I – 6.00 POLICY ON SHARED GOVERNANCE IN THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND

(Approved by the Board of Regents October 4, 1996; Amended on August 25, 2000)

I. PURPOSE

The University System of Maryland (USM) consists of 13 institutions with distinct but complementary missions. The Board of Regents recognizes the distinct and complementary roles that the Regents, the Chancellor, the Presidents, other administrators, the faculty, the staff, and students have in governing the USM institutions.

Moreover, the Board also recognizes that as higher education changes and evolves, implementation of the fundamental principles of shared governance set forth below must also continue to evolve.

This policy affirms the Board’s commitment to these fundamental principles, which shall guide the development of institution-specific shared governance practices consistent with this policy.

II. PRINCIPLES

A. Final authority and responsibility for the welfare of the USM and its institutions rests with the Board of Regents. The Board may delegate to the Chancellor and the Presidents portions of that authority for the purpose of assuring the effective management of the System and its institutions.

B. Shared governance procedures and principles apply at all levels within the USM.

C. Shared governance requires informed participation and collaboration by faculty, students, staff, and administrators.
D. Faculty, staff, and students shall have opportunities to participate, appropriate to their special knowledge and expertise, in decisions that relate to:

1. Mission and budget priorities for the University System of Maryland and its constituent institutions;

2. Curriculum, course content, and instruction;

3. Research;

4. Appointment, promotion, and tenure of all faculty members and the development of policies that affect faculty welfare generally;

5. Development of human resources policies and procedures for exempt and non-exempt staff;

6. Selection and appointment of administrators;

7. Issues that affect the ability of students to complete their education; and

8. Other issues that arise from time to time that affect the overall welfare of the USM and/or its institutions.

E. While some members of shared governance bodies may be appointed, the substantial majority should be elected by their constituencies. Such bodies should elect their own presiding officers.

III. PRACTICE

A. Each USM institution shall have in place written procedures and formal structures that provide for appropriate collaboration and communication between and among administration, faculty, staff, and students. The structures and procedures shall be developed cooperatively, disseminated widely prior to adoption, and reviewed periodically according to procedures and timelines established in the documents governing institutional
B. Each constituent institution within the USM shall have either a single shared governance body for the institution as a whole, or separate bodies for faculty, staff, and students. At least 75% of the voting members shall be elected by their constituencies. This percentage shall not apply to paragraph G. below. These bodies shall have written bylaws and shall meet regularly.

C. Each institution shall define the subject matter appropriate for faculty, staff, and/or student participation in the shared governance process.

The definitions shall recognize:

1. The responsibility of administrators for forming and articulating a vision for the institution, for providing strategic leadership, and for managing its human resources, finances, and operations;

2. The central role of the faculty in the institution's teaching, research, and outreach programs, including the assessment of the quality of these activities through peer review;

3. The essential support provided by staff in facilitating the institution's operations and the legitimate interest of the staff in participating in the development of policies and procedures that affect them and the welfare of their institutions;

4. That students are the institution’s main academic educational focus and that they have a legitimate interest in matters affecting their ability to complete their education, including but not limited to costs, grading, and housing; and

5. That there is a role for each group in the search for and selection of key institutional administrators.

D. Institutional structures and procedures for shared governance shall address the role of non-tenured and non-
tenure track, part-time, adjunct, and other faculty ranks as established by Regents’ policy, as well as other employees on long-term contracts.

E. The Presidents and other institution-wide administrators shall consult regularly with the institution’s elected representative body or bodies. This consultation will be in accordance with accountability plans developed collaboratively by the participants. These accountability plans shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Regents. The Presidents shall report annually to the Chancellor on the implementation of these accountability plans, and the Chancellor in turn shall report to the Board.

F. The Chancellor and other System administrators shall consult regularly with the legislatively-mandated, System-wide representative bodies. The Chancellor shall report annually to the Board on the status of these consultations.

G. The Presidents shall assure that shared governance, based upon the principles and practices in this policy, is appropriately implemented in all sub-units, and are accountable for assuring that other administrators follow them in unit-level deliberations.

H. Effective implementation of shared governance shall be a component of evaluations of the Chancellor, the Presidents, and other administrators as designated by the Chancellor for the USM Office, and by the President for the institutions.

I. In keeping with Principle II.C., all participants share with their Presidents and the USM leadership responsibility for:

1. Being informed on issues that confront higher education, the USM, and the institutions;

2. Acting within time constraints that are imposed by external agencies and influences, sometimes with little or no notice;

3. Sharing appropriate information and providing timely feedback;

4. Recognizing the specific goals and needs of the
institution, and being accountable to the constituencies represented; and

5. Distinguishing the roles played by various units and individuals in decision making and administration.

J. Given the dynamic nature of institutional governance, it is understood

1. That there may be occasions when institutional leaders must act in the best interest of the institution on major issues affecting the institutional constituencies without full benefit of the shared governance process. In such cases the representative bodies shall be informed in a timely manner and have an opportunity to comment on the issues.

2. That administrators shall inform important constituencies in a timely manner if they choose to disregard, in whole or in part, the advice and recommendation of constituencies, and they should provide the reasons for their decision. In these cases, the shared governance body may, if it so chooses, present a written statement of its position and/or any objections to the decision as part of the institution's or unit's record on the issue.

K. Faculty and staff who do not hold administrative appointments, and all students, may express their opinions freely on all shared governance matters without retaliation. Administrators, including faculty holding administrative appointments, may also express their opinions freely during policy discussions, without retaliation, but once a decision is reached they are expected to support and implement policy as determined by the institutional leadership.

L. Shared governance requires a commitment of resources and time from the USM institutions. Each institution shall provide a proper level of resources, as determined by the President, to faculty, staff, and students to allow them to carry out their shared governance responsibilities effectively.
M. While participation in governance by faculty, staff, and students is necessary and important for the well-being of the USM and its institutions, the final responsibility for decision-making rests with institutional Presidents, the Chancellor, or the Board of Regents, who are ultimately held accountable by the public and its elected leaders.