

## **Standard Three Organization and Governance**

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### **Description**

This chapter describes and appraises the organizational structure and practices of the main governing units of the college: the Board of Trustees, administrative leadership, governance committees, faculty leadership and students. Since the last NEASC visit, the college has made extensive efforts to create a more inclusive governance structure with open communication and shared decision making across all levels.

### ***The Board of Trustees***

The legal control of Goodwin College and final authority rests in an independent Board of Trustees whose duties and responsibilities are outlined in its Bylaws. The Board holds the institution's financial, physical, human assets and operations in trust for future generations and advises the President on institutional management. Trustees, as individuals, have no legal authority, nor are they entitled to special privileges. Rather, their authority arises exclusively from their participation with other Trustees when the Board is officially convened. As stewards of the college, the mission of the Board is to support student success by maintaining fiduciary responsibility and by providing policy direction to the administration of the college. The Board also ensures that the college advances its mission, continually seeks to improve institutional effectiveness, and maintains institutional integrity.

Board operations are governed by Bylaws originally adopted in 2004, and amended in 2005, 2006 and 2008. They were reviewed again in 2009, but no revisions were made. The Bylaws articulate the expectations of the Board and define its composition, voting rights, length of terms, and how members are added or removed. The Bylaws also include when meetings should be held and how they should be conducted. Additionally, the Bylaws specify the officer roles and the specific committees to be maintained. The Bylaws specifically prohibit discrimination in any manner and address the liability and indemnification of Board members.

The current Board consists of 18 members who serve for staggered three-year terms for up to three consecutive terms. This rotation structure ensures continuity of Board functions while providing new perspectives. The Board is currently made up of experienced individuals who possess the skills needed by the Board and represent the areas of our students' study, such as finance and business, health care, community and social service agencies, marketing/public relations, and organizational development. The Board members represent cultural and gender diversity and all demonstrate a strong commitment to community involvement.

Significantly less than one-half of the Board have any financial interest in the college. The Chair of the Faculty Senate and one alumnus serve as voting members of the Board. The Student Council President also serves as a non-voting member to ensure that the Board hears the voices of current and past students. One Board member, Raymond Madorin, serves as Corporate Council, but he has limited financial interest in the college. Including the Faculty Senate Chair and President of the college, less than 17% of the board has any financial interest in the College. To ensure Board member independence, each trustee is required to annually submit a conflict of interest disclosure statement.

The full Board of Trustees, Executive Board and standing committees meet regularly and arrange impromptu meetings if the need arises. The Chairman of the Board may appoint ad

hoc committees that act as a conduit for first review and recommendation to the Board. Although provided for in the Bylaws, there are no trustees emeriti.

Each spring, Goodwin College hosts an annual retreat for the Board that provides an opportunity to reflect on the college's mission in light of the past year's accomplishments. In addition to Board members, top-level administrators, faculty, students, and alumni participate and brainstorm regarding strategic development. They also review milestones and monitor fulfillment of the strategic plan. The retreats also include a professional development workshop for Board members.

The President communicates informally on a weekly basis with the Chairman of the Board and with other members as needed. The Presidential Compensation Review Committee is comprised of four Executive Committee members and is responsible for review of the President's performance and compensation. The Board has the sole authority to appoint and/or terminate the President of the college. President Scheinberg has served in this leadership role since the college's inception.

In 2006, the college established its charter Board of Corporators. Members come from government agencies, community and non-profit agencies, local boards and commissions, business, and industry. Their involvement with the college is on a volunteer basis, and includes participating in the Goodwin College Speakers' Bureau, serving as mentors to Goodwin students, serving on the various College Advisory Boards, actively supporting the special events of Goodwin College and becoming involved with campus development. We view the Corporators as a "feeder" group enabling the college to widen community input and to recruit a more diverse board with proven commitment to our Mission. Corporators also serve on all Board of Trustee committees except the Executive board. This allows board members access to individuals with various types of expertise.

### ***Administrative Leadership***

The President, as Chief Executive Officer, implements the strategic direction provided by the Board of Trustees through oversight of the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the budget. This ensures that there are adequate resources to carry out the college's functions and mission. The role of the President also includes, but is not limited to: responsibility for day-to-day management of college operations, attention to institutional morale, enhancing the general reputation of the institution, maintenance of the institution's quality, and careful management of responsible growth and expansion. When the President is not on campus, presidential responsibilities lie with the Executive Vice President/Provost.

The President, in conjunction with senior administrators, effectively manages the institution. The President's Cabinet consists of the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Physical Facilities and Information Technology, Institutional Effectiveness, College Relations and Advancement, as well as the Finance and Chief Financial Officer and the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Services. At their weekly meetings, they provide counsel to the President and, in consultation with the President, implement the strategic direction given by the Board. The Cabinet is also responsible for the development and assessment of the short and mid-term strategic goals for the institution. The Cabinet's duties include, but are not limited to: departmental reports, retention and enrollment planning and evaluation, new program planning, student life issues, resource and facilities assessment and allocations, and evaluation of and consultation on marketing strategies. Cabinet meetings are the primary platform for interdepartmental communications.

The Executive Vice President/Provost, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and the Director of Human Resources (currently vacant) all report directly to the President, ensuring that he receives vital information in a timely manner. The Executive Vice President/Provost serves as Chief Administrative and Chief Academic Officer of the College and carries administrative responsibility for the efficient operation of the areas for which the Vice Presidents are responsible. She serves as the liaison between the President and the other Vice Presidents. She delegates campus administrative functions and operations to the Vice Presidents and, through the Vice President for Academic Affairs, facilitates the improvement of instructional services and academic programs. In the absence of a Director of Human Resources, she administers these functions.

### ***Shared Governance***

In spring of 2009, the President initiated discussions regarding the college's opportunity to redesign the governance structure. His vision was to create a governance structure that would foster decision-making, expand institutional involvement, and improve communication within the organization. In March 2009, the Board of Trustees, in conjunction with the President and the Cabinet, worked to redesign the governance structure to meet these intentions. The recently implemented governance structure ensures that information is communicated throughout the organization from a variety of sources in a manner that promotes access to and involvement in the decision-making process.

To ensure that all members of the college community have the opportunity to participate in shared governance, two levels of governance committees were established. Tier I committees report directly to the President's Advisory Council (PAC) and are strategic in direction. Tier II committees report to the College Leadership Council (CLC) and are more operational and process driven. All committees meet regularly and have cross-departmental representation. Information flows vertically and horizontally throughout the structure.

PAC meets monthly and is comprised of Cabinet members, senior level management and the Faculty Senate Chair. Academic department chairs attend this meeting on a rotating basis. The PAC's role is to discuss, debate, and make recommendations regarding policy, procedures and programmatic changes to the Cabinet. Every other month the PAC is joined by all service department heads, department chairs, and program directors to form the CLC. One role of the CLC is to disseminate information across the college.

Recommendations regarding assessment, institutional effectiveness data, new program development, policies or other substantive changes are directed to the Board level for approval or input for revision. In addition to the impact on decision making, these strategies promote organizational growth and development. This shared governance structure also created needed additional layers of administration

### ***Faculty Leadership***

The Faculty play a significant role in assuring the academic integrity of the college's educational programs. The Faculty Senate, first established in 1999, is an active, body that operates under constitutional aegis. The Senate provides an opportunity for faculty to meet to discuss academic and faculty-life issues. The Senate has its own mission statement and constitution. All full-time faculty members are voting members in the Senate. Adjunct faculty may participate as non-voting members. The Senate is involved in the formulation of educational planning, policy, and implementation. For example, the recently revised Academic Integrity policy was written by a Faculty Senate subcommittee. The Senate participates in governance through input and feedback on policy, long term planning, and annual strategic priorities.

As part of the shared governance structure, a Faculty Forum was created. As with all governance committees, the Forum has representation from faculty and service departments. The Forum was created with the concept that many faculty and academic issues should not be addressed only by faculty because many issues are also community issues. The Senate is closely associated with the faculty forum. The Chair of the Senate serves as the chair of the Forum with a direct line to the Board through her voting membership on the Board of Trustees.

### **Students**

Students are placed at the top of both the organizational and governance charts because students are central to the college's mission. The students' position at the top of the chart reminds everyone of the college's strong commitment to student success. Students participate in the governance of the college in the following ways.

The Goodwin College Student Association (GCSA) was established in September 2002. The Student Experience Committee will work closely with the GCSA to ensure that adequate resources and support are available to the association. The mission of the GCSA is to improve student cultural, social and physical welfare. Additionally, they focus on encouraging members of the student body to become more active in volunteerism, civic engagement and service-learning projects. These activities foster a sense of community across the campus. The President of the Association serves as a non-voting member of the Board of Trustees and brings student recommendations to the table.

Selected governance committees that directly impact students' experiences at the college have student members. Specifically, students have been invited to serve on the Student Success, Student Experience and Facilities committees. Furthermore, the revised Academic Integrity Board includes two voting student members selected by the GCSA to serve with the five voting faculty members.

Finally, each academic department solicits input from their students regarding curriculum and program issues through course evaluations, graduate surveys, focus groups and advisory boards.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

The Board has engaged in self-assessment activities and they have been instrumental for its growth and development. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) created an instrument that the Board used to assess its performance. The instrument focused on board organization and leadership, policy, institutional performance, advocating for the college, and community relations. The survey included open-ended questions about the board's strengths, weaknesses and goals for the next year. Survey results were discussed at the March 2009 retreat. The Board rated themselves highly in commitment and dedication. Areas identified for improvement included their involvement in ongoing training and the establishment of a systematic review of Board policies and implementation procedures. The effectiveness of the board may also be measured from a variety of external perspectives including the financial viability of the college and the success of our students.

The Board evaluates the college's performance, goals, and educational needs annually. The results are used to set the agenda for board meetings, identify topics for board retreats, and identify expertise needed in current and future trustees.

The OIE provides regular reports to the Cabinet, PAC and CLC to use in monitoring institutional effectiveness. As stated in Chapter 2, the College Committee on Assessment

(CCA) is responsible for assessing the effectiveness of all Tier I and Tier II committees established as part of the new governance structure. As yet, the Faculty Senate has not engaged in any activities to assess their effectiveness as a governing unit.

## **Appraisal**

Goodwin College has a well-qualified, active, and engaged Board of Trustees committed to the fulfillment of the mission and purposes of the college. Board members reflect the cultural, ethnic and gender diversity of our students and staff. The Board of Trustees consists of individual members who consistently demonstrate a steadfast, collective commitment to the mission of the college and assure that the vision becomes a reality.

Since the last NEASC visit and the change to a non-profit organization, Board of Trustee members have grown into their roles. The evolution from a for-profit board to a non-profit governing board has been successful, with the Board assuming authority for setting policy and fiduciary responsibility on behalf of the college. The ability of the Board to self-evaluate has been instrumental in promoting its growth and development. For instance, in response to survey data that indicated their interest in learning more about academic programs and student success, each Board meeting now devotes time for presentations on these topics. The Board brought in consultants to help them develop a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

The revision of the organizational chart to include vice president positions, additional academic positions, and increased administrative layers ensures that the college has the administrative support needed as it moves toward baccalaureate status. To accommodate the offering of bachelor degrees, we will begin a search for a Dean of Faculty and a Dean of Student Affairs in 2010. These new positions will report directly to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. It is noteworthy that the length of tenure of many of the Vice Presidents far exceeds that national average; this is reflective of the strong commitments of these senior administrators to the college.

The faculty play an important role in curriculum development and the integrity in awarding academic credit. The new shared governance structure provides faculty with increased opportunities to engage in discussions and activities that have been traditionally beyond their scope, such as marketing and health and wellness activities. The new governance structure is an important step in the shared governance of the college. At this time, the effectiveness of the changes is too new to assess.

The voices of our students have a direct impact on changes in their educational experience. With the implementation of the new governance structure in 2009, it is expected that the voice of the student body will be even more prevalent throughout the organization and that decisions made will reflect the interest of all stakeholders. As a small commuter school with the bulk of our students juggling work, school, personal issues, and educational activities, we anticipate that challenges will remain with regard to engaging students in college governance.

## **Areas of Achievement**

- A strong, independent, committed, and effective Board of Trustees.
- Implemented a new shared governance structure to improve communication and provide opportunities for all members of the college to participate in decision making. Established guidelines for minimum performance standards for Tier I and Tier II committees, and designed a process for assessing committee effectiveness.

- A hierarchical organizational structure by adding a vice president level and creating additional management positions.
- The beginning of a self-assessment process for the Board of Trustees.

### ***Areas of Concern***

- The limited involvement of the Board in monitoring student learning outcomes and other measures of student success.
- The need to fill vacant administrative and faculty positions with highly-qualified personnel.
- The limited engagement of students in college governance.
- The level of participation by faculty on the governance committees.

### **Projections**

Goodwin College is an institution that thrives on seeking opportunities to grow and improve. We are committed to change and consistently focus our collective efforts on remaining passionate about the future for our students. We realize that our new governance structure is truly an experiment. We must remain committed to create a structure that provides employees with shared knowledge of college departments, operations and issues. This new structure will give employees opportunities to anticipate and resolve challenges together as we become a true baccalaureate institution. We anticipate that as we evolve, adjustments will have to be made. As we look to the future, we will undertake the following initiatives related to the Board and the new governance structure:

- Use the Board assessment data to address areas of concern identified by members (e.g., add an individualized plan for improvement to the Board's annual self-evaluation process, establish a systematic review process for Board policies, and increase the visibility of the Board to the student body and faculty).
- Monitor and assess the new governance structure to ensure that there is better communication throughout the college.
- Design a succession plan for the current college leadership. Explore the possibility of offering leadership training to support new administrators.
- Engage the Faculty Senate in yearly assessment activities, monitored by the College Committee on Assessment