

4.2.e**The governing board has appropriate and fair processes for the dismissal of a board member. (*Board dismissal*)****Rationale and Notes**

Members of the governing board need to exercise their responsibilities without fear of retaliatory measures, such as removal from office by arbitrary or capricious means. Substantive and procedural processes protect the interests of the institution and the members of the governing board. A fair process, in most cases, should include some mechanism for board members to have their response to charges for dismissal heard.

The removal of board members at public institutions is often subject to statutory language. In such cases, any institutional policies and procedures for dismissal of a board member should be consistent with the statutes, as should any actions taken to remove a board member or to replace an entire board.

NOTE

If the institution has had no cause to dismiss a governing board member and, therefore, has not applied its policy, it should indicate that examples of implementation are unavailable because no such dismissals have taken place.

Questions to Consider

- What is the institutional policy that governs the removal of a governing board member from office?
- Who elects/appoints governing board members? Who has the authority to remove board members?
- If board member removal is subject to statutory procedures, is board policy consistent with legal requirements?
- Does the policy or procedure offer specific grounds for potential board dismissal?
- Does the policy or procedure specify a process for dismissal?
- Would a reasonable person find that process to be fair?

Sample Documentation

- Governing board documents (e.g., bylaws, manuals) that outline the grounds and process for board member dismissal.
- Details on how board members access this information.
- Examples of how the policy has been implemented, if applicable.

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

This standard requires a policy or procedure. See Appendix A of this document for implications. See also:

SACSCOC good practices: [Developing Policy and Procedures Documents](#)

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

None noted.

4.2.f The governing board protects the institution from undue influence by external persons or bodies. (*External influence*)

Rationale and Notes

Effective governing boards adhere to the laws and regulations that underpin the institution's legitimacy while championing its right to operate without unreasonable intrusions by governmental and nongovernmental agencies and entities. This applies to any governing board, whether public, private not-for-profit, or private for-profit. The board protects and preserves the institution's independence from outside pressures.

“Undue” influence does not mean “no” influence. Elected officials, corporate offices, alumni associations, and religious denominational bodies are examples of persons or bodies that appropriately have interests in the activities of related colleges and universities. However, the governing board of the institution has been vested with the authority to make decisions regarding the institution, and no outside person, board, or religious or legislative body should be in a position to interfere with the governing board's ultimate authority to fulfill its responsibilities or to interfere in the operations of the institution.

Questions to Consider

- How and to what extent are governing board members educated regarding their responsibilities?
- What safeguards are in place to protect the institution from undue influence of external bodies or persons?
- In cases where undue external influence was sought by external bodies or individuals, what actions were taken by the governing board?

Sample Documentation

- Bylaws, operating manuals or handbooks, and/or orientation materials that outline board member duties and responsibilities.
- Details on board training.