



AAUP CSU NEWSLETTER

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IN THIS ISSUE

- **The Goals and Means of Shared Governance at CSU, p. 1**
- **AAUP-CSU, p. 4**
- **How to Join the AAUP, p. 4**
- **Meeting of AAUP-CSU Chapter (Friday, April 10, 12-1, LSC 380) p.4**

THE GOALS AND MEANS OF SHARED GOVERNANCE IN THE PURSUIT OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AT CSU

AAUP - CSU

Organizations in the service of the public good should value the expression of difference and should facilitate deliberation over it. Shared governance is an important issue for universities. As should be expected, there are differences as to what shared governance entails. For some, shared governance means to *inform* those affected about what is likely to happen to them. Others deem it necessary to *consult* with those affected, without conferring any policy making power. Finally, there are those who see shared governance as *joint decision making*. Joint decision making involves significant and institutionalized participation in the making and implementation of university policies. The AAUP calls this “joint effort”. Joint effort underlies the AAUP’s vision of shared governance.¹

Shared governance empowers Faculty to participate in the *educational policy making* of the university along with the Board of Governors, the Administration and, we should add, Students. A public university, of course, involves other stakeholders who

may be less directly involved in educational policy making but are very much affected by the operation of the university as a whole.

The AAUP’s view of shared governance with respect to educational policy is not limited to information and consultation. Rather, it calls for *joint decision making* to be intrinsic to the university, both in terms of its goals and in terms of the means that enable Faculty, through its Faculty Council, to fully participate in it.

The Goals of Shared Governance: The AAUP identifies a number of key goals of “joint effort”.

- The ‘faculty has fundamental responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which are related to the educational process.’ Overall these are areas in which CSU Faculty does play an important role and many of us would consider these responsibilities as both self-evident and exhaustive in terms of shared governance. They are not, however.

¹ All quotes from AAUP. 2020. Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities. At <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>



- The AAUP also believes that “Faculty status and related matters are primarily a faculty responsibility; this area includes appointments, reappointments, decisions not to reappoint, promotions, the granting of tenure, and dismissal. The primary responsibility of the faculty for such matters is based upon the fact that its judgment is central to general educational policy.” However, the CSU Faculty has not participated in joint-decision making with regard to the proliferation of precarious employment that now characterizes a number of the colleges at CSU. AAUP-CSU has consistently opposed this casualization of academic employment. We believe CSU Faculty, through its Faculty Council, must be involved in joint decision-making regarding the nature of faculty employment. At this juncture it must continue supporting its NTTF members and, in the long term, it must argue for the abolition of precarity by increasing tenure track lines.
- The AAUP realizes that these important goals cannot be accomplished without Faculty playing a broader and deeper governance role. Faculty’s role in long term planning with respect to the educational mission and practice of the university must be institutionalized and must involve joint decision making, along with transparent information sharing and respectful consultation.
- One aspect of long-term planning concerns “decisions regarding existing or prospective physical resources”, an issue of importance to all stakeholders in the university. Decisions over physical plant have implications for the internal allocation of resources and affect the balance between the various activities of a university. The commitment to football through an expensive stadium, for example, drives the need for success in that area and, thus, more spending on certain kinds of athletics. It is also telling that the combined salaries and incentives of the 3-4 highest paid coaches alone exceed the budgets of many departments.
- Related to the above, shared governance is needed in budgeting, another issue affecting all stakeholders. Budgeting is a political process that privileges certain priorities and diminishes others. The end result of budgeting, when it does not involve the full Faculty, is the development of internal inequities. For CSU to become a world-class university across the board it is necessary that its budgeting process be fully transparent and subject to shared governance. Budgeting involves questions of educational policy -as well as a host of other issues, including tuition, room and board, pension and health care- that are of significance to faculty as well as students and other stakeholders.

- It is also integral to shared governance that Faculty be involved in choosing university, college and department leadership in a more profound fashion that is currently the case.
- These areas of shared governance are not exclusive and immutable. The idea behind shared governance is that Faculty should be meaningfully involved in joint decision making with respect to the educational goals of the University as well as the well-being of faculty members individually and collectively.

The Means of Shared Governance. In order for the Faculty to play a more significant and consequential role in shared governance it needs the appropriate resources and means.

- Faculty Council should operate autonomously and free of any direct or indirect intervention from BOG or the Administration.
 - Administration officials should not be ex officio members of the Faculty Council or its Executive Committee so that Faculty can deliberate freely and without any concerns about possible punishments or rewards.
 - Additionally, there should be a waiting period before leaders of the Faculty Council can be appointed to administrative positions.
- Shared governance will be better served by enhancing the role of institutional arrangements that include Faculty, BOG, Administration, Students and other stakeholders, depending on the issue at hand. For example, our representatives in the BOG should have meaningful voting rights with respect to the goals/issues outlined previously. University faculty should appoint their own representatives to all University Committees and these committees should start serving as vehicles of shared governance.
- In order for the Faculty to carry out its role in shared governance it requires professional support.
 - Shared governance revolves around legal interpretation and advice. Just the interpretation of the Faculty Manual – a binding legal document -- raises a plethora of legal challenges. As Faculty becomes more involved in shared governance the technical challenges will multiply. In short, Faculty needs a dedicated professional staff, included in CSU's base budget, that would, at the very least, include legal, budgetary and planning experts whose responsibility is to advise the Faculty Council.
 - Faculty should also be able to craft its message to the broader community. We know well that communication is important and good communication is invaluable. Faculty can play a more important role with the support of a communication staff.
- In order to incentivize more faculty from all colleges to serve in Faculty leadership positions it is important to provide resources for these positions. Below we provide some examples.
 - ⊖ The remuneration of leadership positions that require year-long commitment should not be tied to faculty salaries which are very uneven across CSU. Regardless of their College the leadership are called upon to do the same work over 12 months.
 - Chairing faculty committees or participating in university committees requires extensive commitment of time. The University Curriculum Committee, for instance, meets on a weekly basis. These faculty members should receive course releases, as is the case with the faculty representative to the NCAA, as well as remuneration if they have to work during the summer. Such resources should be budgeted in CSU's budget in an effort to equip Faculty, through its Faculty Council, with the means to play its role in shared Governance.

AAUP-CSU is committed to this vision for shared governance at CSU, a vision in which Faculty Council is a core participant as the representative of Faculty. The present challenge is for our Faculty to expand its effective role in shared governance, as well as acquire the necessary resources towards that end. AAUP-CSU believes that shared governance is the best foundation for inclusive excellence at CSU, an ambition that it is fully consistent with the democratic spirit of its land grant mission whose 150th Anniversary we are celebrating. Such inclusive excellence, moreover, cannot lose sight of the fact that a great deal of what CSU has accomplished is due to the efforts of the precarious colleagues amongst us. The expansion of our goals and resources, outlined above, should serve ALL Faculty and Students and should not exclude or marginalize any stakeholders associated with CSU.

AAUP-CSU

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To join AAUP and our CSU chapter, sign up at the national AAUP site:

<https://www.aaup.org/membership/join>

Also contact us at aaupcsu@gmail.com for more information about additional ways to join

MEETING OF THE AAUP-CSU CHAPTER (Open to ALL interested)

Friday, April 10, 12-1, LSC380