

**Testimony by UNT System Board Chairman Jack Wall**  
**Joint Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence and Transparency**  
**October 17, 2011**



Jack Wall, Chairman  
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Jack Wall was appointed to the University of North Texas System Board of Regents in 2007. His current term expires in May 2013. He presently serves as the Chairman of the Board for the UNT System Board of Regents.

Mr. Wall graduated from Polytechnic High School in Fort Worth in 1959 and earned his Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of North Texas in 1964. He is married to Gay Wall and enjoys golfing and hunting as his hobbies. He is a rancher and investor and a former deputy mayor for the city of Sherman.

Mr. Wall served for 28 years as Executive Vice President and Director of Principal/Eppler, Guerin and Turner, a New York Stock Exchange member firm. Previously, he served as branch manager, partner and senior vice president of J.C. Bradford/UBS Paine Webber of Dallas. He is a former Allied member of the New York Stock Exchange and member of the Securities Industry Association.

Jack Wall has served as Vice Chairman of the UNT Foundation and Chairman of the Investment Committee. He was a member of the Board of Advisors for UNT's College of Business Administration and the UNT President's Council.

He has previously served as a director of the Downtown Dallas YMCA and as chairman of Community Services and Major Gifts for the Downtown Dallas YMCA and on the Board Directors for the Dallas Opera. Mr. Wall is currently serving on the Metropolitan Dallas YMCA Foundation Board.

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**Introduction**

My name is Jack Wall, and I am the Chairman of the University of North Texas System Board of Regents.

I will discuss how our Board and the administrators of our institutions develop and implement major policy decisions, including the impartiality and adequacy of the processes we use. I hope to convey how our Board functions and how we continuously seek to improve and strengthen our operations through shared governance.

**UNT System Board Operations Background**

The UNT System Board routinely meets to explore our Board's goals and performance. Issues relating to governance and leadership are often at forefront as we seek to balance our duties with the immense responsibility we have been given.

Our Board uses a committee structure with four standing committees – finance, facilities, academic affairs & student success, and audit. Members are appointed to match their interests and expertise. Most members will serve on two, three or all four committees during their tenure. Ad Hoc committees are formed as needed to address specific issues. Enactment of committee decisions requires action of the full Board.

**Development of Major Policies**

Traditionally, major policy directions have been developed collaboratively between the Board and System and campus administrations. The impetus can come from the Board, the System and institution administrations, or a hybrid of both. Some examples are:

- a. Board-led Project – Business Services Center
- b. Hybrid Project – System Strategic Plan
- c. Administration-led Project – Rewriting of Regents Rules

**Implementation of Major Policy Decisions**

Our Board sees implementation, by definition, as an operational activity to be handled by the administrations of System and campuses with Board oversight as needed. Some projects require greater oversight than others, but consistent reporting by the institutions keeps us informed and involved.

See attached Regents Rule 04.102.2.

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**Ensuring an Impartial Process**

We believe our Board must self-monitor and seek to be attuned to constituencies and stakeholders at various levels while remembering to balance the various interests we serve. On our Board, the Chairman plays an important role in conjunction with the Chancellor in bringing members together for discussion while seeking consensus on action. Each Board must use its own governance structure to bring discipline to its discussions and ideas.

**Seeking an Adequate Process**

Quite simply, our Board's process is based on the ideas of open dialogue and honest inquiry. We strive to foster an atmosphere that encourages both. We have used facilitators to aid us in ensuring all opinions are heard and the tough questions are asked when dealing with important or controversial proposals. I would assert that in my four years of service, we have been relatively successful in accomplishing this goal.

I appreciate the opportunity to share this information with the committee and hope it has been helpful.

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**UNT System Regents Rule 04.102.2**

04.102.2 Duties and Responsibilities. The Chancellor, by delegation from the Board, is authorized to exercise the powers and authorities of the Board in the governance of the System. The Chancellor is authorized to delegate any of the assigned duties and authorities except as restricted by the Board. Specifically, the Chancellor shall act on behalf of the Board in implementing its policies and recommending strategies for addressing the common goals established by the Board.