

**NADD Responses to Online Question:  
How does your school/department involve students in decision-making/policy-making?  
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**Responses compiled by: Susanna Jones, Director, San Francisco State University**

*How does your school/department include students in decision-making, policy making, and any and all affairs and matters that take place in your school and department?*

*What mechanisms do you have in place to include students?*

1. We are doing each quarter a Town Hall to have an open forum AND cover certain topics they want.

We had a survey of students done by the leaders of our half dozen SWGAs, then met with them to give us input. We will meet with them again to give a response on what we can do short and longer term. It's on all types of topics from curriculum to student organization needs, to them needing clarity on course changes, etc.

Good luck compiling this and thank you!

2. Our Faculty Governance Document lays out the policies related to student involvement on committees. They have seats (students are assigned through their Graduate Student Organization) on the following committees: Educational Policy; Advanced Concentrations; Educational Review of Students; Field Rep. Advisory Committee, PhD committee.

We are in the process of revising our faculty governance document; once it is done, I will distribute to Cohort 10.

3. We put one or more student reps on all committees that we can legally put them on. Our student group has a vote at the faculty meetings (usually decisions related to curriculum). We have a faculty member as a liaison for each of our student groups, to help keep communication going back and forth. The administration meets with student groups occasionally when there is an issue facing the school that either they raise or we raise. However, our students feel that they don't really know what's going on at the school. We are trying to keep them informed more with newsletters, but I'd like to hear what others do to keep students engaged and informed and participating in decisions.
4. We are making a conscious effort to actively recruit students to all our standing committees (outside of student affairs). We are working with students to help them form new student groups, and I am meeting with students, program-by-program,

several times a semester to hear their concerns/aspirations. We have a core group of faculty and staff who have informally taken on the roles of student group sponsors and advocates. Our monthly Council Meeting is a combined forum for all SSW constituents and is open to students, with several student group representatives present. Students who attend standing committees have a vote like any other member. It is still a work in progress. We are glad that students want to be active participants and share in governance, and we are also honest about the limits of student involvement in shared governance - they cannot serve as committee chairs, for example, and while we are accountable for our actions, we cannot always be responsive to their priorities because we have to balance the competing needs of four programs within the School as well as the School's overall mission and viability.

5. At our university, we invite a student representatives to sit in on the first 10-15 minutes of our curriculum meetings and faculty meetings to bring concerns. We also hold town-hall meetings where students can voice concerns anonymously to a neutral party (a director of another college at our university) who then reports back to us. We then inform students of what changes we plan to make and how based on their feedback, and what we cannot change because of university policies or such.
6. We usually have students be part of our search process – one undergrad and one grad will sit on the search committee with the faculty. For our concentration committees, we take at least one meeting per semester and hold it at a time when students can attend and have input.

In answer to your question, each of our degree programs (MSW, NPL, MSSP, DSW and PhD) has a governance committee that includes both students and faculty members.

7. We include them as non-voting members of the MSW, PhD and Executive Committee as well as Search Committees. In Minnesota we permitted one vote per student class by an elected representative on most curricular matters. Cal is more elitist than Minnesota. :)
8. Our student clubs theoretically are a forum for input to us. The history is that when a specific student is appointed, they really don't have time. So what we do is survey students, from time to time, using qualtrics. It is a hard area- takes time when one does not have a lot of time! When I was at East Bay we had two students attend our Curriculum Committee meetings to advise on our curriculum. Here in LA we have students who help with Admission file reviews. That's all.
9. We've struggled with the too and received a small grant to study this and develop a plan for it. I thought you may be interested in our final report.

10. To answer your question, we have students on our Curriculum committee for the department. Additionally, we have a student government within the School where they are routinely asked for feedback. Finally, at the University there is a Grad Student government and they provide feedback to the University there too.

11. Frankly we aren't very good at it, but we are trying to improve.

12. At this point we try to communicate through our student organizations -- Organization of Social Work Students (OSSW) and Phi Alpha. We also are holding one meeting each semester as an open forum for our students. I also have an "open door" policy so that any student can come to me to express a concern or state a desire.

I'm looking forward to reading what you learn from others so that we might try something.

13. At the University at Buffalo School of Social Work we include student representatives on all faculty council committees, and in our faculty council meetings (this is specified in our bylaws). Also, I meet regular with our Graduate Student Association officers.

14. At Michigan students can comprise up to 50% of every committee (1 member less than faculty positions) and student members do vote.

15. We include students in decision-making in the following ways: representation on committees (curriculum, grievance, field advisory). The SW graduate student organization (GSO) membership recommends students from our various programs (part-time, full-time, advanced standing) to serve on these committees. I meet with students once a semester for "Conversations with Vicky to hear what is on their minds, recommended changes, etc. These are scheduled at times to hit all program types and student cohorts. This semester I will go to part-time classes in the evening for 20 minutes (with permission of instructor) and per recommendation of GSO. We have yet to find a good way to get part-time student feedback. I also meet with the GSO President twice a month to talk about what is on students' minds, program feedback, concerns, etc. The GSO president also comes to beginning of first department meeting of the month to talk with faculty. Students from all departments also serve on college level committees.

16. We have one student representative from each of our degree programs (one BSW student and one MSW student) who attend our monthly departmental meetings. They are active contributors to the agenda and meeting discussion. We ask for their input on other matters during the year via surveys as well. For example, when trying to determine what courses should be offered over the summer.

17. BSW- There is an student/faculty liaison selected by our BSW student organization who attends program meetings, dismissed of course for any student or personal matters.

MSW- has the same option, but meetings often conflict with field, so it has been hard to get a student rep to these meetings. We also host "town hall" meetings with the program director once a semester, and this have been very helpful for getting input from students, as well as for sharing rational around current policies that they may not be aware of.

18. Good question! We include student representatives on our standing committees. This includes committees on curriculum, policy, and even the general social work faculty meeting. The students are asked to "sign up" at the beginning of the year if they are interested in participation. Students do not vote on issues, but rather are expected to share information with their student colleagues and serve as partially a pipeline of communication.

Occasionally, there are more sensitive discussions that require an "executive session" of the committees, held without students present.

I would look forward to hearing what you find out about other models.