

EFFECTIVE STUDENT TRUSTEES

Third Edition



by Nick Kachiroubas

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Nick Kachiroubas
Crystal Lake, Illinois
nkachiroubas@gmail.com
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Effective Student Trustees (3rd Edition)

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Introduction

As longtime community college leaders and advocates, the authors of this introduction deeply appreciate the positive impact community colleges, a uniquely American form of higher education, have on our society. And, having worked with student trustees over the years, we bring a deep appreciation for the contributions made by student trustees on the governing boards of those colleges. We are pleased to introduce Dr. Kachiroubas' important book.

Dr. Packard spent most of his academic career associated with community colleges. In fact, if the community college that he attended had not existed, it is quite likely he never would have become a college student, let alone had the opportunity to become a college president and a chancellor in California and Illinois. As a CEO, Dr. Packard worked with many student trustees on the boards he reported to. He believes that having a student trustee as part of the board is beneficial to the institution and provides a unique, positive learning experience for the students who were fortunate enough to serve in this role.

Dr. Smith was Director of Education Services for the Community College League of California and consultant with Association of Community College Trustees, a national association. She learned from thousands of trustees through her work with governing boards throughout the US and Canada, and wrote ACCT's guide for community college trustees. She knows that governing boards play a key role in ensuring their colleges successfully educate students and contribute to their communities.

Student trustees hold a unique position. On one hand, the student trustee represents those impacted most by the college – the students who benefit from the education and services it provides. On the other hand, they are a member of a board of trustees, who work together as a team. The board is responsible to many constituents: all the demographic groups in their communities, taxpayers, groups, businesses, industry, governments, other educational institutions, social services –

the list goes on and on. The board also ensures that the college is a great place to work by responding to the needs of its employees – the faculty, administrators, and staff.

Dr. Kachiroubas's book is an essential resource for student trustees. He helps them navigate these two primary roles: first, to represent one of the board's most important constituents, the students, and second, to act as one member of the governing board team.

He does an excellent job of providing student trustees insights into becoming an integral part of the board during their terms of office. He offers key advice on how to connect with their fellow board members, negotiate challenging issues that the board may face, and provide effective student leadership. Throughout our time as community college leaders, we were pleased by the thoughtful contributions made by student trustees to the deliberation of their boards. The fact that you are reading Dr. Kachiroubas's book indicates that you will likely be one of the student trustees who puts in the necessary effort to fill this important role in a positive fashion. We know that your positive efforts make these vital institutions even stronger.

Dr. Walter J. Packard

President Emeritus

McHenry County College, Illinois

Dr. Cindra J. Smith

Director Emeritus

Community College League of California

CHAPTER ONE



The Role and Responsibilities of a Student Trustee

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.” – Abraham Lincoln

Congratulations, on your new adventure as a student trustee. This adventure has the possibility of being an exciting journey that can provide you with many skills and experiences that will be useful and beneficial for years after you have completed your term on the board.

As you proceed on this new adventure, you will most likely run into stretches of rough terrain, perhaps even the occasional cliff or mountain. With ample preparation, direction and proper tools, you, the adventurer (as student trustee), will be equipped to handle such challenges with skill and confidence. The purpose of this guide is to give you some basic background information upon which you will be able to build a strong foundation as an effective student trustee.

The Role of Community Colleges

First, let's begin with a quick history lesson. As an important student leader on your campus it is important that you be able to

understand where the community college concept came from and what their role is in the larger community.

If you're like most student trustees, you already have a good idea of what a community college does, or why else would you want to be a student trustee? Regardless, here is some important information that you may not know. If your board ever decides to play the community college version of "Trivial Pursuit", you will be one up on the rest of the board members.

Community colleges have evolved much during the hundred years plus that they have existed. The first public community college, Joliet Junior College, located in Joliet, Illinois, was founded back in 1901 as a means for people to gain higher levels of education at an affordable cost close to home. Other than a few isolated community colleges across the country, this revolutionary concept in higher education did not gain much steam until after World War II.

After the war, thousands of young veterans were returning home from serving their country, anxious to take advantage of the education benefits in the new GI Bill. Community colleges began to rise in number. Often serving as extensions of local high school districts they frequently specialized in advanced technical education. After a small initial expansion during the Truman administration, the level of community college growth leveled off for most of the 1950's.

The mass explosion of community colleges came during the mid-1960's during the Johnson Administration. President Johnson saw higher education as a major component of his Great Society proposals. The Great Society was a series of domestic policy programs aimed to allow all members of American society a chance to improve their quality of life. During the development of these programs, the community college concept really began to take shape. An institution was needed to provide post-secondary technical training; to offer access to higher education for those individuals who could not attend a university because of their income, geographic location, or family obligations; and

to furnish workforce training for existing and expanding industries, as well as non-credit programming for the adult population. After much debate and controversy, legislation was passed, and over \$1.7 billion in federal dollars were made available for students in the form of federal grants and loans which spurred immense demand in options for an affordable close to home higher education model and in response states created and built community colleges, which made the system the dominant force in higher education that it is today.

In helping you understand the significance of the enterprise you are a part of, you should know that 46% of all undergraduate students attend a community college first according to a December 2020 report from the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). Former President Barack Obama puts the importance of the community college evolution in perspective in his 2008 “Plan to Reclaim America”:

Community colleges are a vital component of our higher education system, serving 12 million people each year, almost half the undergraduate students in the U.S. Without community colleges, millions of people would not be able to access the education and skills they need to further their education or succeed in the workplace.

Who Are Our Students?

In the first half of the twentieth century and into the early 1970’s, the traditional college student graduated from high school, went off to college for four years, and lived in a residence hall or apartment. Few of these students worked full-time, were married, or had children. Classes started in the fall and ended in the spring with vacations liberally scattered throughout the year.

According to a March 2021 report published by the AACC, the average age of the community college student is 28 years old. Forty-four percent of community college students are older than 22 years of age. Community College students represent 41% of students attending an

institution of higher education.

Throughout your term, you will hear people talk about “traditional” and “nontraditional” students. What does this mean? Which one are you? The traditional student mirrors the typical student of the early to late twentieth century, generally a student between the ages of 18 to 24 years of age. However, the nontraditional student typically goes into the workforce before completing a postsecondary education, is financially independent, attends college on a part-time basis, works full-time, has dependents (children or parents), may have some college credits, or does not have a high school diploma, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). As a rule of thumb, a non-traditional student is generally a student who returns to college and is over the age of 24 years old. When you look around your campus, you will find that many of your student colleagues are nontraditional students, though the NCES reports that the number of younger, traditional students is on the rise.

What is the Role of Community Colleges Today?

The answer to that question is as complex and diverse as the communities served by each college. In general, community colleges provide the community with access to lifelong learning and are integral to the economic vitality of the community they serve.

Through credit programs, students, both traditional and nontraditional, can acquire the first two years, or what is generally referred to as general education curriculum, of a bachelor’s degree by completing an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree. In the past several years community colleges have begun expanding coursework to include opportunities for students to obtain an entire bachelor’s degree.

Community colleges also provide technical education programs specific to the workforce and economic needs of the communities they serve. In some states, technical colleges provide this kind of training. Generally, this technical programming leads to an Associate of Applied

Science (A.A.S.) degree or a diploma of less than two years. This could take the form of an agricultural equipment maintenance program in a more rural area or a plastics technology program at a college in a more industrial community. These technical education programs are a key niche of community colleges and technical colleges, and they fuel the development of the community's competitive workforce and economy. Community colleges have become a key provider of the coursework and training necessary for the certification in the health sciences as well as technology-oriented fields in an effort to alleviate the shortage of trained professionals in these areas.

Community colleges also serve a wide range of needs specific to the community. Critical to the community your college serves is the economic and workforce development programs and services it provides. These programs are often, but not always, non-credit and differ from one community college to another. However, the common factor in these programs is their focus on a competitive workforce and the economic vitality of the community.

Within this category of community-specific needs are other community service programs that cover a wide range of topics. Many of these programs are for citizens who may choose not to be enrolled on a regular basis but want to learn and participate in classes for personal enrichment. Again, these programs will reflect the topics of interest in your community and will look very different from one college to another.

Examples of these types of programming, might include "Learning Microsoft Office", "Sewing", "Health and Wellness", "Starting Your Own Business" continuing education required to maintain certification or licensing requirements (for real estate agents, EMT's, etc.), and Adult Basic Education and GED. This last area has become an integral part of the community college mission in most states.

Sometimes included under the umbrella of "community service" or "adult education" are English as a Second Language programs.

As communities continue to become more diverse, the need to learn English has grown immensely among individuals whose first language is something other than English. Take Truman College, one of the colleges that make up the City Colleges of Chicago, for example. On this one campus, there is such a diverse student population that over 100 language groups are represented.

These are just some of the general roles that community colleges play across the country. The approaches that each college uses to accomplish the overall community college mission may vary greatly, but ultimately work toward improving the quality of life in the communities they serve.

Term in Office

One of the most common challenges that you will face as a student trustee is that short tenure of office that you will hold. Although a year may seem like a long time, it is extremely short compared to the terms of other public offices. Traditionally, by the time a student trustee figures out how to function in his/her role the year is half over, so, at best, he/she has only about six months to accomplish whatever it is that they wish to accomplish.

For this reason, it is important that you take some time to “sharpen your axe” and learn about your role, the community college system and college governance, so when it comes time to “chop down the tree”, you will be swift and effective. This guide will give you the basics about serving as a student trustee. Keep in mind that it is only an introduction and you may wish to seek out additional sources for more in-depth information and research on specific community college issues and governance models.

You will find as you network around your state or even nationally that student trustees and their area of jurisdiction vary greatly depending on the state and the structure of their community college system. Generally, student trustees are appointed or elected sometime

during the spring semester and serve one-year terms. In some states' community colleges are governed by a local board; in other states both community colleges and public universities are governed by one statewide board. Some student trustees represent one community college; others represent several community colleges in a system; and in other states, there are no student trustees at all (see Appendix 1). However, your state community college system is structured, your role as a student trustee is valuable and important, so it is crucial that you hit the ground running.

The Unique Role of a Student Trustee

The role of the student trustee has been debated by student trustees and their fellow board members as long as students have been serving on boards. The debate surrounds whether the student trustee exists to represent students exclusively or to represent the interests of the community as a whole. Regardless of what your initial response to this debate may be, I would encourage you to approach your role with an open mind about how to best serve your community college through participation in the governance of your institution and how you can make the most of your role as a trustee who just happens to be a student.

The Debate: Representing Students...

Serving as the student member of your board gives you a perspective that is quite unique compared to the rest of the board. You are the one member of the board who must be an enrolled student in order to serve on the board. While most board members do not have daily contact with the college and its services, you attend classes at the college, interact with faculty and staff on a daily basis and utilize the facilities and services of the college regularly. This unique perspective allows you to add value to board discussions on policy development, contemplated changes and their impact on students, and, most

importantly, their ability to learn.

Many student trustees come to the boardroom with the perspective that they are there to represent students and students only. This assumption is often made in those states where student trustees are elected by the general student population. Approaching issues with this perspective usually leaves student trustees in an adversarial role and at odds with other members of the board and/or college administrators. In reality, the issues that the board will face while conducting its business are much broader than issues that can be viewed simply as pro-student or anti-student. Nonetheless when issues arise where an opposing student perspective is warranted and necessary it is important that you communicate that perspective to the rest of the board in an articulate and respectful fashion. One suggestion is to write out your comment prior to the board meeting and plan your statement. Doing this will give you the advantage of structuring your thoughts and arguments so you have the most impact with your contribution. Remember to keep comments focused on the issue and not at specific people.

The Debate: Representing the Whole Community

The other side of the debate is regarding what some consider the “greater community”. As mentioned earlier, many students believe that their sole role on the board is to represent students. While this may seem like a logical approach, think about the rest of the community served by the college? Because the board governs a community college, the board will deal with policy issues that impact the whole community, including many groups with specific interests. These may include high school seniors, under-represented populations, social service agencies, other educational institutions, government entities, business and industry, or even members of a particular employment group such as auto mechanics, healthcare workers, or HVAC professionals. The idea is that a large number of interest groups exist within any community and a good trustee, student or non-student, will consider the entire

community when making decisions that affect the college. Your perspective will be that of a student, but your decisions and your greater mindset should be focused on what is best for the entire community.

As you assume your role on the board you may want to spend a few minutes and make a list of all the interest groups that you can recognize that are specific to your college both internally and externally. Keep this list on hand for the rest of your term and occasionally pull it out to see if more groups should be added as you identify them throughout the year. When a controversial issue arises you can also pull out the list to help you think how the issue might be perceived by each group before formulating your final opinion. This exercise will keep you focused on the entire community and thus more focused on being an effective trustee.

Why Is This So Important?

Some student trustees may think that a focus on the interests of the whole community may be a disservice to the students that elected or appointed them. These individuals may then begin to make decisions specifically geared to one particular interest group: the students. These same student trustees will then complain that the other board members treat them like a student. Hmmm... if your actions on the board only represent one group, it is likely you may be labeled, perhaps unfairly. If you want to be viewed equal as a trustee, you must act and think in the broader interest of the community. Even other trustees can fall into the habit of focusing on one issue and as “one issue” board members they distance themselves from the other members of the board. All trustees should focus on the entire community, students included, when making decisions. A good student trustee, being equal to the rest of the trustees, will assume a similar focus.

Summary Chapter 1

- Community Colleges have an important mission within higher

education providing not only a general education curriculum in pursuit of a baccalaureate degree for the traditional student, but in providing specialized career and technical education as well as adult basic education. English as a second language coursework, and non-credit study for the life-long learner.

- The community college student body is made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds including students from a variety of ages, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds and goals. The average age of the community college student is 28 years old.
- While there is much debate regarding whether the role of the student trustee is to only represent students' interests or the community as a whole, it is important for the effective student trustee to find the right balance of both these perspectives while on the board.

CHAPTER TWO



Understanding Governance

“Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.” – General George S. Patton, Jr.

Governance - What Is It?

Governance sounds like a complex and boring word and to some it is, but in a nutshell it’s a fancy term for the way many community college boards (as well as other units of local government) across the nation choose to govern their institutions. As a productive member of your board, it is important to understand this concept, not so much that you can use this term in an assignment, but so that you understand how governance works and how your board will conduct business.

The Association for Community College Trustees has developed a model for exemplary community college governance using the Policy Governance® approach developed by John Carver. The ACCT Model is a systematic approach to overseeing the work of our colleges. Think of a system such as our federal government: we have a process for making laws, the legislative branch made up of the US House of Representatives and the US Senate; and a process executing and enforcing the laws, the executive branch headed by the President; and a process for settling

disputes and determining the constitutionality of the law, the judicial branch headed by the Supreme Court. While each of these branches are dynamic in their own way, together they create a system that allows the federal government to operate. The ACCT Governance Model is a similar type of system, made up of three primary processes: Governance through Policy, Advocacy, and Monitoring and Analysis. While each of these processes are important, our discussion will focus on Governance through Policy as this is a key concept to understanding how the College Board will operate.

Governance Through Policy

What in the world does that mean? Governance is the method that the Board uses to create direction and accountability for your institution. In order to understand Governance through Policy, you need to recognize the four types of policy: Ends Policy, Governance Policy, Board-CEO Relationship Policy, and Executive Limitations Policy. A description of each type of policy is in the chart below.

End Product Speaking on behalf of the community, the board charges the president with those Institutional Outcomes that are most crucial to the economic, social and political vitality of the community.	Governance The board defines how it will work as a body.
Board-CEO Relationship The board establishes the relationship of the board and the chief executive officer (CEO, President or Chancellor, i.e., governance versus management.	Executive Limitations After setting its expectations of the institution, how it will work as a body, and establishing the relationship between itself and the CEO, the board then tells the CEO what behavior is subject to board approval.

Ends-Based vs. Means-Based Thinking

In order to understand Policy Governance though, you need to understand the difference between ends-based and means-based thinking. While this may sound complicated, the concept can be easily understood. There are a number of sources that explain the topic of governance in greater depth. If you would like more information on models of community college governance check with your college's president's office or visit the Association of Community College Trustees website (www.acct.org) for additional publications and resources.

Let us return back to our key concept of Ends-Based vs. Means-Based Thinking. What does it mean and how does this affect your role on the board? This concept is centered on how the board chooses to oversee the college and delegate authority. It is particularly important to understand this difference when you are engaging in discussion and making decisions at a board meeting. Ends-Based Thinking is focused on the “What” – or the outcome of the project. Means-Based Thinking looks at the “How” – or the specifics of how things get done.

As a student you constantly are being challenged and evaluated by class assignments. Let's use the example of a US history class where your instructor has assigned you to a team of four people who have to present a twenty-minute presentation to teach the rest of the class about the key battles of the Civil War. The instructor tells your team that the presentation may take any form, but must use the full twenty minutes, everyone in the team must participate in the presentation, and you must highlight the key battles of the Civil War. The instructor tells you that all other decisions regarding the project will be left to you and your team. In short, your instructor has provided you with the “ends” that are to be achieved by you and your fellow students. In our Governance concept, this is the “What” and it is generally considered good practice for the board to define “ends” or outcomes that are to be achieved by the institution.

Further, your team decides that it will structure its presentation by using a game show format such as “Jeopardy.” Additionally, your team decides that it will meet for an hour each day for the next week to work on the presentation. The team decides to appoint you to serve as the project coordinator so that no details are left between the cracks. Other members are assigned tasks such as writing “answers” and “questions” and creating a computer program to act as the game board. All of these details represent the “means” that are required to meet the “end” that your instructor has assigned. In our Governance discussion, these are the “How”. Again, generally good practice recommends that the Board delegate the “means” of the project to the CEO and administration.

This assignment is an example of both Ends-Based and Means-Based Thinking. Your instructor has defined your assignment and given you certain parameters that you have to meet in order to receive a good evaluation. A time frame to completion has been established and the method of grading or evaluation has been provided. The instructor will evaluate you on the completed work, the “End Product”. Similarly, the Board will periodically review the performance of the institution in achieving the “ends” defined by the Board.

Effective trustees are first and foremost Ends-Based thinkers. The board’s job is to set the policy that governs the institution. The board sets the parameters of what needs to be accomplished - the means or “how to” is delegated to the President/CEO. The CEO then sets internal goals, timelines and plans designed to accomplish the “Ends” as defined by the board. A good board does not concern itself with the everyday details of the process. It may ask the president what her or his plan is to accomplish the board’s “Ends”, it may even provide constructive criticism to the president or highlight an area not previously identified, but when it comes to carrying out the job, it is the president’s responsibility to make it happen. How the president fulfills this responsibility is the foundation for the board’s monitoring of that individual’s performance.

Each year, the board and the president should engage in dialogue regarding the status of these “Ends” and a formal evaluation of the president’s performance should take place. This process - the Monitoring and Analysis Process in the ACCT Model - Will then begin again with the board setting the “Ends” for the next year. Critical to this process is the formal evaluation process of the president that is usually referred to as the presidential evaluation.

Many boards will choose to do a board self-evaluation during this same period to assess its performance during the year. Such a healthy evaluation process, if conducted properly, can prove beneficial in raising the board’s effectiveness.

Governance Policies deal with “How” the board will organize itself such as officers, committees, etc. Board-CEO Relationship Policies deal with “How” the board and the CEO will interact. An example of a Board Governance policy for a board that may be trying to enact more “green” friendly policy: “All board meeting materials will be submitted to the board via electronic communication such as email or flash drive”.

What does the board expect of the President/CEO and what should the CEO expect of the board? Executive Limitations address “How” the CEO does her/his work by telling the CEO what is or is not acceptable behavior. For instance, the CEO should not treat staff unfairly, do anything illegal or immoral, or allow the college to go “broke”. An example of an executive limitation policy that a board might enact on a CEO might be, “The CEO shall not engage in an expenditure of more than \$25,000 without approval from the Board”.

Appropriate Questions to Ask

Beginning to serve on the board can seem overwhelming. You may be asking yourself what kind of questions I should be asking, and more importantly, how do I avoid looking like I don’t know anything. In light of the earlier section on Ends-Based and Means-Based Thinking, you may be even more unsure of what you should be asking. There is a lot to

learn and you are not expected to walk in the door at your first meeting and know everything there is to know about community college governance. Remember, most new members of the board (student and non-student) felt the same way you do when they first started - they just didn't let it show!

One of the most important items for any board member is to understand about the college is its finances. If you are gifted in this area and accounting really lights your lantern, good for you. For us in the rest of the world, finances can be a difficult topic. Some of us even avoid dealing with our personal finances, let alone those of a college or multi college district which has an annual budget in the millions of dollars. As a student trustee you should not avoid learning and asking about your college's finances and funding mechanisms. These funding mechanisms are different in each state. One of the easiest ways of learning about your college's specifics is to ask.

You can ask to set up a meeting either with your college president or board chair. Your college president may involve the institution's Chief Financial Officer as well if you mention ahead of time that you are interested in learning more about the college's finances. It's important to stress that the meeting is just to learn the basics. The key is to tackle this issue head on and do not hesitate to ask about complex issues. Not only will you learn a lot of interesting information that could be helpful after you finish your term, but you will also be much better equipped to participate in discussions that your board will engage in during future meetings especially if you ask if the board uses a "strict policy governance model" or something slightly different (as discussed earlier in this section).

In addition to finances, you should inquire about what model of governance your college follows. Each college adds its own special twists to its governance, and it is important for you to know how your board conducts itself. The board chair or college president should be able to answer this question in greater detail.

A third area in which you should familiarize yourself with is your College's administrative structure. As a trustee who happens to be a student, you will no doubt encounter issues and problems that are brought to you by your fellow students that need resolution. After learning a little about governance, you may now realize that many of these issues are "Means-Based" issues and need to be handled by administrators without board intervention. Even so, as an effective trustee it is important for you to understand your College's structure well enough to send a student with a question to the right source for an answer. This will also help you in making your role more visible to college faculty, staff and administration.

A fourth area which you should seek to understand is your State Community College structure. As mentioned before, in some states each board represents one or two community colleges (Illinois, Texas, Maryland, California, for example), in others there is one board that represents all community colleges within that state (Kentucky, for example). Still in other states there is one board that oversees all public universities and community colleges (Minnesota, for example). If you don't already know, or if you need further clarification, ask your board chair or College president to explain your state's structure to you. It is important that you learn this state governing structure early so you can fully understand your college's context more completely (see Appendix 1).

These general areas are not and exhaustive list of questions one could ask to become familiar with an individual college or system. They are meant to serve as the foundation of key areas to ask about so you can begin thinking critically about your role as a member of a board and demonstrate your interest in learning to be an effective trustee. These questions may spark other questions that you will then want to ask the college president or board chair.

- How is the financial system structured at my college? (President)
- What governance model does my board follow and how does it conduct its business? (Board chair or president)

- How is the college administration structured? (President)
- How is my state's community college system structured? (Board chair or president)

Finally, it is important to feel comfortable and understand when to ask questions. As a general rule of thumb, it is most appropriate to make an appointment with your board chair or college president when you have questions. That way, your question can be discussed and, if necessary, you can be directed to the appropriate information sources.

If you have a question or an issue regarding something coming up at a board meeting, don't wait to get that question answered at the meeting; send an email or make an appointment with your board chair or president before the meeting. Share your question or concern prior to the meeting. Perhaps your question or issue can be resolved before you walk into the boardroom. If you have followed those steps and still have an important question or issue that you feel the rest of the board needs to take into consideration prior to its decision, then bring it up at the board meeting. But remember, nobody likes to be "ambushed". To keep this from happening, it is helpful to mention your concerns to the board chair before the meeting. Then when the particular item is called for discussion, the chair will expect some discussion.

Be More Than A One Issue Board Member

Sometimes when students are elected or appointed to serve on the board they may have campaigned on a particular issue or agenda. It is important to realize that although that issue or agenda may be important, it is not the only thing that the board will deal with. It is also important that you work hard to represent the perspective of the entire community on all the issues that the board deals with, not just the student perspective. Strive to broaden your interests and challenge yourself to get input from other perspectives. Seeing the role of a student trustee is an adventure, if you always look at the terrain in front

of you, you may miss some of the most beautiful scenery just a little bit off the main path or over the horizon!

Summary Chapter 2

- Governance is an important concept that impacts how most community colleges function, specifically regarding the board responsibilities versus the CEO or president's responsibilities as well as the relationship between the board and the CEO.
- Ends based thinking is important for student trustees to understand as the role of the board is to clarify what results or ends are to be achieved while leaving the means or details to the CEO and his or her executive team.
- There are four types of policies that the board generally deals with: End Product; Board Governance; Board-CEO Relationship; and Executive Limitations.
- It is important to remember that a student trustee should actively share their perspective in all issues and topics that come before the board and not focus solely on one issue such as student tuition.

CHAPTER THREE



Responding to Student Issues

“Today’s mighty oak is just yesterday’s nut that held its ground.” – Anonymous

During the last section we discussed the importance of your role on the board and the decisions that are made as a board. When involved in these decisions it is important for you as a student to keep an “Ends-Based” approach to decision making. With that said, as a student on the board you will, no doubt, encounter issues and problems brought forth by your fellow students. How do you handle such cases keeping an “Ends-Based” focus? This requires a delicate balance and an intricate knowledge of your community and your college.

In many ways serving as a student trustee is very similar to the roles that elected officials face when serving in a state legislature or in the US Congress. Legislators set policy by writing and passing laws and resolutions. In the passing of laws and resolutions, each member of the legislature must think about what is in the best interests of the entire nation or entire country. This role could be equated to the board’s creation of “Ends” Policies.

Legislators also have to deal with constituent issues when a resident they represent contacts them and needs assistance dealing with a particular department or agency of the government. In these

instances, a legislator's office works as an advocate for the constituent in dealing with that department or government agency. The legislator cannot force a particular outcome unless it is spelled out by law; he / she cannot individually change the structure or procedures of that particular department. Particular outcomes sometimes require a change in policy – a new or amended law – or the intervention of the elected official that oversees the executive branch such as a governor or the president. A legislator is not always successful in solving the constituents problem and quite frankly, it's not the job of the legislator to solve every problem. In fact, sometimes the resident has not given the legislator's office the full story about the situation or the agency's administrative code prohibits the resolution the constituent is seeking. In either case, it is important that the legislator make an effort to advocate for a resolution of the problem, not a particular solution as well as guide the resident through the process.

When dealing with student issues, your role is similar to that of a legislator. As you work with students with particular issues, it is important to approach each situation remembering that it is not your job to solve the problem but act as a liaison. You can connect the student with the problem to the appropriate administrator who will use the internal processes of the college to assist the student, if possible, and then advise you, as a board member, the outcome of his / her review and action to the extent possible while respecting confidentiality boundaries. Approaching problems and issues this way should prove helpful not only in assisting a particular student but will help set a tone for working with members of the college administration as well. Additionally, it will allow you to provide support to the student seeking assistance and allow you to continue to demonstrate an “Ends-Based” approach to governance.

Learn the College's Administrative Structure

In the last chapter, you were urged to learn about the college's administrative structure. In the subsequent section, you will hopefully

see the practical benefit of asking such a question at the beginning of your term and learning the operating policies or “rules” of the administrators on your College’s leadership team.

Let’s look at an example on why this knowledge of structure is helpful. Imagine that a non-traditional student comes to you and tells you that he / she is having some financial troubles and needs help getting financial assistance. They have filled out the appropriate forms but have not heard anything further and don’t know what they should do. Ask yourself how you might approach this situation? If you are familiar with your college structure you might choose to assist this student by learning who is responsible for the financial aid department at your institution. With this information, you could refer the student to that individual and then check back with the student a week or so later to see if their issue has been resolved. Better still, if your situation permits, you could walk the student over to the financial aid office and introduce the student to the director of financial aid and then work through the issue together. Given privacy issues, it is not recommended that you facilitate a meeting, but simply make the introduction and then excuse yourself out of the conversation.

If during the course of your term, a trend develops where you have several students who are not getting timely responses to their financial inquiries - one or two does not constitute a trend – you should share your concern with the president so he / she can determine if there is an ongoing problem which should be resolved or a process which has broken down. In some cases, the president may not be aware of a problem, and if that is the case, he / she can’t fix it. As with all board members, it is appropriate to ask the president to let you know what he / she has found and the resolution he / she is pursuing.

Another situation that you are bound to face as a student trustee is when a student comes to you to complain about a particular class or instructor. If this has not happened yet, get ready, it probably will. Approach these situations with caution. This is a case where you might

not have all the facts. The student might portray to you that they have been treated unfairly or may not be receiving the grade they feel they achieved. During my tenure I had a similar situation and at first glance I was inclined to support the student, but then after digging deeper, found out that the student rarely attended class.

Your first question to the student should be: have you talked to your instructor about the problem or concern? Most student / instructor problems can be resolved by a simple conversation between both parties. Many students will not feel comfortable with that option, but most administrators will first ask the same question of the student when the issue gets to them. Why delay the process? Encourage the student to talk to the instructor. If such a discussion has occurred then you can follow your College's administrative structure and refer them up the ladder to the particular department chair, the dean, or chief academic officer. Again, it is important in these situations that you let the student present their case directly to these individuals, while you act as a guide along the way.

Be sure to read and understand your College's student code of conduct. This is usually included in the student handbook or guide. It gives the "rules of the road" and will help you give a student the best advice on how to approach a unique problem within your College's administrative structure.

The particular problems and issues that you will face may mirror the examples given, or they may be completely different. Regardless of the issue, the hope is that you understand, perhaps a little better, the importance of learning the college's administrative structure. No one likes being passed from person to person when they have a problem. Think about when you have had a similar situation. You wanted a resolution of the problem. The more you were passed around the angry or you got. Learn the administrative structure of your school and don't pass the buck - direct the student to the right person who may be able to solve their problem.

Create Avenues of Dialogue

An important step in being able to effectively handle student issues is to create avenues of dialogue with those individuals in the college's administrative structure that you have just learned about. The process begins by putting faces and names to the titles on the organizational charts. Spend some time walking around campus, introduce yourself to the college staff and administrators. Get to know them, who they are, how they got to your institution and what they do at the college. By doing this, you will greatly increase your already expanding knowledge about the college and its services as well as get to know many of the staff and employees that you encounter during the course of your term.

Why is this so important? It's all about comfortability. As student issues come up that you may need to refer to a staff member for assistance, it is much easier for you to give the student sound advice based on college procedures or to connect the student with the right person if you understand the administrative structure of the college and you know the individual whom you are sending that student to see. You will be able to say with confidence, you need to talk to Dr. Smith, she is a great person and I think she will be able to help you with your issue. Getting to know your administrators will also make it easier for you to introduce students to the administrator, since they already know you and have spent some time talking with you.

Work with Student and Community Organizations, Participate in Campus and Community Activities

When you ask students on campus to identify who the student trustee is at their school more often than not you will get a blank stare or an, "I don't know, what's a student trustee?" Face it folks, when it comes to being a student trustee, your name and position identification among the student population is not high. And, if you were to ask that question in the broader Community outside of your college, your name recognition would be even lower. So here you are in a position

addressing major college decisions, and the community segments you represent don't have a clue who you are. This can leave a trustee, both student and non-student, in an interesting predicament.

The good news is that you have the power to turn that situation around. The bad news is that it is going to take time and energy. Don't be disappointed if at the end of your term every student or member of the community does not know who you are or what your role is as a member of the board.

How do you overcome this hurdle? By being seen! If you did any campaigning when you were seeking office, you probably came in contact with students. Now that you're in office, the campaign should not be over - but the focus should be different. Before you were meeting people for the purpose of being elected or appointed, now you should be meeting and talking with people for the purpose of listening to their ideas and concerns. While meeting students on your campus is important, remember, that you should be meeting and listening to the larger community as well, not only students. This will help you avoid becoming a "single-issue" trustee whose effectiveness may become compromised. While you cannot take action as an individual trustee, you can present valuable information and a different point of view for the board's consideration when an issue comes before the board for review.

Student organizations and campus activities are an easy way to seek out student input. If you are not already involved with a particular group on campus, perhaps you could get on the agenda for the next meeting and introduce yourself. If there is a campus event coming up in the near future, make sure that you are present and take the initiative to approach students and introduce yourself. These simple steps will help you understand the needs of the student body better.

More challenging as a student trustee is developing an understanding of the needs of the broader community. Don't feel alone - every trustee experiences this problem. Many boards have organized

activities that help them connect with the community. You should participate in them and learn from individual community members and groups who participate in them. With this information and input from students, you will be better prepared to consider a policy issue which affects several different community groups.

Chapter 3 Summary

- Just as a state or federal legislator will provide assistance with constituents in dealing with governmental agencies, a student trustee can represent students effectively by helping them connect with the appropriate member of the faculty, staff or administration when an issue arises.
- When providing assistance to students, it is important to remember to let them champion their own issue while directing them to the appropriate individuals and to proceed only up the chain of administrative command to the CEO and / or board only after all options have been exhausted and the problem is persistent.
- It is important to be involved with your campus and community for two reasons: one, other students can learn about your role and approach you with questions and / or concerns, and too, as a board member you can assist in being an ambassador for your college within your community.

CHAPTER FOUR



Building Good Relationships with Fellow Board Members

“A drop of honey catches more flies than a gallon of gall. So, with men. If you first win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend. Therein is a drop of honey which catches his heart, which, say what he will, is the high road to his reason.” – Abraham Lincoln

If you haven't already had the chance to figure it out, one of the key factors of being an effective trustee are your relationships. Not the relationships that leave you brokenhearted such as a romantic relationship, but professional, working relationships. Many students who serve as student trustees feel that they are good leaders. But it is important to remember that leadership is based on one's ability to motivate others towards a shared goal. To be an effective leader and motivate others, you must build and maintain good relationships with those people whom you represent and with whom you work with on the board.

To get off to a good start, you should begin building these relationships on day one of your term. In this section you will explore several ways that you, even as a student, can take a proactive approach toward building good relationships with other members of your board.

Act as a Public Steward

First, it is important to recognize that you have now entered the realm of public service. As an elected or appointed member of your board of trustees you now have the exciting role and responsibility of being a servant of the people. While dreaming about what it will be like to be a student trustee, numerous students seeking the position often overlook this central aspect of their role. Many times, the superficial parts of the job become the focus. Things like having your own office, parking space and business cards may seem to create a prestige about the role and overshadow its servant aspect. If your college does not provide some of the superficial items mentioned above, it is important to remember that not all colleges provide these things since they do not provide them for the other board members. While each of these items might be nice to have, they should not become more important than your role as a public steward.

No matter where life may take you, keep in mind that elected / appointed positions are all opportunities for service. Although there is a certain amount of respect and prestige that come with each role, keep in mind that your central motive should be service to others first. As you approach your role, challenge yourself to keep this mindset, especially when dealing with other board members. This point may seem rather trivial, but if you practice it correctly, the outcome can be most beneficial in allowing you a productive year on the board.

Go Out with Fellow Trustees

What was that? Go out with my fellow trustees? Although at first glance this suggestion might seem off but give it a chance. The focus of this section is building good relationships with your fellow board members. Let's think about this in terms of your friends. How did you begin building relationships with your current friends? My guess is that you probably spend some time with them. This same approach is recommended for getting to know your fellow trustees, but in this

instance, you may need to consciously implement the concept. If you want to build a relationship with your fellow board members that is stronger than an occasional head nod at a board meeting, then you will have to invest some time and energy.

So, here's my advice in short: take the initiative. Invite a fellow trustee out for coffee, lunch or dessert. I know that at first this will seem very awkward, but keep in mind the rationale. Your motive for the meeting should be to get to know the person a little better. During the social meeting, perhaps you can ask some simple questions about the person's background, why they sought election or appointment to the board as a good starting point. Keep in mind that your fellow trustees are also leaders within your community as well. Hopefully, you will be able to build a positive relationship that might last beyond your role as a student trustee. You never know when you might need a recommendation for a job, scholarship or some other reason. Begin to build your network by investing in relationships and getting to know your fellow board members on an interpersonal level.

Go to Board Meetings

Now this point may seem rather trivial, but it is crucial. I cannot begin to tell you how many conversations I have had with students who wanted to know how they could be more effective only to find out that they do not attend their board meetings. If you want to be an effective student trustee, you need to attend your board meetings. If you think that you will have conflicts attending the meetings, then perhaps you should reconsider serving on the board.

With this said, this does not mean that you have to attend every single meeting. We all have circumstances that come up in our lives, but for the most part you should be at your board's meeting. What do you do if you cannot attend? A suggestion would be to contact your board secretary or chair and let him / her know that you will not be able to attend the meeting. After the meeting ask your board secretary

for a copy of the minutes and make sure to read them before your next meeting.

One concern I have is when students say that they have a class on the night of regular board meetings. I am not suggesting that you sacrifice your education to be on the board, but I do believe that your acceptance of the role implies that you put that regular meeting date aside and perhaps find a different time to take the class. Again, if scheduling classes and other activities around board meetings seems like a major issue, perhaps you should reconsider serving on the board.

A final thought regarding attendance at board meetings. While I know that sometimes these meetings can be long and to some may seem boring, it is important to stay focused and involved in the discussion at hand. With technological advances being as they are, some students have found board meetings a great time to catch up on emails and text messages with friends. We all have an occasional emergency; it is important to turn off or put aside your cell phone and other non-meeting related technology devices during the meeting. This will help to keep you focused on the issues at hand and can also help you maintain a relationship of respect from your fellow trustees, even if they don't follow this advice themselves. If you are sitting next to them texting the entire meeting, it is hard for them to believe that you are taking your role seriously.

Dealing with The Press

How should student trustees deal with the media? This question is regularly asked by most new trustees and is also one that is regularly debated by boards in regard to every individual on the board. We all like to see our names in the paper, hear our voice on the radio, or see our faces on television. These appearances give us a sense of personal recognition and accomplishment. That said, use extreme caution when dealing with the media. Most boards designate one member to deal with press issues as the official spokesperson for the board, and that

person is usually the board chair. As a member of the board, you should support and respect this written or often unwritten policy in order to be most effective in your role. As you become more effective and skilled in your role, the opportunity to be recognized in the media will come without being sought. If you are asked to comment on an issue you may consider saying something like, “as a student of the XYZ College I believe... But Mr. or Mrs. Smith, the board chair can share with you the college’s official position on this issue.”

You Don’t Have to Know Everything

Guess what? You don’t have to know everything. Too many times student trustees feel that they have to know everything about the college. Sometimes they forget they are students. More importantly, they forget that even their fellow trustees don’t know everything. Too many times we approach the situation like we have all the answers. Unfortunately, this can have a negative affect not only on your relationship with the board, but it can lead you to misinform students. Most of your fellow board members realize that they are still learning, and they know that you are as well, so don’t try to fake it or be concerned with having to know all the answers. Take this opportunity to learn.

As you approach new or difficult situations, as mentioned in an earlier section, don’t be afraid to ask questions. Sometimes the questions you have are shared by other board members too, they just are afraid to ask. Be a leader and a good public servant at the same time. Recognize that you don’t know all the answers and ask appropriate questions to gain a better understanding. Both you and the institution may be the better for your inquiry.

Chapter 4 Summary

- Remember that serving as a trustee is a privilege and don’t get wrapped up with some of the external benefits that may

accompany the office of student trustee. Remember to attend your board meetings as well as observe all the written and verbal agreements that apply to all members of the board, including the student trustee. Particularly to dealing with the press.

- As a member of a board, you are part of a larger group or team, it's important to get to know each of your board members as individuals. This can be done by inviting them for coffee or a meal. While your intuition may tell you to wait for them to ask you, consider being proactive and taking the lead in meeting with them individually.
- Being an effective student trustee does not require that you know everything, to the contrary do not be afraid to ask questions and for clarification at the appropriate times.

CHAPTER FIVE



Typical Trustee Issues

“Being president is like riding a tiger. A man has to keep on riding, or he is swallowed.” – Harry S. Truman

Each board has issues and proposals that are unique to its own organization and the community it serves. However, there are a few broad issues that boards in general will deal with on an annual basis. Board may come to resolution on these issues in very different ways, but most likely you will run into these topics during your term as a trustee.

The purpose of this section is to give you a brief introduction and, hopefully, a basic understanding of these topics. Should you want more information regarding these topics, check with your board chair, or the Association of Community College Trustees in Washington, DC.

Presidential/CEO and Board Evaluations

Most boards conduct a presidential/CEO and board evaluation annually. These evaluations may be done together or separately. The purpose of both evaluations is to look back over the past year and evaluate the CEO’s performance and/or the board’s performance and to discuss new goals for the upcoming year. The evaluation is a critical component of effective governance. The evaluation process should be

considered a confidential personnel matter, especially when dealing with issues such as presidential compensation and should not be discussed with anyone outside the boardroom.

The presidential evaluation can be conducted in many ways; it frequently the president submits a self-assessment on his / her progress toward achieving the goals that were established the previous year and addresses progress on these goals. This can lead to a board discussion of the president's performance focused on his / her effectiveness in moving towards accomplishment of the institutional outcomes prescribed by the board. Many times, salary adjustments are tied to this evaluation. It is at this point that the ongoing cycle of monitoring & analysis kicks in. The board should review and, if appropriate, modify its goals or "ends" to focus on during the coming year. The president or CEO will then create goals and strategies for accomplishing these goals. This process creates the basis for the following year's review of the president, and so on in subsequent years.

The board's self-evaluation addresses how well the board is following its own "Means" policies (Governance, Executive Limitations, and the Board-CEO Relationship). Often this examination is assisted by the facilitator. The sole purpose of the board's evaluation is to help the board better perform its overall governance and by so doing, to become more effective in representing the needs of the community to the college and the needs of the college to the local community.

The Budget Process

For accounting students, the annual budget process might be your favorite part of your term on the board. For the rest of us, the budget can sometimes be a confusing issue. As with any large organization, the budget process usually occurs on an annual basis. Typically, a preliminary budget is proposed by the college's president and administration, and then the board will consider, and if appropriate, approve or change the budget. Each board will handle the budget in different ways and have

different levels of input.

The budget is extremely important to the board since it implements the board's priorities as expressed by its "Ends Policies." Because the budget is an internal operating document, most boards delegate its development to the CEO, who highlights how the proposed budget carries out the board's priorities. The temptation for the board is to look at and debate every line of the budget when, in fact, the board cannot spend the days and weeks required to fully design and develop a spending plan. Don't fall into this trap!

Staff and Faculty Negotiations

If your college has one or more unions, negotiations are an important process that impacts not only the budget but also the entire operation of the college. Some colleges only have one or two unions; others may have as many as nine unions, and some have none. Remember that negotiations do not necessarily occur each year. Some contracts will expire annually, but many are on a two- or three- year cycle.

During the negotiation process, it is important for you as the student to learn and serve your board as an observer. Unfortunately, the negotiation process can sometimes divide the board as well as the union members they represent. With luck, this is not the case of your institution, but regardless of the circumstances it is important for you to understand what is going on but remain at observer of the process.

With that in mind, it is important to note that there are many ways that negotiations are done. Some boards and unions negotiate only through attorneys. Others use an interest - based model, where a team from the union and a team from the administration work towards an agreement. Negotiations can be short and sweet if there are not many issues at hand, or they can involve a long-drawn-out process if either side does not want to come to a consensus. Remember that many of the issues that come up during contract negotiations usually have a

history that precedes your term as a student trustee. It is important that you have a conversation with your president or board chair about the process, the negotiation history at your institution and the specific issues in play during this negotiation. This will give you a broader sense of the process and the history behind your College's negotiation process.

The most important thing to remember in your role as a board member during the negotiation process is to maintain the confidentiality of any discussions which occur during a closed session of a board meeting and to always decline the "invitation" to express your opinions about the process or the results of the negotiations. Once the board has spoken through its vote, you as a board member have the obligation to support that decision. And, if a student, faculty member or media person pushes you to talk about the process, refer him or her to the board chair, unless authorized by the board or administration to publicly comment.

Foundations: Alternative Funding Sources

With tuition rising and state and federal funding decreasing or staying the same, community colleges are working to provide alternative funds to support their programs and services. A common way that has emerged in the past twenty years is the creation of a college foundation. College foundations usually serve as charitable non-profit organizations to raise funds for the institution. Some foundations raise funds specifically for student scholarships, while others will conduct million-dollar capital fundraising campaigns for new construction or major renovation, and many do both.

Most foundations operate independently from the board, usually with a board of directors on its own. The foundation board works with the trustee board to jointly accomplish the college's mission and "Ends" as established by the board.

As a student you can be an important resource to the college foundation. Many times foundations are working with high-dollar

donors who like to have contact with the students whose lives they are impacting through a charitable gift. If your college happens to have a foundation, you might wish to introduce yourself to the foundation director and offer to be available should a donor wish to meet students on campus. But a word of caution here. Remember, in this role you are acting informally as a student, not officially as a trustee. It is very important that you keep the distinction clear so as to avoid the appearance of speaking on behalf of the board or representing the board. The board speaks with one voice and you as an individual trustee cannot speak for it unless the board authorized you to do so.

The other reason for mentioning foundations in this section is to alert you to potential issues or meetings that come up between the Board of Trustees and the foundation board. As foundations continue to become a more significant funding mechanism for community colleges, they will become a more vital issue within your board's discussions and planning.

Policy Issues

In addition to the issues discussed above, the board will also deal with policy issues. This includes the creation, modification or deletion of policy language which governs the institution. Back in chapter 3, we discussed Ends-Based vs Means-Based Thinking. During that discussion we mentioned that one of the three processes for which the board is responsible is Governance Through Policy. It makes sense that a major part of the board's business will be developing, monitoring, and approving board policy.

Boards have a large variety of policy manuals varying in size and length. The policy manual contains all of the current policies approved by the board. Boards following the principles of policy governance may have a very small and concise set of policies that are reviewed periodically other boards may have a much larger set of policies that are changed more frequently. If you do not receive one when you take office,

you should request a copy of your board policy manual from your board chair or College president and become familiar with how your board operates.

State and Federal Lobbying

A major role of the board is to work with state and federal legislators to secure adequate funding to accomplish the college's mission and achieve its "Ends." Over the past years, funds from state and federal sources have shrunk in most States. Because of this, it is extremely important that your legislators understand the vital role your college plays within your community.

Trustees have a unique role when it comes to lobbying legislators. You are the appointed or elected officials who oversee the outcomes of the institution. Trustees are volunteers or receive a nominal salary for their time. Because of this, your communication with legislators is extremely influential. Just as you are a public servant and a steward of public resources, as discussed in Chapter 4, so are they. Obviously, their work is much broader, but nonetheless, you have a similar task.

As a student trustee you can play a vital role in lobbying your legislators. How? First, let's understand what lobbying is. Do you remember as a child seeing that brand-new two wheeled bicycle that you just had to have for your birthday? You begin to suggest to your parents how much you really need that bicycle. You tell your story to them many, many times usually looking for different ways to get your point across.

This is how lobbying works but more directly, and without the whining. Instead of asking for a new bicycle, you are asking for items with much larger price tags. Lobbying essentially means communicating with your elected lawmakers about your college needs in order to serve the communities and constituents they represent and reminding them continuously how important it is that they provide those resources.

Since you are the student trustee on your board, your personal

participation in this process is imperative. Instead of hearing from someone who is removed from the institution, legislators love to hear from students. As your board looks for opportunities to lobby your state and federal legislators, get involved. It's a great experience for you and it will be most beneficial for your institution as well. If you are interested in meeting with either your state or federal legislators contact your college president and find out when and how would be the most appropriate time for your institution, as some colleges participate in a state or nationwide advocacy day while others host legislators on campus'.

Summary Chapter 5

- While individual boards will deal with a variety of issues throughout the year, some typical issues include presidential and board evaluations; the budget; faculty and / or staff contract negotiations; working with a foundation / fundraising; policy issues; and state or federal lobbying.
- When your board engages in one of the issues discussed, it is important to educate yourself about the issue and / or process and then to actively participate in discussions and deliberations regarding the issues at hand. Additional written resources on each of the discussed issues can be found via web search, through your State Community College Trustees Association, and / or the Association of Community College trustees in Washington, DC.
- Active participation in state and federal lobbying by the student trustee can be extremely beneficial to the college and education for the student trustee. Legislators enjoy interacting with students as they are a product of the college. As a student trustee, you have the role of representing all your fellow students to your state and federal legislators.

CHAPTER SIX



Leave a Legacy

“The price of greatness is responsibility.” – Winston Churchill

So, you’ve been elected or appointed, you’ve learned about your role on the board and hopefully you’re feeling really good about serving as a student trustee. If this is the case, that’s wonderful. Now there’s one more area that you need to consider. This last area is truly the mark of an exceptional student trustee. An exceptional student trustee is one who not only influences change while serving as a trustee, but does the tasks needed to assist his / her successors. In this regard, a student trustee can leave a legacy. During this section, we will look at several ways that can help you accomplish this undertaking.

Maintain Good Records and Files

One of the easiest ways to leave a legacy is to maintain good records and files as a trustee. Imagine how helpful it would have been for you to have your predecessor hand you a thumb drive or folder with information on the issues or projects he or she worked on during the course of the year. For this reason, I recommend that you try to start this practice early in your term. The main question usually is: what should I keep a record of? Each individual student board member will have to determine what items are of greatest importance. From the start of your term, I suggest you save as much information as possible. As the year

precedes and you gain more focus on the issues of importance, dispose of those unneeded materials.

There are a few things that you really should keep track of. First, keep a copy of your board meeting materials. Because of the confidential nature of some of these materials, you may want to keep these materials in a locked location or secure electronic file. Second, you should keep a copy of your board policy manual, operating budget and, if available, and organization chart. These will be helpful during your tenure and serve as good resource materials for your successor.

Third, if you have it available, maintain a recent electronic copy of your State's legislative directory. Because working with your state legislators is so important, it is good practice to keep a directory on hand. Many legislators now have this information online. Fourth, as you progress in your term, keep a copy of any correspondence that you send out. Although the issues that generated the correspondence may be resolved during the course of your term, it is helpful for future student trustees to view past examples of communications. Consider how helpful it might have been when you took over your position if you had been handed examples of letters or correspondence that your predecessor sent. Just by looking over the materials, you could get a good preview of what types of issues you might handle during your term.

I suggest at the end of each month you take 5 or 10 minutes to reflect back on the major accomplishments, appointments, issues and other items that you have seen that month. Keep this as a bullet point list and put it in a file or electronic document. By doing this, you can look back occasionally and evaluate your own progress as well as assist your successor. Remember that many issues happen on an annual basis and if your successor can learn from your notes that the college starts discussions on the budget in April, then you just helped him or her become more effective in his or her role and have thus influenced the future.

Finally, I suggest at the end of your term that you take an hour or two to write a short letter to your successor. In the letter tell them what your major accomplishments were for the year. Also tell them the biggest challenges that you faced in your role during the term. Conclude your letter by letting them know the things that you did not have time to get to and politely recommend an issue or two that you suggest they start with. While your successor is not bound by this information, it would certainly give them a head start in being effective in their term of office.

Encourage Students to Get Involved and Run

Another simple, yet significant way to leave a legacy is to encourage other students to run for the position. As I am sure you have learned, many students are unaware that the position of student trustee exists. Even fewer understand the process to fill the position. As mentioned earlier, students in some areas have to run for the position While others are appointed. Whatever the process is at your institution, take the initiative to tell others how they can get involved.

As you begin your term, start evaluating other student leaders who you think might make a good student trustee in the future. As the year progresses, encourage them to consider the position. As always keep an open mind to students who represent a diverse point of view and encourage them to consider serving in the role.

Share Your Positive Experiences with Others

Being a student trustee is an awesome experience. As you progress through the year you will no doubt have numerous positive experiences that will serve you both as learning experiences as well as motivators to continue your role. Share those experiences with others. As you may have learned most people love a good story. What better way to inspire someone to consider the position than to tell them about a rewarding experience that you had.

Mentor Your Successor

After your successor has been appointed or elected, you're done right? You can just coast until they officially take over the position. Wrong! It's your job to pass on your knowledge to your successor. If you are in the beginning of your time as you are reading this now, this may be hard for you to believe, but as you approach completion, you will look back at the year and say, "gosh, I wish I had known all of this when I started". Well, that's your cue to help your successor. Think of all that valuable knowledge and experience that you have acquired over the past year. What a shame for that to go to waste. Take the opportunity before you leave office to impart your newly gained wisdom to your successor.

With that said, a quick note of caution. Do not be overzealous when training your successor. Remember, you are trying to help them. They can always choose to decline your help and, if that is the case, respect their decision. If they accept your offer to share your knowledge with them, then remember that you are a guide, not a dictator. That individual may choose to conduct himself / herself differently than you did. Be there to provide advice as well as support, but also respect that person's autonomy to do things differently than you did.

By following these simple tips, you can leave the office feeling that you have served your institution well not only during your tenure on the board, but by helping mentor your successor. This will allow you to hopefully leave the institution in a better position than when you began. Shouldn't that be the goal of every public servant? What more could one ask: to leave something in a better state than when you inherited it?

Chapter 6 Summary

- In addition to working hard at board meetings as well as student advocacy, as your term progresses it is important to remember to encourage others to get involved in to carry the torch forward in student leadership roles, including running to serve as your successor.

- A keyway to encourage others to consider involvement in the college, including running for student trustee is to share with them some of the positive experiences you have had during your term and the growth and development you have gone through over the past year.
- Once your successor is elected or appointed, spend time with the student trustee-elect to help them understand their role, what went well for you, and what you would have done differently. It's important to remember that they will have to learn and experience the role themselves so they may not do things exactly your way but give them any insights you have to enhance their effectiveness.

CHAPTER SEVEN



How You Benefit from Serving

“He who wishes to secure the good of others has already secured his own.” – Confucius

Now if you just peruse the table of contents and this is the first section you are reading, that’s probably not a good way to begin your experience as a student trustee. I hope your interest in the position was not spurred by personal gain. As mentioned in previous sections, being an effective student trustee begins with the understanding that this is a public service role. There will be many positive lessons that will be beneficial to your future from your service.

In the next few pages, we will review some of the most notable lessons you can gain through your experience as a student trustee, if you allow yourself to fully embody the adventure.

Master Visionary Thinking

If you are like most college students, visionary or thinking long-term usually means knowing that this Friday you are planning to go out with friends to have dinner and catch a movie. When asked what your long-range plans are, your response may be wrapped in ambiguity. That’s okay. Most of us function on the “now” level. Our thoughts are

focused on the moment and what's going on in our lives this second, or this week. For many people, it is unnatural to peer into the future and see a clear picture of where they want to go.

Fortunately, this is a skill that you can learn through your service as a student trustee. As I hope you've learned from earlier chapters, part of the board's job is to guide the college into the future. Hopefully, on your board you will be looking one, two, three or more years into the future and trying to create a map of your institution's destination. This is a very important skill for leaders in many fields, to create a vision. By being exposed to visionary thinking as a student you can begin to develop how to look into the future, see a vision of what things should look like, and then communicate this vision to others so they can see it as well.

The reason I choose to highlight this as something you gain from your experience, is that when you complete your educational goals you are likely to be looking for employment. After your experience on your board, you have some level of practical experience in visionary thinking. Don't forget this important skill. You will find that is an asset that employers are seeking. It is truly a great for an employer to find someone who can intuitively look at a situation and see where the group or company needs to go in the future.

Public Service Experience

A second important benefit that you gain from serving as a student trustee is real life experience as a public servant. At first glance, this might not seem like an important skill. However, it can be very beneficial to your long-term contribution to a better society. I know that is an idealistic comment, but your introduction to public service as a student trustee could lead you to future public service opportunities during your life. The American system of government is propelled by public servants at all levels, from the most local form of government to the highest level of national service.

By serving as a student trustee, you have entered the realm of

public service and now have tenure in a real experience of that service. As you continue through life, perhaps you will be able to seek other public service opportunities using the skills you learned as a student trustee. Although at times the issues you will deal with are specific to a community college, the overall governing concepts are ones that can be applied to other public service roles. Even on the local level there are library boards, city commissions, and school boards that you can choose to become involved with at a later date. Don't let your experience as a student trustee go to waste, continue to serve throughout your life.

Take Opportunities to Learn

One of the most immediate and visible benefits of serving as a student trustee is the mass of learning opportunities that the role provides for any student. As you progress throughout the year and look back, trust me, you will be amazed at everything that you have learned. I urge you to welcome these learning experiences as they are presented to you and utilize them to the fullest potential. By doing this, you will have a fulfilling experience in your role as a student trustee. Learning opportunities will present themselves on the local, state and national levels. Some of these may be conferences that you attend or Statewide trustee meetings. Make every opportunity to attend these sessions. On the national level, the Association of Community College Trustees provides educational conferences and legislative seminars in Washington. If funding is available, I encourage you to go or to participate virtually.

There will also be learning opportunities that present themselves as your board deals with issues. These opportunities include attending committee meetings of the board, setting up a meeting with the president or attending a board retreat session. All of these occasions will require extra time and effort, but the chance to gain understanding is worth the time commitment. Don't let them pass by without taking advantage of them, if at all possible, without forgetting that you need to also be successful in your academic studies as well.

Developing Your Network

Another important benefit to serving as a student trustee is the possibility to expand and professionalize your network of contacts. Serving on the board, you are able to interact with many people on a very professional level. You will be more than just another student in the crowd. This happens within your institution through interaction with faculty, staff and administration. It also happens with your elected legislators. As you begin to lobby them and interact with them at special events, you have a unique opportunity to get to know them better as individuals.

As you participate in meetings on the state and national levels, you will begin to network with people across your state and the country. Don't miss the chance to interact with new people as you attend these meetings & conferences. Concentrate on building your network. Remember that relationships you build as a student trustee can last much longer than your term in office. One of the most impactful things that you can do for your long-term future is to build these relationships then continue to maintain them after you leave office.

Have Fun!

Oh, yeah, and there's a final thought to keep in mind. Have fun! Enjoy the journey you are on. There will be times when you become stressed with schoolwork, meetings and everything else going on. Remember to take time for yourself and relax. Serving as a student trustee should be a fun and rewarding experience. If the fun begins to disappear, you need to take a step back and remember why you are serving in this role.

As you embark on your student trustee experience, I wish you the best of luck and hope that you find it to be a beneficial and rewarding experience. If I can personally be of assistance to you directly, please feel free to get in touch with me. In conclusion I leave you with a quote from Dr. Joseph J. Cipfl, President Emeritus of the Illinois Community

College Board and a strong supporter of student involvement in board governance:

“Always remember, good things don’t just happen. Good people make things happen!” — Joseph Cipfl

Chapter 7 Summary

- There are many positive benefits that you can gain from your experience serving as a student trustee. First and foremost, you can learn how to be a visionary thinker which helps you to look out one, three, five or even ten years into the future and provide input and direction on how your college can meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.
- Serving as a student trustee is an elected or appointed public service role. It is also an entrance point for individuals who might be interested in lifelong involvement in public service as every community has roles such as community college boards, school boards, library boards or city council. You now have some experience which may lead you to future public service.
- Serving as a student trustee places you in a leadership role where you have the ability to develop your networks as over the course of your term you may interact with state and federal legislative leaders, business and corporate leaders, Community leaders and of course higher education leaders. Work to expand your network and maintain contact with these new relationships which can serve you well, even after your term concludes.
- Last, but not least - have fun while you serve as a student trustee. At times the role can seem stressful as you balance school, work, and your trustee commitment. Don’t let that take away from the enjoyment of the journey, good luck!



Student Trustee Perspective - Melkitsedeq Jorge Hernandez Gomez

Becoming a student trustee can seem like a daunting task from attending governing board meetings, listening to students and the issues they face, and participating in various committees. My first piece of advice would be to relax, most issues will not be hard to fix and there are people around you willing to help. However, help will not appear if you do not ask for it. As a trustee being a people person is necessary, this does not mean you have to be the center of attention but it does mean you have to be an effective communicator. Finding the right mentor that can explain a community college's governance and the vast array of issues that is unique to each institution will be very helpful. In my case, I found Southwestern College (California) President Kindred Murillo to be the perfect mentor; her calm collective demeanor paired with her knowledge were indispensable in my journey.

My second piece of advice would be to take some time to know your fellow governing board members, most meetings will be long and the task of paying attention can seem beyond your capabilities, go for lunch or coffee and try to learn something beyond schoolwork. When you get to know people on a personal level beyond work many doors will open. My final advice would be to spend time in advance of each governing board meeting looking at the agenda and be ready to ask questions. Also keep an eye open for subjects that spark your interest, and ask yourself how will these items affect your students, curriculum, professors, and community? Learn about the characteristics of your college and its demographics always have in mind how each decision will affect the people you represent. Best of luck on your journey and remember to learn but most importantly, have fun!

Melkitsedeq Jorge Hernandez Gomez was elected student trustee of Southwestern College in Chula Vista California in September of 2019 and served through May of 2021. Melkitsedeq will transfer to a four-year institution in California to study International Relations.



Student Trustee Perspective – Victoria Thoman

Serving my term as Student Trustee from the start of the COVID-19 pandemic last year certainly gave me a different perspective on this position. Truthfully told, I can only speak from my own personal experience sitting on the College of Lake County's (Illinois) Board of Trustees. Almost a year ago, during my first board meeting on Zoom, I vividly remember sitting back in my chair and thinking to myself, "What am I even doing?". I honestly did not know the answer to that question at that point in time. I was aware that Student Trustees are essentially the liaison between the Board of Trustees and the student body - but what does that specifically entail? I wish I had known how much of an impact I would truly have initially going into this position. This not only included being the voice for the student body, but also having the opportunity to network and advocate for certain student initiatives on a national level. Putting aside attending National Legislative Summits and other various community college seminars, I wish I had known how much of an effect I would have on the College of Lake County itself.

I had the opportunity to meet with a multitude of the college's departments in order to voice student needs and concerns. Anywhere from providing a voice regarding student payment plans, to giving student input about the College's ongoing technology enhancements. I also wish I knew how much the Board of Trustees actually does for the community college in which they represent. They have a say on an array

of important subjects such as tuition raises, the allocation of student relief funds, and many other topics that are crucial to student life. Lastly, I wish I had known how serving my community as a Student Trustee would be one of the most rewarding opportunities I would experience thus far. This public role has given me the chance to shape the young adult I am becoming while allowing me to explore my passions with local politics and helping my community on a broader scale.

Victoria Thoman served as the Student Trustee for the College of Lake County in Grayslake, Illinois from 2020–2021. Victoria is pursuing a degree in Social Work from the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.



Student Trustee Perspective – Taylor Vitacco

Becoming a Student Trustee at the start of a pandemic topped the many challenges I have faced within my life as a student leader. Not only did I have to learn how to reach the student body through different virtual platforms but learn which platform everyone liked best. Being a Student Trustee allowed me to set high expectations for myself and conquer things I never believed I could. Learning how to navigate my way through such a difficult and interesting time for students has allowed me to grow as an individual.

Prior to my election, I wish I was aware of the pressure I was going to be under. As a student member, not only do you have to manage your full-time courses, but also take on the role of being the voice of the student body. There are many due dates you have to be aware of, and plan things accordingly. One piece of advice I can give is staying in touch with the previous Student Trustee. They will be able to guide you and provide you with suggestions to overcome this pressure. Consequently, prior to my election I wish I knew how to say ‘No.’ As

a student, sometimes it was hard to keep up with the work, clubs and organizations, a job, and the internships I was seeking. I often got many emails regarding different committees, different events, and tasks that others wanted me to be a part of, attend, and even complete. I always said yes, because I wasn't aware that I could say no. Towards the end of my term, I realized that by saying no, it did not make me less of a student leader. By saying no, I was better able to deal with the stressful nights, the long days, and accomplish many things asked of me without overworking myself. One thing to remember is at the end of the day, you can only do so much. Therefore, learning to say 'No' will only help you in the end. Being the Student Trustee was a lifetime experience that I would do again in a heartbeat.

Taylor Vitacco served as Student Trustee for Elgin Community College in Elgin, Illinois from 2020 to 2021. Taylor plans to transfer to Northern Illinois University to pursue a bachelor's degree in Human Development & Family Science.



Student Trustee Perspective – Luke Zakedis

During my term as Student Trustee, our board faced a vast number of unique challenges. On the state level, we faced the issue of a 10% budget reduction due to a reformulation of state budgets. At the local government level, we faced an uphill challenge in trying to win a local city planning commission vote. Within the college, a range of discussions were ongoing, spanning from staff cost of living adjustments (COLA), to renewing accreditation, all the way to a \$300 million construction project bond.

As student trustee, I had to learn on my feet, and not be afraid to jump into the discussion and ask questions, even when it seemed

overwhelming. I'd recommend to future student trustees the following advice. If you have a policy adjustment idea, study it in depth-first, and bring peer institution examples to the discussion if it comes up. The board's job is focusing on the big picture, not specifics, but sometimes a well-informed subtle nudge can go a long way. Make sure you're asking the right questions at board meetings, but at the same time don't feel too intimidated to speak; your voice represents the students' voice. Make sure you're attuned to the perspectives of your student constituencies, through classmates, clubs, college survey data, and in the student government. Their experiences and world views should shape your guiding principles on the board.

Know you're not alone, and that you can reach out to your peer trustees and other student trustees for guidance. Getting coffee with members of your board can help you mature into the role and can produce lifelong mentorships. Finally, it is important to recognize you individually have no executive authority, and your seat's authority comes purely with a majority board vote. Also recognize that, assuming you gain the respect of your peers, they will view your voice as an accurate embodiment of the students, and your vote will hold the most sway and influence as to how other trustees will vote.

Luke Zakedis served as Student Trustee of the Ohlone Community College District in Fremont, California from 2018-2019. Luke went on to complete a B.A. in Political Science at the University of California – Los Angeles in June of 2021.

Appendix 1: State By State Student Trustee & Community College Governance Table

State	# of Districts	# of Community Colleges	Local-Level Governance	Local-Level Governance Structure	Student Trustee (1 Per District)	State-Level Governance	State-Level Governance Structure	State-Level Entity	State-Level Jurisdiction	Student Trustee Per State
Alabama	1	24	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	9-Person Governing Board	Consolidated Board	Regulation	0
Alaska	1	3	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	11-Person Board of Regents	Consolidated Board	Governance	1
Arizona	10	10	Locally elected	5 to 9-Person District Governing Boards	0	Appointed	10-Person Board of Regents	Coordinating Board	Coordination	0
Arkansas	10	22	Locally elected	9-Person Board of Trustees	0	Appointed	10-Person Board of Governors	Coordinating Board	Coordination	0
California	73	116	Locally elected	6 to 10-Person Board of Trustees	73	Appointed	21-Member Board	Independent Board	Coordination	1
Colorado	1	13	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	11-Member State Board of Trustees	Independent Board	Coordination & Governance	1
Connecticut	1	12	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	15-Member State Board	Independent Board	Governance	2
Delaware	1	1	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	7-Member Board of Trustees	Governing Board	Governance	0
Florida	28	28	Appointed	9-Member Board of Trustees	0	Appointed	21-Member State Board	State Board of Ed. & Independent Board	Coordination & Regulation	0
Georgia	1	23	N/A	N/A	0	Locally Elected	23-Member State Board	Consolidated Board	Governance	0
Hawaii	1	10	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	11-Member State Board	Consolidated Board	Governance	1
Idaho	4	4	Locally elected	5-Member Board of Trustees	0	Appointed	8-Member State Board	State Board of Ed. & Consolidated Board	Regulation & Governance	0
Illinois	39	48	Locally elected	8-Member Board of Trustees	39	Appointed	11-Member State Board	Independent Board	Coordination	1
Indiana	1	14	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	15-Member State Board	Independent Board	Coordination	
Iowa	15	15	Locally Elected	5 to 9-Person Governing Boards	0	Appointed	9-Member Board of Trustees	State Board of Ed.	Coordination	0

Kansas	19	19	Locally Elected	6-Person Governing Board	0	Appointed	9-Member Board of Regents	Consolidated Board	Coordination	0
Kentucky	1	16	Appointed	7-Member Advisory Committee	16	Appointed and Locally Elected	14-Member State Board	Independent Board	Governance	2
Louisiana	1	13	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	15-Member State Board	Independent Board	Governance	2
Maine	1	8	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	13-Member State Board	Independent Board	Governance	1
Maryland	16	16	Appointed	7 to 15-Member Governing Boards	1	Appointed	12-Member Board of Trustees	Coordinating Board	Coordination	1
Massachusetts	20	20	Appointed	11-Member Board of Trustees	11	Appointed	11-Member Board of Trustees	Consolidated Board	Governance and Coordination	1
Michigan	28	28	Locally Elected	7-Member Board of Trustees	0	Locally Elected	28 Trustees Representatives	Consolidated Board	Coordination	0
Minnesota	1	31	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	15-Member Board of Trustees	Consolidated Board	Governance	3
Mississippi	5	15	Locally elected	15-Member Board of Trustees	0	Appointed	10-Member Board of Trustees	Independent Board	Coordination	0
Missouri	12	12	Locally Elected	6-10 Member Board of Trustees	0	Appointed	7-Member Board of Trustees	Coordinating Board	Coordination	0
Montana	16	16	Locally elected	5-7 Member board of Trustees	0	Appointed	7-Member Board of Regents	Consolidated Board	Governance	1
Nebraska	1	3	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	10-Member Board of Trustees	Coordinating Board	Governance and Coordination	3
Nevada	1	4	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	6-Member Board of Regents	Consolidated Board	Governance	0
New Hampshire	1	7	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed and Locally Elected	24-Member Committee	Independent Board	Governance	2
New Jersey	18	18	Appointed	11-Member Board of Trustees	18	Appointed	18-Member Council	Coordinating Board	Coordination	0
New Mexico	3	10	Locally Elected	7-Member Board of Regents	3	Appointed	7-Member Board	Coordinating Board	Coordination	0
New York	2	95	N/A	N/A	7	Appointed	16-Member Board (SUNY), 17-Member Board (CUNY)	Consolidated Board	Governance	0

North Carolina	1	58	Appointed	7-17 Member Board of Trustees	58	Appointed	18-Member Board	Independent Board	Governance	0
North Dakota	1	11	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	8-Member State Board	Consolidated Board	Governance	1
Ohio	1	23	Locally Elected	9-15 Member Board of Trustees	23	Appointed	23-Member State Board	Coordinating Board	Coordination	2
Oklahoma	1	12	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	7-Member Board of Trustees	Governing and Coordination Board	Governance	0
Oregon	17	17	Locally elected	7-Member Board of Trustees	17	Appointed	34-Member Board of Directors	Coordinating Board	Coordination	0
Pennsylvania	1	15	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	20-Member Board of Governors	Coordinating Board	Governance	3
Rhode Island	1	1	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	14-Member Board of Trustees	Consolidated Board	Governance	0
South Carolina	1	16	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	13-Member Board of Trustees	Independent Board	Governance	0
South Dakota	1	7	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	10-Member Board of Regents	Consolidated Board	Coordination	0
Tennessee	1	13	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	15-Member Board of Regents	Consolidated Board	Governance	0
Texas	50	50	Locally Elected	7-Member Board of Trustees	50	Appointed	9-Member Board of Trustees	Coordinating Board	Coordination	0
Utah	3	3	Appointed	12-Member Board of Trustees	3	Appointed	16-Member Board	Consolidated Board	Governance	2
Vermont	1	3	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	15-Member State Board	Consolidated Board	Governance	1
Virginia	1	23	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	15-Member State Board	Independent Board	Governance	0
Washington	1	34	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	9-Member State Board	Independent Board	Coordination	0
West Virginia	9	9	Appointed	15-Member Board of Governors	9	Appointed	11-Member State Board	Independent Board	Governance	0
Wisconsin	16	16	Appointed	9-Member Board of Trustees	0	Appointed	13-Member State Board	Independent Board	Governance	1
Wyoming	7	7	N/A	N/A	0	Appointed	7-Member Commission	Independent Board	Governance	0

Table compiled by Mr. Cole Neder, MPA graduate assistant to Dr. Nick Kachiroubas, School of Public Service, DePaul University. Cole completed his MPA in June 2021 and works for the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP).

About the Author

Dr. Nick Kachiroubas served as a Student Trustee from April 1998 to April 1999. In April 1999, at age 19, Nick was elected to the McHenry County College Board of Trustees, becoming the youngest Community College Trustee elected in the State of Illinois. He served a six-year term as an elected member of the board through April of 2005 when he was designated Trustee Emeritus. Nick is a regular presenter at the Student Trustees Workshop of the Community College League of California. He had served as the advisor for the Illinois Community College Board's Student Advisory Committee from 2001 to 2014. In 2002, Dr. Kachiroubas created the first-ever Statewide Student Leadership Institute to help train student trustees to be effective leaders on their boards. In April 2009, Dr. Kachiroubas was first elected City Clerk of his hometown Crystal Lake, Illinois and has subsequently been re-elected to his fourth term in 2021. In 2017, Dr. Kachiroubas was awarded a Fulbright Teaching Award where he taught leadership to individuals in the public sector in Panama in coordination with the Universidad Santa Maria La Antigua (USMA) and the Universidad Tecnologica de Panama (UTP).

Dr. Kachiroubas is a Teaching Professor and Chair of the Masters in Public Administration (MPA) program at DePaul University in the School of Public Service located in Chicago, Illinois. Kachiroubas holds a Ph.D. in Leadership for the Advancement of Learning and Service from Cardinal Stritch University, an M.A. in Organizational Leadership from Lewis University, and a B.A. in history from the University of Illinois at Springfield, and an A.S. from McHenry County College. In his free time, Dr. Kachiroubas enjoys sailing, traveling, and volunteering in his community.



