

3.2.4

Governance and Administration: External influence

The governing board is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies and protects the institution from such influence.

Judgment

Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable

Narrative

Note: Text for all linked documents below can be increased/decreased for ease of reading by pressing your keyboard's Ctrl key while rotating the mouse wheel.

The Board of Regents of the Texas Tech University System, which is the governing board of Angelo State University, is free from undue influence from political, religious, or other external bodies and protects the institution from such influence.

The board is composed of nine members who are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. The members hold office for staggered terms of six years, with the terms of three members expiring January 31 of odd-numbered years (TEC §§109.21–109.22). A non-voting student regent is also appointed by the governor for a one-year term, from June 1 to May 31 (TEC §51.355).

As public officials, board members are expected “to preserve institutional independence and to defend [the institution’s] right to manage its own affairs through its chosen administrators and employees” (TEC §51.352). All state laws relating to ethics and conduct of public officials are applicable to members of the board; these laws include stipulations regarding personal financial disclosure, standards of conduct, and conflict of interest (Texas Government Code §572.051).

The board has also adopted its own ethics and conflict of interest policies prohibiting its members from having a direct or indirect interest or taking part in business or professional activities that are in conflict with the performance of their duties as trustees of the public interest. These policies are published in *The Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of the Texas Tech University System* (Sections 03.01–03.03, *Regents’ Rules*).

To facilitate public oversight of its actions, the board complies with the requirement of the Texas Open Meetings Act and does not conduct official business unless the business has been placed on its meeting agenda and posted publicly (Texas Government Code §§551.001–551.146, specifically sections 551.002 and 551.041-.042, respectively). Copies of board minutes are posted on the Board of Regents website, and a representative example of meeting minutes is attached (Board of Regents minutes December 15-16, 2011).

The ethics and conflict of interest policies of the Board of Regents are consistent with the standards prescribed in Texas Government Code §572.051, and the board distributes its policies and the Texas

Government Code §572.051 to each new board member and each new officer not later than the third business day after the date the person becomes a board member and/or qualifies for office. In addition, each new regent participates in a training program that focuses on the official role and duties of the members of the board and includes training in the areas of budgeting, policy development, and governance. Topics covered by this training program include the requirements of the open meetings and open records law, the requirements of conflict of interest laws and other laws relating to public officials, and the Board of Regents ethics and conflict of interest policies (TEC §61.084). A sample new regent orientation agenda and an overview of the new regent orientation process are attached.