

AAUP GA conference survey on shared governance

Jon Colton and Matthew Boedy

The Georgia AAUP conference sent a survey on shared governance to faculty members at Dalton State College and Georgia Southern University. Since neither institution has an AAUP chapter, the purpose of the survey was to collect information about faculty governance from non-AAUP USG institutions. Dalton State and Georgia Southern were selected because DSC represents a small college (about 5000 students) and GSU represents a large university (about 26,100 students). Email addresses for the faculty members surveyed were obtained from the conference's email list of USG faculty.

The survey questions were derived from a 2021 AAUP faculty governance survey. Faculty members were requested to assess the level of authority for decision making noting a spectrum between faculty dominance or primacy, joint authority, and administrative primacy or dominance. The 2021 AAUP survey defined dominance as making decisions "essentially unilaterally. The other group is informed of the decision or consulted in a pro forma fashion but generally has no influence on the outcome." There is "meaningful" participation in a final decision with primacy. The survey asked faculty to assess the situation of shared governance concerning several topics such as:

- Searches for tenure-track faculty members
- Evaluation of tenure-track faculty for reappointment prior to tenure decision (e.g., critical review in third year, not annual evaluations)
- Setting standards for promotions of tenured and tenure-track faculty members.
- Individual promotion decisions for tenured and tenure-track faculty members
- Setting standards for awarding of tenure
- Individual tenure decisions
- Assessing a faculty member during post-tenure review
- Terminating a faculty member for failing to improve after the post-tenure review process
- Searches for full-time non-tenure track faculty members (such as lecturers, instructors, research faculty, or academic professionals)
- Evaluation of full-time non-tenure track faculty members (such as lecturers, instructors, research faculty, or academic professionals)
- Setting standards for promotion of full-time non-tenure track faculty members (such as lecturers, instructors, research faculty, or academic professionals)
- Individual promotion decisions for full-time non-tenure track faculty members (such as lecturers, instructors, research faculty, or academic professionals)
- Faculty salary policies
- Program-level curricular decisions, including approval of individual courses and major/minor requirements
- Establishment of new academic programs
- Institutional curricular decisions (general education/distribution requirements, etc.)
- Undergraduate admission decisions

Forty responses were received. Six from Dalton State, 31 from Georgia Southern, and three that had no institution identified. Due to the small number of responses from Dalton College, it

was not possible to determine if there were significant differences between it and Georgia Southern.

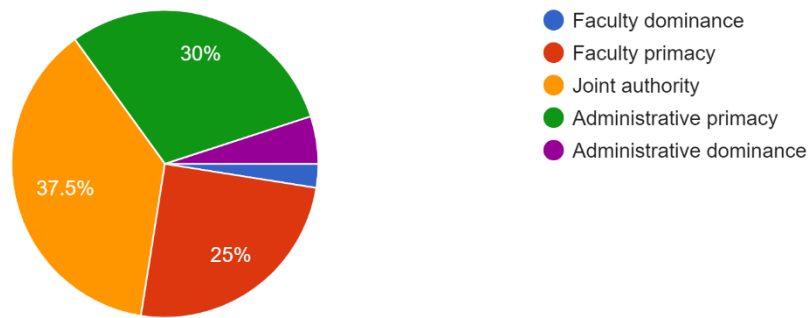
For many of the questions, the results were as expected with the perception that the faculty and the administration sharing governance equally. Overall, the level of shared governance at these two institutions is in a reasonable state. But in some important areas, such as PTR and curricular matters, there needs to be more.

We want to comment on a few of the surprising results.

Question 7 asked about post-tenure review (PTR) and the results were again split between faculty and administrative decision making. This result was disappointing as PTR is supposed to be a faculty driven process. Question 16 concerned program level curricular decisions. Again, there was an even split between faculty and administrative control. This was also disappointing as the academic faculty should have primary control over academic curricula. The results for Question 17 - establishment of new academic programs - were very disappointing because one would expect that the faculty would have the majority of control over the creation of academic programs.

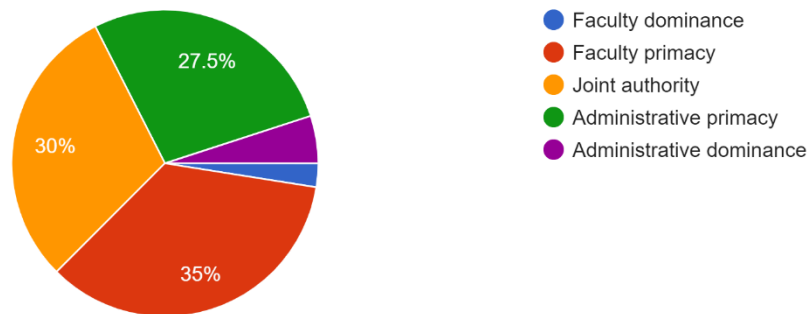
6. Individual tenure decisions

40 responses



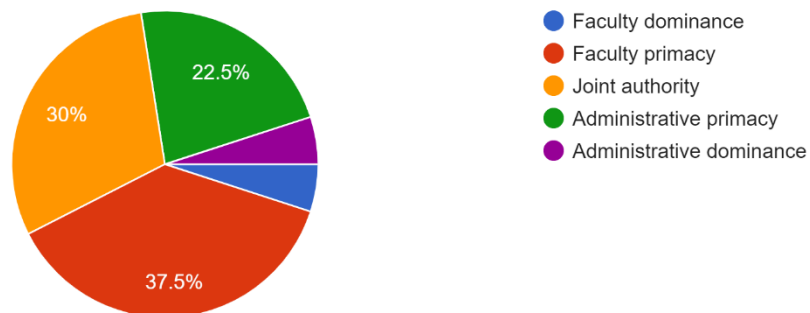
7. Assessing a faculty member during post-tenure review.

40 responses



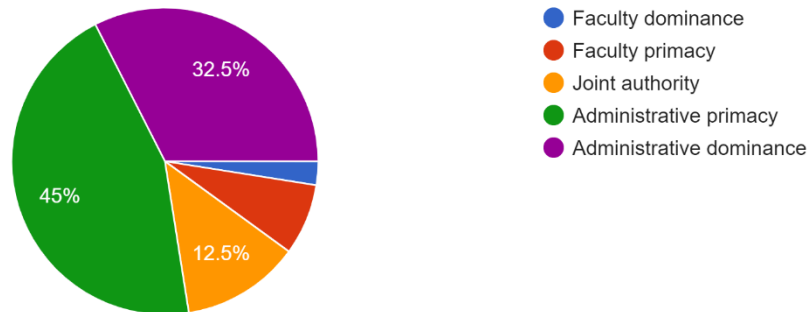
16. Program-level curricular decisions, including approval of individual courses and major/minor requirements.

40 responses



17. Establishment of new academic programs.

40 responses



18. Institutional curricular decisions (general education/distribution requirements, etc.).

39 responses

