

MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES SELF-EVALUATION
March 2021

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

	<u>Rating</u>
Board Organization	
• The board operates as a unit.	<u>AABBBBBB</u>
• Board members uphold the final majority decision of the board.	<u>AAAAABB</u>
• Board members understand that they have no legal authority outside board meetings.	<u>AAAAAAB</u>
• The board's decisions are independent of partisan bias.	<u>AAABBBC</u>
Policy Role	
• Board members understand and support the concept that board policy is the primary voice of the board.	<u>AAAAAAB</u>
• The board assures a systematic, comprehensive review of board policies.	<u>AAAABBC</u>
• The board focuses on policy in board discussions, not administrative matters.	<u>AAAAABC</u>
• The board has clarified the difference between its policy role and the roles of the CEO and staff.	<u>AAAAAAB</u>
Community Relations	
• The board is committed to protecting the public interest.	<u>AAAAAAB</u>
• Board members act on behalf of the entire community.	<u>AAAAABB</u>
• Board members maintain good relationships with community leaders.	<u>AAAAABB</u>
• Board members keep the CEO informed of community contacts.	<u>AAAABBB</u>
Policy Direction	
• The board is knowledgeable about the mission and purpose of the institution.	<u>AAAAAAB</u>
• The board bases its decisions in terms of what is best for students and the community.	<u>AAAAABB</u>
• The board maintains a future-oriented, visionary focus in board discussions.	<u>AAAABBB</u>

Rating

Board-CEO Relations

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

Fiscal Oversight

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

Institutional Performance

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

Board Leadership

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

Advocating the College

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

Board Education

Rating

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| • Board members are engaged in a continuous process of training and development. | <u>AAAABBC</u> |
| • The board adequately studies issues prior to board action. | <u>AAAABBC</u> |
| • The information provided to the board is appropriate and relevant. | <u>AAABBCC</u> |

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?

- Ability to work together and all Board Member's share the vision of what is in the best interest of the students.
- Trustees work together well and clearly have interest of the College and students at heart. We are well-connected with the community and constituents.
- The new composition of the governing board reflects Mt. SAC student population.
- Board Members actively participate in campus events and engage the community and advocate for Mt. SAC.
- The Board takes pride in its students', faculty, and staffs' accomplishments and actively participates in College events with enthusiasm and support.
- The majority of the Board has been supportive of decisions and/or recommendations made by CEO/administration.
- Board Members' diligence and patience in studying and understanding when voting on complex issues.
- Mutual respect, professionalism.
- Despite ongoing differences of opinion related to specific personal actions and policy, the Board tends to work together to better achieve College goals related to student success, along with a variety of issues.
- Each member is engaged in efforts to improve the academic lives of students and add to the success of the College, overall.
- Student success is among the top priorities, which cannot be achieved by a single member, there is shared responsibility.
- The Board is naturally strong due to mutual respect, unity, and collegiality.
- Board ethnic makeup is 100% diverse.
- Great boards thrive on trust.

- The Board is very united and cohesive in decision-making when it comes to acting on the best interest of students and the College.
- The Board is active in the many communities we represent.
- The Board is active in county, state, and federal bodies and associations that help Mt. SAC have a presence.

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

- Settlement of the West Parcel issue with the City of Walnut, completion of the Stadium, transition to remote instruction (faculty accomplishment), and received funding from the Federal government for \$16M and \$60M.
- Managing through a pandemic and overseeing a college that moved 95% of classes online. Keeping staff, faculty, and students safe. No incidents of COVID-19 related to campus activity.
- Supporting CEO and Administrations' actions during the pandemic crisis for the best interests of the students and campus constituents.
- Providing leadership on state and national boards, e.g., Dr. Baca serves as President of the State Foundation Board and Judy Chen Haggerty serves on the national ACCT Board of Directors and the State ACES Committee. Their efforts enhance the growth of Mt. SAC's statewide and national reputation and representation.
- Allowing the administration to lead us through the pandemic and other big issues.
- Approving the PLA.
- The Board has been able to keep informed and actively involved in a variety of functions and events since the beginning of "close down" in March 2020.
- The Board has remained committed to excellence at all levels of the organization even in a remote learning format.
- The Board has made fiscally prudent decisions during the pandemic and has leveraged resources to continue to provide basic needs to students experiencing housing and food insecurities.

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

- Certain items in closed session has shed light on other policies that probably need to be addressed. I believe many items which end up being addressed under a discrimination issue take this route because the other steps to remedy the grievance have no appeal procedures.

- Better communication with CEO and among Board Members without Brown Act violations relating to labor negotiations. Perhaps request more information from the CEO for controversial matters prior to the Board Meetings.
- A bit more participation in the big decisions (e.g. payment to Foothill Transit).
- Although members, generally speaking, are prepared for Board Meetings, a bit more time could be spent discussing some significant items with the CEO, prior to the meeting.
- Decision making: increase effort for openness encouraging board of education, city council, and community leaders to attend/participate in Board Meetings.
- Continual effort to enhance operating campus in a manner that fosters openness between campus leadership, faculty, and staff.
- Financial: enhance accurate reporting of district financial position including risks.
- The Board can make an improvement in the area of encouraging and supporting systems that promote the recruitment and hiring of a more diverse faculty.

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

- The dedication of our employees to serve our students. I see the passion in all of our departments and it is a reflection of the philosophy of the Board, the President of the College, and our VP's.
- Progress on our construction projects and savings incurred.
- Safety of our campus.
- Movement to online learning, and now the movement back towards campus learning.
- Board Members are asking questions prior to the meeting and are prepared, and asking good questions at the meeting.
- The transition from on-ground to online instruction during the pandemic period.
- The maintenance of fiscal stability to avoid being negatively impacted by COVID-19.
- The work of faculty and staff in support of our students during the pandemic period.
- Board Members' continuous efforts in building strong relationships with local city councils, school boards, water board officials, and elected officials.

- The way the administration handled the pandemic, COVID protocols, transition to distant learning, and adjusting construction to pandemic conditions.
- The very significant difficulties of the past year have presented many challenges. The staff and faculty of the College have really stepped up in order to support students through this pandemic.
- Fellow trustees and campus leadership, faculty, and staff value our students, are focused on student success.
- Favorable reputation of Mt. SAC locally and statewide.
- Exceptional campus leadership team.
- Maintaining status as the state's largest single-campus district.
- The continued successes of our numerous programs that support students who experience the most challenges.

5. As a Trustee, I have concerns about:

- It seems like we are having more comments from our respective shared governance groups that they feel they are often not included in the decision process.
- Communications between President Scroggins and Board could be better. Key personnel decisions should be communicated to the Board of Trustees first before being pushed to the Mt. SAC community, and major hiring decisions should not be announced until Board has taken a vote and ratified the decision.
- In general, there seems to have been more concerns raised regarding stakeholder input into key decision points. Examples include the VPI hiring process and the modalities used to move classes back to campus.
- Mt. SAC's fiscal strength impacted by the pandemic.
- The pending negotiations with the Faculty Association and other labor unions.
- The uncertainty of funding formula due to the post-pandemic state budget.
- The increasing STRS/PERS obligations and the impact on our budget.
- The negative impact to the enrollment of local, out of state, and international students brought by the pandemic.
- The Board getting info and having opportunity to have input on big decisions. Ethnic Studies which will help our students be more successful. I also have reservations about our efforts to address institutional racism. Hope it's not committees, conversations, then back to business as usual.

- The most outstanding concern is that of our ability to return to safe and healthy open college. However, I have confidence that the executive leadership of the College, in working with faculty and staff constituencies will be able to achieve this.
- Maintaining a robust enrollment of students during a mostly virtual learning environment.

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

- I would like to be given updates either prior to or after the Board Meetings when there is a grievance which is going to be aired. Often, we are only made aware of the grievance at the public hearing and having a follow up afterwards would allow the Board to understand the logic and merits of the comment.
- It would be helpful if the President would give the Board a bit more detail on why certain decisions are made. For example, if certain high level staff are terminated or hired, the reasons why would be helpful to understand the criteria for this decision.
- There are times when the President is reluctant to share bad news with the Board. We understand that not every decision will turn out smooth. By sharing the struggles and difficulties, this will allow the Board to better understand the various pressures and allow to Board to make a determination if there is a policy issue which needs to be addressed. Along these same lines, I would like the President to share with us some of his accomplishments so we can be aware of what techniques and policies work with our respective groups.
- Ensure the CEO continues to run a tighter ship in dealing with the City of Walnut and certain groups of residents for possible future legal disputes and foreseeable future challenges.
- Request the CEO to keep the Board informed/more frequent updates on details of the GO Bond as new developments arise after the pandemic.
- CEO to provide details of procedures in returning campus to on-ground instruction.
- More opportunities to have input into big decisions including getting info early enough to allow the Board to respond.
- Our Board Meetings could always be a bit tighter. We allow plenty of discussion and this should not be sacrificed in order to achieve this.
- Agenda: consider oral reports provided by the 10-13 stakeholders either be given three minutes and/or submit written report.

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

- I would like to see the College make a bid for the 2024 Olympic trials. Losing the 2020 trials was in reality a blessing and I believe we are better situated to bid of the 2024 trials.
- I would like to see the College come up with an analysis as to the right balance of remote classroom and in person classroom for our students. The last year has forced us to offer classes which we did not previously offer remotely.
- President Scroggins has approximately 2 years remaining on his contract. He has informed Trustee Jay Chen to start to formulate search criteria. This will be the most important decision facing the Board in the next few years. President Scroggins' replacement will be difficult to find as my expectation is to have another "human Google". I think the Trustees Baca and Chen-Haggerty will be key to finding an appropriate replacement as they have the most experience in this area.
- Making sure various stakeholders feel heard in the key decision points that we will address in the coming year.
- More "diversity hiring" to be more reflective of our student body.
- Maintain a balanced budget, whatever that takes, including preservation and improvement of the fiscal stability of the institution to overcome the challenges of the "new normal" after the pandemic.
- Re-establishment of positive/effective working relationships with the community and new city officials of Walnut.
- Mt. SAC Foundation's plan for raising funds after the pandemic.
- Review our security/police policies in light of recent revelations.
- Continue efforts to address equity and institutional racism.
- Fiscal efficiency.
- Work closely with the CEO and executive leadership to oversee the fiscal demands the pandemic has placed on the institution, as well as the impact that this past year has had on student success.
- Diversity, inclusion, and racial justice.
- Strengthen government relationships.
- Thoughtfully and safely re-populate campus of students, faculty, staff, and administration.

8. Additional Comments:

- My largest disappointment this year was how we handled the PLA contract. I believe we allowed the political pressures stifle a prudent discussion on the merits of the program. I feel we rushed into the decision with terms which were burdensome to the college. The decision has been made and our job now is to support that decision. However, I hope that any future decisions on the magnitude of this one will have more discussion in the future.