Governance Reorganization:
Key Elements and Rationale

1.	Creation of Handbook	We have no single location or handbook that guides how decisions are made which results in confusion and a lack of transparency. We also have consistent administrative turnover and it takes quite some time for new members to learn the unwritten rules of our processes. Most of us don't understand how decisions are made and who makes decisions - it is frustrating. If we need something acted on, the handbook provides guidance on how to do this through the shared governance process. In the 10 years since our last reorganization, there has been a massive change to budget allocations and reporting mechanisms from the state for SSSP, Student Equity, Basic Skills initiatives. The state has mandated we have processes to integrate programs and services for these initiatives; we currently have no mechanism to facilitate integrated conversations. Both the handbook and the governance reorganization address this issue.
2.	Broader Constituency Inclusion	The president needs to receive recommendations from constituents across the campus, including classified staff and students. Issues of participatory governance affect all groups. In the past, classified staff and student voices have not been effectively included in participatory governance. This is setting a new precedent for our college and shows inclusivity and collaboration. Faculty have an existing strong voice through Academic Senate as defined in the 10+1, which consists of the Senate and all of its committees. The reorg maintains and strengthens our voice by providing clearer processes for how to feed input into participatory governance.

3.	Separate Budget Committee	In the current Planning and Resources Council (PRC), the budget is a regular item on the agenda; however, it is quite complex, particularly with the increase in "categorical" funding from the state. Also, budget issues and reports vary in format and information as the role of the VPAS has changed over the years. The inconsistency in the manner of addressing budget issues has resulted in confusion. Having a separate Budget Committee raises the levels of clarity and transparency to the topic of funding. One goal of the reorg process is to help our overall ability to plan independent of the existing budget and then implement items within the current budget, versus planning based on a projected budget that changes considerably within each fiscal year. A separate Budget Committee with college-wide constituency representation allows for a larger group of people to gain expertise on the workings of state and local budget matters. These members can then become a resource for their respective constituencies. A separate Budget Committee will also provide a greater level of transparency about the budget, budgetary decisions, as well as recording the work of the committee, which has previously not been possible at Grossmont College.
4.	Staffing Committee	This is an overarching committee that will develop a long-term staffing plan that is aligned with our Educational Master Plan and strategic goals, as opposed to our current system where we only focus using a 12-month lens. The Staffing Committee does not replace nor take on the functions of the two staffing prioritization committees: Faculty Staffing Prioritization Committee and Classified Staff Prioritization Committee. The Staffing Committee collaborates with the two prioritization committees to ensure that the long-term staffing plan is reflected in the rubric that the two committees will use in their work. This process requires mutual agreement. The Faculty Staffing Prioritization Committee uses the rubric to prioritize staffing requests from program review reports; a parallel process occurs with Classified Staffing prioritization committee. Each prioritization committee shares their annual list with the Staffing Committee which then also looks at other available information i.e., budget forecasts and FON. This increases transparency as this part of the process is currently not a matter of participatory governance. All pertinent information is then forwarded to College Council. The Chair of the Faculty Staffing Prioritization Committee sits as a member of the Staffing Committee.

5.	Training for Chairs & Members	All chairs and members will be trained on their roles within the new structure. There will be online access for people who can't attend in person. Formalized training creates a consistent process that is sustained institutionally rather than relying on person-to-person training. Training also standardizes meeting processes with templates for meeting agendas, minutes, consensus-building, and meeting facilitation tools. Training topics will also include Academic Senate 10+1 matters to better inform ALL constituent groups.
6.	Annual Evaluation	The handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis by the College Council and its standing committees, and updated as needed, per ACCJC standards. This will ensure the document stays current and up to date. The review process will also prompt committee members to revisit the handbook and consider whether the breadth and depth of their discussions align with their charge and responsibilities.
7.	Consensus	The purpose of quorum is to keep the work moving forward and to be fair minded and inclusive of all stakeholders. Consensus is not about majority; rather it's about agreement at a 75% threshold. Also, consensus cannot occur without most members from any one constituency (i.e., absent.) We've never had a checks and balances system like this before. The shared governance process needs to represent a balanced recommendation to the president. This is a substantial improvement over our current standard which only requires a majority of members be in attendance and a vote of more than 50% present to move something forward.
8.	Standard Templates for Agendas/Notes	The creation of standardized templates for agendas and notes creates consistency for how information is organized, disseminated and stored. This will create a more efficient process for many classified professionals, committee chairs and committee members. In the future, this also will make it easier for everyone to find information about a topic, to clearly see the meeting minutes and notes, and allows for notes and agendas to be compiled into a searchable database. It is understood that a centralized website, or easily-found weblink will be developed to accommodate this goal.

9.	Clear Agendas and Notes Posting Locations and Timelines	The new proposed structure would provide timelines and a specific, centralized location for accessing agendas and notes from the meetings. This will add a high level of organizational transparency and enable communication into and out of the shared-governance structure. The basic goal is that by setting these standards/guidelines, members of the committee and community can gather information about who, where, when, and what a committee discussed. This makes it possible to trace a topic/idea/issue through the structure, while it also encourages participation by providing access to current and ongoing conversations.
10.	Constituent-Based Approach Constituency Communication within Academic Senate	This concept changes our sense of how we represent a constituency. Instead of "I represent myself" or "I represent my division," it is "I represent Academic Senate and all faculty." It's a fundamental intervention for our major communication problem. If every person is representing a different division or department, we have no mechanism for consensus-building because there is no clear way to ensure broad communication to divisions and inclusive feedback from them. Aligning communications with the frequent Academic Senate meetings gives a central place to bring information and take it back; meeting minutes are regular, easily accessible, timely and organized. The information can come to Academic Senate, where we meet every 2 weeks with 80+ faculty from all departments, versus at a division meeting, that takes place 2 times a year. Information will also be posted on the Academic Senate website. Additionally, this places less responsibility on individuals to take thorough notes and craft their own way to communicate to whom they represent. It is worth noting that this does not require that every member of a constituency on a committee offer the same perspective and/or votes uniformly - but it does increase the capacity of all members to have appropriate feedback to and from the faculty. We have reorganized the participatory governance committees so that there no longer "division reps." All faculty represent the Academic Senate on participatory governance committees. This actually makes communication much simpler and more transparent. For example, with a centralized spot on the web, the Senate President can easily link the agendas and meeting notes for all the meetings since the last senate meeting. All Senators can read the ones they want (president reads them all)- and a faculty will know who the Senate reps are to offer feedback to. Also, when something requires feedback from faculty- the reps can come to Senate instead of trying to figure out how to get in touch with their division. How we choose to appoint our reps from the Senate is up to us. If, for example, we decide that broad representation from across campus is important, then we can write that into our selection criteria for committee appointments. On a side note, we will still have division reps on Senate committees.

11.	Clear distinctions between Participatory Governance and Operational Committees	Participatory Governance Committees have a *committee*-reporting chain which serves to consult about what we want to do and achieve, and then make recommendations to the President. Operational Committees have a *person*-reporting chain which focuses on implementing and getting things done. It is the difference between determining what needs to get done versus implementing policy which has already been consulted. Clarifying this helps to streamline implementation work and unclog some of the discussions in Participatory Governance Committees.
12.	Detailed Responsibilities listed for Each Committee	Instead of only having a broad description or charge for each committee, we have more detailed information regarding major tasks, duties, and responsibilities. Listed are the actions, documents, and materials the committee will be responsible for and who they report to. Formalizing these details gives the committee chairs and members more information on what is expected of them. It also ensures that more than one person knows what the committee is to do.
13.	Union Participation	We have agreed to include Union representation from AFT, CSEA, and Administrator's Association in College Council. Those representatives will serve as advisory members. The purpose of including union representatives on the College Council is to provide feedback whenever an issue may arise during a meeting which may be impacted by the collective bargaining agreement. In these instances, Union Representatives can either offer clarity on relevant portions of collective bargaining agreements or, if these topics should not be part of the participatory governance process; they can be addressed by the union at the district level as part of the negotiation process. Including the expertise of union representatives ensures that the governance process is attentive to bargained agreements when needed and that there is a clear understanding of governance conversations at the college so that bargaining agents are able to be well informed during district negotiations. It is helpful for all constituent groups to have a better understanding of which topics fall under the purview of a union.

Note: We walked the talk. To craft every aspect of the handbook, the Governance Organization Steering Committee (GOSC) used the consensus-building process with a constituency-based approach that was focused on broad inclusion. We used standard templates for meeting agendas and notes, and all materials were easily accessible in a timely manner. We experienced effective meeting facilitation from trained leaders. We carefully considered and respected the differences between participatory governance, operational committees, and collective bargaining aspects.