

Ursuline Academy of New Orleans  
Performance Self-Assessment of the Board of Trustees, 2023-2024 School Year  
**Compilation for Submittal**  
**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

<b>Subject:</b> Board of Trustees, UANOLA		<b>Date Finalized:</b> 6/4/2024				
<b>Approved by:</b> Board of Trustees						
<b>Purpose Statement:</b> This document supports the annual process whose objective is to facilitate a self-assessment of the performance of the Board of Trustees for the most recent school year thereby enabling continuous improvement. Assessments should be based on the three functional criteria of: <i>Effectiveness (are we doing the right things?)</i> <i>Efficiency (are we doing them well?)</i> <i>Sustainability (are we making progress in ensuring the continuation of our Mission?)</i>						
<b>I. Key Accomplishments:</b> (based on annual goals established at the beginning of the school year)						
1. Successfully recruited our new President.						
2. Significantly improved Trustee commitment.						
3. Improved focus on development and enrollment.						
4. Participated in a successful Ursuline Identity Assessment.						
<b>II. Assessments of Responsibilities and Behaviors:</b> (Total number of votes shown per category.)		Strongly Disagree	Some-what Disagree	Neutral / Don't Know	Some-what Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5
1. The Board develops and implements policy in light of the school's Catholic/Ursuline Mission and identity.		0	0	0	1	12
2. The Board develops and implements strategic plans grounded in the school's Catholic/Ursuline Mission and identity.		0	0	2	1	9
3. The Board develops and implements leadership succession plans for the Board of Trustees and the key school Leadership positions.		0	0	1	8	4
4. The Board evaluates the President annually and acts on the findings to promote improvement.		0	0	3	3	6
5. The Board performs and submits annual self-evaluations to be used to guide beneficial changes to Board operations.		0	0	0	1	12
6. The Board is committed to new Trustee training and ongoing formation in the areas of governance and Catholic/Ursuline Identity.		0	2	0	5	6
7. The Board participates in the Ursuline Identity Assessment process and submits any relevant reports or action plans as requested.		0	0	3	1	9
8. The Board understands that it has the ultimate governance accountability for the Academy (including making policy, approving budgets and strategic plans, securing resources, and administering their sole employee, the President), and acts consistently.		0	1	1	3	8

9. The Board ensures that its decisions on behalf of the Academy and its internal policies, procedures, and standards reflect Ursuline’s stated commitment to Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging.	0	0	0	6	7
10. The Board works in partnership with the President and provides necessary and sufficient guidance to the President while respecting each party’s functional boundaries.	0	2	0	5	6
11. The Board functions as an effective decision-making body in that it balances the competing priorities of fiscal oversight and strategic vision, and has the internal policies and procedures that enable this.	0	1	0	7	5
12. Trustees are respectful toward the institution and each other (e.g., by first seeking to understand, by being prepared for and actively participating in meetings, by advocating honestly and effectively for the Academy, and by fulfilling all of their other responsibilities as Trustees).	0	0	0	6	7
13. Trustees individually demonstrate support for the Academy by participating in school functions and by making a financial contribution that is significant to them.	0	1	1	6	5
<b>III. Open-Focus Questions:</b> <i>(please answer as best you can, and provide whatever evidence you have)</i>					
1.How does the Board keep the Academy’s Catholic/Ursuline Mission and Identity central to making decisions in your role as Trustee?					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The BoT continues to be formed in the Charism of the Founder and the Tradition of the Sisters by the Central Office as well as by Mission Integration. We start every meeting with a well-chosen reflection and prayer, and of course end with the Ursuline Prayer.</li> <li>- Additionally, the Sisters and Karen Mortillaro who serve on the BoT help keep it focused on its Mission and the Ursuline Identity.</li> <li>- The BoT’s commitment to the primacy of our Mission and Identity was further evidenced by, and will continue to be advanced by, our new President whose life and background prove a strong conviction to these principles.</li> </ul>					
2.What aspects of Mission formation offered to the Board this year have you found most helpful in fulfilling your responsibilities as a Trustee? Please share any governance or Mission formation you feel could be helpful in the coming year.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At the beginning of each BoT meeting, in support of Mission Integration, a reflection is provided which is extremely formative and informative. Additionally, the “Mission Moments” have been most beneficial as well. We have all enjoyed learning more about St. Angela.</li> <li>- In addition, the briefing on the results of the UIA was very interesting and helpful in re-centering us on our reason for existence.</li> <li>- The BoT still needs work on staying in our lane vis-a-vis President/Administration, although we feel we have improved. This will be an important working topic in the upcoming Transition Workshop this summer.</li> <li>- Board effectiveness can be improved by getting better at using time in committee meetings to do the work and then delivering strong specific recommendations to the entire Board.</li> </ul>					

- Overall, continuing our emphasis on ongoing Catholic formation and Catholic leadership and governance would be beneficial. This could include retreats or focus groups or Special Meetings on topics such as ethical decision making and effective stewardship of resources from a Catholic perspective.

3. How can the Board do a better job of nurturing, supporting, and providing constructive feedback to the President, thereby enabling an environment that is conducive to her success?

- It is critical for the BoT to be open and supportive of the new President as she learns her way at Ursuline. How we do this must be determined jointly with her.

- The BoT is doing a better job of understanding our role and "staying in our lane", but more progress is needed. This includes the avenues of communication. Again, this is a topic ripe for dialogue with the new President, beginning at the Transition Workshop. However, we should be open to a solution somewhere along the spectrum from "Hierarchy" to "Partnership."

- Providing regular, consistent feedback from the Executive Committee to the President is essential. Components of this would be focused dialogue (e.g., retreats) and increased Trustee engagement with school and fundraising activities, which would result in a better Board-President relationship and more effectively inform the guidance.

- After the President's report it might help if the Board's reactions to the report are elicited.

4. What should the Board do to leverage our successes (the things we do well) and exploit our improvement opportunities (the things we don't do so well)?

- UA is in a pivotal moment in time, especially with the hiring of our new President. The BoT should ask her what she needs to be successful—time, tools, training, personnel—and we should satisfy all reasonable requests.

- The BoT should consider some targeted governance formation from an outside source, for all Trustees and not just "new" Trustees.

- The BoT should foster a culture where innovation, creativity, and continuous improvement are encouraged and valued. It should encourage open communication and collaboration among stakeholders to generate new ideas and solutions (and also to identify high value donors, especially within our alumnae network).

- Given the strategic importance of continuity, the BoT should develop a written succession plan for Board leadership and consider appropriate long-term strategies for filling the position of President (e.g., cultivating the next President from within).

5. What should the Board prioritize in the upcoming year?

- Successful on-boarding of our new President, including goal-setting.

- Monitoring finances, development, and enrollment.

- The Tricentennial Celebration - this could have a tremendous impact on the future of UA, including (but not limited to) Enrollment and Major Fundraising. The Event could be global and ecumenical, including the Ursuline Community; the Vatican; and the Federal, State, and Local Governments.

- Strategic Planning with the new Administration.

- Engagement, presence, and visibility of Trustees.

6. Are there any other commendations or concerns you wish to communicate? (Feel free to amplify your feedback from Section II.)

- We recognize our current President Karen Jakuback for her outstanding efforts and accomplishments on our behalf, commend her for her grace and forbearance these last 3 years, and wish her well in her new position to the west.
- We further recognize and thank our Faculty and Staff for their accomplishments during the year and for maintaining the loving culture that the Alumnae hold so dear.
- The BoT may be too internal (i.e., too heavy on Alumnae). While Alums tend to be highly motivated and thus make great Trustees, we still need external expertise and perspective (and gender diversity).
- There is some concern about the bifurcation between the Academy and the Shrine. We are competing with ourselves and possibly projecting contradictory messages. This may be an opportunity to better integrate Mission into practice.

**IV. Goals for Next School Year:** *(be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Constrained)*

1. TBD
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

This compilation prepared by:	David A. Huete	Date:	5/22/24
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**Ursuline Academy - Board's Performance Assessment for 2023-2024 Sc**  
**Section I: Key Accomplishments**

5/20/2024

<b><i>Compiled Responses</i></b>
Engaged with an Advancement and Alumni Relations Consultant.
Prioritizing the Development Department.
La Fete was a financial success.
Engaged with an Enrollment Management Consultant..
Focus on increased enrollment.
Identified key areas that need to be addressed to ensure the success of Ursuline Academy.
Facilities.
Funding approval for building repairs that are instrumental in maintaining the UA campus.
Furtherance of our Mission Identity.
Ursuline Identity Assessment.
Mission Statement.
Choice of new president.
Hired Laurie Leiva.
Found and onboarded a new President.
Hiring a new President
Not on '23-2'4 goals, but a major accomplishment - New President Search.
Searched for and Hired a new President.
Meeting potential candidates for the position of President and choosing Laurie Leiva.
Improved Trustee commitment, including implementation of Trustee Commitment form.
Improved level of engagement from trustees
Improve trustee commitment – yes this has happened.
I attended at least 90% or more Board Meetings
I participated in multiple opportunities to contribute to Ursuline’s annual giving
I attended at least 1 or more school events per quarter
I signed and returned all Trustee commitment forms, as well as served on Board committees.
Likely Goal 3 - improving expectations of Trustee commitment.
Improve trustee commitment.
All other goals are on hold.

# Ursuline Academy - Board's Performance Assessment for 2023-2024 S

## Section III: Open-Focus Questions

5/21/2024

### 1 How does the Board keep the Academy's Catholic/Ursuline Mission and Identity central to making decisions?

#### *Compiled Responses*

Trustees know what the mission and identity are and refer to them in discussions and decisions.

The school and mission are always top of mind.

The BoT continues to be formed in the Charism of the Founder and the Tradition of the Sisters by the Central Office as well as by Mission Integration.

Additionally, the Sisters and Karen Mortillaro who serve on the BoT keep the BoT focused on the Mission and Identity.

We start every meeting with a reflection and prayer.

As my role is centered on the Ursuline Educational Mission and the Catholic and Ursuline Identity of the schools, my focus is to assist the Academy and the Board in remaining mission-driven and focused.

The presentations that Christy Zurcher gives prior to each meeting.

During the 2023-24 school year, it was abundantly clear that the Board prioritizes Ursuline's Mission Focused Identity. The Board's choice for the incoming Academy President demonstrates this. The search process for the incoming academy president was strongly guided by a desire to choose a candidate whose life and background reflect the Ursuline mission. The board's prudent decision to offer the position to a proven and strongly convicted Catholic female is evidence of this fact.

New Board members participate in an orientation which includes a considerable amount of time focused on Ursuline's mission and identity.

Trustee meetings begin and end with prayer.

The Trustees attend mass together before making important decisions.

Through prayerful discernment and reflections on Angela's words/ Thanks to Christ who gives us reflective words on St. Angela at the beginning of each meeting.

Starting meetings with prayer and reflection on St. Angela's writings.

Remembering the Mission in our decisions.

I feel that every meeting is totally focused on the Ursuline Mission and values. At the meetings, I believe that the board can disagree and yet come to terms and a middle ground. The strength of the board IS the different views and concerns.

### 2 What aspects of Mission formation offered to the Board this year have you found most helpful in fulfilling your responsibilities as a Trustee? Please share any governance or Mission formation you feel could be helpful in the coming year.

#### *Compiled Responses*

We believe this is done.

At the beginning of each BoT meeting, as part of the prayer and Mission Integration, information is provided to the BoT, which is extremely formative and informative. Additionally, the "Mission Moments" have been most beneficial as well.

Briefing on the results of the UIA were very interesting and helpful.

Still need work on staying in our lane vis-a-vis President/Administration.

I think Christy has done a beautiful job of formation with the board to allow us to participate in the year's theme and grow in our understanding of St. Angela!

I am happy to collaborate on governance formation as the new year begins.

I appreciated the focus on the chapters from Martha Buser's book on St. Angela.

As I look ahead to the coming year, I believe continuing our emphasis on ongoing Catholic formation and Catholic leadership and governance would be beneficial. This could include retreats or focus groups or Special Meetings on topics such as ethical decision making and effective stewardship of resources from a Catholic perspective. Our understanding of these principles can better equip us as trustees to fulfill our responsibilities in our roles in service to the Academy.

Learning more about St. Angela Merici and the Ursuline Sisters has been helpful in remaining focused on the Mission Formation.

Bd Retreat Aug '23 / (image of St. Angela with questions) - we took time to reflect. I wish this (the opening prayer for Board meetings) could be more organized - e.g., connecting Angela's words to the theme of the year. This year: TAKE CARE.

I would like to make sure we keep our meeting agendas to items that are actually in our purview by reviewing governance vs. management. This might be accomplished by regular governance training or add this responsibility to an existing committee.

I think we could work on Board effectiveness by using time in committee meetings to address best practices for the individual committee types and sending strong specific recommendations to the entire Board.

I was disappointed that the Enrollment Ad-Hoc Committee & Tricentennial Committees never met, plus the Institutional Advancement Committee had numerous meetings cancelled.

Being a member of the Mission Integration Committee was helpful for me.

As a new trustee I feel this past year was a huge learning experience. I feel that the board was very supportive of me throughout the year.

I wish we could gather as a complete board and just get to know each other BEFORE we meet for the first time. I feel like there were some people I barely knew.

**3 How can the Board do a better job of nurturing, supporting, and providing constructive feedback to the President, thereby enabling an environment that is conducive to her success?**

***Compiled Responses***

After the President's report it might help if the Board's reactions to the report are elicited.

It is critical for the Board to be open and supportive of the new President as she learns her way at Ursuline.
The BoT is doing a better job of understanding our role and “staying in our lane.”
However, all feedback should be provided to the President through the BoT Chair and/or at BoT meetings. Members of the BoT, other than the Chair, should not have regular contact with the President, unless the President initiates the contact.
We should be more specific regarding what info we need vs what we get. Feels like we get too much trivial stuff sometimes. This would leave more room for important conversations.
Listening to Karen as she leaves will be valuable in how the relationship with Laurie is built.
I think the board already does a good job of supporting the president.
This could be accomplished by fostering deeper connections between the Board members and the President. While we must remain steadfastly mindful of the employer/employee relationship between the Board and its only employee, the President, fostering opportunities for spiritual reflection between the two, could help deepen our commitment to the school’s mission while also fostering a sense of shared purpose. Again, this could possibly be accomplished through retreats, prayer focused gatherings, or open discussions and dialog on faith moderated by guest speakers. Fostering a community of sharing in this way could serve to nourish the soul of our governance body and sustain us in both of our roles.
Ongoing information sharing is important.
Providing regular, consistent feedback from the executive committee to the President is essential.
It’s a two-way street / President must be willing to be open-available (coffees?) for welcomes to come and chat. This can be informal - on certain days/times.
Trustees should attend more school activities, participate in fundraising, and be an advocate for UA. This would enable feedback to President.
Respect her ability to manage the school, but push ourselves as a board for more accountability that we are meeting the expectations for our “job”.
With the incoming President, the Board has an opportunity to develop an environment that will lead to her success.
Identify areas of improvement and ensure that she has the resources/development opportunities.
I think we must eschew hierarchy and see ourselves as partners where the boards responsibilities are concerned.
Hopefully, we can find time to meet with Laurie in small groups to get to know her and vice versa.

**4 What should the Board do to leverage our successes (the things we do well) and exploit our improvement opportunities (the things we don’t do so well)?**

*Compiled Responses*

Meetings are kept on point and function well in their allotted time. However, a longer meeting may not be possible but might allow a more thorough understanding of any problems or decisions.

UA is in a pivotal moment in time, especially with the hiring of Laurie. I feel that we should ask Laurie what she needs to be successful—time, tools, training, personnel—and we should provide her with all reasonable requests.

Laurie should be tasked, for her first year, to raise whatever amount of money that will be needed to staff the Enrollment Management Office, the Advancement and Alumni Relations Office, and the Finance Office.

And, the BoT needs to let Laurie be President, and the BoT needs to govern.

Success: consult with the President more/better on how we can help.

Improvement: continue to work on Board/President role distinction.

Keep listening to one another and communicate well while supporting Laurie in her new role.

We never had governance training . Perhaps Barbara Dausch can help with this.

The board should recognize and celebrate the school’s successes, both big and small. We should be highlighting achievements. Boosts morale and it reinforces positive behaviors and motivates the different stakeholder communities to continue their efforts. Publicly acknowledging accomplishments also fosters a sense of purpose and unity within the school’s community,

The board should also try to do a better job of fostering a culture where innovation, creativity, and continuous improvement are encouraged and valued. The board should encourage open communication and collaboration among stakeholders to generate new ideas and solutions, and also to identify high value donors – especially within our alumna network.

The board should also focus on creating opportunities for professional development and learning to empower faculty, staff, and students to contribute to the school’s improvement efforts.

Ursuline needs to maximize and share any and all highlights with the school community and beyond as Ursuline begins celebrating three hundred years of service and success.

Consider some targeted governance formation - from an outside source - for all Trustees - not just "new" Trustees.

Really think we need a written succession plan for the board leadership and consider some planning for cultivating next academy president from within.

More and better marketing; working more closely with the alumnae board.

I think we have a very strong board. There are so many intelligent, trained, people who really amazed me with their knowledge.

This year was an exception, in that Karen stated that she was leaving, Shelly was removed, a search for a new President. Hopefully, next year will be a little calmer, so to speak.

**5 What should the Board prioritize in the upcoming year?**

***Compiled Responses***

Helping the New President get well established. Increasing enrollment.

The BoT should prioritize the Tricentennial Event, which could have a tremendous impact on the future of UA, including but not limited to, Enrollment and Major Fundraising. The Event should be a global event, including the Ursuline Community, the Vatican, the Federal Government, the State Government, and the Local Government.
Guiding the new President:real time feedback; Clarity of instruction (preference vs guidance) including goal-setting; Information sharing.
Successful on-boarding of Laurie.
Strategic Planning with Laurie's team.
Monitor finances and enrollment.
Ensuring work on the 300th anniversary is in the forefront. It will take all three of these years to plan a successful celebration.
Getting back on track with the condominium deal and the transfer of property.
Support the new president.
Keep contact with whoever/whatever is responsible for finances whether a new company or a new hired person.
Development (fundraising) and increased enrollment.
The Board should focus on enrollment and staff retention, student recruitment and expanding institutional advancement.
More engagement/presence of Board members at Board meetings. Come early for coffee.
Visibility with faculty, staff, and parents/alums.
From Cultivating the Vine: Developing and implementing a leadership succession plan for the board of trustees and school leadership positions.
Enrollment.
Finances.
On boarding the new president.
Identifying new ways to generate contributions and revenue.
Teachers' salaries.
How to recruit more girls to attend Ursuline.

**6 Are there any other commendations or concerns you wish to communicate? (Feel free to amplify your feedback from Section II.)**

<b>Compiled Responses</b>
Finances and enrollment.
There is great hope for the future of Catholic Education and for Ursuline Academy. We just need to remain focused and include every member of the Ursuline Community and Greater Community to realize all of our goals for the 2024-2025 School Year, leading to the 2027 Celebration.
Once again I salute our President Karen for her outstanding efforts and accomplishments on our behalf, and wish her well in her new position to the west.

6. *The Board is committed to new Trustee training and ongoing formation in the areas of governance and Catholic/Ursuline Identity.* Governance formation was put on hold this year as Karen announced she was leaving. I do believe it is a priority and hope to see governance formation at all meetings in 24-25 and the time for mission formation remain a priority.

10. *The Board works in partnership with the President and provides necessary and sufficient guidance to the President while respecting each party's functional boundaries.* While there is always room for improvement, I do believe roles have been much clearer this year.

I think the board is too internal, meaning too many alums. No offense is intended as the alums on the board are excellent and very committed. Perhaps this is why the commitment of the board has improved.

But we still need some external expertise. Perhaps Laurie Leiva will be able to provide a new and different group of candidates.

n/a

Commend our President, Karen J., for her grace and forbearance these last 3 years.

Faculty and staff for their accomplishments during the year.

And last, but not least, to David - for keeping us on task and willing to do another year.

I would like to consider MK's suggestion of "flattening" our structure by expanding the executive committee to include chairs of the strategically important standing committees.

I am very concerned about the bifurcation between the Academy and the Shrine. We are competing with ourselves and projecting contradictory messages. It is where I think we are not integrating mission into practice.