

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

MSU Governance Commitments – Protocols

I. Internal Communications/Information requests

The goal of this section is to streamline and coordinate information requests with administrators and share outcomes, as needed, with relevant board committees or the whole board for further awareness, deliberation, or decision-making, as applicable. Information requests from any Board member will be shared with the Board Chair and the President, unless there is an ethical reason not to do so. The requesting board member should state their rationale for limiting distribution when making the request. The processes outlined recognize and try to balance the responsibilities of individual trustees, the board, and the administration.

A. Information Requests:

Substantive requests for information or action (e.g. would require the university to allocate resources in new or significantly different ways; would require a revision to board or university wide policies) from a board member that are outside of items on the agenda for a public meeting, committee meeting or work session should be sent to both the Office of the President's Chief of Staff ("CoS") and the Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Board of Trustees ("Secretary"). The CoS and the Secretary will consult and triage the request, informing the President as may be necessary for effective coordination, and work with the appropriate Vice President(s) to fulfil the information request. Information stemming from a substantive request may be shared with the full board or routed to a relevant committee.

Requests for information from a board member about items related to a board agenda may be directed in either of the following ways depending on subject matter:

1. the Secretary *or*
2. the relevant Vice President with a copy to the Secretary and the CoS

Non-substantive requests for information or action (e.g., a copy of a report, preexisting data set, etc.) may be sent to the Secretary and/or other staff in the Board of Trustees for triage and resolution.

Employees reached out to by a Trustee for information should notify their direct supervisor, the head of the Major Administrative Unit (MAU) overseeing that unit and the



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relevant Vice President. The head of the MAU or Vice President, at a minimum, should inform the Secretary and the CoS to ensure coordination.

In general, Trustees should communicate with university stakeholders through the Office of the President and the Office of the Board of Trustees with university stakeholders.

B. Faculty and Student Liaisons:

Engagement with academic governance representatives, both faculty and students, should primarily occur through the board's designated liaisons. √. The Secretary and the CoS should be notified of any follow-ups stemming from such engagements to coordinate accordingly.

1. Academic Governance representatives are strongly encouraged to work with the Administration to both raise and resolve issues prior to engagement with board members.

C. Student Organizations:

Trustees should notify the Senior Vice President for Student Life and Engagement prior to engagement with student organizations, if possible, or at minimum shortly thereafter. The Secretary and the CoS should be notified of any follow-ups stemming from such engagements to coordinate accordingly. As the primary individual assigned to work with student leaders, coordination with the Senior Vice President is critical to ensuring programmatic and resource support and coordination.

D. Meetings:

Meetings involving board members should be scheduled by, or in coordination with, the Board of Trustees office.

II. External Engagements

A. Government Relations:

Visits with elected officials about matters affecting the University should be conducted in coordination with the Office of Government Relations, either directly or through the President or Secretary. At minimum, the Vice President for Government Relations should be notified, either directly or through the President or Secretary, in advance of any such intent to conduct a meeting so the Trustee can be briefed on any broader context that may be relevant and to inform the overall university advocacy strategy. The Secretary will share information about the engagement with the Board Chair and the President, as applicable, to ensure coordination.

B. Donor Engagement:

Visits with major university donors about matters affecting the University should be conducted in coordination with the Office of Advancement, either directly or through the President or Secretary. At minimum, the Vice President for Advancement should be notified in advance, either directly or through the Board Secretary, of any such intent to conduct a meeting so the Trustee can be briefed on any broader context that may be relevant and to inform the overall university advancement strategy. The Secretary will share information about the engagement with the Board Chair and the President, as applicable, to ensure coordination.

III. Events

A. Event Form:

Units looking to invite Trustees to university functions should do so using the event invitation form unless otherwise guided by the Office of the Board of Trustees. The unit head should inform the relevant MAU lead and Vice President of the request. Trustees should receive briefing materials from the appropriate unit at least two (2) days prior to an event. Remarks should be prepared by, or in consultation with, University Communications.

B. Event Calendaring and Updates:

Trustees will have an event placed on the Board of Trustees calendar and their own MSU calendars for reference. The Office of the Board of Trustees shall apprise board members on a regular cadence regarding upcoming events and board representation at university functions to ensure the board is appropriately represented.

IV. Media

A. Statements:

On matters pertaining to the business of the University, the Board should speak through the Chair of the Board when a statement on behalf of the board may be necessary. In determining whether a statement is necessary, the Chair will consult with the President and the Vice President for University Communications. In general, a single university statement is preferred to ensure aligned communication with stakeholders, with the perspectives of the board and the administration taken into consideration on sensitive matters. The following principles will also be considered:

1. Is the Board in agreement on a clear, meaningful statement?
2. Is there a desire to obtain the Board's perspective separate from that of the university that cannot be managed through a singular communication or a joint communication with the president?

3. Does the situation or incident require Board action and require a communications support of that action?

In instances where an individual trustee speaks out on their own behalf, the Board Chair and/or the President should be informed in advance of any such statement being distributed to the media.

B. Media Outreach:

Trustees should contact University Communications for assistance/context when contacted by the media. This helps inform the University's media strategy and Trustees' ability to advance it.

V. Travel, Taxation, and Donations

A. Guidelines:

All travel should be conducted in alignment with the Trustee Travel & Taxation guidelines issued by the Office of the Senior Vice President, Treasurer, and Chief Financial Officer.

B. Donated Items (excluding tickets*):

In the event a Trustee donates a university-provided item to a charity (e.g., MSU provides a football autographed by the head coach to a Trustee who gives it to a local non-profit for a charity auction), this donation should be logged for tracking by the Board Office for internal documentation purposes. The Board Office is to determine if the charity involved is an appropriate recipient of such items. The value of a single item donated should not exceed \$100.

*Tickets are addressed in Section I of the Trustee Taxation Guidelines for Tickets and Travel.