

Date: October 5th, 2026

To: Shared Governance Taskforce Members

Subject: Summary Memo (September 29th Meeting)

Meeting Overview

This memo provides a summary of the topics discussed and perspectives shared at the September 29th taskforce meeting.

Agenda Item #1: Welcome & Retreat Debrief

Summary: As a welcome activity, the facilitator, Shelly Blair, invited taskforce members to reflect on the September 11th retreat, and then delivered the day's agenda. The co-chairs, Amina and Bjork, then presented a short debrief of the retreat, naming the key activities and items produced, most notably draft structure designs from the retreat breakout groups, and shared the common elements across the designs.

Agenda Item #2: Draft Governance Structure – Walkthrough & Breakouts

Summary: Shelly presented the draft structure generated from the work of the taskforce, with the centering of student outcomes, the cluster of legal accountability, and the four key elements of the design: the college council, constituency senates, standing committees, and a governance stewardship team. Shelly then called out key items that are not yet signaled in the draft structure, but need to be addressed in the charter and/or operations manual: seat counts/proportional representation, the selection process for representatives, decision-making practices, response times, the order in which existing groups move, and group names. In breakout groups, the taskforce members then provided feedback on each of the key elements of the structure. Feedback highlights are below:

- **College Council**

- The concept of a college council appears to center students and be structured in a way that facilitates communication between the senates and admin groups, as well as the college at large.
- Need to spell out the selection process for representatives and term limits, with noted accommodations to ensure people can join; need to determine what different groups *need* from the college council; determining the scope of work for the college council will be essential.
- Need documentation (or a toolkit/training) for representatives to ensure effective communication and representative practices to help in disseminating information.
 - Ensure transparency coming from the council (e.g., webpages, newsletters, quarterly shareouts, observable meetings).
- *Key decision-making questions:* Is the college council only an advisory body? Can the council have more explicit decision-making power?
 - How can the accompanying manual clearly articulate that the body whose charter covers something decides it, and that only things that cross several bodies or have legal/board implications go up? How do we establish a clear process for what goes up (e.g., a written response within 30 days, and the president can send it back with rationale/data?)
- Recommendation for community members to serve on the council.
- Need to determine how we address dissent inside the council and can look to other colleges to see how they've broken that down into a clear process (e.g., the Clackamus handbook).

- **Constituency Senates**

- Need definitions of senate representative roles, responsibilities, term limits, and accountability.
- Need to ensure senate representatives can accommodate the commitment, as folks are already overwhelmed. The manual needs to emphasize the value of asynchronous participation.
- Need clear and regularly updated websites for each senate.
- Each group will need a champion to get them started.
- Senates should decide how they select representatives; senates also might advise on representation to councils and possibly even committees.
- Any subcommittee should be able to build subcommittees for work it owns.
- *Question:* Can we receive models for what these senates might look like in practice?
- *Question:* Shouldn't there be a manager senate as well? And how would we go about establishing a casual senate? How do we ensure part-time faculty concerns do not get muted?

- **Standing Committees**

- The charter/operations manual will need to flesh out how frequently committees meet, and the forms of communication between them.
- Need to ensure there are equitable ways for people to join, with transparent membership criteria.
- Need to ensure compensation for participation (e.g., casual employees and PT faculty).
- Need clarity between the types of participation for those acting within their job function operationally (e.g., an IT worker acting upon decisions) and those who are participating in an advocacy/oversight function (e.g., a key stakeholder steering the group towards mission/goals).
 - Perhaps we could write this distinction into every charter, with a balance between members who are there because their job is implementing the decision and members who are there in an advocacy or oversight role.
 - Operational commitment is needed for committee relationships with working teams.
 - Suggestion that the simplest approach would be that every committee reports to one body and each working team has one committee it brings proposals to (working teams don't need to be governance bodies as long as each one is mapped to a committee).
- Regarding the "cross-cutting themes" language, accessibility and equity appear in standing committees, but not sustainability; additionally, the overall language is confusing given that one of the committees is labeled Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility.
 - Questions regarding whether or not initiatives like equity, sustainability, and accessibility should or should not be standing committees if they are also "cross-cutting."
- *Question:* Are the committees only making recommendations? Can they make decisions?
- Individual member note asking if committees can be included on the right side of the visual, as opposed to embedded in a senate, and that the basic structure should be councils overseeing the broader areas (e.g., Academic Affairs and Pathways) that then receive input from the standing and ad hoc committees.
- Note that the Academic Affairs and Pathways standing committee should not be different/separate from the Student Success and Enrollment standing committee.

- **Governance Stewardship Team**

- *Key question:* Who are the people doing the stewardship? Recommendation for a small team of dedicated positions for the work (e.g., one manager for review and evaluation; one AP for training; and one classified employee for meeting support, with collaboration).
 - Recommendation for these positions to be paid/stipend-based (if not half/full FTE).

- Need to define the individual components of the roles (e.g., charter review, annual evaluation) and develop clear guidelines around the roles members will play in other meetings/training, with defined appointment terms.
- **Question:** What will the stewardship member(s) role be in decision-making? Or are they only attending/supporting meetings/serving as project managers?
- Perhaps include an annual self assessment every shared governance body fills in against the same questions, compiled and reported up. And then an ombudsman who receives a concern if the process gets skipped, writes down what happened, and reports it to the council.
- Noted need for a bidirectional arrow between the stewardship team and the ad-hoc groups.
- **General Thoughts on the Overall Draft Structure**
 - Need to have a conversation about the EAC's vote to move their standing committees out of EAC and into a new faculty senate; need to discuss where this leaves the EAC—the conversation is vital when it comes to deciding how different employee groups (besides faculty) will be represented in the constituency senates (e.g., perhaps classified, APs, and casuals could be merged together into one constituency senate due to similar needs).
 - There's value in simplicity: How do we make this structure less complex?
 - We don't want senates and standing committees to step on each other's decisions or slow decision making unnecessarily, so we need to be clear about who decides what (e.g., include a decision matrix in every charter to avoid senates and committees competing for authority).

Agenda Item #3: Policy Workstream Update

Summary: A member of the taskforce planning team, Matt Longo, provided an update on the taskforce's policy workstream, sharing that the group will be producing two documents as part of its charge: 1) a summary memo noting shared governance policy gaps, pointing to the desired structure the group is looking to formalize through the process and in the operations manual, and 2) a draft set of policies. It was noted that the taskforce will soon be receiving a draft summary memo as an initial step for their review and feedback, with revisions to follow, and that, once finalized, the recommendations the taskforce generates in this workstream will go through a pre-existing Board review and approval process.

Agenda Item #4: Shared Governance Definition – Discussion & Vote Introduction

Summary: The co-chairs discussed the subsequent revisions made to the definition following the retreat feedback. The taskforce was then asked to reflect on the latest definition feedback the members delivered in the immediate lead-up to the September 29th meeting. The group discussion centered on potentially adding the word “distributed” to the definition, with a noted tension in the group on whether or not to include the word, and additional thoughts on its potential placement within the sentence structure. After the discussion, the taskforce received a link to vote on potential acceptance of the definition (*which closed at 5pm on October 2nd*).