

JSCC Faculty Council Meeting Minutes—December 12th, 2009

The Faculty Council met Wednesday, December 12th, at 3:00 p.m. in the Foundation Board Room of the Student Union.

Present: Mark Walls, Claude Bailey, Stacy Dunevant, Roger James, Carol Norman, Nell Senter, John Koons, Kim White, Mechel Camp, Donna Johnsey, Belinda Higgins, Steve Cornelison, Amy Wake, Jayne Lowery, Gerald Graddy, and guests Bobby Smith, Bob Raines, Billie Gately, Diane Fordham, Pam Xanthopoulos, Beth Stewart.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Redesign of Advising (Bobby Smith)

Bobby Smith summarized changes to better regulate the flow and amount of students during the new student advising and registration processes for Fall, 2010. These changes, he explained, will reduce the need for faculty advisors “waiting around the clock” for new students seeking to enroll and schedule classes. This new system involves setting appointments for new applicants who then follow a three-step process. First, new students attend a general advising session that familiarizes them with the catalog and pre-requisites. Second, students activate their J-Web log-ons and look up courses. Third, students register for classes with access to “entry-level” academic advisement. Smith emphasized that this new approach was not intended to distance new students from contact with faculty advisors. Instead, its aim is to make the use of faculty more efficient by keeping their role to genuine academic advisement rather than burdening them with routine logistics of enrollment and scheduling.

A concern was expressed about whether advisement for students making discipline choices will continue to be successful if JSCC separates academic advising from the mechanics of scheduling new students into classes. Smith replied that it was not the intent of the changes to redirect students from specific discipline choices toward general studies. He explained that one or two academic advisors would be available to ensure that beginning students got directed academically and not only logistically.

2. End-of-Year Comments (Beth Stewart)

Beth Stewart addressed the Council regarding several matters. First, she explained that in the Fall, '08 semester, the Arts and Sciences Division, spent \$400,175.00 to compensate adjunct instructors. In Fall '09, the division spent \$565,823.00. Stewart explained that an additional \$336,000.00 was allocated for adjuncts in the Spring, '09 semester, but that with a 17% enrollment increase that might not be enough. She also reported an 82 million dollar shortfall in projected state revenues discussed in recent TBR sub-council meetings.

To offer starting points for needed campus conversations, Stewart passed out three articles from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (see Attachments 1-3): one on managing “crisis fatigue,” one on the terms of academic freedom, and one on perspectives of shared governance. She reiterated her own commitment to shared governance and referenced recent committees and projects she considered to reflect shared governance approaches.

Shared Governance:

An interest in clarifying shared governance and JSCC’s circumstances regarding shared governance arose in the Council. Beth Stewart was asked for her definition of shared governance. Acknowledging there were many different views, she characterized her view of shared governance as gathering as much input as one can from as many sources as possible and then seriously considering that input whenever possible in decision-making. In Council discussion, it was stated that in order to facilitate such authentic, serious input in decision-making, shared governance also necessarily involved establishing processes and personnel roles and identifying and enabling campus constituencies to engage in genuinely shared decision-making.

A question arose about distinguishing “shared governance” from simple “shared conversations” with a supervisor in which solutions to issues develop in acceptable ways among parties. An opinion from one representative was that there seemed to be no problem engaging in such straightforward approaches to decisions, at least in that representative’s area. That person’s concern, ultimately, was whether at JSCC “there is a different definition of shared governance for others that isn’t true for me.” Some others on the Council, suggested that, indeed, such “unproblematic” approaches to decision-making were not typical at the institution. In the Council’s discussion, it was noted that at JSCC there has been for some time a breakdown of committee roles that has impacted “whole-campus issues,” not just individual “employee-supervisor issues.” Beth Stewart noted that she had been charged with re-examining the structure and organization of campus committees in the wake of JSCC’s 2008 reorganization. The Council’s discussion emphasized, however, that at JSCC there was a larger concern beyond simply how committees were structured. This larger concern, which impacts shared governance, is that faculty and staff voices on committees do not seem to be considered. It was noted finally, that the 2008 *Lea Report* had, indeed, mandated shared governance for JSCC and affirmed that campus stakeholders should clarify for themselves both the appropriate terms of shared governance and effective approaches for enabling it.

3. AAUP Memorandum (Pam Xanthopoulos)

Pam Xanthopoulos distributed and summarized a November 17th Memorandum to the JSCC administration from the JSCC Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (see Attachment 4). She explained that the memorandum lists six key concerns that relate to shared governance issues, some of which, she said, have had origins and histories with JSCC committees with problematic or “dysfunctional” roles in campus governance. She noted there has been no official response from JSCC’s administration to the memo. She explained

that she has communicated with the national AAUP General Secretary already regarding issues with item #3 in the memorandum, which addresses employee concerns about the “partial and incomplete” nature of the *JSCC Faculty Handbook* and other concerns about the implementation of *Handbook* policies. It was noted from the Council that the AAUP memorandum’s six concerns all have been important issues the Fall ’09 Council has considered and that the Council has helped resolve, to some degree, a few of the concerns.

Following Xanthopoulos’s comments, a concern was voiced from among the Council about the AAUP and about its November 17th memorandum. It was stated that there was a “secretive[ness]” about the JSCC Chapter of the AAUP and that its formation had simply “been announced” to the campus. Xanthopoulos explained that unlike the TBR-mandated internal faculty councils or senates, the AAUP chapter at JSCC was “an external organization” that represented faculty interests independently, though one of its aims certainly was to complement the Council’s work on behalf of faculty. Xanthopoulos pointed out that, in fact, invitations to attend AAUP membership and information sessions had been publicized and sent to faculty the spring and fall of 2009, that the organization had not emerged in a secretive manner. It was questioned why an external organization was offered opportunities to address the Council, and Council Chair, Mechel Camp, clarified that AAUP was given the same opportunity to announce matters or issues to the Council that any group or representative of interest to faculty or connected to the broad interests of faculty would be given, if time was requested. Another concern was raised among the Council about the AAUP’s membership and whether, in fact, some on the Council also may be on the AAUP, which might create a conflict of interest. Xanthopoulos clarified that membership simply was not public information, ensuring the organization’s ability to represent potentially vulnerable faculty members like those without tenure. Another response within the Council maintained that with any issue the Council considers, conflicts and differences of opinion or cross-interests always exist; this would be the case whether Council representatives were AAUP members or not. Ultimately, it was suggested, regardless of Council members’ affiliations, motions or positions offered in meetings for the Council to support were always subject to approval or rejection by majority vote. A disagreement with the AAUP’s November 17th memorandum was stated, and it was asked whether the Council could entertain a motion against the document. Chair Camp replied that, indeed, that was possible. No motion, however, was offered regarding the AAUP’s memorandum to JSCC’s administration.

Within this discussion, a concern was expressed about the career impact of tenure denial. It was questioned whether distinctions might be made officially for persons denied tenure for simple budgetary reasons rather than for negative performance or other such reasons. It was noted that denial of tenure was unquestionably a professional “black mark.” The concern was whether the college could assert that faculty not offered tenure for financial reasons were actually valued and that, in their cases, there had been a kind of “honorable discharge” from the service of the institution. It was suggested that such matters were the prerogative of the institution’s administration.

4. Revised Honors Program (Bob Raines)

Bob Raines reminded the Council that Mechel Camp had forwarded representatives the Honors Program revisions. He asked that representatives look at it and direct any questions to him. The program will be implemented in the Fall, 2010 semester. The Council expressed support for the program and gratitude for Bob Raines' efforts to restore this important component of JSCC's academic program.

5. Constitution and By-laws Subcommittee Report

Mechel Camp stated that she would be emailing representatives the proposal from the group working on revisions of the Faculty Council constitution and by-laws. She summed up key aspects of the report. There would be one Council representative for each seven members within each division, but this proportion could be re-assessed. There would be four at-large representatives.

6. Committee Reports

Steve Cornelison reported on the Assessment of Administrators Committee meeting. Nothing will be changing in the assessment process, but he explained that different employees would be made aware of administrators they are to assess in light of recent changes or additions to the group of administrative personnel. In Council discussion, a concern was expressed that employees should know the size of the "pool of assessors" in order to feel more secure about responding with confidentiality. For the Faculty Development Committee, Nell Senter noted the topics for in-service mini-sessions and noted the policies for allotting faculty development funds.

7. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the November Council meeting minutes was made, seconded, discussed, and passed. In discussing the minutes, the importance of distinguishing general Council remarks and individual remarks was reiterated.

8. Council's November Statement of Concern

Mechel Camp reported on her meeting with Dr. Blanding regarding the Council's November Statement of Concern about changes to the Faculty Evaluation Plan and his initial reaction to it. She emphasized that "the Council acted responsibly and appropriately" in releasing the statement and emphasized that her discussion with Dr. Blanding about the matter was concluded with improved understanding.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. before three matters of old business could be discussed: (1) adjunct representation on the Council, (2) a faculty year-end project, and (3) teaching load equivalents.

Mark Walls, Secretary

Stacey Dunevant, Vice-Chair

Attachment 1

THE CHRONICLE

of Higher Education

Commentary

November 29, 2009

Crisis Fatigue in a Difficult Economy: 5 Mistakes to Avoid

By Kent John Chabotar

As the recession persists into a second academic year, some campuses feel "crisis fatigue." That fatigue, manifested by weariness with financial emergency and stress about personal and institutional futures, can lead to shortsighted behavior. Although the effect of the economy on colleges and universities can vary significantly, The Chronicle asked Kent John Chabotar, president and a professor of political science at Guilford College and an expert on financial matters, to write a hypothetical letter to his campus community describing the challenges that he sees ahead.

MEMORANDUM: December 2009

TO: Faculty and Staff Members

FROM: President

RE: Financial Challenges

As we begin a new fiscal year and the development of a budget for 2010-11, I sense the desire to get business back to what passes for "normal." I accept how tired we are of being asked to do more with less. I know how much we all want to focus on our students rather than our finances. But despite some brightening on the horizon, we must review where we've been and then start a conversation about how best to handle the dangers that still lie ahead.

In response to economic uncertainty, unexpected enrollment shortfalls, and a plummeting endowment last fall, the campus budget committee recommended a major reduction of the 2008-9 budget. That was our "worst case" scenario. The trustees authorized us to eliminate positions, freeze salaries and wages, curtail capital projects and maintenance, and cut operating budgets almost everywhere. We regretted the effects on programs and services, and we had compassion for colleagues who left.

We also knew we were not alone, as the state's public-university system asked its campuses for budget cuts of 10 to 15 percent, and state universities elsewhere announced plans to cut salaries, reduce enrollment, and raise tuition. Some elite private colleges froze salaries, and others borrowed hundreds of millions to replenish endowments and support operations.

Then we were surprised when enrollment far exceeded goals this summer and fall. Many independent colleges that responded to a survey by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities also reported enrollment gains. Institutional financial aid was less in demand than expected, despite fears

that high unemployment would depress family incomes and limit our students' ability to pay. Although the number of donors dropped last year, Guilford surpassed its fund-raising goals. Our revenues topped expenses last year and are on a trajectory to do so again in 2010.

Yet I do not think we are safe from fiscal dangers. And we can't let crisis fatigue tempt us to act in ways we will later regret. We need to avoid these mistakes:

1. Declaring victory too early. One danger is to let our strong enrollment and other good news make us complacent. I share the skepticism of many economists and businesspeople in the "green shoot" theory that the economy is definitely on the mend. The budget committee initially recommended a substantial pay raise effective in 2010—after no raise besides a one-time bonus in 2009—but I am willing to commit to only half that amount, despite our enrollment and fund-raising successes. We still do not know about other major drivers of this year's budget, including enrollment next spring and summer, interest rates on our variable-rate debt, and gifts—especially annual-giving dollars—that we can spend on operations. Unemployment remains high as students and families make their college choices.

I cannot support large increases to the base budget in such unpredictable times. Remember the tribulations of a nearby college when it announced a pay increase in January 2009 only to have to cut pay by 20 percent in April? For the moment, the prudent course is to consider how what may turn out to be one-time revenue should pay for one-time expenses—like another employee bonus, a renovation project, or lab equipment. We will consider more-significant and continuing increases in expenses, especially for employee pay and benefits, as early as next spring, as our financial condition improves.

2. Looking for easy outs. Even if we admit that we still have a budget problem, frustration with what seems like a chronic crisis might tempt us to make decisions that look easy but are seldom right. Some of our recent budget models have been balanced by overly optimistic forecasts of enrollment, gifts, and endowment earnings. At the end of more than one budget cycle, we have closed a gap by adding a few more students to our admissions goals, which we then did not meet and, if we had, would have made us marginally less selective. We also assumed extra revenue from unrestricted gifts and annual giving that never materialized because we lacked a firm strategy for obtaining those funds. We are still paying high debt service for the superb science center erected a decade ago with too many bonds and not enough gifts.

On the expense side, using our strategic plan or assessment data to decide where to cut costs has been technically and politically difficult. The solution has never been to reduce all departments across the board by the same percentage. As simple as that seems, it ignores our mission and core values, and it treats efficient and inefficient programs the same. Our decision last year to allocate more money to the strategic plan, even though that widened our budget gap, exemplified the expression "short-term pain for long-term gain."

We also used our plan to identify budget priorities when our finances improve. We ranked employee pay first, followed by capital projects, including information technology, and admissions and development programs. In better times that will make the issue not what our priorities are, but how much money we will allocate to those priorities.

3. Getting mired in process. Making decisions at this institution is highly transparent and participative. We have used this approach to develop a strategic plan, annual budgets, a master plan, and capital-campaign priorities. We have generally made more decisions with good results because those affected and knowledgeable have been involved.

But at times we have wasted time by obsessing about how to decide rather than focusing on the decision itself. That, for some people, has been a way to evade hard choices and hard feelings. We must continue to balance openness and speed as we respond to unpredictable economic circumstances.

The longer we wait to eliminate a position, the less money we save. If opportunities for stimulus money arise, we may have to act quickly. If grants are available, faculty members and departments will judge whether their values and programs fit the requirements of the donor, and vice versa, and might not consult with every colleague. It is impossible to give any department a subject-matter monopoly. For example, the theater department is under no obligation to consult with the history department about a course on the history of theater.

4. Forgetting the facts. Facts are important, and not just because, as Mark Twain wrote, "If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything." Think of a college like a jumbo jet, with scores of dials and meters for the pilots to read. We have to look at where we are, not where we might have gone, and we cannot misrepresent conditions or directions that might make us feel better but will lead to disaster.

In addition, we should study the entire console and not just the data that fit our interests or preconceptions. There are many positive signs in enrollment, budget, fund raising, and facilities. Nevertheless, negative and uncertain data remain and must also guide our actions. Our endowment is still way below its peak, our graduation rates lag behind our targets, and the yield for accepted students is near a historic low. Despite the many construction and renovation projects last summer that made our campus more functional and attractive than ever, we also have millions in deferred maintenance.

Furthermore, we are not the only jet in the sky. Other institutions are watching their consoles and us, too. We not only have to be better than before, but we also have to be better than the competition—which, in some ways, is stronger than ever. Ten years ago, for example, eight of our 10 admissions "overlap" colleges—those with the most applicants who apply to us as well as them—were independent colleges and universities. Now eight of the 10 are less-expensive and quite often excellent public institutions.

As we ponder what to do with this year's surplus, and how to frame next year, we need to be mindful that we cannot afford to do everything. We must consider both good and bad facts as we weigh our priorities. We have to follow our flight plan, our long-range strategic plan—not the circumstances of the moment.

5. Fighting among ourselves. When the financial crisis hit higher education, including our college, I was amazed how community values and shared sacrifice guided our response. I recalled Benjamin Franklin's advice at the signing of the Declaration of Independence: "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." Although we are doing far better than we expected as the crisis enters its second year, the precariousness of the economy compels us to keep working together both to obtain new revenue and to save money.

We must not look for scapegoats on whom to blame our predicament. The economic malaise constitutes an ebbing tide that lowers all boats, not merely our own. We must all think institutionally rather than focus on our departmental or personal "silos." We each have a responsibility not only to our programs and constituencies but also to the entire college.

Another trap is "budget envy," in which, seeing other departments and programs get more resources, you attribute it to favoritism, politics, or luck rather than institutional strategy and priorities. If you have questions, ask me or the chair of the budget committee or your supervisor.

Please accept the thanks of the Board of Trustees and this president for your patience and cooperation. If you want to know who will help us to surmount this crisis, take a walk on the Quad and see our trustees, faculty and staff members, and students. It has been, and will be, all of us.

Attachment 2

THE CHRONICLE

of Higher Education

Advice

December 9, 2009

The Limits of Academic Freedom

By Gary A. Olson

Last summer I wrote a column attempting to clarify the meaning of shared governance (*The Chronicle*, July 24, 2009). Since then, some readers have requested that I do the same for academic freedom.

It's a particularly timely request, given that the American Association of University Professors recently announced a campaign to enhance academic freedom at public universities.

Most of us in academe cherish the protections afforded by academic freedom, but too many are unclear as to its limits. I have known colleagues who believed that academic freedom allows them to say anything they want, to anyone, in any venue, or to engage in behavior that most observers would assume to be inappropriate in any other workplace.

In fact, academic freedom has been claimed as an excuse for the most abusive and uncollegial behavior—shouting at colleagues, publicly berating students or staff members, defaming supervisors or other university administrators, shirking professional duties. One colleague even told me that academic freedom would protect her even if she indulged in slander and character assassination. "So long as you believe that what you are saying is the truth," she said, "then you are fully protected by academic freedom." (Needless to say, what a person "believes" is hardly an appropriate defense for violating a law.)

Department heads have told me countless stories of how academic freedom has become the generic excuse for any number of irresponsible acts. One chair described a senior professor who missed a substantial number of her classes. When confronted with evidence of her absenteeism, she told her chair that as an academic she had the freedom to conduct her courses in any way she deemed appropriate.

"I tried to explain that as an employee she has certain contractual obligations and that academic freedom did not free her from those responsibilities," the department head explained. "But it took the dean and, finally, the provost to convince her that not only did she have no such freedom but that she would be jeopardizing her future employment if her absenteeism persisted."

Another department head said one of her professors managed to avoid teaching his course the entire quarter by assigning a graduate research assistant to "facilitate discussions." The professor never showed up in class after the first day. In effect, the graduate student was forced to teach the course in addition to carrying out her research duties. When undergraduates brought the situation to the department head's attention, the professor angrily insisted he was protected by academic freedom and threatened to sue if the chair pursued the issue.

I know of yet another incident in which a fistfight erupted between two colleagues at a faculty meeting, resulting in bruises and a bloody nose. Both later contended during a formal hearing that they were "covered" by academic freedom and that the university had no recourse beyond reprimanding them for disrupting an official departmental meeting.

The practice of citing academic freedom to condone a limitless range of bad behavior has begun to take on the flavor of that hackneyed student excuse: The dog ate my paper (or, nowadays, My computer crashed). The magical incantation—"I'm protected by academic freedom"—is thought to offer instant indemnity. In reality, academic freedom, like tenure itself, is not a blanket protection.

The modern concept of academic freedom has two meanings. First, it refers to the right of an institution to manage its own curriculum and academic affairs without governmental interference. Colleges may determine, for example, what subject matter gets taught and who can teach it; establish their own admission criteria and graduation requirements; and develop their own academic mission and priorities. That is an important feature of American higher education. It establishes a crucial separation of power that discourages government from dictating that universities adopt particular positions or promote specific causes, and it prevents government from using educational institutions as part of a propaganda apparatus.

The second meaning of academic freedom involves the concept that faculty members may engage in research on controversial subjects (and, by extension, discuss those subjects in their classrooms) without fear of reprisal. This refers specifically to academic subjects and is not a blanket protection for any and all speech in any venue. As the AAUP's well-known statement on academic freedom cautions, professors "should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject."

The distinction between speech related to one's discipline, on the one hand, and utterances about extra-disciplinary matters, on the other, is key to understanding academic freedom. Without the protections afforded by academic freedom, some scholars might fear for their jobs were they to challenge treasured assumptions in their fields, oppose well-established intellectual traditions, rewrite commonly accepted historical narratives, create artistic works that offend some sensibilities, or conduct scientific experiments that run counter to some people's ethical codes.

Academic freedom, then, facilitates scholarship and teaching by eliminating that concern over personal safety. Institutions benefit from the system because their faculty members may go on to produce groundbreaking work that brings greater distinction to the institutions. But a college or university has no comparable incentive to protect extra-disciplinary speech because such discourse is peripheral to the normal workings of the campus.

Because academic freedom is specifically intended to foster the free exchange of ideas within a community of scholars, it does not protect us from other types of utterances and behavior, such as slander or libel, bullying co-workers, lying on a curriculum vitae, or conducting one's classes in irresponsible ways.

The AAUP reminds us that as professors we are both private citizens and officers of our institutions. When speaking as citizens (perhaps at a political rally, say) we should be immune from being disciplined by the institution for our speech, but when speaking in our unique capacity as representatives of the institution—as scholars and teachers in our disciplines—we have an obligation to exercise caution in what we say and how we say it. In the latter role, according to the AAUP, our "special position in the community imposes special obligations" because our words are likely to be construed to represent the official position of the institution rather than our own personal views.

Some people confuse the constitutional concept of freedom of speech with the less grandiose notion of academic freedom, but they are two distinct concepts. Academic freedom is limited to the confines of academic discourse while free speech is a broad constitutional right central to our democratic system of government.

But even free speech has its limits. The constitutional right of free speech is not meant to protect each and every utterance regardless of context (yelling "fire" in a crowded theater when no such danger exists, engaging in "hate speech," or threatening a police officer). It is intended to protect you from being incarcerated by the state for expressing your views.

Academic freedom is a right we should all cherish because it ensures an environment of free inquiry. That is precisely why we must guard against attempts to make the concept so limitless, so capacious, that it loses its power to protect the academic enterprise. When academic freedom becomes all things to all people, then it becomes nothing at all.

Gary A. Olson is provost and vice president for academic affairs at Idaho State University and co-editor, with John W. Presley, of the newly published "The Future of Higher Education: Perspectives From America's Academic Leaders" (Paradigm). He can be contacted at golson@isu.edu.

Attachment 3

THE CHRONICLE

of Higher Education

Run Your Campus

July 23, 2009

Exactly What Is 'Shared Governance'?

By Gary A. Olson

At a recent conference of college administrators, several of us had an impromptu discussion over lunch about the meaning of "shared governance." The consensus? That term is often invoked but much misunderstood by both faculty members and many administrators.

"Some of my faculty believe that shared governance literally means that a committee votes on some new plan or proposal and that's it—it gets implemented," said a seasoned department head. "There is no sense of sharing, of who is sharing what with whom."

A dean chimed in that a faculty leader at her institution actually told her that shared governance means that professors, who are the "heart of the university," delegate the governance of their universities to administrators, whose role is to provide a support network for the faculty. "He said, in all seriousness, that faculty have the primary role of governing the university and that administrators are appointed to spare them from the more distasteful managerial labor," said the dean with incredulity.

That may be a more commonly held notion in academe than it at first appears. I know several faculty senators at one institution who regularly refer to faculty as "governance," as in "You're administration, and we're governance." That expression reveals a deep misunderstanding of the mechanism of shared governance—and presupposes an inherently adversarial relationship.

The phrase shared governance is so hackneyed that it is becoming what some linguists call an "empty" or "floating" signifier, a term so devoid of determinate meaning that it takes on whatever significance a particular speaker gives it at the moment. Once a term arrives at that point, it is essentially useless.

Shared governance is not a simple matter of committee consensus, or the faculty's engaging administrators to take on the dirty work, or any number of other common misconceptions. Shared governance is much more complex; it is a delicate balance between faculty and staff participation in planning and decision-making processes, on the one hand, and administrative accountability on the other.

The truth is that all legal authority in any university originates from one place and one place only: its governing board. Whether it is a private college created by a charter, or a public institution established by law or constitution, the legal right and obligation to exercise authority over an institution is vested in and flows from its board. Typically, the board then formally delegates authority over the day-to-day operation of the institution (often in an official "memorandum of delegation") to the president, who, in turn, may delegate authority over certain parts of university management to other university officials—for example,

granting authority over academic personnel and programs to the provost as the chief academic officer, and so on.

Over time, the system of shared governance has evolved to include more and more representation in the decision-making process. The concept really came of age in the 1960s, when colleges began to liberalize many of their processes. In fact, an often-cited document on the subject, "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities," was issued jointly by the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges in the mid-60s. That statement attempted to affirm the importance of shared governance and state some common principles.

The fact that the primary organization championing faculty concerns, the body devoted to preparing future academic administrators, and the association promoting best practices in serving on governing boards together endorsed the statement illustrates that university governance is a collaborative venture.

"Shared" governance has come to connote two complementary and sometimes overlapping concepts: giving various groups of people a share in key decision-making processes, often through elected representation; and allowing certain groups to exercise primary responsibility for specific areas of decision making.

To illustrate the first notion of how shared governance works, I'd like to revisit a 2007 column, "[But She Was Our Top Choice](#)," in which I discussed the search process for academic administrators and attempted to explain why hiring committees are commonly asked to forward an unranked list of "acceptable" candidates. I wrote that shared governance, especially in the context of a search for a senior administrator, means that professors, staff members, and sometimes students have an opportunity to participate in the process—unlike the bad old days when a university official often would hire whomever he (and it was invariably a male) wanted, without consulting anyone.

"Shared" means that everyone has a role: The search committee evaluates applications, selects a shortlist of candidates, conducts preliminary interviews, contacts references, chooses a group of finalists to invite to campus, solicits input about the candidates from appropriate stakeholders, and determines which of the finalists are acceptable. Then it's up to the final decision maker, who is responsible for conducting background checks and entering into formal negotiations with the front-runner, and who is ultimately held responsible for the success (or failure) of the appointment.

"Shared" doesn't mean that every constituency gets to participate at every stage. Nor does it mean that any constituency exercises complete control over the process. A search cannot be a simple matter of a popular vote because someone must remain accountable for the final decision, and committees cannot be held accountable. Someone has to exercise due diligence and contact the front-runner's current and former supervisors to discover if there are any known skeletons that are likely to re-emerge. If I am the hiring authority and I appoint someone who embezzled money from a previous institution, I alone am responsible. No committee or group can be held responsible for such a lack of due diligence.

That's a good example of shared governance as it daily plays out in many areas of university decision making. No one person is arbitrarily making important decisions absent the advice of key constituents; nor is decision making simply a function of a group vote. The various stakeholders participate in well-defined parts of the process.

The second common, but overlapping, concept of shared governance is that certain constituencies are given primary responsibility over decision making in certain areas. A student senate, for example, might be given primary (but not total) responsibility for devising policies relevant to student governance. The most obvious example is that faculty members traditionally exercise primary responsibility over the curriculum. Because professors are the experts in their disciplines, they are the best equipped to determine degree requirements and all the intricacies of a complex university curriculum. That is fitting and proper.

But even in this second sense of shared governance—in which faculty members exercise a great deal of latitude over the curriculum—a committee vote is not the final word. In most universities, even curricular changes must be approved by an accountable officer: a dean or the university provost, and sometimes even the president. In still other institutions, the final approval rests with the board itself, as it does for many curricular decisions in my own university and state.

Clearly, when it comes to university governance, "shared" is a much more capacious concept than most people suspect. True shared governance attempts to balance maximum participation in decision making with clear accountability. That is a difficult balance to maintain, which may explain why the concept has become so fraught. Genuine shared governance gives voice (but not necessarily ultimate authority) to concerns common to all constituencies as well as to issues unique to specific groups.

The key to genuine shared governance is broad and unending communication. When various groups of people are kept in the loop and understand what developments are occurring within the university, and when they are invited to participate as true partners, the institution prospers. That, after all, is our common goal.

Gary A. Olson is provost and vice president for academic affairs at Idaho State University. He can be contacted at careers@chronicle.com.

Attachment 4

Memorandum

To: Dr. Bruce Blanding,
 President of Jackson State Community College
 Mr. Frank Dodson,
 Vice President of Academic Affairs for Jackson State Community College

From: The JSCC Chapter of the American Association of University Professors

Re: Six Critical Areas Needful of Administrative Attention

Date: 17 November 2009

1. Mission and Identity:

Through the regular work of the Strategic Planning Committee, JSCC's administration appears to be developing a statement of our institution's identity, goals, and mission. Development of such a statement was addressed by the Lea Report, the product of a 2007-2008 hired consultant and a large, campus-wide committee. Our JSCC President endorsed the Lea Report in a campus-wide meeting in Spring 2008. The Lea Report's Recommendation #1 specifies that JSCC's mission and vision statement will be "carefully crafted" with the "broad participation of the entire college community," and that "This work will *complement* [emphasis added] the next strategic plan."

- **The JSCC-AAUP fully expects that the terms and the spirit of the Lea Report will be followed to develop statements of JSCC's institutional identity, mission, and/or vision. The JSCC-AAUP also expects that any routine Strategic Planning Committee work will not pre-empt or replace the work of a broader, campus-wide effort to clarify JSCC's identity, but will be only one aspect of it.**

2. Faculty Credentials:

The SACS Reaffirmation Report of 2006 cited JSCC for employing an adjunct faculty member to teach university parallel courses in history with a master's degree but with fewer than 18 graduate hours in the discipline. Beginning in fall 2009, JSCC again hired adjunct faculty in history, as well as in English and perhaps other university parallel areas, that lacked master's degrees and 18 graduate hours in their disciplines to "facilitate"/teach university parallel courses. Using appropriately credentialed faculty is required by the 2006 SACS Reaffirmation citation and by item 2B, of SACS's "Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs" (which directs that the "presentation, management, and assessment" of a program's courses—"the substance of a program"—be "the responsibility of people with *appropriate* [emphasis added] academic qualifications" as specified by SACS).

- **Therefore, the JSCC-AAUP expects that JSCC will employ only SACS-qualified faculty to teach (i.e.: explain, facilitate, represent, apply, interpret or otherwise mediate) all university parallel courses material and expects that JSCC will cease from staffing university parallel classes with unqualified facilitators in the future.**

3. Review and Implementation of Handbook:

Faculty have received no complete, updated (for new TBR and JSCC policies and procedures), fully published JSCC Faculty Handbook since Spring 2005. Additionally, that version had only a copy-and-paste of the Tennessee Board of Regent' tenure and promotion policies approved by the Regents on April 2, 2004: Policy No. 5:02:03:70 and Policy No. 5:02:02:30, respectively. The TBR-mandated campus-specific applications of those policies were not developed, vetted, and approved via shared governance, nor forthcoming in a timely fashion. Thus, faculty working toward tenure and/or promotion could not be 1) fully knowledgeable of specific steps in the process, 2) permitted informed choices between the old and new policies during the 2004-2008 phase-in period as stipulated in those policies, 3) aware of all relevant details and implications of their changed and changing faculty-appointment status en route to tenure application, and 4) assured that the tenure and promotion policies and procedures were being applied fairly and equitably. A partial version of the handbook has recently been vetted and approved, but remains unpublished and apparently in flux.

The Faculty Council subcommittee on the JSCC Faculty Handbook performed due diligence in reviewing the administration's April 2009 version, making suggestions that were then responded to by the administration. However, unvetted changes have since been made and published via email to the faculty, particularly regarding the Faculty Evaluation Agreement and the Promotion and Tenure Committee selection process. Both of these are employment and career issues of the gravest import to the institution and the individual faculty members involved.

- **The JSCC-AAUP expects, in the spirit of shared governance mandated by Recommendation #5 of the Lea Report, that the JSCC administration involve broad faculty representation, cooperative work, careful vetting, and both elected representative faculty body and administrative review and approval of the final, published draft of the JSCC Faculty Handbook prior to the implementation of any portion thereof.**

4. Faculty Evaluation Plan:

There has been a unilateral deletion of a key component to the Faculty Evaluation Plan that both the administration and faculty have agreed upon. The first bullet under "Instructions" for the "Goals and Instructions for Faculty Evaluation Form for Academic Year 2009-2010" states, "Prior to October 1, the faculty member should develop a PLAN for the academic year using *either* [emphasis added] the Faculty Evaluation Plan (pp. 1-2)." No

“or” phrase to correspond with the “either” is supplied. This omission reflects the editing out of a central quantitative evaluation option for faculty that was accepted by the Faculty Council and Administration as part of the complete Faculty Evaluation Plan in April, 2007.

- **The JSCC-AAUP expects the JSCC administration to use and to publish in the JSCC Faculty Handbook the complete Faculty Evaluation plan approved by the 2007 JSCC elected representative faculty body and the administration—rather than the altered, incomplete, and unvetted plan distributed to faculty via email on September 28, 2009.**

5. JSCC Tenure Process:

In accordance with the original spirit and language of the peer-review tenure process, members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee should be determined by faculty elections rather than “nominated by the assistant dean or program director and appointed by the dean,” as described in an October 13, 2009, email. For this committee to be populated any other way than by election, by peer faculty, runs counter to shared governance regarding promotion and tenure.

- **The JSCC-AAUP expects the JSCC administration to retain for the final, fully published version of the JSCC Faculty Handbook—and for use in the current process campus wide—the original shared-governance procedure found in the April 2009 version and subsequently reviewed and approved by both the Faculty Council subcommittee in Summer 2009 and by the administration in Fall 2009.**

6. Vice President for Student Services:

A joining together of the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and of the Office of the Vice President for Student Services in time for the next academic year has been proposed. However, these two administrative areas serve the interests of distinctly different constituencies whose interests sometimes conflict. The two positions also have inherent incompatibility in their purposes.

- **The JSCC-AAUP recommends that the positions of Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Student Services remain separate.**

Thank you for your consideration.

CC: Mr. Barry Jennison, Dean of Professional and Technical Studies
 Ms. Beth Stewart, Dean of Arts and Sciences
 Dr. Leslie West Sands, Dean of Nursing
 JSCC Faculty Council
 All Faculty
 Dr. Delphia Harris, President of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Association of University