Elements of Shared Governance

From the Taskforce on Shared Governance
Shared governance is the longstanding process in higher education by which various constituents contribute to decision-making related to college policy and procedure.

Effective shared governance engenders deeply-informed institutional decision-making and an institutional culture of collective ownership and accountability for the institution’s present and future.
Why? The Purpose of Shared Governance is:

To ensure well-informed decision-making and fitting transparency
Major Tenets of Shared Governance
Consistent with Otis’s Workplace Values

- **Mutual respect**, which can foster trust
- **Recognition** that groups’ responsibilities and/or authority are clearly defined, yet interrelated
- **Ongoing and timely communication** with each other and with the larger community to close loops and explain the basis for decisions
- **Making readily visible** relevant institutional priorities, policies, and procedures
Communication
Good Decision-Makers Must:

**Confer**
- Regularly confer and gather input as a form of research/learning before decisions are made

**Synthesize**
- Synthesize community, conferral groups, and individual experts’ input with thoughtful consideration and deep analysis

**Communicate**
- Communicate to close loops for the campus community by sharing the basis for informed decisions, providing needed transparency
With these major tenets guiding shared governance . . .

**Trust** can evolve, and propel even better decision-making and **alignment** within the campus community and the Board.

Governance is more **effective** because it emanates from **shared understanding**.

**Clarity**, **inclusion**, and **fitting transparency** help to answer questions and reduce doubts and fears.
Three kinds of **distinctions** are helpful to discuss at Otis today:

• The distinction between a *situation* and a *system*

• The distinction between *Advisory* roles and *Institutional Decision-Making* ones

• The distinction between *governance* and *management*
A situation can incite feelings of systemic failure. Yet a situation may be an event or moment that should not be mistaken for an entire system.

A system is much larger, and can be bolstered by new alignment, thoughtful articulation, and central, ready visibility.
Is the role *Advisory* or *Decision-Making*?

*(These differ but often overlap)*

Those in *Advisory* roles provide expertise to properly inform institutional decision-making.

Those in *Decision-Making* roles are responsible for gathering input to make properly informed institutional decisions.
Governance determines the “what,” the strategic task of setting the organization's goals, direction, limitations and accountability frameworks.

Management determines the “how,” the ways the institution will reach its goals and aspirations.
Three Key Kinds of Engagement Support Shared Governance

**Input**—the free exchange of ideas and perspectives, responses to inquiry, or specific expertise sought and received from many to inform a topic.

**Responsibility**—the variable job duties and scope of influence accorded to some individuals; leaders analyze input from the conferral process and prepare to make decisions.

**Institutional Decision Making**—following due conferral and synthesis of broad and/or pointed input, three bodies of governance make institutional decisions.
Formal Governance and Management Channels

President's Council

Standing Conferral Groups
- Broad Community (Administrators, Faculty, Staff, and Students)
- Students' Union
- Alumni Council
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Council
- Environmental Steering Committee
- Staff Council (forming)
- President’s Council
- International Partnerships Committee
- And more . . .

Board of Trustees

President

Vice Presidents

Provost

Chairs & Acad. Directors

Academic Assembly

Faculty Senate

Committees

Full-Time & Adjunct Faculty, Chairs, ex-officio

Includes Asst Deans and Asst Directors

Includes Ex-officio (Staff & Admin)

Representatives from the Whole College with Senior Team

Chair/Dirs., Asst Chairs, Faculty

Full-time & Adjunct Faculty
Conferral is essential with standing groups such as these, and others:

- Alumni Council
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Council
- Environmental Steering Committee
- Staff Council (forming)
- President’s Council
- International Partnerships Committee
- Students’ Union
- And more . . .
After Conferral, Governance Relies on Three Main Branches

- The Academic Branch (Disciplinary Experts)
- Institutional Management (Senior Leadership)
- The Fiduciary Body (Board of Trustees)
The Academic Branch (Academic Assembly)

Faculty Senate (Full-time and Adjunct Faculty)

Chairs, Assistant Chairs, & Academic Directors
Academic Assembly Governance Includes:

- Executive Committee
- Curriculum Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Rank & Promotion Committee
- Faculty Development Committee
- Academic Standing Committee
- Assessment Committee
- Faculty Senate
- Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees
- Faculty Representative to the Board of Governors
- Acad. Assembly Representatives to Board Committees:
  - Campus Life
  - Educational Planning
  - Finance and Investment
  - Institutional Advancement
  - Marketing
Governance is important at the Department level, too.

Part-time, Adjunct, and Full-time Faculty contribute directly to:

- Course Development and Clear, Sequential Syllabi
- Grading Criteria
- Development and Meeting of Program Learning Outcomes
- Curricular Innovation, Student-Responsive Pedagogies, and Teaching Methods
- Current Discipline-specific Content—Remaining Relevant to the Field(s)
- Quality of Education Delivery—Student Success, Retention, and College Reputation/Distinction
Institutional Management
(Senior Leadership)

Division Leaders
(President, Provost, Vice Presidents)
The Fiduciary Body
(The Board)

California 501c3
Corporate Bylaws

Board Committees,
Task Forces, Trustees
What Good Shared Governance Can Do

Ensure Well-Informed Decision-Making and Fitting Transparency through:

• Conferral

• Main branches responsibly seeking input and making decisions accordingly

• Trusting the system and remembering that it’s not the same as a situation
Shared Governance at Work

Several Examples:

- A new major (Toy Design) (from admin.)
- Faculty Senate (from the faculty)
- The DEI Council (from the faculty)
- Attendance policy (from students to academic assembly)
Shared Governance Cycle and Sequence

• An issue or concern requires attention
• Explore initial ideas
• Gather necessary input
• Synthesize input and revise ideas, accordingly (in some cases, continue input gathering for further learning and revision)
• Form a decision or solution
• Communicate decisions/solutions and their basis
• Evaluate and improve
Looking Forward

Shared Governance will be:

• Ongoing
• Made and kept readily visible, and
• Under continuous review.