



# Life University

## Statement on Shared Governance



**DATE: January 26, 2009**

**TO: The Life Community**

**FROM: Brian J. McAulay, D.C., Ph.D.**

**RE: Board Approval, Statement on Shared Governance**

I'm pleased to share with you that the Board of Trustees has approved for adoption the Statement on Shared Governance that arose from the LAMP process. Shared governance is a time-honored value of the academy and necessary to a well-integrated, inclusive system of guiding a university toward achieving its institutional Mission. The hard work of the LAMP Faculty Roles Team has culminated in a document that will set the stage for the future of Life University to unfold in a defined and rational way, recognizing the appropriate contributions of faculty in a dynamic relationship with the Board, the administration, staff and students.

The LAMP Faculty Roles Team, whose membership was comprised of faculty from all three colleges, is to be congratulated not only for its hard work, but also for the collegiality exhibited in the process of creating the Statement on Shared Governance. I would also like to acknowledge the President for his support of the LAMP process and the openness with which he has embraced it. The enthusiastic support of the Board and their appreciation for the work of the LAMP Faculty Roles Team should also be noted. The Board was particularly pleased to approve the final Statement for adoption and eagerly anticipates the path it will pave for faculty roles and responsibilities, within a framework of shared governance, to shape the University's future.

The implications of shared governance for faculty, administration, staff and students are many and varied. The rights and roles of each group are, of course, balanced by their responsibilities to one another and, foremost, to the institution and its Mission. The responsibility for creating policies is shared, although the management and implementation of those policies are not transferred from the administration. It is the spirit of trust and collegiality which shared governance engenders that offers the greatest promise for the future of Life University as an institution prepared for fulfilling its ambitious vision.

I would like to add my thanks to the Deans, our LAMP consultants Drs. David Hornbeck and Barbara Byrne, and Ms. Peggy Brockington, Life's University counsel, all of whom provided input.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Faculty Roles Team in advance for the work they are about to undertake in bringing the Shared Governance Statement to life in the Faculty Handbook. I truly appreciate the work they have done, and continue to do, in advancing Life University toward its Mission and Vision. I look forward to the collaborative and dynamic process that the Statement on Shared Governance will bring to Life's future



**LIFE UNIVERSITY, INC.  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**JANUARY 23, 2009**

**RESOLUTION**

**RE: LIFE UNIVERSITY SHARED GOVERNANCE**

**WHEREAS** Life University's 2020 Plan sets forth the Board and President's Vision to substantially develop and grow the University consistent with the institution's Vision and Mission;

**WHEREAS** the realization of the 2020 Plan requires substantial levels of cooperation between the faculty and the central administration and the Board of Trustees;

**WHEREAS** the University has created over the past four and a half years a series of enhancements in communications and shared governance practices to facilitate effective cooperation between the faculty and the central administration of the University to set the stage for the growth to come;

**WHEREAS** the Provost established in January 2008 a Faculty Roles Subcommittee as part of the Academic Master Planning process and charged this subcommittee with drafting a statement of shared governance;

**WHEREAS** the Faculty Roles Subcommittee reviewed the AAUP statement on shared governance, researched the practices of shared governance at other institutions, considered the application of those principles given Life's unique Vision and Mission, and has developed broad principles for shared governance;

**WHEREAS** this subcommittee has written a *Statement of Shared Governance*, presented it for review, and had it ratified overwhelmingly by a formal vote put before the full Faculty on October 16, 2008;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of Life University unanimously endorses the *Statement of Shared Governance* presented by the Provost and Faculty, and approved by the President;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, the Statement will be used to write a statement outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Faculty of Life University in the following areas: curriculum and course development, assessment of the quality of instructional delivery and educational outcomes, the

definition of scholarship and service, faculty development, University enrollment, advisement and other provisions of input into the Vision and Mission;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** the Statement will be used to develop the best structure for faculty governance to advance the Mission of the University;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** the Statement will be used to review, and revise as necessary, the Life University Faculty Handbook in the spirit of supporting the achievement of the Mission.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Thomas M. Klapp, DC**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Kenneth O. Nix, JD**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Charles E. Ribley, DC**

# Life University

## Statement on Shared Governance



### Preamble

The principle of shared governance is an honored tradition and an expectation of accreditation<sup>1</sup> in higher education, wherein governance of an institution results from collaboration and interdependence between and among the Board of Trustees, President, administration, faculty and, as appropriate, other interested constituents. Shared governance is an effective way to coalesce the community around the common goal of fulfilling the mission of the institution. It acknowledges competence in discipline and draws on the expertise of all. It is in the best interest of Life University for the Board of Trustees, President, administration and faculty to work collegially and to speak with a unified voice to agencies and publics whenever possible.

### A. Principles

To promote a culture of shared governance, the Life University community embraces the following principles:

1. The Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty acknowledge the importance of and are committed to fostering shared governance.
  - a. A hallmark of shared governance being the early and consistent involvement of faculty, the University fosters shared governance by involving faculty at early stages of discussions, maintaining reasonable workloads that allow faculty participation in governance, supporting faculty development of governance skills, and rewarding participation in governance work.
  - b. The faculty participates in shared governance as an essential faculty responsibility and avails itself of opportunities to develop expertise in governance.
2. A spirit of collaboration among the Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty is vital to healthy governance.
  - a. Relationships among the Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty are cooperative and marked by collegiality and mutual respect.
  - b. Deliberations and communication between and among the Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty are carried out in good faith by all parties.

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<sup>1</sup> 3.7.5 The institution publishes policies on the responsibility and authority of faculty in academic and governance matters. (Faculty role in governance) from *SACS Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement* (adopted December 2007 and effective January 1, 2008)

- c. In the context of internal communication among university constituencies, the Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty can express dissenting views on governance without reprisal. These views should be expressed in appropriate environments and using agreed-upon processes.
  - d. The Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty have timely access to relevant information that is necessary to make informed decisions or recommendations on University matters. All parties will understand that some information is confidential by Life University policy and therefore not available.
  - e. Given reasonable time, all parties (Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty) respond expeditiously to requests for recommendations and action on University matters.
3. The Board of Trustees, President, administration, and faculty look to national, regional and local accreditation, statutory and regulatory standards for their respective roles in the governance of the University.
  4. The Board of Trustees, President, administration and faculty recognize that the active, informed participation of faculty and administrators in governance is necessary and important, at levels appropriate to their special knowledge and expertise, and understand that the final authority and responsibility for the University rests with the Board of Trustees and the President, as directed by the Board of Trustees.
  5. The Board of Trustees, President, and administration consider, assess and evaluate, respectfully and in good faith, faculty recommendations in those areas in which the faculty has initial responsibilities, including:
    - a. curriculum, subject matter, pedagogy, and research,
    - b. appointment of regular faculty: hiring, peer review, retention, grievance, within the context of the roles of faculty committees as described in the Faculty Handbook.
    - c. status of regular faculty: evaluations, promotion, extended contracts/tenure, post-tenure review; and
    - d. those aspects of student life that relate to academics.
  6. Administrators above the level of division chair/department heads, who have the ability to overturn, override, or veto recommendations of the faculty, do not have a vote on faculty committees on which they serve.
  7. The faculty has a defined role in developing and administering the University budget, which includes:
    - a. having initial responsibility for defining department/division budget priorities and for effectively using funds allocated to the division/department pursuant to University policies.
    - b. having direct input in setting budget priorities for their respective colleges, and

- c. being consulted and informed of budget priorities for the University at large.
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- 8. The campus community fosters participation and leadership by a diverse population
  - 9. The University develops, adopts, and publishes policies on the responsibility and authority of all constituencies in academic and shared governance matters.

## **B. Communication and Representation**

Open communication and proper representation are crucial to effective shared governance; therefore, all constituencies of Life University embrace the following principles:

- 1. The University develops, adopts and publishes policies to create and maintain the appropriate channels:
  - a. for regular and accurate communication of faculty views and concerns to the Board of Trustees, President, and administration, and
  - b. for regular and accurate communication of the views of the Board of Trustees, President, and administration to the faculty.
- 2. Faculty members who represent the faculty in any capacity are either selected by the faculty or selected by others from a list provided by the faculty in accordance with university policies.
- 3. Faculty members who are selected to represent the faculty to any entity have the authority and responsibility to speak for the faculty as a whole to that entity.
- 4. As an authorized representative to any entity, a member of the Board of Trustees, the President, an administrator or a member of the faculty, is responsible for:
  - a. taking adequate time to determine the views of his/her constituents before voting or making recommendations on important issues,
  - b. keeping his/her constituents informed of the issues being discussed,
  - c. understanding the discussions and recommendations of all parties and representing accurately and completely those discussions and recommendations to his/her constituents,
  - d. respecting confidentiality when clearly and properly established, and
  - e. accurately identifying his/her personal views as distinct from those of his/her constituents or those of the University.
- 5. The Board of Trustees, President, and administration use established mechanisms to ensure a faculty voice in matters of:
  - a. addition/elimination/revision of educational programs.
  - b. establishment of educational relationships with outside entities,
  - c. enrollment management,

- d. institutional planning,
  - e. student life, and
  - f. other shared concerns.
6. Often decisions that are made by one group (faculty or administrators) substantively affect other constituencies. As appropriate and practical, affected constituencies will be consulted before final decisions are made.