

# AGB

**A PRESIDENT IS ONLY AS GOOD  
AS HIS/HER BOARD**

**A BOARD IS ONLY AS GOOD  
AS ITS CHAIR**

# Mutual Expectations for Effective Leadership

For Presidents/Chancellors  
and Board Chairs

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# THE CONTEXT FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP

# STRATEGIC ISSUES

1. Fiscal Challenges
2. Productivity and Efficiency
3. Student Aid/Student Debt
4. Value Proposition of Higher Education and Public Trust
5. Educational Delivery
6. Changing Demographics

# STRATEGIC ISSUES

7. Student Learning/Quality
8. Student Success
9. Accountability
10. Market and Mission
11. Technology
12. Globalization
13. Risk Assessment

# Board-President Partnership

- Clear expectations
- Shared vision
- Mutual agreements about priorities/plans
- Roles of key stakeholders
- Climate of trust and candor

# Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities

- What belongs to the Board?
- What belongs to the President?
- What belongs to the Faculty?

# Oversight and Delegation— Where is the Balance?

- Boards cannot delegate fiduciary responsibility
- Boards can delegate to the President abundant authority to manage

# Ensuring Conditions for Success: Questions to Ponder

- Do the president and board understand and respect their respective responsibilities and make efforts to work together strategically?

# Ensuring Conditions for Success: Questions to Ponder

- Does your board offer opportunities to foster a strong president-board chair relationship?

# How does the board chair support the president?

- Provides input on the strategic content of the board agenda
- Serves as a sounding board for new ideas and strategies
- Gives candid feedback for improvement
- Establishes guidelines for board member communication with staff

# How does the board chair support the president?

- Communicates regularly with president
- Supports president when unpopular decisions are necessary
- Ensures president does not have to “police” the board or its members

# SHARED VALUES

- Foster strong feelings of personal effectiveness
- Facilitate consensus about key goals
- Encourage ethical behavior
- Reduce levels of stress and tension

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# BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE BOARD

# An Effective Board

- Understands and respects the difference between governing and managing.
- Balances advocacy and oversight
- In spite of differing views, speaks with one voice

# An Effective Board

- Observes the highest ethical standards—no conflict of interest
- Balances the institution's interests with state needs
- Listens to all constituencies without giving any veto power

# An Effective Board

- Monitors to ensure the quality of the educational experience for students
- Is committed to due process and academic freedom for students and faculty

# An Effective Board

- Pursues board education
- Is informed of national trends in higher education—both state and regional needs
- Makes decisions that are data driven
- Regularly assesses its own performance and its governance capacity

# Board Leadership Board Performance

- Boards Must be Self Regulating
- A president cannot police the board
- Challenge: Governance is a team sport but boards are mostly composed of quarterbacks
- A Team of Equals

# BEST PRACTICE: COLLEGIALITY

- Willingness to listen to and understand another's point of view
- Not the same as compromise or consensus  
Spirited debate is good and healthy
- Central to the notion of deliberative democracy that everyone gets a chance to be heard

# COLLEGIALITY

- Willingness to live by majority rule
- Willingness to let go of bad feelings about past decisions
- Civility and collegiality enhance the boards stature and influence

# Resources

- **AGB Leadership Institutes for Public Presidents and Board Chairs**
- **AGB Consulting Services**
- **AGB's *Trusteeship* magazine and numerous publications**
- **AGB website ([www.agb.org](http://www.agb.org)) for notices about meetings, webinars, AGBU and more!**

**Questions?**

**THANK YOU**