



Board of Trustees Special Meeting

Thursday, November 16, 2017
3:00 – 5:00 p.m. (or until business concludes)
DeBoer Room, Hannon Library

MINUTES

Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Chair Thorndike called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. He extended a special welcome to Shanztyn Nihipali, the board's new student trustee who was appointed the previous day and will serve on the Academic and Student Affairs Committee. Chair Thorndike also welcomed the "First Gentleman," Tom Fuhrmark.

Chair Thorndike acknowledged Mr. Morris' last board meeting and thanked him for his work; Trustee Nicholson noted the gratifying level of collaboration the trustees have had with Mr. Morris and thanked him for everything he has done for the board. Chair Thorndike recognized the recent death of Dr. Don Laws, an emeritus SOU professor.

The following trustees were present: Bill Thorndike, Lyn Hennion, Sheila Clough, Paul Nicholson, Shanztyn Nihipali, Daniel Santos, Teresa Sayre, April Sevcik, Joanna Steinman and Steve Vincent. Trustee Les AuCoin participated via videoconference. Trustees Dennis Slattery and Shea Washington were absent. Linda Schott (ex officio) also was present.

Other meeting guests included: Jason Catz, General Counsel; Janet Fratella, Vice President for Development; Craig Morris, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Dr. Susan Walsh, Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs; Kendall Meador, ASSOU; Allie Bogard, Student Life; Christina Richardson, SOU student; Dr. Vincent Smith, SOU; Marjorie Trueblood-Gamble, Director of Diversity and Inclusion; Dr. Jody Waters, Associate Provost; Chris Stanek, Director of Institutional Research; Max Brooks, SOU; Jennifer Fountain, SOU; Brandon Givens, SOU; Jonathan Chavez Baez, SOU; Ryan Schnobrich, Internal Auditor; Joe Mosley, Director of Community and Media Relations; John Stevenson, User Support Manager; Don Hill, Classroom and Media Services Manager; Sabrina Prud'homme, Board Secretary; and Kathy Park, Executive Assistant.

Public Comment

Max Brooks, Career Preparation Coordinator, described his experience in the strategic planning process. He co-chaired the professional learning community (PLC) on the future of employment and served on the team that looked at one of the strategic directions. He said his experience has been inspiring and he feels energized by the work being done. He said the idea of being daring feels appropriate in this process.

Dr. Vincent Smith, professor of sociology, anthropology, environmental science and policy, said the strategic planning process has mirrored best practices in participatory

decision-making and commended President Schott's leadership. He chaired one of the PLCs, worked on a focus group and served on a strategic planning subcommittee and a team that looked at one of the strategic directions. He thought the strategic plan would build on what is best about SOU and will challenge SOU to pursue areas where it has opportunities to grow.

Christina Richardson, an SOU student intern on the strategic planning committee, found her involvement empowering. She and her friends who have participated in the process believe SOU is taking care of students and is student centered. She is excited because the plan represents students well.

Dr. Jody Waters, Associate Provost, said she has been very involved in the strategic planning process. She supports the strategic plan because it addresses many of the issues facing universities, including attracting and retaining students, different types of learners and ensuring student success.

Jonathan Chavez Baez, Minority Outreach Program Coordinator, said being a member of the strategic planning committee was eye opening and motivating for him. The PLC findings were key, as was taking the risk to be bold. He thought the plan would ensure SOU is a place where everyone is welcome and all learners can succeed.

Action Items

Southern Oregon University Vision, Mission Statement, Values and Strategic Directions

Introducing the item, Chair Thorndike said that, over the past year, the board has engaged with the strategic planning process in several ways: the board approved the transparent, collaborative and iterative process; Trustee Nicholson served as the board's representative on the strategic planning committee; the board had two focus group sessions to discuss the values and an analysis of SOU's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT); board members attended open forums; the board received presentations on the strategic plan and discussed plan drafts; and the board discussed the plan and strategic directions during its September retreat. The president used this feedback along with campus participation to develop the plan that is being presented to the board for approval.

President Schott highlighted the stages of the strategic planning process. Stage 1 included the formulation of the strategic planning committee, the professional learning communities, and looked at SOU's values. Stage 2 included a SWOT analysis, the [PLC] Expo, and open forums to share drafts of the vision, mission and values. In Stage 3, drafts of the strategic directions were formed. At Stage 4, the directions were reviewed, sent to campus for input, and the committee began formulating goals to advance the directions.

The strategic planning committee considered the values that are most important to the campus community and should serve as SOU's foundation and guide its work. President Schott discussed the mission statement. SOU is a regionally engaged learning community because it is important to engage with the region but also to work beyond it. SOU is committed to being the educational provider of choice for learners throughout their lives, which is the biggest shift for SOU. The mission also addresses how SOU will fulfill the mission.

The strategic planning committee formed a new vision that is exciting, bold and audacious. President Schott explained each element of the vision: inclusive; sustainable; university for the future; guide; every learner; develop knowledge, capacities and audacity; innovate boldly; and create lives of purpose.

With that vision in mind, the strategic planning committee started thinking about the strategic directions, as detailed in the meeting materials. The first strategic direction requires a transformation in SOU's pedagogy and curriculum, which is very big. The second direction is that SOU will become an employer of choice and provide excellent service to all of its constituents; the idea is that if SOU is a great place to work, employees will be happy and will want to deliver excellent customer service. The third strategic direction, involving environmental sustainability and ecological resiliency, covers areas where SOU can lead. The fourth strategic direction on creating a diverse, equitable, inclusive community where learners flourish flows from SOU's values and research into the future diversity of the region.

The fifth strategic direction states that SOU will maintain financial stability and invest for institutional vitality. President Schott said SOU is now financially stable but has more to do. She said now is a time to invest and to do so in ways that will increase the strength and vitality of the institution. This strategic direction will include elements such as a strategic enrollment management plan, the optimal enrollment mix and size of SOU, fundraising, investing and generating other revenue.

The sixth strategic direction involves developing physical and virtual environments in which all learners can thrive and utilizes immersive technologies and universal design principles for all types of learners.

Under the seventh strategic direction, SOU will be a catalyst for economic vitality, civic engagement and cultural enrichment. SOU is known for its arts, which will continue to be important, as will creativity and innovation. SOU will also be a hub for civil discourse and action.

President Schott said the strategic planning committee will develop tactics, timelines and metrics to ensure SOU makes progress on the strategic directions. She stressed that SOU will learn from what it is doing and will make changes as needed. SOU also will seek big ideas that integrate multiple strategic directions.

President Schott then discussed some changes that will occur. With the pedagogical transformation, learners will become more engaged in learning. There will be improved and expanded service to adult learners. SOU will be recognized as a key element in attracting and growing creative and innovative activities and employers throughout the Rogue Valley. Overall, SOU's reputation will change and it will be seen as a university embracing the future. SOU will be Oregon's university for the future.

Responding to Trustee Santos' inquiry regarding the fifth strategic direction, President Schott said it encompasses the enrollment mix and the HECC funding model. SOU's work to transform the funding model is not in that strategic direction, but is rather a political activity.

Responding to Trustee Nihipali's inquiry, President Schott said she did not expect the day-to-day student experience to change immediately following the implementation of the plan. However, if curriculum and pedagogy are transformed successfully, programs may evolve and the general education experience will definitely evolve. The most immediate impact will be people trying out new pedagogical approaches. Students will also see a change in the increasing diversity, in simplified processes, and in even better customer service. There will be a lot change over the next four or five years.

Trustee AuCoin said President Schott's presentation exceeded what he had hoped and wanted to see at the beginning of the process. He, along with Trustees Clough, Steinman, Santos, Hennion and Vincent, highly praised the plan and process.

As the board representative on the strategic planning committee, Trustee Nicholson first expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with faculty and staff on that committee. He and President Schott discussed how the plan would change the institution and he applauded how she embraced that concept and encouraged everyone to move forward.

Chair Thorndike said that, about two years ago, he and Trustee Sevcik sat down with representatives from the campus and talked about change and movement. He said the strategic plan has encapsulated the big changes the university has wanted for a long time and he takes pleasure in moving it forward. Trustee Sevcik added that she came away from those meetings with a feeling that everyone they talked to had a great passion and love for the university.

Trustee Hennion expressed concern there may be a major stakeholder group that feels it was not properly engaged. President Schott replied that, in spite of their best efforts, some folks have not attended to this process. There are early adopters, others will come on board gradually and others will not like the new direction. President Schott said that if you treat those who do not like the plan with respect, moving forward is still possible.

Trustee Nihipali moved to approve the proposed resolution as presented, Trustee Nicholson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Southern Oregon University Core Themes

SOU is restarting a new seven-year accreditation process. Dr. Jody Waters said the core themes were generated directly from the new mission, vision and strategic directions. In addition to submitting a new mission to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), SOU is required to submit a viable set of core themes that map to essential elements of and collectively encompass that mission, objectives for each core theme and indicators for evaluating accomplishments for each core theme.

The three draft core themes are using innovative curriculum, practices and technologies to achieve student learning and success; putting our guiding principles into practice; and creating opportunities and inspiring the audacity to act upon beliefs and values in a broader context. Essentially, SOU wants to make the student better, make the institution better, and make the world better. Dr. Waters said they are still working on

how to measure the elements of each core theme, such as critical thinking, professional preparation, service excellence, and economic vitality.

Responding to inquiries from Trustees Nicholson and Sayre, Dr. Waters said the development of the core themes has not been rushed but was accomplished without extensive consultation because it was not conducive to a large group process. The core themes, along with an implementation plan, will be submitted to the NWCCU for its review and action, if any.

Trustee Sayre moved to approve the proposed resolution as presented, Trustee Hennion seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Information and Discussion

December Meeting of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Chair Thorndike mentioned the December meeting at the HECC, at which SOU will make a presentation on various critical issues. President Schott said the administration was confident SOU has met or exceeded the metrics in the retrenchment plan and was looking forward to the presentation to the HECC. She also mentioned Ben Cannon's upcoming visit to SOU.

Chair Thorndike added that everything is changing, including the makeup of the Oregon legislature. Seeking an effective presence in the legislative process, he would like to rely on a few trustees with experience in dealing with the state's process—Trustees Santos, Vincent and AuCoin—to work with Jeanne Stallman and President Schott to identify salient questions, perspectives and answers. Chair Thorndike said the group aligns nicely with AGB's Guardians Initiative and two of the president's goals.

Adjournment

Chair Thorndike adjourned the meeting at 5:06 p.m.

Date: January 19, 2018

Respectfully submitted by,



Sabrina Prud'homme
University Board Secretary