

Report of the Board of Trustees' Ad Hoc Committee on Governance, Collegiality, and Responsibility in the California State University

Academic governance is a complex web of decision-making and responsibility that translates academic goals and values into university policy or action. Authority in the modern public university derives from two quite different sources: (a) from the power vested by law and administrative code in governing boards and administrators and (b) from the knowledge of the subject matter and from the pedagogic expertise of the faculty.

Collegiality consists of a shared decision-making process and a set of values which regard the members of the various university constituencies as essential for the success of the academic enterprise. It incorporates mutual respect for similarities and for differences—in background, expertise, judgments and assigned responsibilities—and involves mutual trust based on experience.

Collegial governance allows the academic community to work together to find the best answers to issues facing the university. Collegial governance assigns primary responsibility to the faculty for the educational functions of the institution in accordance with basic policy as determined by the Board of Trustees. This includes admission and degree requirements, the curriculum and methods of teaching, academic and professional standards, and the conduct of creative and scholarly activities. Collegiality rests on a network of interlinked procedures jointly devised, whose aim is to assure the opportunity for timely advice pertinent to decisions about curricular and academic personnel matters.

The governing board, through its administrative officers, makes sure that there is continual consultation with appropriate faculty representatives on these matters. Faculty recommendations are normally accepted, except in rare instances and for compelling reasons. The collegial process also recognizes the value of participation by the faculty in budgetary matters, particularly those directly affecting the areas for which the faculty has primary responsibility.

Central to collegiality and shared decision-making is respect for differing opinions and points of view, which welcomes diversity and actively sponsors its opinions. The collegium must be the last public bastion of respect for individuals, whether they are members of the faculty, students, staff, alumni, administration or Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees wishes to maintain the statewide Academic Senate and campus senates/councils separate and apart from collective bargaining. It is the intention of the Board to maintain its efforts to promote collegiality and to support the continuing efforts of the Academic Senate to preserve collegiality in the CSU.

(Adopted by the Board of Trustees of the California State University, September 1985.)