



# CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

## Chicago State University Guiding Principles for Our Shared Governance Work Shared Governance Initiative *Version: November 21, 2022*

As members of the Chicago State University community (Board of Trustees, students, faculty, staff, and administrators),

- We believe that a collaborative system of decision-making based on defined roles and responsibilities for each constituency and a definition of how those roles and responsibilities overlap and integrate is best to serve our campus and community.
- We desire to affirm and recognize that it is in the best interest of the University to have a sustainable system in which we actively engage to share responsibility for identifying and pursuing outcomes that are aligned with our mission, vision and priorities.
- We understand that shared governance is a partnership grounded in honest and transparent communication that fosters trust and promotes collaboration.
- We agree to work together to embrace and support practices and processes that promote the goal of maintaining our agreed-upon system of shared governance.

### **Proposed definitions and principles for CSU shared governance exercises**

#### **What is Shared Governance?**

"Shared governance" in higher education refers to the structures and activities through which constituencies participate in the development of policies and in the decision-making processes that affect the institution. At the core of successful shared governance is a commitment to open and honest communication which is embedded in the university's operational frameworks. Seeking input, listening to it, and considering it as part of a decision-making process strengthens confidence among the various components of the institution. Features of shared governance include defined areas of roles and responsibilities, facilitative engagement for consensus building, and shared accountability.

In practice, shared governance in higher education is conducted through committees, departments, organizations, offices, and governing bodies, by Board of Trustees, students, faculty, staff, administrators, and their representative bodies. These activities are guided by codified/approved documents such as by-laws or regulations.

#### **Our Established Guiding Principles of Shared Governance**

- Successful shared governance depends on all participants acting in good faith, with participants having sufficient information to offer sound opinions. Shared governance is a deliberative process with representation and while the inclusion of all constituencies is

not always possible, reasonable effort will be made by faculty, staff, and administrators to share information in a timely fashion.

- Shared governance expects those who will be affected by a decision on a policy or procedure to participate in a well-defined and transparent process through which they will be informed and provide their input.
- Shared governance relies upon consistent, trustworthy communication that is multidirectional and reciprocal, and should always be focused on a university's mutual goals of student success and institutional effectiveness.
- Shared governance requires mutual accountability of all members of the University community for the execution of their roles, as prescribed by governing and policy/procedures documents, in a timely manner.
- The constituencies of the university will contribute to the university's decision-making process through a mutually developed shared governance framework.
- Recommendations made by constituencies through an agreed upon shared governance process will be considered in university decision-making.

### **Our Practice of Shared Governance**

- 1) Authority for Chicago State University originates from the governing board (currently the Board of Trustees), who may formally delegate authority and responsibilities. Therefore, the final responsibility for the exercise of decision-making, including solicitation of input through shared governance, rests with the President and the Board of Trustees, who are accountable by law, University constituencies, the public and its elected leaders.
- 2) Chicago State University develops and maintains procedures and formal structures providing for collaboration and communication between and among the members of the university community. Updates to these structures and procedures shall be developed cooperatively, disseminated widely prior to adoption, and reviewed periodically according to procedures and timelines established in the documents governing institutional practice.
- 3) As an institution of higher education, which has as its mission the education of its students, shared governance defines and weighs the voices and responsibilities of the members of the university community, and various spheres of decision-making as defined:
  - a) The responsibility of administrators is to provide strategic leadership in the development and articulation of a vision for the institution, and to manage human resources, finances, and operations;
  - b) The central role of faculty includes teaching, direct and indirect services, research and creative activities, and service, including assessment of these activities through peer review; this is evidenced primarily by active representation in the Faculty Senate, and university, college, and department committees;

- c) Staff members provide a unique awareness of day-to-day operations that are essential in the consideration of university decision-making and in the development of policy and procedures, as evidenced by their inclusion in relevant university committees; and
  - d) Students have vested interests in matters pertaining to student life and the academic environment, as evidenced by participation in student governance and campus committees.
- 4) Exigent circumstances may require institutional leaders to act promptly in the best interest of the institution without full benefit of shared governance. In such cases, efforts will be made to inform representative bodies on actions taken in a timely manner.
  - 5) Shared governance requires a commitment of resources and time from the institution; therefore, the University shall support students, faculty, staff, and administrators in the execution of their defined responsibilities to shared governance and in participation in the ongoing shared governance process.
  - 6) Collective bargaining is an avenue of input separate and distinct from the practices of shared governance.
  - 7) The members of the university community commit to regular and meaningful review of the definitions and the established framework for shared governance.

Finally, in a system of shared governance, respect for the diversity of opinion is of the utmost importance. The Board of Trustees, students, faculty, staff, and administrators will not always be of one voice on matters of policy and practice, and all involved must respect dissenting views. No stakeholder should fear retaliation for expressing dissent from the majority opinion or from the opinion of a superior.