

# ACBO 2025 INSTITUTE II

## California Community College Governance Model

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# ? Question ?

- What is the governance or decision-making process used in California community colleges and its state system?
- Describe your understanding of this governance or decision-making process?
- What types of decisions must use this decision-making process ?

# Decision-Making Literature in Higher Education

- Gibson et al (1985) – superiority of group decisions
- Howell (1997) – accountability for all.
- Vaughan (2000) – defines academic governance
- Bush (2000) – identifies decision-making models
- Williams (2003) – avoid “group think”

## Decision-Making Literature in Higher Education (cont'd)

Bush (2000) – writes about two of the primary decision-making models as:

- Political Model – focuses on group activity rather than the institution
- Collegial Model - power and decision-making shared

# ? Question ?

- Which model do you think Bush considers to be the most appropriate way to manage a college/system?
- Do you agree and if so, why?
- Do you disagree and if so, why?

# Pros and Cons of Participatory Governance

Participatory decision-making (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 1985):

Pro:

- increases acceptance and commitment

Con:

- consensus is a waste of resources, takes time, and is difficult to achieve

# Key Historical CA Events

- 1961 - Donahue Act, which separated community colleges from K-12 districts
- 1967 – Legislation created the BOG to provide coherent state policy directions
- 1978 – Prop 13 increased call for accountability and educational quality. Funding from state, no longer local and fees set by the state

# Key Historical CA Events (cont'd)

- 1980's – Criticism/resentment locally “super board” without understanding local needs; and, ultimately
- Followed by fallout of Prop 13 with classes cut, faculty and staff laid off
- 1984 – CEOs formed a commission to review the state's ED Master Plan and CA community colleges, which lead to legislators passing AB 1725 in 1986-87



# Key Historical CA Events (cont'd)

- AB1725 separated community colleges from K-12; tenure/credential process changed; clearly defined the role of administrators and faculty
- “Administrators (should) lead, organize, plan and supervisor...understand the needs of faculty and the learning process...value institutional governance based upon a sharing of responsibility with their faculty colleagues

# What Did AB 1725 Accomplish?

- Identified eleven (10 +1) broad areas where Boards of Trustees would rely primarily on the advice of Academic Senates
- “opened the door” for collegial decision-making
- Section 53200 and 53204 of Title 5 “strengthened the authority of academic senates in dealing with local boards”
- Shared Governance term was not actually used in the AB1725 legislation

## ? Question ?

- Has California's governance process impeded or advanced the work of the California Community Colleges at the system and local levels of governance?
- If so, how has it impeded?
- If so, how has it advanced the work of the colleges/system?

# What Governance Looks Like



## Governance or decision-making process used in California community colleges system

- “Shared Governance” mandated the creation of a Consultation Council to include constituency representation
- Provided for student voice in decision-making
- A&P matters strengthened faculty roles in decision-making
- However, it varies from district to district
- Critics see it as a coalition rather than institutional representation

# Governance – The 10+1: Title 5 §53200

Title 5 §53200 (b): Academic Senate means an organization whose primary function is to make recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters. Section 53200 (c) “Academic and professional matter” means the following policy development and implementation matters:

1. Curriculum including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines
2. Degree and certificate requirements
3. Grading policies
4. Educational program development
5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success

# Governance – The 10+1: Title 5 §53200

- 6. District and college governance structures, as related to faculty roles
- 7. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports
- 8. Policies for faculty professional development activities
- 9. Processes for program review
- 10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development

AND

- 11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon between the governing board and the academic senate

# Governance – The 10+1: Title 5 §53200

“Consult collegially” means that the district governing board shall develop policies on academic and professional matters through either or both of the following methods, according to its own discretion:

- ✓ Rely primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate;  
OR
- ✓ Agree that the district governing board, or such representatives as it may designate, and the representatives of the academic senate shall have the obligation to reach mutual agreement by written resolution, regulation, or policy of the governing board effectuating such recommendations



## Shared and Collaborative Decision-Making

- Whether by mandate or convention, participatory decision-making results in a higher level of commitment
- Researchers who have studied governance in community colleges believe an effective governance process requires a commitment from the entire leadership to participation, collaboration, teamwork and consensus-building skills

## Shared and Collaborative Decision-Making (cont'd)

- ❑ Critical for system to speak as “**one voice**” to legislators
- ❑ Participation at college level is dependent upon CEO’s leadership
- ❑ Shared decision making is slow and **time-consuming** process but inclusive
- ❑ Individuals feel empowered when they participate

## Shared and Collaborative Decision-Making (cont'd)

- March 2000, the Little Hoover Commission released a report that if California's Community Colleges intend to respond to the diverse needs and learning styles of potential students, there must be a “governance model that provides leadership and accountability both from the top down and from the bottom up”

# What Is Your Role in Participatory Governance?

- What types of business processes do you deal with on-a-daily basis at your district/college that requires you to engage in participatory governance?
- How do you determine when you need to reach out to ASCCC, Labor groups or other units at your district/college?
- Why is it important that you reach out?

*Thank you &  
Closing Questions ?*

