

Shared Governance Spotlight: David Paradis | CU Boulder

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David Paradis, Faculty Council Vice-Chair



David Paradis, FC Secretary

Associate Teaching Professor, College of Arts & Sciences

What does shared governance mean to you? Why is it important?

Shared governance at the system level allows university leadership to draw upon the diverse perspectives of faculty across the four campuses. In essence, this system has the potential to fulfill the promise of democracy in university governance. Leaders often live in a very different cultural milieu than rank-and-file faculty and staff. Consequently, leaders often lack familiarity with the challenges facing workaday employees who are crucial for the university's success. Shared governance provides an opportunity for those employees to express their concerns, which can often reorient the moral compasses and policies of the decision makers not only at the system level but also at the campus and college levels as well. When fostered and respected by university leaders, shared governance bodies can enhance decision making and equity within the entire CU system.

Tell us about your role on the Faculty Council, how long you have served in this role, and what your initial motivations were for engaging in this type of service.

I joined the Faculty Council Budget and Finance Committee in the Fall of 2019. It seemed like a logical choice for me because I had served on the Boulder campus Budget and Planning Committee in addition to the Arts and Sciences Budget Committee on the Boulder campus. To be honest, I have often joined these committees because there was a distinct lack of interest by others in doing so. Once I was up to speed on budget issues on the college level, I became curious about how these issues played out on the campus and system levels. The more I became familiar with the budgetary challenges that the system faced, the more motivated I became to try to improve CU's fiscal health without compromising its integrity, particularly in regards to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion along with ethical pay for our employees. These issues are ongoing.

What would you want the CU community to know about the work that you are doing on the FC? Can you share some of your committee's or the Council's initiatives that you are particularly proud to have contributed to?

I am particularly excited that we have a new group of faculty from the Boulder campus who recently joined the Faculty Council Budget and Finance Committee. Shared governance will only thrive if we recruit motivated faculty to tackle some of the big challenges that we face. I hope the university leadership will incorporate more incentives into faculty promotion guidelines to improve recruitment of faculty in shared governance.

Meanwhile, university leadership is taking encouraging action partly because of concerns expressed by faculty about the impact of low state funding. It is well-known that the state of Colorado underfunds CU in comparison with its peer institutions across the country. However, few know that this fiscal miserliness disproportionately affects our lower paid faculty and staff. I am grateful that our leadership recognizes this problem and is taking steps to address it.

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