

test of time, including accreditation visits as well as institutional strategic planning exercises. It has also weathered challenges beyond the library's control (COVID-19), changes in student population, and those trials internal to libraries, such as major collection-review projects, a library ILS migration, and staff reorganizations and resignations (117).

Though this model certainly requires dedication and time, its beauty lies in its adaptability: by focusing on assessment, observation, and analysis, it allows for impactful adaptation to realistic behaviors and challenges in the library environment. Stephen cites it as assisting her in becoming a more effective and innovative leader and notes that it allows the library to intentionally celebrate its and its employees' accomplishments. Along with the author's guidance and experience in developing a strategic plan, she also provides additional resources, including detailed sample report outlines and a bibliography for referencing.

When asked to review what appeared to be yet another book about dusty library strategic planning methods, I must confess that I inwardly groaned. However, by the third page of the introduction, my attitude had completely shifted due to the author's engaging tone; her optimistic, pragmatic, and, at times, even humorous view of the strategic planning process; and the innovative, adaptive, and inclusive new strategic planning model that she has developed. This model, which requires trust and commitment from all parties, will be immensely useful to libraries of all sizes, staffing models, and types (public, academic, or special), particularly to library directors but also to managers and directors at all levels. I am hopeful that it will be incorporated at my own institution. —*Julene Jones, Director of Library Assessment and Organizational Effectiveness, University of Kentucky Libraries*

Opening Ceremony: Inviting Inclusion into University Governance, Kathryn Johnson Gindlesparger, University of Minnesota Press, 2023, 9781517915926, softcover, 96 pages, \$10.00, 9781452969947, eBook, \$4.95.



Governance: "The office, function, or power of governing; authority or permission to govern."¹

To govern: "To hold or exercise personal authority over (a person, esp. a child); to exert proper or fitting control over; to discipline."²

Kathryn Johnson Gindlesparger is an associate professor of writing and rhetoric. Her recently published work *Opening Ceremony: Inviting Inclusion into University Governance* is part of the University of Minnesota Press series "Forerunners: Ideas First." The book is written from her perspective as a faculty member at an institution recently merged with a more prominent university. She seeks to understand the role of governance in an institution when someone first learns about something new to the organization. The book expands on her previously published article "Trust on Display: The Epideictic Potential of University Governance" in the journal *College English*. Rhetoric is at the heart of her thesis. It combines a historical exploration of how academic institutions form themselves into organizations that operate distinctively with a reflective examination that seeks to move the reader toward a more inclusive approach to institutional governance.

There is no singular definition of university governance within higher education. If you surveyed ten different institutions, ten distinct institutional definitions would undoubtedly emerge. If you surveyed the faculty at those respective institutions, they too would have definitions born out of their academic histories and experiences within current and past universities. Saying this is simply stating the obvious, but it is worth noting by way of emphasizing the issue's complexity. Gindlesparger's work adds to the continuous governance discussion.

University governance is a complicated topic in academia and is often rife with contention and disagreement over its definition and implementation. No two institutions are alike, and as such no two perspectives on governance are alike. Even within my own institution's faculty senate, shared governance is a central meeting theme. Do we fully agree on what it means? Ours, too, is a consolidated university like the author's, joined to be amicable, but even more than a decade later we are still sorting out the goods, and it only sometimes looks pretty.

Opening Ceremony is organized in a thoughtful manner. The author introduces the topic and uses several examples from universities entrenched in the issue of governance debates and what the AAUP says about these issues. She argues that institutional values intrinsically link with their efforts toward shared governance. This discussion has continued since the establishment of higher education in Colonial America. Gindlesparger's thesis contends that shared governance is ceremonial but also attempts to recruit newcomers to the work. The author gives the reader necessary background and the historical context for the discussion, devoting special attention to understanding the role of a charter in the life of a university. She then asks how faculty might locate sound examples of governance and uses institutional celebrations through monuments as a way to understand how institutions choose to celebrate and recognize those they identify as model members.

The discussions about the history and theory of governance help clarify why it is an essential topic for debate. More importantly, they are a good foundation for the chapter that discusses the practical implications of governance. Gindlesparger's third chapter provides three scenarios directly connected to policy development. They all have their unique factors, but each explains how complex governance is when related to day-to-day institutional operations in a real-world environment. Once developed, who owns the policy and why does ownership matter? These practical questions have significant implications. She uses invention and revision as the steps of the process to consider when trying to understand policy. Policy development is not simply ruling action in an academic game. These policies often impact the day-to-day lives of students, faculty, and staff. Southern Illinois University Carbondale's story of creating the nation's first university AIDS policy is a practical illustration highlighting how personal policy can be.

No discussion of faculty governance is complete without *Robert's Rules of Order*, which is undoubtedly a foundational piece of governance. Nevertheless, the author makes a solid argument that perhaps we need to rethink our overreliance on it and instead look for ways to have dialogue in meetings that allow for the development of ideas in natural discussion rather than through procedural minutia. Gindlesparger makes an intriguing argument for rethinking how committees govern themselves within a spirit of great inclusivity.

The author's work is well crafted and communicates its themes and key ideas clearly and concisely. At times, specific examples would have benefited the reader; for instance, in the chapter discussing *Robert's Rules of Order*, she makes several strong claims about the rules but fails to provide specific examples from those rules to support those claims. Overall, it is well

organized and easy to follow. It would be an excellent resource for someone who spends a lot of time thinking about university governance issues and for the novice who is just beginning to examine the topic. It is suitable for academic libraries and collections supporting faculty development in their work with governance issues.

This book is highly recommended for anyone who is interested in the topic of governance, whether faculty governance, university governance, shared governance, or however you frame it. The author invites the reader to consider a variety of issues connected to how we operate our institutions and to recognize that our histories and our institutional values are all important factors, whether hundreds of years old or a freshly merged institution rethinking how it operates within its new community. — *Austina Jordan, Head of Access Services, University of Georgia*

Notes

1. “governance, n., sense 1.a”. *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/8866861237>

2. “govern, v., sense 1.b”. *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, September 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/3821467499>