



Modesto Junior College (MJC) Participatory Governance Structure

Fall 2020 Initial Draft

Background

The first phase of reimagining the current Modesto Junior College (MJC) participatory governance process, [Engaging All Voices](#) (EAV; established 2012), was undertaken by a **Participatory Governance Workgroup** (PGW) made up of representatives appointed from each of the current EAV councils and committees. The workgroup began by listing the [current council and committee charges](#), and then examined these charges to “group” them by similarity to see if our collaborative regroupings might envision our governance structure, and its requisite functionality, in a more efficient, stream-lined manner.

Redundant charges were used only once to clarify the essential participatory governance work that must be accomplished, and operational responsibilities were excluded when the group agreed they were more appropriately assigned to administrators or other college-wide bodies, such as the Academic Senate. Additional charges were included where the group agreed there should be constituency perspective or that a crucial shared governance charge was excluded from the initial list of charges. Thus, the process began with deconstructing our current shared governance structure, agreeing to the list of primary charges of participatory governance, and then collectively reconstructing these charges into novel groupings, with input from all constituency groups.

A [planning session](#) was completed, as well as an asynchronous survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MJCGovernance>), and a [brainstorming](#) session. [Reorganizational input](#) was solicited from workgroup members at various, structured meetings on February 13th (9-11am), March 4th (3-5pm), June 10th (10:30am-12 noon) and July 8th (10:30am-12 noon), 2020.¹ In addition to completing an extending deconstruct and collaborative reconstruct of the current participatory governance structure, the PGW also agreed upon guiding principles and parameters for its work while highlighting the following facts:

- *The current EAV structure includes 6 councils, 4 committees and the Academic Senate;*
- *The current average number of meetings per semester is 6 and at an average of \$40/hour, a two-hour meeting in our participatory governance structure, with 15 people involved, is estimated at \$1,200;*
- *Some councils and committees do not meet as regularly as initially planned and meeting quorum is often an issue for councils and committees within the current EAV structure.*

¹ Members of the MJC Participatory Governance Workgroup include: Chad Redwing, Academic Senate President (Chair); Curtis Martin, Faculty; Angelica Guzman, LTAC; Tiffnie-Ann Versola, CSEA President; Patrick Bettencourt, LTAC; Rob Stevenson, Faculty; Sherri Suarez, LTAC; Amanda Cannon, Classified Professional; Florida Arias, Vice President; Parul Parikh, Classified Professional; Sounisa Lee, Classified Professional; Mikayla Ramirez, Student; Iris Carroll, Faculty; Shelley Akiona, Yosemite Faculty Association President; Jenni Abbott, LTAC.



Overview

The current **MJC Participatory Governance Workgroup** (PGW, 2020) reached preliminary consensus that [all current governance councils and committees](#), with the exception of College Council, should be identified as *committees*, each communicating regularly with our extant [College Council](#). After broad discussion, brainstorming, multiple planning sessions and an asynchronous, anonymous survey, the workgroup made the following initial placements into common “groupings” by charge. In addition to College Council, the workgroup identified five general categories of participatory governance charges, which have been conceptualized as potential committees.

The reorganized charges are shown below; note the names of all committees are intended to be descriptive and do not necessarily reflect the ultimate name of each proposed committee, as the next step in the shared governance reorganization is to devolve organizational and procedural decisions to those who are actually doing the work, the outlined college-wide committees themselves.

College Council

- *College Mission and goals*
- *MJC Strategic Plan*
- *College Governance and coordinating, reviewing all college-wide committee recommendations*

Student Success, Equity and Access Committee

- *Student Success*
- *Student Access*
- *Student Equity*
- *Affordability*

Technology Committee

- *Technology Initiatives*
- *Technology prioritization*
- *Instructional Technology Planning*
- *Campus technology standards*
- *Technology TCO Planning*

Professional Development Committee

- *Professional Development Coordination with all constituent groups to support institutional priorities*
- *Faculty, staff, and student technology training*
- *Dissemination of professional development resources*

Budget & Facilities Planning Committee

- *Budgetary Master Planning*
- *Budget development*
- *Facilities Master Planning*
- *Swing space planning*
- *Facilities TCO planning*
- *ADA planning*

Institutional Effectiveness & Accreditation Committee

- *Research and integrated planning*
- *Accreditation*
- *Institutional Effectiveness, Program Review, Assessment and Learning Outcomes*
- *Education Master Plan*



Recategorized Charges

[Enrollment Management](#) is recommended by the PGW as an administrative function best considered by [President's Cabinet and Extended Cabinet](#) as well as [Dean's Cabinet](#) in collaboration with the College Council and MJC Administrators.²

[Program Viability, Revitalization, and Discontinuance](#), [Instructional Program Planning and Development](#) and [Hiring Prioritization](#) were recommended as [Academic Senate](#) tasks as they fall within the Senate's 10+1 purview.³ Agreement with the Academic Senate is affirmed by vote of the Senate in a regular or special meeting; the Academic Senate is committed to review and state a position in a timely matter on any proposal, related to its purview, submitted by other governance bodies or the Board Designee.

The [Academic Calendar](#) was determined to be a [YFA](#) and [CSEA](#) negotiated item, with [YCCD Board](#) approval, and the faculty Academic Senates at both colleges should be involved in calendar conversations, especially as related to the pedagogic/andragogic implications of academic calendar options.⁴

² College administrators include the president, vice presidents, deans, associate deans, and classified administrators. The Board of Trustees defines the scope of responsibilities and delegates authority to college administrators through job descriptions and board policy. All administrators have supervisory duties related to budgets, personnel, and operational responsibilities. Administrators provide leadership and expertise in assessing, identifying, formulating, and aiding in implementing the overall direction for the college.

³ When considering Academic and Professional matters the "governing board or its constituents or its designees" will "rely primarily" or "mutually agree" with the Academic Senate ([Title 5, section 53203\(a\)](#)). On Academic and Professional matters, the Academic Senate is the primary recommending participatory governance body "to the administration of [the] college and to the governing board of [the] district" ([Title 5, section 53200\(b\)](#)). The Board of Trustees shall "rely primarily" upon the advice and judgment of the Academic Senates in selected areas. *These areas are: A. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines; B. Degree and certificate requirements; C. Grading policies; D. Faculty role and involvement in accreditation process, including the self-study; F. Policies for Faculty professional development activities. The Board of Trustees shall reach "mutual agreement" between the Academic Senates and the Board on selected areas. These areas are: A. Education program development; B. Student preparation and success; C. Processes for program review; D. Institutional planning and budget development processes; E. District and college governance structures; F. Others as may be mutually agreed upon by the Academic Senates and the Board of Trustees.*

⁴ Related to working conditions, full and part-time faculty members are represented by the Yosemite Faculty Association which is the collective bargaining unit. Related to district governance, classified staff members are represented by the CSEA and CSAC. The rights of CSEA and CSAC to represent classified staff along with the rights to consultation on matters that may have significant impact on staff are affirmed in the CSEA contract. Information regarding the roles and rights of classified staff can be found in California Code of Regulations [Title 5, §51023.5](#). Related to working conditions, classified staff members are represented by CSEA.



Guiding Principles

Decision-making at Modesto Junior College is guided by the college's [mission](#), [strategic directions](#), and [decision-making principles](#). The PGW agreed upon several important workgroup additional parameters for its work:

1. Details about each committee, including its procedures and processes, should be *devolved to the lowest level of governance possible, the committee's themselves*. In this way, as opposed to a rigid and hierarchical structure, the proposed changes seek to foster joint efforts among faculty, students, classified staff, and administration and empower committees to help determine how they will meet their charges.⁵

Each committee will begin by crafting, through consensus, a framework that includes its **general charges and process guidelines** which outline a **committee make-up of 9-12 people, include all constituency groups**, the appointment of a **chair or co-chairs**, in addition to **the possibility of additional ex-officio members** who bring certain expertise to guide the committee, as well as guidelines for the **regularity and length of committee meetings** and the **term of service** for each member. Both College Council and the five proposed committees are free to create **workgroups** and **task forces** in order to accomplish their charges.

In this way, the revised participatory governance structure begins by framing each committee with charges, what it is to be accomplished, while giving some degree of flexibility and self-determination within each committee in regards to how it accomplishes its work.

In order to facilitate the most efficient and thoughtful participatory governance structure, it is recommended that the College Council oversee a **master calendar** that captures regularly scheduled meetings of the council and each committee.

⁵The College Council forwards governance issues to and receives recommendations from the governance committees, then makes recommendations to the President on the issues. Decision making at Modesto Junior College relies heavily upon the spirit and principles of good faith and collegial, participatory governance focused on improving student learning. The scope for each constituent group outlined below is derived from the California Education Code, California Code of Regulations, the Yosemite Community College District Board of Trustees policies and procedures, Academic Senate rules and bylaws, CSEA/CSAC contract and bylaws, the Associated Student Government constitution and bylaws, YFA contract and bylaws.



2. The College Council, which ultimately makes formal recommendations to the college president, includes representatives from **Yosemite Faculty Association (YFA), MJC Academic Senate, ASMJC, California School Employees Association (CSEA), and Classified Staff Advisory Council (CSAC), and administrators.**⁶

College Council makes decisions by consensus, defined as a decision that all College Council members either agree with or can live with. Differences or clarifications may be submitted by members for inclusion in the minutes.

College Council is a place where specific proposals and plan may both initiate and end, and, in this way, College Council is able to provide some oversight, provide deadlines and annually receive reports from each committee as to the work accomplished each academic year.

The College Council, as well as the proposed five committees, are composed of members that are elected, appointed, or position based, but one does not need to be a member to participate.

On academic and professional matters described in [YCCD Board Policy 7-8049](#), on which the Academic Senate is primarily relied, or subject to mutual agreement between the Academic Senate the President (acting as the YCCD Board's designee), the College Council may serve as a forum for advising the President on proposals that must be submitted to the Academic Senate for concurrence. Faculty representatives to governance groups and the administration share joint responsibility for ensuring appropriate lead time for Academic Senate consideration and the process of collegial consultation.

College Council and all college-wide committees are open, public meetings and any member of the community can attend a committee and offer public comment. Agendas and accompanying documents for all committees, as well as the College Council, should be published 72 hours prior to any meeting whether the groups fall under the Brown Act or not. In this way, constituent groups can be better prepared to provide timely feedback at the meeting.

⁶ [Board Policy 5400](#) the Board of Trustees recognizes the Associated Students organization as the official voice for the students in district and college decision-making processes. The Modesto Junior College Student Senate is recognized as the sole representative body of the Associated Students of Modesto Junior college. Through ASMJC and the ASMJC Student Senate students participate effectively in governance processes. Information on students' roles and rights is found in YCCD Board Policy 5400 and the California Code of Regulations [Title 5, §51023.7](#).



In order to best capture the work of each participatory group, the workgroup recommends all committees standardize key practices for agendas and minutes with the use of [BoardDocs](#) while also seeking professional development on efficient and effective participatory governance. Agendas should be heavy on action and discussion items and short on report outs. Minutes should accurately reflect decisions made at meetings – including a brief description of the discussion.

Report outs should be greatly curtailed or eliminated in meetings and the focus of participatory governance meetings should be to deliberate, debate and take action on items, and the PGW recommends professional development opportunities for council and committee members to bolster each college-wide body's capacity to engage in thoughtful, transformative work that is transparent, thoroughly participatory and serves the best interests of the college, our students and the communities we serve.

3. Good Faith Participatory decision-making necessitates engaging in mutually productive dialogue that is based on respect, trust, and a willingness to seek and give information in an honest fashion. This is what good faith effort means. It is grounded in honesty. It is a sincere intention to deal fairly with others.

4. Decisions must align with the college's mission, vision goals, college initiatives, program review and learning outcomes. MJC's [Strategic Directions](#) and [Strategic Plan](#) should be considered and participatory governance should be informed by MJC's master plans, of which there are several, including: the [Educational Master Plan](#), the [Vision Goals](#), the Facilities Master Plan, the [College Technology Plan](#), the [Online Education Plan](#), the [Student Equity and Achievement \(SEA\) Plan](#), the [Cooperative Work Experience Education Plan \(CWEE\)](#), the district [Total Cost of Ownership/Facilities Plan](#) and the Yosemite Community College [District Strategic Plan](#).

Decisions must also consistently utilize appropriate data to inform and clarify decisions, and all stakeholders shall have access to the most reliable and applicable data and reports to best guide recommendations.



General Framework for College-Wide Participatory Governance at MJC

Compared with the previous [EAV \(2012\) Flowchart](#), the proposed revisions to participatory governance at MJC are simpler and more flexible. The animating principle is that in a short, clear document anyone can understand the college's overall approach to collaborative decision-making.

The College Council is the primary, cross-constituency recommending body of the institution. The college president receives formal recommendations from College Council, as well as the Academic Senate on academic and professional matters. Recommendations of College Council are informed by the committee structure and recommendations can flow either from College Council to the committee structure and back again, or percolate up from the committee structure itself, or the Academic Senate in academic and professional matters. The College Council should "provide consensus recommendations to the College President on matters of college-wide concern and to the College President and other college representatives to District Council on district-wide concerns. Each College Council shall have a definite role in recommending college budget priorities and strategic planning, in determining institutional processes and the charge and membership of certain college committees..." ([Yosemite Faculty Association Contract](#); Art. 34.1.3.3).

