

Excerpt from Memorandum to Board of Trustees on Composition  
and Structure of the Board of Trustees from K. S. Pitzer April 3, 1969

1. The Board should include within its membership a wider distribution of age, of professional or other experience, and of geographical location than at present. In particular, several members should have current or very recent experience in full-time activity on a university campus similar to Stanford.
2. Alumni input to university governance should be primarily through the Board of Trustees. I favor the plan used by Yale and several other universities in which alumni elect directly a certain number of trustees. The nomination process should be carefully designed. I base this recommendation on a very careful study of the same question in which I participated at Rice University.
3. A few recent alumni who understand student attitudes and still have personal acquaintance or at least easy personal rapport with students would be desirable on the Board. Their value in this role would be limited to a few years; hence, their terms should not be too long.
4. The pattern of length of terms and probability of re-election should be modified to become appropriate to the variety of backgrounds, competences, and ages desired on the Board. The problem of second-class citizenship is ameliorated if most members do not expect to serve until retirement (unless elected to a different class of membership), and if the terms are rationally related to the roles expected.
5. There should still be a core of members expecting to serve until retirement age, willing to devote themselves deeply to Stanford, and commanding unquestioned respect among all the areas from which support for the university is being attracted. This should remain the most influential group on the Board. In future election to this category of membership, particular consideration can be given to individuals who have served especially ably in a category carrying a shorter term.
6. These various concepts imply an increase in size of the Board, less frequent meetings of the full Board, and delegation of some actions to either a single executive committee or executive subcommittees of certain standing committees. I believe a greater emphasis on less frequent but longer meetings will naturally direct Board attention to the longer-range and policy problems where Board participation in decisions is most important. The shorter-range matters, which are essentially executive decisions needing Board confirmation, can go appropriately, in my view, to an executive committee.
7. While formal legal confirmation of a new structure giving full legal voting status to all members would be desirable, a similar expansion of the Board at Rice was carried out by simple by-law amendment. The "charter" Trustees voted to add the other members and could, of course, vote to abolish them. In practice, all members vote on an equal basis (except that the charter Trustees retained exclusive power for the election of new members). Thus it would be possible to implement a new pattern of membership as soon as it were approved, but I would hope that the additional categories of Trustees would be confirmed by charter amendment as soon as convenient.