



**Board of Trustees  
Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, October 19, 2017  
12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (or until business concludes)  
DeBoer Room, Hannon Library**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum**

Chair Sayre called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the committee's first regular meeting of the academic year.

The following members were present: Teresa Sayre, Daniel Santos, Joanna Steinman and Steve Vincent. Trustee Les AuCoin was absent due to an illness. Trustee Shea Washington was also absent. Trustee Linda Schott (ex officio) also attended the meeting.

Other meeting guests included: Dr. Susan Walsh, Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs; Craig Morris, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Jason Catz, General Counsel; Shanztyn Nihipali, SOU student; Tiffany Morey, APSOU; Matt Stillman, Registrar; Lee Ayers, Division Director of Undergraduate Studies; Jennifer Fountain, Student Life; Marjorie Trueblood-Gamble, Director of Diversity and Inclusion; Vicki Suter, SOU; Kemble Yates, SOU; Ryan Schnobrich, Internal Auditor; Joe Mosley, Director of Community and Media Relations; Devon Backstrom, ASSOU; John Stevenson, User Support Manager; Don Hill, Classroom and Media Services Manager; Sabrina Prud'homme, Board Secretary; and Kathy Park, Executive Assistant.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Provost's Report**

Dr. Susan Walsh reported on activities of the Provosts' Council. She said five of the eight Oregon university provosts are new and their recent discussions included but were not limited to: applied baccalaureates, strengthening working relationships with community colleges, studying 2- and 4-year transfer students bachelor's degree completions; declaration of meta-majors, new advising models; academic support services; strategies for better preparing high school students for college-level work; the need for data on the impact of the Oregon Promise; creative financial aid; competency-based education; and university evaluations.

Dr. Walsh mentioned her participation in a conversation Chair Thorndike arranged with Dr. Naganathan, the new OIT president, when he visited the Rogue Valley. They talked with community and business leaders about how SOU, OIT and RCC can support the needs of the workforce.

Dr. Walsh said she recently presented to SOREDI SOU's strategic plan and other items about which SOU is excited. Trustee Vincent said the conversation was well-received. Dr. Walsh then passed out the new SOU viewbook, which she distributed at the SOREDI meeting and highlighted a couple of pages on student support, the new advising model and the cost of attendance.

Dr. Walsh discussed House Bill 2998, the transfer bill. The HECC is required to convene higher education representatives to evaluate existing one-year curricula for students who plan to transfer, establish foundational curricula with a minimum of 30 college level academic credits that may be counted toward a student's four year degree requirements and determine major courses of study for which unified statewide transfer agreements will be established. Chris Stanek was appointed to serve on this HECC group. This is a way to capture credits not being used in the transfer process, even beyond the articulation agreements with community colleges.

The university evaluation is due to the HECC and SOU's final report on its retrenchment metrics and the conditions report are also due to the HECC. SOU leadership is planning how to approach its mission presentation but Craig Morris added that the HECC has provided very limited guidance.

Matt Stillman presented the enrollment dashboard, saying things are still looking very strong, as FTE is ahead of last fall's FTE and Advanced Southern Credit students are still coming in. Degrees awarded are up from last year. Every category in the admissions data is up from fall 2016 and the application volume is the second highest in SOU's history. Retention rates also are up. Responding to Trustee Santos' inquiry, Dr. Stillman said the \$500,000 set aside for tuition offsets was used immediately and awarded fully.

### **Consent Agenda**

Trustee Steinman moved to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2017 meeting as presented. Trustee Santos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Information and Discussion Items**

#### Information and Discussion: What are Safe Spaces at SOU

Marjorie Trueblood-Gamble provided an interactive presentation and discussion session on safe spaces at SOU. She defined a safe space as a place or environment in which a person or category of people can feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, criticism, harassment or any other emotional or physical harm and a space where people are encouraged to take intellectual risks and explore a line of rational thoughts. She then discussed trigger warnings and their use on campus; microaggressions; and the tension between inclusion and freedom of speech. Ms. Trueblood-Gamble mentioned the Association of Governing Boards' publication on freedom of speech, which made the point that governing boards need to be aware of the competing tensions between individual freedoms and the expectation of civility and personal safety and should understand the difficult balance between restricting certain speech and having a campus that is open to the public.

Ms. Trueblood-Gamble then led an interactive activity for all those in attendance at the

meeting to consider the following statements: 1) Schools should be places where students are exposed to many viewpoints, even if some groups or individuals might find them offensive. 2) A college or university should cancel a speaker if a majority of students object. 3) All speech should be protected. 4) Free speech is not truly available to all, especially members of marginalized groups, so additional protections for them are needed. Ms. Trueblood-Gamble noted the diversity in the participants' answers.

Ms. Trueblood-Gamble then discussed brave spaces at SOU, which encourage students to be resilient and not opt out of difficult, uncomfortable conversations. Various training opportunities are available to staff, faculty and students on creating brave spaces. SOU has physical safe spaces, such as identity-based resource centers, clubs and organizations and the Native American Studies program.

Responding to inquiries from several trustees, discussion ensued on being unable to eliminate microaggressions, training people to deal with them, and the Ally program. Ms. Trueblood-Gamble referenced pertinent SOU policies: Speech Activities; Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct; and Student Code of Conduct. SOU's processes include the Bias Response Team, CARES and confidential advising. Responding to Trustee Santos' inquiry, Ms. Trueblood-Gamble and Mr. Catz said the Department of Education's new Title IX guidance has no impact on SOU's process.

Responding to Trustee Vincent's inquiry, Ms. Trueblood-Gamble said she receives tremendous support at all levels within the university. Discussion ensued on SOU's procedures for processing speakers' requests and how SOU would respond to an incident. Mr. Catz added that most of the campus is available for free speech activities and community members can rent facilities to put on speeches. SOU is very open to speech and has long advocated that speech is opposed with more speech. Dr. Walsh added that Mr. Catz's personal commitment to this issue makes a big difference for SOU and Mr. Catz, in turn, credited Ms. Trueblood-Gamble's personal dedication.

#### Academic and Student Affairs Organizational Update

Dr. Walsh provided an update on the Acting Vice President for Enrollment and Student Life, saying she and President Schott have been working on a position description for this six-month position and a screening committee has been assembled. President Schott added that, after the six-month period, leadership would determine if the position should be made permanent and, if so, at what level. The hope is to have someone on board by January, possibly sooner.

Turning to academic advising, Dr. Walsh said SOU studied decentralized advising models and created a new plan to take advantage of other services offered at the university, such as career preparation. Each division will have a student success coordinator and faculty will still have advising responsibilities. Looking at the high retention rates in the pilot program in Social Sciences, Dr. Walsh believes this new model will be successful in all seven divisions. Dr. Walsh said ASSOU is solidly behind this new model. Trustee Steinman praised the new model.

#### Curriculum Update

Dr. Walsh said SOU is on track for an April launch for the online MBA program, starting with four concentrations: business analytics, marketing, accounting and

general. Mr. Morris added that Mark Denney conservatively estimated that by 2021, the program could produce an additional million dollars per year.

Dr. Walsh said the Masters in Outdoor Adventure and Expedition Leadership program has seven students and there are several students in the new Health Care Administration major as well.

The Wine Business Certificate is moving along. Dr. Greg Jones was scheduled to teach a course or two and SOU is looking for instructors for those courses.

#### Committee Meeting Schedule and Future Meetings

Chair Sayre reminded committee members that last year, the committee decided to meet less frequently for longer durations. The full board would be asked to adopt an updated schedule in its meeting the following day. Trustee Santos said he appreciated the long-term planning and thought the schedule was good. Chair Sayre also thought the quarterly meetings worked well for the committee.

#### **Adjournment**

Chair Sayre adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

Date: January 18, 2018

Respectfully submitted by,



Sabrina Prud'homme  
University Board Secretary