

Shared Governance Working Group
Interim Report to the UW Board of Trustees
Final 1/26/2026

Committee:

Laura Schmid-Pizzato - co-chair
Michelle Sullivan - co-chair
Anne Alexander - Provost
Tai Baker - Staff Senate
Gwen Dailey - Staff Senate (replacing Jesse Grosinger)
Rob Godby - Faculty Senate
Jesse Grosinger - Staff Senate (through August, 2025)
Seth Holmquist - Staff Senate
Alex Kean - VP of Finance
Paula Medina - ASUW
Peter Parolin - Honors College Dean
Bradley Rettler - Faculty Senate
Scott Turpen - College of Arts & Science Dean

Executive Summary

Purpose and Context

In Spring 2025, the University of Wyoming faculty, after the culmination over several years of a significant erosion of trust and confidence in UW's administration and leadership, submitted a vote of no confidence through its Faculty Senate. Nearly simultaneously, a formal letter from UW deans and directors expressed serious concerns about institutional decision-making. At the request of both the Faculty Senate and deans and directors, University of Wyoming Board Chair Kermit Brown appointed a Shared Governance Working Group (SGWG) to examine how the University could rebuild collaboration, transparency, and mutual accountability across all constituencies. When Chair Brown spoke to the committee at their inaugural meeting, he reminded them of President Kennedy's visit to NASA, where he asked a janitor what he did. The janitor's response was "I'm helping to put a man on the moon." Likewise, at UW, we aspire for every member of our community to see themselves as an essential part of delivering on our mission. Critical to such inclusivity is trust and confidence in leadership, and a spirit of shared governance and mission.

While universities call it "shared governance," successful businesses have long recognized this principle under different names. High-performing companies employ "distributed leadership" models where frontline expertise informs strategic decisions, recognizing that those closest to customers and operations possess critical knowledge. Healthcare systems increasingly adopt

"interprofessional collaboration" frameworks that distribute authority among physicians, nurses, administrators, and patient advocates. Even military organizations, despite hierarchical command structures, rely on "mission command" philosophies that push decision-making authority to those with situational awareness. What these approaches share is a pragmatic recognition: sustainable organizations harness expertise throughout their ranks, balance competing interests through structured processes, and make better decisions when accountability is distributed rather than concentrated. This isn't ideological—it's proven management practice that protects against both executive overreach and organizational drift.

This report reflects six months of deliberation by representatives from the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, ASUW, and administration. We have yet to address the final charge which is to engage stakeholders across the University community – this could be more appropriate in consultation with a new President. Our charge was not to assign blame, but to understand what broke down, identify where the University has successfully course-corrected, and develop actionable strategies to strengthen shared governance going forward.

What We Found

The University of Wyoming adopted a robust shared governance framework in 2021 through University Regulation 1-4, choosing an "aligned priorities" model designed to build shared responsibility for institutional welfare. This model emphasizes open communication, collaborative priority-setting, and mission-centered decision-making. However, implementation of our policy has been inconsistent.

Key findings include:

- The gap between policy and practice has eroded trust. While Regulation 1-4 articulates clear principles, the University has not developed the processes and procedures necessary to operationalize them consistently across major decisions.
- Communication breakdowns and lack of consideration of the principles of shared governance have caused harm. Faculty, staff, and students reported experiencing decisions as abrupt, opaque, or lacking meaningful engagement and inclusivity—leading to perceptions that shared consultation was performative rather than genuine and did not live up to the principles of shared governance defined in the institution's governing principles .
- Shared governance is valued but unevenly understood. Different groups interpret shared governance differently, and there is confusion about when inclusion of constituents and consultation is sufficient versus when better alignment is required for strategic decisions.
- The right stakeholders have not always been at the table. Particularly for staff and students, established pathways for raising concerns and receiving meaningful responses have been limited.
- Accountability mechanisms are absent. There is no regular process to assess governance health, provide feedback on engagement quality, or ensure follow-through on commitments made during consultative processes.

The Path Forward

Rebuilding shared governance at UW requires both immediate action and sustained cultural commitment. The Working Group offers the following strategic recommendations:

1. Clarify and Operationalize Shared Governance

Develop a plain-language governance guide that defines the type of shared governance expected at UW, when and how shared governance applies, distinguishing between strategic decisions requiring alignment and operational matters requiring consultation or management discretion. Provide regular training for all governance participants. This includes UW trustees, administration, faculty, staff and students.

2. Strengthen Communication and Transparency

Establish consistent protocols ensuring that major decisions include early engagement, clarity about decision-making, transparent rationale, and visible feedback loops that demonstrate how input shaped outcomes ("You said / We heard / We did"). Use multiple channels to reach all constituencies effectively.

3. Reinforce Accountability and Feedback

Conduct annual governance health assessments, integrate governance participation into leadership evaluations, and strengthen non-retaliatory channels for raising process concerns. Review existing University Regulations to ensure adequate stakeholder engagement mechanisms.

4. Build and Sustain Trust

Foster visible partnership through regular joint sessions between Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students. When processes fail, leaders should acknowledge missteps openly and explain how future practice will improve.

5. Institutionalize Learning and Continuous Improvement

Consider establishing a permanent Shared Governance Council to monitor progress and recommend adjustments. Link governance principles explicitly to strategic planning and budget models. Publish an annual Shared Governance Report to demonstrate transparency and track progress.

Commitment to Action

The events of Spring 2025 represent an opportunity to grow and move forward. The response must be more than procedural—it requires genuine efforts to ensure partnership, authentic dialogue, and shared accountability as part of our campus culture. Every member of the UW community has a role: to put the institution first, to engage meaningfully, to listen before deciding, to engage one another in good faith, and to be open to new ideas and other constituents' concerns.

This work will not be accomplished through regulation alone. It will require intentional practice, consistent modeling of respectful collaboration, and sustained attention to the institution's values and mission. The Board of Trustees, working in partnership with administration, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and ASUW, has the opportunity to lead the University into a new chapter—where decisions are informed by expertise, guided by trust, and aligned with Wyoming's mission and values.

The path forward is clear. The commitment to walk it together will determine our success.

Background

Concerns of shared governance practices at UW are not new. Serious concerns have been present on the UW campus for over a decade. It was precisely such concerns that led to the creation of University Regulation 1-4 (passed by UW's Trustees in June 2021). This regulation codifies how shared governance is to be understood and practiced at the university, and was the product of nearly five years of effort. That effort began by considering the types of shared governance practiced elsewhere and concluded with describing what it should look like at the University of Wyoming after consideration of the university's history and input from UW's various constituencies, including Administration, Faculty, Staff and Students. The document "*Shared Governance at the University of Wyoming: A White Paper* (UW White Paper, April 2021)" details the conclusions of this effort. University Regulation 1-4 quotes heavily from this document, paraphrasing and summarizing its main conclusions as it characterizes the principles of shared governance expected at UW.

Types of Shared Governance and the Form Chosen at UW in 2021:

Drawing from national practice and insight, UW chose in the white paper above, to define shared governance as "... the process by which various constituents (traditionally governing boards, senior administration, and faculty; possibly also staff, students, or others) contribute to decision making related to college or university policy and procedure." (AGB, 2017 as quoted in UW White Paper, 2021). Furthermore, such efforts must be inclusive and respectful of all constituencies to create a "well functioning partnership of Trustees, the President, faculty, staff, students. When successful, good shared governance "strengthens the quality of leadership and decision making at an institution"; it "engenders an institutional culture of collective ownership and accountability for the institution's present and future"; it "increases the odds that the very best thinking by all parties is brought to bear on institutional challenges"; "decisions are implemented more quickly and more effectively"; and the institution "enhances its ability to achieve its vision and to meet strategic goals" (AGB White Paper, 2017, quoted in UW White Paper, 2021).

Four forms of shared governance were defined in UW White Paper, 2021. Each differs in a number of ways, including the practicability of use at UW, and the potential effectiveness given expectations on our campus.

- **Shared Governance as Equal Rights.** Decisions are not made until a consensus is achieved across constituents.
- **Shared Governance as Consultation.** Parties responsible for making decisions consult with others and consider their positions before actions are taken.
- **Shared Governance as Rules of Engagement.** Rules define roles of the board, faculty, and administration in academic, budgetary, operations, president selection, etc., and specify rules of engagement when disagreement occurs among the parties.
- **Shared Governance as a System of Aligning Priorities.** In this model, open communication is necessary to identify and align priorities, and to create a culture of

shared responsibility for the welfare of the institution. Furthermore, this system creates a system of checks and balances to ensure the institution stays mission centered.

After consultation with all constituencies, UW White Paper, 2021 had two findings:

- 1) UW was perceived at the time as relying on “a minimal expression of shared governance: Consultation.” (Pg 2, UW White Paper, 2021)
- 2) UW’s constituencies of administration, trustees, faculty, staff and students considered shared governance through Aligning Priorities as “most preferable, given the model’s capacity to build a more robust university. Aligning Priorities creates a culture of shared responsibility for the welfare of the institution. It derives from open communication and operates through a system of checks and balances that ensures the institution stays both collaborative and mission centered. It is this model that informs our principles, strategies, and best practices.” (Pg. 2, UW White Paper, 2021). University 1-4 formalized this finding in Sections I and IV of the regulation.

To achieve successful shared governance and a culture of shared responsibility requires all parties to work to fulfill the university’s mission, “to keep our academic mission in the forefront, supported by the administrative offices of the university.” (Pg. 2, UW White Paper, 2021). Constituencies “...must align and share priorities through a collaborative and consultative process.” When priorities are aligned, this allows “...a steady foundation for necessary change and allows the university community to break the cycle of responding under a “crisis model” of making decisions quickly without enacting proper shared governance.” (Pg. 2, UW White Paper, 2021). Ironically, it was the reorganization effort that began in response to the State’s COVID-induced budget crisis, begun in July of 2021 and pursued with minimal input from all but a few administrators that almost immediately began the process of frustration that resulted in the events of Spring 2024.

To achieve alignment of priorities, University Regulation 1-4 and UW White Paper, 2021 identified that the institution and participants in shared governance be committed to three 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. (University of Wyoming Regulation 1-4, Section IV, Part A, June, 2021)

Regulation 1-4 goes on to identify best practices that would embed robust shared governance in the culture of the institution. These include frequent and transparent communication; collaboration; active faculty, staff and student engagement in governance; and regular assessment of shared governance (both practice and outcomes). To ensure the institution moved to engage in effective shared governance reflecting all these ideas, the regulation further directed “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.” (University Regulation 1-4, Section IV, Part C).

Outcome:

The frustrations expressed in the Deans and Directors’ letter and the faculty vote of no-confidence indicate that while the intent of the institution in 2021 was laudable, the implementation as directed in University Regulation 1-4 was not successful, possibly because of the crisis model management actions taken shortly after its passage. Both actions in Spring 2025 demonstrate that the Consultative model was never abandoned. Over the past four years, although the University has implemented many Standard Administrative Processes (SAPs), a SAP has not been developed to define new processes and procedures to ensure shared governance across campus as the regulation requires. . In this light, and because of a perceived top-down style with which many decisions since 2021 have been made, it is understandable that many on campus began to question the commitment of the Administration to the principles of shared governance. Again, the lack of effort to implement specific procedures to enact shared governance, can be seen as directly leading to the climate on campus in Spring 2025. These circumstances also led to the last line of University Regulation 1-4 , which reads “Coming to a shared understanding of these principles, including timely response, is imperative to the success of Shared Governance on campus.” (UW 1-4, Section IV, Part C), becoming strikingly prophetic. The actions taken in Spring 2025 by Deans, Directors and faculty could be viewed as a final last ditch effort to turn the institution back to the principles the community seemed to coalesce around in 2021. Both documents end with a plea to administration to address what was never done after University 1-4 was adopted.

Links to the Pithian Paper, AGB Paper and Shared Governance Regulation are linked or included in appendix a of this document.

In response, Chair Kermit Brown charged the Shared Governance Working Group with addressing the concerns raised in the Faculty Senate’s vote of no confidence by strengthening trust, transparency, and collaboration across the University of Wyoming. He asked the committee to review and clarify the University’s shared governance framework under UW Regulation 1-4, develop implementation policies and accountability procedures, and recommend ways to ensure broad, timely, and reciprocal consultation in major decisions. The group was also tasked with fostering a culture of mutual respect and open dialogue, protecting against retaliation, and engaging faculty, staff, and students across all colleges and divisions through listening sessions and other feedback mechanisms.

Learning Together: The Shared Governance Working Group's Approach

The Shared Governance Working Group (SGWG) met monthly from May through October 2025 to examine the state of shared governance at the University of Wyoming (UW), identify areas where governance processes had been successful or had broken down, and develop actionable strategies to strengthen collaboration, communication, and trust across the institution. Membership included representatives from the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, ASUW, and administration.

Purpose and Charge

At its inaugural meeting in May, the SSWG affirmed its charge to review UW's shared governance framework—particularly UW Regulation 1-4—and to focus on alignment, transparency, and respect in institutional decision-making. The group emphasized forward-looking dialogue, examining past breakdowns and examples of where the University was able to effectively course correct – not to assign fault but to generate solutions. Trustees stressed that the process must model openness, mutual respect, and accountability to rebuild confidence between governance bodies and university administration.

Early Discussions and Foundational Themes

Initial meetings underscored the centrality of **transparency and communication**. Members agreed that meeting minutes would be publicly available and shared broadly within representative bodies. The SSWG also determined that meaningful participation from university leadership was essential to its success, inviting a member of the president's cabinet to join as a standing participant.

In reviewing Regulation 1-4, participants affirmed the soundness of the policy but noted challenges in its consistent implementation. Faculty and staff representatives cited episodes where decision processes appeared to bypass established consultation mechanisms, leading to perceptions of unilateral decision-making. The group cataloged examples where shared governance worked effectively, including strategic plan development and the recent pivot to get more feedback on the SAPP for “prohibited efforts.” The group then examined governance breakdowns, including reorganization decisions, administrative restructuring, and policy changes made without adequate engagement. These instances were recognized as contributing factors to diminished trust within the university community.

Emergent Learning and Case Analysis

Using the “Deloitte Case for Change” for a campus wide staff reorganization as a focal point, the SSWG employed an emergent learning approach to identify systemic communication failures and where the process was able to get back on track. Members observed that institutional messaging often lacked context and clarity, leaving stakeholders uncertain about the rationale

behind major initiatives. The exercise revealed that timely, inclusive feedback loops are critical to successful governance. Participants emphasized the need for consistent alignment between decisions, the university's strategic plan, and articulated institutional priorities.

Through subsequent discussions, the group drew distinctions between **strategic and tactical decision-making**, noting that shared governance should apply most strongly to strategic issues affecting the mission, people, and resources of the institution. Members also acknowledged the need to balance inclusivity with efficiency, recognizing that not all administrative decisions warrant broad consultation.

Rebuilding Trust and Strengthening Culture

Across meetings, trust remained the dominant theme. Participants consistently cited residual impacts from past reorganizations and administrative leadership missteps. Members advocated for transparent communication, clearly defined roles, and proactive engagement to foster a culture of respect. Staff and faculty representatives underscored the importance of visible responsiveness to input, rather than processes that appear performative.

The SGWG discussed the necessity of consistent communication from leadership—linking decisions to institutional priorities, articulating their intended outcomes, and acknowledging their impact on campus communities. Participants praised recent improvements in communication from Academic Affairs and encouraged similar clarity at all levels. The group also highlighted the importance of informal engagement opportunities and smaller community discussions to restore confidence and collaboration.

Current Discussions and Emerging Recommendations

By August and September, the SGWG began consolidating insights to inform the broader understanding of shared governance. The group acknowledged varying interpretations of the term “shared governance” across campus and agreed to articulate a unified, institution-specific definition that aligns with UW’s “aligned governance model.” Members stressed that true shared governance extends beyond procedural compliance and requires authentic dialogue, empathy, and shared accountability.

As the university begins the potential transition to a new hybrid Responsibility-Centered Management (RCM) budget model, the SGWG emphasized that governance principles must guide financial design—not the reverse. Members recommended that mission and institutional values remain central to budgetary decisions, and that transparent, iterative communication accompany the model’s rollout.

October Deliberations and Report Development

At its October meeting, the SGWG reviewed progress and began drafting its formal report to the Board. Key themes included:

- **Defining Shared Governance:** Clarify UW's "aligned" model and articulate where shared governance applies at policy versus management levels.
- **Moving Beyond Proceduralism:** Ensure engagement processes produce tangible outcomes with visible follow-up.
- **Trust and Accountability:** Rebuild confidence through transparency, responsiveness, and acknowledgment of past missteps.
- **Representation and Voice:** Strengthen staff and student participation, including in the presidential search and other major processes.
- **Education and Orientation:** Provide ongoing training for trustees, administrators, and governance bodies on participatory governance principles.

The SGWG reaffirmed its commitment to model the collaboration it seeks to institutionalize. Members agreed that rebuilding shared governance at UW requires sustained attention, cultural change, and shared ownership among trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Next Steps

The committee has synthesized findings into this report for presentation to the Board of Trustees at its November 2025 meeting. We include recommendations to establish clear governance definitions, strengthen communication and accountability mechanisms, and promote a durable culture of trust and transparency across the University of Wyoming.

Insights

Over the course of its work, the Working Group identified several key insights regarding the current state of shared governance at the University of Wyoming. These findings highlight both the sources of past breakdowns and opportunities for institutional growth.

- **Shared Governance is Widely Valued but Unevenly Understood:** The Working Group affirms the importance of shared governance. Yet over the course of our discussions, it has become clear that practice has not consistently reflected UW's commitment to the *aligned priorities* model described in University Regulation 1-4. In practice, many have experienced shared governance primarily as consultation rather than alignment. This raises important questions about when consultation is sufficient and when alignment is required for decisions affecting the university's mission, people, and resources.
- **Policy Frameworks Have Not Been Fully Implemented:** UW Regulation 1-4 and the 2021 Shared Governance White Paper clearly articulate principles and expectations for shared governance, noting that:

“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.”

However, these expectations have not been consistently operationalized across institutional decisions. As the Pythian paper reminds us:

“Communication should reflect an actual dialogue. Directives in which the decision appears already to have been determined short-circuit the deliberative process and undermine shared governance.”

These gaps between principle and practice contributed to the climate leading up to Spring 2025.

- **Breakdowns in Process Have Caused Harm:** The committee recognized that breakdowns in shared governance have caused harm to individuals and to the broader sense of community. Some faculty, staff, and students experienced decisions that felt abrupt, opaque, or lacking in meaningful engagement. These experiences diminished trust, created fear of speaking openly, and contributed to the vote of no confidence — described by several members as a “last-ditch effort to be heard.” Acknowledging harm and committing to repair is an essential step toward rebuilding trust.
- **Trust Depends on Transparent Communication:** Across stakeholder groups, the strongest theme was the need for early, contextualized, and transparent communication. Community members emphasized that trust is built when the rationale for decisions is shared; when input is genuinely considered; and when feedback loops are visible (“you said / we heard / we did”).

Members also recognized that communication must be balanced: too little information leads to speculation; too much, without context, can overwhelm and dilute key messages.

- **Procedural Compliance Alone Is Insufficient:** The committee heard that some engagement processes felt performative - technically compliant, yet lacking authentic dialogue. Members stressed that shared governance requires more than notice and comment; it requires listening, reflection, and responsiveness. Effective engagement is especially important when the University faces challenges which cannot be solved by “pro forma or box-ticking” approaches.
- **Shared Governance Requires the Right People at the Table:** A recurring theme was that the best decisions come when those closest to the issue - those with relevant expertise or lived experience - are meaningfully included. Committee members emphasized that engagement is especially important for staff and students, who reported fewer established avenues for raising concerns and receiving follow-up. Bringing “the right stakeholders to the right table at the right time” builds clarity, strengthens decisions, and supports institutional credibility.

Across all complex systems—whether universities, healthcare networks, or large public agencies—effective shared governance depends on bringing “the right stakeholders to the right table at the right time.” In hospitals, for example, high-reliability practices intentionally elevate the voices of frontline nurses and care teams because those closest to the patient often hold the insights that avert errors and improve outcomes. Similarly, large system contexts such as statewide human-services networks or Fortune 500 companies rely on cross-functional decision-making teams to ensure that policies reflect both operational realities and lived experience. The committee noted that the same principle must guide UW’s approach: when individuals with relevant expertise, daily responsibility, and direct impact—particularly staff and students—are meaningfully engaged, decisions become clearer, more credible, and more cost effective. This alignment with proven practices in other industries underscores the importance of broad, consistent, and authentic participation in shared governance.

- **Not All Decisions Require the Same Level of Engagement:** The working group also recognized the need to distinguish between strategic decisions (where shared governance is essential), and operational, time-sensitive decisions (where consultation may be more limited) or legal issues. Moreover, the group affirmed that not all decisions fall within the purview of shared governance, as some matters are appropriately addressed through administrative or managerial authority. In these cases, the group acknowledged that effective leaders engage the expertise of their teams to inform their decisions and bring people along as matters progress.
- **Accountability Is Shared:** Members affirmed that shared governance is a shared responsibility. Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students each have obligations to participate, communicate with their constituencies, and approach disagreements with respect. Committee discussions highlighted that accountability should be understood not as punishment, but as reflection, learning, and improvement - a commitment to the institution’s mission and an investment in future trust.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The Shared Governance Working Group recognizes that meaningful change requires both immediate action and long-term cultural commitment. Restoring trust at the University of Wyoming will depend not only on new processes, but on a shared willingness to engage transparently, communicate openly, and hold ourselves accountable to the institution's mission and values.

Foundational Principles

Effective community and constituent engagement in shared governance requires moving beyond top-down announcements to create genuine opportunities for dialogue, learning, and participation. Based on best practices from higher education and other complex organizations, engagement should be:

- **Inclusive** - Inclusive of affected constituents and stakeholders, and intentional in reaching underrepresented voices, including staff and students
- **Accessible** - Multiple entry points for different schedules, roles, and communication preferences
- **Meaningful** - Clear connections between participation and institutional outcomes
- **Sustained** - Ongoing rather than one-time or crisis-driven
- **Transparent** - Visible follow-through demonstrating how input shaped decision-making and how final decisions and strategies were arrived at.

Some short term possibilities include:

1. Clarify and Operationalize Shared Governance

- **Develop a shared governance framework and guide.** Building from University Regulation 1-4, create a concise, plain-language guide that defines where and how shared governance applies across academic, administrative, and operational contexts.
- **Map decision-making processes.** Establish clear expectations for when consultation, collaboration, or alignment is required and what communication steps are needed at each stage and when decisions do not fall within the purview of shared governance.
- **Train for practice.** Provide regular onboarding and skill development for Trustees, administrators, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and ASUW leaders on effective governance practices, communication, and conflict resolution.
- **Codify expectations.** In committee charters and charges, include phrases like: "Members are expected to communicate deliberations to their constituencies and to document how input was gathered."
- **Publish a shared governance charter or MOU** that clarifies mutual obligations between administration, faculty, staff, and students.

2. Strengthen Communication and Transparency

- **Establish consistent communication protocols.** Ensure that major institutional decisions include early collaboration, meaningful engagement, and a summary of input received and how it informed the final outcome (“You said / We heard / We did”).
- **Improve information flow to Trustees and governance bodies.** Present comprehensive, balanced information rather than curated summaries to promote informed decision-making.
- **Invest in communication channels that reach all groups.** Recognize that traditional email is not sufficient; use multiple methods to engage students, staff, and faculty in timely, accessible ways.

3. Reinforce Accountability and Feedback

- **Adopt an annual shared governance review.** Conduct a “governance health check” to assess transparency, inclusiveness, and trust across the institution.
- **Review all University Regulations for consistency and sufficient stakeholder engagement.** For example, UW Regulations 2-6 and 2-8 do not provide an avenue for staff members in impacted units to participate.
- **Integrate governance participation into evaluation processes.** Include expectations for meaningful engagement in administrative and leadership reviews.
- **Leverage ombudsperson and faculty conciliator role.** Provide non-retaliatory channels to surface concerns about governance processes or participation.

4. Build and Sustain Trust

- **Foster visible partnership between Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students.** Continue to schedule regular joint sessions or informal dialogues to strengthen understanding and reduce distance between groups.
- **Model difficult but respectful dialogue.** Commit to surfacing and constructively addressing hard issues directly, with humility and empathy.
- **Acknowledge and repair.** When processes fail or communication falters, leaders should own mistakes, take responsibility, and outline how future practice will improve.

5. Institutionalize Learning and Continuous Improvement

- **Consider the Establishment of a permanent Shared Governance Council.** Comprising representatives from each major constituency, this group would meet regularly to review progress, identify challenges, and recommend adjustments. This is

likely a longer-term recommendation, as plates of all parties are currently pretty full.

- **Link shared governance to strategic planning and budget models.** Ensure that new initiatives- especially those impacting mission, people, and resources - are guided by governance principles rather than retrofitted into them.
- **Create an annual Shared Governance Report.** Publish outcomes, engagement metrics, and examples of successful collaboration to demonstrate transparency and progress.

Looking Forward - Long Term Vision

Reinforcing shared governance at the University of Wyoming will not be accomplished through regulation or processes alone. It will require intentional practice, a shared commitment to transparency, and consistent modeling of respectful partnership. Every member of the UW community has a role in this work: to put the institution first, to listen before deciding, and to engage one another in good faith - including recognizing that shared governance does not mean that everyone agrees with every decision. UW commits to investing time and attention to surfacing and understanding our institution's values and fears and provide avenues for us all to renegotiate them together.

The Board of Trustees, through continued partnership with the administration, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and ASUW, can lead this next chapter—where decisions are informed by expertise, guided by trust, and aligned with the university's mission and values.

Appendix

Committee Charge

AGB Report on Shared Governance (attached)

[Shared Governance at the University of Wyoming](#)

[UW Regulation 1-4: Shared Governance](#)

[Faculty Senate Background and Perspective](#)