



OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Public Meeting Notice

September 15, 2021

TO: Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees
FROM: Sabrina Prud'homme, University Board Secretary
RE: Notice of Special Meeting (Retreat) of the Board of Trustees

The Southern Oregon University Board of Trustees will hold a board retreat on the date and at the location set forth below.

Agenda items for the retreat include an action item for a board officer election. Discussion items include a presidential search update including COVID considerations for presidential candidate interviews and a presidential transition discussion regarding the board's role and setting up the next president for success.

The meeting will occur as follows:

Friday, September 17, 2021
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (or until business concludes)
Visit governance.sou.edu for meeting materials.
To view the online proceedings, visit <https://sou.zoom.us/j/82028710361> at the time of the meeting.

If special accommodations are required or to provide written public comments or testimony, please contact Pamela Tomac at (541) 552-8055 at least 12 hours in advance of the meeting.

Public Comment

During this time of remote operations, members of the public who wish to provide public comments for the meeting are invited to submit their comments in writing in advance of the meeting. Please send written comments or testimony to the Board of Trustees email address: trustees@sou.edu. Public comments also may be delivered or sent to the board via postal addressed to SOU Board of Trustees, 1250 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland, OR 97520.



Board of Trustees Retreat

September 17, 2021

3:30 -5:30 p.m.

Online Meeting: <https://sou.zoom.us/j/82028710361>

AGENDA

Persons wishing to provide public comment shall do so in writing to trustees@sou.edu during COVID-19 protocols.

- 1 Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum**
 - 1.1 Welcome and Opening Remarks Chair Paul Nicholson
 - 1.2 Roll and Declaration of a Quorum Sabrina Prud'homme, SOU, Board Secretary
 - 1.3 Agenda Review Chair Nicholson
- 2 Public Comment**
- 3 Action, Information and Discussion Items**
 - 15 min. 3.1 Board Officer Elections (Action) Chair Nicholson
 - 45 min. 3.2 Presidential Search Update and Discussion Vice Chair Santos
 - 3.2.1. COVID Considerations for Presidential Candidate Interviews
 - 60 min. 3.3 Presidential Transition Discussion: The Board's Role and Setting up the Next President for Success Chair Nicholson and President Schott
- 4 Adjournment** Chair Nicholson

Southern Oregon University
2021 Presidential Search
Considerations for Presidential Candidate Interviews Regarding COVID

At this time in September, a COVID “surge” is taking place in Jackson County, OR and other places in the U.S. Southern Oregon University has delayed the start of in-person classes until October 11, 2021. Presidential candidate finalists may be scheduled to come to campus for interviews during the weeks of October 11, 18, and 25. The COVID prevalence in the Southern Oregon region, the low community vaccination rate, the high transmissibility of the Delta variant of the virus, the COVID prevalence in the originating locations of some presidential candidates, and candidates’ vaccination status or their own health conditions may affect candidates’ willingness or ability to travel to Ashland for interviews.

Therefore, alternatives to a full, on-campus interview process for finalists have been considered in case on-campus interviews cannot take place as originally envisioned. Under the best of circumstances, the planning process is complex for candidate interviews among numerous constituent groups who are in various locations throughout Southern Oregon and beyond.

Three to five candidates each will have a two-day interview that require additional considerations such as travel, meals, escorts about campus, regional tours, spouse/partner engagement in the process if necessary, and much more. During this less-certain-than-normal time in the pandemic, Southern Oregon University must remain flexible when considering a robust interview process in order to support the safety of members of the campus as well as the candidates. In the case that a full in-person interview experience will not be possible, the following options have been designed for maximum engagement—whether in-person, remote, or a hybrid of the two.

To ensure an equitable interview experience for candidates and to be consistent with SOU’s hiring practices, the same interview format would be extended to all candidates. It is important to note that even in a remote interview process, the top two candidates will be invited to campus to meet the board.

In all cases, the Presidential Search Committee will screen candidates, interview 10-12 selected candidates, and recommend finalists, as expected. The first first-round interviews will be conducted via videoconference. Finalists will be invited to Southern Oregon University. At the time the invitation to visit campus is made available to each finalist, finalists will be informed that if they emerge as the top candidate, even in the case of a remote-interview process, no offer of employment will be extended without an in-person meeting with board members.

Considerations for Presidential Candidate Interviews Regarding COVID (Continued)

Scenario 1: If Finalists Can Visit Campus Without Restriction

- Two days of in-person interviews will take place for each finalist. Interview events likely will be less-densely populated than in a non-COVID environment. Safety precautions will be taken. The board's Executive and Audit Committee and the board will interview finalists at this stage.

Scenario 2: If Finalists Can Visit Campus With Some Restriction

In this scenario, the finalist(s) would be comfortable with traveling to SOU but not comfortable with groups of people.

- Two days of in-person interviews will take place for each finalist. Most interview events will be less-densely populated than in a non-COVID environment and offered in a remote or hybrid format. Safety precautions will be taken. The board's Executive and Audit Committee and the board will interview finalists at this stage.
 - A. Interviews with constituent groups may be in-person with a single, recognized leader or the leader and a limited number of members (up to 3?) of a constituent group, provided those individuals also are willing and able to meet in-person.
 - B. A webinar could take place for broadcasting to members of constituent groups to observe the conversations, provide questions to their leader to ask or moderate via the Q&A function.

Scenario 3: If Finalist(s) Cannot Visit Campus

In this scenario, a finalist would be unable to travel to Southern Oregon due to a variety of COVID-related circumstances. It is important to note that if most finalists are willing to come to campus, but one is unable to do so, all of the interviews over the two-day period will be conducted remotely.

- Two days of remote interviews will take place for each semi-finalist. The board's Executive and Audit Committee will interview finalists at the end of this stage.
- From this process, the top two candidates will be identified and invited immediately to come to Southern Oregon University for one day for an interview/discussion with the board (this could be a hybrid meeting in order to accommodate board members who are unable to attend an in-person interview). Dinner with the board or as many members of the board as possible also would be scheduled for this visit; attendance at dinner will not be offered in a hybrid format.
- The top candidate will be identified immediately following these interview events with the board.