SEATTLE PACIFIC
UNIVERSITY

SPU SHARED GOVERNANCE

Workshop led by Venture international consultant, Andy Westmoreland

Board of Trustees, Faculty Council, Senior Leadership, Deans

February 24, 2022

What were the goals for the session?

The foundation of shared governance is trust between trustees, administration and faculty. As such the goals for this session were to continue to build trust between the parties, and to foster a renewed understanding of—and appreciation for—shared governance. Additionally, the session served as a starting point to chart a path for keeping shared governance on track at SPU.

What is shared governance and why is it important?

The definitions and delineations offered by the [American Association of University Professors](#) are especially helpful, even if faculty, administrators and trustees may not agree with every element. Additionally,

- When practiced well, shared governance is biblical. A scriptural model can be found in Romans 12:4-5, "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."
- It promotes understanding. The process is deliberative (thinking, discussing, deciding carefully).
- It tempers tyranny; tyranny of the board, tyranny of the administration; tyranny of the faculty; tyranny of one voice or a small segment of voices.
- It respects wisdom… accumulated wisdom. Precedent is important in avoiding the recreation of past mistakes.
- It is a touchstone for institutional accreditation.
- It is the norm within most of higher education, so new colleagues expect that they will join a community at SPU that is committed to shared governance.

Key points identified were:

- Despite the reasons why shared governance is prized, there are pitfalls:
  - It can be used to stymie innovation.
  - It can result in power plays by those who learn how to be masters of the game.
  - It can be painfully legalistic.
  - It can lead toward arrogance.

- Trust is always the key to shared governance. It requires constant attention to earning, building and keeping trust among all parties.

- Among the duties of shared governance:
  - The duty to respect all parties.
  - The duty to listen, study and learn.
  - The duty to look at issues from different perspectives.
  - The duty to explain.
  - The duty to move forward, even in the midst of disagreement.

What do we know about the SPU context for shared governance?

Responsibilities are delineated in various documents and they can be found specifically in the Faculty Constitution. In the course of the consultation with Seattle Pacific Venture International observed that policies and culture are not always aligned. Finding and understanding the gaps between policies and culture regarding shared governance is a necessary pursuit for all institutions, including SPU

What are the next steps?

Based on feedback from the participants, it will be best to appoint and convene a relatively small work group of faculty, trustees and administrators to further explore the current issues, begin the process of clarifying definitions, and assembling and distilling existing policies and practices. The group should also agree upon a framework for ongoing and regular sessions (pursuing a cadence of twice annually) in which faculty, administrative , and Board convene to evaluate what is going well and what isn't related to shared governance process, to hold each other accountable, and to continue to build mutual respect.

Additional insight that will be valuable for the Seattle Pacific University member to review:

Shared Governance Model for Higher Education Boards | BoardEffect

Exactly What Is 'Shared Governance'? (chronicle.com)

How to Make Shared Governance Work: Some Best Practices - AGB (otis.edu)

SEATTLE PACIFIC

Office of the President

Board of Trustees: February 2022
Overview and Reports

We gathered for our Winter Board of Trustees meetings Thursday and Friday of last week. For the Trustees, this was only the second time in the last two years that the meetings were able to be conducted in person. Following the opening Plenary session and recess to Committee meetings, the Board concluded its first day on campus with a dinner at Hillford where I led them in a discussion on their hopes for SPU and the values that shape their vision of the institution. After collecting note cards with individual Trustees' lists of values, the list was converted to a word cloud to visually represent the range of ideas, with the more prominent values appearing in larger text. Not surprisingly, the value identified most often by the Trustees was the value of being a Christian university. Other values identified by the Trustees were excellence, diversity, innovative, justice, integrity, and courage. On Friday, a photographer took photos of each Trustee for a soon anticipated redesigned Board of Trustees webpage that will include photos and brief biographies of each member of the Board.

Shared Governance

In an intentional and important start to this gathering of the Board of Trustees we began with a session on shared governance. This was led by Venture International consultant, Andy Westmoreland and, as stated in an earlier email regarding the workshop, included the Board of Trustees, members of Faculty Council, senior leaders, and deans. During the workshop he addressed several key questions and points on the importance and value of this concept and provided opportunity for the participants to consider and respond to case studies.

You will find an overview of this [Shared Governance workshop here.](#)

Committee Meetings

The Trustees met in their respective standing committees (Academic Affairs and Student Experience; Finance, Audit, and Facilities; and University Relations) on Thursday afternoon, with the FAF and UR committees meeting jointly before moving to their individual committee meetings. Additionally, each area of the University submitted a report, available via the links below. I encourage you to read through them as they contain a great deal of information about the work of the various units across campus. I am grateful for the work of so many individuals that impact our students.

The area reports can be accessed through these links:

- [Provost](#)
- [Academic Affairs](#)
- [Inclusive Excellence](#)
- [Student Formation and Community Engagement](#)
- [University Ministries](#)
- [Enrollment Management and Marketing](#)
- [Finance and Administration](#)
- [University Advancement](#)

Friday Devotional

Opening our time together on Friday, Associate Professor of Worship and Historical Theology Matt Sigler led the Board, Senior Leadership Team, and faculty leaders in worship that included responsive readings, singing of hymns, and prayers. He concluded the devotional time with a Charles Wesley hymn entitled, *O For A Heart to Praise My God*, that we sung to the melody of Amazing Grace.

Reports from Strategic Work Groups

Friday's general meeting began with reports from the **Strategic Work Groups**. The five groups presented in order and allowed time for questions about the launch, work underway, and what is being developed for review, ultimately, at the May Board of Trustees meeting.

Academic Program Model Work Group (APM): Co-Chairs, Cindy Price and Leslie Vander Griend, began by reinforcing two forces driving the APM group. A key theme of the group is recognizing the

significance of [the financial challenges] facing SPU and holding that in tension with the mission we are trying to fulfill for our students. APM is reviewing the following areas: our approach to traditional undergraduate and graduate education, new programs, academic calendar, faculty contracting, collaborations, and accreditation.

Enrollment, Tuition, and Financial Aid Work Group (ETFA): Co-Chairs, Louise Furrow and Dean Kato, noted that we have a dual challenge and pathway to pursue in addressing enrollment growth. We need to address the immediate need of our traditional undergraduate residential model and at the same time consider the possibility of alternative education delivery models that may be more cost effective. A set of recommendations is being developed over the coming months and will be presented at the May Board of Trustees meeting.

University Facilities and Services Work Group (UFS): Co-Chairs, Kim Sawers and Mark Mason, presented a slide deck that gave an overview of the landscape of higher education, its current state, insights from literature on the field of higher education, and potential hurdles to significant change. Given this context, the work group has been hard at work reviewing available data, outlining a process to gather information, and have sought innovative ideas from across campus. The next phase will be to prioritize ideas, begin analysis, and create opportunities for broader conversations. The ultimate goal will be to create a set of recommendations by the May Board of Trustees meeting.

Digital Transformation and Data Governance Work Group (DTDG): Co-Chairs, Micah Schaafsma and Mike Quinn, unpacked the changing reality of technology as we sit at the beginning of the fourth revolution. Key questions raised were: "What must we become to prepare students to survive and thrive in this new environment?" and "How can we make technology at SPU more student centered?" They also reported on a SWOT (strengths, weakness, opportunity, and threat) analysis to provide clarity to begin charting the path to final recommendations.

LGBTQIA+ Work Group: Co-Chairs, Kevin Neuhouser and Joshua Canada, reported that the group had just completed their fourth meeting and recognized that there is so much to cover that they are likely going to add more meeting time and try to move the work out into more sub-groups. They have received input through "listening sessions" and will continue to give updates to the campus after each meeting to keep the campus informed of progress. (Look for a report later this week.) The work group will have its fifth meeting on March 8.

During the general business sessions of the meeting, the Board discussed a number of matters and approved a variety of action items (noted below). The Board also engaged in conversation during

Executive Session to better understand the administration's plans to enable preferred names/pronouns features in student-facing technology systems (e.g. Banner, Canvas, Zoom). More information on the implementation of these plans will be shared with the faculty/staff community very soon.

Board Actions

Action items from the Board included:

- Approval of the 2022-23 Board meeting schedule.
- Approval of Foundation Director appointments for Brian Pearson, Mark Cederborg, and Nancy Zevenbergen.
- Approval to engage Clark Nuber to conduct the University's independent audit.
- Approval of 2022/33 Undergraduate Tuition, Room & Board, Fees and Graduate Tuition Rates. A memo to current students will be sent later this week as soon as updates to public web pages have been completed.

One of the highlights of the February Board meeting is the opportunity for the Board to recognize the meritorious service of retiring faculty members and to consider junior faculty for tenure.

Emeriti Faculty

It is with delight that I announce the following retiring faculty members were proudly recognized as "Emeriti Faculty."

We are a better place because of their investment in our mission, and, in turn, the lives and future of our students and those of us who have had the privilege of serving alongside them. May God bless each of them and their families during this transition to their next phase of life – one that I am sure

will continue to benefit from their influence in new ways.

Tenure Candidates

Receiving tenure speaks to a faculty member's commitment and dedication to the profession and to student success. The process is demanding, and achieving tenure is a tremendous accomplishment.

I am pleased to announce the Board of Trustees approved the following five faculty members to receive tenure:

If you have any questions, please email me and I welcome your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Pete Menjares

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