



IECG IN THE NEWS



2014 DCEO Excellence in Corporate Governance Award

Corporate governance essentially means the system by which a company is run. And if you need to get up to speed on it, there is one person in North Texas to call: Dennis McCuistion. He's a clinical professor and executive director at the Institute for Excellence in Corporate Governance at the University of Texas at Dallas. Having served on both public and private boards in a career that stretches back to the 1960s, McCuistion has learned a thing or two about what makes corporate boards work-and what makes them dysfunctional as well.

"It's a question of teaching, mentoring, and sharing our lessons," he says. Those he's teaching-whether they're students or real-world board members-"don't have to make the same mistakes we made. They can make new ones."

Much of the reading in McCuistion's courses, in addition to textbooks, includes *The Wall Street Journal*. Many students "don't read anything in newspapers," he says. "They don't know what the heck is going on."

He also works with the National Association of Corporate Directors, a Washington, D.C.-based trade group whose aims include improving boards. "I'm in the boardroom, educating people who don't think they need any educating," he says.

Here's the good news from McCuistion's perspective: corporate boards are getting better at governance. Mindful of fiascos ranging from Enron to WorldCom and of resulting laws such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, boards are improving the quality of their work, he says.

"The whole idea of corporate governance before the year 2000 [had] an entirely different set of dynamics than today," he says. "Boards do much better than they used to, which is great." -J.B.