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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Implementation of Self-assessment Survey Tool Devised by the Association of
Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges**

In May of 2023, the University of South Carolina (“USC”) Board of Trustees adopted use of a Self-assessment Survey Tool (<https://agb.org/board-performance-survey/>) devised by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (“AGB”). The Board intends to administer the survey annually.

The Governance Committee of the USC Board of Trustees has reviewed May 2023 survey results in open session in meetings since June of 2023. In many cases, survey items and responses to survey items have been leveraged as educational opportunities for the committee and the full Board.

AGB’s Self-assessment Survey Tool is proprietary, and online access to the survey is limited to individuals with certified AGB accounts, paid for through annual membership dues; however, the survey has been discussed by the USC Board’s Governance Committee in open session, and the survey is therefore a public document.

The Office of the Board of Trustees provides the AGB survey items here with the expectation that readers will not repurpose this information to devise a competing survey.

As Chair Westbrook mentioned during his remarks to the USC Columbia Faculty Senate on February 7, some of the AGB survey items seem better suited to governing boards of private institutions, which are often self-perpetuating. That is, these private boards select their own members. Survey items that address diversity of board members and their career expertise, although valid for public boards, cannot be remedied by public boards in ways available to private boards.

What is your role on this board? Please check one.

Institution chief executive
Chair of board
Other board officer
Administrative officer
Staff
Other (please describe)
Board member

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How long have you served on this board?

Less than 1 year
1 to 3 years
4 to 6 years
7 to 9 years
10 to 12 years
13 years or more

Do you have a vote on the board?

No
Yes

Remaining survey items utilize response options as follows:

Poor
Fair
Satisfactory
Very Good
Excellent

The board periodically reviews the mission to ensure it fits the current context of higher education and reflects the history of the institution.

The board ensures the institution operates under a written strategic plan that defines the institution's strengths, challenges, and priorities.

The board seeks out and considers diverse and competing points of view when discussing critical issues.

The board works with the chief executive and appropriate constituent groups to gain support for institutional goals.

The board elects a chair who can effectively lead the board and build a partnership with the chief executive.

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The board annually reviews the performance of the chief executive and periodically conducts a comprehensive assessment.

The board reviews and approves the chief executive's compensation (the full board).

The board reviews the budget to ensure it reflects the institution's priorities.

The board monitors the institution's financial health using trend and comparative data.

The board evaluates the sustainability of the institution's current financial model.

The board annually reviews the institution's endowment performance and policies (e.g., asset allocation; endowment drawdown).

The board sets policies for the creation and spending of endowment funds where applicable.

The board follows industry standards when overseeing the audit process (i.e., auditor independence, audit committee membership).

The board takes steps to preserve and enhance the physical assets of the institution.

The board monitors educational quality, using trend and comparative data for student learning outcomes, retention and graduation rates, and the value of degrees/certificates.

The board ensures policies and practices are in place to protect academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

The board reviews the institution's accreditation reports including responses to identified concerns or deficiencies.

The board has the right mix of skills and abilities among board members.

The board provides a meaningful orientation program for new board members.

The board periodically assesses individual board members and uses the results to strengthen performance.

The board periodically assesses the board chair and uses the results to strengthen performance.

The board structures board meetings to include time for substantive discussion.

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The board adheres to a comprehensive conflict-of-interest policy and addresses conflicts appropriately.

The board focuses on board-level work and avoids micromanagement of administrative responsibilities.

The board promotes trust among board members through a culture based on openness and respect.

The board establishes and communicates clear expectations related to board service.

The board incorporates practices that build diversity and foster inclusion at the board level.

The board speaks with one voice and stands united behind controversial decisions.

The board respects the confidentiality of board and committee materials and discussions.