# NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION MANUAL

**Revised- July 2012**

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**Introduction**

Welcome to the Selkirk College Board.   We are sure that you will find the experience both enjoyable and challenging**.** Selkirk College strives to provide a board-friendly environment in which goal-oriented individuals thrive as they receive ever more demanding challenges**.** The orientation manual and process has been established so that you are immediately informed to every extent possible, and so that attention is given to your ongoing development needs. At Selkirk College, we value your individual talents and abilities and seek to foster an open and cooperative environment in which you and the College can thrive.

The Castlegar Campus, where most of the Board meetings are held, is located in Castlegar at 301 Frank Beinder Way. The phone number for the switchboard is 250-365-7292. If you have any questions that need immediate attention, please feel free to contact:
- Bruce Morrison,  Chair, 250 352-7777  ig_bruce@shawbiz.ca
- Angus Graeme, President, 250 365-1214, agraeme@selkirk.ca
- Margaret  Poohachoff, Executive Assistant, 250 365-1225, mpoohachoff@selkirk.ca

We look forward to meeting and working with you.

You may also want to visit the Selkirk College Board website at
http://selkirk.ca/about/governance/bog/


**Overview of Selkirk College**

Selkirk College came into being in 1965 with the passing of a plebiscite held throughout the West Kootenay - Boundary region.   A referendum was subsequently passed (the only successful referendum in the history of the college and institute system) which provided the initial resources to develop the Castlegar Campus.  In 1972, the Ministry piloted the melding of its vocational schools with colleges and, in 1975, the meld was officially adopted across the province.   Thus the BC Nelson Vocational School became integrated into Selkirk College.  In 1976, the Trail Business School was absorbed by Selkirk College.  In 2000, Selkirk College entered into a 25-year lease with the City of Nelson for space on the City's Tenth Street Campus. Most recently, the Kootenay School of the Arts was officially amalgamated with Selkirk College (July 01, 2006). In addition, the College operates a small campus in Grand Forks and learning centres in Kaslo and Nakusp.  The College serves approximately 3000 students in its credit program offerings and another 6000 in its extension services.  Approximately 125 international students attend Selkirk College during the regular college year and several smaller groups during the summer months.

In 1984, Selkirk College established the Selkirk College Foundation with its own governing board and staff. For over twenty years, the Selkirk College Foundation served the students of Selkirk College by designing, implementing and overseeing the establishment of an endowment for scholarships and bursaries which has grown to over $5M. Over a five-year period of deliberation, research, consultation and decision-making, the Foundation Board recommended to the College Board that the Foundation Board be dissolved and that the College Board

assume the oversight role for the endowment, and that the day to day operations be the responsibility of the Division of Communications and Development. The Board accepted this recommendation in September 2006.

The number of employees at Selkirk College varies considerably depending on the definitions applied. It is safe to assume that approximately 300 employees can be considered full- and part-time employees of the College with another 300 to 400 providing services through the extension division.

Government grants to the operating budget total $27 million annually. Annual tuition revenue ($4 million) plus other revenues (cafeteria, bookstore, residences, and specific equipment capital) of $6. million result in a total annual budget of $37M. Further details are available in the financial statements.

a. **Structure:** Reporting to the President are Vice-President Finance/Administration, Vice President Education and Students, Director of Human Resources and Director of Communications and Development. Details on respective responsibilities and the College's organizational structure can be found in the organizational structure document available in hard copy or on the College's website.

b. **Programs:** Programs are grouped into major categories: academic (university courses), career/technology, vocational, academic upgrading, continuing education and apprenticeship. These categories are historical and found their beginnings tied to the funding approaches in the early days of the development of colleges. The nomenclature continues to this day. The College offers about 40 programs within the above categories and these can be found in the College calendar. The programs are administratively organized into eight Schools. Continuing education programs number in the hundreds annually and are continually changing in response to local needs and interests.

c. **Services**: The College provides a wide range of services to students, staff and the wider community. Among these are included:
   - *Library* - The main library is on the Castlegar campus with limited services provided on the Silver King, Trail and Tenth Street campuses. All College sites have electronic connection to the College library, and inter-library services are available throughout the College Region. Courier services are used extensively to deliver services to these sites as well as other centres.
   - *Bookstore* - The main bookstore is located on the Castlegar campus with limited resources provided at the other campuses and centres.
   - *Cafeteria* - Services are provided on the Castlegar, Silver King and Tenth Street and Trail Campuses. The Professional Cooking program students and staff provide food services on the Tenth Street Campus. Transitional Training students and staff provide food services on the Trail Campus.
   - *Computer Services* - A growing area of the College is in information technologies and computing services. Full network and maintenance services are provided to both the Castlegar and Nelson campuses and limited services at the Trail, Grand Forks, Nakusp and Kaslo locations. The Computer service staff is responsible for over 1000 machines located on all campuses and centres, connectivity to the PLNet [Provincial Learning Network], support for the Selkirk Geospatial Centre, support for all Management Information Systems and the Selkirk College website.
   - *Other Services* - There are many other services (personnel, maintenance, custodial,

purchasing) typical of large organizations and these are detailed in the Organizational Structure document.

**Overview of the Provincial Environment**

a.  *College and Institute Act:* The Act is the primary document that provides the Board with its authority to exist.  The Act is described as "permissive legislation" in that many parts of the legislation enable boards to take action rather than being required to do certain things.  The following are some of the key features of the Act:
    - The objectives of the College are to provide comprehensive courses in the first and second year of degree programs, post secondary education and training and continuing education.
    - The composition of a board includes eight appointees of the government, an elected representative of the faculty, an elected representative of the support staff, two elected representatives of the student body, the chair of the Education Council and the President (the latter two being non-voting).
    - The creation of an Education Council with a minimum of 20 members:  10 elected faculty, four elected students, four appointed administrators and two elected support staff (In addition, Selkirk has opted to add one elected exempt staff member).  The Council has a dual role of providing advice to the Board on policies dealing with the educational activities of the College and providing academic governance at the College by setting policies on examinations and evaluations of student performance, student withdrawals, academic standards, criteria for recognizing academic performance, student appeals and setting the curriculum content for courses.
    - Provisions are included to ensure Boards collect fees on behalf of student associations.
    - The Act provides a limitation on expenditures in that a Board may not enter into a deficit.  The typical interpretation of this part of the Act is that a board should not plan for a deficit without the approval of the Minister of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development.  However, if it becomes quite obvious during the course of a fiscal period that the college will incur a significant deficit, the college should contact the Ministry for guidance.
    - The Act requires boards to seek the approval of the Minister and the Minister of Finance to acquire land and buildings.
    - The Act requires the board to appoint a president who is responsible for keeping the board informed on the affairs of the institution.
    - A quorum is defined as a majority of the members holding office on the board.
    - Resolutions are passed if the majority of the people present at a meeting with a quorum vote in favour of the resolution.  Thus, abstentions are considered negative votes.

b.  *Post Secondary Employers Association (PSEA)* The PSEA is established under the Public Sector Employers Act.  The purpose of PSEA is to coordinate human resources in the public PSE sector.  Much of the effort of the PSEA focuses on compensation issues for unionized and non-unionized employees.

**Selkirk College Board Policies Document**

The Selkirk College Board has developed a Policies document for the conduct of the Board's activities. These policies address the Board's activities and responsibilities and not those of the staff. The following sections provide a brief summary of the Policy Manual:

a.  **Mission, Vision, Values and Outcomes Statements**
    A primary role of the Board is the determination of the foundation or purpose statements for Selkirk College. It is the Board's responsibility to produce and review these statements on a regular basis to ensure their currency and relevancy to the wider community. This process is carried out in a consultative manner with the community and internal stakeholders.

b.  **Board-Staff Relationships**
    Under the governance model adopted by Selkirk College, the President is the sole employee of the Board. All delegation of the Board's authority is through the President and the President is responsible for the performance of the institution.

c.  **Executive Limitations**
    Executive Limitations are boundaries or limitations placed on the President and the staff. They indicate actions, behaviours and methods, which are not acceptable to the Board. They are expressed in the negative, thus providing empowerment to undertake that which has not been restricted by the limitation. The President may exercise any reasonable interpretation of the limitations.

d.  **Board's Governance Process**
    The Selkirk College Board adopted the Policy Governance model in the fall of 1994. Since then the Board has continued to review and revise the model to suit the College's and the Board's needs. Under the Policy Governance Model, the Board focuses on issues and activities that the Board considers its responsibilities and depends on the President and staff to deal with all operational matters.

    Since the President is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the institution, the Board's governance focus is on the long-term vision and purpose of the College. The Board conducts its meetings in an open and consultative manner and gives due consideration to the views and concerns of all members of the community. The Board ensures accountability for its own activities and evaluates its performance on a regular basis.

    The Board functions as a single entity and speaks with "one voice" and Board members are expected to support the decisions of the Board. The Board is committed to governing with excellence including the self discipline needed to perform well in its governance function.

    The Selkirk College Board has adopted "Robert's Rules of Order" as the basis for the conduct of its meetings. Robert's Rules apply in those instances where legislation and

Board Policies are silent. A summary is available that provides a quick reference to familiarize one with the key elements of Robert's Rules.

e.   **Board Products**
     The key products of the Board are the development and review of the Selkirk College Policies document, the preparation and review of the Selkirk College Board Bylaws, the development of the annual perpetual board agenda, linkages to the ownership (wider community), the selection, appointment and performance of the President, the annual operating and three-year accountability plans,  and the Expenditure Plan.

f.   **Board's Perpetual Calendar**
     The Board's Perpetual Calendar is a plan of the major activities that the Board expects to complete for the next year.  It is typically developed at the Annual Workshop and approved at the following Board meeting.  In addition to the regular board meetings, the perpetual calendar includes specific activities that the Board needs to consider during the coming year. These could include meetings with specific community groups (linkages to ownership), meetings with legislators, evaluation of the President, monitoring activities and attendance at conferences and other provincial groups.

**Development of the Monthly Board Agenda**

The responsibility for the development of the Board's monthly meeting rests with the Board, primarily through the Chair and the Vice-Chair.  From a practical perspective, the agenda is usually drafted by the President and the Executive Assistant.  Board members who wish to see an item place on the Board's agenda can do so by contacting the Chair, President or Executive Assistant.  Items for the Board agenda should be submitted at least 14 days prior to the Board meeting so that they can be included with the agenda materials.  Items can also be placed on the Board's agenda at the meeting by a resolution of the Board.  In keeping with the Board's Policy Governance Model, issues and items placed on the Board's agenda should be consistent with the Model.

It is very easy to get involved in administrative "means" issues; however, the Board strives to deal with these in the context of consistency with the foundation statements, executive limitations and/or monitoring.

The typical Board agenda follows this general pattern:
- Adoption of agenda and approval of minutes
- Delegations and/or presentations by students/staff
- Board Business (issues that deal with the above policy issues)
- Board Decisions (items that require a board decision, approval of budget, program profile, etc.)
- Monitoring Reports (reports on the achievement of outcomes and consistency with the executive limitations)
- Activity Reports (information reports from administration and staff on the activities and functions of the College)
- Correspondence (all correspondence addressed or copied to the Board and Board Chair are included in the agenda package)

The Board's meeting agenda also integrates the schedule determined in the Board's perpetual calendar that is adopted at the Annual Retreat.  The Board usually meets the 4$^{th}$ Tuesday of the month from 4:30/5:00PM to 8:00/9:30PM. Board Members should plan to have the hours from 4:30PM to 9:30PM from September to June available.  Additional meetings may be called from time to time.

**Board Member Role Expectations**

a.  *Preparation for Board Meetings*: Board members are expected to familiarize themselves with the contents of the agenda prior to Board meetings. The Board Chair may directly ask Board members for their input on topics during meetings, so that the opinions of all members assist in making the best decisions possible.

b.  *Attendance at Board Meetings*: The Board considers attendance at meetings an important part of a Board member's relationship with the Board and College.   The College and Institute Act Section 59 (7) indicates that "if a member of the board has not attended three consecutive regular  meetings of the Board, the member is no longer a member of the Board unless excused by a resolution of the Board."  The Selkirk College Board's "Board Members' Code of Conduct" policy further enhances this commitment by indicating that a board member may be asked to resign if they miss two consecutive meetings or a total of three meetings in a year.

c.  *Linkages to community/ownership:* Board members can assist the Board and College by attending various college and community functions.

d.  *Representation:* Board members are expected to represent the interests of the greater community rather than specific constituencies.  This does not mean that a board member cannot bring the concerns of a constituency to the Board for consideration; however, when dealing with the issue, a board member is expected to give primary consideration to the interests of the College where a conflict of interest occurs.

e.  *Conflict of Interest:* The Selkirk College Board Policies document contains policies with respect to conflict of interest.  Board members are responsible for ensuring they do not conflict with these provisions.

f.  *Code of Conduct*: The Selkirk College Board Policies document includes policies for the conduct of board members.  Again, board members need to familiarize themselves with these provisions.

g.  *Representation on Board Committees*:  Board members are required to sit on at least one Board Committee, and may sit on more than one if they so please. These Committees include the Development Committee, Human Resources Committee, Finance Committee and the Audit Committee. Student and staff Board members may not sit on the Human Resources Committee or the Audit Committee. For greater detail into each Committee refer to the college website at http://selkirk.ca/about/governance/bog/committees/.

h. **Effective Meetings:** It is expected that the College Board meetings be conducted effectively so as to have productive and quality input within the monthly designated times. To assist with your contribution to effective meetings, you may refer to the following "Cheat Sheet" by Eli Mina (Elimina.com):

## "CHEAT-SHEET" FOR MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Members of governing bodies (Councils, Boards and Commissions) have significant decision making powers. But their ability to participate fully is compromised when they don't know what procedure to use to address a concern about the decision-making process. To "level the playing field" and establish empowered decision makers, it would help if each one of them had a quick-reference summary of the most commonly used procedures, or a "cheat sheet". Here is an example:

| If this happens in a meeting: | You can do or say something like this: |
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| **A digression**: <br> The meeting focuses on a side issue. | *"It seems to me that the issue is ___, and not ___. Am I right? Can we please get back on track?"* |
| **Domination:** <br> A member dominates the discussion and the Chair does not intervene | *"May I interject? In fairness, I think we need to hear from those who have not spoken, like ___, who has been waiting for a while to speak."* |
| **Rambling and repetition:** <br> You want to close debate on a motion. | Get permission to speak and say: "*I move that we end debate and vote now". A* vote will first be taken on closing debate. If this vote is successful, the vote on the main motion will follow. |
| **Confusion:** <br> The wording of the proposal is confusing. | Propose to amend the motion by replacing the confusing words. The motion to amend requires a majority vote to adopt. <br> **Or:** Propose to refer the motion to staff for a report at a later meeting. The Board (by a majority vote) will decide on the question of referral. The motion to refer is debatable. |
| **Time is running out:** <br> You notice that the time allocated for an issue is about to end. | *"Mr. Chair. The time for this issue is about to end. We have several other important issues. Can we move on?"* <br> **Or:**"*I move that we extend debate on this issue by 10 minutes"*. |
| **Surprise agenda item:** <br> Close to the end of a meeting, a new motion is presented. You (and other Board members) are tired and ready to go home. Or you think more study and analysis of the issue is required for responsible decision making. | *"Mr. Chair. It's late, and I wouldn't want to rush the decision on this important issue. I move to postpone this motion until the next meeting".* The motion to postpone requires a majority vote to approve. It is debatable as to the merits of postponement. |

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| **Re-visiting a defeated motion:** You want to re-introduce a defeated motion, since new information may lead to a different outcome. | Introduce the motion as "new business" at a subsequent meeting. This is known as "renewal of a motion". |
| **Re-visiting an adopted motion:** You want to have an adopted motion rescinded or amended. | Propose that the motion be rescinded or amended. Keep in mind that this procedure cannot be used if the motion has been implemented and it is too late to rescind or amend it. Note: The motion to rescind or amend an adopted motion can be made by anyone, and not only by someone who voted on the winning side. |
| **The re-visiting privilege is abused:** You object to re-visiting a motion that was adopted or defeated at a previous meeting, since no new information is apparent, and time should be spent wisely. | "*Mr. Chair. I don't think any new information is evident that justifies us re-visiting this motion*". The Chair can make a ruling on this question. If another member disagrees with this ruling, the Chair would ask: "*Those who believe the Chair's decision was correct please raise your hands*", etc. A majority against the Chair's ruling is required to reverse it. |

**A vision of a successful Meeting**

A meeting is a gathering to discuss business and reach decisions jointly. The following ten ingredients characterize an effective meeting.

- **Clarity** of mandate, purpose, issues and process.
- **Participation protocol and etiquette:** Only one person speaks at a time. Interruptions are kept to the necessary minimum. A courteous, civilized and respectful tone is maintained. Discussions are focused on issues, not personalities.
- **Productivity and forward movement**: Discussion progresses along a pre-defined agenda in an efficient and timely manner. For the sake of follow-up, good minutes are taken.
- **Flexibility and room for creative thinking**: Meeting structures (agenda and rules) are used in a flexible manner, to accommodate and promote creativity and open discussion rather than stifle them.
- **Quality:** Informed and in-depth discussions take place, leading to meaningful outcomes and thoughtful decisions.
- **Balance and Inclusion**: All members are given an equal opportunity to participate. Dominated discussions are avoided.
- **Openness and Collaboration**: Listening takes place, and members work together towards a common goal; Members are open to changing their views based on the discussion; Debates are "personality neutral": hard on the issue, soft on the people.
- **Shared responsibility:** Everyone (and not only the leader) takes responsibility for the success of the process; Finger pointing is minimized; Promises are kept and assigned tasks are completed.

- **Variety and a light touch:** The meeting's pace and activities are varied, to make it more engaging, interesting, and enticing to attend. A light touch is introduced when appropriate: "Take yourself lightly and your work seriously".
- **Logistical support**: Logistical details are managed proactively and professionally, to allow for an optimal use of time at the meeting.

**Using Time Productively**

a. *Board Orientation:* Participation in orientation activities is critical to becoming an effective board member in the shortest time possible. This includes the Selkirk College Board's Orientation sessions.

b. *Board Agenda*: There are many items included in the monthly agenda package. While it is desirable that board members be familiar with the full contents of the agenda, the order of the agenda reflects the importance of its contents. The critical areas are:
- Board Business
- Board Decisions
- Monitoring Information

c. *Campus Visits*: Site visits should be completed in the first few months of the initial appointment. These will help to place much of the discussions into a better context. Board meetings are typically held on the Castlegar campus. However, the Board does consider each year whether it will hold meetings in other areas of the College Region. Site visits at any of these meetings for board members. As well, board members are encouraged to visit campuses or learning centers by contacting the campus administrator for a visit.

d. *Concerns and Issues:* Board members are contacted by constituents regarding concerns and/or issues. These should be considered in the context of the Code of Conduct included in the Selkirk College Board Policies document. Board members are encouraged to follow through on these items as soon as possible rather than waiting until the next Board meeting in order to see their early resolution.

**Staff**

a. *BC Government Employees Union*
The BCGEU represents certain of the instructional staff on all campuses and the learning centers. The BCGEU's roots flow from its involvement in the BC Vocational Schools which were melded into colleges in the early 1970's.

b. *Selkirk College Faculty Association*
The SCFA-FPSE represents most of the instructional staff on the Castlegar campus and the music program instructors on the Tenth Street Campus, counsellors and librarians. FPSE is a provincial association representing a significant portion of the professional faculty in the system.

c.  *Pulp and Paper Workers of Canada*
    PPWC - Local 26 represents support, maintenance and custodial staff on all campuses and centers.

d.  Senior Administration
    Senior Administration consists of the Management Committee which is composed of the President, Vice President Administration, Vice President Education and Students, Director of Finance, Director of IT, Registrar, Human Resources and three Deans.

e.  *Exempt Staff*
    Exempt staff includes executive assistants, confidential secretaries, campus managers, continuing education staff, human resources personnel and extension center supervisors and managers.


**Finance Division**

A new Board member is encouraged to meet with the Vice-President Finance and Administration in order to develop an understanding of the budgeting processes and Ministry requirements**.**

**Availability of a Mentor**

New Board members are provided a mentor unless they request otherwise**.**   A mentor is a seasoned member of the Board who can provide assistance with the ongoing orientation process of a new Board member.

**Personal Expectations of New Board Member**

New Board members may have joined the Board because of specific interests.  The orientation process should provide an opportunity for the new Board member to express those interests and how they might be addressed consistent with the policies of the Board.

**Board Member Resumes**

All board members have been asked to provide a brief resume of their background and interests.  These are shared among the board members and with the public on the College Board's website.

**New Board Member Orientation Evaluation and Feedback**

New Board members are invited to provide feedback on the orientation process at anytime during the orientation and following the orientation.   After each year a new Board member will be asked to complete an evaluation form on the orientation process.  The purpose of this process is the continual improvement of the orientation process.

**Moodle**

The Board now uses an internet/computer-based tool called Moodle. Information on Board meetings, as well as Committee meetings and discussions are placed on Moodle. A meeting will be set up for you so that you may familiarize yourself with this tool. For more information, you may also visit the Moodle website at https://gov.selkirk.ca/login/index.php and establish a password.  Marg Poohachoff can assist you with this.

**Board Member Honoraria and Expenses**

Appointed Board members and student Board members receive an annual honorarium of $2,000 ($2,500 for the Chair) which is paid on a quarterly basis.
Expenses for board activities are reimbursed by the College according to policy.

- ➢ Transportation is reimbursed at the lesser of full economy airfare or $0.50 per kilometre.
- ➢ Meals are reimbursed on a per diem basis of $52.00: $12.00 - breakfast, $15.00 - lunch and $25.00 - dinner for part days.   Meals are not to be charged when included in other expenses, e.g., conference fees.
- ➢ Accommodation, taxis, and telephone calls are reimbursed.  The College is covered by the provincial government's accommodation policies which provide for lower cost government rates at most hotels in the province.
- ➢ Travel advances are available to cover anticipated costs when traveling outside the Region on behalf of the Board or College.

Travel Advance and Report forms are available from the Executive Assistant.  These are usually processed within a two-week turnaround period.  Policy 9400 - Reimbursements of College Business Expenses details the foregoing points.