



GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE FOR **STUDENT SUCCESS**

## COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

July 2011

Prepared by the Association of Community College Trustees

Board Leadership Services

Washington, DC





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## OVERVIEW OF SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

We want to thank trustees, presidents, and professional board support staff for their support and willingness to participate in this effort to gather self-reported data on the boards of trustees. All governing board members of the Texas community and technical colleges were afforded the opportunity to complete the comprehensive self-assessment survey. The response to this request was outstanding, with 18 community and technical colleges actively participating.

This report provides an overall assessment of the Board as one unit and reinforces the role and responsibilities of the Board. It also provides a profile of each trustee without disclosing the identity, or attribution associated with, any individual trustee. A comparison of these sets of data provides a clearer picture of where there is general consensus and where there is divergence among individual trustees from the Board's overall average response.

Some stylistic changes were made to the comments submitted in an effort to provide clarity, but content was not altered.

### Review at Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS)

This report was prepared by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) to encourage reflection and assessment and to foster learning during the GISS. It is a tool for both self-assessment and group-assessment, and it is intended to inform constructive dialogue on the Board's strengths, weaknesses, and areas requiring greater attention. By conducting a self-assessment, the Board helps set standards, clarifies expectations, and serves as an example of the ongoing commitment to accountability needed to ensure student success. The trustees attending the GISS will have an opportunity to discuss the quantitative and qualitative data and the findings as part of the governing board assessment process.

### Discussion with full Board of Trustees

We encourage all boards to use this report as a tool to facilitate group discussion, acknowledge the effectiveness of the Board, address concerns before they become bigger issues, and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Board. We hope that the findings will facilitate open and frank discussion and, in turn, enhance the Board/CEO and trustee-to-trustee relationships. The goal is to strengthen the Board's unique leadership role and partnership with the president. To benefit fully from the self-assessment process, and as a follow-up to the GISS, we encourage all boards and the president to set aside time to discuss the report as a group and reach a consensus on a plan of action and next steps. Should you have any questions, please reach out to Dr. Narcisa Polonio at [npolonio@acct.org](mailto:npolonio@acct.org), 202-276-1983 or Pat Ma at [pma@acct.org](mailto:pma@acct.org), 202-384-5819.

### College of the Mainland Board Profile:

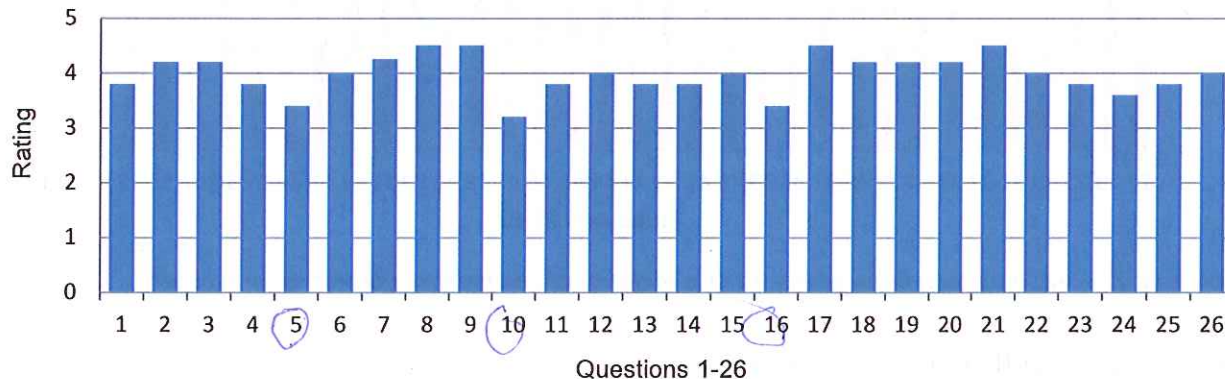
- 1) The Board has seven board members. Five board members participated in the assessment.
- 2) The average number of years of service for **all** trustee respondents is 1.73 years.
- 3) The number of years of service for each trustee respondent is: 0.2, 1, and 4 years.
- 4) The average number of hours per month that **all** trustee respondents spend on board work is 38.67 hours.
- 5) The number of hours per month that each trustee respondent spends on board work is: 6, 30, and 80 hours.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Board Self-Assessment for the Governance Institute for Student Success evaluates the readiness of the Board of Trustees to undertake leadership in promoting student success. The first 26 questions of the assessment focus on **overall board health**, including Effective Leadership: Roles and Responsibilities (questions 1-9); The Right Chemistry: Board/President/Chancellor Relationships (questions 10-17); and Leading By Example: Productivity and Consistency (questions 18-26). Respondents evaluate these questions on a 5-point rating scale, with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree." "Don't Know" responses are not included in average ratings.

**OVERALL AVERAGES FOR  
BOARD LEADERSHIP, RELATIONSHIPS, PRODUCTIVITY AND CONSISTENCY  
CATEGORIES (5-POINT SCALE CATEGORIES )**



*Questions 1 – 26: only questions where all or a majority of trustees responded were included.*

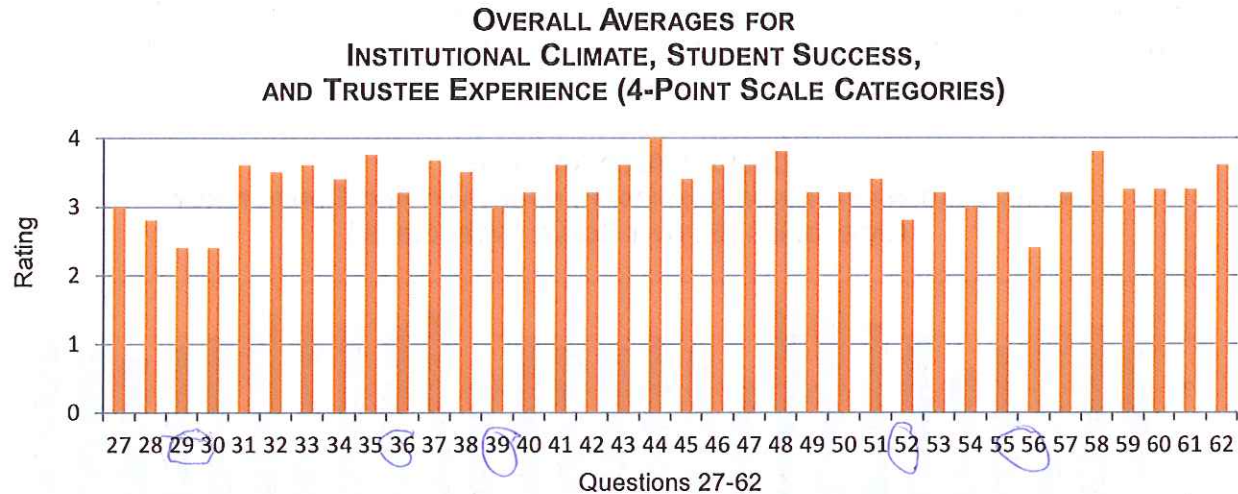
### HIGHEST RATED INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

Q 8.	The Board has conducted a Board self-assessment within the last two years.	4.50
Q 9.	The Board regularly participates in professional development, such as state and national trainings.	4.50
Q 17.	The Board encourages the professional growth of the President/Chancellor through annual evaluation, written feedback, and guidance on performance.	4.50
Q 21.	The Board periodically reviews and evaluates its policies and procedures.	4.50

### LOWEST RATED INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

Q 10.	Board members treat one another with respect, and a climate of mutual trust exists.	3.20
Q 5.	The Board spends sufficient time planning and providing clear priorities for the President/Chancellor and the College.	3.40
Q 16.	The Chair, Board members, and the President/Chancellor have a positive cooperative relationship with mutual trust and respect.	3.40

The second half of the Board Self-Assessment focuses on **institutional and trustee readiness**, including Institutional Climate (questions 27-31); Institutional Readiness and Effectiveness for Student Success (questions 32-45) and Trustee Preparation & Satisfaction (questions 46-62). These questions have a 4-point rating scale with response categories, with "1" representing "never considered/implemented/not at all prepared/very dissatisfied" and "4" representing "always considered/fully implemented/prepared/very satisfied." "Don't Know" responses are not included in average ratings.



*Questions 27 – 62: only questions where all or a majority of trustees responded were included.*

#### HIGHEST RATED INDIVIDUAL QUESTION

Q 44.	Decisions about budget allocations are based on evidence of program effectiveness and linked to plans to increase rates of student success.	4.00
Q 48.	The amount of work expected of you	3.80
Q 58.	Your overall satisfaction serving as a board member	3.80

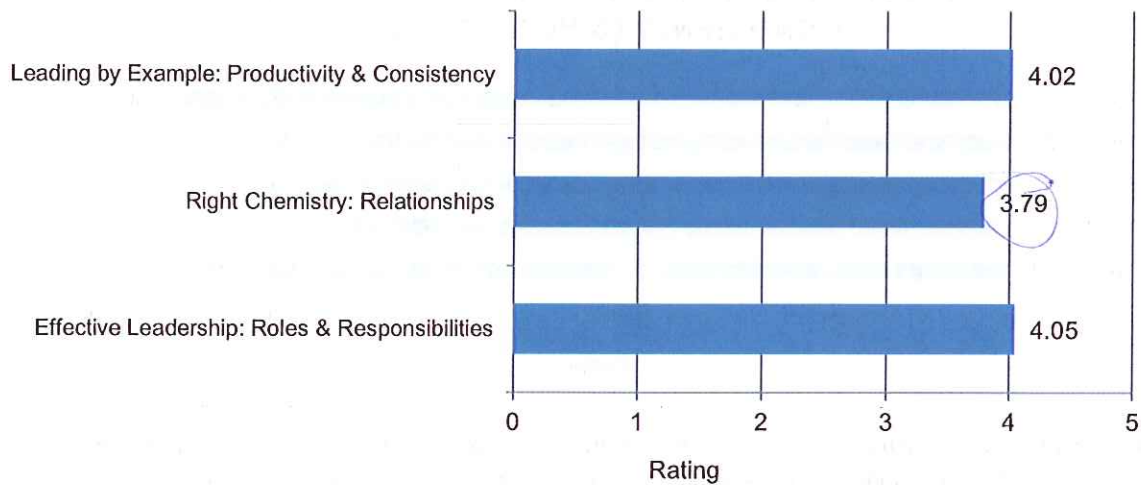
#### LOWEST RATED INDIVIDUAL QUESTION

Q 29.	Favorable publicity and interest in the college from the media.	2.40
Q 30.	Community support and engagement.	2.40
Q 56.	Identifying and acquiring new sources of funding (fundraising, corporate partnerships, earmarks, etc.)	2.40

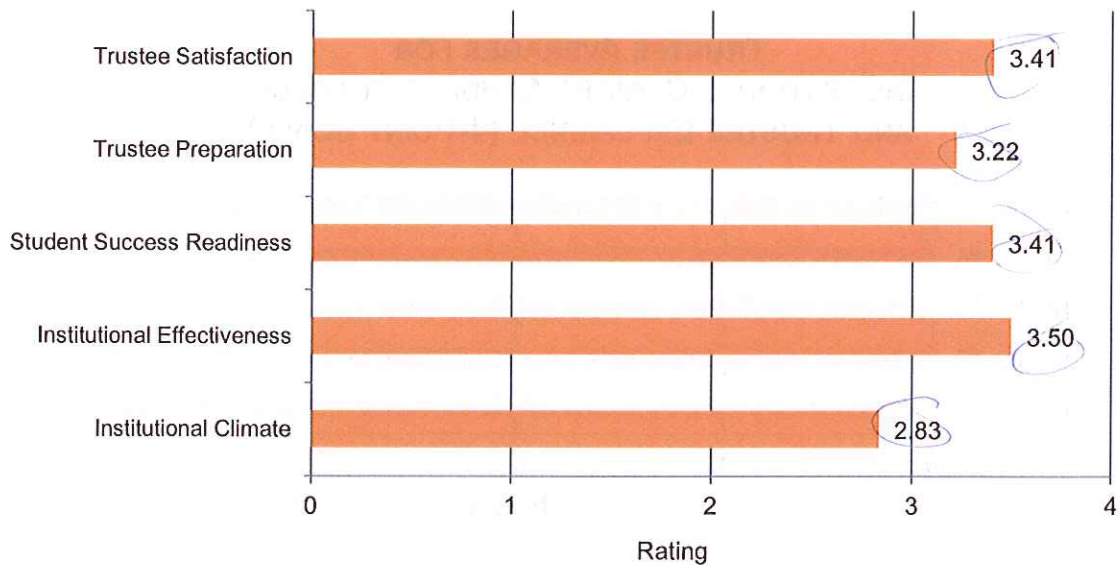
## CATEGORY AVERAGES

This section shows the overall averages for the eight categories of the Board Self-Assessment. "Don't Know" responses are not included.

### 5-POINT SCALE CATEGORY AVERAGES



### 4-POINT SCALE CATEGORY AVERAGES





## INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE AVERAGE RATINGS

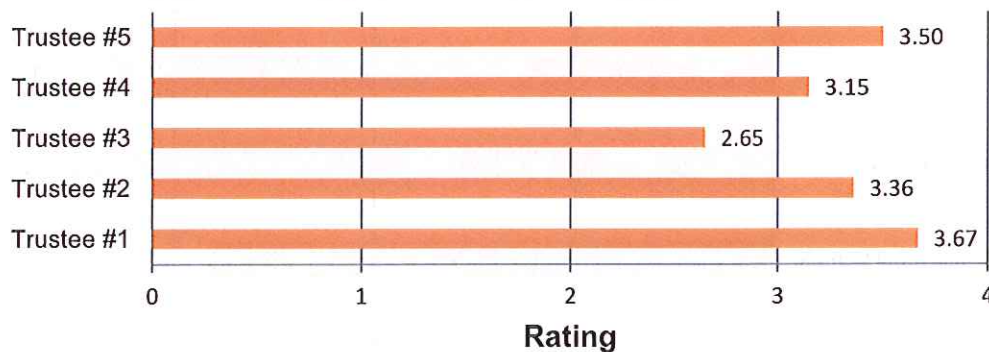
Average individual trustee ratings above 3.0 reflect a generally healthy board. For questions with a 5-point rating scale, the difference between the highest average score (4.50) and lowest (3.69) is 0.81, out of a possible maximum difference of 4.0. This difference of 0.81 indicates overall consensus, with slight divergence of opinions among board members.

### TRUSTEE AVERAGES FOR BOARD LEADERSHIP, RELATIONSHIPS, PRODUCTIVITY AND CONSISTENCY (5-POINT SCALE)



For questions with a 4-point rating scale, the difference between the highest average score (3.67) and lowest (2.65) is 1.02, out of a possible maximum of 3.0. This difference of 1.02 also indicates general consensus, with some divergence of opinions among board members.

### TRUSTEE AVERAGES FOR INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE, STUDENT SUCCESS, AND TRUSTEE EXPERIENCE (4-POINT SCALE)





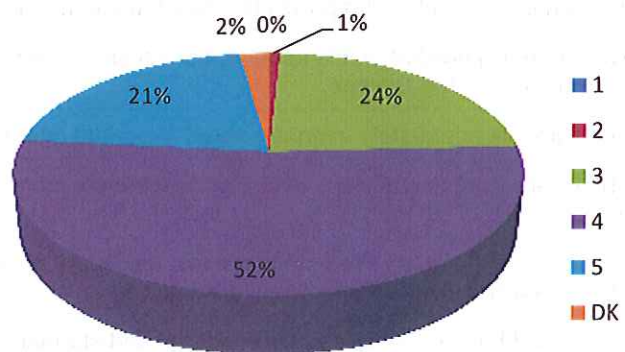
## BREAKDOWN OF RESPONSES BY PERCENTAGES

There were 62 survey questions scored by five board members for a total of 310 individual responses. For questions 1-26, 73% of all responses were a 4 or 5, indicating a high level of satisfaction and agreement among board members. For questions 27-62, 83% of all responses were a 3 or 4, indicating a high level of satisfaction and agreement among board members

### Responses by Percentage

21% of responses had a rating of 5  
 52% of responses had a rating of 4  
 24% of responses had a rating of 3  
 1% of responses had a rating of 2  
 0% of responses had a rating of 1  
 2% of responses were "Don't Know"

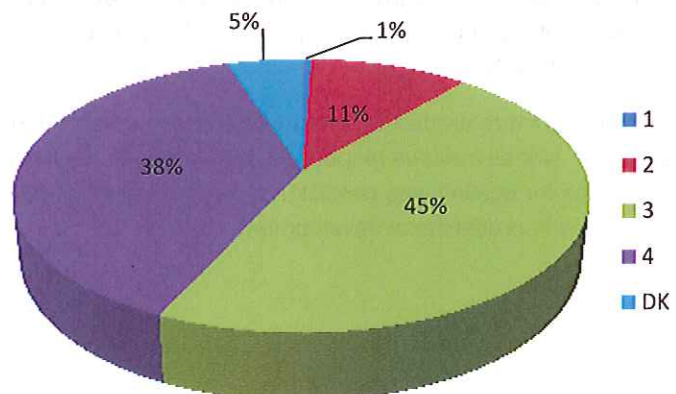
**RESPONSE DISTRIBUTION FOR  
 BOARD LEADERSHIP, RELATIONSHIPS,  
 PRODUCTIVITY & CONSISTENCY, 5-POINT SCALE**



### Responses by Percentage

38% of responses had a rating of 4  
 45% of responses had a rating of 3  
 11% of responses had a rating of 2  
 1% of responses had a rating of 1  
 5% of responses were "Don't Know"

**RESPONSE DISTRIBUTION FOR  
 INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE, STUDENT SUCCESS,  
 & TRUSTEE EXPERIENCE, 4-POINT SCALE**



## RESULTS BY TOPIC

I. Effective Leadership: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Board		AVG
<b>To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your Board's performance in these key functional areas?</b> <b>Please use the following scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree</b>		
1. The Board continuously demonstrates that it adheres to its roles and responsibilities in accomplishing its duties.		3.80
2. An examination of the Board's work provides clear evidence that the Board understands that its primary function is to establish the policies by which the community college is administered.		4.20
3. The Board is knowledgeable about major social and economic trends and issues that affect the community and the College.		4.20
4. The Board is adequately informed about important internal issues facing the College.		3.80
5. The Board spends sufficient time planning and providing clear priorities for the President/Chancellor and the College.		3.40
6. Before adopting policy recommendations, the Board ensures it has adequate information and data, and it allows sufficient time for study and discussion.		4.00
7. The Board has and adheres to procedures and standards for dealing with actual or potential conflicts of interest.		4.25
8. The Board has conducted a Board self-assessment within the last two years.		4.50
9. The Board regularly participates in professional development, such as state and national trainings.		4.50

### Findings:

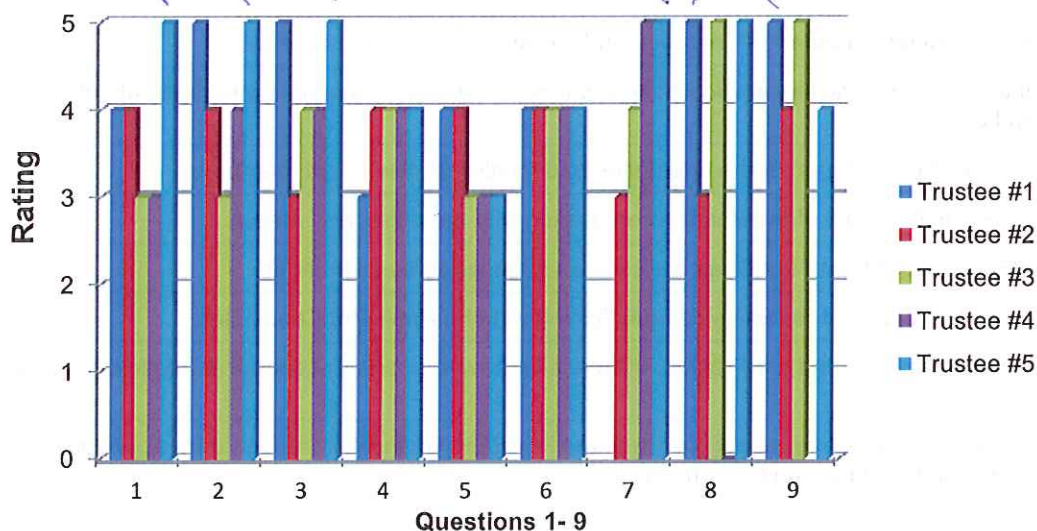
All trustees agree that there is sufficient time, information, and data to plan and discuss policy recommendations. Most trustees agree that the Board adheres to and understands its responsibilities which focus on policy-making, and feel the Board is knowledgeable about key College issues and major social and economic trends affecting the College.

Opinions are more divided on whether the Board spends enough time planning to provide clear priorities to the President. Not all trustees responded, but among those that did, there is agreement that the Board adheres to procedures for dealing with conflict, has conducted a self-assessment in the past two years, and regularly participates in professional development.

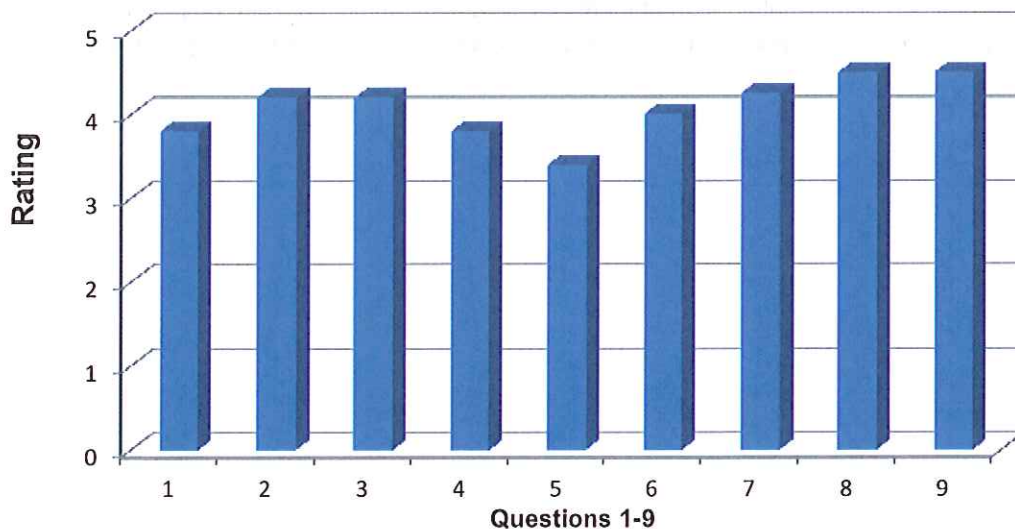




**EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:  
BOARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES  
INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES**



**EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:  
BOARD ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES  
AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS**







II. The Right Chemistry: Board/Trustee/Chair/President/Chancellor Relationship

AVG

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your Board's performance in these key functional areas?  
Please use the following scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

10. Board members treat one another with respect, and a climate of mutual trust exists.	3.20
11. The Chair of the Board effectively handles disagreements or divisions among members about policies, programs, and the budget.	3.80
12. The Board has good procedures for the orientation and training of new board members.	4.00
13. The Chair serves as the voice of the Board when dealing with the public and media.	3.80
14. The roles and responsibilities of the Chair are clear and supported by all trustees.	3.80
15. The Board maintains open and effective communication with the President/Chancellor.	4.00
16. The Chair, Board members, and the President/Chancellor have a positive cooperative relationship with mutual trust and respect.	3.40
17. The Board encourages the professional growth of the President/Chancellor through annual evaluation, written feedback, and guidance on performance.	4.50

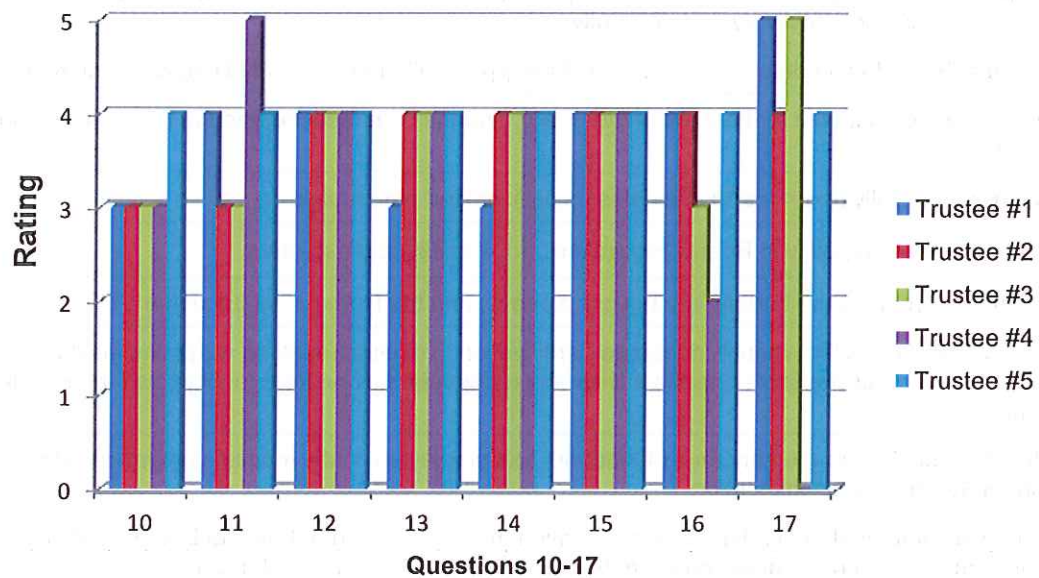
**Findings:**

All trustees agree that there are good procedures for orientation and training of new board members, and most trustees agree that the Board encourages the President's professional growth through formal Board feedback and guidance. The majority of trustees also concur that the Chair has a clear role and responsibilities, which include effectively handling disagreements and serving as the voice of the Board with the public and media.

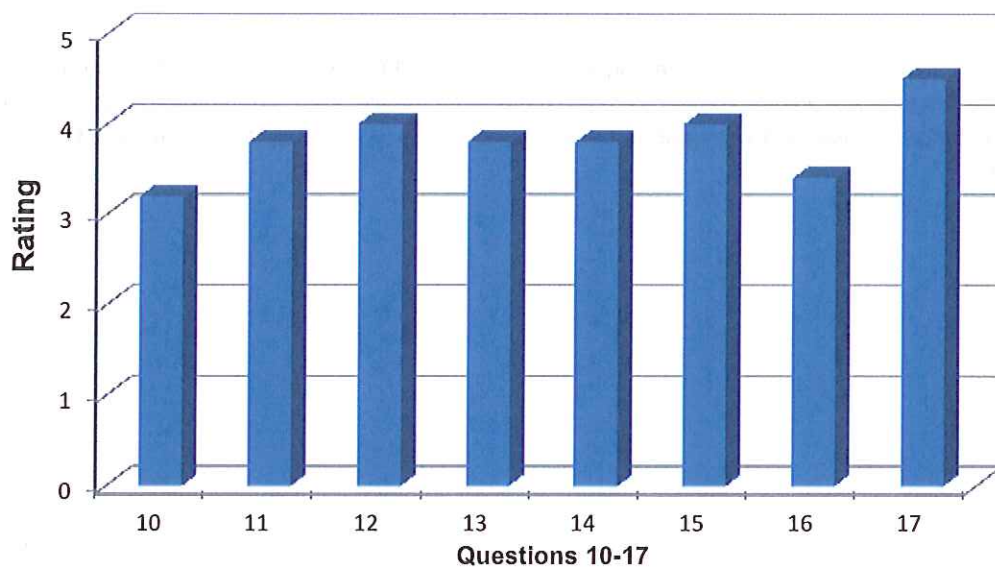
By contrast, most trustees only somewhat agree that there is a climate of mutual trust and respect among Board members, and opinions are more varied on whether, the Chair, Board, and President have a positive relationship.



**RIGHT CHEMISTRY: RELATIONSHIPS  
INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES**



**RIGHT CHEMISTRY: RELATIONSHIPS  
AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS**





**III. Leading by Example: Being Productive and Consistent****AVG**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your Board's performance in these key functional areas?**  
**Please use the following scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree**

18. Board members are prepared for Board meetings, and meetings are conducted in such a manner that the purposes are achieved effectively and efficiently.	<b>4.20</b>
19. The Board adheres to a code of ethics and avoids any perception of a potential conflict of interest.	<b>4.20</b>
20. Board agendas are relevant to the work of the Board, and they are focused enough to use the Board's time efficiently.	<b>4.20</b>
21. The Board periodically reviews and evaluates its policies and procedures.	<b>4.50</b>
22. The Board focuses on policy in Board discussions, not administrative matters.	<b>4.00</b>
23. The Board understands the budget, the budget process, and the financial health of the College.	<b>3.80</b>
24. The Board has policies that require adequate participation in decision-making within the institution and, through the President/Chancellor, seeks advice and recommendations from faculty, staff, and students in developing policies.	<b>3.60</b>
25. The Board is sensitive to the concerns of students and employees while maintaining impartiality and support for the President/Chancellor.	<b>3.80</b>
26. The Board accommodates the differences of opinion that arise during debates of issues, and once a decision is made, Board members cease debate and uphold the decision of the Board.	<b>4.00</b>

**Findings:**

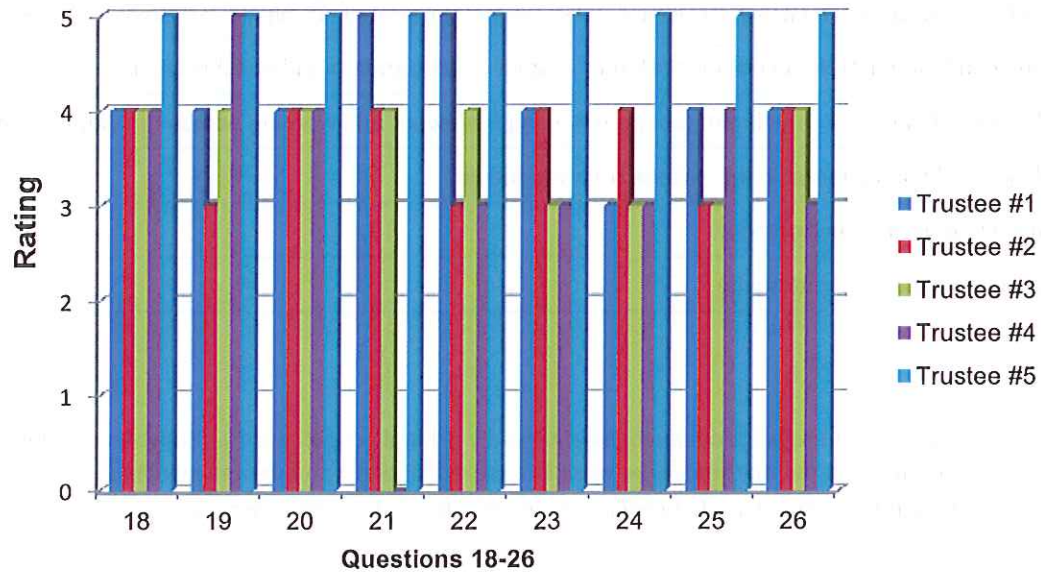
Trustees are in strongest agreement that the Board members are prepared for meetings, which are effective, efficient, and have relevant agendas. They also concur that the Board adheres to a code of ethics, avoiding potential conflicts of interests, and most feel the Board periodically reviews and evaluates its policies and procedures.

There are more varied views among trustees on whether the Board understands the College's budget and financial health; has policies to solicit advice and recommendations from faculty, staff, and students when developing policies; and balances sensitivity to student and employees' concerns with maintaining impartiality and support for the President.

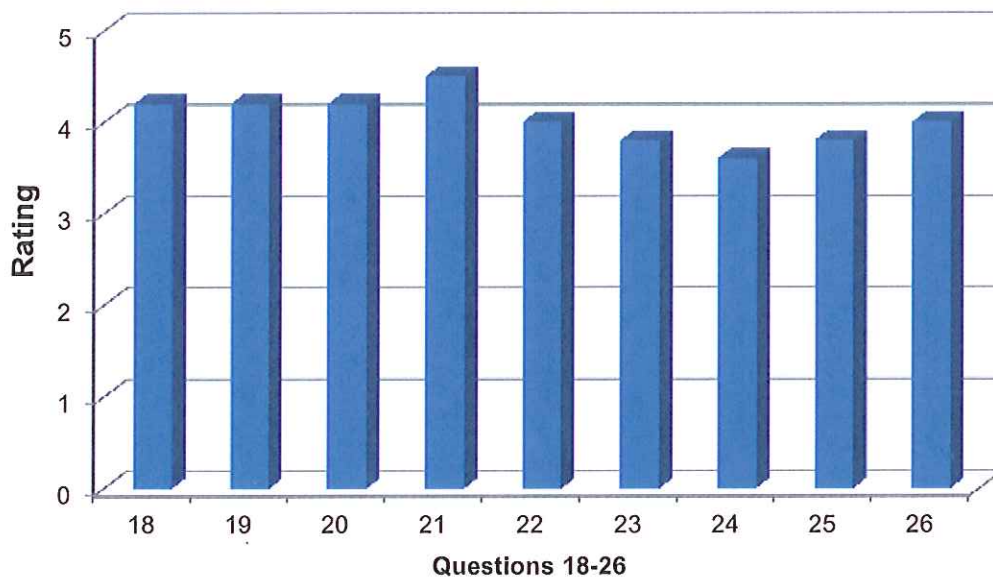




LEADING BY EXAMPLE: PRODUCTIVITY & CONSISTENCY  
INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES



LEADING BY EXAMPLE: PRODUCTIVITY & CONSISTENCY  
AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS





IV. Big Picture Focus: Institutional Climate

AVG

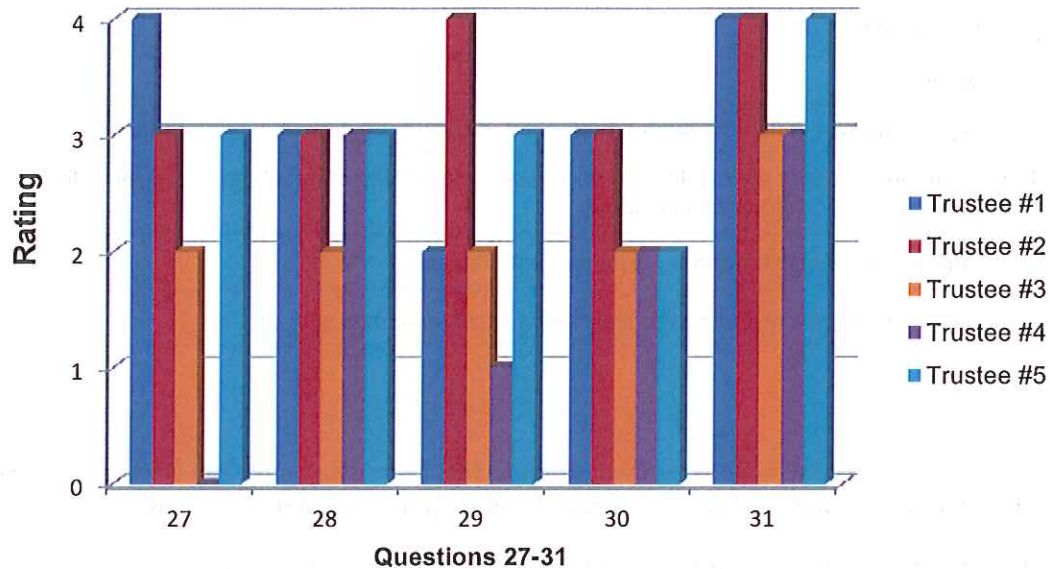
Over the last two years, to what degree has your Board considered the following when assessing institutional climate?  
Please use the following scale: 1 = never considered; 2 = sometimes considered; 3 = often considered; 4 = always considered

27. Good faculty and staff morale as demonstrated by a spirit of cooperation and collaboration	3.00
28. Good relations with internal constituent groups reflecting teamwork and working across functional areas	2.80
29. Favorable publicity and interest in the college from the media.	2.40
30. Community support and engagement.	2.40
31. Fostering student success and equity.	3.60

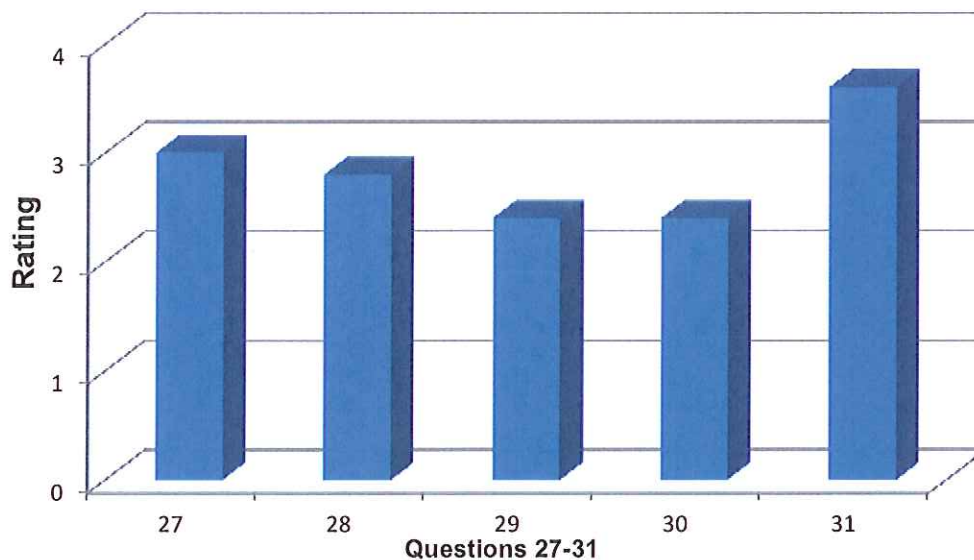
**Findings:**

Trustees all report that fostering student success and equity is highly considered when assessing institutional climate. Views are more varied on the degree to which good relations with internal constituents, community support and engagement, and favorable publicity and media interest are considered.

**BIG PICTURE FOCUS: INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE  
INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES**



**BIG PICTURE FOCUS: INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE  
AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS**







V. Institutional Readiness and Effectiveness for Student Success

AVG

Over the last two years, to what degree has your Board considered the following indicators when assessing institutional effectiveness?

Please use the following scale: 1 = never considered; 2 = sometimes considered; 3 = often considered; 4 = always considered

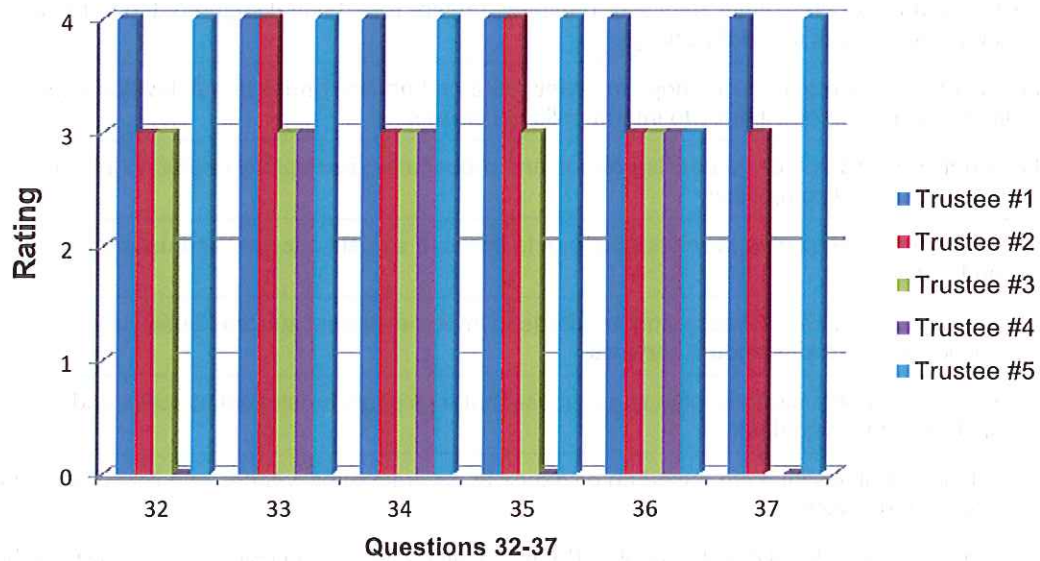
32. Academic quality and program review	3.50
33. Increasing enrollment size	3.60
34. Review of data on performance indicators such as retention, persistence, transfer, and graduation rates	3.40
35. Disaggregated longitudinal student cohort data on successful completion of developmental (remedial) education courses and other performance indicators	3.75
36. Student data on completion and placement by occupational programs	3.20
37. Data on the effectiveness of customized and/or short-term workforce training	3.67

Findings:

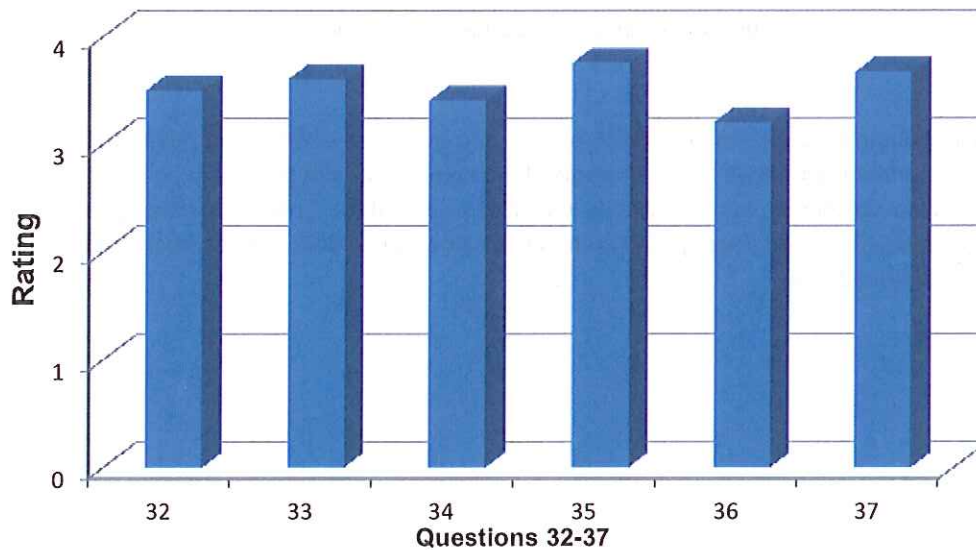
When assessing institutional effectiveness, all trustees report that increasing enrollment size, data on retention, persistence, transfer, and graduation rates, and occupational program student data are highly considered.

Of the reporting trustees, academic quality and program review, disaggregated longitudinal student cohort data on successful completion of developmental education, and academic quality and program review are other indicators to assess institutional effectiveness.

### INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES



### INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS



**V. Institutional Readiness and Effectiveness for Student Success****AVG****To what extent has your college and your board implemented the following practices?****Please use the following scale: 1= never implemented; 2 = sometimes implemented; 3 = often implemented, 4= fully implemented**

38. The Board expects, and the President/Chancellor provides, regular reports on disaggregated student outcomes and uses the results to modify policy.	<b>3.50</b>
39. The Board holds retreats or regular workshops to review data and obtains professional development about building a culture of evidence and inquiry to inform policy decisions.	<b>3.00</b>
40. The Board routinely reviews and evaluates its policies and procedures, particularly related to improving student equity, success, and completion.	<b>3.20</b>
41. The College routinely evaluates effectiveness of efforts to improve student success and uses the results to inform policy and practice.	<b>3.60</b>
42. There is alignment and extensive collaboration on efforts to improve student success between academic/instructional affairs and student services.	<b>3.20</b>
43. The College has established a strategic planning process that sets goals for student success and measures goal attainment using data.	<b>3.60</b>
44. Decisions about budget allocations are based on evidence of program effectiveness and linked to plans to increase rates of student success.	<b>4.00</b>
45. The College provides professional development to Board, faculty, and staff on using data and research to improve programs and services.	<b>3.40</b>

Sources: \*\* Byron N. McClenney and Kay M. McClenney: *Questions from Achieving the Dream--Institutional Readiness Assessment*, 2009

**Comments:**

- The college uses data to ensure and promote student academic success.

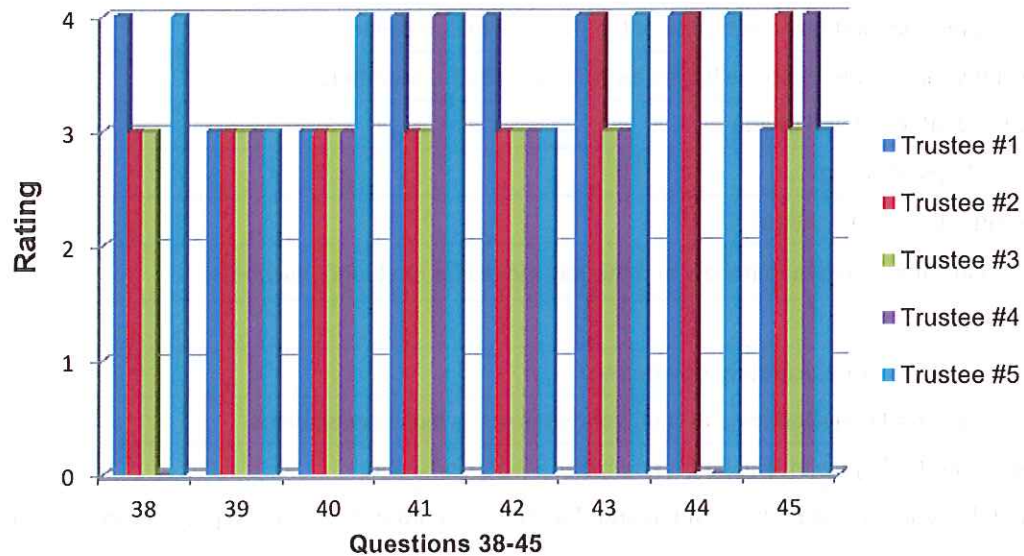
**Findings:**

Most trustees report that the College often routinely reviews and evaluates efforts to improve student success policy and practice, and that the College has a strategic planning process with student success goals and measures. There is also agreement, but to a slightly lesser degree, that the College provides professional development opportunities for Board, faculty, and staff to learn how to use data and research to improve programs, services, policies, and procedures.

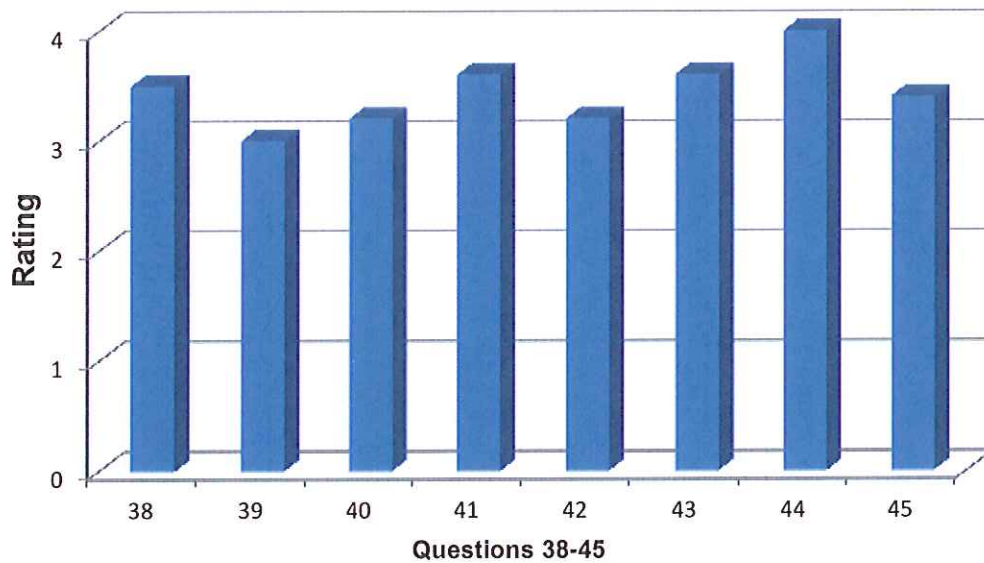




### STUDENT SUCCESS READINESS: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES



### STUDENT SUCCESS READINESS: AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS





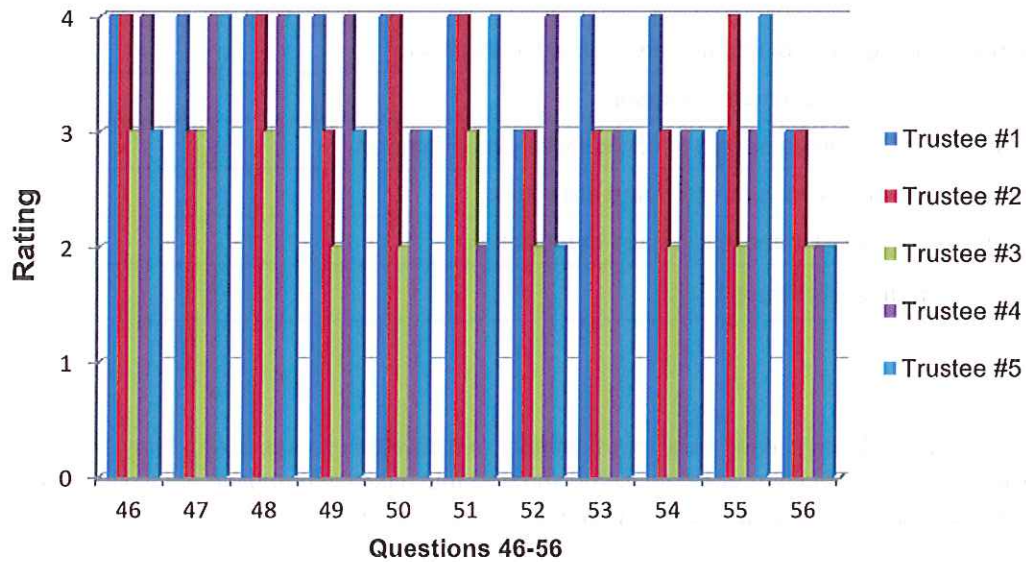
VI. Your Experience as an Individual Trustee		AVG
<b>How prepared do you feel you have been in the following areas?</b> <b>Please use the following scale: 1 = not at all prepared; 2 = somewhat prepared; 3 = mostly prepared; 4 = fully prepared</b>		
46. Understanding the role and responsibilities of the President/Chancellor		3.60
47. Understanding your role and responsibilities as a Trustee/Board Member.		3.60
48. The amount of work expected of you		3.80
49. Long-term strategic planning		3.20
50. Understanding finance and budget		3.20
51. Knowing what institutional data to review and the key indicators of student success		3.40
52. Campus politics		2.80
53. Understanding shared or participatory governance		3.20
54. Understanding internal constituencies and power dynamics in higher educations		3.00
55. Advocating for the College with legislators and other political officials		3.20
56. Identifying and acquiring new sources of funding (fundraising, corporate partnerships, earmarks, etc.)		2.40

#### Findings:

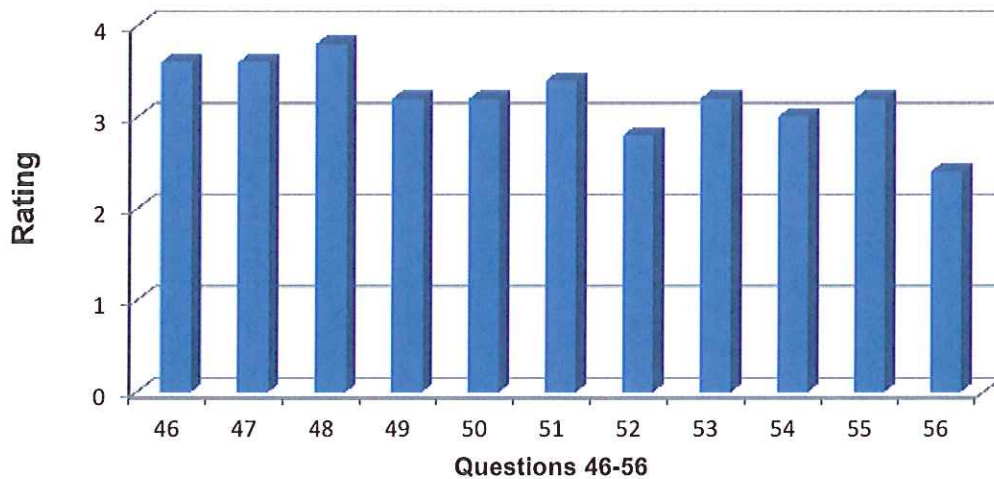
Trustees report being most prepared to understand their own and the President's role and responsibilities, as well as the amount of work expected of them. They felt least prepared to identify new funding sources, and understanding campus politics.



### TRUSTEE PREPARATION: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES



### TRUSTEE PREPARATION: AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS





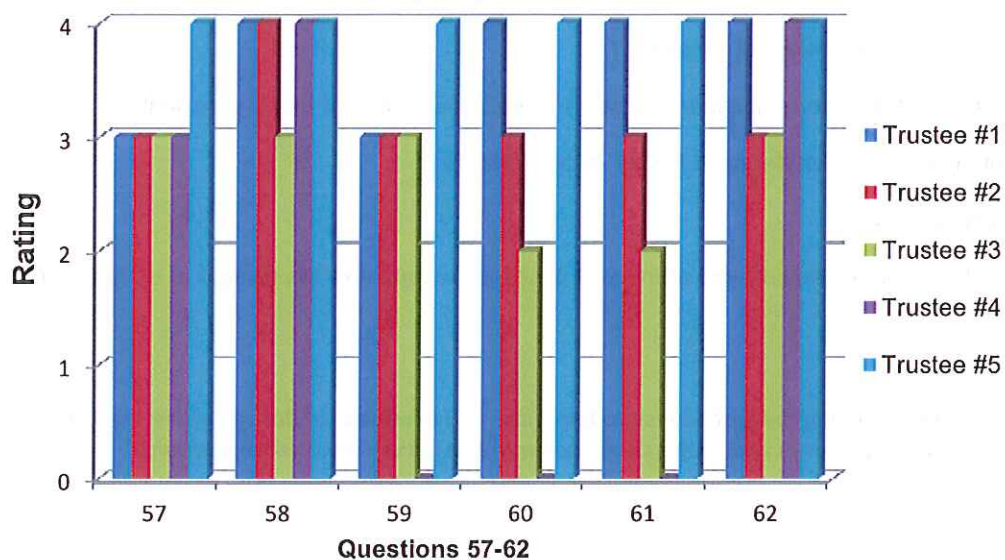
VI. Your Experience as an Individual Trustee	AVG
<p>How satisfied have you been with each of the following on your current board?  Please use the following scale: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = somewhat dissatisfied; 3 = somewhat satisfied 4 = very satisfied</p>	
57. The quality, amount, and frequency of information provided to the Board	3.20
58. Your overall satisfaction serving as a board member	3.80
59. The degree to which board members adhere to confidentiality requirements	3.25
60. The degree to which your contributions on the Board are valued	3.25
61. The overall effectiveness of board management and organization	3.25
62. How your time as a board member is used	3.60

#### Findings:

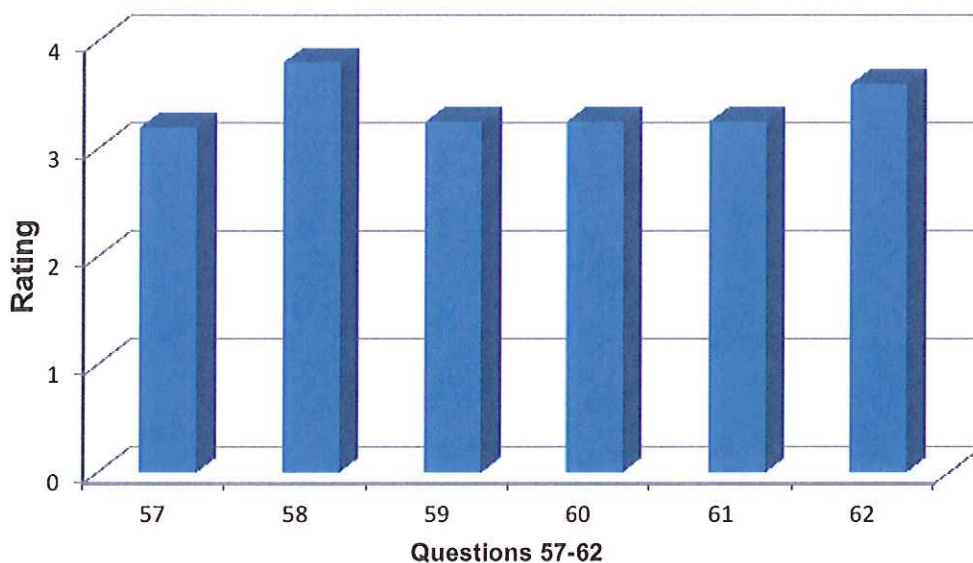
All trustees are most satisfied with serving as a board member and how their time is used. They are also satisfied, but to a slightly lesser degree with information received, and how much their contribution are valued how well confidentiality is maintained, and how effective the board is managed and organized.



### TRUSTEE SATISFACTION: INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES



### TRUSTEE SATISFACTION: AVERAGE QUESTION RATINGS



## OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

**What are the major accomplishments of your Board in the past year?**

- Continued advocacy for student success
- Developed a Board Governance Manual, new trustee orientation and training manual
- Recipient of 2010 Charles Kennedy Equity Award (ACCT)
- Eliminating overhead
- Revamped our policies and offered retirement packages to right size the college to enhance student success

*ACCT appreciates the opportunity to be of service to the Board and President of College of the Mainland and applauds their proactive and professional commitment to their leadership positions.*