

To: Faculty Senators  
From: Kimberly Jensen  
Date: July 6, 2019  
Re: Shared Governance Survey

Dear Colleagues:

Outgoing Faculty Senate President Schepige invited me to provide a general summary of the faculty responses to the survey on shared governance distributed to faculty senators and faculty members last spring term. The following is a one-page summary of those responses.

Many respondents are interested in continuing the conversation about shared governance. Given this, it would seem a good next step to invite faculty senators to consult with their Division colleagues about how best to continue and to broaden this discussion across campus for the 2019-2020 academic year, and to encourage suggestions about action goals faculty members have for this process. Possibilities mentioned in the survey include the creation of a sub-committee or task force for this purpose, and creating activities across stakeholder groups including faculty, faculty union, staff, administration, students, and Board of Trustees. Division discussions will also bring additional strong ideas for moving forward.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Jensen  
Professor of History and Gender Studies  
Social Science Division Senator

## **General Summary of Responses to Shared Governance Survey**

### **How do you define shared governance, and faculty members' role in shared governance, on our campus? 30 responses**

Respondents emphasize shared and transparent decision making as a key process of shared governance and indicate that this brings both rights and responsibilities for participants.

Respondents emphasize that this should be a collaborative process and not administrators informing faculty after the fact. Frequent descriptions include transparency, true collaboration, developing trust between and among stakeholders. Faculty emphasize that they have a valuable and personal connection with students and curriculum that should be valued in the decision-making process and that faculty have a particular responsibility for curriculum.

### **What are your three top concerns about the role of faculty and shared governance on campus? For each, what do you see as a way to resolve your concern? 31 responses**

Lack of trust and collaboration in decision-making: "top down" decisions affecting campus, including Provost search, curriculum initiatives and decisions, personnel issues.

Faculty workload and low faculty morale: many respondents feel administration has asked faculty to do more work without providing compensation or space for faculty to accomplish this work. Other respondents expressed frustration that only a few faculty members are actively involved in decision-making processes, doing the "heavy-lifting," while many complain but do not participate. A number of respondents linked this problem to workload and faculty not feeling appreciated.

Need for improved communication across committees, divisions, among faculty and administration and a university-wide commitment to and understanding of policies and procedures.

### **Do you have an example or examples of shared governance that is working well here at Western? How might we build on this positive example or these examples? 27 responses**

Most reported:

General education revisions

Faculty union

University Budget committee

### **Do you feel that faculty's role in shared governance is respected at WOU?**

28 responses (29 listed on survey but only 28 specific comments)

No 18

Yes 6

In some cases 4

### **Anything else you would like us to know about WOU's shared governance?**

21 responses

Respondents believe in the need for shared governance and a strong faculty role in campus decision-making. Many request continuing discussions and broadening the conversation about how to address shared governance on campus. Respondents want Western to succeed. Many respondents call for a rebuilding of trust and morale among faculty and between faculty and the administration.