

DRAFT FIRST READ of Synod Governance and Structure

For initial conversation purposes only with modifications/improvements to come

Sources: *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership* by Dan Hotchkiss

“A Theory of Corporate Governance: Finding a New Balance for Boards and their CEOs” by John Carver

Synod of Mid-America Governance and Structure

Refined by Ben McConaughy (AC), Michelle Johnson (AC), and Chip Hardwick (Staff)

Commissioners Meeting 3/11/21

Overarching Goals for Governance and Structure (Hotchkiss 6):

- A unified structure for making governance decisions
- A unified structure for making operational decisions
- An open, creative, and accountable atmosphere for ministry

Suggested Structure: From Hotchkiss, 53

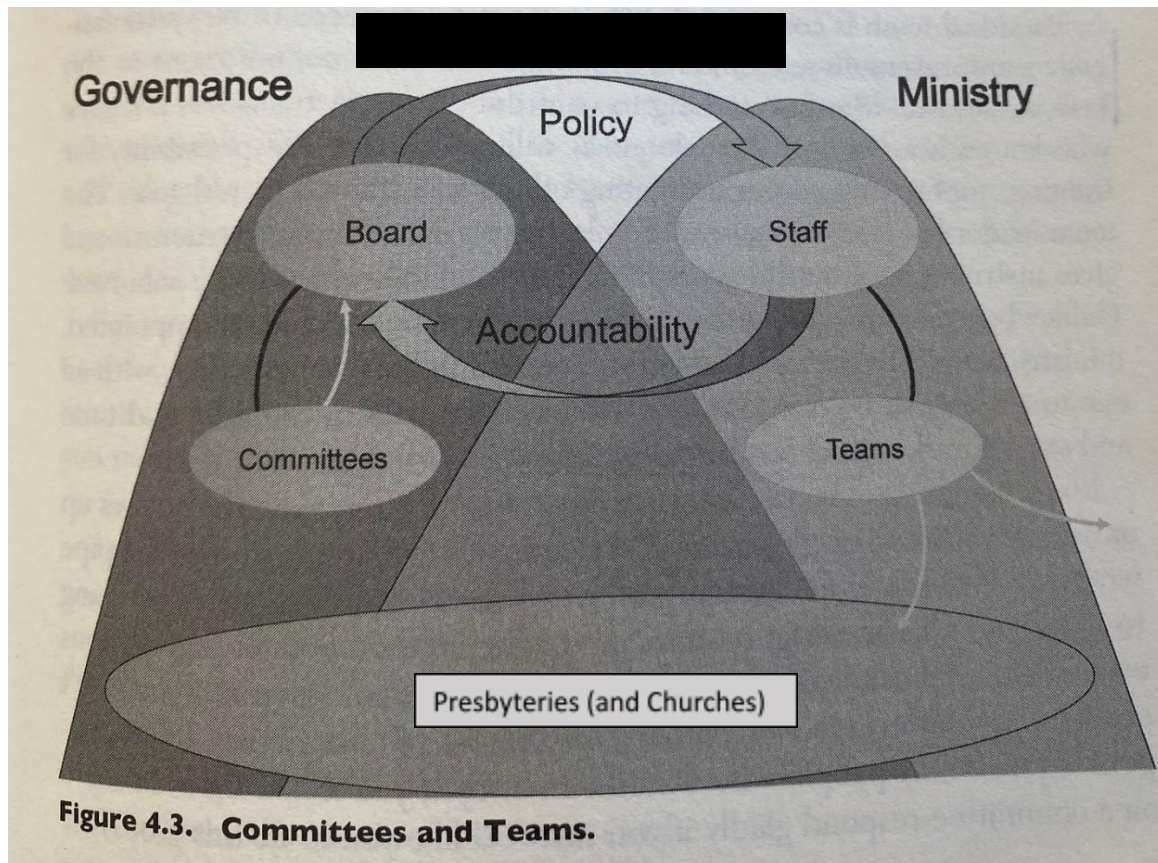


Figure 4.3. Committees and Teams.

Board = Synod Assembly

- Composition: 22 Commissioners + 1 RE or TE from each Racial Equity Caucus + 1 RE or TE from Presbyterian Women

- Primary Role: Setting Policy through Governance (“Owning” the Synod, holding and controlling its human and material resources, and making sure that they are used to serve its mission) (Hotchkiss, 49)
- Primary Activities:
 - Establishing prioritized missional priorities (ends) in an affirmative, prescriptive way (Carver, 5) (see examples on separate document from Synod of Mid America)
 - Establishing aspirational guidelines for the way the Synod conducts its life together and ministry as well as guiding policies (means)
 - Providing oversight by evaluating the performance of the staff in achieving the missional priorities according to its aspirational guidelines (Hotchkiss, 51)
- Subgroups: Committees that help the board to govern (e.g., finance, personnel, governance, representation/nominations) (Hotchkiss, 53-55)
 - Composition: Primarily commissioners
 - Duration: Long-term, with three year terms

Staff = Paid Staff and key positions

- Composition: Interim Executive, Stated Clerk, Office Manager, Treasurer (volunteer), Communications (consultant)
- Primary Role: Accountability to the Assembly to accomplish Ministry (the Synod’s practical work of changing lives in ways that fit its mission, acting out its values, and achieving its goals) (Hotchkiss, 50)
- Primary Activities:
 - Management of the activities which achieve the missional priorities according to the aspirational guidelines and guiding policies
 - Reporting progress toward the missional priorities fully and transparently
- Subgroups: Teams that produce practical results for the Synod, presbyteries, congregations, and world (e.g., grants/scholarships, Self-Development of People, preaching courses, LeaderWise, worship services, etc.). (Hotchkiss, 57)
 - Current examples: grants/scholarships; Self Development of People; preaching courses, LeaderWise, worship services, etc. Future examples (including sub-teams): building congregational vitality; dismantling systemic racism; eradicating structural poverty
 - Composition: Primarily people throughout the Synod, including presbytery leaders
 - Duration: ad hoc, annual or three-year terms

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