

COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE AT NKU

The Faculty and Administrators, of Northern Kentucky University, has endorse the "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities", jointly formulated by the American Association of University Professors, Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, and the American Council of Education. (As adopted by the AAUP on October 29, 1966 and revised in April 1990) as the most appropriate general statement on University Governance. The remainder of the position paper, specifically addresses the role of faculty and faculty bodies in university governance, consistent with the aforementioned "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities."

The Faculty and Administrators of Northern Kentucky University believe in a collegial system of university governance, based on a concept of authority and responsibility shared among colleagues, some who have primary duties as faculty and some who have primary duties as administrators. A collegial system has, as its fundamental principle, the concept of good faith, consultation among these colleagues prior to decision-making as stipulated below. Under the collegial system, decision-making authority is delegated or assigned to the collegial group most expert in or responsible for the particular area in which the decision is made. However, the Board of Regents and Council on Post-secondary Education is statutorily responsible for the governance of the University, and this document does not abridge this responsibility or authority. All colleagues in the system, regardless of their respective roles as faculty or administrators, have an obligation to honor and support the decisions reached through the collegial process. If good faith consultation among colleagues exists, if decision-making authority is delegated appropriately, and if all participants are committed to the decisions made through the collegial system, non-productive adversarial relationships among groups are minimized, and university goals and objectives are more easily achieved.

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF A COLLEGIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE:

1. "Colleague" is defined as a university employee of faculty rank or of professional or administrative classification.
2. Leadership, reason, persuasion, and cooperation are the hallmarks of the collegial system.
3. All colleagues have the opportunity to participate, directly or through elected representatives, in the collegial process.
4. Good faith consultation and mutual respect among colleagues are fundamental principles of the collegial system. All university decisions are preceded by dialogue among relevant constituencies, followed by appropriate rationale.
5. Academic freedom is an essential element of collegial governance.
6. When the person responsible for making the decision reaches a decision, and that person has considered all recommendations made pursuant to this document, then that decision is reached through the collegial process.
7. Colleagues are bound by the decisions relating to or affecting matters, which are reached through collegial processes. Colleagues, therefore, ought to avoid using external political processes (e.g., legislature, CPE, governing board) to frustrate the decisions reached through the collegial process.
8. All colleagues are bound equally by the results of the system and seek to implement those decisions. Of course, a colleague is free to seek to change policy within the collegial system. Leaders of the faculty (e.g., president, provost, senate president, deans, and chairs.) have a particular responsibility to implement the decisions of the system. To facilitate consensus on [the policy] policies and procedures, the procedures outlined in section B1 through B4 below shall be followed.

B. THE ROLE OF FACULTY BODIES IN THE COLLEGIAL SYSTEM:

"Faculty bodies" are defined as the collective members with faculty rank of an academic unit (such as) Department and College faculties, the Senate and its committees, and department and college faculty committees. As participants in the collegial system of university governance, all faculty bodies are obligated to make decisions and/or recommendations for the good of the university. Generally speaking, faculty bodies have primary responsibility for recommendations in matters directly related to academics, including curricula subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which directly relate to the educational process.

1. Academic matters:

Faculty bodies have primary responsibility for recommendations in the following matters, and their recommendations should be implemented except for compelling reasons. Reasons for non-implementation of faculty recommendations should be clearly stated in writing, except where giving reasons in writing would contradict the faculty handbook, other pertinent university governance documents, or state or federal regulations. In cases where written notification is prohibited, reasons for non-implementation of recommendations should still be communicated in another manner to the appropriate faculty bodies. Implementation or notification should occur in a timely fashion.

Examples:

- Admissions requirements
- Graduation requirements
- Graduation of students
- Program Curricula
- Approval of academic degree programs
- Policies regarding grading and student grievances associated with academic work
- Academic personnel policies
- Academic personnel decisions
- Dismissal of tenured faculty
- Policies (personnel policies) which result in dismissal of tenured faculty
- Faculty and academic grievances
- Approval of agreements with external organizations which directly affect academic matters
- Structure of faculty and collegial academic governance bodies
- Appointment and reappointment of academic officers
- Academic planning
- Issues related to academic freedom
- University policy statements related to the matters listed above

2. Activities fundamentally affecting academic programs:

Good faith consultation with faculty bodies is routine in the following matters. Faculty opinion in these matters should be strongly considered.

Examples:

- Selection of the President and Executive Officers
- Structure and organization of academic units (departments, divisions, colleges, and schools)
- Institutional Budget Priorities
- Building priorities and design of academic facilities
- Policies regarding academic administrators (e.g. job descriptions, performance reviews)
- Selection of academic administrative staff at the Director level and above
- Decisions regarding organization of academic administration

- Goals and objectives of major fund raising efforts as they may affect academic matters
- Foundation money for academic affairs
- General policies regarding intercollegiate athletics, to the extent that they involve academic concerns
- Policies concerning agreements with businesses and other entities which may affect academic matters
- University policy documents related to these matters

3. Activities which may affect academic programs:

Good faith consultation generally occurs in the following matters, which are the primary responsibility of the administration, to the extent that they affect academic matters.

Examples:

- Structure of support services
- Scholarship policies
- Student non-academic discipline (policy and implementation)
- Long range planning not affecting academic matters
- Selection of major non-academic administrators
- Structure and authority of campus security/police services
- Policies concerning disposal of major assets of the university
- Foundation priorities
- Planning for support services related to academic functions
- University support services related to academic functions

4. Activities not normally affecting academic matters:

Consultation does not take place routinely in the following matters. When consultation does occur, the faculty act more as advisors or expert assistants than the colleagues. Decision-making or recommending authority generally is shared substantially with other groups (e.g. students, staff, and the community), and in some cases other (non-faculty) groups may retain primary authority. Faculty bodies may feel free to give advice in these matters regardless of whether formal consultation occurs.

Examples:

- Management and investment of funds of the university and the foundation
- Implementation of budget priorities and policies
- Selection of contractors and vendors
- Routine operation of and planning for auxiliary enterprises
- Non-academic personnel policies (development and implementation)
- Staff personnel policies
- Selection of staff and lower level non-academic administrators
- Development and implementation of staff grievance policies
- Alumni and development structures and plans (not including academic matters)
- Selection of auditors and outside counsel
- Development and implementation of recreational policies
- Routine operation of intercollegiate athletics
- Development of lobbying and legislature efforts

Approved by NKU Faculty Senate February 23, 1998

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