

# COLLEGE OF THE SEQUOIAS

## District Governance Senate

### Bylaws

#### 1. Philosophy:

Participatory governance is a decision-making process committed to the best interests of our students and our institution based upon the active involvement of those affected by decisions working in an environment of:

- Mutuality, collegiality and collaboration;
- Transparency;
- Representative participation;
- Mutual accountability;
- Clarity of roles.

One of the basic principles of governance in higher education is that effective decisions derive from the powers and authority vested by law in governing boards with input from faculty, staff, students and administration as required by law and by accreditation standards. Because these constituencies are vital to the development and implementation of sound educational policy, College of the Sequoias wishes to encourage to the greatest extent possible the practice of participatory governance. Participatory governance is predicated on the sincere commitment on the part of all participants to our students, our professions and our institution. It is a complex process of consultation that demands from students, staff, faculty and administration a respect for divergent opinions, a sense of mutual trust, and a willingness to work together for the good of the college. It is a representative system in which those who serve on governance bodies hold a responsibility to their constituents. Participatory governance embraces the basic objective that all key parties of interest should be given the opportunity to participate in jointly developing recommendations and priorities for the well-being of the institution.

#### 2. Purpose:

Participatory governance is a process to ensure students, staff, faculty and administration the right to participate effectively in district and college governance, and the opportunity to express their opinions at the district level, and to ensure that these opinions are given every reasonable consideration (*Ed Code 70901 (b) (1) (E) enacted as part of AB 1725*). The purpose of the District Governance Senate is to serve as a forum for discussion of college-wide issues and to formulate and provide recommendations for the superintendent/president regarding institutional planning and budget development.

The participatory governance process should be one that functions in accord with:

- The mandates of AB 1725, the Education Code and the intent of Title 5 Regulations;
- The accreditation standards of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges' Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges;
- The policies of the Board of Governors and the College of the Sequoias Board of Trustees.

The participatory governance process allows for recommendations from the District Governance Senate to the superintendent/president, who will normally accept the recommendation of the District Governance Senate. If the superintendent/president does not accept the recommendation from the District Governance Senate, the superintendent/president will communicate the reasons. In all cases, a written record will reflect those reasons.

### **3. Function:**

The District Governance Senate is a governance and consultative body that represents all District constituents.

The District Governance Senate meets twice monthly to:

- Make recommendations to the superintendent/president on the budget, the integration of planning and resource allocation, and other matters of the District;
- Refer appropriate items to Academic Senate with regard to issues covered under California AB 1725, commonly referred to as 10-plus-one items;
- Make recommendations to the superintendent/president regarding board policies and administrative procedures;
- Promote communication and foster awareness among the students, faculty, classified staff and administration concerning the welfare, growth and sustainable quality improvement of the District;
- Identify common areas of concern that require further study and forward these to the appropriate governance or operational group;
- Oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of the District's model for integrated planning;
- Lead the periodic review and/or reaffirmation of the District mission;
- Support and monitor the development of the master plan and strategic plan;
- Monitor compliance with accreditation standards;
- Annually review the *College of the Sequoias Governance and Decision-making Manual* and revise as needed.

Access to the District Governance Senate is available to all constituencies. All actions of the District Governance Senate will be communicated to its constituencies in the form of minutes. Members of the District Governance Senate representing constituent groups in Section 4A and standing committees in Section 4B are responsible to communicate District Governance Senate issues and report to the District Governance Senate the positions of the groups they represent. It is recommended that a report from District Governance Senate appear regularly on the agendas of the constituent groups and standing committees.

#### **4. Structure:**

- A. The permanent, voting members of the District Governance Senate are:
- Chairs: Administrative co-chair appointed by superintendent/president or his designee from among administrative appointees to the District Governance Senate; faculty or staff co-chair elected from among all non-administrative members by all non-administrative members
  - Four administrators appointed by the superintendent/president or his/her designee
  - Two representatives from Academic Senate
  - Two representatives from College of the Sequoias Teachers Association (COSTA)
  - Two representatives from College of the Sequoias Adjunct Faculty Association (COSAFA)
  - Four representatives from College of the Sequoias School Employees Association (COS-CSEA).
  - Two students appointed by Student Senate
  - The administrative or faculty/staff co-chair of each District Governance Senate committee
  - Superintendent/president, ex officio (non-voting member)

For the exception of administration representatives, the term of service of members shall align with each organization's bylaws regarding elections and/or terms of service.

- B. The District Governance Senate will have the following Standing Committees:
- Budget
  - Institutional Planning and Effectiveness
  - Institutional Program Review
  - Technology
  - Equity & Diversity Action

The composition of these committees will include representation from among all college constituencies. Each committee will designate a co-chair to serve on District Governance Senate. Each committee is responsible for submitting to District Governance Senate written minutes. The membership, internal composition and function statement is determined by each committee and approved by District Governance Senate annually.

## **5. Process:**

### **A. Time and Place:**

The District Governance Senate will set a time and place to meet that is mutually agreeable to its members. The District Governance Senate will meet twice per month when possible and at least once per month during the fall and spring semesters.

### **B. Agenda:**

1. Agendas will be prepared by the administrative co-chair and distributed to the District Governance Senate members 72 hours before the meeting.
2. The agendas will be published 72 hours in advance of meetings.
3. The administrative co-chair will generate the agenda from items submitted by the members of the District Governance Senate.
4. Those who do not sit on District Governance Senate but wish to submit items for the agenda should contact their District Governance Senate representatives.
5. Anyone may attend District Governance Senate meetings and may make comments during the public comment portion of the meeting.

### **C. Operations:**

1. In order to take action, a quorum must be present. For this purpose a quorum is defined as a simple majority of the total membership (11).
2. A member unable to attend a meeting may designate a proxy, either giving his/her vote to another senate member or, in the case of a committee representative, by sending an alternate from his/her committee. The administrative chair must be informed, via email, of the granting of proxy 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Emergency circumstances in which the 24-hour notice condition is not met or circumstances in which excessive requests for proxy occur (more than three consecutive absences or more than four absences in the academic year) may be addressed by the District Governance Senate on a case-by-case basis.
3. The District Governance Senate will follow Robert's Rules of Order to conduct business. Records of dissenting and minority opinion will be included in the minutes.
4. The District Governance shall elect a non-administrative co-chair at the first meeting of the fall semester annually. The non-administrative co-chair shall be elected from among all non-administrative members by all non-administrative members.

5. Clerical Support: The Office of the President will provide clerical support.
6. Changes to the composition and/or bylaws of the District Governance Senate:
  - a. Any member of the District Governance Senate may request a change in the composition and/or bylaws of the District Governance Senate as part of the annual assessment of planning and decision-making processes laid out in the Integrated Planning Manual.
  - b. Changes to the composition and/or bylaws must be approved by two-thirds of the total voting membership of the District Governance Senate.

Adopted: Academic Senate, 4/25/01  
College Council, 4/30/01

Revised: College Council, 5/8/2007  
College Council, 9/9/08  
College Council, 10/9/12  
District Governance Senate, 10/8/13  
District Governance Senate, 9/27/22