



PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK



Reviewed by the President's Advisory Council on June 30, 2025



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At Mt. San Antonio College, the strength of our institution lies in the active participation of our campus community. Participatory governance is not just a process, it is a commitment to ensuring that all voices are heard in shaping the policies, programs, and initiatives that guide our institution forward. Your involvement is not just encouraged, it is essential to our collective success.

Engaging in governance is an excellent way to gain a deeper understanding of how our College operates, whether your interests lie in academic affairs, student success, campus operations, or institutional planning. There is a Committee that aligns with your expertise and passions, and your contributions can make a real difference.

By serving, you have the opportunity to:

- **Influence Decision-Making** – Your insights and expertise help shape policies, initiatives, and improvements directly impacting our campus community.
- **Represent Your Constituency** – Your participation ensures that diverse perspectives are heard, fostering inclusivity and equity in the decision-making process.
- **Develop Leadership and Professional Skills** – Governance involvement enhances communication, collaboration, and leadership skills that benefit your professional growth and personal development.
- **Foster Community and Connection** – Engaging in governance allows you to build relationships across departments and deepen your understanding of College processes, strengthening our Mt. SAC community.

Getting involved is simple; reach out to your constituent leaders to express your interest. When vacancies arise, constituent groups communicate these opportunities to their members. If you would like to serve, step forward! Your voice matters, and your participation strengthens our College.

Thank you for your commitment to making Mt. SAC a place where participatory governance thrives. I encourage you to get involved and play an active role in shaping our future together.

Dr. Martha Garcia
President/CEO

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND COMPLIANCE: LEADERSHIP ROLES, REGULATIONS, AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Decision-Making Roles

Included below is the delineation of decision-making roles:

- **Board of Trustees**

Reference: [BP 3255 Participation in Local Decision-Making](#)

The [Board of Trustees](#) embraces the concept of participatory governance as a fundamental policy of the College, while retaining its own rights and responsibilities as the ultimate decision-maker in those areas assigned to it by State and federal laws and regulations.

- **President/CEO**

References: Education Code Section [70902\(b\)\(7\)](#); [AP 3255](#); [BP2430](#)

The [President/CEO](#) is the official designee of the Board of Trustees and has the authority to make campus decisions.

Regulatory Framework for Participatory Governance

Education Code § [70901\(E\)](#) establishes the regulatory framework for participatory governance as, “procedures established by governing boards of community college districts to ensure faculty, staff, and students the right to participate effectively in district and college governance, and the opportunity to express their opinions at the campus level and to ensure that these opinions are given every reasonable consideration, and the right of academic senates to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum and academic standards.

Title 5 regulations ([Title 5 § 53200-53204](#)) identify constituent groups who have rights and obligations to participate in governance.

Brown Act Bodies

Academic Senate, Associated Students, and Classified Senate and its subCommittees are subject to the Brown Act and must follow Brown Act. Ad hoc Committees are not subject to Brown Act if:

- *composed solely of members of the legislative body itself*
- *less than quorum of its members*
- *not formally created by action*
- *advisory in scope*
- *has a defined purpose and timeframe for completion; and*
- *does not have a fixed meeting schedule*

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Reference: [AP 3255](#)

The work of effective participatory governance is in policy formation and development, which results in recommendations to the President/CEO. Policy implementation (Operational Bodies) is the purview of the College administration. Once a policy has been recommended to the President/CEO and the President/CEO approves the recommendation, the administration is entrusted with the responsibility for the implementation and execution of College policy, given existing circumstances and resources.

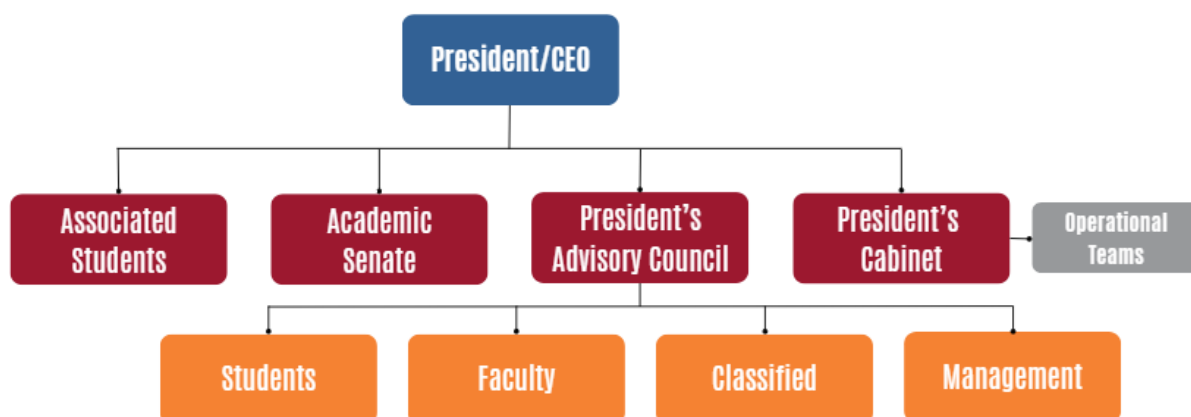
Recommending Bodies

A Recommending Body is a body that participates in institutional decision-making by providing recommendations to the College President/CEO on matters that affect the institution. Mt. SAC's recommending bodies participate in short-and long-term College planning. The functions of these bodies include recommending policies, procedures, direction, and processes. Any budgetary recommendations must be approved by the appropriate Cabinet-level administrator.

Mt. SAC Recommending Bodies include:

- President's Advisory Council (PAC)
- President's Cabinet (PC)
- Academic Senate (Legislative Body that is subject to the Brown Act)
- Associated Students (Legislative Body that is subject to the Brown Act)

RECOMMENDING BODY STRUCTURE



Organizational Groups

Governance Structure

Mt. SAC embraces participatory governance with campus groups, which include representatives selected by each of the appropriate campus constituencies. The groups contribute to institutional decision-making by providing recommendations within their scope of focus through a Recommending Body to the College President/CEO on matters that affect the institution. They coordinate and participate in the short- and long-term planning of the College by participating in Governance Committees and recommending policies, procedures, and processes through their defined purpose and function.

- **Governance Council:** Participate in the short- and long-term planning of the College and guides the efforts of Governance Committees that report to it. Governance Councils direct Committees and Taskforces, and receive recommendations from them regarding policies, procedures, and processes. Governance Councils make recommendations to PAC. When multiple Committees are working on related initiatives, a Council helps align their efforts, ensuring consistency, collaboration, and progress toward shared goals.
- **Governance Committee:** Coordinates and guides the efforts in short-and long-term planning of the College. Governance Committees may report to a Council when their work is part of a larger coordinated effort, providing recommendations to either a Council or PAC. Committees direct Taskforces and Workgroups.
- **Governance Taskforce:** A temporary, specialized group assembled by a Council or Committee to tackle a complex problem requiring immediate action. Taskforces make recommendations to Committees and Councils.

Below is a list of all Governance Councils and Committees:

- Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC)
- Budget Committee
- Climate Commitment and Environmental Justice Committee
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Social Justice, and Anti-Racism Committee (DEISA+)
- Information Technology Committee (ITC)
- Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC)
- Professional Development Council (PDC)
 - Management Professional Development Committee (MPDC)
 - Classified Professional Development Committee (CPDC)
 - Faculty Professional Development Council (FPDC) (Note: This Council is established by the Academic Senate, but also reports to the Professional Development Council)

Operational Structure

Operational teams provide oversight and implement specific functions, processes, or services that support the operations and effectiveness of the institution. While not part of the College Participatory Governance Structure, these teams make decisions affecting local projects and College operations, reporting to an appropriate Vice President or the

President/CEO. Operational teams will provide updates and reports for transparency to the campus via their respective Vice President or the President/CEO.

- **Operational Committee:** Provides oversight and carries out ongoing responsibilities on specific operational topics. These Committees have a structure that includes a broad representation of constituency groups. These Committees may provide regular reports to the President's Advisory Council, as outlined in their Purpose and Function Statement.
- **Operational Advisory Group:** Provides recommendations, expertise, and guidance on specific operational topics. These advisory groups have a structure that includes members with specific areas of expertise.
- **Operational Team:** A temporary team formed to address a specific issue, challenge, or project that requires focused attention and resolution on specific operational topics. These teams have a structure that includes members with specific areas of expertise.

Below is a list of all Operational Committee and Advisory Groups:

Administrative Services

- Facilities Planning Committee (Note: This Committee provides a monthly report to President's Advisory Council)
- Police and Campus Safety Committee (Note: This Committee provides a monthly report to President's Advisory Council)
- Health and Safety Committee
- Auxiliary Services Board (Brown Act)

Human Resources

- Equal Employment Opportunity Plan Committee (Brown Act) (Note: This Committee provides a monthly report to President's Advisory Council)
- Employee Wellness Committee
- Insurance Committee
- VOICES Committee

Instruction

- Economic Development and Workforce Committee

School of Continuing Education

- Transition Advisory Group

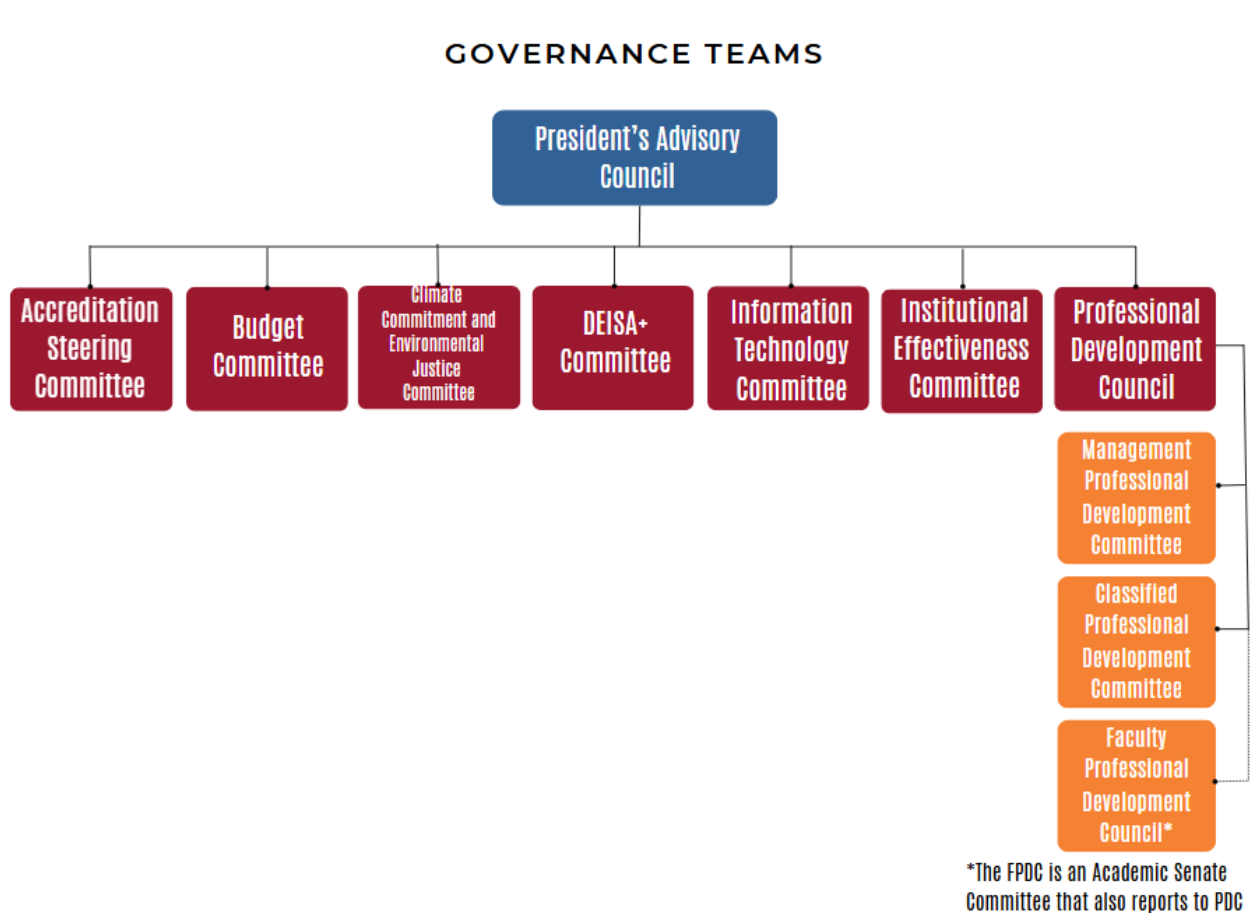
Student Services

- Basic Needs Committee
- Transfer Advisory Group
- Board of Appeals Committee
- Behavior and Wellness Advisory Group

Recommending Bodies Organizational Structure

President's Advisory Council

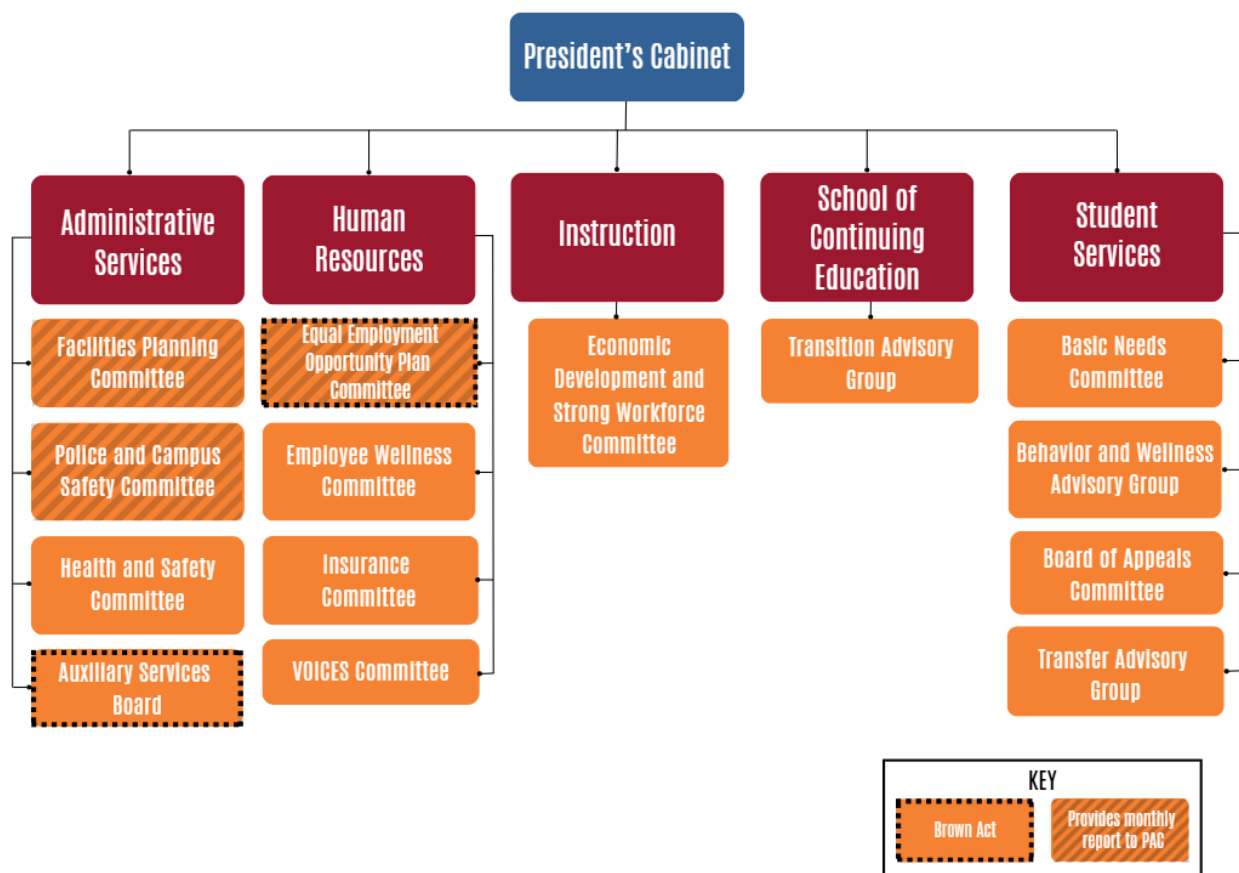
The President's Advisory Council serves as the primary planning body for the College and provides a forum to review and recommend direction and focus for the College consistent with the College's Mission, Vision, and Core Values, directly advising the College President on policy and governance. This is led by the President/CEO or designee. President's Advisory Council may establish taskforces or workgroups as needed to support its functions and objectives. These taskforces or workgroups may focus on specific issues or tasks and report their findings to the Council.



President's Cabinet

President's Cabinet is the senior leadership team that advises and supports the College President in decision-making and institutional governance in the areas of strategic planning, operational oversight, policy development and implementation, budget and resource allocation, and communication and coordination. President's Cabinet may establish taskforces and workgroups as needed to support its functions and objectives. These taskforces and workgroups may focus on specific issues or tasks and report their findings to President's Cabinet.

OPERATIONAL TEAMS



Academic Senate

References: [BP 3255](#) and [AP 3255](#); Title 5, Sections 53200 et seq.

The Academic Senate abides by the Brown Act.

Faculty are represented by [Academic Senate](#), which consults collegially with both the College administration and the Board of Trustees on the development of policies and procedures related to academic and professional matters, also known as “10+1”.

“The Board of Trustees and the College President will rely primarily upon the faculty, acting through Academic Senate, in the following academic and professional matters:

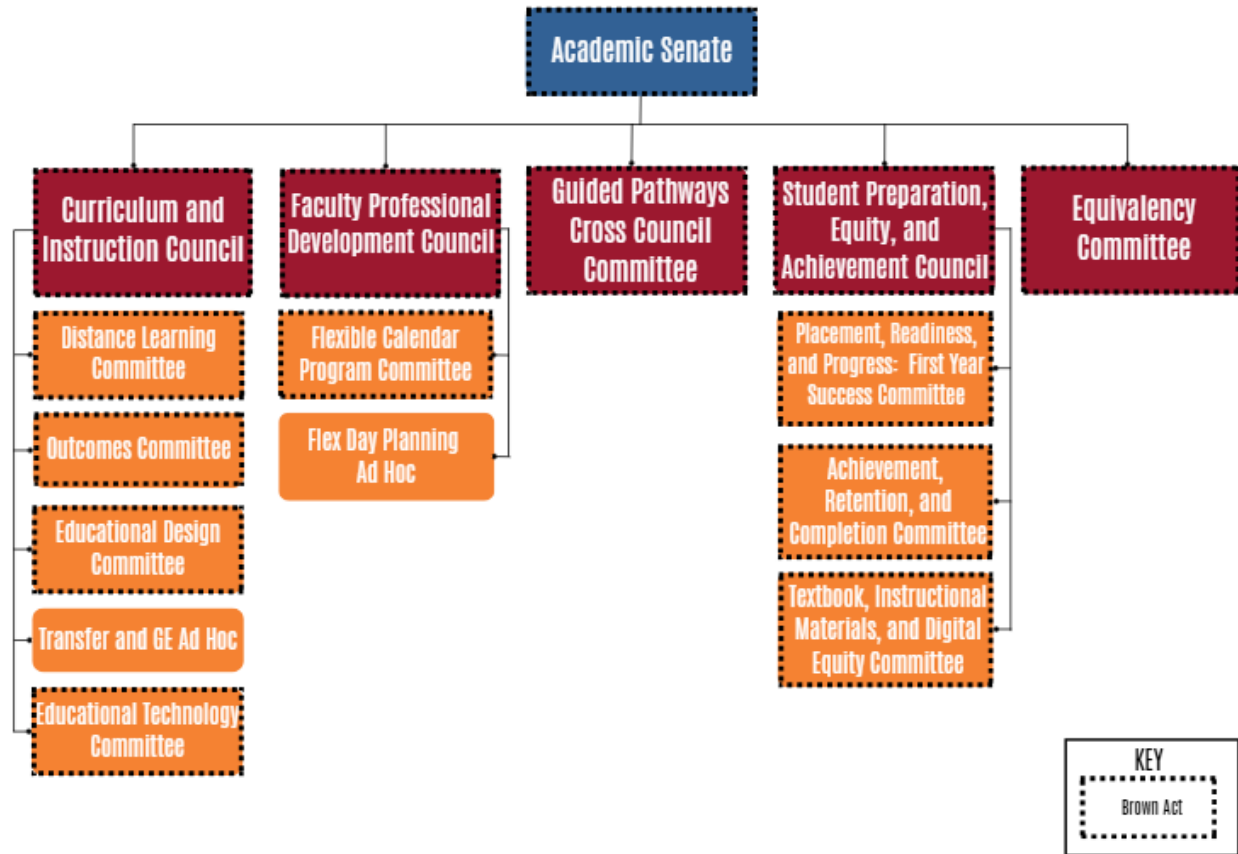
1. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites and placing courses within disciplines,
2. Degree and certificate requirements,
3. Grading policies,
4. Educational program development,
5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success, and
6. Policies for faculty professional development activities.

The faculty and Board of Trustees and the College President shall reach mutual agreement on the following academic and professional matters:

7. District and College governance structures, as related to faculty roles,
8. Faculty roles and involvement in the accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports,
9. Process for program review,
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development, and
11. Any other District and College policy, procedure, or related matter that the District Board of Trustees determines will have a significant effect on students.”

The Academic Senate has an approved Constitution and Bylaws to govern its operation. The Academic Senate representatives are members of Councils, Committees, and taskforces as described in this handbook.

ACADEMIC SENATE



Associated Students

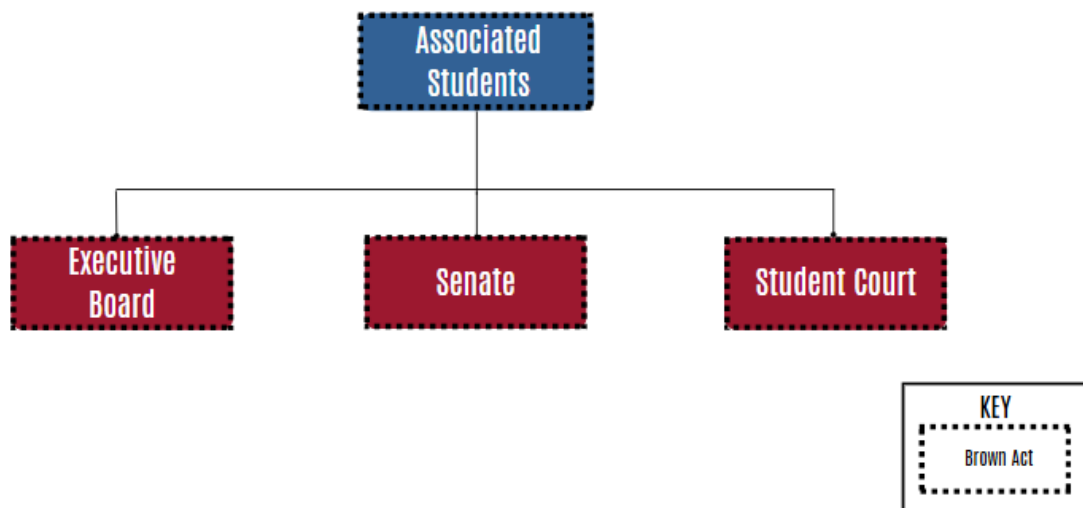
References: [AP 3255](#); Title 5, Sections 51203.7

Mt. SAC Associated Students represents the student body. It has an approved Constitution to govern its operation and serves to promote and protect the diverse needs of the student population. Associated Students and its representatives have the right to participate effectively in governance. They are provided the opportunity to make recommendations and aid in the formulation and development of policies and procedures that affect students in all aspects of college life, also known as “9+1”:

1. Grading policies;
2. Codes of student conduct;
3. Academic disciplinary policies;
4. Curriculum development;
5. Courses or programs that should be initiated or discontinued;
6. Processes for institutional planning and budget development;
7. Standards and policies regarding student preparation and success;
8. Student services planning and development;
9. Student fees within the authority of the District to adopt; and
10. Any other District and college policy, procedure, or related matter that the District governing board determines will have a significant effect on students.

The selection of student representatives to serve on College Committees, taskforces, or other Governance groups is made by the Associated Students’ President after consultation with the College President/CEO or a designee ([AP 3255](#)).

ASSOCIATED STUDENTS



Additional Groups Who May Appoint

Collective Bargaining Groups

California School Employees Association (CSEA)

As the exclusive representative for classified members, [CSEA 262](#) and [CSEA 651](#) have the first right to appoint classified employees to Committees. In accordance with [Education Code Section 70901.2](#), the exclusive representative of classified employees shall appoint the representatives for the respective CSEA unit members for designated Councils, Committees, taskforces, and other groups ([AP 3255](#)). Each unit has its own Constitution and Bylaws that govern how its units operate and appoint representatives to campus Councils, Committees, and taskforces.

- CSEA Chapter 262 represents non-teaching academic and administrative professionals of Mt. San Antonio College.
- CSEA Chapter 651 represents maintenance and operations professionals of Mt. San Antonio College.

Mt. SAC Faculty Association (FA)

The [Faculty Association](#) is a collective bargaining unit composed of faculty, whose role is prescribed by Education Code with a focus on the negotiation of compensation and working conditions. The FA representatives are members of participatory Governance Councils, Committees, and taskforces as described in this handbook.

Other Employee Groups

Classified Senate

The [Classified Senate](#) provides classified professionals with a formal participatory voice in supporting the College mission, vision, and core values. It has an approved Constitution to govern its operation. The Classified Senate is an organization that consults on issues affecting all classified employees, making recommendations that pertain to its purview. It may appoint representatives, not to exceed the number appointed by CSEA, to designated Councils, Committees, and taskforces as described in this handbook ([AP 3255](#)).

Management Steering

The Management Steering Team serves as the representative body of the College for administrative employees. It gathers information and research on management staff needs and concerns. It may appoint representatives to designated Councils, Committees, and taskforces as described in this handbook.

Confidentials

The Confidential Team serves as the representative body of the College for confidential employees. It gathers information and research on confidential staff needs and concerns. It may appoint representatives to designated Councils, Committees, and taskforces as described in this handbook.

Governance Structure Quick Glance Chart

	Governance Council	Governance Committee	Governance Taskforce
Overview	Coordinates and guides the efforts of Governance Committees that report to it and participate in the short- and long-term planning of the College by directing Committees and recommending policies, procedures, and processes to PAC. <i>Meeting schedule is regular and ongoing during primary terms.</i>	Supports institutional priorities for participatory Governance. They may report to a Council when their work is part of a larger coordinated effort, or they may report to PAC. <i>Meeting schedule is regular and ongoing during primary terms.</i>	A temporary group of individuals assembled to address a complex problem. It is typically created to investigate, analyze, or develop solutions to a particular problem within a defined timeframe. Taskforces are action-oriented and make recommendations or deliver specific results. <i>Limited scope and meeting duration.</i>
Communication	Meeting agendas and minutes are accessible on BoardDocs , and the purpose, function, meeting schedule, membership, and key information are available on Committee websites . College employees may attend Council/Committee meetings since they are public. Constituent group representatives are appointed to represent their respective groups. Council/Committee representatives should seek input regarding key issues and report out updates at regular intervals to their constituency group, the timing and format to be decided by each constituent group.		A taskforce will culminate with a final work product and conclude meeting when the charge has been accomplished. Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided to the respective Council or Committee.
Work Flow	These groups provide reports and recommendations to a Council or PAC. PAC provides recommendations to the President/CEO.		This group provides reports and recommendations to a Council or Committee.
Formed	Recommendation from PAC to President/CEO regarding the structure. All Governance Councils/Committees are listed on the College website. All have a purpose, function, meeting schedule, and membership.		Recommendation from Council or Committee regarding structure of the taskforce. Must have a specific charge and defined timeframe.
Evaluation	Follows the evaluation plan within this Handbook.		

Operational Structure Quick Glance Chart

	Operational Committee	Operational Advisory Group	Operational Team
Overview	A group of individuals who have broad representation of constituency groups that assist the President/CEO or area Vice President in supporting campus operations and implementing policies. <i>Meeting schedule is regular and ongoing.</i>	A group of individuals with area expertise who are convened to provide guidance and recommendations on topics or programs. They may be short-term, cyclical, or continuous in nature. <i>Meeting schedule is regular and ongoing.</i>	A group of individuals with area expertise assembled to address a specific issue, challenge, or project that requires focused attention and resolution on a specific topic.
Communication	Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided to the respective Cabinet member, who will update Cabinet as appropriate. Committees may provide periodic reports to the President's Advisory Council as identified in their Purpose and Function Statement. Constituent group representatives are appointed to represent their respective groups.	Meetings will operate per the specific requirements set forth within each Committee's requirements, which may be set by a legal requirement or funding source. Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided to the respective Cabinet member, who will update Cabinet as appropriate.	Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided to the respective Cabinet member, who will update Cabinet as appropriate.
WorkFlow	These Committees and advisory groups provide reports and recommendations to the respective Vice President or President/CEO. The Cabinet member provides recommendations to the President/CEO.		This group provides reports and recommendations to a Vice President or the President/CEO.
Formed	Vice President provides a recommendation to President/CEO or the team is created by the President/CEO. Recommendations will be recorded on Cabinet Notes. All Teams are listed on a website. All have a purpose, function, meeting schedule, and membership.		Recommendation from Team, Group, Vice President, or President/CEO regarding the structure. Must have a specific charge.
Evaluation	Cabinet reviews the Operational Committee or Advisory Group structure annually to provide recommendations.		

PROCESS FOR AMENDING, DEACTIVATING, OR ESTABLISHING A GOVERNANCE COUNCIL, COMMITTEE, OR TASKFORCE

Establishing, amending, or deactivating a Governance Council, Committee, or Taskforce requires review and approval of the purpose, function, and membership by PAC. The process follows the General Goals and Operating Principles of [AP 3255 Participation in Local Decision-Making](#) with the intent:

- To create effective decision-making and use of time by streamlining the process and by avoiding duplication of effort. This implies the expanded use of Taskforces that are task-specific work groups rather than the proliferation of standing Committees.
- To establish working size groups no larger than is required to achieve the task at hand while keeping in mind the voices needed to complete the task equitably.

Amendment to a Governance Council or Committee

- Requests may be initiated at any time when a Council or Committee's Purpose, Function, or Membership requires a change.
- Committees that report to a Council send their proposed revised Purpose, Function, and Membership statement to their Council for input and approval. Once approved, the Council will forward recommended changes to PAC for consideration and a decision. Councils and Committees that report directly to PAC will send their proposed revised Purpose, Function, and Membership statement to PAC for consideration and approval.

Deactivation of a Governance Council or Committee

As part of the participatory governance cycle of evaluation, PAC will review and discuss each Council's and Committee's purpose, function, and membership within the context of the Governance Decision-Making Structure. Overlap in Council or Committee functions may lead to a decision to deactivate a Council or Committee.

Councils and Committees are expected to fill all seats and meet actively. Should a Council or Committee not be able to maintain membership or meet for at least 70% of meetings, PAC may recommend deactivating the Council or Committee.

Establishment of a Governance Council or Committee

A Council or Committee Purpose, Function, and Membership statement is proposed within the context of the Governance Decision-Making Structure. The request is presented to PAC for consideration and a decision.

Establishment of a Taskforce

A Council or Committee or the President/CEO creates a formal charge statement with deliverables, assigned membership, reporting expectations, and a date for task completion.

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE CYCLE OF EVALUATION

Reference: ACCJC Standard 4

The evaluation of participatory governance effectiveness is overseen by the President's Advisory Council. The process of evaluation can be found in the Participatory Governance and Planning Handbook Toolbox.

GOVERNANCE TOOLBOX

Links to documents that will assist Committees

- **Participatory Governance Principles** – Learn how Mt. SAC engages students, faculty, staff, and administrators in collaborative decision-making to support student success and uphold the College's mission.
 - **Principles of Consensus** – Discover how Mt. SAC uses consensus-building to guide inclusive, collaborative decisions that reflect shared understanding and collective support.
 - **Governance Membership and Responsibilities** – Explore the roles and responsibilities of governance members at Mt. SAC, including how chairs and Committee members contribute to effective, collaborative decision-making.
 - **Evaluation of Participatory Governance Structure and Reporting Process** – Learn about Mt. SAC's participatory governance evaluation cycle, including regular and comprehensive reviews that ensure continuous improvement in the governance processes.
 - **Forms** – Access essential forms required for participatory governance processes.
 - **Brown Act** – Find key information and resources for Committees required to comply with the Brown Act, including guidelines for agendas, meetings, and public transparency.
 - **Acronyms List** – Browse a comprehensive list of acronyms commonly used at Mt. SAC to help you navigate terms and titles.
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- Governance Councils and Committees Webpage and Agenda/Minutes
 - Academic Senate Committees Webpage and Agenda/Minutes
 - Associated Students Committee Webpage and Agenda/Minutes
 - Operational Committees Webpage
 - Committee Meeting Schedules
-
- Board Policy and Administrative Procedure Regular Review Cycle
 - Institutional Planning

Committee Names Revised 8/25/2025