COE Governance Task Force

Introduction

As a college, we are committed to a shared governance model based upon the characteristics of **voice, transparency**, **communication**, and **structured practices**. We seek a model of shared governance in which all constituent groups have a **voice** and the opportunity to contribute to governance in meaningful ways. To ensure meaningful opportunities to share their voices, the college must create shared information pathways—effective **communication** and **transparency** from all within the college. Although many decisions are the responsibility of administrators, the goal of shared governance is met when consequential issues are discussed by administration with representatives from constituent groups to gather input and ensure **transparency**. Moreover, the input gathered by administration must be considered, and when appropriate, utilized in decision-making. To promote efficient input-gathering and decision-making, consistent and proactive **communication** from all involved must occur both before and after critical decisions. To support these principles, the college commits to enacting shared governance through clearly defined and **structured practices**. Our goal is to create defined structures (codified in by-laws or policies) with clear responsibilities for decision-making and mechanisms for preservation of voice.

In the sections that follow, we describe the structures that will support shared governance in alignment with the characteristics outlined above.

College-wide structures:

- A set of by-laws and a summary of shared governance accessible on the COE website;
- Publication of agendas and minutes of key committees in a timely manner for community review;
- An online "idea incubator" for any member of the College community (students, faculty, staff) to submit recommendations for the improvement of the College experience;
- A mechanism to support Alumni relations.

Faculty structures:

In a shared governance model, primary responsibility for academic matters (e.g., curriculum, faculty status, and research) is held by faculty. In the COE, this is reflected in

existing departmental and college curriculum committees. The following structures will be added to augment and enhance faculty voice.

- **COE Faculty Council** – The Faculty Council provides faculty voice/input in the governance of the College. The Faculty Council will be comprised of elected departmental representatives and will meet with the Dean and Associate Deans on a regular basis. The council will:
  - Advise the Dean on academic initiatives;
  - Draft or revise college policies;
  - Evaluate progress toward meeting the goals of the strategic plan;
  - Provide input on budget decisions and issues that impact the entire college;
  - Collect feedback and input from part-time faculty;
  - Provide a mechanism to bring faculty grievances/concerns to the COE administration;
  - Monitor and support culture and engagement (i.e., responsibilities previously held by the Culture and Climate Committee);
  - Support faculty in navigating current legal parameters (state and federal)

  COE Faculty Council Administration

  - Voting membership will consist of two members from each department (ICL, CEPR, LEAD), one member from Lambuth campus, one member from CREP, and one COE faculty senate representative.
    - Appointments are for two-year staggered terms with the opportunity for repeat appointment (with possible exception of faculty senate rep if that is a one-year appointment).
    - Departments, Lambuth, and CREP elect their representatives. COE faculty senators determine each year who will attend for the year.
  - Each year, voting committee members will elect a chair to direct meetings. They will also elect a secretary to keep and post notes.
  - Meeting times will be posted in advance.
  - Meetings are always open to all COE faculty members. The committee will strive to make meetings accessible to online and in-person faculty.
  - COE faculty members will also have an opportunity to share their opinions during council meetings. However, only voting members will make decisions for the committee.

- Notes from each council meeting will be posted on a COE webpage (associated with the committee) within a week of the meeting.

- **COE Curriculum Committee –** The COE Curriculum committee provides faculty voice on all undergraduate and graduate curriculum matters. They review new course and program proposals, course and program modifications, and other related activities.
    - This committee will merge the existing College Graduate Council and College Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

  COE Curriculum Committee Administration

    - The committee will consist of an Associate Dean, the Academic Services Coordinator (Madison Maw), one representative from each academic department, and the Director of Teacher Education.
        - Appointments are for staggered two-year terms with the opportunity for repeated appointments.
        - Each department will elect their committee representative.
    - COE Curriculum Committee meetings will be posted in advance and are open to COE faculty members and students.

- **COE Scholarship Committee –** The COE Scholarship Committee provides faculty input regarding COE scholarships. The Scholarship Committee will:
    - Assist the Associate Dean with the development and monitoring of scholarship review procedures;
    - Review applications and make recommendations for scholarship awardees.
    - Identify student populations within the College that are underrepresented with respect to scholarship opportunities;
    - Suggest scholarship revisions to the COE Faculty Council/Dean's Office;
    - Support the development and strengthening of donor/alumni relations (e.g., recipient/donor reception).
    - Committee membership will consist of at least two representatives from each COE department

- **COE Technology Committee** - The COE Technology Committee offers a structure for faculty assessment and feedback regarding resources (physical and other). This committee will regularly:

- o Evaluate the types and quality of COE online resources/systems to ensure they are accessible, user-friendly, accurate, and relevant for faculty/students.
- o Evaluate the types and quality of (physical) classroom resources/systems to ensure they are accessible, user-friendly, accurate, and relevant for faculty/students.
- o Identify and highlight exemplar COE resources and systems that effectively promote student access, engagement, and retention.
- o Suggest updates to existing on campus and online resources to enhance access, engagement, and retention.
- o Track and evaluate the progress and effectiveness of initiatives aimed at improving access, engagement, and retention.

COE Technology Committee Administration

- o The committee will consist of an Associate Dean, the Ball Hall Technology Coordinator, a technology coordinator from Lambuth Campus, one faculty member from Lambuth Campus, one representative from each department, one representative from the Center for Research for Educational Policy, one representative from a fully online degree program, and three students (one undergraduate, one graduate, and one online).
    - ▪ Appointments are for one-year staggered terms with the opportunity for repeated appointments.
    - ▪ Departments, CREP, and relevant Lambuth campus faculty elect their representatives.
    - ▪ Technology coordinators are assigned based on their job duties.
    - ▪ Student representatives will be selected by the committee from a list supplied by department heads.
- o Meetings are open to all COE faculty, staff, and students and they will have an opportunity to share their ideas. However, only voting members will make decisions for the committee.

Staff Structures:

The Staff Advisory Council will continue to serve as a formalized structure for staff voice/input in decisions. This body will:

- o Offer professional development opportunities for staff;
- o Monitor and support culture and engagement;
- o Gather staff input on budget/resource issues;

- o   Provide a mechanism to bring staff grievances/concerns to the COE administration;
- o   Celebrate and recognize staff contributions.

Student Structures:

Student input and voice will be elicited through the following structures.

- **Dean's Undergraduate Student Advisory Council** – The UG Advisory council is a representative student council that meets with the Dean to discuss topics such as quality of instruction, program requirements, student support services, culture and climate, internship experiences, etc. The Council will also provide a mechanism to bring student concerns to the COE administration. This council will meet with the Dean (and respective Associate Dean) at least two times per year. (Additional details in Appendix).
- **Dean's Graduate Student Advisory Council** – The Grad Advisory council is a representative student council that meets with the Dean to discuss topics such as quality of instruction, program requirements, student support services, culture and climate, assistantships, etc. The Council will also provide a mechanism to bring student concerns to the COE administration. This council will meet with the Dean (and respective Associate Dean) at least two times per year. (Additional details in Appendix).
- **Open Forums and Town Halls**– In addition to the advisory council, student input will be sought through open forums or town halls.

In summary, the COE will enact a vision of shared governance through multiple representative structures that provide opportunities for voice and support transparency and communication. Faculty, staff, and students will have meaningful input and engagement in the governance of the college.

Appendix: Dean's Student Advisory Council Structure

A. Membership

8–12 student members with one-year terms (potential for renewal). Each department head selects and appoints at least one student to the committee. Representation across:

- Licensure and non-licensure pathways
- Online and in-person students
- Demographically diverse groups

B. Selection Process

- Open call for applications each academic year.
- Applicants submit:
  - Statement of interest
  - Program/degree level and year
  - Optional resume or short bio
- Faculty/staff may nominate students to apply.
- The Dean's office reviews applications and appoints members to ensure balanced representation.

C. Dean's Office appoints administrative staff to assist with:

- Recruitment and application coordination
- Scheduling and meeting logistics
- Maintaining records and reports

D. Meeting structure and possible topics

Meetings with the Dean are held twice per year (or more often as needed). Agenda created jointly by the Dean's office and student chair/co-chair. Summary notes prepared after each meeting for the Dean's Office. Areas of Focus can include:

- Quality of instruction and classroom learning experience.
- Program requirements, advising, and progression.
- Student support services (academic, financial, wellness).
- Culture, climate, and sense of belonging within the College.
- Fieldwork, practicum, and internship experiences.
- Professional development and career preparation.
- Technology, facilities, and resource needs.
- Not responsible for individual course complaints or grade appeals.

E. Communication and Reporting

- The council prepares a semester summary report on key themes and recommendations.
- Dean provides a response outline:
    o Actions taken
    o Actions under consideration
    o Issues outside the scope of the Council
- Optional sharing of non-confidential outcomes with:
    o Faculty governance bodies
    o Program coordinators
    o Student body (as appropriate)