



Oregon State
University

The Board of Trustees of Oregon State University

Regular Meeting of the Academic Strategies Committee

October 25, 2018

1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Room 2002

OSU Portland Center

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Mike Bailey, Rani Borkar (*ex officio*), Michele Longo Eder (*vice chair*), Ed Feser (*ex officio*), Paul Kelly (*chair*), Julie Manning, and Preston Pulliams

Other Trustees Present: Mark Baldwin, Julia Brim-Edwards, Darry Callahan, Angel Mandujano-Guevara, Ed Ray, Kirk Schueler, and Mike Thorne

University Staff Present: Charlene Alexander, Jennifer Almquist, Noah Buckley, Susan Capalbo, Steve Clark, Debbie Colbert, Becca Gose, Mike Green, Dan Larson, Roy Haggerty, Keith Raab, Lauren Skousen, and Patti Snopkowski

1. Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Committee Chair Paul Kelly called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m., asked the assistant board secretary to call the roll, and noted a quorum.

2. Provost's Report

a. Status Report: New and Existing Academic Program Reviews and Professional Accreditations in Progress

Provost and Executive Vice President Ed Feser began with a preliminary report on enrollment, which he said topped 32,000 for the first time. This reflects a 0.3% increase overall, with 4.6% growth at OSU-Cascades, 7.9% growth through Ecampus, and a 1.9% decline at Corvallis. He noted an overall decline in enrollment of Oregon residents and international students and an increase in enrollment of non-resident students. Next, Feser provided an update on the Portland Center, which opened on October 8. He described current course offerings and the additional programs under development, noting that there are currently approximately 91 students taking classes. Feser reported that gross revenue for the Portland Center lags the \$2M projected in the Ten-Year Business Forecast, which warrants attention but has not prompted a revision to the forecast. Feser spoke about progress at the Statewide Provost Council related to hybrid programs, which includes efforts to articulate a distinction between creation of new programs and development of a different method to deliver existing programs. While new programs require approval by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), the definition proposed by some universities would mean the development of a new hybrid delivery mode for an existing program would not. Feser said the focus is on seeking agreement among provosts on the proposed new language and then making a recommendation to the HECC. Feser provided an update on transfer student initiatives, including the placement of an OSU employee at the Portland Community College Rock Creek campus to provide on-site advising to students to support the transition between community college and a university. The hope

is to solidify OSU's partnership with Portland Community College, and potentially other community colleges, to help students with a transition to Oregon State University if and when they desire to do so. Students are being encouraged to complete their associates degrees before transferring. Feser provided a progress report on accreditation, noting that the self-evaluation report is on track for completion by the end of February and a site visit by a peer-evaluation team is scheduled for April. On the topic of unionization, Feser said he anticipated that bargaining would begin in late-November. He then provided an update on senior leadership searches, including the appointment of Alix Gitelman as the new vice provost for undergraduate education, Irem Tumer as interim vice president for research, and Alan Sams as dean of Agricultural Sciences. He said finalists had been identified for the positions of senior advisor to the provost for international affairs and vice provost and dean of the Graduate School. External searches for a vice provost of enrollment management, dean of the College of Pharmacy, vice provost for information and technology, and vice provost for student affairs are underway. Feser remarked on the work of Senior Vice Provost Susan Capalbo to expand the university's academic leadership series, including a recent summit to build a community of practice around academic leadership. Next, Feser provided an update on academic programs. He noted that the MS in Business was approved by the HECC. There will be additional conversations at the Statewide Provost Council on the BS in Nursing. Lastly, Feser reported that the university would soon be celebrating its ten-year partnership with INTO OSU. Over the past decade, INTO OSU has served over 9,000 students and the population of international students in Corvallis has grown from 1,085 to 3,220. He also spoke about changes in international recruiting, which necessitate exploration of new approaches in the future.

Following the report, Trustee Julie Manning asked about the review of the Baccalaureate Core. President Ed Ray said the Baccalaureate Core was last revised in 2009 and he anticipated one outcome of the current review might be to develop a smaller, more focused set of courses. Feser added that the review would be conducted in partnership with the Faculty Senate and would work to align with the strategic plan goal of positioning the university to integrate research, teaching, and engagement. Trustee Mike Bailey asked about the anticipated time to graduation for students transferring from Portland Community College following the new advising support, and Feser said that if students follow and succeed on the path outlined, it would be possible to graduate in four years. Trustee Darry Callahan cited the BS in Nursing as an example of the importance of collaboration among the seven public universities. Pulliams asked about the connection between the strategic plan and the topics covered by the Board at its retreat, and Ray noted that further discussion of the strategic plan was scheduled for the Board Meeting and it would be a good opportunity to continue those conversations. Kelly added that it would also be an important topic when discussing the committee's proposed work plan.

3. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes of the September 17, 2018 Academic Strategies Committee Meeting

On a motion made and seconded, the committee approved the minutes of the September 17, 2018, meeting.

4. Action Items

a. 2019 Academic Strategies Committee Work Plan

Kelly introduced this item by providing a summary of the committee's discussion at the September telephonic meeting, including the proposed new framework for organizing the committee's efforts in the coming year. He then summarized changes that he and Vice Chair Michele Longo Eder had worked on with Feser and Board Secretary Debbie Colbert since the telephonic meeting. The changes include incorporating into the Provost's Report a discussion of emerging issues and a summary of progress on prior reports, emphasizing that the briefings to the committee will use the strategic plan as the framework, and adding a placeholder for special topics that arise. With no further discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the 2019 committee work plan as proposed. The motion carried.

5. Discussion Items

a. Financial Aid Basics and Scenarios

Kelly introduced this item by saying that the discussion would build on conversations held by the committee throughout the previous year. He said that he and Eder had requested that Feser, Interim Associate Provost for Enrollment Management Noah Buckley, and Director of Financial Aid Keith Raab provide an introduction to financial aid at OSU. Feser began by saying the focus of the conversation would be on the types of financial aid available and how it is granted. Raab described the three types of financial aid as aid that must be paid back, aid that does not need to be paid back, and self-help aid. These types of aid can come from the federal government, the state government, and the institution. He described the percentage of total aid dollars by type of aid, noting that many students receive aid from all three sources. Trustee Julia Brim-Edwards asked whether there was information available on the distribution of aid by residential status, and Raab said he could provide that information in the next report to the committee. He then provided data on the dollar amount and number of students who receive institutional scholarships as compared to the Oregon Opportunity Grant. Buckley added that because the expected family contribution threshold set by the state to qualify for the Oregon Opportunity Grant is not known until May, after students have committed to an institution, it can be difficult to maximize the amount of aid available. Raab said the university addresses this challenge by making estimated awards based on a student's status in the previous year. Eder asked how eligibility for an Oregon Opportunity Grant affects what a student might receive in institutional aid, and Raab said that the total is not impacted because the university uses an additive approach to awards rather than subtracting scholarships when a student becomes eligible for other sources of aid.

Raab provided an overview of the timeline for aid, noting the release of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at the start of October and the financial aid priority deadline at the end of February. Pulliams said that reliance on the FAFSA has been a barrier for some students and families given the complexities of the form and difficulties in navigating the website. Raab said that the U.S. Department of Education continues to explore ways to simplify the process. Callahan asked how students know when to apply and what to apply for, and Raab said that most students are advised by high school counselors, and they also learn about the process at events sponsored by local community

colleges. He noted that students can experience a challenge when they start the FAFSA during a school event and then try to complete it on their own. Eder observed that schools throughout the state have differing levels of resources and different approaches to supporting students, and she asked whether the state had considered developing and sharing a uniform framework. Raab said that while he was not aware of a specific effort, a role for the university would be to educate partners across the state about the resources that are available. In response to a question from Ray about the availability of online resources, Raab said the university could post on its website a guide to navigating the FAFSA. Feser added that it was important to continue to review what students encounter when they interact with the university for the first time to ensure that resources are easily accessible and meet the needs of students. Trustee Mark Baldwin asked how many families contribute to the cost of higher education at the rate of their calculated expected family contribution. Raab said most families contribute a portion and then work to reduce the student's expenses in order to cover the total cost of attendance. Raab spoke about additional challenges to students in navigating the federal financial aid process.

Next, Buckley described challenges internal to OSU, including the optimization and prioritization of a limited pool of institutional aid. This requires determining how to use available funds to drive enrollment and meet institutional goals, including those related to access, the proportion of resident and non-resident students, the diversity of the student body, and recruitment of high-achieving Oregon students. Merit awards are frequently used to attract high-achieving students and need-based aid is distributed to support the university's access mission. Ray noted that merit and need are not mutually exclusive, and Raab said that 85% of first year students in 2017 received aid, and approximately 45% of those students received both merit- and need-based aid. Buckley added that this leaves limited aid to distribute to students who are in the middle in terms of both income and academic performance, resulting in the loss of such students to other institutions. He described the university's Bridge to Success program, which ensures that qualified students receive enough gift aid to cover their annual tuition and fees but has not been funded at the level needed to meet need. Buckley described the current climate in which Oregon State competes for students and said the university works with a consulting group to optimize its recruitment and financial aid strategy. In response to a question by Kelly, Buckley said that it would be possible for a student to receive a merit award even if they have a high expected family contribution. He said this is part of the competitive environment and the balance the university seeks to achieve its distribution of merit- and need-based aid. Raab then presented several scenarios to explore types of aid packages available and different challenges students may face. In response to a question from Eder about parameters for federal aid, Raab said that a student eligible for Federal Pell Grant funds has a maximum timeframe of 150% of the normal timeframe for the program. He said there are also limits on the amount of subsidized and unsubsidized loans a student can receive. Trustee Angel Mandujano-Guevara asked whether the cost of attendance varies by major, and Raab said that some majors have differential tuition and associated fees, but this is not a factor in the amount of aid they are awarded.

Buckley spoke about opportunities and strategies related to aid, including aligning and orchestrating scholarship fundraising with enrollment goals,

increasing the funnel to graduation through a focus on retention and completion scholarships, and offering a job to every student who wants one. He also described the approach of equity packaging, which works to get every student to the same amount of unmet need. Pulliams asked what the committee could do to support further exploration of opportunities and strategies. Kelly noted that financial aid was scheduled again as a topic in April. Trustees discussed additional topics for further exploration, including ways to optimize available funds, opportunities for working more closely with partners such as the OSU Foundation, and strategies to maximize the university's competitive advantage. Eder asked whether the university analyzes previous aid decisions to look for connections between aid and student success metrics in order to inform future decisions. She also asked about the process for making decisions about which strategies to pursue. Feser said the choice about how to optimize aid depends on the goals the university wants to pursue, noting, for example, that the focus on high-achieving students was aligned with goals in Strategic Plan 3.0. He said it would be helpful to continue the conversation in April about priorities, strategies, and potential scenarios for the distribution of aid. Kelly thanked the presenters and said the conversation would continue into 2019 when the committee discusses enrollment and financial aid under its new work plan.

b. Student Success

Kelly asked Feser, Interim Vice Provost for Student Affairs Dan Larson, and Dean of the College of Science Roy Haggerty to present this item. Feser began by reviewing the goals of the undergraduate student success initiative and providing an overview of the work of the Undergraduate Student Success Steering Committee, co-chaired by Haggerty and Larson. Manning noted the goal of increasing high-achieving income freshman to 50% and asked how it was defined. Ray said students with a high school GPA of 3.75 or higher were categorized as high-achieving. Haggerty described the composition of the steering committee, which included college leadership, central leadership, student success experts, and the OSU Foundation. He said the committee produced a report that set clear priorities to advance student success and is now working to advise the provost on the highest impact priorities to advance student success; identify, evaluate, and present actionable pathways to improve student success; and continue to facilitate engagement throughout the university. He summarized the committee's engagement and the lessons learned, which led to the prioritization of the transition experience, financial aid and scholarships, faculty-student engagement, curricular excellence, and experiential learning. Larson said the committee was making progress in each of these areas, and had placed a particular emphasis on the transition experience. He described the components that contribute to a positive transition experience, noting in particular the importance of building community and creating a sense of belonging. Data on why students leave OSU early indicate that 91% of students who left in 2016 did so for "personal reasons," and 76% of those reasons were related to a sense of not belonging. In response to a question by Kelly, Larson said this included a number of reasons why students might feel like they do not belong.

Larson then focused on the specific example of the transfer student experience, describing what is known about what transfer students face and highlighting some of the university-wide strategies being pursued to improve their transition experience. He also highlighted a pilot faculty/student mentor program, which

connects one faculty member with up to five students. If this proves to be an effective model, the university will have a way to scale faculty mentorship. Larson said Oregon State is also leveraging its partnership with the University Innovation Alliance (UIA) by sharing knowledge and discovery across the 11 alliance universities. Areas of focus for the coming year include using interactive technology in the admissions process and implementing a college-to-career initiative as well as sustaining ongoing initiatives related to completion grants and proactive advising. Feser added that the UIA started with a large number of initiatives and is now pursuing a more focused approach. Haggerty concluded by saying that while there is intensive focus on the transfer student experience, the committee continues to make progress in the other areas identified as priorities.

During the discussion that followed, Ray noted that one important component of the university's efforts in the future will be to move toward a perspective on enrollment management as an enterprise level activity. Feser added that this also entails aligning college and central initiatives from recruiting and admissions through supporting student transitions. Pulliams asked about connections between the student success initiative and broader efforts related to diversity and inclusion, and Feser said one important area of overlap is fostering a sense of belonging, particularly for students who have historically experienced marginalization. Haggerty added that the faculty/student mentor program emphasized support for underrepresented, first generation, and Pell eligible students. Manning noted that a shared commitment to student success could serve as a foundation for collaboration across the PreK-20 continuum, and Ray suggested planning a discussion with regional leaders from across the educational continuum. Trustee Mark Baldwin asked about initiatives focused on building community. Larson said that there are a number of activities in which students can participate, and there is a growing focus on identifying students who have not engaged so that someone can check in and help them identify ways to make connections that align with their areas of interest. Haggerty added that colleges are also focused on investing in strategies to help students feel connected and engaged. Trustees thanked the presenters and commended the university's efforts related to student success.

6. Adjournment

With no further business proposed, Chair Kelly adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer M. Almquist

Assistant Board Secretary