

Shared Governance Council (SGC) Minutes October 29, 2025

Present: Chris Atwater, AUC Co-Chair; Melissa Rojas, AUC Co-Chair; Dr. Renae Gorman, MCCC Chapter President; Dr. Chris Thuot (CAO), Cabinet; Darcey Kemp (CSAO), Cabinet; Mary Kaselouskas (CIO), Cabinet; Dr. John B. Cook (Ex-Officio), President, and Nanette Flores (minutes)

Unable to attend:

Andrea Nathanson (CFO), Cabinet; Kim Noel, AFSCME; Takira Williams, SGA President.

Meeting started at 12:21 p.m.

i. Reminder: Public-facing website

www.stcc.edu/about-stcc/shared-governance/

ii. Reference: Board of Trustees enabling motion from 2022

“A Shared Governance Council (SGC) is hereby formalized, and serves as the structure that ensures advisory input from college stakeholders through a consensus-model, and does so by providing recommendations to the STCC President; recommendations are high-level regarding institutional policies, planning and operations in support of the STCC mission”

ii. Review/Discussion

Student Bereavement Policy

All-Unit Congress gave an overview of the submission, and the work/process to develop the recommendation. A good deal of discussion took place including how the Division of Student Affairs handles situations (medical, etc.), what policy exists (most often developed at the state level with legal counsel), as well as implications for faculty, particularly in health programs with clinical requirements. It was made clear by AUC leadership that the intent is to demonstrate understanding and deep empathy for student bereavement, and to seek a way to model how to manage very difficult situations. It does not appear that other Massachusetts community colleges have a specific bereavement policy.

Of particular consideration was the recommendation for up to five days of non-consecutive leave by students from class. Related, the conversation also considered the policy in light of “shall” and the requirement that faculty, regardless of discipline, will have to adhere to the class leave element. In asking MCCC for a view in light of the collective bargaining agreement, the Chapter President would take that question under advisement. There is also the complication of the Student Code of Conduct, as well as if a faculty member would seek to grieve, and this is to do with whether and how a student utilizes the policy. The example: if a student needs 6 days due to travel, and a faculty member says that this counters their syllabus, how will the policy handle disagreement? A different example – student is hospitalized – that falls under a different category, and medical leave requires documentation, different from the absent notification form. In regards to the absent notification form, that is a centralized notification process, which allows for student and faculty to work out next steps.

Within the conversation was the stated value of helping educate students on how bereavement works – the idea of time parameters, and how the five days was an attempt to provide some guidelines. Again, in the discussion of what makes for a policy, and one that can be enforced, this was a distinguishing point – is optional actually possible. No consensus reached; MCCC will consider and as needed, Vice President Kemp will confer with legal counsel.

Food Services on Campus

All-Unit Congress gave an overview of the submission, and the work to develop. It was clarified that the submission was not a policy recommendation.

Also provided in advance was a memo from Vice President/CFO Andrea Nathanson (will be included with these minutes), given that she was unable to attend. Also included in the memo was the question: what response, from administration, the STCC President, or others, would be expected beyond this open letter, as a response to the submission?

As part of the conversation, and in reference to the memo: the topic of food on campus has been discussed before; there is certainly frustration in some quarters and a desire for more or different options, and cost considerations for the college itself have been significant. Also for clarity: is there a working definition of “affordable” or “healthy” in the context of food on campus, as well as distinguishing from resources available through the Center for Access Services (CAS).

Broadly, this agenda item included a conversation about distinguishing policy recommendations, as opposed to operations feedback to president/administration, including concerns. President Cook stated that feedback is always welcome. He also noted some of the other avenues where administrators not only hear from employees, but what it means to prioritize in relation to costs and college investments. Returning to the item, AUC leadership made the point that food is one of the ways to create community on campus, and their work by a committee is raising questions about the quality of the food and availability of food.

iii. Item not included on the agenda - submission by AUC - Campus Communication/ New Employee Hires

This item will be taken up at the next SGC meeting

Will look into a date in December for another meeting
Meeting ended at 1:31p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Nanette Flores