



Fitchburg State University

Board of Trustees Personnel and Human Resources Committee Meeting

Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees Meeting

Published on November 28, 2023 at 1:18 PM EST

Date and Time

Tuesday December 5, 2023 at 8:15 AM EST

Location

Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Personnel Committee on Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 8:15 a.m.,

Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
I. Opening Items			8:15 AM
A. Record Attendance			1 m
B. Call the Meeting to Order			
C. Approve Minutes	Approve Minutes		1 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
Approve minutes for Board of Trustees Personnel Committee Meeting on January 25, 2023			
II. Faculty and Librarian Reappointment Process			8:17 AM
A. Dr. Pat Marshall will lead the discussion	Discuss		20 m
III. Professional Development Opportunities			8:37 AM
A. Ms. Jessica Murdoch will lead the discussion	Discuss		10 m
IV. President's Evaluation Process			8:47 AM
A. Annual Presidential Evaluation Outline	Discuss		5 m
B. Informational Documents			10 m
V. Closing Items			9:02 AM
A. Adjourn Meeting	Vote		

Coversheet

Approve Minutes

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: C. Approve Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material:
Minutes for Board of Trustees Personnel Committee Meeting on January 25, 2023

DRAFT



Fitchburg State University

Minutes

Board of Trustees Personnel Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday January 25, 2023 at 2:00 PM

Location

Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Personnel Committee on Tuesday, January 25, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Committee Members Present

D. Phillips, J. Flanagan (remote), K. Spinelli (remote), L. Barrieau (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

A.J. Tourigny, E. Gregoire (remote), F. Barricelli, G. Doiron, G. Doiron, J. Bry, J. Murdoch, J. Wolfman, L. Bayless, M. Bruun, M. Fiorentino, Jr. (remote), P. Marshall, R. Lapidus (remote), R. Toomey, S. Swartz

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

D. Phillips called a meeting of the Personnel and Human Resources Committee of Fitchburg State University to order on Wednesday Jan 25, 2023 at 2:06 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

II. Elect a Chair

A. Chair

D. Phillips nominated L. Barrieau as Chair of the Personnel Committee.

D. Phillips made a motion to nominate L. Barrieau as Chair of the Personnel Committee.

E. Gregoire seconded the motion. The committee VOTED to approve the motion.

III. Personnel

A. Review the faculty union's petition

D. Phillips next discussed the faculty union's petition.

M. Fiorentino joined the meeting at 2:08 p.m.

J. Murdoch provided history and background regarding administrative positions. She talked about how the union gathered their information via a public portal. She indicated that this is not real-time information and does not align with how the university presents their information. She talked about the discrepancies in the union's PowerPoint that was submitted previously. She discussed the attached PowerPoint in detail.

J. Bry discussed the mechanisms used to collect the data. J. Murdoch stated that there are 38 non-unit staff as of today. She explained the different ranks within the non-unit group.

L. Barrieau said she was getting the sense, from the petition, that it is was more of an issue with continued raises among senior administrative positions.

J. Murdoch explained the contractual language in Appendix O of the MSCA Collective Bargaining Agreement and what happens each academic year. The faculty are given increases by way of the promotion and tenure process. She discussed the process for members of the various unions to request a review of their salary.

There was a discussion on cost of living adjustments, the Governor's and the Department of Higher Education's role in salary equity.

K. Spinelli joined the meeting at 2:27 p.m.

J. Murdoch discussed faculty positions and the changing needs of the university to meet the institutional demands given retirements and other factors. She talked about vacated positions and their replacements.

J. Flanagan joined the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

M. Fiorentino noted that the 18 new faculty are new individuals and not positions. He said he appreciated the background and hiring practices of both faculty and administrators. He continued, that in looking at the petition that was presented, being blunt, and the elephant in the room, these things are tied to enrollment challenges. People are concerned, particularly what will happen to positions and academic programs. The Trustees are too far removed from day-to-day operations. This needs to be a priority and how do we interact with the campus so there is a real understanding of the future, and that makes a difference on what you see on campus.

The President responded that the university has started to put together committees to talk about long-term sustainability and have campus-wide conversations on how decisions are being made.

M. Fiorentino said he was glad to hear that and asked if Trustees could be part of that process, and we need to send that consistent message to feel secure of what's happening at the university. We may not reach everyone. Debating over the numbers doesn't move the agenda forward.

The President said he is putting together a variety of committees to talk about prioritizing the needs of the institution.

M. Fiorentino encouraged the administration to move forward as rapidly as possible. The semester goes very quickly and this has to be addressed as much as possible for the wellbeing of the university.

L. Barrieau said this is more urgent than less urgent. She also asked, do you need the exact numbers? People would appreciate the communication.

The President responded that the campus is not an information void. Many of these conversations are being repeated. He said he believed he was reasonably transparent, and that data was needed. Without the common language and understanding, he was not sure if the campus could make significant changes without the data. He said there have been many presentations, and it's not for the want of not providing information. Given our new Governor, he also anticipates some different thinking from this new administration. Consideration of the implications of anticipated changes will need to be given thought as well.

There was a discussion that included the impact of COVID, hybrid classes, and the new world of telework.

D. Phillips said if there are additional questions or concerns, to let her know.

IV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 3:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Phillips

Documents used during the meeting

- MSCA Financial Presentation 11 1 22 (4).pdf
- Petition to the Board of Trustees.pdf

Coversheet

Annual Presidential Evaluation Outline

Section: IV. President's Evaluation Process
Item: A. Annual Presidential Evaluation Outline
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: AnnualPresidentialEvaluationOutline (1).pdf

Annual Presidential Evaluation Outline

- I. Executive Summary including recommendation for compensation adjustment**
- II. Description of the Process used**

Items to be addressed could include a self-evaluation, campus surveys, third party interviews, which documents and data were consulted and whether a committee process was used.
- III. Institutional Goal review**

Boards can review executive skills, competencies and experience; institutional challenges; and areas of exceptional performance and areas in which performance needs to improve. This section should contain more than a list of activities but metrics that show progress on each of the goals.
- IV. System-Level Goal review**

Boards can review executive skills, competencies and experience; institutional challenges; and areas of exceptional performance and areas in which performance needs to improve. This section should contain more than a list of activities but metrics that show progress on each of the goals.
- V. Recommendation for compensation adjustment**

This recommendation should include the opinion of the board on a merit increase (if any is available in that year).

Potential Attachments:

- List of Annual Goals determined at the institution level
- Presidential Self-evaluation (if applicable)
- Data used as part of the evaluation (i.e., VP dashboard, internal metrics, etc...)

Coversheet

Informational Documents

Section: IV. President's Evaluation Process

Item: B. Informational Documents

Purpose:

Submitted by:

Related Material:

Comprehensive Presidential Evaluations - 2019 Annual Trustee Conference Breakout Session Presentation (1).pdf

conducting_a_presidential_evaluation_article (2).pdf

2019 Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Trustees Conference



MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

Comprehensive Presidential Evaluations

March 28, 2019
Westborough, MA

AGB ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNING BOARDS
OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Presenters



Merrill P. Schwartz
Senior Vice President, AGB
BA, UMass, '78
MPA, UMass, '81
PhD, U MD, '98



Dena Papanikolaou,
General Counsel,
Massachusetts Department of
Higher Education
BA, Brandeis University
JD, Suffolk U Law

Agenda

- Why Presidential Assessment Matters
- Boards and Presidents
- The Massachusetts Context
- Annual Assessment
- Periodic Comprehensive Evaluations
- Discussion and Q & A

Why Presidential Assessment Matters

Good practice—set goals and assess progress, enhance performance, improve board/president relationship

State law—requires assessment annually and comprehensively every 3 or 5 years; informs compensation

Institutional accreditation—NEASC standard 3.10:
The board appoints and periodically reviews the performance of the chief executive officer...

Boards and Presidents

- Select, support, *and* assess
- Trustees as fiduciaries—act collectively, independent of appointing authority (no Lone Rangers)
- Board chair/president relationship key—but chair and board must act together
- Regular communication, not once a year
- Accountability: transparency; communication; shared vision, goals, and priorities

The Academic Presidency

"The president acts within an institutional context which is determined by the attitude of the **faculty**, the behavior of the **student** body, the presence or absence of **collective bargaining**, the influence of **alumni, legislators** and **self-interest groups**, the degree of control by the central office in a **statewide system**, and most critically the extent of authority and responsibility of the **governing board**. An adequate appraisal of the president's role must take into account the attitudes, prerogatives and behavior of these groups."

John Nason

Challenges Assessing Leadership in the Academic Presidency

- Metrics of performance: no single bottom line, operational and strategic indicators, qualitative and quantitative data, many constituencies, competing goals
- Like steering a battleship
- Complex role of governing board, supporting *and* evaluating the president
- Trustees at a distance, from diverse fields; board conflicts and back channels
- Social media, 24/7 job

The Massachusetts Context

- Open meeting laws: 7 exceptions—presidential assessment is not one
- Institutional and system/state goals
- Institutional board and MBHE roles
- Fiscal realities for compensation

Annual Assessment Process

Assessment Committee Review

- President's self-assessment
- feedback from other board members
- feedback from other sources
- questionnaires and surveys: not typical

Review with President

- board chair and chair of the committee meet promptly with the president to provide feedback
- documented oral and/or written review focusing on the future

<http://www.mass.edu/foradmin/trustees/documents/AnnualPresidentialEvaluationOutline.pdf>

Periodic Comprehensive Evaluations: Multi-Source or 360 Reviews

Purposes

- systematic feedback
- leadership development
- reflect on the evolution of a presidency

Periodic

- every 3 to 5 years
- comprehensive look at years under review
- avoid crises and public controversies

Periodic Comprehensive Evaluations: Protocols and Participants

Protocols for Multi-Source or 360 Reviews

- board committee for presidential assessment including president
- staff support
- notify participants about the purposes of the review and their role

Typical participants

- governing board, senior staff, representatives of faculty, students, staff, alumni, local leaders and officials

Comprehensive Evaluation Process

1. Board selects committee member(s); committee selects consultant
2. Board chair sends email to participants or the campus community explaining the purpose of the evaluation
3. President prepares self-assessment and supporting materials
4. Committee/consultant in consultation with board chair and president prepares list of interviewees
5. Committee and president establish criteria for review (goals and leadership characteristics)
6. Committee/consultant develops interview protocol and questionnaires

Comprehensive Evaluation Process (cont.)

7. Consultant conducts individual and group interviews on campus and some by phone
8. Consultant shares preliminary findings with president and committee chair/board chair
9. Consultant reports findings & recommendations to the president and committee chair/board chair who share with board including plan for leadership development and improved organizational effectiveness
10. Committee documents process, submits summary by deadline, sends follow-up communications
11. Process completed in about 3 months

Topics for Interviews on President's Performance

- Strategic Leadership
- Academic Leadership
- General Management
- Financial Management
- Fundraising
- External Relations
- Internal Relations
- Governance
- Leadership Style & Values (this is often a focus)
- Other

Survey or No Survey?

Advantages

- Expands participation
- May cost less than and complement interviews
- Quantifiable responses

Disadvantages

- Review isn't a democratic process
- Challenge to design a good instrument
- Quantifiable responses

Potential Survey Items—open ended

- What have been the president's major accomplishments in leading the institution over the past three years?
- What would you suggest to improve the president's effectiveness?
- Suggestions for goals for the president and the University for the next three years?

Leadership Development

- Coaching and mentoring: conflict resolution and team building
- Leadership seminars and peer discussions, some at national meetings
- Re-organizing decision-making processes and positions
- Personal renewal: writing and professional travel
- Renewing board/president communication

Process Issues and Special Situations

- Risk Management: political, financial, reputational and other risks; off-campus with media, governor, legislators, and alumni; and on campus with unions, faculty, staff, and students
- Divisions within the board
- Dealing with votes of no confidence
- Other topics

Resources

Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

- Dena Papanikolaou, CPapanikolaou@dhe.mass.edu
- Online Trustee Resources

<http://www.mass.edu/foradmin/trustees/home.asp>

<http://www.mass.edu/foradmin/trustees/preseval.asp>

Compensation and Evaluation Guidelines and Procedures

Annual Presidential Evaluation Outline

AGB

- Merrill Schwartz, mschwartz@agb.org
- www.agb.org
- [Assessing Presidential Effectiveness](#)



Questions and Discussion

MBHE Annual Presidential Evaluation: Outline of Report

- Executive Summary
- Process used
- Review of institutional goals
- Review of system-level goals
- Recommendation for compensation adjustment
- Attachments (goals, self-assessment, data, metrics, etc.)

<http://www.mass.edu/foradmin/trustees/documents/AnnualPresidentialEvaluationOutline.pdf>

Conducting a Presidential Evaluation Can Benefit the Board, the CEO and the College

By Narcisa Polonio

ACCT Vice President for Board Leadership Services

Conducting a board retreat is a valuable way to facilitate the president's evaluation.

One trustee suggested that boards should move away from evaluation to "value-action." That approach would focus on the positive, but also identify areas that require greater attention by the CEO and the board.

One of the outcomes of the presidential assessment is to strengthen the relationship between the CEO and the board. It sets the stage for objective consideration of strengths and weaknesses, recognizing superior performance and challenges the CEO to constantly strive for improvement. It should also serve as an example of the board and president's commitment to accountability at all levels of the institution.

The assessment should never be about "getting the president." Dedicating time to design a process and to implement an effective evaluation is a prudent investment benefiting the president, the board and thus the college community. ACCT encourages boards to consider planning a retreat dedicated to the presidential evaluation and board self-assessment, and, if appropriate, to bring in an experienced facilitator to guide the discussion.

Why do many boards find it difficult to conduct the president's evaluation?

The relations of the board and the president is not just a typical supervisor-subordinate relationship.

We are all used to the one-on-one evaluation where a supervisor and subordinate meet to discuss performance. The relationship of the president and board is different from any other relationship within the institution. The president works for and



reports to the full board—not to just one board member.

While this may be an obvious distinction, it adds a level of complexity. Board members are not on campus every day to observe every detail of the president's performance. The president is probably much more knowledgeable about all the requirements and pressures of the position than individual trustees. The president and board are dependent on each other. Sometimes the board will lead, but often it is the president who guides and leads the board. Adding to this complexity are the diverse opinions, experiences and points of view represented on the board.

Some boards find it difficult to take on this responsibility. Very often the reluctance has to do with emotions and experiences that many individuals connect to evaluation. It can be perceived as confrontational

and negative; some even believe it is inappropriate to evaluate the president.

Some trustees don't have a lot of experience in this area and are just not sure what is appropriate in academia. Others find it embarrassing and confusing; still others find it difficult to agree with other members of the board. Many board members are aware of the dangers in conducting an assessment, and others choose to simply avoid or delegate the responsibility to the chair or a smaller group of interested trustees.

What do boards frequently want to aid their evaluations?

Many board members who contact ACCT are looking for a ready-made instrument that they can share with the rest of the board and get the evaluation process out of the way. We suggest to them that the

role of the president is too critical to the well-being of the institution to be handled in a routine way.

Assessing the CEO is one of the key responsibilities of the board. It is imperative that boards, with the assistance and cooperation of the president, dedicate the time necessary for a careful analysis. A commitment to an appropriate evaluation design and process is a valuable investment of time. Experience shows that it will take a couple of years of enduring the process and making adjustments for the board and president to be comfortable with a design and process that meets their needs.

What do presidents want?

Most presidents reach out to ACCT looking for expert advice on how to best assist their board. We find that many feel uncomfortable about having to provide guidance to the board, wanting to make sure they seek information on “what has worked best in other colleges” and to provide alternative approaches and instruments to their board. Most want to be involved, but do not want to be perceived as trying to manipulate the board. Many are eager to obtain feedback from their board and are very supportive of the idea of participating in an annual assessment process.

What has ACCT learned?

When it comes to handling presidential evaluations, boards fall into the following categories:

- **Formal** – The board follows a well-designed process with clear timelines and expectations. It includes opportunities for discussion, provides written feedback to the president, and establishes the goals, priorities and timeframe for the

continued on page 42

A Sample Evaluation and Board Self-Assessment Process

- > Assess the most recent performance as a mechanism for constructive consideration of strengths and weaknesses.
- > Recognize superior performance and the need for constant improvement.
- > Enhance the board/CEO relationship and the unique leadership partnership.
- > Set standards and heightened morale on campus by setting an example.

Preliminary Work

President prepares self-assessment report based on goals and priorities previously established with the board

1. Annual goals/objectives and strategic initiatives established jointly by the president and board.
2. State of the college—status report of the college on key indicators such as enrollment, fundraising, overall functioning and stability of the institution, status of strategic plans, etc.
3. Trustees complete survey form on president's performance.
 - a. Sample list of performance review criteria:
 - i. Leadership on campus and in the community
 - ii. Communication with the board
 - iii. Representation of the district
 - iv. Administrative and management skills
 - v. Fiscal management
 - vi. Personal attributes including trust and integrity
4. Self-evaluation form on board's performance (rate both board and individual performance).
5. Prepare summary of both trustee surveys.

Retreat/Workshop

- President to present both self-evaluation and state of the college and participate in questions and answers with the board.
- Distribute and discuss the summary findings from the completed surveys on the president's performance and board's self-evaluation.
- Facilitate discussion on accomplishments and items needing further attention by the president, the board and individual trustees.
- Set goals and priorities and the timeframe for the next evaluation and self-assessment process and provide a letter summarizing assessment to the president.

BOARD SERVICES *(continued from page 41)*

next review. All the board members and the president are comfortable with the process.

- **Informal** – The board and the president meet, the president presents information to the board, and an informal discussion takes place.
- **Avoid it** – The board is busy and puts off the evaluation for a year or two.
- **Don't do it** – The board has no formal evaluation process and historically has not conducted presidential evaluations.
- **Adopt an instrument or process from another college** – The board follows a procedure developed elsewhere and follows the required steps.
- **Ask the president** – The board asks the president to conduct research on how other colleges carry out the evaluation and to suggest a process. The president takes the leadership role in designing, implementing and guiding the discussion.

Why is an effective evaluation a prudent investment?

Where the president and board have taken the challenge to design and

implement an effective assessment, the rewards include:

- Enhanced knowledge of the institution by the board and greater understanding of the complexity of the presidency.
- A commitment to nurture and support the president.
- A commitment to hold on to a good leader.
- Greater clarity in goals and priorities.
- A greater focus on expectations and outcomes.
- Greater respect and improved communications.
- Better group and planning skills by the board.
- A sense of ownership and pride in the assessment process.
- An opportunity to reflect and provide important guidance to the president.
- Greater trust between the board and president.

We recommend that the board take on the tasks of reviewing their current evaluation process and consider holding a retreat that would allow them time to

work with their president to understand, reflect and appreciate their roles

The retreat should be conducted in a professional manner, based on mutual consensus and a commitment to strengthening leadership at the college.

To get started, the board and president may want to seek advice from experienced facilitators who can assist with all of the components, including how to maintain confidentiality and guide the discussion. The external facilitator can assist the board by interviewing the president and trustees and incorporating their ideas and suggestions into a customized instrument. The consultant can also analyze data, facilitate a constructive discussion and prepare next steps for the board.

We always recommend combining the president's evaluation with board self-assessment. Many boards and presidents have worked well together to handle the assessment responsibility. The association has learned a lot from these boards and we want to make sure we continue to share what works well.



Narcisa Polonio can be reached at 202-775-4667, ext. 126, cell phone 202-276-1983, or email: npolonio@acct.org.

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FOR APPLICATIONS OR ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CONTACT:

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