

**SHARED GOVERNANCE**  
**Framing the Conversation**  
**February 8, 2018**

Shared governance has a long history in higher education. Typically, however, members of governing boards, administrators, and faculty have differing views about shared governance. The concept is broadly endorsed by most in higher education, but its implementation is inconsistent and leads to misunderstandings and tensions among the various constituents—the very things that shared governance is expected to mitigate or eliminate.

Responding to a continuously changing external environment and implementing timely change to best position Western for the future requires a shared understanding of the consequences of change, a shared commitment to advance the strategic plan in a timely way, and a shared understanding of institutional values of quality, excellence, diversity and inclusivity. This necessitates that the Board, administration and faculty align their understanding and practice of shared governance.

The February 2018 retreat is designed to focus on two important and inter-related topics critical to advancing Western: change management and shared governance.

The following pre-retreat reading materials will help inform the Board members, president and vice presidents about the concept and practice of shared governance:

1. AGB Board of Directors' Statement on *Shared Governance*
2. "How to Make Shared Governance Work: Some Best Practices", AGB Trusteeship Magazine, March/April 2014.
3. "Exactly What is Shared Governance?" Chronicle of Higher Education, July 23, 2009.
4. "Transforming Institutions Through Shared Governance", AGB Trusteeship Magazine, September/October 2012.
5. Western's Governance documents (including Rules of Operation-Section 1. The Board and Governance; Section 2. Authority, Powers, and Duties of the Board; and Section 8. Authority, Powers, and Duties of the President.)
6. Western's Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes, March 3, 2016 (Topic: Governance at Western).
7. Eastern Washington University's Principles of Shared Governance and Chapter 3—Governance.

As you reflect on these readings and shared governance practices at Western, please consider the following questions:

1. What is shared governance?
2. What are the hallmark characteristics of a great Master/Comprehensive University?
3. What is the process of engaging faculty and other campus constituents in important decisions/directions for the university?
4. How might Western best capitalize on the multiple perspectives of faculty, administrators, and trustees to learn better as an organization and to seize opportunities when they arise to advance Western?
5. How do we balance autonomy, consultation, and accountability in a shared governance environment?