HARTNELL COLLEGE

DRAFT REPORT FROM THE
GOVERNANCE REDESIGN TASK FORCE

December 10, 2021

OVERVIEW
This report provides a brief synopsis of work leading to the recommendations of the task force, along with chief recommendations for governance redesign and emerging guidance for implementation. The recommendations follow directly from the two areas of focus for governance redesign—structure redesign and meaningful participation—specified within the broader Institutional Innovation and Effectiveness Plan (IIE Plan), and the six objectives associated with these two areas that additionally serve to provide the context and principled rationale for the recommendations. More broadly, governance redesign is one of a wide range of college redesigns in process of development and/or implementation, all dedicated to making Hartnell a truly student-centered institution.

MULTI-YEAR EFFORTS LEADING TO TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS
The work emanated from long standing institutional conversations and focused discussions among several groups that have convened sequentially over a multi-year period regarding how to better engage the College community in institutionally strategic activities focused on student success. Year-by-year activities and key events are delineated here.

➢ In 2017-18: the institutional rollout of college redesign/guided pathways.
➢ In 2018-19: a report issued by the College Planning Council (CPC) work group on deepening institutional dialogue, approval of an institutional Plan for Engagement through participatory governance, and a request and approval for technical assistance from the Chancellor's Office through the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI).
➢ In 2019-20: visits to the College from an external partnership resource team (PRT), development of an Institutional Innovation and Effectiveness (IIE) Plan by a designated work group, approval of the IIE Plan through participatory governance, and receipt of the IEPI grant to implement the Plan.
➢ In 2020-21: initial IIE Plan implementation, including formation and regular convenings of the Governance Redesign Task Force, along with the final PRT visit, resulting in the development of a conceptual model for governance redesign and approval of the conceptual model through participatory governance.
➢ In 2021-22: expanded task force membership, continued task force convenings, and development of the full model of redesigned participatory governance.

WORK OF THE GOVERNANCE REDESIGN TASK FORCE
The task force was initiated in spring 2021 for the purpose of following through on the portions of the IIE Plan focused on governance redesign. The task force has continued work in fall 2021 with expanded membership, and plans to continue to convene through spring 2022. Task force meetings have been held approximately every two weeks, with membership including faculty, staff, and administrators. Students have unfortunately not participated directly on the task force despite requests that the Associated Students of Hartnell College (ASHC) appoint one or more student members. Representatives of the task force have made presentations to various groups, perhaps most notably the Academic Senate, ASHC, and CPC. Task force members have also gathered input through various communication channels and convenings with varied employee groups, such as confidential staff, CSEA, and the executive cabinet.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDANCE

Key task force recommendations are provided below under the ==areas of focus== and ==objectives== specified in the IIE Plan. All task force ==recommendations== are incorporated within the proposed ***Participatory Governance Charter***, the latter of which encompasses the entirety of governance redesign components under consideration.

Presuming approval of the Charter in early spring 2022, the task force plans to further develop and provide more detailed ==guidance== linked directly to the specific recommendations. The full set of guidance will reflect ideas and tools for consideration by those who will begin implementing governance redesign, with the understanding that these ideas and tools are likely to evolve over time.

Implementation of the new governance system will begin in spring 2022 with appointment of council members and the first annual participatory governance retreat, and will continue in fall 2022 with monthly council meetings through AY 2022-23.

==IIE Plan Area of Focus==
GOVERNANCE: STRUCTURE REDESIGN

==IIE Plan Objective==
Re-structure participatory governance system, including governance committees, in service of the institution's strategic direction with respect to student access, equity, and success goals.

==Recommendation #1==
    a. Focus on synergistic relationships among councils and coordinated information flow, such as which gaps in student equity and success require improvement (institutional effectiveness council), how the improvements can be made (student success council), and with which resources (institutional resources council).
    b. Build language relevant for the institution's strategic direction into council responsibilities.

==Guidance #1==
The task force will provide a template for meeting agenda that emphasizes institutional strategic agenda items.

==IIE Plan Objective==
Streamline governance system to provide clarity with respect to decision flow and committee interrelationships and responsibilities.

==Recommendation #2==
    a. Reduce significantly the number of councils to, and re-title councils based on, the essential areas of participatory governance work: College Council, Institutional Effectiveness Council, Student Success Council, and Institutional Resources Council.
    b. Allow councils to organize, yet hold them responsible for, work within their respective purview while ensuring maximum participation, such as by establishing standing committees and ad hoc task forces as may be needed.

==Guidance #2==
Clarity with respect to flow of agenda items among councils through to decision points should help bring

about greater clarity and transparency concerning how the participatory governance system is working. In order to assist the new councils as they consider how to structure their respective work moving forward, the task force will prepare a list of topics and/or committees that may be considered by each council.

Recommendation #3

a. Establish a Governance Coordination Group (GCG) comprised of tri-chairs of the councils, responsible for maintaining the master participatory governance meeting calendar and routing, tracking, and reporting on agenda items as they flow through the participatory governance system and to a decision point. Any and all action items ultimately flow for decision making to the superintendent/president or their designee and, if necessary, to the governing board.
b. Incorporate Academic Senate 10+1 issues into flow considerations.
c. Ensure that working conditions and purely operational issues do not become the subject of participatory governance deliberations.
d. Task the GCG with ensuring periodic evaluation of participatory governance.

Guidance #3

The task force will provide a master calendar for potential use of the Governance Coordination Group for displaying when participatory governance meetings will most effectively and efficiently be held. The task force will also provide a spreadsheet for the Governance Coordination Group to consider using in routing, tracking, and reporting on agenda items through the participatory governance system. The tracking sheet should be used to not only inform the College community about progress in moving agenda items forward, but also in proactively alerting the community to upcoming meetings when specific actions may be taken. When councils take action, the tracking sheet should provide clarity as to whether those actions result in institutional decisions by the superintendent/president (or designee) or, if necessary, the governing board. The task force will provide a tool for evaluating participatory governance, with an especially critical review and report to the superintendent/president in spring 2023 for their consideration in modifying the Charter or otherwise improving the governance redesign.

Recommendation #4

a. Provide a visual of information flow and decision-making that broadly depicts structural relationships within the participatory governance system.
b. As a complement to this visual, delineate the information that is intended to flow between the Governance Coordination Group on the one hand and the superintendent/president, the Academic Senate, and the participatory governance councils on the other.

Guidance #4

Training on information flows to Governance Coordination Group members will be provided in spring 2022 to help them prepare for implementation in fall 2022.

Recommendation #5

a. Define and judiciously use key participatory governance terminology. For example, distinguish between actions and decisions, pointing to the actions that councils take as advisory versus decisions that the superintendent/president and governing board make.

Guidance #5

Training on participatory governance terminology will be provided to the College community starting spring 2022.

GOVERNANCE: MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

IIE Plan Objective
Advise appointing groups/persons to be mindful of the desire to encourage broad participation in governance, and to be aware of the number of committee assignments per appointed individual.

Recommendation #6

    a. Focus on representation of four groups, including students and three broad employee groups— namely, faculty, staff, and administrators—having equal numbers of appointees, as opposed to providing for more specific types of appointments that alternatively highlight the needs and desires of special interest groups. A member of any employee group may only be appointed by one appointing body that represents or makes appointments for that particular employee group. AP 2510 speaks directly to the specific groups that may be involved in making appointments and/or participate in local decision making. Note that while a staff senate was approved in the conceptual model, the task force subsequently determined that a staff senate is not currently practicable. Confidentials, CSEA, and L-39 may therefore have a smaller but equivalent number of appointments, and, like faculty and administrators, all staff members are appointed to work collaboratively toward what is in the best interest of students and the institution.

Guidance #6
While the Governance Charter cannot "tell" appointing bodies how to make appointments, the task force will provide proposed guidelines that the superintendent/president and appointing bodies may consider as they implement their appointment process. For instance, the Academic Senate may choose to appoint certain positions from subcommittees to specific councils while still seeking broad faculty representation, and the superintendent/president may wish to review full sets of appointments to ensure demographic and district locational representation. Striving toward transparency and equity in the appointment process will help ensure a participatory governance system free of coercion and undue influence.

IIE Plan Objective
Ensure employees are treated equitably in governance assignments, understand their role in the governance process, and are allowed appropriate time to participate in governance activities.

Recommendation #7

    a. Prioritize consensus building in council action taking, and include member expectations that speak to collaborating toward consensus as the preferred means to resolving issues.
    b. Include language that speaks to the district's commitment to providing appropriate time for staff to participate in participatory governance.

Guidance #7
The task force will provide guidelines that request appointing bodies be sensitive to diverse perspectives and voices, such as by rotating membership over time and appointing members to serve on only one council at a time. Training will be provided in spring 2022 and beyond to students and employees concerning their role in the participatory governance process, with a focus on collaborating to reach consensus when possible. As meaningful participation in governance requires a certain time commitment, the institution must support this commitment, and this commitment must be recognized and practiced by all members. Managers must be informed of the prospective participation of their staff, and managers must proactively support staff by providing the appropriate time for staff to participate meaningfully.

==IIE Plan Objective==

Intentionally plan participatory governance meetings so that they focus on strategic agenda and action items.

==Recommendation #8==

  a. Make the Governance Coordination Group responsible for holding an annual spring retreat during which strategic participatory governance issues for the following academic year are delineated and new council members are trained.
  b. Make council tri-leads responsible for ensuring that meeting agendas are strategically developed and time spent deliberating in meetings is proportionate to the importance of specific items.

==Guidance #8==

The task force will publish a projected timeline for governance redesign implementation and assist with the spring 2022 retreat. Training on building meeting agendas and meeting facilitation will be provided to tri-leads in spring 2022 and beyond. As mentioned under Guidance #1 above, the task force will provide a template for meeting agenda so that the meetings will focus on deliberations that lead to action-taking; presentations that are purely informational will be discouraged. Town hall forums, surveys or other venues/methods are preferred for encouraging large-scale input and presenting information and communicating decisions of widespread institutional significance. Limiting the number of times that individuals may speak might assist in ensuring equity in soliciting varied perspectives, and limiting the amount of time dedicated to a specific agenda item may be required to prioritize across agenda items at a given meeting.

==IIE Plan Objective==

Enhance utilization of virtual technology to ensure broad participation in governance meetings across multiple sites.

==Recommendation #9==

  a. Require virtual meetings, as they allow for maximum and equitable participation not only of council members, but also for any and all students, faculty, staff, and administrators who may be interested in attending participatory governance meetings.

==Guidance #9==

Having had the opportunity to implement virtual participatory governance meetings successfully over the past several semesters, the College should expeditiously transition away from in-person participatory governance meetings that unfairly favor Main Campus or otherwise serve to limit access to meetings based on locational factors. The task force requests that one or more councils experiment with a hybrid format—i.e., joint virtual and in-person meetings—during spring 2022 to determine whether this format is or can be made practicable with respect to available technology and training, and allowing for maximum and equitable participation of members and access for the entire College community.