



**Academic Senate Council Minutes**  
**Aug. 29th, 2008, 2:30-4:00 p.m.**  
**Room 5305**

X	<b>John Veres</b> Biology	X	<b>Kevin Bontenbal</b> Curriculum Comm. Chair	X	<b>Steve Leone</b> President	X	<b>Peet Cocke</b> Fine Arts
	<b>VACANT</b> N. County at-large		<b>Jani Johnson</b> Physical Education		<b>Lisa Mifsud</b> Social Science	X	<b>Beth-Ann Dumas</b> Vice-President
X	<b>Donna Bowers</b> ESL		<b>Jen Sanders</b> Math	X	<b>Patrick Len</b> Physical Sciences		<b>Carina Love</b> Learning Resources
X	<b>Allison Merzon</b> CCFT President		<b>VACANT</b> Part-time at-large		<b>Tricia Bramsen</b> Human Development	X	<b>Andrea Devitt</b> Counseling
	<b>VACANT</b> AS/DSPS	X	<b>Jack Sullivan</b> Business	X	<b>Toni Torrey</b> Nursing	X	<b>Michael Walker</b> Performing Arts
X	<b>Matt Vasques</b> Lang. & Communication		<b>Gary Villa</b> Engineering & Tech.	X	<b>Peter Dill</b> Full-time at-large	X	<b>Sean Boling</b> English

**I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**II. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Orientation**

(Leone/Dumas // 50 min.)

**Background:** The purpose of this orientation is to review the role of the Academic Senate in college governance at Cuesta (BP 2305), the role of the Senate leadership, the consensus model of discussion on the Senate Council (the use of cards), and the responsibilities of the Senate Representatives.

**Action Item:** The Academic Senate President and Vice-President will give a brief presentation and training for the Senate Representatives on the Senate Council.

**Steve discussed the role of the Academic Senate as it has been defined through Title V, Ed Code, and our own Board policy. The subject of Senate/Union relations was also briefly discussed. Beth-Ann summarized the philosophy of the consensus discussion and decision-making model used by the Council and the meanings and use of the colored card system.**

**2. Round Table Discussion**

(All // 25 min.)

**Background:** Given the change of Senate leadership, the Senate President will facilitate an open discussion of topics for the coming year.

**Action Item:** The Senate Council will itemize, prioritize, and discuss issues for the coming year.

**The Council brainstormed a list of topics that the Senate may address in the upcoming year. There was no time to prioritize. See the attached page of topics, titled "Roundtable Discussion 8/29/08."**

**3. Prerequisite Enforcement**

(Leone // 10 min.)

**Background:** Banner is not currently enforcing prerequisites during enrollment.

**Proposal:** The Academic Senate will work with various campus organizations to ensure that prerequisite enforcement is implemented by Spring registration in Banner to replicate the enforcement practices of Spring 2008.

**Consensus was not reached with the proposal as written.**

**4. Use of Academic Senate office**

(Leone // 10 min.)

**Background:** Allison Merzon, CCFT president, would like to use half of the Academic Senate office as the official CCFT office. Most unions have dedicated union office space that is used to hold office hours, keep records, etc. At many campuses, the union rents off-campus space for its union office. However, there is no off-campus site close enough for CCFT leadership to use regularly.

**Proposal:** The Academic Senate supports the use of the Academic Senate office by the CCFT President.

**Proposal modified:** The Academic Senate supports the use of the Academic Senate office by the CCFT officers.

**Consensus was reached.**

### **5. Name Change for Sizzler**

**(Leone // 5 min.)**

**Background:** Sizzler was the name of the restaurant where meetings between the A. S. President, A. S. Vice-President, and the President/Superintendent took place. Since this restaurant is no longer a meeting place for these meetings, a name change is prudent.

**Proposal:** The Academic Senate supports the following change to the name of the Sizzler council: “Dialectic with Dave.”

**Consensus was not reached.**

### **III. SENATOR CHECKLIST**

**(Leone // 5 min.)**

- Faculty Manual: Please inform your division that the faculty manual needs major revisions. It was not updated over the summer due to the immensity of the project. A proposal to create a joint Academic Senate/CCFT task force will be included on an upcoming Senate council agenda.
- At the next Senate meeting, we will need to determine whether or not to appoint a part-time rep. for this year and next or to hold a special election.
- Other: **On a future agenda will be an item regarding changing the all faculty listserves to announcement only with approval by the President’s office and moving all other dialogue to myCuesta. Please get feedback from your division constituents and be prepared to make a decision about this issue at a future Academic Council meeting.**

#### **IV. AGENDA BUILDER/SIZZLER ITEMS**

Are there any items/issues that anyone has that he/she feels need to be on the Senate Council agenda for discussion, or that need to be taken to Sizzler for answers/clarification?

**There was no time for reports.**

#### **STANDING REPORTS**

**(Approx. 15 min.)**

1. Sizzler (3 minutes)
2. Curriculum
3. Faculty Professional Development (3 minutes)
4. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment
5. Minors in the Classroom (3 minutes)
6. CCFT (2 minutes)
7. Planning and Budget (3 minutes)

#### **SPECIAL REPORTS**

**(Approx. 5 min.)**

No reports were scheduled.

**THE NEXT MEETING IS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup>**

## Roundtable Discussion 8/29/08

### Potential Senate Issues

#### **Joint with CCFT**

- Distance Education, evaluations and process
- Faculty hiring procedures
- Sabbatical process and Chair report
- Committee obligations—tracking form?
- Relationship between Flex and Professional Development
- SLOs (Student Learning Outcomes) and Evaluations, linked to Accreditation
- Orientation for new hires and for the evaluation process run by faculty
- Faculty manual task force
- Computing support for faculty
- Continue to host joint A.S./CCFT social functions

#### **Senate Committees/Task Forces**

- Minors—petition & process
- Program review—new committee? Include in PPRC?
- Equivalency—minimum quals.
- FPDC (Faculty Professional Development committee)—appoint chair, clarify role
- Constitution & Bylaws revision, including term dates
- Standing accreditation/self study committee
- New Faculty Orientation taskforce or committee—opening day, etc.

#### **Shared Governance**

- Shared understanding—Senate perspective vs. attorney invited by district
- Senate orientation to Cabinet
- Committee structures and processes
- Program development & approval

#### **Senate Business**

- Approval of revised constitution & bylaws
- Website & myCuesta
- Senate dues & payroll form

#### **Other/Campus-wide**

- Discussion of Shared governance / Dr. Pelham's communication structure
- Listserv announce only, move everything else to myCuesta
- Pre-req. enforcement
- SLOA Liaison
- Building construction near 6100 classrooms
- Parking congestion
- FSAs (faculty service areas)
- Move registration to May to help with enrollment

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
<b>AUG</b>	18 SEMESTER BEGINS	19	20	21	22	23	
	25	26	27	28	29	30 <b>DEADLINES:</b> ADD CLASSES DROP CLASSES W/PARTIAL REFUND*	
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	1 <b>HOLIDAY: LABOR DAY</b>	2	3	4	5	6	
	8	9	10	11	12 <b>DEADLINES:</b> SUBMIT WRITTEN REFUND REQUEST-CLASSES DROPPED BY DEADLINES* 	13 <b>DEADLINES:</b> DROP NO "W" PASS/NO PASS CREDIT BY EXAM 2 UNIT INDP. STUDY	
	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	22	23	24	25	26	27	
	29	30	1	2	3 <b>DEADLINE: 1 UNIT I.S.</b> 	4	
<b>OCT</b>	6	7	8	9 <b>FLEX DAY</b>	10 <b>FLEX DAY</b>	11	
	13	14	15	16	17	18	
	19 <b>DEADLINE:</b> ADDRESS UPDATE APPLY SP/SUM 2009 GRAD PRIORITY REG .5 UNIT INDP. STUDY	20	21	22	23	24	25
	27	28 <b>DEADLINE:</b> RETURN/TITLE IV FUNDS 	29	30	31	1	
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	3	4	5	6	7	8 <b>DROP DEADLINE: "W"</b>	
	10 <b>HOLIDAY VETERANS DAY</b>	11	12	13	14	15	
	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	24	25	26 <b>FLEX DAY</b>	27 <b>HOLIDAY</b>	28 <b>HOLIDAY</b>	29 <b>HOLIDAY</b>	
<b>DECEMBER</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	8	9	10	11	12	13 <b>FINALS</b>	
	15 ←	16 <b>FINAL EXAMS WEEK</b>	17 →	18 →	19 <b>SEMESTER ENDS</b>	20	
	22	23	24 <b>HOLIDAY</b>	25 <b>HOLIDAY</b>	26	27	
	29	30	31	1 <b>HOLIDAY</b>	2	3	

**SYMBOL KEY**

- Planning & Budget meetings (5402): 2:30-4 p.m.
- Shared Governance Council meetings (5402): 1:45-3:45 p.m.
- Board of Trustees Council meetings (5401): 2:30-5 p.m.
- CCFT Executive Board meetings: 2:30-4:00 p.m.
- CCFT Council of Representative meetings: 3-4:30 p.m.

- Academic Senate Council meetings (5305): 2:30-4 p.m.
- Senate Leadership meetings (Lib. Staff Room): 2-3 p.m.
- Sizzler (Dr. Pelham's office): 10-11:30 a.m.
- VPSL meetings (Dr. Greiner's office): 9-10 a.m.

# Defining And Understanding The Role Of The Academic Senate

## BOARD POLICY AND REGULATIONS

The "10+1" Areas, according to Board Policy (BP) 2305:

### Rely Primarily

According to BP 2305, the Board of Trustees will rely primarily on the advice of the Academic Senate in:

1. Curriculum, including prerequisites
2. Degree and certificate requirements
3. Grading policies
4. Standards regarding student preparation and success
5. College governance structures, as related to faculty roles
6. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes
7. Policies for faculty professional development activities

If a Senate recommendation in these areas is not accepted, the Board of Trustees or the Superintendent/President as the Board's designee, shall promptly communicate the reasons in writing to the Academic Senate upon request.

### Mutual Agreement

According to BP 2305, the Board of Trustees will come to mutual agreement by written resolution, regulation or policy, with the Academic Senate in:

1. Educational program development
2. Processes for institutional planning and budget development
3. Processes for program review
4. Policies regarding student preparation and success
5. Other academic professional matters as mutually agreed

### **Delegation of Authority**

The intent of the law and local policy is to assure "effective participation" of all relevant parties, and to ensure that the local governing board engages in "collegial consultation" with the academic senate on matters that are academic and professional in nature. Often called the "shared governance" policy, that term does not appear in statute and, in fact, may contribute to misunderstandings; some administrators or other affected parties misinterpret the regulations to call for equal voice or mandatory consensus on all matters, even when those are academic and professional matters over which the faculty have privilege and primacy. "Effective participation" means that affected parties must be afforded opportunity to review and comment upon recommendations, proposals, etc.; having given due and reasonable consideration to those comments, however, the academic senate shall retain its primacy in the "10 + 1" items noted earlier on the chart and need not adopt, accommodate, or reach consensus on concerns raised by other constituent groups.

Our local policy is important for us and our senators to review annually so that all understand which of the 10 +1 items of academic and professional nature are defined as "rely primarily" and/or which are "mutually agreed." While the concepts of mutual agreement have their genesis in labor law and hence are more restrictive, there are significant differences between consequential application of each methodology.

If, for example, your governing board has elected to "rely primarily" upon the recommendation of your local senate for one or more of the 10 + 1 items, the board must ordinarily accept the senate's recommendations, EXCEPT when "exceptional circumstances and compelling reasons" may exist. *Participating Effectively in District and College Governance*, a document written by a joint task force of representatives of the California Community College Trustees (CCCT), the Chief Executive Officers of the California Community Colleges (CEOCCC) and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges,

makes the following point about these two concepts, "exceptional circumstances" and "compelling reasons":

The regulations do not define the terms . . . and these terms are not intended to have a legal definition outside the context of this law. . . . These terms mean that . . . in instances where a recommendation is not accepted[,] the reasons for the board's decision must be in writing and based on a clear and substantive rationale which puts the explanation for the decision in an accurate, appropriate, and relevant context. (p. 4, Question 12) [Note: for a full copy of these discussions, please visit the "[Scenarios to Illustrate Effective Participation in District and College Governance](#)" document available on the Academic Senate Website.]

On the other hand, where the board has adopted a policy of mutual agreement on any or all of the 10 + 1 items, the board may not act without having reached agreement with the senate, except when the existing policy "exposes the district to legal liability or causes substantial fiscal hardship." In these circumstances, a board may act without reaching mutual agreement provided that it has made a good faith effort to reach agreement and has "compelling legal, fiscal or organizational reasons" to act without waiting any longer for agreement. (p. 5, Question 14)

As these matters continue to be confronted, and as districts' nuanced interpretations of these regulations come to light, these topics are routinely addressed at the Academic Senate's annual Leadership Institute, as well as in many publications available on the statewide Academic Senate Website: <http://www.asccc.org>.

#### **For More Information:**

Cuesta College Academic Senate: <http://www.ccsenate.org>  
California CC State Senate: <http://www.asccc.org>

### **TITLE 5 (excerpts):** Selected Passages Specifying the Roles of the Academic Senate

#### **SECTION 53200—DEFINITIONS**

Academic Senate means an organization whose primary function is to make recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters.

Academic and Professional matters means the following policy development and implementation matters:

1. Curriculum, including establishing prerequisites.
2. Degree and certificate requirements.
3. Grading policies.
4. Educational program development.
5. Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success.
6. College governance structures, as related to faculty roles.
7. Faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes.
8. Policies for faculty professional development activities.
9. Processes for program review.
10. Processes for institutional planning and budget development.
11. Other academic and professional matters as mutually agreed upon.

Consult Collegially means that the district governing board shall develop policies on academic and professional matters through either or both of the following:

1. Rely primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate, OR
2. The governing board, or its designees, and the academic senate shall reach mutual agreement by written resolution, regulation, or policy of the governing board effectuating such recommendations.

### **SECTION 53203—POWERS**

A) The governing board shall adopt policies for the appropriate delegation of authority and responsibility to its college academic senate.

B) In adopting the policies described in section (a), the governing board or designees, shall consult collegially with the academic senate.

C) While consulting collegially, the academic senate shall retain the right to meet with or appear before the governing board with respect to its views and recommendations. In addition, after consultation with the administration, the academic senate may present its recommendations to the governing board.

D) The governing board shall adopt procedures for responding to recommendations of the academic senate that incorporate the following:

1. When the board elects to rely primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate, the recommendation of the senate will normally be accepted, and only in exceptional circumstances and for compelling reasons will the recommendations not be accepted.

2. When the board elects to provide for mutual agreement with the academic senate, and an agreement has not been reached, existing policy shall remain in effect unless such policy exposes the district to legal liability or fiscal hardship. In cases where there is no existing policy, or when legal liability or fiscal hardship requires existing policy to be changed, the board may act, after a good faith effort to reach agreement, only for compelling legal, fiscal, or organizational reasons.

E) An academic senate may assume such responsibilities and perform such functions as may be delegated to it by the governing board.

F) The appointment of faculty members to serve on college committees shall be made, after consultation with the chief executive officer or designee, by the academic senate.

### **SECTION 55002—STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR COURSES AND CLASSES**

(1) Curriculum Committee. The college and/or district curriculum committee recommending the course shall be established by the mutual agreement of the college and/or district administration and the academic senate. The committee shall be either a committee of the academic senate or a committee that includes faculty and is otherwise comprised in a way that is mutually agreeable to the college and/or district administration and the academic senate.

### **EDUCATION CODE (excerpts):** Selected Passages Specifying the Roles of the Academic Senate

#### **SECTION 70902 (b)(7) GOVERNING BOARDS; DELEGATION**

The governing board of each district shall establish procedures to ensure faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to express their opinions at the campus level, and to ensure that these opinions are given every reasonable consideration, and the right of academic senates to assume primary responsibility for making recommendations in the areas of curriculum and academic standards.

#### **SECTION 87359 (b) WAIVER OF MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS; EQUIVALENCY**

The agreed upon process shall include reasonable procedures to ensure that the governing board relies primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate. The process shall further require that the governing board provide the academic senate with an opportunity to present its views to the governing board before the board makes a determination.

#### SECTION 87360 (b) HIRING CRITERIA

Hiring criteria, policies, and procedures for new faculty members shall be developed and agreed upon jointly by the representatives of the governing board and the academic senate.

#### SECTION 87458 (a) ADMINISTRATIVE RETREAT RIGHTS

The agreed upon process shall include reasonable procedures to ensure that the governing board relies primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate. The process shall further require that the governing board provide the academic senate with an opportunity to present its views to the governing board before the board makes a determination.

#### SECTION 87610.1(a) TENURE EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The faculty's exclusive representative shall consult with the academic senate prior to engaging in collective bargaining regarding those procedures.

#### SECTION 87663 (f) EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The faculty's exclusive representative shall consult with the academic senate prior to engaging in collective bargaining regarding those procedures.

#### SECTION 87743.2 FACULTY SERVICE AREAS

The exclusive representative shall consult with the academic senate in developing its proposals with regards to faculty service areas.

## **SENATE/UNION RELATIONS**

The academic senate and our campus' collective bargaining agent (union) work together for the benefit of faculty, but questions often arise concerning the roles of the respective organizations. Put in its simplest terms, the academic senate represents the faculty in academic and professional matters, and the collective bargaining agent represents the faculty regarding working conditions.

More specifically, the academic senate represents the faculty in the eleven specific areas defined by Title 5 §53200-204. In addition, the Education Code assigns myriad additional responsibilities to academic senates, such as minimum qualifications and equivalency processes, faculty hiring, faculty evaluation and tenure review, administrative retreat rights, and faculty service areas. The collective bargaining agent represents the faculty in such areas as workload, assignment, working hours, academic calendar, and salary and benefits. Typically, the role of the collective bargaining agent is evident in the agreement between the union and the district.

Do these roles overlap? Yes, and in a variety of ways. For example, "policies for faculty professional development" is one of the academic and professional matters assigned to the academic senate by Title 5. But many collective bargaining agreements also address such areas, particularly with respect to flex service – though the focus might tend more toward the legal aspects (service obligations, etc.) Likewise, sabbatical leaves (terms, application process, requirements, pay) are typically addressed in the collective bargaining agreement. However, as faculty professional development is among the academic and professional matters, some local senates elect the sabbatical committee chair and may appoint committee members, which has the effect of making the sabbatical committee a senate committee. A reminder: having a senate committee's status protected by the contract does not make it any less a senate committee. The contract language would ensure that the local senate would retain its right to appoint and report and to render decisions.

These are only two examples of how the local academic senate and the collective bargaining agent commingle their responsibilities. Those are further entangled as, the Education Code requires that bargaining agents consult with the academic senate's prior to engaging in bargaining on evaluation, tenure review processes and faculty service areas. Additionally, the bargaining units should consult with

the senate prior to negotiations to determine if there are additional areas of mutual interest and concern to be placed on the table. Some senates and unions may wish to establish joint committees or issues-oriented task forces to exchange information (see Appendix C). Other useful suggestions are contained in the Academic Senate paper, *Developing A Model for Effective Senate/Union Relations* (1996). Remember that each organization has its primary area of responsibility and focus, and that each may (and likely will) approach issues differently. Remember, too, that each organization represents the same group of people. Faculty interests are best served when the two faculty representative groups work cooperatively with each other."

#### SOURCE

"Local Senates: Codes and Regulations." Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. June 1998. 8 Aug.

2008 <<http://www.asccc.org/LocalSenates/Cr.htm>>.

# CONSENSUS

Cuesta College Academic Senate

## Philosophy of Consensus

Groups often make the best decisions when they are cooperating/collaborating together, when each individual holds power for their constituents (rather than the majority), when members feel heard, when all are involved in the discussion (rather than a few who dominate), and when there aren't "winners" and "losers." The consensus model reflects a collaborative approach to communication/discussion rather than an adversarial (for or against) competitive approach. Too often, unusual or creative solutions are overlooked when a Roberts Rules approach polarizes discussion into "debate." Consensus does not mean unanimity; strong disagreements often lead to creative solutions. In *limited circumstances* (See Vote as Back-up Decision Method) when consensus is blocked, the Senate uses a 2/3 vote.

## Philosophy of Colored Card Consensus Model

The particular colored card model used for discussion and decision-making in the Senate leads to a greater understanding of the proposal through its prioritizing of questions for clarification AND largely prevents domination, cross-talk, and interruptions. The process of proposal modification resulting from expressed reservations/concerns often leads to even better proposals and consequently, better decisions.

Any Senate Council member *except the President or Vice President* who understands the cards can facilitate a meeting (recognize who may speak when depending on cards held up). Leaders in any group already yield more power/influence by virtue of their position; they should be part of the discussion, but should **never** hold facilitative power. The facilitator is recognized by the group as the sole person who decides who will speak when. She/he keeps track of who speaks in what order, prioritizing questions above comments and allowing those who have not been heard from to speak before others who have been more vocal.

## Proposal Driven Agendas

Specific proposals make it easier to focus discussion. Proposals are submitted to Senate leadership for inclusion in the agenda. Often, Proposals create a solution to a problem or suggest a course of action so discussion at meetings is more productive than it would be with only a topic or question as an agenda item. During discussion, proposals can be withdrawn, the initiator can give permission for modification, or a proposal can be non-consensused (it fails) and a new one offered.

## Discussion and Decision Cards

### Discussion

Yellow: I have a question. This card is used for questions of clarification, to better understand the proposal or to obtain information needed to make a more informed decision regarding the proposal. Therefore, these cards have priority over the others.

**Comments disguised as questions are still comments—not questions!** (You know what these are—“why don’t we...? shouldn’t we...? Wouldn’t it make more sense to...?”).

Green: I can answer that question. This card is used to answer someone’s question.

Blue: I have a comment. Use this card to express your opinion, suggestions, information you have etc...

Orange: Someone has not been heard; I’ve noticed the facilitator has missed their card for some time now.

Red: STOP; something is wrong; we are off track, out of time, or the discussion is becoming too emotional/heated. Anyone can use this card at any time.

Decision—a proposal has passed when each member is showing a green, blue, or orange card. A proposal is blocked if one or more members display a red card.

Green: I agree.

Blue: I’m neutral.

Orange: I have some reservations, but I will not block consensus. The orange card allows members to “stand aside.” That is, they do not wish to prevent the group from moving forward, but want their reservations to be known. Most of the time, an orange card allows an individual to be heard regarding their concerns **or** results in a modified proposal to address the concerns. Individuals feel heard and valued. This process often results in better decisions and a more cohesive, cooperative relationship.

Red: I am blocking consensus. You must explain your reasons for blocking consensus. If you refuse, the red card is invalid. Red cards should only be used when an individual strongly believes there will be serious consequences for her/his constituents if the group moves forward with the proposal.

**PERIOD OF REFLECTION:** After a member has communicated their concerns or their reasons for blocking, a brief period of reflection ensues and members are asked if anyone will change their card to reflect a different decision.

## Vote as Backup Decision Method

The Senate allows for a 2/3 vote to be held *in some circumstances* when a proposal is blocked/has failed. If a vote is used *every time* someone blocks consensus, individuals, in effect, no longer have power. The power is with the majority over the minority. Consequently, a group is not as motivated to try and meet the concerns of the blocker because they know it will go to a vote anyway, and he/she will “lose.”

Senate leadership (President and vice president) can determine if a proposal that has been blocked is subject to a 2/3 vote. Voting as backup method for consensus is only included as a component in the decision making process for the following two reasons:

1. To prevent an individual from abusing his/her individual power to block proposals. Abuse includes someone who uses the red card indiscriminately, uses it for nearly every proposal, uses it for personal reasons (e.g., a personal agenda directed towards another), or refuses to offer an explanation for its use.
2. When the group must make a decision about a particular issue and can not render no judgment.

## Consensus (C) vs. Roberts Rules (RR)

\*RR may be appropriate for other groups and circumstances. The following explains why the Academic Senate Council uses a consensus model.

### Shared Power vs. Majority Power

*C:* Each individual holds an equal amount of decision making power. The group is motivated to focus on an individual's concerns/reservations to create a solution that is acceptable to all because each person has the power to block a proposal. This method encourages collaboration rather than competition to get enough votes to "win."

*RR:* Power lies always with the majority. The minority is often ignored because they don't have enough votes to win; they can't affect the decision and so their concerns/reservations are inconsequential.

Members with similar agendas or viewpoints often form voting blocks and can win consistently.

### Collaboration vs. Adversarial Communication

*C:* A group "discusses" the proposal, working together, considering multiple viewpoints and opinions to make the best possible decision or to create the best possible proposal. At any time, questions for clarification or to seek information are prioritized so that all members can make an informed decision. Good consensus relies heavily on questioning and problem solving, not good debating.

*RR:* Communication about a motion is called "debate." After the member who initiates the motion speaks, the Chair asks for a "rebuttal." This immediately creates a confrontational/adversarial system of communication dividing members into opposing camps and encouraging members to speak either for or against the motion. Individuals are more likely to become entrenched as passionate defenders of their "side" and less likely to consider other points of view.

### Greater Participation vs. Dominance

*C:* Since even a lone dissenting viewpoint is important (principle of equal individual power), the group listens to any member who expresses a minority viewpoint. Group members feel heard and consequently, valued. Individuals who know they will be heard participate more. The card system and a skilled facilitator prevent one or two individuals from dominating a meeting. This method also provides a check and balance for the potential abuse of a group leader who may dominate or recognize/allow only certain members to speak.

*RR:* Once the majority viewpoint is clear and members know there are enough votes for a motion to pass or fail, many group members feel there is no point to speaking. The adversarial/for or against communication method leads more often to emotionally charged language and anger which discourages some members from speaking. It is easier for individuals to dominate meetings and for leaders to abuse their power by acting as Chair to recognize only certain members to speak.

### Cohesion vs. Discord

*C:* When group members have equal individual decision making power, discuss proposals collaboratively, participate fully, feel comfortable dissenting, and don't "lose" each time a decision is made, group cohesion is high. Additionally, more group members will accept responsibility for the group's decision; the decision is stronger to outside entities as well, since all had to support a proposal for it to pass.

*RR:* When communication is adversarial much of the time, when members form blocks to "win," often don't participate in the "debate," and "lose" each time a vote is taken, discord among group members results.

Also, group members are less likely to accept responsibility for a group's decision because she/he "didn't vote for it." The groups' decision is not as strong to outside entities when the vote is close.