

Responses to UNCG 2010 Survey on Center Policies

Beginning in 2008, the Network began looking at the kinds of administrative principles and standards that could be developed to guide the work of member Centers in order to promote accountability, understanding, and confidence in their programs. We also began to examine the principles that need to underlie collaborative governance practices.

With leadership from Jill Purdy, U of Washington Milgard School of Business, descriptions of the kinds of standards organizations commonly adopt to guide their activities were developed and categorized. UNCG held an October teleconference during which we discussed both them and the principles that should guide the use of collaborative governance processes.

Following that, we developed a survey to gather information and examples from member centers to use in formulating a set of principles to set before UNCG members for their consideration. We received responses from 13 UNCG member centers. What follows is a tally of those responses together with examples of the kinds of principles and standards they have adopted and the mechanisms they have developed to implement them.

Openness/transparency with regard to information about mission, activities, administration and finances – Yes – 6 No - 7

MODR - MODR is a statutory state-funded institute and as such we are subject to the state's public records laws (M.G.L. c. 66, s 10) and open meeting laws (M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 11A½, M.G.L. c. 39, s. 23B).

Cal State - With regard to the CA Public Information and Federal Freedom of Information Acts: In one of our projects, a stakeholder group demanded all of our correspondence with our client (a public agency) and they began legal procedures to get us to release all correspondence. Some of this was of a confidential nature and we told them that we would give them all correspondence (including tons of e-mail) except that which was confidential between the Center and the public agency client. They initiated a law suit. The University's legal department got involved. They did not want us to release anything that we perceived as confidential as that would have been a bad precedent for the whole 23 campus system. As our state public disclosure law (the law that the stakeholder group was using) has provisions for maintaining confidentiality when appropriate, University lawyers believed that we had an air-tight case. In the end, after a few initial court filings, the stakeholder group dropped the whole thing. The University lawyers considered it a harassment legal action without merit.

Washington State - We are part of a public institution and subject to Washington State's sunshine laws. At the same we do have policy regarding confidentiality and our clients.

NC State - not so much a policy as simply the way we do business, both because of practice but also as an educational institution. Many aspects of the way universities conduct business are made available to the larger public.

Conflict of interest stds: Yes – 5 No-7

MODR - MODR is a statutory state-funded institute and as such we are subject to the state's conflict of interest laws (M.G.L. c. 268A)

Washington State - Our policies call for disclosure of potential, real or possibility perceived conflict of interests..... we also fall under the conflict of interest status for Washington public employees

NC State - signed annually

www.ncsu.edu/policies/governance_admin/gov_gen/REG01.25.1.php

Confidentiality: Yes – 8 No - 4

MODR - Attached is MODR's press policy which covers communications with the news media and references the state's mediation confidentiality law (G.L. c. 233, s. 23C).

Washington State - We have worked with our Assistant Attorney General to protect our clients confidentially... it is handled through privacy associated with "work product as part of applied research being conducted by the institution"

NC State - confidentiality in limited cases since NCSU is a public institution. See: www.fis.ncsu.edu/appendices/confidentiality%20guide.html

Ethical Stds: Yes – 8 No- 5

Georgia State - IOA standards of practice where applicable. Although we are not subject to them, we adhere to the Georgia Ethical Standards for Mediators when in a mediator-like role to the extent applicable

MODR - Rule 9 Ethical Standards of the MA Supreme Judicial Court Uniform Rules on Dispute Resolution
ABA Model Standards of Conduct for Mediators
IAP2 Code of Ethics for Public Participation Practitioners

NC State - OEO, State Government Ethics Act,

http://www.ncsu.edu/equal_op/OEO_Ethical_Standards.pdf

Practice Stds: Yes – 7 No - 6

Georgia State – International Ombudsman Association (IOA) - <http://www.ombudsassociation.org/standards/>

MODR - Rules on Dispute Resolution

- U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution Roster Qualification Standards for environmental and public policy practitioners
- International Association of Facilitators Foundational Facilitator Competencies

Hawaii - We have a charter of good practice that was never formally adopted.

Washington State - We have adopted our own Canons of Practice – see <http://www.cahe.wsu.edu/fs/cop.htm>

Faculty or Student Codes: Yes - 7 No - 4

Georgia State - Faculty and students are subject to the applicable codes of conduct in force in the College in which we function.

University prescribed/defined stds: Yes – 6 No - 5

Georgia State - There are certain state-imposed legal standards regarding record keeping and public access to meetings to which we must adhere.

MODR - Administration & Finance Policies – budgets, financial accounts & reports, effort certification, procurement & contracting, travel, record-keeping, reimbursements, etc.

Human Resource Policies – hiring, performance management, benefits, timekeeping, time off, etc.

Communications – branding, logos, formats for external communication materials

Wyoming - Accounting standards and required submission of an annual report, including budget information to the university's Office of Academic Affairs.

NC State – Most of the policies described above are driven by NC State.

Washington State - We are required to practice all of the good conduct standards for our interactions with students, faculty etc as well as good fiscal management practices etc.

Colorado State - The university has general conflict of interest standards, but they don't govern our center. They might impact us more if we did more contract work.

Strictures: Yes – 1 No - 11

Washington State – None, except we can't violate the "faculty manual"

NC State - There could be, especially if those standards conflict with NC law/statutes.

NOTES:

Hawaii - UH had an ombuds office that was headed by a former PCR director. It had all of the above. However, it was recently closed for budgetary reasons by the university.

Cal State – the Center for Collaborative Policy developed three documents.

The first document was recently developed to make sure they are maintaining standards as they accept and/ or continue with projects. It is a Draft and they invite feedback. What precipitated this document was a fear of getting involved with projects inconsistent with the Center's mission due to the state's fiscal condition and the overall recession.. It provides that if there is doubt about an incoming or existing project, the practitioner has to elevate the issue to the Center' leadership.

The second and third documents are sample Teaming Agreements that are executed whenever they are a subcontractor to a private consulting firm. They have found they need to spell out their practice and needs with contractors who are profit driven, not purpose driven. The first Teaming Agreement is tougher; the second one more tactful. The second is for firms with whom they have a long standing relationship and trust.

They have a document for training practitioners called Conditions Needed to Sustain a Collaborative Policy Process that can be found at:

<http://www.csus.edu/ccp/collaborative/sustain.stm>

They spend a fair amount of time taking about their standards/ principle in monthly Professional Development Seminars for their practitioners. It is the way they promote and deepen their mission and internal culture. Since they have 20 employees and an equal number of consultants, they pay lots of attention to their culture. In the end, they think their culture is what supports our standards and principles.

They have monthly 4 hour Center leadership meetings where many of these issues are discussed. When necessary, they convene the whole organization to talk about issues regarding standards/ principles.