

Academic Enterprise at Stanford Notes

Stanford is a large and complicated place.

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Before we talk about governance at Stanford let's think about what some different governance models look like. You can easily think of a few: in a dictatorship one person has all of the power and authority; democracy, in its purest form, every single person has a voice and part in governance; and corporate governance models, which balance the interests of various stakeholders. Corporate governance models have shareholders, management, customers, financiers, suppliers and so forth.

The University has a shared governance model. The governance is shared between the faculty and the administration and board of trustees. You'll notice students are not part of the actual governance structure, yet they are the reason that we are here. Stanford would not have been founded were it not to educate students.

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This presentation will review two important governing documents for Stanford — the Founding Grant, and the Articles of Organization of the Academic Council. It will then cover the academic organization of the university as well as a few processes that are important to the way that the university operates.

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Many of you know the history of Stanford. Jane and Leland Stanford lost their only child, Leland Jr., to typhoid fever when he was a few days shy of his 16th birthday. Within a few weeks of his death, they decided to create a great university—a university of high degree. From its founding, Stanford was non-denominational and coeducational, which was very unusual for a private institution at the time. In addition to using their personal wealth, including Jane's jewel collection which she sold to finance the construction of the buildings on this campus, the Stanfords deeded the rights to their farm to the University with the express provision that it never be sold. From 1885 to 1903, Jane and Leland Stanford held all the power for the administration of the University. The founding grant set forth the role of the Board of Trustees, the powers of the President and the roles and responsibilities of the faculty.

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These are the lands that were part of the Stanford's donation that created the campus. Our land is in two counties, Santa Clara and San Mateo. It abuts 5 different municipalities. Most of the core campus is in unincorporated Santa Clara County, but part of the Medical Center, the Shopping Center and the Research Park are in Palo Alto.

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According to the founding grant, the Board of Trustees is the custodian of the endowment and all university properties. They manage the invested funds, set the budget, and determine policies for operation and control of the university. Today's board approves tuition, room and board fees, they approve the university's budget, they approve the

construction in every new building on campus, they approve money that we borrow, and they approve the way we invest the endowment. Another power given to the Board of Trustees is to hire and fire a President. The Board of Trustees has the fiduciary responsibility that the University will continue in perpetuity. That is an exceedingly long frame of reference! The board is thinking intergenerationally—every decision they make is not a decision for tomorrow, it's a decision for 20 years from now and 30 years from now and 100 years from now.

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The President of the university can only be appointed or removed by the Board of Trustees. The founding grant gave the President the powers listed here:

- To prescribe the duties of professors and teachers
- To remove professors and teachers
- To prescribe and enforce the course of study and the mode and manner of teaching—this is in the original founding grant
- And such other powers that will enable him to control the educational part of the university.

When this founding grant was enacted and the President was hired, then president of Harvard University, Charles Elliot, said: “What an extremely disagreeable and inexpedient power of dismissal the Stanfords forced on the President of their university! For all I know it may work well in a railroad, but it will certainly be extremely inconvenient and injurious in a University.”

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Next I'm going to talk a little about the academic organization. Beyond the President there's the Provost, the Executive Cabinet, the Advisory Board, and the Senate of the Academic Council.

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This is the current President's organizational chart. He has a set of Vice Presidents who are in charge of a lot of operations at Stanford. The President is the only officer of the University whose role was specified in the founding grant.

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The Provost is the chief academic and budget officer of the University. The Provost administers the entire academic program of instruction and research and oversees student affairs, admission, financial aid, libraries, and religious life. She oversees the budget planning process, the capital planning process, and oversees faculty appointment, and allocation of faculty resources. While the President's role was specified in the founding grant, the Provost derives her authority from the President who delegates it to her.

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This is the Provost's organization chart. The individuals who are outlined in the double blue make up the Executive Cabinet. The Executive Cabinet is the academic leadership team that helps the President and Provost run the University. It includes the Deans of the seven schools, the directors of SLAC and the Hoover Institution, the Vice Provost and

Dean of Research, and our Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and our Vice Provost for Graduate Education. The org charts of the President and the Provost make up the whole administration.

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Recall that at its beginning, Jane and Leland Stanford held most of the administrative power at Stanford. In 1900, Jane asked the first president, David Starr Jordan, to fire a popular faculty member, Edward Ross. Edward Ross was politically active and favored limits on Japanese immigration and municipal ownership of utilities. The Stanfords made their fortune on the private ownership of a railroad, so Ross' point of view was anathema to Jane.

Jordan did fire Edward Ross and an outcry followed. Seven Stanford faculty resigned and the Ross Affair, as it was known, became a battle cry across the entire country for academic freedom. This ultimately led Jane to consider re-thinking the organization of the University. She designated a committee which recommended a restructuring of the organization of the University, and a shift in the balance of power from a strong executive, the President, to one that gave the faculty more power balanced against the President and Trustees.

The committee drafted something called the Articles of Organization of the Faculty and in it recommended the formation of an executive committee. That executive committee is now called the Advisory Board, and they advise the President on matters of importance. Most of their effort focuses on hiring and, in rare cases, firing faculty. They currently advise on appointments, promotions, appeals of tenure decisions, faculty discipline and the creation or elimination of departments.

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The full faculty elect the Advisory Board; the Advisory Board has the option to appeal a decision to the Board of Trustees. They have the right to go over the head of the President.

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The Academic Council was also established in the Articles of Organization of the Faculty. The membership of the Academic Council is all of the tenure line faculty, Assistant, Associate and Full professors and the non-tenure line faculty which include Professors (Teaching), (Research) and the Senior Fellows in the independent labs and institutes (for example, SIEPR, FSI, and Woods).

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The Academic Council has full control over academic policies and requirements at Stanford. In the early years, the Academic Council voted as a whole group, and as the faculty grew of course that became unwieldy. In 1968, they convened the first Faculty Senate, made up of 55 members distributed by faculty electoral unit, which has authority over degree programs and academic requirements.

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The Senate works through multiple committees. For example, the committee on research might think about who should be a principle investigator at Stanford. They'll deliberate, and make a recommendation to the Senate and then the Senate votes on it.

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Now I am going to talk a about some important processes the administration goes through. The first one is choosing a dean.

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When choosing a dean, there is a search committee co-chaired by the Provost and a faculty member from the school in which we're searching. The first job of the Provost and the co-chair of the committee is to think about the school and think about whether a broad national search or internal search is more appropriate. This decision depends on the specific needs of the school.

The search committee is composed of faculty, students, and a staff member or two. Their responsibility is to go out and talk with everybody—they talk with faculty in the schools, they talk with staff and students, with colleagues around the university—to find out the issues facing the school, improvements that could be made, and what to be thinking about as they look for a Dean. The end result of the search committee's work is an unranked list of three or four names submitted to the President and the Provost, from which the President and Provost select the Dean. It is an entirely closed and secretive process, just like when the Vatican selects a new pope. There are public universities and some private schools and colleges that have very open search processes—they'll bring somebody on campus and everyone will know who is interviewing for the job. That is not what we do and the reason is that we will not have the very best people throw their hat in the ring to take one of these jobs if they stand a possibility of losing a job they have now. In the last decade or so we've appointed deans at Stanford who came from other universities where they were serving as provosts, and those people would never have even engaged with us if they weren't assured of complete confidentiality in the process.

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Hiring a faculty member or promoting to tenure a faculty member

All appointments of faculty originate in a department. This means that the Provost, President or School Dean cannot decide to hire somebody at Stanford on their own. When a department decides we need to do a search or promotion—we have a faculty member whose time for promotion has come up, for example—they appoint either a search committee or an evaluation committee. The department then collects broad evidence—they gather letters from experts in the field assessing that individual candidate and they collect letters from students who have been advisees or in classes with an instructor. These letters from students are taken very seriously in the case of a promotion to tenure, so this is a significant opportunity for a strong student voice.

The committee evaluates the candidate, and sends their recommendation to the department and if the department vote is positive, it goes to some version of a school appointments and promotions committee. Each of our seven schools have a slightly different version of this committee. That committee then evaluates the case, and if the

committee views the file positively it goes to the Dean. The Dean reviews the case, and if the Dean's review is positive, the file moves to the Provost who reviews the entire file again, and if she is positive it is sent to the Advisory Board. They deliberate on this and if they are positive, they recommend the appointment to the President of the University and the President makes a report to the Board of Trustees.

At any point here, there could be a negative decision, and then the file doesn't move forward. Negative promotion decisions can be appealed. If the negative decision is made in the department or the School, they are appealed to the Provost; if it is a negative decision made by the Provost, the appeal is to the President.

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Creating a Degree Program

Degree programs are initiated in a department, usually by a group of faculty who see a need for a new program. Those faculty put together a proposal detailing what program should be created and why, the courses that would be included, who would teach those courses. This proposal goes to a School curriculum committee, and then the School Dean, and from there, if the view is positive, it goes to one of those faculty senate committees. If it is an undergraduate degree program it goes to CRUM, and a graduate program goes to CGS. If these are positive, the full Senate votes on it.

In 1891, the President was the person who had the authority to decide what the students would learn and what the faculty would teach, but now it is the faculty who make these proposals and they are the ones who review and approve them.

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Creating a department

Creating a degree program is very different from creating a department. A proposal to create a new department starts within a school. Here is a recent example. In our Medical School, they have had professionals who are specialists in emergency medicine, and they have been part of the Department of Medicine. The department of Medicine is the largest department in the University; it is perhaps bigger than the entire school of engineering. They decided that their work would be best served if they existed in their own separate department rather than as a sub-field in another department. They made a proposal to create a separate department. The Dean of the school supported this idea, it went to the Provost who also thought it was a good idea, so it was sent to the Advisory Board for review. They opined and thought it was a good idea, sent it to the President who also thought it was a good idea. The department was not created until the Board of Trustees voted on it.

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Spending Money

This is the consolidated budget for the current fiscal year. It's made up of Auxiliaries (Residence and Dining Enterprises, Athletics, etc.), grants and contracts, restricted funds, designated funds, and General Funds. These General funds are the only part of the budget that is controlled by the Provost.

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The budget process runs like many of the other things I just described. The departments, the schools, the vice presidents and vice provosts make budget requests. Those come up to the budget group. The budget group hears all the requests and then make a recommendation to the Provost. The Provost makes a final decision and then makes a report to the Faculty Senate, and then presents the budget to the Board of Trustees who approve the budget.

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You may ask, where do students fit in? Students are an integral part of what we do. In many of the processes we talked about there are committees which include students, and the evaluation and feedback from students for tenure decisions is a critical part of the process.

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The one process in which students are actually part of the governance structure is the creation of the Student Judicial Charter, which governs actions on campus. David Starr Jordan, the first president of Stanford, wrote the Fundamental Standard in 1896. About 25 years later students created the Honor Code. These two documents together are the disciplinary code of conduct for the campus.

In 1997, the Committee of 15 was created in order to revise the judicial charter. This was a group of faculty, staff and students, and they drafted a new judicial charter. That charter went before the student governing bodies—the ASSU and the GSC—who had to approve it and once they approved it, it went to the faculty senate for review and approval, then it went to the President for approval.

Any time there is a change to this charter, it has to go through the same process, which unites the students, faculty, and administration. Virtually all initiatives at Stanford start at the level of faculty and students. Money that is raised and spent is mostly in the hands of the faculty and the department. The role of the administration is to help make this happen by facilitating, supporting, and providing strategic direction for the faculty and students.