

# Sterling College

Working Hands. Working Minds.

## COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

### Basic Organizing Principles

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It is important for the health of Sterling College that members of the community be thoroughly engaged in college governance and decision-making.

Sterling has community governance organizational structures that link important **responsibilities** with the appropriate **authority** to make decisions and to get our work done. Representation of students, faculty, administrators, and staff strengthens the work of the College. There are also a handful of committees that require confidentiality when student or human resource issues are regularly an element of the agenda.

### Organizational Structures 2017-18

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#### Board of Trustees

The authority to maintain and operate an educational program at Sterling College stems from our charter and the laws of the state of Vermont, and this responsibility lies solely with our trustees. Trustees uphold the mission of the College through accepting fiduciary responsibility and by assuming responsibility for the hiring and evaluation of the President, who also serves as a member of the Board. The President and the Board have final legal responsibility and authority.

Sterling's Board of Trustees is self-perpetuating through election of new trustees by sitting trustees. The membership and biographies of the Board of Trustees can be found on the Sterling website.

#### Administrative Council

The Administrative Council meets weekly to discuss and advise the President on issues related to the current and future needs of the College. In particular, this council focuses on issues related to institutional vision and planning, operational budget, risk management, and general college initiatives. While the membership of this committee includes the senior leadership of the College, the Administrative Council is a deliberative body that advises the President; it does not make institutional decisions. This council may also establish taskforces to research and make recommendations on specific topics, particularly those identified in the Strategic Plan goals.

Administrative Council is chaired by the President, and its membership includes: the Dean of Academics (who acts as chair and President in my absence), Dean of Community, Director of Finance, Director of Advancement & Alumni Relations, Director of Admission & Financial Aid, Director of Communications, Director of Technology, Director of Marketing, and the Assistant to the President.

#### Faculty Meeting

The purpose of Faculty Meeting is to create a venue for the work of the faculty. As such, it is the primary forum for the faculty to arrive at decisions regarding the curriculum of Sterling College. Chaired by the Dean of Academics, the full-time faculty has responsibility for developing and sustaining a cogent academic, community, and work curriculum that supports our mission by furthering the learning competencies adopted in the Strategic Plan.

Faculty Meeting convenes weekly to review and comment on curricular recommendations brought forward by the Academic, Community, and Work councils, to discuss student progress, and any other topics important to the welfare of Sterling College, and also to engage in regular professional development activities.

As the most senior teaching faculty member of the College, the Dean of Academics establishes the formal agenda and is the chair of Faculty meeting. Membership of Faculty Meeting includes all full-time employee faculty and adjunct faculty by invitation of the Dean of Academics.

### **Academic Council**

Working in collaboration with the Dean of Academics, the Academic Council has responsibility for making recommendations on the development, review, assessment, and modification of the credit-bearing academic components of the Sterling College curriculum. The Academic Council reports on its work at each Faculty Meeting and presents recommendations for decisions related to the academic curriculum.

The Academic Council reviews and is given authority to approve individual courses proposed by faculty and to consider student self-designed major proposals. The Academic Council may also make recommendations to Faculty Meeting, other councils, committees, and the President concerning other needs of the academic curriculum. This council may also establish taskforces to research and make recommendations on specific topics, particularly those identified in the Strategic Plan goals.

Academic Council is chaired by a full-time member of the academic faculty invited by the Dean of Academics, and its membership is composed of 4 other full-time academic faculty and students.

### **Community Council**

The Community Council is responsible to further the health and wellbeing of the Sterling College community and supports the development of a rich community-based learning experience for students. Community Council makes recommendations on the development, review, and modification of the community components of the Sterling College program. The Community Council reports on its work at each Faculty Meeting and presents recommendations for decisions related to the curriculum.

The Community Council reviews and is given authority to approve student life initiatives and to address Community Standards and judiciary issues at the request of the Dean of Community. The Community Council may also make recommendations to Faculty Meeting, other councils, committees, and the President concerning other needs of the community life program and curriculum. This council may also establish taskforces to research and make recommendations on specific topics, particularly those identified in the Strategic Plan goals.

Community Council is chaired by the Dean of Community and typically includes 3 students, 3 faculty, and 3 staff in its membership.

### **Work Council**

Work Council has responsibility for expanding the opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to participate in the development of and commitment to the work curriculum and the College's membership in the federal work program. This committee will make recommendations on the development, review, assessment, and modification of the credit-bearing components of the work curriculum. The Work Council also reports on its efforts at each Faculty Meeting and presents recommendations for decisions related to the College's curriculum.

The Work Council reviews and is given authority to approve new jobs proposed by members of the community and to consider new initiatives in the on-campus work & off-campus internship program. The Work Council may also make recommendations to Faculty Meeting, other councils, committees, and the President concerning other needs of the work program and curriculum. This council may also establish taskforces to research and make recommendations on specific topics, particularly those identified in the Strategic Plan goals.

The Work Council meets is chaired by the Dean of Work and includes 3 students, 3 faculty, and 3 staff in its membership.

## Working Committees

- **Calendar Committee**

The Sterling College calendar is a unique integration of intensives, long blocks, and summer sessions. The Calendar Committee is charged with developing the academic calendar, in consultation with the faculty, approximately 1-2 years in advance.

- **Enrollment**

The Enrollment Committee is charged with taking a comprehensive approach to the enrollment and retention of students at Sterling College. Members include the Dean of Academics, Dean of Community, the Registrar and the Director of Admission & Financial Aid.

- **External Relations**

The External Relations committee comes together to discuss all issues relating to how Sterling College presents itself to the outside world: fundraising, public relations, marketing, print and web publications, recruitment, and alumni relations. It includes the Directors of Admission & Financial Aid, Advancement & Alumni Relations, Communications, and Marketing, as well as the Assistant to the President, and is chaired by the President.

- **Land & Energy Committee**

The Land & Energy Committee is a clearinghouse for information and decisions on projects, which affect land use and energy development on Sterling College property. The Committee serves as a forum for discussing facilities and land use planning, budgeting, and long-range issues.

- **Personnel Committee**

Composed of a broad spectrum of Sterling personnel, this committee is responsible for evaluating and proposing standards concerning personnel procedures, responsibilities, and administration. It is chaired by the Director of Finance. The employees will review policy recommendations and other issues concerning personnel and evaluation policies before being presented to the President for approval.

- **Risk Management Committee**

The purpose of the Risk Management Committee is to identify, monitor, and manage hazards and dangers in order to reduce the potential for incidents that could result in injury, illness, fatality, or damage. The committee is charged with developing and revising a written Risk Management Plan and an Emergency Action Plan; for assuring that incident reports, including near misses, are completed in a timely manner; for appropriate safety briefings and training; and for meeting on a monthly basis.