# **Report of the FAEC Subcommittee on Shared Governance (4/23/14)**

Members: R. Becklen, D. Chen, D. Crawley, S. Kurzmann, K. McMurdy (chair)

I. Charge to the Subcommittee: The FAEC Subcommittee on Shared Governance was formed by the FAEC, for the purpose of internally conducting a pilot study of issues of shared governance at Ramapo College. This is not an FA task force or committee. Our final report will be made to the FAEC. The FAEC may then choose to present our findings to the FA.

Goals: The goal of this subcommittee was to perform an unbiased case study analysis of shared governance at Ramap mp.0 1 Tf [(s) -0-0-0-0-0-5nml (t) 0.2 (Ra) g2 (Ra) . .76cm B . .76cm

## II. Definitions of Shared Governance

As a starting point, in 1966, the AAUP Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities described the need for shared governance: "the variety and complexity of the tasks performed by institutions of higher education produce an inescapable

academic policy. In comparison, decisions regarding the physical plant apart from educational spaces along with the internal

### **Respect and Collegiality**

When describing the manner in which the personal interactions that make up the act of "shared governance" take place, the words "respect" and "collegiality" are frequently invoked. Without further explanation, however, these can be little more than empty platitudes. In the context of shared governance at an academic institution, and specifically at Ramapo College, we interpret them in the following way. Faculty, Administration and other constituencies should approach decision events and policy deliberations with the understanding that they all share the same overarching goal, i.e., optimizing the long-term health of the College and the quality of education for current and future Ramapo students. This assumption of a common goal should provide the framework for a constructive debate, even when there are passionate disagreements over how best to achieve that goal.

## **Respect for Expertise and Decision-making Domain**

Out of respect for faculty expertise, decisions about curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process will generally be the primary responsibility of the faculty. Conversely, some policy decisions on the part of the administration need not involve shared governance at all, as their effect on the Faculty may be negligible and the Faculty may have negligible expertise in this area. It is important to recognize, however, that many decisions, while clearly within the purview and expertise areas of the administration, directly affect the ability of the Faculty to fulfill their academic mission (for example, facilities decisions). Hence, for such issues, it may still be essential to involve and consult with faculty meaningfully, even when the issue is not within their purview or expertise. Based on such considerations, there is a natural distinction to be made among three levels of involvement by any particular party/stakeholder in a given decision event:

(1) primary responsibility - recommendation of decision-making body should be followed by the governing board or designee "except in rare instances and for compelling reasons which should be stated in detail." (AAUP, 1966, Faculty, para 3).
(2) secondary - no final responsibility for the decision, but should substantially contribute to discussions and decision making; should be formally and meaningfully consulted

was, and how it was made. In the absence of this communication step, rumors and unsubstantiated claims can gain steam and undermine other ongoing shared governance efforts.

## **Clear Procedures and Compliance with those Procedures**

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Formal descriptions of policies and procedures are essential and should be readily accessible to the college community, whenever possible. It is not realistic or appropriate

possible we tried to obtain multiple perspectives and compared the information gleaned with any official documentation that was available.

## **Methodological Limitations**

The choice of cases was not exhaustive and was made partly based on the knowledge of the members of the subcommittee. A more formal selection of cases would have been more representative of actions at the College as a whole. There was also a need to respect the confidentiality of faculty and staff who spoke with subcommittee members, as they spoke with great candor. Therefore, specific interviews are not included with this report.

# V. Findings

# a. Course approval processes

ARC decisions for the past 4 years were reviewed via the archives of ARC minutes and discussion with the ARC chair. Overall, this is a successful area of shared governance, with primary responsibility resting with the faculty. The process is clear and includes individual faculty, conveners, appropriate faculty bodies (such as the Graduate Council, Writing Across the Curriculum Committee, and so forth), Deans, ARC, and the Provosts. With few exceptions, courses approved by this faculty body

program faculty were not afforded the opportunity to speak directly with the Provost about these changes. However, even though some sources were critical of the manner in which recent changes have been implemented, they are supportive of the program itself and hopeful that the prospects for the MSW program are good.

c. Personnel processes

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i. Deans and Assistant Deans searches

The search process for the Assistant Dean of Teacher Education was perceived as problematic by the relevant faculty – from the constitution of the search committee by the Dean in what is perceived to be a biased manner – to the final weighting of candidates by the Dean. In contrast, the most recent search for a Dean in the School of Humanities and Global Studies was reported as successful and ultimately without conflict. Similarly, while the recent search for a new Dean of TAS ultimately failed, leading to the appointment of Eddie Saiff as Interim Dean, faculty from that search committee reported that the official procedure had been correctly followed. (See Appendix B)

ii. Deans reappointments

Faculty input regarding the job performance of the deans has not been substantial prior to two years ago. The form used by the Provost to solicit faculty views contained a number of items about which faculty have limited knowledge, and did not address areas important to faculty. For the past two years, the FAEC has conducted an evaluative survey of the deans to inform performance evaluations of the deans by the Provost. The Provost has said that she discussed the outcomes of the surveys with each dean, although it is not clear if the input was used in reappointment decisions.

- d. A cademic policy decisions
  - i. A summer schedule change was made by the Provost for summer 2014 without prior consultation with the faculty. The FAEC conducted a survey with faculty about this change. In total 93 faculty members (43%) responded to the full survey; 54.8% believed there would be little or no pedagogical impact of the changed schedule, 23.6% said there would be a negative effect, and 21.5% believed there would be a positive effect. Asked about their preferences, 65% prefer TWR, 18% prefer MWR, and 18% had no preference. Although not unanimous about preferences, the faculty were displeased about the lack of (prior) consultation regarding this decision.
  - ii. The move of the substance abuse minor from psychology to social work was made by the administration without full consultation with either convening group. In the same vein, a faculty line was not replaced in psychology and was given to social work to support the program. While the outcome of this move

c. Administrators outside of the units themselves should consult the FA when they would like faculty representation on administrative committees (such as marketing committees, fundraising, etc.). Using this method will 1) provide for the most appropriate faculty representatives in terms of appropriate expertise and seniority, and 2) the faculty assembly as a whole will know which faculty are serving on which committees, which will increase the sense of faculty

would be the more prudent approach. In either case, however, we feel that it is crucial to view the Administration as a partner in the shared governance assessment process. Thus, the FA might want to consider including one or more representatives from the Administration on its committee. Alternatively, the FAEC subcommittee would want to set up regular meetings with the Provost to ensure genuine cooperation.

## b. Duties of the shared governance assessment body

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The first duty of the assessment body will be to formalize a framework and process for assessing shared governance. We feel that our trial run at this process was very successful and provides a model that would be an excellent starting point. The basic steps are as follows.

(a) Formally define Shared Governance at Ramapo College with a brief but carefully thought-out conceptual statement.
(b) Outline a list of guiding principles that elaborate on the conceptual definition. This may lead to a general rubric for assessing shared governance as it pertains to a particular but general decision event.
(c) Create (and continually update) a list of categories of decision events for which the principle of shared governance should reasonably apply. For each category, refine the general rubric to better reflect the process for decision-making within that particular category. Identify the primary bodies or individuals who have authority in making each type of decision, as well as secondary "interested parties" who should be meaningfully consulted, and tertiary parties who must be explicitly informed.

(d) Identify when policies and procedures are not clear and/or not accessible.

Note: Again, it is crucial that the Administration be involved in the process of developing a formal fram2 (n t) .44 252 I3 0.2 (I) (I) 0.2 ,.2 (n t) 0 eraent.

to determine when a sufficient number of individuals have been interviewed to attain a fair assessment, and how best to protect the confidentiality of those individuals whenever appropriate.

Share reports periodically with both the FAEC and Provost's Office, including recommendations as to how shared governance might have been improved.

## Appendix A Shared Governance Statement for the State University of New York

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# Appendix B Board of Trustees Policy and Provost's Procedure for New Dean Selection

Section:	200	
Section Title:	Executive	
Policy Name :	Appointment of Academic Deans	
Policy Number:	201	
Approval Authority:	Board of Trustees	
College Policy Executive:	Chief Planning Officer	
College Policy Executive: Responsible Executive:	Chief Planning Officer P rovost //ice President for Academic Affairs	
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Responsible Executive:	P rovost /Vice President for Academic Affairs	Academic Affairs

1) Appointment of Academic Deans Procedure

2) Concurrent Tenure & Academic Rank Eligibility for the President, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Academic Deans, & Other Academic Administrators (Policy 326)

http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/botpolicies/policies2/board\_of\_trustees\_300/Tenure-by-Exceptional-Action-for-Acad-Admin-Policy-326-022509.pdf

3) Contracts for Managerial Employees/Initial Appointment and Multi-Year Policy (Policy 449)

http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/botpolicies/policies2/board\_of\_trustees\_400/Contracts%20for% 20Managerial%20Empl\_Initial\_Appt\_and%20Multi-Year\_449.pdf

#### 5 Contacts

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Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

201-684-7529

### **Appointment of Academic Deans**

#### **Summary of Job Responsibilities**

The chief academic and administrative officer of an academic unit is entitled dean (College Librarian) and reports directly to the provost/vice president for academic affairs. Each has authority and responsibility for planning and achieving the educational objectives of the unit, delivery of instructional programs, and development of high quality in teaching, scholarship and professional service. The dean is responsible for the continuing review, assessment, and improvement of the total unit consistent with College mission and goals, and therefore makes recommendations to the provost/vice president for academic affairs on particular matters related to planning, faculty, scheduling, personnel, curriculum, instruction, budget and other related issues

#### **Search Process**

Deans are appointed based on an established search process and may include external candidates. The recommendation for dean will be made by the search committee to the provost and by the provost to the president. Appointments shall be made by the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the president.

#### **Term of Appointment**

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Initial appointment to the position of academic dean shall be for an initial three year term, renewable at 1 - 3 year terms. Multi

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1) Appointment of Academic Deans (Policy 201)

2) Concurrent Tenure & Academic Rank Eligibility for the President, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Academic Deans, & Other Academic Administrators (Policy 326)

http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/botpolicies/policies2/board\_of\_trustees\_300/Concurrent\_Tenure\_Acad\_ Rank\_Pres\_ProvostVPAA\_326\_092308.pdf

3) Contracts for Managerial Employees /Initial Appointment and Multi-Year Policy (Policy 449)

http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/botpolicies/policies2/board\_of\_trustees\_400/Contracts%20for%20Mana gerial%20Empl\_Initial\_Appt\_and%20Multi-Year\_449.pdf



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# Appendix C Shared Governance Subcommittee of FAEC - College Decision Categories

Appendix D

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