

State of Shared Governance Report
in the USM System
Survey of Senate Chairs
for 2017

to

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Executive Summary

For the calendar year 2017, CUSF completed its survey and report of senate chairs on the state of shared governance in USM institutions. This year 12 of the 12 institutions participated. Overall, the state of shared governance on campuses is good. In the survey, the first question served as an overall measure of the state of shared governance on the individual campuses. Nine and one-half of the senate chairs agreed with the statement that “*Shared governance was alive and healthy on their campus.*” However, this year none of the senate chair strongly agreed with the statement. Two and one-half campuses neither agreed nor disagreed. For these schools, there was usually a mitigating circumstance such as hesitancy to evaluate a new president or a retiring president. This year none of the schools disagreed with the statement.

In addition, a recommendation of this survey is for the administration and faculty to revisit the role of consulting with the faculty as presented in the I-6.00 policy of the Board of Regents. A thread emerging throughout many of the surveys and in many of the responses within the surveys is the difference between consulting with the faculty and good communications that is directionally one-way communications. The term used in the I-6.00 policy is “informed participation” and “collaboration” which suggests more of a two-way communications and involvement.

The survey and report was completed in March and the first week of April. This report along with the survey data was sent to the Chancellor in the beginning of April for use in his annual evaluation of the presidents during April. In addition, the information will be used in the five year review of presidents for the BOR. The information contained in this report is the summative results from the survey.

State of Shared Governance Report in the USM System Survey of Senate Chairs for 2017

Summary Report¹

The primary use of the survey is by the Chancellor in his annual performance evaluation of the Presidents during April. The survey provides the Chancellor with substantive data and feedback on improving shared governance practices within the individual institutions in the University System of Maryland (USM). The survey data is an internal document and not for public dissemination. A second document, the summary report, includes the generalized results of the survey. It is provided to the BOR, public, and other interested parties summarizing the state of shared governance within the System. This document is the summary report.

Procedures

The 18 questions in this survey were adapted from a short monograph by Keetje Ramo entitled *Assessing the Faculty's Role in Shared Governance: Implications of AAUP Standards (1998)*. The survey instrument has undergone several revisions and modifications since its inception in 2014. Currently, the questions consist of a five point Likert scale followed by a section for comments. This provides both quantitative and qualitative data. The survey is completed by the Senate chairs or their equivalent position within the governance structure. It covers the previous calendar year, in this case 2017. The survey is distributed to the Senate chairs in October. They are due March 10th or the week before spring break. This allows time for the Chair of CUSF to complete the analysis and submit it to the Chancellor prior to his April review of the Presidents. This year all 12 institutions participated in the survey.

Sampling – An effort was made this year to make the survey more representative of the faculty. When the survey was envisioned and being developed, the issue was considered that there was the possibility of making the survey so cumbersome that no one would complete it. The option was provided that the Senate chairs could complete the survey themselves. This option was retained as a fall back position. Only the Senate chair from UB exercised this option this year (Figure 1). The other chairs utilized their executive committee, faculty senate or faculty in general. It should be noted that within the university administrative structure, the Senate chair generally has the most contact and involvement with the President, followed by the executive committee and faculty senate. For this reason, these options should not be minimized in favor of a general survey of the faculty who have little or no involvement with the President in terms of shared governance.

¹ This report was completed by Robert B. Kauffman, Ph.D., Chair, Council of University System Faculty (CUSF).

Figure 1: Procedural Options		
Option	Option Description ¹	Number of Institutions Using the Option
Option #1:	Senate Chair Competes the Survey Alone	1
Option #2:	Senate Chair Completes the Survey in Conjunction with Their ExCom	4
Option #3:	Senate Chair Shares with Senate and Compiles Results with ExCom	2
Option #4:	Senate Chair Surveys Senate Members	4
Option #5:	Senate Completes a Survey of the Faculty	--
Option #6:	Other – Please explain below	1 ²

¹ The full descriptions are provided within the survey instrument.
² The Frostburg Senate Chair indicated a combination of Option #4 and #5.

Reporting Surveys – Several institutions surveyed their executive committees or Faculty Senates and reported the survey results as the percentage of responses. A two step process was performed to consolidate the responses into the most prevalent category. First, the five point Likert Scale was condensed into a three point scale. The categories were Agree (i.e. Strongly Agree and Agree), Neither Agree Nor Disagree, and Disagree (i.e. Strongly Disagree and Disagree). This consolidation determined the degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement. Procedurally, it reduces the situation where one category with a large response offsets two more evenly response categories (e.g. SA-3, A-4, D-5, SD-0). Using the most frequently occurring category in the example would result in respondents disagreeing with the statement. However, there was general agreement with the statement (i.e. SA&A-7, D&SD-5). The second step acknowledges the most frequently occurring category within the combined categories (i.e. including NAD). In the example, this was the Agree category with four responses. In the report, the agree category would be the response recorded for the university. Since there were small samples, several ties occurred between categories. When this occurred, the response was split in the reporting (i.e. 0.5 per category).

Results

Based on Keetje Ramo’s short monograph, the survey is subdivided into seven different areas covering the role of shared governance within the institution. These categories are used as the main headings and to provide the organizational structure for of this report.

Figure 2: Climate for Governance – 2017							
Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
1.	Shared governance on our campus is alive and healthy.	--	9.5	2.5	--	--	--

Climate for Shared Governance – Question #1 served as an overall measure of the state of shared governance on the individual campuses (Figure 2). Of significance, this year none of the campuses disagreed (i.e. disagree and strongly disagree) with the statement. Nine and one-half of the senate chairs agreed with the statement that shared governance was alive and healthy on their campus. Also, of interest is that none of the senate chairs strongly agreed with this statement. Two and one-half of the senate chairs neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Figure 3: Internal Communications – 2017							
Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
2.	There are excellent communications and consultation between the administration and the faculty and senate leadership.	--	6	5	1	--	--

Internal Communications – The second question focused on internal communications between the administration and the shared governance structures of the faculty and senate leadership. Good communications is fundamental to effective shared governance. Six senate chairs agreed with the statement on communications. Five neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. One senate chair disagreed with the statement suggesting that there needs to be better internal communications.

In reviewing the comment sections of the question, three levels of involvement seemed to emerge: Consultation, communications, and lack of communications. Consultation involves participation by and with the faculty even if the President and administration have the decision making ability. One senate chair noted that *“What keeps this rating from being Strongly Agree is that activities are ... limited to communications and not always **consultation**.”* Another senate chair noted that *“We receive lots of communication. But as a body we are not always consulted on important matters.”*

In contrast, good communications focuses on keeping the faculty informed. It is one-way communications. Typically, senate chairs indicating good internal communications noted that their President listened to the faculty. Examples of facilitating good communications were periodic meetings with or easy access to their President. Usually, the President and/or Provost attended Senate meetings. The President and/or Provost kept the senate chair and faculty apprised of what the administration is doing.

Several senate chairs noted the importance of communications and consultation at the dean and chair levels. In several cases there was good communications with the President and Provost, but there was a breakdown at the lower levels of administration.

The third level was poor communications. Generally, senate chairs disagreeing with the statement on internal communications reflected poor communications with the President. As might be expected, there was little if any consultation. In addition, these presidents tended to operate more external to the institution.

Figure 4: Senate's Role – 2017							
Survey Questions		<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neither Agree or Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
3.	The faculty senate plays an important role in providing academic and administrative functions at the university.	1	5.5	4.5	--	1	--

Senate's Role – The third question in the survey asked whether the faculty senate played an important role in providing academic and administrative functions at the university. Conversely, the question asked whether the faculty senate is disenfranchised by the administration. Six and one-half institutions agreed (i.e. Strongly Agree and Agree) with the statement that the faculty senate plays an important role in providing academic and administrative functions. Four and one-half neither agreed nor disagreed and one institution strongly disagreed with the statement.

Along with the diversity of institutions within System, a review of the comment section to this question reveals the duality of the relationship between the faculty and administration expressed in the I-6.00 policy of the Board of Regents. This question captures both the administrative and academic functions. These functions are split in succeeding questions. In general, the responses to the question express a desire to work with the administration. In addition, several comments echoed the comments made regarding communications with faculty including attendance at senate meetings, etc.

Figure 5: President's Role (4-7) – 2017							
Survey Questions		<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neither Agree or Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
4.	Other than on rare occasions, the president seldom overturns faculty decisions and recommendations in areas in which the faculty has primary responsibility (e.g., curriculum, tenure and promotion, etc.).	4	5	2	--	--	1
5.	The president seeks meaningful faculty input on those issues (such as budgeting) in which the faculty has an appropriate interest but not primary responsibility.	1	4	3	3.5	0.5	--
6.	The president supports and advocates the principles of shared governance?	4.5	5.5	1	0.5	0.5	--
7.	The president supports and advocates the principles of shared governance at the sub-unit level also (e.g. college, department).	2	4	5	1	--	--

President's Role – Questions four through seven focused on the president's role in shared governance. The wording in questions four and five reflect the relationship between the faculty and president as defined in the BOR I-6.00 policy on shared governance. Nine of the senate chairs agreed with their

presidents following the faculty’s advice in areas where they have primary responsibility such as promotion, tenure and academic matters (Question #4). Four senate chairs strongly agreed with this statement.

There was a desire that their presidents consult with them more on matters where the administration has the primary responsibility such as budgeting (Question #5). Only five senate chairs agreed with the statement. However, three senate chairs neither agreed nor disagreed and four disagreed with the statement. One senate chair summarized the sentiment with “*The faculty senators would like to have more active participation in the discussion and influence associated with the University’s budget.*” In addition, this quote echos the previously discussed consultation thread. However, one bright spot is noted by a senate chair who noted that “*New CFO (started January 2018) along with president sees faculty input on budgeting process – this is completely new and welcomed by the faculty. We hope it continues.*”

For question six, ten of the twelve institutions indicated that their president supports and advocates the principles of shared governance. Question seven was a parallel question to question six but at the sub-unit level. Six of the institutions agreed with this statement (i.e. Strongly Agree and Agree). For both questions, there was roughly three school drop-off from last year (2016) with those agreeing with the statement.

Figure 6: Faculty’s Role – 2017							
Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
8.	Faculty’s Role: The administration is supportive of faculty involvement in shared governance.	--	7	4	1	--	--

Faculty’s Role – For question eight, seven institutions indicated in the affirmative that the administration was supportive of faculty involvement in shared governance. This was a drop-off of four schools from 2016 with four schools moving into the neither agree nor disagreed category. A review of the comments didn’t reveal any significant trends or reasons for this change.

Figure 7: Joint Decision Making (9-15) – 2017							
Survey Questions		<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neither Agree or Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
9.	The administration utilizes faculty involvement in the area of planning and strategic planning .	2.5	5.5	2.5	1.5	--	--
10.	The administration recognizes faculty involvement in budgeting and fiscal resource planning.	--	1	6	3.5	0.5	1
11.	The administration recognizes faculty involvement in academic affairs and program development.	3.5	7.5	1	--	--	--
12.	The administration recognizes faculty involvement in staff selection and hiring .	2	4	3	2	--	1
13.	Structures and processes that allow for shared governance are clearly defined in the governance documents (e.g. faculty handbook).	2.5	9.5	--	--	--	--
14.	Shared governance between the administration and faculty functions in an effective manner.	0.5	6.5	4	1	--	--
15.	Joint decision-making and shared governance discussed in questions 9-14 are practiced at the sub-unit levels also (e.g. college, department).	1	5.5	0.5	4.5	0.5	--

Joint Decision Making – Seven questions focused on joint decision making. Four questions focused on administrative and academic functions of strategic planning, budgeting, academic affairs, and hiring. Eight of the senate chairs agreed with the statement on strategic planning (Question 9). Regarding budgeting and fiscal planning (Question 10), there was a drop-off in agreement with only one senate chair agreeing with this statement. Traditionally, these areas are considered administrative responsibilities. Six senate chairs neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement and four institutions disagreed with the statement. Regarding Question 11, 11 institutions agreed with the statement recognizing the faculty’s role in academic affairs. This was expected. Six institutions agreed with the statement that faculty are involved in the staff hiring (Question 12).

Question 13 focuses on how shared governance is institutionalized within the institution (e.g. inclusion in the faculty handbook). All 12 institutions surveyed agreed with the statement that shared governance processes and procedures were clearly defined in the institution’s documents.

Question 14 asks whether shared governance between the administration and faculty functions in an effective manner. Seven senate chairs agreed with the statement, four neither agreed nor disagreed, and one senate chairs disagreed.

The last question in this group asked if the joint decision roles discussed in the previous questions were applied at the sub-unit level (Question 15). It should be noted that shared governance at the sub-unit level

is a continuing issue within the institutions and it is a difficult issue to address. Regardless, this question is still a barometer. Six and one-half senate chairs agreed with the statement and five senate chairs disagreed with the statement.

For this section, the comments represent differing opinions. One senate chair who disagreed with the statement noted that *“This [Joint decision making at the sub-unit level] is also variable and depends greatly on the Dean. Most College Councils seem to be dominated by the agenda of their Deans. One even calls itself the Dean’s Council now.”* Another senate chair summarized that *“Shared governance between administration and faculty is efficient, but not always effective. It varies within colleges and across departments.... There is a significant level of culture change at dean’s level and often feels as though communications are dictate out and not consulted with.”* In addition, this comment reinforces the consultation theme. In a contrasting view, another senate chair noted that *“In general, collaborative decision-making becomes prevalent at the sub-unit level.”*

Figure 8: Structural Arrangements (16-18) – 2017

Survey Questions		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
16.	The faculty senate and/or other institution-wide governance bodies meet on a regular basis.	9.5	2.5	--	--	--	--
17.	Faculty determine how their own representatives are selected.	9.5	2.5	--	--	--	--
18.	The administration provides adequate institutional support for shared governance to function.	2.5	8.5	1	--	--	--

Structural Arrangements – The last three questions focused on the support given to shared governance on the campuses. All the senate chairs agreed with the statement that the faculty senate and/or other institution-wide governance bodies meet on a regular basis (Question 16) and faculty determine how their representatives are selected (Question 17). All but one senate chair agreed with the statement that the administration provides adequate institutional support for shared governance. It is worth noting the importance of providing administrative and clerical support and without it, facilitating shared governance can become problematic. Reinforcing this point, one senate chair noted that *“While not universal, several other USM institutions have a clerical support person dedicated to faculty governance who can maintain documents, schedule rooms, make purchases, prepare and mail agendas, maintain websites, and other clerical support.”*

Figure 10: Historical Analysis of Climate for Governance Question			
Climate for Governance: Shared governance on our campus is alive and healthy.	2015	2016 ²	2017
Strongly Agree	4	4	0
Agree	6	3	9.5
Neither Agree or Disagree ¹	- -	3	2.5
Disagree	2	2	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0
NA	0	0	0
¹ The “Neither Agree or Disagree” category was added in the 2016 survey. In 2015, a four point Likert scale was use. ² For the 2016 report, UMCP submitted their report after the completion of the report. The Senate Chair’s response is included in this table (i.e. NAD) but not in the report on the website.			

Historical Analysis of Climate for Governance Question – In the survey, the first question was considered to be the summary statement for the state of shared governance on campus. It asked if shared governance was alive and healthy. Although the questionnaire has been modified over time, the basic four category Likert scale remains intact enabling comparison of data over a three year period. The results are presented in Figure 10.

Review of the three years of data suggests three interesting trends. Overall, the campuses generally feel that shared governance is alive and healthy. Combining the strongly agree and agree categories, there were ten campuses that agreed with the statement in 2015, seven campuses in 2016 and nine and one-half campuses in 2017.

Second, there were generally one or two campuses in any one year that were dissatisfied with the state of shared governance on their campus. Unlike in previous years, it should be noted that in 2017 none of the reporting campuses disagreed with the statement.

Although there has been an overall increase in campuses agreeing with the statement over the three year period, those campuses strongly agreeing with the statement decreased from four in 2015 and 2016 to none in 2017. An interesting trend, no substantive reasons could be gleaned from the surveys.

Conclusion

In general for the twelve campuses that responded, the state of shared governance on the campuses is generally good. This was suggested by the response to the first question where nine and one-half of the senate chairs agreed with the statement that shared governance was alive and healthy on their campus (see Figure 1). Two and one-half of the senate chairs neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The one-half resulted from a survey tie between the two categories. In addition, a quick review of the other responses in Figure 2 - 9 suggest general support for the conclusion that shared governance is alive and healthy on USM campuses.

Second, the historical analysis indicates that shared governance is alive and healthy on most campuses, and that in any given year, there are one or two campuses where it is less so. An interesting trend this year was the decline in the number of senate chairs who strongly agreed with the statement. No reason was suggested for this trend.

A continuing theme that cut across multiple questions in the survey was the difference between communications and consulting. This point was noted by several senate chairs and in multiple comments. Many senate chairs indicated that there was good communications (e.g. attend Faculty Senate, monthly meetings, etc.) but poor consultation with the faculty on traditionally administrative functions such as budgeting. In addition, a three level paradigm was suggested: Consultation, good communications, and poor communications. Institutions noting poor communications generally experience lack of any consultation. Conversely, those institutions that have good consultation tended to have good communications.

Building on the previous point, there may be a need to revisit the I-6.00 policy on campuses. It defines the consultation relationship between the administration and faculty on both administrative and academic affairs. Section C of II Principles suggests that “*Shared governance requires informed participation and collaboration by faculty, students, staff, and administrators.*” “Informed participation” and “collaboration” may be synonyms for consultation. Also, collaboration and consultation doesn’t mean that the decision necessarily rests with the faculty either.

This year an effort was made to make the survey more representative of the faculty. There has been a tendency toward surveying the faculty. There can be a role for and important information can be gained through a survey of the general faculty. However, more weight should be given to those faculty who work with and have a direct relationship with the President regarding shared governance. This includes the senate chair or equivalent position, the executive committee and faculty senate. Usually, the senate chairs has the most involvement with the president followed by the executive committee and then by the Senate.