

President's Report
The Hierarchical Approach to Shared Governance
By Karen Sue Grosz

The July 13, 1988 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* carries a front-page article detailing national problems with shared governance at various institutions: "In the last year, clashes over governance, finances, and other issues have erupted from Oregon to North Carolina, at institutions ranging from Portland State University to Duke University" (pp. A1, A13). The faculty role in decision-making appears to be a major focus in all of these disputes, and has been a focus of attention in California over the past several years. It is interesting to note also the link between governance and finance, for it would appear that as financial resources shrink, governance problems expand.

What exactly is shared governance? The University of California model would suggest that shared governance means that the Board of Regents delegates authority over certain matters, such as curriculum, to the faculty. When the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates developed the general education transfer curriculum, and the UC decided to use it as the basis of a UC general education transfer curriculum, a vote of the Senate on May 5, 1988, was sufficient to put the new curriculum into play. Action by the Regents in such matters is pro forma if it is needed at all, and it would appear that in case of blatant illegality would the Regents refuse to approve a faculty-developed curriculum policy. This granting of authority ensures that administration and faculty share in the governance of the UC system, but it should be noted that faculty authority is clearly delineated; it does not extend into all areas of administration.

The California State University model differs. Curriculum issues do lie within the purview of the Academic Senate, but the Senate is a recommending body in the CSU, and it has been known to have its recommendations substantially altered by the CSU administration before they are adopted by the Board of Trustees. While the CSU also worked upon the intersegmental general education transfer curriculum, faculty were rattled by the suggestion from the Chancellor's Office that, once agreement among the three segments was reached, the curriculum would be instituted within the CSU system as its general education curriculum. Faculty in the CSU system pride themselves on their locally developed general education curricula, with ethnic studies required at one campus, oral communication at another, and critical thinking or some combination of these at another. Because of these differences, and because of the Chancellor's Office suggestion that a single curriculum for the 19 campuses should be imposed, agreement within the CSU upon the intersegmental general education curriculum has been difficult to accomplish. The CSU administration has not extended to faculty the same control over curriculum which UC faculty enjoy, and that lack of control results in occasional argument or tension.

Because the California Community Colleges are 71 districts with locally elected boards of trustees, they tend toward 71 models of governance. In addition, the community colleges have been the least well funded of the California postsecondary segments, and funding has a direct link with how well shared decision-making is understood to operate. When money abounds, college presidents often request faculty assistance with decisions about how to spend the money and experimentation with new ideas is possible. But when money is tight, those same presidents not only shrink from requesting faculty assistance, but more often refuse to accept such assistance when it is offered. When money is tight, most college presidents fear experimenting with new ideas and retreat instead to the tested and accepted methods of operation. In contrast to

their colleagues in both the UC and CSU systems, then, community college faculty have no clearly delineated areas of authority, and areas within their control when funding is plentiful disappear as the funding shrinks and anxious administrators fear for their positions.

Because of the multiplicity of local governing boards, models of governance vary markedly from one campus to the next. One academic senate President recently remarked that the president of his institution “made it quite clear that according to his view our collegial governance structure is hierarchic and that the tone, direction, and goals of the college trickle down, taking, in effect, all policy-making and decision-making out of the hands of faculty. “ Anyone who visits a college campus knows that the tone of the campus, while it may be reinforced and supported by those at the top, is set by students, faculty, and clerical staff members, for those are the individuals a visitor meets first. Similarly, if the direction which the president chooses for a college is not embraced by the faculty, students, and clerical staff, the president alone will be headed in that direction, while the rest of the college community wanders about in a daze of mixed opinions or angry arguments. The important factor, then, involves finding ways to get faculty, staff, and students to embrace the directions, goals, and tone the campus president desires. That is best accomplished through shared decision-making, not through unilateral action and magisterial decree.

The most successful models of shared governance invite faculty participation in a wide range of campus decisions. At the institutions where faculty and administration agree that they work together in the decision-making process, faculty are apprised of decisions in the making, not after they have been made. Most important, faculty viewpoints are sought out and used as final decisions are made, not sought out discarded as the president, either alone or in concert with close advisers, makes the final decision. At the most successful institutions even the budget is open to faculty scrutiny, and faculty views help shape expenditure decisions even when budgets are tight.

Jack Shuster, professor of education and public policy at Claremont Graduate School, decries the “we vs. they” attitude on many modern campuses, an attitude he says has led many faculty to view administrators as “management” (p.A14). Shuster states that “...a lot of administrators could be doing more to signal that the faculty constitutes the core of an institution” (p.A14). On the other hand, Allen Ostar, president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, ascribes the gap between faculty and administration to the fact that faculty no longer understand the managerial demands placed upon college president (p. A14). Perhaps this is the crux of the problem: modern college presidents are managers, worried about marketing an image of their institutions, having to deal with an increasingly critical press, and fearful of the criticism of a governing board which sometimes cares less about the academic quality of the institution than about the athletic teams’ success or the demands of a collective bargaining group which helped them win their seats on the board.

California Community College presidents, superintendents, and district chancellors have long since embraced the management mentality. The budget, for them, does not shake down to questions about academic resources and academic quality, but rather to questions of cost-effectiveness. Productivity does not suggest student satisfaction with the curriculum or classroom presentation, but rather suggests adding students to a classroom in order to generate additional funding at no additional cost. Within this mode of thinking, there is only a very limited role, if any, for faculty in shared decision-making, for faculty and managers are operating

at different levels of thinking and will succeed only in frustrating one another in their attempts at reaching consensus. While their goals are divergent, agreement will escape them.

As the Chronicle article suggest, college presidents must engage in a discussion with the faculty about the academic role of the institution and the essential role of faculty. Such a discussion can lead to recognition of areas within which faculty should participate as decisions are being made, such as curriculum, hiring, ethnics, grading and academic standards. Once those areas have been identified, college presidents must assign to academic senates the primary role in developing and shaping policy proposals, and must work assiduously to ensure that those areas remain within the province of the academic senate. From such a ground-work of faculty support, the college president will be free to direct the institution, shaping its tone, direction, and goals, for faculty will be part of the vision, not fighting it. The hierarchical approach to shared governance has little validity within the world of academe when faculty perceive that a paternalistic authority figure has unilaterally assigned to them the most meaningless decisions on campus, decisions which can be reversed without recourse. College administrators would do well to follow the model of successful academic leaders who engage in participatory decision-making.

Research in Vocational Education at UC Berkeley

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, which recently was awarded to the University of California at Berkeley, would like to hire some individuals now working as teachers and administrators in postsecondary education to carry out parts of its research. These individuals might work for the Center between half-time and full-time for a period lasting from one semester to one year; they would normally take a partial leave of absence from their institutions. The purpose of this employment is to bring the experience and knowledge of practitioners into the Center, to facilitate the interchange of information between the Center and postsecondary vocational programs, and to provide some individuals with a stimulating leave of absence working at policy-oriented research.

For further information, interested individuals should contact:

W. Norton Grubb
School of Education
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720
(415) 642-0709
Committees of the Academic Senate

At its June meeting, the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate adopted 1988-89 committee assignments and goals for the coming academic year. Major committees are currently being staffed. If you would like to serve on an Academic Senate committee or have special interests in topics being studied, please call the Senate office in Sacramento for further information.

Educational Policies Committee-Susan Petit, Chair

The major tasks of the Educational Policies Committee in 1988-89 are to

- Continue work on the General Education Transfer Curriculum
- Promote use of Instructor advisement

- Promote acceptance of CAN system
- Continue efforts to strengthen associate degrees
- Continue efforts to strengthen liberal arts component for transfer/non-transfer students
- Prepare handbook on implementing ethics policies
- Prepare report on General Education policies and procedures
- Study faculty involvement in hiring and prepare a position paper
- Study positions of CCESL and CATESOL on ESL instruction and prepare a recommendation
- Prepare statement on critical thinking skills in vocational education by area
- Review and update guidelines for telecommunications
- Recognize the concerns and needs of counselors and library/learning resource center faculty members.

Relations with Local Senates Committee- Harry Kawahara, Chair.

Major task for the Local Senates Committee in 1988-89 are to

- Help implement leadership workshops
- Analyze characteristics of strong and weak senates
- Explore booklet on "Evaluating your Senate"
- Identify informational needs of local senates
- Oversee dissemination of high school brochure to local senates
- Arrange regional meetings
- Encourage increased faculty participation in Curriculum Consultant Project
- Encourage discussion of Academic Senate policy papers
- Encourage discussion of CEO affirmative action recommendations
- Facilitate increased communication between Executive Committee and local senates
- Encourage discussion of Vocational Education Instructor Advising paper
- Revise and update Senate publications concerning local senates
- Encourage local senates to participate in institutional research

Research Committee- Bud Hannan, Chair

Major tasks for the Research Committee in 1988-89 are to

- Research issues for other committee
- Research EERA and its implications
- Research successful academic senates
- Monitor Chancellor's Office coordination of efforts to assure that locally established skills requisites are educationally sound and meaningful
- Research teaching loads and overloads and prepare report
- Prepare a study of community college child care needs
- Prepare a comparison of 1987-88 library expenditures with those for 1988-89
- Report on regulations governing teaching days and instructional hours
- Distribute information to local senates on outstanding faculty recognition awards
- Survey and report on local faculty involvement in college foundations