

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 21, 1971

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Stockton State College Staff
FROM: Richard E. Bjork, President
SUBJECT: CAMPUS GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

Stockton should be a place where all who choose may contribute their ideas to the shaping of the college. Although not everyone's ideas will be specifically reflected in everything that is done, those ideas will shape the conditions under which we live. Perhaps that contribution is not enough for some. Despite the persons who say "sham" because some of those things they propose are modified or not done, I argue that each person's contribution is an influence in any decision, even if it is rejected. It may be worth remembering what we think of the guy who picks up his marbles and goes home when things aren't done the way he wants them done.

What we decide will be changed. So will other things we decide as we grow and mature. I urge that each of us remember that we are starting something, not putting the finishing touches on the perfect world.

Right now Stockton needs your help. Look carefully at the attached statement on the governance of our campus affairs. I suggest we each read it with the understanding that we'll only manage to govern this much of our lives if we respect each other and impose restraints on our individual interests.

The attached statement covers the bare framework of Stockton's initial system of campus governance as proposed to the Board of Trustees. Please give me any comments you have, in any form you want. I'll come in search of you if necessary.

cb

STOCKTON STATE COLLEGE

Administrative Working Paper #1: CAMPUS GOVERNANCE

Background

It would be convenient and easy to ignore life outside the college community as we develop ways of governing our lives on the campus. When we don't like some of the processes of power and control we see around us, and when consideration of the rights and authority of others complicates matters, we are strongly attracted to ignoring such factors. The current disarray in higher education stems partially from this form of "tunnel vision." Simple persistence in the belief that the campus community can be governed insulated from other political processes will not restore "power to the campuses." That form of blindness, no matter how well-intentioned or fervently held, offers little promise.

One of the most damaging things we can do as we build a campus governance system is to fool ourselves. We should know from the outset how responsibility for and authority over public institutions of higher education in New Jersey are already distributed and what that means for Stockton. Most of this information can be found in statutes, policies, organizations, and processes open to public view if we only look. Beyond those things already "on the books" are trends and changes in attitudes among groups to which we must turn to make higher education possible. These are difficult to assess, yet they influence what is possible. The point is simply that we should not start with the assumption that we are going to run Stockton by ourselves.

Who Has A Say?

Let's put aside the role of the general public, parents, interest groups, etc. for the moment.

Historically, most state colleges throughout the United States have been strongly controlled, if not directly administered, from a central state authority. The New Jersey state colleges come with this heritage. Until 1966-67, the state colleges were directly under the control of the State Department of Education - including such day-to-day matters as decisions on all personnel actions. The deficiencies of this arrangement became increasingly apparent as New Jersey's education needs began to find expression in political action. Thus, by 1967, all higher education, public and private, was organized under a cabinet level State Department of Higher Education. This change was the signal for the rapid development of higher education, but - and this is essential to remember - not by autonomous action of individual colleges and universities.

From 1967 on, higher education has been developed as a matter of public policy under the direction of a Department of Higher Education which serves as the executive of a lay citizen controlled Board of Higher Education. Higher education gained a crucial advocate and retained a central authority. The Higher Education Act of 1966 is required reading for all who have

suggestions for campus governance. The central point may well be that the Department and Board of Higher Education are responsible for such critical items as statewide master planning, all program approvals, and all budget building.

On the policy level, Stockton joins all colleges and universities as part of the higher education system being developed to serve the people of New Jersey. On the procedural level, Stockton and the other seven state colleges have a special, uncomfortable place, i.e., they are state agencies. Without a long catalog of the implications of that status, we should understand that our procedural independence is limited by a list of state regulations which could bring despair to the weak. Facing this reality is often the most unpleasant for those who have made their lives within higher education, but its influence is inescapable. One quickly learns what Civil Service, the Budget Office, DBC, etc. mean.

One of the most important links in the chain of state responsibility and authority for Stockton is its Board of Trustees. Those who wrote the Higher Education Act of 1966 and created local Boards of Trustees for the state colleges (a departure from national practices) sought to moderate the history, current practices, and prospects of central control. The Board of Trustees is considered the route by which pluralism, diversity, individuality, experimentation, etc. are possible within a

comprehensive state system of higher education. Even in those moments when we feel that a lay Board of Trustees can't really understand the academic community, and when we find it convenient to dismiss Trustees as stupid, relics of the past, or anti-intellectual, because they didn't cheer our every whim or cause, it may simply be good judgment to reexamine the merits of our own desires. The Board of Trustees is at once a strong reminder that Stockton is not the exclusive property of those who are on any day part of the college community, and it is a constant advocate of Stockton's development.

The President has been defined by statute as the "chief executive officer" and a "managerial executive." The last label is his by virtue of faculty sponsored legislation. The first label is intertwined with his relationship to the Board of Trustees. Besides these formal acknowledgments of the President's managerial responsibilities and authority, nearly everyone "on the outside" who wants something done at the college contacts the President because they assume he is "in charge." Despite all this evidence, observers of the internal life of colleges often conclude the President is powerless and faculty, students, and administrators often work to make him so.

The growth of system-wide management of higher education at one end and the advent of collective bargaining at another, have made clear what higher education often chose to hide, namely, that

colleges both need and benefit from executive leadership. The words may sound awkward in the academic setting, but the message they carry is vital to the creation of an effective campus governance system for Stockton.

Earlier we set aside the influence on Stockton of those who are not formally within the state structure for higher education. There are many sources of influence, and most of them are obvious. However, their importance for public colleges and universities has increased immensely. Many of Stockton's brethren have found this out the hard way and now stand dazed by the attacks on them. A "shorthand" way of capturing the essence of the change and suggesting how insulation and blindness live so well together might be the following:

Colleges and universities have found avenues to increase their value, contributions, and importance to more and more people, groups, and institutions in society. The costs of pursuing these avenues have risen rapidly both proportionately and in absolute terms until the visibility of higher education in considerations of how public funds shall be spent is very high. Any combination of high public value and high public costs is likely to produce significant public interest and, ultimately, control. Those who constitute higher education probably advanced the introduction of public controls greatly by a

combination of greed, indifference to students, disdain for management and accountability, and insistence that everyone else live a more humane, compassionate life while they adopted many of the trappings of living for which others were condemned.

The fallout from changing conditions surrounding higher education will undoubtedly require that we adjust to dealing with many more persons and groups who will have both the interest and ability to say how colleges and universities will behave. Stockton's campus governance system not only will have to accommodate this new range of influences, but the system will also require the capacity to organize the energies of the college so they flow in constructive directions and to communicate what Stockton is doing and its importance to supporter, skeptic, and foe.

How Do We Have Our Say?

The foregoing description of who says important things about how Stockton operates is necessarily abbreviated. It is offered as a window on some "realities" we would be foolish to ignore or overlook. The many ways responsibility and authority are shared may sound discouraging to those who persist in dreams of autonomous, self-governing colleges. Those who think we either should or will decide Stockton's destiny with a governance system built by and of its own students, faculty, and staff will be disappointed. Those who think we can influence in crucial ways the overall governance system of which Stockton is a part will

be right if we organize ourselves to manage our affairs rationally and with an eye to the implications for others of the things we do. Those who simply want to find the most rewarding ways for members of the college community to live and work together need feel no discouragement because of the complexities of the "system." The capacity for success in that search must be measured among those who live at the college every day. If we lack sufficient capacity for self-discipline and human respect, we cannot rightly blame others for the failure of a campus governance system.

Our goal in campus governance is to arrange our resources in ways which enable us to have a maximum affect on those outside of the campus who make critical decisions concerning Stockton, and which enable members of the college community to share responsibilities for maintaining that community for the benefit of all. This should provide enough important work for everyone, and perhaps too much for some.

In thinking about how people can combine their strengths, settle their differences, and help one another, it strikes us that several thoughts need to be brought into the light. Those which seem important at this point follow. Others will emerge for consideration.

1. Advise or Decide

More frustration and anger are generated in college governance systems over advisory and decision-making functions. This often stems from our tendency to undervalue the importance of advice and to oversimplify the progress of decision-making. First, so-called decision-making is basically another form of advice-giving, for all decisions are subject to change by groups or persons more powerful than those who make a decision. A decision is a form of closure more likely to feed directly into a structured process than is advice; therefore, "decision-makers" often feel they can observe the consequences of decisions, or they feel they can see their "hands" in the action. This may be more illusion than reality, but it seems to sustain a preference for decision-making, except when decision-makers are asked to assume responsibility for decisions they took. At this point, one often finds that those responsible for a decision are near-legion and that a decision is really the product of many "advisers."

Decisions are shaped or produced by advice. Often advice comes over an extended period since most decisions are part of a continuing process, and advice generally comes in many forms from a variety of sources. Seldom does a single type of advice lead to a decision, but rather it is likely to become part of a pattern of information and influence. Its original form may well be substantially altered in the

decision-making process. This fact leads to the chronic charge that, "Our advice wasn't followed!," or, "I'm not wasting my time giving advice; they do what they want anyway!," or, "We've been used!"

Because decisions and advice are not the same things is not reason to downgrade the giving of advice. Without a system of collecting and analyzing information about what's going on, without ways to consider such information systematically within the framework of community and individual values, and without the discipline of forming judgments as to the courses of action to be followed, decisions would look more like accidents than rational steps toward our goals.

Undoubtedly, the single most important characteristic which separates the decision-maker from the adviser is accountability. Implicit in accountability is the authority and power to take legitimate action. Those who have the power to use the college's resources must also be those whom the state can hold accountable. Thus, if we feel frustrated in being "only part" of the decision-making process, and imagine that we would rather be "the decision-maker," we should take the accountability test.

2. Community and Governance

If Stockton is true to its claims, it will be a community

where every person has equal worth as a human being. As such, it is critical that campus life be arranged so that we can tell one another about those things which are important to us. The value of simply knowing what others are doing, how they do such things, and perhaps even why they do them should not be underestimated. Thus, openness when we are doers and sensitivity when we are observers may be a constant thread to link the campus community.

If we are both open and sensitive in our behavior, we stand a reasonable chance of making the disparate elements which constitute a college also constitute a college community. Too often the term community is equated with egalitarianism. That is obviously but one form of community. Stockton and nearly all colleges and universities are formed by bringing together persons with important, substantial differences who learn from one another across those differences. We are a community of non-equals in important ways, e.g., age, talent, experience, education, size, hopes, etc. The list is obviously long. Where we should come closest to equality is in our interest in learning.

The problem Stockton faces in campus governance is not to find another form of the New England town meeting or to substitute a grand, emotional happening where everyone says

everything, often endlessly, for rationally imposed discipline on ourselves. The problem is to find simple, effective ways for the various elements of the college to bring their interests and energies to focus on collective action which promotes the purposes of the college and provides reasonable opportunities for the growth of even our most private persons.

Stockton cannot be governed directly by everyone. It is already governed partially by persons and groups outside of the campus. Campus governance must take a form which reminds us that selflessness produces a community of respect. Perhaps then we need not struggle so desperately over individual power.

Willingness and Accomplishment

By all signs in higher education, Stockton should do no better at campus governance than its cohorts. "New" systems of campus governance are being rapidly contrived and the records of dissatisfaction and failure continue to grow. Some of the newer approaches include intricate mechanisms which are designed to avoid legal-technical constraints on colleges; some call for everyone to have an "equal" say on everything (often equality is in time to speak, although some of the newer participants speak at great length); some prepare the way for a strong

executive who may also serve as a "father" image; and some grope for the forms of collective leadership increasingly fashionable in the corporate world.

For a long time voices have said something like, "Structure can only aid; it cannot insure." Certainly, structure should match the conditions of the environment and the functions of the organization. That is a difficult, but manageable task. But only people and their attitudes will make the basic difference, and will make the structure do their wills.

Any governance system for the Stockton campus must start from the point that the campus community believes it essential for collective and individual benefit that our lives here be managed in rational ways. If we fail to see the need for and rewards from orderly human activity then self-government even within the relatively limited confines of a campus is not possible. Therefore, the efforts to construct a campus governance system for Stockton rest on the assumptions that we want it, we need it, and we will make it work. This probably just means that we are willing to cooperate with each other without prejudice.

To survive with support, maybe even a touch of affection, a campus governance system must produce. The campus undoubtedly must accommodate unending, even seemingly pointless talk or

discussion. Neither the campus governance system nor the classroom should provide such a haven. People cannot be expected to wait forever; and even after waiting just short of forever, be expected to tolerate a meaningless action.

The prospects for campus governance at Stockton will be enhanced if it has the following among its characteristics:

1. A simple structure.
2. Avenues for participation by the basic constituencies of the college.
3. Openness of operation.
4. A quick pace of activity.
5. Willingness to see each decision as a step along a continuing path.
6. Readiness for changing itself.
7. The knack of combining seriousness of purpose, dignity of conduct, humility, and a sense of humor.

A Way to Start: THE CAMPUS GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

What follows is a statement of the first campus governance system proposed for Stockton. It is not the work of committees, searching campus discussions, or extensive consultation. It emerges from a careful reading of trends in higher education, extensive research in the literature of college governance and organizational theory, a feeling of strong commitment to the potential of Stockton, and what we think may pass for common sense. The initial structure is truly "a way to start." It will change, but we believe it wise and helpful to test it by considerate practice. It can easily be made to fail. We could all be surprised to see how easily it can be made to work.

Much of the operating details of the campus governance system have been left for the first round of builders. They will devise the ways to make the system work easily every day; or they will follow the path of most who build governance systems, namely, load it down with so many rules and procedures that those who memorize the rule book run the system. If we fall into the latter pattern, we have already spoken our minds on trust and cooperation.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

-A governance system depends largely on the goodwill and sense of responsibility of its constituents.
-A governance system should match structure to function.
-A governance system should include manageable groups subject to some checks and balances.
-A governance system should minimize exclusivity and maximize a sense of community.
-A governance system should allow ready identification of and easy access to persons responsible for policy decisions.
-Persons who participate in the formulation of decisions affecting their lives are most likely to accept them.
-An all-college, single body system simplifies governance, eliminates duplication, and fosters unity.
-Opportunities to contribute directly or indirectly to policy making should be available to all members of the college community.
-Legal authority and accountability rest with the President, the Board of Trustees, and the State.

COLLEGE COUNCIL

Responsibilities

The College Council is a college-wide governing unit encompassing students, faculty, and staff. Within the limits of the statutes and the powers of other duly constituted authorities, the College Council serves as the principal legislative body for the internal affairs of the college. The College Council's full range of legislative responsibilities and the extent of its authority will emerge from its experience in the following areas:

1. Instruction

-Development, review, and preliminary approval of proposals for new degree programs, supporting studies, and curricula excluding individual courses.
-Development of instruction to emphasize the effective use of all means to improve both teaching and learning.
-Review and continuing development of means for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional programs and techniques.
-Support of systematic means to promote and sustain experimentation in the instructional programs.
-Maintenance of teacher-student relationships which emphasize that opportunities to learn are available in all places and at all times.

2. Co-Curriculum

-Development of a full range of recreational, cultural, social, and related co-curricular activities and programs.
-Development of program priorities and appropriation of special fees to support co-curricular programs and activities, e.g., activity fees, revenues from events and services, etc.
-Support of programs and activities which combine the resources of the college and neighboring communities, groups, and organizations.

3. Advisement/Information

-Development and support of pervasive programs for advising students what the college can offer and what it cannot do.
-Support of all programs which provide members of the campus community with information about the life of the college clearly, rapidly, and directly.
-Assist the college in programs which accurately apprise non-college publics of the life of the college.

4. Personnel

-Maintain a continuing review of the implications of admissions policies to advise the President and Board of Trustees on appropriate changes in such policies.

.....Advise the President and Board of Trustees on the criteria and procedures to evaluate the performance of staff and their eligibility for initial employment, advancement, and retention.

.....Participate in staff evaluation procedures.

.....Advise the President and Board of Trustees on the standards and conditions for retention and dismissal of students.

.....Assist in the development of programs and conditions which foster the integration of personnel in the classified service into the life of the college.

5. Finance

.....Participate in those all-college processes through which program priorities are established, budgetary alternatives are considered and chosen, and appropriated funds are apportioned by programs.

.....Review at least annually all on-going programs to advise on the appropriateness of continuing or discontinuing them.

.....Advise the President on alternatives to be pursued on a priority basis when funds requested are not provided and/or existing levels of support are reduced or discontinued.

6. Campus Planning

-Participate in the development of both short- and long-range campus planning.
-Assist in the coordination of actions taken to implement the campus master plan.
-Develop procedures for reviewing plans for campus facilities and providing timely recommendations concerning such facilities.

COMMENT

Many of the college's prerogatives and responsibilities in the area of discipline for staff, faculty, and students have been assumed or altered by statute, court decisions, the Civil Service Commission, and the "Agreement Between the State of New Jersey and the Association of New Jersey State College Faculties, Inc." The implications of such changes are clearly within the responsibilities of the Council and it is anticipated that the Council may choose to propose a role for itself in the matter of campus discipline.

A simple hearing procedure for violations of campus discipline is under consideration by the Board of Trustees. This approach is not intended to carry the court system to the campus. The goal is a system which is as fair as people of goodwill can make, which moves quickly, which affords reasonable protection of the rights of both the accused and accuser, and which acknowledges that justice may be more subjective than theory claims. At this time, the discipline hearing system is separate from the College Council.

Operations

The College Council will meet at least once each month throughout the college year. Presently that year is defined as September 1

through June 30. If a 12-month college calendar were instituted, the Council would meet at least once a month throughout the calendar year.

A complete record of the proceedings and actions of the Council shall be maintained and published promptly after each meeting. All actions of the Council must be taken in public meetings.

Until the Council develops its own rules of procedure and/or by-laws, Roberts Rules of Order shall be followed.

COMMENT

The Council's ultimate effectiveness may well rest on its ability to restrain tendencies to develop rules for every possibility. On the substantive side, the Council's influence on the life of the college is probably closely related to its wisdom in choosing between policy formulation and rule-making. Although grappling with policy is more difficult than establishing rules, Stockton needs a continuing commitment from its own community to the development of and reexamination of guiding policies.

Membership

The membership of the College Council is:

10 Students

10 Faculty

10 Staff (7 from the "Unclassified" service and 3 from the "Classified" service.)

The President of the college is excluded from membership on the Council.

1. Selection of Members

Candidates for Council membership will volunteer for service on a prescribed date annually on a standard form which shall include basic background information about the candidate plus the names and signatures of at least five persons who are part of his constituency.

From those candidates presenting themselves, the required number from each constituency will be drawn by lot. The drawing will be public and on the day following the date set for candidates to file.

If there are not enough candidates from any constituency to fill the places available, the remaining spaces will be filled by lot from among those in the constituencies affected.

2. Term

No member of the Council may serve more than two consecutive terms. One may be a Council member as frequently as he qualifies throughout his period of service with the college.

Organization

In addition to the College Council as a whole body, the Council shall have the following elements of organization. No other sub-units of the Council are excluded simply because they are not identified.

1. Officers

The Council shall have at least a President, Vice-President, and Secretary. Other offices may be created as the need arises.

2. Executive Board

The Executive Board shall include the Council President, Vice-President, Secretary, Chairmen of the three Standing Committees, and one additional Council member elected from the Council membership at-large. The Executive Board will be constituted at the first meeting of the Council for the new year.

The Executive Board will act with the authority of the College Council between meetings of the Council. To stand, all actions of the Executive Board must be approved at the next public meeting of the College Council.

The Executive Board shall meet at least monthly with the President of the college.

3. Standing Committees

To handle the business of the Council on a continuing and manageable basis, the Council will be served by the following three Standing Committees (suggested areas of concern are

indicated):

- A. Instruction: Degree programs, curriculum, academic advising, admissions, faculty staffing, academic standing, evaluation of instruction, and general academic affairs.
 - B. Co-Curriculum: Community affairs, campus activities and services, community fees, recreation, cultural-social programs, housing, and general student affairs.
 - C. Administration: Appropriated funds, planning and construction, library services, computer services, food services, campus store, and general administrative affairs.
4. Committee Membership
- Membership of the committees is weighted to reflect the primary interests and expertise of the constituency most affected by the considerations of a particular committee. Additionally, each committee will have one member who is not a Council member and who is selected by lot from volunteers in a manner similar to that used to select Council members. Council members who serve on the committees will be selected by lot from among volunteers unless there are not enough volunteers, at which time they will be selected by lot from the remaining Council membership.

A. Instruction

Two Faculty

One Student

One Staff

One At-Large (Faculty)

B. Co-Curriculum

Two Students

One Faculty

One Staff

One At-Large (Student)

C. Administration

Two Staff

One Faculty

One Student

One At-Large (Staff)

5. Committee Task Forces

The Standing Committees are empowered to organize "Task Forces" consisting of members of the college community. Such Task Forces and their memberships must be specifically approved by majority vote of the Standing Committee. Each Task Force will be assigned a specific task, problem, or issue and will be assigned dates to report to the Standing Committee. Continuation of a Task Force beyond one year must be approved by the College Council.

Access To The Governance System

The major on-going participants in the governance system are members of the Council, its committees, and its task forces. They provide the essential continuity of service and the means for systematic communications throughout the college community. To supplement the work of the Council and its adjuncts and to maximize the opportunities for people to speak and listen, several Forums are provided.

1. Standing Committee Forums

The three Standing Committees shall each hold a campus forum at least monthly, and additionally as circumstances warrant, throughout the college year. Committee members are expected to attend and the forums shall be open to all members of the college community.

The Standing Committee shall prepare the agenda and materials for the forums and shall be prepared to answer questions and receive comments from the participants.

2. Community Forums

Upon presentation of a petition signed by at least ten members of the college community, the Council through the Office of Educational Services will reserve at the earliest convenience the facilities necessary for a forum. The petition must include an agenda which will be filed with the Council and

the Library at least two weeks prior to the Forum. The petitioners may request the presence of any college community member(s) deemed appropriate to the agenda. At the community forum, members of the college community may question and offer criticisms and suggestions to persons believed to be accountable for a given issue, or the Community Forum, as a body, may wish to develop proposals or recommendations to forward to the Council or other policy-making units.

Introduction of Items of Business to the Council

Items of business for the Council may be introduced by:

1. Any Council member in accordance with rules established by the Council.
2. Any item approved by a majority vote of a collegium and presented in writing to the President of the Council who will in turn submit the item directly and promptly to the Council for consideration.
3. By a petition signed by at least one-tenth of the total membership of the college community. Such a petition will be submitted directly to the President of the Council for verification and action as prescribed above.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT

The campus governance system does not alter the President of the college's statutory responsibilities as the chief executive officer of the college.

The President of the college will meet at least monthly with the Executive Board of the Council and report to the Council in person at least annually. The President may also with the approval of the Executive Board address the Council at other such times deemed appropriate.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The essential responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are defined by statute and by practice. The campus governance system does not and cannot alter the Board's role as the ultimate authority and the final review agency at the institutional level.

The Council is free to propose channels for communicating with the Board of Trustees and seek means for the Trustees to share in the work of the Council.

COMMENT

Thus far, we have described a system of campus governance dominated by an institution-wide body, the College Council. Just as the Council dominates this particular aspect of the life of the campus community, so must it bear a major responsibility for bringing together the diverse resources of the campus to serve the purposes of the whole. If the campus community cannot be unified as it tends to its needs through the College Council, we must face the prospect that Stockton will divide in ways already common in higher education. Stockton will no longer be an uncommon place.

The Council will be greatly aided in the discharge of its responsibilities if its members remember that they do not possess an instrument exclusive, wise, or powerful enough to do all things. Other people and other groups will be needed if much is to be accomplished. The College Council's task is to help them all find and contribute to the special purposes of Stockton.