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# **GOVERNANCE: DECISION MAKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION:**

**A Look at University of Scranton Governance  
Processes**



# Decision Making in Higher Ed

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- Governance describes the processes we use in higher ed to engage multiple groups in the policy and decision making process.
- Key participants:
  - Board of Trustees, Regents, other governing boards depending on type of institution
  - Administrative Leadership
  - Faculty
  - Others (students, staff, external stakeholders)
- Key questions:
  - Who's in charge – authority, degree of centralization
  - Who has a say in what – not everyone is involved all the time; some groups have primary responsibility for some decisions, other decisions call on representative structures for input
  - Balance of collegial (more informal, consensus building) vs. managerial approach (top down decision making); quality of conversation & procedural justice (perceived fairness of process) vs. expedience



# Core Purpose: Governance

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- Governance takes place at institutional and other levels to place structure around decision making
- Desired product is a collaborative decision related to the institution, often in the form of policy or practice, “collaborative responsibility”
- Effective governance:
  - Provides institutional purpose
  - Clarifies strategic direction
  - Identifies priorities
  - Exerts sufficient control to manage outcomes
- Even good governance has its challenges – “authority and responsibility [are a] source of tension, even in well-functioning systems” (Heaney, 71).
  - Conflict is a natural part of decision making – healthy institutions have a place to put it
  - Group dynamics

# Governance at Scranton

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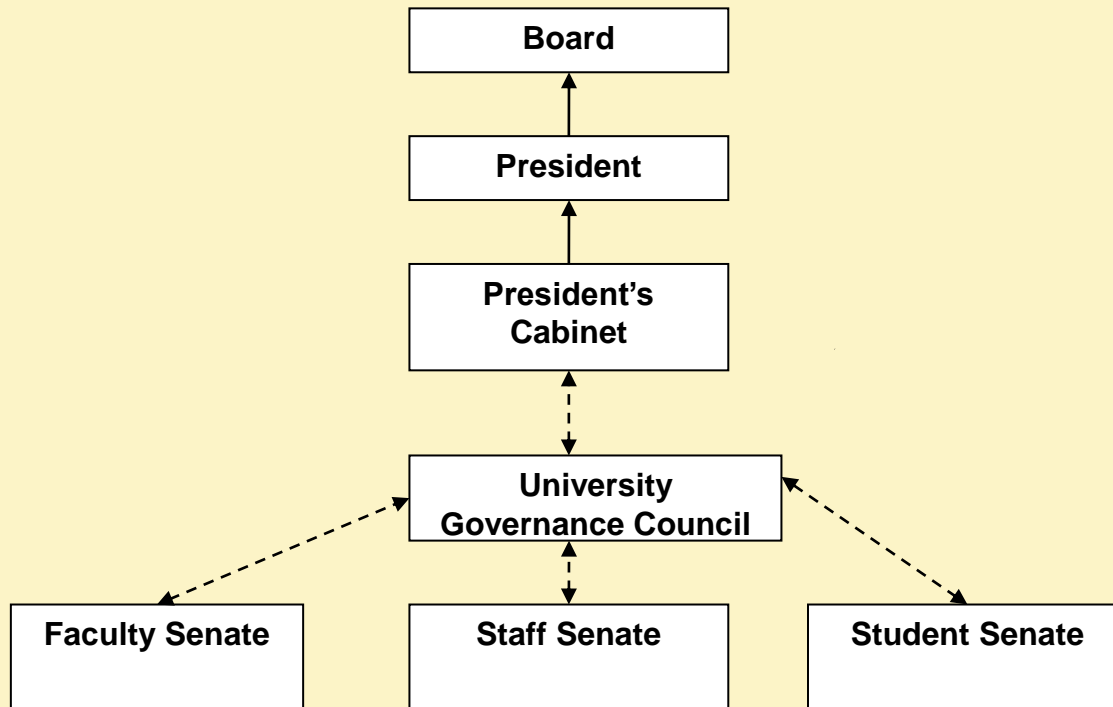
- Broad term for the processes involved in informed, engaged advisory relationships and decision making (often strategic). Used specifically in relationship to policy development:
  - **“A process of consultation, communication, and decision making that produces institutional policies.”**

# Toward our Current State: University of Scranton Governance Revisions

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- Long history of shared governance
- Numerous reviews and assessments over the years, most recent in this past year (2010-11).
- Following 2008 governance assessment
  - Creation of Staff Senate
  - Dissolution of University Council
  - Creation of University Governance Council
  - Other modifications:
    - Definitions/principles of governance clarified to emphasize its role as primarily policy-making
    - Cabinet charge revised
    - Policy processes codified and coordinated
    - Governance Web site and materials:  
<http://matrix.scranton.edu/governance/>

# Overview of Structure



Indicates a direct relationship



Indicates an indirect relationship

Each of the three representative governance bodies will have an administrative liaison (direct relationship) to the AC for non-policy issues.

# Governance Groups: UGC

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- University Governance Council (UGC): coordination and communication between and amongst groups; conduit for centralized distribution & review of institutional policy.
  - Membership: representatives from each of the three senates. Convened by VP Planning/CIO; supported by Planning & IE Office

# Governance Groups: Senates

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Each senate has a role in (1) policy development and (2) constituency issues

- Student Senate

- President: Oliver Strickland
- Cabinet Liaison: Dr. Vince Carilli

- Faculty Senate

- President: Dr. Rebecca Mikesell
- Cabinet Liaison: Dr. Hal Baillie

- Staff Senate

- President: Meg Cullen Brown
- Cabinet Liaison: Tricia Day





# Staff Senate Role in Governance

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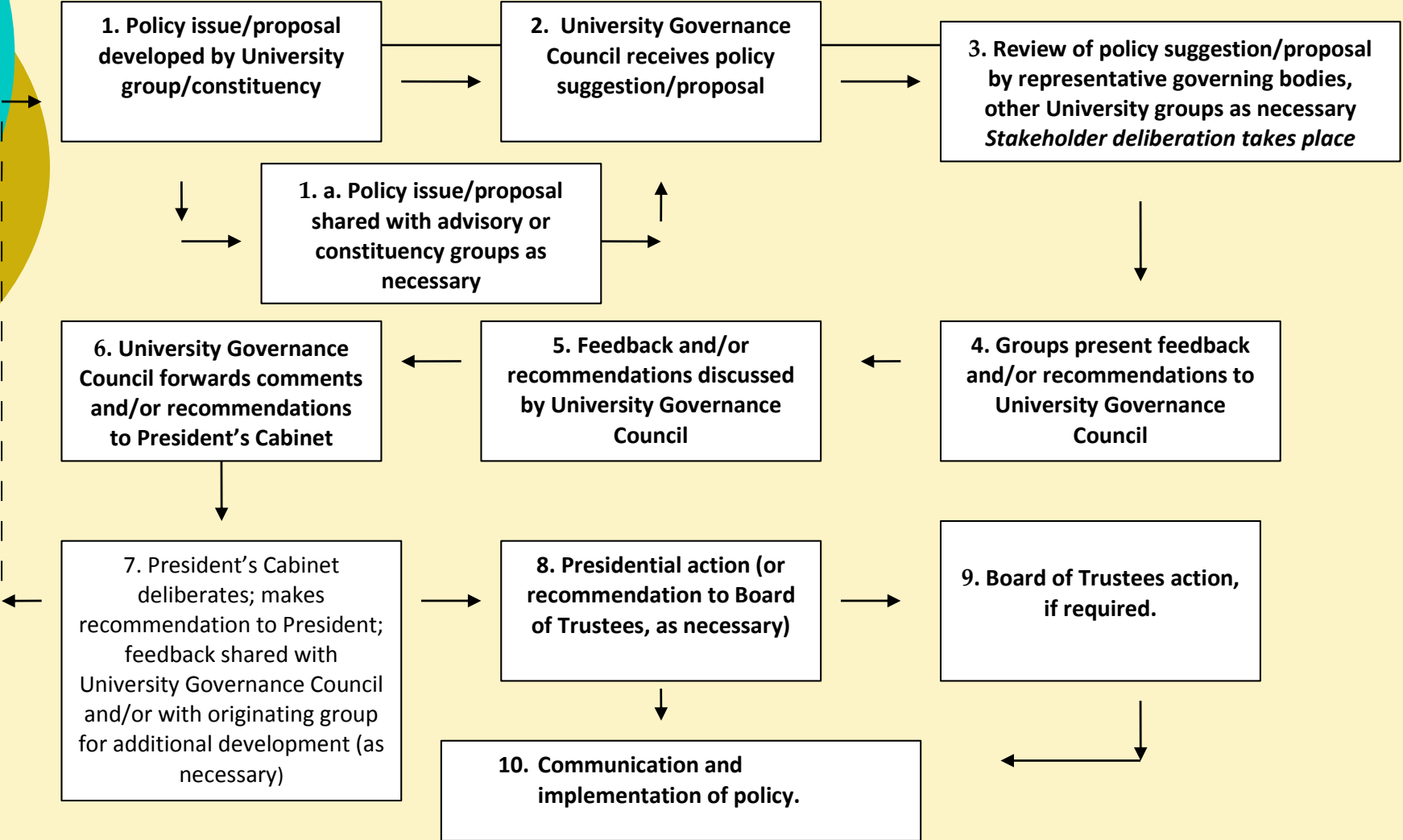
- Staff Voice in University Governance, and specifically policy-making
- Staff contributions to an effective university: peer support and comradeship (Cura Personalis); inspiration and knowledge transfer (Magis); communications; raising issues and potential solutions on issues germane to staff—but not compensation; marshaling resources to benefit the institution (Rei Sollicitudo)

# Policy Process

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- Policies can originate from several places:
  - Board, Cabinet (top down)
  - Individual offices, departments, divisions, constituency groups (bottom up)
  - Governance bodies, UGC (in the middle)
- Type of policy determines if, and where, it enters formal governance process
  - Institutional policies entering into the formal process
  - Other Policy Definitions @ [www.scranton.edu/governance](http://www.scranton.edu/governance)

# Institutional Policy Flow Chart



# Growth of Policy Coordination: A Key Goal

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- We need to have a better grasp of what policies we have, which ones we need that we don't have, and which ones we have that should go away
- Development of policy definitions help us to
  - Identify different types of policies (and procedures)
  - Identify which things need to be reviewed within which level(s) of governance
- Development of policy template helps us to
  - Ensure that policies have the same structure and required elements (and if what a group or individual is seeking to produce doesn't have those elements, we can say it probably isn't a policy).
  - Create a standard process for review and approval of policy, including set revision/sunset dates
- Development of policy website helps us to
  - Coordinate location of institutional policies
  - Ensure access to policies & help communicate their content

<http://matrix.scranton.edu/governance/University%20Policies%20.shtml>
- PIR divisional policies have been critical test bed
  - Has impact on institutional governance/policy development
  - Led to examination of IT governance process

# Questions

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