

**Board of Trustees
Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 15, 2021
Videoconference**

MINUTES

Theme: Innovation and Collaboration

Call to Order Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Committee Members:

Jonathon Bullock	Present	Daniel Santos	Present
Steve Vincent	Present	Deborah Rosenberg	Present
Dylann Loverro	Present	janelle wilson	Present
Barry Thalden	Present		

Chair Jonathon Bullock called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. The secretary recorded the roll and a quorum was verified.

Other trustees in attendance: Paul Nicholson, Lyn Hennion, and President Linda Schott.

Other attendees and Zoom webinar panelists included: Greg Perkinson, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Jason Catz, General Counsel; Dr. Neil Woolf, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs; Dr. Susan Walsh, Provost; Janet Fratella, Vice President for University Advancement; Sabrina Prud'homme, Board Secretary; Taylor Burke, Dean of Students and Director of Student Life; Dr. Matt Stillman, Executive Director of Enrollment Management; Josh Lovern, Director of Budget and Planning; Hughes Lecomte, Director of Campus Recreation and SRC; Dr. Lee Ayres-Preboski, Division Director of Undergraduate Students; Dr. Joan McBee, Interim Division Director/Professor of School of Business; Danielle Mancuso, Associate Director of Student Life; Zachary Olson, Associate Director of Admissions for Operations; Robert Casserly, OLLI Assistant Director; Dr. Rene Ordonez, Professor, Business; Dr. Erik Palmer, Associate Professor & Department Chair of Communication; Danielle Hammer, Adjunct Faculty, University Seminar; Belisario Nigenda-Perez, TRIO, SSS Coordinator; Stacy Shaver, Academic Resource Officer; Deborah Lovern, Provost's Office; Christina Sanz, Southern Oregon University Foundation; and Pamela Tomac, Office of the Board Secretary.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Consent Agenda

Board Vice Chair Santos moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Trustee Loverro seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Provost's Report

General Updates

Provost Susan Walsh said that work currently is being done on the general education curriculum. The general education task force is wrapping up year two. The plan is to work

over the summer, lay some groundwork for the fall term, and continue into next academic year. The process has been inclusive of most faculty on campus. There are still six capacities which Andrew Gay previously presented to trustees. Learning outcomes will be determined for all the capacities and a model will be presented to the faculty senate for approval.

Responding to Trustee Loverro, Dr. Walsh said the new curriculum should begin in the Fall 2022 term for new students but the process for continuing and transfer students may differ.

Responding to Vice Chair Santos' question about a fall transition back to campus, Dr. Walsh said Dr. Woolf is on a statewide re-opening committee and will be sharing more information about this later on in the agenda. She added that all seven public institutions and Oregon Health & Science University are attempting to get close to each other on their opening plans, which will include as much in-person instruction as possible.

Provost's Council Update

Dr. Walsh explained that SB 233, the common course numbering (CCN) bill, is moving forward. Using CCN for general education coursework would enable the transfer of community college students to universities to happen more seamlessly. There would be more faculty input across the seven institutions and the community college faculty, plus a transfer council. SOU is advocating for more faculty involvement in this council.

The Provost's Council approved the sustainability bachelor of science program and HECC followed with its approval last week. The university now has a new bachelor of science degree in sustainability.

Recently, Provost Walsh and Dr. Woolf discussed the E-Sports program with Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development Incorporated (SOREDI). Approximately 25-30 students are committed to this minor. Dr Woolf added that the E-sports program is off and running, and SOU anticipates growth, as students are engaged, receiving scholarships, and functioning as a team. Additionally, SOREDI will advertise the program in its community newsletter.

Vice President's Report

Enrollment Dashboard

Dr. Woolf reviewed the spring 2021 enrollment snapshot as presented in the meeting materials, noting that full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment is down 11.4 percent; he clarified that FTE is not headcount. Regarding a percent decrease in headcount, he said students leave for a variety of reasons—some graduate, some do not retain, some transfer. Part of the element of the comparison for the spring of 2021 decrease is tied to the enrollment decrease in the fall of 2020.

The ethnicity snapshot from 2020 to 2021, though each ethnic cohort is down, one of the key considerations is whether there is a particular group having a larger enrollment drop as compared to others. All individuals are a concern, but no group stands out in this comparison as a leading indicator for any set of issues.

Regarding retention rates by race and ethnicity; for all SOU students, the fall-to-fall retention rate is 80 percent. Black students are at 75 percent; Pacific Islanders at 68 percent; the American Samoan students had difficulty traveling off the island to return to school so that

presents an anomaly. Multi-ethnic student retention is at 70 percent; Native American retention is at 77 percent, and two metrics to celebrate are the 81 percent retention for Hispanic students and the 85 percent for Asian students, which are higher rates than the general population.

Dr. Woolf said that another goal is to eliminate the achievement gaps especially those defined by graduation rates. Reviewing the graduation rates by race and ethnicity, the all first-year cohort rate is at 46 percent. In comparing this rate to the other populations, there is room for growth for the Black population. When combining retention and graduation data, there is hope that the aforementioned higher retention will increase SOU's graduation rate.

Responding to Trustee Vincent, Dr. Woolf said that SOU retention numbers are fairly close to the other TRUs, but lag behind Portland State University and Oregon State. SOU is a few percentage points below national norms and the university is working to make improvements.

Responding to Trustee Thalden, Dr. Woolf shared that the total spring 2021 enrollment headcount for undergraduates was 3670. Comparing numbers from 2019 as a pre-COVID comparison, Dr. Woolf agreed that SOU is about 10 percent down in enrollment, which is typical of higher education right now. The flagship universities are not having the same enrollment challenges as the regional universities but the community colleges are doing much, much worse. SOU is slightly better than the other regionals and Navigate has been an effective tool for retention. Students who use Navigate are persisting term-to-term at a rate of about 5 percentage points higher than non-users. This number should continue to grow.

In reviewing the fall application funnel, Dr. Woolf said there is a smaller pool of applicants to work with, but a higher yield of almost 30 percent of admits are confirming. This shows SOU is doing better admitting students than the prior year. Once fall registration for continuing students starts, a better update for fall 2021 will be available.

Other General Updates

Dr. Woolf summarized some general updates: the recreation center has had 110 daily visitors; the student health and wellness center has been the central point for vaccinations with over 177 staff vaccinated; and the student vaccination clinic opens on April 19.

An upcoming community policing webinar will address the fears and concerns of students, particularly those of color who have asked the university to advocate on their behalf. The intent is to create a dialogue and engagement opportunity, as many of these police agencies are run by SOU graduates. Other virtual events were the Black Youth Leadership Summit, a Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Women in Leadership Series, the Queer Indigenous Gathering, Winter Equity Roundtables, and the February Food Drive.

Turning to organizational updates, Danielle Mancuso was recognized by the National Association of College and University Residence Halls, as the Pacific region advisor of the month for her work with the student government and other entities.

Kelly Moutsatson, the director of admissions, is relocating and tomorrow will be her last day. Associate director, Zac Olsen, will be the interim director. Also relocating, is Taylor Burke, Dean of Students, who is leaving in June. A national search is underway to fill this position.

Tuition and Fees Affordability

Tuition Advisory Council: Process and Recommendation; and Total Cost of Attendance for Academic Year 2020-21

Dr. Walsh led the Tuition Advisory Council (TAC) and described each committee member by name and position. Starting in January, the TAC met on Fridays through last week. The TAC is advisory to the president, does not make decisions but provides recommendations to President Schott, who will make final recommendations to the board. The TAC's recommendation is that mandatory fees remain flat, the Student Health and Wellness Center fee would remain flat, and across the board, the increase would be 2.99 percent, rounding down to the nearest dollar. So, the actual percentage of 2.55 keeps the dollars whole.

Mr. Perkinson added that TAC reviewed the financial conditions and the aggressive cost controls that the institution implemented. The TAC wanted to drive a sense of fairness and equity between the resident and non-resident fees, so the percentages that were proposed came in much closer than the normal model. President Schott and Dr. Walsh explained the JackJo Pledge rate is kept in-line with the community colleges. The online programs developed in partnership with Academic Partnerships also show a 0 percent increase.

Responding to Trustee Thalden's question about textbook costs, Dr. Walsh answered that robust conversations concerning keeping all costs low for students are taking place and textbooks are a priority. She noted the efforts of the student government as well as a new librarian focusing on open educational resources, and the bookstore.

In response to Vice Chair Santos' concerns about media accounts of lawsuits of online versus in person, Dr. Woolf said that there has been a reduction in mandatory fees for fall, winter, and spring that essentially provided a price rebate during this current term.

Federal Relief Funding to Students

On the topic of federal relief funding to students, Dr. Woolf discussed three stimulus packages: the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES); the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), and state dollars that assisted those students who did not qualify for CARES or CRRSAA called the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER). The total awarded was almost \$2.8M that benefited nearly 2000 students. Dr. Woolf shared testimonials from students Stacey O'Shea and Purisma Wesley describing how the aid helped them, respectively, to graduate and pay rent in order to have a warm, safe place for her and her pets.

Responding to Chair Bullock and Trustee Loverro, Dr. Woolf explained that the federal funding came in the form of a direct pass-through from SOU. The student would apply, the funds would come to SOU and then be sent directly to the student. The average CARES stimulus dollars were about \$1800 per student on the first round, and closer to \$4,000 on the second round. One of the regulations was that only current students were eligible for funds.

Curriculum Update

New Certificate Program: Professional Social Media (Action)

Dr. Erik Palmer said the communication department wanted to take social media as a

professional practice into the 21st century. Dr. Palmer discussed that the new certificate program has not launched any new courses but rather has packaged current courses to make them attractive to prospective students and be completed in one academic year. He said the curriculum is practical and is aimed at using media platforms in innovative ways with an emphasis on collaboration as well as teamwork.

Following further discussion on the certificate, Trustee Loverro moved to approve the new Certificate Program in Professional Social Media as presented. Trustee Vincent seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

President Schott commented how amazing this certificate will be and appreciates the faculty. She attended a conference session for governing boards and the conversation for the future of higher ed was about how universities should look at options other than a bachelor's degree to meet workforce needs that are tied to employment. Dr. Palmer added that this certificate is a minimum viable product to serve new types of students and could contribute to new enrollment success at the university.

New Program Options: 3+1 and 4+1 MBA

Dr. Walsh commented that this MBA initiative exemplifies collaboration and innovation by using existing resources and repackaging them creatively.

Dr. Joan McBee introduced the goals of the proposal which were to develop an affordable, accelerated, and interconnected undergraduate-to-MBA program. The program provides an affordable and timely pathway to both undergraduate and graduate degrees. In doing so, the hope is to increase the program's growth and competitiveness, increase student satisfaction, improve retention, and enhance revenue generation. There is a huge potential for market expansion, especially within the international markets.

The proposal has two options, the first one is the 3+1 program, encouraging students to continue for an additional year to earn their MBA at 180 credits, rather than the traditional 225 credits. The 4+1 program would target students on the traditional four-year track earning a minimum GPA of 3.0, and by their senior year, they would complete their bachelor's degree and begin working on their MBA requirements simultaneously. Both programs save students time and money.

Discussing costs and the administrative overview, Dr. Matt Stillman said it will be as if the students are undergraduates for the entirety of their academic experience. This is happening for several reasons; primarily, it will enable them to have a tremendous amount of financial aid eligibility while allowing them to graduate with their undergraduate and MBA degrees. Dr. Rene Ordonez added that anticipated cost savings are \$17,000 - \$20,000 along with a time savings of 10-20 percent less time to completion than when taken traditionally. The program will become a powerful recruiting tool for admissions, enticing students to stay at SOU longer to earn the MBA while also bolstering the funding model.

Answering Trustee Rosenberg, Dr. Stillman said they would take split 400/500-level courses and the 500-level integration would be counted simultaneously towards the MBA and the undergraduate business requirements.

President Schott added her appreciation for using the resources differently and in alignment with the workforce; she also likes the idea of appealing to the non-business areas. She thanked the team for their creative thinking and being student-centered.

Academic Partnerships (AP) Online Master's Degree Programs

Dr. Walsh provided an update on the online MBA: it's currently at 230 students with a goal of 270-300; has steady growth; its terms lasts seven weeks; it has six concentrations with a seventh in the works; student credit hours for spring are at 1203, confirming the profitability of the program; it can be completed in 16 months; and students can start/stop as needed.

Dr. Walsh shared a LinkedIn testimonial from MBA student, Will Shelby, who posted that he achieved a lifelong dream to earn his MBA in 16 months and thanked everyone who helped him. It was not easy, but a great challenge that sharpened his skills, uncovered new thoughts, provided him with great information, support, and challenges that prepared him for business.

The master of science in education has launched and already is adding to its three concentrations. There are five new programs ready to launch: adult education as a second language, curriculum and instruction, leadership in higher education, public health education, and reading and literacy. The program started in the fall of 2019 with 3 students, now has 70, and is growing. The courses already are on the books or are in the process of being developed, but they could be tailored slightly based on quality feedback from AP. This is a good example of taking existing resources, developing curriculum, and collaborating with faculty, and getting them trained with lots of professional development.

Southern Oregon Education Leadership Council Updates

Dr. Woolf began by explaining how through the Southern Oregon Education Leadership Council (SOELC), SOU is working with Rogue Community College (RCC) and the regional school districts to broadcast how seamless advanced education could be for current seniors. Letters have been sent to local parents and their students informing them about the RCC-SOU guaranteed pathway to continued education for local school districts. The challenge has been that the council did not have access to the kids, and the districts do, so the districts are sending the letters out on behalf of the university, a prime example of collaboration and innovation. The other item the council worked on with the southern Oregon college access network, a subset of this council, was to create an information-sharing inventory of current college access programs. A recent development from the school district in Medford, with many students that have fallen behind this year, is creating a summer experience to provide additional learning opportunities for K-12 students. Dr. Woolf is participating by providing opportunities, experiences, and field trips for those kids to come to the SOU campus.

Referencing back to SB 233, the common course numbering bill from Senator Dembrow, opened the door for more conversations with this council. Dr. Walsh mentioned that she, Dr. Woolf, and Dr. Stillman, along with their respective counterparts at RCC and after performing an audit, it was discovered that approximately 60 percent of the commonly numbered course can be applied to SOU undergraduates. To get to 100 percent, there will be more work to do, as they purposefully focused on general education.

President Schott added there is a workforce component to the SOELC as well. Rogue Workforce Partnerships has a site where people can find available jobs to figure out what they

want to do and then the site defines the pathway for them. SOU is doing an inventory of all the boards on which members of SOELC sit so the team can relay periodic updates to those boards. Sarah Grulikowski, former ASSOU president, is working on this project.

Osprey-Raider Transfer and Reverse Transfer Program

Dr. Woolf said that one challenge to traditional transfer recruitment has been access to students, especially homebound ones since most transfer students stay close to home. SOU has created an innovative form with RCC that asks during the application and admissions process if a student would be interested in transferring to SOU at some point. That information is passed to SOU through our new constituent relationship management (CRM) database upon their entry into RCC so that SOU can provide advising. A reverse transfer partnership also was created. It allows classes taken at SOU to be applied to RCC for an associate degree. The registrar's offices at both SOU and RCC will be working together at leaving no degree behind. .

Responding to Vice Chair Santos, Dr. Woolf said yes, there are opportunities within the relationship with Southwestern Oregon Coast College (SWOCC). Trustee Vincent said the UCC's President Thatcher is retiring in July, so with new leadership, there may be an opportunity presenting itself there. Trustee Vincent also complimented everyone for being so student-focused and is amazed at all the effort that goes into the transfer program. Dr. Woolf said he would share that praise with Dr. Stillman, along with his team in the registrar's office, the admissions office, and the financial aid office, who all work together.

Recruitment Updates

Dr. Woolf discussed the expansion of efforts with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL), SOU's enrollment management partner. Through the Demand Builder program, SOU add about 100K new, prospective students into SOU's database each year from existing and new markets. The program adds a new parent portal, as many inquires come from parents on behalf of their students. SOU will engage with each group differently, which is expected to help prospective students better meet deadlines.

As students think about where they want to go to college, they also think about where can they find a job after college. RNL will provide access to "big data" through Emsi, which takes student data, matches it to other sources, and then provides specific alumni successes. Dr. Woolf said it allows SOU to name-drop companies where SOU graduates are working, along with salary data, strengthening the recruitment message; he provided an example of a geographically-specific computer science graduate.

Responding to Trustee Rosenberg, Dr. Woolf said the line between parental engagement and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act does not begin until the student is enrolled. To encourage students to make decisions on their own, the wording is presented as "it is time to complete *your* Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)." Knowing this may be the first time some students are responsible for application items, he said the parent portal should provide tips and tools to help their students.

Fall 2021 Return to Campus

Chair Bullock remarked that anticipating the uncertainty of what a fall return to campus will be like, as a result of the 2020 and 2021 years of the pandemic, students will have been

prepared for college differently than ever before. So, being a student-ready university is important now more than ever. Dr. Walsh introduced guest speakers, Dr. Lee Ayers-Preboski, Division Director of Undergraduate Studies; Professor Danielle Hammer, who oversees the Bridge Program; and Danielle Mancuso, in student life.

Danielle Mancuso began by stating that when COVID hit, the goal for the team at orientations was to make students feel connected and to embrace campus pride, a task made more difficult. She later said the program goals are 1) academic success, 2) requirements and responsibilities, and 3) belonging and involvement. She discussed the number of students attending virtual events, a new platform that promoted engagement and conversation, the structure of registration events, orienting first-year sophomores, the orientation program redesign, the Week of Welcome, the new Welcome Days, and new mentor programming in which mentors would be paid. The program will begin with 25 student success peer mentors; Dr. Walsh added that Bridge mentors have a group of 10, for a total of 35.

In response to Trustee Thalden's suggestion to make mentorship an opt-out program, Ms. Mancuso said she has concerns about forcing anything on students. Responding to further questions, she said the mentors will work five hours weekly, meet with mentees regularly, and be paid from the new student orientation matriculation fees as well as from Student Life.

Dr. Danielle Hammer said the Bridge program is designed to help underrepresented Oregon students succeed in higher education, so the recruitment process focuses on accepting students with strong academic and community service backgrounds. She reviewed components of the program including structure, events, year-long classes, peer mentors, cohorting, eligibility, and the target demographics of first-generation, low-income, rural, and students of color. Following demographic and socio-economic shifts as well as substantial stress experienced by students during the pandemic, the program plans to strengthen the mentor-mentee relationship this year, continue the social and emotional supports, connect all students that self-identify with disability resources including for pandemic-related anxiety or depression, and accommodate a loss of learning over the past year.

Responding to several questions from Trustee Thalden, Dr. Hammer verified that the mentors are paid for their work. Dr. Lee Ayers Preboski added that not only are they paid, but as they become master mentors, they receive an increase in salary for their experiences gained. Further, the program is geared toward first-year Oregonians and currently, the program represents 18 counties. Part of the recruiting process begins with the high school counselors.

Returning to Vice Chair Santos's earlier questions about what fall will look like, Dr. Woolf said the administration met with the medical director for the Oregon Health Authority. The intention is for classroom activities to be back in person at their capacity, with further guidance expected. There is flexibility to hold a combination of in-person and hybrid classes, as the students, staff, and faculty are hopeful about this operating assumption.

Future Meetings

The committee's next meeting will be on Thursday, June 17.

Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Date: June 17, 2021

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sabrina Prud'homme". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Sabrina Prud'homme
University Board Secretary