<p style="text-align:center">Governance Task Force</p>
<p style="text-align:center">Synthesis of Data from Forums and Survey</p>

Final Report - February 8, 2019

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Executive Summary

The Data Synthesis Team was charged with analyzing and synthesizing community perceptions collected for the purpose of evaluating Lane's campus governance system. Over Fall term 2018, we reviewed four sets of data and noted major themes about governance at Lane that concern the campus community. The data we evaluated consisted of free-text comments collected at campus events, specifically the Spring Conference 2018, Fall Break-out 2018, and the College Council Forum Winter 2018, and the 2014 College Council Survey.

In order to track recurring issues, we developed a set of 26 themes within 5 broad areas that describe specific issues of concern (e.g part-time faculty, council work plans, top down vs. democratic). These themes map to the LCC's Board of Education own principles of governance. Based on our analysis, all of the Board's evaluation principles are of concern to respondents. That said, we found that the principles of Clarity, Effectiveness, Decision making, Accountability, and Communication were the highest scored concerns in our data sources. Overall, we found that there is tremendous support for a representative and collaborative structure of governance with many anecdotal examples of how it can--and should--work.

Data Analysis Process

The Data Synthesis Team was charged with analyzing and synthesizing community perceptions collected for the purpose of evaluating Lane's campus governance system. Our work has focused on making sense of the campus community's perceptions using comments gathered at multiple events and one survey. To date, members of the team met nine times outside of the Governance Task Force meetings. During this time we created a work plan, developed themes we could score, and discussed outcomes and recommendations of our work. We also discussed the challenges presented by the different kinds of data and the inconsistent formats provided to us.

Our first step for evaluating the data was to read through the entire body of comments and come up a set of recurring themes we could measure. This resulted in a list of 26 themes that we could tabulate with a single point score. These themes fit into 5 overarching categories: Accountability, Communication, Administration, Participation, and System. For example, if a comment mentioned the concept of "cliquishness or isolationist" we marked 1 point in that

theme. In most cases, we were able to use the LCC Board of Education's College Governance Policy (BP325) principles to denote the context in which the comment was made.

Molloy Wilson, from IRAP, was instrumental in helping us understand how to interpret the data we had, and how to make it meaningful for sharing with the Governance Task Force.

Data Sources

Three of the four data sets we analyzed are qualitative data in the form of free-text comments collected at campus events, specifically the Spring Conference 2018, Fall Break-out 2018, and the College Council Forum Winter 2018. Of these three sets, only two sets of comments were coded using the 26 themes of our own device, and Board Policy 325 evaluation principles. Comments derived from the Appreciative Inquiry exercises (Fall Break-out session) was left uncoded because it did not utilize the Board evaluation principles encoded in BP 325. It should be noted that all data from campus events was informally derived from a conversational setting, and not directly input by commenters themselves. This fact introduces multiple issues about interpretation and translation that we had little way to correct or measure.

A fourth data set is the 2014 College Council Survey specifically focused on governance at Lane and includes both quantitative and qualitative data. Due to the large volume (57 pages) of free-text comments received from that survey, our team decided to use only the quantitative data already tabulated from the survey to support our own themes. Data from the 2014 College Council survey is the only truly quantitative data in our analysis. We have used the extensive free-text comments as additional support material.

Summary of Findings

All seven of the Board's evaluation principles are of concern to respondents. Overall, there is tremendous support for a representative and collaborative structure of governance with many anecdotal examples of how it can, and should, work. In the Recommendations section of this report, we will address some possible ways for improving governance generally, and specifically how these improvements support increased alignment with the mission, values, and strategic directions of the college. It is worth noting at the outset that there is considerable data to support the vision of shared governance at Lane. In the 2014 College Council Survey, 42% of respondents have a high level of support for a shared governance system that represents all stakeholders, while only 12% have no support. Similarly, 47% of respondents have a high level of support for a collaborative, shared governance system, as compared to 10% who have no support.

In the following section we describe *only the top five principles* that were coded using the themes, in order of highest percentage to lowest:

- Clarity (19%)
- Effectiveness (16%)
- Decision making (15%)
- Accountability (14%)
- Communication (12%)

An important note about the Board Principles and our analysis: In the planning stages of the College Council's Governance Subcommittee community forums, a series of questions was developed to elicit comments from community members. These questions, for the most part, mapped directly to Board Principles, however, not all of questions did. For example, the question "Is the current governance system clear and easily understandable?" maps easily to the Board principle #1 of Clarity. Board principle #6 "Processes that assure that decisions are made at the appropriate level, by the appropriate group with the needed expertise" was categorized as Decision-making and Accountability at the community forums. There is no Board principle called Accountability but there was considerable data collected in that theme. The result of this discrepancy is that we actually scored two extra principles: Accountability and Vision. Accountability is, in fact, a very highly rated concern of the community as we describe below. https://blogs.lanecc.edu/governance/

Here is a chart showing the frequency of comments as mapped to Board Principles:

FREQUENCY OF BOARD PRINCIPLES WITHIN COMMENTS
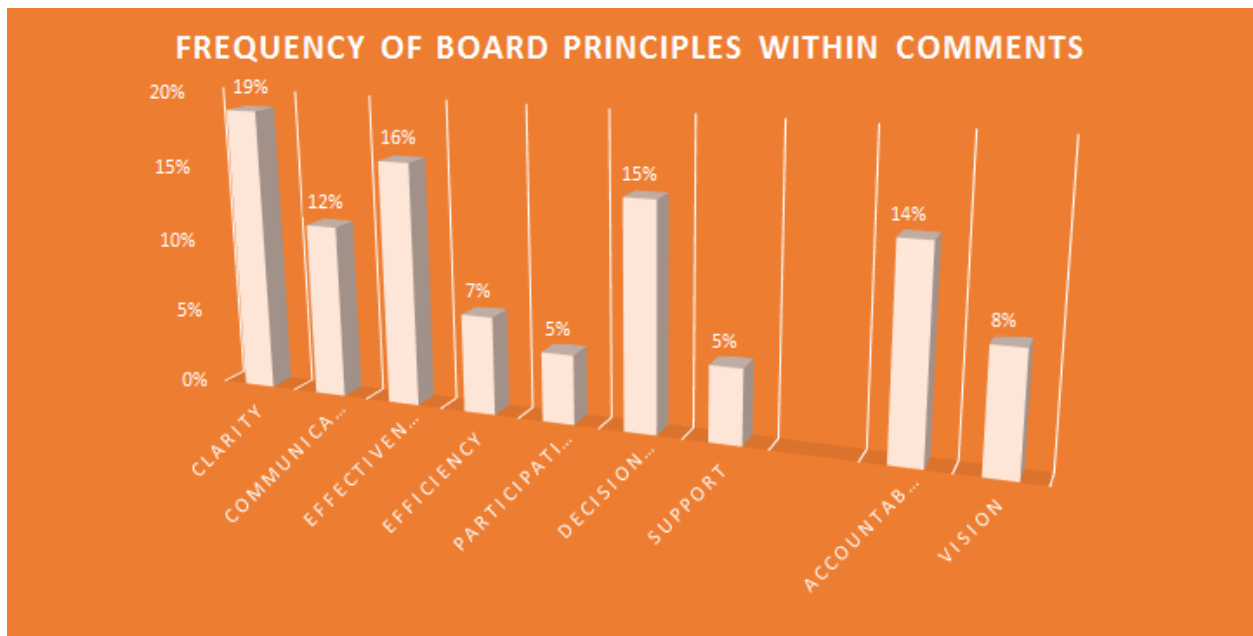
Clarity

Clarity is a concern as it relates to communication, and 33% of comments concerned confusion about how the councils communicate to/from the community, and between councils. While the concept of system clarity is not inherently linked to communication, on our campus it is perceived as a significant place of breakdown: the governance system is unclear because there is little communication about how it works, how council decide on specific goals, and clear accountability for outcomes of council work.

Respondents comment repeatedly that agendas are not routinely publicized, minutes are not current or distributed, and that there is a perception of little concern for the majority of campus stakeholders to learn how they might participate in governance. All of these factors are seen as obscuring governance processes and importance of governance on campus.

Focus and purpose of council work are also noted as important concerns. Lack of direction, scope of work, duplication of efforts, and how to create effective policy are recurring themes in the comments. Many dozens of comments distributed across the data sets question how council work is impeded by unwieldy processes, lack of understanding of systems, and thinking in isolation.

> *"Missions and scope are not always defined; results in lack of effectiveness"*

Need for clarity, or lack of clarity, regarding the system itself is a strong concern voiced by community members; 19% of all comments were coded as related to Clarity (49 out of 259). Within this principle, 20% refer to general understanding of governance system overall. The largest number of comments about clarity refer to how the councils are tasked with doing specific kinds of work and how that work moves (or does not move) from a council into operations.

> *" … if you are going to give Council the charge to create policy they should be able to pass it clearly to someone/something functional to implement"*

According to the 2014 College Council survey, 35% of all respondents thought the work of the councils is "not at all" clear, and 39% thought it was "only a little."

> *"There needs to be clarity of the scope of work with accountability for all councils. Each council should have goals for the years based on the priorities of the college in addressing core themes and student success. Councils should be reporting out on these outcomes rather than their process with recommended follow- up for the next year."*

Board Policy 325 begins: "Lane Community College is governed by a system that is a learning-centered system and fulfills the vision, mission, and core values and strategic directions of the

college." But many comments question the application of this statement in how governance actually operates in campus.

> "The system does not focus on our core themes."

> " … insure that Councils are addressing the priorities of the institution through the core themes/values"

Effectiveness

Effectiveness as a Board principle with the second highest number of comments, or 16% of the total were coded as related to Effectiveness (42 out of 259). Within this single principle a startling 52% of comments were concerned with accountability. As the next highest scored theme, 24% were concerned with administration of councils and how council work is impeded by how they operate.

As one commenter notes:

> "Who owns the decision? Who owns the implementation? Who assigns it?"

Other common concerns include lack of outcomes for serious work, how councils do/do not adequately provide for representation needed to understand issues, and how decision-making and guidance for decision-making are muddled.

> "Movement of decisions up and down are not part of councils. No connective tissue between policy and implementation."

If the primary goal of the governance system is to create policy and steer programs toward student success, the councils are not seen as effective.

> "In the 9 years of existence of the governance system, there have been no more than 4 policies created. It doesn't justify the the amount of time each council spends on meetings. And for the councils that have tried to work on policies, there has been obstruction when one of the members doesn't agree with the issue."

> "Policy development, isn't necessarily, the problem with the councils. It is timely development, and timely implementation, when there is resistance."

> "Policy is still developed at Lane in a top down manner. The councils function as input, but seem to have little to no direct effect on policy or action at Lane."

Three questions in the 2014 College Council Survey focus on questions of the effectiveness of governance. Data from respondents presents a low opinion of current governance system effectiveness.   With regard to *strategic planning*, 34% of respondents consider the system is not at all effective, with a combined 63% consider it to be either a little, or fairly effective. With regard to *policy development*, 36% of respondents consider the system is not at all effective, with a combined 61% consider it to be either a little, or fairly effective. With regard to *policy review*, 35% of respondents consider the system is not at all effective, with a combined 62% consider it to be either a little, or fairly effective. In all three questions, respondents that felt that the governance system has been effective were in the single digits.

Decision making

Decision making is the third highest scoring Board principle and received 15% of the total (39 out of 259). A high number of comments were clustered in the theme of accountability and showed strong concern about how council members are chosen, who is allowed to weigh in on policy decisions, and how council representation can be isolationist or cliquish. There is also concern that union representation unfairly thwarts some decision-making ability.

> *"There is a lack of diversity, with a small group of the same people participating across multiple councils."*

> *"We need to bring more voices and perspectives to the work. It shouldn't be focused on union and labor relations issues and voices– there are separate structures for that."*

> *"The process is exclusive and exclusivity is increasing. For example, the process to create hiring committees for faculty and managers is very closed."*

There is a recurring sentiment that decisions are made that affect part-time faculty without input from that group, or without clear understanding of impact to academic programs.

> *"There needs to be explicit support for participating without fear of retaliation (especially true for part-time employees)."*

The role of consensus in decision making is a strong recurring concern in the free-text comments of the 2014 College Council Survey, and it is one that we missed entirely developing our themes. Despite not having our own measurement for this as a theme, many comments are instructive:

> *"This is a serious problem in the governance system. While the decision making process is clearly defined in the governance operational manual, it is not being followed as originally intended. When consensus cannot be reached on a council, majority and*

minority reports should be submitted to the responsible administrator. Instead persons with minority opinions are able to block important recommendations and work of the college."

"The system does not appear to respect diversity of opinions since it will only bring forward a consensus approval. Consensus approval discourages the process from moving forward when there is any dissenting opinion. The system should work toward consensus but allow a majority vote to rule. A majority vote will also encourage more timely decision making."

"I believe the ineffectiveness in productive decision making stems from a Council being tasked with a project but not given a deadline for completion of the project and lack of adherence to the Governance System Decision-Making Protocol."

Accountability

Accountability is the fourth highest scoring Board principle and received 14% of the total (36 out of 259). The highest number of comments scored by theme concern follow through and representation. For example,

> *"There is an abdication/diffusion of responsibility."*

> *"There is a lack of clear descriptions for positions. Structure is built around champions and persons for initiatives rather than responsibilities which would ensure follow-through."*

> *"College Council should be requesting and evaluating final reports and then establishing priorities for the next year."*

> *"Roles and responsibilities of 1) leadership, 2) supervision, and 3) managers need to be defined and held respectively accountable."*

> *"I feel that each council should prepare a plan of action for the year and a report at the end of the year which outlines the planned work and summarizing the work they have accomplished. … the plan of action and the report should be tied to specific strategic goals as well as an annual review and updates for the appropriately associated policies for each council."*

Many respondents mention concern with accountability but primarily it is perceived as a lack of measurable results.

> *"I'm much more aware of what hasn't worked and what efforts have ended in failure in the councils than in what councils have produced that worked for the benefit of the students, staff, or college. The councils appear as extremely partisan operations, not interested in finding common ground or common good."*

Authentic engagement is also mentioned in relation to this principle; common issues are that there is little time to devote to governance work, little incentive to participate, and some departments are less open to employees working on projects not deemed to be part of job description.

Accountability was also one of our broad thematic areas. Combined, this issue was the highest scoring of all our themes accounting for 34% of all comments.

There is no specific data in the 2014 College survey on the principle of Accountability.

Communication

Board Policy 325 states that communication be qualified as both "*wide and explicit.*" Some 30 comments were coded as negative feedback regarding communication, and these represent 12% of coded comments. Communication was scored also as a theme.

Many comments referred to how to councils communicate to the campus community, and whether communication is intentional, instructive, and truly effective.

> *"Represented groups communicate along their own lines and fail to connect with each other. Faculty hears one story, classified another, managers yet another. There is very little effective centralization of information and almost no crossing group lines to share information. Highly siloed communication, often unshared or shared with a particular "spin," hence ineffective."*

> *"The communication is nonexistent. Besides the minutes on line, there is nothing else that outreach or encourages the college community to be involved."*

> *"Communication is the probably the biggest problem that College Council and the governance system should be working on to rectify. It's likely the easiest to fix and will*

probably return good bang for the buck value."

Data from the 2014 College Council survey is instructive on the principle of Communication. A majority of respondents, or 54% feel that "communication between the governance system and the college community" is not at all effective, 49% feel that "clear, frequent, consistent and timely communication between councils" is not at all effective, and 47% feel that "clear, frequent, consistent and timely communication with the wider college community" is not at all effective. In all three questions, respondents who felt that communication has been very effective were in the single digits.

Communication issues in governance are ripe for improvement and there are dozens of suggestions littered throughout the survey and the forums comments. So many suggestions are made that this principle would benefit from a closer look. For example:

> *"Councils should have clearly defined expectations for communication and reporting between them. Chairs should of course have sufficient release time to do this important work."*

> *"If the College considered such communication important, they would put together a "Lane Governance Weekly" (or "Monthly") digest that had a regular breakdown of governance committee meeting agendas and bullet points of work done, decisions made, and future topics."*

Communication was also one of our broad thematic areas. Combined, this issue accounted for 20% of all comments.

Specific findings from 2014 College Council Survey

There is considerable data to be analyzed in the 2014 College Council Survey but, due to time constraints, we were only able to look at the most broad key findings. One concern of our team was access to any previous reports made by the College Council or the Board of Education. What happened after the survey was concluded, and to whom were the results reported? In a perfect world, we would have had access to any report made by College Council and been able to include previous findings with our own.

A total of 215 respondents answered the survey in two installments with all four stakeholders groups represented:

- Classified Staff: 64
- Faculty: 62
- Managers: 37
- Students: 52

Of these groups, Managers were much more likely (62%) than any other group to serve on a governance council, and students were, unsurprisingly, the least likely (8%).

Despite the different questions asked on the 2014 survey, there was considerable overlap in the high-scoring principles of concern to the community:

- Decision-making
- Effectiveness
- Participation
- Communication
- Clarity

Because of this overlap, we surmise that our own findings have credibility and that the survey data supports our findings.

Challenges of our data analysis

Our data analysis was complicated by multiple data collection processes and the data sources available to us. One assumption of our work is that all of the data collected over the last four years was expected to be further analyzed and presented to the Board, including questions about college responsiveness to principles of governance. Multiple methods were used to develop and collect data; some methods collected free text conducive to thematic analysis, while some quantified respondent opinions from statements intended to align with Board principles.

Translation occurs when group discussions are recorded by one person and distilled into bite-sized comments. Some of the comments collected on the blog are disconnected from their conversational context or prompts. This is not a criticism of the transcriber(s) but rather a limitation of the data collection process. Because comments have been aggregated, we cannot determine if there are multiple commenters, or a lengthy series comments by one person. We also cannot determine if the same issue was recorded only once in a group discussion, or if several people had slightly different views.

Our methodology is not representative of qualitative analysis suitable for replication or peer-reviewed publication. We were constrained by time, resources, and expertise. We did not

archive notes, nor use formal qualitative methods that seek to optimize credibility and expose potential bias in interpretation. We did not triangulate with additional sources outside of the data provided to us. However, we did engage in robust conversations during our subcommittee meetings in an effort to internally check our thinking. While we did take steps to increase credibility and expose our own biases, we did not perform normalization--in the strict sense of the term--by coding the same comments and comparing the results. Our preliminary interpretations of comments to affirm, correct, or disregard our theme structure was limited. All of our coding was asynchronous.

Recommendations

There is ample data to show that the principles for assessing governance effectiveness as described by Board policy are widely valued and relevant to the Lane campus community.

> *"I am strongly in support of a real shared governance system. Lane is doomed to continue its slide toward mediocrity without one. The current system, however, is not a governance system at all, because councils have no authority."*

> *"I think that the governance system needs to be participatory and accessible to all interested staff and students … stakeholder representation is one part of that participatory process. It is not the only form … we need to be more thoughtful about how all stakeholders can engage. I would like to see a more open access system along with systematic stakeholder participation."*

In the aggregate, respondents have little confidence in the principles for actually *guiding the structure and outcomes* of governance as it is practiced at Lane. This suggests that the qualities of effective governance are sound, and that there is a need to realign current practices more intentionally with Board principles stated in BP 325.

Specifically, college governance bodies (councils, administrators, policies) will see improvements in structure and outcomes when we:

- create charters, work plans, and scope work to align with college mission and core themes
- actively solicit broad membership from widely representative stakeholders
- increase transparent methods of campus engagement
- adopt administrative procedures and processes that align with the Board principles
- develop and assess work plans and outcomes based on the Board principles
- take action to make informed decisions to improve governance at the college

- model collaborative practices that are representative of shared governance

These recommendations support the importance of Lane's Equity Lens in improving governance through improving access, equity, and inclusion.

Lane's Equity Lens Framework

Intentional alignment of governance structure and practices with Board principles and equity lens components will advance the college's commitment toward a cultural shift in decision-making and continuous improvement. Planning and policy development with transparent and honest appraisal of its efforts to uphold sound principles and consider equity throughout will begin to engender trust and invite meaningful, rich, collaborative work.

> *"The governance system needs to include an ongoing assessment process. In all parts of the college, we conduct ongoing and comprehensive assessment of the work we do; teaching and learning, financial practices, etc."*

Opportunities

How can the Governance Task Force to use this data to move work forward? Here are some ideas about how to use the key findings from our analysis:

- Explore each Board principle with an Equity Lens
- Identify any College Council or Board Report concerning prior evaluation of governance and integrate those findings into our own
- Collate specific suggestions from the community data to support refinements to the Board principles
- Move some of this work into other councils for greater input (Diversity, Faculty)
- Explore each of the key findings in greater depth for actionable/deliverable improvements

Conclusion

There is a trove of rich and valuable information available to authentically improve governance at Lane. We highly recommend that all College Council Governance Subcommittee members read this report and consider how it can inform the work of other GTF subcommittees. (All of the data sources we used are available in the Team Drive Resource documents folder, and also linked to our subcommittee work plan.) We recommend that this report is shared with all members of Lane's Board of Education.

Lane employees have a strong belief in and support for shared governance at Lane with many respondents seeking greater connection to their work in support of student success. There is a willingness to work for the common good, improve governance systems, and uphold shared values as they are codified in our mission and core themes. We hope that this document provides clear avenues for work that advances these values, our own educational mission, and the values codified in the principles of governance outlined in Board Policy 325.

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Link to GTF Data Team presentation from January 2019:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/14llqBvTXK-Fjg8w_Pvnrfv4-oYI8sF7sEz9LF0HFQfA/edit#slide=id.gc6f90357f_0_0