



**Joint Oversight Committee on
Higher Education Governance, Excellence, and Transparency**

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**Richard Novak
Senior Vice President for Programs and Research
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
1133 20th Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036
202-776-0825
richn@agb.org**

Introduction

The American form of higher-education governance—entrusting the oversight of our colleges and universities to lay citizens rather than employees, government, a ministry of education, or members of professional societies—distinguishes our system of higher education from others in the world. Despite ongoing debates about costs, quality, and degree attainment, our system of higher education remains one of the best, if not the best, in the world, and that is in large part due to its autonomy, independence, and freedom from interference in its governance and management.

A substantial amount of autonomy and flexibility is also permitted in American higher education as a necessary condition for the pursuit of excellence. Throughout the modern history of higher education, some of the best minds have said as much, including the Committee on Government and Higher Education, chaired by Milton Eisenhower in the late 1950s, and Frank Newman in *Choosing Quality: Reducing Conflict between the States and the University* in 1987. Strong and effective governance is part of the autonomy equation—the more effective and responsive the board and the more able it is to ensure institutional accountability, the less necessary the heavy hand of government.

The governing boards of our state-owned institutions are composed of representatives of the greater citizenry and provide an arm's-length independence of leadership. Public universities owe their independence from direct government control to the Dartmouth College Case decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1819. Self-governance and self-regulation are crucial to the quality and integrity of our colleges and universities but inadequate if higher education is disconnected from, or unresponsive to, society's concerns and public priorities. The public and policymakers, for example, are deeply concerned about the quality of higher education. Governing boards can help senior administrators in responding to such issues.

The challenges facing higher education require a long-term vision, sustained focus, and deeply embedded commitment by all leaders within the field. Members of governing boards, whether they oversee entire systems or just a single institution, have an indispensable role to play, and their vision, focus, and commitment are critical. They must be up to the task. If citizen governance works, it works by ensuring the responsiveness and accountability of the institution, or institutions, that it oversees.

Some Major Challenges

Inherent ambiguity. One of the primary leadership challenges facing public governing boards is the inherent ambiguity of board governance. Public boards straddle the intersection of state needs and priorities on the one hand, and institutional aspirations on the other. As a consequence, board members are often criticized for being either too close to the governor or legislature, or too close to the university administration, unable to balance the interests of the public and the state with those of the institution or university system.

Unclear expectations. Problems in governing can arise because of unclear or conflicting expectations for regents or trustees. As a result, board members are sometimes unclear about necessary time commitments, proper protocols for confidentiality or who speaks publicly for the board (to the press or others), or individual responsibilities such as expectations and personal commitments for fundraising. The appointing authority (in most cases, the governor) may have a different set of expectations for board members than the board leadership or the chancellor or president. For example, does the board follow a corporate model of governance, whereby the board sets expectations for the president or chancellor and holds him or her accountable? Or does the board follow a model whereby it openly solicits more direct input from constituents and the public?

Inadequate orientation and board education. The data show that only half of all public institutions seriously address board orientation and education. Most boards that hold annual retreats tend to spend more time talking about institutional, system, or state strategic plans than about issues of governing and trusteeship. This may be understandable. But time for reflection, self-assessment, orienting new members, or other board-building activities that collectively enable the board to advance a strategic agenda is insufficient. No matter how talented or prestigious, board members need time to come together as a unit, to “gel” as a policy decision-making body. In addition, few states conduct meaningful annual or bi-annual statewide board education programs for all of the state’s regents and trustees. Such gatherings expose all board members to the common issues confronting the state and higher education and provide valuable opportunities for members to learn from one another.

Maintaining policy independence. The board's ability to govern effectively requires a high degree of policy independence. Policy independence is the capacity of a board to fashion reasoned, responsible policy in an environment comprising several, often competing, demands from multiple internal and external stakeholders. While elected leaders or a coordinating board may later disagree with the outcomes, it is the governing board's responsibility to exercise due diligence and make decisions in a transparent fashion based on its own deliberations, recommendations from executive leaders, and the availability of evidenced-based data and information. Policy independence is the fullest expression of self-governance.

Impatience and interference into governance. Since higher education means so much to states and society, elected leaders may be impatient with the overall decision-making process at colleges and universities, including that of their governing boards. Although not totally unexpected, this can lead to unwarranted pressures or interference. Governors and legislators can never control higher education directly, nor should they try. However, by not acting in a timely manner or unduly deferring to others on difficult decisions, governing boards and senior administrators in many instances have invited the intrusion of elected leaders and put board autonomy at risk.

Uneven attention to board selection and composition. Other than determining state appropriations or rearranging governance structures (which seldom improves educational outcomes), appointing board members is the most direct way elected leaders can influence higher education. For the most part, governors take this responsibility seriously and select strong, deserving candidates. But too often, board seats are given to less deserving citizens on the basis of political connections or campaign contributions. Board candidates can also become pawns in a high-stakes game between the legislature and the governor, both on initial appointments and re-appointments.

We need experienced and influential people to oversee our universities, university systems, and state higher education agencies—people who have demonstrated leadership in business or civic life. With pressing national needs to increase educational degree attainment and spur research and innovation for a 21st century economy, what kind of individuals are needed to serve on our public boards? (*Attachment B provides some ideas.*)

Public boards today are made up of, on average, 29 percent women and 21 percent minorities, with a slight gain in the percentage of minorities serving in the past decade, but a slight decrease in the percentage of women serving. Governing boards need to include citizens and community leaders who reflect a broader cross-section of the population and who can relate personally to the needs and life experience of minority groups, women, adult learners, and first-generation students. In addition, boards need people with broad content knowledge.

Governing the modern university. The complexity of the increasingly market-driven modern public research university or the large multi-campus system is another governance challenge. These institutions and systems provide indispensable contributions to state and national public needs through instruction, research, and public service. Many of the boards that govern these enterprises need greater capacity to address multiple pressing policy and finance issues. This could happen by expanding the board's breadth of talent, either by diversifying its members or increasing the board's size. As many of our top public research universities and university systems struggle to diversify revenue streams while state dollars decline, it is essential for governing boards to pose legitimate questions about productivity and efficiency, and absolutely critical for boards and administrators to seek variations to existing business models.

Moody's, in a recent "Special Comment" in *U.S. Public Finance*, suggested that large public research universities have evolved into "market-driven public mission agencies that require more flexible governance and oversight to achieve their goals." Moody's calls for greater board expertise in particular areas, such as familiarity with health care and health-care administration, and believes that more diverse selection processes, including allowing boards to appoint some of their own members, will bring such talent into the boardroom. The National Academy of Sciences is currently studying the status of the research university and may make similar statements about governance and how it might evolve to oversee the modern university. Their report is due in November.

Best Practices and Characteristics of Board Effectiveness

Without question, today's boards are significantly more engaged with issues of policy and strategy than are their predecessors. Several best practices and characteristics define an effective governing board. The

following six are among the most critically important for public governing boards and, where noted, for state coordinating boards. (*The responsibilities for governing boards and individual trustees and regents are listed in Attachment A.*)

First, an effective board, with the chief executive as a partner, successfully *balances institutional priorities with public purposes*. It understands the public mission of the institution(s) it oversees and it responsibly brings state and community issues to the administration and into the boardroom. In some instances, this requires the board to constrain institutional ambitions that would unwisely expand the academic mission. AGB's board of directors issued the "AGB Statement on Board Accountability" in 2007 to help boards understand and fully appreciate this commitment to the public interest and the public trust, and to the broad achievement of public purposes.

Second, an effective board *expects and demands accountability*. Public boards are accountable to the people of the entire state but not to any constituency, stakeholder group, or individual. It is also incorrect to say that governing boards are accountable to state government. Board of trustees and regents are surrogates for the state; they exist and are responsible to do what the state cannot, should not, or prefers not to undertake itself.

As part of its commitment to the achievement of public purposes, boards are accountable for safeguarding public assets—ensuring that future generations benefit from all the institution has to offer. In addition, the board is accountable for the fiscal integrity of the institution; its own performance; for ensuring that ethical policies are in place; and for hiring, assessing, and setting fair compensation for the chief executive.

Effective boards balance advocacy to external constituents (elected leaders, the business community, and others) with the need for oversight and institutional accountability. The board monitors institutional performance on several indicators that give it a clear indication of the institution's successes as well as areas of potential improvements. Primary in this regard is assuming responsibility for results in the educational programs of the university or the state higher-education system. This responsibility continues to grow in importance, as noted below.

Third, as a part of accountability, effective boards *demonstrate sound fiscal stewardship*. The board understands where the cost-drivers are in the budget and thinks strategically about how reallocations or new investments can fund institutional or system priorities. Budgeting is clearly linked to planning, an in-depth conversation that is more than a discussion about balancing revenues and expenditures. The board is diligent in considering tuition increases in light of institutional needs and student access. In keeping with the spirit of the federal Sarbanes-Oxley Act, the board has an audit committee that functions with a clear and comprehensive set of responsibilities.

Fourth, and as noted above, an effective board needs to be *engaged, within acceptable boundaries, in educational quality*. Peter Ewell put it best in AGB's popular book *Making the Grade: How Board Can Ensure Academic Quality*, writing that quality "is as much a part of our role as board members as ensuring that the institution has sufficient resources and is spending them wisely." This approach gives the board appropriate leverage over quality and improvement. Boards need to know the quality of the public schools that provide the majority of the entering class, the remediation rates of entering students, how students are assessed, and how the results are used to improve the progression of students through the curriculum to graduation. An effective board is also engaged in the accreditation process, both regional and program-specific, and apprised of any recommendations for institutional improvement as a result of the accreditation review.

AGB's recent "Statement on Board Responsibility for the Oversight of Educational Quality" is a clear and readable guide for boards that respects the role of faculty and academic administrators but does not minimize or side-line the board in its important role.

Fifth, effective boards show a *willingness to help lead and support strategic change* by engaging in meaningful statewide, system-wide, or institutional planning. Change-adept boards also work in concert with their presidents and chancellors to help lead a change agenda.

Ideally, the board's key leaders are involved in the planning process, perhaps by chairing planning committees. In a perfect world, a statewide public agenda championed at the statewide board or office guides the subsequent development of system and institutional agendas and strategic plans. In other words, there exists a deeply embedded commitment to the

public agenda: everyone can explain it, buy into it, and understand what it requires at the state, regional, and community level. Effective boards build a board work plan around the finalized strategic plan to monitor implementation and progress; this work plan should include appropriate reviews of goals, benchmarks, and metrics.

Sixth is the ability to *balance engagement with a degree of detachment*. Trustees and regents need to be supportive of good, strong ideas that come not only from the chief executive and his or her staff, but from outside the boardroom. They also need to be willing to challenge assumptions, ask sound questions, and probe for viable alternatives. In short, an effective board maintains a healthy skepticism and some objective distance, if not detachment, from the issues it debates, especially once they are decided. Board members can be effective advocates, but they should not be cheerleaders.

Seventh, effective boards *understand the corporate status of the board*. The individual members of effective boards understand that governance is a corporate responsibility; the board a legal, state corporation. All decisions are majority, consensus, or collective decisions. Despite the privileges and honor that come with being on a governing board, individual members do not have legal authority for decision making, and as such, deliberations and actions occur gavel to gavel. Individual board members are fully cognizant of the distinction. Only under the most unique circumstances and at the request of the president, chancellor, or board chair, should a board member be engaged directly in operational activities.

Most boards understand the realistic limits of their authority and appropriately delegate to the chief executive. While board members and the chief executive are distinct entities—the board a policymaking body, the president or chancellor the executer of those policies—at the end of the day, perhaps after vigorous debate, they must be on the same page. Critics of higher-education leadership often misunderstand the board-president relationship. They see it as one of checks and balances, with the administration comparable to the executive branch of government and the governing board comparable to the legislative branch. That is a prescription for conflict and failure. By extension, any individual board member concern or request for data or information about the university should be made to the president or chancellor's office, or the board chair. Effective institutions

require leadership and skill that links the chief executive and the board, as well as the faculty, in a well-functioning partnership.

Eighth, effective boards *engage productively with elected leaders* and work across party lines with the governor and legislators, while keeping politics, especially partisan politics, out of the boardroom. The board should not become—either by the actions of its individual members or of political leaders—a vehicle for issues playing out in the state capitol. As suggested earlier, the actions, competence, and self-governance of board members should mitigate against political intrusion.

In reality, elected officials *do* want to hear directly from the board’s chosen leaders—unfiltered by their own staffs or university administrators—and not just at annual budget hearings. They want to have meaningful conversations about accountability, costs, performance, productivity, and a host of other issues. Conversations between board members and elected leaders that contribute positively to institutional goals and public purposes should be encouraged. These conversations should occur with a leadership team of board members (chairs and vice chairs) and the president or chancellor.

Additional Best Practices and Characteristics of Effective Boards

A clear sense of expectations. For boards to be effective, board bylaws must include a comprehensive (though not exhaustive) list of the board’s key responsibilities, a “job description” that cites the board’s major areas of authority in contemporary, state-of-the-art language that helps to distinguish governance from management functions. (It is unlikely that simply borrowing prose from enabling state legislation or relevant regulation will prove to be adequate for this purpose). Effective boards adopt their own “statement of board member responsibilities” or “rules of engagement” that set basic expectations for the conduct of all individual members, including communication, time commitment, and protocols on who speaks for the board. Such boards adopt standards of performance to which all are expected to adhere in the course of their trusteeship.

For the record. An effective board functions well under the state’s open meetings and records laws and has full and open debates. Transparency is evident. Board meetings are designed for the full participation of all members. The board also requests that an accurate record of member

attendance be maintained and provided as part of every board meeting's materials for all board members (i.e., attendance by name).

Self-assessment. Every three or four years, an effective board commits to a comprehensive self-study of its strengths and shortcomings. By doing so, it sets an example for the academic community and acknowledges that even good boards can be better. Among the areas assessed are relations with the chief executive and the board's duties as related to the strategic plan or planning process. Done well, self-assessments can build board cohesion.

Board chairs. The chair plays a critical role for effective boards, not only in running good meetings, but in being a partner with the chief executive on a mutually acceptable strategy for engaging the full board on a mutually agreed-to long-term agenda. The chair is the spokesperson for the board, and no one else should speak on its behalf.

Effective boards avoid the practice of enabling every member to be chair of the board. They have adopted a bylaw provision similar to this wording: "The chair shall serve for renewable one-year terms. Ordinarily, he or she shall serve for at least two years, but not more than four consecutive years." Not every board member has the time, disposition, commitment, or skills to be an effective chair and there should be no presumption of entitlement.

The board should choose its own chair on the basis of merit and leadership abilities. Board accountability begins with the board's flexibility and responsibility to choose its own leaders. Governors frequently and appropriately appoint individual trustees as vacancies occur, but governors should not appoint the chair of a governing board, either by statute or by accepted practice. The many duties of governing boards warrant board independence, and such appointment power risks eroding such autonomy and opens the door for politics to enter the boardroom.

The big picture. The chief executive and board leaders of effective boards stay focused on long-term strategy, priorities, and goals. This may not be as easy as it sounds. But by improving the meeting agenda and using consent agendas for the required approvals on operational matters, having fewer but longer meetings, and emphasizing discussion over presentation, the board can be more engaged in policy, less inclined to stray into administration or micromanagement, more stimulated and motivated, more

knowledgeable in the key issues facing the institution(s), and more willing and able to serve as an effective advocate.

The president or chancellor also works closely with board leaders to encourage devoting a part of each board meeting to providing awareness and understanding of the strengths and needs of the institution, as well as general trends in higher education. Each board meeting is part seminar, an opportunity to bring faculty, students, business leaders, and other constituents to the boardroom, as well as deans and other academic leaders to help assess the strengths and weaknesses of major academic programs.

Committee structure. Effective boards have standing committees that bear a sensible relationship to the size of the board. No member serves on more than two committees. Full board meetings are not overburdened by committee reports. If an executive committee exists, it does not make decisions that should be reserved for the full board. Ad hoc committees are created as needed to examine specified issues or activities.

Board policies. Best practices show that boards codify or catalog all board policies related to their legal and fiduciary responsibilities. It is good practice to state the date of adoption or amendment of each policy and whether it is subject to annual, biennial, or other review. A board policy manual or handbook helps ensure that the board policies are up to date, shared with all members, and in compliance with any pertinent state laws. Clear and concise ethics and conflict of interest policies are also hallmarks of an effective board.

Consultative but decisive. The board listens to the legitimate concerns and interests of several constituents, particularly on issues that directly affect them. But in the end, it does not delay decisions on difficult issues or defer unnecessarily to elected officials, the administration, or faculty. The board knows when to reserve decisions for itself and when decisions need to be appropriately delegated to the administration.

Principles and Guidelines for State Policymakers

State policymakers can strengthen the performance, transparency, and accountability of public college and university governance in several ways.

Governors and legislators should send a clear signal that merit comes first in appointing public higher education governing board members. They should recruit and appoint civic and business leaders, as well as educators and other citizens of stature, who:

- Understand the broad role of public higher education in society;
- Have the knowledge base to craft effective policy in a rapidly evolving environment; and
- Demonstrate the leadership—and listening—skills to acknowledge and work with a diverse array of internal and external stakeholders.

In addition, governors and legislatures should carefully consider reappointing trustees and regents who have demonstrated their value to their board, institutions and community, even if political expediency or party affiliation argues against reappointment.

State policymakers should ensure that public college and university governing boards have the scale, skill mix, and institutional memory required to oversee today's increasingly complex modern higher-education institutions and systems.

- Large or growing institutions or systems should have at least 12 members, and those with complex missions or policy challenges may need to be even larger.
- Effective leadership is built on six-year terms for board members. Resist legislative efforts to reduce board members' terms or further link them to electoral turnover.

States should consider creating a nonpartisan advisory or nominating committee to recruit, screen, and recommend board candidates.

- Building merit criteria into the appointment process can minimize politics and help to secure stable and more effective boards. The Association of Governing Boards has advocated for a merit selection

process for over three decades. In such a process, a non-partisan advisory committee solicits and screens candidates for board vacancies and makes recommendations to the appointing authority, which in most states is the governor. Massachusetts, Hawaii, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Virginia have adopted such processes and they appear to be working well.

- The best of these advisory committees are guided by detailed, written qualifications for prospective members that are tailored to each board.
- Legislatures should have publicly stated criteria upon which gubernatorial nominees will be considered for appointment and reappointment.

Set clear expectations for board members.

- Realize that the state statute or constitution will provide all parties a limited outline of the responsibilities of the governing board as a whole and its individual members. Beyond the required legal language of statutes and constitutions are several basic responsibilities that strong and effective boards and their members fulfill.
- Encourage development of a “position description” for individual trustees and regents that more clearly defines their responsibilities. Such a description can assist policymakers with nominations and confirmations and inform potential trustees and regents of the magnitude and seriousness of the position.
- State explicitly that you expect board members to exercise independent judgment while formulating academic policy, balancing institutional and state interests without being beholden to any single stakeholder group or special interest.
- Boards should fully exercise the authority the state has invested in them for setting academic policy. Rather than micromanage, demand that boards set academic policy and allow chief executives and other administrators to get the job done.
- One of the board’s primary responsibilities is to provide the first level of institutional accountability—for institutional performance, achieving mission, the prudent expenditure of public dollars, and the performance of senior administrators—to the state’s citizens. Allow boards to do so without interference; they are the state’s authority to ensure accountability.

Establish a channel for clearly communicating state priorities to governing boards.

- Fairly or unfairly, many public boards are criticized for failing to respond to state priorities or to communicate about issues and problems. Set an expectation for regular communication with board leadership and chief executives on how institutions are responding to state priorities or how they are contributing to the resolution of major policy issues and problems. Such conversations are best done outside the pressures of the budget process. Just as they advocate institutional needs to stakeholders, governing boards should actively engage with all stakeholders on a number of levels as part of the process of shaping and gauging a state's public agenda for higher education.
- Policymakers should exercise discretion about having their voices heard by the board. They have, of course, every right to place their opinions and ideas before a governing board. But in doing so, it is incumbent upon policymakers to respect board protocols and the board's need for independence.

Promote board orientation and education programs, both at the institutional and state levels, that bring together regents and trustees to discuss their basic responsibilities and to attain a full understanding of state-level issues and funding priorities.

- An annual or bi-annual state education program—particularly in states with multiple higher-education boards—can strengthen communication and understanding, clarify responsibilities, and contribute to board cohesion and general effectiveness.

Review the impact of sunshine laws on the operations of public college and university boards.

- Consistent with a state's values and traditions, open meeting and open-record laws should be periodically reviewed to ensure that they are achieving their goals: open access to the public decision-making process, balanced with common-sense rules for the disclosure of personal, financial, or other confidential information. Too often, such laws can interfere with, rather than serve, the public interest by impeding sound decision making.

- Boards function best if they can engage in candid discussions, hold strategic board retreats or education sessions, and recruit presidential candidates in an environment of trust.

Conclusion

We must remember that board members, be they members of governing or coordinating boards, volunteer their time and expertise in order to give something back to society and their states and communities. Much is expected from trustees—their support, ideas, time, money, wisdom, connections, and encouragement.

Like trustees at other important social institutions, public board members can be a powerful force for positive change. Often, however, they are an untapped resource for making contributions to a broad-based public agenda. By recruiting dedicated and experienced citizens through improved selection processes, setting clearer expectations, and providing better orientation and education, we contribute to governing and coordinating boards that understand, articulate, support, and help their states achieve significant educational progress.

About AGB

The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges is a national organization based in Washington, D.C. Established in 1921, its mission is to strengthen the performance of citizen governing boards and academic trusteeship. AGB provides a broad portfolio of publications, studies, programs, and direct consulting services to over 1,200 boards and 35,000 individual members—board members and institution and system chief executives. AGB encourages adherence to best practices in trusteeship and governance and to the highest possible performance standards. The governing boards and chief executives of the vast majority of the nation's senior institutions are members.

Sources

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Attachment A

Responsibilities of Governing Boards:

1. Ensure that the institution's mission is kept current and is aligned with public purposes. In the case of a multi-campus system, ensure the alignment of each campus's mission with the system's vision and public purposes.
2. Select a chief executive to lead the institution.
3. Support and periodically assess the performance of the chief executive and establish and review the chief executive's compensation.
4. Charge the chief executive with the task of leading a strategic planning process, participate in that process, and approve the strategic plan.
5. Ensure the institution's fiscal integrity, preserve and protect its assets for posterity, and engage in fund raising and philanthropy.
6. Ensure the educational quality of the institution and its academic programs.
7. Preserve and protect institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and the public purposes of higher education.
8. Ensure that institutional policies and processes are current and properly implemented.
9. In concert with senior administration, engage regularly with the institution's major constituencies.
10. Conduct the board's business in an exemplary fashion and with appropriate transparency, adhering to the highest ethical standards and complying with applicable open-meeting and public-records laws; ensure the currency of board governance policies and practices; and periodically assess the performance of the board, its committees, and its members.

Responsibilities of Individual Trustees and Regents:

1. To seek to be fully informed about the college or university or university system.
2. To understand the responsibilities of the institution or university system in addressing the public interest and public good.

3. To understand where the institution(s) fits into the overall state higher-education policy agenda.
4. To support the mission of the institution or university system.
5. To support positive change and responsiveness of higher education while cognizant that preserving tradition, culture, and long-term stability is tantamount.
6. To speak one's mind at board meetings but to support policies and programs once established.
7. To understand that the board's responsibility is policymaking and not involvement in administration or the management process.
8. To strengthen and sustain the chief executive while being an active, energetic, and probing board member exercising critical judgment on policy matters.
9. To communicate promptly to the chief executive and board chair any significant concern or complaint.
10. To defend the autonomy and the independence of the university or university system.
11. To maintain an overriding loyalty to the entire university or university system rather than to any individual part of it or constituency within it.
12. To represent all the people of the state and no particular interest, community, or constituency.
13. To help enhance the public image of the university or the university system and the board.
14. To recognize that authority resides only with the board as a whole and not in its individual members.
15. To recognize that the president or chancellor is the primary spokesperson for the university or the university system and that the chairman of the board is the only other person authorized to speak for the board.
16. To foster openness and trust among the board, the administration, the faculty, the students, state government, and the public.
17. To maintain a courteous respect for the opinions of one's colleagues and a proper restraint in criticism of colleges and officers.
18. To recognize that no board member shall make any request or demand for actions that violates the written policies, rules, and regulations of the board or of the university.
19. To maintain the highest ethical standards and never to allow any personal conflict of interest to exist.

Attachment B

Qualifications Sought in Individual Board Members:

A. Personal

1. Integrity, with a code of personal honor and ethics above reproach.
2. Wisdom and breadth of vision.
3. Independence.
4. An inquiring mind and an ability to speak it articulately and succinctly.
5. Ability to challenge, support, and motivate the university or system administration.
6. An orientation to the future with an appreciation of the university's heritage (or the heritage of each university or college in the system).
7. The capability and willingness to function as a member of a diverse group in an atmosphere of collegiality and selflessness.
8. An appreciation of the public nature of the position and the institution, including the open process of decision making and service.

B. Professional/experiential

1. Valid knowledge and experience that can bear on university problems, opportunities, and deliberations.
2. A record of accomplishment in one's own life.
3. An understanding of the board's role of governance and a proven record of contribution with the governing body of one or more appropriate organizations.

C. Commitment

1. Commitment to education.
2. Enthusiastic understanding and acceptance of the university's mission or the mission of all system institutions.
3. An understanding of the role of their institution or university system within the broader higher-education system of the state.

4. A willingness to commit the time and energy necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of a board member.
5. Willingness to forego, while a board member, any partisan political activity that could be disruptive or harmful to the university or university system.
6. The capability to foresee six to eight years of constructive and productive service.
7. Overriding loyalty to the institution (or university system) and to the public interest rather than to any region or constituency.

(These statements are from AGB's *Effective Governing Boards: A Guide for Members of Public Colleges, Universities, and Systems*; others are adopted in part from documents of the Minnesota Regents Candidate Advisory Council.)