

## **I. Purpose and Vision**

This new approach to shared governance both honors and diverges from Los Medanos College's past efforts. The long history of participation by all of the college constituencies is a foundational characteristic of the college and this model. Los Medanos College's participatory governance history, our immediate challenges and our future opportunities require us to engage in effective and collaborative governance. This Shared Governance Model gives the college a structure for creating its vision with the guiding question: what does this issue, decision (etc.) mean for us as a college?

Shared governance - in its broadest sense, a participation of and mutual deliberation by the college Senates, Associated Students, the President, and the management team - must be mindful of and defer to the particular legal rights and responsibilities granted to the Governing Board, Chancellor, President, Academic Senate, Classified Senate, Associated Students, and collective bargaining units. It is very important to note that neither the rights (primarily rely or mutually consent) nor the responsibilities of the Academic Senate in academic and professional matters noted in legislation and law are abridged, challenged or limited by this model. Similarly, the obligations and rights of the President, Classified Senate, Associated Students, and college administrators remain unchallenged.

This paper aims to address historical criticisms of the shared governance process. While previous accreditation teams and members of the college community have noted that we too frequently sacrificed outcomes for process, this is a model that aspires to continually move us toward forward looking decision making, to outcomes rather than process. This model assumes that plans affecting the college as a whole will be reviewed by the representative Shared Governance Council and not be approved at less comprehensive levels of the institution. Presidential participation in the Shared Governance Council and evaluation are noted as key elements of this model; sections of this document appropriately cover these issues.

Los Medanos College's planning efforts and in particular its Educational Master Plan (Master Plan) should be the driving force for key decisions. The college's governance must be inextricably tied to the important issues and the professional thinking imbedded in the Master Plan, which will guide the Council members in all facets of their work. The governance model that follows is a means for implementing college wide planning, a means subject to thoughtful and timely recalibrations that serve the interests of the college as a whole. The Shared Governance Council as described in other sections of this document will be expected to act as the "Keeper of the Plan" for the college.

The Shared Governance Council will spend its time and energy on high level issues that could include future regional needs, new program commitments, existing program contractions, program eliminations, and financial planning. Additional



## II. SENATES, ASSOCIATED STUDENTS, AND SHARED GOVERNANCE

Formally noting the relationship among the Senates and the Associated Students and the Shared Governance Council is a new development in the trajectory of participatory governance at Los Medanos College. The success of this shared governance model is predicated on the nexus of informed and effective Senates and a collaborative management philosophy. Responsible and ethical representation is critical.

The Senates and the Associated Students, in partnership with the President, will act as a check and balance for the Shared Governance Council. The Senates and Associated Students choose their representatives on the Shared Governance Council. The President selects the management representatives. This model acknowledges in a redundant fashion throughout this paper that the Shared Governance Council cannot abrogate the Academic Senate's rights in academic and professional matters; but it may offer recommendations or comments on particular issues of importance. **It is understood that the Associated Students, the Classified Senate, and the Academic Senate may bring recommendations directly to the President.** The Shared Governance Council maintains the right to send an accompanying recommendation or comment.

While any college constituency or group can initiate and recommend policy or program changes, the Council will normally review all such proposals. A distinction will be made among Senate and the Associated Students recommendations, Presidential recommendations, and recommendations from shared governance committees covered by this model. Senate and Associated Students recommendations will be discussed and reviewed by the Shared Governance Council. The Council may express their own concerns about Senate and Associated Students proposals in writing, both to the Senates, the Associated Students and to the college President, if the members feel implementation of the proposal would adversely affect other college constituencies or operations.

The Council will forward the recommendations from any Senate or the Associated Students to the voting members of the other groups for the purpose of generating input and facilitating discussion. This is done in an attempt to ensure a wide array of input and to identify potential conflicts before formal presidential approval.

## III. SHARED GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

### a. Role

What does this new Shared Governance Council mean for LMC and its decision-making history, culture, and experience? This Council is ultimately the keeper of the college's plan and vision for itself. The Shared

Governance Council is charged with promoting and facilitating collaborative decision-making at LMC. It is expected to devote itself to the college's most significant issues and challenges. The role of this Council is not to micro-manage, but rather to focus on broad, high-level policy concerns.

The Council is a key body in the formation of strategic goals as an expression of the Master Plan. First, the Council will lead the implementation and evaluation of the annual planning cycle by directing the activities of all Shared Governance Committees, and by reviewing all new policies and allocation processes proposed by the Shared Governance Committees, the Senates, Associated Students and the College President. Planning, and policy making linked to planning, should be the major focus of shared governance and its organizational components.

The Shared Governance Council works with policy in a multi-faceted way including its creation, incremental development, maintenance, and periodic evaluation/review. While policy initiation and recommendation can occur within numerous constituencies in the college, the Council should be the most appropriate and formal step in final policy review and recommendation to the President. The Shared Governance Council is not intended to be an obstacle on the way to recommendations to the President but rather a collective review forum where representative leaders validate the support and integrity of recommendations. The Shared Governance Council derives its authority from its representative nature not its superior status.

The Shared Governance Council is a coordinating group for multiple and diverse efforts (new and old) that occur college wide and within the various departments and programs of the college. The Council is expected to assist with the synthesis of deliberation and planning across operational units of the college to whatever degree required. This may occasionally require the Council to engage in conflict resolution among competing interests and processes. Operation units and the management team will remain the primary implementers of college policy and agreed upon unit initiatives.

The Shared Governance Council is the locus and coordinator of college-wide communications. The Shared Governance Council facilitates communication among the various college constituencies, particularly between the Senates and the Associated Students, regarding policy matters of importance to the entire college community. As reliable and accessible written communications are key to institutional coherence and employee morale, the Council will promulgate recommendations of college wide importance. These communications can take many forms, but they should be constant, consistent and pervasive. For example, public hearings sponsored by the Shared Governance Council should be held once every

semester or as needed for broad discussion and input. Electronic means of communications ranging from email to chat rooms (and technologies not yet envisioned) have to be employed with the expectation that everyone will be responsible for reviewing the messages in these media. Reliable and accessible written communications are a key to governance success and should include clear information on timelines and processes.

Additional activities that befit the energy and attention of the Shared Governance Council are assisting the President in assessing unforeseen or quickly developing opportunities for and threats to the college, and developing intervention strategies to address these. The Shared Governance Council also coordinates subcommittees and ad hoc task forces including oversight of the Financial Planning Model. (See COMMITTEES and TASK FORCES.)

**b. MEMBERSHIP**

The Council shall have three voting members from each major constituency (Classified Senate, Academic Senate and Associated Students). These voting members will be elected and ratified by their respective Senates and the Associated Students, for terms to be determined by the Senates and the Associated Students (but no less than one year). The representative members are selected by the criteria chosen by the respective constituency. The Senates and the Associated Students will annually give the President the names of their appointed members, preferably in the Spring semester in anticipation of the next academic year. The President will select the management representatives and notify the Associated Students and the Senates.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:** The Council has only nine voting members, with equal representation from each non-management constituency. The President or the President's administrative designee will be the chair of the Council.

This model envisions that students may be paid and/or participate in a leadership class(es) for credit. To facilitate Council deliberations various "experts" from within and outside the college community may be called in to attend meetings and provide input and insight. Such experts may, for example, include governance committee chairs, union representatives, or the college research director. These experts will not have voting rights on the Council, but will be key to informed discussion and decision-making.

**\*The Curriculum Committee liaison is expected to share information on course and program issues that could affect planning and resource decisions now or in the future.**

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>DURATION</b>	<b>VOTE</b>
President or designee	Perennial	Chair - Nonvoting
Exec dean or President's designee	Perennial	Facilitator Nonvoting
3 students (min)	As appointed by AS	VOTING
3 faculty	As appointed by Academic Senate	VOTING
3 classified	As appointed by Classified Senate	VOTING
2 managers	As appointed by President	Nonvoting
Curriculum rep*	As appointed by Academic Senate	Nonvoting

**c. MEETINGS**

The Council meets regularly, generally twice each month during the academic year, to formulate charges for governance committees and evaluate recommendations and ongoing college initiatives for feasibility, effectiveness, and concordance with the Master Plan. Council discussions are open and meeting outcomes and Council decisions are communicated quickly and effectively to the entire college community.

**d. VOTING**

The Shared Governance Council has only nine voting members, with equal representation from each non-management constituency. When voting is necessary, the members of a constituency in attendance can cast all of the votes for that constituency e.g. the three classified votes can be cast by the one and only representative in attendance on any given day. The same rule applies to the Associated Students and Academic Senate members. The attending representative(s) may cast a total of three votes whether one, two, or three representatives are in attendance. Votes are recorded by the name of the voter/Shared Governance Council member – including those cast in absentia by another Council member.

The Council votes on all recommendations from shared governance committees, and takes advisory votes on Senate and Associated Students recommendations. The advisory votes are on whether to forward additional commentary to the President on the Senate or Associated Students

recommendations. As noted above, the Council may not vote down any Senate or Associated Students recommendation, as these are automatically forwarded to the college President.

**e. MANAGERS on the COUNCIL**

A departure from our Shared Governance history is the introduction of administrators on the Shared Governance Council as non-voting participants. The model identifies the President as the chair of the Council and the Executive Dean of Planning or the President's designee as the meeting facilitator. Administrators bring their expertise by role and function to the issues at hand and attend as needed.

Administrators will act as engaged participants with "full voice" and an obligation to clearly and regularly share their professional judgment, opinions, and concerns. Exercise of the administrative "voice" and the obligation to offer input, are appropriate throughout any shared governance deliberation. The responsibility for much of the college's policy implementation belongs to the management team.

**f. PRESIDENT on the COUNCIL**

The President makes every effort to be present at meetings as the chair. In the event that this is not possible, the Vice President, the Director of Business Service, or the Executive Dean are present at meetings as the chair and as the President's designee. The President may delegate the role of meeting facilitator to promote her/his unencumbered and active meeting participation. The President does not vote at meetings but participates freely in the deliberations. The President receives recommendations from the Shared Governance Council.

Presidential proposals for college action are first offered to the Shared Governance Council for review. This may be an informal notice. This model acknowledges that the pre-notification of the Council regarding decision-making is best but notes that emergency decisions are warranted in some circumstances. In these cases, a post-decision briefing is warranted. The president communicates with the entire college as needed.

The President should also evaluate the Shared Governance Council's effectiveness on a regular basis, including a review of its processes and outcomes and actively work with the Shared Governance Council to set goals, review outcomes, and archive the agreements, policies, and decisions that emanate from the Council.

#### **IV. COMMITTEES and TASK FORCES**

The Shared Governance Council authorizes the creation and the charges of Shared Governance committees and Shared Governance task forces needed to complete the Council's work on an annual basis. Committees and task forces created by position paper or other shared governance bodies must be reauthorized and charged by the Shared Governance Council. (Excluded are subsets of the Senates and Associated Students and operational team meetings).

As part of the annual authorization process for Shared Governance task forces or Shared Governance committees, the Council maintains a list of authorized committees, their charge(s) and function(s), planned outcomes, and duration of authorization (sunset dates). The charges are accompanied by proposed evaluation criteria. All work completed by the Council's authorized committees and task forces and their recommendations are submitted to the Council for evaluation and review. Governance committee recommendations should/must include projected costs to the college (if applicable), timeframe for implementation, and evaluation criteria that may be used by the Council to determine the effectiveness of the recommendation over time. Many committee recommendations involve new processes or procedures, and the Council would expect these to be detailed in the recommendation. One of the first tasks of the Shared Governance Council is to review the recent activities of all existing shared governance committees on campus. After this review the Council may decide to disband moribund committees, to form new committees, or to consolidate the activities of many separate committees into one.

#### **V. EVALUATION**

The Council members should undertake an annual written self-evaluation. This includes a statement of basic college goals and major initiatives the Council intends to promote and discuss during the coming academic year, and then, at the end of the year, a brief summary of all major recommendations reviewed (and all votes taken) during that year. The Council makes its self-evaluation reports available to the Senates and the Associated Students and to the management team for external review.

Another departure from our past is the call for ongoing evaluations of outcomes, process, and the governance model itself. The Shared Governance Council and this model must be the object of self-evaluation and planned external critique. The evaluation must include identification and analysis of accomplishments and missed opportunities.

The initial recommendation is that the Shared Governance Council link regular review of its effectiveness to some element of the Educational Master planning cycle (e.g. strategic goal setting). The President, in collaboration with the administrative



team, should evaluate the Shared Governance Council's effectiveness on a regular basis. This may include a review of its processes and outcomes. It is expected that the Senates and the Associated Students do the same. Senate, Associated Students and Presidential evaluation of the model should occur at least every two years and include proposals for improvement. The Research Office assists with this. A reauthorized existing committee, a subgroup of the Council or a new committee can be charged with evaluation of the Shared Governance Council and the new model's effectiveness. An administrative office will issue a periodic report to the constituencies on the review findings.

Another aspect of evaluation identifies the Shared Governance Council as an evaluator for the work of committees and task forces. While evaluation has to be continuous, it is particularly needed at the end of major recommendation processes. For evaluation to be meaningful, measurable performance criteria for new projects and charges should be identified in the planning stages prior to implementation.

## **VI. HOPEFUL SUMMARY**

In conclusion, we want to underline the opportunity that this new shared governance presents for the college. It is a central place where all constituents can be at the table for college planning. It presents a new Presidential relationship wherein the two senates and the associated student body talk directly to each other with the President participating and listening. It provides for timely public management input on major issues and discussions. It represents the central place where evaluation of all programs that guide our future will occur. It is, at last, a central place where synthesis can occur and where what we say we are going to do is not only discussed but communicated college wide.