Participatory Governance at Blackhawk Technical College

DEFINITION OF PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

Participatory Governance at Blackhawk Technical College is a dynamic and cooperative interaction among the administration, faculty, and staff that enhances the decision-making process. The goal is to engage a larger number of people on campus, improve communication both vertically and horizontally, and create a system where "silos" are broken down and innovative ideas from all corners of the campus can be brought forward for consideration. Teaching and learning will serve as the center of governance with other areas of the College serving a supporting role. The governance system will operate under a premise that the needs of our students, the quality of their education, and the needs of our district communities come first.

Communication must be clear, frequent, consistent, and timely, both within governance groups and between groups and the wider college community. In order to further clear and open communication a governance intranet site will be created.

PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

BTC is a public technical college. Statute vests responsibility with the Board to hold in trust and good custody the interests of the state and the citizenry. These are responsibilities for which the Board is accountable and which neither it nor the President, who is an agent of the Board, can delegate. Therefore, all decision-making must be in the form of recommendations to the President or the Board. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon the Board and the President to support college governance procedures so long as they do not result in recommendations contrary to statute, fundamental principles or mission, or the vital interests of the College or the larger community.

The organization is expected to solicit and receive advice on the development of such procedures, processes, and practices from the President's senior staff, the faculty, operational staff, other administrators, students, and the College's legal counsel as needed. When deciding the appropriate course of action to follow, policies supersede procedures, procedures supersede processes, and processes supersede practices.

__Other Definitions__

Policy -   a definite course of action adopted for the sake of prudence, expediency, or facility (must be approved by the Board)

Procedure -   the particular mode of action involved with respect to implementing and executing a policy, viz., instructions for executing policy

Process -   the series of actions, operations, or motions involved in the accomplishment of an end; i.e., the actual steps involved in carrying out a procedure, viz., operational guidelines

Practice -   habitual or customary course of action or way of doing something

Examples of what a governance issue is and what it is not

Governance	Not Governance
Grading system	Individual grade change
Academic programs	Semester schedule of classes
Criteria to purchase equipment	Equipment purchases
General Studies curriculum requirements	Classroom assignments
Computer use policies	Computer lab schedules
Campus safety plan	Disposing of hazardous waste
Tuition refund policy	Issuing tuition refunds
Planning for new buildings	Repainting office walls
Process for hiring new employees	Placement of new hires on the salary scale

Participatory Governance is:

- A vehicle for campus-wide participation and collaboration.

- An opportunity to introduce, analyze, and discuss college goals, policies, and procedures.

- A formal, deliberate process.

- A forum for active involvement by college employees that will be recognized and supported by the college administration.

- A process based on clear, frequent and consistent communication is practiced throughout the college community in a timely manner.

- A process involving people with responsibility and accountability in providing well informed, realistic and unbiased decisions to the campus as a whole.

- A system that will incorporate a communication network that enables and promotes dialogue, understanding, joint investigation, and creative collaboration.

- A process where decisions are consistent with the mission, vision and values of the College.

Participatory Governance is not:

o A replacement for administrative functions.

o A process to supersede the authority of the President or the Board.

o A place for a person to fear retaliation for expressing his or her views and opinions about the topic under review.

o A platform to promote the interest of individual constituencies.

o An arena to address all the concerns of the campus community.

o A personality-driven process.

o A forum for personal issues or complaints.

o A perfect process.

GOVERNANCE MODEL OVERVIEW

The Blackhawk Technical College Participatory Governance Model is comprised of five major bodies,

> ➢ the College Council,
> ➢ the Instructional Council,
> ➢ the Student Support Services Council,
> ➢ the Administrative Services Council, and
> ➢ the Employee Support Services Council.

The sixth body, the Institutional Effectiveness Council, will monitor and evaluate the governance system assessing communication and process efficiency and effectiveness.

COLLEGE COUNCIL

The College Council will contain the following thirteen members:

- The President, Chair
- Vice President of Learning
- Vice President of Student Services
- Vice President of Finance & College
- Vice President of Human Resources
- Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Director of the Foundation and Alumni Association
- Director of the Monroe Campus
- Assistant to the President
- An instructional dean elected by the deans
- A representative of the faculty elected by faculty
- A representative of the support staff elected by the support staff
- A representative of the employees who are not classified as either faculty or support staff elected by those employees

The College Council reviews recommendations and may recommend that they be forwarded to the Board for approval in cases where Board action is required, or may recommend adoption for issues of governance for which Board action is not required.

The President or a Council may establish an *ad hoc* committee to address a particular issue when the need arises. Once an *ad hoc* committee has completed its task, the product is then considered through the normal governance process, beginning with the appropriate Council(s).

There will, from time to time, be topics of a confidential nature (primarily around personnel issues) that will require the Council to adjourn to executive session. In these instances, all members of the Council

will be dismissed save the Executive Council members and those whom the Executive Council determines should be included in the issue or issues under discussion. The Executive Council membership will include:

- President, Chair
- Vice President of Learning
- Vice President of Student Services
- Vice President of Finance & College Operations
- Vice President of Human Resources
- Assistant to the President

Those topics appropriate for Executive Council discussion will be selected by the President.

The **College Council** consists of two standing committees:

Core Abilities Committee: This committee was created to continue the efforts of the retired AQIP Action Project: Integrating Core Abilities into BTC's Culture. The major goal of this Action Project was to share the concept and specifics of what the seven core abilities mean to the College and how they should impact expectations of students and staff. In as much as core abilities are important for students, they should also be reflected in the actions of college staff.

Celebration Committee: This committee was created with the mission of creating additional fun and meaningful social gatherings to celebrate and show appreciation for our employees and our accomplishments.

INSTRUCTIONAL COUNCIL

The Instructional Council is responsible for governance issues that involve academic standards, curricula, and programs. This council will contain thirteen members.

- Vice President of Learning, Chair
- Dean of Advanced Manufacturing and Transportation
- Dean of General Education/Academic Support
- Dean of Business
- Dean of Health Sciences
- Dean of Public Safety
- Director of Learning Resources.
- Associate Dean General Education/Academic Support
- One representative from Student Services
- Two representatives of the faculty elected by faculty
- One representative of the adjunct faculty elected by adjunct faculty
- A representative of the support staff elected by the support staff

There will, from time to time, be topics of a confidential nature (primarily around student issues) that will require the Council to adjourn to executive session. In these instances, all members of the Council will be dismissed save the Executive Council members and those whom the Executive Council determines should be included in the issue or issues under discussion. The Executive Council membership will include:

- Vice President of Learning, Chair
- Executive Dean of Advanced Manufacturing and Transportation
- Dean of Academic Support
- Dean of General Education
- Dean of Business
- Dean of Health Sciences
- Dean of Public Safety
- Director of Learning Resources

Those topics appropriate for Executive Council discussion will be selected by the Vice President.

The **Instructional Council** consists of four standing committees:

Faculty Professional Development Committee – This Committee is an integral part of the BTC College Governance structure. Its mission is to promote student success through faculty development. The committee facilitates, advocates, and provides opportunities and resources for faculty enrichment across the college through the Teaching and Learning Center, faculty in-services, and the BTC Faculty Quality Assurance System.

Curriculum & Assessment Committee - This Committee provides guidance, advocacy, and oversight in the development of courses, programs, and academic policies, to ensure that curriculum is academically sound, comprehensive, and responsive to the evolving needs of the academic, business, and social community, in the fulfillment of the college's mission.

Academic Technology Committee – This Committee assesses and makes recommendations regarding instructional technologies after researching, selecting, piloting, and assessing the effectiveness of the technology in the learning environment.

Online Learning Committee - This Committee ensures the quality of online and hybrid classes. The committee promotes faculty development opportunities aimed at delivery of quality online/hybrid instruction; and in collaboration with Student Services ensure student preparation for and support in online/hybrid classes.

In addition, there are two current ad hoc committees:
Credit for Prior Learning/Test Out Ad Hoc Committee
Classroom Management Ad Hoc Committee

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES COUNCIL

The Student Support Services Council is responsible for governance issues that involve student development and services. This Council will contain thirteen members.

- Vice President of Student Services, Chair
- Director of Student Development
- Financial Aid Coordinator
- Career and Employment Relations Coordinator
- Student Life Coordinator
- Enrollment Services Manager
- Director of Marketing
- Tutoring and Testing Services Coordinator
- A representative of the faculty elected by faculty
- A representative of the support staff elected by the support staff
- A representative of the employees who are not classified as either faculty or support staff elected by those employees
- A representative of the part-time employees elected by those employees
- Student Government President

The **Student Support Services Council** consists of the following standing committee:

Enrollment Management Committee – This Committee discusses reviews, develops, monitors, and evaluates all ideas, strategies, and actions relating to the marketing, recruitment, and retention of students.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COUNCIL

The Administrative Services Council is responsible for governance issues that involve the College's facilities and its fiscal and technological resources. This council will contain eleven members.

- Vice President of Finance & College Operations, Chair
- Chief Information Officer
- Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
- Facilities Manager
- Controller
- Manager Grant Administration and Budget Development
- Manager Purchasing and Facilities Design
- Banner Systems Administrator
- A representative of the faculty elected by faculty
- A representative of the support staff elected by the support staff
- A representative of the employees who are not classified as either faculty or support staff elected by those employees

The **Administrative Services Council** consists of two standing committees:

Emergency Preparedness Committee – Provides a venue for internal and external stakeholders to review plans & systems, and coordinate activities related to campus emergency preparedness.
- Assist in the review and maintenance of the BTC Emergency Response plan.
- Assist in the review and maintenance of the College's Incident Command System (ICS) and Continuity of Operations plan.
- Assist in the development of recommendations to mitigate risk and/or strengthen the College's readiness to respond to campus emergencies.
- Assist with planning training programs related to emergency response, crisis management, and workplace safety.
- Assist with incident command training for individuals responsible for serving as evening supervisors at BTC Central Campus, as well as administrative staff at satellite campuses/centers.
- Assist in the review of the BTC Campus Safety and Security report

Technology (Banner) Governance Committee – This Committee serves to collect information and data related to needs and provides direction in the setting of institutional priorities and allocation of resources related to technology.

Safety Committee– Provides a venue for internal and external stakeholders to review reports, plans, and systems related to environmental health and safety.
- Assist with development of safety plans such as Chemical Hygiene Plan
- Review accident/incident reports to identify trends and develop recommends to reduce risk of injury

- Assist in the coordination of the BTC Safewalk program
- Assist with review of annual safety inspection report and develop recommendations to improve environmental health and safety

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SERVICES COUNCIL

The Employee Support Services Council is responsible for governance issues that involve employment, quality of work life and professional development. This council will contain eleven members.

- Vice President of Human Resources, Chair
- Employment Specialist
- Diversity/Staff Development Specialist
- Compensation and Benefits Specialist
- Counselor/Program Advisor
- Teaching Learning Specialist
- Special Populations Specialist
- A representative of the faculty elected by faculty
- A representative of the support staff elected by the support staff
- A representative of the employees who are not classified as either faculty or support staff elected by those employees
- A representative of the part-time employees elected by those employees

The **Employee Support Services Council** consists of three standing committees:

Diversity Advancement Committee - This Committee assists in the development and implementation of BTC's Diversity Plan. The Committee strives to improve the campus climate through educational events at staff in-service sessions, book & film review activities, and seminars. The emphasis of these educational events is an acknowledgement that growing cultural and institutional influences continue to shape the College environment.

Health MD's Committee - This Committee is dedicated to sponsoring and promoting activities, events and information that promote a healthy lifestyle which include proper nutrition, alleviating stress, receiving annual check-ups, and knowledge of important health information.

Professional Development Committee - This Committee researches the professional development needs of all staff, and organizes professional growth activities, including in-service and orientation activities.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

The Institutional Effectiveness Council examines the College's performance compared to stated mission and strategic priorities. The process includes the establishment and monitoring of critical outcomes with the results used to reinforce and/or modify college policies and procedures to ensure the achievement of mission and strategic priorities.

The Institutional Effectiveness Council is made up of nine members.

- Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Chair
- AQIP Steering Team Co-Chairs
- A representative of the College Council elected by that council
- A representative of the Instructional Council elected by that council
- A representative of the Student Support Services Council elected by that council
- A representative of the Administrative Services Council elected by that council
- A representative of the Employee Support Services Council elected by that council
- A representative of the faculty elected by the faculty
- A representative of the support staff elected by the support staff

Strategic Priority Action Plans:

College Action Plans are developed to support achievement of the College's strategic priorities. In most cases, implementation of college action plans will affect a policy, an administrative procedure, a process, and/or practice as defined within this document. For this reason, strategic priorities will be aligned to a specific council upon adoption.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

Principles of Operation

Accountability standards and procedures need to be clear at key points or stages of discussion.

Procedures for initiating change must be clearly defined both to encourage creativity and to preserve institutional values.

The College's agreed-upon principles and values must be respected and followed.

The culture and history of the institution must be respected, and any changes that are made should be made in accordance with the College's agreed-upon principles and values.

A governance model should be capable of functioning effectively regardless of the personalities involved (i.e., regardless of who the people are in any given unit at any given time).

The employees who perform the work have the most knowledge about the work; and therefore, should be consulted in depth when important decisions are made.

Only governance issues will be brought to the Councils. Confidential personnel issues will be handled appropriately and separately from the governance structure.

All College employees must do their best to focus on what is best for the students and community and put aside their personal interests. At the same time, what appears to be a narrow personal interest to one may be an important example of a salient issue to others; so patience and tolerance must be afforded those expressing a perspective.

Rules of Operation

New items proposed for study may be submitted by any group or person. Proposed items are to be submitted on the BTC Governance Item Submission form and submitted to the Assistant to the President who will distribute to the respective council. Submissions should normally be made prior to the start of the academic year (i.e., by August 15th); however, items that come up during the academic year can also be addressed depending on their relative importance.

New items proposed for study shall appear on the next agenda of the Council to which the proposal was assigned. The proposal should be distributed to council members in its original form. The Council may then take action on the proposal, place the proposal on hold for action at a later time (parking-lot issue), forward to another Council if members deem it a better fit to the mission of that Council, or elect to take no action, informing the proposal's author(s) as to the reason why. If the proposal is postponed for action at a later date, the author(s) should be given an approximate date the proposal will become

active again. All proposals placed in a parking lot should continue to appear on the council agenda as a "parking lot issue" until a final disposition is rendered.

Councils are required to meet bi-weekly; however, the meeting schedule may be modified as needed. The Chairs will formalize the agenda and run the meetings, and will do their best to fully, accurately, and succinctly communicate the news and decisions of the Councils to the College community, including the date, place, time, and agenda of the next meeting. Agendas should be posted to the intranet a minimum of two days prior to the scheduled meeting. A Recorder will create and distribute the minutes of the meetings. The minutes from all Council meetings will be made available within seven business days to the campus community via the governance intranet website.

Information necessary for making recommendations and decisions should be made available to all who request it, and information will not be withheld from decision-making individuals, councils, or committees.

No council should make recommendations without consultation with its constituents and without notifying its constituents of its recommendation.

Employees who have information necessary to a particular discussion may be invited to that particular meeting as a guest but will not be a voting member.

All recommendations should be accompanied by an explanation regarding the procedures and rationale that led to the recommendations.

Before a recommendation is sent forward, the originating Council must ensure that (1) it is consistent with the College's mission and goals, (2) it is sufficiently supported by data or some other form of information, and (3) when appropriate, it incorporates a mechanism for evaluating the outcome. Recommendations that do not meet these conditions will not be considered by the College Council.

All recommendations from Councils must be approved or disapproved in a timely manner (i.e., within 30 days) unless such recommendations are sent back for further information and study or unless circumstances outside the administration's control require an extension. In the latter case, an explanation of those circumstances must be made.

Whenever possible, when disapproving formal recommendations, alternative recommendations or further courses of action should be suggested. In order for employees to be engaged, they need to understand the reasons behind decisions. When a request is denied at any level, an explanation should be given containing consideration and thoughtfulness equal to the thoughtfulness contained in the original request.

No person should fear retaliation for expressing his or her views and opinions about the topic under review.

Elected representatives to committees or councils have an obligation to participate in 75 percent of the meetings (unless excused). If their schedules do not permit such attendance, they have an obligation to resign so a replacement can be selected. If the representative does not willingly resign, procedures for replacing the representative should be articulated and enforced.

Because participatory governance requires a commitment of time, effort, and sometimes resources from individuals and departments, the College shall provide members of the Councils with an adequate level of support to enable them to carry out their participatory governance responsibilities. Members of the Councils may be relieved of other duties equal to the time spent on Council responsibilities.
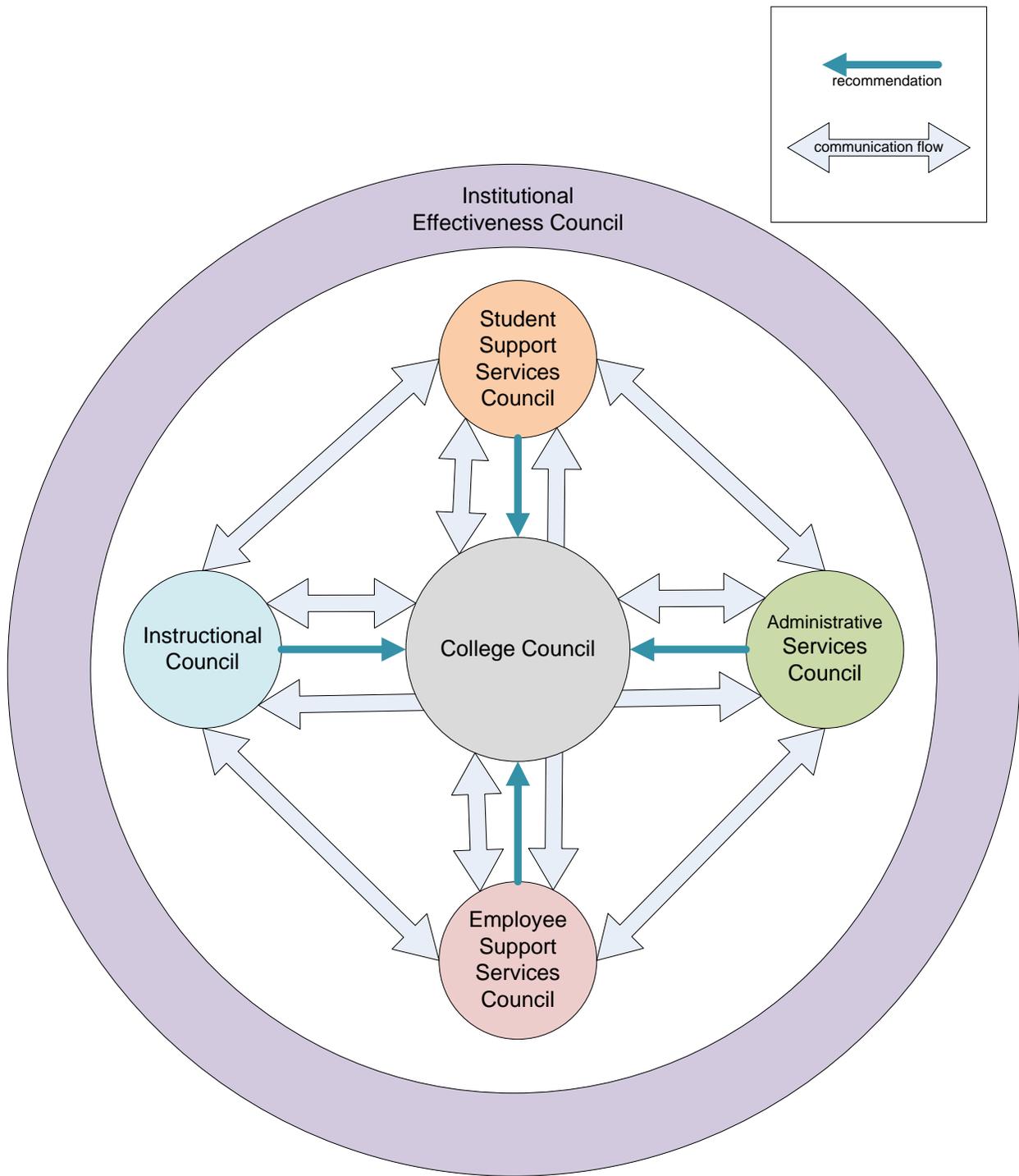
Roles and Responsibilities

Chair: Attends and facilitates all meetings, ensuring Council work is consistent with stated purpose. Responsible for setting the meeting schedule for the year, taking into consideration deadlines for Council and Committee activities, projects, and reports. Develops agendas, meeting notices, and other planning documents. Monitors Committee progress and follows up with committee chair regarding the status of assigned projects. During meetings, keeps the discussion on track, monitors participation by members, and keeps the Council focused on reaching a decision. Is responsible for the dissemination of information relative to Council activities including meeting agendas, news, and decisions.

Council Recorder: Responsible for accurately capturing the minutes of Council meetings and making the minutes available to the Campus community in a centralized electronic repository.

Members: Possess a good understanding of the Council's purpose, support the efforts of the chair and carry out individual assignments made by the chair, prepare for and attend meetings, ask questions and voice objective opinions on the issues, support decisions of the Council, and act as an advocate for the Council. Elected members may not serve on more than one council at any given time.

Terms: Elected members will serve a two-year term. In an effort to offer others the opportunity to serve, elected members may not serve in the same position for more than one consecutive term.

Institutional
Effectiveness Council

recommendation

communication flow

Student
Support
Services
Council

Instructional
Council

College Council

Administrative
Services
Council

Employee
Support
Services
Council

HOW THE PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE MODEL OPERATES

Election Process

Elections are held each spring for terms that begin in the autumn of each academic year. Faculty representatives will be selected by the Faculty. Support Staff representatives will be selected by the support staff. Representatives of the employees who are not classified as either faculty or support staff will be chosen by that group. In the event that no governance representative is elected for a particular position, i.e., no one was nominated, that position will be filled by appointment, the appointment being made by the President. The election results will be forwarded to the Institutional Effectiveness Council, which is responsible for monitoring the participatory governance process.

How Agendas Are Constructed

Items for study or issues to be addressed by the Instructional Council, the Student Support Services Council, the Administrative Services Council, and the Employee Support Services Council may be submitted by the President, a constituent group, another Council or Committee, an *ad hoc* committee, or any individual. After vetting by the Chair, the Council, working within their defined areas of responsibility, will review the submitted items, construct an agenda, and assign tasks to ad-hoc committees when appropriate. These agendas will be posted on the Governance intranet site. Items for consideration must be submitted in writing (on the BTC Governance Item Submission Form).

How Decisions Are Reviewed

All recommendations must be accompanied by rationale (including the data or other information that supports the recommendation). All recommendations must be responded to within 30 calendar days, unless there are extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the reason for the delay must be documented. All Councils must maintain communication with constituents and with each other. Agendas and minutes of all meetings will be published on the governance Intranet website.

How Decisions Are Made

Decisions regarding items that affect one Council will be decided by that Council with the decision communicated at the next College Council meeting. If no concerns are raised, the decision will stand. If an item affects two or more Councils, an ad hoc committee comprised of members from each affected council will be created for the purpose of addressing the issue. The recommendation will be presented to a joint meeting of the Councils. Upon approval of the Councils, the recommendation will be forwarded to the College Council. Recommendations that are endorsed by the College Council are then referred to the President.

Recommendations That Are Not Approved

If the College Council fails to endorse a formal recommendation, or if a formal recommendation is disapproved, it should be returned to the originating Council with a written explanation for why the recommendation was not endorsed or approved.

Acknowledgement

In presenting this new governance system, Blackhawk Technical College would like to acknowledge the work of Garrett College. Many ideas in this model have been adapted from the model used at Garrett College.