WEST VALLEY COLLEGE
SHARED DECISION-MAKING PLAN

PREAMBLE

In compliance with AB 1725 and the California Administrative Code Title 5, Sections 51023 and 53200, it shall be the policy of the West Valley-Mission Community College District to implement a process wherein faculty, students, and classified staff participate in collegial decision-making and policy recommending activities.

The West Valley College Shared Decision-Making Plan defines and implements this policy at West Valley College.

This plan seeks to accomplish the following:

Utilize the full range of skills, talents, and interests of our staff and students by providing for a process that allows decision-making at the lowest most appropriate level of the system structure.

Complement the administrative structure of the college.

Provide a mechanism that empowers committees to make substantial contributions to the operations and policy decisions of the college.

Provide efficient utilization of committees and task forces by establishing a system that clusters activities by similar functions. Each functional area will be led by an executive council.

Formalizes record keeping and project control through the establishment of electronic information management systems.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

AB 1725 [§70902 of the Education Code] requires that governing boards of community college districts establish standards "to ensure faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to express their opinions at the campus level and to ensure that these opinions are given every reasonable consideration, and the right to participate effectively in district and college governance, and the right of academic senates to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum and academic standards." These standards, commonly referred to as shared governance, are interpreted in Board Policy 3.2.6, 3.3.4, and 5.15.1 and West Valley College's "Shared Decision-Making Plan."
However, West Valley College's commitment to shared decision-making is based on more than a legislative mandate. West Valley practices shared governance out of respect for the expertise and experience of its faculty staff and students and because it believes that shared governance results in better decisions. During 1995-96 academic year the College Coordinating Committee reviewed the college's shared governance documents as well as the process for shared decision-making and modified the Committee’s role in shared governance.

The original "Shared Governance Plan", developed in accordance with AB1725, was agreed upon by the Shared Governance Task Force, approved by the Academic Senate in accordance with AB1725 on March 3, 1993, and formally adopted by the College Coordinating Committee on October 19, 1993. It was never reviewed at the end of the first year as stipulated in the adopted plan. The following document is focused on changes to the process that have been used for the past several years and is responsive to one of the major recommendations of the Accreditation Team's report during the Spring of 1996.

The 1996 revisions include calling the West Valley College process shared decision-making instead of shared governance. We believe the perceptions formed from the term decision-making are more appropriate than those formed from the word governance. The body meeting regularly to develop recommendations for the West Valley College will be called the College Council and is composed of representatives from the governance senates, the councils and the College President. The governance senates and councils at West Valley College are called Executive Councils. Recommendations made by the College Council will be developed by consensus, meaning general agreement in opinion, and not majority vote whenever possible.

MISSION

Shared decision-making at West Valley College is designed to:

1. provide an opportunity for input from all college constituencies;
2. base the decision-making process on open communication and shared information;
3. rely on representatives to maintain open communication between constituencies and groups of which they are members;
4. encourage all to hear and respect the needs and expectations of faculty, staff, students and administrators - developing consensus wherever possible.

VALUES

1. Participants of all governance structures are expected to effectively represent their constituency. Therefore it is expected that:
   a. the opinions of all staff and students be treated with respect and given reasonable consideration;
   b. the interests of each constituency be accepted as having equal legitimacy;
   c. constituency representation will take place within the context of collegial/consensus-based process;
d. each participant be committed to ensuring the consensus-based process is collaborative and non-adversarial.

2. Meetings will be open.

3. West Valley College’s goals will be the focus for decision-making.

4. West Valley College’s organizational structure will be designed to accommodate and encourage shared decision-making.

5. Shared decision-making should lead to understanding and acceptance of decisions, as well as commitment to their implementation.

6. Shared decision-making should lead to trust, cooperation, mutual understanding, team identity, and coordination.

7. The process should provide opportunities for consensus building and conflict resolution.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Decisions made in the spirit of shared decision-making are more likely to result in outcomes that are in the best interest of the college as a whole.

2. Shared decision-making requires that all members of the college, either directly or through representatives, share responsibility for making decisions and recommendations.

3. Decisions should be made as close to the issue as possible and should therefore be made at the department, division, committee, council, task force or administrative level, etc. whenever possible.

4. Some decisions cannot be made through the shared decision-making process because they are specifically delegated; e.g. AB 1725 delegates certain areas of responsibility by law to the Academic Senate that makes recommendations directly to the Board of Trustees. Such decisions are, however, made in the spirit of shared decision-making, and it is the Academic Senate’s responsibility to receive appropriate input from the various constituencies of the college in making their recommendations.

5. There are issues that should be decided with input from all constituencies at the college through the College Council. At the College Council, the consensus-based recommendations/decisions will be reached by a two-staged process:

   a. First, the interest(s) of each constituency will be identified and,
   b. Second, the Council is to develop a recommendation that encompasses as many of the identified interests as is possible.
6. Representatives to senates, councils, committees, task forces, and other groups have a two-fold responsibility to:

   a. solicit and accurately represent the position(s) or the group they represent, and
   b. provide effective and timely communication between their constituencies and the group

7. Groups have a responsibility to (1) communicate their meeting schedule and their agendas, and (2) maintain written records of their activities, decisions, and recommendations and disseminate this information in a timely manner.

8. Before final recommendations are forwarded by the Executive Councils to the College Council, constituencies within the college affected by the recommendation shall have opportunity for input.

9. The ultimate responsibility for college decision-making rests with the President.
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

COLLEGE COUNCIL

Issues of a college-wide nature that are not specifically related to the function of other Executive Councils may emanate from the College Council. Issues that are appropriately addressed by the College Council include (but are not limited to): college-wide planning, operations of the college, budget, maintenance of the facilities, parking and security, admissions and records, and registration. College Council can also function as the steering committee for college-wide planning or other projects.

Membership:

College President – ex-officio, non-voting
Chair (or Designee) from each of the six Executive Councils – voting members
Vice President, Administrative Services - voting member
Vice President, Instruction - ex-officio, non-voting member
Vice President, Student Services - ex-officio, non-voting member
Representative – Student Equity and Success Committee – ex-officio, non-voting member
Grants Liaison – ex-officio, non-voting member
Staff Development Coordinator – ex-officio, non-voting member
Research Analyst – ex-officio, non-voting member
Accreditation Liaison – ex-officio, non-voting member
SEIU Representative (per SEIU Agreement, 7.11) – voting member

College Council is chaired by the President and approved recommendations proceed to him/her for implementation and/or forwarding to the Board.

Responsibilities:

• Facilitate communication and appropriate involvement of all members of the college community through:
• Assigning issues to Executive Councils as appropriate
• Tracking the work effort of the councils
• Organizing the flow of communication among and between the councils
• Reporting on the status of issues before the councils
• Coordinating maintenance of the governance information system
• Serving as an avenue of appeals in matters of process and equity (but not concerning the specific recommendation)
• Develop consensus through the use of a "Consensus Recommendation" form for all decisions or recommendations emanating from the College Council (since consensus may not mean total agreement on every issue brought to the College Council, it is recognized
that a minority opinion shall be recorded on the "Consensus Recommendation" form before forwarding)

- Create committees or task forces as needed
- Serving as a steering committee for college-wide projects
- Resource allocation, prioritization of final list—merging instruction, Student Services and all-college lists

The above objectives are accomplished through such activities as:

- Reaching consensus on decisions through the use of the "Consensus Recommendation" form,

- Receiving requests, proposals, or projects from any member of the college community and directing them to the appropriate executive council;

- Maintaining a project/report calendar to track the progress of all tasks directed to the various Councils;

- Facilitate maintaining an electronic information retrieval system in order to allow access to all decisions and resolutions of all committees and task forces as well as the Executive Councils. This database will be freely available to all members of the college community;

- Organizing and maintaining archives of decision memos, adopted resolutions, and attending reports.

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1 While the Vice President, Instruction, Vice President, Student Services and Vice President of Administrative Services will sit with the College Council to serve as a resource to the council, only one vote on the Consensus Recommendation form will be cast on behalf of the Executive Staff Council.
EXECUTIVE COUNCILS

West Valley College has established six executive councils that participate in both operational concerns as well as policy recommendation. Various committees operate under the auspices of these Executive Councils.

The Executive Councils are as follows:

- Academic Senate (AS)
- Classified Senate (CS)
- Division Chair Council (DCC)
- Executive Staff Council (President’s Cabinet-PC)
- Student Senate (ASO)
- Student Services Council (SSC)

Administrative Services is represented by the Vice President of Administrative Services, who serves as an advisor and voting member to the College Council. SEIU (Service Employees International Union) also has a voting seat, per their negotiated contract.

All committees of the college (except those under the direction of the unions, e.g., Performance Goals Committee) will be organized into a reporting relationship with one of the above mentioned councils. Each council will determine the need to accept, eliminate, or modify its associated committees. Each council is empowered to create committees or task force as needed.

Each Executive Council decision will be formally communicated to the college community through the shared decision-making process. Each council and its committees will keep a file of decisions and recommendations.

The chair of each Executive Council shall be elected by its members on a regular basis. Each council will develop, publish, and disseminate its procedures for processing requests, proposals, or projects which may be received from the College Council, or any other member of the college community.
MEMBERSHIP - AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

**Academic Senate**

Membership: As defined by the Academic Senate Constitution

Responsibilities:
- Curriculum and educational program development
- Degree and certificate requirements
- Grading policies and standards for students
- Accreditation
- College (Program) Review
- Professional matters
- Appoint/validate faculty representatives
- Flex activities

**Classified Senate**

Membership: As defined by the Classified Senate Constitution

Responsibilities:
- Committee appointments
- Classified staff development
- New employee orientation for all classified staff

**Division Chair Council**

Membership:
- Vice President, Instruction
- Division Chair of each Division
- Vice President, Student Services
- Dean, Instruction
- Dean, Counseling and Matriculation
- Dean, Career Programs/Workforce Development
- Dean, Instructional Technology and Services
- One (1) Representative of the Classified Senate
- One (1) Representative of the Student Senate
- One (1) Representative of the Academic Senate
Responsibilities:
- Educational program planning\(^2\)
- Faculty hiring procedures
- Instructional computer planning
- Instructional equipment planning
- Resource allocation, prioritization of instructional requests

**Executive Staff Council**

Membership:
- President
- Vice President, Instruction
- Vice President, Student Services
- Vice President, Administrative Services
- Dean, Counseling & Matriculation
- Dean, Student Support Services
- Dean, Career Programs and Workforce Development
- Dean, Informational Technology and Services

Responsibilities:
- Coordinate administrative functions across the campus
- Provide administrative leadership and support for all college functions in instruction, student services, and budget/planning
- Participate in problem solving and planning as college-wide activities
- Facilitate the change processes that contribute to increased student success
- Serve as the administrative link between the college, the president, administrative and district-wide services and the Mission College administration
- Facilitate communication and information exchange throughout the district and with the public
- Develop a strategic focus for the college administration

**Student Senate**

Membership: As defined by the Student Senate Constitution

Responsibilities:
- Student welfare
- Student Activities programming
- Oversee, maintain and regulate Senate property and assets
- Communicate activities and actions to student body
- Promote, control and regulate functions of the Inter-Club Council
- Appoint student representatives to WVC committees and councils

\(^2\) Recommendations to be approved by the Academic Senate as per Title 5, Section 53200.
Student Services Council

Membership:
- Vice President, Student Services
- Dean, Student Services
- Dean, Counseling/Matriculation
- Division Chair, Student Services
- Two (2) faculty appointed by the Academic Senate
- One (1) student appointed by the Student Senate
- One (1) representative of the Classified Senate
- One (1) Admissions/Records Supervisor
- One (1) Financial Aid Director
- One (1) SEP (DSPS) Coordinator
- One (1) EOPS Coordinator
- One (1) Tutorial Coordinator
- One (1) Counseling Department Chair
- One (1) Director of Research
- One (1) Student Activities Director
- One (1) Health Services Coordinator
- One (1) ET Coordinator
- One (1) representative of Workforce/Career Programs

Responsibilities:
- Academic Appeals\(^3\)
- Matriculation\(^4\)
- Campus Assistance Program
- International Students
- Multicultural Enrichment
- Student Grievances
- Recruitment
- Marketing
- Financial Aid Appeals
- Resource allocation, prioritization of Student Services requests

\(^3\) Process and Criteria require approval of the Academic Senate as per Title 5, Section 53200.
\(^4\) Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success require approval of the Academic Senate as per Title 5, Section 53200.
AUTHORITY

The decisions of each council are considered to be the final decisions and recommendations of the college community, except in areas where Academic Senate approval is required by Title 5, Section 53200. Decisions appropriately made by any Executive Council, are sent to the College Council so that all governance groups may be appropriately informed of the decision. Any decision brought to the College Council by an executive council will be recorded on a "Shared Communication" form that will reflect that all governance groups have been duly informed of the decisions of the executive council. The College Council treats the decision or recommendation as follows:

   a. They are assigned to the appropriate administrative staff for implementation.
   b. They are carried by the President to the Board of Trustees for its consideration.

If the college President is opposed to the decision of one of the Executive Councils, the College Council will convene a conference with the President and the Executive Council to attempt to reconcile their differences.

If a compromise cannot be reached on an issue that must be approved by the Board of Trustees, the Executive Council which initiated the recommendation may, at their discretion, carry the proposal to the Board without the consent of the President.

The plan will take effect immediately upon the approval of the Academic Senate, the Division Chair Council, the Student Services Council, the Classified Senate, the Resource Management Council, the Student Senate, the Administrative Staff, and the President of West Valley College.

At the end of one year from the October, 1996 adoption of this Shared Decision-Making Plan, West Valley College will reevaluate the plan and revise it based on the experience of implementing the structure. Each year thereafter College Council shall update the plan and will decide if a thorough review and revision process for the Shared Decision-Making Plan is necessary.
First adopted October 10, 1996 by the College Council.

This Shared Decision-Making Document is hereby adopted and approved to include revisions by the College Council on November 11, 2010:

Lori Gaskin - President

Lance Shoemaker - Academic Senate

Laurel Kinley - Classified Senate

Hugh Leonard - Student Senate

Michael Renz - VP Administrative Services

Dave Fishbaugh - Executive Staff Council (PC)

Jim Henderson - Division Chair Council

Jean Finch - Student Services Council

Scott Ludwig - SEIU
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