Section III: Leadership Interviews on Shared Faculty Governance

While a thorough review of the college bylaws and a survey of faculty perceptions of faculty governance in the colleges, as presented above, may offer important insight into shared faculty governance at CU Denver, these tools may not capture many important nuances in shared faculty governance and its practices. To gain a more insightful understanding of the state of faculty governance, the project team conducted interviews with administration and faculty governance groups in each of the colleges.

A. Process

Throughout late March and extending throughout April, the team conducted eleven meetings with deans, associate deans, and faculty leaders in a guided discussion about faculty shared governance at the college level. Discussion participants were given a draft copy of the bylaws report (Section II) and a summary of survey responses provided by the Office for Institutional Research and Effectiveness before the meeting. In total, approximately 50 individuals participated in these meetings. A complete list of meetings is provided in Appendix 5.

During the meetings, members of the team discussed results of the Survey on Faculty Shared Governance at CU Denver, received feedback on the bylaws evaluation, and were invited to raise topics on the state of shared faculty governance in their respective colleges. AVC-Faculty Affairs Turan Kayoaglu and report author Peter Anthamatten facilitated discussion in these meetings. Anthamatten was not able to attend four of the meetings due to schedule conflicts. Aubrey Thorburn, from the Office of Faculty Affairs, took extremely detailed notes from the meetings. AVC Kayoaglu then initially organized the meeting notes into coherent themes, which are reported here.

B. Interview Discussion Themes

Several themes on shared governance emerged throughout these interview discussions. A full list of themes and ideas collected from meeting notes is categorized and listed in Appendix 7. These ideas from the meetings are categorized here into major themes, ideas raised consistently through the meetings; and minor themes, topics or ideas which emerged in three or fewer meetings.

Major Theme 1: Heavy workloads limit the ability of faculty to engage in shared governance in their college.

University faculty and administrative leadership expressed concerns that heavy workloads from faculty impede faculty governance. Faculty members are often unwilling

to take on additional workloads, given the need to strike a balance between demands of various teaching, research, and other service responsibilities.

Major Theme 2: Shared governance structures vary across schools, colleges, and the library, and need to be periodically reviewed.
There is a need for governance structures to be reviewed and updated to ensure that the bylaws are consistent with Regent policy and that faculty shared governance structures are appropriate for the changing realities of academic life and work. There is also some confusion around the bylaws review and revision process. It is important to emphasize faculty autonomy over decisions in key areas, and faculty should lead the process to revise the bylaws.

Major Theme 3: Effective shared governance in CU Denver's colleges, schools, and libraries requires strong faculty governance structures at the campus level, as well as strong support from campus administrators.
Ensuring alignment with institutional policies, particularly those set by system-level governing bodies such as the CU Board of Regents, is recognized as crucial for effective shared governance within each unit. Policy decisions made higher up the CU System hierarchy directly affect governance at the college level. Discussants also raised the need for improved communication between campus and college faculty governance representatives and governing bodies. Finally, there are concerns about the role and influence of the upper administration in shared governance processes. Decisions, such as those made about graduate education or budget realignment, have implications for shared governance which are felt at the college level.

Additional Themes
Discussion yielded several additional themes:
1. **Transparency and communication:** Effective communication and transparency between faculty members and school leadership are essential components of shared governance.
2. **Budget and resource allocation:** Concerns have been raised regarding budget decisions and the necessity for faculty involvement in matters related to budgeting. There is a desire for greater transparency and faculty input in budgetary decisions.
3. **Autonomy in research:** Discussions have raised questions related to faculty input concerning research and creative activities. There is a need to balance shared governance principles with academic freedom.
4. **Continuous improvement:** There is a shared commitment to continuously improving shared governance practices through ongoing dialogue, solicitation of feedback, and periodic reviews of governance structures.
5. **Involvement of staff in faculty governance:** Several participants expressed a desire for more involvement of staff in decision-making processes related to shared governance.
6. **Closure of the Graduate School:** Discussants raised concerns about governance at the Graduate School and its recent disbandment, including concerns about top-down decision-making and the need for more faculty

involvement in developing policy concerning the administration of education and curriculum.

7. **Manipulation of shared governance:** Concern was expressed about ensuring that faculty representative bodies are not manipulated to serve specific interests, rather than those of the broader faculty community. One dean emphasized the importance of maintaining integrity and representing the broader faculty perspective.

Appendix 7: Faculty Shared Governance Interview Discussion Meetings

Group	Date	Members
Library Shared Governance Leaders (Faculty)	Thursday, March 7, 2024	Kodi Saylor
		Ryn Grotelueschen
		Bailey Wallace
		Kelsey Brett
		Deborah Bumbie-Chi
		Teresa McGinley
Business School (Dean and Associate Deans)	Thursday, March 28, 2024	Scott Dawson
		Jahangir Karimi
		Andrey Mikhailitchenko
CEDC (Dean)	Monday, April 1, 2024	Martin Dunn
UCDALI (ExCom)	Friday, April 5, 2024	Beth Pugliano and others (about 10)
CAM (Dean and Leadership)		Joann Brennan
		Nathan Thompson
		Mark Rabideau
		Karen Ludington
		Michelle Carpenter
		David Liban
SEHD (Dean and ADs)	Wednesday, April 10, 2024	Marvin Lynn
		Scott Bauer
		Dorothy Garrison-Wade
		Barbara Seidl
CAM Faculty (Bylaws Committee)	Thursday, April 11, 2024	Christopher Beeson
		Maria Buszek
		Erin Hackel
SPA (Dean and Leadership)	Friday, April 12, 2024	Paul Teske
		Chris Smith
		Annie Miller
CLAS (Dean and Leadership, including Faculty and Staff Leaders)	Friday, April 12, 2024	Pam Jansma
		Richard Allen
		Faye Caronan
		Lisa Keranen
		Julien Langou
		Margaret Woodhull
		Michelle Medal
CAP (Dean and Leadership)	Wednesday, April 17, 2024	Stephanie Santorico
		Ann Komara
		Lois Brink
		Michael Jenson
		Kat Vlahos
Library (Dean and Leadership)	Thursday, April 25, 2024	Cinthya Ippoliti
		Dawn Zoni
		Keith Teeter

Appendix 8: Faculty Shared Governance Interview Discussion Themes

Major Discussion Theme 1: Heavy workloads limit the ability of faculty to engage in shared governance in their college.

Faculty workload
- Faculty feel overburdened by their existing workloads, which impacts their ability to effectively engage in shared governance activities, such as attending meetings and contributing to decision-making processes.
- Faculty are reluctant to take on additional service responsibilities due to perceived overwork.
- There is a recognition of the challenges in finding a balance between departmental work and engagement in college-level governance.
- There is a recognition of a conflict between getting IRC faculty involved in shared governance and their non-existing or more limited-service requirements and incentives for service in their contracts.
- There are concerns about faculty retention due to factors such as retirement incentives, the workplace climate, and compensation, which negatively impacts shared governance structures and practices.
- It is difficult to realize effective governance due to a shortage of faculty members who possess sufficient institutional history and leadership skills.
- There is an impact from leadership turnover, which affects institutional stability and challenges associated with replacing faculty in leadership roles to maintain institutional continuity.
- Retaining qualified faculty members is essential for maintaining a strong faculty voice and ensuring effective governance. Efforts to address faculty retention issues may need to be integrated into broader discussions on shared governance and institutional stability.

Faculty engagement
- It is important to find the best practices to encourage faculty engagement in shared governance activities across different schools and departments. This is of particular concern in our post-COVID higher education environment in which remote work and online teaching have been decisive factors contributing to faculty disengagement.
- There is a need to address barriers to faculty engagement in shared governance initiatives.
- There is a perceived need for greater involvement of IRC faculty in shared governance to ensure diverse perspectives are represented.
- Early-career faculty are often advised to focus on research and external service activities, rather than participate in internal shared governance roles.
- There is low attendance at faculty meetings in some colleges, a potential indicator of a lack of engagement or interest in decision-making processes at the college level.

Faculty empowerment
- There is a desire to improve communication channels and clarify processes to ensure that faculty voices are heard and valued.
- Faculty-driven governance structures and key policy documents, such as bylaws, are important to ensure faculty voice in key decisions.
- Faculty members should participate in discussions about governance issues to ensure diverse perspectives are considered.
- There is a need for policy clarification regarding empowering faculty voices in research governance.
- There should be a focus on planning for future engagement efforts to ensure that schools and colleges genuinely reflect faculty desires. Suggestions include holding sessions at faculty meetings or administering surveys to gather input.
- There is a need to reinforce the idea that Deans have a primary responsibility to foster a culture of shared governance and to support faculty participation in it.

Faculty meeting frequency and structure
- Some discussion centered around the frequency and structure of faculty meetings, with concerns raised about the effectiveness of current meeting schedules.
- There is need in some colleges for a more structured approach to meetings and increased faculty participation, considering challenges in balancing departmental workloads with college-level engagement

Major Discussion Theme 2: College, school, and library bylaws should be periodically reviewed and updated.

Continuous improvement of bylaws
- Colleges, schools, and the library should periodically review shared governance policies. Activities could include examining existing bylaws, conducting faculty surveys, and gathering qualitative feedback to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their bylaws.
- There is a need for continuous improvement of governance structures and bylaws to adapt to changing needs and challenges within academic institutions.
- Bylaws have been created and revised in varying ways across the colleges. While in some cases such revisions have been led by the faculty, in other cases it may have been initiated by administrators and then voted on by faculty.
- There is confusion about bylaw revision and approval processes, as well as the roles of faculty, deans, and the provost.

Structural review and improvement
- Several interviewees mentioned the need for reviewing and revising governance structures, committees, and leadership roles to better represent faculty interests and comply with institutional policies. There is a shared commitment to continuously improving shared governance practices through ongoing dialogue, feedback solicitation, and periodic reviews of governance structures.
- All interviewees stressed the importance of having structures in place, such as committees, to involve faculty in key decision-making areas such as curriculum development, faculty hiring, and budgeting.
- Committee structures within schools and colleges are driven by departmental needs. There are questions regarding whether faculty elected to college-level bodies represent their departments or represent the college.

Alignment with institutional policies
- The alignment of bylaws revision with institutional policies, such as those set by the Board of Regents, has been identified as a key consideration in shared governance, emphasizing the need to review and revise bylaws accordingly.
- There is a need for policy clarification regarding faculty roles in governance, including research activities, which highlights the importance of clearly defined bylaws to provide guidance and direction.

Faculty-driven governance
- It is important to emphasize faculty autonomy over key decisions, which underscores the importance of clear and regularly updated bylaws that reflect faculty expectations and interests. Faculty should take the lead in efforts to bylaws revisions.
- Establishing faculty-driven shared governance bodies, such as councils within schools, is seen as important for facilitating independent discussion and advocacy for faculty needs. The Auraria Library's shared governance structure is worth consideration as a model for other CU Denver college-level structures.

Staffing challenges in small colleges
- Smaller schools face challenges in staffing Faculty Assembly and college-level shared governance bodies due to limited resources and personnel. This has been compounded further by complex committee structures in some schools in which there are concerns about authority, overlaps, and staffing between college-level shared governance bodies and committees in place. Overall, creativity may be needed to ensure proper structures are in place to carry out shared governance functions.

Major Discussion Theme 3: **Strengthening shared governance at school, college, and library levels requires strengthening shared governance at departmental and campus levels.**

Communication among faculty governance bodies
- Ensuring alignment with institutional policies, particularly those set by system-level governing bodies like the CU Board of Regents, is recognized as crucial for effective shared governance within each unit because policy decisions made higher up the CU System hierarchy directly affect governance at the college level.
- The need was expressed to coordinate FA activities at the campus level with those of other faculty governance bodies, such as those within schools, colleges, and libraries, to ensure alignment and effectiveness.

Department and college-level governance
- Discussions touched on differences between faculty perceptions and involvement at the department level, and those at the college level. While faculty may feel more comfortable and engaged at the department level, there are questions and concerns about shared governance practices at the college level, indicating a need for more organized and formalized structures.
- While in some colleges, departments have strong faculty engagement, shared governance structures, and codified bylaws, in others the quality of shared governance depends very much on department chairs' leadership.

Concerns about upper administration support of faculty shared governance
- There are concerns about the role and influence of the upper administration in shared governance processes. Decisions such as those made about graduate education or budget realignment have implications for shared governance practices.

Secondary Themes

1. **Transparency and communication:** Effective communication and transparency between faculty members and school leadership are essential components of shared governance. Discussants raised concerns about the perception that faculty influence may not always be reflected in final decisions. There is recognition of the need to enhance communication channels and clarify processes to ensure that faculty voices are both heard and valued. This entails keeping faculty informed about key decisions, policies, and initiatives, and providing opportunities for open dialogue and feedback.

2. **Budget and resource allocation**: Concerns have been raised regarding budget decisions and the necessity for faculty involvement in matters related to budgeting. There is a desire for greater transparency and faculty input in budgetary decisions. A few faculty participants mentioned that they see more

faculty involvement in the budget and resource decisions in the last two years compared to previous years.

3. **Autonomy in research:** Discussions have raised questions related to faculty input concerning research and creative activities and related to the need to balance shared governance principles with academic freedom.

4. **Integrating IRC Faculty in Share Governance**: Ensuring the empowerment and safety of IRC) is integral to shared governance. Understanding the diverse needs of academic units by examining variations across schools and colleges is crucial. It's essential to balance these localized needs with the imperative of including IRC faculty in decision-making processes to foster an inclusive and supportive academic community.

5. **Continuous improvement at every level:** There is a shared commitment to continuously improving shared governance practices through ongoing dialogue, solicitation of feedback, and periodic reviews of governance structures.

6. **Involvement of staff:** In several conversations, participants expressed a desire to involve staff in decision-making processes related to shared governance.

7. **Lingering questions on graduate school governance:** Issues concerning governance at the graduate school level were raised, including concerns about top-down decision-making and the need for faculty involvement in policy development.

8. **Concerns about manipulation shared governance processes:** Concern was expressed about ensuring that faculty representative bodies are not manipulated to serve specific interests rather than those of the broader faculty community. One dean emphasized the importance of maintaining integrity and representing the broader faculty perspective. Faculty representation in shared governance roles over personal agendas or feelings helps create an environment conducive to collaboration and mutual respect.

9. **Confusion between Faculty Governance and Shared Governance**: Explicitly defining the roles and relationships of "faculty governance" and "shared governance" is essential for clarity. This differentiation helps establish clear boundaries and responsibilities within the academic community.