

# Elements of Shared Governance

From the Taskforce  
on Shared Governance

# What is 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*

# Is it a *Situation* or a *System*?

*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.

# Is it *Governance* or *Management*?

*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.

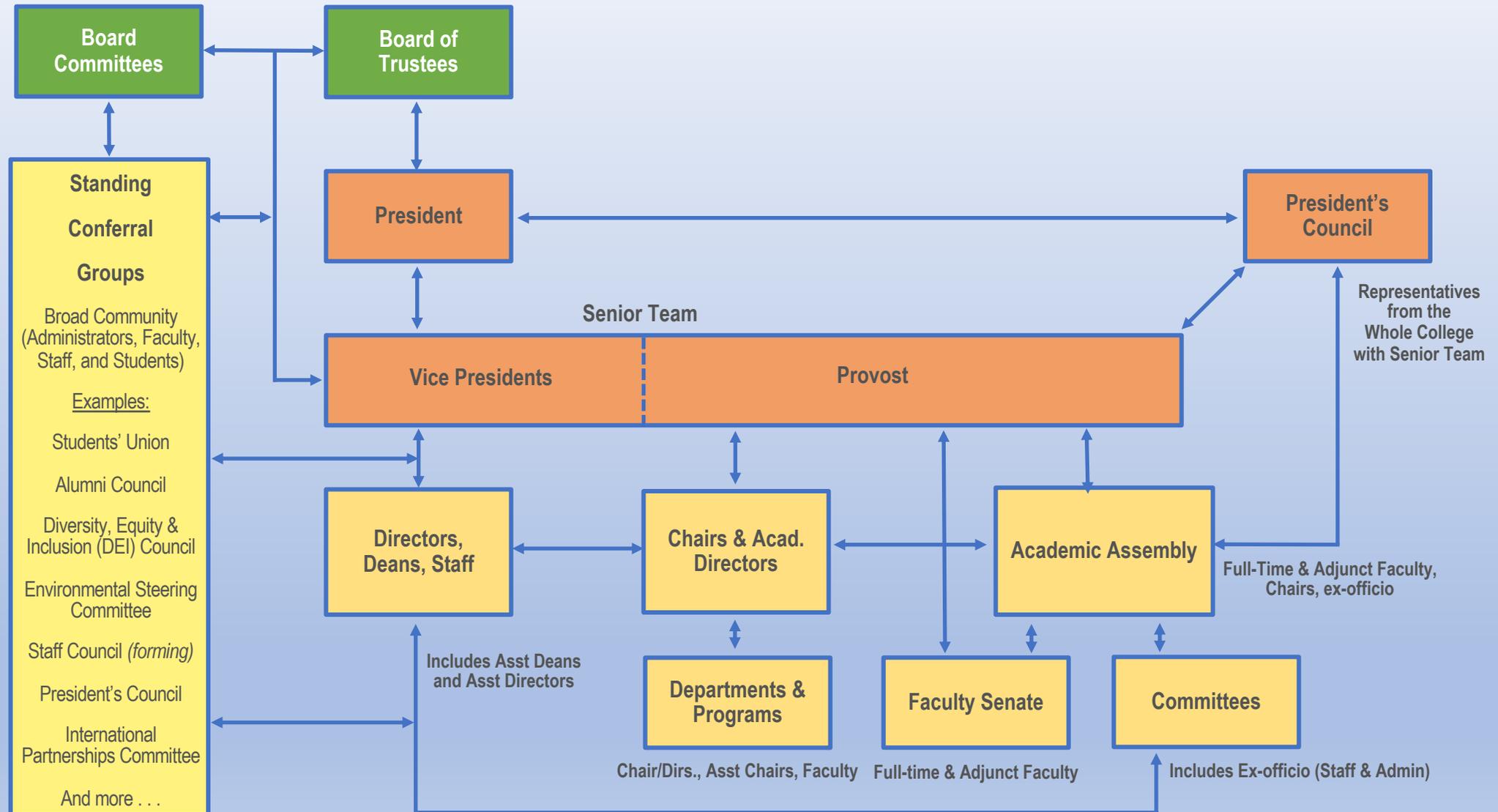
Three Key  
Kinds of  
**Engagement**  
Support  
Shared  
Governance

**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

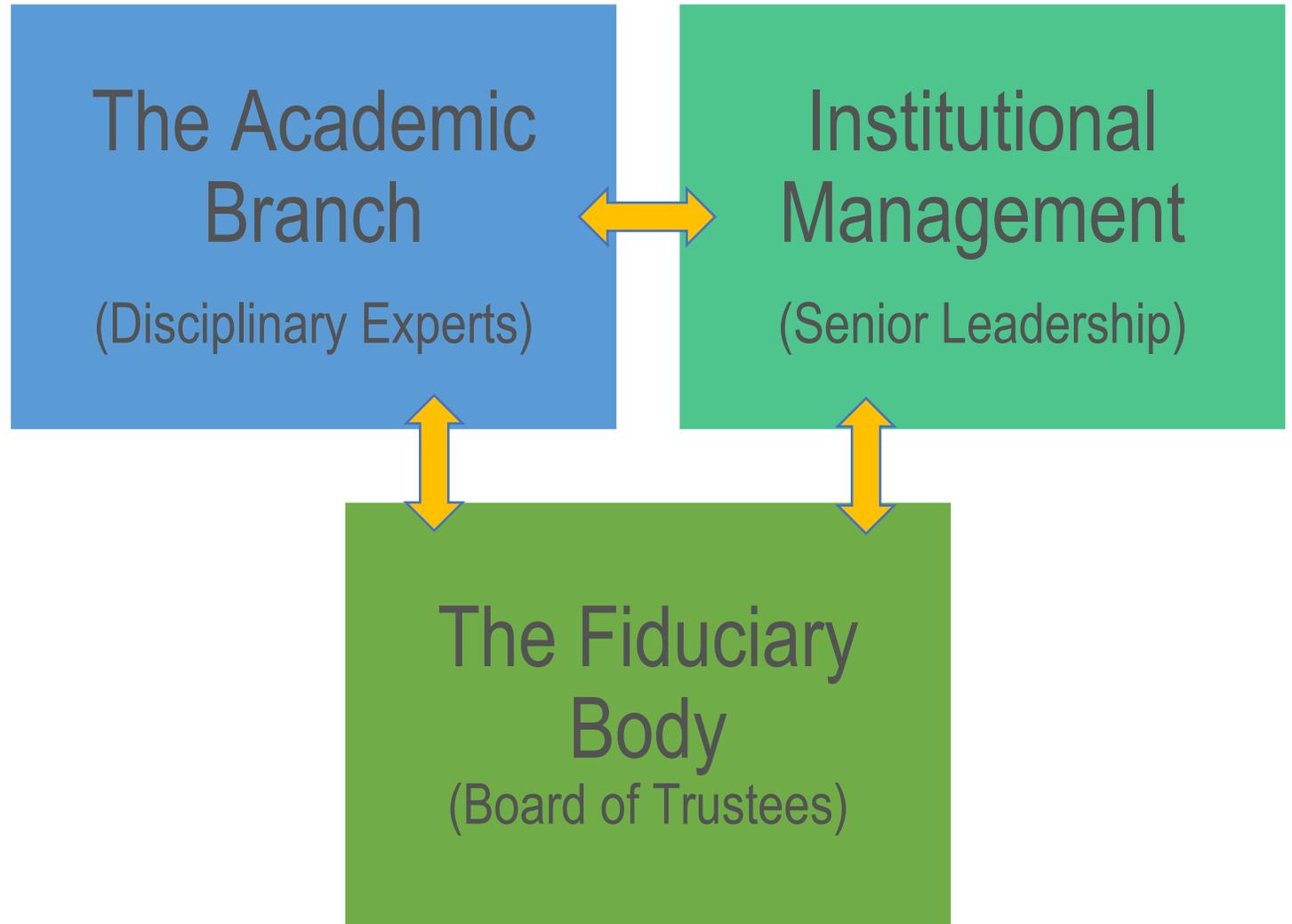
# Formal Governance and Management Channels



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  
(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.

