

SETTING THE BOARD AGENDA FOR 2024-2025

We will get started in just a few minutes.

Brought to you by: AGB Consulting

May 15, 2024

Webinar Overview

- ❑ Webinar recording and slides are emailed to you.

- ❑ Structure:
 - ❑ Conversation & slides
 - ❑ Audience Q&A

- ❑ Interaction: Questions and comments are strongly encouraged. Please use the Q&A button to send us questions.

Meet Your Panelists



Mark Heckler, PhD

AGB Senior Consultant

Former President of the
Valparaiso University

Trustee, Elizabethtown College



William Troutt, PhD

AGB Senior Consultant

President Emeritus of Rhodes
College and Former President of
Belmont University

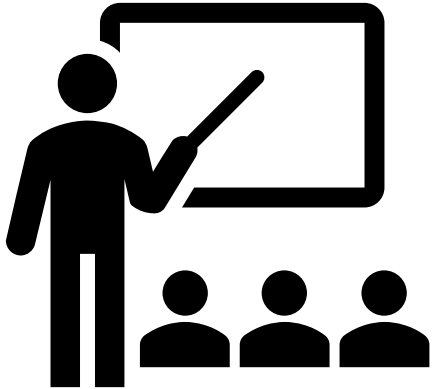
Trustee, St. Jude Graduate School of
Biomedical Sciences



Chris Moloney, PhD

AGB Associate Vice
President and Associate
Managing Principal,
Consulting

Today's Agenda



1.

The Board's Role in Agenda Setting

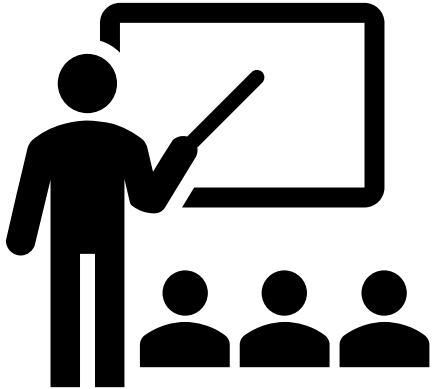
2.

AGB Top Strategic Issues for Boards 2024-25

3.

A Case Study in Agenda Setting and Board Design: Rhodes College

Today's Agenda



1.

The Board's Role in Agenda Setting

2.

AGB Top Strategic Issues for Boards 2024-25

3.

A Case Study in Agenda Setting and Board Design: Rhodes College

The Board's Role in Setting the Agenda

The Relationship of Board Leadership and Senior Staff in Setting Board and Committee Agendas

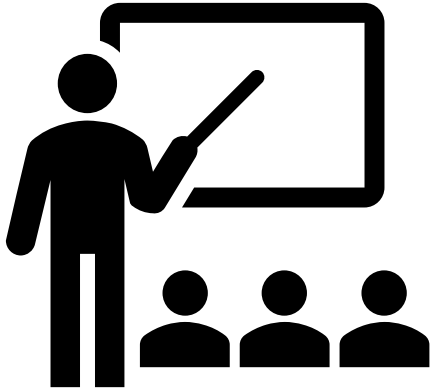
Locus of Agenda Setting within Boards and Committees

Identifying Top Strategic Issues for the Institution

Using AGB Resources to Inform Agenda Setting

Crisis Management and the Board Agenda

Today's Agenda



1.

The Board's Role in Agenda Setting

2.

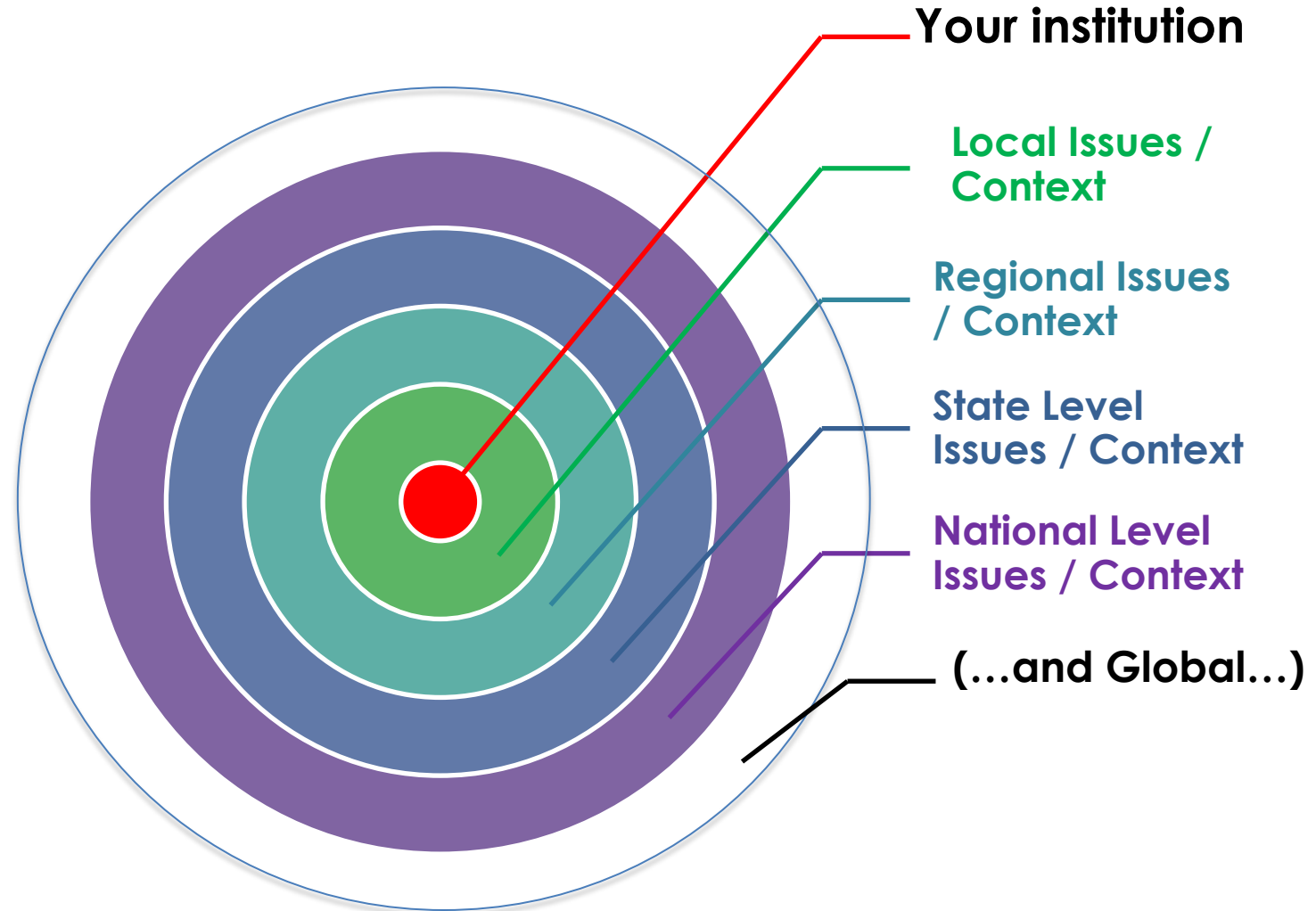
AGB Top Strategic Issues for Boards 2024-25

3.

A Case Study in Agenda Setting and Board Design: Rhodes College

The Higher Ed Ecosystem

- Sensitize to the issues that matter most
- Issues may be localized or national /global
- Some will transcend all institutions...others will be more sector or geographically specific
- **KNOW YOUR CONTEXT**



Top Strategic Issues 2024–2025



**Board
Independence
and Leadership**



**Leadership
Succession
and Support**



**Student Success,
the Student
Experience, and
Campus Inclusion**



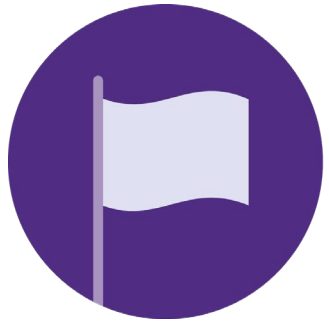
**Business Model
Innovation
and Digital
Transformation**

What is the role of the board in understanding and addressing these complex challenges and opportunities in ways that make sense for institutions, systems, and foundations?

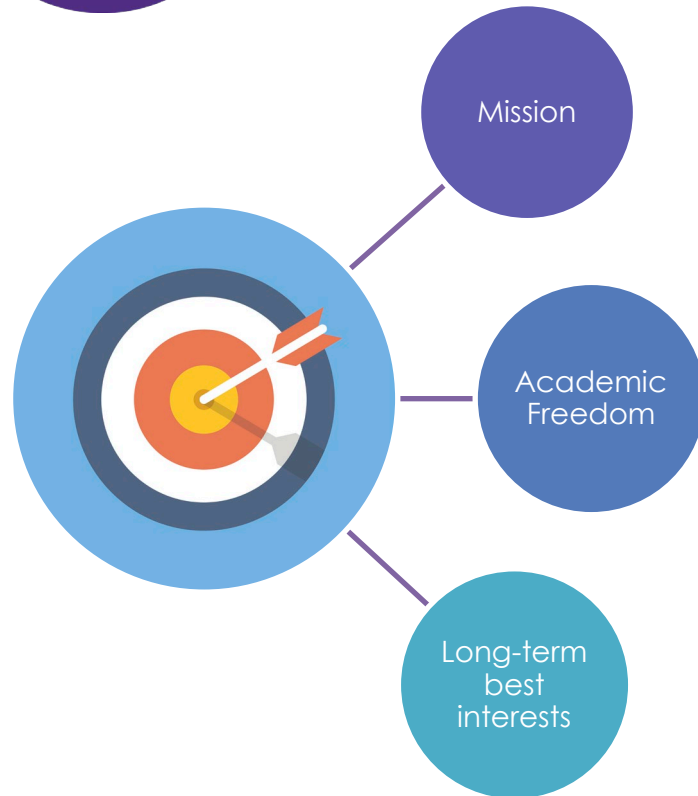
<https://agb.org/product/top-strategic-issues-for-boards-2024-2025>

AGB

What is the board's role?



Board Independence and Leadership



Embrace board independence—even in the face of political, legislative, or other outside pressure—and trustees' responsibility to act in their institution's best interest.

Build a relationship of trust and mutual support with the president.

Use orientation, regular assessment, and continuing board education to ensure board members share a cohesive understanding of principles of trusteeship and good governance.

Discuss and decide, *before a crisis*, how the board empowers or backs the president in cases of public stances or freedom of speech issues.

What is the board's role?



Leadership Succession and Support

Have a leadership transition plan in place before there is a need; be ready to search for and select the best candidate to lead the institution.

Provide regular assessment and coaching and development opportunities, with constructive feedback to support presidents and CEOs in what are increasingly difficult positions.

Cultivate future leaders at the provost and cabinet level to create a leadership pipeline.

Ensure that board members have, or get, the education and skills to fill future chair or committee positions. Search for new volunteers strategically.

Prepare a succession plan for the board professional role, which is critical as a line of communication between leadership and the board and for the preservation of institutional knowledge.

What is the board's role?



Student Success, the Student Experience, and Campus Inclusion

Design a student-centered, user-friendly experience from enrollment to graduation, leveraging trustees' business and corporate experience.

Have a clear understanding on what student success metrics are and should be.

Ensure that offerings meet students' desire for career preparation and job skills alongside traditional academics. Make sure the return on investment is clear.

Request metrics to understand the diversity of the student body and use an equity lens in all decision-making.

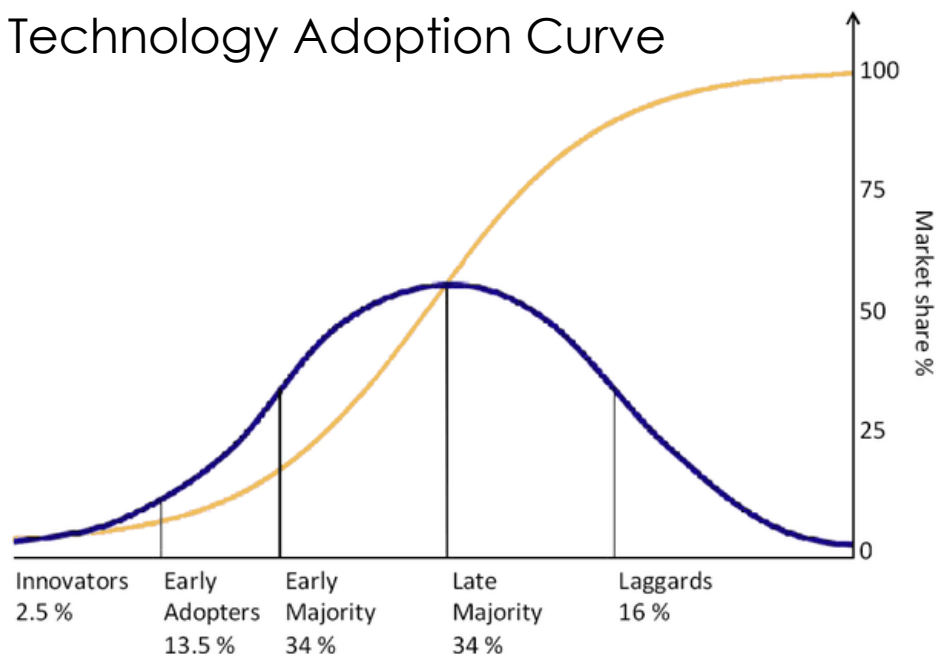
Understand what institutional policies are and should be in place to foster student safety, democratic citizenship, and respectful and honest conversations on campus.

What is the board's role?



Business Model Innovation and Digital Transformation

Technology Adoption Curve



Understand and anticipate how advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and other technologies affect teaching, learning, and other processes, and specific opportunities and challenges for your institution.

Use technology and data responsibly and ethically to improve the student experience through recruitment, retention, and graduation.

Work with leadership to re-examine the institution's business model, conduct market research, and embrace innovation.

Be aware of how innovative partnerships, mergers, or affiliations can help an institution's financial model while increasing the value proposition.

Questions for Consideration

Does the board operate cohesively?

Does it act in unison after airing different views among its members on issues affecting governance and policy?

Does the board eschew pressures to accede to partisan agendas yet recognize the importance of instilling civic virtues in students and strengthening democracy?

Does the board understand the role the institution must play in balancing academic freedom and freedom of speech on campus by ensuring the campus climate is inclusive of diverse opinions and viewpoints?

How well prepared is the board to handle the inevitable turnover of the president and other key top administrators? Does the board ensure the institution has procedures in place well before any vacancy at the top may occur?

Questions for Consideration

Has the institution experienced greater turnover than normal and has it adequately explored why?

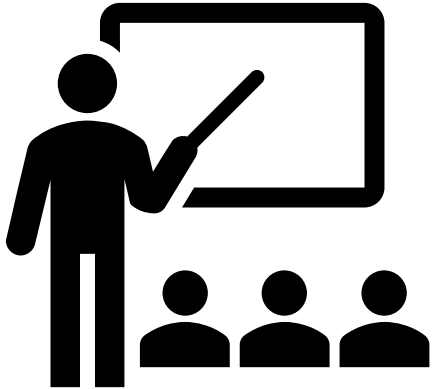
Does the board understand its degree of commitment to achieving equitable student outcomes?

Are the board, president, and key administrators aligned on the best way to offer more career-related programs and infuse job-related skills into more traditional disciplines like the liberal arts?

Does the board help foster an entrepreneurial and innovative approach to the management and operations of the institution?

Does it empower the president and other leaders to make tough yet transformative decisions?

Today's Agenda



1.

The Board's Role in Agenda Setting

2.

AGB Top Strategic Issues for Boards 2024-25

3.

A Case Study in Agenda Setting and Board Design: Rhodes College

“Colleges and Universities Grow in the Direction of the Questions Trustees Ask”

Finding and Staying
Focused on the Right
Questions

Trustee Meeting Design

Rethinking Board Structure

Clarifying Trustee Roles and
Responsibilities

An Agenda Committee

Building Blocks of a Well-Designed Meeting

Executive
Sessions

Standing
Committee
Meetings

Ad Hoc
Committee
Reports

Plenary
Session
Reports

Formal
Business
Meetings

Trustees as Thought Partners

Resources

[Top Strategic Issues for Boards 2024-2025](#) (AGB, 2024)

[“Board Governance as a Strategic Challenge”](#)
(AGB / Dr. Mary Papazian 2024)

[“Designing Trustee Meetings That Matter,”](#) William E. Troutt (Trusteeship, May/June 2019)

[A President's Guide to Effective Board Leadership,](#)
William E. Troutt (AGB, 2021)

Q&A and Discussion



Summary Thoughts

1. Understand context and anticipate what issues matter most.

2. What questions do we (as a board) have that we need to better understand to effectively serve the mission of the institution and fulfill our role?

3. Be a supportive partner acting in the best interests of the institution.

Opportunities to Engage

Engage us in a conversation – we'd like to learn how we can help your board, leadership, and institution!

Email consulting@agb.org
cmoloney@agb.org
or mheckler@agb.org