

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Basics

1. What do the acronyms mean?

ELT = Executive Leadership Team

IEC = Institutional Effectiveness Council

SSC = Student Success Council

PES = President's Executive Staff

ASB = Associated Student Body

ARC = American River College

LRCCD = Los Rios Community College District

2. What is governance?

Governance involves how policies, practices or procedures are established to guide the operation of the college.

Participatory governance is a collaborative goal-setting and problem-solving process built on trust and communication that involves representatives from appropriate constituent groups who engage in open discussion and timely decision-making.

3. What is a council?

A council is a governance group that includes members from constituent groups and is charged with a specific function which is described in its charter. At ARC, councils are typically chartered for three-year periods.

4. What is a project team?

A project team is a work group sponsored by a council and charged with specific tasks that are described in the project charter. Project teams usually focus on designing solutions or implementing solutions. At ARC, project teams are typically chartered for one academic year.

5. What is a senate?

A senate is a governance entity that represents a particular constituency (students, classified staff, or faculty). Senates operate in accordance with California Education Code, Title 5 regulations, and Los Rios Board Policy.

6. What is a management team?

Management is not represented by a senate. Instead, the management team is represented in governance structure through the Administrative Leadership Council and the Senior Leadership Team.

7. What is a charter?

A charter defines what a council or project team is expected to do, how long it will last, how its membership is constructed (i.e., ex-officio and appointed members), the boundaries of what it is authorized to do, and other details. Per the [ARC Governance Framework](#), "the ELT provides input and recommendations to the President in establishing the charters, strategic direction, and accountability of ARC councils and project teams. The College President retains final decision making authority for the college."

Navigating the Governance Structure

1. I have an item that needs input from a senate and a council. Who should I go to first?

It is usually best to seek input from the appropriate senate(s) and other key stakeholders before formally placing items on a council agenda.

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2. I have an item that seems to fit the charge of multiple councils. Where do I start?

If an item seems to fit multiple councils, email the council chairs/co-chairs as a group (one email) so that they can help you determine which councils need to see the items and in which order. Some councils meet more frequently so sequencing in a particular order may be necessary to move an item through the councils in a timely manner.

Please indicate in the email the topic you would like to place on the agenda and what you are seeking from the council members (e.g., awareness of the item or a recommendation to ELT).

3. If I take an item to a council, does it also need to go to executive leadership (PES and ELT)?

It may need to go to the President's Executive Staff (PES) and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) depending on the topic and what type of action you are seeking. In general, the councils make recommendations to executive leadership (PES and ELT).

4. Who makes the final decision?

Final decision-making authority is held by the ARC President. In certain cases, items may also require approval by the LRCCD Board of Trustees.

Meetings

1. When do councils meet?

Please see the master calendar or the individual council pages for their regular meeting schedule.

2. How do I place an item on a council agenda?

Please email the facilitator(s) who serve as chair and co-chair. The facilitators are listed on the page for each council.

3. Are guests allowed during council meetings?

Invited guests often participate in meetings. If you are interested in a particular topic, please contact the chair in advance to arrange to be a guest. Please note that some councils meet in small rooms which have limited seating capacity.

4. How do I find out what's happening?

Agendas and notes are posted on the web page for each council. The notes are made available as soon as possible after the meeting. Summary information from the meetings is also distributed through other channels.

5. What are meeting notes and how do they differ from minutes?

Meeting notes are brief in nature and are published in a draft format without being formally approved by the council. They may be revised if necessary after the next council meeting.

Participation

1. How are the facilitators (chair and co-chair) appointed?

The facilitators for each council are specified in the council composition which is listed in the [ARC Governance Framework](#). Facilitators may include ex-officio or appointed individuals.

2. How are council members selected?

The membership is determined by the council composition which is listed in the [ARC Governance Framework](#). Councils generally use a combination of ex-officio and appointed positions.

3. How do I get involved?

If you are interested in participating on a council, please contact the leadership of your constituency to let them know that you would like to participate when an opportunity becomes available. Because the councils are chartered for three years, membership does not change as frequently as project teams. You can also participate in the process by providing input and feedback to the members of the council who represent your constituency.

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Project Teams

1. How are projects initiated?

Projects are sponsored by one of the councils, recommended by the ELT, and authorized by the ARC President. Please see the Project Initiation Flowchart for details. Project initiation usually happens each spring to identify and authorize projects for the upcoming academic year. In some cases, a project may be initiated in an expedited manner at a different time of year to allow ARC to be responsive and agile.

2. How are project team members selected?

The College President, in consultation with ELT, designates the Project Steward (aka project manager), Project Lead(s), and the expected composition of the team. Positions may be designated for potential inclusion based on role and responsibilities. The President indicates the number of representative appointments needed and individual appointments are determined according to the processes established by each constituent groups' representative body.

3. How do I get involved?

If you are interested in an upcoming project, please contact the leadership of your constituency to let them know that you would like to participate.