The State University Board of Trustees approved on December 12, 1991 an amendment to Section 604.2 of the Community College Code of Regulations (responsibilities and duties of community college trustees) and a set of revised "Guidelines for the Selection and Approval of Community College Presidents." The revised regulation and guidelines (copies attached) clarify the existing authority and responsibility of the State University Trustees and community college trustees under the Education Law concerning evaluation, selection, appointment and approval of community college presidential appointments, while maintaining the traditional and statutory authority of both sets of trustees.

The University's Central Administration has customarily maintained a role of liaison with and assistance to the campuses in the selection and approval process for community college presidents. The guidelines continue and define this relationship. They will also serve as the basis for the Chancellor's recommendation of approval of any community college presidential appointment to the State University Trustees. There is no change, however, in the basic relationship between the two: the recommendation of the Chancellor does not alter the authority of the SUNY Trustees, who continue to exercise their authority to accept or reject a presidential candidate appointed by a community college board of trustees.

The attached guidelines are based on earlier (1983) guidelines. The principal changes are additions or clarifications, for example, further defining and clarifying the conditions of appointment that are customarily taken into consideration by the Chancellor before making a recommendation to the State University Trustees such as presidential salary and other important benefits, length of employment contract or commitment pursuant to resolution of the college trustees, procedures for notice of renewal, and terms of separation in the event of non-renewal. Additional criteria
provide that the search will be open, that college constituencies will be involved, and that the search will be conducted in accord with the principles of affirmative action.

The amended regulations and revised guidelines, which have been the subject of extensive review and discussion by community college trustees, have been endorsed by the Executive Committee of the Association of Boards of Trustees of Community Colleges and the Council of Presidents.

Thank you for your assistance in developing the new guidelines.

D. Bruce Johnstone

Attachments

Copy: Chairs, Community College Boards of Trustees

This memorandum for information to:

Presidents, State-operated Campuses
Deans, Statutory Colleges
President Coll
Provost Nesheim
Guidelines for the Selection and Approval of Community College Presidents

A. Legal Authority

The legal authority to approve the appointment of a community college president is vested in the State University Board of Trustees by Section 6306(2) of the Education Law which states that the board of trustees of each community college shall appoint a president subject to the approval of the State University Trustees. These guidelines are intended to provide guidance to community college boards when they are engaged in the process of selecting or evaluating the appointment of a campus president. The following guidelines will be applied in connection with the approval or disapproval of a presidential appointment by the State University Trustees after receipt of the recommendation of the Chancellor in accordance with §604.2 of the Community College Code of Regulations and the procedures set forth in these guidelines.

B. Procedures for Search

The appointment by the college trustees shall follow an open search in which college constituencies play a substantial role and which shall, in the spirit of affirmative action, reflect good faith efforts to generate a substantial and diverse pool of applicants.

1. As soon as is practical after a presidential vacancy occurs, the college board of trustees should appoint a committee to advise the full board on the appointment of a new president. The committee should, in accord with generally accepted presidential search procedures, have representatives from principal constituencies including, but not limited to, teaching faculty, administration, support staff, students, alumni, the college sponsor, and, of course, the board itself. Confidentiality is most important, and anyone agreeing to serve on a search committee must respect this principle.

2. The Chancellor shall immediately designate a State University Central Administration staff member to act in an advisory capacity with the community college trustees and presidential search committee. That representative shall have full access to files of the committee, shall be entitled to attend all search committee meetings, and shall be responsible for reporting to the Chancellor and the State University Trustees regarding the progress of the search and the work of the committee.

3. The college board of trustees should take advantage of the presidential vacancy to determine its immediate leadership needs and those of the foreseeable future.
At the first presidential search committee meeting, the chairperson of that committee, along with the Central Administration representative, should acquaint the committee members with search procedures in general and those established by the board of trustees of the college, and the provisions of the State University Trustees Guidelines for the Selection and Approval of Community College Presidents.

Following review of candidates, the presidential search committee should plan to interview a small number of candidates, and from that group refer the finalists to the board of trustees of the college.

The college board of trustees should meet with the finalists, select one from that group, and request the State University Board of Trustees to approve the appointment after receiving the recommendation of the Chancellor.

A recommendation by the Chancellor to the State University Trustees for approval or disapproval will take into consideration the conditions of appointment of such presidential candidate as evidenced by a resolution of the college trustees or proposed contract of employment. The conditions of appointment to be considered would include, but not be limited to, salary and other major executive benefits, length of employment contract and procedures for notice of renewal, and terms of severance in the event of termination or non-renewal.

The Chancellor, or designee, shall provide such further advice and assistance in connection with the selection and approval of presidents of community colleges not inconsistent with these guidelines as the community college trustees shall request.

Notwithstanding the procedures followed or the qualifications of the presidential candidate, the community college board of trustees and/or the State University Board of Trustees reserve the right to reject any candidate.

C. Qualities to be Sought

Although a list of qualities to be sought should not be viewed as absolute requirements, and while the qualities most appropriate will vary by college and historical moment, the following qualities are generally expected for the presidency of a State University community college:

- an appropriate background of academic credentials and accomplishments evidencing scholarly ability;
successful administrative experience appropriate to the requirements of the presidency;

- qualities of educational leadership and ability to maintain effective relationships with faculty, students, administrative staff, alumni, and others;

- commitment to the mission of public higher education, generally, and to the specific mission of the community college for which the candidate is being considered;

- evidence or distinct promise of the ability to build productive community relationships;

- evidence or distinct promise of the ability to generate external support;

- commitment to the principles of diversity and equal opportunity; and

- personal traits necessary for the most exacting of executive responsibilities, among which are strength of character, intelligence, integrity, humor, fortitude, judgment, flexibility and openness to new ideas, sensitivity to human values, and a capacity for hard work.
604.2 Responsibilities and duties of the college trustees. Under the time-honored practice of American colleges, trustees of colleges, as legal official bodies corporate, concentrate on establishing policies governing the college, and delegate responsibility for the administration and execution of those policies to their employed professional administrators. The college trustees, subject to the approval of the State University trustees, shall appoint a president (whether permanent, acting, or interim), approve curricula, approve budgets, establish tuition and fees (within legal limits), approve sites and temporary and permanent facilities. Approval or disapproval of the appointment of a president by the State University trustees shall be made in accordance with the State University trustees guidelines for the selection and approval of such appointments. The guidelines shall include a procedure for the State University trustees to receive the recommendation of the chancellor concerning such appointment. The college trustees shall provide for the awarding of certificates and diplomas, and the conferring of appropriate degrees on the recommendation of the president and the faculty. In addition, the college trustees upon the recommendation of the president shall appoint personnel, adopt salary schedules, and approve the organizational pattern of the college.