

Faculty Council of Community Colleges

Position Statement in Support of Student Governance at Community Colleges Approved October 8, 2016

The Faculty Council of Community Colleges places high value on the principles of shared governance. We model these practices for students in the SUNY community colleges and therefore support the inclusion of students in shared governance on SUNY campuses, which is essential for campus and system-wide success and equity.

In addition, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation* 13th edition (2014), Standard 7 “Governance, Leadership and Administration” states “An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making by each constituency, including governing body, administration, faculty, staff and students...”

While SUNY policies exist regarding the management of student activity fees at the state operated campuses, no such SUNY system policy exists to codify the management of community college student activity fees. In response to the SUNY Student Assembly Resolution 1516-113 “Strengthening Community College Shared Governance,” the Faculty Council of Community Colleges supports the Student Assembly initiative to work with SUNY System Administration to improve community colleges' student governments' access to decision making processes on their campuses that include the following shared governance best practices:

- Written policies and procedures describing how students are recognized in governance
- A sustainable student governance body with governing documents created and maintained by the students themselves
- A regular transparent election process for students to choose their leadership
- A clear avenue of communication for student governance with major shared governance bodies
- Written policies and procedures describing how the student activity fee is managed
- A formal role for a student governance body representative in determining how allocations of the student activity fee are made

The Faculty Council of Community Colleges further supports the Student Assembly's proposal to partner with SUNY System to assist community college student governments in conducting self-assessments and to provide recommendations to community college campuses on best practices for student government, students' roles in shared governance, election management, and allocation of the student activity fee.

In the spirit of shared governance, and given the role of applied learning in achieving student success, the Faculty Council of Community College urges that this issue be given high priority.