



FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF STRATEGIC
PLANNING, ANALYSIS AND
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Board of Trustees' Self-evaluation (2023-24)

A descriptive report of the results for the
2023-24 Board of Trustees' Self-evaluation

Report prepared by:



FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF
UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT

Overview

Report Timeline, Response Rate, and Assessment Development

The link to the Board of Trustees Self-evaluation was sent via email to all trustees on July 1, 2024 and closed on July 17, 2024. At the time of closing, there were 13 responses from trustees, with one partial response. The partially completed survey compromised responses to section 1 (Board Organization, Governance and Leadership) and section 2 (Board Relations). The thirteen (13) responses indicate a 100% response rate for the Board of Trustees.

The survey is comprised of six (6) Factors, each containing multiple statements (number of questions for each Factor is indicated in parentheses) on which each trustee rates the Board's performance on a 5-point Likert-type scale (Superior, Above Average, Average, Below Average, Poor). Each Factor includes an open-ended question to gather detailed feedback.

The six (6) Factors are:

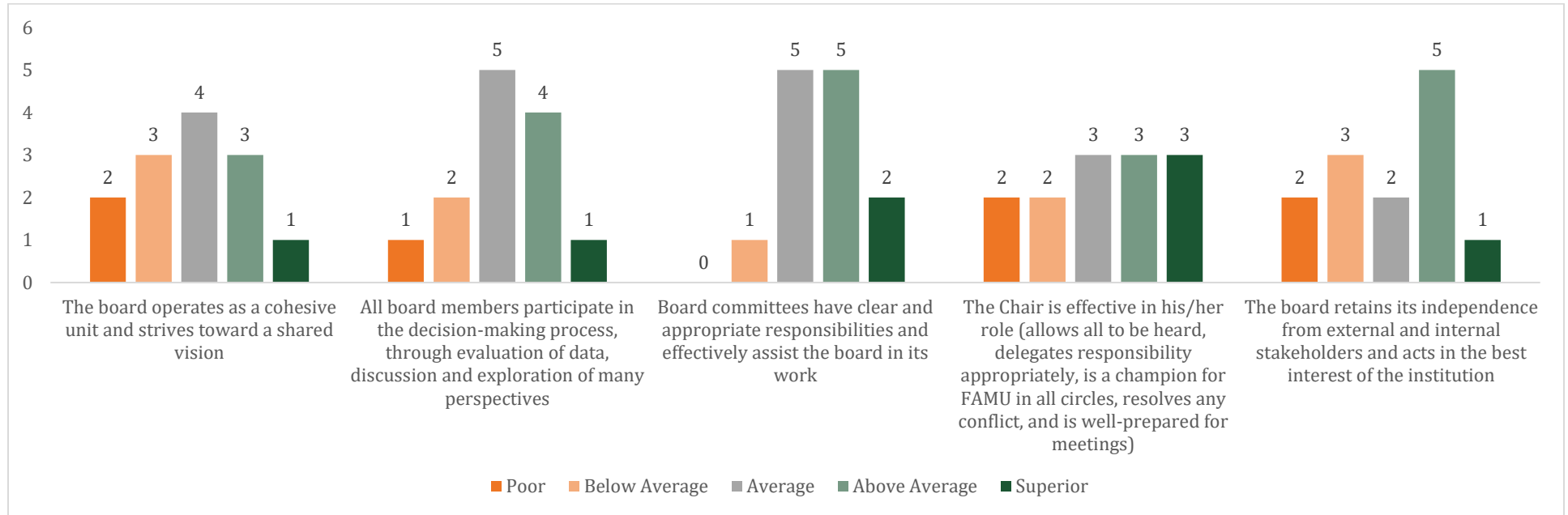
1. Board Organization, Governance and Leadership (5)
2. Board Relations (3)
3. Policy (3)
4. University Operations and Performance (5)
5. Institutional Sustainability (4)
6. Board Education (4)

The final section of the instrument includes four (4) open-ended questions to elicit qualitative feedback on the Board's performance.

This report contains an overview of all of the questions and documentation of the responses received for each question.

Board Organization, Governance, and Leadership

Responses



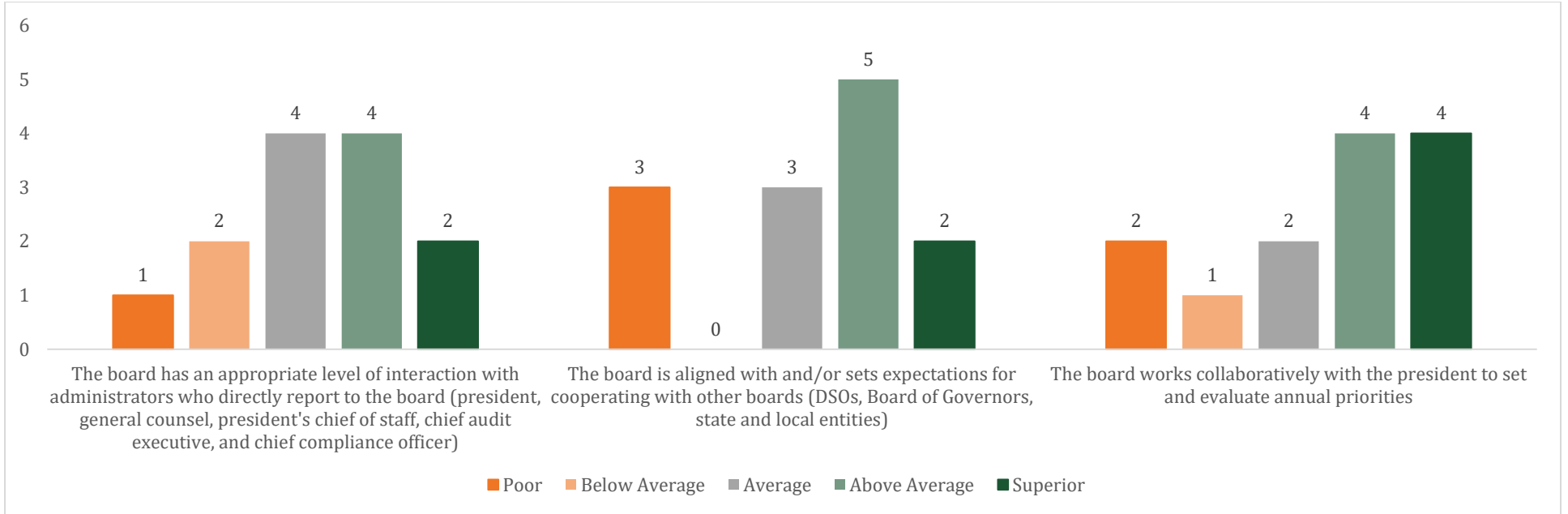
2022-23 Average	2023-24 Average	Board Organization, Governance and Leadership	Number of Responses by Level				
			Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
4.3	2.8	The board operates as a cohesive unit and strives toward a shared vision	2	3	4	3	1
3.9	3.2	All board members participate in the decision-making process, through evaluation of data, discussion and exploration of many perspectives	1	2	5	4	1
4.1	3.6	Board committees have clear and appropriate responsibilities and effectively assist the board in its work	0	1	5	5	2
4.3	3.2	The Chair is effective in his/her role (allows all to be heard, delegates responsibility appropriately, is a champion for FAMU in all circles, resolves any conflict, and is well-prepared for meetings)	2	2	3	3	3
4.1	3.0	The board retains its independence from external and internal stakeholders and acts in the best interest of the institution	2	3	2	5	1

Comments

- This is basically a new board that is growing as one solid unit with diverse views and different approaches. In time we can become a better board as we jell.
- Overall, I feel that we are doing a good job. We need to find healthier ways to deal with the handful of big outstanding problem projects.
- This board lacks leadership and is lacking in many areas where expertise is much needed.
- I would like for the Board Chair to be more engaged with newer Trustees. The Chair has to lead meetings and be prepared to reel in BOT members who go astray during meetings.
- The board requests certain things, never receiving these items or information. This keeps the board at a complete disadvantage; we cannot be strategic, we cannot be aligned and it ensures that we will never be able to make a clear decision based on data. The chair lacks in leadership and responsibility, always looking for a reason why something didn't happen, rather than making sure the information that was requested is provided in a timely and digestible manner. As a board the administration has kept us out of the loop on so many things that it is really unconscionable, while creating an environment of mistrust between board and administration. This is where a chair is critical in his or her leadership. I would like to make sure as a board we can and will improve in these areas. Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Board Relations

Responses



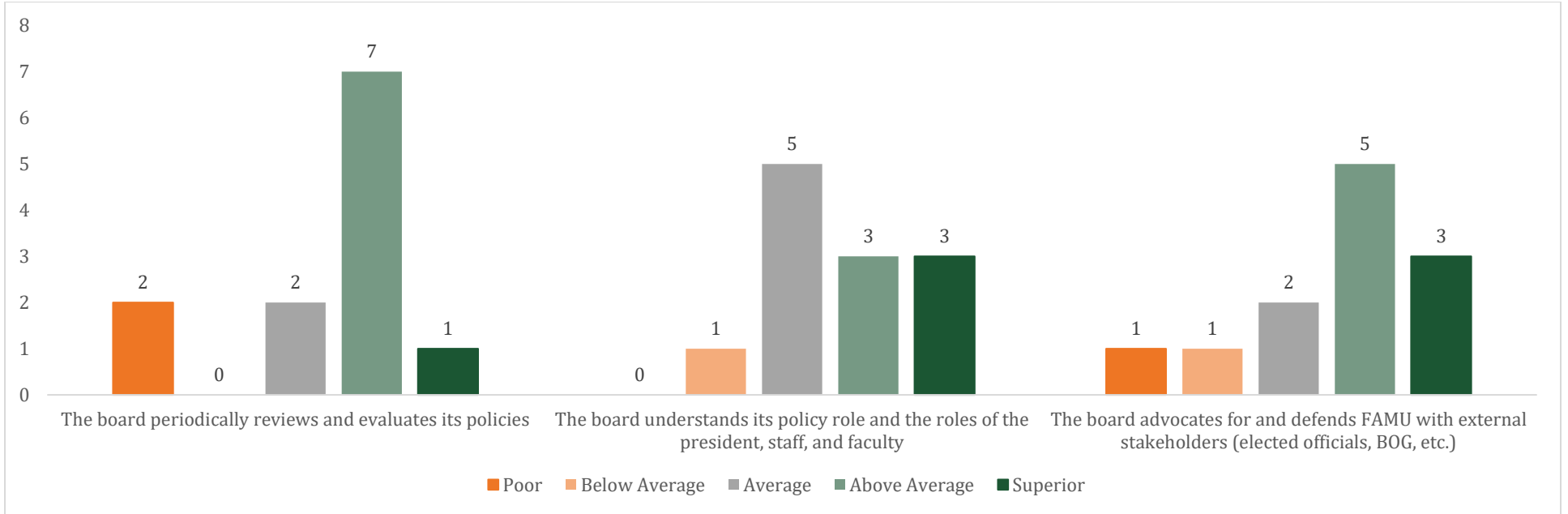
2022-23 Average	2023-24 Average	Board Relations	Number of Responses by Level				
			Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
3.9	3.3	The board has an appropriate level of interaction with administrators who directly report to the board (president, general counsel, president's chief of staff, chief audit executive, and chief compliance officer)	1	2	4	4	2
4.0	3.2	The board is aligned with and/or sets expectations for cooperating with other boards (DSOs, Board of Governors, state and local entities)	3	0	3	5	2
4.0	3.5	The board works collaboratively with the president to set and evaluate annual priorities	2	1	2	4	4

Comments

- This year has been a very rocky relationship with the administration in terms of communication with the board and the President holding his management accountable in achieving the stated priority set by the board.
- Again, it's going well but we need to tighten up communication and clarity of goals.
- No leadership from the top. Board can't be a cohesive unit because the Chair hasn't made sure the board is provided with proper and all information to make competent decisions.
- The BOT must be more consistent, individually, in rating the President. One good act should not warrant an excellent nor should one poor act warrant a poor; we must rate on a consistent level, and we must include the umbrella (overall) body of work.
- The governance structure of the DSOs needs some work and we need to get these groups back to what they were formulated for. Back to the original intent.
- Routine communication and reports from the Chief Audit and Chief of Compliance are provided to the board and the board has open and unfiltered access to this team. New process this year regarding a joint board meeting of DSO's with BOT is great way to ensure alignment and engagement. President's goals are tracked and monitored via an external dashboard with clear availability for all to see performance. All actions and activities are aligned to FAMU's strategic plan and include call out to the areas of emphasis.

Policy

Responses



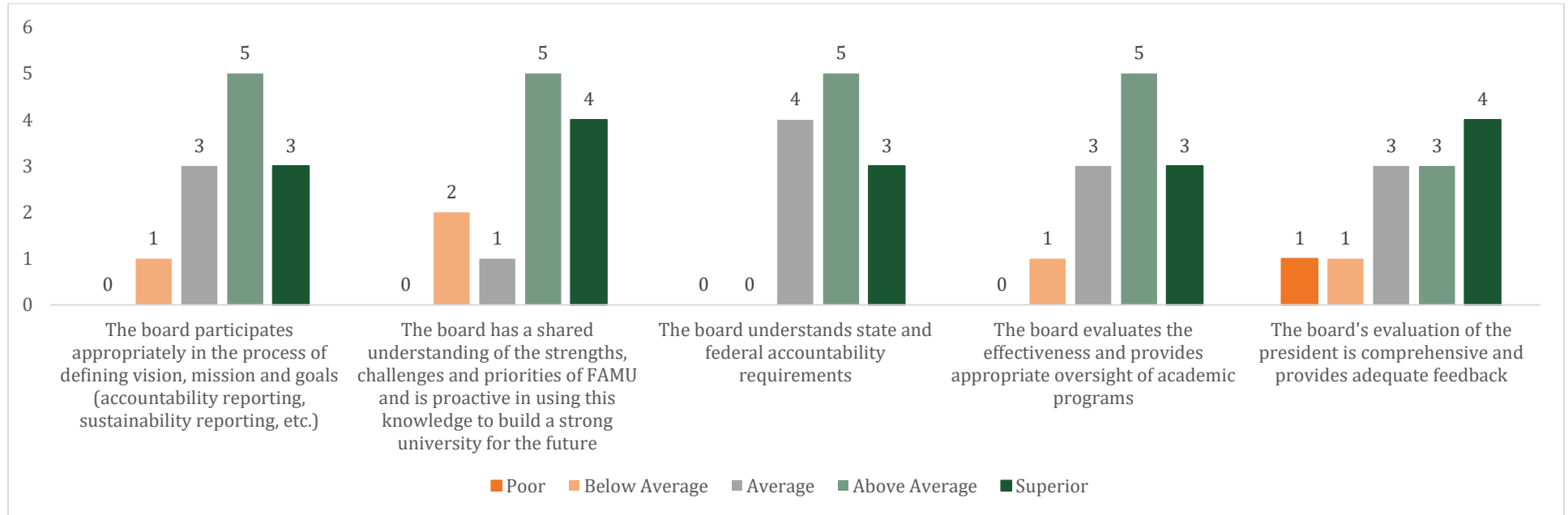
2022-23 Average	2023-24 Average	Policy	Number of Responses by Level				
			Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
3.7	3.4	The board periodically reviews and evaluates its policies	2	0	2	7	1
3.7	3.7	The board understands its policy role and the roles of the president, staff, and faculty	0	1	5	3	3
4.4	3.7	The board advocates for and defends FAMU with external stakeholders (elected officials, BOG, etc.)	1	1	2	5	3

Comments

- We need increased communication with President Robinson. More time with him.
- The BOT must be more consistent, individually, in rating the President. One good act should not warrant an excellent nor should one poor act warrant a poor; we must rate on a consistent level, and we must include the umbrella (overall) body of work.
- Board policies are reviewed but there is an opportunity to define more specifically if we should change any that are specific to FAMU operating model vs the SUS. The board sometimes gets in the weeds of driving University business but on average knows its role. We have many new members and the opportunity to ensure that we have clearly articulated the roles of all key staff should be a constant reminder.

University Operations and Performance

Responses



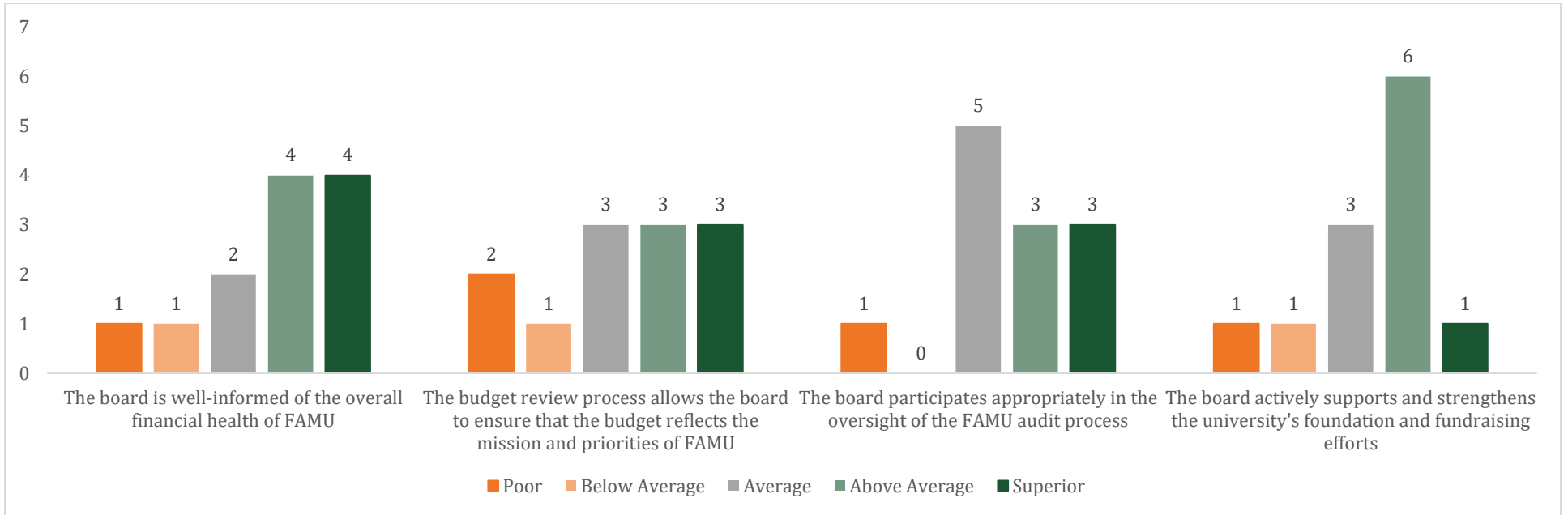
2022-23 Average	2023-24 Average	University Operations and Performance	Number of Responses by Level				
			Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
4.1	3.8	The board participates appropriately in the process of defining vision, mission and goals (accountability reporting, sustainability reporting, etc.)	0	1	3	5	3
4.6	3.9	The board has a shared understanding of the strengths, challenges and priorities of FAMU and is proactive in using this knowledge to build a strong university for the future	0	2	1	5	4
3.6	3.9	The board understands state and federal accountability requirements	0	0	4	5	3
3.3	3.8	The board evaluates the effectiveness and provides appropriate oversight of academic programs	0	1	3	5	3
4.0	3.7	The board's evaluation of the president is comprehensive and provides adequate feedback	1	1	3	3	4

Comments

- While feedback has been given to the President, particularly concerning the school of law, nursing, and pharmacy, that feedback has not been taken seriously. The Clarion call concerning the state of the school of law has been ignored for years and now we are at the point of failure.
- The BOT must be more consistent, individually, in rating the President. One good act should not warrant an excellent nor should one poor act warrant a poor; we must rate on a consistent level, and we must include the umbrella (overall) body of work.
- The board seems to rely on past and current relationships rather than looking at the productivity of the person or the organization. The evaluation of a president must be based upon schools in the SUS that we compete against. We are constantly making detours and excuses of why something isn't proper or intact.
- The board continues to work to understand the effectiveness and provide appropriate oversight of academic programs through the academic program prioritization exercise, but follow-through and accountability has been a challenge.
- The board has a very comprehensive process in University strategic planning process that has been well received and is setting the pace and context for all activity at the University. This includes areas of emphasis and key programs of importance that requires more board oversight and due diligence. President's evaluation is comprehensive and transparent.

Institutional Sustainability

Responses



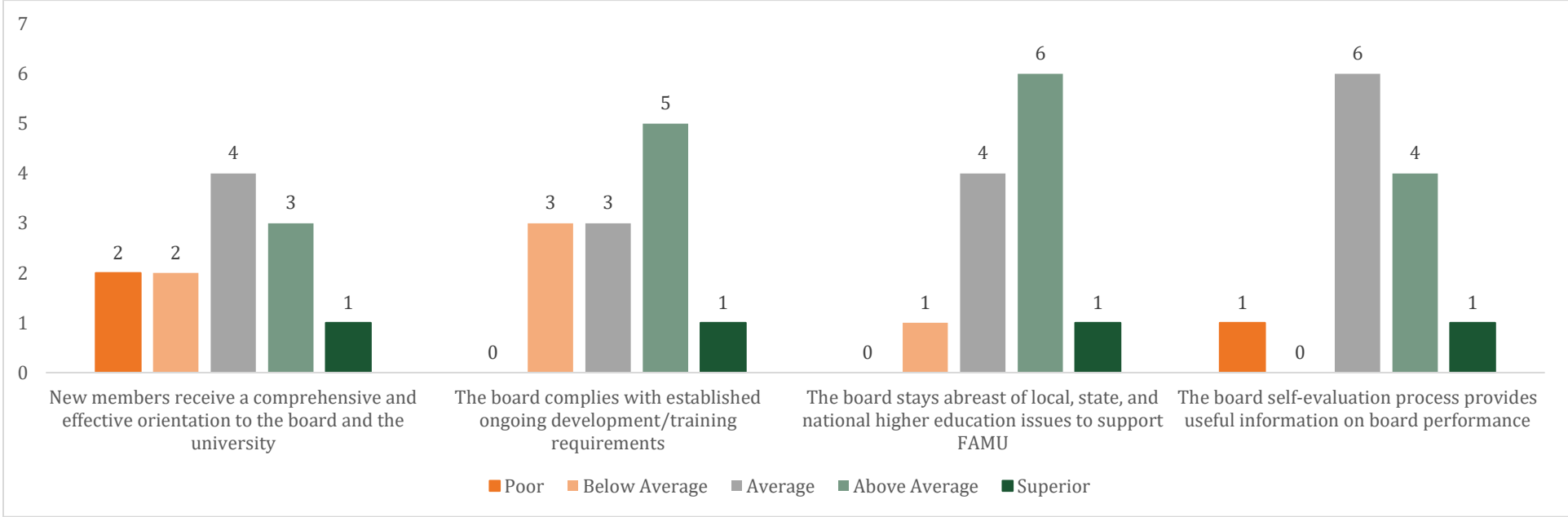
2022-23 Average	2023-24 Average	Institutional Sustainability	Number of Responses by Level				
			Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
4.1	3.8	The board is well-informed of the overall financial health of FAMU	1	1	2	4	4
3.7	3.3	The budget review process allows the board to ensure that the budget reflects the mission and priorities of FAMU	2	1	3	3	3
4.1	3.6	The board participates appropriately in the oversight of the FAMU audit process	1	0	5	3	3
4.3	3.4	The board actively supports and strengthens the university's foundation and fundraising efforts	1	1	3	6	1

Comments

- The board needs more individuals that can actually read, understand, and digest financials. This is an issue.
- Board is an active participant in the review and release of expenditures relating to the University. The budget process is driven with the accountability plan that aligns the financials. Board supports University foundation as evidenced by the record in fundraising achieved but opportunity exist to streamline the process and have appropriate resources in place for the long-term success of the University.

Board Education

Responses



2022-23 Average	2023-24 Average	Board Education	Number of Responses by Level				
			Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Superior
2.9	2.9	New members receive a comprehensive and effective orientation to the board and the university	2	2	4	3	1
3.3	3.3	The board complies with established ongoing development/training requirements	0	3	3	5	1
3.6	3.6	The board stays abreast of local, state, and national higher education issues to support FAMU	0	1	4	6	1
3.4	3.3	The board self-evaluation process provides useful information on board performance	1	0	6	4	1

Comments

- More is better and more is needed [regarding] education.
- I am not aware of the quality of the orientation process for new board members.

Open-ended Questions

What are the major accomplishments of the Board of Trustees in the last year?

- Raising the issue of accountability for decisions made by the administration and asking for more information to be able to fulfill their fiduciary role as trustees.
- Approved the following
 - Regulation 3.017, Tuition and Fees
 - New academic programs for AY 2024-2025
 - Revised FY 2025-2026 Legislative Budget Request
- The joint meeting between the Board and FAMU Direct Service Organizations (DSOs).
- I believe the board has done a good job on putting attention on the areas that must be approved.
- Have not seen that yet.
- Providing leadership through staff accountability and customer service.
- Supporting/advocating for additional funding for the institution.
- Continuing our move into the Top 100.
- Cracking the Top 100.
- Clean audits, exceeded fundraising goal, national ranking achieved, research dollars achieved in support of R1 status, new living learning center, stadium improvements, etc.
- Robust discussions on legislative funding request.
- Orientation of new and seasoned trustees.

Please provide your suggestions regarding how the Board of Trustees can improve performance in alignment with its roles and responsibilities.

- The board needs more in-depth training in roles and responsibilities as board members.
- Currently, the Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring the efficient operation of all institutional management decisions and performing in alignment with its roles and responsibilities while prioritizing the best interests of stakeholders.
- We need to find more ways to get time together and discuss solutions to the challenges the university is facing.
- Transparency in everything the BOT is doing.
- Provide a better on-boarding process for new BOT members. Also, the BOT must require the President and staff to become better at onboarding new university senior staff members. This is a critical phase in development.
- Too many.
- The board should decide on which priority issues to advance each year and set board meeting agendas accordingly.
- We should all be on the same page and speak to external parties as a cohesive board. Differing intentions should be addressed and reconciled.
- The board needs to be more cohesive in our approach to overseeing the institution.
- Continue to become informed regarding the interworking of the University and lean into ways to support.
- Focus on the 'big rocks' – discussions and decisions that have the greatest consequence to the University, not personal agendas.
- Show respect for each other. We can disagree without being disagreeable, disrespectful, or tarnishing the reputation of FAMU or our Board.

As a trustee, I would like to see the following changes in how the board operates.

- The selection of chairs of committees appears to be based more on friendships and other personal relationships rather than qualifications and experience.
- Currently, the Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring the efficient operation of all institutional management decisions and performing in alignment with its roles and responsibilities while prioritizing the best interests of stakeholders.
- It still feels like we have a few items that keep coming up without resolution. We need to get these items resolved so we can focus on new items.
- Trustees should be informed in all aspects. Not just when it's convenient.
- More engagement from the BOT Chair with newer BOT members and better management of meetings. Less of a public figure as the BOT must be great at providing guidance, processes and procedures for the university.
- Will provide at the retreat.
- I would like for our meetings to focus on strategic priorities rather than the same presentations.
- More unity as we speak to external stakeholders.
- More hard decisions being made to ensure the viability of FAMU.
- Better alignment of board deliverables timeline with BOG calendar. Clearer alignment on board meeting topics with clear deliverables and follow-up.
- Implement and practice Robert's Rules of Order to conduct more efficient, effective meetings. Limit the number of times a board member can speak on a particular topic.
- Consistently participate in briefings with the President and administration to address areas of concerns prior to board meetings.

Please provide any other general feedback that you feel will help to improve the performance of the board.

- Remove the board members that do not participate or those that do not align with the values of FAMU or the board.
- Continue to create environment where the board can continue to build relationships.

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