

Preface

Peter L. K. Knuepfer

The first SUNY Voices Shared Governance conference, “Shared Governance for Institutions of Higher Education in the 21st Century: Beyond Stereotypes” was held in Albany, New York, on April 23 and 24, 2014. More than 150 registrants, from campuses throughout the State University of New York and City University of New York as well as a number of other institutions, attended and participated in plenary and concurrent sessions that explored a broad range of topics around shared governance. The conference opened with remarks from SUNY Board of Trustees Chairman H. Carl McCall and SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher about SUNY’s commitment to shared governance. In addition to the two keynote addresses that Dr. Tina Good summarizes in her introduction, nineteen papers and panels were presented at the conference, and this volume contains fifteen papers that grew out of these conference presentations.

The conference included some general overviews of shared governance, especially viewed through a faculty lens, with a group of case studies that illustrate how shared governance structures and processes have led to successful outcomes, whereas in other cases a lack of effective shared governance has led to less robust results. Again, those foci are well represented by the papers contained in this volume.

The first group of papers explores a range of aspects regarding the interactions of different stakeholders in shared governance. The first three papers by Bruce Simon, T. John McCune, and Rob Deemer from SUNY Fredonia describe the ways in which they have leveraged modern technology and their own bylaws revisions to foster a greater degree of collaboration across all campus governance constituencies, including faculty (and the faculty-professional staff union), students, and administrators. Their papers highlight the processes developed at Fredonia that led to the campus being awarded the first SUNY Voices Shared Governance Award, in

recognition of the collaborative structure that has evolved on the campus. The award, presented to Deemer and his colleagues by Chairman McCall, is aimed at recognizing effective engagement of campus constituencies—administrators, faculty, staff, students, governing board members—on a particular topic or general campus structure that addresses issues and policies that affect the SUNY campus. The award, which continues to be offered, honors a campus rather than an individual or single constituency.

The next set of papers explores the integration of students in shared governance, highlighting experiences from both the State University of New York and the City University of New York. Minna Barrett and Duncan Quarless explore the myriad pressures on shared governance that exist in the 21st-century university, and particularly those for a public university system committed to open access. In their review of the changing nature of shared governance, they consider approaches that can encourage faculty and students to participate—and continue to participate—in meaningful shared governance. Daniel Ryan provides an overview of faculty-student partnerships, viewed in particular from his experience at the University at Albany. The companion papers by Síocháin Hughes and by Oluwadamisi Atanda and Emily Sohmer Tai explore the relationships that have evolved at the City University of New York to more effectively engage student governance leaders in working with other governance bodies and limit the disconnects between student governance leaders and other governance constituencies while at the same time enhancing the educational opportunities that shared governance offers to students. The two papers examine the issue from perspectives not usually obtained: faculty, Office of Veterans Services, graduate student, and artist.

The next set of papers explores a number of structural aspects of shared governance. Sharon Cramer and Rochelle Mozlin identify “holes” in shared governance structures. They then offer “systemness” as a way to close them, exploring how taking advantage of the breadth of a university system can operate at both campus and system levels. Quarless and Barrett, in a second co-authored paper, recognize that existing governance structures on campuses may not always be adequate to address particular issues. They argue that the use of task forces, properly formulated, can be a useful response to these special circumstances. They caution that task forces need to be clearly defined, with proper attention to identifying appropriate expertise and to identifying to whom the task force will make recommendations; that the role of the task force within the shared governance structure of the academic unit needs to be clearly defined; and that the task force should operate in as open and transparent a manner

as possible, depending on the nature of the issues to be addressed.

The next two papers summarize key aspects of two major initiatives within the SUNY System—seamless transfer (described by Elizabeth L. Bringsjord and co-authors) and Open SUNY (discussed by Tina Good). The two papers are good companions to explore how different structures were developed and employed to tackle system-wide initiatives. As Good argues, the ability of a range of constituencies to work together in new ways not only provides the opportunity to accomplish complicated objectives, but also strengthens and expands the sharing of governance.

The next three papers explore challenges that have been faced in the evolution of shared governance on individual campuses. Kelley Donaghy describes the challenges that have been faced at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry in moving shared governance forward, and offers pragmatic recommendations for individuals new to governance leadership roles. Noelle Chaddock and Beth Hinderliter explore the impediments that restrict and block engagement in shared governance of faculty who bring diversity, especially race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. They argue that recognizing barriers is essential to moving into more engaged, and diverse, governance. Sallie Cuffee and co-authors explore the challenges that have been faced at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York, in maintaining effective shared governance through times of administrative turnover and other campus turmoil.

In the final paper, Norman Goodman provides a perspective on two questions I posed to the panelists at the final session of the conference. He suggests that the most important message from the conference was the need to develop strategies to engage and retain faculty and students with administrators to work together to address issues facing individual campuses or systems, but with a shared recognition of expected actions and the timeframes necessary to identify and implement them. He argues that the future of shared governance requires fostering trust and mutual respect among participants in order for governance to be effective in the modern university. His final point is that faculty, staff, and students need to appreciate that their efforts can be effective at shaping and implementing campus policies and programs, a position that has certainly manifested itself on many campuses in recent months.

In closing, I want to thank the people who made both the conference and this volume possible. Tina Good, then President of the Faculty Council of Community Colleges, chaired the planning committee, with close cooperation from me and Tremayne Price, then President of the SUNY Student Assembly. We are indebted to Lori Mould and Robert

Drumm representing the SUNY Student Assembly; Christine Fogal and Jarrod Cone representing the community college faculty; Sharon Cramer from the State-operated SUNY campuses; Cynthia Demarest representing the New York Community College Trustees; and David Belsky from SUNY System Administration. We were ably assisted by Bryant Barksdale (graduate student intern), Carol Donato, Cherí Burnham, and Lisa Kelsey (the three assistants to the SUNY faculty and student governance organizations). We all extend a special thank you to Sharon Cramer, who stepped forward to bring this volume to a successful conclusion by assuming the editorial duties as it became clear that the rest of us could not. Without her dedication, and the assistance of Donna Dixon and the staff at SUNY Press, this volume would not have materialized.

Introduction

Tina Good

In April 2014, the State University of New York (SUNY) hosted its first academic conference on shared governance. At a time when the Association of American University Professors (AAUP) was predicting the demise of shared governance and ceasing to host its own national conference on shared governance, the SUNY-wide faculty and student governance bodies joined with Chancellor Nancy Zimpher and SUNY System Administration to bring together faculty, students, provosts, business officers, presidents, council members, and trustees from the two public higher education systems within the state of New York (SUNY and the City University of New York—CUNY) to discuss how and why to share governance in the 21st century. Just as the AAUP was pulling back on its efforts to serve as a shared governance resource, SUNY, through its strategic planning initiative known as SUNY Voices, declared its commitment to shared governance as a fundamental tenet of higher education within a democracy.

The SUNY Voices conference—“Shared Governance for Institutions of Higher Education in the 21st Century: Beyond the Stereotypes”—was a culminating event that focused on how processes and structures of shared governance could stay flexible enough to meet the rapid pace of initiatives being introduced to or demanded of our colleges and universities without compromising fundamental principles of shared governance. The conference was framed by two keynote speakers: Rick Legon, President of the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), and Benjamin Ginsberg, author of *The Fall of the Faculty: The Rise of the All-Administrative University and Why It Matters*. While Legon suggested the necessity for establishing trust within a shared governance system that included trustees, presidents, faculty, and students, Ginsberg suggested that governance of colleges and universities should be minimally shared. Instead, he suggested that the faculty should be the primary governing body of the institution. While Legon

suggested that a system of shared governance built on trust would lead to effective and innovative colleges and universities, Ginsberg suggested that such trust was unachievable because of the rise of administrative power in colleges and universities. Such division of thought served to motivate panelists to offer practical solutions to preserving and strengthening shared governance at our institutions, the fundamental mission of the SUNY Voices initiative.

SUNY Voices was a result of “The Power of SUNY Strategic Plan,” which was launched by the SUNY Board of Trustees and Chancellor Nancy Zimpher in April 2010. While The Power of SUNY Plan is best known for its aspirational goals (the six big ideas), a lesser known function of the plan was to strengthen the infrastructure of SUNY, itself. Chancellor Zimpher and the leaders of the Faculty Council of Community Colleges, the Student Assembly, and the University Faculty Senate agreed that maintaining and strengthening shared governance throughout SUNY was a crucial element of SUNY’s infrastructure and deserved strategic planning attention. Consequently, funding was allocated to strengthening shared governance through the SUNY Voices initiative, which has provided for campus workshops, structured collaboration with constituency groups, surveys and survey analysis, training institutes for campus governance leaders, an annual conference, publications, and a SUNY Shared Governance Award, the first of which was presented at this conference to SUNY Fredonia.

Presented with their award by the Chairman of the Board and the Chancellor, SUNY Fredonia launched the first SUNY Voices conference on shared governance. The theme of the conference declared our intention to continually work toward building and maintaining sustainable shared governance systems within higher education in general, and SUNY in particular. That celebration and intention continues with the publication of this book, which excerpts and further develops the concepts of shared governance discussed at this seminal conference.

Editor's Note

Anchovies and Governance

Sharon F. Cramer

At the 2014 SUNY Voices Shared Governance Conference, someone asked me what it was about shared governance (and, actually, governance in general) that seemed to be so foreign to many people. My gut response was, “Governance is like anchovies—it is something people either love or hate.” And while a bit of an overstatement, since governance is completely dismissed by some, I have found the simile to be consistently true during the last few years. Fortunately, while serving as editor of this volume, I have come to know people who care as deeply about governance as they do about anchovies. Some authors I have come to know only through their writings; others I have known for years but had never read their work. All rose to the challenge of translating their SUNY Voices Conference presentations into chapters. Together, we have forged this book. Working with each of the authors has been a humbling privilege.

As you will find when you take a look at our chapters, authors come from all across New York—SUNY, FCCC, and CUNY. And those of you who are deeply enmeshed in governance challenges will find authors whose experience in many ways parallels your own. Shared governance members and leaders have reflected on the paths they followed to advance their governance goals: Some explain what they did that worked, whereas others consider alternatives that might have led to more successful results.

What I can promise you is that you will feel the passion each author has for the work done to address the unique governance complexities that faced them. Intellect partnered with heart to yield solutions, as well as to raise further questions about what is needed to ensure shared governance's vitality on our SUNY campuses. You will find here a feast for the mind,

as well as prompts for discussions on your own campus about the ways you and your campus colleagues can foster shared governance. Get ready for a hearty meal—hope you like anchovies!

Acknowledgments

Gratitude is extended to the authors of this volume, who mined their own experiences, not only to present at the first SUNY Voices shared governance conference, but when composing their chapters. Their efforts enable others to learn. Their patience with the timeline and editorial process is much appreciated. Thanks are extended to the leaders who enabled SUNY Voices and this volume to come into being: President Pete Knuepfer (UFS), President Tina Good (Past President, FCCC), Past President Ken O'Brien (UFS), and SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher—without their commitment to shared governance, New York State's public higher education system would be the poorer. As always, Carol Donato's skills and dedication to excellence improved many aspects of this volume from start to finish. Our editors at SUNY Press, Donna Dixon and Ryan Morris, made what can be a cumbersome process much easier, for which I am extremely thankful. Last, my late husband, Leslie R. Morris was the founding editor of the *Journal of Interlibrary Loan, Document Delivery & Electronic Reserve*. Although he died before I began my editorial work on this volume, he was a remembered role model for me, in the care and discipline that informed all his work with authors and their manuscripts.