



INSTITUTIONAL POLICY B1095: Shared Governance

Category: Mission and Governance
Subject: Shared Governance and Transparency
Effective Date: November 24, 2025
Updated: February 24, 2026

1. Authority:

2. Introduction:

2.1 The Niamez College of Osteopathic Medicine is charged with developing principles of shared governance endorsed by the Faculty, Staff, Administration, and the student body to be approved by the Board of Governors and Trustees, that reflect the mission, vision, and values of NCOM. This document presents shared governance and related communications principles that the Board(s), the Administration, faculty, staff, and student body commit to along with recommended mechanisms to create a strong culture of shared governance at NCOM. This document references, but does not alter or amend, NCOM's current governing documents.

2.2 Shared governance at NCOM will connote one fundamental principle: providing Faculty, staff, and students with a meaningful role in key decision-making processes as reflected in the governing documents, often through elected representation.

2.3 NCOM governing documents make clear that there are structures already in place that allow for coordinated participation in shared governance by the Board(s), Administration, faculty, staff, and students, however, the purpose of this document is to recommend the adoption of these principles and additional mechanisms to strengthen the participation and coordination among each group encouraging robust and multi-directional communication.

3. Policy:

3.1 NCOM and the NCOMMUNITY are committed to the principles of shared governance, as outlined in NCOM's governing documents and this document to achieve excellence in the academic mission.

3.2 Board(s) Delegation of Authority to the Administration:

3.2.1 The Board(s) are vested with the ultimate legal and fiduciary responsibility for the affairs of NCOM and in the exercise of that authority understand that it has delegated to the Administration the responsibility to manage the day-to-day affairs of the institution.

3.2.2 NCOM recognizes that governance is not management and that the Administration must have the ability to discharge its management responsibilities, with appropriate oversight from the Board(s) and participation of the faculty, staff, and students as described in the governing documents, understanding that mechanisms will be in place to hold the Administration accountable for its actions.

3.3 Recognition of the Faculty Senate, Staff Council and Student Government

The Board of Governors and the Administration acknowledge that the institution has representative bodies - the Faculty Senate, the Staff Council, and the Student Government - that serve as the principal mechanisms through which the NCOMMUNITY participates in shared governance. The role of these bodies and their committees to advise the Dean/CAO and President/CEO on matters affecting the mission and educational policies of NCOM, and to ensure their participation in Institutional-level shared governance, as set forth in this document.

3.4 The Administration as the Primary Conduit of Communication Between the Board(s) and Faculty, Staff, and Students:

3.4.1 Shared governance has its greatest meaning not in the direct relationship of the Faculty, Staff, or Students to the Board(s), but in their relationships with the Administration.

3.4.2 NCOM is committed to maintaining a relationship of collaboration, trust, and mutual respect between these bodies and the Administration, understanding that there must also be a relationship of trust and mutual respect between these bodies and the Board(s), as well as between the administration and the Board(s).

3.5 Education and Understanding:

NCOM is committed to promoting ways to increase the understanding by the Faculty, Staff, and Students of the role and responsibilities of the Board(s), and the understanding by the Board(s) of the role and responsibilities of the Faculty, Staff, and Student elected bodies. This may be accomplished through education and training of the Board(s), Administration, the Faculty, Staff, and Students at initial orientation and at other appropriate times, and opportunities for informal gatherings between faculty, staff, and student body members and Board(s) members.

3.6 Effective Communication:

3.6.1 NCOM is committed to transparency in institutional decision-making and managing the institution, and encourages an environment that allows for free exchange of ideas and candid but professional discourse for everyone on campus and those serving on institutional governance bodies and committees.

3.6.2 There may be legal or business reasons why certain information may not be shared, for example, on personal matters or competitively sensitive issues.

3.7 Flexibility:

There may be occasions where decisions directly affecting the academic enterprise of the institution need to be made more quickly and in a way that may not allow for an extended

consultative process. NCOM recognizes this need for flexibility and agility but are committed to seeking input appropriate under the circumstances.

3.8 Mechanisms to Instill Shared Governance:

3.8.1. The Board of Governors will meet with members of the three elected bodies at least once per year to discuss institution wide issues of interest. The President/CEO and Dean/CAO shall work collaboratively with members of these elected bodies to provide a structured agenda for these meetings.

3.8.2. The Board(s) shall evaluate the President/CEO annually consisting of a 360-degree review of the President/CEO that shall include an evaluation of the President/CEO's commitment and adherence to shared governance. Input from all stakeholders (including faculty, staff, and students) will be integral part of this 360-degree review process.

3.8.3. The President/CEO shall evaluate the Dean/CAO annually consisting of a 360-degree review of the Dean/CAO that shall include an evaluation of the Dean/CAO's commitment and adherence to shared governance. Input from all stakeholders (including faculty, staff, and students) will be integral part of this 360-degree review process.

4. The NCOMMUNITY shall work collaboratively to conduct a periodic campus climate and shared governance survey, to be overseen by the Administration and reported to the board(s). The review will occur no less than concomitant with the NCOM Strategic planning but may occur more often if necessary.

5. Orientation:

Board(s) members, faculty, staff, students, and administration shall be provided with appropriate orientation and onboarding experiences relating to shared governance and transparency. This should involve all parties and specifically address the principles and aspirations for shared governance, identification of the key roles and responsibilities of the faculty, staff, student elected bodies, administration, and the board(s), the existing structures and mechanisms for governance and management, the key governing documents, and mission for NCOM.

6. Challenges in higher education:

There are well known challenges affecting osteopathic medical education: access, affordability, funding, enrollment challenges (changing population, quality, possible international students), attracting and retaining high-quality faculty/staff/students, corporatization of universities/healthcare, faculty/staff/student exhaustion and moral injury, clinical training and GME access, research, maintaining and building trust, value proposition, and delivering academic excellence, budget and high costs, and size of administration.

6.1 NCOM commits that the President/CEO, Dean/CAO, and the Faculty, Staff, and Student elected bodies (or Committees thereof) work collaboratively with administration, and the board(s) to identify and address critical challenges and opportunities facing NCOM. The Faculty/Staff/Student leadership, Administration, and Board(s) will operate

with a common awareness of the challenges and constraints facing the institution and its key decision-makers.

6.2 It is important for all parties to continue to enhance NCOM's reputation for excellence and scholarship. Strengthening the image and elevating the reputation of the institution as a center of excellence in shared governance, transparency, clinical care, research, and scholarship are of vital importance to successfully engage and attract students, alumni, staff, faculty, clinicians, and other stakeholders. This understanding shall not be construed to impair or otherwise affect the academic freedom of faculty members as per the academic freedom policy of NCOM.

Signed by:

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Board of Governors