

Building A Culture

he term
"shared
governance"
often means
different

things to different

Our own understandings
about shared governance have
expanded and evolved over the
years through our participation
in university governance as
faculty members, faculty senate

the American Association of
University Professors (AAUP),
the American Council on
Education (ACE) and the
Association of Governing
Boards of Universities
and Colleges (ACB)

A common
misunderstanding concerning
shared governance centers upon
the concept that every group
is equally involved in making
decisions on everything. This

campus constituencies.
Although the term is used
frequently in academic

We have come to appreciate the
value of collaboration, dialogue
and inclusive decision-making

organizations concerned
chiefly with matters related
to faculty, administration

First, while shared governance
requires joint planning and
effort, participation in decision-

By Philip Rous and Sarah Shin

For example, promotion and tenure processes and policies are primarily within faculty's purview because the faculty is likely to have the best knowledge of a specific academic discipline.

In most cases, the assignment of decision-making authority between faculty and administration is not binary but "weighted," to borrow from statistics nomenclature. In other words, while various groups of people share in many key decision-making processes, the weight of each group's voice is determined by the primary responsibility of each constituency. Thus, in matters that are primarily within faculty's purview, the recommendations and

as people rotate on and off these assignments, it is necessary to review these concepts regularly and give people the opportunity to ask questions about the processes. The same is often true when the administration is subject to rapid turnover.

One of the most important lessons we have learned concerns how information is communicated. This is a particular challenge in shared governance. Both of us have encountered situations

where you are surprised to discover that things are thought

[REDACTED]