

In search of reasons why people who have studied and worked with state institutional boards prefer them small, Martorana and Hollis advance several ideas. First, large numbers create cumbersome, unwieldy units for the transaction of business. Secondly, as the number increases the tendency of factional splitting also increases. Thirdly, conflicts of dates for meetings are more probable in a large group. And fourthly, the expense of travel and per diem costs increases with size. For these reasons, augmented by the political scientist's rule of thumb that nine is a maximum number for optimum board or commission operation, Martorana and Hollis categorically state that "ideally, boards should have an uneven number of members, not fewer than 9 nor more than 15."²⁴

LENGTH AND OVERLAPPING OF TERMS

The average term for all twenty-two boards is 6.7 years. This term is the same for both the governing boards and governing-coordinating boards and is only slightly higher, seven years, for the six Southern boards. This figure is also close to the national average of 6.1 years²⁵ and ranges from a low of three years for the University of Indiana, Purdue University, and Pennsylvania State University boards to sixteen years for the University of California board.

The members of all twenty-two university boards serve overlapping terms. Overlapping terms and terms of long length can be viewed in a similar light. They both promote the same desirable goals. As Moos and Rourke note, stag-

gered, long terms minimize political interference and serve to "sustain a spirit of independence by a governing board."²⁶ Trustees of the North Carolina board serve eight-year, overlapping terms, twenty-five trustees being elected every two years.²⁷

The effect of a long term in achieving these goals is more apparent than that of overlapping terms. With respect to the overlapping term it can be noted that it encourages these objectives in several ways. It provides continuity in the board and assures it, at a time of turnover, of members with prior experience and (presumably) expertise in board matters. It also serves to limit the influence of the appointive authority on those boards selected by the governor and to minimize the impact of a particular—perhaps temporary—issue when the board is selected by any method. Furthermore, in the case of election by the state legislature or by a special group, the control of the electoral body by a particular political party at the time of selection would probably produce a board of similar partisan views. This possibility is also minimized by overlapping terms.

'SUCCESSIVE TERMS

On all but one of the twenty-two boards examined, members can succeed themselves. In the case of the Board of Trustees of the Ohio State University, the Ohio Code states "No person who has served a full nine-year term or more

²⁶ MOOS & ROURKE, *supra* note 8, at 305.

²⁷ See N.C. GEN. STAT. §116-4 (1966). Although the statutory term is eight years, the average length of service of the currently elected 99 trustees (there is one unfilled trustee position) is 8.72 years. The six honorary members have served an average term of 12.8 years, and the average length of service for all 105 members (ninety-nine elected and six honorary) is 8.93 years.

²⁴ MARTORANA & HOLLIS, *supra* note 4, at 29.

²⁵ COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS, HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE FORTY-EIGHT STATES 127 (1952).