

San Bernardino Valley College, Participatory Governance Task Force
DEFINITIONS ON PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND COMMITTEE TERMINOLOGY
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LIVING DOCUMENT

Governance constituent

A group with a role, interest, and representation in a governance structure. In California Community Colleges under Title 5, governance constituents include faculty, classified staff, students, and administrators. Each contributes to decision-making and policy development at the college and district levels through participatory governance. **The constituent group** advises and makes formal recommendations to administration and the Board of Trustees. These groups contribute at the college & district levels to ensure participatory governance in decision-making. Senates may establish and oversee committees under their own authority and bylaws.

- **Academic Senate** – Represents faculty in academic and professional matters (Title 5 [§53200](#)). The Academic Senate has primary responsibility in "10+1" areas of academic and professional matters under Title 5, Section 53200.
- **Classified Senate** – Represents classified professionals in governance (Title 5 [§51023.5](#)). with 9 areas of participation plus a +1 for additional matters.
- **Associated Students/Student Government** – Ensures student participation in governance (Title 5 [§51023.7](#)). Students have 9 defined areas of participation, plus +1, allowing them to be consulted on additional matters as agreed upon.
- Administrators, including the College President, Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors, collaborate with participatory governance groups by considering recommendations from faculty, classified professionals, and students.

Participatory governance

A collaborative decision-making process in which faculty, staff, students, and administrators actively contribute to institutional planning, policies and procedures, and implementation. It is rooted in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, which ensures that all governance constituents have a voice ensuring that institutional policies reflect the diverse perspectives of the college community while maintaining Board of Trustees' ultimate authority in governing the district. Five key organizations exemplifying this collaborative approach are the [Academic Senate for California Community Colleges \(ASCCC\)](#), the [California Community Colleges Classified Senate \(4CS\)](#), the [Student Senate for California Community Colleges \(SSCCC\)](#) and the [Community College League of California \(CCLC\)](#).

College Council

It provides broad oversight of institutional planning, policy development, resource allocation, accreditation, and decision-making while serving as the primary advisory body to the College President. By including representatives from faculty, classified professionals, students, and administrators, the College Council ensures that diverse perspectives are

integrated into institutional decisions, promoting transparency, participatory governance, and institutional effectiveness.

Standing Committee

A permanent group with a defined, ongoing purpose, such as overseeing institutional processes or compliance with regulations. Membership includes representatives from governance constituencies (faculty, classified professionals, administrators, and students) to ensure broad input (e.g., Facilities & Safety Committee). Both a College Council and Senates (Academic Senate, Classified Senate, Student Senate) may have standing committees, but they differ in purpose, oversight, and authority. The Senates standing committees recommends actions to the Senate or higher governance bodies. Their primary members are specific to the respective constituent group. College Council standing committees are designed for cross-functional decision-making, ensuring that various governance constituencies work together to address institutional issues.

Sub-Committee

A smaller group derived from a parent committee to focus on specific aspects of the parent committee's broader charge. Sub-committees report back to their parent committee and are ongoing.

Steering Committee

A semi-permanent (exists if the initiative needs oversight) group for an initiative tasked with providing guidance, policy direction, and/or oversight for specific projects or initiatives, ensuring alignment with institutional goals. Steering committees often include members from multiple governance constituencies (faculty, staff, administrators, students). Unlike a task force, a steering committee oversees but does not execute tasks.

Task Force

A temporary working group assigned to address a specific problem, implement a short-term project, or develop policy recommendations, and actively works on solutions and implementation. It has a clear mission, timeline, and expected outcomes, after which it dissolves. Task forces usually include members with specialized knowledge and disband once their goal is achieved.

Ad Hoc Committee

An Ad Hoc and a Task Force are both temporary working groups created to address specific issues, but they differ in scope, authority, and purpose. An ad hoc committee

studies an issue, develops recommendations, or provides advice and does not implement. Temporary, disbands after completing recommendations or findings.

Advisory Committee

A permanent group with a broad focus that offers continuous input on policies, programs, and/or institutional matters. There is no direct decision-making authority or implementation power in the participatory governance structure but offer recommendations based on their expertise.

Operational Committee

A permanent group focused on implementing approved plans, policies, or operational tasks. These committees are action-oriented and ensure that governance decisions are executed effectively. Often has authority to implement operational decisions. Day-to-day institutional process management. Typically includes staff, administrators, and faculty members responsible for running college services.

An operational committee can also be advisory. While executing operational tasks, it advises higher governance bodies (senates, councils, boards) on improvements and policy needs. A well-structured operational-advisory committee helps bridge daily execution and long-term policy planning.