

PUBLIC EDUCATION NOMINATING COUNCIL CRITERIA TO GUIDE THE APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

The Public Education Nominating Council (PENC) is charged with the responsibility to “advise the governor with respect to appointments to... all boards of trustees of community colleges, state colleges, and the University of Massachusetts.”

This Statement of Criteria identifies the special overarching expectations for the service of public sector trustees and the attributes of character, temperament and reputation essential to the effective performance of the responsibilities of trusteeship. It is intended as a guide to the sourcing and selection of candidates for public trusteeship, and will be used by PENC to determine which candidates should be recommended for appointment. Each institution is invited to add its own *Defined Institutional Attributes* in the last section of the statement.

I. Special Character of Public Trusteeship:

All candidates for public trusteeship are expected to understand and support the unique role that trustees play in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Through the dedication and quality of their work for the institutions they serve, trustees make significant contributions to the future intellectual, economic and social character and well-being of the state and its citizens.

II. Overarching Attributes:

No single candidate for trusteeship will possess all of these attributes in perfect balance. However, it is the expectation that those attributes that describe character, temperament and reputation will not be compromised and that candidates will display important strengths among the list of supporting attributes.

1. Attributes of Character, Temperament and Reputation:

- Personal and professional reputation of highest integrity;
- Uncompromising support of the societal mission of public higher education;
- Understanding that public trusteeship serves the larger good to the exclusion of personal benefits;
- Demonstrated civic and professional leadership;
- Interpersonal reputation of fairness and objectivity;
- No known disqualifying conflicts of interest;
- Resistant of narrow interests and supportive of broad interests;
- Supportive of the need for demonstrated leadership of institutional philanthropy;
- Belief in the need for governance that is supportive and collegial, not adversarial and hierarchical.

2. Supporting Attributes:

- Expertise and experience in fields that align with the trustee needs of the institution, such as law, medicine, business, education, health, and nonprofit governance;
- Understanding governance boundaries and the distinctions between policy and management and between collaborative engagement and intrusive behavior;
- Motivation to meet the expectations of high performance through the commitment of time and energy;
- Capacity to think strategically;
- Gender and ethnic qualities that contribute to balancing the “face” of the board to resemble that of the college or university and the community;
- Experience that will contribute to the institution’s defined needs for governance assistance.
- Ability to exercise judgment and discretion in dealing with sensitive, and sometimes confidential matters that come before the board

III. Defined Institutional Attributes

(Each college and university is invited here to develop an additional list of attributes that are unique to its governance needs)