Using Shared Governance Systems to Improve Student Success

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

-Henry Ford
About us ...

Regent Carol Del Carlo
Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)

President Karin Hilgersom
Truckee Meadows Community College
Community colleges have a context …

- Times of disruption
  - What do you see as causing disruptions in public higher education?
What might the future bring?

• Rapid changes are occurring in our economy. Such as . . .
• What are the challenges facing your college?
What is shared governance?

• What you said . . .

• What it is not . . .
  – Equal rights on decision making
  – Faculty way or the highway
  – Board way or the highway
  – President’s way or the highway
  – An obligation that is done to “fake” shared governance
What is shared governance?

“. . . the goal of shared governance is not consensus but, instead, the best possible decision.”

• (Bahls, 2014, pg. 11)
Shared governance presumes openness to knowledge

- Collaboration can mitigate unintended consequences
  - The experts are in the field
  - Board members can inspire change
  - Presidents can lead from the middle
Why does shared governance work?

- People support what they help to create
- Shared governance can reduce negative unintended consequences of new initiatives (more perspectives on effective implementation)
Expanding upon the traditional definition of shared governance (Steven C. Bahls)

**Exhibit A. Components of Shared Governance as a System. Adapted from Shared Governance in Times of Change: A Practical Guide for Universities and Colleges (pg 29), by Dr. Steven C. Bahls, 2014, Washington: AGB Press.**
Effective Shared Governance Defined

• Open communication that aligns priorities & creates a culture of shared responsibilities (Bahls, March 8, 2019)
What is the role of a board in shared governance?
How can linkages between a board, the president’s team, and faculty be strengthened?

• Quick partner activity: Engage with the person next to you and brainstorm a strategy to strengthen linkages. You have 2 minutes.

• GO!
Examples of 3-way information sharing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Can the Board Do?</th>
<th>What Can the President Do?</th>
<th>What can the CAOs and Faculty Do?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share Board Biographies</td>
<td>Shared Information about how Budgets are Built</td>
<td>Share Biographies of Faculty Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share Board Committee Agendas</td>
<td>Share Annual Budgets and Audit Results</td>
<td>Provide Summaries of Academic Actions Taken and Being Considered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide Summaries of Actions</td>
<td>Provide a One-Page Chart Describing Who Makes which Decisions</td>
<td>Develop and Share a Dashboard of Indicators Relevant to Academic Quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taken by the Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share Basic Information about</td>
<td>Provide Summaries of Actions Taken by the Cabinet and Actions under Consideration</td>
<td>Share Expected Student Learning Outcomes and How Outcomes are Assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invite Faculty Leaders to</td>
<td>Share President’s Annual Goals and Objectives</td>
<td>Invite the Board Chair to Speak Annually at a Faculty Meeting or Retreat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board Retreats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involves Faculty Leaders in</td>
<td>Include Shared Governance at Board, Faculty, and Staff Orientations</td>
<td>Periodically Present to the Board How Important Academic Decisions (Including Tenure and Promotion) are Made</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board Orientations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educate All About Key Directional Documents, Including Strategic Plans</td>
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The three “T”s and one big “S”

• Transparency
• Trust
• Talking, talking, and maybe even more talking!
• Structure
Shared governance at TMCC and NSHE

• What didn’t work at TMCC
• Intervention, Three “T”s and one “S”
• New model, new culture
  – Commit to working through difficult issues TOGETHER
  – Agree on a shared set of metrics for student success TOGETHER
  – Structure checks and balances to verify and occasionally adjust mission focus
Far from perfect, but a good start example: The co-requisite model at TMCC

• What did work
• What could have been better
• Are priorities aligned—Yes! (but it could have been less painful along the way)
On the horizon . . .

• Using shared governance to share services
  – Police consolidation model
  – Sharing platforms that benefit students such as “Starfish”
Shared Governance Best Practices: Your key takeaways for this session

- Consistently and publicly remind all constituencies about the importance of shared governance.
- Periodically assess the state of shared governance; then develop an action plan to improve it.
- Support programs to strengthen faculty self-governance
- Maintain a steadfast commitment to three-way transparency and frequent communication
- Respect traditional rules of faculty engagement

Questions?