

1 TCNJ School of Engineering Governance

2 Supplement to "Governance Structure and Processes (2005)"

3 Adopted by the School Faculty November 8, 2011

4 Modified April 30, 2013

5 **Purpose:**

6 While all authority for decision making is held by the TCNJ Board of Trustees, "collegial governance"
7 rights, especially concerning academic and scholarly issues have been given to the faculty as defined in
8 the College-wide governance document "Governance Structure and Processes (2005)." In 2010 the
9 Faculty Senate realized that some schools and departments were not following shared governance
10 principles which led to schools and departments being asked to consider establishing their own
11 governance documents. The value to faculty is that governance gives faculty, students, and staff an
12 institutional voice, enabling these three stakeholder groups to make recommendations. School level
13 governance also provides processes for making recommendations and resolving questions when
14 recommendations are not supported by the dean. As in the College-wide document, governance is
15 limited to issues of policy, procedure, and program.

16 This document augments the existing College-wide document "Governance Structure and Processes
17 (2005)." The College-wide document will supersede any perceived conflicts between the documents. It
18 is vitally important that the School's governance policies follow the College-wide "Basic Principles" that
19 reflect the established shared-governance principles. The system must allow for the participation of
20 stakeholders without being overly burdensome or adding unnecessary layers of bureaucracy that would
21 slow progress within the School.

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23 **Membership and Meetings:**

24 Faculty members of committees are elected by their respective department; student membership in any
25 committee are the SGA School of Engineering representatives, who have been elected by their peers by
26 simple majority vote, and/or other students recruited by these SGA representatives; and staff is selected
27 by the staff unless specified by job title (expertise) in the committee charge. This representation allows
28 School-wide committees to address issues that span multiple departments and units, fostering dialogue
29 when necessary. All stakeholder groups must have an open election process that reflects appropriate
30 representation and engages as many of the stakeholder members as possible.

31 The regularly scheduled School meetings are intended to be a forum for information sharing concerning
32 all issues being considered at the College, School, and Department levels. However, certain issues
33 require more in depth discussion on particular topics and/or require broader input from the community
34 than can be afforded at a regular School meeting. Therefore, committees must call one or more open
35 forums to collect testimony on important issues at the preliminary recommendation stage.

36
37 **Policy Flow, Testimony, and Reporting:**

38 Committees are established through appropriate stakeholder groups representing faculty, staff, and
39 students as described in each committee's charge. All committee members have equal rights and
40 responsibilities concerning input, elected service and voting privileges. Routine business which is defined
41 in each committee charge does not need to be directed by the School Steering Committee (SSC). For
42 issues that are not routine, the SSC will prepare a charge and direct the charge to one of the school
43 committees or establish an ad hoc committee to deliberate the issue. Unlike standing committees the
44 output of an ad hoc committee is a report, and not a recommendation.

- 45 As with the College-wide process, an explicit three-step process is followed for each issue:
- 46 (1) Identifying and reporting the problem. If necessary the School Steering Committee will prepare a
 - 47 charge identifying the issue for the appropriate committee.
 - 48 (2) Preparing a Preliminary Recommendation, and
 - 49 (3) Making a Final Recommendation.

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51 This three step process ensures that all committees seek information through committee membership,
52 formal testimony, and open comment from affected individuals and all stakeholder groups. It is
53 expected that committee members bring issues back to their stakeholder group for discussion during
54 formal meetings. Preliminary recommendations for new policy, procedure, or program must be
55 presented to the stakeholders at either a regular school meeting or at a scheduled forum. If there are
56 substantive changes needed after the preliminary recommendation has been presented at an open
57 forum then the revised recommendation must be sent to all stakeholders and presented again at an
58 open forum. If any stakeholder has evidence that the process has not been followed then the School
59 Steering Committee (SSC) will meet with the committee to redress the problem. If at least one
60 department objects to a preliminary recommendation of a committee as specified in the conflict
61 resolution section, and if the faculty support the objection then the recommendation must be
62 reconsidered by the standing committee. The final recommendation is forwarded directly to the dean
63 who will respond in writing to the committee. When there is any disagreement the conflict resolution
64 process will be followed.

65 School Committees serve as governance entities that handle issues that are regular and continuing,
66 often related to normal operations of the School. School committees are formed each spring for the
67 following academic year. Each school committee will maintain appropriate action minutes of all official
68 action and will make an annual report to the faculty and dean.

69 **Student Representation:**

70 Student representation in the shared governance of the School is an important College-wide principle.
71 In order to effectively provide representation of students on relevant committees, students in each
72 department will elect two student representatives to the School governance processes. These elected
73 students will be members of the Student Representative Committee (SRC) and will be eligible to serve
74 on the SSC, CC, SC, CSPI, and ad hoc committees. School of Engineering elected representatives of the
75 College's Student Government Association (SGA) will serve on the SRC as ex officio members without
76 vote. Each School-wide committee will have two student representatives. Both student members are
77 expected to attend all committee meetings. The SRC will determine the representatives for each
78 committee.

79 The SRC will meet regularly to discuss issues occurring in the various School committees. The SRC will
80 solicit feedback from other students when deemed appropriate by a School committee or the SRC.

81 The SGA elected representatives will ensure that elections are held in each department during the
82 spring term, effective for the next academic year. If SGA representatives are not available, then the
83 elected leaders of the School of Engineering student organizations will ensure that elections are held.
84 Nominations will be sought for the SRC from the entire student body of each department; self-
85 nomination is allowed. Candidates will provide a short biography and statement of interest that will be
86 made available to the departmental student body with a department-specific ballot.

87 In order to ensure that there is a proper membership balance among students and faculty for each
88 committee meeting, the number of members constituting a quorum will be as follows:

Voting Members on Committee	Quorum
8 (SC)	5
6 (CSPI)	4
4 (SSC)	3
5 (CC)	3
5 (PSC)	3

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92 **School Steering Committee (SSC):**

93 The School Steering Committee (SSC) has a limited but important role in School of Engineering
 94 governance. The committee is charged with maintaining a collegial working environment by:

- 95 • Receiving issues that fall outside the normal charge of existing committees
- 96 • Receiving concerns related to governance process
- 97 • Address concerns that an issue is not being resolved in a timely fashion
- 98 • Assisting in the resolution of conflicts concerning the rejection of any recommendation
- 99 • Hold a faculty vote when a petition has been received as part of the conflict resolution process.
 100 When at least one department voting by secret ballot questions the appropriateness of a final
 101 resolution that vote represents a petition to have the issue placed before the faculty. School
 102 votes will be by electronic voting with a majority of the School membership needed to pass the
 103 question.
- 104 • Hold a faculty vote concerning school-wide issues to be limited to (1) school name change, (2)
 105 school governance process, (3) school wide strategic plan. School votes will be by electronic
 106 voting with a majority of the school membership voting in the affirmative needed to pass the
 107 question.
- 108 • Initiating a formal review of this “**TCNJ School of Engineering Governance**” document every
 109 three years

110 For issues that are not covered in a committee charge, the SC will prepare a charge and direct it to one
 111 of the School Committees or establish an ad hoc committee to deliberate the issue. Students will be
 112 recused from any proceedings that address an issue that is deemed inappropriate by the co-chairs.

113 (6 members) The School Steering committee is made up of two faculty members from two different
 114 departments (one chair and one non-chair), a staff member, two students (one with vote and one
 115 alternate member), and dean (or designee) who serves ex officio without vote. The committee is co-
 116 chaired by the dean (or designee) and an elected member.

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118 **Curriculum Committee (CC)**

119 The Curriculum Committee (CC) is charged with making recommendations concerning curricular issues
 120 related to improving the quality of the academic mission of the School. The Committee is responsible
 121 for reviewing recommendations from Departmental Curriculum Committees and other sources

122 concerning new programs, nature of degrees, program structure, new or revised course proposals,
123 prerequisites, or other issues deemed appropriate.

124 (8 members) One faculty member from each department (BME, CIV, ECE, ME, and TS), two students
125 (serving without vote), and the assistant dean who will serve as the dean's representative ex officio
126 without vote.

127

128 **Program Standards Committee (PSC)**

129 The Program Standards Committee (PSC) is charged to establish and maintain appropriate protocols for
130 hearing the appeals of students who have been dismissed from the School for not meeting the program
131 standards. These protocols should be published and include: the format of a student appeal, minimum
132 criteria needed from the student to support the appeal, criteria for evidence and witness interviews, and
133 other pertinent items. The committee must maintain confidentiality of all cases that are reviewed.

134 (6 members) One faculty member from each department (BME, CIV, ECE, ME, and TS), and the assistant
135 dean who will serve as the dean's representative ex officio without vote.

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137 **Safety Committee (SC)**

138 The Safety Committee (SC) is charged with making recommendations on safety issues within Armstrong
139 Hall related to the delivery of the curriculum, including establishing safety guidelines, rules for student
140 access, training for students and faculty/staff, reviewing safety incidents and recommending corrective
141 actions, and housekeeping. The committee must periodically review safety guidelines for each
142 laboratory and classroom in Armstrong Hall, understanding that each instructional/research space has
143 unique needs. This review should include all potential hazards including chemical, mechanical,
144 electrical, and occupational. The committee shall report the corrective action for any safety incident to
145 the dean and faculty within one week of the reported occurrence. The committee must work closely
146 with the College's Occupational Safety & Environmental Services Department.

147 (9 members) One faculty member from each department (BME, CIV, ECE, ME, and TS), the machine
148 shops supervisor, and the instrumentation technician, and two students (one with vote and one
149 alternate member). At least one member of the committee must serve as a liaison to the College-wide
150 safety committee

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152 **Committee for Strategic Plan Implementation (CSPI)**

153 The Committee for Strategic Plan Implementation (CSPI) is charged with making recommendations
154 concerning strategic initiatives that support the School's strategic goals. The committee will periodically
155 review and prioritize the existing strategic initiatives and consider new initiatives that may be proposed
156 by faculty, programs, students, or other constituents.

157 (7 members) One faculty member from each department (BME, CIV, ECE, ME, and TS), and two students
158 (one with vote and one alternate member).

159

160 **School Ad Hoc Committees (SAHC)**

161 School ad hoc committees are established to discuss timely issues that fall outside the purview of one of
162 the school committees. The dean or School Steering Committee may form ad hoc committees that will
163 exist only for the duration necessary to complete the charge. Ad hoc committees may not recommend
164 new policy, procedure, or program.

165

166 **Conflict Resolution**

167 Stakeholder groups have an opportunity, through the SSC, to express concerns about the three-step
168 process not being followed during the development of any recommendation. If the SSC determines that
169 the three-step process was not followed conscientiously, the SSC shall return the recommendation to
170 the school committee for further consideration.

171 Additionally, faculty can also petition the SSC to return a recommendation to a standing committee. A
172 secret ballot with a simple majority vote by at least one department is required to petition the SSC to
173 take a school wide vote of the faculty. When the petition concerns an issue of policy, procedure, or
174 program and is being considered by a standing committee, the SSC will conduct a vote by electronic
175 voting with a majority of the school membership needed to pass the question. If the question passes
176 then the petition is upheld and the recommendation must be returned to the recommending committee
177 for reconsideration

178 Once a final recommendation has been considered by the dean, the decision regarding the final
179 recommendation should be communicated in writing to the school committee or the SSC when the
180 charge was developed by that committee. Final recommendations may be accepted, accepted with
181 minor revisions, accepted following major revisions, or rejected.

182 Ideally, the representatives of the stakeholder groups and the administration on the school governance
183 committees will be able to communicate during the on-going work of the committee as policies and
184 procedures are being developed. Continuing communication by all groups, including the administration,
185 should limit the number of instances where the administration does not accept final recommendations
186 that come out of the governance structure.

187 In the case of revision, the proposed changes to the final recommendation must be agreed to by the
188 committee. The committee should then develop a new final recommendation considering the suggested
189 modification with or without additional testimony as it sees fit. If the modification is considerable, then
190 the committee must first determine whether it should be considered to be at step #2 or step #3 of the
191 process.

192 In the case of rejection when the issue appears to be irreconcilable, the reasons for rejecting the final
193 recommendation must be conveyed in writing to the SSC.

194 Where disagreements persist, the Provost can call for an informal meeting of affected stakeholder
195 groups for the purpose of resolving the disagreements. If a resolution cannot be achieved, the Provost
196 shall make a final recommendation with a statement of the dissenting objections.