

AGENDA

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Meeting: 1:45 p.m., Wednesday, March 22, 2023
Glenn S. Dumke Auditorium

Jean Picker Firstenberg, Chair
Julia I. Lopez, Vice Chair
Diana Aguilar-Cruz
Diego Arambula
Jack Clarke, Jr.
Leslie Gilbert-Lurie
Lillian Kimbell
Christopher Steinhauser

- Consent** 1. Approval of Minutes of the Meeting of January 25, 2023, *Action*
- Discussion** 2. Approval of the California State University Board of Trustees' Meeting Dates for 2024, *Action*
3. Approval of Proposed Revisions to the Rules Governing the CSU Board of Trustees – Procedures for Selection of Board Committees, *Action*
4. Approval of Program for Board Planning, Goal Setting and Self-Evaluation, *Action*
5. Evaluation of CSU Policies for Presidential Performance Reviews, *Information*

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES**

**Trustees of the California State University
Office of the Chancellor
Glenn S. Dumke Auditorium
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California**

January 25, 2023

Members Present

Jean Picker Firstenberg, Chair
Julia I. Lopez, Vice Chair
Diana Aguilar-Cruz
Diego Arambula
Jack Clarke, Jr.
Leslie Gilbert-Lurie
Lillian Kimbell

Jolene Koester, Interim Chancellor
Wenda Fong, Chair of the Board

Trustee Firstenberg called the meeting to order.

Consent Agenda

Item 2 was removed from the consent agenda at the request of Trustee Sabalius and removed by Chair Firstenberg to discuss the proposed Board of Trustees 2024 meeting dates. Specifically, the May 2024 meeting dates and potential conflict with commencement dates. Trustee Linares also requested staff to review possible alternative dates for the May 2024 meeting dates. Associate Vice Chancellor Kiss noted staff would review options for possible revised proposed meeting dates.

The minutes of the November 16, 2022, meeting were approved as submitted.

Discussion Agenda

Jane Wellman began discussions with introductory remarks regarding the board assessment and how the board works and carries out its responsibilities. Board consultants spoke with each trustee regarding any comments or concerns about board governance issues. Research was conducted on how the CSU Board is both similar and different from other governing boards across the country.

Roberta Achtenberg provided an update on the work requested to review student trustee compensation. She noted following previous discussions by the board on the topic, the board chair and interim chancellor requested that a task force of subject matter experts from the Chancellor's Office research possible options to enhance financial support for student trustees and provide recommendations. Based upon recommendations from the analysis conducted by the task force, an approach similar to that of the University of California for student regents and CSSA Officers was recommended. Pursuant to existing delegations of authority to the chancellor, a new policy for a Student Trustee Scholarship was established and will become effective July 1, 2023. Trustee Linares thanked the board and CSSA for their response to this issue. Trustee Rodriguez, Trustee Gilbert-Lurie, Trustee Sabalius, and Trustee Aguilar-Cruz echoed the same sentiments regarding their appreciation for the swift and comprehensive response to addressing student trustee financial support.

Recommended Procedures for Selection of Board Committees

Roberta Achtenberg presented an overview of the process for the selection of board committee assignments and committee leadership (chair and vice chair). A comprehensive review and analysis of the policies and procedures of other governing boards for appointment of committee members, chairs, and vice chairs was conducted. Additional criteria were presented for consideration to add to the current board practices and procedures for the selection of committee and board leadership as outlined in Article IV §2 of the Rules Governing the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Clarke commented that the current policies governing selection of committee assignments and leadership – with the addition of the criteria as recommended to better assist the Committee on Committees – further clarifies a process that is both collaborative and consultative. Trustee Sabalius suggested that the full board consider electing board leadership, though supported further criteria clarifying the selection process. Trustee Gilbert-Lurie commended the consultant's analysis and recommendations, and agreed that the current process reflected best practice. She encouraged continued transparency in the process and to further clarify the criteria regarding leadership diversity. Trustee Arambula, Trustee Linares, Trustee Lopez, and Trustee Kimbell concurred to maintain the current processes of the Committee on Committees as outlined in the governing rules, with the addition of the recommended criteria. Trustee Linares supported the inclusion of the recommended criteria and confirmed the prior board leadership experience criteria included student boards. Trustee Kimbell noted through the collaborative work of the board, trustee strengths and expertise are identified and leveraged to best serve the board. She also noted the diversity of board leadership both during her tenure as a trustee and in the past. Trustee Lopez expressed her support for the current practices and the recommended criteria. Trustee Aguilar-Cruz noted the importance of continued transparency in the process with expressed rules regarding selection of the board chair and vice chair, and consideration of student trustees serving on the Committee on Committees. Trustee McGrory asked for clarification to confirm that the nomination and selection process for board leadership is noted in the rules governing the board. Trustee

Emerita Achtenberg confirmed this was correct. Interim Chancellor Koester underscored the importance of the current practice and supported the inclusion of the recommended criteria to further strengthen, clarify and support the committee selection process. Trustee Emerita Achtenberg stressed the importance of the board chair position in stewarding board leadership in a way that supports continuity and development over time.

Recommended Best Practices for Board Planning, Goal Setting and Self-Evaluation

This item was presented by Jane Wellman and recommended the board adopt a regular program for board self-evaluation based on clear set goals. The consultants reviewed system boards across the country noting that some form of board evaluation was an increasingly adopted best practice. While programs for board evaluation differed across their analysis, there were common attributes including board assessments based on goals set by the board via a strategic planning process and done with some consistent frequency. There is a standard practice in soliciting feedback from the board for self-evaluation, reflection and planning. The consultants recommended the Committee on Organization and Rules serve as the committee responsible for organizing and overseeing the board review program and conduct a board review every other year.

Trustee Adamson noted that many other boards he has served conduct a similar board self-review and also a board satisfaction survey. Based on guidance from the board discussion, an action item would be presented for adoption at the March meeting.

Trustee Firstenberg adjourned the meeting.

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Approval of the California State University Board of Trustees' Meeting Dates for 2024

Presentation By

Jean P. Firstenberg
Committee Chair

Michelle Kiss
Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff

Summary

The following schedule of the CSU Board of Trustees' meeting dates for 2024 is presented for approval:

RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the California State University, that the following schedule of meetings for 2024 is adopted:

2024 Meeting Dates

January 30-31, 2024	Tuesday – Wednesday	Chancellor's Office
March 26-27, 2024	Tuesday – Wednesday	Chancellor's Office
May 21-22, 2024	Tuesday – Wednesday	Chancellor's Office
July 23-24, 2024	Tuesday – Wednesday	Chancellor's Office
September 24-25, 2024	Tuesday – Wednesday	Chancellor's Office
November 19-20, 2024	Tuesday – Wednesday	Chancellor's Office

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Approval of Proposed Revisions to the Rules Governing the CSU Board of Trustees - Procedures for Selection of Board Committees

Presentation By

Roberta Achtenberg
Senior Advisor, Board Governance and Relations

Jane Wellman
Special Consultant to the Board

Michelle Kiss
Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff

Summary

This action item proposes modifications to the Rules Governing the CSU Board of Trustees to clarify procedures for making committee appointments. The proposed change would largely maintain existing board rules governing committee appointments, with the addition of the following criteria to be considered by the Committee on Committees in making their recommendations for board and committee leadership (chair and vice-chair) positions:

- Seek board leadership that is comprised of members with diverse perspectives and experiences;
- Seek leaders who have a broad understanding of the CSU system gained from length of service on the board, prior board committee experience, or other personal or professional experience;
- Identify potential chairs and vice chairs who are willing and able to devote sufficient time to prepare for and participate in the conduct of board business;
- Identify potential leaders who have demonstrated respect for differences of opinion and an ability to work toward consensus, and who contribute to constructive discourse among board members;
- Seek leaders who have demonstrated an ability to make decisions independent of influence by stakeholder groups, whether internal or external to the CSU;
- Seek leaders who have demonstrated an understanding of and commitment to the role of the board as a collegial, independent oversight body, while respecting traditions of shared governance, and have been able to work effectively and respectfully with fellow trustees and with the chancellor, vice chancellors, presidents, staff, faculty and students.

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The proposed revisions were previously reviewed as an information item at the January 2023 meeting of the Committee on Organization and Rules. The text of the proposed rule change is provided in Attachment A.

Recommendation

The following resolution is recommended for approval:

RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the California State University, that the criteria listed in Attachment A of item 3 of the Committee on Organization and Rules at the March 20-22, 2023 meeting of the Board of Trustees, is adopted.

Proposed Revisions to the Rules Governing the CSU Board of Trustees

The proposed rule change would add the criteria to be considered by the Committee on Committees as it prepares its nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair and all members of standing committees. Proposed revisions are noted in ~~strike through~~ for deletions and *italics* for added text. Only § 2. Committee on Committees of the Governing Rules are included in this attachment as no other changes to the remaining sections are proposed.

Rules Governing the Board of Trustees of the California State University

§ 2. Committee on Committees

The Committee on Committees nominates the Chair and Vice Chair, and all members of the standing committees.

At a regular meeting in or about January, the Chair nominates five members of the Board of Trustees to the Committee on Committees. These nominations are acted upon at the next regular meeting. Any Trustee can make other nominations at any time prior to the election. The five nominees who receive the highest number of votes constitute the Committee on Committees. They take office at the end of the meeting at which they have been elected.

Within ten calendar days of the election of a new Committee on Committees, each Trustee submits to the ~~Trustees' Secretariat~~ *Office of the Board of Trustees* a list in rank order of at least four standing committees on which the Trustee would prefer to serve. The lists are sent to each member of the Committee on Committees, which shall give due consideration to the preferences listed in determining its nominations.

The Committee on Committees shall also consider the following criteria in making their recommendations for board and committee leadership (chair and vice chair) positions:

- *Seek board leadership that is comprised of members with diverse perspectives and experiences;*
- *Seek leaders who have a broad understanding of the CSU system gained from length of service on the board, prior board committee experience, or other personal or professional experience;*
- *Identify potential chairs and vice chairs who are willing and able to devote sufficient time to prepare for and participate in the conduct of board business;*

- *Identify potential leaders who have demonstrated respect for differences of opinion and an ability to work toward consensus, and who contribute constructive discourse among board members;*
- *Seek leaders who have demonstrated an ability to make decisions independent of influence by stakeholder groups, whether internal or external to the CSU;*
- *Seek leaders who have demonstrated an understanding of and commitment to the role of the board as a collegial, independent oversight body, while respecting traditions of shared governance, and have been able to work effectively and respectfully with fellow trustees and with the chancellor, vice chancellors, presidents, staff, faculty and students.*

The Committee on Committees may nominate ex officio members of the Board of Trustees to serve as members of standing committees.

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Approval of Program for Board Planning, Goal Setting and Self-Evaluation

Presentation By

Roberta Achtenberg
Senior Advisor, Board Governance and Relations

Jane Wellman
Special Consultant to the Board

Michelle Kiss
Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff

Summary

Regular programs for board planning and self-evaluation are increasingly seen as a best practice for public and private university governing boards. This action item implements a recommendation from the external review of the CSU Board of Trustees that the board adopt a self-evaluation program to be managed by the Committee on Organization and Rules and conducted on a biennial basis.

The goal of the review will be to stimulate honest reflection and dialogue about board performance as a regular element of board business. The Committee on Organization and Rules will be responsible for conducting the reviews, which will be done on a biennial basis beginning in 2025. The reviews will be based on goals for board performance which the committee will set one year prior to the conduct of the review. The performance areas may differ from one review to the next, however each review shall include some process for collecting information from board members about how they see board functions as well as their own satisfaction with their service on the board.

This item was previously discussed as an information item at the January 2023 meeting of the Committee on Organization and Rules.

Recommendation

The following resolution is recommended for approval:

RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the California State University, that the Program for Board Planning, Goal Setting and Self-Evaluation as outlined in item 4 of the Committee on Organization and Rules at the March 20-22, 2023 meeting of the Board of Trustees, is adopted.

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Evaluation of CSU Policies for Presidential Performance Reviews

Presentation By

Jane Wellman
Special Consultant to the Board

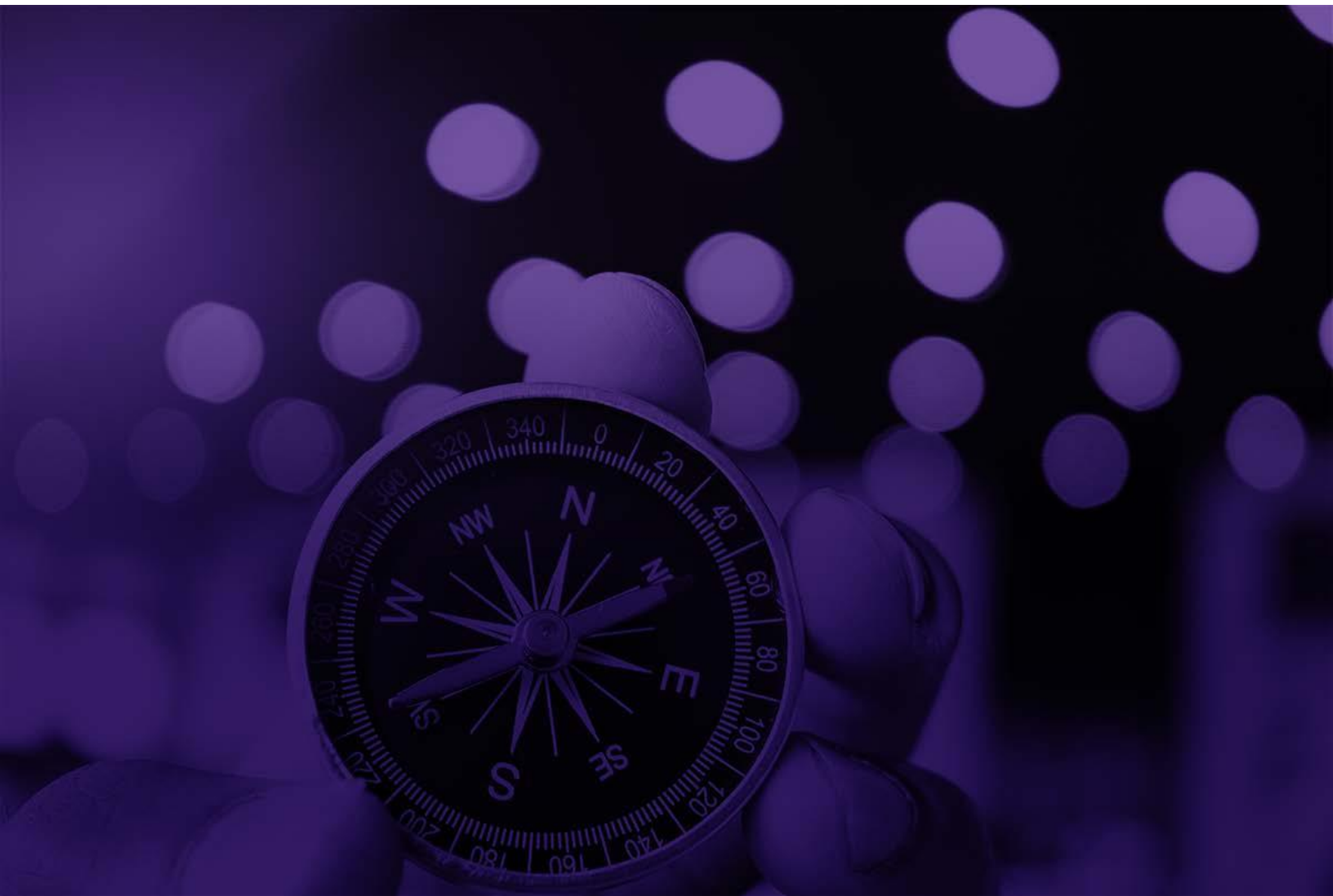
Dr. Terry MacTaggart
Consultant
Association of Governing Boards

Summary

This information item presents the results of an evaluation of CSU presidential review policies conducted by Dr. Terry MacTaggart, a consultant with the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) and a national expert on the topic. Board members requested this comprehensive review to better understand how CSU presidential performance review policies compare to current practices among other systems and institutions nationally, and to identify possible recommendations that might be considered for the CSU. Dr. MacTaggart will present his findings to the board at the March meeting and discuss possible next steps. The full report is included in Attachment A.

Key Findings and Recommendations

The report discusses the role of the board in presidential reviews, hallmarks of effective assessments, national trends affecting presidential performance reviews, and recommendations for possible improvements. Dr. MacTaggart concludes that the CSU approach reflects widely accepted best practice, and is particularly noteworthy for the depth of board involvement in the process. He also finds that across the country, and in the CSU, expectations for public accountability for presidential performance mean that the performance evaluation process may no longer be sufficient to provide both the board and the presidents with the constructive and actionable feedback they need to be most successful. He recommends that the board commission a small working group of presidents, staff and some trustees, to confirm core principles to guide performance reviews, and to consider changes to strengthen professional support and leadership development for presidents.



Assessing Presidential Performance in the CSU: A Report and Recommendations

Dr. Terrence MacTaggart
Senior Fellow, Association of Governing Boards
March 2023

Assessing Presidential Performance in the CSU: A Report and Recommendations

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Introduction

What is the most effective approach to assessing the performance of the twenty-three presidents of the California State University?

This report responds to that question, posed by CSU Chairperson Wenda Fong and Chancellor Jolene Koester on behalf of the CSU Board of Trustees to the Association of Governing Boards in October 2022.

Scope of Work

The following scope of work statement guided the research that underpins this report:

To evaluate current CSU presidential assessment policies and procedures and provide guidance and recommendations to the CSU System Board, based on AGB and other consultant research and interviews, with special attention to the Board's role in the presidential review process.

About the Report

Three key questions

This report addresses and is organized to respond to three specific questions:

- What is the appropriate role of the Board in evaluating its presidents?
- What can be learned from current practice among other systems and institutions nationally?
- What recommendations should the Board consider to render assessment more useful to the Board itself, the Chancellor, the presidents, and CSU's large body of stakeholders?

Summary of major findings

The CSU approach to presidential assessment reflects widely accepted good practice, and in fact offers several strengths worth noting. These positive features include:

- An appropriate balance composed of Board oversight and staff management of the review process;
- Personal meetings of Board members, the Chancellor, and each president at the time of the three-year and six-year reviews;

- Board recognition of the essential role of presidents in achieving System and state goals; and
- Board success in securing appropriate compensation following presidential reviews.

The recommendations at the conclusion of this report suggest steps to further improve a fundamentally sound process while sustaining the appropriate roles of the Board and the Chancellor.

Sources of information

In advance of writing this report, I interviewed the CSU Board Chair and Vice Chair, several trustees, the Chancellor, senior staff, and several CSU presidents. Board policies and the recent history of assessment in the CSU were important subjects as well. Sources outside the CSU included several public university systems as well as selected independent colleges and universities. I interviewed executives and assessors, reviewed their policies and practices, and drew upon my experience as an assessor of many presidents at a variety of institutions and systems.

I reviewed approaches to presidential assessment in the following systems, universities, and colleges: Baruch College, the City University of New York, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, Eastern Oregon University, George Washington University, Kalamazoo College, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the Montana University System, the University of Illinois System, the University of Maine System, the University of Missouri System, the University of North Carolina System, the University System of Maryland, the University of Tennessee System, and Washington State University, among others.

Report structure

Following this introduction, the report addresses the three key questions under these headings:

1. Board Roles and Responsibilities for Presidential Assessment
 - a. Board-Chancellor division of responsibility
 - b. Hallmarks of effective assessments
2. Lessons from Systems and Universities
 - a. National trends
 - b. Assessment in public Institutions and systems
 - c. Key takeaways
3. Recommendations to Consider
 - a. Assessment in the CSU
 - b. Recommendations

Board Roles and Responsibilities

Board-Chancellor division of responsibility

Traditional governance wisdom holds that the Board sets policy and the administration—in the case of the CSU, the Chancellor—implements those policies. This balance of authority and responsibility remains fundamental when it comes to assessing presidential performance as well. Problems arise when one party attempts to perform the duties of the other. The balance is upset when either of two events occur:

- the board becomes dissatisfied with the process and chooses to manage assessment itself, or
- an administration attempts to isolate the board from the process entirely.

The balance is usually threatened when an assessment has failed to detect a serious leadership flaw or a crisis erupts which more penetrating assessment might have predicted. The trick is to sustain the balance of authority and responsibility while adjusting the process to correct its weaknesses when events such as these occur.

The CSU's policy on presidential assessment respects the balance of authority: the Board sets policy and the Chancellor carries it out. In this case, the Chancellor and System staff manage the review, while the Board receives culminating reports and, most important, *meets personally with each of the 23 presidents* on a regular cycle. These meetings represent a superior approach to board engagement compared to common practice among systems across the industry.

Hallmarks of effective assessments

The most effective assessments deliver accountability for performance; achieve credibility with stakeholders; support presidential leadership development; offer predictability of future performance; and result in meaningful consequences for the president. In discussing this report and its recommendations, the Board may wish to consider these standards in light of its assessment policies and practices.

Effective assessments feature:

<i>Accountability</i>	The public and the Board have a right to expect demonstrable and continually improving results in return for public and student investment in the System and its universities.
<i>Credibility</i>	Stakeholders, including presidents, ought to believe that the process is fair, reasonably transparent, and accurate in identifying leadership strengths and areas for improvement.

<i>Leadership development</i>	Identifying areas for improvement or challenges to be addressed should be accompanied by options for developing the president's capacity, for example, to manage crises, lead change, and sustain their own emotional health.
<i>Predictability</i>	Effective assessments draw on past performance to forecast a president's capacity to lead going forward.
<i>Consequentiality</i>	The findings of an effective review should lead to performance improvement when needed; a personal leadership development plan; decisions on contract renewal, compensation, and other employment elements.

An effective assessment program satisfies all these expectations, albeit in varying degrees depending on the circumstances and the results of the assessment.

Lessons from Other Systems and Universities

National trends

The procedural steps in presidential assessments have not changed greatly over the past thirty years, but the way reviews are conducted and attitudes toward assessment are currently in flux. The pressures driving these trends include: the increasingly disrupted character of higher education; well-publicized examples of presidential missteps that should have been detected in advance; consolidations and centralization of authority within systems; trustee dissatisfaction with the pace of change; and the frustration of presidents with the mismatch between expectations of them and the resources and authority available to meet those expectations.

General trends include:

- Board skepticism of a process that fails to predict institutional problems and crises and downplays the president's performance deficiencies;
- Presidential wariness of a board's or system's intentions, expectations, and sensitivity to the perils of the contemporary presidency;
- Pressures upon presidents to put system mandates above their institution's needs and priorities;
- Increasing recognition of the need for leadership development and leadership coaching to cope with a more challenging environment; and
- Greater attention to metrics and other quantitative measures of performance intended to clarify achievements or lack thereof.

Assessment in public institutions and systems

The board's role in presidential assessment and the overall tone of the process varies depending on system structure, the board's strategic agenda, and the culture of the board and system.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>Traditional public systems</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ board oversees policy▪ board gets summary of assessment▪ pro forma Board meetings with President (if at all)▪ standard criteria often dated and superficial▪ modest attention to leadership development▪ some public notice of process and outcomes |
| <i>Combination local and system board</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ local board is typically directly engaged in assessment with the report going to the system chief executive▪ minimal system board involvement▪ sometimes a meeting of president, assessor, and system head required |
| <i>“Flagship systems”</i>
(dominated by one or two large institutions) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ board focuses on major institution(s)▪ smaller, regional campus presidents receive pro forma assessments until a crisis demands greater attention |
| <i>Consolidating systems</i>
(pursuing campus mergers and centralized services and authority) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ board sets direction, system administration manages process and deals with presidents▪ little system board involvement with individual assessments▪ focus on presidential adherence to and support of mergers, centralization, and central authority▪ system agenda replaces local aspirations and presidential independence |
| <i>Politicized systems</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ boards and presidents alike find themselves caught between polarized factions over issues such as disputes between advocates for Palestine and Israel, guns on campus, and critical race theory in the curriculum▪ polarized boards render objective assessment impossible▪ political party affiliation becomes an implicit factor in evaluations▪ opinions of constituents outside the campus weigh more heavily than objective measures of performance |

Key takeaways

- Boards should recognize that a variety of social, political, and economic pressures has made both campus and system leadership much more complex and more difficult than in the past.

- The pressures surrounding the contemporary presidency and the frequency of crises speak to greater support for their development as leaders in fraught environments.
- The historic “distance” between campus realities and system boards may need to be recalibrated so that boards acquire a more realistic view of campus dynamics and the work life of their presidents.
- Boards that expect presidents to pursue and be held accountable for both system and campus priorities need to appreciate the high degree of dexterity required to do both.
- Boards need to allow their chancellors room to maneuver as they operate at the intersection of academic tradition, collective bargaining, interest group politics, and public finance.

Recommendations to Consider

Assessment in the CSU

The CSU’s assessment procedures—e.g., timing, foci, stakeholder input, self-assessment, and outcomes—are well within the mainstream of good practice and provide a functional framework for individual assessments.

- The combination of annual goal-centric reviews each year with more extensive three- and six-year assessments reflects standard practice and is a schedule presidents expect.
- The criteria listed in CSU policy are typical of many such lists, in that the standards are generic and thus downplay the contested environment in which presidents operate today.
- Linking performance reviews to increases in compensation based on comparisons with peer institutions is logical, and much appreciated by the presidents with whom I spoke.
- Presidents in the CSU regard the assessment process as helpful overall. Those with whom I spoke especially appreciate their meetings with trustees. Presidents find the process time-consuming and, in some respects, performative. They recognize that special interests can exploit the process for their own ends.
- Confidence in the current CSU System leadership is high and lends credibility to the fairness of assessments as currently conducted.

The CSU approach to assessment has several distinctive features.

- The Board's policy of meeting with the Chancellor and the president following comprehensive reviews represents a much higher level of trustee involvement than in other systems. In my view, it is a positive feature since it allows Board members to become better acquainted with individual presidents and the issues they face. These conversations provide the Board with a perspective on what may become System-wide issues. The presidents with whom I spoke appreciated the chance to tell their story and receive feedback from Board members.
- As I understand it, under the Interim Chancellor annual assessments have emphasized goal setting and achievement more than in the past. This is a welcome change. Most presidents appreciate the greater objectivity that clear goals provide.
- The practice of soliciting 100 letters from stakeholders is an intriguing way to gather input. It gives voice to critics of the president's performance and may serve as an early warning of serious problems. To be sure, those relatively pleased with the president or indifferent to the administration are less apt to comment. The letters reveal aspects of institutional climate rather than an objective appraisal of performance. Inviting comments in this form is preferred to large surveys which inevitably poll many individuals who have little direct knowledge of the president's performance. Surveys become an unnecessary source of embarrassment should the results become public.
- The potential for "weaponization" exists in evaluations when a group conspires to damage a president in retaliation for unpopular decisions or for other reasons. I mention it here as a reminder that critical comments received during an assessment need to be taken seriously, but also considered within the larger context of campus dynamics including the inevitable conflicts and academic politics.

Recommendations

The basic framework of CSU's assessment policy is sound and represents responsible good practice. However, since the working environment and expectations of presidents have changed so dramatically in recent years, it makes sense to consider some adjustments to current practice.

1. Continue the Board's practice of meeting with the Chancellor and each President as the culminating event of comprehensive assessments. Not many public boards follow this example, but they should. As noted earlier, this conversation leaves the Board better informed and the presidents appreciate the opportunity to speak directly to trustees. Participation in these meetings should be a standard expectation for all trustees.

2. Achieving selected, important goals each year and over a span of time lies at the heart of superior presidential performance. It is also the basis for assuring accountability. In simpler times, a friendly president who presided over a relatively stable organization was regarded as good enough. Times have changed. Congeniality, popularity, and the absence of serious complaints are welcome attributes, but the test of a president's performance and its assessment should be the relative success in achieving significant goals. Making goal achievement front and center in the assessment process, as the Interim Chancellor is reported to have done, should be sustained.
3. Although the current process of inviting broad input, including the 100 letters requirement, is less than perfect, it offers some advantages as well. Giving voice to dissidents may function as something of a relief valve, and it probably contributes to the overall credibility of the process. It is preferable to alternatives such as opinion surveys inevitably administered to those with strong views but without much knowledge of how well the president is performing.
4. Assembling a working group of presidents and others to discuss and confirm CSU assessment principles and criteria will support faith in the process and may contribute to their growth as leaders. The group might include a few trustees, the Chancellor, System staff, and several experienced presidents. Two meetings to discuss and confirm basic principles such as those listed as hallmarks above and others like transparency, confidentiality, respect, trust, should be sufficient. A succinct statement of guiding principles and revised criteria for assessing and developing presidential leadership should be reviewed annually to remind participants of the fundamental purposes of assessment.
5. Predicting future problems based on the intersection of institutional dynamics with a president's strengths and weaknesses requires savvy assessors with substantial CSU and other higher education experience. Establishing a small group of former CSU presidents to advise new CSU presidents, and to participate in annual "formative" assessments, as well as comprehensive reviews, is well worth considering. The goals here are to support presidential leadership in the crucial early months and years, and to provide the president, the system, and—when appropriate—the Board, with early notice of brewing issues.
6. Leadership development seems to be a somewhat overlooked part of the CSU assessment process. What good is noting deficiencies, absent a plan and support for improved performance? The presidents, in pairs and small groups if not as a whole, have likely developed aid and support groups to assist with common problems, crises, difficult relationships, and the like. System support for these efforts could help expand them. In addition, every president should be required to retain the services of an experienced coach at system expense.

7. Expanding the existing opportunities for Board-president socialization around Board meeting days and on other occasions is worth considering. Currently, presidents appear to be seen but not heard at Board meetings and otherwise have only modest interaction with Board members. Frequent dinners (with or without a short formal agenda, speaker, etc.) of trustees and presidents, with the intent of building familiarity and trust in a semi-relaxed environment, is a good thing.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Terrence MacTaggart

AGB Senior Fellow

Dr. Terrence MacTaggart is a Senior Fellow with the Association of Governing Boards. He is the former head of public university systems in Minnesota and Maine and the author of Assessing and Developing College and University Presidents (AGB Press, 2020). Jane Wellman and Roberta Achtenberg, advisors to the Board and Chancellor, provided helpful background information throughout the process.