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GOVERNANCE AND THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM

BOARD REVIEW: APRIL 8, 1985

REVISED: MAY 9, 1995

REVISED: MAY 13, 1997

REVISED: AUGUST 8, 2001

REVISED: MARCH 13, 2001

REVISED: MAY 13, 2008

REVISED: DECEMBER 9, 2008

REVISED: JUNE 9, 2009

REVISED: JULY 13, 2010

REVISED: MAY 10, 2011

CATEGORY 2 REVISION: FEBRUARY 11, 2014

CATEGORY 2 REVISION: JUNE 10, 2014

The Sonoma County Junior College District recognizes the importance of a broad inclusion of perspectives on District committees. Every effort will be made to reflect this commitment to diversity in committee membership varied by race and ethnicity, gender, disability status, belief, age, nationality, cultural background, life experiences, and other enriching characteristics. The responsibility for promoting broad inclusion is shared by all segments of the District community.

Committee members are expected to liaison with their association on appropriate matters developed and discussed within committee or council groups.

Charters and memberships for all Sonoma County Junior College District governance committees shall be approved by College Council and maintained online for use throughout the District. Changes to the membership or to the scope of the committee charter must be submitted in writing to College Council for review, then reviewed by the Board of Trustees, in the same manner as all District procedures.

District committee descriptions and current rosters are available on the District Web site. Any request for change in committee names, functions, composition, meeting times, chair information and the like, shall be forwarded in writing to the College Council, which will review, approve, and forward all clerical or informational changes to the Web site. New committees, as well as changes regarding member composition, authority of the committee, or other substantial alterations, shall be reviewed by the Board of Trustees in the same manner as District procedures.

The Office of the Superintendent/President maintains the District Policy Manual and will request periodic review of those sections of policy and/or procedures associated with the committee system. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs maintains the annual roster of current membership on college standing and President's Advisory committees and committee chairs on the District Web site. Each constituent group is responsible for forwarding member names to Academic Affairs by the end of the spring semester preceding the year they are assigned to serve, or no later than the first week of each academic year.

Standing committees, councils, and Academic Senate consultation committees shall forward copies of their agendas and minutes, including attendance, to the administrative member of the committee responsible for placing these documents on the District Web site or to the Office of Academic Affairs. Standing Councils shall also publish agendas and minutes on the District Web site.

District administrative offices will provide clerical assistance for the District-wide committee system, most typically by the offices of administrative members of the committee.

I. Standing Committees

Standing committees have memberships that include more than one constituent group, and responsibilities that generally impact large sectors of the District or regularly scheduled activities. Their defined charters, membership lists and meeting schedules are reviewed and must be approved through the College Council process and listed on the District Web site.

Standing Committees shall maintain a sustained presence through regularly scheduled meetings and the distribution of agendas and minutes to designated individuals and offices and the District Web site.

A. Councils

Councils have all the same characteristics as Standing Committees with the added quality of an even larger scope of interest. They coordinate, integrate, or review the activities of other committees or groups in the District. Councils shall post their agendas and minutes on the District Web site.

B. President's Advisory Committees

President's Advisory Committees are created by the Superintendent/President and are advisory in nature. Longevity, membership, and meeting schedule are determined by the Superintendent/President. While not subject to oversight by College Council, President's Advisory Committees that include more than one constituent group shall maintain communication with the college community through minutes routed to designated parties and posted on the District Web site.

C. Academic Senate Consultation Committees

Academic Senate Consultation Committees are standing committees or councils that deal with professional and academic matters designated for faculty and Board collegial consultation by Title 5, Section 53200. Faculty and administrative co-chairs of Academic Senate Consultation Committees are responsible for liaison between the Academic Senate and the Superintendent/President, who will provide the advice or judgment of the committees to the Board.

The Board has agreed with the Academic Senate to rely primarily on the advice or judgment of the Academic Senate in Academic Senate Consultation Committees on matters in the following areas:

- Curriculum
- Degree and certificate requirements
- Grading policies
- Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success
- Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes

Only in exceptional circumstances and for compelling reasons will the recommendations of the Academic Senate not be accepted. If such cases occur, the Board or its designee, upon request of the Academic Senate, shall promptly communicate their reasons in writing to the Academic Senate.

The Board has agreed to reach mutual written agreement with the Academic Senate on the processes and procedures by which the Academic Senate offers its advice and judgment on matters in the following areas:

- Educational program development

- Faculty roles in District governance
- Policies for faculty development activities
- Process for program review
- Processes for institutional planning and budget development
- Any other academic or professional matter designated through mutual agreement

In the areas in which the Board has elected to rely on mutual written agreement with the Academic Senate, if agreement has not been reached, then existing policy shall remain in effect.

Written agreements achieved in the eleven Academic Senate consultation areas listed above shall result, whenever possible, in the creation and maintenance of formal written policies and procedures.

In cases where Academic Senate Consultation Committee discussions or other forms of consultation do not lead to consensus between the faculty and administrative representatives on the committee, the faculty may present its opinions to the Board of Trustees either through the Superintendent/President or through direct communication with the Board at its regular meetings.

In Academic Senate Consultation Committees, faculty provides principle consultation on other matters designated in Education Code:

- a. Through joint agreement with the Board, development of District hiring criteria, policies and procedures for faculty;
- b. Through joint agreement with the Board, development of District policies and procedures regarding equivalencies for minimum qualifications;
- c. Through consultation with the bargaining agent(s) and Academic Senate, faculty evaluation procedures and policies, and delineation of faculty service areas and competency requirements.

In Academic Senate Consultation Committees, each faculty chair or co-chair must maintain close contact, through written and/or oral reports, with the Academic Senate on the issues discussed in the committee, and the administrative co-chair serves as liaison to the Superintendent/President and Board of Trustees.

Academic Senate Consultation Committees include:

- Basic Skills Committee
- Curriculum Review Committee
- District Online Committee
- District Tenure Review and Evaluations Committee (DTREC)
- Educational Planning and Coordinating Council (EPCC)
- Equivalency Committee
- Institute for Environmental Education Committee
- Institutional Planning Council (IPC)
- Professional Development Committee
- Project LEARN Steering Committee
- Sabbatical Leave Committee
- Student Success and Equity Committee
- Textbook and Instructional Materials

In addition, the following President's Advisory Committees have faculty co-chairs and function as Academic Senate Consultation Committees as well:

- Budget Advisory Committee
- Integrated Environmental Planning Committee

Nothing in this section shall be construed to impinge upon or to detract from any negotiation agreements between the recognized faculty bargaining unit and the Board of Trustees.

D. Career and Technical Education Program Advisory Committees

A Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee is made up of a diverse, representative group of individuals whose expertise, experience and abilities represent a cross-section of a particular occupational discipline and are recognized experts in their fields. These groups, appointed by the Board of Trustees, will assist in the development of educational programs.

E. Ad Hoc Committees (sometimes called "Study Groups" or "Task Forces" by membership preference)

An Ad Hoc Committee is temporary or intermediate in term, formed to take on specific short-term tasks or to test the need for a new standing committee, with a time frame likely to span one year or less. Any Ad Hoc Committee must select its members from constituent groups with activities related to the committee's charter.

F. Forums

Forums are open sessions or groups with no fixed membership. Forums must be widely announced to allow for the participation of all interested parties for one-time meetings to present or discuss new information or an on-going series of meetings dealing with a specific topic or area.

II. COMMITTEE CHAIR OR CO-CHAIRS

A. All information regarding Chair or Co-Chair positions will be recorded in the committee description provided on the District Web site, including eligibility to serve, election, and appointment process.

B. If the position of the Chair or Co-Chair is not specified by title or constituent group, then all committee members are eligible to serve and a simple majority of members present at the first meeting shall nominate and elect a committee chair. It is assumed that all constituent groups represented on the committee have been notified of the meeting when the Chair is elected.

C. Those committees that have a dual designation as both President's Advisory Committees and Academic Senate Consultation Committees will have faculty/administrative co-chairs:

- Budget Advisory Committee
- Integrated Environmental Planning Committee
- Strategic Enrollment Planning Committee

D. The Committee Chair or Co-Chair will:

1. Establish meeting times and locations.
2. Create and distribute an agenda in a timely fashion.
3. Conduct meetings in an orderly manner allowing appropriate participation of all individuals present.
4. Ensure that a clear consensus is reached_or a vote is taken on action items.
5. See that written minutes are kept, including attendance, approved, and distributed promptly.

6. Act as a mentor or assign a mentor to new committee members who are unfamiliar with the committee or Sonoma County Junior College District governance.
7. When serving as co-chair, announce to the committee members how co-chair duties will be divided and communicate regularly with co-chair over the construction of the agenda and other relevant work.

III. DUTIES OF MEMBERS

- A. All committee members will:
 1. Attend meetings regularly
 2. Plan with the chair for a substitute or proxy vote when an absence is necessary and work must continue.
 3. Keep their constituent groups informed of committee actions.
 4. Complete assignments associated with committee work in a timely fashion.

IV. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

- A. All Standing Committees may elect to request ex-officio members by title, in their committee description. All others in attendance at meetings are guests or visitors. Ex-officio members:
 1. May serve on a committee to provide information and advice to the committee as deemed necessary by the committee.
 2. Shall be recorded on the committee description maintained by College Council should their attendance become permanent.
 3. Do not vote in committee action.

V. AGENDAS AND MINUTES

- A. Will be distributed to all committee members and to the distribution list associated with each group (individuals with a need to remain informed of topics).
- B. Any member of the committee may request to have an item placed on the agenda.
- C. It is preferred those individuals not on the committee request items to be placed on an agenda through their constituent representatives in that group.
- D. Committee and Council agendas and minutes will be placed on the District Web site by the office of the designated Manager serving on the committee. If there is no Manager identified, they will be forwarded to the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The responsible party will have the minutes downloaded onto the District Committees Web page in PDF format.
- E. Committees who discuss confidential matters as a part of their charge will place a statement to that effect on the District Committees Web page, indicating that minutes are confidential in nature and are archived in the administrative co-chairs' office. These committees include but are not limited to: Professional Growth Increment, District Tenure Review and Evaluation Committee, Faculty Staffing Committee, Equivalency. Agendas should be placed on the District Committees Web page with any names or identifying titles redacted.

VI. SCHEDULING OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- A. Committee descriptions found on the District Web site represent the current times that Standing Committees, Councils, and other constituent groups meet. Ad hoc groups, advisory committees or new (proposed) standing groups should work around these time blocks when possible.
- B. Changes in meeting dates and times of standing committees, councils, and President's Advisory committees should be forwarded to College Council in writing for amendment to the District Web site.

VII. COLLEGE COUNCIL

The College Council is the final District-wide policy recommending body formed for purposes of involving and utilizing the opinion of all segments of the College community. It coordinates and supervises the committee system, insuring that committees do not overlap in their function or misconceive their purpose; and that any policy recommendation emanating from one group but affecting other constituent groups of the District community be reviewed by appropriate committees and/or constituent groups before being submitted to the Board of Trustees.

All Standing Committees and Councils shall be considered sub-committees of the College Council in matters of policy and in the coordination of committee activity. College Council shall meet twice monthly, with special meetings called by the Chair, as needed. Agenda items may originate with any member and/or committee of the District and/or by request of the Superintendent/President. College Council meetings are open to the College community

- A. College Council is obligated to:
 1. To solicit the combined thinking of faculty, administrators, classified staff, and students in the deliberation of District policy and procedures.
 2. To provide a setting where the different constituent groups can inform and advise each other on policy matters as well as debate differences of opinion.
 3. To aid in the orderly process of policy formation, and serve as the highest policy recommending body of the District to the Superintendent/President and the Board of Trustees.
 4. To aid in the dissemination of items and/or discussion between constituent groups and that the Board of Trustees' wishes are brought to the attention of the collective College community.
- B. Process
 1. All matters referred to College Council shall be in writing.
 2. All decisions of College Council shall require a majority vote of the membership of the Council.
 3. Policy recommendations found to require modification shall be either:
 - a. returned to the originator for reconsideration; or,
 - b. revised by College Council (only if minor changes are required)
 4. Policy recommendations found to be acceptable as presented will be forwarded to the Superintendent/President. The Council must state what bodies reviewed the proposed policy and what objections were made, if any.

5. Recommendations from the Council that include dissenting opinion shall be in writing, and shall be forwarded to the Superintendent/President for Board of Trustees review or action.
6. If the Superintendent/President disagrees with the Council's recommendation, s/he is encouraged to refer the matter back to the Council for additional deliberation accompanied by written statements from the Superintendent/President.
7. If the Council again reaches the same conclusions, the Council's recommendation will be returned to the Superintendent/President for forwarding to the Board for consideration. The Council's chairperson will represent the Council before the Board.
8. When Council members are presented with policy material that does not pertain to their constituent group, work domain or expertise, it is acceptable for them to "pass" or defer on these policy matters.
9. When an academic policy under consideration by the Council refers to the specific topics that require the Board to consult with the Academic Senate or to rely on the primary advice and opinion of the Academic Senate, the policy material shall be presented to College Council as an informational item only. Students shall be invited to attach written comments to documents forwarded by the Academic Senate to the Board of Trustees when topics reflect the 10 areas of consultation designated in Title 5.
10. Every effort will be made to resolve all policy differences at the Council level. When the Superintendent/President's recommendation to the Board differs from that of the Council's, such differences are recognized as a reflection of the diversity of opinions prevailing in an academic institution.

C. College Council shall:

1. Periodically review the District committee structure with respect to purpose, procedures, membership and authority, and establish guidelines for review of the recommendations of all sub-committees.
2. Establish ad hoc committees as required by policy work or College Council business.
3. Solicit college-wide committee appointments from the administration, Academic Senate, All Faculty Association, and Classified Advisory Council of the elected bargaining unit, and the Associated Students' Senate.
4. Provide the College community with a list of all committee appointments for the following year by May 1st.
5. Periodically review the scope of all committees to avoid potential duplication.
6. Establish the limits of review with respect to District constituent group interests and set time limits for accomplishing work.
7. Route considered policy changes coming from committee groups to appropriate constituents for comment prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Superintendent/President.
8. Create, maintain, and distribute "Committee Best Practices" that sustain common standards and procedures within the Committee System.

D. College Council Membership

The College Council will be composed of the following representatives.

1. Administrators (4)

Vice President for Academic Affairs and three administrators selected by the Superintendent/President (selected annually). The Vice President of Academic Affairs serves as permanent secretary to the Council. S/he is responsible for notifying the members of meetings, taking and distributing minutes, and contacting appropriate parties to speak about certain agenda items. The Office of Academic Affairs will provide clerical assistance for the work of the College Council.

2. Faculty (4)

President of the Academic Senate (for term of office), President of the All Faculty Association or his/her designee and two faculty representatives selected by the Academic Senate. Every attempt will be made to appoint faculty representing a broad cross-section of the District.

3. Classified (2)

Selected by the collective bargaining unit President or his/her designee (one selected in even years, one selected in odd years).

4. Students (2)

Selected by the Student Government Assembly.

E. College Council Chair

1. When possible, the College Council Chair will have served on the Council for one year prior to being elected from among the faculty representatives.
2. The Chair serves a one-year term, but can be re-elected.
3. The Chair is a full voting member of the Council and will coordinate the agenda with the Vice President of Academic Affairs.