The COCC Shared Governance Work Group: June 2016 Update

Background:

In 2011-12, the Faculty Forum Executive Team supported the formation of a Shared Governance Task Force[1] because of the belief that the General Procedures Manual describing representative governance at COCC was out of date. That Task Force drafted a definition, adopted in 2013, of "shared" governance at COCC.

However, there were two other goals that the Forum's Shared Governance Task Force had that we did not pursue at the time: one was the creation of a shared governance handbook, and the other was a Shared Governance Advisory Team or Work Group. The creation of this work group had wide appeal across the College; however, there were questions about the work load, the membership, and ultimately, the "ownership" of such a work group.

PURPOSE

A Work Group of College Affairs:

At its February 4, 2016 meeting, College Affairs approved the creation of a Shared Governance Work Group. President Metcalf appointed the following people to serve: Sharla Andresen, Renee' Brazeau-Asher, Stacey Donohue, and Tim Peterson. This Work Group is initially under the auspices of College Affairs, with the intention of eventually creating a standalone Committee in the future.

The key goal is to have the Work Group act in a role that helps maintain effective Shared Governance at COCC. The initial charge of our group includes the following:

- Provide training (in person, online, and/or with documents, such as a Shared Governance Handbook) and guidelines for committee members and chairs;

[1] Shared Governance Task Force 2011-13: Stacey Donohue, Steve Bidlake, Amy Harper, Stephanie Andre´, Tina Hovekamp, Kathy Smith, Tony Russell.

- Complete an annual review of the Policy, Procedures and Committee Manuals (as well as the Committee Matrix) to ensure that approved edits or updates were made, and to recommend revisions as needed.
- Investigate creating a central location for agendas, minutes, and recommendations;
- Serve as a resource for anyone in the COCC community who has questions about the decision making process.
- Develop a tool to assess the effectiveness of the goals of shared governance at COCC according to the definition of shared governance as stated in the GPM.
- Determine the structure of a permanent group to monitor, lead and support shared governance at COCC, including the process for determining membership and standing duties of the group.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Our Work in 2016:

The Shared Governance Work Group set up an initial meeting immediately following approval by College Affairs, and we have been meeting every other week since February. During this period, we have begun work on the following projects:

- We compared the Committee section of the General Procedures Manual (G) with our Committee Matrix and discovered several discrepancies in membership status that have been shared with the appropriate stakeholders. After meeting with Alicia Moore and Terri Botts, the keepers of the Matrix, we have come up with the following new procedures:
  - The Matrix is now located on the College Committees website and updated regularly.
  - Committee Chairs will be tasked with keeping Terri informed of changes to their committee structure/membership on a quarterly basis.
  - College Affairs will also inform Terri about any changes to committee structures approved by College Affairs.
- We discovered, also in the Committee section of the GP Manual, that the procedure for making changes to the Procedures manual needs clarification. The SGWG is drafting a process to be discussed at College Affairs in the fall.
- We drafted a Shared Governance Handbook that will be fleshed out over the summer for distribution to committee members in the Fall. It will also be used during our inaugural fall Committee Chair and Committee Notetaker workshops this fall.
- We met with several administrative assistants who serve as notetakers on key committees (College Affairs, Academic Affairs, Curriculum, College Planning) to discuss best practices for agendas/minutes and communicating committee discussion items and decisions with the college community.
- As part of the handbook, we are developing templates for the following:
  - Agendas
  - Minutes and Decision Matrices
  - Annual Committee Summary Reports
- We tested a shared governance evaluation tool developed by the American Association of University Professors, and determined that with some revision, we can make it a useful tool for staff, faculty and administrators to use to also do a check in of the effectiveness of Shared Governance at COCC. We plan to work on such a tool during the 2016-17 academic year.

NEEDS/CHALLENGES:

Although we have only been meeting since mid-February, we are already being recognized as the "go to" group for questions related to Committee work and decision-making at COCC. As the Viability Task Force concludes its work reformatting the General Procedures Manual into Policy and Procedures sections, the Shared Governance Work Group will follow up with developing a process for the many revisions that the reformatted document still needs since many of our procedures have evolved in the last few years.

What's Next?

For 2016-17, we will finalize the work we began in Winter 2016, and begin to tackle the other tasks in our charge, including:

- Piloting a Shared Governance Workshop for a select group of committee chairs (we hope to open it up campus wide next year);
- Investigating a central location for committee work;
- Developing a process for ongoing revision and upkeep of the General Policies and Procedures Manual;
- Creating a flow chart of decision making at COCC and working with key committees to determine best practices for communicating when input on the process is needed and when decisions are finalized and approved; and,
- Surveying the College community to find out how we can best serve as a resource for all things Shared Governance in the future.

If you have any initial ideas, suggestions, or questions, please don't hesitate to contact one of the Shared Governance Work Group members:

- Sharla Andresen (sandresen@cocc.edu)
- Renee Brazeau-Asher (rasher@cocc.edu)
- Stacey Donohue (sdonohue@cocc.edu)
- Tim Peterson (tmpeterson@cocc.edu)