

COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM

BOARD POLICY NO. 2200

COM-FSM Participatory Governance Policy

Date Adopted: 07 December 2006

Date Revised: 19 February 2019

Date Reviewed: 19 February 2015; 25-29 August 2025

References:

I. Authority and Responsibility

The **Board of Regents** has authority over and responsibility for policies that ensure mission alignment, academic quality, integrity, effectiveness of student learning programs and services, and financial stability of the college as empowered by the Enabling Law (Public Law No. 7-79 and Public Law No. 8-144) of the National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, and in compliance with accreditation standards.

The **President (Chief Executive Officer)** is responsible for implementing policies and procedures adopted by the Board and for leading the college's administration in accordance with participatory governance principles.

II. Commitment to Inclusive and Equitable Participation

The Board of Regents and President shall ensure that **all appropriate stakeholders**—including faculty, staff, students, administrators, and, where applicable, alumni and community partners—have **clear and meaningful opportunities** to participate in the development of recommended policies and procedures.

Except in unanticipated emergency situations¹, no action shall be taken by the Board on matters subject to this policy without documented stakeholder participation.

COM-FSM recognizes the importance of **equity and inclusion** in decision-making processes. Participatory governance shall actively seek and reflect the diverse voices and identities within the college community, including those from traditionally underrepresented groups.

III. Scope and Definition of Participatory Governance

Participatory governance is the process through which members of the college community engage in **purposeful dialogue** and collaborative decision-making in the development of:

- A. Institutional policies and administrative procedures
- B. Strategic and operational plans
- C. Academic programs and curricular development
- D. Student learning programs and services

¹"**Unanticipated emergency situations**" are rare, urgent events requiring immediate action where prior stakeholder input is not feasible. Examples include natural disasters, public health crises, cybersecurity threats, or sudden legal mandates. Actions taken under such conditions must be documented, justified, and followed by post-action communication with stakeholders.

COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM

BOARD POLICY NO. 2200

- E. Budget and financial planning
- F. Institutional effectiveness and accreditation

Purposeful dialogue is characterized by:

- A. Genuinely participatory and inclusive discussion
- B. Multi-directional and ongoing communication
- C. Professional tone and mutual respect
- D. Use of data and evidence to inform decisions
- E. Focus on achieving the college's published mission and goals

To support this model, the college shall utilize both in-person and virtual platforms to enable participation across all campuses.

IV. Roles and Representation

A. Board of Regents. The Boards shall:

- 1. Provide policy direction aligned with the college mission.
- 2. Require documented evidence of stakeholder consultation before policy adoption.
- 3. Evaluate the effectiveness of participatory governance as part of its oversight.

B. President (CEO). The President shall:

- 1. Implement this policy across the college.
- 2. Ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement in decision-making.
- 3. Oversee the functioning of participatory governance councils, committees, and working groups.
- 4. Promote a culture of collaboration and transparency.

C. Stakeholders

- 1. Faculty, staff, and administrators shall be authorized and expected to participate in institutional decision-making through their representation on standing committees, sub-committees, special committees, working groups, and through established bodies such as the Faculty/Staff Senate and the Management Team.
- 2. Students shall have formal representation in relevant governance bodies. Their voices shall be sought and respected in matters directly affecting their education and welfare. Structures shall be in place to support student leadership and capacity-building.
- 3. External stakeholders, such as alumni and community partners, may be invited to participate in advisory capacities when relevant to the issue under discussion.

V. Implementation Structures

The college shall maintain a structured system of standing committees, sub-committees, special committees, working groups, and representative bodies, including the Faculty/Staff Senate and the Management Team, and the Student Body Association:

- A. Are representative of the college's organizational units and constituencies.
- B. Operate under clearly defined charges and transparent procedures.
- C. Report regularly on decisions and recommendations.

COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM

BOARD POLICY NO. 2200

- D. Have established channels to forward recommendations to the appropriate decision-making authorities

Each governance body shall maintain meeting minutes, communicate decisions to the wider college community, and engage in regular self-evaluation to ensure continued effectiveness and relevance.

VI. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

The participatory governance system shall be **formally assessed at least every five years**, or more frequently if needed, to ensure effectiveness and relevance. Evaluation criteria shall include:

- A. Inclusiveness and representation.
- B. Clarity and efficiency of processes.
- C. Quality of communication and dialogue.
- D. Impact on institutional planning and improvement.

Findings from governance evaluations shall be documented and made available to the college community. Action plans for improvement shall be developed based on the results.

VII. Alignment with Strategic Planning and Accreditation

Participatory governance shall be fully integrated into the college's:

- A. Strategic planning processes.
- B. Accreditation self-evaluation and reporting.
- C. Institutional effectiveness frameworks.

The governance system shall serve as a vehicle for collective reflection and accountability toward achieving the college's mission, strategic goals, and student learning outcomes.

Findings from governance evaluations shall be documented and made available to the college community. Action plans for improvement shall be developed based on the results.

VIII. Use of Technology

To support equitable participation across all campuses and time zones, the college shall use **appropriate digital tools** for communication, collaboration, and feedback gathering. These may include video conferencing platforms, learning and content management systems, shared workspaces, surveys, and web-based forums.

See Administrative Procedure 2200.