

# **GOVERNANCE POLICY**

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.

## **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, 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**

The student body possesses tremendous energy, passion, and dedication for their studies. 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 a Staff Council representative 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

## **VIII. NEXT REVIEW DATE**

As needed.

## SCNM Policy on Shared Governance

### IX. VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Control	Approved By/Date	Date Effective	Amendment
1	President's Council/10.23.2013		
2	President's Council	6/24/2020	Minor Changes
3	President's Council	10/12/2020	Minor Changes

### X. POLICY AUTHOR/CONTACT

Office of the President