

GOVERNANCE POLICY

Policy Number:

Owner Department: President's Office

Effective Date: October 23, 2013

Approved By: President's Council

I. POLICY STATEMENT/PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define governance at Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences. The higher education literature provides the framework, the historical context and best practices to draw upon. Two primary sources, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Statement on Government and the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) Statement on Institutional Governance underpin our SCNM position on shared governance.

II. POLICY STATUS

New

III. HISTORY/BACKGROUND (non-mandatory)

The College established a governing board upon incorporation in 1992. In 2000 the Board of Trustees established faculty and student trustee positions, each to serve one-year terms. At that time both the nascent Faculty and Staff Senates began meeting regularly. The interim president chartered the President's Council in September 1999, which afforded every College department and constituency an opportunity to meet, discuss and ratify policy. In 2000 the Board adopted the Policy Governance model, working with a facilitator and board development literature to develop a Policy Governance Manual. In 2008, the Executive Council, made up of the president and direct reports, was expanded to include the Faculty Senate president, and again in 2012 to include the Chief Academic Officer.

IV. SCOPE/KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Faculty, Staff, Students

V. POLICY ITEMS

Governance at SCNM: Representative & Shared

Communication, consultation and determination comprise the activities of shared governance.

The SCNM model, based on higher education historical precedents and documents, blends the concepts of shared and representative governance. Students, staff, faculty and the administration are represented, have input, and vote on the majority of committees, task forces and councils, including President's Council. Faculty and student participate as voting members of the College's Board of Trustees.

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This level of participatory governance, rare in higher education, gives voice to constituencies whose valuable perspectives and experience help the College meet society's changing healthcare needs while adhering to the principles of naturopathic medicine. However, it also introduces a degree of role ambiguity and slows the decision-making process.

The following section will examine the roles of SCNM's internal constituencies and external stakeholders, delineating their respective authority and responsibility in communication, consultation and in determination.

Internal Constituencies

A. Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees bears the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the College fulfills its mission, stewards its resources (financial, human and physical), and complies with accreditation and other regulatory requirements. As stated in the AAUP Statement, the board also is the "final institutional authority", the body that selects the president, approves the budget, adopts new or eliminates existing programs, chooses an independent audit firm, and determines the strategic and financial wisdom of new construction, the acquisition of land or other forms of campus expansion, and confers degrees. The board, comprised mostly of independent trustees, is an interface between the institution and the public, blending fresh perspectives on current and future trends to best position the College.

The Board has the primary responsibility to select, evaluate and set compensation for the College's President/CEO. The Board's fiduciary duty includes the selection of an independent audit firm and authorizing the audit and IRS Form 990 submissions. Only the Board can authorize the acquisition of real property. The Board has the responsibility to regularly evaluate its own performance using reliable and standardized instruments. The Board monitors that Ends Policies (SCNM deliverables) are achieved, without being prescriptive on how to achieve them.

As recommended by the AAUP, the SCNM Board of Trustees, "Entrusts the conduct of administration to the administrative officers – the president and the deans and the conduct of teaching and research to the faculty."

B. Administration

According to the AAUP, "The degree to which a president can envision new horizons for the institution, and can persuade others to see them and to work toward them, will often constitute the chief measure of the president's administration ... The president has a special obligation to innovate and initiate."

The Board of Trustees confers the authority of running the institution directly to the President/CEO. According to its Policy Governance Manual, all communication between the Board and the College flows through the President/CEO. This doesn't preclude discussions with other individuals or groups; it does however require that those encounters are coordinated through the President/CEO. The president represents the College and serves as its chief spokesperson.

Much of the College's success depends on a talented and dedicated Administration; one that includes Vice Presidents and Chief Officers, with management expertise in higher education, business affairs, information technology, and human resources. The administration has the primary responsibility to maintain existing resources including human resources and the campus and its infrastructure. It also creates new resources through fundraising and developing new programs. The administration organizes and leads strategic planning

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and develops the ensuing budget in consultation with the faculty and staff. The administration approves faculty appointments, reappointments and changes in rank, as well as selection of academic deans and the Chief Academic Officer with consultation from the faculty.

C. Faculty

The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process. The faculty sets the requirements for degrees and determines whether the requirements have been met, thereby authorizing the president and board to grant the degree. Faculty play a critical role in shaping the future of SCNM by participating via representation on President's Council, Executive Council, standing committees and task forces on strategic planning, policy initiation and review, salary increases, and the development of new programs.

The faculty has the primary responsibility to develop and deliver the curriculum. Accordingly, the faculty innovates and establishes pedagogical standards for classroom, laboratory and clinical education. The faculty makes recommendations on status (appointments, rank) to the administration for approval.

D. Students

Students represent the future of a health profession, especially so in emerging and rapidly growing fields like naturopathic medicine. The student body also possesses tremendous energy, passion, and dedication for their studies, for the treatment of patients and for the future of their discipline. However, students' high course-load and focus on their studies does constrain their perspective. Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences recognizes the value of the student perspective and understands its limitations, according student participation as representatives in the governance process.

Students have a voice and a vote, typically one, across the College's governance structure. These include membership on the Board of Trustees, President's Council, and many committees and task forces. Students who serve on these bodies bring an important perspective and experience; they serve on behalf of the entire school and not merely as representatives of a specific constituency.

E. Staff

Individual staff members serve on many College committees and President's Council, because of their specific responsibilities. In addition the Staff Senate President sits on President's Council, the College's highest communication and policy ratification body. Staff members are invited to participate on search committees, strategic planning activities and task forces.

VI. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Office of the President

VII. RELATED DOCUMENTS

SCNM Statement on Governance

SCNM Policy on Shared Governance

VIII. NEXT REVIEW DATE

As needed.

IX. VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Control	Approved By/Date	Date Effective	Amendment
1	President's Council/10.23.2013		
2			

X. POLICY AUTHOR/CONTACT

Office of the President

Governance in Higher Education: Introduction

The purpose of this document is to define governance at Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences. The higher education literature provides the framework, the historical context and best practices to draw upon. Two primary sources, the AAUP Statement on Government and the AGB Statement on Institutional Governance underpin this SCNM statement on shared governance.

Shared governance assures diverse input and deliberate process. It also can seem cumbersome and slow to respond to changing environmental conditions. Shared governance, to paraphrase Winston Churchill's description of democracy, "is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried."

Higher education governance in the United States stands apart from nearly every other country in important ways. First, the federal government delegates authority to regional and programmatic accrediting agencies, foregoing the central control wielded by ministries of education elsewhere. Second, the United States established institutional independence (protected by the US Supreme Court) and fostered shared governance to an unsurpassed degree. Third, the independence, responsibility and authority of institutional governing boards began and remain practically sacrosanct in this country.

Historical Context: Governing Boards, Faculty, Accreditation Agencies

While the higher education landscape looks vastly different today, the origins of its governance structure date back nearly 200 years. The 1819 U.S. Supreme Court decision on a case that pitted Dartmouth College against the state of New Hampshire is often referred to as the *Magna Carta* of higher education. Chief Justice John Marshall wrote the majority opinion that upheld the college's right to choose its own board and its president without interference from the governor (who sought to replace the president).

The Yale Report of 1828 confirmed academic freedom and the faculty's primary authority over curricular decisions. The Yale Corporation (Yale's board of trustees), having passed a resolution that recommended eliminating the teaching of 'dead languages' like Latin and Greek, invited faculty comment. While the faculty acknowledged the need to adopt necessary changes to the curriculum, they made a compelling case for a liberal arts education as the foundation for learning. Furthermore, they asserted that decisions on curriculum and teaching were the primary responsibility of the faculty, an assertion that laid the foundation of academic freedom.

Proliferation of diploma mills beginning in the 19th century led to the establishment of voluntary accrediting bodies. It was the passage of the legislation commonly referred to as the GI Bill that conferred the importance and authority to accreditation bodies that we know today. Concerned that veterans returning from World War II would flood the U.S. workforce and dramatically increase unemployment, Congress passed the *Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944* to provide GIs educational benefits. Concerned that diploma mills would attract unwitting veterans, Congress would only approve tuition at federally approved institutions – those conducted by accreditation associations. The GI Bill, followed by the 1965 Higher Education Act that established federally backed student loans, led to a tripling in college and university enrollment.

In 1965 the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) published its *Statement on Government*. The document obviously written from a faculty perspective (the AGB commended it but did not endorse it) outlined governance responsibilities to three constituencies, the board, the president, and the faculty. The document includes a section on students that articulates the need to permit significant student participation, but falls short of according students (or staff) any formal role in institutional governance.

The Association of Governing Boards (AGB), whose 1800 college and university membership includes SCNM, published its *Statement on Institutional Governance* in 1999. Noting the changing educational landscape, the AGB recognized the growing power of accrediting and governmental bodies, workforce development demands and the importance of students as stakeholders. Notably, the AGB document specifically recommends against student, staff or faculty serving on boards of trustees. According to the latest AGB survey the number of colleges and universities with faculty trustees is less than 14%. Students serve on governing boards at fewer than 9% of U.S. colleges and universities.

History of Governance at SCNM

The College established a governing board upon incorporation in 1992. Creating and growing a credible and accredited school taxed an institution with limited financial resources, and small staff, faculty and student body. In several key instances, inexperience, exigency and expediency trumped the principles of collaborative governance, none more so than the decision to close the College in July 1999. The College's subsequent rebirth and continued growth was guided by the Board's ongoing development, commitment and contributions.

After the College regained its financial footing and attained initial programmatic accreditation, the Board of Trustees established faculty and student trustee positions, each to serve one-year terms. At that time both the Faculty and Staff Senates, already in existence in name only, began meeting regularly. The interim president chartered the President's Council in September 1999, which afforded every College department and constituency and opportunity to meet and discuss and ratify policy. In 2000 the Board adopted the Policy Governance model, working with a facilitator and board development literature to develop a Policy Governance Manual. In 2008 Executive Council, a weekly meeting of the president and direct reports, expanded to include the Faculty Senate president, and again in 2012 to include the Chief Academic Officer.