

CHAPTER 2

THREE GOVERNING AGENCIES—THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

IN THE days prior to about 1875 there were only three bodies of authority in an American college—the trustees, the president, and the faculty. As colleges grew in size and wealth, further administrative officers were added: the dean, the registrar, and the business officer—variously called business manager, treasurer, bursar, secretary of the board.

In the present usual organization the business officer represents the president in business matters, the dean represents the president in educational matters, and the registrar keeps all academic records.

The trustees hold all property, authorize the budget and budget changes, fix policies, appoint the president, and serve as a court of final appeal in all matters.

The faculty, under the board, teaches all students, determines all curricula and courses to be offered and all classes to be taught, and assigns classes to teachers, determines grades, who shall graduate, and who shall receive degrees, both in course and honorary.

The president is the chief executive officer of the board of trustees and also of the faculty. With the aid of the business officer, on the one hand, and of the dean, or deans, on the other, he is responsible for the administration of the educational and financial affairs of the institution under the policies and regulations set up by the board and by the faculty. Depending on the interests and talents of the president and immediate needs, he may devote his chief efforts to financial or to educational problems.

The control of an institution in all its parts is shared by the board of trustees, the president aided by the chief financial

officer and deans, and the faculty. Their several spheres of authority are fairly distinct but overlap in places. Some consideration of the chief loyalties of each of the above agencies will throw light on their duties and their limitations. It is important to recognize that any authority is limited by its loyalties (see table 2).

TABLE 2
THE CHIEF LOYALTIES

of Trustees	of President and Officers	of Faculty
to Legislature or Donors to Parents to the People	to the Trustees to Legislature or Donors to the Faculty and Staff to the Students to the Parents to Alumni to the People	to the President to the Individual members of the Faculty to the Students to the Trustees to recognized academic standards to the academic standard- izing agencies

It has been the aim to arrange the loyalties (table 2) in the order of their influence. Others might arrange them differently. Theoretically, perhaps the first loyalty of each of these agencies should be to "the truth." Undoubtedly each is deeply concerned with the discovery and preservation of the truth, but this is an abstract loyalty, and each of those listed in table 2 is quite concrete.

Very briefly, the functions of the above agencies are as follows: The trustees control all financial and property matters and determine general policies. The president administers the institution under policies fixed by the trustees. The faculty controls teaching and research and is responsible for academic standards. These duties will now be amplified.

The Duties and Responsibilities of Trustees

The loyalties of the trustees are simpler and less personal than those of the president or faculty, and their duties are

more general in nature. They stand between the institution and the public. It is their responsibility to see that the types of service for which the institution was established are rendered as effectively and as economically as possible, and that as many properly prepared students as possible are adequately served. It follows that the chief duties of the trustees are to determine policies and see that these policies are carried out by competent administrative officers.

The policies controlling the scope and operation of a college should be fixed by the trustees with advice from the president and the faculty, and should continue with slight modification from administration to administration. The trustees and not the president should determine what sort of an institution they control. Too often we see the whole policy and personality of a college changed by a new president who reorganizes it in accord with his own ideas. Certainly the president should feel free to suggest changes in policy, and the trustees should give his suggestions careful consideration, but the fact remains that the control of policy is a function of the trustees and one of their most important functions. It is also one of which they very often lose sight.

When the trustees overlook their function of determining policies, they tend to become an official rubber stamp of the actions of the president. It is rather their duty to assure themselves that the president's administration conforms to the policies laid down by themselves.

In addition to determining the policies of the institution, there are three very important functions of the trustees usually fixed in the laws governing the institution:

1. The trustees hold title to all property and are custodians of all property of the institution.
2. The trustees are responsible for the appointment of the chief executive officer of the institution, ordinarily designated as the president.

3. The trustees constitute the final court of appeal of students, alumni, faculty, and all staff members, who feel that the administration has not adequately cared for their interests.

The Duties and Responsibilities of the President

The president is the chief administrative and executive officer. As the representative of the trustees it is his duty to see that the institution is operated in conformity to the policies fixed by them. As chief executive officer he is finally responsible for everything concerning the institution and for the effective and economical operation of all departments. He is responsible to the parents for the well-being, good conduct and education of all students. He is the chief adjuster of all difficulties which are brought to his office and should discover and adjust many difficulties before they reach the stage when they must be brought to his office. As the executive officer of the general faculty he presides at meetings, and with the assistance of the deans he is responsible to the faculty to see that their regulations are enforced. The president recommends to the trustees all appointments, promotions, dismissals, and salaries. He is often occupied with the general public which comes to him for assistance and with criticisms and complaints. His duties are numerous, and all of them should be discharged in conformity with the policies approved by the trustees.

While of course he always should be free to suggest to the trustees new policies or modification of old policies to suit the times, he should not himself fix policies but leave this for determination to the trustees.

Perhaps no better statement of the functions of the president has been made than that of Charles W. Elliott of Harvard, in his inaugural address in 1869. "However important the functions of the President, it must not be forgotten that he is emphatically a constitutional executive. It is his character

and his judgment which are of importance, not his opinions. He is the executive officer of deliberative bodies in which decisions are reached after discussions by a majority vote. Those decisions bind him. He cannot force his own opinions upon anybody. A university is the last place in the world for a dictator. Learning is always republican. It has idols, but not masters.”

The responsibility of the president is so to administer the institution that these policies, fixed by the trustees and faculty, are faithfully carried out, or recommendations for changes submitted to them. Appointments to vacancies and new positions are to be made such as will contribute to the effective operation under the fixed policies. Appointments must be made with a view to best serving the students and also to carrying out the aims of the institution as fixed by the trustees in research and scholarly achievement. The president must be loyal to all staff members and guard their interests as to tenure and salary and in every other way. It is his responsibility to see that deans, department heads, and all in authority are of a type and ability to render fine leadership to those under their direction. He should concern himself with guarding and promoting the best interests of the students. He also has responsibilities to the alumni, supporters, and friends, to maintain the spirit and morale of the institution. His position is often rendered difficult when some of these several loyalties conflict, as when the alumni press for a stronger football team than the academic standards and the integrity of the institution permit; or when the trustees desire a department discontinued to which the president has appointed a staff which depends on its continuance for support; or when the salary demands of able men call for salaries above the scale adopted by the board.

Recognizing the fact that the president must operate under a variety of more or less conflicting loyalties, the trustees, when they feel compelled to take action affecting staff mem-

bers should always allow sufficient time for execution, so that adjustments to the change can be made without serious injury to anyone.

The formal duties of the president may be listed as follows:

Attends meetings of trustees and reports periodically.

Recommends the annual budget, and any later necessary changes.

Recommends appointments, promotions, dismissals, salaries, and salary changes.

Presides at meetings of the general faculty.

Represents the institution before the public.

Represents the institution before large donors or before legislature.

No complete list of his duties can be made. The president is, or should be, the chief servant of all, always willing to help student, professor, employee, or any others needing his aid in their work or trouble. His authority is considerable, and he can be the most helpful man in the institution.

The Duties and Responsibilities of the Faculty

The faculty includes all members of the teaching and research staff. In a small college there is only one faculty. In a university there may be quite a number. Usually, faculties of Arts and Science, Medicine, Law, Education, and a graduate school are included. In addition there may be faculties of Theology, Engineering, Commerce, Agriculture, Home Economics, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and others.

The general faculty in a university is usually made up of the permanent members of the entire teaching and research staff who under the regulations of the institution have the right to vote. Often the younger members also attend but do not vote. The president presides over the general faculty. Each school or college faculty is presided over by its respective dean.

All matters directly connected with teaching and research

are under the control of the faculty. Matters of common interest to all are determined by the general faculty, and matters wholly within the interests of a particular college are determined by the faculty of that college.

The faculties, within the limits of the policies of the trustees, determine what courses will be taught, fix the requirements of each curriculum, fix the passing grade and the requirements for graduation. They vote all degrees, both in course and honorary. All rules and regulations affecting the work and conduct of students are fixed or approved by the faculty. All examinations are set by members of the faculty or by persons selected by them, and the grades given are final and not subject to revision by any administrative officer.

Inasmuch as the whole purpose of the institutions under discussion is to give instruction to students and conduct research, it is easy to see that possible conflicts in authority can arise.