

Final report, Shared Governance Advisory Committee

**I. Phase 1 – What Does it Mean to Be an Exceptional Learning Community?**

CHARGE: The purpose of this phase will be to create a shared vision of an exceptional learning community and of the ways in which we will engage with each other as faculty, students, staff and administration in research and discovery, learning and education, and service and stewardship.

The committee held a visioning exercise on 2/10 and with insights from that day we have written a “Culture Charter for an Exceptional Learning Community.” This document has been through several iterations, over 45 community members (staff, students, faculty, administrative leaders) participated in the visioning. The document we are attaching is the outcome of those processes. We think this document can help create a positive and more collaborative culture on campus. We encourage leadership to pair the different elements of the charter with professional development opportunities for employees.

**II. Phase 2 – Roles and Responsibilities**

CHARGE: The purpose of this phase will be to create a shared understanding of distinct roles and responsibilities for governance and administration that will allow all community members to engage with each other as faculty, students, staff and administration in research and discovery, learning and education, and service and stewardship.

- 1) As part of this charge, University Governance worked to clarify roles and responsibilities for Faculty/Staff/Student senators, which allowed us to reorganize the University Senate to provide greater equity among the different constituent groups, while recognizing faculty responsibilities around academic decision-making.

For this charge we are also making the following recommendations:

- 2) There is often lack of clarity around who does what at the university, and community members do not know who to approach when they have a problem or want to offer creative ideas/solutions. We recommend that clarity be provided about roles and responsibilities for each administrative role, across different administrative levels.

Relevant roles include (more roles can be added to this list):

- Chancellor
- Provost
- Vice Chancellors
- CFO

- Vice Provosts
  - Deans
  - Associate Deans
  - Budget Directors
  - Chairs/Associate Chairs
  - Directors of Graduate Studies
  - Directors of Undergraduate Studies
- 3) Because these roles fall across different administrative levels, we recommend that each administrative level work collaboratively with the level right below to clarify roles and responsibilities. We believe these conversations should be simultaneously internally-facing, to ensure different individuals have clarity of job responsibilities and expectations; as well as have externally facing outcomes to help provide clarity for community members. An illustration of jobs and responsibilities should be posted on the main KU website with all the roles alongside one another. This kind of illustration can be an annotated organizational chart that illuminates what the different roles do.
- 4) We believe that particular attention should be paid to areas where there may be overlap in roles and responsibilities. In those cases, there needs to be clarification of process, scope of authority, who has what decision-making authority, and who has the ability to provide feedback/opinion for consideration in decision-making.
- 5) In addition to leaders within administrative reporting lines, a robust shared governance structure at the university also calls for non-administrative leaders, informal leaders, as well as committee structures with specific responsibilities. Governance can provide templates for roles and responsibilities for non-administrative leaders and committees. We believe that these roles can be incorporated into the illustration of roles and responsibilities above to indicate a robust system of collaborative decision-making, which begins with education.

Relevant roles include (more roles can be added to this list):

- Governance Leaders
- Academic Policies and Procedure Committee (University Senate)
- Faculty Rights, Responsibilities, and Privileges Committee (Faculty Senate)
- Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure (Faculty Senate)
- Faculty Compensation Committee (Faculty Senate)
- Planning and Resources Committee (University Senate)
- Faculty Rights Board (Faculty Senate)
- Faculty Experts with Subject Matter Expertise
- Curriculum/Core Committees
- Promotion/Tenure Committees

### III. Phase 3 – Decision-making Processes

**CHARGE:** The purpose of this phase will be to create a shared vision of processes for decision-making and communication that will allow all community members to engage with each other as faculty, students, staff and administration in research and discovery, learning and education, and service and stewardship.

This step relates to the previous step, with a specific emphasis on decision-making processes: how decisions are made, when community constituencies affected by decisions learn about certain decisions, when/whether they can provide input, and how decisions are implemented. In the course of 13 COACHE listening sessions with faculty, although there were occasional concerns about specific decisions, the concerns voiced were primarily about *how* decisions are made and the lack of communication in those decision-making processes. When community members are not fully aware that something is happening and we do not explain why something is happening, this creates significant barriers around shared governance.

Communication is an essential component in ensuring that campus constituencies feel included in decision making processes.

- 1) Consistency of communication must become a priority at KU in order to disrupt siloes and ensure the proper exchange of information among different offices at the university, and among administration and relevant constituencies. Internal communication should be prioritized and systematized at many levels and not simply approached from a centralized vantage point to ensure that there is proper exchange of information and the information shared is salient to the relevant group or groups.

We recommend that the university start a campaign to have communication advisors in every academic or non-academic unit who are responsible for creating a strategic plan for communication within that unit, with updates about the efforts and any upcoming changes to day-to-day processes (before, during, and after the changes take place). These communications should be geared to constituencies both inside the units and outside the units. Boosting communication can help with better linkages between upper administration, academic unit level administration, and community members.

- 2) Relatedly, as part of ensuring better communication at the university, we recommend that there be a State of the University and Campus address each academic year by the provost and chancellor – open to both faculty and staff. We recommend that at the State of the University, leadership present updates on ongoing changes/decisions, present upcoming changes and priorities, and provide updates and rationales for why these things are happening. There should also opportunities for community members to provide input. The information presented should subsequently live on a website that can be consistently updated and provide the opportunity for additional input.

- 3) We would encourage academic leaders to engage in similar processes in their academic units – e.g. CLAS used to have a “State of the College” for many years that has since been discontinued.

We understand that we have a challenge with communication on campus in that emails and other communications are not always opened or read. For this reason, we also feel we should communicate about communication and plans for systematic exchange of information – both to present communication protocols and to address the expectation that any act of communication involves engagement from both sender and receiver.

We hope that through the steps in Phases II&III we can embody what we state in the charter: “We make decisions together – through collaborative, inclusive, transparent processes.”

#### **IV. Phase 4 – Financial transparency and Community Engagement in Jayhawks Rising**

**Charge:** The Purpose of this charge was to have greater transparency around university finances and greater community participation in the Jayhawks Rising Strategic plan.

- 1) Governance has invited CFO Dewitt to do a public presentation with the Planning and Resources Committee (Fall 2023) around finances and financial planning at the university. Having this kind of presentation every year can help create greater financial transparency around the financial standing of the university, which significantly impact the life of community.
- 2) The charter in Charge I ties the different objectives of Jayhawks Rising to community culture. Additionally, we have been told that governance leaders will be integrated within the Jayhawks Rising Teams. These steps can help create greater ties between community members, community culture, and the strategic plan.