The Difference between Policy and Administration

Board members are community representatives who hire a college president to lead the institutions. The president hires staff members who have the expertise to implement board policy and fulfill purposes of the institution. The system works best when trustees focus their efforts on representing community interests through establishing policies, in collaboration with the president and staff, which provide direction for the college. The board is most effective when it leaves the day-to-day operations to the staff and concentrates on broad values and the big picture.

Trustees should keep the following broad principles of the roles and responsibilities of boards and administration in mind at all times:

The Board:	**The President:**
Governs	Administers
Decides: Why, What	Decides: How, Who
Makes Policy	Implements Policy
Sets Goals	Plans to Achieve Goal
Reviews Plans	Implements Plans
Evaluates Progress	Monitors Progress

Trustee involvement should not extend into the day-to-day life of the college. Trustees should not be on campus to such an extent it is perceived as interfering or micromanaging college activities. They should not ask special favors of staff members or attempt to direct staff activities.

The college president works with the board chair in preparing and presenting the agenda to the board, and is responsible for the recommendations brought to the board. If a problem or issue comes to the attention of a trustees that is a matter for the board, ask to have it reviewed by the board. If the problem is one that should be solved through administrative channels, it should be referred to the president for handling by the appropriate staff member.

The president and board function best as a team. While the president is hired to carry out board policies, trustees look to the president for guidance and educational leadership. Mutually agreed-upon clear descriptions and expectations of roles and responsibilities help ensure open communication, confidence and trust.