Decision-Making and Collegial Consultation Regarding Academic and Professional Matters

YCCD Board Policy 7-8049 and Title 5, §53200 articulate decision-making policy with regard to academic and professional matters. “Collegial consultation” is the key principle and process for decision-making concerning academic and professional matters at Modesto Junior College.

In principle, collegial consultation is designed to foster a culture of transparent communication and continuous dialogue between the Academic Senate and administration. Collegial consultation affirms the professional knowledge and expertise of faculty, and it establishes the Academic Senate as the voice of faculty regarding academic and professional issues. The Academic Senate engages in collegial consultation as a body through the council governance structure and via direct communication with the Board of Trustees and/or the Board’s designee. Faculty serving as Academic Senate representatives on any governance bodies shall be given reasonable accommodation to report to, and receive direction from, the Senate before conclusions or decisions on recommendations relating to academic and professional issues are reached.

As a process, the role of the Academic Senate in “collegial consultation” is defined in Board Policy 7-8049 and Title 5, §53200 as the practice of “relying primarily” and “mutual agreeing.” Board Policy 7-8049 delineates academic and professional matters subject to mutual agreement or as areas where the Board and/or its designee will rely primarily on the recommendations of the Academic Senate.

The Board of Trustees shall “rely primarily” upon the advice and judgment of the Academic Senates in selected areas. “Rely Primarily” means the recommendations of the Senate will normally be accepted, and only in exceptional circumstances and for compelling reasons will the recommendations not be accepted. If a recommendation is not approved, the Board or its designee shall promptly communicate in writing its reason to the respective senate(s).

These areas are:
A. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing course within disciplines
B. Degree and certificate requirements
C. Grading policies
D. Faculty role and involvement in accreditation process, including the self-study
F. Policies for Faculty professional development activities

The Board of Trustees shall reach “mutual agreement” between the Academic Senates and the Board on selected areas. “Mutual Agreement” means that recommendations shall be prepared by either the Academic Senates or the Board’s designee, and are subsequently ratified by both. If “mutual agreement” cannot be reached after good faith effort, existing policy shall remain in effect unless continuing with such policy exposes the District to legal liability or causes substantial fiscal hardship, which the Board shall promptly communicate in writing to the respective Senate(s).
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These areas are:
A. Education program development
B. Student preparation and success
C. Processes for program review
D. Institutional planning and budget development processes
E. District and college governance structures
F. Others as may be mutually agreed upon by the Academic Senates and the Board of Trustees