



Policy Title:	Board of Trustees Evaluation Policy
Policy Category:	Board of Trustees
Related Policies:	None
Policy Approval Date	February 16, 2023
Frequency of Review:	5 Years
Policies Superseded:	None
Responsible Office:	Board of Trustees/Office of the University Secretary

I. Scope

This Board of Trustees Evaluation Policy (“Policy”) applies to the Arcadia University (“University”) Board of Trustees (“Board”) and all of its members.

II. Policy Statement

The purpose of a board evaluation or self-assessment is to give all trustees an opportunity to evaluate and discuss a board’s performance with candor and from multiple perspectives. Evaluation helps a board enhance its effectiveness by providing feedback, informing and shaping decisions and strategies, and by supporting an institution’s mission and strategic planning. By establishing a consistent evaluation cycle, a thorough evaluation process and a clear plan to address the findings of each evaluation, a board holds itself accountable, demonstrates its commitment to serve the institution, and promotes stronger board performance. A board that evaluates its own performance delivers greater value and sets the right tone at the top for the entire institution.

In furtherance thereof, the Board is committed to establishing an evidence-based planning and assessment culture and has delegated this responsibility to the Executive Committee of the Board (“EC”) as set forth in that committee’s charter. This Policy defines the scope and outlines the procedures of implementing the Board’s evaluation.

III. Policy

A. In-Depth Comprehensive Board Self-Assessment

An in-depth comprehensive Board self-assessment (“Comprehensive Assessment”) of its governance shall be conducted every five years beginning with the implementation of the then-current University strategic plan (each a “Comprehensive Assessment Period”). The Comprehensive Assessment shall be designed to inform and improve the Board’s strategic planning and vision, internal culture and trustee engagement, relationships with other key University stakeholders and operating procedures. The Comprehensive Assessment process shall be scheduled, designed, implemented, reviewed, and reported on by the EC. The Comprehensive Assessment shall include, but shall not be limited to, review of the following Board functions:

- performance of the Board’s ethical duties, including fiduciary responsibilities and avoidance of conflicts of interest
- structure of internal processes, including the effectiveness of Board communications, use of time, and decision-making
- the utility of Board and committee agendas, minutes, and other governance documents
- organization of Board leadership
- Committee structure and practices to ensure that the Board has the right committee structure to advance the University’s strategic plan and to ensure adequate oversight
- effectiveness of Board and trustee engagement
- University success and achievement of goals
- simultaneously with the Comprehensive Assessment, the Secretary of the University will review the corporate documents and bring major change issues to the Board for review and approval.

The EC (or a designated ad hoc task force) shall be responsible for determining the appropriate methodology for the Comprehensive Assessment. The Secretary of the University and staff will provide support for the EC and coordinate timelines, meeting logistics, and other administrative details. To ensure that the Comprehensive Assessment is conducted with objectivity, candor, and utility, the following processes are recommended:

- Implementation of a confidential survey of the Board, with individual trustee responses reported in the aggregate and without attribution. The EC may also, at its discretion, include interviews with individual trustees or other community members, or any other relevant methods and/or tools, to complement the survey.
- Scheduling of a Board retreat to discuss the findings of the Comprehensive Assessment with the University President. An outside facilitator may be hired to guide the process, create the survey, analyze the results, and facilitate the retreat.
- Analysis of the Comprehensive Assessment results by the Secretary of the University and/or the facilitator, in coordination with the EC to identify Board strengths, accomplishments and areas of concern, and to set Board expectations, goals, and priorities.
- Development and publication of an action plan (“Action Plan”) on the basis of the Comprehensive Assessment results. The Action Plan should be delivered to the Board and should serve as the basis for adjustment of existing priorities or governance practices/policies and/or the adoption of new strategic goals to maximize Board effectiveness. The Action Plan should guide the work of the Board and committees during the following five years until the next Comprehensive Assessment is conducted.
- Discussion of the results of the Comprehensive Assessment facilitated by the Board Chair at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

To help inform the then current Comprehensive Assessment, gauge progress against the Action Plan, and adjust and/or establish goals for the remainder of the Comprehensive Assessment Period, a mid-cycle review should be conducted at the mid-point of each Comprehensive Assessment Period.

B. Other Assessments

Meeting Evaluations: Since the Board meets infrequently, meeting surveys are a relatively quick and simple way to gauge what is working, what is not, and what questions remain. Evaluation of Board meetings should focus on their substance and value, including how Board meetings help advance the University's priorities and good governance, rather than just on logistical matters. Meeting evaluations shall be conducted yearly after the Annual (spring) meeting of the Board. Assessment of other Board meetings may also be conducted at the discretion of the EC.

Individual Trustee Evaluations: Evaluation of individual trustees provides an opportunity to ensure that each trustee understands his or her role on the Board, the expectations of the University, and the direction of the Board. Individual trustee evaluation also gives trustees the means to provide input on how best to deploy their individual talents and feedback on how they can better serve the Board. It also informs decisions about whether trustees should be recommended for another term, if eligible, and it can be an effective tool for enhancing engagement and collective Board performance. The evaluation of individual trustees should be based on expectations that have been agreed upon in the Trustee Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities. Trustee evaluations may consist of a short self-assessment survey completed by the incumbent trustee who is eligible for re-election (in accordance with the Trustee Term Renewal Guidelines), a review of attendance, giving history, committee service, and other evidence of commitment to the University and to Board service, and interviews with other Board trustees. Individual assessments shall be conducted upon (i) the completion of each trustee's first year on the Board, and (ii) at the expiration of each term served by a trustee.

Committee Evaluations: Each committee shall also evaluate its own performance, productivity, and protocols on an annual basis to provide guidance to committee chairs, committee members, and the administrators who support them. Such assessment should include a review of committee charters to ensure that they clearly demonstrate the governance purpose of the committee and that the committee's work is aligned with the institution's strategic vision, goals, and priorities. It should also include a review of the committee's size, composition, member engagement, support from the administration, leadership, communication with the full Board, coordination with other committees, and productive use of time. Committee evaluations may consist of a survey of committee members, interviews with committee chairs, and/or any other relevant methods as determined at the discretion of the EC.

Board Chair Evaluation: Since a Board's performance depends on the ability of its chair to establish the right tone, focus on the right things, and get the right people in the right positions, the Board Chair shall be evaluated as part of a regular, anticipated, recurring process. The EC (or a designated task force) shall conduct the evaluation. The evaluation must be undertaken annually during each term that the Chair serves. The Board Chair evaluation should be based on objective factors and focus on the Chair's role as written in the job description when he/she accepted the position. The process should include a self-evaluation by the Chair, as well as interviews and/or a short survey of Board members, the president, and key cabinet members.

This Policy is effective on the date that it is signed by the Chair of the Board.

John Rollins
John Rollins, Chair of the Board

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