

Friday April 14, 2017

Neal Campus Kingman, Room 508

(Action Items are in **bold print**)

I. Call to Order (Smith)

Ms. Smith called the workshop to order at: 10:45 a.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance (Smith)

III. Roll Call (Amy Curley, Recorder)

Julie Bare Present

Jon Longoria Present

Vance Miller Present

Judy Selberg Present

Phyllis Smith Present

IV. Audience of Any Citizen (Smith)

There were no citizens wishing to address the Board.

V. Administrative and Governing Board Succession Planning (Smith)

- Design and Composition of a Search/Hiring Committee

Board members contributed their individual thoughts on the design and composition of a presidential search steering committee. The following positions were determined to be most appropriate for a steering committee: (2) Trustees, (1) Faculty, (1) Campus Dean, (1) K-12 Superintendent. Each steering committee member needs to be able to think globally about a candidate's capacity to the job.

Dr. Kearns stated that the steering committee should be responsible for: establishing the process (timeline, communication methods, etc.), review of the applications to narrow the pool, providing a list of finalists to the whole Board. The entire Board carries the responsibility of due diligence of the finalists.

It was pointed out that public institutions are experiencing increased difficulty navigating state's open meeting laws. Many candidates at this level are unwilling to publically release the fact they have applied for a position before they are offered that position. The steering committee and Board will have to be very aware of balancing the public's right to know and the candidate's right to privacy. They also will need to protect and respect internal candidates especially.

To clarify:

Stage 1: Steering Committee Process

Stage 2: Board Due Diligence, i.e. "Airport interviews"

Stage 3: Meet and greet with College & community

Stage 4: Negotiating an offer (Board)

A discussion occurred regarding employee's role in the process. Dr. Kearns stated that current employees, including himself, are available to staff the process (process paperwork, scheduling, communications, advice, etc.) but are not part of the decision making process. Human resources will facilitate the application process as they do for all positions.

Dr. Kearns congratulated the Board on the work accomplished during the course of these succession planning workshops. If or when the time comes, the Board's strong leadership will be essential and this proactive planning will help facilitate the process.

VI. Adjournment (Smith)

Changing of the guard: Community colleges shift strategies to survive, thrive



Camden County College President Raymond Yannuzzi (right) and Rutgers-Camden Chancellor Phoebe A. Haddon shake hands after signing an agreement that allows any student that finishes at CCC to automatically be accepted at Rutgers University, Monday, Sept. 29, 2014. (Lori M. Nichols | For NJ.com)

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By Michelle Caffrey | For NJ.com

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on July 02, 2015 at 3:00 PM, updated July 02, 2015 at 3:01 PM

The news [Camden County](#) College President Raymond Yannuzzi will be stepping down from the helm of the Blackwood-based school later this year after 10 years as its leader marks another wave in a changing tide for community colleges in the state.

The "old guard" that got their career start in the community college educational system during it's boom in the 1970s, and who took on leading roles in the past decade, are now reaching retirement age and passing off the baton, Yannuzzi said.

In the past year, the presidents of community colleges in [Salem](#), [Morris](#), [Mercer](#) and, most recently, [Cumberland counties](#) have announced they'd be moving on.

"It's time to have a new generation come in," said Yannuzzi, who will return to teaching English classes at the school for the next two years before retiring.

The next leaders in line will be tasked with how to adapt their schools' overall strategies to the shift in community college's role in the system and a changing economy that at first gave the schools a bump in enrollment during the recession, followed by recent declines.

Along with expanding their health, science and technology offerings, many have linked up with four-year universities to create easy post-graduation transfer policies and dual-degree programs.

Just last month Burlington County College adopted a new identity as Rowan College at Burlington County, a year after [Gloucester County College became Rowan College at Gloucester County](#), name changes that signal the weight of their partnerships with an expanding Rowan University. Camden County College has a similar relationship and agreement with Rutgers-Camden, [which was formalized last year](#).

Many are also beefing up their certification and job training programs, with an eye on the reality highlighted by President Barack Obama when he launched an initiative early last year to help make community college as "free and universal" as high school — people need some kind of post-secondary training to make it in this economy.

"Everybody has to get some sort of credential post high school," said Yannuzzi. "It's very difficult for someone with just a high school diploma to get job."

When he first started in education, and throughout the 70s and 80s, he said that wasn't the case. People could find jobs in factories or industry with a high school degree, and then-expanding community colleges were chock full of adults, many of whom worked full-time, looking to move up.

"There was a great, untapped need ... At night, the parking lots used to be full," said Yannuzzi, adding full-time students now fill the spaces throughout the day as a larger percent of their students come right out of high school.

"The institution [of community colleges] is still so well established as a part of the educational system, we'll be as responsive as we've always been to a changing of the economy and student population's needs," he said. "It's clear we're a definite part of higher education that's here to stay."

When it comes to the school he's steered for the past 10 years, Yannuzzi sees good things as well, despite a decline in their numbers and dozens of layoffs last year. The Gloucester Premium Outlets, a 170,000 square foot shopping center set to open across the road from their Blackwood campus in just over a month, has drawn

interest in the area and will hopefully be a shot in the arm for the college's home base of Gloucester Township. They've made moves to improve their campus with a 10-year, \$2 million transformation, and the school has more than 150 acres just waiting to be developed, he said.

"It's prime for something, we don't know what, but we hope it'll be something that'll attract more students," he said. "The future of the college is bright."

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Retrieved from:

http://www.nj.com/camden/index.ssf/2015/07/changing_of_the_guard_community_colleges_shift_str.html



AGB Search finds successful
leaders for higher education.

INCREASING THE ODDS FOR SUCCESSFUL PRESIDENTIAL SEARCHES

By Jamie Ferrare and Theodore Marchese

Trusteeship, September/October 2010

Few board decisions are more important than selecting a new president or chancellor. Done correctly, the appointment of a new CEO impacts positively on the institution's health and future success.

Before launching a presidential search, the board and search committee should analyze the institution's mission and goals, and thoroughly review the institution's financial health, the relevance and strength of academic program and curriculum offerings, and the quality and strength of its personnel.

A well-run search can be an occasion for community renewal and partnership between the board and campus, as well as an opportunity to elevate expectations about an institution's future.

As search consultants, both of us have seen boards, confronted with the need to find a new president, veer off in mistaken directions -- sometimes diametrically opposed mistaken directions. We have seen boards that turn the whole matter over to a search committee, only to find at the end that the candidates brought forward weren't the kind the trustees had in mind. We have also seen boards that retreat into themselves and come up with the presidents they want, only to find their choices frustrated or rejected by important constituencies. Both types of outcomes -- having to start a new search or appointing someone unwanted or likely to fail -- are ones every board wants to avoid. Care and thought beforehand are the remedies.

What is the right amount of board involvement in a presidential search and how much responsibility should the board delegate to a search committee? Can we agree that there are few decisions a board makes that are more important than the selection of a new president or

chancellor? And can we also agree that, if done correctly, the appointment of a new chief executive can have a positive impact on the health and future success of the institution? The point of an upcoming search is to found a successful next presidency, and how the search is done can be important to that success.

In academic life (as in law firms, medical practices, engineering, and architecture partnerships), the "consent of the led" can be important to a new leader's effectiveness, which implies consultation and listening by everyone involved. However, unlike other groups of professionals, all parties should know that in higher education, the naming of a president rests entirely with the board.

GUIDED BY MISSION AND GOALS

When a board of trustees assumes the responsibility of launching a presidential search, among the first steps prior to the actual search should be a review of the institution's mission statement, approved goals, and the current strategic plan. This step is often overlooked, but it can, in fact, provide a great deal of information for the board and search committee and lead to important conversations about direction, priorities, and, ultimately, the attributes sought in the next president. The full board should set aside time for a thoughtful, extended discussion of what the college or university needs from its president over the next three to five years. From that discussion, supplemented by "town meetings" or listening sessions involving a wide range of the institution's constituencies, should emerge the "preferred qualifications" that will guide the process and assist in the recruitment, screening, and ultimate appointment.

At the same time, the board should decide its role in the search process and answer a few key questions: Will it charge a search committee to conduct the search and, if so, how many board members will sit on the committee and what other stakeholders will serve?

Throughout the search, how often will the committee provide the board with updates? How will confidentiality be maintained and guaranteed? And following vetting of the final candidates and the interview process, will the search committee present a ranked or unranked list of candidates to the board?

Answering these questions prior to the beginning of a presidential search will clarify the role of the board for all constituents. It will also ensure that the full board will be engaged in the process as well as in determining the characteristics and attributes sought in the next president and in helping the search committee understand what is expected.

As the search committee begins its work, a great deal of attention is focused on a strategy for recruiting outstanding candidates to the pool. This can be a dangerous time in a search, as the board and search committee may be tempted or "wowed" by the "name candidate" or a candidate from the more highly visible institution down the road. While some of those

candidates may be ready to lead, many are not prepared for the institution's specific challenges or do not fully grasp its distinctive culture.

That is why we recommend, in addition to "town meetings" and the analysis of mission and goals, that the board and search committee commit themselves to a thorough review of the institution's financial health, the relevance and strength of academic program and curriculum offerings, and the quality and strength of its personnel. Thinking about what the college or university needs next from its president -- and developing a preliminary statement of preferred qualifications -- can provide the search committee, and the search consultant, if one is used, with important information to help focus the search and recruit the most appropriate candidates.

Once drafted and approved by the search committee, this profile or prospectus, outlining the priorities of leadership and preferred attributes for the next president, will be disseminated to a network of potential nominators, prospective candidates, and others who may have interest in the search. Typically, it will also be posted on the college or university Web site and the Web site of the search firm, if one is used. It becomes, in essence, the lead document in the recruitment process and can provide nominators and prospective candidates with an entry-level primer about the institution and its leadership needs. In addition, the profile will guide the committee as it reviews each candidate's application materials and will help identify a short list of applicants for more in-depth screening and interviews.

A "TRANSITION PLAN" FOR THE SEARCH

The board's executive committee should oversee development of a "transition plan" for board-initiated communications and events over the course of the search and into the initial tenure of the new president. The transition plan should address everything from the announcement of the retirement or resignation of the current president to the inauguration of his or her successor. At the point of the current president's announcement, and for his or her remaining time in office, the board might promulgate a "charge" aimed at avoiding "lame duck" status for the sitting president (e.g., conclude current capital campaign and donor cultivation; complete master-plan development, etc.).

The executive committee should next bring to the full board a plan, budget, and timeline for the search; nominations for the search chair, committee membership, and a search secretary; and a formal charge to that committee. The full board is an important constituency of the process; board members should know their composing a presidential search committee can be an art in itself and should be carefully weighed. Some institutions are guided by a collective-bargaining agreement in the selection of the search chair and committee members; others select the chair and committee independent of an agreed-upon process, but can rely on tradition and community expectations. The committee is the public face of the institution

before candidates are recruited and will make a string of important decisions before recommending candidates to the board.

Presidential search committees today almost universally engage the assistance of a search firm. Responsibility for selecting the firm typically falls to the executive committee of the board, the search committee, or a subcommittee led by the board chair. The process begins with the issuing of an RFP, followed by interviews with principals from selected search firms and reference checks. Once appointed, the search firm and assigned consultant will work closely with the search-committee chair and the search committee in determining the search timeline, process, and recruitment strategy. An important reminder here: confidentiality is crucial to any presidential search and must be a central theme and reminder for the committee and search firm. Aside from "sunshine states," where full disclosure is mandated by law, the names of candidates should not be shared in public, or anywhere outside of the committee's deliberations, until authorized by the candidates. Responsibilities and how they will participate in the search.

Presidential search can be a lot of work, raise stress levels, and tax relationships. But a well-run search can also be an occasion for community renewal, for board and campus partnership, and for elevating expectations for an institution's future. The board itself should feel energized by the process and should, at the end, embrace a new president with enthusiasm.

ATTRACTING OUTSTANDING PEOPLE

With the assistance of the search consultant, a public announcement of the search (advertising in numerous education-media outlets, with national associations, and at peer institutions) is generally the first step in telling the world that your institution is seeking a president. If done well, in addition to generating a pool of highly competent and interested candidates, the institution can use this public announcement as a positive marketing strategy—informing the greater education community of the quality of your institution, its programs, and its faculty. This is also the time for the search firm to initiate a call for nominations that spans a network of presidents, vice presidents, and deans, as well as a select group of prospective candidates from outside of the academy with skills and experiences that appear to match those identified in the pre-search review. In addition, the search consultant and committee should begin to identify prospective candidates not necessarily seeking a presidency, but whose work and reputation could be a fit for the institution and add significant strength to the pool should they agree to enter the search.

Upon receipt of applications, the committee begins the laborious and confidential task of screening each candidate's letter of interest, vita, and any preliminary reference feedback available at this point. The committee will spend time discussing candidate strengths, perceived weaknesses, and fit with the institution's mission and goals and its leadership

needs for the future. A short list of candidates, typically 12–15, will emerge, and following authorization from each candidate, more extensive due diligence will be completed by the search consultant and, at times, members of the search committee. After a review of references and additional research (Google is a likely tool, among other electronic-research outlets used by the search firm and committee), six to eight candidates are selected for off-site interviews.

Then following off-site interviews and confidential committee deliberations, a small number of candidates (typically three or four) are selected, and each is invited to visit the campus for the final phase of the search process. This final phase can vary considerably, depending on the culture and expectations of the board, search committee, and the campus community, as well as the tolerance for exposure that each candidate indicates. Many boards prefer an "open" final visit in which candidates are asked to meet with senior administrators, faculty leadership, students, staff, and alumni. This may also include an "open-forum" session for those not scheduled or unable to meet with candidates in smaller group sessions. Often candidates' vitas are posted on the institution's Web site, and open social gatherings are scheduled to allow stakeholders to meet the candidate, and spouse or partner, as appropriate.

While "open" final visits are the norm, some institutions and, in particular, those whose finalists include sitting presidents at other institutions, can opt for a more restricted or "closed" final phase of the process. In this situation, candidates are invited to meet with a limited number of representatives of the campus community, typically off site and with a commitment to maintain complete confidentiality about the identity of the candidates and what was discussed. In both types of circumstances, members of the board of trustees will have an opportunity to meet with individual candidates, and spouses or partners, usually in executive session prior to a final decision and appointment.

Regardless of the format selected for campus interviews, feedback from those involved in the interview process is channeled to the search committee for review, and the search committee prepares a final report with recommendations and sends it to the board. The search committee meets with the board to discuss all the input it has received. Often boards will ask the committee for its feedback on each finalist, but many prefer that no ranking of candidates accompanies this information.

Following this final committee report from the search committee, the board typically moves to an executive session and deliberates, with assistance and counsel from the search consultant. Once the full board determines who will be offered the position, the executive committee, or a designated subcommittee, will offer the position to the chosen candidate, and, if he or she accepts, negotiate a contract and prepare for the public announcement.

This announcement, and the steps planned earlier to help both the old and new presidents' transition, are crucial to the success of a new president and equally important to the board of trustees and campus community. If done well and with proper support, the transition can celebrate the successes of the outgoing president and also provide the president-elect, the board, and the campus with time to establish a working relationship and understand the board's priorities. The president-elect can gain valuable knowledge about fund-raising targets and expectations, academic programs and faculty needs, alumni relations, advancement and development, athletics, and community partnerships.

Boards need to get presidential search right. By charging the search committee appropriately, identifying the attributes and priorities required of new leadership, engaging the college community in discussions about expectations and aspirations, and communicating a united message, the board can help attract a pool of highly qualified candidates and select a candidate with the right leadership qualities needed for the next phase of the institution's advancement.

Retrieved from: <http://www.agbsearch.com/resources/increasing-odds-successful-presidential-searches>

The Pick and the Process: Leading a Presidential Search in the Digital Age

Investing in both the presidential pick and the process will prepare institutions for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

January 22, 2016

This article originally appeared in [Trusteeship Magazine](#) in November/December 2015.

By Celeste Watkins-Hayes

The most important job of a board of trustees is selecting a president. When Beverly Daniel Tatum, Spelman College's ninth president, announced her retirement after 13 years of outstanding service, the Spelman board launched an extensive process to identify her successor. The board chair, Rosalind Brewer, appointed me, an alumna and vice chair of the board, to lead the effort. The following are my insights on the search process.

Presidential searches should have two main goals. The ultimate goal, of course, is to select a leader who will move the institution in the right direction. But many overlook the second goal: to design and execute a leadership selection process that bolsters rather than undermines the institution's strength. As campus stakeholders weigh in and search politics unfold, the symbolic importance of the journey becomes just as critical as its practical execution. Therefore, when searching for your next president, it is wise to invest heavily in both the pick and the process.

A well-conceived and effectively executed presidential search begins with instilling confidence in the institution's stakeholders, which facilitates the search team's work by establishing credibility. A controversial search process sets up what might be an otherwise exceptional hire for a difficult introduction to the campus community, saddling her with the task of mending fences that were damaged before she even took office. Ultimately, a presidential search process that is rocky, opaque, or exclusionary—in either perception or reality—fails to serve the brand well.

In this wired age, the dynamics around a presidential search have changed. Copious information about candidates—from online speeches to press appearances to authored publications—is now at our fingertips. Unfortunately, people can also very quickly share speculation and negative views, creating the potential for information that harms the search to go viral. However, by following some important principles, you can minimize these risks and lead a presidential search process that positively engages your campus community and successfully transitions your college or university into its next chapter.

PLAN THE PROCESS

Careful thought and meticulous execution were the cornerstones of our search. As search chair, I became a student of presidential searches. AGB's 2013 book *A Complete Guide to Presidential Search for Universities and Colleges* was very helpful. It was also important to understand how Spelman had conducted presidential searches in the past. What worked well? What didn't? What was the political history of presidential searches at the college? I spoke to all of the chairs of Spelman's previous presidential searches as well as some former trustees, faculty, staff, and alumnae with deep institutional memory. I was struck by how clearly people remembered the searches for the last three presidents and had lessons to impart. From those conversations, we gleaned ideas to be replicated, pitfalls to avoid, and areas of sensitivity for our stakeholders that we took into account during the process planning. The talks also opened a two-way channel of communication between the search chair and some of the institution's most valuable stakeholders.

LESSON: Doing the research on your institution's presidential-search history will help you identify aspects of a standard search process that you can adjust to fit your institution's culture.

Once I understood the search process and its history at Spelman, I began sketching out a timeline with the board chair, using AGB's recommended timeline as a baseline and shaping it to our institutional context. We presented a draft to the board during a retreat a few weeks prior to the president's official retirement announcement, and we led an executive session in which board members talked about the items that should be on the agenda of the next president.

The board thought a great deal about the end game, specifically whether we intended to bring one or multiple finalists to campus to meet the college community. We knew that sunshine laws require many public institutions to release the names of all finalists. However, private institutions increasingly run closed searches, presenting only one candidate, often after the official board vote has taken place.

A plan to present only one finalist to the campus community offers several advantages. First, we knew that, in this digital age, many high-profile prospects would not participate in an open search for fear of jeopardizing their current positions or signaling leadership instability in their organizations. Moreover, we understood that some would be leery of potentially compromising their "brand" should they be publicly unsuccessful in their pursuits. Finally, we recognized that the search committee, charged with recommending one candidate to the board after a thorough vetting process, would have the most information about the candidates and the most informed perspective on the pool as a whole. Campus stakeholders attending one event would be forming opinions based on limited information. If Candidate A performs the best during a one- or two-day visit, but Candidate B is actually the best fit for the job, how will Candidate B be viewed by the campus when she gets the job over Candidate A? How will that hamstring her initial efforts as president?

Nevertheless, given the high-engagement culture of the Spelman community, we knew that adopting a completely closed process would generate considerable but understandable resistance. We therefore chose a hybrid approach: invite only one finalist to campus, postponing the board vote until after the campus visit. This allowed the campus community to meet the finalist and provide feedback before any official action was taken. We shared this plan from the beginning and reiterated it throughout the search to attract candidates and give stakeholders time to digest the strategy, ask questions, raise concerns, and understand this as the approach that would build the best possible applicant pool. Should the invited finalist prove not to be a good fit during the campus visit, we could invite another person to campus.

The search committee, however, viewed the need to invite another candidate as highly unlikely given the extensive vetting process that took place prior to the campus visit. We sent strong signals to the invited finalist and discussed the preliminary terms of a contract as a show of confidence and to ensure that all parties were on the same page. We recognized that this hybrid approach carried some risk: the candidate's name would go viral, but without a formal job offer. However, we believed that this was a reasonable risk if it meant running an inclusive process that the campus community could trust.

LESSON: Message your search strategy early and often so that stakeholders know what to expect well before you arrive at the end game.

BUILD THE TEAM

The next step was to mobilize the search team. (A separate entity, the transition group, focused on planning and executing the thank-you and farewell events for Dr. Tatum and organizing the on-boarding process for the incoming president.) A smooth process depends on forming a highly competent group that has the savvy, experience, vision, and interpersonal skills to plan and execute it optimally.

For the presidential search committee, it is important to assemble a group that brings excellent skills to the task at hand, instills trust and credibility among the institution's constituent groups, works together cohesively, and can sell the opportunity to candidates through enthusiasm and professionalism. It is also very important to appoint people who will attend all meetings, read all assigned materials, and bring their A-games to the conversation. We knew that many people would desire or even expect a seat on the presidential search committee, which is typically appointed by the board chair or other nominating body. We sought to be as inclusive as possible, but we tried to avoid "obligatory" appointments. Here are some key questions to ask when selecting search committee members:

- What technical expertise can this person bring to the table? We had specialists in finance and budget, law, human resources, fundraising, and higher education, among other areas.
- Are all of the institution's constituencies (students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, trustees, and friends of the college) represented in some meaningful way?
- Do we have the right mix of personalities? It is critically important to bring together smart, discerning people, but it is just as important that they know how to disagree

- without being disagreeable. The search chair should not be bogged down mediating intra-group conflicts.
- Is there diversity on the committee in terms of race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, religion, length of tenure with the institution, etc.?
- Do you have confidence in each person's ability and willingness to keep the proceedings confidential?

Keeping the committee to a reasonable number will be challenging, as there will be many highly qualified people who care deeply about the institution and would be honored to serve. Some institutions create separate search advisory boards. With a fairly large 15-member search committee, we opted not to do this. Instead, I set up monthly one-on-one calls with key members of the college community to update them on the search and hear their ideas, many of which we adopted. We enlisted people to help us engage with their particular constituency groups. When the finalist visited campus, we invited these individuals to attend small "preview" events the day before the formal visit to provide opportunities for more intimate interaction.

LESSON: There are many options for meaningfully engaging stakeholders in a search; search committee membership is not the only tool.

In our meetings, we used the "round robin" technique, asking each member to offer his/her comments (and starting with a different lead person each time) to ensure that no one would dominate the conversation and to create a space for respectful disagreement. This also helped to level the playing field insofar as search committee members came into the process with a range of titles, expertise, and search experience.

Three other entities can play significant roles in the search process:

First, through a competitive RFP process that resulted in strong proposals from several excellent firms, we hired a search firm shortly after Dr. Tatum's retirement announcement. In addition to considering the strength of the firm's proposal, its reputation, the quality of references given, and the interview performance, we found it wise also to consider the institutions with which the firm had previously worked and the diversity of the proposed team. The firm's network will become your search's network, so ideally you will select a firm that has worked with both peer and aspirational peer institutions. Open, positive communication between search consultants and the search chair is critical. I talked extensively with our search consultants and encouraged them to provide their candid perspectives. While never overstepping, the consultants offered invaluable context.

Second, we appointed a dedicated executive-search administrator (ESA) to assist us throughout the process. An ESA can help the search chair finalize the search timeline and facilitate its execution, draft correspondence and other documents, plan search-related events, manage search accounting and expense reimbursements, liaise with the search firm, and staff the search committee during and between meetings.

Some institutions appoint an employee to do this work. Given the magnitude of the commitment involved, and depending on your search design and the scope of your outreach efforts, it is wise to consider bringing in an outside party. This can help safeguard the confidentiality of the process, relieving a current employee of the burden of having information that attracts so much curiosity. We were fortunate to be able to engage a former employee of the college as our ESA. This person knew the institution well and knew how to move the right levers to get things done but was able to offer a fresh perspective from beyond campus. A lawyer by training who understood well the importance of process and confidentiality, she became a trusted adviser.

LESSON: For the search administrator role, consider engaging a former employee who left the institution on favorable terms or an individual who has served as a consultant to the institution.

Finally, we convened a synergy group, made up of three campus officials, the ESA, another search committee member, and myself. The synergy group assisted with stakeholder communications, compiled primer materials for candidates and the search firm, assisted with search-related events, and helped devise internal strategy. Although the synergy group did not have access to confidential candidate information, members drew on their in-depth knowledge of the college to advise on how best to engage the campus community throughout the process.

EXECUTE WISELY

With a clear and collaborative process plan and an outstanding team to implement it, you are ready to operationalize your vision for the search process. As search chair, I created a daily plan of action, informed by the search timeline, my weekly work plan, and emerging issues. On a typical day, I engaged in scheduled and unscheduled calls, crafted and polished emails and documents, and reviewed candidate dossiers. Running a presidential search entails a sustained commitment that can be taxing but profoundly rewarding.

LESSON: No matter how well you plan or execute, there will be challenges. You will make mistakes and perhaps even step on a few political landmines. You can recover.

As we executed our plan, we constantly emphasized confidentiality. Some might argue that confidentiality in such a search is unattainable in this wireless age. Information that slips out can cause promising candidates to pull out of the process if they don't trust the professionalism of the players, and stakeholders may respond disruptively to leaked information. We understood that we were dealing with people's livelihoods and wanted to be respectful and careful. As in many aspects of the search, the search chair sets the tone and therefore must develop a very strong and disciplined filter, having substantive conversations with stakeholders while nevertheless protecting confidential information.

ENGAGE THE CONSTITUENTS

We reminded stakeholders that the ultimate authority to select the next president lies with the board. But we nevertheless recognized the intense interest in the search and knew that “opening the tent” would be extremely valuable. So how do you engage stakeholders without undermining the confidentiality of the process or inviting too many cooks into the kitchen? How do you create an appropriately inclusive and appropriately transparent process?

We viewed the search process as an opportunity to strengthen the board’s relationships with campus stakeholders and to create a collective moment of reflection on Spelman’s future.

We sought to establish transparency and encourage inclusion early on by educating people about the presidential selection process. Providing stakeholders with an approximate timeline of the search and sharing some of the logic driving decision making allowed people to understand the systematic method by which the next president would be selected. We presented a slide show to groups of faculty, student leaders, alumnae, administrators, parents, and staff leaders about the search and encouraged people to ask questions and give feedback.

Stakeholders were offered four ways to participate in the search: attend a listening session hosted by the search committee and facilitated by the search consultants (we held several on campus and in four cities with large alumnae presence), complete an online survey about the college and its future direction, nominate candidates or sources that should be solicited for nominees, and attend events to meet the finalist during the campus visit.

The search chair, board chair, search consultants, and several search committee members invested considerable time in campus outreach, calling or meeting with members of the campus community in order to solicit their feedback, gather their nominations, and connect them to the process. We “worked the phones,” proactively reaching out to deeply networked members of the campus community to address any concerns.

Being inclusive also involved keeping the sitting president and trustees informed. We invited the president to offer a state-of-the-college presentation to the search committee at its first meeting, ensuring that committee members had current information with regards to college fundraising, enrollment, budget, academic affairs, operations, etc. As search chair, I spoke regularly with Dr. Tatum about the process. The board received regular updates through email and during our board meetings. While we could not share the names of candidates outside of the search committee, we could gather nominations and listen to endorsements. The board chair and I also sent regular email updates to the campus community, and the presidential search website included the search timeline, the schedule of search-related events, instructions for nominations, bios of search committee members and search firm consultants, and the leadership profile.

LESSON: Set a tone of collaborative and constructive dialogue through your outreach strategies. Try to be as open-minded as possible and recognize that great ideas will come through exchanges with the campus community.

LISTEN TO FEEDBACK

Campus stakeholders typically offer a great deal of feedback during a search. Having a systematic and efficient way to collect and review that information, packaged by the ESA for the search chair's review, proved to be very helpful. We could identify in real time the ideas, suggestions, and areas of concern that were most frequently offered and adjust accordingly. We included an FAQ page on the presidential search website, addressing areas that had generated the greatest number of queries. Inevitably, tensions arose between the internal workings of the search and the desires and external perceptions of campus constituents. When they did, we tried to be as forthright as possible about our constraints so that stakeholders could have some sense of why we were unable to adopt a proposed strategy. Adjusting our approach when possible increased the overall level of inclusivity and transparency in the search; it is the role of the search chair to strike that balance between flexibility and firmness.

LESSON: In such a moment of institutional change, it is important to recognize that stakeholder anxiety will sometimes be expressed unconstructively. Assume the best intentions from all involved.

ENCOURAGE AN ISSUES-DRIVEN SEARCH

From the beginning, we entertained many different ideas about the profile of the person who should be Spelman's next president and spiritedly floated candidate names. We considered several talented people, so we knew that we needed clear rubrics to determine who would be the best person to lead Spelman at this moment in the institution's history.

We promoted the concept of an issues-driven search, leading a dialogue about the key issues facing the college now and into the future and the strategic direction of the institution. We felt that if we encouraged the campus community to debate a desired biographical profile (academic vs. non-academic; a background in the for-profit vs. nonprofit vs. public sector; established figure vs. growing profile), we might make it more difficult to build consensus. We would also be speaking in the abstract, evaluating unnamed candidates with one defining characteristic rather than taking a holistic approach to candidate assessment.

Our issues-driven approach allowed us to ultimately focus on identifying the strategic challenges and opportunities that we believed would require the next president's attention. We collected ideas through the listening sessions, the search website, and one-on-one conversations with key stakeholders. Some wanted very specific issues addressed; others identified broader strategic concerns on the landscape of higher education. This process helped us identify strengths and opportunities that we could articulate in the leadership profile. Thus we wanted candidates—through past and proven experience, leadership style, and forwardthinking vision—to fit the leadership profile and demonstrate how they would move Spelman forward. The profile provided our campus community with a clearly articulated statement of aspiration, helping the search committee marry campus needs with candidate backgrounds, skills, and expertise.

BUILD THE POOL

Building the pool of candidates requires a dynamic and collaborative process that leaves no stone unturned. Candidates move in and out of the pool, so it is critical to continue engaging prospects until you form the right group. Using the leadership profile as a guide, we explored “aspirational” candidates with the background and experience that would be a windfall for the college, “strong” choices with excellent credentials, and “stretch” candidates with excellent skills but less experience in roles of this magnitude. Interviewing a range of candidates created a diverse pool that encouraged the search committee to imagine several models of leadership for the college.

LESSON: Some unexpected, but not ideal, candidates will enter the search. Other candidates who seem ideal will drop out. The pool will shift frequently. Your job as search chair is to help build the best pool possible so that the search committee has excellent options.

THE INTERVIEWING PROCESS

The search committee conducted two rounds of in-person interviews, using questions designed by a subcommittee. We invited all board members to participate in the second round of interviews with our three semi-finalists, creating the first of multiple opportunities for trustees to engage with the president-elect prior to the board vote. Our interviews covered a wide range of topics, including the candidates’ backgrounds and preparation for the role, experience with college administration, and strategic ideas for higher education. We were deeply grateful to the candidates for their willingness to enter the process and were humbled by their accomplishments.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

We arranged a three-day campus visit for the finalist. This would involve a grueling marathon of intense engagement with all of our constituency groups, but it would also affirm our commitment to an appropriately inclusive and transparent process. Whether attending an in-person event, reading about the candidate online, or viewing a webcast of her town hall session, everyone in the Spelman community could learn about the recommended finalist prior to the official board vote. We offered an online survey to collect stakeholder feedback, underscoring that survey results would be one of several data points informing the search committee’s final recommendation to the board of trustees.

As we anticipated, the news media reported the finalist’s name within minutes of the college’s releasing it. Her cell phone and email inbox were flooded with messages of support. Because only a fraction of our campus community could attend the in-person campus forums, many gathered their information about the candidate through social media and by exploring her online presence. By the conclusion of the first day of the visit, I had received several voicemails, text messages, emails, and social-media messages. This gave us up-to-the-minute impressions of the finalist, helping us identify topics that stakeholders wanted to learn more about as we structured a forum with the candidate that members of the campus community could access online.

In this sense, the finalist's biography that is circulated to the campus community is critically important, as it shapes initial impressions of the candidate. It should be tailored to inform both the media and your institution's stakeholders. If major institutional changes are on the horizon, emphasize the candidate's prior accomplishments in leading transformation. If the candidate has personal connections to your institution or ones like it (e.g., liberal arts college, women's college, HBCU), that information should be included. It is also important to present the candidate's fundraising experience. Through the biographical statement, the search committee is not only introducing the candidate's credentials but also signaling why she was chosen as a finalist.

THE VOTE

Following the campus visit, the committee reviewed the feedback, which was overwhelmingly positive. We met with the finalist to thank her for an outstanding campus visit and to register our unwavering support. After a unanimous vote, the committee presented the finalist's name to the board, recommending that she be elected as the tenth president of Spelman College.

During this very special meeting, the motion carried unanimously and enthusiastically, naming Mary Schmidt Campbell as Spelman College's president-elect. The dean emerita of the Tisch School of the Arts and university professor in the Department of Art and Public Policy at New York University, Dr. Campbell is an accomplished scholar and a recognized leader in both the public and nonprofit sectors. Captivating the search committee and trustees from her first interview, she demonstrated, through her brilliance, vision, creativity, and grace, that she is the right leader at the right time for Spelman.

CONCLUSION

Spelman's rich history and bright future fuel a highly committed community of students, faculty, staff, alumnae, parents, trustees, and other supporters. Our sense of institutional commitment registers at the highest decibels. We recognize that Spelman has a critical presence in higher education, and its mission is still vitally important as we consider the work that remains to ensure that all individuals, regardless of race, gender, or class, have access to opportunity.

The weight and significance of the search for our tenth president never escaped the many individuals who contributed to the process. We sought to continue our tradition of outstanding executive leadership, honoring the transformative work of Beverly Daniel Tatum and those who came before her. We needed to do justice to the courageous women and men who built Spelman, those who support the college today, and those who will be a part of it in the future. We are truly honored to have Dr. Campbell lead us into this next chapter.

Colleges and universities appointing new presidents over the next several years will do so in the context of dramatic transformation in higher education. Longstanding ideas about the value, necessity, affordability, and quality of a college education are now openly contested. Some institutions will not survive—all will be forced to change. Boards will be tasked with

identifying the best leaders for the times: individuals who can enhance the competitive advantage of their institutions, offer energetic servant-leadership, and present a vision for education that is simultaneously global and local, future-oriented and historically rooted, boldly assertive and pragmatically grounded. Boards must identify and attract presidents who will provide inspired leadership in a transforming world. Investing in both the presidential pick and the process will prepare colleges and universities for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

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Topics: Books, Diversity, Inequality, Institute for Policy Research, Media, Opinion, Politics, Staff

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Presidential Search Committee Checklist

By Muriel E. Poston

The search for a new president is one of the most significant instances of shared governance in the life of a college or university, but it is also one of the most challenging. Although governing boards have the legal responsibility for selection of a president, the process of selection is the fundamental in determining which candidate has the appropriate academic leadership and administrative skills needed to lead the institution. The recognition of shared responsibility in the search process for academic administrators is reflected in the American Association of University Professors' 1966 [Statement on Government](#):

Joint effort of a most critical kind must be taken when an institution chooses a new president. The selection of a chief administrative officer should follow upon a cooperative search by the governing board and the faculty, taking into consideration the opinions of others who are appropriately interested.

AAUP's 1981 *Faculty Participation in the Selection, Evaluation, and Retention of Administrators* articulates the importance of faculty participation:

The Statement on Government emphasizes the primary role of faculty and board in the search for a president. The search may be initiated either by separate committees of the faculty and board or by a joint committee of the faculty and board or of faculty, board, students, and others; and separate committees may subsequently be joined. In a joint committee, the numbers from each constituency should reflect both the primacy of faculty concern and range of other groups, including students, that have legitimate claim to some involvement. Each group should select its own members to serve on the committee, and the rules governing the search should be arrived at jointly. A joint committee should determine the size of the majority which will be controlling in making the appointment. When separate committees are used, the board, with which the legal authority rests, should either select a name from among those submitted by the faculty committee or should agree that no person will be chosen over the objections of the faculty committee.

The following is intended as a practical guide for implementation of these principles in the search for a president.

Search Committees

The board of trustees, working with the faculty, creates the search committee structure and defines the charge of the committee. The committee may be formed as a single entity representing both the faculty and the board, or there may be a two-tiered committee structure. In the latter case, the faculty committee—which may include other constituent groups such as students and alumni—is separate from the board committee. However, a single committee representing the faculty and board is the most common standard. Such a committee provides an opportunity for shared perspectives and broader understanding among the various groups and thus fosters a sense of unity in accomplishing a common goal—identifying a president who is qualified to serve as both the chief academic and the chief executive officer of the institution.

- **Committee Composition.** Representatives from the board already and faculty as well as representatives of other institutional constituencies commonly serve on joint search committees. Because faculty play a significant role, their representation on the committee should not be limited to a single member. The precise number is dependent on the size of the committee but should reflect the primacy of faculty concern in determining presidential leadership. The involvement of administrators on the search committee is problematic and should be discouraged since they may represent the perspective of the outgoing administration.
- **Committee Chair.** The chair appointment is typically made prior to the formation of the search committee. The joint search committee chair is typically chosen by the board and is usually a trustee who can provide an important connection between the board and the search committee. In cases where a two-tiered committee structure is utilized, a trustee chairs the board committee and a senior faculty member chairs the constituent group committee.

- **Committee Selection.** Each constituent group should select its own members to serve on the committee. This gives the greatest sense of legitimacy to the members and acknowledges the respective roles of the constituent groups.
- **Committee Size.** The size of a joint search committee will vary according to the institution but may range from nine to twenty. Larger committees are not necessarily less effective, and a good process is considerably more important than the size in determining a successful outcome. In cases of a two-tiered committee structure, the individual committees are smaller.
- **Committee Charge.** The search committee charge is formulated by the board, in consultation with other constituents, and reflects the role of the board in making the selection of the president and in defining the terms and conditions of the appointment. The charge also will set forth other criteria such as:
 - search committee membership
 - statement of presidential leadership qualities
 - breadth of the search: regional or national
 - expectations regarding use of search consultants
 - number of candidates to be recommended to the board for the final decision
 - date by which the board expects recommendations of nominees

Search Process

The search committee has the responsibility of designing its own procedures and timetables. The basic functions of a search involve the identification of candidates; screening and interviewing; and the recommendation of a short list of candidates to the board for consideration. Key factors that should be considered in structuring the search process are:

- **Search consultants.** If executive recruiters or consultants are to be utilized, their selection (or that of a search firm) is one of the first tasks of the committee, unless this decision has already been mandated by the board. A search consultant may be most helpful in educating the committee about the search process, providing a broader pool of candidates for consideration, or checking the candidate references beyond the scope of traditional academic criteria. However, the role of the search consultant should be clearly defined and should not extend into matters of educational or institutional policy. Search firms (which may be non-profit or for-profit organizations) and their consultants range from those that serve only educational institutions to those that have an education division within a large executive search firm. It is important to interview the potential search firms, preferably those staff members who would be assigned to the presidential search, to determine if the match is appropriate to the institutional characteristics and needs. References of the search firm candidates should be contacted. Among the questions that might be asked: How successful were they in previous searches? What were their interactions with faculty and other constituent groups? Do they understand and support the role of faculty in the search process?
- **Confidentiality.** The presidential selection process is a classic conflict between the right of individual privacy and the public's right to know. It is important for the campus community to know the procedures that the committee will use in the search process, and these should be made public early in the search. It is the responsibility of the search committee to keep constituent groups informed of the progress of the search. However, in order to attract the best candidates, the search process may involve some measure of confidentiality, especially during the early phases. The disclosure of candidates prior to the development of a short list of nominees to recommend to the board can result in the loss of the best candidates. However, to ensure a successful search, the nominees who are recommended to the board should visit the campus and be interviewed by the faculty and possibly other constituent groups. The approach to implementing confidentiality and the process and guidelines for campus visits are matters to be resolved early on in the search process.

- **Institutional Analysis and Leadership Criteria.** The search committee should spend some time defining the present condition of the college or university, determining what problems must be faced, what priorities the institution has, and what direction it must take to meet its challenges and opportunities. This institutional analysis is needed in order to determine the type of leadership qualities needed for this particular stage in the college or university's development. The leadership criteria statement defines the principal qualities that are required in the new president--an academic leader, an experienced fund raiser, etc. The statement of leadership criteria should be circulated to various institutional constituencies for review and comment. Consensus within the campus community on the leadership qualities is important since these criteria are used in evaluating candidates' credentials and again in the and interview process.

Sources of Potential Candidates

In most instances, institutions engage in a comprehensive search. Casting the net broadly includes soliciting nominations from faculty, administrators, and alumni; running advertisements in national journals; and, if an executive recruiting firm is engaged, using the search consultant to identify candidates for review. The issue of confidentiality will again be raised during this step in the process since some nominees, particularly those who are currently successfully leading an institution, may not wish to be identified as candidates.

Screening

The purpose of screening is to identify a limited number of candidates from the applicant pool. In the first phase, the list is commonly reduced to fifteen to twenty-five names, in the second stage, to eight to ten names. The final stage of the process involves selecting candidates whom the committee will recommend to the board. Issues to be considered in the screening process are:

- **Background and reference checks.** The search committee may charge a subcommittee with checking the references of the fifteen to twenty-five candidates selected after the initial screening of credentials. These are generally the references provided by the candidate. In this phase of the search process, the committee usually refrains from contacting other possible sources of information out of respect for the candidate's privacy. In the case of the eight to ten candidates who become semi-finalists, additional sources of information beyond those listed by the candidate may be contacted. A search consultant may be useful at this point in the referencing process, particularly for conducting criminal and media background checks. In the final phase of screening, anyone who might be able to provide useful information on the candidate's leadership qualifications should be contacted. Referencing by faculty members of the search committee who can contact their counterparts at the candidate's campus is particularly crucial at this stage. Background information at this point can be obtained not only from telephone calls but also from visits to the candidate's campus.
- **Interviewing.** The interviewing process may occur in two stages. In order to preserve confidentiality, there may be off-campus interviews with the semi-finalist candidates. Direct contact between the candidates and the search committee is important. The second stage of the interview process involves campus visits where the candidate will meet with different constituencies, particularly faculty and students. These open visits are crucial in the success of the search process because they permit members of the campus community to participate in providing impressions, as well as to contribute to the candidate's understanding of the culture of the institution. In this final phase of the selection process, open visits present vitally important opportunities for both the campus community and the candidate to determine each other's suitability. This final step is extraordinarily useful to the search committee in making its final recommendation to the board.

Final Recommendation

The search committee, depending on its charge, may recommend only one candidate to the board. A committee that has conscientiously fulfilled its duty will recognize the best candidate, one who "fits" the institution, and will be able to convince the board of the wisdom of its recommendation. On the other hand, a successful search committee may be able to identify three or more candidates who would make an excellent president. The final act in the search process is the appointment of the president, a decision usually made by the full board.

This checklist is intended as a brief guideline for the presidential search process. The search itself is an opportunity for a university or college to take stock, consider new directions, and identify the individual best suited to lead the institution into its future.

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