

Criterion Two—Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Core Component 2.C.

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

Ball State University is governed by its Board of Trustees, which consists of nine members appointed by the governor of Indiana. The board's members represent a wide range of constituencies. The Board of Trustees has executive and supervisory authority over all aspects of the institution, including the appointment of the university's president. The board maintains autonomy from special interests within and around the university, and it delegates day-to-day operations to the university's administration and duly selected university councils, committees, and officers. The primary mission of the board is to ensure the fiscal, physical, academic, and social well-being of the institution and its constituencies.

Subcomponent 2.C.1.

The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

Ball State's Board of Trustees has the authority to govern all facets of the university's finances, personnel, and curricula and to approve initiatives in facilities planning, subject to limitations established by special law or through appropriation acts passed by the Indiana General Assembly. The board's deliberations routinely address issues that affect the reputation, well-being, and quality of the institution, as can be seen in the Board of Trustees minutes from 2004 to the present and in a template for the normal schedule of issues that come before the board each year.

Important actions taken by the Ball State Board of Trustees since 2004 include:

- Approval of Jo Ann Gora as the university's 14th president (*September 2, 2004*)
- Renovation of East Residence Hall/Woodworth Dining, \$36 million (*December 17, 2004*)
- Geothermal project and boiler replacement, \$48 million (*December 5, 2005*)
- Renovation of Scheumann Stadium, \$15.6 million (*March 18, 2006*)
- Construction of the Student Recreation and Wellness Center, \$39 million (*July 21, 2006*)
- Renovation of L.A. Pittenger Student Center, \$22.9 million (*July 20, 2007*)
- Construction of North (Kingham) Residence Hall, \$46.5 million (*July 20, 2007*)
- Renovation of DeHority Complex, \$30 million (*July 20, 2007*)
- Renovation of Ball Honors House, \$1.2 million (*October 26, 2007*)
- Central Campus Academic Renovation and Utility Improvements Phase I, \$33 million (*July 24, 2009*)
- Construction of Glick Center for Glass, \$2 million (*July 24, 2009*)
- Renovation of Studebaker East Residence Hall, \$24.1 million (*January 29, 2010*)

While the day-to-day management of the institution is delegated to Ball State's administrative, the president and her cabinet keep the Board of Trustees informed of activities and issues of importance at

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the university, both during and between board meetings. A report of such issues is provided by the president and the chair of the University Senate at each meeting. A variety of other issues are also discussed as needed, and board members are given thorough information about any action items on the agenda.

Subcomponent 2.C.2.

The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

Ball State's Board of Trustees does not act alone when making decisions that will impact the university's internal and external constituencies. The board observes and values Indiana state statutes, the institution's strategic plan, cultural diversity, research, and recommendations before approving resolutions. The following examples illustrate this approach:

- In 2008, the board created the University Diversity Committee to review and recommend faculty employment policies concerning diversity issues, review faculty and administrative personnel complaints concerning diversity issues, make recommendations to promote and maintain cultural diversity among faculty members, and make recommendations to promote recruitment and retention of minority students.
- In 2008, the board was notified of Ball State's need for a new Intellectual Property Policy. The University Senate gathered information and drafted a proposed policy for the university's president and the Board of Trustees based on research, focus groups, and open forums of faculty, staff, and students. The revisions of the existing policy were proposed in 2009 and were approved based on advice from a task force assembled by the provost.
- Attentive to the quality of campus life, the board considered a fraternity's problems in obtaining a first mortgage for a house in 2010. Ball State's 2007–2012 strategic plan mentions Greek life as part of an overall objective to increase the vitality of the campus and its social and cultural life. Specifically, Goal 4, Objective F includes: "By 2007, complete a plan for redeveloping Riverside Avenue and strengthening Greek life." The fraternity's request for a loan guarantee was reviewed by business affairs and student affairs personnel, who suggested assisting the group in order to enhance the goals of Greek housing. The board agreed to guarantee the loan on behalf of the fraternity.

Subcomponent 2.C.3.

The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.

Ball State's Board of Trustees includes members of the public and is sufficiently autonomous from the university's administration to ensure the integrity of the institution. The governor of Indiana appoints all nine members of the board: six are at-large members, two are selected from Ball State alumni, and one is chosen from the Ball State student body. Short biographies of current members of the Board of Trustees are available for review.

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A strong conflict of interest clause that includes abstention, disclosure of interest, and determination of quorum is incorporated into the Board of Trustees bylaws, and each board member signs a conflict of interest disclosure statement, which is discussed by the university's attorney in the orientation of new board members.

Subcomponent 2.C.4.

The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Ball State's Board of Trustees delegates the daily management and administration of the institution to the university's president, who is appointed by the board. Current President Jo Ann Gora was appointed in 2004 following a national search.

President's Cabinet

At Ball State, the President's Cabinet includes six vice presidents, the director of athletics, and the associate vice president for governmental relations. The university's vice presidents are:

- provost and vice president for academic affairs
- vice president for business affairs and treasurer
- vice president for enrollment, marketing, and communications
- vice president for information technology
- vice president for student affairs
- vice president for university advancement

Organizational charts and descriptions of the vice presidents' areas of responsibility are available for review.

In providing day-to-day management, the university's president and administration refer to Ball State's strategic plan to inform decisions that need to be made about the direction of the institution. The strategic plan outlines the university's vision, mission, and values and details the strategies and objectives for attaining the plan's goals. The new *Strategic Plan 2012–2017* was developed by a campuswide task force representing faculty, staff, students, administrators, and students, and a draft was presented to the Board of Trustees on October 17, 2012.

University Senate

Ball State's Board of Trustees cedes oversight of academic matters to the university's faculty. "The principal agent for the formulation of educational policy at Ball State University is the University Senate." The University Senate's constitution outlines the responsibilities of the senate and the various councils and committees under its purview. Specific responsibilities include determining the following:

- admission and retention standards
- requirements for the curriculum and instruction
- requirements for granting degrees
- standards regarding academic freedom and professional responsibilities

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Three councils report to the University Senate: Faculty Council, University Council, and Campus Council. Two standing committees also report directly to the University Senate, and 34 committees report to one of the three councils. The duties, composition, and meeting schedule of these councils and committees are easily accessible on the University Senate's website.

The constitution of the University Senate is available in its entirety in the *Faculty and Professional Handbook*. The Board of Trustees adopted the current constitution on December 17, 2004.

Core Component Summary

Ball State's Board of Trustees carefully considered all of the recommendations of the Higher Learning Commission in its 2004 accreditation report. These included:

- more effective communication between the board and the university's president
- regular evaluation of the president's performance
- creation of a committee structure to make the board's work more efficient
- improved communication with campus constituencies, including community leaders, faculty, staff, and students

With the university's current leadership, the first two items are no longer deemed problematic, and the board makes considerable effort to be accessible to a wide range of campus constituencies. The recommendation for a formal committee structure was not adopted because the board regards its current procedures as efficient and effective in carrying out its work and the business of the institution.

The Board of Trustees should periodically assess its procedures and review its communications, especially with the university's non-administrative constituencies, in order to maintain its currently excellent lines of communication.