

State-Mandated Participatory Governance in California Community Colleges: Perceptions of College and Faculty Senate Presidents

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It has been nearly 30 years since the passage of California's AB 1725 in 1988 requiring participatory governance in California's community colleges. The goal of the legislation was to move to a collegial model of governance, where faculty is involved in meaningful ways in college decision making in faculty related-areas. This Delphi study explored the California community college governance system through the perspectives of the state's 114 college and faculty senate presidents, the primary governance leaders. The study sought to identify the essential characteristics of AB 1725, establishing a profile of perceived strengths, drawbacks, and improvements of this governance system. Study participants developed the profile elements and scored them on a 7-point Likert-type scale. Mean scores and standard deviations were examined for participant consensus. The study concluded with a summary profile of strengths, drawbacks, and suggested improvements for AB 1725, conclusions related to the Baldrige framework of governance, and implications for practice.

Keywords: Delphi; community college; leadership; governance; participatory governance; shared governance; California community college system; AB 1725; academic senate

Since the political activist years of the 1960s, participatory governance has emerged across all sectors of the United States economy as a human and

organizational system (Burgos-Sasscer, 1993; Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1995; Parilla, 1993). Thaxter and Graham (1999) described participatory governance as

an organizational redesign that shifts levels of decision making from a typical top-down structure to one involving multiple levels within an organization. Over the years, colleges and universities have demonstrated a commitment to the principle of participatory governance. This movement can be seen through development of collegial models, which have given faculty primacy over areas of the organization relating to curriculum development, academic planning, and faculty hiring and promotion (Dill & Helm, 1988). For the most part, development of participatory governance in four-year colleges and universities has been ahead of two-year community colleges that arose from the hierarchical K-12 environment. In California prior to 1988, the more structured, hierarchical environment of community colleges resulted in community college faculty feeling disenfranchised from college governance decisions. Since passage of Assembly Bill 1725 (Community College Act, 1988, Cal. Stat. Ch. 973 § 3, 3093), California's community colleges have been legally mandated to have participatory governance structures in place. California community college faculties are required to have a voice and play a significant role in college governance processes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore through a 3-phase Delphi process the perspectives of California community college and faculty senate presidents related to the state's legally mandated participatory governance structure. The

study sought to identify the perceptions of these primary governance leaders to establish a profile of significant matters in the participatory governance system of California community colleges. An overarching purpose of the study was to understand how the California's community college governance system might be described in the context of one of the three Baldrige models of higher education governance (Baldrige, 1971). Given there has not been a study of California's community college governance structure in the context of Baldrige's models, this study adds an important dimension to the research. In doing so, it contributes to the theories of participatory governance and the general study of human and organizational systems.

Background to the Study

Community colleges are an American development and are a more recent development than the nation's universities. As Cohen and Brawer (2008) noted, the majority of the 1,100 community colleges in the United States were developed during the 1960s. During this time of rapid growth, community college governance was characterized by a strong, top-down, control-oriented leadership approach (Thaxter & Graham, 1999). Some elements of this bureaucratic structure were vestiges of more hierarchical K-12 ancestry, but most were out of necessity because a tightly controlled approach was appropriate during such rapid expansion. Decisions needed to be strong, quick, forceful, and unhindered by time-consuming consensus building

of participatory governance in order to avoid chaos (Thaxter & Graham, 1999).

During the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, the pace of growth of community colleges slowed; however, the colleges were still operating in an environment of prosperity. Governance of the institutions had matured and the atmosphere lent itself to development of more open and inclusive structures (Kater & Levin, 2004). The institutions began movement away from the dominant bureaucratic model. Faculty wanted more participation and a greater voice in college operations.

California Community College Governance

The history of governance in California's community colleges has been unique compared to other states. The community college system is comprised of 73 districts, representing 114 colleges, serving 2.1 million students (California Community College Chancellor's Office [CCCCO], 2017). While a huge system, the colleges have always been community based. As Livingston (1998) documented, prior to 1978, California's community colleges were very much local community schools, serving local students with local faculty from primarily local fund sources.

As Piland (2016) pointed out, the 1970s also brought a strong anti-tax movement across the country. Forces coalesced around this movement that began in California with the passage of Proposition 13 (1978), limiting the ability of governmental agencies, including community colleges, to raise local

property taxes. Prop 13 dramatically altered the local focus and governance of the state's community colleges (Baca, 1998). The passage of Proposition 13, and the years that followed, brought resentment from community college trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff. One primary complaint was that the legislature was acting as a "super board" for the state's community colleges with little understanding of local needs (Livingston, 1998). Local community college constituency groups felt disenfranchised. This was particularly true for the state's community college faculty. Frustrations continued to mount until 1988 when statewide dissatisfaction and malcontent led to development and passage of the Assembly Bill 1725 (Community College Act, 1988), which was the most comprehensive overhaul of community college governance in the history of American higher education (White, 1998). This legislation mandated that all California community colleges adopt a local participatory governance system, requiring faculty involvement in "academic and professional matters."

Research Questions

To explore the perceptions of California community college and faculty senate presidents, the following interrelated research questions were addressed through this study:

1. What are the perceived *strengths* of participatory governance under AB 1725?
2. What are the perceived *drawbacks* of participatory governance under AB 1725?

3. What are the perceived *improvements* for participatory governance under AB 1725?

Conceptual Framework

Victor Baldridge's (1971) research was seminal in the history and development of higher education governance. He made the case that organizational development research was inadequate in describing college and university governance structures. In his landmark studies at New York University, Portland State College, and Stanford University, Baldridge documented the mix of governance structures and processes. Overall, Baldridge concluded that academic governance could be categorized into three models: (a) bureaucratic, (b) collegial, and (c) political.

The Bureaucratic Model

Baldridge suggested that the bureaucratic model of governance utilizes the "great man" theory of leadership (Northouse, 2007, p. 30). In this case, leadership comes from a single leader who is seen as the hero, standing atop a complex pyramid of power. It is the hero's job to evaluate problems, look at alternatives, and make choices in the best interest of the organization. The bureaucratic model is characterized as top-down, rigidly structured, hierarchal, and chain-of-command driven, which is regulated according to the principle of "legal rationality" (rules, regulations, and careful procedures). The emphasis of the bureaucratic model is on proficient

execution, maximum efficiency, and high production.

The Collegial Model

Baldridge (1971) described the collegial model as that most akin to shared governance. It is undergirded by the philosophy of the *collegium* or community of scholars. According to this concept, the "community of scholars" administers its own affairs. A foundational aspect of the collegium relates to "professionalization" of the academic community. Specifically, just as physicians, lawyers, architects, and other professionals control their services, faculty are professionals and should be free agents serving students. The institution recognizes the professional authority of the faculty. Faculty members in the collegial model hold their authority because of knowledge and expertise, rather than any official administrative position. Decision making is shared and determined by consensus.

The Political Model

Baldridge (1971) proposed that complex organizations such as colleges and universities are best viewed as miniature political systems. Political acts emerge from the complex, fragmented social structure of the university, drawing on the divergent concerns and life styles of hundreds of subcultures. Members of these groups articulate their interests in many different ways, bringing pressure to bear on the decision-making process from any number of angles, using whatever power they have. Power and

influence, once articulated, go through a complex process until policies are forged out of the competing claims of multiple groups. This is a dynamic process, which clearly indicates that the university is best understood as a “politicized” institution.

Overall, Baldrige’s (1971) framework for academic governance favored the political model as the most realistic. Baldrige found that governance of any higher education institution exists along a continuum with subtle blends of bureaucratic factors, collegial influences, and political dynamics found to some degree or another in all academic organizations. He also found that governance systems evolve as unique reflections of institutional history, values, and accidental interactions. This is certainly evident in the development of governance within community colleges.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a modified Delphi approach to explore the characteristics of California’s legally mandated community college participatory governance structure from the perspectives of college and faculty senate presidents. A quantitative approach was utilized in following the Delphi study stages as determined by Linstone and Turoff (2002). These stages included: (a) exploration, (b) distillation, and (c) utilization. The exploration phase included use of a pilot panel to review a draft of the survey instrument and a pilot study of 20 college and academic presidents to test the instrument. The distillation

stage featured a first-round Delphi questionnaire sent to all college and academic senate presidents in the state, a summary of the first set of responses, and inclusion of new questions into the second round questionnaire. Finally, the utilization phase was where the researcher scrubbed, analyzed, and formatted the data and applied statistical applications to the data.

Sample

The sample for this inquiry consisted of current college and academic senate presidents from the 113 California community colleges, which existed at the time of this study. Thus, 226 presidents were surveyed. A total of 36 college presidents (31.9%) and 30 academic senate presidents (26.5%) responded to the first round of the survey. For the second and final round, 34 college presidents (30.1%) and 24 academic senate presidents (21.2%) completed the survey instruments.

Instrumentation

The items for the initial round one Delphi survey came from a review of AB 1725, the legislation that mandated the current governance system, the rules and regulations promulgated by the CCCCCO for AB 1725, input from the pilot panel, which consisted of five community college experts, and results from the pilot study. This questionnaire consisted of three parts related to the research questions. The first part, labeled Participatory Governance Strengths, had 21 items; the second part, Participatory Governance

Drawbacks, had 14 items; and finally, the third section, Participatory Governance Improvements, consisted of 11 items. During the first round, respondents added numerous items to each section of the questionnaire. The final round instrument consisted of 35 items for Strengths, 30 items for Drawbacks, and 16 Improvement items. Each item included a Likert-type response scale from 1-7 with descriptors that ranged from Not at All Important (1) to Critically Important (7).

Procedures

In March of 2016, round one of the statewide governance survey was launched via Qualtrics. A cover letter accompanying the survey was personally addressed to each community college president and academic senate president. Follow-up letters were sent 10 and 20 days after the initial mailing. In April, round two surveys were sent, with follow-up letters sent 10 and 20 days after that mailing. The survey was closed by the beginning of May. Changes to the round two survey, suggested by round one respondents, were made right after the first round of data collection.

Data Analysis

For this study, a mean score of an item receiving at least 4.9, with a standard deviation of no greater than 1.0, was defined as achieving consensus.

Results

The results of the study are displayed using the finding from the second round of surveys because they include the questionnaire items added by respondents from the first survey round. The combined results from the college and academic senate presidents are discussed below, along with the results for each group of respondents.

Result: Strengths

Table 1 presents the round two survey results related to the combined results of the strengths of the mandated participatory governance system. As indicated, consensus between college and faculty senate presidents was achieved for survey strength items 1—8, 10, and 11. These survey items of consensus were as follows:

- Provides primary authority on curriculum matters (survey item 1).
- Clarifies the governance role of the academic senate (2).
- Clarifies the domain for faculty expertise (3).
- Enhances communication between senate and administration (4).
- Prevents surprises—senate president tells college president and the reverse before they become issues (5).
- Increases transparency (6).
- Focuses on good process, leading to more buy-in on decisions (7).
- Covers aspects of participatory governance that are not part of

the collective bargaining agreement (8).

- Facilitates collegial consultation with faculty in areas of faculty expertise (10).
- Creates mechanism for faculty input (11).

Table 1 also indicates that there was strong consensus among the college presidents related to five strengths of AB 1725. These strengths are:

- Provides primary authority on curriculum matters (survey item 1).
- Clarifies the domain for faculty expertise (3).
- Enhances communication between senate and administration (4).
- Covers aspects of participatory governance that are not part of the collective bargaining agreement (8).
- Creates mechanism for faculty input (11).

Table 1 indicates a strong general consensus among faculty senate presidents that mandatory participatory governance under AB 1725 has many strengths. Of the 35 strengths of AB 1725 listed in the survey, all but six items achieved consensus among the faculty senate presidents. Specifically, only survey items 16, 29, and 31—35 *did not* meet the consensus determination criteria established for the study. These survey items *not* meeting consensus for an important strength for faculty senate presidents were as follows:

- Provides a non-union approach to various faculty responsibilities (survey item 16).

- Forces vetting of things (29).
- Gets rid of the hierarchical attitude that exists, moving it more horizontal (31).
- Involves faculty in grant application/implementation (32).
- Keeps watch on spending tax dollars (33).
- Restricts classified in decision making in 10+1 matters, as they are not instructors and do not meet Minimum Qualifications (MQs) (34).
- Establishes sabbatical criteria (35).

Results: Drawbacks

Table 2 presents the round two survey results related to the combined results of drawbacks of the mandated participatory governance system. No item in the combined results achieved both study criteria (mean and standard deviation) to meet consensus. However, while survey items 1—10 did not meet the standard deviation criteria of the study, the items did receive strong mean scores of ≥ 4.9 . This would suggest that there was noteworthy agreement on these topics, but just not high enough consensus to meet study consensus criteria related to standard deviations. These survey topic areas were:

- Confuses people into thinking they are making a final decision rather than having an opportunity to participate (1).
- Blurs concepts of “shared” versus “participatory” governance (2).

Table 1

Delphi Round 2: Question #1

<i>How important do you feel the following strengths are to consider for participatory governance under AB 1725?</i>						
AB 1725 Strengths (Delphi Round 2)*	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
<i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) “Not Important at All” to (7) “Critically Important.”</i>	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
1) Provides primary authority on curriculum matters	6.4	0.9	6.0	0.9	6.9	0.4
2) Clarifies the governance role of the Academic Senate	6.4	0.9	6.1	1.1	6.8	0.5
3) Clarifies the domain for faculty expertise	6.3	0.9	6.1	1.0	6.6	0.8
4) Enhances communication between senate and administration	6.3	0.8	6.0	0.8	6.6	0.8
5) Prevents surprises - Senate president tells College President and the reverse before they become issues	6.3	0.9	6.2	1.1	6.4	0.6
6) Increases transparency	6.3	0.9	6.1	1.1	6.7	0.6
7) Focuses on good process, leading to more buy-in on decisions	6.2	1.0	6.0	1.1	6.4	0.7
8) Covers aspects of participatory governance that are not part of the collective bargaining agreement	6.2	0.9	6.0	1.0	6.5	0.7
9) Empowers faculty, assuring a voice in governance	6.1	1.2	5.6	1.2	6.8	0.5
10) Facilitates collegial consultation with faculty in areas of faculty expertise	6.1	1.0	5.9	1.1	6.4	0.7
11) Creates mechanism for faculty input	6.1	0.9	5.8	0.8	6.6	0.7
12) Shares ownership of the processes and interests of the college	6.0	1.2	5.7	1.4	6.4	0.8
13) Strengthens teamwork and sharing of the college’s vision	6.0	1.1	5.8	1.2	6.3	0.7
14) Maintains quality instruction for students	5.9	1.3	5.4	1.4	6.6	0.7
15) Gives faculty a seat at the table, especially in multi-college districts	5.9	1.3	5.4	1.4	6.5	0.8

(continued)

Table 1

Continued

AB 1725 Strengths (Delphi Round 2)*	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
<i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) "Not Important at All" to (7) "Critically Important."</i>	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
16) Provides a non-union approach to various faculty responsibilities	5.9	1.2	6.0	1.3	5.8	1.1
17) Builds trust	5.9	1.4	5.6	1.6	6.3	0.8
18) Produces good recommendations	5.9	1.1	5.5	1.1	6.4	0.8
19) Creates collegiality between faculty and administration	5.8	1.2	5.5	1.3	6.2	0.9
20) Fosters an atmosphere of teamwork	5.8	1.1	5.5	1.1	6.2	0.9
21) Permits faculty to help establish institutional goals and objectives	5.8	1.2	5.4	1.4	6.3	0.8
22) Brings strong, thoughtful faculty to the decision-making process	5.8	1.4	5.2	1.6	6.5	0.6
23) Provides an opportunity for faculty to discuss aspects of the campus culture, policy, and practices	5.7	1.1	5.3	1.1	6.3	0.7
24) Paints a clearer picture of professional faculty engagement beyond the classroom	5.7	1.3	5.2	1.5	6.4	0.7
25) Calls out roles for all employees, not just faculty, leading to better student success	5.6	1.4	5.2	1.6	6.1	0.9
26) Leads to unified positions between the faculty and administration	5.6	1.1	5.4	1.2	6.1	0.9
27) Connects faculty to statewide organizations	5.6	1.5	5.2	1.7	6.1	1.0
28) Shares responsibility between faculty and administrators and in collaboration with classified	5.5	1.5	5.1	1.7	6.1	0.9
29) Forces vetting of things	5.4	1.5	5.0	1.6	6.0	1.2
30) Makes the college a place of academic inquiry and critical thinking as opposed to a business	5.2	1.6	4.4	1.6	6.3	0.9
31) Gets rid of the hierarchical attitude that exists, moving it more horizontal	4.9	1.9	4.1	1.9	5.9	1.1

(continued)

Table 1

Continued

AB 1725 Strengths (Delphi Round 2)*	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
<i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) "Not Important at All" to (7) "Critically Important."</i>	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
32) Involves faculty in grant application/implementation	4.7	1.8	3.9	1.8	5.7	1.2
33) Keeps watch on spending tax dollars	4.6	1.9	3.9	2.0	5.5	1.3
34) Restricts classified in decision-making in 10+1 matters, as they are not instructors and do not meet MQs	4.4	1.7	4.0	1.6	5.0	1.8
35) Establishes sabbatical criteria	4.3	2.0	3.4	1.8	5.7	1.3

*Table mean scores *and* standard deviations in bold meet study consensus criteria.

- Works the same few faculty members who volunteer for everything (3).
- Lacks widespread understanding of elements of AB 1725 (4).
- Requires time and preparation in order to understand the issues (5).
- Lacks understanding of who makes recommendations versus who makes decisions (6).
- Confuses role of senate in academic and professional matters versus merely "effective participation" by other groups (7).
- Relies on the incorrect belief that "primacy" means 100% faculty control (8).
- Confuses difference between participatory and shared governance (9).
- Allows a handful of active faculty to drive personal agendas (10.)

The responses from the college presidents were consistent with the combined results on drawbacks, with no item reaching the study consensus criteria. No items from the faculty responses met the study consensus criteria, either.

Results: Improvements

As Table 3 indicates, there were three improvement items under the combined results where consensus was achieved by both college and faculty senate presidents. These survey items were:

- Make clear what participation and consultation mean—understanding that the final decision and responsibility still rests with administration (survey item 1).
- Communicate processes and decisions with the college (2).

Table 2

Delphi Round 2: Question #2

<i>How important do you feel the following drawbacks are to consider for participatory governance under AB 1725?</i>						
AB 1725 Drawbacks (Delphi Round 2)*	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
<i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) “Not Important at All” to (7) “Critically Important.”</i>	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
1) Confuses people into thinking they are making a final decision rather than having an opportunity to participate	5.6	1.5	5.9	1.4	5.2	1.5
2) Blurs concepts of “Shared” versus “Participatory” governance	5.6	1.6	5.8	1.5	5.2	1.6
3) Works the same few faculty members who volunteer for everything	5.5	1.6	5.8	1.1	5.0	2.0
4) Lacks widespread understanding of elements of AB 1725	5.5	1.6	5.7	1.6	5.3	1.7
5) Requires time and preparation in order to understand the issues	5.4	1.7	5.2	1.6	5.5	1.9
6) Lacks understanding of who makes recommendations versus who makes decisions	5.2	1.7	5.6	1.6	4.6	1.6
7) Confuses role of Senate in academic and professional matters versus merely “Effective Participation” by other groups	5.1	1.6	5.6	1.3	4.5	1.7
8) Relies on the incorrect belief that “primacy” means 100% faculty control	5.0	1.9	5.7	1.6	4.0	1.9
9) Confuses difference between participatory and shared governance	4.9	1.9	5.4	1.7	4.2	2.0
10) Allows a handful of active faculty to drive personal agendas	4.9	1.9	5.8	1.3	3.6	1.9
11) Needs administrators to make the difficult decisions (e.g., program discontinuance or non-tenure of problem faculty)	4.8	1.8	5.7	1.4	3.6	1.7
12) Permits faculty to expand AB 1725 purview, as administration tries to narrow it	4.7	1.7	4.7	1.7	4.8	1.6
13) Overlaps Union roles sometimes with Senate roles	4.6	1.8	5.1	1.7	4.0	1.6

(continued)

Table 2

Continued

AB 1725 Drawbacks (Delphi Round 2)*	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
<i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) "Not Important at All" to (7) "Critically Important."</i>						
14) Abuses the shared governance process -- to stop processes	4.6	1.8	5.3	1.5	3.5	1.7
15) Promotes the idea that since faculty are on a committee, the 10+1 requirement has been met	4.5	1.7	4.2	1.7	5.0	1.5
16) Slows decision-making, as good democracy is slow, and participatory governance is democracy in action	4.5	1.8	5.0	1.5	3.9	2.0
17) Prolongs arguments over what is faculty primacy	4.5	1.6	4.7	1.5	4.2	1.6
18) Requires mutual agreement	4.5	1.7	4.6	1.6	4.4	1.8
19) Promotes the belief that faculty have primacy, so they decide and do not need to communicate with administration	4.5	2.0	5.1	1.7	3.6	2.0
20) Obscures the interpretation of "primacy," so most administrators have no idea what it means	4.4	1.8	4.6	1.6	4.0	2.0
21) Enables Senates to claim "primacy" where none exists	4.3	2.0	5.1	1.6	3.3	1.9
22) Lacks recognition of faculty time to deal with myriad of issues presented to Academic Senate	4.3	1.8	3.6	1.5	5.3	1.7
23) Biases and prejudices small programs and certain faculty	4.2	1.9	4.9	1.6	3.3	1.9
24) Clouds Board member roles	4.1	1.9	4.9	1.7	3.1	1.8
25) Dis-empowers other constituencies by Senate's primacy	4.1	1.9	4.8	1.7	3.2	1.6
26) Manipulates Academic Senate officers and College Presidents via AFT/CFT influences	4.1	1.9	4.5	1.9	3.5	1.9
27) Fails to enforce administration to adhere to AB 1725	4.1	1.9	3.5	1.6	4.9	1.9

(continued)

Table 2

Continued

AB 1725 Drawbacks (Delphi Round 2)* <i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) "Not Important at All" to (7) "Critically Important."</i>	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
28) Forces instructors, who are generally not able to respond because of teaching, to meet and discuss an issue quickly, which is not good	3.9	1.9	3.8	1.8	4.0	1.9
29) Enables administrators/senate members to refuse to participate in shared governance	3.7	1.6	3.9	1.4	3.3	1.8
30) Excuses Academic Senate involvement in non-academic matters	3.7	1.9	4.0	1.9	3.3	1.8

*Table mean scores *and* standard deviations in bold meet study consensus criteria.

- Accelerate becoming knowledgeable of AB 1725 through professional development (3).

Consensus on improvements was reached among college presidents on three survey items:

- Make clear what participation and consultation mean—understanding that the final decision and responsibility still rests with administration (survey item 1).
- Accelerate becoming knowledgeable of AB 1725 through professional development (3).
- Clarify Administration and Senate roles under AB 1725 (4).

Finally, round two of the Delphi survey indicated that faculty senate presidents had consensus on six survey items. These were:

- Make clear what participation and consultation mean—understanding that the final decision

and responsibility still rests with administration (survey item 1).

- Communicate processes and decisions within the college (2).
- Accelerate becoming knowledgeable of AB 1725 through professional development (3).
- Educate administration—this cannot be overstated (8).
- Require annual representatives (both administration and faculty) to attend leadership training (9).
- Provide more realistic release time, as time is a fraction of that actually needed for governance roles (13).

Conclusions

This research shows a tremendous disparity of perceived strengths of AB 1725 between the college and faculty

Table 3

Delphi Round 2: Question #3

<i>How important do you feel the following improvements are to consider for participatory governance under AB 1725?</i>						
AB 1725 Improvements (Delphi Round 2)*	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
<i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) "Not Important at All" to (7) "Critically Important."</i>	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
1) Make clear what participation and consultation mean - understanding that the final decision and responsibility still rests with administration	6.3	0.9	6.5	0.8	6.0	0.9
2) Communicate processes and decisions with the college	6.2	1.0	6.1	1.3	6.5	0.6
3) Accelerate becoming knowledgeable of AB 1725 through professional development	6.1	0.8	6.0	0.9	6.3	0.6
4) Clarify Administration and Senate roles under AB 1725	6.0	1.2	6.1	1.0	5.8	1.3
5) Engage many more faculty, as few care about any of this!	5.8	1.4	5.6	1.4	6.0	1.3
6) Be honest about reassigned time, not requesting it and then carrying a full load so you can get extra pay	5.7	1.2	5.9	1.2	5.5	1.3
7) Provide professional development for classified	5.5	1.3	5.4	1.5	5.7	1.1
8) Educate administration - this cannot be overstated	5.5	1.5	5.2	1.7	5.9	1.0
9) Require annual representatives (both Administration and Faculty) to attend leadership training	5.3	1.5	5.1	1.8	5.6	0.9
10) Revisit the 10+1 in the current circumstances, funding models, and requirements. Not sure all are important to have primacy	5.1	1.6	5.7	1.2	4.3	1.6
11) Set decision time lines by when faculty must get with it and make a decision or relinquish the privilege	5.0	1.7	5.5	1.4	4.3	1.8
12) Recognize that 10+1 is a creation of the Board of Governors and was never in AB 1725 language	4.9	1.7	5.3	1.6	4.4	1.8

(continued)

Table 3

Continued

AB 1725 Improvements (Delphi Round 2)*	Combined Results		College Presidents		Faculty Senate Presidents	
	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev	Mean	StdDev
<i>Scoring scale ranged from (1) “Not Important at All” to (7) “Critically Important.”</i>						
13) Provide more realistic release time, as time is a fraction of that actually needed for governance roles	4.9	2.2	3.7	2.0	6.5	0.8
14) Involve students, who have limited experiences in college governance	4.7	1.7	4.4	1.8	5.1	1.5
15) Develop true “Shared Governance,” where faculty share in the decision and the responsibility of the decision!	4.4	2.4	3.4	2.4	6.0	1.3
16) Drop the +1	4.3	2.1	5.4	1.8	2.8	1.3

*Table mean scores *and* standard deviations in bold meet study consensus criteria.

senate presidents. Case in point, while there were only five strength items where college presidents could find consensus among themselves, the faculty senate presidents found a high level of consensus among themselves for 29 of the 35 AB 1725 strengths surveyed. Considering pre-AB 1725 faculty feelings of disenfranchisement from college decisions, it is not surprising that faculty feel strongly about these strengths of AB 1725. The lack of consensus among college presidents of AB 1725 strengths may indicate a need to maximize related participatory governance benefits. It may also show a continued schism and general discontent with the legislation. It was encouraging that the research showed a strong consensus of AB 1725 strengths between both college and faculty senate presidents in 10 combined results items.

College and faculty senate presidents agree on several strengths of AB 1725. Many of these relate directly to the goals of AB 1725. Other AB 1725 strengths perceived as important by both college and faculty senate presidents relate to operational or relational matters. Overall, there are some tremendous strengths in AB 1725 on which many college and faculty senate presidents agree. However, nearly 30 years after the passage of AB 1725, there also are some significant differences between college and faculty senate presidents that need to be resolved.

Consensus could not be found with any of the combined results from college and faculty senate presidents on AB 1725 drawbacks. However, there was strong agreement between the two groups in the first 10 items. Several of these items relate to the basic underpinnings of AB 1725. The remaining items

of the top 10 combined drawbacks relate to who is participating and the time needed to participate in governance under AB 1725. A more telling conclusion of AB 1725 drawbacks is drawn from the college president group. Nearly two-thirds of the items received a mean score of ≥ 4.9 on the importance rating scale. Contrast this to only eight items identified by the faculty as important drawbacks. The reverse is true of the results for faculty senate presidents, indicating an overall sense of less importance of the drawbacks surveyed than related perceptions of college presidents. These drawbacks are broad statements and are not necessarily the operational norm. In some cases, perceived drawbacks are based on a misunderstanding of the intent of AB 1725. For example, its intent was never to place faculty in a role of making decisions, but rather to provide input, advice, and recommendation to rely upon related to decisions in the defined 10 plus 1 areas, which include items such as grading policies, curriculum development, and program review.

This research found considerable improvements that might be made to AB 1725. It was encouraging that there was consensus for several of these improvements. College presidents found strong consensus related to AB 1725 professional development items and in the area of clarification of administration and senate roles. Similar to college presidents, the faculty senate presidents agreed that important areas for improvement for AB 1725 related to professional development and communications. It is hard to argue against AB 1725 areas

for improvements where the college and faculty senate presidents indicated consensus. This is particularly true for professional development.

From the evidence gathered in this research, Baldrige's conclusion of higher education governance as a political model holds for California community colleges. Given political relationships are based on influence and power, at the very least, AB 1725 has shifted governance influence and power to the faculty. At most, AB 1725 has exacerbated relationships, causing deeper entrenchment. With this swinging of the political pendulum to the once disenfranchised faculty, it now appears to have aggravated how college presidents view the governance relationship. The areas of greatest difference specifically indicated the politics of power and influence.

Implications for Practice

Overall, there were several implications for practice based on the areas of consensus found in this research.

Clarify Decision Authority

The AB 1725 improvement item with the strongest consensus (mean score and standard deviation) between college and faculty senate presidents was to, "Make clear what participation and consultation mean—understanding that the final decision and responsibility still rests with administration." When AB 1725 passed, it was codified into law in relevant parts of Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Sections 53200 to

53204. Specifically, Title 5 §53200 (d) states that:

Consult collegially means that the district governing board shall develop policies on academic and professional matters through either or both of the following methods, according to its own discretion: (1) relying primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate; or (2) agreeing that the district governing board, or such representatives as it may designate, and the representatives of the academic senate shall have the obligation to reach mutual agreement by written resolution, regulation, or policy of the governing board effectuating such recommendations.

There was no intent in this language that “consult collegially” indicated a transfer or removal of decision-making authority and responsibility from the governing board or administration. Accordingly, a recommendation for college and faculty senate presidents is to clarify who ultimately has decision-making authority. This could be a clarifying board policy, stating that “ultimate decision-making authority and responsibility rests with the governing board or its representative.”

Communicate

A second survey item that received very strong consensus between college and faculty senate presidents addressed communications. In terms of implications for practice, this could be a simple effort to increase communications when the administration and/or the academic

senate make decisions. Many times decisions are made but not communicated back out to the college, so the college community is left asking “whatever happened” or “why.” If necessary, such communications may be codified in an administrative procedure requiring periodic reports or minutes to be developed and sent to college members.

Professional Development

Of all the practice areas that should be easiest to mitigate, the consensus areas dealing with becoming knowledgeable of AB 1725 through professional development should be straightforward. Statewide organizations (e.g., Community College League of California, State Chancellors Office) should provide annual professional development workshops and activities for both faculty and administrators. While the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has done an excellent job of providing its members training related to participatory governance, administrators may not be as proficient in related matters. Ideally, the administrative and faculty training should be required and be completed together.

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