

MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES SELF-EVALUATION

February 2015

Just as Boards are concerned with the effectiveness of the institutions they govern, so they should be concerned with their own effectiveness as a Governing Board. Effective Boards engage in a continuing process of self-assessment and evaluation of their performance in order to identify areas of strength and strategies for improvement.

Accrediting Commission standards require Boards to define processes for assessing their performance in policy or bylaws, and to act in a manner consistent with the statements. The processes may be as formal or informal as the Board wishes—the most important thing is to use a process that provides useful information for the Board members.

Evaluating the performance of the Board as a unit is not the same as evaluating individual trustee performance. The accreditation standards do not require individual self-assessment, although many trustees find it beneficial.

The Board self-evaluation is very different from the political evaluation that takes place every few years at the ballot box. The election process has many variables, and it is extremely difficult to determine how a Board can specifically improve its own effectiveness through election results.

The purpose of the Board self-evaluation is to identify areas of Board functioning that are working well and those that may need improvement. In addition, the discussion of Board roles and responsibilities builds communication and understanding among the members and leads to a stronger, more cohesive working group. At the end of an evaluation discussion, Board members should have:

- identified areas for improvement, perhaps stated as goals and criteria for future evaluations;
- an understanding of what they expect from themselves and each other to be an effective Board; and
- a summary of accomplishments and characteristics of which they can be proud.

Beside each question is a space for you to give a general evaluation mark. The following rating scale should be used:

- A = Excellent*
- B = Above Average*
- C = Average*
- D = Below Average*
- F = Unsatisfactory*

Board Organization

Rating

- The Board operates as a unit. AAAABBB
- Board members uphold the final majority decision of the Board. AAAAAAA
- Board members understand that they have no legal authority outside Board meetings. AAAAAAA
- The Board's decisions are independent of partisan bias. AAAAAAB

Policy Role

- Board members understand and support the concept that Board policy is the primary voice of the Board. AAAAAAA
- The Board assures a systematic, comprehensive review of Board policies. AAAAABB
- The Board focuses on policy in Board discussions, not administrative matters. AAAAABB
- The Board has clarified the difference between its policy role and the roles of the CEO and staff. AAAAAAB

Community Relations

- The Board is committed to protecting the public interest. AAAAAAB
- Board members act on behalf of the entire community. AAAABBC
- Board members maintain good relationships with community leaders. AAAAAAB
- Board members keep the CEO informed of community contacts. AAAABBC

Policy Direction

- The Board is knowledgeable about the mission and purpose of the institution. AAAAAAB
- The Board bases its decisions in terms of what is best for students and the community. AAAAABB
- The Board maintains a future-oriented, visionary focus in Board discussions. AAAAAAB

Board-CEO Relations

- The Board and CEO have a positive, cooperative relationship.
- A climate of mutual trust and respect exists between the Board and CEO.
- The Board has clear protocols for communicating with staff that include the CEO.
- The Board clearly delegates the administration of the college to the CEO.

Rating

AAAABBB

AAAABBB

AAAAABB

AAAAAAB

Fiscal Oversight

- The Board understands the fiscal condition of the organization.
- The Board provides fiscal oversight to assure the financial stability of the College.
- The Board understands the financial audit and its recommendations.

Rating

AAAAAAB

AAAAABB

AAAABBB

Institutional Performance

- The Board demonstrates a concern for the success of all students.
- The Board is appropriately involved in the accreditation process.
- The Board is committed to equal opportunity.

AAAAAAA

AAAAABB

AAAAAAA

Board Leadership

- The Board understands its roles and responsibilities.
- Board members are prepared for Board meetings.
- The Board maintains confidentiality of privileged information.
- The Board understands the political implications of its actions.

AAAAAAA

AAAAABB

AAAAAAA

AAAAAAB

Advocating the College

- The Board recognizes positive accomplishments of the college.
- Board members speak positively about the institution in the community.
- The Board plays a leadership role in the local community.
- The Board helps educate the local community about community college needs and issues.
- The Board works to secure adequate public funding.

AAAAAAA

A+AAAAAA

AAAAAAB

AAAAAAB

AAABBBB

Board Education

- Board members are engaged in a continuous process of training and development.
- The Board adequately studies issues prior to Board action.
- The information provided to the Board is appropriate and relevant.

AAAABBC

AAAAABB

AAAAABB-

The following questions are open-ended. Your response will assist in institutional evaluation and determining future priorities.

1. What are the Board's greatest strengths?

- Board is professional and collaborative with many years of educational and business experience that collectively helps strengthen the institution.
- They consistently engage their district communities as well as the Mt. SAC community.
- They embrace the mission and are enthusiastic about its students, faculty, and staff accomplishments while always mindful of institutional challenges.
- A majority of the Board members always demonstrates trust, respect, and support toward fellow Board members. A majority of the Board members maintains a good relationship with the community leaders, elected officials, and the general public.
- Experience with education and the District's communities.
- Diversity of its constituencies.
- Emotional commitment to Mt. SAC's success and reputation.
- Board members tend to work very well with other members in addressing issues before them, always showing consideration and respect. These relationships allow for the Board to deal more effectively with regard to pressing issues.
- Board members are diverse in many ways; but, for the most part, we respect each other's viewpoints and maintain professionalism. We are active in the community and use our positions within the community to reflect our pride in Mt. SAC and all its accomplishments. We are active to varying degrees in the activities in the activities within the campus as our time permits.
- The Board's greatest strengths include having many years of governance experience, knowledge, and history of the College and its programs, strong advocacy efforts in local and statewide issues, and a high level of collegiality and professionalism.
- Professionalism, respect, and smarts.

2. What are the major accomplishments of the Board in the past year?

- Successfully negotiated labor union agreements.
- Continued to preserve and improve the fiscal stability of the institution.
- Continued to produce students and teams of accomplishment in academic and co-curricular areas.
- Dedicated the new Child Development Complex.
- The Board members were able to remain united during the "parking lot construction" controversy and acted professionally in dealing with Walnut City officials and its residents.
- Financial stability.
- Consideration of new programs – not accepting the status quo.
- Completion of new facilities and ground-breaking for new ones.
- National academic and athletic championships.
- Resumed growth in FTES.

- The Board, due to the nature of its leadership approach and involvement in the community, generally speaking, has contributed to the stability and positive ranking within the state as well as within the regional and local communities. The parking structure situation has hampered this, somewhat, so we'll see.
- Studying all aspects of the parking structure and listening to the concerns of neighbors of the College regarding the parking structure. Responding to requests for study of a new location for the parking structure and, hopefully, making a final decision that takes into account our responsibilities to our students' priorities and our responsibility to ALL the taxpayers of the Mt. SAC District.
- Opening of our child care building.
- Ground-breaking events for our disabled/veterans center and food court.
- Fiscal solvency.
- Continued progress of bond projects.
- Many more athletic championships.
- Successfully weathered tough storms (including, but not limited to, the controversy about my former office, and Walnut's ongoing opposition to the parking garage), while maintaining excellent services and staying in front of everything coming down the road.

3. What are areas in which the Board could improve?

- Anticipate potential sensitive issues and ask that the College be more prepared to publicly address them.
- Be more mindful about construction projects and request CEO to update and share his plans regarding campus construction diligently.
- Support for Mt. SAC Foundation efforts.
- The Board could consider more closely those big issues. The balance between micro and macro involvement should be reviewed, just to ensure that that balance is at an appropriate level.
- Attend student-sponsored events, whenever possible.
- Support our Foundation Board in their efforts to raise funds for our students and the institution.
- There is a stronger need to improve communication with community members, particularly the Walnut residents and city council members who oppose the parking structure.
- I need to attend more trainings so I can better stay in front of what's coming down the road and provide more valuable input.

4. As a Trustee, I am most pleased with:

- Mt. SAC being a state leader in new initiatives such as the Student Success program.
- Keeping strong fiscal reserves as a hedge for challenging state budgets.
- Mt. SAC's commitment to consistently maintain an atmosphere of excellence in student academic accomplishments, faculty quality, staff dedication, athletic and other extracurricular dominance, and community morale.
- Maintaining an outstanding reputation in the communities we serve.

- Awards and achievements (both academic and sports) by the students, faculty, and staff.
- The collegial nature of our Board.
- The College's continued success and growth.
- High national and state reputation.
- Student accomplishments.
- Certainly, we should not be pleased with neither the parking structure situation, nor the student housing debate. How all this is resolved remains in the future.
- The continuous success of Mt. SAC's academic and athletic success and the success of all of our College teams – Forensic, Choral Music, Instrumental groups, etc.
- Our great faculty and outstanding reputation as a great community college which extends throughout the state.
- The growth of enrollment this year.
- Fiscal stability.
- Our Visual and performing arts programs continue to shine.
- Athletic accomplishments.
- Our Student Equity Plan.
- The Board's professionalism, respect, and smarts.

5. As a Trustee, I have concerns about:

- Not having a more vigorous crisis communications plan when dealing with community issues.
- The process regarding the campus master building plan especially the proposed student housing complex so the trustees, faculty and staff are fully informed and involved as appropriate in establishing a vision, strategy and direction for the campus.
- Unable to complete Measure RR projects.
- The execution and planning of Measure RR construction.
- The working relationship with the City of Walnut.
- The cost of retirement programs.
- Coping with student and employee parking and traffic.
- Friction with City of Walnut leadership.
- Getting out to the general public knowledge of Mt. SAC's successes.
- Completion rates, which will be addressed by the Student Success and Equity programs.
- Publicity for all our successes and accomplishments at Mt. SAC.
- Parking for our students and staff.
- STRS percentage increases and how this will impact our budget.
- How we will rebuild relationships with Walnut residents and council.
- I'm concerned about the possible repercussions if this goes to litigation.

- It's great to see that the Board and College have a close relationship with some communities in the Mt. SAC District, but it would be better if we were well connected with all the communities in the Mt. SAC District.
- No everyone and all communities in the Mt. SAC District know about Mt. SAC's great qualities, what we have to offer to students, and some don't even know they live in the Mt. SAC District.

6. As a Trustee, I would like to see the following changes in how the Board operates:

- Play a more active role in providing input for a crisis communications strategy.
- Set a system to enhance CEO's report to the Board in more detailed fashion relating to bond construction projects and major campus decisions.
- I believe that there are some changes along the lines discussed above (re: micro/macro balance).
- Increased communication regarding new proposals, even as they are in the early development stages.
- We operate well as a Board and need to continue to communicate with each other as long as there is no Brown Act violation.
- We must also continue to stand by our decisions during contentious votes.
- I wouldn't mind having more than one meeting a month; perhaps a special meeting when we have a lot of business to cover so our meeting won't run so late. After several hours, my focus and thinking are not as sharp. But, since it's difficult to coordinate 7+ schedules, I'm fine if this does not happen.

7. I recommend that the Board has the following goals for the coming year:

- Advocate for a clear strategy and plan to utilize the anticipated additional state funding.
- We continue to wisely use our fiscal reserves even in a more favorable budget climate.
- Successful labor negotiations.
- Resolve the issues with the City of Walnut and rebuild the positive working relationship.
- Learn more about CEO's plan regarding:
 - Solar Farm
 - Student Housing
 - Others, if any
- Increasing support for the Mt. SAC Foundation.
- Resolving the future plans for a new parking structure.
- Growing FTES sufficient to capture all available growth money.
- Adding as many new faculty as possible.
- Support the CEO and college constituents in seeing that the Student Success Initiative continued to be implemented successfully.
- Resolve the parking structure issue.
- Greater outreach to local legislators and the new member of the Board of Supervisors.
- Make the local school boards' dinner an important priority as we continue to work with our K-12 partners.

- Maintain fiscal stability.
- Improve relationship with our neighbors.
- Examine course offering and ensure they are meeting the demands of the workplace so our students are able to join the workforce.
- Continue to address equity and access so all of our students have the resources and opportunities they need to be successful.
- When we're in the community, remember to mention at least one of our many great qualities so the word will get around.