

AGB CONSULTING

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Monitoring the Campus Climate: Diversity and Inclusion and the Role of Boards

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Governing Board Forum
Columbia, Missouri
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Goals

- Insight into the role board members play in improving campus climate
- Review approaches toward improvements in campus climate

Significance to Boards

- Board's role in supporting institutional mission
- Board's role in supporting President
- Board's ultimate accountability for:
 - Ensuring public trust (incl. social and moral imperatives)
 - Institutional quality
 - Student, faculty, and staff well-being
 - Financial well-being
 - Risk management imperative
 - Institutional reputation

Exercise: **Difficult Conversations**

- Why is it difficult to have conversations about diversity, inclusion and civility?
- Why is it difficult for Boards to have such conversations?

The Diversity Conversation is an Act of Stewardship

“ The stewardship responsibility assigned to boards demands that they care deeply about the institution on whose behalf they serve...Caring about our institution enough so that we take on the challenge of diversity conversation is a leadership calling to which we must respond.”

Larry Roper, Trustee
Heidelberg University and
Oregon State University Professor

Campus Climate

Campus climate describes the dynamic relationship between campus participants and the campus environment; this includes the ability to understand, measure and/or document the influence of attitudes, behaviors, policies, procedures, structures, and other variables on participants' feelings, perceptions, experiences and outcomes.

Climate is not the same as culture.

Culture

...is a pattern of responses discovered, developed, or invented during the group's history of handling problems which arise from interactions among its members, and between them and their environment.

- These responses are considered the correct way to perceive, feel, think, and act, and are passed on to the new members through immersion and teaching.
- Culture determines what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, workable or unworkable.
- Culture trumps structure and strategy.

Culture (cont.)

“Culture is a system of informal, unwritten, yet powerful norms derived from shared Values that influence behavior”

—David A. Nadler, *Building Better Board Value*

“Culture is what people do when no one is looking”

—Herb Kelleher, *Former CEO, Southwest Airlines*

Climate vs. Culture

*While climate is not the same as culture....
culture creates climate.*

Campus Climate

- can be measured
- is subjective
- is best understood through measuring collective experiences
- is critical for understanding how people are likely to react
- gives reports on impact (demands of the environment as perceived by those who inhabit it)

Why Climate Matters

- Role in attracting and retaining students
- Role in recruitment and retention of faculty and staff
- Enhances diversity benefits
- Enhances well-being and thriving – positive productivity
- Produces sense of community and deeper engagement in campus life
- Provides concrete evidence of institutional progress and success
- Allows students to model the respectful environment sought by society and enables them to create the positive world in which they want to live

Guidance and Counsel for Boards

(to be issued Fall 2016)

AGB – Draft Statement Guiding Principles

- Governing boards serve as trusted stewards for the institution or system that they serve. Their legal responsibilities as fiduciaries require them to protect and preserve the institutional assets entrusted to their care consistent with their mission and values and the dictates of law.
- Boards have:
 - A fiduciary duty of care – the duty to act in good faith and with diligence and care, and to be fully engaged; and
 - A fiduciary duty of obedience – the duty to ensure that the institution acts in compliance with its mission and applicable law.

Governance Frames for Considering the Board's Role

GOVERNANCE AS LEADERSHIP

- **Fiduciary** ...where boards are concerned primarily with the stewardship of tangible assets.
- **Strategic** ...where boards develop strategy with management to set the organization's priorities and course, and to deploy resources accordingly.
- **Generative** ...where boards, along with executives, frame problems and make sense of ambiguous situations – which in turn shapes the organization's strategies, plans, and decisions.

Chait, Richard. Gremlins of Governance. *Trusteeship*, AGB Magazine. July/August 2009.

Governance as Leadership

	GENERATIVE	STRATEGIC	FIDUCIARY
Board's purpose	Source of leadership	Strategic partnership w/management	Stewardship of tangible assets
Chief role	Sense maker	Strategist	Steward
Core work	Find and frame challenges, reconcile values and choices	Scan environment, shape strategy, create comparative advantage	Set mission, oversee operations, budget resources, ensure compliance
Value added	Insight	Foresight	Oversight

Consequential Boards

...*Determining What Matters Most*

If you are a Consequential Board, is
Campus Climate—*diversity and inclusion*—
an issue of great consequence?

How Boards Can Impact Campus Climate

Climate can be impacted by:

- Clarifying the relationship to institutional goals, missions and values
- Committing to firm goals and measuring progress
- Articulating rules of engagement
- Assigning ownership and responsibility
- Celebrating successes and acknowledging shortfalls
- Creating opportunities for community members to collaborate

Exercise:

Personally, how equipped do you feel to navigate issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as a board member?

An Invitation to a Personal Journey to Inclusion:

1. **Know Self First** – Who am I? What do I stand for? What makes me “me”?
2. **Value Self** – What are my unique gifts? Who is my best self?
3. **Acknowledge Your Prejudices** – In what ways do I exclude? How do I contribute to intolerance? What are my blind spots?
4. **Open Self to Change** – What are my opportunities to grow? ...to be my best self?
5. **Learn About Others** – How are other individuals/groups different from me? How are they the same?
6. **Value Differences** – How do differences enhance who I am and can become? What can I learn from differences?
7. **Include Others** – Expand your circle to optimize diversity.
8. **Embrace Personal Growth** – Constantly ask yourself, where am I now? Am I growing in my journey to be more inclusive? What changes do I need to make?

The Board's Journey

AGB Draft Statement scheduled for release Fall 2016 suggests the Board's course of action as:

- Understand
- Prepare
- Listen
- Respond
- Learn
- Lead
- Teach
- Share
- Assess

Information Needed to Govern

The Board's assessment of how the institution is doing must go beyond reporting on enrollment and numbers. The inquiry should test if the efforts are:

Intentional
Pervasive
Visible

Board Inquiries Must Test If the Effort Is:

- **Intentional**

Beyond integration, i.e., mixing of races, how do we ensure that homogenous and diverse populations benefit from each other not just co-exist.

- **Pervasive**

The responsibility is shared among students, staff, faculty and administration. Examine the places most critical to learning – the classroom.

- **Visible**

Leadership matters — it influences culture and ultimately the climate.

Questions Board Should Ask to Ascertain Campus Climate

Are Our Diversity Initiatives and Investments Tethered to Clearly Articulate Institutional Goals?

Whether the goal is to increase campus diversity, raise high school graduation rates in the surrounding community, increase interest in science and medicine among underrepresented minority undergraduate students, or cultivate a pipeline of women and minority faculty leaders, board members must inquire into the overarching strategy of diversity interventions.

What Resources Have Been Applied and What Has Been the Return on Investment?

- Are diversity goals supported with adequate staffing and other resources?
- Are the funding streams for essential programs sustainable?
- Returns need not be financial in nature but also can be dividends of social and community benefit, or institutional trust and reputation.

Are We Applying Metrics for Success Beyond Compositional Diversity?

A focus on campus composition can perpetuate the notion that campus diversity is the institution's end goal. More salient questions to evaluate the success of diversity initiatives include:

- How many employees across different subpopulations and identity groups rate their managers as treating them fairly and inclusively?
- Is faculty engagement, satisfaction, and productivity consistent across all subpopulations and identity groups?
- Does the institution have mechanisms for cultivating a climate of fairness that combats favoritism and tokenism?

Are We Applying Metrics for Success Beyond Compositional Diversity? (Cont.)

- Is the institution's educational approach working equally for students across all subpopulations and identified groups?
- Is the institution graduating students with the skillsets needed to succeed in a pluralistic society?
- Do potential new senior-executive hires demonstrate a capacity and aptitude for diversity and inclusion? In addition to questions about prior experience, qualifications, and vision, boards can make it a priority to identify senior leaders with training on unconscious bias and diversity.

Have We Established Civility as A Rule of Engagement?

- What constitutes civil behavior?
- Are we contributing to a general sense of civility on our campus?
- Are we willing to confront those who engage in acts of disrespect and hostility?
- Does the Board set a good example of civil behavior in deliberations and decisions?
- Has the Board been an exemplar demonstrating construction dialogue and respectful debate in addressing divisive issues?

Exercise

During the current school year, to what extent have events or activities offered at your institutions emphasized perspectives on societal differences (economic, ethnic, political, religious, etc.)?

Campus Climate (Environmental) Scanning by Board Members

On your visits to the campuses, notice:

- What messages are communicated?
- How might the created climate influence behavior?
- What beliefs/attitudes toward particular identity groups are communicated by the environment?
- What messages of encouragement and/or discouragement are observable? Inclusion/exclusion?
- What messages does it communicate about equity or inequity — consider whether "embedded benefits" may still exist on campus?

Board To-do List

- Lean-In, Listen, Learn, and Observe;
- Articulate policy and expectations;
- Establish goals and measure progress;
- Engage in dialogue;
- Ask questions—see Diversity Questions for Boards;
- Openly acknowledge and address challenges associated with pursuing climate enhancement;
- Communicate board support for a transparent process, regardless of the outcomes; and
- Assess the Board, then if needed adopts its own enhancement plan with goals to include composition and governance structure, process and policies

- *AGB's Policies, Practices, and Composition of Governing and Foundation Boards (2016)*

Diverse Students Deserve Diverse Boards

	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC
Board – Private	8.3	2.4
Board – Public	13.6	5.8
Students	14.7	15.8

The Fielding Board Model

Twice a year, a diverse Board of twenty-two (22) engage in exercises to enhance their diversity because they believe it affects their competencies as trustees. As a result, the Board:

Leads
Establishes Culture of Diversity and Inclusion
Influences Campus Climate
Enhances Board Effectiveness

Wisconsin Pioneering Model as Reported in 2009

- Strong, clear board and presidential leadership.
- Board called for long range diversity plan; the comprehensive plan addressed student, staff and the K-12 pipeline issue.
- 1998 adopted a second ten-year plan operationalizing commitment to diversify. A mid-point course correction was implemented after assessment revealed shortcomings.
- Assessment of educational outcomes, multi-campus climate appraisal project, and diversity award program were established.
- Senior executive performance evaluations and salary adjustments were tied to goals.
- An externally-focused Diversity Council was established to provide best practice insights.

Chancellor Blank—responding to campus unrest

March 2016 Letter to the Community (continued)

- Noted the need to produce graduates who are effective in diverse environment and announced the pilot of a cultural competency program and community-building activities starting with incoming freshman Fall 2016.
- Acceleration of hiring additional student support counselors and immediate hiring of two positions dedicated to diversity and climate mental health issues.
- Plan to improve the campus cultural center model after funding students' visits to Big Ten to formulate recommendations.

Chancellor Blank—responding to campus unrest

March 2016 Letter to the Community (continued)

- Post-Spring Break university-wide session to share information on processes for reporting incidents and student conduct.
- Called for the entire community to be engaged to improve campus climate ... Solicited proposals which, if selected, would be funded to test scale in the next academic year.
- Committed to increase the urgency in addressing issues of campus safety.

Exercise:

- What are the impediments to implementing the strategies discussed today?
- What are some ideas to mitigate impediments?

References

- **Why Board's Should Care About Campus Unrest**; AGB Blog, Larry Roper, Trustee, Heidelberg University and Professor, Oregon State University (January 11, 2016)
- **Diversity Questions for Boards**; AGB Blog, Marc Nivet, Chief Diversity Officer, Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) (June 5, 2014)
- **Inclusion Starts with I: *Eight Steps to Inclusion: The Personal Journey***, Mary Francis Winters, CEO, The Winters Group, Inc., Renaissance Books 2003
- **Six (6) Management Practices for Affecting Workplace Climate**, Training Magazine, Maggie Walsh, Ph.D., 2012
- **AGB Webinars: Leadership for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** (January 20, 2016)
- **We Must Build a Culture of Civility on Campus, and Setting the Diversity Agenda, Achieving Goals**, Kevin P. Reilly, Trusteeship Magazine (Spring 2011, Fall 2009)
- **Creating Diverse Communities**, Brian Rosenberg, President, Macalester College, Trusteeship Magazine, Winter 2016

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