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SHERIDAN   WHITE PAPER: GOVERNANCE

'Governing to Our Strengths' | The Governance Engagement Team

Acknowledgements:

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1. Introduction – An Overview

As an institution Sheridan has embarked upon an exciting journey, namely, to "become Sheridan University celebrated as a global leader in undergraduate professional education" (Board of Governors, 2012, p. 2). The primary purpose of the Governance Engagement Team was to envision, and make recommendations for, a governance structure that would fully support Sheridan University.[1]

Members of the team felt strongly that the task at-hand was not to simply replicate an existing university governance model but, rather, to explore how Sheridan's strengths and differentiators could best be incorporated in strong shared governance. The team also recognized that an institution's governance, how authority is distributed and decisions are made, is foundational to organizational excellence and sustainability.

1.1. Team Membership

The Governance Engagement Team was comprised of representatives from Sheridan's Board of Governors and Academic Council. Respected Board members Bob Pesant, served as Co-Chair, and Princess Alexander as an active team member. Mark Orlando and Janet Shuh participated as faculty representatives from Sheridan's Academic Council. Additional members included President Jeff Zabudsky, who served as Co-Chair, and Mary Preece, Provost, Vice President Academic and current Chair of Academic Council. Administrative support for the Governance Engagement Team was gratefully provided by Elizabeth Benson, Secretary to the Board of Governors.

1.2. Methodology – Inquiry Approach

The Governance Engagement Team began by conducting academic research and reviewing best-practices of postsecondary governance from selected Canadian universities. Three common governance models used in universities were identified and briefly described (i.e. unicameral; bicameral and tri-cameral). This structural research was enhanced by a summary of key principles that support effective and sound governance. Lastly, a brief overview of the legislative approaches used to establish universities and the governance criteria for university membership outlined by the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada (AUCC) were also explored.

Based on the research conducted, and the on-going consultations, the Governance Engagement Team developed three main recommendations to enable strong shared governance for Sheridan University. Each recommendation includes sub-recommendations and suggested timing. It is envisioned that these recommendations will be adopted by the *Journey* Steering Committee and further refined through the planned collaborative consultation across the broader Sheridan community.

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[1] See Appendix A for a complete copy of the Governance Engagement Team's Terms of Reference.

1.3. Consultation – Connecting Common Directions

Members of the Governance Engagement Team maintained open dialogue with their respective constituencies, namely Sheridan's Board of Governors and Academic Council, throughout the team's mandate. Regular updates were provided, and input solicited, that informed the research and resulting recommendations.

Our team also had the opportunity to meet with representatives from the Accreditation Engagement Team in late February of 2012. This dialogue was mutually beneficial and allowed for a discussion of the AUCC criteria, pertaining to governance, within the context of the broader criteria being considered under the Accreditation Team's mandate.

Lastly, the *Journey* event held in early June 2012 provided an opportunity for robust dialogue with members of other engagement teams and Sheridan's Academic Council. The world café approach enabled the Governance Engagement Team to solicit input on key governance related questions from over a hundred and fifty individuals.[2] A common theme emerged across the different teams, notably, the importance of preserving and building upon all of the qualities and differentiators that distinguish Sheridan from other institutions within Ontario's postsecondary system.

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[2] See Appendix B for a record of the feedback gathered by the Governance Engagement Team at the *Journey* Event.

2. Strategic Imperatives

As expressed previously, the task of re-imagining Sheridan's governance structure, in support of its' transition to a university, is best approached in a way that celebrates those qualities and differentiators that make Sheridan unique from other postsecondary educational institutions. Governance structures are foundational to the overall excellence and sustainability of any institution. The Governance Engagement Team feels strongly that forging our own path in governance is necessary to fully achieve Sheridan's long-term strategic vision and goals.

2.1. Differentiators – 'Governing to Our Strengths'

2.1.1. Connections to 'Fields of Practice'

Sheridan's strong history of connectivity and responsiveness to our 'fields of practice' is one such differentiator. In a recent review of four transitioning Western Canadian universities[3], it was noted that "… industry advisory councils still play a substantial role in developing academic programs" (The Education Advisory Board, 2011, p. 4). However, a scan of selected university acts in Ontario, B.C. and Alberta revealed that none of these acts referenced Professional Advisory Members, per say, under the Senate's or Board's designated membership.

As Sheridan transitions towards university status, the institution must address how 'fields of practice', including community and industry partners, can continue to contribute to and support the development of emerging curriculum and new educational paradigms. Indeed, the ensuing goal of becoming a "unique undergraduate *professional* university" (Sheridan Strategic Plan, 2012, p.1) suggests a prominent role for our industry and professional partners. Exactly how this differentiator will become formalized in Sheridan University's governance structure requires further consideration and consultation.

Sheridan's past experience and on-going commitment to expand our mandate for applied research, in partnership with industry and community partners, is another strategic direction that will strengthen our ties to 'fields of practice'. Engaging faculty and students in applied research, imbedded in curriculum and field practice[4], will benefit our external stakeholders/partners and also enhance academic and faculty excellence and the student experience at Sheridan.

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[3] The universities reviewed iIncluded, Grant MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, Vancouver Island University and Kwantlen Polytechnic.
[4] By field practice we refer to program requirements inclusive of internships (degrees), placements, and practicums (diplomas and certificates) and co-op.

2.1.2. Creativity & Innovation

Creativity and innovation have long been hallmarks of Sheridan's institutional direction and reputation. In its recent strategic plan the Sheridan Board of Governors (2012) re-articulated creativity and innovation as core institutional values (p. 2). Initiatives such as the Creative Campus, Academic Innovation Strategy and more recently the Sheridan *Journey* have highlighted the paramount importance of creativity and innovation to our institution as a whole including the Faculties, programs and service areas which comprise Sheridan.

A strong pedagogical commitment to inter-professional/inter-disciplinary approaches in academic curriculum and professional practice is another example of Sheridan's innovative and creative approach. Whether in the arts, community services, health or other educational domains, the entrenchment of inter-professional and inter-disciplinary approaches mimics the reality of the professional environments in which graduates will work. The stated Board of Governors outcome, namely to "Integrate applied research involving students from many disciplines collaborating to solve relevant workplace problems" (Board of Governors, 2012, p. 3) exemplifies the practical connection between applied research and inter-disciplinary education.

Building decision-making structures and processes that will enable Sheridan to govern in a creative and innovation manner will be critical. The on-going re-vitalization of Sheridan Academic Council (SAC), and its subcommittees, demonstrates how governance structures can foster innovative and creative decision-making.[5] Effective September 2012, sub-committees to the SAC will be established to explore and make recommendations to Sheridan Academic Council in areas such as Teaching & Learning, Applied Research, Academic Policy, Learning Partnerships & Academic Pathways, and Curriculum and Program Excellence. Establishing a governance structure that provides the appropriate forum and expertise to engage in important idea generation and recommendations will help further operationalize the goals of creativity and innovation at Sheridan.

2.1.3. Exceptional Student Experience

Sheridan's on-going commitment to student experience (Board Strategic Plan, 2012, p. 6) is another unique differentiator that can serve to enhance our governance structures. Firstly, we must strive to shift the culture of 'student engagement' in governance at Sheridan, by ensuring the appropriate representation and meaningful contribution of students to formal decision-making. Secondly, Sheridan's governance bodies, both academic and administrative, must ensure that decisions are always made in the 'best interest of the institution' in order to foster academic excellence and the best possible student experience.

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[5] Refer to Appendix C – Sheridan Academic Council Sub-Committee chart.

2.1.4. Responsiveness & Flexibility

Sheridan's ability to responsively adapt to changing trends in labour markets, government policy and the economy demonstrates our institution's inherent responsiveness and flexibility. Anticipating impactful trends and steering the institution in new and innovative directions is a strength that has differentiated Sheridan from other postsecondary institutions.

Current and anticipated shifts the economy and postsecondary educational sector, for example the emerging knowledge-based economy, globalization and university capacity constraints, poise Sheridan to continue to proactively address these challenges and opportunities. Sheridan's commitment to be responsive and flexible is showcased in the Board's Chair message supporting the new Strategic Plan "Sheridan is uniquely positioned to answer the call in Ontario and be part of the solution for our province's, indeed, our country's, challenging future" (Sheridan Board of Governors, 2012, p. 1).

Globalization has impacted all sectors, including that of postsecondary education. Sheridan sees an active role to play in terms becoming part of the solution to "global pressures on education". Our newly articulated vision is one which sees Sheridan as a "global leader" in education (ibid, 2012, p. 1).

3. Scope of Inquiry - Research

Governance, or decision-making, in postsecondary institutions can be achieved through a number of different models, structures and processes. While there are multiple definitions, for the purpose of this report, we define governance as "the process for distributing authority, power and influence for academic decisions among campus constituencies" (Albert, 1998, p.1).

This section provides an overview of university governance by summarizing: three different governance models; key principles of effective and sound governance; the legislative framework that enables postsecondary governance; and lastly the governance related criteria for proxy university accreditation by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)[6].

3.1. University Governance Models

Three different governance models (bicameral, unicameral, tri-cameral), typically used in universities, will be described and examples provided. It is worth noting, that some universities operate with idiosyncratic variations of a prescribed governance model. Such arrangements allow a particular institution to operationalize unique attributes or governance arrangements. For example, the Memorial University legislation assigns the Provincial Government an important role in selected decision-making processes, for example approving the President, which would not be typical of most Canadian universities' legislation or Charters.

Ultimately, the governance model chosen by Sheridan must optimize our distinctive characteristics, or 'differentiators', while entrenching the goals and objectives we espouse as an institution in relation to decision-making. There is no one-size fits all approach to designing and implementing governance structures.

3.1.1. Bicameral Governance

Bicameral governance separates decision-making between two distinct governance bodies, one academic (normally referred to as a senate) and the other administrative (board of directors or governors). Bicameral governance is undoubtedly the most common model of governance adopted by Canadian universities and is the minimum benchmark required for membership in the AUCC.

The key principle underlying bicameralism is the notion of 'shared governance' (Jones, 2011, p. 6). Governance is shared in that the responsibility for academic decisions is made by a senate composed of faculty, students, academic administrators and other

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[6] The AUCC sets out broad criteria for granting university membership. For the purpose of this report only those criteria related to governance and decision-making will be discussed.

relevant constituencies, while responsibility for administrative decisions is vested in an independent board composed of lay members with some representation from internal constituencies. For bicameralism to result in effective decision-making clear communication between the academic and administrative decision-making bodies and clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for each governance body are required.

3.1.2. Unicameral Governance

Unicameral governance is manifested in a single governing body which is responsible for both academic and administrative decisions. The key strength of unicameral governance is the inherent recognition that most decisions in universities have academic and administrative impacts. Therefore, it may be argued that decision-making is optimized by one single governing body.

In practice, unicameral governance may operate functionally as bi-cameral or tri-cameral depending on the sub-committee structure[7]. Unicameral governance provides a means to reduce the "disconnect" between academic and administrative decision-making. Examples of institutions with unicameral governance include: The University of Toronto; and Athabasca University.

3.1.3. Tri-Cameral Governance

Tri-cameral governance exists where the enabling legislation or Charter delegates decision-making authority to three distinct legislative bodies (Hogan, 2006, p. 3). For example, Queen's University has a board and a senate (like other bicameral universities), but it also has a University Council that selects the university chancellor and can bring matters to the attention of the board and senate.

3.2. Principles of Effective & Sound Governance[8]

The following summary is intended to identify some of the key principles, articulated in the academic literature and best practices, which enable effective and sound postsecondary governance. These principles are not to be read as recommendations but rather their spirit has been imbedded into the Governance Engagement Team's recommendations.

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[7] See the University of Toronto whose governance operates under a unicameral model with 1 key decision making body that is supported by three distinct sub-committees.
[8] By effective and sound governance we mean governance that works and results in transparent and competent decision-making.

3.2.1. Clearly Articulated Roles & Responsibilities

The need to clearly state roles and responsibilities pertaining to institutional decision-making is vital, particularly where governance is shared between two or more bodies. The enabling legislation that gives power to a given university should describe the overall governance structure and bodies. The legislation would then be supported by institutional by-laws that would detail the terms of reference and membership for all governing bodies, including sub-committees. Role clarification is critical to ensuring transparency in governance and ultimately the sound operation of the institution. When governance is shared between two or more bodies clear articulation of roles and responsibilities becomes even more important.

3.2.2. Fostering Mutual Respect & Trust

Mutual respect and trust are central principles that must guide institutional decision-making. This assertion was supported in a study of university governance models within the United Kingdom, the British Commonwealth and the United States. The author comments that," … governance must be based on trust and confidence between those who govern and those who are governed" (Trakman, 2008, p. 63). All members of governance bodies (whether senates, boards or others), and staff and students within the broader institution, must foster mutual respect and trust in their discussions, dialogue and decision-making. This should not stifle freedom of thought or expression, however, decorum, mutual respect and trust must be upheld at all times and in all decision-making forums.

3.2.3. Transparency

As noted in a recent study of governance at Concordia University, Côté et al (2011) stress that publically funded universities have special obligations related to transparency and openness to both internal and external constituencies. "University governance processes must, therefore, be transparent in that it should be clear what decisions have been made, by whom, on what basis and why" (p. 7). The authors of this study go on to further clarify that this does not mean all information is freely available and provide examples where this would not be permitted or in the best interest of the institution, for example personal student records or some strategic discussions.

3.2.4. Representative and Balanced Membership

The majority of members of university senates, or like bodies, responsible for making academic decisions are professors or teaching staff. In a study by Jones et al (2004), which reviewed senate composition, on average 44% of members of university senates were faculty. This figure is likely an underestimate of faculty representation since many individuals who are senate members because of their roles as academic administrators,

such as Chairs, also hold faculty appointments. All public universities in Canada include student members on their senates. In total, 18% of all senate members were students. Ex-officio positions for key senior administrators were also common (Jones et al, 2004, p. 47).

From the perspective of boards, most members are largely meant to be independent or at arms-length from the institution. Some common exceptions would be for the President, Chancellor and limited membership of students or employees (faculty, administrative) from the institution.

3.2.5. Balancing Continuity with Renewal

Governance bodies are ideally meant to be dynamic in order to generate creative and innovative decisions for the institution. The balance then becomes one of ensuring renewal and creativity through the recruitment and educational development of new members while not compromising the historical knowledge and continuity of the governing body.

Specified terms of appointment, in regards to how long a member may sit on a given governance body, whether a senate or board, are common. Term limits typically range from one year (for students) to two to seven years for other categories of membership, and may often be renewable for up to two terms. A best practice for term appointments is to stagger appointments to ensure that the bulk of term expirations for members do not happen in the same year, thus ensuring the governance body's continuity of knowledge, experience and process.

3.2.6. Enhanced Communications

To function properly a system of shared governance requires open and regular communications between all governance bodies and to members of the broader institution. Regular and meaningful communication between governance bodies fosters transparency in decision-making and has the potential to enhance strategic planning. Full communication can also help ensure that decisions made reflect the common values and goals of the institution. As articulated in the 1966 Duff & Berdahl Report on University Governance, in order to achieve effective decision-making within a bicameral model " … there should be more interaction between senates and boards, and the entire governance process should become more open and transparent" (Jones et al, 2002, p. 30).

3.2.7. Managing Conflicts of Interest

All members of governance bodies (whether senate, boards etc.) bring with them inherent conflicts of interest arising from their role and past experiences within, and outside of, the institution (Côté et al, 2011, p. 8). Members may hold multiple simultaneous roles as faculty, administrator, union representative, and/or alumni. Ultimately, decisions in senates and boards must be made through the lens of the "best interests of the institution" versus the best interests of a specific stakeholder of constituency group. Such a guiding principle will strengthen governance and the quality of ensuing decisions.

Establishing a code of ethics policy and procedure for senate and board members is essential. Educating members' on their roles and responsibilities in governance and guiding the appropriate disclosure of conflicts of interests are vital to good governance. In order to ensure awareness of, and consent to, a board or senate code of ethics, orientation sessions of members should review such policies and possibly consider a signature of the member acknowledging their awareness, understanding and commitment to act appropriately under the code of ethics policy.

There must also be a documented procedure in place that addresses how conflicts of interest will be dealt with once declared. It would be impossible to eliminate all conflicts of interest therefore the challenge becomes one of managing them in an open and transparent manner (ibid, p. 8).

3.2.8. Clear Separation of Collective Bargaining

Decision-making in shared governance must be carried out independent from the collective bargaining process. If this separation is not maintained, Côté et al (2012) note, that "… the adversarial culture associated with collective bargaining will permeate the relationship between the university community and its governing structure, especially at the level of the senate" (p.9). Collective bargaining plays an important role in all postsecondary institutions, however, specific structures and processes must be established between faculty associations/unions and the institution's management to address matters related to labour relations and conditions of employment.

3.2.9. Size of Governance Bodies

The actual size of a senate or board is also noted in the literature as a key factor supporting effective governance and decision-making. Senates range in size greatly with an average of 61 voting members, a low of 10, and a high of 190 members (Jones et al, 2004, p. 46). From a board perspective while there is no ideal size, per say, there is a general agreement that onerously large boards can impede effective decision-making (Côté et al, 2012, p. 12).

3.3. Legislative Landscape

In Canada, the responsibility for education falls under provincial jurisdiction. This responsibility is clearly articulated in Canada's *Constitution Act* that states "In and for each province, the legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Education."[9] As a consequence of the delegated provincial authority, notable regional differences in the educational systems and legislative frameworks across Canada's ten provinces and three territories have emerged (Dennison, 2006, p. 107).

In Ontario, the ability to grant degrees is regulated by the *Postsecondary Education Choice and Excellence Act*, 2000. Only government can provide an institution with the authority to grant degrees and call itself a university. Within the province, there has been a historical separation between the evolution of universities and colleges. Universities have operated more independently, or at arms-length, from government and are all enabled through institution-specific legislation as private not-for-profit corporations. In contrast, colleges are more closely regulated by government and are enabled under a collective piece of legislation, namely the *Ontario Colleges Act*.

Other provinces, such as Alberta and British Columbia have, created collective legislation to regulate some or all universities within their jurisdictions. Universities in British Columbia operate under the authority of the *Universities Act*, while all postsecondary institutions in Alberta operate under the authority of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.

3.4. Regulatory Considerations – AUCC

Canada's provincial governments have generally controlled the number of institutions that have the legal ability to grant degrees and call themselves universities, but there is no national body that accredits institutions. The Association of Canadian Universities and Colleges (AUCC) assesses applications from new institutions and grants membership which serves as a "proxy" accreditation for universities. Dennison (2006) states:

> "This organization [AUCC] neither assumed nor had been awarded the role of accrediting agency, but in a vacuum created by having no formal body in Canada assigned to the task of awarding institutional accreditation (program accreditation was another matter), quasi accreditation rested upon AUCC membership" (p. 115).

Membership in the AUCC is viewed as important because it will positively impact the recognition of Sheridan degree credentials by other universities and thus provide opportunities for graduates to pursue graduate level studies at other institutions.

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[9] As per section 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

As it pertains to governance, the following AUCC criteria[10] would be relevant to secure institutional membership.

> "It has governance and an administrative structure appropriate to a university, including:
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> - Authority vested in academic staff for decisions affecting academic programs including admissions, content, graduation requirements/standards, and related policies and procedures through membership on an elected academic senate or other appropriate elected body representative of academic staff;
> - An independent board of governors, or appropriate equivalent, that:
>   - is committed to public accountability and functions in an open and transparent manner;
>   - has control over the institution's finances, administration and appointments;
>   - includes appropriate representation from the institution's external stakeholders (including the general public), from academic staff, from students and from alumni;
>   - and uses the institution's resources to advance its mission and goals.
>
> - A senior administration normally including a president and vice-presidents and/or other senior officers appropriate to the size of the institution and the range of its activities." (AUCC Criteria for University Membership).

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[10]http://www.aucc.ca/about-us/member-universities/membership-eligibility/criteria-to-become-a-member/

4. Recommendations: Governance

The following recommendations are being proposed to formalize an effective shared governance structure that will enable the envisioned goal of becoming "Sheridan University, celebrated as a global leader in undergraduate professional education" (Sheridan Strategic Plan, 2012).

Three primary recommendations are proposed, each with a number of sub-recommendations that are interim steps or processes required to achieve the cumulative recommendation. The team's recommendations address the following key areas of governance: a desired governance model; legislative approach; and "university" membership in the AUCC.

The projected timing[11] for the recommendations to be implemented is also included, broken down into three phases: **Phase 1** – 1-2 year ⇨**Phase 2** – 2-4 years ⇨ and **Phase 3** – 5-8 years. Following each of the recommendations the rationale and/or expected outcomes are described. The team recognizes that additional consultation and dialogue will be required by the *Journey* Executive Steering Committee and broader Sheridan community to finalize and implement these recommendations.

1. ***Implement and formalize a robust bicameral governance model that would share decision making authority between a senate-like body (responsible for academic decisions) and a board (responsible for administrative decisions). Consider how Sheridan's differentiators can best be reflected in this new shared governance structure.*** [Timing: Phases 1 & 2]

Sub-Recommendations (Governance Model)

1.1. Move towards a shared governance framework by reviewing key areas of decision-making and determine whether they are "academic" in nature (authority of the SAC/Senate) or "administrative" in nature (authority of the Board). Begin to formalize this division of roles and responsibilities in provisional by-laws between the two governance bodies. [Phase 1 & 2]

1.2. As an institution, begin to formally identify the processes and forums for exploring and making employment related decisions. This mapping will enable a more clear separation of employment related decisions from academic, strategic and resource related decisions carried out through the formal governance structure. Identify the roles and responsibilities of management, human resources, union representation and individual staff and faculty.

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[11] The stated timing recognizes that uncontrolled factors may either delay or expedite the recommendations and sub-recommendations.

1.3.   Explore the current system and guidelines for 'Program Advisory Committees' with the view of identifying strategies to better leverage their input with the view of furthering academic excellence, applied research and other strategic imperatives at Sheridan. Consider the constraints as per the *Ontario Colleges Act* and how our external partners might contribute to the emerging system of shared governance at Sheridan.

1.4.   Promote transparency and openness of all decisions made to internal/ external constituencies. Consider making minutes of all governance bodies, with the exception of in-camera sessions, readily available to broader Sheridan community. Create clear criteria for guiding decisions on when to conduct business "in-camera". [Phase 1]

1.5.   Re-name the Sheridan Academic Council (SAC) the 'Sheridan Senate', as supported in principle through the *Journey* event consultation. Continue with the re-vitalization efforts to establish a robust and effective sub-committee structure which addresses the core academic mandate and enables the incorporation of our differentiators (e.g. innovation and creativity, exceptional student experience, 'fields of practice', flexibility). [Phase 1]

1.6.   Establish majority faculty membership in the new Sheridan Senate, to enable decisions that will enhance academic excellence and creativity and innovation. Formalize the democratic election process for faculty and non-faculty members with the exception of ex-officio positions held by virtue of administrative positions. [Phase 1]

1.7.   Continue to foster a strong Board of Governors with predominant external membership including appropriate internal representatives. [Phase 1]

1.8.   Develop a 'Code of Ethics' Policy and Procedure for the SAC/Senate to provide direction on when, and how, conflicts of interest will be addressed. Review the Board's current ethics policy and procedure. [Phase 1]

1.9.   Consider cross-representation of members (minimum 2 plus Chair) on both the SAC/Senate and Board to enhanced communications and enable more integrated academic and administrative decision-making. [Phase 1]

1.10.   Enhance and increase meaningful student representation and engagement on both governing bodies (SAC/Senate and Board) supported by training, orientation, formalized co-curricular record and compensation[12]. [Phase 1]

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[12] While the role of students in postsecondary governance has been identified as an under studied area, one study by Lizzio and Wilson (2009) noted that "Role ambiguity was the greatest challenge reported by student representatives, and the overall effectiveness of the role was perceived to be reliant on the willingness and ability of academic

Rationale & Outcomes

- Uses governance language, senate, paralleled to the university system.

- Meets, or exceeds, AUCC criteria pertaining to governance of a shared decision-making structure. A robust faculty driven senate-like body will also ensure that academic decisions and priorities are driven by faculty.

- Clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for decision-making.

- Enhanced communications between the two governance bodies.

- Promote transparency of decision-making to both internal and external stakeholders of Sheridan.

- Shared governance has the ability to showcase Sheridan's differentiators (e.g. connectedness to 'fields of practice', exceptional student experience, innovation and creativity, and flexibility).

- Reinforces the Sheridan commitment of optimizing the 'student experience' by providing more opportunities for students to contribute in a meaningful way to governance and decision-making at Sheridan.

2. ***Work with the Provincial Government to draft and pass an institution-specific piece of legislation formally incorporating 'Sheridan University'.*** [Timing: Phases 1 & 2 & 3]

Sub-Recommendations (Legislative Approach)

2.1 Continue to maintain open dialogue between Sheridan's President and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) regarding the Sheridan *Journey.* [Phase 1]

2.2. Imbed in the Sheridan-specific legislation the proposed bicameral governance structure, strategic institutional goals and objectives, reference to authority of local by-laws etc. [Phases 2 & 3]

2.3. Develop by-laws to support the current governance structure and eventually the incorporating legislation and/or Charter of Sheridan University. [Phases 2 & 3]

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managers and staff to engage in constructive dialogue with students. It is argued that universities need to adopt a more proactive approach to the development and support of student leaders and representatives" (pg. 69).

Rationale & Outcomes

- Institution-specific legislation allows greater potential to entrench Sheridan's differentiators and strategic vision. Whereas, an omnibus undergraduate teaching university act would be more generic and possibly limit Sheridan from operationalizing a unique form of governance that highlights our uniqueness as an institution.

- Stand-alone legislation is the common approach currently used for incorporating Ontario universities.

- Better option for the branding of "Sheridan".

3. Once institutional readiness is assessed, seek university membership with the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada. [Timing: Phases 2 & 3]

Sub-Recommendations (AUCC Membership)

3.1.   AUCC university membership is dependent on much more than simply having the appropriate bi-cameral governance structure in place.[13] Prior to seeking AUCC institutional university membership as an institution Sheridan will need to self-evaluate, and possibly work with an external consultant, to assess our institution's readiness vis-à-vis AUCC criteria.

3.2.   Continue to drive renewal of Sheridan's academic and institutional policies and procedures that are required to support AUCC membership (i.e. Academic Freedom, Research and Ethics etc.).

3.3.   Support the recommendations and work of the other *Journey* Engagement Teams (e.g. Accreditation, Quality, University Status, Pathways etc.) in order to move towards aligning with the AUCC criteria for university status.

Rationale & Outcomes

- Eventually achieve full recognition as an instiutional member "university" from AUCC.

- Ensure access to graduate studies as an option for Sheridan degree graduates.

- Further brand Sheridan as a "university".

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[13] See the AUCC web-site for a complete copy of the criteria used for assessing, granting, university status.
http://www.aucc.ca/about-us/member-universities/membership-eligibility/criteria-to-become-a-member/

5. Conclusions

Sound and effective governance is essential to the operation and sustainability of any organization. As Sheridan moves closer to our goal of university status governance structures and processes will need to adapt to support this transition.

The report's literature and best-practice review revealed that there is no one ideal model for structuring postsecondary governance. In Sheridan's *Journey* there will be many opportunities to build new, and refine existing[14], governance structures and processes that will allow us to govern to our many strengths and differentiators.

Another important outcome of this report is a recognition that we need to begin to move towards a formal system of "shared governance". Shared governance recognizes that all members of Sheridan, both internal and external, have important roles and responsibilities to fulfill. The proposed delineation of authorities for academic versus operational decisions is a departure from current practice[15], however, will be required to realize our long-term goal of university status.

The recommendations herein are meant to provide a blueprint for change in relation to how governance is structured at Sheridan. As such, the work of the Governance Engagement Team will continue over the next academic year and provide guidance and advice on matters relating to governance. Our members will work collaboratively with the *Journey* Executive Steering Committee and other engagement teams to support the integrated implementation of recommendations.

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[14] For example the on-going revitalization of Sheridan Academic Council will lay the foundation for an eventual Senate authorized to make key academic decisions.

[15] The Board of Governors retains the final authority to approve most significant decisions at Sheridan.

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Appendix 'A' - GOVERNANCE ENGAGEMENT TEAM TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. **Purpose**

   The Governance Engagement Team will include representatives from Sheridan's Board of Governors and Academic Council to research university governance structures, best practices, strengths and challenges associated with the various models and propose to the Vision Steering Committee the appropriate governance structure for the new Sheridan University.

2. **Committee Mandate**

   Governance is a platform for organizational excellence of Sheridan's Vision to be a top-ranked undergraduate teaching university. Recognizing that alignment between a proposed governance structure and our key differentiators that support Sheridan's values and Vision, the Governance Engagement Team is committed to the:
   - Articulation of fundamental principles required for sound governance;
   - Review of current governance models with their strengths and opportunities;
   - Recommendation of a governance model for Sheridan's future;
   - Exploration of the legislative/regulatory requirements which may restrict the proposed governance structure;
   - Delineation of the key roles and responsibilities of the proposed governance bodies;
   - Design of processes and representation principles that will optimize communication and information sharing between all governance bodies;
   - Identification of Sheridan's differentiators (what makes us different and unique) and ensure that these differentiators are reflected in the proposed governance structure

3. **Communications**

   a) The Board representatives will provide the Board with regular briefings regarding the Governance Engagement Team's research, observations and recommendations;
   b) Similarly, the Academic Council representatives will regularly brief the Academic Council and solicit feedback for consideration by the Governance Engagement Team.

4.   **Team Composition**

Co-Chairs: Jeff Zabudsky
                                          Bob Pesant
Board representatives: Princess Alexander
Academic Council representatives: Mary Preece
                                          Mark Orlando
                                          Janet Shuh
Associate Dean/Legal perspective: Michael Rubinoff
Governance Consultant: Glen Jones
Board Secretary: Elizabeth Benson

5.   **Committee Meetings**

The Governance Engagement Team will meet:

President's Boardroom
4 to 6 p.m.
Trafalgar Campus

January 26, 2012
February 23, 2012
March 29, 2012
April 26, 2012
May 24, 2012
June 21, 2012

6.   **Meeting Agendas**

The meeting Agendas will be developed by the Co-Chairs of the Team.

Appendix 'B' – *Journey* Event Record of Governance Consultation

Some of the key themes identified in this consultation included:

- The need to give full decision-making power, over academic matters, to the Sheridan Academic Council or eventual Senate.
- Govern to Our Strengths - the need to articulate what qualities/aspects make Sheridan unique, what are our differentiators? Consider how best to leverage these differentiators as we build a formal system of shared governance for Sheridan University. Feedback on what are our differentiators – Interdisciplinary, Connections to Fields of Practice/Industry, Diversity, Student Success or Experience, Creativity, Flexibility.
- Authenticity in Governance – participants felt strongly that where bodies (i.e. Boards or Senates) are vested the authority to make decisions those decisions should be binding and implemented.
- Membership on governance bodies should make sense, i.e. senate/SAC being majority faculty and Board majority external.
- Need to better communicate decisions and outcomes of Governance Bodies to wider Sheridan Community. General support for cross appointed members on multiple governance bodies.
- Need to foster strategic decisions around programs and curriculum in informal bodies for optimal creativity and innovation.
- Need for better orientation of members on the SAC and Board. Members should know their roles and responsibilities and be properly trained.
- Need to better engage students in governance.
- Need to strive towards becoming a "leaderful" organization.
- A vote was taken, and 68 participants favoured the terminology 'Senate' while 25 preferred the current Sheridan Academic Council and 9 others offered variations to the two options.

Appendix C – Sheridan Academic Council Sub-Committee – see over