



DATE: December 15, 2022

TO: Dr. Joanne Addison, Faculty Assembly Acting Chair  
Dr. Vivian Shyu, Faculty Assembly Vice-Chair  
Dr. Dennis DeBay, Faculty Assembly Secretary

FROM: Dr. Constancio Nakuma, Provost Faculty Assembly  
Dr. Turan Kayaoglu, Associate Vice Chancellor, Faculty Affairs

CC: Dr. Michelle Marks, Chancellor

SUBJECT: Shared Governance in all Schools and Colleges: Compliance with Regent Law/Policy



Thank you for your call to continue to strengthen shared governance at CU Denver. As your memo mentions, for shared governance to be effective, the structures and practices should be in place to allow faculty to deliberate and make decisions, convey their collective will to the deans, and broadly fulfill their role in the decision-making process. We read the 2019 "Faculty Governance at CU Denver Colleges" review and share your concerns about the inconsistencies across colleges in adherence to Regent Law and Policy on shared governance.

Shared governance is a key principle of the University of Colorado, and we are committed to upholding this principle. The faculty should have a strong voice at every level of the university to contribute to decisions that affect their work and the institution as a whole. The faculty involvement includes protecting the faculty's right to take the lead in academic areas, such as pedagogy, curriculum, research, and academic ethics. At the same time, this involvement includes ensuring the faculty input is sought and considered transparently and fairly for areas where the administration takes the lead, such as personnel policies and budgeting. As your memo reminds us, for shared governance to flourish, each school, college, and library needs to have a faculty governance body whose structure and operating rules are determined by the faculty.

Here are four institutional practices we plan to undertake to strengthen shared governance in all schools, colleges, and the library at CU Denver.

1. The Provost's Office will issue guidance on shared governance at CU Denver in Spring 2023, and this guidance will identify the minimum shared governance structures, principles, and practices that must be followed to comply with Regent Law and Policy. We will consult with the Faculty Assembly leadership to affirm that we share an understanding of these minimum standards. We will also check with the system office to affirm our interpretation is consistent with Regent Law and Policy.
2. Starting in Spring 2023, the Office of Faculty Affairs will annually issue on the "State of Shared Governance at CU Denver" in April. This report will be based on a review of schools, colleges, and library bylaws and a survey of faculty and administrators in academic units and will be presented to the Faculty Assembly and deans, and shared on the Office of Faculty Affairs' website. It will inform our work with the deans and the faculty to strengthen shared governance in the schools, colleges, and library.

3. Starting 2023-24 Academic Year, each Fall and Spring, the Office of Faculty Affairs will convene a meeting with the Faculty Assembly, UCDALI, and faculty governance leaders in the schools, colleges, and library to discuss faculty shared governance at CU Denver and facilitate information sharing, including the discussion of best practices.
4. We will provide training and support to both faculty and administrators on the principles and practices of shared governance. The AVC-Faculty Affairs will work with Faculty Assembly leadership to develop a program to integrate shared governance at CU Denver into the orientation of new faculty and administrators starting 2023-24 Academic Year.

We are confident that these initiatives will help to strengthen shared governance at CU Denver in the long term. However, they will not address the immediate and critical question of faculty involvement in the current budget refinement process at CU Denver. In our challenging budget environment, shared governance will be our best asset to navigate the complex challenges. The faculty's perspectives, expertise, and questions will lead to better-informed decisions that are more likely to be effective in addressing the budgetary challenges at hand.

To address this immediate concern, we have communicated to the deans that they need to engage with their faculty and staff in the budget refinement process and we have asked the deans to document and report on how they plan to involve their faculty and staff in budget decisions. This can help ensure that faculty and staff have a strong voice in the current budget process, even in academic units where shared governance structures may not yet be in place.

To recap, strengthening shared governance is indispensable to realizing our goals at CU Denver. We need to ensure that faculty have a strong voice in decision-making at the university, and their rights and interests are protected per Regent Law and Policy. This is not just a matter of upholding Regent Law and Policy on shared governance; it is a matter of ensuring that the university can foster a more inclusive and democratic academic environment, and better support the faculty in teaching, research, and service. It is only by fostering a culture of shared governance that we can ensure that the university effectively achieves its mission and serves its students and faculty.

Thank you for your service and leadership.