

MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES SELF-EVALUATION (COMPILED)

March 2016

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

Rating

Board Organization

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

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Policy Role

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

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Community Relations

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

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Policy Direction

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

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Rating

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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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Board Education

Rating

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

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?

- We are a very diverse Board that reflects our District. As such, we act from various viewpoints, yet for the good of the institution and the students at Mt. SAC. I feel the entire Board has been diligent in our understanding of the complex legal issues which have challenged us in this past year.
- We are usually thoughtful in our approach to the governing of the College and have respect for one another's opinions.
- As a seven-member Board, we have greater reach than before and greater diversity, as well. Our diversity spans not just ethnicity, but also professions. Having several members with K-12 experience as trustees and as teachers, and also having a community college professor on the board, really gives us a good grounding. Our personalities mesh well.
- The Board takes pride in its students', faculty's, and staff's accomplishments and actively participates in College events with enthusiasm and support.
- The Board members always act with professionalism and courtesy towards their Board colleagues, campus constituents, and students.
- Each Board member has his or her own unique background, experience, and knowledge to contribute.
- Board members consistently engage the community and advocate for Mt. SAC.
- Broad experience in education.
- Deep knowledge of the District's communities and their leaders.
- Diversity of the Board's constituencies.
- Emotional commitment to Mt. SAC's success and reputation.

- The Board is an experienced board which represents the diversity of its community. Its members work collegially and show a significant degree of respect to each other. Its members actively engage in activities both on and off campus. The Board contributes positively toward the campus environment and the morale of students, faculty, and staff.
- The Board always puts the interests and success of the College and its students before anything else.
- There is a high level of professionalism and collegiality among trustees.
- The Board participates in many events that support student success and the mission of the College.
- Professionalism, respect, smarts.

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

- Re-election!!! In addition, we have a new Board member who is diligent in his preparation for meetings and has experience in Board issues, at least at the K-12 level.
- Making progress on the Solar Project plans and understanding the issues of SEQA and working with the City of Walnut to the best of our ability.
- Moving ahead with the final construction projects of Measure RR.
- Continuing to make Mt. SAC's presence felt by our participation and leadership in statewide and national associations of community colleges.
- Several new buildings have been completed, the most visible sign of Board progress. While the lawsuits have been unpleasant, they have not stopped all of our construction, which is a partial victory. But, the injunction is a large setback for the College.
- Continued preservation and improvement of the fiscal stability of the institution.
- Students' and staff's accomplishments in academics and athletics at the national and state level.
- Financial stability.
- Continued FTES growth.
- Consideration of new instructional and counseling programs – not accepting the status quo.
- Growth in Financial Aid.
- Completion of new facilities and breaking ground on additional ones.
- National academic and athletic championships.

- The Board has overseen a healthy financial situation for the College and interacted well with the CEO in doing so.
- Its members have been actively involved in state and national organizations, assuming leadership roles.
- Although only somewhat of an accomplishment, the Board has managed to stay focused, as a unit, as it works through the legal issues it has been confronted with during the past year. It is a credit to its members and to the administration that these legal challenges have not disrupted that unity.
- The partnership with Mt. Saint Mary's to offer a BSN on our campus was a big accomplishment.
- The completion and opening of the Business and Technology building.
- The Learfield Award that honored our athletics program.
- There was enrollment growth in Fall 2015.
- Maintaining respect in a contested election.
- Addressing litigation with the community in an appropriate manner.
- Maintaining high quality education, programs, staff, administrators, leaders, services, and operations.
- Supporting the implementation of an additional BA program, despite losing the opportunity with the State pilot program.
- Successful negotiations with our unions.
- Maintaining a great relationship with a great education foundation.

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

- Support our Associated Students by attending student events whenever possible.
- Support our Foundation in their efforts to reach out to Alumni and their fund-raising activities.
- We do need better outreach into the community and make sure that we are seen and heard at community events. We don't want to give the impression that Mt. SAC is insular. We need better geographic diversity in our bond committee and ensure that all members make appointments.
- Be more mindful about construction projects and request the CEO to update and share his plans regarding campus construction, in a timely fashion.
- Involvement in Measure RR planning and changes to the Facilities Master Plan.
- Involvement in the activities of the Citizens Oversight Committee.

- Support for Mt. SAC Foundation efforts.
- The College is viewed very favorably by the community and its elected officials; but, the Board could do better in coordinating, with the CEO and staff, its interaction with these entities.
- Although this has not been a problem, with the exception of maybe one city, it might be good to have a schedule whereby local, state, and national representatives are periodically invited to the campus. This, of course, does happen; but, it would be good to maintain a “calendar” of these visits (engagements) and be in a position to follow up where there are gaps.
- Ensuring our fiscal situation remains in good standing, especially with mandated increases in CalSTRS and CalPERS contributions for the next four years.
- We need to improve our communication and outreach efforts with our neighbors in Walnut.
- Having the ability to provide a solution to our construction litigation.

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

- The continued success of Mt. SAC’s academic and athletic success and the success of all of our College teams – Forensics, Choral Music, Instrumental groups, Athletic Teams – particularly the Learfield award for the outstanding Community College Athletic Program in the nation.
- Our great faculty, administrators, and managers and our outstanding reputation as a great community college, which extends throughout the state.
- Our ability to attract top-quality hires in all areas because of the aforementioned successes of the College.
- The modernization of our buildings. Our new buildings look great, and the campus looks beautiful. Plans for the sports complex are exciting. We continue to excel academically and athletically. We have an outstanding and unique horticulture program and aviation program that set up apart. The Solar Project is a great statement on our commitment to sustainability.
- Awards and achievements (both academic and sports) by the students, faculty, and staff.
- The collegial nature and diversity of our Board.
- The College’s continued success and growth.
- High national and state reputation.
- The Board’s professionalism, respect, knowledge, and dedication.
- The collegial nature of our Board.

- The College's continued success and growth.
- High national and state reputation.
- Student accomplishments and awards.
- The College's fiscal stability, solvency, and reserves.
- The overall work of the College is exemplary. Mt. SAC faculty, staff, and administrators work diligently in preparing our students for success. Our students, in great numbers, excel in achieving their academic, career, and intercollegiate goals. We, of course, need to continue to work at increasing the number of students who are succeeding; but, it's great to know that the College is functioning quite well.
- The relationships the Board has forged with students and faculty at Mt. SAC.
- Mt. SAC staying ahead of developing research, policy, and regulations.
- Our student services, high quality academics, and being a great operating community college that provides opportunity to many that may not otherwise be able to attend college.

5. As a Trustee, I have concerns about:

- The lawsuits filed against us by a group of homeowners and the City of Walnut.
- Parking for our students and staff.
- Continued lawsuits with Walnut and its citizens. We need to make sure that future projects are lawsuit-proof, as much as possible. We have left ourselves open to criticism through some of our doing that must be corrected. We have more modernization to go, such as adding credit card kiosks for the parking structures and revamping the gift store so it sells items more relevant to college students.
- City of Walnut's ongoing opposition to Mt. SAC's construction projects. Not having a clear communication plan and strategy when dealing with Walnut community issues.
- Not having a more vigorous communication plan with the elected officials at the local, state, and federal level.
- Future fiscal impact due to the increase of CalSTRS and CalPERS contributions.
- The growing cost of retirement programs.
- The future of Proposition 30 funding.
- Coping with student and employee traffic and parking issues.

- Getting out to the general public knowledge of Mt. SAC's successes and offerings.
 - Friction with Walnut.
 - Making sure we do not become administratively top-heavy, with too many managers and not enough teachers.
 - As indicated above, we should be concerned that as successful as Mt. SAC is at preparing students, we have many students who need our attention and energies. Success for the College is best measured by the number of "underprepared for college" students were able to graduate, transfer, and/or earned certificates.
 - Our lack of diversity among our professors. We are making progress, but need to continue our efforts to hire qualified staff that is representative of our student population.
 - Our pending litigation with Walnut and the Taxpayers.
 - Future construction.
6. As a Trustee, I would like to see the following changes in how the Board operates:
- Greater outreach and communication with our local legislators.
 - Greater care in email communications to ensure we are not in violation of the Brown Act.
 - Be more mindful about construction projects and request the CEO to update and share his plans regarding campus construction, diligently.
 - A few more Board subcommittees operating in key problem areas, providing input to the Administration.
 - There are no significant changes that I would recommend beyond those discussed elsewhere in this evaluation document.
 - Look into whether online agendas would be beneficial to Board operations.
 - The administration does a great job in facilitating our smooth operation; so, the only improvement would be if I did a better job in staying up on developing research, policy, regulations, etc.
7. I recommend that the Board has the following goals for the coming year:
- Evaluate facilities needs and ensure that we do not open ourselves up to litigation in future projects.
 - Repair the relationship with Walnut.

- Expand satellite class offerings to other communities.
- Build a transportation hub and explore other ways to make Mt. SAC more accessible.
- Issue a student survey to see what the students want and think is important.
- Plan ahead to weather tough storms (including, but not limited to, the controversy about Walnut's ongoing opposition to the parking structure, the solar project, and any upcoming construction projects).
- The administration to have a more vigorous communication plan with the elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels and to better prepare the Board's advocacy at the state and national levels.
- Resolving our disputes with the City of Walnut by the end of 2016.
- Continued growth of FTES in order to capture all available growth funds, and support whatever marketing is necessary to accomplish this.
- Adding as many new faculty members as possible.
- Increasing the Board's support for the Mt. SAC Foundation.
- I believe that we have had a successful transition from five to seven Board members and should continue to develop the positive relations among Board members.
- Our lack of diversity among our professors. We are making progress, but need to continue our efforts to hire qualified staff that is representative of our student population.
- Have research and report done on the benefits and costs of a PLA and whether one should be written into our next bond.
- Have research and report done on how we could develop and improve ethnic studies in a manner that would benefit academic achievement.

8. Additional Comments:

- Overall, we are heading in the right direction and are blessed with a college with great history and culture.