

**Board of Trustees
Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 20, 2023**

MINUTES

Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Chair Jon Bullock called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone and thanked Dean of Students, Dr. Carrie Vath, for her invitation to the Career Connections job fair. He thanked presenters Anna D’Amato, Dr. Kylan de Vries, Dr. Larry Gibbs, Dr. Dan DeNeui, Dr. Matt Stillman, and Dr. Carry Vath.

Board Secretary Sabrina Prud’homme called the roll and a quorum was verified.

Committee Members:

Brent Barry	Present	Iris Maria Chavez	Present
Jon Bullock, Chair	Present	Andrew Gay	Present
Debra Lee	Absent	Barry Thalden	Present
Mimi Pieper	Present		

Other Trustees in Attendance: President Rick Bailey, Katherine Cable, and Daniel Santos

Public Comment

No members of the public offered comments.

Consent Agenda (Action)

Trustee Gay moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of meeting minutes from January 19, 2023. Trusted Thalden seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Provost’s Report

Provost Sue Walsh provided legislative updates on the possible continuation of Strong Start (Bridge Program) funding; the universities’ presentation to legislators on the mental health challenges students face; the possible movement of state funding from the Oregon Promise to the Oregon Opportunity Grant; and community colleges offering bachelor degrees and a bill allowing the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to approve bachelor of science in nursing degrees. Regarding the nursing degrees, there are many concerns. Much trustee discussion later ensued on these topics.

The provost serves on a subcommittee of the HECC’s Transfer Council. House Bill 2998 authorized community colleges and Oregon’s public universities (OPU) to identify three majors each year in which students could smoothly go from community college to OPUs with 90 credits. Senate Bill 233, pertaining to common course numbering, also seeks to help students transfer easily from community college to an OPU. The special subcommittee will figure out how to move this work forward.

Provost Walsh noted that work continues on faculty workload issues and Jackie Apodaca is chairing a committee that is examining workload, what faculty can do differently, what they can stop doing, and opportunities for change. The committee will present recommendations to her and the president in June. Department chairs will examine the issue this summer.

The provost outlined the new academic structure articulated in *SOU Forward*, which is the result of work by SOU's division directors. The outcome is that SOU's seven divisions and the library will be reorganized. The new units will be a School of Arts and Communication; a School of Science and Business; a School of Education, Leadership, Health, and Humanities; a School of Social Sciences; and the University Library and Undergraduate Studies. These schools will be co-directed in fall until the retirement of Drs. Lee Ayers and Sherry Ettlich. David Humphrey, Director of Oregon Center for the Arts, also is retiring and SOU will search for his replacement.

Vice President's Report

Dr. Woolf referred to the enrollment dashboard and noted that both fall and winter terms gained headcount and the gap is narrowing on full time equivalency. He mentioned that it was still too early to provide final spring term numbers. For fall 2023, the numbers are trending in the right direction.

Dr. Woolf provided brief updates on a several topics. He acknowledged the Student Health and Wellness Center (SHWC) for their excellent work that led to a three-year reaccreditation by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care. Dr. Woolf expressed his excitement with the faculty involvement in recruitment, and that Zac Olson is participating on a HECC workgroup to improve the college-going rate of high school graduates. He also announced that the Office of International Programs has resumed US Passport application process after its recertification.

Dr. Woolf noted that he was in Washington D.C. with Jonathon Chavez Baez and attended the Hispanic Association of Colleges and University (HACU) where they met with other universities and learned about grant opportunities. Woolf was also attending the American Association of State Colleges and Universities meetings and is doing advocacy on capitol hill. He met with Congressman Bentz, the aides of Senators Merkley and Wyden; he expressed gratitude for their federal dollars for solar projects and talked about the congressional directed spending request for the SOU's Workday project. During these meetings there were discussions and stories shared regarding mental health and all were intrigued to learn that the number one reason students drop out of college is due to mental health. Dr. Woolf said he learned that Senator Merkley is looking at creating a bill focused on mental health and was interested in our Behavioral Health Institute.

Information, Discussion, and Action Items

Curriculum Update

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science, Healthcare Administration

Dr. Larry Gibbs, Associate Professor and Healthcare Administration Chair, provided an overview of the healthcare administration (HCA) program and faculty. The programs

concentrations are: population, public and community health; data analytics; healthcare personnel management; and aging studies. He acknowledged board Vice Chair Sheila Clough and her husband Chris Clough for their generous scholarship to support students. Dr. Gibbs discussed senior internships at healthcare facilities, community partners, enrollment data, program highlights, future goals for the department, a future application for an age-friendly campus designation, the HCA community advisory network, and a standalone degree targeting current healthcare employees. He also spoke of the creation of certificates in public health, healthcare economics, and Spanish and Latinx studies for health professions and new courses.

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies

Dr. Kylan de Vries provided an overview of the GSWS programs including the BA/BS degrees; a certificate in transgender studies; the minors in GSWS and ethnic and racial studies (ERS); a micro-credential in gender, indigeneity and sexuality; forthcoming certificates in GSWS and ERS; and a trans and queer training program. He discussed enrollment trends and faculty, new and revised courses as well as credit requirements, continued collaboration with affiliated faculty, and a hybrid course delivery modality for in-person and remote students. Speaking of challenges, he acknowledged that the program has not had the enrollment that was expected, which he attributed to the pandemic and Alameda fire.

Dr. De Vries spoke of the nationwide anti-LGBTQ bills and the opportunity to recruit students from other states and universities discontinuing programs. In response to Trustees Gay and Thalden, Dr. de Vries discussed marketing to other regions where even offering such classes is illegal; shared students' struggles with mental well-being and concerns about the future; and that affiliated, interdisciplinary faculty have expressed interest in teaching courses and being connected to the GSWS program.

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science, Digital Cinema

Trustee Andrew Gay, chair of Communication, Media & Cinema and associate professor of digital cinema, reported on program growth both in enrollment and curriculum since the launching he BA/BS and recent addition of the BFA in Digital Cinema Production Arts, as well as a number of certificates tied to that. Gay stated that even during the pandemic when the university's enrollment was declining, this program held steady and student head count increased. He reviewed enrollment trends, graduates' careers, the higher-than-average national outlook for jobs in media, the difference between the BA/BS and the BFA degrees, and instructional capacity.

Trustee Gay also acknowledge challenges including students' mental health, lack of collaboration skills due to pandemic isolation; lack of sufficient learning spaces; and faculty workload, as much support and supervision are needed outside of class time. He is excited about the possibilities that realignment will bring for collaboration with theatre, creative arts, and music.

AY 2023-24 Tuition & Fees Recommendation

President Bailey introduced the topic noting that the processes for creating the recommendations were inclusive and sophisticated at SOU due to the caliber of students,

faculty, and staff involved. In light of the realignment plan, he asked the Tuition Advisory Council (TAC) to keep tuition increases low. The goal was to have one of the lowest, if not the lowest, tuition increase in the state. He expressed confidence in the work of the TAC and the recommendation.

Provost Walsh reminded the trustees that the TAC advises the president on tuition and fees and the role and process of the TAC, as presented in the meeting materials. Vice President Perkinson summarized the recommendations. The mandatory student incidental fee increased 4.3% or \$51 per year, as determined by the students; there is no increase in the green tag fee; and there is a 13.46% increase of \$42 per year in the student recreation center fee. He then reviewed the president's tuition recommendation to the board with a chart of current and proposed rates for categories of tuition. The resident undergraduate rate increased 3.01%, \$10,155 to \$10,461 per year. President Bailey commented this was the lowest tuition increase at SOU in nearly a decade.

Mr. Perkinson reviewed the mandatory enrollment fees and explained the process of recommendations and approvals. The mandatory enrollment fees include student health and wellness fee increase of 6.86% or \$36 per year; no increase to the building debt-service fee and technology infrastructure fee; enrollment fees increased 4.8% or \$36 per year; and the composite of all the fees and tuition for a resident undergraduate student increased 3.01%. The matriculation fee which is a one-time fee for new undergraduates, was approved to be raised last year from \$300 to \$350. Since it was maintained at \$300 during 2022-23, this year is an implementation of last year's fee.

To demonstrate the total cost of attendance, Mr. Perkinson showed a chart with the rates for an undergraduate resident which totaled a 3.05% overall increase, including housing and dining fees, which do not require approval.

Trustee Thalden explained that with high inflation and only a 3% increase to students, it's a discount off of last year's rate. Trustee Thalden noted that a larger increase in tuition would help meet revenue projections and that cost isn't the main reason students leave SOU. Chair Bullock reminded the committee that the study about reasons why students do not continue only showed part of the picture. President Bailey agreed and explained that students are very conscious of cost. Discussion ensued about the need to keep higher education affordable, especially as the value of a higher education is being questioned. Trustee Santos emphasized that SOU needs to look continually at finances and make decisions that lead to more and better-satisfied students. Trustee Thalden agreed and hope the tuition at SOU would led to higher retention. There was further discussion on the value of higher education and how funding fundamentally needs to change.

New Certificate Proposals (Action)

Provost Walsh stated that there are seventeen certificates to approve. The certificates were: Animation & Motion Design; Art History; Conducting; Creative Writing; Early Childhood Education; Emerging Media and Digital Art; Game Design; Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies; Graphic Design; Music Performance; Music Theory & History; Musical Theatre; Popular Music; Shakespeare Studies; Software Development; Studio Art; and Web Programming.

Dr. Walsh explained that the reasoning behind moving minors to certificates. First, the funding model does not reward SOU for minors, certificates are held to a higher standard, and therefore, are rewarded. Second, philosophically, the shift is helpful for a student to present qualifications and skill sets. Certificates and micro-credentials can be stacked and tailored to a student's desire to get more expertise. Lastly, the literature points to preparing students to be more competitive in their prospective job markets.

Dr. DeNeui added there is a national trend to package current offerings differently. Certificates and micro-credentials help students market themselves and articulate to potential employers the skills and knowledge their education provided. Certificates are state approved and therefore, SOU issues a physical and digital credential.

Chair Bullock questioned when and how the funding model changed. Dr. Stillman explained that certificates have always been rewarded; however, SOU was told differently and working under different auspices. There isn't a fixed value associated with a certificate in the Student Success and Completion Model (SSCM) because everything is over an annual period in comparison to other OPUs, which determines SOU's portion of the state funding.

Trustee Gay moved to approve the resolution on the new certificate programs. Trustee Barry seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Student Retention: Focusing on Mental Health

Dr. Carrie Vath and Anna D'Amato presented information on SOU's efforts to support student mental health, which is essential for retention. Dr. Vath explained that through the Office of the Dean of Students, these services include drop-in appointments, medical and mental health appointments, and managing the CaresNotes system. Ms. D'Amato explained that the SHWC, offers My SSP which is 24/7 crisis counseling and YOU@SOU which is a 24/7 digital platform that helps normalize help-seeking behavior, along with counseling appointments by mental health therapists.

Ms. D'Amato provided an update on staffing and explained that being short-staffed resulted in lower numbers than anticipated. Since the beginning of fall term through the middle of March, the SHWC served 268 students for 893 appointments, with an average of four appointments per student. She included medical appointments as 20% of medical appointments are mental health related. Mental Health is the number two reason for medical appointments after immunizations. Fifty-nine students receive mental health medications from the SHWC's dispensary. The level of acuity is high, as students present with lifelong trauma and other bad things that have happened.

Dr. Vath explained that between the fall 2022 and winter 2023 terms, there were 784 CaresNotes. Of those notes, SHWC was assigned 57 cases; care coordinators were assigned 455 cases; and the dean's office received 105. There was a total combination of 1,987 concerns. The top concern was mental health with 369 cases; financial concerns with 173 cases; personal illness or injury with 157 cases; family concern with 110 cases; and relationship issues with 41 cases. Overall, 43% of concerns reported were attributed or connected to mental health. In addition, there eleven welfare checks conducted and 14 medical transports to the hospital representing 24 individual students.

Dr. Vath and Ms. D'Amato described more about the intensive nature of the services each of their offices provide along with the various needs of students. Collaboration between SHWC and the SOU Dean of Students Office is continuous; the teams meet every other week; and more faculty and staff will be trained on mental health first aid. Dr. Woolf commended Dr. Vath and Ms. D'Amato for their compassion and competence. He emphasized their work is not just about retention, but it is life-saving work.

Dan DeNeui gave an overview of the proposed Oregon Behavioral Health Institute (OBHI). SOU is one of the few institutions in the state that does not have a state-funded institute. SOU currently has a mental health counseling program with consistent enrollment each year. A goal of the proposal is to double the number of mental health practitioners graduating in southern Oregon who are terminally-prepared with masters-level degrees in mental health counseling or social work, as SOU is in talks with Portland State University about reviving the MSW. The OBHI would address the exploding mental health needs, innovative micro-credentials for working professionals, an immediate pathway for counselors to become education-debt free, and a community need to serve underserved communities.

Jeanne Stallman gave a brief update on the pathway of this proposal to the legislature. She mentioned that President Bailey has been talking with key legislative leaders. Senator Jeff Golden listed as one of his top three priorities, Ms. Stallman contacted the governor explaining that this proposal fits squarely within her priorities as well.

Future Meeting

Chair Bullock announced that the next meeting of the committee is scheduled to take place on June 15, 2023. If any trustee has a specific item to suggest for the agenda, please send those to the board secretary for inclusion in a future meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Bullock adjourned the meeting at 3:03 p.m.

Date: June 15, 2023

Respectfully submitted by,



Sabrina Prud'homme, University Board Secretary