



Western Iowa Tech Community College

*Mission: We elevate our diverse learners and strengthen our communities
through inclusive and innovative education.*

Western Iowa Tech Shared Governance Manual

Original document by Contribution
Subcommittee of the Strategic
Initiative Implementation Committee
(2021-2024)

Updates by WITCC Executive Council

2024-2027: Strategic Initiatives:

1. Advance Completion - Elevate WIT's completion to the top 4 among Iowa community colleges.
2. Close the Gap - Close the completion gap for at-risk groups (first-time, part-time, online).
3. Transform the Culture - Strengthen the culture of belonging for employees through increased communication, engagement, and support.

Shared Governance Manual

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Introduction

The Shared Governance Manual emerged from the 2021-2024 Strategic Planning Committee and specifically from the Contribution Subcommittee of the 2021-2024 Strategic Initiatives (known this point forward as SI) Implementation Committee. Two key areas of focus for the SI Implementation Committee are empowerment and access to improve involvement of all stakeholders at Western Iowa Tech Community College. For the purpose of this manual, stakeholders are defined as the students and employees of WITCC. From this point forward, WITCC is referred to as “the College”. From those areas, the SI Implementation Committee engaged in discussion of improvement regarding the transparency and accessibility in the council, senate, and committee structure at WITCC. The SI Implementation Committee then authorized a Contribution Subcommittee to work specifically on those targeted areas of improvement.

The Contribution Subcommittee developed the Shared Governance Manual based on the focus on empowering people through access and involvement. The Subcommittee discussion of the council, senate, and committee structure at the College and subsequently reviewed by the full SI Implementation Committee, resulted in the conclusion that the current structure left nearly all committees operating under authority derived from either Academic Council or Executive Council. Thus, the structure left Executive Council as the default empowering council for any committee that was not within the purview of Academic Council.

The Contribution Subcommittee began developing a structure, referred to as the “gov chart” by many SI Implementation Committee members, to distinguish it from the departmental “org chart”. This was to emphasize a structure similar to the “org chart” but exclusive to councils, senates, and committees. The use of “gov chart” did, at times, create some confusion as people conflated the “gov chart” with the “org chart” already in use. The following is the official response of the Contribution Subcommittee regarding the “gov chart”:

“A gov chart is much different than an org chart. An org chart is a document that shows the structural organization of the College and has built in responsibility and accountability to getting the daily work completed. A gov chart is a document that shows the organization of the shared governance structure of the College that is intended to ensure all voices are heard and ideas have an opportunity to be expressed and germinate before decisions are made to move forward or table them. They are two different charts that show two different systems. The gov chart will not replace the org chart. Both will be in place at the College if the gov chart is approved, with the org chart mostly focused on departmental structures and the gov chart mostly focused on council, senate and committee structures (WITCC President, Dr. Terry Murrell).”

The Contribution Subcommittee proposed adding Administrative Council and Student Support Council to support the need for accessible representation of voices across campus. This proposal brought the addition of Staff Senate to support the Administrative Council and of the

Student Senate (now known as Comet CLASS) to support the Executive Council. The addition of the Staff Senate and the new body for the students, Comet CLASS (Cultivating Leadership, Advocacy, and Student Success), was intended to replicate the connection between Faculty Senate and Academic Council, consistent with the focus on empowering people through access and involvement on the student level. The BRIDGE (Building Relationships for Institutional Direction, Growth, and Engagement) Council was also established in alignment with Executive Council to exist in a location within the structure similar to the locations of the respective senates for each council but acting as a council.

A. Council, Senate, and Committee Charters

A1. Policy Description

The structure of all WITCC councils, senates, and committees follow the guidelines below using a standardized charter form with further instructions as needed relative to designation as a council, committee, or senate. The Board Policy on Shared Governance has been reproduced here for convenience:

“The President shall ensure that the College has a system of shared governance that supports the integrity of collaborative decision making with open and transparent communication and mutual respect. Shared governance is a process of aligning priorities and creating a culture of mutual responsibility to ensure that the College achieves its Mission, Values, and Strategic Initiatives. It is a deliberate process through which the College community actively and respectfully participates to reach decisions on issues related to the College. The College recognizes the diversity of expertise found in different institutional constituents and engages constituents in order to make informed and timely decisions beneficial to students and the College ([Board Policy 400.51 Shared Governance](#)).”

Definitions of Governance Bodies

Council. A body of persons to whom authority has been delegated by the President or Executive Council to consider, investigate, report, make recommendations, or take action as outlined by their charter. Councils will have appointed members and appointed leadership (See **B.1 Membership Information** for additional information). A council must publish its agenda 24 hours prior to scheduled meetings and must publish minutes by the next scheduled meeting. Councils may adjust their charter with the approval of the President or Executive Council. Councils are ongoing and have no term limits. Councils must consider every agenda item proposed by committees, senates, and work groups that report to them and must allow the committees, senates, and work group an opportunity to refine or re-work proposals based on recommendations which are initially unsatisfactory or unclear (See **C5. Committee/Council Obligation for Taking Action on Proposed Agenda Items** for additional information).

Senate. A body of persons in similar capacities who come together to create a voice dealing with issues that are salient to them. Senates are a democratic organization where everyone serves in the same relationship to the College is eligible to participate. Senates must publish their agendas 24 hours prior to scheduled meetings and must publish minutes by the next scheduled meeting. Senate meetings must be open to every person in similar capacities and may adjust their charters with approval of the sponsoring council. Senates are ongoing with

term limits only applied toward leadership. The Governance Chart is set by three minimum senates with their respective council.

- Faculty Senate is the voice of the faculty in all matters relating to academics and pedagogy. Their respective council is the Academic Council.
- Student Senate is the voice of the students in all matters relating to students. Their respective council is the Student Support Council. Student Senate is known as CLASS. ***Note that in all cases, when Student Senate is referenced in the remainder of the document, it refers to CLASS.***
- Staff Senate is the voice of non-faculty in all matters relating to staff. Their respective council is the Administrative Council.

Committee. A body of persons to whom authority has been delegated by their sponsoring council to consider, investigate, report, or make recommendations. Committees may be restricted to interest areas and may not be open to everyone at the College. A committee must publish its agenda 24 hours prior to scheduled meetings and must publish minutes by the next scheduled meeting. Committees must allow for open membership but may focus membership by position in certain cases. Committees can elect their own leadership and may adjust their charter with approval of their sponsoring council. Committees are ongoing and subject to their charters.

Subcommittee or Work Group. A body of persons to whom authority has been delegated by their sponsoring council, senate, or committee to consider, investigate, report, or make recommendations. Subcommittees or work groups are created with a charter for a specific purpose and must complete work and dissolve when the purpose is fulfilled or one year has passed (whichever is soonest). If a subcommittee or work group must continue beyond one year, an official renewal must be authorized by the sponsoring council, senate or committee (**See A6. Work Group Renewal**). A subcommittee or work group must publish its agenda 24 hours prior to scheduled meetings and must publish minutes by the next scheduled meeting.

College Policy has established permanent councils to include Executive Council, Academic Council, Administrative Council, Student Support Council, and BRIDGE while College Policy has established permanent senates to include Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Senate. All councils operate under the authority of Executive Council and all committees operate under the authority of the respective sponsoring council or senate.

A2. Charter Purpose

All councils, senates, and committees will have a charter. In appropriate cases, by-laws, guidebooks, or style guides will be in place.

A Governing charter will:

- Define roles and responsibilities
- Define how members are chosen (cross-departmental and/or diverse membership representation that will fulfill the purpose of the committee)
 - Appointment
 - Volunteer
 - Nomination
- Determine length of membership term(s)
- Determine meeting schedule:
 - Fixed meeting time
 - Varied meeting time
- Meeting modality (i.e. standing)

A3. Charter Application Process

Councils and senates will not have a charter application process. Instead, councils and senates will submit a Charter Update Application for any changes. The following Charter Application Process applies to new committees.

Anyone interested in forming a committee may submit a Charter Application for the proposed committee. The Charter Application is available to all who have access to MyWIT. Once the digital application is submitted, Executive Council, or its delegated authority for the task, will contact the applicant of the decision of the application or to pursue follow-up information as necessary. The following is an example of the application with brief instructions for the process.

Name of the Committee/Council:

Sponsoring Council (Select One):

	Executive Council
	Academic Council
	Administrative Council
	President’s Council on Inclusive Excellence
	Student Support Council

Council/Senate/Committee Description: (explain the purpose of committee)

Fields to be completed:

Name of the proposed committee:

- The committee's name should reflect the committee's purpose and scope (e.g., Strategic Initiatives Implementation Committee)

Which council would be the sponsoring council for this committee?

- Use your best judgment in determining which council seems to be most commensurate with the committee purpose. For example, a committee created to develop more faculty mentoring opportunities for students might have relevance in Academic Council or Student Support Council for jurisdiction, but Administrative Council does not fit very well

Purpose of the committee:

- Please describe the purpose of the committee in the most concise manner possible. This description will be used to determine if the alignment with the council selected above seems appropriate as well as to determine whether a committee with this purpose already exists

A4. Charter Maintenance

Charters will be reviewed annually in the Fall Semester by **Executive Council, or its delegated authority for the task** (see **D. Committee Oversight and Appeal Process, D1. Committee Oversight** for further explanation). It is recommended that Charters be reviewed and updated the first meeting of the Fall Semester. Items for review include but not limited to:

- Purpose of the committee
- Roles and responsibilities of membership
- Objectives for the academic year
- Membership roster

A5. Charter Membership

Required positions for all charters are as follows (see **B. Charter Completion Instructions, B1. Membership Information** for further explanation of positions):

- Chair
- Vice-chair
- Secretary

A6. Subcommittee or Work Group Renewal

A subcommittee or work group, which includes bodies established under the authority of a committee, must seek renewal of a charter if the subcommittee or work group has not completed or resolved the task for which it was created at the end of one academic year since its creation.

B. Charter Completion Instructions

Each WITCC council, senate, and committee will have a charter that explains its purpose, objectives, and membership. Charters will be update annually in the Fall Semester. The following explains the expectations of each component.

B1. Membership Information

All councils, senates, and committees must operate with the following positions and associated responsibilities. Additional positions and/or responsibilities may be included in the charter as deemed necessary for the council, senate, or committee. Temporary or long-standing membership can and should be lent to new members to the council, senate, or committee when new action items emerge to offer constant transparency and connection between departments and personnel and to allow the council, senate, or committee to be outfitted with the members best equipped to handle the action items.

Chair with the following responsibilities associated:

- Schedule meetings if necessary, such as in the case that the council, senate, or committee does not have regularly scheduled meetings
- Schedule meetings if the council, senate, or committee must meet for purposes outside of its normal schedule
- Share agenda for meetings at least 24 hours in advance of meetings
- Share notes/minutes from the prior meeting by the start of the next meeting
- Call for votes as necessary
- Maintain order during meetings
- Coordinate with the respective council, senate, or committee associated with the charter
- Tie breaking power for any motion

Vice-chair with the following responsibilities associated:

- Must monitor the council, senate, or committee in terms of its alignment with the charter with any conflicts with the charter resolved internally within the council, senate, or committee, if possible, and, if not possible, moved to Executive Council or its delegated authority for the task (see **D. Committee Oversight and Appeal Process, D1. Committee Oversight and D. Committee Oversight and Appeal Process, D2. Vice-chair Role** for further explanation) for action
- Act in the capacity of the chair when chair is absent
- Voting power for any motion

Secretary with the following responsibilities associated:

- Record notes/minutes for each meeting
- Voting power for any motion

B2. Required Fields

All required fields on charters must be completed. For a copy of the charter, further instructions, and a list of the required fields, see **Appendix I: Forms Referenced in the Manual, I-B: Committee/Council Charter Template.**

C. Agenda Action Item Process

C1. Proposing an Agenda Action Item

Anyone seeking to bring an action item (i.e., a proposal on which the committee or council will vote) to a committee or a council may complete an Agenda Item Submission Form (See **Appendix I, I-A: Forms for Agenda Item Submissions and Appeals**). The process is the same whether submitting to a committee or a council, but the process will be facilitated if the correct committee or council is identified for the submission. Therefore, before submitting the form, it is recommended that the correct committee or council is identified.

If the wrong committee or council was identified, the committee or council that received the proposal will indicate as such through one of two means:

- At least 24 hours before the meeting for which the proposal had been submitted, the committee or council will contact the author(s) of the proposal through email to state that the proposed action is outside the jurisdiction of the committee or council.

OR

- At least 24 hours before the meeting for which the proposal had been submitted, the committee or council will provide the agenda to determine whether the proposal falls outside the jurisdiction of the committee or council with the proposal and its in-action items to the committee or council and the author(s) of the proposal. During the meeting for which the proposal had been submitted, the committee or council will state that the proposed action is outside the jurisdiction of the committee or council if decided.

In either of the above cases, if the committee or council response did not identify an alternative pathway through the gov chart structure, then the author(s) of the proposal may submit the proposal to Executive Council. See **C2. Committee/Council Obligation for All Agenda Item Proposals** for more information.

C2. Committee/Council Definitions for Agenda Action Item Proposals

Any agenda action item proposal will be considered new if the agenda action item has not been included on an agenda during the current academic year for the committee or council that receives the proposal.

C3. Committee/Council Obligation for All New Agenda Action Item Proposals

When a committee or council receives a proposal for a new agenda action item under the following conditions:

- The proposal is sent via email seven (7) days before the next meeting or delivered directly to the committee or council chair seven (7) days before the next meeting

AND

- The content of the proposal is within the jurisdiction of the committee or council

The committee or council must:

- Add the action item to its next meeting agenda

AND

- Contact the author(s) of the proposal with a copy of the agenda at least 24 hours before the meeting

OR

When a committee or council receives a proposal for a new agenda action item under the following conditions:

- The proposal is not sent or delivered seven (7) days before the next meeting

BUT

- The content of the proposal is within the jurisdiction of the committee or council

The committee or council must:

- Add the action item to one of the next two meetings

AND

- Contact the author(s) of the proposal with a copy of the agenda at least 24 hours before the meeting.

OR

When a committee or council receives a proposal for a new agenda action item under the following conditions:

- The content of the proposal is not within the jurisdiction of the committee or council

The committee or council must:

- Contact the author(s) of the proposal with a statement that the content is outside the jurisdiction of the committee or council.

And the committee or council may:

- Contact the author(s) of the proposal with recommendations for the appropriate committee or council.

C4. Committee/Council Obligation for All Other Agenda Action Item Proposals

The committee or council does not need to add the items to its agenda, but the committee or council still needs to respond to the author(s) to indicate that the items has been considered in the current academic year. The committee or council minutes over the current academic year will include the action item, and, if the committee or council wishes, the committee or council could direct the author(s) to the specific date of the meeting during which the item was considered. In all cases, however, the minutes must be accessible to the author(s) of the proposal.

C5. Committee/Council Obligation for Taking Action on Proposed Agenda Items

Once an item has been added to a committee or council meeting agenda, the committee or council must ensure that the item is discussed before any vote. The committee or council may ask for further information before a vote, which may result in a rescheduling of the item if the author(s) will need time to collect and/or organize the requested information. However, the item is guaranteed a vote per the conditions in **C2. Committee/Council Obligation for All New Agenda Action Item Proposals** if the item has not been considered by the specific committee or council receiving the proposal in the current academic year. Records of the action taken on the agenda item must be accessible to anyone who submits a proposal for an agenda action item to a committee or council that has already taken action on the item in the current academic year per **C3. Committee/Council Obligation for All Other Agenda Action Item Proposals**.

If the result of the vote is against the item, the committee or council must provide a written explanation with specific reasons as to why the item was not approved. A very clear, specific explanation documented in minutes would suffice as well. If the action item is not approved, it also is guaranteed a return to the committee or council if the author(s) can address the reasons why the item was not approved. Failure to comply can lead to action per **D3. Appeals Process**.

D. Committee Oversight and Appeals Process

The committee oversight and appeals process remain within the authority of Executive Council, with the following providing the structural framework for the authority.

D1. Committee Oversight

Executive Council maintains authority for oversight of councils, senates, and committees, but Executive Council may delegate the authority to another body or position within the College, referred to as Committee Oversight hereafter. The delegated authority, unless Executive Council mandates otherwise, will be responsible for:

- Collecting, recording and managing charters for annual maintenance
- Processing charter applications to ensure the appropriate council is provided with all prospective charters within the council's jurisdiction
- Informing applicants of each council's decision regarding sponsorship
- Moving noncompliance issues to Executive Council per the processes outlined in **D2. Vice-chair Role** and **D3. Appeals Process**

D2. Vice-chair Role

The vice-chair for each committee, senate and council will have the responsibility of ensuring the committee, senate or council stays within the jurisdiction of its authority. If a committee, senate or council does not stay within its jurisdiction, the vice-chair will first address the issue internally with the committee, senate or council. If the committee, senate or council fails to resolve the issue internally, the vice-chair will file a noncompliance report with Committee Oversight.

D3. Appeals Process

An appeals process will be available to support the transparent nature of the shared governance structure to further protect the integrity of the shared governance structure. The appeals process can be used for any failure of procedural compliance in the approval process within a council, senate, or committee. Failure of procedural compliance in the approval process within a council, senate, or committee occurs if:

- A council, senate, or committee fails to or refuses to include an agenda item for consideration on its first introduction as an item to the committee, council, or senate
- A council, senate, or committee does not approve an item on the agenda during the first time the item appears on the agenda AND does not provide an explanation to the individual, committee, body, or entity that placed the item on the agenda
- A council, senate, or committee fails to or refuses to include an agenda item for consideration after the individual, committee, body, or entity has addressed the areas for development identified in the item's first consideration

Executive Council will be the final authority responsible for response and/or action on all appeals, but appeals should initially be directed at the body governing the committee or council whose decision is being appealed. For example, someone wishing to appeal a decision by Curriculum Committee would direct the appeal to Academic Council. Any further appeal would

ultimately end up with Executive Council, but the appropriate pathway through the governance chart must be followed. Forms for appeals can be found in **Appendix I, I-A: Forms for Agenda Item Submissions and Appeals.**

D4. Other Noncompliance

For all other noncompliance, Committee Oversight will coordinate with Executive Council if Executive Council has delegated the authority. If Executive Council has not delegated the authority, then Executive Council will be responsible for all other noncompliance.

E. Minutes/Notes and Documentation

All councils, senates, committees, and work groups shall document their meetings. The degree of detail and formality of documentation can vary depending on specific practices adopted by each body. This section outlines the minimum expectations and exceptions for all bodies. See **Appendix I, I-D: Meeting Minutes Template.**

E1. Required Information

The following are the required details for all minutes/notes:

- Name of the governing body
- Attending members of the governing body
- Day, time, and location of the meeting
- All action items with any vote outcomes and counts
- Dissenting vote rationale/defense when expressly requested by dissenter

E2. Optional Information

The following are encouraged but not necessary for minutes/notes:

- Guests at meeting
- Each voting members vote on every item
- Audio or video recordings
- Discussion on any items whether vote occurs or not

E3. Public Accessibility

The use of the word “public” in this manual applies to all College students and employees. The public of the College shall have access to the minutes/notes, agendas and all supporting materials through a publishing process. The publishing of all council, senate, committee, and work group documentation (minutes/notes, agendas, and supporting materials) needs to be at minimum kept on the public drive (N-drive) The College is attempting to improve accessibility even further through integration with MyWIT. In some cases, exceptions to public accessibility may apply (see E4. Exceptions).

E4. Exceptions

Per the authority of Executive Council, some committees can limit publishing documentation to select populations due to confidentiality considerations or other security considerations. These committees may also operate outside of the normal council structure. Examples of these include:

- CORE (not an acronym) Committee
- Colleague Reporting and Operational Analytics (CROA) Committee

Appendix I: Forms Referenced in Manual

I-A: Forms for Charters, Agenda Item Submissions, and Appeals

Committee Charter Form:

Public (N:)\Committee Structure\Templates\Committee\Forms

Committee/Council Agenda Item Submission Form:

Public (N:)\Committee Structure\Templates\Committee\Forms

Committee Appeal Form:

Public (N:)\Committee Structure\Templates\Committee\Forms

Council Appeal Form:

Public (N:)\Committee Structure\Templates\Council\Forms

I-C: Shared Governance Model

The current version of the Shared Governance Model can be found at <https://portal.witcc.edu/si/current-governance-model1/>.

I-D: Meeting Minutes Template



Committee/Council

Date
Time
Location

Meeting called by: *Enter meeting organizer here* **Type of meeting:** *Enter meeting type here*

Facilitator: Enter meeting facilitator here **Note taker:** Enter note taker here

Attendees: Enter attendees here

Minutes

Agenda item: Enter agenda item here **Presenter:** Enter presenter here

Discussion:

To get started right away, just tap any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.

Conclusions:

Enter conclusions here.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here

Agenda item: Enter agenda item here **Presenter:** Enter presenter here

Discussion:

To get started right away, just tap any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.

Conclusions:

Enter conclusions here.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here

Agenda item: Enter agenda item here

Presenter: Enter presenter here

Discussion:

To get started right away, just tap any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.

Conclusions:

Enter conclusions here.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here
● Enter action items here	Enter person responsible here	Enter deadline here

Other Information

Special notes:

Enter any special notes here.