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# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING REGULATIONS

**Subject:** Shared Governance  
**Number:** UW Regulation 1-4

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## I. PREAMBLE

This Regulation articulates and establishes the University of Wyoming's strong commitment to the principles and practices of Shared Governance. The University expects leadership to seek, listen, consider, and reflect back input in decision-making and to define processes and procedures that will hold them accountable to students, faculty, staff and other constituents. The University also believes it is the responsibility of these constituents to timely engage in the decision-making process. The University recognizes there are multiple Shared Governance models. Based on University community feedback, the institution has adopted a model of aligning priorities as a way to achieve shared governance.

## II. PURPOSE

To outline the best practices and key principles necessary to develop and maintain a culture of robust Shared Governance at the University of Wyoming.

## III. DEFINITIONS

**Constituents:** Students, staff, faculty, administration, and the Board of Trustees.

**Shared Governance:** Is the process by which various institutional constituents contribute to decision making related to University policies and procedures. Shared Governance is a basic tenet of universities as intellectual communities and represents a philosophy and practice that brings to bear community expertise to inform deliberations and to shape actions. Robust Shared Governance leads to a culture of shared accountability and responsibility for the welfare of the institution that contributes to the institution staying mission centered. Shared Governance is not a substitution for effective leadership. Instead Shared Governance represents a way of carrying out leaders' roles and responsibilities in a manner that involves all relevant stakeholder participation and utilizes the vast combined knowledge of the University community in planning and decision making, while allowing for students, faculty, staff, administration, the Board of Trustees and other constituencies to be transparent and align priorities across the institution.

## IV. POLICY

It is the policy of the University of Wyoming to engage in a system of Shared Governance, which accomplishes the principles set forth in this Regulation. Shared Governance works to create a culture of shared responsibility for the welfare of the institution. It derives from open communication and operates through a system of structural/institutional checks and balances that contributes to the institution staying both collaborative and mission-centered.

The University community supports a Shared Governance model reflecting **Aligning Priorities**. In this model, University constituents align and share priorities through a collaborative and consultative process, which keeps the academic mission of the University at the forefront.

Specific areas of responsibility for the University's communities are indicated in the Wyoming Constitution Article 7, Wyoming Statute 21-17-103, and in the Regulations of the University. In carrying out these responsibilities, members of the University community commit to the philosophies and key principles of Shared Governance outlined in this document, with the understanding and acknowledgement that Shared Governance strengthens the quality of leadership and decision making within our institution and helps bring the very best thinking by all parties to bear on institutional challenges.

### A. Key Principles

Shared Governance requires careful attention, generous participation from the wide and diverse University community, and a high level of discourse. Consultation through established structures and also with the broad community, especially in the early stages of discussion and decision-making, utilizes relevant expertise and builds trust across the University.

The power and effectiveness of the University are enhanced when all members of the University community acknowledge these fundamental principles:

- 1. Communication:** Principle of open communication accomplished through dialogue designed to engage and utilize the broad expertise within the University.
- 2. Service and participation:** Principle by which all members of the University are prepared for service through a robust onboarding process and all members take seriously their responsibility to prepare conscientiously for service and to participate in shared governance.
- 3. Responsibility, community, and civility:** Principle that recognizes that robust Shared Governance requires informed, sustained, civil and respectful

participation of all members of the diverse community that makes up the University.

**B. Best Practices**

To allow for the development of a robust Shared Governance process that becomes embedded within the University system, now and into the future, there are four fundamental Shared Governance best practices:

1. Transparent and frequent communication;
2. Decision-making collaboration;
3. Active faculty, staff, and student engagement in governance activities; and
4. Regular assessment of Shared Governance.

**C. Implementation**

The University community, including the Board of Trustees, the President's Office, and all divisions and units shall establish processes and procedures to fully implement Shared Governance that involve relevant stakeholder participation and adhere to the key principles and best practices outlined herein. The University community shall regularly evaluate its Shared Governance practices so that all constituents are adhering to this Regulation and timely engaging in the decision-making process. Coming to a shared understanding of these principles, including timely response, is imperative to the success of Shared Governance on campus.

Shared Governance does not limit the powers or authority of students, faculty, staff, academic or administrative officers, the University President or the Board of Trustees, or any unit, department, School, or College, granted by law, the Bylaws of the Trustees, the UW Regulations, or other University policies and procedures. Instead, it complements these powers and authority by emphasizing and cultivating a system of institutional culture of good will, good intentions and commitment to common values. It requires developing ways to engender trust and respect and to periodically recalibrate. When done well, it will allow the University to more effectively meet the challenges it faces both now and in the future.

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**Responsible Division/Unit:** Office of the President

**Source:** American Association of University Professors (AAUP); Association of Governing Boards (AGB); Pythian Paper: Shared Governance at the University of Wyoming

**References:** The “Definition” and “Policy” sections of this regulation rely on concepts and language taken from: Association of Governing Boards (AGB) White Paper. 2017. “Shared Governance: Changing with the Times.”

Further elaboration of the principles and best practices contained in this University Regulation can be found in the following Pythian paper: “Shared Governance at the University of Wyoming: A Pythian Paper” (November 5, 2020).

**Links:** <http://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies>

**Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms:** None

**History:**

UW Regulation 1-4 adopted 6/16/2021 Board of Trustees meeting