

**TOMPKINS CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BYLAWS FOR COLLEGE GOVERNANCE**

The following bylaws, when approved by the staff at Tompkins Cortland Community College, the President, and the Board of Trustees, shall replace the existing Bylaws for Professional Staff Role in College Governance, Bylaws for Classified Staff Role in College Governance, and documents and policies establishing the Institutional Governance Council.

**Section 1: Preamble**

In accordance with the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals developed at Tompkins Cortland Community College, and with the approval of the Board of Trustees, the President, and the College staff, a College Governance Model has been established.

**Section 2: Governance Structure**

Governance shall consist of an elected, College-wide committee known as the “College Forum.” Meetings shall be open to all members of the College community.

**Section 3: Statement of Purpose**

Governance shall support the College’s Mission, Vision, Values and Goals,

- provide a structure for
  - recommending and influencing Institutional Policy
  - discussing and influencing proposed operational decisions that will significantly affect the College’s Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, and
  
- provide a forum for
  - communicating on issues of broad institutional concern
  - providing expertise and/or knowledge on such issues to decision makers.

All issues which come before the Forum shall be analyzed in terms of possible impact upon the College’s identified Mission, Vision, Values and Goals.

All policy and operational recommendations developed through the College Forum shall be submitted to the President of the College. Policy matters shall be subsequently submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration and approval. It is understood that the President will communicate fully with the

College community, through the Forum, his decisions regarding policy and operational decision recommendations in a timely manner.

#### **Section 4: Membership**

The College Forum shall be made up of a maximum of twenty one (21) members from identified groups within the College community.

- Eighteen (18) members shall be elected from the employee groups of the College as follows:
  - Three members shall be elected from the Teaching Faculty
  - Three members shall be elected from the Classified Staff
  - Three members shall be elected from the Non-teaching Faculty and Administrative Staff
  - Nine members shall be elected at-large from the above-named employee groups

Staff terms of membership shall be for two years.

Any staff member whose position is not clearly identified by the terms Teaching Faculty, Non-teaching Faculty, Classified Staff, or Administrative Staff, shall be considered a part of the employee group identified as Non-teaching Faculty/Administrative Staff. Examples include, but are not limited to, positions identified as Technical Assistant or Learning Lab Specialist.

- Up to three members shall be students of the College. It shall be the responsibility of the Forum chairperson(s) to arrange for the selection of student representatives through the Student Advisory Board. Student terms of membership shall be for one year.

No person shall serve as a Forum member for more than two consecutive terms.

## **Section 5: Officers**

Chairperson(s) - One or more Forum chairpersons for the forthcoming year shall be elected from, and by, the College Forum members for a one-year term. The total compensation for the chairperson(s) during each of Fall and Spring semesters shall be at a rate of \$1850.00 beginning the Spring 2007 semester and thereafter increased at the range movement provided in the Faculty Association contract.

Secretary - A secretary for the forthcoming year shall be elected from, and by, the College Forum members for a one-year term. Election shall follow the election of new Forum members and shall be held prior to the end of the academic year. The secretary shall be compensated during each of Fall and Spring semesters at a rate of \$700.00 beginning the Spring 2007 semester and thereafter increased at the range movement provided in the Faculty Association contract. The secretary will ensure that accurate minutes of each meeting are taken and shall make every attempt to distribute them to all appropriate persons within one week of a meeting. The minutes shall record all motions and the action taken thereon, absences, dates and time of convening and adjourning, the essence of discussion on a motion when such information will aid in the understanding of a motion, and direct action of the Forum and all pertinent announcements.

## **Section 6: Meetings**

Regular meetings of the College Forum shall be scheduled biweekly during the academic year. Additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chairperson(s). Meetings of the College Forum, as well as any committees, shall be open to all members of the College community. At the beginning of each semester, the Forum shall set a consistent meeting schedule. In the case of an operational decision that must be made prior to the beginning of an academic year, a special summer meeting(s) may be called by the Chairperson(s).

The College Forum shall establish a set of Standing Rules. Robert's Rules (latest edition) will govern the conduct of the College Forum as well as all committees.

Establishment of committees:

Whenever deemed appropriate by a majority of the College Forum members present, one or more *ad hoc* committees may be formed and charged with

obtaining and analyzing specific information for the use of the Forum. Committee membership shall be determined by the Forum members. It is understood that all recommendations shall be made by the Forum itself, acting as a committee-of-the-whole.

### **Section 7: Information**

Electronic mail shall be considered the primary means of disseminating information between the College Forum and the College community. All agendas, minutes, and other appropriate documents shall be posted to “Everyone” public groups for staff and students, or the equivalent, and shall also be posted in hard copy on a designated Bulletin Board.

Agendas shall be made available to the College community at least three business days prior to all meetings. Whenever possible, minutes shall be distributed within one week.

In order to foster communication to and from the Board of Trustees, the Chairperson(s) shall attend regular Board of Trustees meetings and shall be afforded time on the agenda to share information relating to issues currently under consideration in the College Forum.

### **Section 8: Election process**

The process for the election of members to the Forum shall be as follows:

- Before the tenth week of the Spring semester, three members shall be selected by the College Forum to act as a Nominating Committee and conduct an election. Members of the Nominating Committee shall not be entitled to seek nomination or election.
- Six weeks before the end of the academic year, the Nominating Committee shall advise the members of all employee groups within the College of the number of available positions and shall accept nominations for those positions.
- Four weeks before the end of the academic year, the Nominating Committee shall conduct an election. Absentee ballots and write-in votes shall be accepted.

All nominees shall be identified on the ballot by employee group: Teaching Faculty, Classified Staff, or Non-teaching Faculty/Administrative Staff.

Each voter shall select from the entire ballot the appropriate number of nominees required to fill all expiring or vacant terms.

Elected members shall be selected as follows:

The requisite number of seats identified for a particular employee group shall be filled by the nominees with the highest vote tallies within that employee group. When all designated seats have been filled, the remaining nominees shall then be considered at-large and seats shall be filled by those nominees with the highest vote tallies, without regard to employee group designation.

- Before the end of the academic year, the newly constituted College Forum shall meet and elect the Chairperson(s) to serve for the following academic year.

The term of the newly-elected College Forum shall begin on the first day of the next academic year.

### **Section 9: Disposition of Policy and Operational Decision Recommendations**

Policy and operational decision recommendations from the College Forum shall go directly to the President. Any minority recommendation requested by one or more members of the Forum shall simultaneously be forwarded. The President may return a recommendation with suggestions for modification or, when rejecting the recommendation, shall provide the College Forum with a rationale for that rejection.

For policy matters, if the President chooses not to accept the College Forum's recommendation but to make his or her own recommendation to the Board of Trustees, he or she shall also forward the Forum's recommendation and any minority recommendations.

Subsequent to the approval of the Board of Trustees, policy recommendations shall become policy at Tompkins Cortland Community College.

### **Section 10: College-Wide Coordination**

The College Forum shall be informed of, and review with respect to potential policy or major operational implications, the activities and issues under debate among any task forces or committees that are formed on campus. If policy or

major operational implications are apparent in any group functioning outside of the established governance system, the Chairperson(s) of the College Forum shall meet with that group or appropriate administrator to include that work as a part of the Forum.

### **Section 11: Process for Bringing Issues to the College Forum**

Any member of the College community may request that an issue be considered by the College Forum. Materials for proposals must be submitted in writing to the chair or co-chairs of the Forum at least two weeks before a scheduled discussion or vote. The chair or co-chairs will distribute the materials to the College community at least ten days before the scheduled meeting. The presenter shall provide a written rationale for consideration of the issue by the Forum. Upon presentation of an issue, the Forum shall make a specific determination as to whether the particular issue involves an Institutional Policy or is an operational decision that will have a significant impact on the College's Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals.

In any case, any member of the College community may petition the College Forum to consider a particular issue. Upon presentation of a petition signed by 20 percent of the staff requesting that an issue be considered, and stating that the signatories believe that the issue will have a significant impact on the College's Mission, Vision, Values, Continuing Goal(s), or Critical Success Areas, the Forum shall consider the issue.

### **Section 12: Appeal Process**

In those instances when any member of the College community wishes to appeal a recommendation by the College Forum, they should submit a petition, signed by 20 percent of the staff, to the College Forum. The Forum will then be obligated to commence, within 15 working days, a meeting of the College community to consider the subject of said petition.

### **Section 13: Definitions**

For purposes of Governance the following definitions shall apply:

A. Staff:

The term "staff" shall include any person currently employed in the employee groups defined as Teaching Faculty, Non-teaching Faculty, Technical Assistant, Learning Lab Specialist, Classified Staff, or Administrative Staff, excluding the President.

B. Student:

The term "Student" shall include any currently enrolled student who is matriculated in a degree or certificate program and who is in good academic standing.

C. College Community:

The term "College Community" shall be the most inclusive and shall include all current staff, adjunct faculty, students, the President, and members of the Board of Trustees.

D. Institutional Policy/Policy:

"Institutional Policy" and "Policy" shall be defined for the purposes of Governance as those policies which require Board of Trustee approval and which then serve as guiding principles for the College. Nothing in these bylaws shall be construed to shift the ultimate approval or disapproval of a recommended policy from the Board of Trustees nor shall governance encroach on those issues that are within the purview of collective negotiations.

E. Operational Decision:

"Operational Decision" shall be defined as administrative decisions that affect the ongoing functions and operations of the College. Nothing in these bylaws shall be construed to shift the ultimate decision-making authority, in regard to operational decisions, from the President.

F. Academic Year:

For the purposes of these bylaws, the term "academic year" shall refer to the period of time considered to be the contract year for ten-month employees under the Faculty Association contract.

**Section 14: Bylaw Amendments**

It is understood that the College Forum shall oversee the amendment process. The amendment process will begin when a proposed amendment is endorsed by the signatures of 20 percent of the staff and is presented to the College Forum. The Forum will appoint a Task Force on Bylaw Amendments to consider the proposed amendment. Within 30 working days, the Task Force

will submit a recommendation to the College staff. This recommendation will include perceived advantages and disadvantages of the proposed amendments as well as possible impacts on sections of the bylaws.

After receipt of the Task Force recommendation, the staff will have at least five working days to consider the recommendations prior to a vote. The vote may be conducted in person at a scheduled meeting, by paper ballot, or by electronic ballot. In the case of voting in person at a meeting, staff members may vote by means of an absentee ballot delivered to the Forum secretary before the scheduled meeting time. In case of a paper or electronic ballot, staff members shall have a minimum of three days to cast their ballots. A two-thirds majority of those voting must be attained for amendments to these bylaws to be approved. The amendments will be then submitted to the President and subsequently to the Board of Trustees for final review. It is understood that no amendment to these bylaws becomes effective until it is approved by the Board of Trustees.