



Board of Trustees Self-evaluation (2019-20)

A descriptive report of the results for the
2019-20 Board of Trustees' Self-evaluation

Report prepared by:
FAMU Office of University Assessment



Overview

Report Timeline, Response Rate, and Assessment Development

The link to the Board of Trustee self-assessment was sent via email to all trustees on July 1, 2020 and the survey was closed on July 23, 2020. At the time of closing, there were no partial survey responses in the queue. Of the eleven (11) trustees, nine (9) completed the survey – an 82% response rate.

The evaluation instrument was approved by the Board of Trustees on June 4, 2020. It is comprised of six (6) Factors, each containing multiple statements (number for each Factor is indicated in parentheses) on which each trustee rates the Board's performance on a 5-point Likert-type scale (Superior, Above Average, Average, Below Average, Poor). Each Factor includes an open-ended question to gather detailed feedback.

The six (6) Factors are:

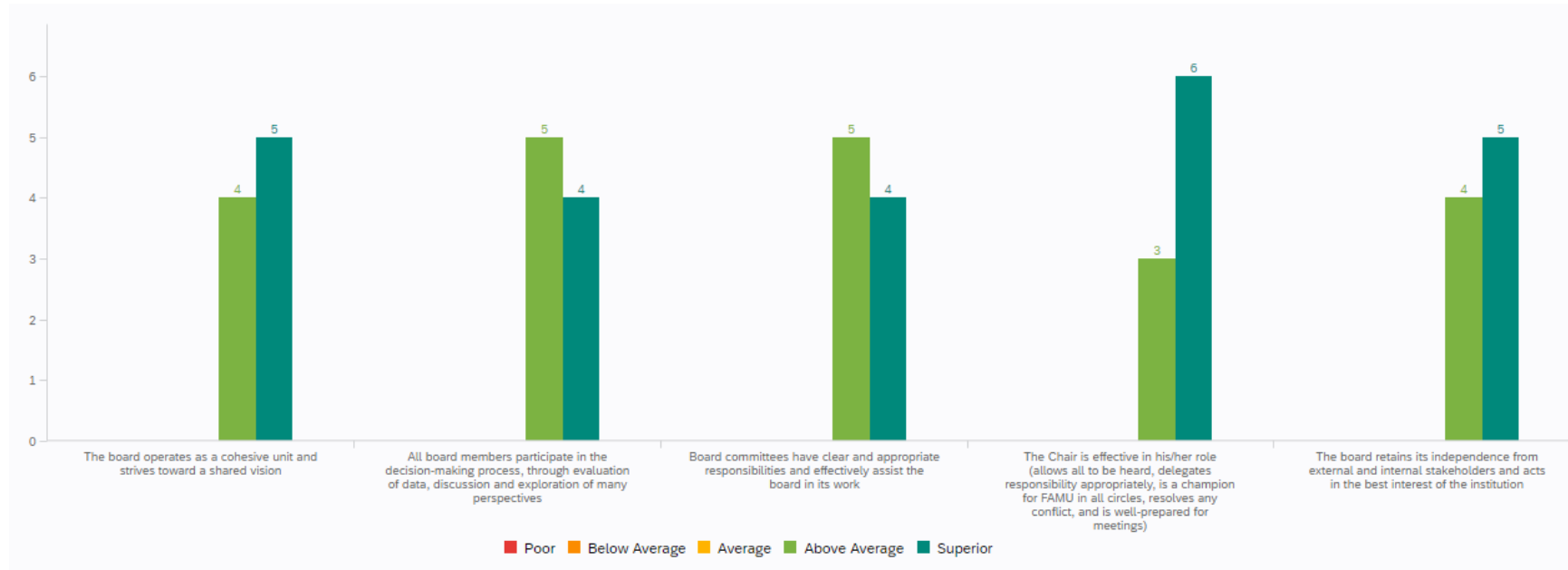
- Board Organization, Governance and Leadership (5)
- Board Relations (3)
- Policy (3)
- University Operations and Performance (5)
- Institutional Sustainability (4)
- Board Education (4)

The final section of the instrument includes four (4) open-ended questions to elicit qualitative feedback on the Board's performance.

This report contains an overview of all of the questions and documentation of the responses received for each question.

Board Organization, Governance, and Leadership

Responses



Average	Board Organization, Governance and Leadership	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
4.6	The board operates as a cohesive unit and strives toward a shared vision	0	0	0	4	5
4.4	All board members participate in the decision-making process, through evaluation of data, discussion and exploration of many perspectives	0	0	0	5	4
4.4	Board committees have clear and appropriate responsibilities and effectively assist the board in its work	0	0	0	5	4
4.7	The Chair is effective in his/her role (allows all to be heard, delegates responsibility appropriately, is a champion for FAMU in all circles, resolves any conflict, and is well-prepared for meetings)	0	0	0	3	6
4.6	The board retains its independence from external and internal stakeholders and acts in the best interest of the institution	0	0	0	4	5

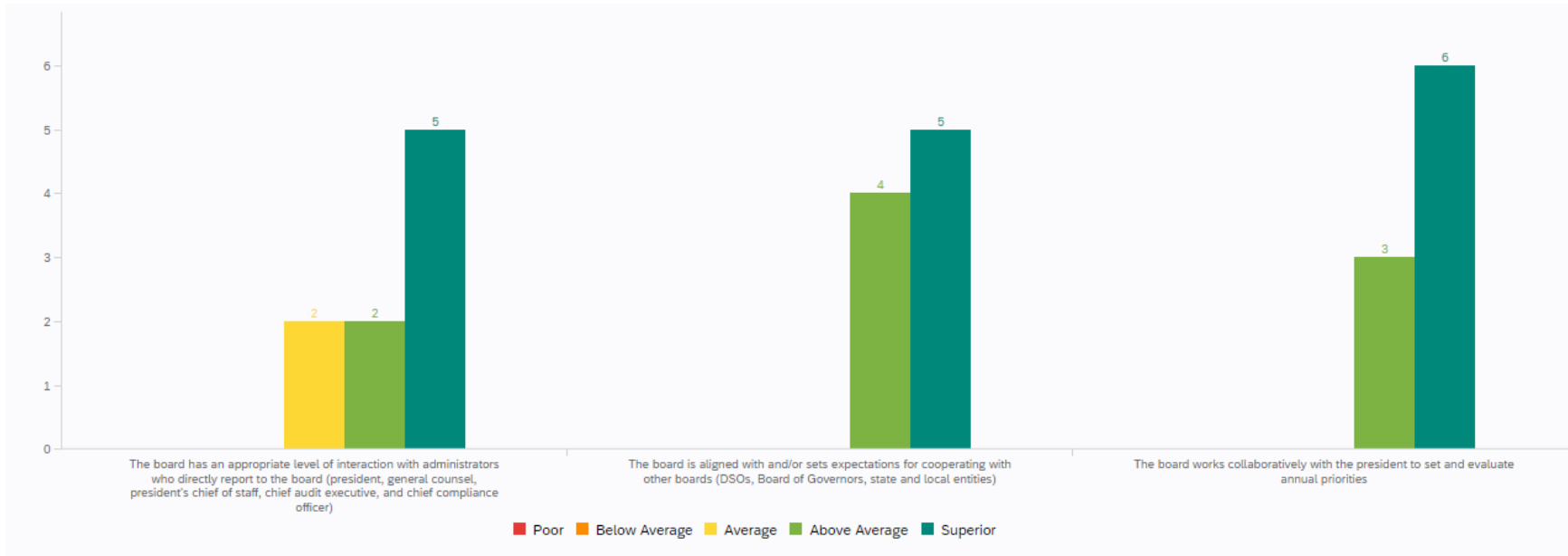
Board Organization, Governance, and Leadership

Comments

- We have worked to be more organized and timely. We have worked with staff on briefing calls with each board member to review details on items coming before the board. We have worked to stick to calendar dates and make changes only when it is the only option.
- Board is high performing and has one goal and this what is in the best interest of FAMU.
- The Board is united in its effort to meet the needs of our students while at the same time adhere to our fiduciary responsibilities.
- Board does an excellent job working together as a cohesive unit. Chairman Lawson makes a special effort to ensure that each Board Member have the opportunity to participate in the decisions effecting the University. The Board continues to conduct itself in a professional matter as the members understands the importance of retaining the independence from internal and external supporters of the University. We pride ourselves in working in the best interest of FAMU.
- We have grown as a team and respects the diverse input of Board members when discussing matters pertaining to the University.
- It is a good and engaged board, with some contributing significantly more than others (which is, of course, what so often happens with boards).

Board Relations

Responses



Average	Board Relations	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
4.3	The board has an appropriate level of interaction with administrators who directly report to the board (president, general counsel, president's chief of staff, chief audit executive, and chief compliance officer)	0	0	2	2	5
4.0	The board is aligned with and/or sets expectations for cooperating with other boards (DSOs, Board of Governors, state and local entities)	0	0	0	4	5
4.0	The board works collaboratively with the president to set and evaluate annual priorities	0	0	0	3	6

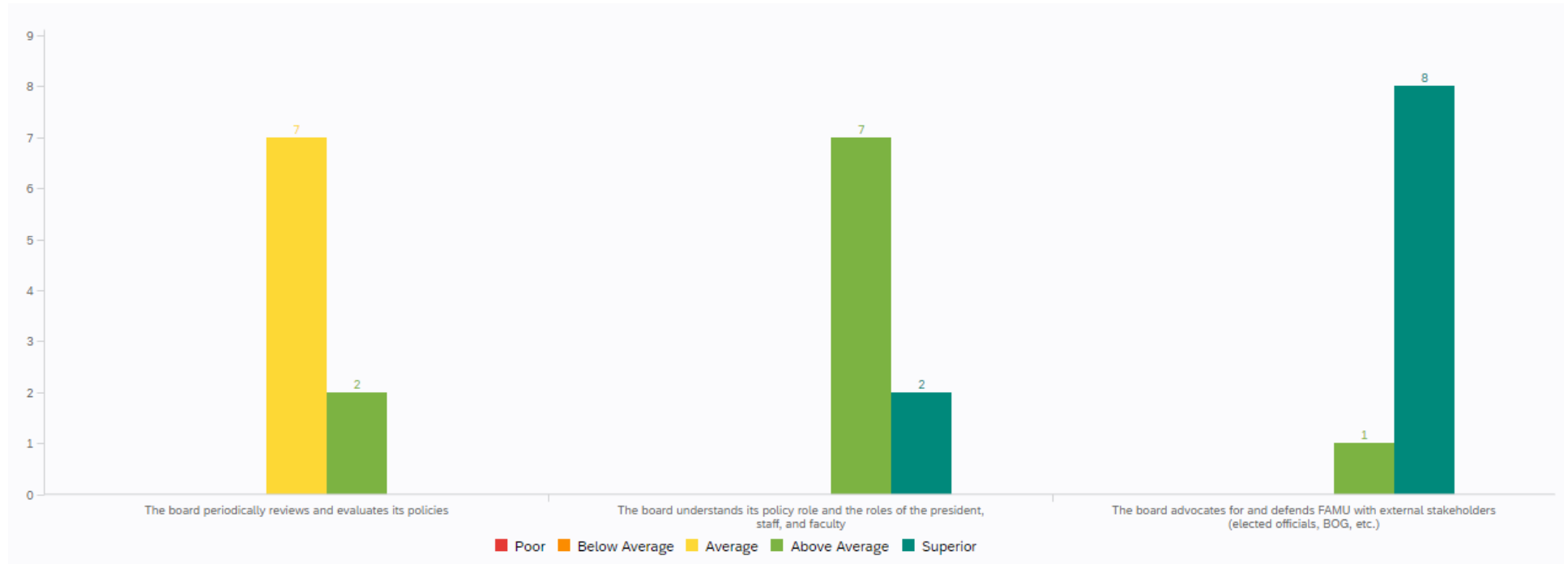
Board Relations

Comments

- Have worked to drive a better and more strategic relationship with the Board of Governors. Boards has developed a strong working relationship with the NAA, Foundation Board and all the DSOs.
- A lot of time is spent ensuring engagement with all other support organizations including time spent on the President's evaluation.
- There are opportunities to streamline and improve the overall communication with the university leadership and the respective areas.
- The Board continues to have a productive relationship with BOG, President Robinson and his staff. The Board have been in total support of the Mission of both the BOG and FAMU. The University / the Board of Trustees appears to have open and transparent relationship with the BOG.
- The Board trust the President and is committed to supporting his administration.
- Good people who get along and care greatly how the university is doing and how it can be better.

Policy

Responses



Average	Policy	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
3.2	The board periodically reviews and evaluates its policies	0	0	7	2	0
4.2	The board understands its policy role and the roles of the president, staff, and faculty	0	0	0	7	2
4.9	The board advocates for and defends FAMU with external stakeholders (elected officials, BOG, etc.)	0	0	0	1	8

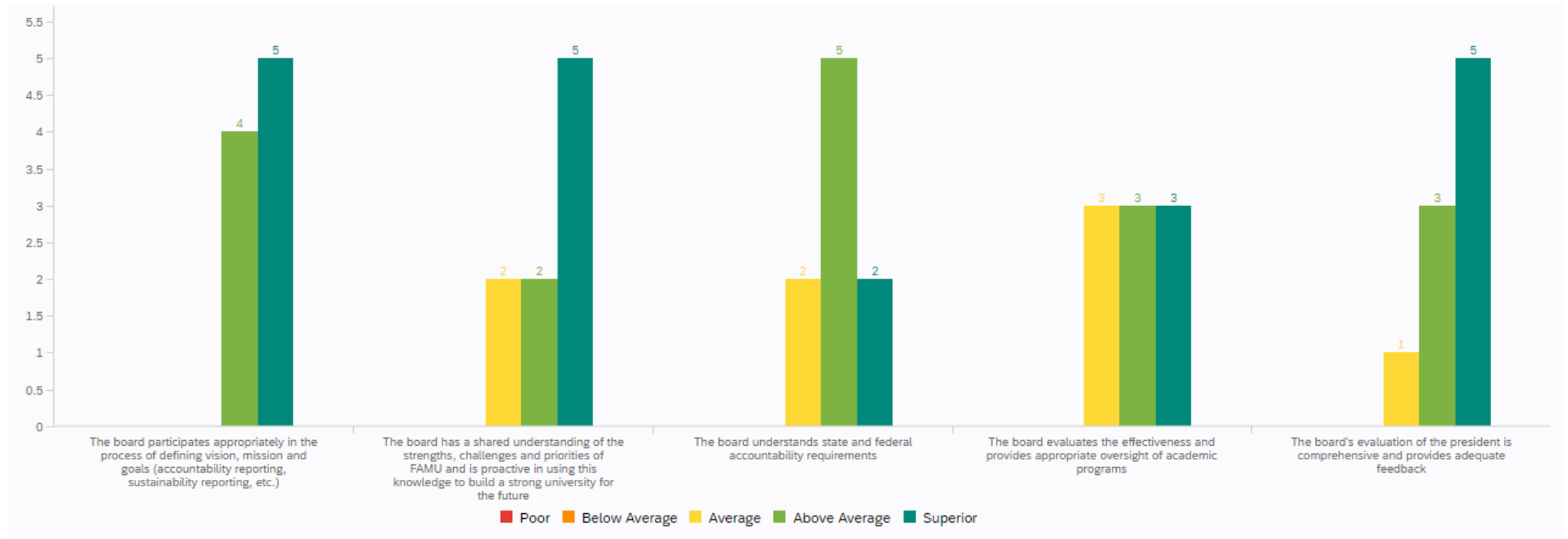
Policy

Comments

- Newer board members need a more robust onboarding. Board works within Board/BOG and other state policies Opportunity to update board operations procedures.
- We should do a Policy review at the beginning of each year as a refresher but for the most part BOT members are clear on expectations and their role.
- During my tenure as a board member, upon information and belief, I have not been involved in reviewing or evaluating policies. Are we talking about the Board operating policies? The Board needs to engage in this activity.
- Our policies should undergo a full review both specific to governance and to the University's overall operation to bring them current. I would also recommend that an ongoing schedule of review be adopted.
- The Board gets high marks in seeing that staff maintains, creates, modifies and articulates of the University's Policies and Procedures.
- We are committed to FAMU.

University Operations and Performance

Responses



Average	University Operations and Performance	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
4.6	The board participates appropriately in the process of defining vision, mission and goals (accountability reporting, sustainability reporting, etc.)	0	0	0	4	5
4.3	The board has a shared understanding of the strengths, challenges and priorities of FAMU and is proactive in using this knowledge to build a strong university for the future	0	0	2	2	5
4.0	The board understands state and federal accountability requirements	0	0	2	5	2
4.0	The board evaluates the effectiveness and provides appropriate oversight of academic programs	0	0	3	3	3
4.4	The board's evaluation of the president is comprehensive and provides adequate feedback	0	0	1	3	5

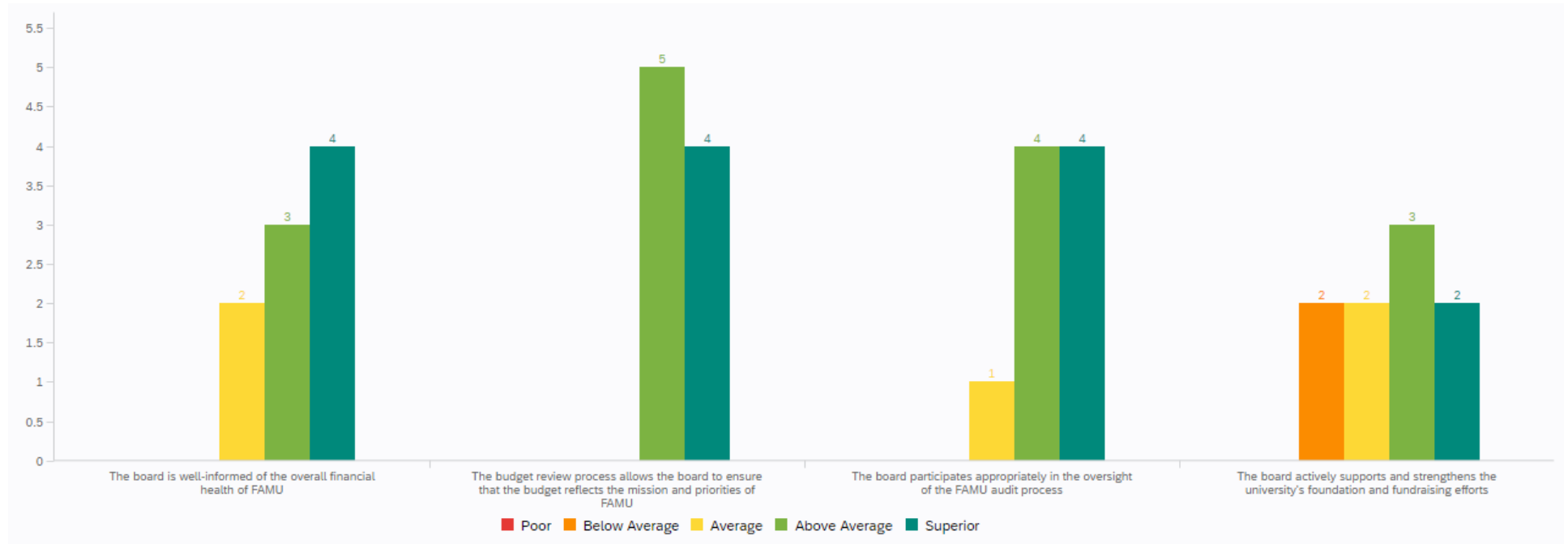
University Operations and Performance

Comments

- New dashboard process has allowed for tremendous visibility into overall University Performance. Board has to take an even more active hand in dealing with Professional Passage Rates of key programs.
- Federal Accountability Requirements should be an annual refresher since this changes and the impact can be significant to the University.
- I believe that there is an opportunity for more engagement and awareness around the academic programs to include greater accountability around plans to be implemented and the overall outcomes. Our current model appears to be limited to the deans but should also take into account the role and responsibility held by Academic Affairs.
- The number of committees assigned to measure the success of FAMU's performance - Student Affairs, Strategic Planning, Athletics, Law School Special Committee, DSO and Audit Committees, just to name a few.
- There are times the Board needs to be more disciplined to sticking to setting policy and staying out of administration and operations.

Institutional Sustainability

Responses



Average	Institutional Sustainability	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
4.2	The board is well-informed of the overall financial health of FAMU	0	0	2	3	4
4.4	The budget review process allows the board to ensure that the budget reflects the mission and priorities of FAMU	0	0	0	5	4
4.3	The board participates appropriately in the oversight of the FAMU audit process	0	0	1	4	4
3.6	The board actively supports and strengthens the university's foundation and fundraising efforts	0	2	2	3	2

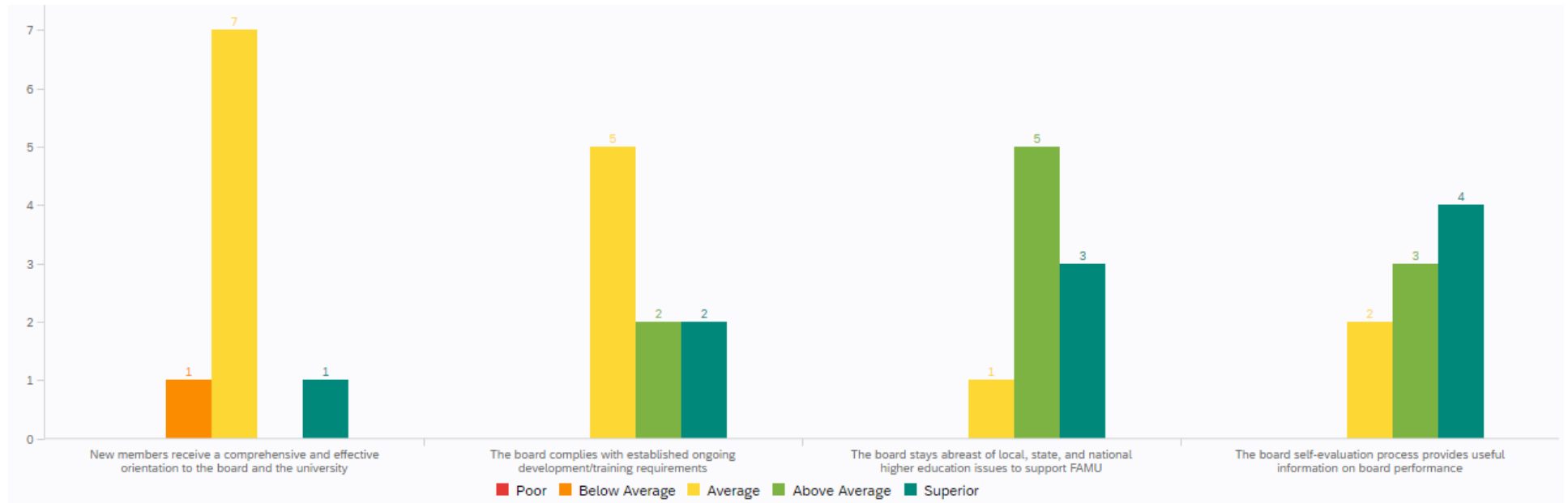
Institutional Sustainability

Comments

- The board is very involved in developing the work plan that ties to the Strategic Plan. There is opportunity for the Board to get more insight on the fiscal health of the University and plans to improve some of the financial performance metrics. Board has an opportunity to better assist the foundation in opening doors to potential individuals or organizations who will give to FAMU.
- Strong focus by the board in this area.
- The Board responds to the information that its provided. However, greater care is needed with regard to ensuring that all information is presented timely and with transparency. Moreover, it is critical that all financial matters include with it a coordinated review by the Budget, Finance and Facilities Committee prior to an item being brought for vote by the full Board, instead of afterwards.
- The Board is continuously improving in these areas.
- The Board does not focus enough attention to its fiduciary responsibility.
- We have made progress, but there is a huge upside remaining on fundraising.

Board Education

Responses



Average	Board Education	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
3.1	New members receive a comprehensive and effective orientation to the board and the university	0	1	7	0	1
3.7	The board complies with established ongoing development/training requirements	0	0	5	2	2
4.2	The board stays abreast of local, state, and national higher education issues to support FAMU	0	0	1	5	3
4.2	The board self-evaluation process provides useful information on board performance	0	0	2	3	4

Board Education

Comments

- Due to challenges presented by this academic year, we have not address all the needed training opportunities. The exposure and participation in the Legislative Process is a Big Opportunity for our Board.
- The board is invited to training but maybe good to have this info brought into the BOT meetings to ensure all that could not attend have the same foundation as those that did.
- While the Board has been diligent in their information share on development/training, the orientation training was not as comprehensive as it needed to have been.
- I would encourage the university to conduct a follow-up with new trustees at the following milestones to determine if needs are being met or if there are questions: 30, 90 and 180 days.
- The Board's Orientation Sessions for new Trustees have proven to be sufficient, as the President and his staff make themselves available to answer questions. There continue to be opportunities for Trustees to be kept abreast of educational issues on the local, state and national levels throughout the year.
- We attend conferences and have comprehensive training and Board retreats.

Open-ended Questions

What are the major accomplishments of the Board of Trustees in the last year?

- Crisis Management
 - The collaboration and support regarding FAMU's strategy in response to the Corona-virus issue.
 - The Board approved FAMU's COVID-19 protocols safeguards, operational guidelines, and the phased reopening of the FAMU campus. The Board of Governors approved the plan. Special thanks to Operation Taskforce.
 - Because of COVID-19, the Board addressed concerns about the quality of faculty online teaching. As a result, Academic Affairs with the Office of Instructional Online Training has implemented a University-wide online certification training for all faculty.
 - President Robinson has done a masterful job with the school University Reopening Plan as a result of the COVID-19 Crisis. The University has done such a good job the plan was approved by the Florida Board of Governors during their June 2020 meeting.
 - Doing a superb job on preparing for the fall amidst the pandemic. The board is a key player in energizing increasing momentum for the university.
 - This year's Legislative Session as it relates to funding.
- Performance-based Funding
 - Helping drive to the highest rating ever in the performance funding model. Continuing the Development and Utilization of the Dashboard Process Managing to a balance budget, with no major audit findings.
 - Improving the Performance in respect to the Performance Based funding model.
 - The Board of Governors approved 13.7 million in FAMU's Performance Base funding. Congratulations to Academic Affairs and President Robinson's for their overall achievements.
 - The board continues to work well together to help guide and advocate for the university. We have focused on data and metrics to improve performance funding.
 - University improved performance and overall scoring associated with the PBF
- New Construction
 - New oversight process for major construction on the campus.
 - The construction projects are progressing promptly except for the delay concerning the CASS building. Special thanks to VP Robertson and his team.
 - Securing the dollars needed for the completion of CASS.
 - The three new construction projects about to be completed this year.
- Hiring in Key Positions
 - Completing a number of critical hires (CFO, Dean - Education)
 - The hiring of a new Athletic Director and Director of the FAMU Law School.
 - Approved the hiring of critical administrators for the University and Law School.
- Athletics
 - The Board took the leadership role of purposefully creating and developing a plan to reduce the Athletic deficit. The Board of Governors commended FAMU on the progressive budget plan.
 - The hiring of a new Athletic Director (see reference above).
 - FAMU having a winning Football, Baseball, Basketball seasons.
- Audit/Ethics
 - The Board's oversight of the Audit department resulted in a reduction of audit finding
 - The Board is to be commended for establishing high ethical standards for each of its members.

Open-ended Questions

What are the major accomplishments of the Board of Trustees in the last year? (continued)

- Other
 - The Board focused on sustaining and maintaining student enrollment for the academic year 2020-2021. The Board acknowledges the Division of Student Affairs enrollment efforts and statistics.
 - The Board's inclusive leadership role — supporting the presentation of faculty accomplishments highlighted at the Board's meetings.
 - Built stronger working relationships with the Board of Governors.
 - Addressed the cyber security challenges of the University.

Open-ended Questions

Please provide your suggestions regarding how the Board of Trustees can improve performance in alignment with its roles and responsibilities.

- Training
 - Continue to insist on training that aligns the BOT of FAMU with the BOG requirements and Government regulations.
 - More comprehensive, structured, and organized training of new Board members when first appointed to the board.
 - The board should intentionally incorporate professional development into our board meetings to learn about current challenges and opportunities facing higher education from national experts in different areas.
 - Full access to all board travel opportunities.
- Performance-based Funding
 - We need to focus more of our time on longer range planning Board needs a deep dive on key financial performance metrics/establish action plan to address
- Legislative Process
 - We need to get much more engaged in the Legislative Process
 - Develop a stronger relationship / advocate with the State Legislative Process. It's imperative that the Trustees develop a relationship with representatives from both side of the aisle.
 - Establish a seamless connection between the BOG meetings and BOT meetings -- Our current system does not allow for the sharing of information to our agenda and ultimately the work performed by the committees. Note a process to address this gap should be established as we move into the new fiscal year.
- Fundraising
 - We need to have a strategy to bring potential givers to the university
 - Get more involved in giving and securing resources for the University.
- Academics
 - To be more inclusive of the faculty representative in all matters involving the board.
 - I think the board does a pretty good job now, but needs to be insistent on college-by-college performance. And it must engender much more significant raising of resources
 - Board has to take a more aggressive hand in dealing with failing academic programs (Law, Nursing etc.).
- Other
 - Haven't been on the Board long enough to accurately say.

Open-ended Questions

As a trustee, I would like to see the following changes in how the board operates.

- Efficiency and Engagement
 - Overall the Board is efficient.
 - Pleased with the way the board is operating.
 - I have very pleased with the way the Board have been operating.
 - I think the board functions quite well. Ideally, there should be a superb person in every board seat; we can do some better.
 - President engagement with board members regarding key meeting topics prior to the actual meeting.
 - Time standards met with the distribution of materials.
 - Increased oversight with the agenda management to ensure adherence with time standard and protocols.
- Enrollment/Budget Planning
 - Less on tactics and more on building for the future to get to 12K to 15K footprint and Tallahassee and look to open a campus in another part of the state.
 - For this year, it will be important for us to stay focused on enrollment and budget and guide the university to make strategic decisions that will leverage our strengths.
- Onboarding
 - How the board orientates and integrates newly elected trustees. I would like to see the board provide and review information about educational policy, state, and federal issues that may impact the institution.
- Annual Goals Setting
 - The Board also needs to set priorities and tasks for the upcoming year at the board retreat and provide a proposed plan as to how we will achieve it. (For example, what are the institutional goals) I think it is important for the board to set a time to speak with various stakeholders at the institution. This can be done in a very structured manner. Trustee's development-attendance at conferences, seminars etc.
- Other
 - No suggestions at this time.

Open-ended Questions

Please provide any other general feedback that you feel will help to improve the performance of the board.

- This has been a great year and we have accomplished great things as a Board. Our meetings overall are efficient, and we are respectful of each other. We operate as a team and the Board meetings are handled overall with excellence. However, I think it is important that each trustee understands his/her role with respect to what things they have to do on their own and what they have to do as a team. It is important that each Trustee understands the legal obligations to the institution and what conflict of interests may exist. Trustees should also periodically review and evaluate the rules and policy that governs the institutions. Also, coordinate with the Trustee representative to speak with stakeholders of the institution: i.e. faculty, staff, and students. Special thanks to the staff for their service to the Board.
- The board needs to continue to focus on performance and metrics, including enrollment, in order to provide timely guidance to the university as we navigate the uncertainties around COVID-19 this year.
- The Board needs to work more with the President to insure we are totally prepared for virtual educating.
- We have made progress each of my years on the board. We are poised to make more. There is potentially a truly great future for the university. We must have academic excellence in all the colleges. That is not yet true in several areas.

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