

**Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, April 21, 2020**

MINUTES

Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Board Members:

Lyn Hennion	Present	Deborah Rosenberg	Present
Les AuCoin	Present	Daniel Santos	Present
Jonathon Bullock	Present	Linda Schott (ex officio)	Present
Sheila Clough	Present	Barry Thalden	Present
Shaun Franks	Present	Bill Thorndike	Present
Megan Davis Lightman	Present	Steve Vincent	Present
Dylann Loverro	Present	janelle wilson	Present
Paul Nicholson	Present		

Chair Lyn Hennion called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. in the DeBoer Room of the Hannon Library. The board secretary recorded the roll and a quorum was verified.

Other attendees included: Dr. Neil Woolf, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs; Greg Perkinson, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Dr. Susan Walsh, Provost; Dr. Jody Waters, Associate Provost; Jason Catz, General Counsel; Janet Fratella, Vice President for University Advancement; Dr. Suresh Appavoo, Senior Executive for Equity and Diversity; Tom Battaglia, Chief Information Officer; Jeanne Stallman, Associate Vice President for Government and Corporate Relations; Sabrina Prud'homme, Board Secretary; Josh Lovern, Budget Office; Andrew Gay, Faculty Senate; Britney Sharp, ASSOU; Taylor Burke, Dean of Students; Clay Austin, Hart Wilson and Bill Bateman, all from the Center for Advancement of Teaching and Learning; Dr. Vince Smith, Chair of Environmental Science and Policy; Dr. Katie Pittman, Director of Business, Communication and the Environment; Dr. John King, Director of Education; and Kathy Park, Office of the Board Secretary.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

Trustee Bullock moved approval of the consent agenda, as presented. The motion was seconded and it passed unanimously.

Reports

President's Report

President Linda Schott mentioned her February trip to Salem. She was accompanied by several students and Andy Durojaiye, [the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs] from Northern Kentucky University who she is mentoring through the Millennial Leadership Institute of AASCU. They visited legislators' offices and had an unscheduled meeting with Senator Arnie Roblan.

At the March meeting of the Medford Rogue Rotary, one of the topics was "What's New at SOU." To assist with her presentation, President Schott invited several individuals

who were new to the university or were running new programs.

Turning to the change in operations necessitated by the coronavirus, President Schott said it was a very challenging and emotional time. The university eventually settled into a new normal, which includes remote meetings and an empty campus. In order to stay present for the campus, she has started “Zoom bombing” classes, delivering more messages by video, holding virtual “Visits with the President” (similar to “Cookies with the President”) and holding weekly meetings with board leadership.

The leadership team is thinking about the ceremonial life of the campus, especially commencement. Division directors and chairs are considering smaller events that can be held to recognize students. She is committed to giving the class of 2020 a commencement ceremony but does not know when it will happen.

In the short-term, the administration has been focusing on health and safety, ensuring student success in the remote environment and finishing the fiscal year with a balanced budget. The administration is looking at operations in the medium- and long-term, which includes reopening the campus. Vice Presidents Neil Woolf and Janet Fratella are leading a reopening group to think through how that would be accomplished. In the long-term, it is probably indisputable that the coronavirus will permanently change higher education; President Schott said she continues to keep abreast of developments and issues in that area.

Racial Equity and Inclusion Strategies - President Schott discussed the racially-motivated incidents that occurred on campus in January. This period of remote delivery altered her plan to hold campus-wide in-person training in the spring term but online training has started. Efforts are being made to create the Multicultural Commons, a space in the student union where all students can feel at home. There is a culturally responsive practices group on campus, as well as a Diversity and Inclusion Committee; those groups will be important as SOU continues its training program. These are first steps but are not the only steps that will be taken. This is ongoing work that must be done and it will never be finished.

Other General Updates - Turning to funding issues, which will be discussed in detail later in the meeting, President Schott said the administration has not lost sight of the need for changes to the Student Success and Completion Model (SSCM). She mentioned the upcoming meeting with Ben Cannon and Jim Pinkard from the HECC, in an effort to find common ground; adjustments from the state are being pursued. She said her task force on financial sustainability has taken a backseat to COVID-19-related issues but more meetings are scheduled; she may take a more active role to increase the pace of the task force.

The coronavirus crisis may require rethinking aspects of SOU’s strategic plan. President Schott requested the board’s approval to skip the detailed progress report scheduled for June. She said the data would still be collected and reported. Then, over the summer, the strategic plan could be reviewed. This would reduce the workload on staff and would enable the type of thoughtful review needed. Trustee Lightman stressed that strategic plans are inherently subject to revision as circumstances change. Trustee Bullock recognized President Schott and the leadership team for their handling

of the current situation and expressed his support for delaying the progress report on the strategic plan.

Trustee Thorndike mentioned the importance of regional support and keeping the work of the SOHEC going during the pandemic, which President Schott said was happening. She added that SOU is critical to the economic recovery of the region and that is being mentioned in various circles.

Board Committee Reports

Academic and Student Affairs Committee - Trustee Santos said Provost Susan Walsh reported on the work of the Provost's Council on changes to academic programs and policies and implications related to COVID-19. The committee discussed continuity planning for academics. Over spring break, all spring term classes transitioned to remote delivery; there will be ongoing assessments of the remote delivery process. Plans call for a remote summer session, with the possibility of converting some courses to a hybrid format if the governor relaxes the current restrictions; this also impacts summer residential pre-college youth programs. Dr. Walsh also provided an update on the work of several task forces. Dr. Woolf presented the report on enrollment management and student affairs, mentioning the new customer relationship management system and walking through the dashboard and enrollment updates. Dr. John King presented the updated Educator Equity Plan; the committee reviewed the plan for suitability and recommended it to the full board for approval. There were updates on curriculum, modified operations in student affairs and the proposed e-gaming academic program. The committee also received a presentation on recent enhancements made to the student employment process.

Finance and Administration Committee - Trustee Clough said the board's agenda includes most of the topics the committee covered. Greg Perkinson provided his update; a number of the measures in the dashboard are not looking their best because of COVID-19. The HECC has delayed its discussion on revisions to the SSCM but SOU's representatives pushed to resume those conversations because the current model disadvantages SOU greatly. The committee also received an update on tuition and fees; she said the decision on tuition and fees will be delayed. There was a robust discussion on financial metrics, including those used by the HECC. Mr. Perkinson provided a budget update; there are some budget gaps and challenges.

Executive and Audit Committee - Chair Hennion said the committee discussed the board elections process (an action item in the board's meeting) and reviewed authorities and related communication. Ryan Schnobrich provided an internal audit update.

SOU Faculty Senate Report

Andrew Gay said Faculty Senate passed a resolution supporting Trustee Rosenberg's reappointment to the Board of Trustees. The spring term is a challenge for faculty and Faculty Senate has discussed SOU's response to COVID-19 and passed measures regarding grading options for students. Faculty Senate is reviewing measures regarding the impact of COVID-19 on promotion and tenure and assessing teacher evaluations. Faculty Senate continues its regular work of reviewing curriculum.

Trustee Santos and Vice Chair Nicholson thanked Mr. Gay and all the faculty for the tremendous amount of work that was done to transition to remote delivery.

Action, Information and Discussion Items

COVID-19 Operations Transitions and Update

Providing a status update, Greg Perkinson said the Incident Response Team (IRT) has been meeting daily, is task organized, and is focused on how to maintain the sense of safety and ensuring preparedness to move forward. Perspectives from various stakeholders are represented on the IRT, including the medical field, Oregon Health and Science University, academic and student affairs, housing, logistics, administration and support elements. Much great work has been done.

The previous day was the add/drop deadline as well as the last day for housing residents to petition to break contracts. Mr. Perkinson said revenue from these two areas now should be stable for the spring term. Normally there are about 820 people living in housing; that number will now be between 200-250. Responding to Trustee AuCoin's later inquiry, Mr. Perkinson detailed steps being taken to ensure the residence halls and dining facility are sanitary, healthy and virus-free.

Moving forward, there will be a focus on the transition from modified operations to the new normal. A working group will be formed to work on that.

Remote Delivery Demonstrations - Clay Austin discussed changes in pedagogy made to create a different experience for students and have that experience be as good as possible. For example, moving face-to-face classroom discussion to an online format has enabled student engagement; students have time to research the issues and prepare their contributions ahead of time. Additionally, students who may be shy in face-to-face discussions are more comfortable participating in online discussions. Faculty are utilizing the small group capability of Zoom then bring them back as one large group. Faculty are also thinking of new ways to approach students' assignments.

Hart Wilson said faculty universally were concerned about their students having a good experience and many were worried about their ability to use technology well enough to make that happen. She said she promoted this situation as an opportunity for growth mindset. Bill Bateman added that he has seen remarkable efforts by faculty. There has been a substantial increase in the use of Zoom and innovative ways of using it.

Dr. Walsh and President Schott presented Service Excellence coins to Mr. Austin, Ms. Wilson and Mr. Bateman, praising all of their work in helping the campus transition.

Andrew Gay described his efforts to transition classes in the digital cinema major to a remote delivery format. Additionally, Dr. Katie Pittman provided an overview of the already-online MBA program. In both cases, a positive student experience was reported.

Responding to Trustee Vincent's comments about benefits of online courses, President Schott said that SOU will continue to explore options, as not every learner benefits from the same method of course delivery.

Update on Tuition and Fees for Academic Year 2020-2021

Greg Perkinson said the tuition and fee process has slipped one month and praised the work of the students as they worked through the process. Dr. Susan Walsh mentioned discussions the Tuition Advisory Council (TAC) has had and said they modeled tuition increases from below 5 percent up to 15 percent. She also mentioned the TAC's website where meeting information is posted. The TAC will next focus on its recommendation to the president.

Responding to Trustee Vincent's inquiry about students' reaction to the setting of the student fees, Trustee Loverro said, in discussions with ASSOU, there seems to be some hesitancy about the rate set through the budget setting process, but not the allocations themselves. Some students support and understand the basis for the decision while others feel they should not have to pay for services they do not use.

Associated Students of SOU Report

ASSOU President Britney Sharp discussed the upcoming elections, saying applications are currently being taken then the campaigning and voting will be done online.

Regarding student's reactions to the student fees, she said students were happy to see the reduction but were concerned about the impact on student organizations. ASSOU has tried to keep student jobs as much as possible and some have been changed to PEAK jobs. She said ASSOU has been transparent in informing students what the fees are paying for, such as student employment and employees' salaries.

Regarding next year's budget, ASSOU President Sharp said various groups appealed their fee allocation; some appeals were granted while others were not. The National Student Exchange and the Oregon Student Association membership were not funded for next year. ASSOU was hesitant to approve the budget because there was so much uncertainty about the deficit. After Taylor Burke and Josh Lovern provided information to clarify issues, a budget was approved, which was the one she previously presented to the board.

Preparation of Diverse Educators (Action)

Dr. John King said this is SOU's third iteration of the state-mandated plan. He is required to update the plan and update the board on progress every two years. This is the first time the plan has had state funding: \$60,000 from the Student Success Act. Efforts are made to help to diversify the teacher workforce in K-12 schools so the cultural and linguistic makeup of teachers approximates the makeup of the students in Oregon.

The plan builds on the great work happening in SOU's pre-college youth programs that help provide academic support and college preparation for Latinx students and their families. The Pathway to Teaching plan provides an extra layer of support and incentives for those interested in teaching as a career. This work has contributed to a more-than-doubling of the percentage of culturally, linguistically diverse students coming into SOU's teacher preparation programs. In four years, the numbers have grown from 9 to 24 percent. In order to continue this progress, the plan proposes two new elements: 1) use half of the allocation for matching scholarships with districts and tribal departments of education that will sponsor their diverse para-professionals to get

licensed as teachers; and 2) provide additional support once students reach the university, with a focus on retention. Each area builds off of a proven model that is working.

Trustee Daniel Santos said the Academic and Student Affairs Committee heard the plan in greater detail yesterday. The plan proves the diversity pipeline is paying off and the committee also was thrilled with the marked improvement in the number of diverse students participating in the educator program. The committee supports enthusiastically and recommends the full board accept the plan for submission as required biannually. Trustee Santos added that President Schott's dedicated efforts with the Oregon tribes, and grants being provided by tribes, are another part of the pipeline.

Responding to Vice Chair Paul Nicholson's question on the engagement of those whose voices the plan is trying to reach, Dr. King described numerous strategies ranging from external meetings with regional superintendents and human resources directors to internal strategies including consulting with representatives from programs for pre-college youth, Native American students, and American Samoan students.

Trustee Santos moved that the board approve the plan [The 2020 Southern Oregon Pathway to Teaching: Southern Oregon University Educator Equity Plan] as submitted. Trustee Rosenberg seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chair Hennion thanked Dr. King and his team for the amazing work that's happening.

Government Relations Update

Jeanne Stallman thanked the trustees who recently made calls to help advocate for certain issues: Chair Hennion and Trustees AuCoin, Santos, Vincent and Bullock.

In federal action, Congress was on the path to approve additional federal funding targeted for small businesses. The next COVID bill might occur in late May and provide support for state and local governments, infrastructure and, hopefully, higher education.

Regarding additional funding for higher education, Ms. Stallman said President Schott wrote a letter to the Oregon delegation, encouraging them to think about the role of regional universities in economic recovery.

At the state level, the CARES Act has been one of the main issues. She said a small part of the funding was allocated to higher education for various purposes. A portion of it was given to governors' offices for education. Trustees made calls to Governor Brown's office advocating for teacher preparation and for support to the universities.

Ms. Stallman said she has been laying the groundwork for challenges ahead: weekly updates to the Southern Oregon delegation, weekly outreach to the governor's office and outreach to some key legislators disposed positively toward SOU.

Looking ahead, she said the May revenue forecast may be followed by a special session in June. The question is whether the legislature will handle the budget gap or if the

governor will allocate the cuts uniformly across state agencies. There also are conversations about reopening the state.

Turning to the HECC, Ms. Stallman said a conversation about the SSCM is scheduled. A team from the seven universities has been working on the consolidated funding request that will be submitted to the HECC; the HECC will then submit its agency request budget to the governor's office. She said SOU is insisting that the consolidated funding request include a statement that the SSCM does not result in equitable results among the universities. Discussion ensued on various approaches for advocating on SOU's behalf for funding.

Overview of Programming for The Farm at SOU

Dr. Vince Smith said the goal of The Farm is to be more than a farm. It will not only provide food and engage students but also inspire a generation of people to be ecologically committed leaders. The Farm supports SOU's strategic direction III on environmental sustainability.

He then highlighted the work since 2012 that has transitioned The Farm to the successful operation it is today. Dr. Smith mentioned some of the challenges faced, many of which were staffing issues, and the solutions implemented. He reviewed some of the accomplishments made in 2020: 80 new fruit trees were donated; a research vineyard was planted; 30,000 plants have been started so far from seeds that were donated; a Campus Bee Club was created; a dining partnership has been created; a new greenhouse has been built; wetlands are being restored and developed; applications for grants have been submitted; and new partnerships have been developed. He also mentioned curriculum and scholarship work accomplished at The Farm.

Trustee Franks, who was involved in the creation of The Farm, said it has been a catalyst for many good things that have happened. Trustee Thalden said it was the students who inspired him and his wife to get involved.

Responding to Trustee Vincent's inquiry, Dr. Smith mentioned some of the recruiting benefits The Farm offers, including more courses in the sustainable food system, a micro-certificate in that area, and a proposal for a new major in sustainability.

Higher Education Coordinating Commission Update

Jason Catz said he and ASSOU President Sharp have been attending the SSCM work group meetings. The March meeting was adjourned about half way through because of competing demands and higher priorities. At the April meeting, a couple of the members proposed that the work be stopped until the end of June. He and others expressed opposition to that on the principle that this was work the HECC commissioners considered some of their most important work. He stressed that no matter what amount is to be divided, it is essential that it be allocated fairly. The next work group meeting will be in May.

Greg Perkinson reviewed the survey the HECC created to estimate the financial impact COVID-19 is having on the universities. In the short term (the spring term), SOU will have about \$4.5 million in impact. In the longer term (the next academic year), the impact is harder to calculate because there is much uncertainty; the estimate is

currently about \$19 million. Mr. Perkinson cautioned that the effects of COVID-19 could extend well beyond one year.

Discussion of Financial Metrics

President Schott said the purpose of the metrics is to monitor SOU's financial performance and sustainability. The HECC uses certain metrics and the question is whether the board wants to use additional ones. Greg Perkinson reviewed the three different levels of utilization of metrics: strategic, operational and tactical and thought the board would focus at the strategic level.

The HECC's framework puts metrics into four categories: affordability; revenue, spending and financial stability; efficiency and [return on investment]; and outcomes. Mr. Perkinson said SOU already tracks about 75 percent of the sub-elements in each category. He then reviewed the HECC's Oregon higher education financial snapshot for SOU and the comparative analysis of various metrics for each university, as included in the meeting materials.

Mr. Perkinson reviewed the financial impact of COVID-19 in the categories of lost revenue, additional costs, cost avoidance and recoveries. SOU is capturing actual cost data which will be used to support decisions made and to advocate for reimbursement.

Reviewing the enrollment data the HECC provided, Mr. Perkinson said it refutes the narrative from the HECC that SOU has an enrollment problem.

Trustee Clough reiterated the conversation the Finance and Administration Committee had, saying the HECC will likely continue to use the metrics so SOU cannot push them aside. President Schott added that the next step is to ensure the exercise of the HECC's authority does not infringe on the board's exercise of its authority.

Budget Update and Review of Pro Forma

Greg Perkinson highlighted recent changes to the pro forma as Josh Lovern modeled different scenarios in the meeting. Mr. Perkinson mentioned the \$1.7 million in funding from the CARES Act; the decrease in revenue from student fees; the projected \$300,000 in savings from the hiring freeze; and benefits from travel that did not occur because of the pandemic. Following the most optimistic approach that could be leveraged based on current data, the current fiscal year could close with an ending fund balance of 8.5 percent in the Education and General (E&G) fund. There are, however, significant negative impacts in auxiliary accounts.

Turning to the cost reduction strategy, Mr. Perkinson said the cost reduction target is now \$3 million. The \$1 million in savings in phase one of the plan has been realized. Phase two of the plan is being implemented to realize savings of \$1.2 million. The savings goal of the new contingency phase is \$.8 million and will be realized through the hiring freeze and short-term reorganization. When all the savings are realized, the result will be a balanced budget, assuming all of the \$1.7 million in CARES Act funding is deposited in the E&G fund.

Mr. Perkinson reviewed the financial impacts of COVID-19, as included in the meeting materials. The short-term impact is \$2.3 million, which includes the E&G and auxiliary accounts.

Board Elections Process (Action)

Jason Catz reminded trustees of the last board meeting when they discussed the need for a new election process and reviewed the proposed process. He reviewed various elements in the proposed Board Statement on the Process for Officer Elections included in the meeting materials. One recommended change is that the officers elected would serve two-year terms.

Trustee Lightman moved to approve the Board Statement on the Process for Officer Elections as presented. Trustee Thorndike seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

University Advancement Update

Janet Fratella mentioned several alumni who are working to help others suffering from the effects of the coronavirus. Turning to the fundraising update, she said fundraising is running slightly below this time last year, which is not bad considering the current state of the world. Trustee AuCoin, Ms. Fratella and Chair Hennion later stressed the importance of having 100 percent donor participation from trustees.

Janet Fratella reviewed some national trends in donor activity and fundraising strategies. She then mentioned some of the work her office is doing: SOU continues to share good news stories; communications have increased; an appeal for donations for SOU's Cares program and the food pantry; opportunities for gifts and grants are being explored; and an alumni advocates program is being created to assist with legislative advocacy.

Future Meetings

Chair Hennion said the next meeting of the board will be a special meeting on May 22 and the next regularly-scheduled meeting will be on June 19. She mentioned the possibility of scheduling a retreat between September 9-20.

Adjournment

Chair Hennion adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

Date: June 19, 2020

Respectfully submitted by,



Sabrina Prud'homme
University Board Secretary