



ROLE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

Title 5:

Section 53200 Definitions

Academic Senate means an organization "whose primary function, as the representative of the faculty, is to make recommendations to the administration of a college and to the governing board of a district with respect to academic and professional matters."

Academic and Professional Matters means the following policy development and implementation matters:

1. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines
2. Degree and certificate requirements
3. Grading policies
4. Education program development
5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success
6. District and college governance structures, as related to faculty roles
7. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports
8. Policies for faculty professional development activities
9. Processes for program review
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development
11. Other academic and professional matters as are mutually agreed upon between the governing board and the academic senate

Consult Collegially means that the district governing board shall develop policies on academic and professional matters through either or both of the following methods, according to its own discretion:

1. Relying primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate^[i]
2. Agreeing that the district governing board, or such representatives as it may designate, and the representatives of the academic senate shall have the obligation to reach mutual agreement by written resolution, or policy of the governing board effectuating such recommendations.^[ii]

Section 53203 Powers

- A. The governing board shall adopt policies for the appropriate delegation of authority and responsibility to its college academic senate.
- B. In adopting the policies described in section (a), the governing board or designees shall consult collegially with the academic senate.
- C. While consulting collegially, the academic senate shall retain the right to meet with or appear before the governing board with respect to its views and recommendations. In addition, after consultation with the administration, the academic senate may present its recommendation to the governing board.
- D. The governing board shall adopt procedures for responding to recommendations of the academic senate that incorporate the following:

1. When the board elects to rely primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate, the recommendation of the senate will normally be accepted, and only in exceptional circumstances and for compelling reasons will the recommendations not be accepted.^[iii]
 2. When the board elects to provide for mutual agreement with the academic senate, and an agreement has not been reached, existing policy shall remain in effect unless such policy exposes the district to legal liability or fiscal hardship. In cases where there is no existing policy, or when legal liability or fiscal hardship requires existing policy to be changed, the board may act, after a good faith effort to reach agreement, only for compelling legal, fiscal, or organizational reasons.
- E. An academic senate may assume such responsibilities and perform such functions as may be delegated to it by the governing board.
- F. The appointment of faculty members to serve on college committees shall be made, after consultation with the chief executive officer or designee, by the academic senate.

[i] See Section 53203 (D) (1) "Powers"

[ii] See Section 53203 (D) (2) "Powers"

[iii] "Participating Effectively in District and College Governance," a document written by a joint task force of representatives of the California Community College Trustees (CCT), the Chief Executive Officers of the California Community Colleges (CEOCCC) and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), makes the following point about these two concepts, "exceptional circumstances" and "compelling reasons": "These terms mean that... in instances where a recommendation is not accepted [,] the reasons for the board's decision must be in writing and based on a clear and substantive rationale which puts the explanation for the decision in an accurate, appropriate, and relevant context."