UVI Board of Trustees
Communications Policy

Current revision	October 17, 2026	**Review cycle**	At least every three years; sooner as needed
Related policies	Policy on Policies; Shared Governance Policy; Code of Conduct; Board Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy	**Related authorities**	UVI Bylaws; Virgin Islands Sunshine Act

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes clear, timely and respectful communication by and with the Board of Trustees. It applies to trustees, Board committees, and employees supporting Board communications, including email, messages, meetings, public statements and social media. Its purpose is informed oversight, accurate public information, and compliance with confidentiality and open-government requirements.

2. Board Voice and Individual Responsibility

The Board acts collectively. The Chair speaks for the Board; the President speaks for University operations. Other spokespersons may act when expressly authorized by the Board, Chair, President, or applicable policy, within the authorizing party's authority and the scope of the assignment. The Chair and President coordinate messages involving both governance and administration. Authority to communicate does not confer authority to make a decision or commitment.

Trustees should ask informed questions, listen to different views, and raise concerns respectfully. Once the Board acts, trustees must accurately describe its decision and respect its lawful implementation. A trustee may express a personal view or dissent, but must make clear that it is not an official Board statement and must protect information lawfully withheld from disclosure.

Board communications must comply with the Board's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy, as adopted and amended. Trustees must disclose conflicts through the prescribed channels and must not use private conversations, electronic messages, or intermediaries to influence a matter from which they are required to recuse themselves.

3. Communication with University Constituencies

Trustees may listen to and engage with faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors and public officials. They must refer individual complaints to the appropriate University process and must bring significant governance concerns to the Chair or Vice Chair. Trustees must not promise an outcome, direct employees, conduct an unauthorized investigation, or create a separate administrative reporting relationship. Established shared-governance channels remain available.

Requests for University information should go through the Office of the President. Committee chairs may work directly with their assigned administrative liaisons within the committee's charge, keeping the Chair and President informed of significant matters. Routine Board records, scheduling and access requests may go to the Board Liaison. These channels must not obstruct fiduciary oversight, authorized auditor or counsel access, or the reporting routes in Section 8.

4. Information Sharing and Committee Reports

The Chair and President will maintain regular contact and arrange timely updates to trustees on significant developments, risks and decisions. The timing will reflect the urgency and subject; matters requiring early attention should not wait for the next regular meeting. Material information needed for a Board decision should be shared with all trustees entitled to receive it, subject to lawful conflicts and confidentiality restrictions.

Committee chairs will report at regular and special Board meetings as required by the Bylaws, distinguishing information, recommendations and authorized actions. Committees must stay within their delegated authority. Executive Committee emergency actions remain subject to the Board's ratification or revocation at its next meeting.

The elected Secretary retains the Bylaws' responsibility for notices, minutes and Board records. The Board Liaison provides administrative support, maintains the Board's communication channels, and distributes materials on behalf of the appropriate officer.

The Board shall use a University-approved electronic platform for Board and committee communications, meeting information, documents, and records. The platform currently designated for this purpose, together with access instructions, shall be communicated to trustees and authorized committee members by the Board Liaison. Users shall access the platform through their assigned accounts, subject to role-based permissions and lawful restrictions.

Approved Trustee email may support required notices, calendar invitations, alerts, and access assistance. It supplements the designated platform. Official records received through other authorized channels shall be captured or linked in the appropriate Board record by the Secretary or Board Liaison, subject to confidentiality, access, and preservation requirements.

Trustees and authorized committee members shall review the designated platform regularly and before meetings for materials and assigned follow-up relevant to their service. Users shall distinguish draft, proposed, approved, superseded, and withdrawn documents and use the current applicable version. The Board Liaison will identify material revisions to previously distributed meeting materials and notify affected users. Users shall report missing documents or access problems promptly to the Board Liaison, who will coordinate assistance or an authorized alternative when necessary.

The designated platform does not replace required public notices or publication on UVI's website. The approved version in the University's official policy repository remains the authoritative University policy version; the platform shall provide links or controlled current copies for Board use.

5. Public Statements and Media

Refer requests for an official Board comment to the Chair and requests about University operations to the President or designated communications office. Coordinate official legislative, donor and community representations through those channels. Public statements and social-media posts must distinguish approved actions from proposals, use verified information, and avoid speculation or disclosure of protected material. Personal accounts do not authorize a trustee to speak for the Board.

6. Open Meetings and Confidentiality

Board and committee business must comply with the Virgin Islands Sunshine Act and the Bylaws. Meetings are open unless a statutory exception and the required closure procedure apply. The presence of counsel, a sensitive topic, or a desire for candid discussion does not by itself authorize a closed session. The Chair or committee chair should consult counsel on the specific legal basis.

Under the ordinary closure procedure in § 254(c)(1), a majority of the entire membership must approve closure, each participating member's vote must be recorded, and the written vote must be publicly available within one day. Closed-session action votes must also be publicly available, identifying members present, the matter and each vote, with exempt information withheld.

The Secretary and responsible committee chairs, with liaison support, will ensure required notices and records are prepared and made available. The Bylaws generally require 10 days' advance Board notice and five calendar days' committee notice, including public posting. Open-session minutes must be recorded within 30 days and be available for public inspection; drafts should be clearly labeled pending approval. Post Board policies and actions on UVI's website consistent with disclosure requirements.

Protect lawfully confidential personnel, student, legal and other restricted information. Share it only with authorized recipients through approved secure channels. Do not forward restricted materials, recordings or screenshots to unauthorized persons. An executive-session or “confidential” label does not, by itself, exempt a record from disclosure. Refer disclosure questions to the Secretary and counsel; release public information with appropriate redactions rather than withholding an entire record unnecessarily.

7. Electronic Communications and Records

Email, text, the designated Board platform and other approved systems may support scheduling and information distribution. Trustees must not use reply-all exchanges, group chats, successive calls or intermediaries to deliberate, reach agreement, or take Board action outside required meeting procedures. Refer substantive group discussion to a properly convened meeting; consult counsel before any proposed action outside a meeting. This is a Board communication safeguard, not a restriction on ordinary social contact.

Preserve communications concerning Board business under applicable record-retention requirements and legal holds, regardless of account or device. Do not use disappearing messages for Board business. Protect account credentials and report misdirected messages or unauthorized access promptly to the Board Liaison. Forward public-record requests promptly to the Secretary and designated records custodian for handling with counsel; trustees should neither promise confidentiality nor decide disclosure independently.

University-approved artificial intelligence, recording, transcription, and automated-processing features may be used for authorized Board purposes in accordance with applicable University policies, access permissions, and information-security, privacy, and records requirements. Approval or acquisition of a platform does not automatically authorize every feature, integration, recording, or use of restricted information.

Recording and transcription features may be activated only by authorized meeting administrators under University-approved procedures. Use involving executive sessions, privileged discussions, or other restricted information requires confirmation that the particular feature and intended use are authorized.

AI-generated summaries, draft minutes, answers, and other outputs are working aids. The person preparing or relying on an output must verify its accuracy against the underlying materials or meeting record before it is circulated or relied upon for Board business. AI output does not constitute an official Board decision, approved minutes, or legal advice.

AI-generated materials, recordings, and transcripts shall be managed under applicable retention requirements and legal holds. Access to an AI feature does not authorize access to or disclosure of information beyond the user’s assigned permissions.

Confidential, privileged, or other restricted University information may be entered into another AI, transcription, or automated-processing service only when the University has approved both the tool and its intended use.

8. Urgent Matters and Protected Reporting

For a significant institutional incident, the President should promptly alert the Chair or Vice Chair. The Chair, President and communications lead will coordinate verified facts, the spokesperson, trustee updates and public messaging; identify what remains unknown and when further information is expected. An urgent communication does not replace required Board action or meeting notice.

Concerns involving the President should go to the Chair; concerns involving the Chair should go to the Vice Chair or another appropriate unconflicted officer. Audit, fraud, ethics or compliance concerns may go directly through the authorized Audit Committee, audit, legal or reporting channels. Nothing in this policy limits lawful reporting to regulators, accreditors, law enforcement or other protected channels, or permits retaliation for a good-faith report.

9. Administration and Review

The Governance Committee will include this policy in trustee orientation, review it at least every three years and when law or governance practices change, and recommend amendments to the Board. Communication concerns will follow the reporting, review and fair-process provisions of the Board’s Code of Conduct and applicable conflict-of-interest procedures, as adopted and amended, with unconflicted decision-makers. This policy supplements those requirements and creates no separate disciplinary process. Applicable law and the Bylaws control any conflict.