

# Statement of Expectations

The Board of Trustees has primary responsibility for governance of the University of the Virgin Islands. The Virgin Islands Code outlines the role and responsibilities of Board members of the University.

Each member of the Board must be willing to make a strong and sustained personal commitment of time, talent and energy in order to meet the challenges of this demanding role.

**The purpose of this document is two-fold:**

**FIRST**, to inform potential nominees to the Board of the level of commitment they will be expected to make; and, **SECOND**, to inform the public of what the Board expects of its members.

## GOVERNANCE

The Board of Trustees governs the University, which under the provisions of Title 17, Chapters 33 and 35 of the Virgin Islands Code, serves in a dual capacity.

- As a body politic and corporate for the purpose of exercising general management and control of the affairs of the University (17, V.I.C. Section 453); 456 and,
- 456 Specific function of board (delegation of power exercise general management and control of the university and shall have specific functions, i.e.
- Sub C board may delegate to the president its representation to the president

## BOARD COMPOSITION

The Board consists of seventeen (17) voting trustees:

- **Ex-Officio:** The Chair of the Board of Education of the Virgin Islands, the Commissioner of Education of the Virgin Islands, and the President of the University.
- **Public Members:** Nine members shall serve on the Board who are appointed by the Governor with advice and consent of the Legislature. This is a five year term.
- **Trustees elected by the Board:** Two members of the Board shall be elected by the Board. This is a five year term.
- **Trustees elected by the Student Body and the Teaching Faculty:** One member of the Board shall be elected by the student body, and one shall be elected by the teaching faculty of the University. This is a one year term.
- **Trustee elected by the Alumni Association:** One member of the Board shall be elected by the UVI Alumni Association. This is a three year term.

## MEETINGS

Meetings of the UVI Board of Trustees are held at least three times a year according to the schedule posted on the UVI website. All formal sessions of the Board are open to the public; a portion of the meeting may at times be held in Executive Session which is closed to the public.

Meetings are generally held alternatively on the St. Thomas and St. Croix campuses of the University.

## **STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS**

- I. To be well informed: To understand the University of the Virgin Islands in the context of higher education, its mission, structure, programs, financial framework, strengths, challenges, and current issues, the role of the governing board, the role of the administration, the roles of faculty, academic staff, and students; relationships between the University and the Virgin Islands government; and national higher education environment. This includes:**
  - a. Participation in an orientation session of new Board members.
  - b. Participation in Trustee visits to the University campuses to view facilities, learn about programs, and meet with faculty, staff, administrators, and students.
  - c. Participation in meetings of the committees of the Board, as assigned.
  - d. Thorough review of agenda materials and other information pertinent to issues before the Board; careful consideration of options for addressing these issues.
  - e. Understanding the mission and character of each campus of the University of the Virgin Islands.
  
- II. To be an active and contributing participant in the work of the Board of Trustees. This includes:**
  - a. Regular attendance at meetings of the Board with the expectation that all of the meetings will be attended (approximately 3-4 meetings annually).
  - b. Speaking with Executive and Legislative branch decision makers and other stakeholders to obtain input and explain Board positions.
  - c. Attending University functions.
  - d. Giving a fair and objective hearing to differing opinions.
  - e. Discussing issues fully, but accepting and supporting the Board's decision once it is made.
  - f. Representing the public interest in general and not the interest of any particular constituency.
  - g. Public support of the President and the University's efforts to fulfill its mission.
  
- III. To adhere to high standards of ethical conduct and to comply fully with laws relating to conduct of public officials and Boards. This includes:**
  - a. Avoidance of any conflict of interest and adherence to the standards of conduct for members of the Board, as set forth by the UVI Board of Trustees Conflict of Interest Policy (approved by the Board March 12, 2005). In the case of any potential conflict of interest, the Board member is expected to seek clarification. Where a conflict of interest is found to exist, the Board member must abstain from participating in the discussion and from voting on the matter in question.

- b. Full compliance with the Open meetings and public records laws and policies.
  - c. Maintenance of confidentiality when appropriate.
- IV. To accept responsibility for effectively and efficiently governing the University of the Virgin Islands in the public interest. This includes:**
- a. Preservation and enhancement of educational quality.
  - b. Sound financial management.
  - c. Prudent stewardship of University assets.
  - d. Appointment and annual performance evaluation of the UVI President.
  - e. Ensure that good planning of programs and allocation of limited resources so as to most effectively serve the higher educational needs of Virgin Islands citizens.
  - f. Establishment and maintenance of a strong system of accountability to the public for performance results.
  - g. Strategic planning to address future needs.
  - h. Advocacy for the value of higher education to the US Virgin Islands.
  - i. Monitor and understand the policy implications of litigation affecting UVI.
  - j. Periodic Board Assessment.

## **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS**

### With External Groups (including GOVI): Official Public Statements/Representations

Because the Board of Trustees has a duty and responsibility to protect the good name, reputation, and interests of the University of the Virgin Islands, it has taken steps to assure not only that there are good lines of communications between the University and its external publics but it has established what those lines should be.

Therefore, to assure that the University speaks with one voice and presents a consistent message about its programs and operations, the Board has charged only the Chair of the Board and the President of the University to make public statements on its behalf. And in those instances in which representations are made on the part of the University or the Board itself, these will have been duly authorized by the Board or the President as its designee. The Board always acts (and speaks) as a corporate entity as specified in the By-Laws and as a generally accepted practice in American higher education.

### With its Board Committees

Both Standing and Special Committees exist to facilitate and make more efficient and effective the decision-making processes of the Board of Trustees. However, no matter how important the work of the committee, it is not more important than the corporate entity of which it is a part. Therefore, it is important that the charges and special assignments given to committees by the Board are unambiguous and that they include essential information about protocols (i.e. timelines, reporting formats) and the like. A Board Committee, unless specifically authorized by the Board, never speaks for or represents the Board as a corporate entity.

As indicated in the By-Laws, Standing and Special Committees must report on their activities at all regular and special meetings of the Board.

### With University Constituent Groups/Persons

Consistent with established protocol – as well as to avoid unflattering public relations, unnecessary legal exposure, and crises in human interactions – the Board operates on the basis that individual members of the Board will communicate with the University through leadership (i.e. the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board or the President of the University). While Board committees will obviously communicate directly with the administrative staff liaisons assigned, the communication will in no way take the form of an administrative directive. This of course does not include directives issued by the Executive Committee of the Board to the President. Not only as a courtesy but also to ensure that information is accurate and from the proper source, requests for information and other inquiries regarding various aspects of the University should be through the Office of the President of the University. If it is a sensitive matter involving personnel, the Board member should discuss such matters in private with the President or the Board Chair.

### **RESOURCES**

**Ingram, Richard T. and Associates.** Trustee Responsibilities: A Guide for Governing Boards and Public Institutions.

**Ingram, Richard T.,** AGB Board Basics Series: Board Leadership, New Trustee Orientation – A Guide for Public Colleges and Universities.

**Wilson, E.B.,** AGB Board Basics: Effective Committees, Committee on Trustees.

**Schwartz, Merrill P.,** AGB Board Basics: Board Leadership, Assessing Individual Trustee Performance.

**Simmons, Howard L.,** Do's and Don'ts for Trustees in Higher Education.

**Simmons, Howard L.,** UVI Board of Trustees Manual

**By-Laws of the University of the Virgin Islands.** (Amended by the Board of Trustees on October 25, 1997, August 5, 1999, March 4, 2000, February 12, 2004, June 19, 2004, March 12, 2005 and June 24, 2006).