

What are the principles of shared governance that we jointly affirm?

The principles of shared governance that Chancellor Plowman presented are broadly affirmed by the Senate and the faculty. We hope that this dialogue will clarify where the Senate has a governing role (curriculum, faculty elections, tenure policies and oversight) and where we have an advisory role (including potentially all aspects of campus life, most importantly strategic planning, budget models, student success initiatives, crisis advising) One of the clearest short descriptions from the AGB is that shared governance is a “system for aligning priorities.” The AAUP Statement on Shared Governance (1966) emphasizes integrating viewpoints and acknowledging the interdependence of faculty and administrators. In the interest of beginning to align our priorities in a meaningful vision and set of practices, we affirm that shared governance should be a dynamic system of engagement that promotes:

1. Collaboration between elected faculty representatives and administrative leaders in order to engage meaningfully on the health, direction, and future of the Campus.
2. Shared stewardship of the Campus’s goals and mission.
3. A transparent system of accountability that helps us see faculty and administrative contributions, and the distribution of resources that supports their efforts.

What are the practices of healthy Shared Governance that help us realize those principles?

We agree that setting clear goals with high expectations of one another is important, but goals must be joined to specific practices and clear moments in which faculty leaders are at the table and engaged in the development of policy in real time. In order to achieve these goals, we propose either restoring a member of the Senate’s Presidential cabinet or the appropriate committee chair to the following bodies:

- A place on the Chancellor’s cabinet for the current FS President. (current at UT Martin)
 - We currently include the Provost on our Executive Council, we regularly invite and provide a forum for the Chancellor and the VP for UTIA, and have 5 voting administrators as well as multiple ex-officio administrative senators. We believe this participation should be mirrored in a role for the Senate President on the Chancellor’s cabinet.
- A place on the Council of Deans for the immediate past FS President. (current at MTSU, Tech)
 - We currently allow administration to staff the majority of positions on the Research Council, the Undergraduate Council, and the Graduate Council. These bodies report to the Faculty Senate in its role as the steward of curriculum and the Faculty Handbook. We believe restoring the place of the Faculty Senate President to the Council of Deans will lead to more effective and efficient communication and academic policy.
- A place on the strategic planning process and new budget model for the FS President-Elect or other appointee

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- The new Strategic Planning process and the new budget model will create urgent needs for clear communication and faculty input. Having a consistent, elected representative of the faculty at the table when the budget is developed, implemented, used to make strategic decisions will be crucial to the integrity and success of the process.
- We ask that these relationships be in place by the time we start the new Strategic Planning process.

Our ask of ourselves

- As FS leaders, we will share information from the System, UFC, and other faculty in a transparent manner with our Campus administrative leaders. We seek your advice on the best way to do that.
- We want to help our colleagues prioritize student success. One way we can do that at scale is to help administrators find ways to reward excellent teaching and mentoring beyond the handful of awards. What would it look like to build more attention to student success into annual evaluations without simply asking for more time of those already working at capacity. As Bok observes, "As more and more colleges and universities insist that their professors publish, and as the rapid growth of adjunct instructors reduces the number of tenured faculty charged with carrying out the same array of administrative chores, the average work-week of professors has grown longer and more crowded."
- As we see these practices materialize, we will commit to helping reverse the negative narrative about university administration that is tied to its growth and expansion.

Our ask of you (informed by the reading recommended by Chancellor Plowman or by the AGB)

- One concrete way to promote student success is to actively build a teaching faculty rather than "beggar adjuncts" (Bok's term).
- (Bahls): Prepare and distribute a simple one-page chart describing who makes which decisions. The chart should describe different decisions across the vertical axis and decision makers (e.g., faculty senate, the president, the board, the executive committee) across the horizontal axis. Within each of the boxes, the role of the respective decision makers is listed (e.g., consultation, recommendation, making initial decisions, approving of decision, acting as appellate body). The chart should pay special attention to the budget process and faculty tenure and promotion.
- (Bok): Shift the campus rhetoric that normalizes reduced student hours on studying for class. While statistically true, according to Bok, we do a disservice to our students when we implicitly endorse declining study hours, the single most important thing they can do to ensure academic success. When administrative leaders repeat the claim that students only spend 15% of their time in class or refer to academic coursework as one of many student activities they devalue the core purpose of a college education and the non-negotiable dimension of graduation for degree attainment.
- Transparency (with appropriate sensitivity to private information) in the review of administrators and staff units.

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- Support the restoration of a faculty trustee on the Board of Trustees.