

Mission, Vision Statement, and Goals Of the Council of System Faculty (CUSF)

Draft

Section I of the USM Board of Regents by-laws creates four systemwide councils and institutional boards. These are the Council of University Presidents (CUSP), Student Council (USMSC), Council of University System Staff (CUSS), and Council of University System Faculty (CUSF). Consistent with the other Councils, ARTICLE I: Section 1 of the Constitution of the Council of University System Faculty (I-2.00) defines the general role of CUSF. CUSF “*advises the Chancellor and reports regularly to the Board of Regents. Its responsibility will be to consider and make recommendations on matters of System-wide professional and educational concern to the faculty and matters to which faculty bring special expertise.*”

Two additional policy documents affect the nature and scope of CUSF within the System. The first is the I-6.00 Policy on Shared Governance in the University System of Maryland. It outlines the purpose, principles, and practices of shared governance within the USM. The second is the CUSF By-Laws which describe the structure under which CUSF operates.

These documents frame the role of CUSF within the USM. The purpose of this document is to further define CUSF’s mission, vision statement, and goals. In turn, this forms the foundation for the development of a strategic plan for CUSF. The strategic plan is contained in a separate document.

Mission of CUSF

The mission of CUSF is framed within the overarching policies and framework of its Constitution and USM policies. The mission of CUSF is “*to strengthen higher education in the State of Maryland through shared governance.*” Variations of the mission include “*Strengthening higher education through shared governance*” or simply, “*Strengthening education through shared governance.*”

The focus of CUSF is on higher education. The primary location of its activities is within the State of Maryland. However, this does not preclude involvement elsewhere. Involvement includes not only the System but MHEC, the Legislature and other institutions within Maryland affecting higher education. As defined by the policies, shared governance is an advisory process by which CUSF can strengthen higher education within the State of Maryland. Strengthen connotes purpose and direction. Issues such as faculty salaries, enhancement funds, academic freedom, curriculum, and student learning outcomes represent important issues facing the faculty. They are viewed through the prism of how these issues strengthen higher education. In turn, strengthening higher education through shared governance is reflected in the vision statement and goals.

Vision Statement

The Constitution of the University System Faculty (I-2.00) recognizes the importance and role of faculty in higher education within the State of Maryland. Not only does it provide a good vision statement for

CUSF, it provides a vision statement that is embodied in its organic documents. The preamble of the constitution notes the importance of the faculty in the advancement of learning and in higher education. It states that *“It is the faculty, whose careers are dedicated to the advancement of learning, who provide the thrust and direction of any academic institution. Therefore, the faculty shall have wide powers in determining professional and academic matters, an informed advisory role in areas of administrative responsibility, and a voice in basic decisions which affect the welfare of the system as a whole.”*

As noted in Section 1 of the Constitution, the Purpose further defines the role of CUSF. CUSF advises the Chancellor and it reports regularly to the BOR. Also, it makes recommendations on System-wide matters. The Constitution indicates that *“Its responsibility will be to consider and make recommendations on matters of System-wide professional and educational concern to the faculty and matters to which faculty bring special expertise.”* This duty reflects the role of the faculty in higher education and the role of shared governance in delivering quality learning.

Goals for CUSF

In implementing its vision, five goals were developed for CUSF. Three of the goals reflect CUSF’s advisory role within the system and to the faculty at the USM institutions. In addition, one goal focuses specifically on faculty concerns and one goal focuses on strengthening the organizational structure and viability of CUSF itself.

The goals become the foundation for the strategic plan which focuses on addressing specific tasks for the academic year. They are designed to fulfil the goals. The strategic plan is addressed in a separate document.

Goal 1.0: Increase communications and advocacy with its constituents.

Communications is one of the cornerstones of providing an effective organizational structure for CUSF. Within CUSF, the main lines of communication exist upward with the Chancellor and the BOR. It exists downward to the individual campus, and it exists laterally between campuses. In addition, there are lines of communication between the Councils, with external organizations such as the AAUP, with other State agencies, and with the Legislature. This goal focuses on strengthening these lines of communication and advocating for strengthening higher education within the State of Maryland. Creating a newsletter or participating in Annapolis Day with the Legislature are examples of tasks addressing the fulfilment of this goal.

Goal 2.0: Strengthen shared governance within the USM institutions.

Under the Shared Governance Policy [I-6.00], shared governance is also implemented at the institutional level. This goal focuses on implementing and strengthening shared governance at the institutional level. First, CUSF advises the Chancellor. Second, CUSF is a resource to System institutions. Third, the other institutions in the System are a resource to each other where CUSF can become the link between them. In a very real sense, it is sharing shared governance between campuses. The creation of the Senate chair’s report on the State of Share Governance within the System is an example of a task designed to help fulfill this goal.

Goal #3.0: Advise and work with USM on major policy initiatives.

This goal addresses a major role of CUSF under the Shared Governance Policy [I-6.00] to advise the Chancellor and USM on policy matters affecting the System. Although these initiatives can be initiated by CUSF, they are most often initiated by System.

Goal #4.0: Advocate for faculty concerns.

This goal relates to issues and concerns that strengthen the faculty in delivering their institutional functions and that contributes to their general welfare. Normally, tasks under this goal are addressed by the Faculty Concerns standing committee.

Goal #5.0: Strengthen CUSF's organizational structure and increase its visibility.

A strong organizational structure enhances the organization's ability to carry out its mission. This goal focused on improving CUSF's organizational structure and on enhancing its ability to advocate for CUSF as a Council. The focus of this goal is on strengthening CUSF itself as a Council as defined under the Shared Governance Policy [I-6.00]. The creation of a strategic plan is an example of a task under this goal. It is suggested that a periodic review of the Practices (Section III) in the Shared Governance Policy be reviewed for issues and practices to be examined and developed by CUSF.