

Presidential Absence, Review and Search Policy

Category: Board of Governors

Approval: Board of Governors

Responsibility: University Secretary

Date: Approved: June 25, 2009, Revised: December 6, 2013, June 27, 2024

Review of the Presidency

Initiating a review of the Presidency: The Executive Committee of the Board of Governors is responsible for initiating a review of the presidency prior to the end of the President's term of office. Approximately 18 months prior to the end of the incumbent President's term of office, the Chair of the Board will consult with the Executive Committee and the Board of Governors, to determine if the Board is willing to consider re-appointment of the incumbent. The Chair of the Board shall then ascertain whether the incumbent is willing to consider re-appointment. If the response to either of these questions is in the negative, the search process will begin without delay with the establishment of a Presidential Search Committee. If the response to both questions is positive, the Executive Committee shall establish an Advisory Committee to Review the Presidency.

Term of Office: The term of office of the President is typically five (5) years but may be extended for one-year periods, without a formal review process for extenuating circumstances as determined by the Board.

Advisory Committee Role: The advisory committee will be charged with providing advice to the Executive Committee about the President's performance, including whether the incumbent should be invited to accept an additional term. This will follow consultation with the University community and examination of internal and external environmental considerations and having regard to the Board of Governors' approved Strategic Direction for the University.

Advisory Committee Membership: The advisory committee shall comprise:

- 6 external members of the Board, one of whom will act as chair and at least one of whom shall be an alumnus/alumna
- 1 faculty or staff member of the Board
- 1 student member of the Board
- 2 faculty Senators named by Senate, each chosen from academic departments/programs not already represented by the faculty member of the Board
- The University Secretary (non-voting)

Senators will be selected by Senate; Board members will be selected by the Executive Committee of the Board.

Confidentiality: During and following the review, members of the advisory committee will maintain absolute confidentiality with respect to the committee's deliberations and the names of contributors to the review process. Committee members will evidence this requirement by execution of a confidentiality agreement in a form acceptable to the University.

Conflict of Interest: Members of the Committee will be asked to declare all possible conflicts of interest. In the event of a perceived conflict of interest that could compromise or to be seen to compromise the member's judgement the member shall disclose the nature of the conflict and the Chair will make a ruling on whether the member should be asked to step down from the committee.

Process:

The re-appointment process should focus on: (i) reviewing the University's progress in moving towards the strategic institutional goals and other priorities in the President's annual statements of goals and objectives; (ii) identifying issues which are relevant to institutional progress and presidential success during a further term of office; and (iii) taking stock of President's demonstrated leadership capacities and whether they fit will with the university's strategic priorities over another presidential term.

The process should particularly seek out the opinions of those who are most likely to be well informed about the President's accomplishments and leadership qualities and should be open to knowledgeable input from the University and the external communities.

The Advisory Committee may request a self-assessment from the President which includes performance relative to objectives for the previous years, their leadership of the University and performance of the University. The President should comment upon potential goals to accomplish during a second term if invited to serve. The committee may also meet with the incumbent as part of the review process. The purpose of the meeting is to provide the incumbent with the opportunity to speak to their capabilities.

Consultations and deliberations should be confidential and the process timely and efficient. Normally it is expected that the advisory committee will complete its work in not more than 3 months and not later than March of the penultimate year of the current presidential term. During this period, care should be taken to ensure that review activities, communications and consultations do not compromise the ability of the President to fulfil the roles of the position.

In the event that the advisory committee is unable to complete its work, for whatever reason, the Executive Committee may disband it and retains the authority to complete the review using such mechanism or process as it shall determine.

Communication: The Chair of the advisory committee will be its official and only spokesperson and will provide the Executive Committee with the final report of the advisory committee, including advice concerning whether the incumbent should be invited to serve another term.

Once the Executive Committee reaches a decision on the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Board Chair and the Vice-Chair(s) shall meet immediately with the President to review the general findings of the committee and the nature of its intended recommendation to the Board. If a recommendation for reappointment is to go forward, its presentation to the Board will be subject to

agreement between the President and the Executive Committee on any changes to the President's contract for the new term of office. The Executive Committee will then make a recommendation to the Board of Governors regarding re-appointment.

If the review does not lead to a recommendation for reappointment, or if the President no longer wishes to stand for re-appointment, a Presidential search is initiated as outlined below.

Presidential Search

Initiating a Presidential Search: The Trent Act assigns to the Board of Governors the "power...to appoint and remove the President and Vice-Chancellor". A presidential search will be initiated by the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors acting on behalf of the Board.

Where it will be necessary to appoint a President at the end of the incumbent President's term of office, the Executive Committee will establish a search committee at least 12, but not more than 18, months prior to the end of the incumbent's term.

Search Committee Role: The search committee will be charged with recommending to the Board of Governors one individual to serve as the President and Vice-Chancellor of the University. The search, and the committee, will be guided by the Strategic Directions established by the Board of Governors and any additional directives the Board may provide concerning the search.

Search Committee Composition and Membership: The search committee shall be comprised of each member of the most recently constituted advisory committee to review the presidency, subject to individuals maintaining their then existing roles within the University. Where establishment of a search committee is required before an Advisory Committee to Review the Presidency has been established, a Presidential Search Committee may be established with the membership provided for the advisory committee as set out above.

The search committee will be chaired by the former chair of the advisory committee, if available; otherwise the chair shall be selected by the Executive Committee from amongst the external Board members.

Where one or more members of the former advisory committee are unable to sit on the search committee, the Executive Committee may appoint alternative members while respecting the balance of roles as provided for in this Policy.

If a vacancy occurs once the search committee has begun its work, another member may be appointed if in the judgment of the search committee's chair, a new appointment at that time would not be disruptive to the search process.

The search committee will be assisted by the Secretary of the Board of Governors and by external search consultants chosen by the committee.

Confidentiality: During and following the search, members of the search committee will maintain absolute confidentiality with respect to the committee's deliberations and the names of candidates.

Conflict of Interest: Members of the Committee will be asked to declare all possible conflicts of interest. In the event of a perceived conflict of interest that could compromise or to be seen to compromise the member's judgement the member shall disclose the nature of the conflict and the Chair will make a ruling on whether the member should be asked to step down from the committee.

Process: The search committee will consult the University community about the opportunities and challenges that will face the next President and the attributes and expertise to be sought in candidates. The committee will determine its own procedures and will tender its advice to the Board in writing.

Normally it is expected that the search committee will complete its work in nine months.

In the event that the search committee is unable to complete its work, for whatever reason, the Board may disband it and retains the authority to complete the search using such mechanism or process as it shall determine.

Communication: The Chair of the search committee will be its official, and only, spokesperson and will provide the Board of Governors and the University community with regular updates on the progress of the search.

Presidential Absence

In anticipation of a period of temporary absence that results in an inability of the President to perform the presidential duties and responsibilities that does not exceed six weeks in duration, the President is responsible for delegating presidential authority to a Vice-President. If the President is unable to delegate authority, the Provost and Vice-President Academic shall act on the President's behalf or if not available the Vice-President Research and Innovation shall act on the President's behalf or if not available the Vice-President Finance and Administration shall act on the President's behalf. In both cases the Executive Committee of the Board will be informed of the absence.

During a period of temporary absence that results in an inability of the President to perform the presidential duties and responsibilities for more than six weeks in duration the Executive Committee will discuss and recommend to the Board of Governors the appointment of an Acting or Interim President.

Contact Officer:

University Secretary

Date for Next Review:

TBD

Policies Superseded by This Policy:

- a) Special Resolution III.2, December 2, 2005