Shared Governance Decision Matrix

A decision matrix is a tool that clarifies who has the authority to make decisions and who within the community should be consulted, offer recommendations, and be informed. Each row within the matrix is its own decision. One of the first challenges in creating a decision matrix is determining what level of granularity is most helpful. Running a university requires hundreds of decisions every day, some large and some small. Capturing every decision would be impossible, and the attempt could yield a matrix the size of a phone book. We wanted this document to be a useful reference, and we felt strongly that this would require restraint. Not every decision falls under the scope and purview of shared governance[1].

This matrix is the product of over 25 hours of discussion over several months. We have endeavored to capture the most critical shared governance functions of the University. While it would be hubris to claim perfection, we sincerely hope the community finds this to be a useful resource. The Decision Matrix stands as a set of best practices for how to reach decisions collaboratively. We expect that it will be applied with common sense and good judgment, depending upon the situation at hand.

There will inevitably come times when decisions must be made that were not anticipated in this matrix. When such situations arise, we recommend that all stakeholders come together to discuss and agree to a process well before making the decision. The process should be shared with all stakeholders at the beginning of the consultation process. It should clearly define what groups need to be informed and consulted, who makes the recommendation, and who makes the final decision, as guided by the definitions below. The process should also adhere to the guiding principles laid out in the Philosophy Statement.

As the University grows and changes, the Decision Matrix may need periodic updating. We hope this task will be easier with the starting point we've established.

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[1] In an early conversation, a task force member asked "isn't this just someone doing their job?", and this question became our touchstone in deciding what to include. For example, we considered including "planning student orientation" as a decision. Orientation is a complex enterprise that requires considerable effort and cooperation between administrators and staff in multiple areas of the college. Furthermore, it is critically important in helping students transition to Siena, building their feeling of belonging in our community, and planting seeds for engaged alumni. But planning orientation, we felt, is also clearly something that could be described as people in these offices simply "doing their jobs"—while it's complex and important, we ultimately decided it did not warrant a line in the matrix. Most of our meetings entailed discussion of this nature; deciding what *not* to include took as much time and consideration as deciding what to include.

Definitions

Consultation

Consultation is the process of engaging stakeholder groups to gather their advice or opinions before a recommendation or decision is made. It involves exchanging information and perspectives to achieve a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. While advisory in nature, the consultation process ensures that stakeholders can provide relevant insights and facts, enabling recommenders and decision-makers to make well-informed choices. The decision matrix identifies the minimum standard; broader consultation with people/groups not listed is encouraged where possible. Consultation should lean toward being more inclusive, involving a diverse range of voices to enhance the quality of the ultimate decision.

Recommendation

A recommendation is a formal suggestion made to a decision-maker after consultation with stakeholders. Recommenders are responsible for collecting input, providing expert insights, evaluating relevant information, and presenting actionable options. Recommendations may sometimes include alternative solutions, along with their benefits and costs, to ensure decision-makers have clear and well-supported choices.

Primary authority: Recommendations can carry different degrees of authority. In some cases, it would violate institutional norms and principles of shared governance for the decision-maker to depart from the recommendation. In these cases, the recommending group exercises what the AAUP terms "primary authority."[2] For example, faculty have primary authority over tenure decisions and thus rightly expect the President and Board to uphold decisions made by the Committee on Faculty Status. While the President and Board have the power to overrule the committee, they should do so only in the most extreme and well-justified circumstances. In these cases, the decision maker needs to effectively communicate the reasons why the recommendation was not followed. But not all recommendations carry such weight; some may genuinely be purely advisory and others fall somewhere in between. We have generally not tried to split hairs over this point, but we have indicated those recommendations that carry primary authority with an asterisk.

Decision

A decision is the final outcome of a deliberative process that includes careful consideration of recommendations and consultations with stakeholders. The decision-maker is responsible for addressing any disagreements, making the final determination, justifying their decision (including why it might depart from the recommendation), and ensuring the organization follows through on implementing the decision.

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[2] AAUP Shared Governance Assessment Tool
https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/AAUP_Shared_Governance_Assessment_Tool.pdf

Decision-makers are often involved, to at least some degree, in the consultation and recommendation process. In particular, recommenders may often wish to consult with decision-makers in the course of developing a recommendation. Decision-makers may also need to consult with university counsel, accrediting bodies, and others as part of their due diligence; we do not include such consultation in the matrix.

Informing

Before the decision, informing entails sharing initial information about a discussion or initiative, including details such as committee membership, objectives, timeline, and the consultation process. After the decision, informing involves communicating the final decision to relevant stakeholders to ensure transparency and understanding.

Internal Community

The "Internal Community" refers to everyone who makes up the Siena campus community, including (but not necessarily limited to) students, faculty, administrators, staff, and friars.

Extended Community

The "Extended Community" refers to all members of the Internal Community, along with alumni, donors, and community partners.

Faculty

The term 'faculty' holistically refers to everyone who holds a faculty contract at Siena, including part-time, adjunct, visiting, teaching, tenure-track, and tenured faculty.

Council of Administrators and Staff

Council of Administrators and Staff includes all Siena administrators and staff. Information is often disseminated via the council's executive committee, which is an elected body.

Decision Matrix

		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
	Academics				
1.	Creation of new degree program/area of study	President	Board of Instruction*[3]	Faculty	Extended community & general public
2.	Existing curriculum updates/revisions	Provost	Board of Instruction*[3]	Faculty	Internal community
3.	Graduation requirements	Provost	Board of Instruction*[3]	Faculty	Internal community
4.	Honorary degrees	Board	President and Honorary Degree Committee	Nominations can come from any community member	Extended community & general public
5.	Policies regarding delivery modalities	Provost	Board of Instruction	ITS and faculty	Faculty; Students; Academic Affairs administrators; ITS
6.	Developing and revising academic program assessment guidelines	Provost	Deans; Office of Institutional Effectiveness; Student Learning Assessment Committee	Faculty	Faculty; Program Chairs
7.	Institutional level accreditation (MSCHE), designing the self-study	President	MSCHE Steering Committee	Most parts of the university	Internal community

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[3] *Recommendation carries primary authority as defined in the 'Recommendation' section, above

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
8.	Articulation agreements	Provost	Deans	Program Directors and Chairs	Extended community & general public
9.	Academic program closure for academic reasons (e.g., elimination of a minor, dropping obsolete programs, reorganization)	Provost	Deans; Board of Instruction; program chairs	Faculty in the program; students in the program	Extended community
10.	Academic program closure for financial reasons	Board	Provost; President	Deans; VP Finance; Board of Instruction; faculty; students	Extended community
11.	Creating/amending academic university policies	President	Provost; Deans	Board of Instruction; faculty; Academic Affairs administrators	Internal community
12.	Developing and revising advising policies	Provost	Deans; AVP SASE	Students; faculty; Registrar	Faculty; Students; Academic Affairs administrators
13.	Topics and methods of instruction in individual classes	Instructor of record	NA	Other faculty and Chair in department or program as appropriate[4]	Students in the class
14.	Revisions to faculty handbook	Board	Faculty votes to recommend the Handbook to the President and Board	Faculty Handbook Committee and Faculty Handbook Working Group; faculty	Faculty; Academic Affairs administrators

[4]Consultation can help ensure that topics of instruction are aligned with disciplinary standards and the program's learning outcomes.

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
	Administration				
15.	Deciding faculty line allocation	President	Provost; Deans	Department; Program Chairs	Department; Program faculty
16.	Organization of administrative unit(s)	President	VPs; Cabinet	Directors and staff in affected areas	Internal community
17.	Developing admissions criteria	President	Cabinet; Graduate Program Directors	Admissions Office; Graduate Program Office; Deans; Program Chairs; Athletic Administrators	Internal community
18.	Non-academic program assessment guidelines	VP's / Cabinet	OIE	Staff and admins associated with programs being assessed	Staff and admins associated with programs being assessed
19.	Revisions to staff handbook/policies	President	HR	Council of Administrators and Staff Executive Committee; staff; Cabinet	Staff; Administrators
20.	Revisions to administrator handbook/policies	President	HR	Council of Administrators and Staff Executive Committee; administrators; Cabinet	Staff; Administrators
21.	Revisions to student handbook/policies	President	VP Student Life; Cabinet	Student Senate; Student Life administrators	Internal community

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
22.	Employee benefits	Board	VP for Finance and Admin; AVP for HR; Cabinet	Council of Administrators and Staff Executive Committee; Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee	All Employees
23.	Addition and elimination of non-academic programs[5]	President	Cabinet	Board; faculty; administrators; staff; Student Senate	Internal community
24.	Overall student retention and recruitment strategies	President	Provost; Cabinet	Appropriate administrators; staff; faculty; students	Board; Affected community members
25.	Creating/amending non-academic policies[6]	President or Relevant VP	Relevant VP	Appropriate administrators; staff; students	Internal community or All Employees (depending on the policy)
26.	Developing and revising campus health and safety policies[7]	President	AVP for Facilities Management; Risk Officer; Director of Public Safety; Cabinet; Director of Health Services; Title IX Coordinator	Faculty; administrators; staff; students	Internal community; Appropriate external partners

[5] Includes student life programs, non-NCAA sports, etc.
[6] Note that every policy document lists the "approval authority" for that policy
[7] Includes longer-term aspects of pandemic response

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
27.	Revising plans and protocols for emergency operations[8]	President	Cabinet	Director of Public Safety; AVP for Facilities; Cabinet	Internal community
28.	Adoption of institution-wide technology and software service platforms[9]	Relevant VP	CIO	President; ITS; community groups that would interact most with the platform	Internal community
29.	Design of information management and security policies	President	Chief Information Officer; Cabinet	Faculty; administrators; staff	Board; All employees
30.	Develop and revise investment policies	Board	President; VP Finance; Investment Manager	N/A	N/A
31.	Significant projects and maintenance outside the facilities master plan	President[10]	AVP for Facilities and administrators responsible for the relevant area	Relevant faculty; staff; administrators; students	Affected community members
32.	NCAA divisional classification	Board	President VP Athletics	Appropriate Board committees Cabinet, athletic staff	Internal community External community
33.	Conference membership for NCAA sports	Board	President VP Athletics	Appropriate Board committees Cabinet, athletic staff	Internal community External community

[8] Some aspects may be dictated by state or federal law
[9] Includes both academic and non-academic technology (e.g. payroll systems, etrieve, etc.). Anything requiring special budget allocation would need to be decided by the President.
[10] Board decides for the largest projects; college policies specify the cost beyond which the Board must be involved

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
34.	Addition and elimination of NCAA athletic teams & programs	President	VP Athletics	Cabinet; Board; Title IX Coordinator; Athletic conference	Internal community
	Budgeting				
35.	University budget approval	Board	President; VP Finance; Cabinet	Faculty; administrators; staff	All employees
36.	Budget allocation for academic programs	President	Provost*[11]; VP Finance; Cabinet	Joint Budget Committee; program chairs; deans; faculty	Affected departments; programs
37.	Budget allocation for non-academic programs	President	Relevant VP*; VP Finance; Cabinet	Admins associated with the programs	Affected departments; programs
	Institutional strategy				
38.	Development of the strategic plan	Board	Strategic Planning Committee; Cabinet; President	Internal community	Internal community
39.	Development of the facilities master plan	Board	Facility Master Planning Committee; AVP for Facilities; Cabinet; President	Internal community	Internal community
40.	Development of comprehensive fundraising campaigns and initiatives	Board	VP for Development; Cabinet; President	Development Office (with input from community & donors)	Internal community

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[11] *Recommendation carries primary authority as defined in the 'Recommendation' section, above

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
41.	Enrollment planning goals	President	VP for Enrollment; Enrollment Leadership; Cabinet	Admissions Office; relevant program directors	Faculty; Council of Administrators and Staff
42.	Developing brand platform and visual identity	President	VP for Strategy, Communications, and Outreach	Faculty; Council of Administrators and Staff; Cabinet; Board	Internal community
43.	Changes to the Bylaws of Siena	Board	Board Governance Committee	Board, Board's Counsel	Internal community
44.	Proposal to NYSED to change the Charter	Board	President, Provost, Cabinet	BOI, faculty, and/or administrators and staff as appropriate for the specific change	Internal community External community
45.	Changes to the Mission	Board	President, Provost, Cabinet	Internal community; Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe	Internal community External community

	Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
Personnel				
46. Hiring president	Board	Search Committee	Faculty; administrators; staff; students; friars	Internal community
47. Policy and procedure for review of the President	Board	Board Governance Committee	Board	President; Board
48. Hiring Vice Presidents	President	Search Committee	Faculty; administrators; staff; students (as appropriate for the VP area)	Internal community
49. Hiring Deans	President	Provost* and Search Committee	Faculty; admin; staff; students	Internal community
50. Policies and procedures for personnel reviews (non-faculty)	President	Cabinet	Supervisors; Human Resources	Affected individuals
51. Hiring full-time faculty	Provost	Dean; Search Committee*[12]	Departmental faculty; students	Departmental faculty; students
52. Hiring part-time faculty	Dean	Academic program chairs*	Departmental faculty	Departmental faculty
53. Hiring administrators[13]	Relevant VP	Appropriate supervisors and/or Search Committee	Relevant Supervisors and community members; Human Resources	faculty; admin; staff

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[12] *Recommendation carries primary authority as defined in the 'Recommendation' section, above

[13] Includes directors, associate VPs, assistant VPs, CIO, registrar, etc.

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	Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
54. Hiring staff	Head of Admin Unit	Admin Unit	Relevant personnel in unit; Human Resources	Relevant personnel in unit
55. Appointment, promotion, tenure, emeritus, and sabbatical guidelines for faculty	President	Provost*; Status Committee; Handbook Committee; Academic Departments	Faculty	Faculty
56. Promotion, tenure, emeritus status and sabbatical for individual faculty	Board	President; Provost; Status Committee*[14]; Departments	Departmental faculty	Faculty
57. Promotion and individual salary levels for staff and administrators	President	Relevant VP; Relevant Supervisor	HR	Supervisor and the individual
58. Non-renewal and terminations for faculty	President[15]	Provost*; Deans	Program Chair	Chair & the individual being considered
59. Review of faculty grievance	President[16]	Faculty Grievance Committee	Appropriate individuals as determined by the Grievance Committee	Grievant; Respondent; Chair of General Faculty Committee; Chair of Grievance Committee
60. Terminations for staff and administrators	Relevant VP	Supervisor	Human Resources	Supervisor & Individual in question

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[14] *Recommendation carries primary authority as defined in the 'Recommendation' section, above

[15] Tenured and tenure-track faculty terminated for cause have recourse to grievance proceedings as detailed in the Faculty Handbook. Tenured faculty additionally have recourse to review by the Faculty Status Committee, as detailed in the Faculty Handbook. Unionized faculty have recourse to grievance proceedings detailed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

[16] If the President disagrees with the Grievance Committee recommendation, the grievant may appeal to the Board

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
61.	Terminations for VPs	President	President	Board Chair; Others as appropriate	Affected individuals
	Compensation				
62.	Determining the faculty salary model	President	Faculty Compensation Working Group[17]	Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee; faculty	Faculty; HR; Finance; OIE
63.	Setting total funds available for faculty compensation	Board	President; Faculty Compensation Working Group	Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee	Faculty; HR; Finance; OIE
64.	Allocating faculty salary funds	President	Faculty Compensation Working Group	Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee	Faculty; HR; Finance; OIE
65.	Setting the total funds available for non-faculty compensation	Board	President; Cabinet	Finance; HR	Affected employees; HR; Finance; OIE
66.	Allocating staff/admin salary funds	President	Appropriate VP	Head of administrative unit; HR	Council of Administrators and Staff; HR; Finance; OIE
67.	Setting cabinet salaries and grade	President	President	President (based on market data)	N/A
68.	Setting President's salary	Board	Board	Board (based on market data)	N/A

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[17] The Faculty Compensation Working Group includes the Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee plus the Provost, Deans, VP Finance, AVP for Institutional Effectiveness, and AVP for HR

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		Decides	Recommends	Consulted	Informed
69.	Title change, salary adjustment for admin/staff roles	President	Appropriate VP; Supervisor	HR; Head of administrative unit	Relevant supervisor; individual in the role
	Shared Governance Assessment				
70.	Periodically review/revise the decision matrix	President	Representatives from the General Faculty Committee, the Council Of Administrators and Staff Executive Committee, the Student Senate, the Provost, the Deans, and Cabinet.	Internal Community	Internal Community

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