



**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WOU BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING NO. 34—AUGUST 19, 2020
1:00-4:00 PM**

I. CALL-TO-MEETING/ROLL CALL

Chair Betty Komp called the special meeting of the WOU Board of Trustees to order at 1:04 PM and asked Secretary Ryan Hagemann to take roll and make any necessary announcements. Hagemann reminded the audience that the Board was convening virtually due to COVID-19. The following trustees were present for the meeting:

Zellee Allen
Jerry Ambris
Jamie Arredondo (arrived at the meeting at 1:35 PM)
Jim Baumgartner
Gayle Evans
Rex Fuller
Linda Herrera
Betty Komp
Cec Koontz
Doug Morse
David Foster
Malissa Larson

II. CHAIR'S WELCOME

Komp welcomed the Board and reminded the trustees that they were convening for a special and important purpose. Before turning to the WOU Fall 2020 Safe Operations and Instructional Plan, Komp asked Dr. David Foster, the Board's new faculty member, to introduce himself. Komp acknowledged that the remaining Board vacancies—including the student member—would be addressed by the Oregon Senate in the near future.

III. BOARD ACTION/DISCUSSION

(1) WOU Fall 2020 Safe Operations and Instructional Plan

Komp turned to President Rex Fuller to introduce the WOU Fall 2020 Safe Operations and Instructional Plan. Fuller described the University's opening committee, the

inclusion of community health expertise, and his decision to designate David McDonald as the coordinator of the effort. Fuller asked McDonald to continue with the presentation to the Board.

McDonald stressed that the committee and the University focused its effort on ensuring a safe instructional environment for students, staff, and faculty. He observed that many of the requirements in the plan were proscribed by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). He noted that Allen Risen was assigned to be the COVID-19 officer and trustees asked how students or employees could contact Risen with issues, questions or problems. McDonald shared that the information was publicly available on the University's website.

McDonald described the differences on the draft plan, including "action items" and "recommendations." McDonald observed that the Board and the University were responsible for monitoring changes to the plan. Baumgartner asked about the current intent about the modality mix for instruction and McDonald shared that the University would be a mix of modality (in-person, hybrid, remote, on-line) and would monitor public health data to make decisions about instruction modality. Komp asked if face coverings were free to students and McDonald confirmed that face coverings and branded masks were provided at no cost to students and employees. McDonald noted that the University was following OHA guidance on segments, such as retail and gyms, that have sector-specific guidance.

Baumgartner asked how the University was ensuring compliance and McDonald observed that 100% compliance might be difficult, but it was the University's goal to impact campus culture on combating the pandemic as a community. Dr. Megan Patton-Lopez echoed McDonald's description of the importance of changing campus culture.

McDonald shared information about residence halls and plans to ensure safety for students that choose to reside on campus. He stressed that most rooms would be single occupancy and that significant isolation and quarantine capacity was set aside. Foster asked about communication mechanisms if a student needed to isolate for several days and McDonald mentioned efforts to work with the Deans to create communication channels with faculty. McDonald turned to Dr. Patton-Lopez to describe the University's contact tracing efforts with Polk County.

Patton-Lopez described the collaborative team dedicated to contact tracing and the scope of contact tracing across the county. Ambris asked about the timeliness of contact tracing and Patton-Lopez offered that the team reaches out within two days. McDonald observed that half of the team were bilingual and enhanced the team's ability to reach out to the Spanish-speaking community. McDonald and Patton-Lopez both described the University's efforts regarding health-related communication with various populations. Foster asked about building ventilation and McDonald shared that

Facilities consulted OHA guidance before surveying campus buildings to ensure compliance with ventilation requirements. Foster asked additional questions about class scheduling and tenure requirements. McDonald also shared that the University had a disease management plan in place prior to the pandemic and would be relying on it for the COVID-19 plan. Evans asked if Allen Risen had the resources and personnel to assume the role of supervising the operation and management of the plan. McDonald noted that he would have the entire reopening committee at his disposal. Hagemann pointed out that while Risen might hear a variety of complaints, while serving as the point person, complaints would get to the appropriate office for investigation and disposition. Evans asked if students were signing a risk acknowledgement statement and Hagemann advised that they were not. Allen inquired about alternate plans if a student did not want to isolate on campus and Patton-Lopez discussed county and community resources.

Foster asked about how the University would define a major outbreak that might impact modality decisions and McDonald described the development of a metrics dashboard that would guide future decisions. Before turning to the vote, Fuller offered two edits to the draft document focusing on health review and the specificity of available COVID-19 tests.

After discussion Komp called for a motion to approve the WOU Fall 2020 Safe Operations and Instructional Plan as presented and included in the written docket materials. Evans moved approval of the plan and Morse seconded the motion. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion:

Zellee Allen
Jerry Ambris
Jamie Arredondo
Jim Baumgartner
Gayle Evans
Linda Herrera
Betty Komp
Cec Koontz
Doug Morse
David Foster
Malissa Larson

Rex Fuller is non-voting.

There were no trustees opposed to the motion.

The motion passed.

(2) Article 15 Process/July 28, 2020 Town Hall update

After a break, Komp asked Fuller to update the Board on the Article 15 process and the July 28, 2020 town hall, stressing that the Board was not slated to vote or take any action. Fuller started the presentation with previous budget and enrollment assumptions and actions to close the structural deficit, including S&S reductions, furloughs, extended benefits, and other programs. He walked the Board through information and actions over the course of the spring and summer 2020, including the availability of CARES Act funding and the no reduction FY21 state appropriation.

Fuller outlined previous guidance from the Board, including the approval of a FY20 deficit budget and direction to remedy the deficit, while maintaining fidelity to the Board's fund balance requirements. Separate from the FY20 and FY21 considerations, Fuller turned to longer-term concerns, including the potential significant drop in state appropriation for the 2021-2023 biennium and further declines in enrollment. He reviewed revenue forecasts from the state and potential impacts on the Public University Support Fund. After the review of the budget history and the economic forecasts from the state, Fuller reiterated his conclusion that the University must right-size to its enrollment reality to succeed in the future.

Separate from the reductions in the unclassified and classified ranks, Fuller pivoted to required process under the faculty collective bargaining agreement necessary to consider faculty layoffs and reductions. Article 15 of the faculty collective bargaining agreement requires a declaration of a financial condition and meetings with the faculty union to discuss alternatives to program curtailment/reduction/elimination. Fuller continued to describe changes to the timeline over the summer to accommodate work by the Deans, Division Chair, faculty panels, and the creation of a Faculty Senate Task Force. He offered that the Faculty Senate Task Force was charged with developing recommendations on various tranches of cuts. Fuller shared that the University's goal, after faculty and union comments and recommendations to a draft plan, would be to release a final plan on December 1, 2020 for implementation. Fuller stressed that shared sacrifice across all employee groups—classified, unclassified, and faculty—were critical to achieve a balanced budget fairly.

Baumgartner asked about the faculty letter asking the Board to require rescission of the Article 15 decision. Baumgartner inquired about the President's response to the letter and what would be required of the Board in the future. Fuller stressed the various steps required by the collective bargaining agreement to conclude the necessity for program curtailment/reduction/elimination and his conclusion that Article 15 remained necessary to balance the University's budget.

Koontz asked Fuller about the rubric that was described previously to guide the retrenchment process and Fuller offered that the Task Force devised several

approaches to data and criteria that might provide possibilities to achieve necessary reductions, while remaining focused on University priorities at the same time. Foster inquired about the financial condition and how the state's decision to keep FY21 funding flat impacted the decision to declare Article 15 layoffs. Fuller shared that while the appropriation decision was welcome, the structural budget deficit remained and the Article 15 process was still necessary.

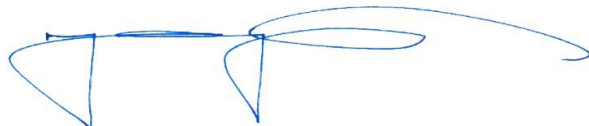
Baumgartner asked Fuller if the University could meet budget targets if Article 15 was revoked. Fuller described the layoff process and the difference between garnering savings from vacancies in the normal course and process required to layoff faculty members. Foster asked how the fund balance policy was determined and Hagemann described the former OUS policy and how the new WOU Board reiterated its approval of a 10-12% target for its fund balance to maintain operations. Baumgartner asked Larson if she had received necessary budget information to answer her concerns from the previous regular Board meeting. Larson shared her perspective on necessary budget cuts, the impact on staff morale, and the need to have a complete picture. Fuller and Baumgartner echoed Larson's desire for transparency and urgency. Fuller stressed that none of these decisions were easy and the work to right-size the University was hard. Larson reiterated the difference between impacts on unclassified employees and faculty; she noted that faculty, under the collective bargaining agreement, get substantial process, but unclassified employees did not.

IV. FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Komp thanked the Board for tackling difficult topics and the vital importance on working on these issues as a team. Komp stressed that open communication would be necessary throughout all of these processes.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Komp adjourned the meeting at 3:31 PM with a quorum of the Board.



Ryan J. Hagemann
Secretary to the Board of the Trustees