

Participatory Governance Assessment Task Group Proposal

Centering Our Values: Excellence, Respect, Diversity, Integrity, Responsiveness

Background: In support of our mission to “provide our community with equitable access to educational opportunities and support services that empower students to achieve their academic and career goals in a diverse and inclusive learning environment,” Los Medanos College uses a participatory governance framework to support both the work of the college and the participation of its constituents in leadership and decision-making processes. Best practices to ensure effective leadership and participatory governance structures include regular assessments that allow for opportunities to improve and support engagement in decision-making processes and communication that allows for input, discussion, and communication of decisions. Our accrediting body, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges addresses these concerns in **Standard IV A Leadership and Governance:**

The institution recognizes and uses the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for promoting student success, sustaining academic quality, integrity, fiscal stability, and continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are defined in policy and are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief executive officer. [...]

5. Through its system of board and institutional governance, the institution ensures the appropriate consideration of relevant perspectives; decision-making aligned with expertise and responsibility; and timely action on institutional plans, policies, curricular change, and other key considerations.
6. The processes for decision-making and the resulting decisions are documented and widely communicated across the institution.
7. Leadership roles and the institution’s governance and decision-making policies, procedures, 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.

LMC’s Shared Governance Model is a structure for “creating its vision with the guiding question: what does this issue, decision (etc.) mean for us as an institution?” LMC has defined shared governance in its broadest sense as “participation of and mutual deliberation by the College Senates, the President, and the management team” that aspires to “move us toward forward-looking decision-making, with an emphasis on equitable outcomes and processes” (Governance Handbook, draft 3/2023).

Context: Since March 2020, LMC faculty, classified professionals and administrators have managed to move the entire college online and have begun the work to return to in-person working and learning environments. The College has opened its new Brentwood Center as well as two new service and instructional spaces at the Pittsburg Campus. Long-term President, Dr. Bob Kratochvil, retired in December 2022, and Dr. Pamela Ralston was appointed as Interim President in January 2023. Numerous esteemed colleagues have retired and many new staff and faculty have been hired since the pandemic began.

The District and College recognize that the pandemic has moved into an endemic stage and have returned to new ways of working in person and online. As a consequence, Brown Act legislative requirements have impacted the use of online meeting accommodations, which has led to discussions across committees about how to incorporate participants working remotely. LMC has also committed to increasing outcomes for all students, and for Black and Latino students in particular. The College is also committed to increased inclusion of diverse voices participating in our governance and decision-making processes. Given these concerns and because a permanent president will join Los Medanos in the summer of 2023, Fall 2023 is an ideal time to conduct an assessment of our participatory governance structure.

Proposal: LMC's participatory governance model should provide: support for the achievement of the College Mission; development and oversight of College policies; and engagement of diverse constituencies with a focus on achieving equitable outcomes and excellence across the College. A cross constituent committee using the following proposed strategies should seek significant **college-wide input and engagement during the assessment process, such as:**

- College Assembly – (dates);
- Survey – to capture feedback on the number/type of committees, the effectiveness of our participatory governance structure, the role of appointed representatives, etc.;
- Retreat(s) – a half-day working session planned by the Task Group (to be held on a Friday); and
- Work with existing committees to include their perspectives.

The task group should share the plan for input with the Senates and the SGC in early Fall 2023.

A cross-constituent task group should:

- Evaluate Brown Act memoranda;
- Review committees that are legislatively enacted and their subcommittee structure;
- Using demographic data of historic committee membership, develop an understanding of who has not been included in participatory governance at LMC.
- Determine how to increase engagement across constituent group: by people of color; people from differing and marginalized backgrounds, disciplines, departments; and new members of the College community;
- Evaluate committee structure for duplication, redundancy, and overlap of committee efforts;
- Evaluate information flow within and among committees;
- Evaluate proposed changes to continue aligning with current accreditation standards; and
- Promote clear committee purpose, process, and product(s)

Timeline: To be initiated Fall 2023, with a mid-process update presented to SGC on November 8, 2023 and a completed set of products in final draft form due to SGC for initial review March 6 for presentation on March 13, 2024.

Proposed Membership:

- 2 Students – 1 SGC member and 1 non-SGC-member selected by LMCAS
- 2 Faculty – 1 SGC member and 1 non-SGC-member selected by the Academic Senate
- 2 Classified Professionals – 1 SGC member and 1 non-SGC-member selected by the Classified Senate
- 2 Administrators/Managers – 1 SGC member and 1 non-SGC-member selected by President's Council

Product(s):

1. A report including proposed: restructuring (if any), additional committees (if any), ending committee(s) if any, and merging of committees (if any).
2. A flow chart for how ideas are taken through the governance process to fruition
3. Updated guidelines for committee operations, as well as the roles of chairs and members
4. Proposed orientation/training for committee chairs and committee members
5. A revised college-wide calendar of meetings that avoids overlaps/scheduling conflicts for committees
6. Final draft of The Governance Handbook that includes items 2, 3, 4, and 5 and a governance glossary