



LEARN • ENGAGE • BELONG

Sandhills Community College

Board of Trustees Retreat

Tuesday, October 7, 2025, | 9:30 AM

Location: Clement Dining Room, Dempsey Student Center

9:30 – 11:00 AM | Trustee Roles & Oversight

Presenter: Dr. Dale McInnis, State Board Member and President Emeritus, Richmond Community College

- Statutory authority and State Board Code
- Governance, ethics, and fiduciary duties
- SCC Trustee By-Laws
- Trustee leadership best practices
- Q&A and discussion

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Funding & Vision: Legislative, County, and Foundation Perspectives

Panel Participants:

- Sen. Tom McInnis; Rep. Neal Jackson; Rep. Garland Pierce
- Kurt Cook, Chair, Moore County Commissioners; James Leach, Chair, Hoke County Commissioners
- SCC Foundation Executive Committee: Jon Giles

Moderator: Dr. Sandy Stewart, President

Discussion Topics:

- Funding priorities and legislative outlook
- County support for workforce and capital development
- Foundation perspectives and long-term vision

12:00 – 1:00 PM | Lunch & Networking

- Informal discussion with panelists and guests
- Opportunity for follow-up on morning topics

1:00 – 1:50 PM | NC Community College Funding Model

Presenter: Dr. Sandy Stewart, President

- Funding structure and formula overview
- State allocations to Sandhills Community College
- Peer comparisons across NC

1:50 – 2:15 PM | One College Implementation at Sandhills

Presenters: SCC Leadership Team

- Vision and rationale
- Progress update and organizational structure
- Impact on instruction, student services, and operations

2:30– 4:00 PM | Board of Trustees Meeting

- Program highlight
- Approval of minutes
- Committee reports
- Action items
- Closed session (if needed)



Sandhills Community College
Board of Trustees Responsibilities and Governance
Framework

"The only valid philosophy for North Carolina is the philosophy of total education: a belief in the incomparable worth of every human being ... a respect for the diverse capabilities of individuals ... a belief that all people should be given an opportunity to learn to the limit of their capacities."

*Dr. Dallas Herring, April 1964 remarks to the
NC General Assembly's Special Committee on Education*

Table of Contents

- I. Statutory Authority – NC General Statutes (Chapter 115D)
- II. North Carolina Community College State Board Code (SBCCC)
- III. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- IV. Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, Sandhills Community College
 - 1. Section 1: Roles and Duties of Trustees as a Governing Body
 - 2. Section 2: Role of the Chair
 - 3. Section 3: Role of the President
 - 4. Section 4: Individual Responsibilities of Trustees
- V. Ethics Training & Statement of Economic Interest
- VI. Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT)
- VII. NC Association of Community Colleges Trustees (NCACCT)
- VIII. Summary

I. Statutory Authority: NC General Statutes (Chapter 115D)

Purpose of North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS), Chapter 115D

- Establish the governance, powers, and responsibilities of community college boards of trustees.
- Chapter 115D provides the legal foundation for the organization, operation, and oversight of the North Carolina Community College System.
- Key provisions of Chapter 115D outline:
 - The creation and composition of local boards of trustees.
 - Terms of office, eligibility requirements, and appointment/removal procedures.
 - The corporate powers of boards, including property ownership, contracting, and financial authority.
 - The duties of trustees, such as electing the president, and adopting policies.
 - The roles of officers, including the Board Chair and President.
 - These statutes ensure statewide consistency in community college operations while allowing local boards to adapt to the unique educational and economic needs of their communities.

Why Statutory Authority Matters

- **Defines Legal Power** – Trustees can only act within the powers granted by the NC General Statutes and the State Board of Community Colleges. This ensures actions are legally valid and enforceable.
- **Ensures Accountability** – By following statutory authority, trustees demonstrate transparency and compliance with state law, reducing risks of liability or overreach.
- **Provides Consistency** – The statutes create a uniform framework for community colleges statewide, while still allowing for local flexibility.
- **Protects the College** – Operating within statutory authority safeguards the College's reputation, accreditation, and eligibility for state and federal funding.
- **Clarifies Roles** – Trustees, the President, and the Board Chair each have specific duties under the law. Following the statutes avoids conflicts, duplication, or neglect of responsibilities.

- **Supports Mission** – By grounding decisions in law, trustees keep the College aligned with its purpose: serving students, the community, and the state's workforce needs.

II. State Board of Community Colleges Code (SBCCC)

Purpose of the SBCCC

- Provides the administrative rules governing the NC Community College System.
- Ensures consistency across the 58 colleges while allowing local flexibility.
- Covers governance, programs, finance, personnel, and students.
- Has the force of law once adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges.

Key Subchapters:

1B SBCCC – Local Boards of Trustees Governance

- **1B SBCCC 300.1 – Authority**
 - Local boards derive their authority from statute and the State Board.
 - Powers are delegated except for systemwide matters, fiscal accountability, and program accountability.
- **1B SBCCC 300.2 – Authorization**
 - Boards of Trustees are corporate bodies, responsible for operating a college consistent with law and State Board rules.
- **1B SBCCC 300.3 – Ethics and Training**
 - Trustees must complete the required ethics training.
 - Trustees must file Statements of Economic Interest (SEIs) annually.
- **1C SBCCC 300.2 – Evaluation of Presidents**
 - Trustees are required to conduct annual evaluations of the President, reported to the State Board.

Why SBCCC Matters to Trustees

- Trustees are legally bound to operate within the SBCCC framework.
- Key responsibilities under SBCCC:
 - Ensure presidential evaluations (1C SBCCC 300.2).
 - Comply with ethics and SEI filing requirements (1B SBCCC 300.3).
 - Approve curriculum changes and recommend them to the State Board (1C SBCCC).
 - Manage local fees within SBCCC limits (1E SBCCC).
 - Safeguard fiscal accountability and annual audits (1F SBCCC).

III. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Accreditation Requirements (SACSCOC)

Standard 4.1 – Governing Board

The institution must have a governing board that:

- Has at least five members.
- Is the legal body with specific authority over the institution.
- Exercises fiduciary oversight (financial responsibility and integrity).
- Ensures independence:
 - The presiding officer of the board and a majority of members must be free from contractual, employment, personal, or familial financial interest in the institution.
 - The board is not controlled by a minority or by external organizations.
 - The board is not presided over by the president/CEO of the institution.

Standard 4.2 – Board Responsibilities

4.2.a Mission Review

The board ensures regular review of the institution's mission.

- Sandhills CC policy: *Mission Statement Review (Policy 1.1.1)* – every 5 years (reviewed in 2016 and 2021).

4.2.b Distinction of Roles

The board ensures a clear and appropriate distinction between:

- The policy-making function of the board.
- The administration and faculty have responsibility to administer and implement policy.

SACSCOC Rationale:

Effective governance avoids boards undercutting the authority of presidents, administrators, or faculty, ensuring a healthy governance structure.

4.2.c Selection & Evaluation of CEO

The board selects and **regularly evaluates** the institution's chief executive officer (President).

- Sandhills CC: Annual presidential evaluation each February.
- Aligned with NC SBCCC 300.2 (State Board Code).

4.2.d Conflict of Interest

The board defines and addresses conflict of interest for its members.

- Written policies must be in place and applied consistently. “SCC Board of Trustees Bylaws, Article II, Section 2”

4.2.e Dismissal of Board Members

The board must have fair and appropriate processes for removal of trustees when necessary. “SCC Board of Trustees Bylaws, Article IV, Section 2”

4.2.f Protection from Undue Influence

The board protects the institution from undue influence by external persons or bodies.

- Safeguards the independence of the institution’s decisions. “SBCCC 300.3 Ethics and Training”

4.2.g Evaluation of Board Responsibilities

The board defines and **regularly evaluates its own responsibilities and expectations.**

- Institutions must demonstrate periodic board self-assessment.

Other Related Standards (Cross-Sections)

Although Section 4 is the governing board section, other SACSCOC standards also affect trustees:

- **Standard 6.2.c – Faculty Role**
Ensures faculty have primary responsibility for curriculum, consistent with board-adopted policies.
- **Standard 7.1 – Institutional Planning**
Boards are expected to provide oversight of strategic planning and mission alignment.

- **Standard 8.1 – Student Achievement**

Trustees ensure that student achievement is measured, reported, and aligned with mission. “SCC Annual College Strategic Plan CSP”

- **Standard 13.1 – Financial Resources**

Boards must demonstrate **fiduciary oversight** of budgets and financial planning.

- **Standard 13.6 – Federal and State Responsibilities**

Compliance with all legal obligations falls under board oversight.

Why Accreditation Requirements Matters to Trustees

For trustees, accreditation requirement sets specific expectations for governance:

- **Independent** – Boards must act free of conflicts of interest and without undue external control.
- **Policy-Focused** – Trustees set policy and direction, but do not manage daily operations.
- **Accountable** – Trustees exercise fiduciary oversight, review the mission, and evaluate their own effectiveness.
- **Responsible for the President** – Boards select, evaluate, and support the president as the chief executive officer.
- **Protective of Integrity** – Trustees must safeguard the College against undue influence from political, personal, or external interests.

By meeting SACSCOC’s accreditation requirements, trustees ensure the College remains accredited, eligible for federal and state funding, and recognized for high-quality education. It also reinforces ethical and strategic leadership, with trustees focusing on long-term direction while faculty, staff, and the president manage operations.

IV. Bylaws of the Board of Trustees

Section 1 – Roles and Duties of Trustees as a Governing Body

- Elect and annually evaluate the President.
- Approve budgets, land purchases, and programs.
- Create broad institutional policies, implemented by administration and faculty.
- Oversee fiscal reports and audits; approve transfers of funds.
- Secure financial resources from state, local, and private sources.
- Elect legal counsel annually.

Section 2 – Role of the Chair

- Presides at all Board meetings; rules on procedure (*Robert's Rules of Order*).
- Prepares meeting agendas with the President.
- Appoints all committees and their chairs.
- Serves as ex officio voting member on all committees.
- Reminds trustees of conflict-of-interest obligations.
- Represents the Board as its official spokesperson.
- Provides governance leadership and ensures alignment with statutes, SBCCC, and bylaws.

Section 3 – Role of the President

- Serves as Chief Executive Officer, responsible for administration and management of the College.
- Administers and manages all College operations: academics, finance, personnel, and facilities.
- Recommends policies, budgets, programs, and personnel actions.
- Reports personnel changes to the Board.
- Participates in all Board and committee meetings (without vote).
- Acts as custodian of college records, documents, and the seal.
- May nominate, with Board approval, an Assistant Secretary to record minutes, issue notices, certify public notices, and attest documents.

Section 4 – Individual Responsibilities of Trustees

Each trustee is expected to:

- Prepare for and attend meetings; actively serve on committees.
- Make informed, fact-based decisions.
- Maintain confidentiality, especially of closed sessions.
- Avoid conflicts of interest or appearances of impropriety.
- Act only through official Board action.
- Comply with Open Meetings and Public Records laws.
- Complete required ethics training, SEI filings, and trustee orientation.

Roles of the Chair, President, and Trustees			
Chair of the Board	President (CEO)	Trustees as a Governing Body	Individual Responsibilities of Trustees
Presides at all Board meetings and serves as parliamentarian (Robert's Rules).	Serves as Chief Executive Officer of the College.	Act collectively as the governing body (no individual authority outside official Board action).	Prepare for and attend meetings; actively serve on committees.
Prepares meeting agendas in partnership with the President.	Administers and manages all College operations: academics, finance, personnel, and facilities.	Elect and annually evaluate the President.	Make informed, fact-based decisions.
Appoints all Board committees and their chairs.	Recommends policies, budgets, programs, and personnel actions to the Board.	Approve budgets, land purchases, and capital projects.	Maintain confidentiality, especially of closed sessions.
Serves as ex officio voting member of all committees.	Reports personnel changes (appointments, separations, etc.) to the Board.	Create broad institutional policies; administration and faculty implement them.	Avoid conflicts of interest or appearances of impropriety.
Reminds trustees of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest.	Participates in Board and committee meetings (without vote).	Oversee fiscal reports, audits, and approve fund transfers.	Act only through official Board action
Acts as the official spokesperson for the Board.	Serves as custodian of college records, documents, and the seal.	Secure financial resources from state, local and private sources	Comply with Open Meetings and Public Records laws.
Provides governance leadership and ensures alignment with statutes, SBCCC, and bylaws.	May nominate an Assistant Secretary (with Board approval) to manage minutes, notices, attestations.	Uphold confidentiality, avoid conflicts of interest, comply with Open Meetings/Public Records laws, and complete ethics training/SEI filings.	Complete required ethics training, SEI filings, and trustee orientation.
		Elect legal counsel annually	

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V. Ethics Training & Statement of Economic Interest

1. Legal Authority

- Governed by the State Government Ethics Act (NC General Statutes, Chapter 138A).
- Applies to all appointed officials, including community college trustees.
- Enforced by the North Carolina State Ethics Commission.

2. Ethics Training

Who Must Complete:

- All trustees of NC community colleges.
- Timing:
 - Must be completed within 6 months of appointment.
 - Must be renewed every two years.
- Format:
 - Offered online or in-person by the State Ethics Commission.
- Covers:
 - Conflict of interest rules.
 - Standards of conduct.
 - Transparency and accountability requirements.
 - Application of ethics laws in decision-making.
- Purpose:
 - To ensure trustees understand their legal and ethical responsibilities, especially around conflicts of interest, transparency, and public trust.

3. Statement of Economic Interest (SEI)

Who Must File:

- Every community college trustee.

Timing:

- Filed annually with the NC State Ethics Commission.
- Filing season runs January 1 – April 15 each year.

4. Purpose:

- Identifies financial interests, employment, and affiliations that could create conflicts of interest.
- Reviewed by the Ethics Commission, which issues a potential conflicts opinion back to the trustee and the college.

5. How to File:

- Completed electronically at ethics.nc.gov.
- Trustees provide:
 - Employment and income sources.
 - Business ownership and investments.
 - Property interests.
 - Positions on boards or nonprofits.
 - Spousal employment and financial interests (required for transparency).

6. Consequences of Non-Compliance:

- Trustees who fail to file on time or complete training can face:
 - Public reporting of noncompliance.
 - Possible removal from the Board for continued failure.

7. Why This Matters for Trustees

- Protects the integrity of Board decisions.
- Ensures public confidence in the independence of the Board.
- Helps trustees avoid conflicts (or appearances of conflicts) when voting on budgets, contracts, personnel, or policies.
- Required for SACSCOC accreditation compliance (Standard 4.2.d – conflict of interest).

VI. Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Membership

Provides opportunities for trustee professional development and networking.

- Core Values:
 - Boardmanship – accountability, integrity, transparency.
 - Advocacy – equitable access to higher education.
 - Student Success – focus on completion and workforce development.
 - Innovation – support for evolving models.
 - Diversity – commitment to inclusion and respect.
 - Service – public service as mentorship and recognition.

<https://www.acct.org/>

VII. NC Association of Community College Trustees (NCACCT)

The North Carolina Association of Community College Trustees (NCACCT) provides trustees with statewide support, advocacy, and professional development resources. Specifically, they:

- **Advocate** for community colleges at the state and national levels, representing trustee interests in policy and legislation.
- **Educate and Train** trustees through orientation programs, leadership seminars, and annual conferences.
- **Provide Resources** on governance, ethics, and effective board practices.
- **Facilitate Networking** among trustees across North Carolina's 58 community colleges to share strategies and best practices.
- **Support Leadership** by partnering with the NCACCP (presidents' association) to strengthen trustee-president collaboration. <http://ncacct.org/>

VIII. Summary

The SCC Board of Trustees operates under a multi-layered governance framework:

- **Statutory Authority** – NC General Statutes, Chapter 115D.
- **Regulatory Oversight** – State Board of Community Colleges Code (SBCCC).

- **Accreditation Standards** – SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation, Section 4.
- **Local Authority** – SCC Bylaws.
- **Ethical Obligations** – SEI filings and ethics training.
- **Professional Development** – ACCT membership & NCACCT.

This framework ensures trustees uphold fiduciary oversight, sound governance, and student success, while aligning with state and national standards.