SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

TIM NADER, GOVERNING BOARD PRESIDENT
NORMA L. HERNANDEZ, GOVERNING BOARD VICE PRESIDENT
NICK AGUILAR, GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER
JEAN ROESCH, ED.D., GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER
TERRI VALLADOLID, GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER
MANUEL R. LOPEZ, JR., STUDENT GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER
DENISE WHITTAKER, INTERIM SECRETARY TO GOVERNING BOARD
AND INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT

Written notice is hereby given in accordance with Government Code Section 54956 that a special meeting of the Governing Board of the Southwestern Community College District will be held as noted below:

DATE: Thursday, April 7, 2011
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Southwestern College
900 Otay Lakes Road
Building 210, Room 214

Compliance with Americans With Disabilities Act

Southwestern Community College District, in compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), requests individuals who may need special accommodation to access, attend, and/or participate in Board meetings to contact Mary Ganio at (619) 482-6301 in advance of the meeting for information on such accommodation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>CALL TO ORDER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Call to Order</td>
<td>CALL TO ORDER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Nader)</td>
<td>6:30 p.m., Room 214</td>
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Attendance at this special meeting (Board members arriving after meeting commences will be noted as “present” at point in this suggested order of business at which they arrive).

Present:
Absent:

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<th>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</th>
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<th>ORAL COMMUNICATION</th>
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Persons wishing to address the Governing Board under this item should fill out a yellow request card (available at the reception table) and indicate on the card if they wish to be called under Oral Communication, or when a specific agenda item is considered.

An oral presentation to the Board does not constitute an open discussion on the presentation topic, unless that topic is on the posted agenda. Pursuant to the Brown Act (Government Code Section 54954.2(a)): “No action or discussion shall be undertaken on any item not appearing on the posted agenda, except that members of a legislative body or its staff may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising their public testimony rights under Section 54954.3.”
4. ACCREDITATION UPDATE (ENCLOSURE)
(Whittaker)
Accreditations Co-chairs Mink Stavenga, Accreditation Liaison Officer, and Professor Ron Vess, will make a PowerPoint presentation providing a status of accreditation.

5. GOVERNING BOARD GOALS AND ROLE
(Whittaker)
The Governing Board will discuss and take action on the following remaining items from the March 12 Board Retreat:

Action
A. FINALIZE BOARD GOALS (ENCLOSURE)
Action
B. FINALIZE BOARD PERFORMANCE GOALS (ENCLOSURE)
Action
C. CLARIFY BOARD AND CEO ROLES & PROTOCOLS (ENCLOSURE)
Action
D. DISCUSSION ON INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS VS. THE BOARD AS A WHOLE
Action
E. CLARIFICATION ON MICROMANAGEMENT (ENCLOSURE)

6. ADJOURNMENT
(Nader)
Accreditation Update

April 7, 2011

Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Students, and the Governing Board
The 10 Recommendations to SWC by WASC

- 1 Mission
- 2 Integrated Planning
- 3 Program Review
- 4 Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) / SLO Assessment
- 5 Substantive Change
- 6 Technology
- 7 Professional Development
- 8 Campus Climate / Shared Governance
- 9 GB - Policy-Making Role
- 10 GB - Conflict of Interest / Ethics

WASC Timeline

- In January 2011, SWC received a letter from the Commission, which stated in part:

"I wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions out of compliance with Standards or on sanction (which SWC is) are expected to correct deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate Accreditation. Southwestern College must correct the deficiencies noted by October 2011 or the Commission will be compelled to act."
To meet WASC's Timeline:

The following items needed to be resolved by March 15:

- SLOs – 100% course/program -- resolved
- Technology Plan -- resolved
- GB Conflict of Interest -- resolved
- GB Code of Ethics -- resolved

Recommendation 5: DE -- resolved

All 10 Recommendations need to be "fully resolved" by October

- However, with summer coming and faculty gone, it's imperative that we complete all 10 recommendations before the end of the Spring semester so that the institution has time to demonstrate sustainability and faculty will be able to meet the timeline in Fall without disrupting teaching & regular duties.
- This means a little more work now, but it'll be worth it in the end.
Recommendation #1: Mission Statement Resolved

- Systematically and regularly (annually) evaluate and update the mission statement;
- Assure that it defines the college educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to student learning; and
- Use it to guide institutional decisions and improvement goals.

- New Mission Statement was adopted at the Feb 2011 GB meeting
- Longer than the one-line Mission Statement we used to have but meets WASC's guidelines and those of Higher Education.
- Scheduled for 1st SCC agenda every Fall
- New posters have been sent out with the new Mission Statement on them.
  - Posters are being displayed in offices or windows.
**What can you do?**

- Everyone is encouraged to include SWC Mission Statement in their email signature

- Memorize the first line & know the 8 educational bulleted areas.

- Use the Mission Statement to guide institutional decisions and improvement goals.

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**SWC Mission Statement**

*Southwestern Community College District serves a diverse community of students by providing a wide range of dynamic and high quality educational programs and comprehensive student services.*
SWC Mission Statement

The District provides educational opportunities in the following areas:

- associate degree and certificate programs
- transfer
- professional, technical, and career advancement
- basic skills
- personal enrichment
- non-credit adult education
- community services
- economic, workforce, and community development

SWC Mission Statement

We promote student learning and success by committing to continuous improvement that includes planning, implementation, assessment, and evaluation.”
Recommendation #2: Integrated Planning Nearly Resolved

- Establish and implement a collegial and comprehensive planning process that:
  - Assures improvement in student learning
  - Integrates institutional plans,
  - Is informed by quantitative and qualitative data and analysis,
  - Systematically assesses outcomes within both instruction and non-instructional services, and
  - Provides for an ongoing and systematic cycle of goal setting, resource allocation implementation, and evaluation.

Integrating Planning Cycle: P-I-E
Has many "layers:" Layer 1

[Diagram showing the planning cycle: Plan, Evaluate, Implement]
What can you do?

- Become familiar with the SWC integrated planning processes & charts
- Be able to explain P-I-E
- Apply P-I-E to teaching & decision-making
- Attend the next Summit to keep up-to-date about integrated planning and our accreditation status.
- Know the 8 Strategic Priorities:
SWC 8 Strategic Priorities:

- **1 & 2:** Student Access & Success
- **3:** Economic, Workforce and Community Development
- **4:** Fiscal Resources and Development
- **5 & 6:** Organizational Effectiveness and Human Resources
- **7:** Teaching & Learning *new!*
- **8:** Institutional Technology & Research *new!*

Recommendation #3: Program Review

**Nearly Resolved**

- Improve program review across all areas
  - Integrate it with SLOs; and
  - Ensure that it is evidence-based and
  - Ensure that it is occurring at regular intervals sufficient to provide a foundation for college planning and allocation of human, physical, technological, and fiscal resources.
**Institutional Program Review Process:**

- Institutional Program Review Committee (IPRC)
- Vice President - Division Program Review
- Dean - School / Director - Unit Program Review
- Academic Program / Unit Program Review

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**Institutional Program Review**

- When we had AIM (Achieving Institutional Mission), SWC had a great program review system. While only portions of it were implemented in the past, the spirit of AIM is at the heart of the new IPRC process.
- All programs/units must now complete Program Review annually in order for our College to be in compliance with WASC.
Primary Role of the Institutional Program Review Committee (IPRC)

- IPRC includes members from all 4 program review committees

Purpose:
- Implement the institutional Program Review (IPR) /annual Snapshot process
- Provide oversight to ensure the program review process is carried out in accordance with the SWC Program Review Handbook.

Major Responsibilities of IPRC:

- Establish & disseminate the yearly PR timeline & Program Review/Snapshot forms.
- Receive and archive completed PR reports in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
- Forward relevant sections of submitted PR reports to the appropriate planning committees (e.g. Technology and Facilities).
- Forward submitted executive summaries/action plans & prioritized budget recommendations to the Shared Consultation Council (SCC).
- Evaluate the PR process annually.
4 subcommittees of IPRC:

- APRC: Academic Program Review
- SSPRC: Student Services Program Review
- AAPRC: Administrative Academic Program Review
- BFA/HR/S/PPRC: Administrative Budget Fiscal Affairs/HR/Sup/Pres Program Review

IPRC Organizational Chart:
4 subcommittees of IPRC
IPRC Subcommittees

- Assist with implementation of the institutional program review process
- Assure quality and completeness of submitted PR reports
  - Read and review submitted PR reports
  - Provide feedback to program authors
- Approve PR Reports
- Submit approved PR reports to IPRC

What can you do?

- Complete the comprehensive program reviews in a timely basis
- Complete the annual snapshots in a timely basis
- Become familiar with the process and be able to explain what IPRC stands for.
Recommendation 4: SLOs/AUOs
Resolved SLOs at the Developmental Level

- Identified SLOs and assessment strategies for all courses and academic programs.
  - AUOs for non-instructional areas.
- Faculty and staff are fully engaged in SLOs development.
- Appropriate resources are being allocated to conduct program review of meaningful quality.

What’s left to do?

- Use data and analysis to assess student achievement of student outcomes.
- Use assessment results for continuous improvements
- Dialogue about the results of all program reviews is evident throughout the institution as part of discussion of institutional effectiveness.
- Comprehensive assessment reports exist and are completed on a regular basis.
SLOs & ISLOs

4 Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs):
- Communication Skills
- Thinking and Reasoning
- Information Competency
- Global Awareness

- Each of the above four has at least one achievement area (11 in total between them).
- All SLOs and AUOs must relate to at least one of the ISLOs and an achievement area.

SLO Hierarchy at SWC

Institutional SLOs

Achievement Areas

Program SLO

AUO

Course SLO
What can you do?

- Complete SLO/AUO per course, program, and administrative unit by May 30, 2011.

- Know what your SLOs are and be able to recite the 4 ISLOs.

Recommendation #6 Technology Plan Resolved

- Implement the Technology Plan
  - That is integrated with the Strategic Plan and College Mission Statement & goals;
  - That relies on Program Review
  - That provides a reliable budgetary process for renewing technology and for providing appropriate technology staffing, support and training college-wide.
What can you do?

- Read the **Technology Plan**.
- Become familiar with the **SWC Philosophy on Technology**.
- Read over the implementation grid of the Tech Plan as it relates to your area.

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**Recommendation 7: Staff Development**

**Nearly Resolved**

The College will:

- **Plan and conduct professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.**
- **Implement a formal evaluation process of the activities.**
- **Define and communicate budget decision making processes to achieve College goals** *(done: in Shared Planning & Decision-Making Handbook).*
- **Provide evidence of an adequate budget to conduct professional development activities.*
What can you do?

- **Participate** in Staff Development activities
- **Fill out** an evaluation sheet on each activity that you attend, whether on or off campus, to show WASC that we’re meeting their recommendation.
- **Develop an Individual Staff Development Plan** for yourself and submit it to the Staff Dev Office.
- **For Full-Time faculty:** follow the SWC Flex Guidelines for professional development activities.

Recommendation 8a: **Campus Climate & Morale**

**Nearly Resolved**

- The College set as a priority fostering an environment of trust & respect for all employees and students
  - Which allows the college community to promote administrative stability and to work together for the good of the College
What can you do?

- Participate in Summits, Forums and other campus events.
- Share positive changes in campus climate over the past few months with others.
- Promote the "positive environment of trust and respect" that is one of our College's top priorities by treating all whom you come in contact with respect and collegiality.

Recommendation 8b: Shared Planning & Decision-Making

Resolved

- Follow Policy 2510 & 2515 & procedures.
- Use the Shared Planning & Decision-Making Handbook.
- Evaluate and make recommendations for continuous improvement.
What can you do?

- Become familiar with the Shared Planning & Decision-Making Handbook.
- Review the charts, many of which have been included in this PowerPoint.
- Be able to explain the role of the SCC & constituency groups.
- Integrate Policy 2510 & 2515 into the college culture.

The Integrated Planning Cycle:

- The next slide shows the integrated planning timeline including:
  - Annual program review process,
  - Assess SLOs,
  - Measure our Institutional Effectiveness,
  - Review our Mission Statement, and
  - Integrate all plans with the SWC Strategic Plan.
- This integrated process culminates with the College's Self Study in preparation for our next WASC Accreditation cycle in 2015.
Recommendation 9 and 10:
Micro-management and Conflict of Interest/Ethics/Self-Evaluation
Resolved
• Governing Board Study Session
  February 16, 2011.
    ◦ Reference Binder prepared
• Governing Board Retreat March 12, 2011.
  ◦ Board Self-Evaluation completed
• Signature of Acknowledgement for WASC Follow-Up Report regarding this Recommendation.
• Developed Annual Training Calendar
Recommendation 9 and 10:
Micro-management and Conflict of Interest/Ethics/Self-Evaluation

Resolved

• Developed 2011-12 Board Goals
• Developed 2011-12 Institutional Performance Goals
• Completed Self-Evaluation & set date for next year's self-evaluation for May 2012
• Attended Board Retreat
• Understands S/P role
• Recusal process included on Board Agenda

Recommendation 9 and 10:
Micro-management and Conflict of Interest/Ethics/Self-Evaluation

Resolved

• Commitment to “act as one” once a decision has been made
• Commitment to going through the S/P for college business
• Understands Board policy-making role
• Understanding of micro-management and the difference between S/P and Governing Board roles
• Commitment to mutual respect
What can the Governing Board do to assist with WASC Compliance?

- Approve Revisions to Ethics Procedures.
- Sign the Ethics Form & fully execute the resolution regarding the Ethics Policy.
- On-going commitment to adhering to Accreditation Standard IV.

In closing,

As we can all attest, SWC has been working diligently to meet WASC's recommendations. There are several actions you can take that will help the College now.

The WASC visiting team will be here on Monday, April 11. In preparation, review this powerpoint.

SWC will continue to keep Accreditation efforts in the forefront of our strategic planning long after the Visiting Team leaves and we achieve reaffirmation of our Accreditation Status.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March 12 Retreat</th>
<th><strong>Draft Board Thoughts on Goals</strong></th>
<th><strong>IS/P Re-Wording of Board Goal</strong></th>
<th><strong>Cindra Smith Re-Wording of Goals</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1:</td>
<td>Obtain full Accreditation re-affirmation and continue to meet Accreditation Standards.</td>
<td>No change recommended. Obtain full Accreditation re-affirmation and continue to meet Accreditation Standards.</td>
<td>Ensure restoration of full accreditation status and continue to use accreditation standards to guide strategic planning and operations.</td>
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<td>Goal 2:</td>
<td>Data systems that provide info for student success/support college operations for informed decision-making.</td>
<td>Ensure that college data systems provide for student accountability information and support college operations for informed, data-driven decision-making.</td>
<td>Expect continued development of integrated data systems that provide information for student success, support college operations, and institutional decision-making. Build a culture of evidence.</td>
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<td>Goal 3:</td>
<td>Budget that meets fiscal crises and provides stability</td>
<td>Ensure that the College District budget effectively addresses the current fiscal crisis and provides fiscal stability to maintain instructional, student support, and operational integrity.</td>
<td>Expect and adopt a budget that accommodates reduced state funding, provides long-term stability, and maintain the 7% reserve.</td>
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<td>Goal 4:</td>
<td>Maintain state of the art teaching, learning, and work environment, particularly technology</td>
<td>Ensure a state-of-the-art teaching, learning, and work environment, including but not limited to technological advancements.</td>
<td>Maintain a state-of-the-art learning environment, particularly technology for teaching and learning.</td>
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<td>Goal 5:</td>
<td>Focus mission priorities regarding resource allocation and college's primary mission</td>
<td>Taking into consideration anticipated severe budget reductions, develop a plan to prioritize the SWCCCD focused Mission for the determination of resource allocation.</td>
<td>Engage in discussions to focus resources on key missions of workforce development and transfer, while continuing support for partnerships and collaborations that support the economic development mission.</td>
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<td>Goal 6:</td>
<td>Optimize resources for programs, partnerships, and grants</td>
<td>Optimize resources for the generation of new revenue-producing programs, partnerships, and grant acquisition.</td>
<td>Support efforts to optimize all resources (partnerships, grants, etc) for college programs and services.</td>
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Board Performance Goals, 2011-2012

The Board identified the following goals to enhance its own performance as a board. These goals will be included as criteria in the next board self-evaluation.

- Monitor progress on the board goals for the institution, including establishing objectives and a timeline in conjunction with the Interim Superintendent/President.
- Implement a study session schedule for board education and monitoring.
- Continue review and updating of board policies.
- Expect board members to be visible and involved in the community, including with business, industry, education, labor and civic organizations.
- Conduct a search for a permanent Superintendent/President and hire an outstanding candidate.
- Review the board self-evaluation process and criteria prior to the next cycle and implement changes if any.
Clarifying Board and CEO Roles & Protocols

The Board and CEO relationship is best served when trustees and CEOs clarify and agree on their respective roles and protocols for communication. Following are some common areas for discussion. The numbers refer to selected Board Policies. BP 2715, the code of ethics, addresses many of the topics on this list.

**As a Policy Board**
1. Operating as a unit
2. Defining and adhering to policy role
3. Upholding ethics and conflicts of interest policies (BP 2715, 2710)
4. Honoring the Brown Act, maintaining confidentiality (BP’s on meetings, BP 2720)
5. Board meeting conduct and discussions
6. Maintaining civility and respect; handling conflict
7. Role of board chair (BP 2210)

**Board and CEO**
8. Board delegation to the CEO (BP 2430)
9. Avoiding “surprises”
10. CEO communication to trustees: how much, how often, and mode?
11. Board meeting agenda preparation (BP 2340)

**As Trustees**
12. Requesting information
13. Representing the college in the community events
14. Trustees visits on campus
15. Community member requests of trustees
16. College staff contacts with trustees (as individuals; as employee group reps)

**Other?**

Prepared by Dr. Cindra Smith, Consultant
cindrasmith@comcast.net
Preventing Micromanagement—
Creating High Performance Boards

Micromanagement prevents boards from governing well. It results in dysfunctional boards, public criticism, accreditation concerns, demoralized staff, and lack of respect for elected trustees. This Board Focus explores definitions and causes of micromanagement and proposes alternatives for governing boards.

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The “Right Stuff” of Governance

BY WILLIAM MCGINNIS, TRUSTEE
Butte-Glenn Community College District

The real challenge for trustees is creating a high performing board. They do this through being willing and able to set standards of excellence for their colleges and themselves. They develop and live by the “Right Stuff.” They have:

- The Right Mind Set
- The Right Role
- The Right Work
- The Right People
- The Right Agenda
- The Right Information
- The Right Culture

Defining Micromanagement

BY CINDRA SMITH, ED. D., THE LEAGUE

That's micromanagement? When trustee A says that to trustee B, trustee A is reminding B to stick to the board's policy role and stay out of administration. But B says, “No, it’s not.” Now what? How do you determine the appropriate role for trustees?

The line between policy and micromanagement is not always clear. It can depend on board and institutional culture and protocols, communication style, intent and how the intent is expressed.

What is clear is that micromanagement is not a good thing. Boards hire a chief executive officer to lead the institution. Micromanagement gets in the way of the CEO doing that work and prevents the CEO from being as effective as he or she could

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The Right Stuff of Governance

continued from page 1

The Right Mind Set is accomplished through a process of continuous improvement. Boards must keep coming back to the same questions about purpose, resources, and effectiveness. It means keeping the board’s focus on the vision and mission in spite of all the noise from other college issues. Boards must focus on their districts’ future and the goals in the strategic plan.

The Right Role means establishing and sticking to an overarching level of engagement that helps trustees set expectations and ground rules for their roles relative to the president’s role.

The Right Work is accomplished by focusing on “what” the district should accomplish, not “how” it is done, and not allowing the boards focus to be diverted from the goals. Boards are accountable for results (outcomes). Trustees fulfill this responsibility best not by dictating the details but rather by asking questions about performance results and their implications. Ask critical questions and insist on clear answers.

The Right People. A board is only as good as its members. Trustee development and training are critical elements to building a strong board. Boards strengthen their members by providing mentoring, education, ground rules, and enforcing state and local laws and regulations, policies, and a code of ethics.

The Right Agenda. Agendas define what the board discusses and at what length. To control the agenda is to control the work of the board. Boards need to assure their agendas reflect the goals of the board. As an example, a board may devote one meeting a year to setting a limited number of priorities for the year—for example, strategic direction, capital allocation, enrollment management, and succession planning. The board must ensure that their regular meetings address these priorities.
Defining Micromanagement

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be. As one trustee said, "We are paying a CEO to do the work, why should we do it instead?" Micromanagement sends a message of distrust, abrogates the authority of the CEO and ignores the organizational structure, decision-making systems and procedures.

Micromanagement also violates the board's fiduciary responsibility to ensure that time and resources of the institution are well spent. When a trustee directs staff to do something or requests information that requires a significant amount of time, the individual trustee has determined how time and resources are used, which may not be in the best interests of the entire institution. Given that colleges don’t have unlimited funds and personnel, priorities for time and resources must be set by the board and college leadership working together.

Criteria for determining whether or not something is micromanagement include:

- The action tells the CEO or a college employee how to do their job. If a request, directive or suggestion has the effect of determining the day-to-day decisions of staff members and how they allocate their time, it is most likely micromanagement. The board has the right to expect that people who work at the college know how to do their jobs. Trustees have the responsibility to honor the professionalism of college staff by allowing them to perform their duties.
- It probably involves an individual trustee. If the board as a whole makes a decision, it is less likely to be micromanagement. Discussing an issue as a board usually provides the checks and balances that help keep the board at a policy level.
- It is identified as micromanagement by fellow trustees or college staff members. Even if there is no intent to direct or manage college staff, trustees may be perceived as micromanaging by virtue of the power of their position. Trustees’ suggestions, opinions, and reactions are taken very seriously, trustees may find that what they meant as just ideas or thoughts are interpreted as directives. Therefore, trustees may need to monitor themselves carefully to ensure that offering opinions is not construed as direction.

High Performing Boards Make & Monitor Policy

BY CINDRA SMITH

EXPERIENCED TRUSTEES know they aren’t on the board to administer the institution—they know that is the chief executive’s job. Instead, they set policy, delegate the responsibility for implementation to the CEO, and monitor that implementation. They define the information they need to perform those jobs well.

Making Policy

Policy reflects and state what is valued by the institution and community. It consists of brief, general statements of purpose, principles or philosophy, which serve as guides for action. Policy:

1. Establishes the general goals of the institution.
   These are stated in institutional long-range and strategic plans, are reflected in the budget, and frame the annual goals or priorities of the board and CEO.
2. Sets standards for acceptable practice, particularly in the areas of educational planning and programs, finance, facilities, and personnel.

A test of whether or not something is a policy level issue, and not micromanagement, is whether it fits into those two categories. Does it relate to the general goals, including who the college serves? Does it reflect the values that guide operations, such as ethics, prudence, diversity, effectiveness, and quality? Does it address what the college does

continued next page
When issues arise, trustees and CEOs consciously identify the policy values inherent in the issue and frame the board’s responses in policy, not procedural, terms.

High Performing Boards
Make & Monitor Policy

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instead of how the college does it?

High performing boards and CEOs agree on policy. They ensure that the board agenda items refer to board policy to clarify why the board is addressing the item and what decision is expected. The background information provided for board decisions addresses policy-level concerns. When issues arise, trustees and CEOs consciously identify the policy values inherent in the issue and frame the boards’ responses in policy, not procedural, terms. They ask:

• Do we have a policy on this issue? Does it say what we want it to say?
• What broad values and standards apply to this issue? Has the board stated those in policy?
• Does the decision or action we are about to take reinforce our policy role, or is it an administrative decision?

Monitoring
Boards must monitor that policy goals are being accomplished and that the college is operating in accordance with policy standards. They fulfill this role when they receive and discuss reports on progress toward district goals. They also receive and discuss reports that inform the board on how the college is complying with policy standards on college operations, such as fiscal audits, program reviews, and descriptions of hiring standards and practices.

“Micromonitoring” can occur when the monitoring system is vague or erratic and/or reports don’t address policy goals or standards. Insufficient or poorly communicated information about the college leads to trustees being more likely to question day-to-day operations and inspect college programs.

Therefore, effective board and CEO teams will establish a monitoring system that provides the board with the information it needs to assure that goals are being accomplished according to the board’s policy standards.

An Information Caveat
Boards need information to make policy and monitor the institution. An informed board ensures that colleges are meeting community needs and doing everything they can to make sure students succeed. Therefore it seems like asking for information is always a good thing.

However, injudicious and scattered requests for information can be micromanagement. Preparing information for the board requires staff time, and every request from the board or a trustee therefore potentially “manages” the time of the staff. Boards, as part of their fiduciary responsibility, want staff time to be devoted to accomplishing the goals of the institution. A good board balances its legitimate need for information with the demands on staff time.

Clarity and communication are key. Boards carefully determine what information is needed to make policy, monitor the institution, and support the “no surprises” rule. They make requests through the CEO’s office. Many boards have a policy or protocol that states that requests that require a significant amount of staff time and resources to produce the information must come from the board as a whole. The purpose isn’t to deny trustees the information they need, but to ensure that staff time and resources are used wisely, and in line with the needs of the entire board.
Why Micromanagement Occurs & What to Do About It

BY CINDRA SMITH

New Board Members
New board members are eager to contribute their knowledge and ideas. Their enthusiasm in asking questions and making suggestions may appear to or actually be attempts to direct staff and do the work of the CEO. A good orientation to the board role and the need to work as a member of the board team help direct new energy into appropriate policy channels.

Delegating Up
Administrators, faculty leaders and others invite micromanagement when they ask for board approval of college procedures or decisions that should be handled within the local decision-making processes of the college. Boards avoid this trap by holding the CEO accountable for decisions and appropriate participation in local decision-making, and refusing to accept “upward delegation” from any college constituency.

Dysfunction
When boards are divided or dysfunctional or when the relationship between the board and CEO is rocky, boards send mixed messages to the staff. Administrators, faculty and staff work around or in spite of the board, some staff members seek direction from different board factions and may play board members off against each other and the CEO. Micromanaging can be avoided by strengthening the sense of team on the board and the board/CEO relationship, and clarifying that the board expects strong leadership from the CEO for the institution.

Catering to Individual Trustees
There is a fine line between listening to and considering individual board member ideas and perspectives, and allowing them to overly influence board and administrative decisions. It is possible to cater too much to individual trustees in efforts to be respectful, politic, and accommodating. While civility is always important, individual trustee perspectives are one of many contributors to the functioning of the institution. Board chairs and CEOs both should emphasize that individual trustees’ opinions are simply opinions—the only legitimate direction to the CEO comes from the board as a whole.

Leadership Voids
When CEOs don’t provide strong leadership, or there is a transition in the CEO position, boards may be more likely to be involved in day-to-day decision-making. Competent leadership and clear delineation of responsibilities during times of transition will clarify board roles. Boards that become more involved during a transition can “let go” and provide support when they are assured that the new CEO is taking charge.

Change and Problems
Change, whether good or bad, causes uncertainty, and uncertainty creates an environment for micromanagement. Fiscal changes, community pressures, political shifts, enrollment increases or decreases, changes in leadership, and other significant events all contribute. If trustees perceive there are ongoing problems, they will be more likely to scrutinize day-to-day operations. Preventing such micromanagement requires being aware of the dynamics involved in change, maintaining broad perspectives, and openly exploring problems and possible solutions.

Personal Agendas
Trustees with personal agendas or single interests may attempt to direct administrative decisions to benefit themselves or others. Boards establish a framework for preventing this type of micromanagement by adopting and upholding a board code of ethics.

Statutory Obligations
California has many laws and regulations requiring board approval and actions. Trustees may use these obligations to justify or require trustee involvement in typically administrative tasks, such as those involved in personnel and purchasing. Thoughtful boards delegate administrative authority to the CEO, use consent agendas to perform their statutory duties, and ensure their time is spent in governing, not managing, the institution.
For CEOs: Communicating with Your Board

Micromanagement is more likely to occur when trustees don't feel they are informed and knowledgeable about what is happening in the colleges and have the opportunity to contribute and influence key decisions at appropriate times. CEOs play an important role in creating an open relationship with their boards—one which keeps the board informed and involves trustees in appropriate decision-making. Communication is key.

BY EDWARD HERNANDEZ, ED. D., CHANCELLOR
Rancho Santiago Community College District

CEO—those initials have a nice ring. But it's a short trip from sweet harmony to cacophony if the chief executive officer doesn't quickly master the art of communicating with the board. The essential, yet challenging relationship with your board demands diligent communication.

When you become a chief executive officer, you are stepping into a politically charged domain. Helping to focus trustees' power, time, energy, and attention in service of your organization's mission is essential.

To understand the board's perspective, consider your service on a chamber of commerce, hospital or other community board. In this civic role, we like to feel that our insights and recommendations are given respectful consideration. Our trustees have the same needs. Open, interactive and information-rich communication to develop trust and understanding addresses that goal, and prevents trustees from feeling the need to micromanage the institution.

Trust-Building Behaviors
Delineation of responsibility There is a fine line between strategic and operational leadership. Right from the start, it is important to gain consensus on where the CEO's job ends and the board's begins. The CEO candidate should research how the board has performed in the past. For its part, the board should consider role definition before a hiring decision. The CEO should hold a board workshop immediately after being hired to lay the ground rules on how the CEO and board will cooperate, make and respond to requests.

Educate the board For our trustees to fulfill their policy-making role, they need the big picture. And to understand it, the CEO must assure that the board has enough information to make sound decisions. A highly-informed board is generally one that can distinguish between its boundaries and those of the CEO.

Good and bad news CEOs need to be secure enough to deliver both good and bad news. There are no secrets in organizations, so the wise CEO will not cover up negative issues. Information cannot always be good, so it is inevitable that we present problems. Lay the groundwork by articulating the problems, what contributed to them, and providing solutions.

Brevity Board members have a right to ask questions. The CEO should provide a simple and direct response. It is tempting to read too much into a question and consequently, provide more information than a trustee wants or needs. Answering a question should not be couched in a long-winded justification for our actions or current conditions. If a trustee isn't asking for reasons why situations are as they appear, then responses should not be defensive.

Discussion and dissent Board members bring a wealth of experience to the table, often from outside higher education. Harnessing that expertise through open discussion and dissent makes for better decisions.

Communication
Establishing communication protocols among the CEO's administrative team and sharing them with the board increases trustees' comfort that they will receive information in a timely manner. Informing the board is part of the administrative team's responsibility, requests for information are delegated with appropriate follow-up. Establish
COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

a protocol that funnels responses through the CEO, unless an alternative approach is approved beforehand.

**Weekly updates** Once a week, send an update of three or four main topics to keep your board apprised of current initiatives or significant issues. If you have a more lengthy issue to explain, provide an executive summary. Trustees will appreciate your effort at telling them what they need to know to meet their responsibilities. If they want more information, they can always ask.

**Informal relationships** Spend time with your trustees. Pick up the phone—go to lunch—whatever it takes to forge the informal bond that improves the relationship. Like a marriage, it needs constant attention.

**Board packets** Sending packets with sufficient information before a board meeting helps the CEO prepare the trustees for the public meeting. The CEO can set the tone for a controversial issue and facilitate the public response.

**Board chair as ally** The board chair is first among equals, so it is prudent for the CEO to give this relationship primacy. Use the board chair as a sounding board and ally in developing strategies to move the organization forward.

**Board/CEO evaluations** Annual evaluation of the board and the CEO are opportunities for becoming a better team. Each side in the relationship needs to review its performance and how each is doing at supporting achieving the goals of the institution.

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**Scenarios: Is the Trustee Micromanaging?**

**BY CHARLES MENG & CINDRA SMITH**

Charles Meng, Trustee, Napa Valley CCD and Cindra Smith, the League, presented these scenarios for discussion at a session at an Annual Trustees Conference. They extend their appreciation to the trustees and CEOs who helped shape the responses.

**Lights Out**
While walking to an evening board meeting, Trustee A notices that some outside lights have burned out. She picks up her cell phone and calls the evening administrator to let him know.

*If this is a one-time occurrence, many would say it's not micromanagement and that the trustee is simply being helpful. The trustee likely does not intend to direct staff work. However, it fits the definition of micromanagement in that an individual trustee has called a staff member other than the CEO and essentially told him or her what to do. A better alternative is for the trustee to talk with the CEO (or established designee) when she gets to the board meeting.*

**Consent Agenda**
The board meeting always includes a consent agenda that covers personnel hiring and routine contract and purchase approvals. Trustee B regularly removes the items on contracts and purchasing from the agenda, so that he can review the process for each item to ensure the staff did enough to get the best price.

*Individual trustees have the right to remove items from the consent agenda and should do so if they need to discuss the item. However, the consent agenda is designed to quickly deal with routine and required approvals so that time can be spent on discussion of strategic educational issues.*

Trustee B's actions take up a great deal of time and reflect a lack of trust in administrative decisions, and therefore are micromanagement. The board should address the reasons behind his actions. Is it a lack of clear policies and procedures on contracts and spending, or a lack of support for the policies? Do the procedures adequately ensure that purchasing processes are legal, fair, and that there are adequate checkpoints? Are the dollar amounts that determine whether a purchase or contract requires board approval set at the right levels?

*Does Trustee B have a reason to distrust administration? Is he attempting to show that he is performing his fiduciary role?*

Possible solutions include revisiting the policies and auditing

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Scenarios: Is the Trustee Micromanaging?

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the procedures to assure Trustee B that the purchasing and contracting are fair, prudent, legal, and contain adequate checks, and that the administration can be trusted. Other trustees may talk with Trustee B about how his activities are interfering with board time for other discussions. They may help find other ways to exhibit their responsibility for fiduciary oversight.

Planning Committee Member

Trustee C is a member of the college's planning committee. The chair of the committee, out of respect for the board member, always makes sure to seek her opinion on the proposed revisions to the college goals. The board member reports to the board each month on committee activities.

Including trustees on college planning committees provides a trustee perspective and link to the board. The intentions are good, but the practice may be a step on the slippery slope. Trustees, by virtue of their positions, have much inherent authority and power. In this situation, the individual trustee's opinions may have too much influence and are thereby "micromanaging" the planning process. She should refrain from active participation on the committee.

Monitoring Student Success

Trustee E wants to know what the graduation rate of student athletes is and what kind of support is provided to ensure that they graduate. He doesn't want to bother the CEO, so he calls the athletic director to find out that information. The athletic director calls the director of research, who then begins preparing the report.

While it is laudable that Trustee E is interested in student outcomes and services, his request to the athletic director has the effect of directing staff time and is therefore micromanagement. Trustee E should contact the CEO, who can provide both background information and know the implications of the request for staff time. If the CEO judges that the request would take substantial time, he or she can refer the request to the board as a whole for approval. The CEO also can ensure all trustees receive the same information.

Responding to Community Complaints

A student's parent, who happens to be on the college's foundation board of directors, calls Trustee F to complain about her daughter not getting into the nursing program. The trustee calls the CEO to find out why and asks the CEO to call the parent.

It is not micromanaging to ask the CEO to respond to questions from community members.

At the next board meeting, Trustee F asks for a report on how students are admitted into the Nursing Program. After the meeting she tells a newspaper reporter that she is conducting an investigation into the admission process.

It is not micromanaging to ask for reports on college processes at board meetings, however, as stated earlier, expecting reports without considering the ramifications involved can lead to problems.

Trustee F crossed the line into micromanagement when she announced an investigation to a reporter. She is now operating independently and is not participating effectively as part of the board unit.

Cutting Programs

After hearing a staff report at a board meeting about proposed program cuts at outreach centers in the district due to budget constraints, the board expresses concern that the students and enrollment in the outreach areas will be disproportionately affected. The board asks the CEO to find a way to keep the centers operating fully.

The board has acted as a whole to direct the CEO to revisit budget cutbacks. Whether or not the colleges provide service throughout the district and who the college serves are policy issues and appropriately the role of the board.”
Refining Board Roles: Works by Richard Chait

Richard P. Chait is a professor of higher education in the Harvard School of Education and an expert in board governance. A number of his recent publications have focused on problems of micromanagement and reframing the work of boards, and are highlighted below.

Governance as Leadership

Governance as Leadership describes three important roles for boards: fiduciary, strategic, and generative. Boards that operate in all three modes are macrogoverning, not micromanaging.

The fiduciary role is familiar to most boards. It addresses the stewardship of tangible assets such as the budget, the facilities, and compliance with state regulations.

The second mode, thinking strategically, starts to define high performing boards. In this mode, boards focus on the mission and the positive impact the college has on the community.

In the generative mode, boards provide leadership for the college. When boards engage in generative thinking, they tap into their creativity and the power of working as a team. Generative thinking engages trustees, CEOs and college staff in questioning, exploring and generating ideas. This mode is not intended to abrogate the CEO role or expertise; rather, it is designed to provide more input into the process in order to reach better decisions.

The book includes examples and activities to help boards and CEOs strengthen their performance in all three modes of governance. It is an outstanding resource to help trustees and the CEO review past successes and, through a deliberate approach and thoughtful series of questions, explore what future they want for the board, the colleges, and the community.

Why Boards Go Bad

"Every time maverick trustees practice an enterprise governance or a board overvalues or undermines the president, the odds tip a little more toward calamity." Two primary reasons for substandard governance are:

Most boards are orchestras of soloists. Individual trustees act alone or as part of a subset of the board. The power and benefit of a board is the plurality of perspectives focused on the good of the college. Clear guidelines for how trustees communicate with, direct, and intercede for constituencies and staff help prevent trustees from governing as individuals. Effective boards have independent thinkers, not independent doers.

Many boards tend to either lionize or trivialize the president. Boards that do the former simply review the plans and problems presented by the CEO, rather than engage in discussions to frame the crucial issues that the CEO should tackle. Boards that trivialize the president view CEOs not as educational leaders, but as civil servants to do the board's bidding. High performing boards do neither: they work in partnership with the CEO.

Avoiding these pitfalls requires that trustees assume responsibility for being a high performing board by regularly assessing board performance, holding study sessions on key issues, and adopting and enforcing expectations for board members.

How to Keep Trustees from Being Micromanagers
Richard P. Chait, Chronicle of Higher Education, May 6, 2005

Most trustees prefer to be engaged in complex problems of substantial importance, not the day to day trivia of colleges. However, three factors can

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Refocusing Board Rules  

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lead to micromanagement and should be avoided:

- Boards are structured to micromanage when they consist of committees that replicate the administrative organizational chart.
- Trustees are invited to micromanage when they are asked to review details of plans, policies, and projects.
- Trustees are relegated to micromanagement when college presidents do not share the responsibility for the college's mission, values, culture, and agenda.

Preventing micromanagement means engaging boards in discussions that identify the questions to be asked about the institution's future, which capitalize on the wisdom and values of trustees. CEOs can foster macrogovernance by involving boards sooner and more deeply in defining the questions on issues essential to the vitality of the institution.

The Importance of Clear Delegation

By Wade Koeninger

Trustee, Mendocino-Lake Community College District

Micromanaging has different causes. Some trustees may feel the CEO is too weak, or too strong, and that the trustee's job is to protect the institution by involving themselves in the operations. Other trustees may not be concerned about the CEO, but have their own agenda, or feel that the role of the trustee is to hunt for possible problems. Trustees may also have a basic personal dislike or bias, which might be expressed as badgering and hostile questioning.

The starting point, indeed the sine qua non, of good trusteeship is to recognize that the board (not a single trustee) has the legal right to give direction to only one employee, the CEO. If an individual trustee wants anything done in the college, even trivial matters, the trustee's first thought should be to talk with the CEO. In most instances the exchange of information between the trustee and the CEO will lead to a resolution.

Defining micromanaging depends in large part on the extent to which the delegation of responsibility to the CEO has been clearly defined. If there is ambiguity about the authority delegated to the CEO, there is also ambiguity as to what constitutes micromanaging. For example, if it is unclear whether or not the CEO has been delegated the responsibility for all personnel decisions, the board may feel it should be consulted before staffing decisions are made. On the other hand, if the board has expressly delegated such authority to the CEO, then any attempt by the board to dictate or even approve staffing decisions (except as may be required by law) is definitely micromanaging.

By maintaining both a healthy relationship with the CEO, and a clear understanding of what responsibilities have been delegated to the CEO, the governing board can prevent or minimize micromanaging.

Thus, trustees can concentrate on broad policy and their responsibility to regularly monitor in order to see that policy is adhered to, in fact and spirit.
The Importance of Trust

BY GARY DAVIS, PH.D.

Dr. Davis consults regularly with community colleges boards and is a past executive director of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association.

When working with boards, the questions I get most often are “How can we build trust?” and “How can we restore trust?”

Mistrust in organizations is not uncommon. Robert F. Hurley, in an article in the September Harvard Business Review, notes that “roughly half of all managers don’t trust their leaders,” which he discovered when he surveyed 450 executives in 30 companies around the globe. Hurley tells us what we already know about the effect of eroded trust. When we don’t trust our colleagues or our bosses, the cost of doing business increases sharply. Efficiency falls off. Stress increases.

Clearly trust is good for organizational health. Hurley uses the research of social psychologist Morton Deutsch when he offers a model for trust. According to Deutsch and Hurley, the chances of my trusting another person increases to the degree that I:

1. am risk tolerant
2. am well-adjusted
3. am similar to the other person, with common experiences and common values
4. share the same interests as the other person
5. have been the beneficiary of the other person’s concern
6. feel that the other person is competent
7. have observed the other person’s integrity and predictability
8. have open lines of communication with the other person

I can’t do much about items 1) and 2) for as Popeye says, “I am what I am.” My organization and I can work on items 3 through 8, however.

Similarity and Shared Interests. Boards and presidents could take time to get to know each other better. As they share experiences and find common values, they will find that trust comes more easily. Presidents and trustees can identify common interests. Usually the students’ success is a commonly shared interest and trusting boards spend time reviewing the success of the college’s students.

Beneficial Actions. People can do nice things for each other. Boards can extend support to a president by demonstrating that the president’s and his or her family’s welfare is important to the board. The wise board ensures that presidents don’t overwork, take time for themselves, and engage in professional development activities. The president can show an appreciation for the trustee as well, by demonstrating a concern for and accommodating trustees’ personal and professional lives.

Addressing Competency. When failures lead to a suspicion of incompetence, the wise board will address the issue swiftly and surely. Unexpressed feelings about the other person’s incompetence destroys trust. Sometimes deficiencies can be quickly remedied. Sometimes that is just not possible. Both boards and presidents should realize that removing a person (or persuading a person to leave a position for which he or she lacks requisite skills) actually constitutes a favor to the person affected.

No Surprises. Both boards and presidents should avoid erratic or unpredictable actions because erratic actions erode trust. The old rule of “no surprises” builds trust. The rule does not mean that the board will know everything that’s going on at the college. Rather, it means that the board will not be jerked around by the erratic actions of the president. In a similar way, trustees will not act erratically in their own role and in relation to the president.

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Honest Communication. Finally, trust grows when the board and the president regularly—at least once a year—find a safe setting and put their cards on the table. Open lines of communication build trust. Both the president and the trustees must guard against defensiveness when their actions are questioned. First the criticism must be understood and the person making the criticism must be convinced that the person whose actions are being questioned understands the concern. Only when the critic believes that he has been heard is it time to move the discussion forward with a suggestion on how future challenges might be satisfactorily met.

Trust. Its worth its weight in gold and it can be nurtured. What has your board done this month to foster trust? After all, you are called the “trustees.”

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