Models for Shared Governance

Cathryn Potter, School of Social Work

One of the great benefits of working on the planning of this conference has been the opportunity to engage in discussion and debate with those on the planning committee. I hope that we can create an experience here today that allows you to do the same. In our busy lives we don't often have enough time to think. My friends are always amazed when I say this – since they assume that what I do is think deep thoughts for a living with the occasional foray into a classroom of adoring students. Actually I spend a good portion of my time managing projects and leading a team at the Institute for Families where we do the work for number of state contracts and federal grants. So, I am constantly balancing competing missions and agendas at the micro level.

Eric Gould argued today, and does so at greater depth in his new book, that American universities have a primary mission related to democratic education. American Universities are implementing democratic values and practices *and* responding to the power of the market.

So, I was struck by an analysis of higher education by Rudolf Weingartner who argues that faculty members in particular (but also others he calls "campus dwellers") are more like *citizens of a country* than they are like *employees of a corporation*. This may be an important distinction as we consider University governance.

That said Universities have approached shared governance in diverse ways. Some have argued for a distinction between shared governance models, collective bargaining models and corporate models, but as Eric has noted the current reality is that many institutions must govern in the face of all three of these frameworks. Certainly, here at DU we are constantly seeking to

Birnbaum presents five "models of organizational functioning" in institutions of higher education (Birnbaum, 1989).

1. The Collegial Institution
2. The Bureaucratic Institution
3. The Political Institution
4. The Anarchical Institution
5. The Cybernetic Institution.

The Collegial Institution places great emphasis on consensus, shared power and effective consultation between faculty, administrators and governors. The academic community is a rich community held together by shared values and by a tradition of civil discourse. Leaders come from the community and are seen as agents for the faculty. Decision-making processes are quite inclusive. Some of us have experience with the small, selective, liberal arts colleges where this model is often found. Some may have entered academia in the hopes of joining such a community

The Bureaucratic Institution relies on a clear, hierarchical organizational structure, chain of command and rule and regulation controls. There is emphasis on effective, efficient, timely management. Decision-making flows from the top of the organization down to the various academic units. Leaders rely on position and charisma for legitimacy. This model has much in common with traditional top-down management models. It could possibly be dubbed the Jean Luc Picard "make it so" model of governance.

The Political Institution assumes that conflict is inevitable and indeed relies on competition for resources as a key governance mechanism. Decision-making is political, diffuse and decentralized. Leadership requires coordination of many diverse and sometimes conflicting missions and priorities. Leadership is by persuasion,

We may think about three primary types of shared governance decisions.

Consultative Decisions are decisions made by administrators or governors that take place when the faculty and other members of the community have been consulted. Faculty members have little control over the final decision, but do have a clear investment in the quality of the consultation relationship and process that is employed.

One example of this type of decision is the selection of leadership positions. While the Board of Trustees will select the next Chancellor of the University, the faculty expects an appropriate consultative role. We expect the same of decisions regarding leaders in ancillary administrative roles (Athletic Director, Vice Chancellors, President, etc.) If consultation is sought but never used – then shared governance is not in effect. Sham consultation is a major threat to shared governance.

Co-determinative Decisions are made appropriately when the faculty has given both its advice and its consent. In many academic settings, the selection of academic administrators falls in this category. Other examples might include the selection and implementation of a new Core Curriculum or the decision to go to a required study abroad program. Items that come to the Faculty Senate for consideration and approval are co-determinative decisions, although other structures may also be involved in such decisions.

All-but Determinative Decisions are made by the faculty and are subject to administrative oversight, but are very rarely over-ruled and only for explicit reasons that must be defended. For example, promotion and tenure decisions would rarely be overturned at the Provost, Chancellor or Board level. Similarly, decisions regarding required curriculum content would rarely be mandated by senior administrators (Weingartner, 1996).

In practice decisions are not always so clearly conceptualized. Many governance flashpoints occur when participants hold differing conceptions of the nature of the decision, when decisions are moved from one category to another, or when agreed upon processes are altered.

We would do well to develop our collective abilities to play appropriate roles in these differing types of decisions, and to structure decision processes with greater clarity. Effective leadership skills vary depending on the type of decision and on the broader governance model. All players need proficiency in those skills as well as a commitment to the integrity of the exchange.

Making it So

The dominant governance style of an institution influences views on which decisions fall into the shared governance arena and what type of collaborative decision-making is appropriate. A strong collegial model of governance might well consider the selection of top University leadership to be a co-determinative decision betw7h goveenegoed thepusll m tun6(i)3.d te.C tl ( )TJ0 -1.1437 T-0.00

Challenges for University Governance

Dean J. Saitta, Department of Anthropology

The key challenges for university governance often spring from what Cathy Potter has called "flashpoints" of conflict.   These flashpoints are produced by people— trustees, administrators, faculty—who bring to the table different sets of cultural values (what we've termed "corporate" and "academic") and different ideas about how decisions are best made.   As Cathy notes, these flashpoints provide an opportunity to test the effectiveness of university governance, and to consider ways of improving it.

In this talk I'll describe some of the more common governance flashpoints in the modern university, and identify a few flashpoints here at DU that are of a piece with national trends. Some of the common flashpoints have been woven into the scenarios that we'll consider in this morning's second session.   I'll also review some of the more useful suggestions that have been made about how to secure the future of shared university governance in a rapidly changing higher education environment.

Governance Flashpoints in the Modern University

Just about any issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* will address one or another flashpoint of conflict created by the clash of corporate and academic values.

Numerous examples exist of both blitz and stealth tactics by Governing Boards to appoint chief executives, consolidate power

Local Governance Flashpoints

Like every institution, DU is experiencing tensions