

ATS Standards

7 Authority and governance

Governance is based on a bond of trust among boards, administration, faculty, students, and ecclesial bodies. Each institution should articulate its own theologically informed understanding of how this bond of trust becomes operational as a form of shared governance. Institutional stewardship is the responsibility of all, not just the governing board. Good institutional life requires that all institutional stewards know and carry out their responsibilities effectively as well as encouraging others to do the same. Governance occurs in a legal context, and its boundaries are set by formal relationships with ecclesiastical authority, with public authority as expressed in law and charter, and with private citizens and other legally constituted bodies in the form of contracts. The governance of a theological school, however, involves more than the legal relationships and bylaws that define patterns of responsibility and accountability. It is the structure by which participants in the governance process exercise faithful leadership on behalf of the purpose of the theological school.

7.1

Authority

7.1.1 Authority is the exercise of rights, responsibilities, and powers accorded to a theological school by its charter, articles of incorporation and bylaws, and ecclesiastical and civil authorizations applicable to it or by the overall educational institution of which it is a part. A theological school derives from these mandates the legal and moral authority to establish educational programs; to confer certificates, diplomas, or degrees; to provide for personnel and facilities; and to assure institutional quality and integrity.

7.1.2 The structure and scope of the theological school's authority are based on the patterns of its relationship to other institutions of higher education or ecclesiastical bodies. Some theological schools have full authority for all institutional and educational operations. Other schools, related to colleges, universities, or clusters of theological schools, may have limited authority for institutional operations, although they may have full authority over the educational programs. Still other schools are related to ecclesiastical bodies in particular ways, and authority is shared by the institution and the ecclesiastical body. All three kinds of schools have different patterns for the exercise of authority, and in some schools these patterns may be blended.

7.1.2.1 Schools with full authority shall have a governing board with responsibilities for maintaining the purpose, viability, vitality, and integrity of the institution; the achievement of institutional policies; the selection of chief administrative leadership; and the provision of physical and fiscal resources and personnel. The board is the legally constituted body that is responsible for managing the assets of the institution in trust.

7.1.2.2 Schools where authority is limited by or derived from their relationship to a college or university shall identify clearly where the authority for maintaining the integrity and vitality of the theological school resides and how that authority is to be exercised in actual practice. Schools within universities or colleges should have an appropriate advisory board whose roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in the institution's official documents.

7.1.2.3 Schools with authority limited by their ecclesiastical relationships shall develop, in dialogue with

their sponsoring church bodies, a formal statement concerning the operative structure of governance for the institution. This statement must make clear where the authority for maintaining the integrity and vitality of the school resides and how that authority is to be exercised in actual practice. In schools of this type, the authority of the governing board shall be clearly specified in appropriate ecclesiastical and institutional documents.

7.1.3 Governing boards delegate authority to the faculty and administration to fulfill their appropriate roles and responsibilities. Such authority shall be established and set forth in the institution's official documents and carried out in governing practices.

7.1.4 In multi-location institutions, the assignment of authority and responsibilities should be clearly defined in the institution's official documents and equitably administered.

7.2 Governance

7.2.1 While final authority for an institution is vested in the governing board and defined by the institution's official documents, each school shall articulate a structure and process of governance that appropriately reflects the collegial nature of theological education. The governance process should identify the school's constituencies and publics, recognize the multiple lines of accountability, and balance competing accountabilities in a manner shaped by the institution's charter, purpose, and particular theological and denominational commitments.

7.2.2 Shared governance follows from the collegial nature of theological education. Unique and overlapping roles and responsibilities of the governing board, faculty, administrators, students, and other identified delegated authorities should be defined in a way that allows all partners to exercise their mandated or delegated leadership. Governance requires a carefully delineated process for the initiation, re-view, approval, implementation, and evaluation of governing policies, ensuring that all necessary policies and procedures are in place. Special attention should be given to policies regarding freedom of inquiry, board-administrator prerogatives, procedural fairness, sexual harassment, and discrimination.

7.2.3 The collaborative nature of governance provides for institutional learning and self-correction, constantly developing the theological school's knowledge of specific tasks, and remaining alert to developments in other organizations and institutions.

7.3 The roles of the governing board, administration, faculty, and students in governance processes

The various roles that the board, the administrative leadership, and the faculty play in the development of policy and the exercise of authority should be clearly articulated. Because of their different histories and patterns of governance and administration, the role of the governing board varies from institution to institution; and the role also varies dependent upon the authority vested in the governing board and upon the institution's relationship to other educational and denominational structures.

7.3.1 Governing board

7.3.1.1 The governing board is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the institution's integrity and its freedom from inappropriate external and internal pressures and from destructive interference or restraints. It shall attend to the well-being of the institution by exercising proper fiduciary responsibility, adequate financial oversight, proper delegation of authority to the institution's

administrative officers and faculty, engaging outside legal counsel, ensuring professional and independent audits, using professional investment advisors as appropriate, and maintaining procedural fairness and freedom of inquiry.

7.3.1.2 The governing board shall be accountable for the institution's adherence to requirements duly established by public authorities and to accreditation standards established by the Commission and by any other accrediting or certifying agencies to which the institution is formally related.

7.3.1.3 Members of the governing board shall possess the qualifications appropriate to the task they will undertake. In accordance with the school's purpose and constituencies, the governing board's membership should reflect diversity of race, ethnicity, and gender. As fiduciaries, they should commit themselves loyally to the institution, its purpose, and its overall well-being. They should lead by affirming the good that is done and by asking thoughtful questions and challenging problematic situations. New members of the board should be oriented to their responsibilities and the structures and procedures the board uses to accomplish its tasks.

7.3.1.4 Subject to the terms of its charter and bylaws, the board chooses the chief administrative leadership, appoints faculty, confers degrees, enters into contracts, approves budgets, and manages the assets of the institution. If, in accordance with an institution's specific character and traditions, certain of these powers are reserved to one or more other governing entities, the specific character of these restrictions shall be made clear.

7.3.1.5 The governing board shall require ongoing institutional planning and evaluation of outcomes to assure faithful implementation of the school's purpose, priorities, and denominational and theological commitments.

7.3.1.6 The governing board shall create and employ adequate structures for implementing and administering policy, and shall delegate to the school's chief administrative leadership authority commensurate with such responsibilities. In turn, it requires from these officers adequate performance and accountability.

7.3.1.7 In its actions and processes, the board serves in relationship to a variety of constituencies, both internal (e.g., administration, faculty, students, staff) and external (e.g., graduates, denominations, congregations, etc.) and should seek creative initiatives from all of these constituencies. Individual board members, who are drawn from various constituencies, shall exercise their responsibility on the behalf of the institution as a whole.

7.3.1.8 The board shall exercise its authority only as a group. An individual member, unless authorized by the board, shall not commit the institution's resources, nor bind it to any course of action, nor intrude upon the administration of the institution.

7.3.1.9 The board shall have a conflict of interest policy. Ordinarily, members should not be engaged in business relationships with the institution, nor should they derive any material benefit from serving on the board. In the event that conflicts of interest arise, a board member must recuse himself or herself from any vote or participation in the board's decision on that issue.

7.3.1.10 Governing boards should be structured to conduct their work effectively. Board membership should be large enough to reflect the institution's significant constituencies but not so large as to be

unwieldy in its decision making. The frequency of board meetings should be determined by the number and complexity of the issues the board is called upon to address. An executive committee of the board may be given the authority to address issues between meetings of the full board.

7.3.1.11 The board has the responsibility to hold itself accountable for the overall performance of its duties and shall evaluate the effectiveness of its own procedures. It should also seek to educate itself about the issues it faces and about procedures used by effective governing bodies in carrying out their work. The board shall evaluate its members on a regular basis.

7.3.1.12 The board shall be responsible for evaluating overall institutional governance by assessing and monitoring the effectiveness of institutional governance procedures and structures.

7.3.2 Administration

7.3.2.1 Under the governing board's clearly stated policies and requisite authority, the chief administrative leadership is responsible for achieving the school's purpose by developing and implementing institutional policies and administrative structures in collaboration with the governing board, faculty, students, administrative staff, and other key constituencies.

7.3.2.2 Administrative leaders should implement the institution's theological convictions and shared values in the way they manage the school's financial and physical resources and personnel, consult and communicate with constituencies, and ensure fairness in all evaluation and planning activities.

7.3.2.3 Administrative leaders and staff shall include, insofar as possible, individuals reflecting the institution's constituencies, taking into account the desirability of diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender. They should be sufficient in number and ability to fulfill their responsibilities. They should have adequate resources and authority appropriate to their responsibilities.

7.3.2.4 The responsibilities and structures of accountability shall be clearly defined in appropriate documents.

7.3.3 Faculty

7.3.3.1 Within the overall structure of governance of the school, authority over certain functions shall be delegated to the faculty and structures devised by which this authority is exercised. Normally, the faculty should provide leadership in the development of academic policy, oversight of academic and curricular programs and decisions, establishment of admissions criteria, and recommendation of candidates for graduation. The faculty should participate in the processes concerning the appointment, retention, and promotion in rank of faculty members.

7.3.3.2 Beyond the matters specifically delegated to the faculty, the faculty should contribute to the overall decision making as determined by the institution's structure of governance. Such involvement is particularly important in the development of the institution's purpose statement and in institutional evaluation and planning.

7.3.4 Students

Where students take part in the formal structures of governance, their roles and responsibilities should be clearly delineated.

NEASC Standards

Standard Three: Organization and Governance

The institution has a system of governance that facilitates the accomplishment of its mission and purposes and supports institutional effectiveness and integrity. Through its organizational design and governance structure, the institution creates and sustains an environment that encourages teaching, learning, service, scholarship, and where appropriate research and creative activity. It assures provision of support adequate for the appropriate functioning of each organizational component. The institution has sufficient independence from any sponsoring entity to be held accountable for meeting the Commission's *Standards for Accreditation*.

- . 3.1 The authority, responsibilities, and relationships among the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff are clearly described in the institution's by-laws, or an equivalent document, and in a table of organization that displays the working order of the institution. The board, administration, staff, and faculty understand and fulfill their respective roles as set forth in the institution's official documents and are provided with the appropriate information to undertake their respective roles. The institution's organizational structure, decision-making processes, and policies are clear and consistent with its mission and support institutional effectiveness. The institution's system of governance involves the participation of all appropriate constituencies and includes regular communication among them.
- . 3.2 The governing board is the legally constituted body ultimately responsible for the institution's quality and integrity. The board demonstrates sufficient independence to ensure it can act in the institution's best interest. The composition of the board includes representation of the public interest and reflects the areas of competence needed to fulfill its responsibilities. More than one-half of the board members, including the chair, are free of any personal or immediate familial financial interest in the institution, including as employee, stock- or share-holder, corporate director, or contractor. Members of the governing board understand, accept, and fulfill their responsibilities as fiduciaries to act honestly and in good faith in the best interest of the institution toward the achievement of its purposes in a manner free from conflicts of interest.
- . 3.3 The board has a clear understanding of the institution's distinctive mission and purposes. It exercises the authority to ensure the realization of institutional mission and purposes. The board sets and reviews institutional policies; monitors the institution's fiscal solvency; and approves major new initiatives, assuring that they are compatible with institutional mission and capacity. These policies are developed in consultation with appropriate constituencies. The board assures that the institution periodically reviews its success in fulfilling its mission and achieving its purposes.
- . 3.4 The board systematically develops and ensures its own effectiveness. The board enhances its effectiveness through periodic evaluation.
- . 3.5 Utilizing the institutional governance structure, the board establishes and maintains appropriate

and productive channels of communication among its members and with the institutional community. Its role and functions are effectively carried out through appropriate committees and meetings.

- . 3.6 The board appoints and periodically reviews the performance of the chief executive officer whose full-time or major responsibility is to the institution.
- . 3.7 The board delegates to the chief executive officer and, as appropriate, to others the requisite authority and autonomy to manage the institution compatible with the board's intentions and the institutional mission. In exercising its fiduciary responsibility, the governing board assures that senior officers identify, assess, and manage risks and ensure regulatory compliance.
- . 3.8 The chief executive officer through an appropriate administrative structure effectively manages the institution so as to fulfill its purposes and objectives and establishes the means to assess the effectiveness of the institution. The chief executive officer manages and allocates resources in keeping with institutional purpose and objectives and assesses the effectiveness of the institution. The chief executive officer assures that the institution employs staff sufficient in role, number, and qualifications appropriate to the institution's mission, size, and scope.
- . 3.9 In accordance with established institutional mechanisms and procedures, the chief executive officer and the administration consult with faculty, students, other administrators and staff, and are appropriately responsive to their concerns, needs, and initiatives. The institution's internal governance provides for the appropriate participation of its constituencies, promotes communications, and effectively advances the quality of the institution.
- . 3.10 The institution's chief academic officer is directly responsible to the chief executive officer, and in concert with the faculty and other academic administrators is responsible for the quality of the academic program. The institution's organization and governance structure assure the integrity and quality of academic programming however and wherever offered. Off-campus, continuing education, distance education, correspondence education, international, evening, and week-end programs are clearly integrated and incorporated into the policy formation, and academic oversight, and evaluation system of the institution.
- . 3.11 In multi-campus systems organized under a single governing board, the division of responsibility and authority between the system office and the institution is clear. Where system and campus boards share governance responsibilities or dimensions of authority, system policies and procedures are clearly defined and equitably administered.
- . 3.12 Faculty exercise an important role in assuring the academic integrity of the institution's educational programs. Faculty have a substantive voice in matters of educational programs, faculty personnel, and other aspects of institutional policy that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise.
- . 3.13 The system of governance makes provisions for consideration of student views and judgments in those matters in which students have a direct and reasonable interest.
- . 3.14 Through its system of board and internal governance, the institution ensures the appropriate consideration of relevant perspectives; decision-making aligned with expertise and responsibility; and timely action on institutional plans, policies, curricular change, and other key

considerations.

Institutional Effectiveness

3.15 The effectiveness of the institution's organizational structure and system of governance is improved through periodic and systematic review.

Authority and Governance

ATS Standard 7; NEASC Standard 3

Governance is the process by which the mission of the school is carried out. Effective governance is essential if the seminary is to achieve its educational mission with excellence, vitality and integrity. Trust is foundational to good governance, but a well-articulated and clearly-defined governance structure has the ability to engender trust among trustees, administration, faculty, staff and students. The Board of Trustees is the sole governing authority of the seminary (By-Laws, Article IV, Section 1), but it has delegated authority to various constituents so that the mission of the school can be accomplished. Shared governance in theological education, therefore, entails the collegial and collaborative work of the Board, the president, the faculty and the staff, who work together as God's stewards to accomplish the mission of the seminary. Since Gordon-Conwell is one institution with four campuses, it is vital that the lines of responsibility and authority be carefully delineated and clearly communicated, so that an environment of trust and transparency may be fostered among all its constituents.

The seminary's governance structure is based on the authority that the Board has delegated to the president, faculty and staff, who are assigned tasks and responsibilities so that the mission of the school may be accomplished. A clearly defined authority structure enables various constituents to exercise their rights and responsibilities with legitimacy and integrity, while also fostering a bond of trust throughout the institution. The goal of such processes is that decisions made, policies written, and programs initiated will be done with transparency and integrity, in accordance with the mission of the school. Since the Board is the legally-constituted governing body with final authority and fiduciary responsibility, the evaluation of the seminary's governance and authority structure begins with the Board of Trustees (ATS 7.3.1; NEASC 3.2-3.7).

Board of Trustees (ATS 7.3.1; NEASC 3.2-3.7)

The By-Laws of the seminary state that the Board of Trustees has "sole governing authority over the Seminary" (By-Laws, IV, Sec. 1); thus all corporate powers fall under its authority. The Board has final authority "on all policy matters, fiscal transactions, internal organization, relationships with external bodies, and the appointment of all members of the Board, the Administration, and the Faculty" (Article V, Sec. 1). The By-Laws are reviewed annually, with minor revisions being made regularly.

The Board of Trustees is to comprise no less than 21 and no more than 33 members (By-Laws, Article IV, Sec. 5). In 2013-2104, the Board had 26 members, comprising 74% men and 26% women. The Board is predominantly Caucasian (81% of its members); African-Americans represent 15% of its membership and Latinos represent 4% of its membership. There is currently no Asian representation on the Board. In terms of age, most of its members are over 50, with only 4% of its members under the age of 50 and with no Board member under the age of 40. The Board does not have any faculty or student representatives as invited guests, but the Board does meet with faculty and students regularly during

campus visits. The Board holds meetings three times per year, normally gathering on the main Hamilton campus, while periodically meeting at the Boston, Charlotte and Jacksonville campuses.

Rev. Dr John A. Huffman, Jr., who has served as a long-term Board member, was appointed Chairman of the Board in 2013. Board members are elected to three-year terms, which are renewable indefinitely. Board officers, namely, the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, are elected to serve for three years. Board officers are not permitted to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office (except under special circumstances determined by the Board). Under the leadership of the Chair, the Board is responsible to review periodically the seminary's mission and educational programs, elect and review the president, and oversee the seminary's budget and endowment, salaries, tuition rates, and fees. The president is evaluated by the Board on an annual basis. Yearly goals are established, a self-assessment is completed by the President and performance evaluation is conducted by the Chairman of the Board, and by the Chair of the Executive Compensation and Institutional Benefits Committee. Every three to five years the President's performance is evaluated by the full Board as part of a comprehensive presidential evaluation process by which input from the full Board and other constituent groups is obtained. The first annual evaluation of Dr. Hollinger was completed in February 2011 and the first comprehensive evaluation was completed in October 2012. The next comprehensive evaluation will be conducted by October 2017.

The Board carries out its work through six Standing Committees: Academic Affairs, Executive Compensation and Institutional Benefits, Finance and Advancement, Governance, Audit Committee, and the Investment Committee, all of which have their own charters delineating their responsibilities. In November 2013 the Board completed a self-assessment process, which was discussed and reviewed at the February 2014 Board meeting. In March 2014 the Board will conduct a peer review of trustee performance, which will be discussed at the May 2014 board meeting. Each member of the Board signs the Statement of Faith annually, along with the *Mission Statement* as an indication of his or her agreement with its articles of belief. The *Mission Statement* expresses the mission of the school to which the Board of Trustees is committed, and it ensures theological and educational consistency on all campuses and among all the constituents of the seminary. The *Mission Statement* along with its Commentary was reviewed by the Board in 2012, and the decision was made that all faculty members would affirm agreement with it annually. Every board member also signs a Conflict of Interest statement each year.

With full fiduciary responsibility, the Board has the prerogative to authorize the incurring of debt as needed, the construction of buildings, and the purchase or sale of property. The Board is fully supportive of the seminary, as indicated by the 100% participation of current Board members in the Comprehensive Campaign in 2013. Ensuring that the seminary's policies and procedures are in accordance with the law is the Board's responsibility, and it is the Board that ultimately votes to grant degrees to degree candidates. In 2012 the Board reviewed and approved a new Academic Governance Structure, which marked a significant change in academic processes. The new structure granted more autonomy in governance at the local campus level, while also preserving the authority of the full faculty with respect to faculty hires and the core curriculum of the seminary.

The Board of Trustees is authorized to establish a Board of Advisors for each campus, which consists of representatives chosen from the community. The purpose of the Board of Advisors is to foster good communication between the institution and the community in which the campus is located. Each campus has a separate Board of Advisors.

Administration (A.T.S. 7.3.2, N.E.A.S.C. 3.8-3.11)

In the spring of 2006 Dr. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. retired as the third president of Gordon Conwell, after serving nine years as president. Dr. James Emery White was appointed as the fourth president of the seminary, beginning in July 2006. His tenure was short-term, however. His departure as president in

May 2007 was immediately followed by the Board's appointment of Dr. Haddon W. Robinson as president in the interim period while the Board conducted a formal presidential search. Dr. Dennis P. Hollinger was appointed president in the summer of 2008 and continues to serve as the sixth president of Gordon-Conwell.

Under the authority of the Board, the president is the chief executive officer of the seminary. He is responsible to implement and direct policies and objectives of the seminary, and to integrate all its management functions so that the goals of the seminary are accomplished (By-Laws, VIII, sec. 3). The president is responsible for the direction and organization of the faculty (By-Laws, VIII, sec. 3), he serves as a member of the faculty with vote, and he represents the faculty at Board and committee meetings. The president has oversight of all the finances of the seminary and all its programs. Leadership and management of the seminary are carried out by the senior executive team, which is led by the president and which serves under his authority.

The organizational structure of the senior executive team has experienced some changes over the past few years. Prior to 2009, the chief academic officer was the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Hamilton Dean, who served as *primus inter pares* among the two other campus deans located at the Boston and Charlotte campuses. Dr. Barry Corey served as Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Hamilton until 2007, at which time he assumed the position of the President of Biola University. Dr. Alice Mathews served as interim Dean of Hamilton from 2007 to 2009. In 2009 the academic leadership structure changed to a provost model. It was envisaged that the Provost would serve as the chief academic officer of all four campuses, and a Hamilton dean would be appointed to provide academic leadership of the Hamilton campus. In 2009 Dr. Frank A. James III was appointed as Provost, and Dr. Carol Kaminski was appointed interim Dean, and subsequently Dean of the Hamilton campus. The transition to the provost model was not without its difficulties, particularly since two senior academic officers were located on the one campus. This led to some duplication and overlap in roles and responsibilities, and it became apparent that the suitability of the provost model for the institution needed to be reevaluated. In December 2011 Dr. Kaminski stepped down as dean of the Hamilton campus to return to her faculty position. In 2012 the academic leadership model returned to the Vice-President/Hamilton Dean model, which also marked the conclusion of the tenure of Dr. Frank James as Provost.

In 2012 Dr. Rick Lints was appointed Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Hamilton campus. Under the authority of the President, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs provides leadership in the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the institution-wide educational process, while also serving as Dean of the Hamilton campus. The four campus deans report to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Timothy Laniak continues to serve as Dean of the Charlotte campus, and he also had oversight of the Jacksonville campus during its formative period. In 2010 Dr. Ryan Reeves was appointed Assistant Dean of the Jacksonville campus, which enabled the Jacksonville campus to be governed independently of Charlotte, while continuing to be under the authority of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. In 2012 Dr. Mark Harden was appointed Dean of the Boston campus after the previous Dean, Dr. Alvin Padilla, assumed new responsibilities as Dean of Hispanic Ministries. In 2014 Dr. Don Fairbairn was appointed Associate Dean of Academics for the Charlotte campus, while continuing to serve as a full faculty member.

Senior executive leadership and management is carried out through two Senior Leadership Groups, namely, the President's Cabinet and the Leadership Team. These two leadership bodies provide the basic structure for the administration of the seminary, which functions as one institution with four distinct campuses. Members of the President's Cabinet include the President, the Vice-President for Finance and Operations, the Vice-President for Advancement, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Dean of the Hamilton Campus, the Dean of the Boston Campus, the Dean of the Charlotte Campus, the Dean of Hispanic Ministries, and the Dean of Students and Director of Student Life Services. The

purpose of the President's Cabinet is to provide counsel to the president on critical issues facing the seminary, to provide on-going analysis of the strategic plan, and to provide counsel to the president in relation to institutional priorities, initiatives, and partnerships so that the planning and implementation of strategic initiatives are in accordance with the mission of the school.

The Leadership Team consists of the President, the Vice-President for Finance and Operations, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Dean of the Hamilton Campus, the Dean of the Boston Campus, the Dean of the Charlotte Campus, the Assistant Dean of the Jacksonville Campus, the Dean of Hispanic Ministries, the Vice-President for Advancement, the Dean of Students and Director of Student Life Services, the Director of the Ockenga Institute, the Dean of Enrollment Management and Registrar, the Director of Communications and Marketing, the Director of the D.Min. Program, the Chief Information Officer, the Director of Human Resources, and the Controller. The purpose of the Leadership Team is to coordinate the daily management of all institutional operations, management policies and procedures, and to implement the strategic plans of the institution.

Under the authority of the president, the Vice-President for Finance and Operations is the chief financial officer. He is responsible for the seminary's budget, and accordingly, for ensuring the financial soundness and stability of the institution as a whole. As chief of operations, he is responsible for the administrative processes of the institution on all campuses. Under the authority of the Vice-President for Finance and Operation, each campus dean develops and manages the educational and operational budget of his campus.

Under the authority of the president, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Dean of the Hamilton campus is the chief academic officer of the institution. He provides leadership in the development, implementation, operation, and evaluation of the educational processes on all campuses, including educational technology, distance learning, and life-long learning. He is chair of the Faculty Policies and Personnel Committee (F.P.P.C.), and he manages the three faculty academic divisions, which are led by three divisional chairs.

As Dean of the Hamilton campus, he directs the on-site management and evaluation of all instructional programs on the Hamilton campus: he implements curriculum and instructional processes, participates in the selection, evaluation, and professional development of faculty, oversees the spiritual formation, mentoring, and assessment of students, and manages the professional work of the Hamilton faculty. He chairs the Academic Affairs Committee (A.A.C.) of the Hamilton campus, which is the primary committee for processing all matters pertaining to instructional programs, course development, and other educational processes related to the campus. The Director of the Ockenga Institute, who is responsible for a variety of non-credit academic programs on the Hamilton campus, reports directly to the Dean of the Hamilton campus. The Ockenga Institute covers a broad range of programs, which include the Shoemaker Center for Church Renewal, the J. Christy Wilson Center for World Missions, the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, and the Center for Preaching. The Director of the Doctor of Ministry programs, under the direction of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, is responsible for D.Min. program administration, including program research and development, quality control of the program, student recruitment, and policy development and implementation.

Under the authority of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, the deans of Boston, Charlotte and Jacksonville direct the management and evaluation of all instructional programs on their campuses; they are responsible to implement curriculum and instructional processes, participate in the selection, evaluation, and professional development of their campus faculty, oversee the spiritual formation, mentoring, and assessment of students, and manage the professional work of their faculty. Each campus dean serves as chair of the Academic Affairs Committee (A.A.C.) of his campus, which is the primary committee for processing all matters pertaining to instructional programs, course development, and other educational processes related to the campus.

Under the authority of the president, the Vice-President for Advancement provides leadership in the fundraising/stewardship and public relations programs of the seminary. He is the chief development officer within the overall governance process of the institution. He oversees the Annual Fund, the capital campaigns, and the public relations staff.

Under the authority of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Enrollment Management and Registrar oversees admissions, registration, and financial aid of the seminary. He devises and implements strategy to secure the planned enrollment at Gordon-Conwell, in addition to managing the academic records and transcripts and the enrollment reports of the entire school. As registrar located on the Hamilton campus, he serves as a member of the Hamilton A.A.C. and is chair of the Judicial Committee.

Under the authority of the president, the Dean of Students and Director of Student Life Services provides leadership for Student Life Services on all campuses, with particular focus on the Hamilton campus where the office is located. She initiates, implements and evaluates strategies and programs which are designed to serve the student body, which include the Student Association, residence life and housing, food service, international students, campus police, nursery school and community life/ethos.

Under the direction of the Vice-President for Finance and Operations, the Chief Information Officer directs and manages the information technology services necessary to support the administrative and educational technology programs of the seminary.

Staff (ATS 7.3.2.3; N.E.A.S.C 3.8)

The ongoing efforts and dedication of Gordon-Conwell's staff enable the day-to-day work of the seminary's mission to be accomplished. Every staff member is required to review and acknowledge acceptance of the seminary's *Mission Statement*, *Community Life Statement* and *Employee Standards*. Policies guiding staff employment are contained in the *Staff Handbook*, which was revised in 2010. An updated version of the *Handbook* will be completed by 2014. The handbook contains policies on sexual harassment, general harassment, equal opportunity employment, freedom of inquiry/appeal, a whistleblower policy and other policies. In 2006, new on-line harassment prevention training was launched to staff and faculty; all new employees are required to complete this training within one month of employment. Refresher training was successfully completed by all employees in 2011. The staff members on the Hamilton campus belong to the Staff Association, which serves as a forum for expressing staff needs and concerns, and as a communication channel between staff and administration. The Staff Association is not represented in the seminary's formal governance structure.

Faculty (A.T.S. 7.3.3; N.E.A.S.C. 3.12)

In 2013-2014 the faculty was comprised of 44 full-time teaching faculty members, located in the Hamilton, Boston and Charlotte campuses. In addition to the seminary's teaching faculty, in 2013-2014 there were four administrative faculty members. The faculty represents an ethnically and nationally diverse group, with members from Argentina, Australia, China, Croatia, Germany, Puerto Rico, Romania, South Africa and Switzerland, as well as the United States. The faculty is organized into three divisions: Biblical Studies, Christian Thought, and Practical Theology, and each division is led by a divisional chair. According to Article X in the By-Laws, responsibility for the direction of the seminary's academic programs is vested in the faculty who, under the president, "have responsibility for the educational program including such matters as admissions requirements, curricula, instruction, schedules, and degree requirements" (X, sec. 3). The authority and responsibilities of the faculty are delineated in the *Faculty Handbook* and in the *Academic Governance Structure*.

The *Faculty Handbook* states at the outset that "Institutional governance is the process that seeks to balance the interests of the Board of Trustees, the Office of the President, and the Faculty and is based upon the bond of trust established between these structures. It is this process that allows these

governance structures to carry out their leadership responsibilities effectively in behalf of the seminary.” The *Faculty Handbook* outlines the responsibilities of the Faculty. The version of the *Handbook* currently in use is from 2000, even though the *Faculty Handbook* states that the document is to be reviewed annually by the faculty and Board (4.21). A major revision is currently in process, and is expected to be finalized by October, 2014.

A significant restructuring of academic governance was accomplished in 2012 through the collaborative work of an ad-hoc governance committee, consisting of trustees, faculty and administration. Decision making under the purview of the faculty was previously accomplished through two primary committees: the Faculty Policies and Personnel Committee (F.P.P.C.), and the Educational Policies and Procedures Committee (E.P.P.C.). The F.P.P.C. processed, and still does process, jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to (i) faculty selection, (ii) faculty evaluation, (iii) faculty status and rank, and (iv) faculty collegiality. Prior to 2012, the E.P.P.C. processed all matters pertaining to (i) instructional programs, (ii) course development, (iii) lectureships, and (iv) specialty issues, such as judicial matters, library concerns, admission policies, and the overall curriculum development of the seminary. Members of the F.P.P.C. and the E.P.P.C. were elected by the faculty with attention given to adequate divisional representation on both committees, along with gender and ethnic representation.

The new Academic Governance Model, which was implemented in 2012, made significant changes with respect to how decisions are made in relation to instructional programs, course development, and the hiring of adjuncts. These changes were necessary in view of the seminary’s growth into four vibrant campuses which have their own identities shaped by their unique contexts. Previously, one E.P.P.C. committee had oversight of all instructional programs on all campuses. In the new model, the local campuses have their own committees, called Academic Affairs Committees (A.A.C.), thereby allowing for more decision-making at the campus level, while also preserving core commitments of the seminary through the bi-annual unified faculty meetings. Thus there is no longer an institutional E.P.P.C. The F.P.P.C. continued to have the same function under the new model, since this committee is responsible for matters related to faculty selection, status, evaluation and collegiality.

Students (A.T.S. 7.3.4.0; NEASC 3.14)

Student governance functions differently on each campus. At the main Hamilton campus the primary umbrella organization for student governance is the Student Association (SA). The SA consists of an Executive Committee, with a president, vice-president, and executive assistant, and several Standing Committees, including the Black Student Association, the Korean Association, the Women’s Resource Network, the Men’s Fellowship, and the Justice Association. The study body elects representatives to serve on these committees. The SA provides spiritual and social support for students on campus, and it functions as a liaison between the Dean of Students Office and the student body. While members of the SA may be invited to attend ad hoc committees or meetings, there is no student participation in the formal governance structure on the Hamilton campus. There is currently no Student Association at the Boston and Jacksonville campuses, whereas the Charlotte campus has a Student Council, consisting of four officers elected by the student body. The Student Council provides a student voice in faculty and administrative deliberations.

Alumni

At the beginning of 2014 Gordon-Conwell had 8,948 graduates living in every state of the US and in 82 countries. The Alumni Services office was reestablished in 2008 under the management of the Director of the Ockenga Institute. It provides regular communication to the graduates from all campuses, with the goal of helping them remain connected to the seminary, faculty and to other graduates, and enabling them to contribute to the ongoing work of the seminary. Gordon-Conwell Alumni are not currently represented in the governance structure of the seminary.

Appraisal and Recommendations

It was noted at the outset that “a clearly-defined authority structure enables various constituents to exercise their rights and responsibilities with legitimacy and integrity, while also fostering a bond of trust throughout the institution. The goal of such processes is that decisions made, policies written, and programs initiated will be done with transparency and integrity, in accordance with the mission of the school.” The research of the self-study committee has led to several observations about governance at Gordon-Conwell, which may be summarized as follows:

(i) Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has given careful attention to the establishment of yearly goals, which includes a self-assessment process that seeks to ensure the effectiveness of the Board’s six Standing Committees. A process for peer review is in place, and term limits for Board officers have recently been adopted. An important accomplishment of the Board in 2012 was the approval of a new Academic Governance Model, which represents the desire of the Board to grant more autonomy to the local campuses in light of the seminary’s growth into a multi-campus institution. The new academic governance structure was the result of the collaborative work of the governance ad-hoc committee, which included trustee, administration and faculty representatives. The collaborative work accomplished by the committee points to the benefits of shared governance in theological education.

In recent years the seminary has experienced a number of changes in the area of senior administrative leadership. As has been noted, there have been three presidents since the retirement of Dr. Kaiser in 2006. The Hamilton campus also experienced changes in senior leadership at the level of Academic Dean and Provost, after the departure of Dean Barry Corey in 2007 with the movement to a provost system, which was followed by a return to a structure in which one person (currently Dr. Rick Lints) holds the position of Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Dean of the Hamilton campus. It is inevitable that such changes in senior leadership will affect at some level the bond of trust between Board and the various constituents of the seminary. Dr. Hollinger’s tenure as president since 2008 has brought stability to the seminary after a somewhat turbulent period, and the appointment of Dr. Lints in 2012 has provided further continuity since he is a longstanding and well-respected faculty member.

Recommendation:

In an effort to ensure the successful transition to a new president whenever the tenure of Dr. Hollinger as president draws to a close, the self-study committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that the presidential search process include representation from faculty and administration.

Out of a commitment to build relationships and foster trust with the faculty, the Board meets regularly with faculty members over meals while on campus for Board meetings. Board/trustee dinners are held during Board visits, and in recent years Board members have had lunch with faculty in their offices. The Board also meets with students during their visits, hearing student testimonies and having breakfasts with students. These informal yet regularly scheduled events provide opportunities for relationships to be built and a bond of trust to be developed. Yet under the current governance structure, there is no formal representation of faculty or students on the Board. It is envisaged that some kind of more formal representation on the Board would serve to foster the bond of trust between Board and faculty, and Board and students, and provide opportunity for further communication between these constituents.

Recommendation

To continue growth in collaborative leadership and transparency, the self-study committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that a representative of the faculty be invited to attend Board meetings as an interested guest, and that the faculty representative provide a report to the Board Academic Affairs Committee. Given that the seminary is multi-campus, it is recommended that the faculty representative be chosen from a different campus on a rotating basis.

Recommendation

To continue growth in collaborative leadership and transparency, and to foster communication and trust between the student body and the Board, the self-study committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that they invite a student representative to attend Board meetings as an interested guest. Given that the seminary is multi-campus, it is recommended that the student representative be chosen from different campuses on a rotating basis.

In 2013-2104, the Board was almost 3/4 men and more than 4/5 Caucasian, with no Asian board member. The Board included no one under age 40 and only 4% under age 50.

Recommendation:

In an effort to increase racial diversity on the Board and in recognition of the growth of Asian students at the seminary, the self-study committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that they recruit several Board members to represent the Asian constituency.

Recommendation:

In an effort to decrease the age-gap between members of the Board and the student body, the self-study committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that they make an effort to consider younger candidates, possibly alumni, when recruiting new Board members.

(ii) Administration

Recommendation:

In an effort to increase gender diversity in academic leadership, the self-study committee recommends to the Board and President that priority be given to the recruitment of women candidates for positions such as campus dean and/or divisional chair.

(iii) Staff

Recommendation:

In an effort to improve understanding, increase involvement, and build trust throughout the institution, the self-study committee recommends broadening the focus of the Staff Association to include periodic meetings with designated leadership and human resources to share staff ideas, concerns and needs for consideration.

Faculty

Recommendation:

The self-study committee recommends to the President and VP of Academic Affairs that the seminary institute processes for the periodic revision of the Faculty Handbook to reflect changes

in the make-up and functioning of the faculty over time. New versions of the Faculty Handbook should be produced at least once every five years.

Recommendation:

The self-study committee recommends to the President and VP of Academic Affairs that the seminary institute processes for the on-going evaluation of the new governance structure's effectiveness. It is anticipated that this evaluation will lead to expansion of the governance document as the lines between centralized and localized authority become more clearly drawn through the implementation of the new structure. The governance document should be revised at least once every five years.

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