

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

STANDARD IVA: DECISION-MAKING ROLES AND PROCESSES

IVA. The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.

IVA.1 Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.

Descriptive Summary

The district has policies that clearly state its philosophy, concept of administration, and commitment to shared governance (IVA.1,2,5). The college adheres to these policies and has created an environment in which the college community is encouraged to participate in the overall improvement of the college's programs and services. The organizational structure of the college is such that the major constituent groups, administration, faculty, classified professionals, and students, have different venues to discuss concerns and share ideas for improvement.

The creation of new programs, such as SYMBAA (Strengthening Young Men By Academic Achievement); an expanded scholarship recognition dinner; ceremonies to recognize the accomplishments of students who complete a certificate of achievement or completion or graduate with honors; the creation of a new fine, performing, and communication arts division; approval for a director of technology position, and the construction of a railroad underpass have been the direct result of ideas brought forward by different constituent groups (IVA.3,4).

Systematic participative processes exist to facilitate discussion, planning and implementation. Before the Institutional Planning and Budget Committee (IPBC) went into hiatus, it allowed for campuswide input for planning and recommendations to the president. The status of this committee will be addressed at the beginning of the Fall 2005 semester. The president's cabinet is the forum where all campus constituencies come together to discuss common issues (IVA.12).

Although the college is committed to the principles of shared decision making, it is strongest when it comes to administrative consultation and collaboration with faculty. The level of classified professional participation is inconsistent, and consultation and collaboration with the classified senate occurs as an afterthought, not as a matter of practice. Student participation continues to be a challenge, even though several of the standing committees include a student representative. Students are asked to participate in a meaningful way on decisions

affecting them; however, their schedules and other commitments often make long-term participation on committees difficult.

Assessment

The college promotes an atmosphere in which ideas, problems and concerns are communicated freely (IVA.6). The different constituent groups work well individually; however, their roles in the decision-making process are not clearly delineated. Moreover, the process whereby recommendations reach president's cabinet for discussion, debate, and action is not clearly communicated.

Theme teams functioned well in their initial stages as the college began implementing its strategic plan. Because of their size, complexity, and finite objectives, many gradually failed to meet on a regular basis and became ineffective. IPBC has been on hiatus since 2003 when it became the de facto accreditation steering committee. There has been a growing concern among different constituent groups that one forum for planning was no longer meeting and that its focus had turned to accreditation. To address this growing concern, the IPBC met in April 2005 to review its final report and to discuss its future (IVA.7). It was the consensus of the committee to reconvene at the beginning of the Fall 2005 semester and establish the direction that the committee would take.

The Accreditation Faculty and Staff Survey showed that all respondent groups agree that Fresno City College relies on the academic senate for recommendations about student learning programs. Respondents are neutral, however, about any such reliance on students or the classified senate. In the Student Outcomes Survey, the students responded to the statement that the college welcomes/

uses feedback from students to improve the college with an average of 3.60 compared to the national average of 3.83 (IVA.8).

IVA.2 The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.

IVA.2a Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy 9311.1 clearly defines the role of shared governance in the district and college structure.

At the faculty level the academic senate and the curriculum committee meet regularly. Departments handle much of the rest of the business of the faculty, particularly in the areas of hiring, evaluation, and curriculum development and implementation. State Center Federation of Teachers (SCFT) handles contractual issues for full-time and part-time faculty. The classified senate provides a forum for shared governance. The California School Employees Association (CSEA) provides a forum for policy and procedure input for classified employees.

The collective bargaining process is used by both the CSEA and SCFT to negotiate contractual issues with the district.

The primary student organization is the Associated Student Government. There are also many student clubs that are monitored by the college activities staff (IVA.9).

Until 2004, the IPBC brought all the constituencies together into a single decision-making body. The IPBC had been established through a collaborative process, growing out of a prior body called the Institutional Strategic Planning Task Force. The IPBC provided a forum for integration of ideas and collaboration among constituencies. The indefinite suspension of the IPBC during the accreditation year has limited the ability to advance ideas, which clearly indicates the necessity of such a committee.

One of the strongest structures for shared decision making is in the area of curriculum, where collaboration between faculty, students, and administration is well established. In the spirit of AB-1725, curriculum decisions are primarily in the hands of the faculty, with administrators playing an important supportive role. Curriculum decisions are made by the curriculum committee; the voting members of that committee are all faculty, with the exception of the two voting student members. The dean of instruction serves in an ex officio, nonvoting role; the administration also provides classified support staff for the committee. Curriculum committee decisions are usually treated as definitive and approval at higher levels is routine.

For academic and professional matters other than curriculum, the structures for faculty/administrative collaboration are not as strong. The academic senate is a strong

voice for the faculty. The shared governance agreement established between the faculty and the district in 1991, in the spirit of AB-1725, treats faculty and administrators as equal partners who are to seek mutual written agreement on policy issues through a process of collegial consultation (IVA.5). At times, however, faculty are notified of decisions rather than consulted in the decision-making process. For example the development of the Student Equity Plan was completed without academic senate involvement. A delay in signing the Student Equity Plan occurred to allow for appropriate academic senate input.

Despite that weakness, sometimes the process works well. For example, an administrative proposal to split the humanities division into two divisions was initially advanced without faculty input. After the academic senate became involved, a procedure was created that gave the faculty and the administration equal roles in the decision, with the understanding that nothing would move forward unless both parties agreed to it. A satisfactory agreement was reached, and a new division of fine, performing, and communication arts was created.

The instances in which faculty/administrative collaboration does not work out well is often a result of the district, not the college. For example, the districtwide shared governance committee, composed of representatives from the senates and from the district and college administrations, has fallen into disuse. This has generated some resentment among the faculty. In 2001 and 2002, the districtwide shared governance committee met to consider rewriting the district shared governance policy (BP 9311.1), based on proposals being advanced by the academic senates.

After meeting regularly in 2001 and 2002, the meetings were delayed and cancelled, postponing consideration of the proposed new policy. Then, in 2003, the district adopted a new shared governance policy that bore no resemblance to the proposed policy that was still on the table for mutual agreement (IVA.16). The adoption of the new policy did not follow the procedure laid out in the old policy (IVA.5). The districtwide shared governance committee is no longer meeting, despite the desire of the academic senates to continue meeting.

Classified professionals have not been included in decision-making processes nearly as much as faculty. Classified professionals are represented by their bargaining agent, the California School Employees Association. The classified senate does not receive the same level of institutional support as the academic senate. For example, the academic senate president receives some release time to carry out the duties of that office; the classified senate president receives neither release time nor a stipend. Furthermore, it is difficult for some classified professionals to even be members of their senate because they cannot be released from their duties to attend meetings. When the IPBC was still in existence, there was a proposal advanced by Theme Team 1 to pay a stipend to the classified senate president. The idea was presented to the IPBC, but it was never acted upon. With the hiatus of the IPBC, which included substantial classified representation, there is no longer a good structure for advancing proposals other than through contract negotiations.

Student membership on committees is solicited, but attendance is infrequent. Student organizations continue to function well within their own spheres, but the ability

of students to participate meaningfully in the decision-making process is limited due to their time constraints. An exception to that is the curriculum committee, where the student government has regular, ongoing voting representation. In addition, two student trustees (one each from Fresno City College and Reedley College) sit on the board of trustees and make regular reports to the board.

Assessment

Preliminary plans are being made to begin the development of a structure for a new plan. Announcements concerning the strategic planning process and the need for committee members were made at the 2005-2006 collegewide meeting and in division meetings across campus. A dialogue needs to be initiated involving all constituencies to create a structure to carry out the functions formerly carried out by the IPBC. Any replacement for the IPBC will be designed through collaboration in a genuine shared governance process. The IPBC or a similar structure will be the primary way of providing students and classified professionals with meaningful access to the decision-making process. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students will be involved in the development of institutional policies.

Furthermore, dialogue needs to be reinitiated between faculty and district administration to reconvene the districtwide shared governance committee, which could then become the forum for resolving shared governance issues. One goal for that committee would be to discuss the proposed administrative regulations for the adopted, but not yet implemented, new BP 2510 (IVA.10). This is needed to ensure the protections provided for in BP 9311.1 (IVA.5). The institution also

needs to create a clear and readily available policy to guide faculty and staff in their relations with the public information office and the mass media.

Finally, there needs to be a readily accessible place for individuals to search the policies and procedures of the college. A web site might help achieve this goal.

IVA.2b The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.

Descriptive Summary

Student learning programs are designed and well monitored by the faculty through the curriculum committee and the program review process. Curriculum procedures are spelled out clearly and are available on the academic senate/ curriculum committee web site (IVA.11).

Assessment

The institution relies heavily on the expertise of faculty to oversee student learning programs; faculty roles in curriculum oversight are well defined. Administrators have the right of assignment and oversee some aspects of implementation of course offerings. The degree to which faculty are involved in specific aspects of curriculum implementation was discussed at the districtwide shared governance committee and has yet to be resolved.

IVA.3 Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies.

Descriptive Summary

Board Policy 9311.1 established shared governance structures as the college's administrative operational model (IVA.5). The president sits at the board of trustees table and is a member of the chancellor's cabinet. Campus administration is represented on campus advisory committees, such as the president's cabinet and the academic standards committee (IVA.12). Through the academic senate, the classified senate, and the associated student body senate, faculty, staff, and students are involved in planning and decision-making processes at appropriate levels.

The president's cabinet serves as the primary campuswide consultation group for shared governance. Chaired by the president, the cabinet has representation from all constituent groups, including district-level representation. The cabinet provides a forum for consultation with the president.

Assessment

Campuswide dialogue is an evident strength of the college; however feedback and evaluation are inconsistent. The president's cabinet is an effective channel of communication for information sharing, but it does not serve as a forum for collegial consultation and deliberative decision making as the IPBC did.

IVA.4 The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.

Descriptive Summary

Fresno City College demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. The college provides assurance that it adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards and policies of the commission, describes the college in similar terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status, and agrees to disclose information required by the commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities. The college distributes the self study campuswide. In addition, recommendations from the accrediting commission have been made available to the public and have been responded to expeditiously as evidenced in the midterm report (IVA.13).

Assessment

The college meets the standard.

IVA.5 The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

Descriptive Summary

In 2004, the State Center Community College District (SCCCD) began reviewing current board policies following the model proposed by the Community College League of California. Since then, the first five chapters have been completed. The final board policies and the administrative regulations appropriate for each section will be developed in collaboration with all campus constituencies. The new board policies and administrative regulations will be adopted by the board of trustees as they become approved by the local constituencies.

At the college level, the effectiveness of decision-making structures and processes are evaluated as changes occur or are proposed. This process is seen in the decision to reorganize learning resources center. The reorganization occurred after the resignation of the associate dean of learning resources. The position was separated into two: associate dean of library and student learning support services and director of technology.

The IPBC was in hiatus for the 2004-2005 academic year and a final draft report was adopted in Spring 2005.

Assessment

The college does not have a formal evaluative process of governance and decision-making structures. The IPBC Final Report evaluates the task completion of the theme teams, but acknowledges the need to review the college's planning and evaluation process (IVA.13).

Planning Agenda for Standard IVA

Please see Planning Agenda under Standard IVB

Resource Documents

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| IVA.1 | Board Policy 0100, Philosophy | IVA.9 | List of Student Clubs and Organizations |
| IVA.2 | Board Policy 2000, The Concept of Administration | IVA.10 | Board Policy 2510 (new), Participation in Local Decision-making |
| IVA.3 | Program Brochures | IVA.11 | http://online.fresnocitycollege.edu/senate/curriculum/ |
| IVA.4 | SYMBAA (Strengthening Young Men By Academic Achievement) | IVA.12 | Academic Standards Committee bylaws |
| IVA.5 | Board Policy 9311.1, Shared Governance | IVA.13 | Fresno City College Midterm Report, 2002 |
| IVA.6 | President's Cabinet Composition | | |
| IVA.7 | Institutional Planning and Budget Committee Final Report | | |
| IVA.8 | Accreditation Faculty and Staff Survey Results
Accreditation Faculty and Staff Survey: Executive Summary | | |

