Shift Power. Share Power.

A Student-Designed Framework to Drive Empowerment and Ensure Success

Empowering students requires genuine collaboration. The **Shift Power, Share Power Framework** - designed by and with students nationwide - centers on self-advocacy and institutional backing, recognizing the varied challenges students encounter on their way to a college degree. More than just shared decision-making, it's about understanding and appreciating the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students and then taking action to create an environment where each and every one can thrive.

WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO FEEL EMPOWERED	WAYS TO BOOST AGENCY AND AUTONOMY

FROM FOUNDATION-SETTING

Acknowledge universal power dynamics and use them to benefit student needs and aspirations.

- Direct decision-making influence towards student priorities.
- Avoid over-exerting authority and treat students as respected adults with valuable insights.

Universally clear communication allows students to understand and engage with systems affecting their education.

- Create clear communication paths among staff, faculty, and students.
- Keep everyone regularly updated on policies and developments.
- Proactively inform students about opportunities.

A supportive community is essential for students to feel connected and empowered.

- Create and maintain safe spaces where students can freely express their concerns and experiences without fear of judgment or reprisal.
- Foster ongoing conversation through online student-faculty platforms.

TO ENHANCING AGENCY AND SELF-DIRECTION

When students see themselves as influential participants in their education, their sense of initiative and self-direction is strengthened.

- Boost student self-advocacy with skills workshops.
- Offer peer-led policy sessions.
- Train faculty and staff in engagement and inclusion.
- Conduct ongoing research to understand current student needs and experiences.

Social barriers that inhibit free expression and participation means that not all students can equally put their power to use.

- Join or form groups that welcome all kinds of students.
- Look for or start mentoring programs that help students navigate challenging social situations.

Having the right connections and resources affects how much control and choice students feel they have.

- Implement a Mentorship Program pairing students with senior peers and faculty for support and advocacy.
- Host Leadership Coffee/Tea Chats as open forums for students and leadership to connect and share ideas.

TO ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Supporting initiatives led by students shows a commitment to actualizing student empowerment.

- Allocate resources and funding to support student-led initiatives, projects, and events.
- Acknowledge and celebrate student successes and advocacy efforts.

Involving students in governance gives them a real stake in their education and nurtures their autonomy.

- Create advisory boards or committees with student representatives to contribute to institutional decisions.
- Include students in faculty hiring committees and policy development discussions.

Regular feedback loops are critical for continuous improvement and for students to feel that their voices lead to real change.

- Schedule regular interactions for students to directly voice their opinions and concerns.
- Facilitate open dialogue, allowing for the direct exchange of ideas and immediate responses from decision-makers.

[Download the full report here.](#)