

Dear Colleagues,

Shared governance is a crucial element of every decision we make here at Central Washington University. From university-wide initiatives, such as the development and implementation of our Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Plan, to planning processes at the college and division levels, we believe it is essential that we do our work collaboratively and inclusively.

Ever since we began implementing a shared governance model in 2021, the members of the CWU community have embraced this new method of institutional decision-making. Your participation in this institution-wide culture shift has allowed us to break new ground in how we collectively plan for CWU's future.

During the 2022-23 academic year, a group of faculty and administrators gathered to discuss traditional shared governance, its history, and the varied perspectives that are held on how the shared governance model can function most effectively.

These conversations revealed that there is a strong desire across the institution to increase our understanding of how shared governance works at CWU. We also learned that the university community is interested in finding ways to create an operational structure that deepens our collaborative and inclusive interactions as we seek to advance the Vision, Mission, and Values of the university.

As Core Value #3 of the Strategic Plan says, we will "Create a university-wide committee consisting of representatives from faculty, staff, students, administrators, and trustees to study shared governance, review our shared governance practices, and create a national model for shared governance at CWU."

We took our commitment to a higher level this fall by asking our shared governance groups, including unions, to nominate a broadly representative and diverse group of individuals who can help us further explore the potential impact of shared governance. The goals of this committee are threefold:

- 1) to develop an understanding of the history of shared governance in higher education;
- 2) to develop our own common definition of shared governance and how it operates at CWU; and
- 3) to nurture a culture where we engage generatively through aligning our priorities.

I am pleased to announce the individuals who have agreed to join this conversation. They include:

- Faculty Senate – Mark Samples (Music)
- Academic Department Chairs Organization – Heidi Perez (Psychology)
- United Faculty – Amy Claridge (Family Consumer Sciences)
- Exempt Staff – Tommy Fernandez
- Classified Staff – Arryn Welty
- PSE (Public School Employees) – Justine Eason
- ASCWU Board of Directors – Michelle Carillo
- Academic Affairs Administration – Elvin Delgado

- Trustees – Erin Black

We will begin meetings in the new year and create a cadence for regular gatherings, reporting out to the university community, and opportunities to be involved in the process.

The co-sponsors for the group will be Interim Provost Kurt Kirstein, Senior Vice President Joel Klucking, and myself, with support from Executive Liaison for the President's Office Dania Cochran.

Please join me in welcoming the members of our new Shared Governance Committee. With your continued participation, these individuals will work to ensure that the interests of every member of the CWU community are represented.

Sincerely,

A. James Wohlpart  
President