

AGENDA

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Meeting: 1:35 p.m., Tuesday, May 20, 2025
Glenn S. Dumke Conference Center

Jean Picker Firstenberg, Chair
Leslie Gilbert-Lurie, Vice Chair
Diego Arambula
Wenda Fong
Jack McGrory
Jose Antonio Vargas

Consent

1. Approval of Minutes, *Action*
2. Approval of Board of Trustees Policy for the Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Titles for Trustees and System Executives, *Action*

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES**

**Trustees of the California State University
Office of the Chancellor
Glenn S. Dumke Conference Center
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California**

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Members Present

Jean Picker Firstenberg, Chair
Leslie Gilbert-Lurie, Vice Chair
Diego Arambula
Wenda Fong
Jack McGrory

Mildred García, Chancellor
Jack B. Clarke, Jr., Chair of the Board

Trustee Firstenberg called the meeting to order.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda, consisting only of the minutes of the January 28, 2025 meeting of the Committee on Organization and Rules, was unanimously approved.

Discussion Agenda

Item 2 was an information item for a Proposed Board of Trustees Policy for the Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Titles for Trustees and System Executives.

Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff Michelle Kiss presented the information item noting the proposed policy seeks to formalize existing practices and align CSU's approach with governance best practices by establishing clear criteria for eligibility and process transparency.

The proposed policy outlined emeritus/emerita eligibility criteria for trustees, presidents, and system executives – chancellors and vice chancellors – upon their retirement, resignation or completion of term in good standing. It further stipulated a minimum of five years of service required for executives, with exceptions allowed for extraordinary contributions.

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The proposed policy also noted commendations may be granted at the discretion of the Board Chair and Chancellor. AVC Kiss underscored that the proposed policy reinforces CSU's commitment to honoring distinguished service and fostering ongoing engagement from former leaders. The proposed policy would be presented for action at the May 2025 meeting.

There were no questions, comments or discussion from trustees following the presentation.

Trustee Firstenberg adjourned the Committee on Organization and Rules.

COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Approval of the Board of Trustees Policy for the Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Titles for Trustees and System Executives

Presentation By

Michelle Kiss
Associate Vice Chancellor
and Chief of Staff

Summary

This action item seeks formal approval of the Board of Trustees policy establishing guidelines and procedures for the conferral of emeritus/emera titles on Trustees, Chancellors, Executive and Vice Chancellors, and University Presidents within the California State University (CSU) system.

The draft policy was presented as an information item at the March 2025 meeting of the Committee on Organization and Rules. The proposal was well-received, and there were no questions, comments or discussion from trustees during that meeting.

Background

The policy is the outcome of a comprehensive review of CSU's past practices and a comparative analysis of policies in place at other higher education institutions. The proposed framework addresses the longstanding need to formalize CSU's process for recognizing exceptional leadership service while ensuring greater consistency, transparency and integrity.

Currently, the CSU system's approach to emeritus/emera designations for system leaders has been ad hoc, lacking clear eligibility criteria or procedural guidelines. This policy, as outlined in Attachment A, codifies eligibility standards and criteria for recognition based on distinguished service and alignment with institutional values.

Recommendation

The Committee on Organization and Rules recommends that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the California State University, that the proposed policy for the Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Titles for Trustees and System Executives, as presented in Agenda Item 2, Attachment A, of the May 19-21, 2025 meeting of the Committee on Organization and Rules, be adopted.

Board of Trustees Policy for the Conferral of Emeritus/Emerita Titles for Trustees and System Executives

Background

The title of *Emeritus* and *Emerita* is an honorific designation that recognizes the exceptional service, leadership and contributions made by individuals in high-ranking positions within the California State University (CSU) system. These positions include members of the Board of Trustees, Chancellors, Executive and Vice Chancellors, and University Presidents. The conferral of the title is a recognition of the individual's significant and sustained contributions to the CSU system, its students, faculty, staff and broader community.

The practice of conferring emeritus/emera titles is intended to honor individuals who completed their appointed terms as Trustees or have retired or stepped down from system executive positions but remain valuable contributors to the academic and administrative mission of the institution. This policy aims to align CSU's longstanding practices with established norms in higher education while promoting a culture of appreciation for long-term service. The granting of emeritus/emera status carries the title but no compensation.

Rationale

The emeritus/emera titles serve as:

- **Recognition of Service:** The conferral of emeritus/emera titles serve to officially recognize and honor individuals who have made significant, long-term contributions to the advancement of the CSU's mission and goals. This may include leadership in promoting academic excellence, student success, advocacy, public service and institutional growth.
- **Legacy and Continuity:** By conferring emeritus/emera titles, the CSU system ensures that individuals who have held leadership positions remain connected to the CSU community, fostering an ongoing legacy of excellence in engagement, advocacy and commitment to higher education.
- **Affirmation of Institutional Values:** This policy affirms the values of respect, gratitude and continuity in leadership within the CSU system, which are critical for maintaining strong relationships among students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees and community partners.

I. Eligibility and Criteria

The policy outlines eligibility and criteria for emeritus/emera titles as follows:

A. Conferral on Trustees

Appointed Trustees—including designated Trustees (e.g., student, faculty, and alumni)—are eligible for emeritus/emerita titles upon the completion of their appointed term(s). Eligibility is based on active and sustained participation in governance, strategic decision-making and advocacy efforts that have strengthened the CSU system and its mission. Trustees must have served in good standing without reputational or ethical concerns. Trustees who resign before completing their appointed term may be considered for emeritus/emerita titles at the discretion of the Board Chair and Chancellor, provided they meet the criteria for distinguished service.

B. Conferral on System Executives

System Executives—including Chancellors, Executive and Vice Chancellors, and University Presidents—are eligible for emeritus/emerita titles upon retirement, resignation, or transition from active executive service in good standing, with a minimum of five years of service in their role. Exceptions to the minimum service requirement may be granted at the discretion of the Board Chair and Chancellor in cases of extraordinary contributions or extenuating circumstances, such as health-related resignations. Recipients must have demonstrated transformational leadership that advanced the CSU's mission and long-term strategic priorities strengthening CSU's position as a leader in higher education, while maintaining ethical integrity.

II. Procedure for Conferring Emeritus/Emerita Titles

Recipients eligible for emeritus/emerita titles will be reviewed by the Board Chair and Chancellor and placed on the agenda for formal approval by the full Board.

III. Privileges of Emeritus/Emerita Titles

To the extent that resources permit, the emeritus/emerita title may confer certain courtesies and privileges as follows:

- A. Formal recognition at a Board of Trustees meeting including a framed resolution commemorating the distinguished service.
- B. Advocacy opportunities, enabling the recipient to represent the CSU system in an official capacity.
- C. Access to CSU system events, such as commencements, as a distinguished guest.
- D. Opportunities for continued advising or engaging with CSU system leadership as needed or requested.
- E. Listing on an official CSU emeriti webpage as a distinguished former leader of the CSU system.

IV. Rescission of Title

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to rescind emeritus/emerita titles if the individual's subsequent actions or behavior harm the reputation or mission of the CSU system.

V. Conferrals of Commendation

In cases where it is appropriate to honor an individual providing exceptional service to the CSU, but an emeritus/emerita title is not appropriate, Conferrals of Commendation on behalf of the Board may be recommended for full Board approval by the Board Chair and/or Chancellor.

VI. Effective Date and Review

This policy shall be effective immediately upon approval by the Board of Trustees and shall be reviewed periodically to ensure it reflects alignment with evolving best practices and CSU system priorities.