and presidents of both independent and public institutions did not differ substantially in their responses, although more independent board members than public board members said shared governance should operate as a system of aligning priorities. Overall, survey data suggest many presidents and board members of both public and independent institutions would prefer a shared governance system that functions differently from the one they have. If they were to pursue change, the majority of presidents and nearly half of all board members responding to the survey aspire to a shared governance system that focuses on effectively aligning priorities.
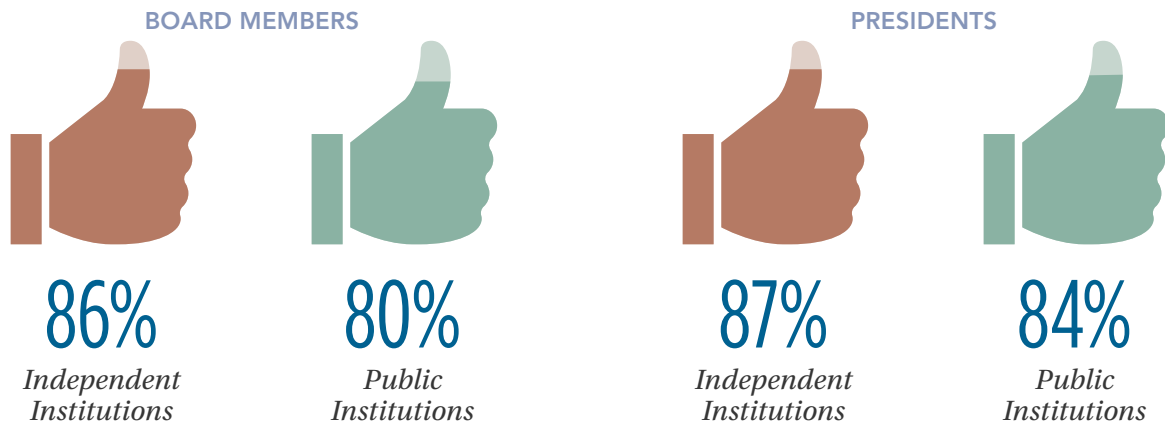
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Acknowledgment of Each Other's Roles

How shared governance now operates may not be ideal, but the majority of survey respondents said that boards and faculty recognize and respect each other's role in it. Figure 2 summarizes respondents' perceptions of board support for faculty authority and faculty support for board authority.
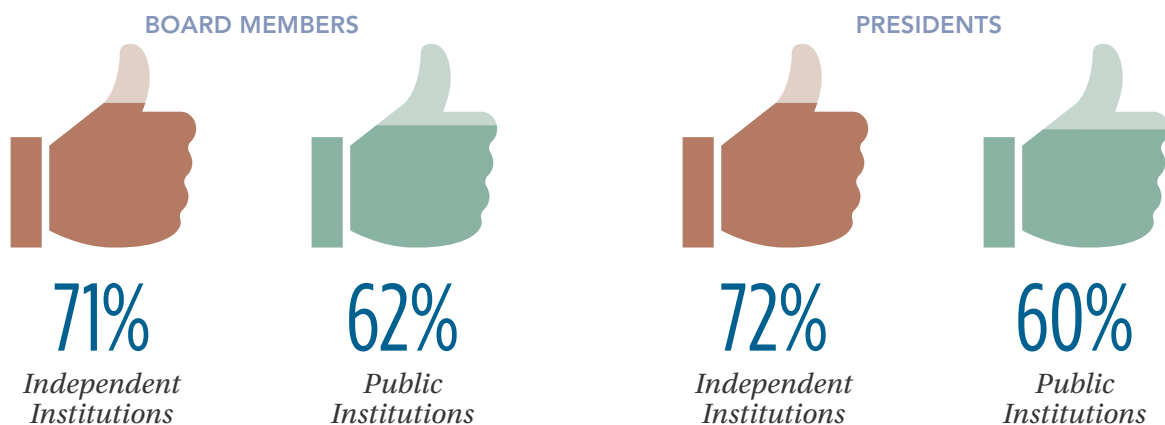
FIGURE 2

HOW SUPPORTIVE ARE BOARDS?

Respondents agree or strongly agree that the board recognizes and supports the faculty's authority in overseeing the academic programs:

BOARD MEMBERS   PRESIDENTS

86%
*Independent
Institutions*

80%
*Public
Institutions*

87%
*Independent
Institutions*

84%
*Public
Institutions*

HOW SUPPORTIVE ARE FACULTY?

Respondents agree or strongly agree that the faculty recognizes and supports the board's authority in overseeing the entire institution/system:

BOARD MEMBERS   PRESIDENTS

71%
*Independent
Institutions*

62%
*Public
Institutions*

72%
*Independent
Institutions*

60%
*Public
Institutions*

Presidents and board members generally agreed that boards recognize the faculty's authority for academic programs and that faculty members recognize board authority in overseeing the entire institution or system. But while respondents saw support of each group by the other as substantial, they suggested that boards are more likely to recognize faculty authority than faculty are to recognize board authority. Presidential assessments of faculty recognition and support for the board's authority were more favorable in independent institutions than in public institutions.

Administrator Support of Shared Governance

The board member survey also asked about presidents' and chief academic officers' support for shared governance more generally. (See Table 2.) Board members broadly agreed that top administrators show support for shared governance. However, a larger portion of board members at independent institutions than at public institutions said they strongly agreed with this assertion.

TABLE 2

BOARD MEMBER PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATOR SUPPORT FOR SHARED GOVERNANCE

		Independent Institutions	Public Institutions	All Institutions
The president and chief academic officer demonstrate support for shared governance at my institution/system.	Strongly Agree	45%	33%	43%
	Agree	43%	50%	44%
	Neutral	8%	11%	9%
	Disagree	3%	4%	3%
	Strongly Disagree	1%	2%	2%

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Shared Governance Under Stress

The surveys also asked about respondents' confidence in the strength of shared governance under stress. Specifically, board members and presidents were asked whether discussions of difficult matters among the board, faculty, and administration occur in good faith and with trust. (See Table 3.)

TABLE 3

BOARD MEMBER AND PRESIDENT PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGIALITY IN TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES

Discussion of difficult matters among the board, faculty, and administration are done in good faith and with trust.

	Independent Institutions		Public Institutions	
	PRESIDENTS	**BOARD MEMBERS**	**PRESIDENTS**	**BOARD MEMBERS**
Strongly Agree	16%	30%	22%	21%
Agree	44%	45%	40%	49%
Neutral	25%	16%	22%	16%
Disagree	12%	7%	13%	8%
Strongly Disagree	3%	2%	3%	6%

While over 70 percent of board members said that boards, faculty, and administrators maintain trust and good faith in discussions of difficult matters, a smaller majority of presidents agreed (about 62 percent of public and 60 percent of independent presidents). Nearly one-quarter of presidents were neutral on the durability of trust and good faith among the three parties during difficult discussions.

Understanding Each Other's Work

In addition to mutual acknowledgement of authority between boards and faculty and general support of shared governance by top administrators, the survey also examined board and faculty understanding of each other's responsibilities. Figure 3 compares presidents' responses about whether typical board and faculty members understand each other's work.
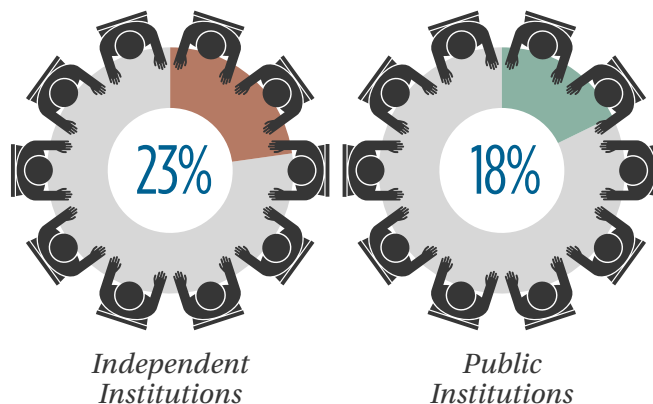
FIGURE 3

HOW WELL DO BOARDS AND FACULTY UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER?

Presidents who state that a typical board member understands the **work and responsibilities of faculty** well or very well:
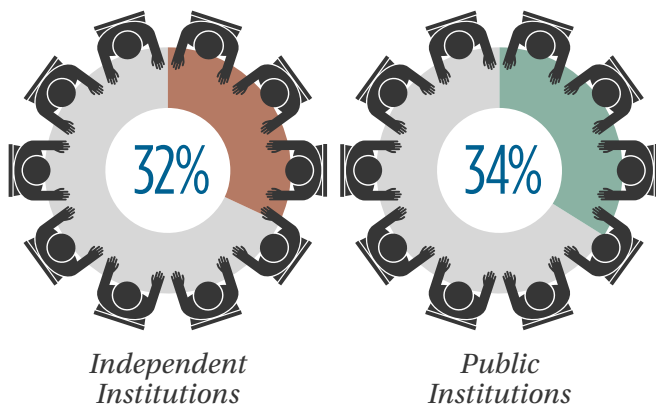
Presidents who state that a typical faculty member understands the **responsibilities and authority of the governing board** well or very well:

32%	34%	23%	18%
Independent Institutions	*Public Institutions*	*Independent Institutions*	*Public Institutions*

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Only about 30 percent of presidents reported that the typical board member understands the work of the faculty well or very well, and only about 20 percent said that the typical faculty member understands the work of the board well or very well. That is, presidents perceived board members to have greater awareness of faculty responsibilities than the reverse, although in neither case was the answer impressive. Perhaps more remarkable is the tepid degree to which presidents believed members of either group typically understand the work of the other.

Noteworthy differences in the responses of public and independent presidents include:

- Independent institution presidents were more likely than public institution presidents (51% vs. 40%) to say their typical board member understands faculty work and responsibilities "fairly well."

- Public institution presidents were more likely than independent institution presidents (37% vs. 26%) to say their typical board member understands faculty work and responsibilities "slightly."

While most board members and presidents aspire to high-functioning shared governance, and support for shared governance among the three groups appears relatively broad, most presidents reported that board members and faculty do not have a strong understanding of each other's contributions.

BOARD-FACULTY INTERACTION

Modes of Interaction

If governing boards and faculty do not understand each other's important work as well as they should, then it is worth considering how the two groups work together. Governing board-faculty interaction can take a number of forms in both independent and public institutions; this is important because structured opportunities for board members to meet and work with faculty can prove helpful in developing durable, trusting relationships.

Table 4 outlines a variety of ways that presidents said their boards and faculty work together.

TABLE 4

PRESIDENTIAL INVENTORY OF BOARD-FACULTY INTERACTIONS

In which of the following ways do members of the governing board and faculty at your institution interact?

	Independent Institutions	Public Institutions	All Institutions
Faculty membership on institution-wide committees (e.g. planning, budget/resources, accreditation, facilities, etc.)	91%	91%	91%
Faculty membership on the presidential search committee	88%	88%	88%
Faculty presentations to board and committees	83%	81%	83%
Faculty membership on board committee(s)	59%	27%	50%
Faculty participation in assessment of the president	39%	48%	42%
Board member involvement (e.g. participation, membership, etc.) on individual academic department or division advisory entities	20%	12%	18%

According to the presidents surveyed, boards and faculty most commonly come together when faculty serve on institution-wide committees, a presidential search committee is convened, or faculty members present to the board. While these kinds of experiences are important, they are irregular and therefore unlikely to build and sustain deeper understanding between faculty and board members. Data from the American Council on Education show that presidents turn over once every seven years on average, and search committees tend to be small. Presentations to the board seldom sustain interaction over time. Service on institution-wide committees may be the most promising area for substantial interaction.

Notably, the percentage of independent institution presidents who reported that their faculty interact with governing board members through membership on board committees was more than twice that of public institution presidents.[1]

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[1]   AGB's publication, *Policies, Practices, and Composition of Governing and Foundation Boards 2016*, indicates that about 21 percent of public governing boards and about 31 percent of independent boards include faculty members (voting and non-voting). Note: Governing board membership and committee membership may be distinct in some institutions.
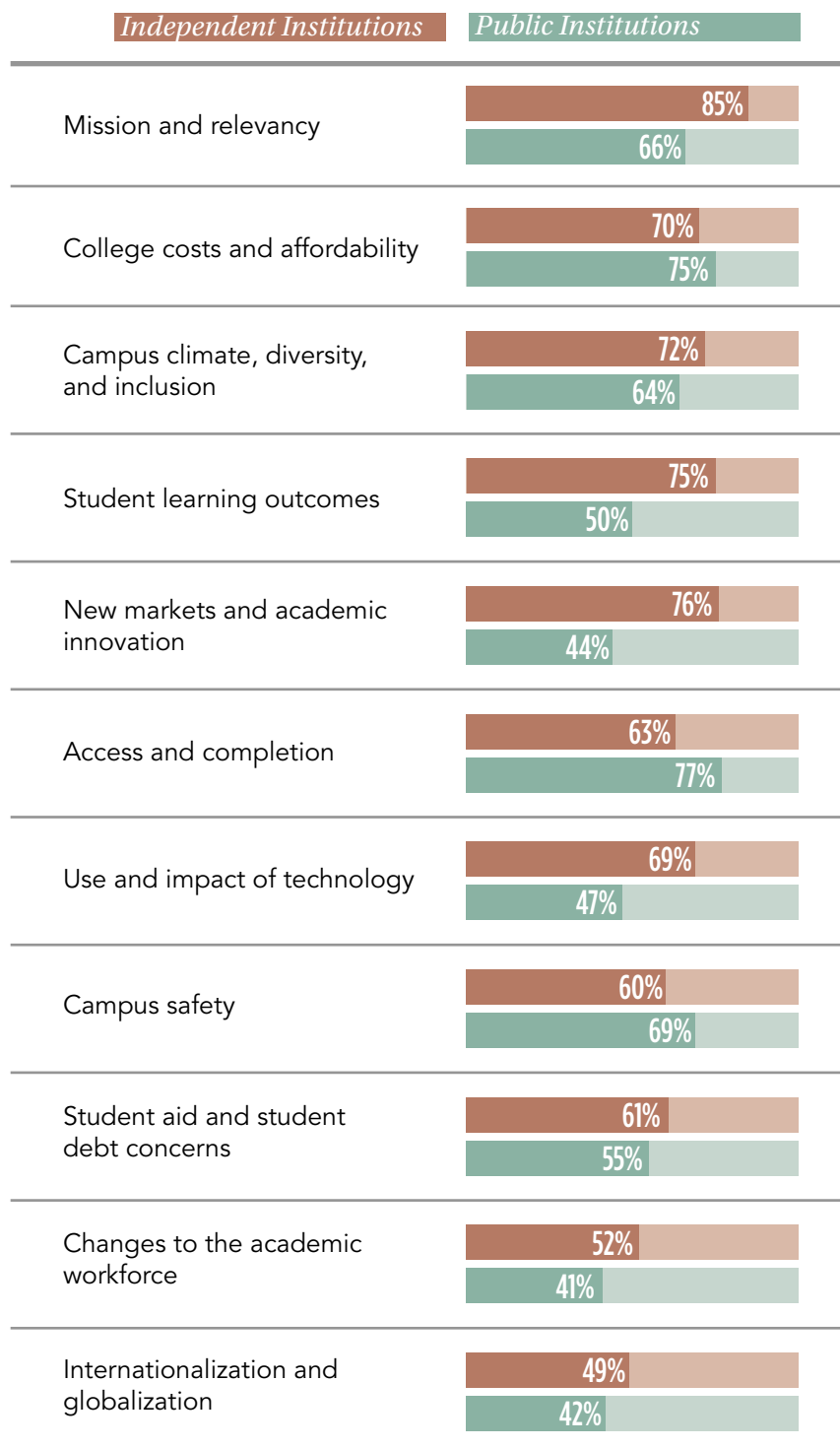
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Issues for Interaction

While opportunities to work together are important, the nature and content of those interactions often hold additional implications for strengthening shared governance. Accordingly, presidents were surveyed regarding the strategic issues around which board-faculty collaboration occur. (See Figure 4.)

FIGURE 4

WHEN DO FACULTY MEMBERS AND BOARDS COLLABORATE?

Independent Institutions *Public Institutions*

Issue	Independent	Public
Mission and relevancy	85%	66%
College costs and affordability	70%	75%
Campus climate, diversity, and inclusion	72%	64%
Student learning outcomes	75%	50%
New markets and academic innovation	76%	44%
Access and completion	63%	77%
Use and impact of technology	69%	47%
Campus safety	60%	69%
Student aid and student debt concerns	61%	55%
Changes to the academic workforce	52%	41%
Internationalization and globalization	49%	42%

Strategic issue-focused collaboration can take a variety of forms, such as task forces, advisory panels, working groups, and special committees. Such collaboration can provide an appealing avenue for meaningful interaction between board members and faculty. Survey data suggest that opportunities for expanding this sort of work are available at many institutions.

Public and independent institution presidents differed when it came to the specific issues their boards and faculty focus on together. Three-quarters of public institution presidents reported that their faculty and governing board are engaged cooperatively on the subjects of access and completion, while less than two-thirds of independent institution presidents said the same. This is not surprising given public institutions' heightened focus on increasing degree completion to meet state and regional needs.

Presidents of independent institutions were more likely than presidents of public institutions to report that their faculty and governing board are engaged cooperatively on:

- New markets and academic innovation

- Student learning outcomes

- Use and impact of technology

- Mission and relevancy

- Changes to the academic workforce

On one hand, some of the differences between public and independent institutions may seem surprising. For example, although state governments increasingly demand that public institutions demonstrate productivity and effectiveness in exchange for important budget subsidies, presidents of those institutions were less likely to report that their boards and faculty are working together to address student learning outcomes. Likewise, state officials often see technology as a key tool to improve efficiency in higher education, but less than 50 percent of public institution presidents reported that their public boards and faculty are engaged on that subject. Additionally, changes in the academic workforce affect public and independent institutions equally, yet their boards and faculty are not working together at the same rate on this issue.

On the other hand, the differences between public and independent institutions in areas such as new markets and missions are more understandable. Many independent institutions, especially those with small enrollments and narrow missions, are pressed to innovate and adjust their missions to secure enrollment and financial health.

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FUELING EFFECTIVE SHARED GOVERNANCE

Board and Faculty Orientation

Shared governance runs on time, attention, and expertise—human resources. Though it is difficult to pinpoint why faculty and board members may not always understand each other's work, insufficient education may play a role. Presidents responding to the survey were asked about new board member orientation. (See Table 5 and Figure 5.)

Overall, orientation is typically offered and largely required of new governing board members. However, nearly one-quarter of public institution presidents reported that their board's orientation program is optional.
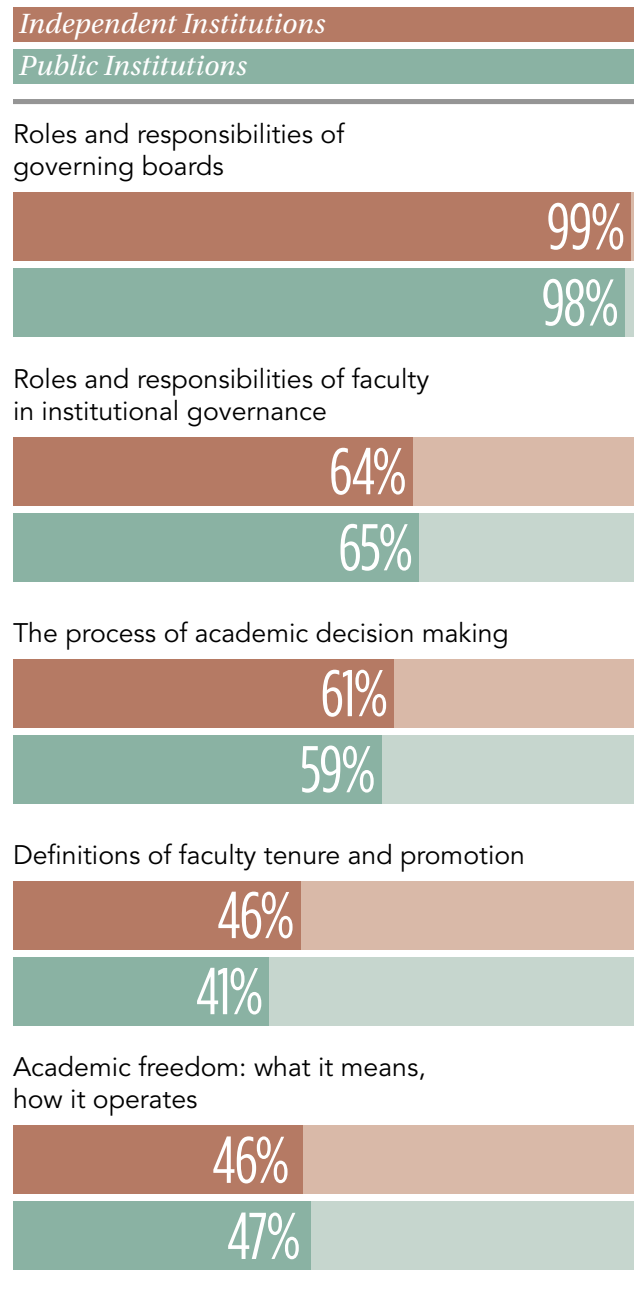
TABLE 5

PREVALENCE OF NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION

Is an orientation program provided for new members of the board?

	Independent Inst.	Public Inst.	All Inst.
Yes, required	82%	54%	74%
Yes, not required	12%	24%	16%
No	5%	4%	5%
Don't know/NA	1%	17%	6%

FIGURE 5

WHAT'S COVERED IN ORIENTATION FOR NEW BOARD MEMBERS?

Independent Institutions

Public Institutions

Roles and responsibilities of governing boards

99%

98%

Roles and responsibilities of faculty in institutional governance

64%

65%

The process of academic decision making

61%

59%

Definitions of faculty tenure and promotion

46%

41%

Academic freedom: what it means, how it operates

46%

47%

While virtually all presidents reported that board orientation covers the board's own roles and responsibilities, less than two-thirds reported that their boards receive some orientation about faculty roles and responsibilities. About two in five boards receive no orientation to academic decision-making processes, and more than half receive no information about faculty tenure, promotion, and academic freedom. With little information about faculty work, board members beginning their service are unprepared to support effective shared governance over time.

Fully 80 percent of public institution presidents and over 90 percent of independent institution presidents reported that faculty orientation is required in some form.[2] Figure 6 shows the extent to which presidents report faculty orientation addresses fundamental shared governance policies and practices.

In a notable minority of public and independent institutions (nearly one-third), orientation to the faculty's own responsibilities and opportunities regarding shared governance is overlooked. Moreover, while many new governing board members learn little about faculty work during orientation, new faculty members also appear to learn little about the work of governing boards.

Without education, neither board members nor faculty can be expected to fully understand each other's role in shared governance. Importantly, a substantial number of survey respondents noted the need for greater role clarity among those involved in shared governance, something that can be addressed in orientation.

FIGURE 6

WHAT'S COVERED IN ORIENTATION FOR NEW FACULTY MEMBERS?

Independent Institutions
Public Institutions

Roles and responsibilities of faculty in institutional governance

66%
74%

Opportunities for faculty to participate in institutional governance

69%
78%

Roles and responsibilities of governing boards

34%
48%

2   Presidents reported at rates of 38 percent for independent institutions and 53 percent for public institutions that part-time faculty are not required to attend orientation. By contrast, more than 90 percent of public and independent institution presidents reported that tenure-track and full-time non-tenure-track faculty are required to participate.

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Faculty Contingency, Collective Bargaining, and Shared Governance

Today's faculty is distinct in important ways compared to the faculty of a generation ago.[3] While the shift toward increased reliance on adjunct labor in the classroom has been gradual and uneven across higher education, its impact on both the culture and the practice of shared governance is now considerable at many institutions. To explore that impact, the survey asked presidents about the growth of non-tenure-track faculty at their institutions over the past five years. (See Table 6.)

TABLE 6

RECENT GROWTH IN NON-TENURE-TRACK FACULTY

Over the past five years, to what extent have the numbers of non-tenure-track faculty grown on your campus?
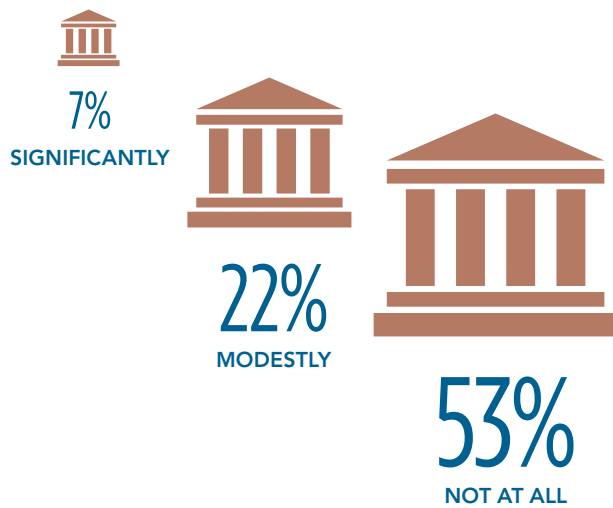
	Independent Institutions	Public Institutions	All Institutions
Significantly	9%	9%	9%
Modestly	48%	65%	53%
Not at all	43%	26%	38%

---

3   U.S. Department of Education data indicate that between 1970 and 2013, U.S. full-time faculty fell from over three-quarters of the total to just over half, and only about one-quarter of the national faculty is now on the tenure track.
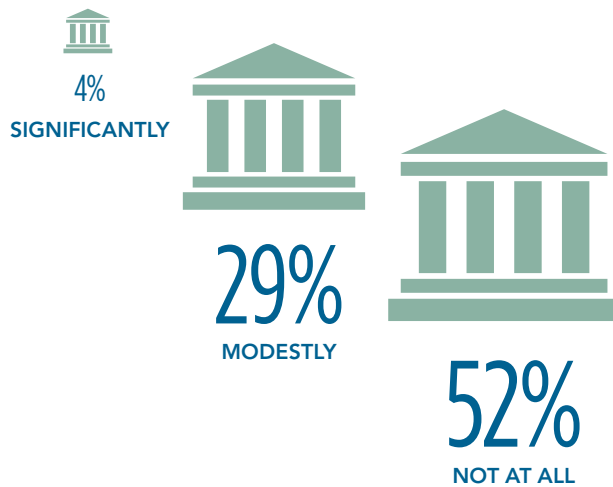
FIGURE 7

HOW MUCH HAS THE BOARD'S POLICY ON SHARED GOVERNANCE CHANGED TO REFLECT THE CHANGING ACADEMIC WORKFORCE?

Independent Institutions

7%
SIGNIFICANTLY

22%
MODESTLY

53%
NOT AT ALL

Public Institutions

4%
SIGNIFICANTLY

29%
MODESTLY

52%
NOT AT ALL

The small proportion of presidents that reported significant growth in non-tenure-track positions (about nine percent over the last five years) is unsurprising. The growth in these positions across higher education has occurred steadily over the course of more than four decades. Yet, nearly two-thirds of presidents of public institutions reported that their non-tenure-track faculty has continued to grow, compared to slightly less than half of presidents of independent institutions.

The survey of presidents asked whether shared governance policies have changed as a result of these shifts in the academic workforce. (See Figure 7.)

While one-quarter of all presidents reported modest changes in recent years, most reported that their board's policies on shared governance remained static in response to changes in the academic workforce. More than one in six presidents reported they had no board policy or statement on shared governance. (See Figure 8.)

FIGURE 8

MY BOARD DOES **NOT** HAVE A POLICY OR STATEMENT ON SHARED GOVERNANCE:

18%

Independent Institutions

15%

Public Institutions
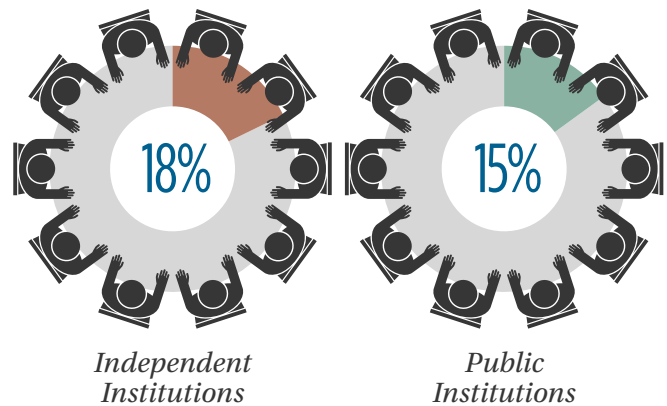
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For many institutions, a disconnect appears between what is required for shared governance to be effective and the number of faculty members available to participate.[4] Often, responsibility for faculty shared governance is now more concentrated within a declining proportion of full-time and tenure-track faculty, and shared governance policies have not been adjusted in the face of these widespread changes. In that vein, AGB's National Commission on College and University Board Governance warned: "If the faculty voice continues to come only from relatively small, homogenous groups, then we should expect tensions to escalate further in the coming years."

However, reduced faculty capacity for shared governance represents only one hazard related to contemporary faculty work structures. Part-time faculty expansion and recent legal decisions on

the status of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty in independent institutions have both contributed to growth in faculty collective bargaining. A key distinction between faculty collective bargaining and shared governance is that unions advocate in the interest of a particular group, whereas shared governance advances broader institutional goals. Presidents were surveyed about the presence and impact of collective-bargaining agreements on shared governance. (See Table 7.)

As might be expected, presidents at public institutions were more likely than independent institution presidents to report at least one faculty collective-bargaining agreement. More public institution presidents also reported that a collective-bargaining agreement affects shared governance.

TABLE 7

INFLUENCE OF COLLECTIVE-BARGAINING AGREEMENTS ON FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN SHARED GOVERNANCE

Is faculty involvement in institutional governance determined or affected
by a collective-bargaining agreement?

	Independent Institutions	Public Institutions	All Institutions
Yes	3%	30%	11%
No (there is a collective-bargaining agreement in place but it has no effect on shared governance)	12%	19%	14%
Does not apply (no collective bargaining for faculty)	84%	51%	75%

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4   In response to this survey, only 43 percent of independent presidents and 39 percent of public presidents reported that part-time faculty are permitted to participate in their faculty governing body. These numbers should not be interpreted to reflect the degree to which those who are given the opportunity actually do volunteer their time. Unlike full-time faculty, part-time faculty are compensated on a per-course basis, so any participation in shared governance constitutes unpaid service to the institution.

FIDUCIARY LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE SHARED GOVERNANCE

As legal fiduciaries, governing boards not only hold responsibility for making wise decisions, but they also must ensure the currency and reliability of policies that facilitate decision making, such as those guiding shared governance. Accordingly, the survey asked board members about the importance of shared governance as a component of decision making at their institutions and in the governance of American higher education more generally. (See Figure 9.)

The vast majority of all board members responded that shared governance is either very important or moderately important at their institution. However, fewer than half of all board members said it is very important in American higher education.

What these paradoxical data mean is not entirely clear, although they are reminiscent of the opinion that "I like my Congressman but dislike Congress." Do a considerable portion of governing board members believe their institution is exceptional in how it employs shared governance? Were some board members more tactful regarding the importance of shared governance in their institutions compared to higher education generally? Some board members may not be enamored of the concept of shared governance, but see it working sufficiently at their institution, so as the adage goes: "If it's not broken, don't fix it."

FIGURE 9

AMONG BOARD MEMBERS, HOW IMPORTANT IS SHARED GOVERNANCE…

In decision making at my institution?

62% ★★★☆☆
VERY IMPORTANT

34% ★★☆☆☆
MODERATELY IMPORTANT

4% ☆☆☆☆☆
NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT

In colleges and universities across the U.S.?

47% ★★⯨☆☆
VERY IMPORTANT

50% ★★⯨☆☆
MODERATELY IMPORTANT

3% ☆☆☆☆☆
NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT

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Many important institutional policies and practices undergo regular review to ensure they remain well suited to the challenges of the day. The survey asked presidents whether their shared governance processes receive regular evaluation. (See Table 8.)

Less than one-third of presidents affirmed that their institution regularly reviews shared governance processes for effectiveness.

TABLE 8

PRESIDENTIAL ACCOUNTING OF SHARED GOVERNANCE POLICY REVIEW

My institution/system regularly reviews the effectiveness of its shared governance processes.

	Independent Institutions	Public Institutions	All Institutions
Strongly agree	5%	8%	6%
Agree	27%	21%	25%
Neutral	31%	27%	30%
Disagree	30%	42%	33%
Strongly disagree	8%	3%	6%

In addition to asking presidents about shared governance assessment, the survey of governing board members asked about the durability of shared governance in respondents' institutions. Specifically, the survey asked board members whether their institution's shared governance model holds up under unusual situations. (See Table 9.)

TABLE 9

BOARD MEMBER PERCEPTIONS OF THE DURABILITY OF SHARED GOVERNANCE

My institution's/system's shared governance model holds up under unusual situations.

	Independent Institutions	Public Institutions	All Institutions
Strongly agree	23%	20%	23%
Agree	47%	43%	47%
Neutral	20%	23%	21%
Disagree	7%	9%	8%
Strongly disagree	2%	6%	3%

Nearly seven in 10 governing board members reported confidence in their shared governance models when tested. These data are difficult to interpret when juxtaposed with information from presidents indicating that less than one-third of institutions regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their shared governance processes. The difference suggests at least some board members' confidence in shared governance rests in something other than a formal assessment.

AGB's National Commission on College and University Board Governance recommended boards take steps to intentionally reinvigorate faculty shared governance:

"Every board must ask for a review of the institution's policies and practices of shared governance with faculty in order to ensure that such policies are appropriate to the realities of the current workforce, reinforce the delegated authority of faculty for academic policy, and ensure that processes for consultation are clear and are routinely followed by all responsible parties. Boards must ensure that their policies for shared governance include means of addressing topics that transect faculty, presidential, and board responsibility (such as program closures)."

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A Note about Shared Governance at Public Universities and Systems

Results of special significance to public university boards, faculty, and administrators surfaced throughout the two surveys. These results paint a less upbeat picture of shared governance in public higher education. On many of the survey questions, presidents and board members of public institutions and systems gave fewer positive responses and more neutral or negative responses than did their counterparts at independent institutions.

For example, 33 percent of public board members strongly agreed that the president and chief academic officer support shared governance, compared to 45 percent of independent board members. According to presidents, faculty and board member understanding of each other's responsibilities and authority are lower at public institutions than at independent institutions. One-quarter of public institution presidents reported that their board members have slight to no understanding of faculty responsibilities, compared to 17 percent of independents. Over one-third (37 percent) of public institution presidents said that faculty had little to no understanding of board responsibilities, compared to just over one-quarter (27 percent) of independent institution presidents. With new member orientation less often required for public institution boards than for independent institution boards (54 percent compared to 82 percent), there is less opportunity to

increase the board's understanding of faculty responsibilities and role in shared governance at public institutions.

Public institution presidents reported greater growth in the number of non-tenure-track faculty in the last five years, greater presence of collective bargaining, and fewer reviews of shared governance processes—a combination of factors that can present special challenges to effective shared governance. They also reported that many faculty and board members do not collaborate in addressing some of the most critical issues facing higher education—campus climate, student learning, academic innovation, use of technology, and changes to the academic workforce.

In key ways, public institution governing boards, presidents, and faculty face fundamentally different challenges than their independent counterparts when it comes to shared governance. For example, mandatory board member education often requires enactment by a state legislative body, and the difficulty of maintaining clear distinctions between collective bargaining and shared governance can be substantial. The special challenges of shared governance pertaining to many public institutions may serve to emphasize the importance of increased collaboration on a host of crucial subjects among governing boards, presidents, and faculty.

AN ESSENTIAL ASSET, OK PERFORMANCE

Modern understandings of shared governance have been influenced by the vast and enduring impact of the American Association of University Professors' 1966 *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.* Fifty years ago, AGB had the opportunity to help shape this seminal statement, and we are committed to ensuring the effectiveness of shared governance in the years to come.

Governing boards, presidents, and faculty can do more to develop shared governance systems that facilitate everyday decisions and strengthen extraordinarily difficult ones. Along with presidents, boards can collaborate with faculty more often on substantive matters. Presidents can promote strong shared governance by ensuring that boards and faculty understand the work of the other and its value to the institution.

More challenging—for boards, presidents, and faculty together—will be addressing the significantly reduced faculty availability for shared governance in many institutions. Boards can contribute practical suggestions and political cover to ensure that administrators and faculty work together to find creative solutions to this complex problem.

For some institutions, solutions to the faculty capacity issue may require multi-year efforts to adjust faculty contracts and expectations to better meet the needs of shared governance. For others, presidents and boards might encourage faculty to examine their governance structures and bylaws to ensure that they reflect new realities. Some

institutions have begun efforts to better incorporate full-time, non-tenure-track faculty and even part-time faculty into shared governance. Boards should understand and have the opportunity to inform those strategic decisions as well. While such endeavors may prove challenging, they address an overarching need in many institutions to strengthen shared governance.

Many boards may find it helpful to consider the care of shared governance as one component of their fiduciary responsibility of care for the institution. Most board members responding to the survey expressed support for their faculty's delegated authority, acknowledged the importance of shared governance to their institution, and showed confidence in their systems of shared governance, but not all of the data tell the same story.

Many presidents reported less confidence than board members in the durability of their shared governance systems, and most reported that their shared governance processes do not undergo regular review. It remains unclear whether board members' expressions of confidence in shared governance are evidence-based, or whether their default appraisal is that shared governance is "OK" unless proven otherwise.

Governing boards' fiduciary duty of care for their institutions entails ensuring that decision-making policies—including those guiding shared governance—are sound. Reasonably, boards attending to the care of such policies might conduct assessments, make changes from time to time, and

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ensure that shared governance is implemented as intended. Whether boards exhibit sufficient care for shared governance, and whether board members' expressions of confidence in their models of shared governance are based in appropriate knowledge or experience, remains unclear. As of the time of this report's publication, AGB is assembling focus groups and case studies to shed light on the nuanced ways in which shared governance works in practice and how it can be strengthened.

If it ever worked easily in the past (and such an assumption is speculative), in today's environment, shared governance requires renewed effort to function well. Governing boards and presidents report strong interest in developing high-functioning shared governance. Data from these two surveys point both to the goal and to steps for improvement.

Shared governance should be an essential institutional asset, but careful board, president, and faculty leadership is needed to prevent it from becoming a liability. We encourage governing boards, along with their presidents and faculty, to question whether OK performance is good enough when it comes to shared governance.

Questions for governing boards and presidents to consider:

1. Have governing board members received sufficient information regarding the nature of faculty work, including the faculty role in shared governance? Have members of the faculty been sufficiently educated as to the governing board's role?

2. How well do members of the governing board understand the value that faculty bring to institutional decision making through shared governance?

3. How might the governing board ensure a rigorous assessment of shared governance policies, practices, and functioning at the institution?

4. In what ways—and on which important subjects—might the institution benefit from more robust collaboration among the governing board, administration, and faculty?

5. If change regarding shared governance policies or practices is important, how can the board set the table for a constructive process?

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ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNING BOARDS OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Trusteeship Magazine

How to Make Shared Governance Work: Some Best Practices

By Steven C. Bahls

March/April 2014

Takeaways

Five practical steps can help make shared governance work. Boards can:

1. Actively engage board members, administrators, and faculty leaders in a serious discussion of what shared governance is (and isn't).

2. Periodically assess the state of shared governance and develop an action plan to improve it.

3. Expressly support strong faculty governance of the academic program.

4. Maintain a steadfast commitment to three-way transparency and frequent communication.

5. Develop ways to increase social capital between board members and faculty members.

The commitment to shared governance is too often a mile wide and an inch deep. Board members, faculty leaders, and presidents extol the value of shared governance, but it frequently means something different to each of them. When that is the case, at the first bump in the road, participants can become frustrated, sometimes walking away from a commitment to do the hard work of good governance. Worse yet, when that happens, there may be mutual recriminations that can cripple the institution for years. Much has been written on the benefits of shared governance, but less has been written on practical steps to take to make shared governance work.

Effective and responsive governance is vitally important during times of change in higher education. Sharing governance in the face of sweeping and transformative change can help shift the thinking of boards, faculty, and staff from protecting yesterday's parochial interests to aligning efforts to address tomorrow's realities. When efforts are aligned, solutions are often more thoughtful and implementation time is faster.

The trends pressuring many colleges and universities are numerous, and they demand unprecedented cooperation and collaboration among boards, administrators, and presidents. They include:

- Heightened competition from institutions delivering online and non-traditional types of higher education that require faculty and boards to develop timely, unified, and mission-sensitive responses;

- The drumbeat of calls for stronger student outcomes, including better graduation rates and placement rates, which requires building consensus among the board, administration, and faculty; and

- Affordability and accessibility issues that require all within the institution to better focus on doing their part to create the best value for an increasingly diverse set of students.

The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges has called for "integral leadership" from leaders of colleges and universities. Recently, in a publication called *Top 10 Strategic Issues for Boards, 2013–2014*, AGB provided this compelling definition of integral leadership:

"To accomplish these goals, many governing boards have moved to a model of integral leadership— **collaborative but decisive leadership** that can energize the vital partnership between boards and presidents. **Integral leadership links the president, faculty, and board in a well-functioning partnership** purposefully devoted to a **well-defined, broadly affirmed institutional vision**."

The bolded phrases in this definition are areas enhanced and strengthened through strong systems of sharing governance. Effective shared governance increases collaboration, creates useful links between constituencies, and builds needed partnerships.

But it can do so much more. When shared governance is viewed as more than a set of boundaries and rules of engagement, it can create a system where the integral leaders move beyond the fragmentation of traditional governance. They move to shared responsibility for identifying and pursuing an aligned set of sustainable strategic directions. And though it may take time to develop these priorities, once they're identified, each constituency can be more decisive in implementing tactics to advance them.

There are five best practices that cut across various types of institutions, whether public or private, unionized or non-unionized, four-year colleges or community colleges, traditional or specialized. Although these types of institutions are different in many ways, including how boards and faculties are structured, they still have much in common. Each board has similar fiduciary and supervisory duties, and each faculty has substantial responsibility for the curriculum. And every institution sometimes experiences a degree of tension between faculty members and board members.

The five practices below, when deliberately followed, create the alignment in which administrators, board members, and faculty members become integral leaders.

1. Actively engage board members, administrators, and faculty leaders in a serious discussion of what shared governance is (and isn't).

Faculty members and trustees tend to disagree on how to define shared governance and what to expect from it. Faculty members often view it as equal rights to governance. That is the most literal view of the word "shared" in shared governance—as in "share and share alike." While this view might be attractive in theory, it is problematic in practice. Faculty members do not have veto power over decisions that are within the primary fiduciary and oversight responsibilities of the board. Similarly, although boards are ultimately, as fiduciaries, responsible for the academic quality of their institutions, trustees should only rarely exercise any power they have to veto core academic decisions.

Likewise, board members and administrators sometimes view shared governance as the obligation to consult with faculty before decisions are made, particularly those directly influencing the academic program. But faculty members often expect more than mere consultation prior to implementation of a decision. They expect to be at the table at key junctures in the decision-making process, instead of appearing for a pro forma consultation after the decision is made. Faculty members tend to view accountability differently than do board members, seeing it as steadfast adherence to a collegial process with wide participation, while board members tend to value process less and judge accountability by strong outcomes. Boards lose credibility with the faculty if they shortcut agreed-upon processes.

Board leaders, faculty leaders, and presidents should openly discuss how they view shared governance. How does each constituency define shared governance and how significant are the differences?

The first step to having a meaningful discussion of expectations is for the president, faculty leaders, and board leaders to state publicly their support for shared governance. At the same time, leaders should make it clear that shared governance is not a sword for gaining the upper hand in policy debates. Rather, it's a system for building communication, respect, and trust—with an eye toward developing integral leaders at all levels.

For institutions that enjoy effective shared governance, faculty leaders and board leaders should seek agreement on each of these five fundamental propositions:

- Shared governance is a central value of integral leadership that requires continued hard work, open communication, trust, and respect.

- The faculty has the central role in setting academic policy, and the board should hold faculty leaders responsible for ensuring academic quality.

- While board members have fiduciary responsibility for many of the business and financial decisions of the college, they should consider the views of the faculty before making important decisions.

- In cases of disagreement between faculty and board members about decisions where both have responsibilities (e.g., tenure and retrenchment), faculty handbooks and other governing documents should clearly state how disagreements are addressed and by whom.

- The most important aspect of shared governance is developing systems of open communication where faculty members, board members, and administrators work to align and implement strategic priorities.

Though all constituencies may not agree on the details, it is hard to disagree with the spirit of these five propositions and underlying principles. Once constituencies are in general agreement on these propositions, the way is paved to develop a commonly understood view of shared governance and a culture of shared mutual responsibility for the welfare of the institution.

2. Periodically assess the state of shared governance and develop an action plan to improve it.

Shared governance at most institutions is far from perfect, because it is difficult, messy, and imprecise work. The first step to improvement is to develop an accurate assessment of the state of shared governance at the institution. That can be done in different ways. Some institutions may want to develop formal surveys. Others may want more informal discussions through an appointed task force or discussions at board meetings and retreats.

The following questions get to the heart of the "health" of shared governance:

- What does each constituency expect from effective shared governance? What are the benchmarks of good governance? How do these definitions and expectations differ?

- Do faculty members believe that the board and administration are transparent about important college matters? Do board members believe the administration and the faculty are transparent in sharing information about student learning outcomes, how the outcomes are assessed, and how the curriculum supports student achievement?

- Do the faculty and board believe they receive sufficient information from the administration to participate in making good decisions? Is the information presented in an easily understandable form?

- Do faculty members believe that the structure of faculty governance will facilitate shared governance?

- Does the board believe that its own structure encourages sharing governance with faculty?

- Do faculty members understand how board decisions are made and vice versa?

- Is it clear who makes what decisions, who is to be consulted, and who must approve?

- How well are faculty members informed about how the board works and vice versa?

- Is there shared agreement on the strategic priorities of the college?

- In an open-ended question, what suggestions do those who complete the survey have for improving shared governance?

Board members and administrators must be thick-skinned when asking for a candid assessment from faculty members. When members of the faculty, administrators, and board members discuss these questions, each usually progresses toward a more mutual expectation of shared governance. In the process, each gains the trust of the other, strengthening the social capital that will move the institution ahead in difficult times.

As a way of drawing these discussions to a conclusion, the president should consider appointing an ad hoc task force or working group to create strategies for improving shared governance by building trust, open communication, and ways to resolve differences amicably.

3. Expressly support strong faculty governance of the academic program.

If a faculty can't effectively govern itself, it will be too fragmented, or even dysfunctional, to meaningfully and responsibly share in the governance of the institution. A faculty that is able to take strong, unified, and even bold collective action can help move from shared governance to shared responsibility.

Robert Zemsky, the founding director of the Institute for Research on Higher Education, recently put it this way: "I would start by having faculty relearn the importance of collective actions—to talk less about shared governance, which too often has become a rhetorical sword to wield against an aggrandizing administration, and to talk instead about sharing responsibility for the work to be done together."

While boards and administrations shouldn't, and really can't, establish structures that ensure the faculty functions well, they can take several simple steps to encourage effective faculty governance:

- Boards and presidents should reward strong faculty governance by stating the importance of the faculty making appropriate and timely decisions, and valuing those actions. Board chairs should do that at board and committee meetings when faculty members are in attendance, and presidents should make such acknowledgments at faculty meetings and at general "state of the college" addresses.

- Boards should give legitimacy to faculty leaders by inviting them to the table at crucial junctures in a decision-making process. That may include invitations to board committee meetings, full board meetings, and board retreats.

- Board leaders, the president, and the chief academic officer should meet annually with faculty leaders, aside from normal board meetings and faculty meeting times. Doing so allows for a full and open exchange of ideas.

- Presidents should include faculty leaders in leadership programs, particularly in internal programs that the institution maintains for administrators. Many faculty members have no leadership training and little experience. Supporting faculty leadership development also may have the benefit of grooming the next dean, provost, or even president.

- Board members should avoid circumventing faculty leaders by giving undue attention to those who express individual concerns not widely held by other members of the faculty. When seeking to understand the sense of the faculty, trustees should rely on elected faculty leadership, not that one professor who seeks to get around the faculty governance process by filing a special brief with the board.

Strong faculty leadership, combined with an effective board and integral presidential leadership, leads to a nimble system of shared governance that addresses challenges and seizes opportunities in a timely way.

4. Maintain a steadfast commitment to three-way transparency and frequent communication.

Effective shared governance depends on three-way transparency. The faculty can't adequately participate in governance if they do not have the information from which to develop informed positions. Board members can't appropriately exercise their general oversight of the institution's academic program if the faculty withholds important facts about the value of the program. And presidents who withhold information from either of the other constituencies as a way of consolidating their power or dividing and conquering are not integral leaders.

Best practices for sharing information with the faculty include:

- Prepare and distribute a simple one-page chart describing who makes which decisions. The chart should describe different decisions across the vertical axis and decision makers (e.g., faculty senate, the president, the board, the executive committee) across the horizontal axis. Within each of the boxes, the role of the respective decision makers is listed (e.g., consultation, recommendation, making initial decisions, approving of decision, acting as appellate body). The chart should pay special attention to the budget process and faculty tenure and promotion.

- Share board and committee agendas with the faculty and other members of the community before board meetings. Include a summary of actions taken by the board shortly after the meeting.

- Clearly communicate decisions being considered by the board and the president's executive cabinet, why those decisions are before the board or the president's cabinet, the timetable for the decision, and the extent of the faculty's opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Give faculty leaders an opportunity to discuss their views.

- Conduct periodic faculty forums with key decision makers presenting. The board chair could present on how the board makes decisions. The chief financial officer could present on how budgets are developed.

- Encourage faculty leaders to observe board meetings and committee meetings, where appropriate.

5. Develop deliberate ways to increase social capital between board members and members of the faculty.

As board members, faculty members, and administrators work together, they will naturally develop social capital. But social capital also can be developed and deepened outside of the formal shared-governance process. Consider these possible practices:

- With faculty members' permission (and not regularly), consider inviting board members to a faculty meeting, followed by a reception. Board members usually are impressed with the quality of deliberation at these meetings, just as faculty members usually are impressed with the quality of deliberation at board meetings.

- If the institution has a required first-year book to read, consider providing the book to the board with an opportunity before or after the board meeting to discuss the book with members of the faculty.

- Seat board members and faculty members in the same area at athletic events, concerts, and other special occasions, and at board meetings and dinners where both are present.

- Publish trustee and faculty leadership biographies. Let faculty members know that board members may be available as guest lecturers in classes that touch on their areas of expertise.

- Invite a board member to participate in part of a study-abroad program or field trip for students.

- Invite board members to celebrations of student and faculty scholarship.

- Hold a reception during each board meeting on campus to give the community the chance to get to know the board, and vice versa.

Following such practices can help institutions build the trust and respect needed to sustain shared governance through good and bad times. In doing so, the institution moves from the traditional approach of shared governance to the more dynamic approach of shared responsibility.

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Decision Charting and Governance

Decision charting offers a way to clarify roles and responsibilities across a set of groups and individuals in a governance system. It helps you think about the levels and kinds of decision rights for key decisions between and across these entities, as it reveals differences in assumptions about where decision rights lie. Using decision charting and decision language increases accountability and leads to more effective communication and delegation, and offers a way to get beyond the paralysis, politics, and inefficiencies that confound many governance systems in organizations. Clarifying roles can increase speed and reduce friction in decision-making. Most importantly, it can set the stage for a fruitful discussion of the role of specific groups within governance and help reach consensus and stop tensions from escalating.

A Shared Language

Decision charting provides the following shared "language" for levels and kinds of responsibility in decisions, either as currently constituted ("is") or as the decisions would best be structured ("ought").

Decision Level	What It Means	Bottom Line
A = Approve	A group (team, board, committee) or person who must sign off or veto a decision before it is implemented or selected from options developed by the R role; accountable for the quality of the decision.	The buck stops here.
R = Responsible	A group or person who takes the initiative in the particular area, develops the alternatives, analyzes the situation, makes the initial recommendation, and is accountable if nothing happens in the area.	It's our job to make it happen—if things get stuck, it's my fault.
C = Consulted	A group or person who must be consulted prior to a decision being reached but with no veto power.	Advice honestly solicited and engaged with, but no veto power.
I = Informed	A group or person who must be notified after a decision, but before it is publicly announced; someone who needs to know the outcome for other related tasks but need not give input.	Informed before public announcement; needs to know for related task.

This framework can be adapted to suit a particular organization's situation, but the key is to focus on the roles that groups or individuals have or should play in the decisions themselves.

How this Framework Could Apply in University Governance

Consider the following decision a University may face – creating a new Master's Program in an area where a current undergraduate program exists. Here is how we might chart the groups who have a role in that decision:

Roles:	President	Provost/Chief Amin. Officer	Dean	Board or Sub-Committee	Faculty Senate	New Program Task Force	Undergraduate Chair	Registrar
Decision to start a new Master's Program								

If the Chief Administrative Officer were to chart this decision, the decision rights might look like this, keeping the ultimate authority to him/herself and assigning other roles accordingly:

Roles:	President	Provost/Chief Amin. Officer	Dean	Board or Sub-Committee	Faculty Senate	New Program Task Force	Undergraduate Chair	Registrar
Decision to start a new Master's Program	C	A	C	I	C	R	C	I

The Chair of the Faculty Senate might have a different view of these roles, perhaps like the following:

Roles:	President	Provost/Chief Amin. Officer	Dean	Board or Sub-Committee	Faculty Senate	New Program Task Force	Undergraduate Chair	Registrar
Decision to start a new Master's Program	I	C	C	I	A	R	C	I

Of course, different Universities will array these decision rights in different ways, depending on how governance works at their institution. By clarifying what role specific bodies, such as the Faculty Senate, should have in an array of decisions, shared governance can be better developed and communicated.

Developing an Agenda for a Governance Meeting

Decision charting language can also be helpful in developing agendas and being clear about which committees and groups own a particular issue, and who would staff these groups.

Delegation helps the delegator and the delegatee clarify exactly what role relationship both have to a decision and to each other.

Issue Owner	Group Staffing the Decision	What It Means
A	R	"Staff the decision, get the necessary facts, present options, make a recommendation, and bring it to me for final review."
C	A/R	"This is your decision, but consult with me to get my views. You aren't bounded by my advice, you are accountable for the decision."
A/R	C	"Let me keep the decision and manage the fact finding and analysis of options, but give me your best thinking."
I	A/R	"This is your decision, merely inform me of the outcome."

Debate and Discourse: The Role of the Faculty Senate on the Modern American Campus

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Shared governance in higher education is a critical component of academic management. The use of faculty senates is the primary mechanism for engaging faculty, yet these bodies have been increasingly viewed as ineffective. Through an analysis of ten purposefully selected universities, faculty senate meeting minutes were analyzed to identify the trends that senates address. Using one academic year as a case study, these senates were identified to be addressing significant campus issues under the themes of academic affairs management, student life and student affairs issues, campus planning, human resources concerns, and faculty personnel matters.

INTRODUCTION

Shared governance in higher education has an historical foundation that includes representation by students, faculty, trustees, and increasingly, staff members. Each of these constituents engage, to various extents, in offering advice to college leaders, reactions to proposals, and in many cases, offering resolutions or actions for programs or policies. Through an evolution of the structure and administration of higher education, each of these constituents has also had to advocate for their rights to be engaged in campus decision-making, with some successes and some failures (Rosser, 2003; Miller & Nadler, 2006). The recent faculty activism at the University of Iowa had little to no impact on the board of trustees hiring a campus president with limited higher education experience (Markwardt, 2015), yet at the University of Missouri, student activism was a key component that led to administrative changes in response to diversity issues.

The shared governance complex in US higher education has been perhaps most focused on faculty involvement in governance. Faculty members once controlled all elements of institutional life, ranging from what was to be taught, when, by whom, and to whom. And although faculty are still engaged in setting admission standards and determining curricular requirements, their ability to control the larger campus has diminished significantly.

The reduction in faculty authority over campus elements has arisen in part due to the changing functionality of higher education institutions, meaning that the complexity now required to lead an

institution requires a much greater level of oversight and specialization than at any time in the past (Bai, 2003; Miller, 2003). An increasing public burden on colleges and universities has also resulted in a growing administrative class, with these professionals being charged with enforcing and ratifying state and federal compliance in such areas as Title IX and ADA compliance. These responsibilities, and the interpretation of them, requires non-faculty members to take an increasingly significant role in campus management, therefore marginalizing the role that faculty members can play (Miller & Newman, 2005).

Faculty governance units are subsequently left with the options of either challenging the growing trend of administrative responsibility through their actions, or conversely, relenting these responsibilities and focusing on their core activities. In order for there to be some practical discussion as to what faculty members options truly are, there is a need to better identify what faculty governance units are discussing, where they commit their time, and what do they view as important enough to dictate their agendas. Therefore, the purpose for conducting this study was to create a profile of what faculty governance units are addressing in their meetings, and use this agenda information to create an outline of their priorities.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Faculty governance units, typically referred to as academic or faculty 'senates' or 'councils,' generally function on a model of representative democracy, although their structures and practices vary greatly. Some institutions make use of a formal election, with strict regulations on who can vote and what can be spent on campaign materials. Other institutions make use of rosters of faculty signatures, where a faculty member can create an independent constituency by garnering a set number of faculty signatures. Some allow for part-time faculty representation, while others limit participation to those who hold full-time, tenure-track positions.

Some institutions, such as Ohio State University, make use of an integrated shared governance model. This model, established in 1972, brings faculty, students, and staff together in a unified body to discuss issues and come to consensus on important issues (Ohio State University, 2015). A somewhat different model of a faculty governance unit is seen at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), where the senate president, Ann Karagozian (2010) identified the academic senate as a "vehicle through which University of California faculty share in the operation and management of the University" (p. 2). In this model of shared governance, developed in 1920, only tenure-track or tenured faculty along with academic administrators have a seat in the senate.

Gilmour (1991) indicated that almost every college has some form of faculty senate, and that they are in no way limited to public institutions; one example being Birmingham, Alabama's Samford University. The Samford Faculty Senate is detailed in the institution's Faculty Handbook as a representation of the overall faculty, particularly noting "…the Senate shall provide a forum for discussion and decision in bringing to resolution the respective interests of the administration, Faculty and schools of the University" (p. 9) and "The Faculty Senate shall identify and address issues of concern to the Faculty that transcend departmental and school boundaries" (Samford University, 2014, p. 10).

A similar structure is in place at Boston's Emerson College which makes use of a Faculty Assembly, first established in 1969. The by-laws of the Assembly report their purpose to be "…to discharge the Emerson faculty's collective responsibilities in matters pertaining to the requirements for the granting of degrees; faculty status and welfare…the determination of general educational philosophy and policy; and related matters" (Emerson College, 2014, p. 2). Although but two examples of private college faculty governance units, they are reflective of the common threads that define their existence throughout the higher education enterprise. They are consistent with their public institution counterparts in defining their purpose as to reflect the interests, needs, concerns, and beliefs of the faculty in bettering the welfare of the institution.

There has been a significant amount of research and writing on shared governance in higher education, with much of the current thinking about faculty governance being tied to the activism movements of the late-1960's and early-1970's (Mortimer, 1974; Mortimer & McConnell, 1978). Research on contemporary issues in faculty governance, however, have been increasingly tied to

determining the impact of shared authority and whether such collaboration makes for better decisions or a more effective university campus (Brown, 2001; Waugh, 2003; Cordes, Dunbar, & Gingerich, 2013).

RESEARCH METHODS

Data were collected by consulting web-based faculty senate or similar portals, specifically identifying faculty meeting agendas and corresponding meeting minutes. The study replicated that of Smith and Miller (2016) who collected and analyzed data in a similar way. Using a random sampling process, higher education institutions were selected, with replacement. Each institution that was selected was explored to identify its version of a faculty senate. Once the senate was identified, the senate's web-based resources were consulted for a full presentation of meeting agendas and minutes for the calendar year 2015. If the meeting minutes were incomplete or not posted, the institution was removed from consideration and the next randomly selected institution was consulted. The process included a total of 39 different institutions being selected to produce a sample of 10 universities identified that could be, and were, included in the analysis (see Table 1 for sample institutions).

TABLE 1
INSTITUTIONS INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

Institution	# of Faculty[1]	Enrollment
Central Connecticut State University	452	12,037
Columbus State University	473	8,307
Kansas State University	1,404	24,146
Texas A&M University	2,700	64,373
University of Missouri – St. Louis	1,325	16,809
University of Nevada	1,325	16,809
University of North Alabama	1,528	20,898
University of Southern Mississippi	322	7,243
Washington State University	2,262	20,043
West Virginia University	1,870	29,175
Average	1,305	21,787

[1]Institutionally reported full-time faculty members.

One important difference between the current study and the Smith and Miller study was that only public institutions were included in the sampling and all private institutions were removed from consideration. This sampling strategy was determined to be appropriate in that it (a) narrowed the scope of the sampling to increase the generalizability of the findings, (b) reflected the differences in private institution mission, and (c) reflected the tendency of private institutions to not include broad and comprehensive senate materials on their websites.

FINDINGS

As shown in Table 2, each institution selected for study was designated with a letter, ranging from A-J to protect institutional identity, and an initial analysis of their meeting minutes was conducted. In this analysis, each posting of meeting minutes were examined to determine the number of meetings during an academic year, the number of elected senators, the number of senators who attended the meetings, the length of the meetings, and the range of meeting length. A total of 99 meeting minutes were examined in

this analysis. On average, these institutions held nine meetings over the course of the academic year (on average, one per month), and had an elected senate size of 62 members, of which, on average, 48 senators participated in each meeting (an average 77% attendance rate). The largest senate had 122 elected members, and the smallest had 35 elected members. The meetings throughout the entire sample ranged from 20 minutes to 4 hours and 46 minutes, with an average meeting length of one hour and thirty-one minutes.

TABLE 2
FACULTY SENATE BASELINE MEETING DATA

Institution	# Meetings	# Senators	Average Meeting Attendance	Average Meeting Length	Length Range
A	10	50	39	:55	:20-1:30
B	9	88	71	1:28	1:16-1:45
C	13	76	60	1:26	:45-2:06
D	10	122	84	1:27	:25-2:40
E	10	27	20	NR	NR
F	9	42	37	1:02	:38-1:30
G	9	100	78	1:08	:45-1:46
H	8	40	NR	1:01	:35-1:25
I	9	44	34	3:02	2:23-3:45
J	12	35	25	3:39	3:05-4:46
AVERAGE	9	62	48	1:31	:20-4:46

The next step in the data analysis was to have each of the three researchers independently read all of the meeting minutes and record themes and major topics of discussion. The intent of this activity was to establish a listing of topics, and then themes, discussed by the sample faculty senates. This initial analysis yielded consensus on the identification of 68 different topics, which after editing for duplication and comparing similarly intended, but differently worded concepts, resulted in 48 topics to be clustered. Each independent researcher then clustered these concepts into groups of thematically similar ideas, resulting in 14 different clusters or themes of faculty senate work (see Table 3).

The majority of topics addressed by these faculty senates were related to student issues, either student academic affairs or issues related directly to student life. The academic issues ranged from service learning and scheduling classes on Fridays to attendance policies and community college articulation agreements. The student life issues addressed topics such as Greek life, athletics, and the recreation facility provided for students. The second most popular topic addressed by the senates were academic affairs, including discussion and voting on the academic calendar, accreditation, general education, and a range of other issues.

Another topic that consumed multiple sessions on multiple campuses was that of faculty senate operations, keeping its committees working, and personnel appointment appropriately. Conducting faculty senate business included discussions of appointing unfilled senate seats, conducting elections, updating senate bylaws, and defining the role of the senate. Other topics (themes) discussed by the senates, and occasionally voted on by senates included benefits, the academic infrastructure, faculty personnel matters, research, technology, and the overall campus culture.

The single most discussed issue across all meeting minutes was that of a faculty handbook, being discussed in 24 different meetings (24% of all meetings). These issues include discussions of updating requirements for faculty member evaluations, clarifying a range of policies on how many classes to be taught, online education, evaluation of instruction, and even required office hours. Many of these types of issues were also discussed under the theme "Faculty Personnel Matters," and included tenure and promotion criteria and processes, sabbaticals, and the conversion of clinical to tenure-track faculty.

Human Resources, Planning, and the Campus Culture were also themes identified from meeting minutes, and the theme with the least number of topical discussions was that of Technology. Technology related agenda items and discussions were only brought up in 7 different meetings, with two of those seven being related to cyber security issues and two being related to an electronic delivery of core classes by a system.

TABLE 3
THEMES IDENTIFIED FROM FACULTY SENATE MEETING AGENDAS

Theme	Agenda/Discussion Items for Agendas
Academic Affairs	Academic curriculum approvals (n=21)
	education reform (n=9)
	Accreditation (n=6)
	Academic calendar (n=4)
	Syllabus requirements (n=2)
	Non-traditional and interdisciplinary curriculum (n=2)
	Honorary Degrees (n=2)
	Data request protocol
	Local school district requirements
	Summer school
	Large class size policy
	International education
	Independent study
Academic Infrastructure and Curriculum	Academic structure/curriculum (n=7)
	Library
	Smart classrooms
	General education
	Instructional resource center
	Classroom space
Campus Culture	Faculty attitude survey (n=2)
	Campus welfare and the environment (n=2)
	Military and veterans
	Inclusivity
	Recycling
	Diversity
	Title IX
	Professor of the week
Campus Human Resources	Concealed weapons on campus (n=4)
	President's evaluation (n=3)
	Dean's evaluations
	Retirees association
	Personnel issues
Faculty Handbook	Faculty handbook revisions (n=6)
	Faculty handbook (n=5)
	Clarification of handbook (n=6)
	University handbook (n=2)
	Faculty manual updates (n=7)
Faculty personnel matters	Tenure and promotion guidelines (n=2)
	Non tenure track faculty (n=2)
	Tenure and promotion policies
	Faculty appointments
	Sabbaticals
	Adjunct faculty review
	Conversion of faculty member contracts
Faculty Senate Business	Senate seats/elections (n=5)
	Senate seat vacancies (n=4)

	Shared governance issues/structure (n=4)
	Senate protocol/bylaws (n=3)
	Faculty senate elections (n=3)
	Role of the Senate (n=2)
	Committee assignments (n=2)
	Length of faculty senate meetings and attendance
Human Resources/Benefits	Benefits (n=11)
	Parking (and during athletic events and access) (n=4)
	Salary/furlough (n=2)
	Human resources (vendors and tuition benefits)
Physical Campus	Construction complaints (n=4)
	Children in the classroom (n=2)
	Facility (repair) (n=2)
	Fire drills
	Service animals
	Use of money for facilities
Planning	Planning/Board of Regents (n=10)
	Strategic planning (n=7)
	Budget (n=3)
	Legislative sessions (n=3)
	Strategic planning (n=2)
	Planning metrics
	Budget process
Research	Research on campus (n=3)
	Research support for faculty
	Digital scholarship curations
	Research and NSF
Student affairs	Academic integrity policy
	Student success (n=2)
	Enrollment (n=2)
	Title IX (n=2)
	Athletics (n=2)
	Greek Life
	Student recruitment and planning
	Recreation center
	Social media policy
	Weather policy
Student Academic Issues	Student evaluations (n=4)
	Service learning (n=4)
	Academic dishonesty (n=3)
	Honor code (n=3)
	Friday classes (n=2)
	System and 2+2 agreements
	Mid term grade policy
	Student attendance
	Academic misconduct
	Transfer of academic coursework
	New admission standards
	Orientation and new student enrollment
	Incompletes/grades/marks
	Academic integrity
	Student attendance policy
Technology	Information technology (n=3)
	Cyber security (n=2)
	Electronic core (n=2)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The faculty senate meeting agendas provided an insight into the operations and content of how senates work and what kinds of issues they invest their time in. Generally, they had good attendance levels and worked on issues that were directly related to the faculty and academic experience of higher education. Although there was no indication as to whether or not these bodies were effective or efficient, they did address issues such as benefits and curriculum that have formed the historic foundation of shared governance.

What became clear throughout the data collection and analysis is that there is something of a lack of transparency not only within faculty senates, but broadly within higher education. The number of faculty senates with incomplete information, a failure to post agendas, meeting minutes, and even current listings of faculty senators bespoke some of the national discussion of problems with reporting tuition, fees, and expenses. Even the process of attempting to identify the current number of full time faculty members was problematic, as numbers of faculty were inconsistent throughout institutional reports (for example, in Common Data Set reporting, on admissions reporting, and in faculty senate reporting). Even though individual actions may be correct, such as in the apportionment of senators, the public may find it difficult to accurately understand an institution.

On average, the apportionment of senators was 1:21, yet none of the faculty senate documents analyzed indicated whether or not these senators worked to understand their constituents and represent their interests. In some of the meeting minutes there were very clear indications of senators speaking to the interests of their academic disciplines, but there was a lack of documents that indicate how senators collect the interests of their constituents (email, public meetings, etc.).

Another dimension to faculty senate minutes was the use of these bodies as a communicative tool by administrators. In almost every instance, a significant portion of the faculty senate meeting was used to present announcements or addresses from senior institutional leaders such as presidents, chancellors, and provosts. This use of the senate as a communication tool is suggestive of the ladder of faculty involvement in governance (Miller, 2003) where senates are structured to serve a variety of different roles, including informing faculty (Level 3) and consulting with faculty (Level 4). As a group, these senates did not operate at the higher levels of faculty control, with the exception of one senate that voted no confidence in a system board of trustees and openly challenged their policies. The group generally informed the other senators of actions and changes on their respective campuses.

Although not included in this study, the topics covered in the senates were appropriately related to the academic and faculty experience on their campuses, yet the study did not include formal votes or designating action items. This means that although faculty senates talked about benefits a great deal, these dialogues did not necessarily result in action items. Further research should take voting into consideration and such results could further answer the question about whether or not faculty senates are effective tools in framing the collective voice of faculty on important matters that face a campus.

Academic administrators might use these findings to realize that faculty senate behaviors do encourage open communication and discourse about issues that face their institutions. Administrators might subsequently structure their involvement in senate meetings by laying out a routine of informational speakers, with the vice president for student affairs attending the senate meeting once per year or semester and similar kinds of routine reporting from governmental affairs, athletics, etc. These reports could also be shared online through the senate portals as formal 'letters/reports to the senate' that might subsequently reach larger faculty audiences.

The current study was limited to a small sample of institutions and only one academic year, creating an opportunity for further research that can lead to a better use of faculty senates and create a more inclusive environment for shared governance. Senate leaders must come to understand that their role is not to simply get through an experience or to run efficient meetings, but to represent their constituents and bring together an institutional faculty for the best interests of an institution, and as a result, might explore faculty senator orientations and leadership development programs as mechanisms to improve the operations of contemporary senates.

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Assessing the senate: critical issues considered
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Assessing the Senate

Critical Issues Considered

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Based on a national study of 750 4-year institutions, this study assesses the current state of senates and identifies factors that contribute to senate effectiveness. Findings show that although cultural elements of campus governance are positive, faculty are dissatisfied with the quality of their involvement in decision making. Regression analyses show that high levels of faculty involvement in the senate and influence in particular areas of decision making are significant predictors of senate effectiveness. Based on the findings, the study raises questions aimed at advancing the study and practice of institutional governance with particular attention to the role of faculty senates.

Faculty senates remain the means by which most faculty participate in governance. More than 90% of 4-year colleges and universities have a faculty senate or some variation of a faculty governing body (Gilmour, 1991). Some critics argue that senates inhibit responsive decision making (Scott, 1996; Strohm, 1981). Other scholars argue that faculty involvement in governance is important for institutional effectiveness (Burgan, 1998; Gerber et al., 1997). If faculty involvement in decision making significantly affects governance, then an examination of faculty senates is warranted.

Utilizing a national data set with 763 institutions, I examine issues that affect senate involvement in institutional governance. The issue of how to involve faculty senates in governance more effectively is the intended goal. My objective for this study is to consider what cultural and functional elements most significantly affect the performance of faculty senates. Faculty senates are considered

the wildcard in academic governance; they are varied, unpredictable, and can alter outcomes depending on the situation. The extent to which they become better understood and more effectively involved in governance will enable better decision making in universities. What follows is a brief review of the literature, a conceptual frame to view senates, and description of the study. Last, I discuss issues that appear important for enhancing the function of faculty senates and the practice of university decision making.

RESEARCH ON FACULTY GOVERNANCE

The research on faculty senates, in large part, exists within the context of studies on faculty involvement in governance. The majority of studies do not address faculty directly. In addition, limited empirical and theoretical work exists specifically on senates (Floyd, 1994; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Lee, 1991). Consequently, few claims can be made concerning the state of faculty senates. Much of the work that discusses faculty involvement in governance and decision making represents a position either calling for more or less participation from faculty (Birnbaum, 1991; Dimond, 1991; Gerber, 2001; Jordan, 2001; Kissler, 1997; Ramo, 1997). There are virtually no studies that discern what factors most significantly affect the role of senates in governance. I utilize the literature to address two questions, which serve as a starting point for this inquiry:

- What are the existing concepts of effective faculty participation in governance?
- How does the literature define effective faculty senates?

CONCEPTS OF FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

One difficulty in addressing the first question is the diversity of higher education institutions and the composition of senates. Another more critical obstacle to addressing concepts of effective faculty participation in governance is the disagreement about the role of faculty in governance (Hamilton, 1999). Two competing voices frame the concept of effective faculty participation in governance. Those who support traditional structures of governance assert that faculty participation is key to sustaining effective institutions. The argument is based on the notion that democratic processes are necessary, with every key constituency involved in campus decision making (Floyd, 1985). In fact, some scholars warn that failing to involve faculty in decision making leads to organizational discord and impairs the fundamental function of higher education (Birnbaum, 1988; Gerber, 2001).

The call for faculty involvement in decision making expanded in recent years to include issues outside the realm of traditional faculty participation. Decisions related to budget, strategic planning, external relations, and the hiring of senior administrators are only a few areas where influence is being renegotiated (Bila,

1999; Dill & Helm, 1988; Dimond, 1991; Miller, 1999). The concept of effective faculty participation from the traditional perspective suggests faculty inclusion in major university decision making as a way to protect faculty interest and ensure that institutions maintain fidelity to the academic mission (Gerber et al., 1997; Ramo, 1997).

Scholars who call for reform claim that governance structures are not suitable for the current decision-making environment. These critics suggest that effective faculty involvement in governance requires new structures that reduce extensive consultation and instead rely on information and an analysis of market forces to determine direction. They claim that for institutions to be effective they must be able to respond quickly to competition and to demands by making fast-paced decisions (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges [AGB], 1996; Duderstadt, 2001). Some even view excessive faculty participation in governance and senates as dysfunctional, impairing institutional progress. Trow (1990) argues that "members of the senate are part-time amateurs, usually with minimal staff support and dependent on the administration for information necessary to make wise policy (or give advice) about the enterprise" (p. 26). Still, both those with a traditional view and the critics agree that extremes are dire; too little or too much faculty involvement in decision making is vaguely viewed as negative. However, evidence suggesting what effective faculty governance means for institutions in general, or for particular sectors of higher education, is indistinct.

In addition to the conventional debate, the technological, political, financial, and social changes experienced by higher education compel some to consider how such changes affect governance systems and the decision-making environment (Collis, 2001; Duderstadt, 2001; Gumport, 2000). Institutional change has thus become central to discussions on governance. Many recognize that shifts in the nature of faculty work, the responsibility of the university presidents, and the types of decisions institutions now face make governance and the involvement of faculty more complex (Benjamin & Carroll, 1999; Collis, 2001; Keller, 2001; Morphew, 1999).

Effective faculty involvement in governance has therefore been discussed in terms of how much influence particular constituency groups have in decision making, not in terms of decision outcomes. Much of the literature seems to focus on participation for the sake of participating, diverting attention from the issue of how involvement affects quality outcomes. More recently, scholars are considering the effects of institutional change on campus governance. In answering the first question, the literature on faculty involvement in governance generally represents three perspectives: (a) Faculty should be, to some degree, involved in nearly all campus decision making; (b) faculty should be involved in decision making, but their involvement ought to be limited principally to academic matters; and (c) higher education institutions have changed so dramatically that there is a need to reconsider how campuses are governed altogether.

DEFINING EFFECTIVE FACULTY GOVERNANCE

The second question of how effective faculty senates are defined poses more of a challenge than the first. Many scholars of governance avoid using the term *effective* altogether. Instead, the term *perceived* is more commonly used as a preface to avoid making definitive statements concerning senate effectiveness. Recognizing the difficulty and risk involved with defining an effective senate is important. What might represent effectiveness in one institution can lead to disaster in another, even on campuses with similar characteristics. Most would agree that providing a prescription for effective faculty governance is difficult, if not impossible. However, advancing empirically based concepts of effective senates can be helpful. For example, doing so may create an ability to test a particular model of effectiveness or invite the development of alternative models. Yet, there has not been a noticeable push from higher education scholars to make determinations about effective faculty senates.

Faculty senate effectiveness is difficult to define given the multiple interpretations of what constitutes sound governance practices (Hamilton, 1999). On many campuses, considerable disagreement exists among campus constituents about what shared governance means and who is to be granted decision-making authority (Drummond & Reitsch, 1995; Evans, 1999; Ramo, 1998; Williams, Gore, Broches, & Lostoski, 1987). Moreover, even if defining an effective senate began with determining the goals of senates and then seeking to measure their success, the diversity of senates relegates such measures to only small samples. Standards for measuring an effective senate have, in many cases, involved an intuitive process of knowing when it works.

The few studies that examine perceptions of effective senates show that senates dominated by faculty, versus those mixed with students and staff, are perceived to be more effective. Senates that are responsive to administrative initiatives are thought to be more effective because of their ability to act, not so much because of the quality of their action. Also, senates that report positive cultural aspects, meaning that campus constituents view them favorably, are also perceived as effective (Lee, 1991). However, senates are more commonly perceived as ineffective due to being unresponsive, having internal disagreement, being uninformed, and being organizationally dysfunctional (Birnbaum, 1989; Jordan, 2001; Scott, 1997; Trow, 1990). The handful of studies that exist on senates are limited due to the use of small case studies and anecdotal descriptions. Consequently, the question of how to define an effective senate remains inadequately addressed. Since the early 1970s, there have been no national studies of faculty senates (American Association of University Professors [AAUP], 1966). Perhaps needless to say, a significant need exists for more empirical and theoretical scholarship to address questions concerning the faculty senate.

Given that faculty are likely to continue playing a significant role in academic governance, determining what factors affect their involvement is important. Work that identifies differences across institutional types, as well as structural,

cultural, and functional qualities of senates, is needed. This study represents a step in that direction. Using a national data set, I identify factors that most significantly affect senate effectiveness (as defined herein). First, I offer a conceptual frame to view senates, and then, I describe the study and present the data on which I base my discussion.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAME FOR FACULTY SENATES

Faculty senates are disparate and perform a variety of functions. Therefore, understanding them collectively can be difficult, if not impossible, without a frame by which to view them. Based on recent research I conducted on faculty senates, four models were developed as a way to comprehend senates. I employ these models to establish a conceptual framework. The models (traditional, influential, dormant, and cultural) are briefly described below.

Traditional. Traditional faculty senates function primarily to preserve and represent the interest of the faculty during decision-making processes. They maintain control in areas that have traditionally been the domain of the faculty (i.e., curriculum, program requirements, and tenure and promotion). Their influence over nonacademic issues (i.e., budget, strategic planning, and external relations) is minimal due to limited legal authority. Traditional senates usually respond to administrative initiatives, and their input on most major decision making is in the form of recommendations that can be considered or rejected by the administration. Generally, these senates function as an association that represents the interest of the faculty during decision making rather than an integrated partner in campus governance.

Influential. Similar to traditional senates, influential senates exercise decision-making authority in areas of curriculum and instruction, but they also influence decision making on nonacademic matters such as budget, athletics, and development. Influential senates can benefit from extensive legal authority, but their influence also can result from being well organized and engaged in campus decision making. These senates are assertive and take the initiative on issues that extend beyond faculty matters to those that concern the entire institution. Other governing constituencies view influential senates as a legitimate integrated governing body of the campus and as having the ability to create change.

Dormant. Dormant faculty senates are usually marked by inactivity and exist largely as a ceremonial pastime for faculty. Although these senates may have structures similar to others, their function in campus decision making is minimal. Decision making that usually rests with faculty via the senate is conducted at the school or college level. Although these senates do not play a role in decision making, they may serve latent functions that are important to faculty or for

maintaining the existing power structure. Dormant senates are not considered a factor in major university decision making. As a result, faculty may participate in governance through alternative means.

Cultural. The role these senates play in campus decision making is influenced by cultural dynamics that continually change. Issues such as personnel, recent decision-making history, and social interaction manipulate the function of these senates more than structural characteristics. For example, informal processes such as the provost making a determination on an issue based on the advice of well-respected senior faculty members may weigh more heavily on decision outcomes than the formal proceedings of the senate. In many instances, structural ineffectiveness can lead to informal processes or "deal cutting" that circumvents formal processes of the senate. Other cultural dynamics such as distrust among constituents, composition and behavior of key personnel, and institutional history are just a few factors that can affect decision making more than formal processes. Consequently, the faculty's role in campus governance is dictated by fluid cultural dynamics more than structural qualities. As the cultural dynamics of the senate change (e.g., turnover in a key position), so does the role it plays in decision making.

These models (traditional, influential, dormant, and cultural) represent a frame to collectively view faculty senates. I do not suggest that one model is usually more effective than another. Some senates may fall in between or across models depending on the decision type and their ability to shift from one model to another. I employ them as a way to understand the multiple functions of senates. I use them in this study to understand the sample.

A NATIONAL SURVEY

To establish an empirical base for scholarship, I conducted a national survey to gauge the state of faculty senates in 4-year colleges and universities. The intent was to survey campus constituents about various structural, cultural, and functional aspects of their faculty senate. To be clear, I use the term *faculty senate* to refer to numerous variations of faculty governing bodies. *Faculty council, academic senate,* or other terms may be alternatively employed. The survey was intended to provide a national description of faculty senate involvement in institutional governance across different institutional types and according to various campus constituents.

Based on the Carnegie Classification of Higher Education Institutions, the sample included 150 doctoral institutions, 302 master's institutions, and 311 baccalaureate institutions. The sampled institutions represent approximately 55% of all institutions from the population of each sector. Among the doctoral universities, 79 were public and 71 were private. Among the master's institutions, 140 were public and 162 were private. And among the liberal arts colleges, 68 institutions were public and 243 were private. These ratios also closely

TABLE 1:   Response Rate for Institutions and Constituency Groups

	Targeted	Response Rate	
Institutions			
Doctoral	150	119	(79%)
Master's	302	236	(78%)
Baccalaureate	311	233	(75%)
Total	N = 763	N = 588	(77%)
Constituency groups			
Academic vice president	757	416	(55%)
Faculty senate chair	749	509	(68%)
Faculty	2,256	1,128	(50%)
Total	N = 3,762	N = 2,053	(55%)

resemble the ratio of public versus private institutions in the population of each institutional sector.

From each institution, five individuals were targeted: the chief academic officer, the faculty senate president, and three department chairs from various disciplines. More than 3,500 participants were targeted. Each was invited to complete the 35-item Web-based survey over a 4-week period. Institutional response rates are reported in Table 1.

The data from the Web-based survey were gathered and analyzed to determine descriptive statistics and categorical variance using ANOVA (an analysis of variance). Regression analyses were then used to determine what factors most significantly predict senate effectiveness. To determine effectiveness, three Likert-scaled items were combined to create a dependent variable ESENATE: (a) Faculty at my institution are satisfied with the structure and function of the senate; (b) during major college/university decision making, the senate is effective in helping reach resolutions to issues under consideration; and (c) others from the campus community (administrators, governing board, students) view the senate as powerful. A reliability analysis was run for the three variables yielding an alpha coefficient of .8042. A range of independent variables that represent cultural aspects of the senate, venue of faculty participation in campus decision making, and level of faculty influence in particular decision types were used as predictors of ESENATE. In addition, an ANOVA and cross-tab were run to determine variance on the dependent variable across institutional sectors (baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral).

CULTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE SENATE

The findings are categorized in two sections. The first section shows descriptive statistics and percentages for cultural and functional characteristics of

TABLE 2:   Response Percentages for Items Assessing Perceptions of Governance Culture

Shared governance is an important part of the institutions value and identity.	
Academic vice presidents	96
Faculty senate presidents	85
Faculty	77
All respondents	83
Communication between campus constituents is good or sufficient to make progress during decision making.	
Academic vice presidents	88
Faculty senate presidents	70
Faculty	66
All respondents	75
There is a significant level of trust between the faculty and the president.	
Academic vice presidents	89
Faculty senate presidents	72
Faculty	67
All respondents	77
I agree that there is a high level of faculty interest in senate activity on my campus.	
Baccalaureate	54
Master's	39
Doctoral	19
All institutions	41

senates. Institutional and constituency breakdowns are shown only where the variance between categories is statistically significant. In the second section, results of the regression analysis, ANOVA, and cross-tab are provided to show predictors of senate effectiveness and differences across institutional types.

The cultural elements of senates refer to beliefs, attitudes, and perceptual factors that can affect the role senates play in governance. Findings reveal that 83% of all respondents believe that shared governance is an important part of their institution's value and identity. Among the vice presidents in the sample, 96% report this to be true, compared to 85% among senate presidents and 77% among faculty. Shared governance was shown to be a strong institutional value across all institutional types. In addition, the quality of communication that takes place between university constituents (governing board members, the president, and faculty) was reportedly high. Of vice presidents in the sample, 88% report that communication between constituents is sufficient to make progress or good, compared to 70% among senate presidents and 66% among faculty. Of all respondents, 77% report that a significant level of trust exists between the president and faculty; 89% of vice presidents in the sample report significant trust exists between the president and faculty, compared to 72% among senate presidents and 67% among faculty members. A summary of these findings is reported in Table 2.

In spite of reporting significant trust, sufficient communication, and the belief that shared governance is important as an institutional value, this sample reports

that faculty are not meaningfully involved in decision making. Of respondents from all institutions, 56% identified the lack of active faculty involvement in campus decision making as a critical challenge to effective governance. Consonant with that, there is a reported lack of interest in senate activity. In response to a question assessing the level of interest faculty have in senate activity, just 41% of all institutions agreed that is was high. The level of faculty interest in senate activity is significantly higher in baccalaureate institutions than in master's and doctoral institutions in the sample (see Table 2). Although the majority of respondents believe that shared governance is important and that sufficient trust and communication exists between constituents, there is significant dissatisfaction with how faculty are involved in decision making. Consequently, positive cultural aspects of governance are not closely related to satisfaction with the nature of senate involvement in campus decision making.

Faculty senates are involved in decision making to varying degrees depending on the issue, context, and the extent of their authority. The functional aspects of senates refer to areas in which senates have decision-making authority and the ways their influence is exercised. Findings show that faculty maintain significant influence over matters related to undergraduate curriculum. Of respondents, 92% from baccalaureate institutions report faculty have substantial influence over undergraduate curriculum compared to 85% of those in master's institutions and 81% in doctoral institutions. Faculty report having the least amount of influence in areas of strategic planning and setting budget priorities. This is particularly important because more than 60% of respondents report that the most critical issues facing their institution in the upcoming year are related to budget shortfalls. Table 3 illustrates levels of faculty influence in several areas of decision making.

Table 3 also illustrates how faculty influence is expressed in the particular areas of decision making. For example, faculty influence over issues of curriculum is expressed through formal authority, whereas influence over issues concerning distance education and intellectual property is expressed informally. Formal influence refers to having legislative authority or substantial voting membership on a decision-making body. Informal influence refers to the formulation of reports, recommendations, taking a collective position on an issue, or other actions not based on a formal delegation of authority. Other means of expressing influence include having veto power or refusing to participate in decision making. These forms were expressed much less frequently. One example of how the two (influence and expression of influence) intersect is that only 12% of respondents report that faculty have substantial influence in setting strategic and budget priorities, yet 65% report that faculty exercise some form of informal influence in decision making on these matters. Overall, faculty maintain significant influence over areas of curriculum and policy related to promotion and tenure standards, and most exercise formal authority in these areas. Faculty have the least influence over evaluation of the president and provost and

TABLE 3:   Decision Types and Percentages for Level of Influence and Expression of
           Influence

Decision Type	Substantial Influence	Expression of Influence
Undergraduate curriculum	87	67
Tenure and promotion standards	70	59
Selection of the president and provost	27	51
Evaluation of the president and provost	17	40
Setting strategic and budget priorities	12	65
Policies pertaining to intellectual property and distance education	26	44

TABLE 4:   Predictors of (ESENATE) Senate Effectiveness (Standardized Beta Coefficients)

Predictors	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Shared governance is an important part of the institution	.045*	.038*	.026
Trust	.018	.028	.015
Communication	.001	.001	.003
Faculty involvement in senate	.501***	.455***	.419***
Faculty interest in senate	.209***	.194***	.177***
Participation in department		.078***	.036
Participation in standing committee		.128***	.061**
Participation in ad hoc committee		.047*	.005
Educational policy			.033
Curriculum			.064**
Tenure and promotion			.098***
Evaluation of provost/president			−.012
Selection of provost/president			.073***
Setting strategic and budget priorities			.076**
R^2	.459***	.490***	.530***

$*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.$

setting strategic and budget priorities. Faculty influence over these matters is expressed informally.

The second part of this analysis involved running three regression models to determine which variables significantly predict what I defined here as "senate effectiveness" (ESENATE). Results from the regression analysis are shown in Table 4.

In the first model, cultural measures (level of trust, communication, interest in the senate, involvement in the senate, and the importance of shared governance on campus) were used as predictors of ESENATE. The degree to which shared governance is regarded as an important part of the institutional value and identity is a significant predictor of senate effectiveness ($p < .05$). Yet, levels of trust and communication were not significant predictors of an effective senate. Although levels of trust and communication are high across all institutions in

this sample, they are not statistically significant predictors of an effective senate. The level of faculty involvement in the senate and the level of faculty interest in senate activity were much stronger predictors of an effective senate ($p < .001$). High levels of faculty interest and involvement in senate activities are positively correlated with senate effectiveness.

In the second model, I measured venue of faculty participation in decision making. That is, how does faculty participation in departmental decision making, standing administrative/faculty committees, and ad hoc committees predict senate effectiveness? The results show that each—faculty participation in decision making at the departmental level ($p < .001$), in standing faculty/administrative committees ($p < .001$), and on ad hoc committees ($p < .05$)—is a significant predictor of an effective senate. Faculty participation in decision making in multiple, or alternative, venues is positively correlated with senate effectiveness. The cultural variables in Model 1 were virtually unaffected by the inclusion of the participation items.

The third model measures areas of faculty influence. Those variables include (a) faculty influence over educational policy (e.g., admission standards), (b) curriculum, (c) issues concerning promotion and tenure, (d) evaluation of the president and provost, (e) selection of the president and provost, and (f) setting strategic and budget priorities. Faculty influence over educational policy was not shown to be significant. In addition, evaluation of the president/provost was not shown to be a significant predictor of senate effectiveness. Furthermore, the coefficient for this variable was negative, which suggests that senates that do evaluate their president and provost are likely to score lower on the ESENATE variable. Faculty influence over undergraduate curriculum, issues related to promotion and tenure, selection of the president/provost, and setting strategic and budget priorities were all shown to be significant predictors. In the third model, the effects of faculty influence in decision making were shown to be stronger predictors, eliminating the effects of the variable measuring the importance of shared governance as an institutional value.

Using ANOVA and cross-tabs, the sample was divided by institutional sectors (baccalaureate, master's, doctoral) and measured to determine where each sector scores on the variable ESENATE. The results show that baccalaureate institutions score higher than master's and doctoral institutions in this sample. Doctoral institutions ranked the lowest. Table 5 shows the results from these analyses.

Collectively, these findings indicate that shared governance remains a strong institutional value among all campus constituents and across the three sectors of higher education in this sample. Faculty in this sample maintain significant control over curriculum and issues related to tenure and promotion and they usually have formal authority over such matters. Faculty in this sample have the least influence in areas of strategic planning and budgetary matters but report having informal authority in such areas. The majority of respondents also report that a sufficient amount of trust and communication exists between constituencies to

TABLE 5: Cross-Tab of Senate Effectiveness (ESENATE) by Institutional Type (in percentages)

ESENATE	Baccalaureate	Master's	Doctoral	Average
Low	18	25	30	24
Medium	59	56	57	57
High	22	18	12	17

make progress in decision making. Yet, many faculty report not being meaningfully involved in decision making. Moreover, levels of trust and communication are not significant predictors of senate effectiveness. In addition, a significant lack of interest and involvement in senate activity exists among faculty. This is particularly evident in doctoral institutions.

Among the 14 variables used in the regression models to predict senate effectiveness, the five strongest predictors were (a) high levels of faculty involvement in the senate, (b) high levels of faculty interest in senate activity, (c) having significant influence over issues related to tenure and promotion, (d) having significant influence in the selection of the provost and president, and (e) having significant influence in setting strategic and budget priorities. In the following section, I briefly discuss the challenges of faculty involvement in the senate and the effects of trust versus authority on senate effectiveness. In doing so, I raise questions related to improving the role senates play in campus governance.

FACULTY INVOLVEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Faculty in baccalaureate institutions are significantly more involved in senate activity and have more effective senates than those in master's and doctoral institutions. Consequently, a potential lesson may be learned from this institutional sector. Why are faculty in baccalaureate institutions more interested and involved in the senate? Conventional wisdom suggests that greater institutional support leads to greater participation, but I argue that institutional support for senate operations does not necessarily increase faculty interest or participation. Based on the fact that baccalaureate institutions received the least amount of support for their senate operations, I view institutional support as a secondary incentive for faculty participation.

More important than institutional support such as release time or secretarial support is the impact of one's involvement in the senate. Notwithstanding differences of institutional type, the issue may not be about how much is offered but what involvement means for faculty. The ability to influence decision outcomes is likely to outweigh release time, a stipend, or other incentives currently being offered to faculty for investing in senate activity. Presumably, ability to shape decision outcomes is more closely related to the concept of meaningful involvement. Certainly, institutional factors such as size affect the ability of senate

participants to manipulate decisions. Individuals in smaller institutions are more likely to directly influence decision outcomes. Structurally, fewer organizational obstacles for participation are likely to exist in smaller institutions. Consequently, the impact of one's labor may be more direct and yield much faster results, making participation more rewarding. Arguably, higher levels of interest and participation in the senate among faculty in baccalaureate institutions has less to do with institutional support than with the possibility of experiencing the results of their work and investment in the senate. Given this reason, are there ways larger institutions can assimilate the effects of meaningful faculty involvement?

Institutional culture and beliefs about participation and community also can influence how constituencies are involved in decision making. Scholars who study the nature of faculty work suggest that faculty are socialized differently across institutional types, which can affect their disposition on participation (Austin, Rice, & Splete, 1988). Moreover, the culture of baccalaureate institutions is often more communal than autonomous, creating environments where involvement and participation is customary. Given such differences, institutional factors and the nature of involvement are important when considering factors closely associated with faculty participation in senates.

The data from this sample show that institutional support and participation are inversely correlated. As a result, the importance and effects of institutional support must be questioned. Keep in mind that most forms of institutional support are offered only to the president or executive committee of the senate. Most at-large members are credited for service that is valued more or less depending on institutional type. How important is release time, secretarial support, or budgetary support to faculty participation? How might resources be redistributed to more positively encourage faculty involvement in the senate? Are some forms of institutional support more effective than others? The inverse relationship between institutional support and faculty involvement does not suggest support is irrelevant. Instead, it suggests that the support and rewards currently being provided (mainly at doctoral institutions) are ineffective. Existing concepts and practices of providing institutional support for senates deserve reconsideration.

TRUST VERSUS AUTHORITY

Trust and communication are concepts often associated with academic governance. It is generally assumed that institutions where considerable trust and communication exist between campus constituents are institutions where campus decision making is more functional. The fact that neither trust nor communication were significant predictors of senate effectiveness in this sample prompts an interesting question: Can effective senates exist on campuses where low levels of trust and communication exist between constituencies? As senate effectiveness is measured in this study, the answer seems to be yes. Still, most in higher education would argue that trust and communication are important for

shared governance on any campus. Before implying that trust and communication are unimportant, another way of addressing the question is to say that other factors influence effectiveness more. Can senates experiencing distrust and poor communication but high levels of influence in decision making be effective? While discussing campus governance, most would agree that adversarial relationships between senates and other campus governing bodies are bad for shared governance. However, when discussing senate effectiveness, how much authority faculty have determines effectiveness more than how well they get along with other campus governing bodies.

One common complaint among faculty is that they have limited authority. This is particularly true concerning nonacademic issues. Many faculty equate legal authority with legitimate authority. Without such authority, many senates view themselves as unable to significantly influence decision making on important issues beyond curriculum and tenure. The two areas of decision making that most strongly predict senate effectiveness (selection of the president/provost and setting strategic/budget priorities) are areas where faculty have the least amount of influence. Clearly, the issue of giving senates more formal authority can create challenges for presidents and governing boards. Advocates for stronger university presidents claim that increasing faculty authority weakens much-needed presidential leadership (AGB, 1996). Although both arguments have merit, for senates to gain more formal authority, the influence of other governing bodies is lessened, creating a complex decision-making environment with diffuse power and competing interests.

Structural and cultural changes experienced in higher education turns attention to the question of whether current governance structures are adequate for the decision-making environment (Baldwin & Leslie, 2001). Do current governance structures negatively affect senate effectiveness? Should faculty senates have more decision-making authority outside of their traditional domain? Although the results from this study suggest yes, others question the effectiveness of faculty being extensively involved in nonacademic decision making. Citing lack of information, lack of administrative infrastructure, and narrow focus, some question the ability of faculty to effectively deal with complex institutional issues (Trow, 1990).

In my estimation, the challenges of faculty involvement in decision making outside of their traditional domain are related to the consequences of their involvement, not so much the idea of sharing authority. Drawbacks often associated with faculty involvement in decision making include the lack of timeliness, faculty having a narrow view of the institution instead of one that is comprehensive, and the culture of us (faculty) against them (administration) that permeates many campuses. Although most campus constituents would agree that faculty involvement in decision making is valuable, the consequence of their involvement creates undesirable operational challenges. In some cases, accepting the results of simply not involving faculty in decision making is viewed as the lesser of two evils. Although this approach may represent one way of moving forward,

acceptance of a lesser evil does not necessarily imply sound governance systems. The data indicate faculty involvement in nonacademic decision making contributes significantly to senate effectiveness. Institutions must be creative in finding ways to grant greater formal influence to senates while, at the same time, maintaining functional governance structures. If failing to involve faculty in decision making leads to ineffective senates, facing the challenges of improving current governance structures may be the lesser evil.

Some in higher education hold that institutional responsiveness is overrated, noting the success some campuses experienced maintaining the status quo. However, the dissatisfaction among many faculty over the quality of involvement in decision making is worthy of concern. To some in higher education, it seems as if asking colleges and universities to be flexible is asking too much. Presumably, 10 years ago, asking institutions to raise $100 million of private revenue over a 3-year period might have seemed to ask a great deal. The point is that for institutions to survive, generating private revenue was a must. Employing effective governance strategies is becoming increasing important for institutional success in the 21st century.

TRADITIONAL FACULTY SENATES

How suitable are governance structures for the current decision-making environment? Although the answer may not be apparent, it is evident that most institutions in this sample typify traditional senates. Using the models of faculty senates, the majority have influence over academic matters, limited influence over nonacademic matters, and express their influence informally. Given the discussion surrounding faculty involvement, it is clear that many senates play traditional roles in governance despite notable institutional change.

Although the consequences of having a traditional senate are unknown, two characteristics of traditional senates deserve mention. The first is that most traditional senates respond to administrative initiatives rarely advancing independent agendas. This can have two consequences. On one hand, senates that lack direction or initiative might be viewed as disengaged by the administration. On the other hand, being responsive to administrative initiatives due to the absence of an independent agenda can be viewed as cooperative. Seemingly, assertive senates with initiatives representative of institutional goals symbolize an ideal medium.

Second, traditional senates act as associations that represent the faculty rather than integrated partners in campus governance. As a result of having better knowledge about cultural and functional elements of the senate, administrative disposition and faculty activism become key areas of future investigation. Using these data helps better understand the gap between the idea and the actually process. Now the relationship between models of faculty senates and senate effectiveness needs to be explored. What kind of faculty make up traditional senates? What role does leadership play in how senates function? Presumably,

acting as an association rather than an integrated partner can contribute to exclusion in decision making or perpetuate adversarial relationships with administration. On other campuses, it can represent acceptable practice. The point is that combining new research with use of models can enhance understanding about faculty governance.

Using models creates a unit of analysis and a means to compare and contrast senate characteristics. While in search of ways to improve governance systems it is important to consider institutional contexts as well as senate types. No one solution is appropriate for all campuses that face challenges related to governance, which makes understanding differences more important.

CONCLUSION: ASSESSING THE SENATE

Governance structures and decision-making processes are of great importance because they are the means that determine institutional direction. In addition, faculty senates are likely to remain a critical component of campus governance in the coming years. Assessing what issues critically affect faculty senates is one way of prompting an examination of how to improve institutional governance. Given the institutional diversity that exists, the aim has not been to prescribe a particular plan of action. Rather, it has been to provide a better understanding about faculty senates and identify what issues most critically affect them. The importance of faculty involvement and issues of trust as related to senate effectiveness provide momentum for future discussion, action, and further study.

This study brings to light the importance of only a few issues that inform the higher education community about faculty senates. To a large extent, senates remain understudied. The need exists for additional work that determines how other factors, such as senate leadership, or particular institutional characteristics affect campus governance. Meanwhile, the focus for practice must be to address the known challenges that impede senate effectiveness. Creating alternative governance structures and improving faculty involvement in the senate represents a place to start.

Much has been said about the apparent changes higher education has undergone. The consequence of such invites a reevaluation of many aspects, including the purpose, mission, leadership, and financial structure of higher education. Governance structures are a necessary part of the discussion.

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