

Community, Environment & Planning's

Guide to Governance

Created by the 2012 Summer Meeting Group

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Governance Defined¹

CEP is a participatory major. We believe that much of our learning grows out of being responsible for our education and program. Therefore, everyone takes part in leadership within the major according to his or her individual talents and interests. Governance is where this happens. We develop, discuss, and vote on new proposals in order to keep the program current and innovative; we manage new and on-going events, professional connections, communications, our admissions process and policy revision through committees; and we ensure collaboration and efficiency through an executive committee. CEP makes key decisions by consensus. This ensures that every member has a say in the policies and the future of the program.

Structure

Governance is held Friday mornings from 8:30-11:20am. The first two hours (CEP 400) are mandatory for CEP students, while the third hour is an optional² executive committee, called Steering. Student Committees meet during the first hour from 8:30-9:20am to work on tasks and responsibilities from CEP's Operations Plan.³ Forum, where larger program issues are discussed, meets from 9:30-10:20am. Program-wide (ie. *joint*) and class-specific (ie. *class*) meetings alternate weekly. Steering meets from 10:30-11:20am and is made up of a student point from each committee. Other students who want to participate are also welcome to join.

Governance Components

Committees:⁴ 50-minute meeting, 8:30-9:20am

Committees support the operations of the major and the needs and wants of the students. Quarterly, students self-select into a committee that they are interested in, that will develop skills, and/or requires skills that the individual can offer.

- **Communications** manages and maintains digital and print media and facilitates effective communication across the major.
- **Community Engagement Committee (CEC)** promotes positive social change and community engagement among CEP students, alumni, and the larger community. CEC also works to build the CEP network and engage students with alumni and vice versa.
- **Headlights** supports long-term planning and visioning for the major in terms of program development and standards, while also addressing emerging issues.
- **Hearthstone** plans and carries out Senior Project Night and Graduation; supports logistics for other events (ie. Spring Retreat); and manages activities that have a financial component such as CEP apparel and fundraising.
- **Outreach & Admissions (O&A)** promotes the CEP program to prospective students and manages the annual admissions process.

Forum: 50-minute meeting, 9:30-10:20am

Forum provides an opportunity for the major to meet as a program or a class to discuss issues, activities, develop skills, and engage in reflection relevant to the larger group. Forum is co-facilitated by two students with an agenda developed in collaboration with Steering and CEP Staff.

Steering: 50-minute meeting, 10:30-11:20am

¹ Adapted from current Plumb Manual; should be revised and brought to consensus then re-inserted into the Plumb Manual

² Required for Committee and Steering points

³ 2012-2013 Operations Plan will be completed after Fall Retreat in Early October.

⁴ Updated by the 2012 summer meeting group (three of last year's points present) with hopes of passing in Fall of 2012

Steering manages communication across committees, decision-making, and the overall affairs of the major. Steering is made up of at least one person from every committee plus staff and faculty.

Attendance and Participation Policy⁵

Students register for Governance every quarter under CEP 400: Governance Practicum. In order to get credit for Governance, a student must attend 80% of Committee and Forum sessions. If a student shows up to Committee after 8:30 they are considered late, and after 8:45 they are considered absent. For Forum, the same structure applies: after 9:30 is late, and after 9:45 is absent. Three late arrivals equal one absence. When present, students must actively participate. Attentive listening, sharing opinions, summarizing points of conversation, asking questions, and engaging in planned activities are all examples of active participation.

Committees⁶

Descriptions

Committees support the operations of the major and the needs and wants of the students. Below are more thorough descriptions of what committees are charged to do. While some activities are required (admissions, Senior Project Night, etc.), others are decided upon under the discretion of the committee and oversight of Steering. A committee is not expected to take on everything they are charged with in a given year, but rather are encouraged to reflect on the current CEP environment and decide what will add the most value to the major and its students.

Communications manages and maintains digital and print media and facilitates effective communication across the major. Specifically, Communications:

1. Develops, streamlines, and promotes the use of our online presence, including our website and social media
2. Manages the CEP 'brand' within the University and larger community by creating and reviewing guidelines for print and online material
3. Produces visual communication for the major and other committees
4. Communicates CEP activities and updates to the larger community through quarterly publications and other outlets
5. Updates the CEP message board on the 2nd floor with relevant information
6. Addresses internal communication when necessary

CEC (Community Engagement Committee)⁷ promotes positive social change and community engagement amongst CEP students, alumni, and the larger community. CEPsters are traditionally very active in the community, and CEC coordinates efforts that support each other in their community endeavors. CEC also works to build the CEP network and engage students with CEP alumni and vice versa. Specifically, CEC:

1. Plans community events to network with organizations and local professionals
2. Works on Alumni relations through database development and management and planned events

⁵ Passed in the Spring of 2012 (please reference the Structural Changes Proposal)

⁶ Passed September 28th unanimously without any Blocks or Stand Asides

⁷ Unchanged due to uncertainty with how to define CEC. During 2012-2013, CEC plans to work on a revised description that gives clear direction.

3. Connects CEP students to organizations, professionals, and alumni through external and internal events

Headlights supports long-term planning and visioning for the major in terms of program development and standards, while also addressing emerging issues. Specifically, Headlights works on the following:

1. Reviews and updates the Plumb Manual
 - a. Reviews are large-scale assessments, while updates are immediate alterations to the Plumb Manual made after new proposals are passed
2. Develops a program-wide Strategic Plan
3. Performs and facilitates curriculum and programmatic review
4. Takes on any other program-wide issues that emerge

Hearthstone plans and carries out Senior Project Night and Graduation, supports logistics for other events (ie. Spring Retreat), and manages other activities that have a financial component such as CEP swag and fundraising. Specifically, Hearthstone:

1. Creates an annual events budget in collaboration with the Program Manager
2. Oversees successful execution of events (ie. researches and purchases/secures event components, volunteer management, event debrief and documentation).
3. Organizes the purchase and distribution of CEP branded swag
4. Organizes fundraising activities in collaboration with the Program Manager

Outreach & Admissions (O&A) promotes the CEP program to prospective students and manages the annual admissions process. Specifically, O&A:

1. Develops and executes a strategic outreach plan
2. Leads the CEP admissions process (updates application materials and acceptance rubric; organizes interview teams; reviews essays; coordinates a finals committee; manages applicant communications, etc.)
3. Organizes and facilitates the new student Meet & Greet
4. Reviews (annually) and revises (when necessary) the admissions process

How to Choose a Committee

Each committee has an overarching purpose that helps support the operations of the community. These purposes are similar to activities that occur in any sort of organization that you may work for in the future. With that in mind, it is recommended that a student choose a committee that they are interested in, that they want to develop skills around, and/or whose current skills will support the activities of the committee. Committee work can be a valuable thing to put on a resume and offers great talking points for an interview. In all committees, students will develop project management, communication, and group skills. More specifically though, students may develop the following skills in each respective committee:

- **Communications:** graphic design, Adobe Suite programs, journalism, marketing, and client management
- **CEC:** community building and relations, social action, professional networking, and event planning
- **Headlights:** strategic planning, policy development, policy and program evaluation, surveying and developing metrics, professional and concise writing, and communication (negotiation and presentations)
- **Hearthstone:** event planning, budgeting, volunteer management, and fundraising
- **O&A:** outreach, strategic planning, public relations, marketing, interviewing and evaluation, project management, and event planning (spring)

Students must commit to a committee for a quarter. After the quarter, students can change committees but are encouraged to take initiative to find out what other committees will be doing the following quarter. Because activities in each committee change from quarter to quarter, a student should make an informed decision based on committees work from the current quarter as well as their year-long and quarter-long plans.

Committee Roles

Within a committee there are assigned roles that help the committee run efficiently and effectively. Each committee is required to have a **Point**. A Point is responsible for seeing that the committee stays on task and meets the goals set forth in the beginning of the year. The Point is also required to represent the committee weekly in Steering. If the Point has an unexpected conflict, it is their responsibility to send someone in their place. Beyond having a Point, committees can choose to operate how they see fit. Below are common, and recommended, roles and responsibilities:

- **Point:** sets meeting agendas; facilitates meetings; represents their Committee at Steering; communicates with other Committee Points on areas of collaboration; prepares brief reports to major during forum; delegates responsibilities if necessary; and communicates issues and concerns with CEP staff
- **Co-Point:** shares responsibilities of the Point
- **Detailer:** takes notes; manages and organizes committee files; adds necessary items to the community calendar
- **Sub-Committee Point(s)** (*if committee decides to make sub-committees*): keeps sub-committees on task; delegates responsibilities; communicates progress to the Point
- **General Member:** actively participates (i.e. attends, participates, volunteers for tasks, and gives input)

Self-Evaluation

At the end of every quarter, each individual is required to fill out a self-evaluation form prior to the last committee session of the quarter. This self-evaluation is available online and on each Committee's USB Drive. Each member is required to turn in a .pdf or printed copy to the CEP Program Manager.

Planning For The Year And For The Quarter

As mentioned in the Committee Descriptions section, a committee is not expected to take on everything they are charged with in a given year. Instead, they are encouraged to reflect on the current CEP environment and decide what will add the most value to the major and its students. Past Operations Plans, Action Plans, and Committee Reviews are a great resource to use, as well as any formal discussion that occurs during Retreats, Forums, and Steering. There are three planning worksheets to support the goal setting and review processes within each committee:

- **Committee Goal Setting – Academic Year:** to be filled out during Fall Retreat during the Committees Workshop and the following Friday. Once this worksheet is filled out, Steering will review all Committee's worksheets and look for overlaps, gaps, or areas of refinement. These year-long plans will make up the current year's Operation Plan.

- **Quarter Action Plan:** to be filled out at the beginning of every quarter, or on the last day of the previous quarter.
- **Quarter Review:** to be filled out at the end of every quarter and BEFORE the Quarter Action Plan for the following quarter.

Worksheets can be found online, and on each Committee's USB Drive. Each form must be saved and organized on the Committee's USB drive for review and tracking purposes.

Best Practices

Over the years, CEP has collected ideas from students, professionals, and personal experience that are important to keep in mind when working in a group. What is listed below is not exhaustive, but includes some key ideas that everyone can be reminded of once in a while.

- **Planning, Action, and Evaluation**
 - Set realistic goals. Think about the resources that you have (time, people, skills, etc.) when you are planning your year and your quarter.
 - Follow your plan. It will help you save time and stick to your goals. It is easy to get sidetracked when other opportunities come up, but staying on the path you planned will help you meet goals and feel successful.
 - Re-Evaluate. If you are coming to roadblocks think of Plan B instead.
 - Have a Plan B.
 - Know how you will evaluate your work and take time to do so. The evaluation and reflection process can be very rewarding. Take time to gather data and reflect on how things could have been done differently.
- **Meeting and Structural Organization**
 - Have a meeting 'formula'. Knowing what to expect during Committee can help save time in getting the meeting going. Have a set 'formula' to implement such as: email the schedule the night before; write the agenda on the board; state the main purpose of the meeting; break up into sub groups; re-convene at the end of the meeting to share key points; have everyone verbally say and write down an action item before they leave.
 - Start on time. Stay on time by watching the clock. End on time.
 - Have ground rules for individual participation (i.e. no cell phones).
 - Arrange the room so that all members can see and hear each other.
 - Schedule outside meetings if need be.
- **Communication**
 - Create norms and expectations for your committee around how members will communicate with each other.
 - Create a group email address.
 - Share phone numbers.
 - Let people know if you are not going to be there.
 - Send out necessary materials before a meeting.
 - Bring copies of necessary materials to a meeting.
 - Share gripes as well as successes as they come up.

Forum

Goals of Forum

Forum provides an opportunity for the major to meet as a whole (ie. *joint*) and class-specific (ie. *class*) meetings to discuss issues, activities, develop skills, and engage in reflection relevant to the larger group. Through structured, student-led meetings, students practice leadership and community building skills. Goals of forum include:

- Re-evaluate and improve the CEP program to keep it current and relevant to our students and larger community needs. This is done through:
 - Proposal presentations, discussions, and consensus votes
 - Facilitated conversation about current policies, courses, and structure
- Develop community within the major. This is done through:
 - Inclusive social activities and team building activities
 - Discussion of current events or thought-provoking videos
- Provide opportunities for professional skill-building. This is done through:
 - Workshops from current students, staff, faculty, or outside professionals
- Network with and gain exposure to other programs and opportunities for current and post-graduation experiences. This is done through:
 - Presentations from external guests

Students are encouraged to propose forum activities and should talk with the Program Manager about ideas.

Role of the Facilitators

Forum is co-facilitated by two students with an agenda developed in collaboration with Steering and CEP Staff. Facilitators' responsibilities include finalizing and communicating the agenda, taking attendance, and note-taking. Notes are shared with the major using Google Drive.

When am I facilitating?

CEP has a calendar with each student scheduled to facilitate one or two governance sessions a year. That calendar is shared using Google Drive and can also be found online under "Password Protected Files".

How do I decide what I am facilitating?

Facilitators should initiate conversation, at least one week prior to their facilitation date, with the Program Manager and/or Steering to see what relevant issues are on the table. The calendar is also updated regularly with new items for the schedule. Before facilitating, facilitators will check in with the Program Manager in person or via email, as well as people schedule on the agenda, to ensure all agenda items are accounted for and are given adequate time.

What do I do when I am facilitating?

It is the facilitators' responsibility to manage time, flow, agenda items. You are not necessarily responsible for leading activities on the schedule, but rather facilitating timing for the schedule. Facilitators need to arrive about 5-10 minutes early to write the agenda on the board, and set up the room, and technology, if necessary. Facilitators will take attendance and notes via online documents. They can be accessed through

the website or through Google Drive on your personal computer. A typical schedule looks like the following:

- 9:30-9:40 - Announcements and Committee Check-ins
- 9:40-10:00 - Guest Speaker
- 10:00-10:20 - CEP Attendance Proposal Update

Proposals

When someone identifies an inefficiency, issue, or sees a need for change within the major, they can write a proposal to initiate a voting process. Proposals and a consensus vote are needed for large policy changes such as grading structure changes, attendance policy changes, or changes to language in the Plumb Manual. Non-policy changes do not need to go through the proposal and consensus process. These changes might include apparel design, marketing strategy, or font choice on the website. CEP staff and Steering will determine the need for a proposal process if it is unclear with an arising issue.

Any student, group of students, or committee can bring a proposal in front of the major. Example proposals can be found online. Here are some ways to ensure a democratic and inclusive proposal development process:

1. Announce your issue/idea at a Joint Forum, seek input, gauge interest, and invite others to help.
2. Develop a problem statement that includes what the problem is, how the problem came up, how CEP has addressed it in the past, and why it should be addressed and dealt with now.
3. Write the proposal.
 - a. What precise changes or new process are you proposing?
 - b. How will the changes specifically address the problem statement?
 - c. How will the change be implemented? Who needs to do what and when?
 - d. How will it be evaluated?
4. Seek input from the entire major on your draft proposal in a Joint Forum
5. Re-write the proposal with necessary changes
6. Bring the draft proposal to Steering for review
7. Pass the proposal by consensus in Joint Forum
8. Send a final copy to Headlights and the Program Manager so the Plumb Manual can be updated

Voting

CEP makes decisions with a public consensus vote. There are three ways to vote:

- **Approving** means that you agree that the proposal will add value to the major and should be put into practice.
- **Blocking** means that you disagree with the proposal, think it will hurt the major, and/or have ideas to make significant changes to the proposal. Your reasons for blocking will be recorded and those that brought the proposal to a vote will take them into consideration when revising the proposal.
- **Standing Aside** means that you are indifferent to the proposal/have some issue with it, but not enough to block. Your reasons for standing aside will be recorded and those that brought the proposal to a vote will take them into consideration in evaluation of the proposal. If there are a significant amount of people standing aside, the group can decide it is in the best interest of everyone to revise the proposal and bring it to a vote at a later date.

Steering

Why Steering?

Steering manages communication across committees, decision-making, and the overall affairs of the major. Steering is made up of at least one person from every committee plus staff and faculty. In this way, Steering acts as an ‘Executive Committee’ for the major, discussing issues before and after they go to the entire major; guiding changes in committee responsibilities when necessary; and planning the annual Spring Retreat. In addition, all policy proposals must be brought to and passed in Steering before they can be brought up in Forum for a vote.

Roles Within Steering

Steering runs similarly to other committees. There is a Steering Point, or Co-Points, that organize and run Steering. They work with the Program Manager and other Steering members to set the agenda for the meeting and ensure that all topics are allotted sufficient time. Points are also responsible for keeping notes and sharing information with the rest of the major when necessary.

Committee Points that attends Steering are expected to represent their committee. They should be prepared to bring updates to Steering, including: progress on year-long and quarter-long Action Plans; issues and challenges within the committee; and potential areas of changes to committee activities. Steering provides a space for Points to support each other and get new ideas for group and project management.

Planning For The Year And For The Quarter

Steering also creates year-long and quarter-long action plans. First, Steering creates a plan to keep committees accountable to their work. Second, Steering reacts to immediate items in the major. Because of this balance, their plans require structure and flexibility.

Conclusion

This document is meant to be a guide to introduce you to policies, structure, and best practices of our Governance Practicum. It is also intended to be a reminder, so you are encouraged to revisit this document if you have questions or confusion about Governance. By no means is this document exhaustive and final, and CEP students are encouraged to update the document with new practices when necessary.