

Memorandum of Understanding for Shared Governance

Introduction

The purpose of the shared governance structure at Texas Lutheran University is to ensure that the faculty, administration, and the board of regents work together to achieve the mission of the university. Shared governance fosters a culture of mutual trust, respect, transparency, communication, and accountability. While not every party may get to vote on all institutional matters, every effort should be made to consult all appropriate stakeholders for most decisions.

The faculty has chief responsibility over academic programs and activities and provides advice regarding institutional operations and strategic initiatives that contribute to the vision of the institution. The administration has responsibility for the vision for the university, provides strategic leadership, and oversees human resources, finances, and operations. The Board of Regents has responsibility for fiscal and physical assets, selection and evaluation of the president, and the overall mission of the university.

The faculty's responsibilities are carried out by the Faculty Association and its attendant committee the Faculty Executive Committee which is led by the Chair of the faculty. The Chair of the faculty is elected by the faculty and serves as their chief spokesperson. The Chair of the faculty receives reassigned time commensurate with the duties of the office, typically one course release per semester.

It is expected that the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) will attend the meetings of the Faculty Executive Committee and will meet regularly with the Chair and Vice Chair of the faculty. The President and VPAA, will be invited to provide reports to the faculty at each Faculty Association meeting. Other administrators will be invited when appropriate. If an issue of concern arises during the summer, the administration will consult with the Chair and Vice Chair of the faculty, or should the Chair or Vice Chair be unavailable, a member of the Faculty Executive Committee.

It is important to note that shared governance may not be defined with complete precision. While some issues may be defined as being primarily the responsibility of the faculty or of administrative officers, most issues do not lend themselves to precise borders. Hence this document should not be interpreted as defining precise lines of demarcation as to the categories of "primary responsibility," "shared responsibility," and "consultative role." Rather, this document is intended to provide a general framework that can assist faculty, administration, and the board in understanding their respective responsibilities, as they work together in a manner that is positive and productive.

With respect to some of the areas mentioned below, specific details regarding policies or procedures may be provided in the Faculty Bylaws, Manual, or Procedures. Nothing in this document should be interpreted as precluding any policies or procedures that appear in the Faculty Bylaws, Manual, or Procedures.

Shared Governance Structure: Division of Responsibilities

1. The faculty has chief responsibility over the university's curriculum and academic policies but should consult with appropriate administrators.

Areas over which the faculty has primary responsibility include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) the curriculum;
- (b) graduation requirements;
- (c) admissions policies;
- (d) attendance and grading policies;
- (e) grade appeal procedures;
- (f) add and drop policies;
- (g) course repeat policies;
- (h) honors program policies;
- (i) the academic calendar.

2. The faculty and key administrators have a shared role in overseeing policies related to faculty positions and academic programs.

Areas over which the faculty and administration have co-responsibility include but are not limited to the following. Some areas require final approval from the Board of Regents (see items with asterisks):

- (a) the university's mission statement;*
- (b) the university's strategic planning;*
- (c) the establishment, consolidation, or elimination of degree programs;*
- (d) the establishment of or substantive change to majors;
- (e) the recruitment and hiring of new faculty members;
- (f) the adoption or amendment of policies regarding appointment, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review;*
- (g) the appointment of program directors and other positions of faculty supervision;
- (h) the appointment of faculty members to positions with administrative responsibilities (e.g., assessment, retention, marketing);
- (i) the creation of faculty task forces and ad hoc committees;
- (j) the awarding of endowed professorships and endowed chairs;*
- (k) the creation, merger, or discontinuation of departments, schools, or divisions;*
- (l) the allocation of new faculty positions;
- (m) the elimination of faculty positions;
- (n) the management of the library
- (o) the management of research facilities;
- (p) the establishment of policies and procedures that directly affect the quality of degree programs;
- (q) the appointment of department chairs;
- (r) the establishment of academic non-degree programs.

3. The administration has primary responsibility for the vision, operations and strategic plan of the university. The faculty should be consulted on these issues. The intent of faculty consultation is not to necessarily participate directly in decision-making, but to provide the faculty's perspective. The board of regents should be consulted on issues

that involve overall mission and fiscal oversight.

Areas over which the administration has primary responsibility and the faculty and the board have a consultative role include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) the selection of senior administrators;
- (b) the budget;
- (c) the campus master plan, including building construction;
- (d) marketing and communications strategies;
- (e) enrollment growth, financial aid, and scholarship strategies;
- (f) tuition policy;
- (g) campus safety procedures and response;
- (h) student discipline;
- (i) intercollegiate athletics;
- (j) employee benefits and holidays;
- (k) accreditation and compliance with external regulations and rules.

4. The Board of Regents oversees the affairs of the university. They consult with the administration and the faculty as needed in the following areas.

The Areas over which the board has primary responsibility:

- (a) fiscal oversight
- (b) hiring and evaluation of the president
- (c) nomination of members to the Board of Regents to be elected by members of the Corporation
- (d) overall mission of the university.
- (e) institutional governance (e.g. identification and recruitment of new regents, orienting new regents, composition of the board, board education, mentorship of new board members, regent self-assessment, church relations, legal actions, audits, tax status, risk management)

Approved by the Board of Regents, May 2012, updated and approved by the Board of Regents, February 2024