



Oregon State
University

The Board of Trustees of Oregon State University

Regular Meeting of the Academic Strategies Committee

October 17, 2019
Horizon Room, Memorial Union
Corvallis, Oregon

MINUTES

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

Other Trustees Present: Darry Callahan

University Staff Present: Charlene Alexander, Susan Capalbo, Jeff Chang, Debbie Colbert, Tom Doyle, Becca Gose, Romeo Lopez Gonzalez, Larry Rodgers, Kendra Sharp, Joey Spatafora, and Steve Zielke

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

Committee Chair Paul Kelly called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m., asked the board secretary to call the roll, and noted a quorum. Kelly welcomed Trustee Hurd as the newest member of the committee.

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 noted the summary of new academic programs and program reviews in TAB W, offering to answer any questions from the committee. Feser next provided an update on the dean searches in the colleges of Forestry, Business, and Education. He also highlighted the arrival of Andrea Ballinger, the new vice provost for information technology, noting her extensive higher education experience and particular interest in data. Feser moved next to an update on briefings previously before the committee, starting with the area of undergraduate and graduate education. He described efforts by Alix Gitelman, vice provost for undergraduate education, to work with academic units to get a more strategic perspective on academic programs that will be developed on a three to five year horizon, which will help the university better see the landscape ahead, look for opportunities for collaboration among units, and anticipate issues with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). On a related front, Feser shared that the university is also moving away from reviews at an academic program level and instead toward a unit level review. The new approach will be more efficient and less costly for units and provide stronger connections with budgeting and accountability at the unit level. Feser also mentioned that the university is now accepting all Willamette Promise credits and will be tracking over time the performance of students transferring these credits to OSU. Previously OSU was

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accepting selected Willamette Promise credits. In response to a question from Trustee Borkar, Feser noted that the data collected will help address faculty concerns on whether the delivery of the course material in the high schools is at sufficient depth to ensure that students are prepared for subsequent courses at OSU. He spoke to the work of the Research Office regarding efforts to improve pre and post grant award support and reduce backlogs in closing grants. Feser talked about enrollment and financial aid, sharing the university has hired a new firm to conduct OSU's financial aid analysis and will be implementing this year a comprehensive consumer relations management tool that is used by thousands of universities. Feser noted other enrollment management efforts such as hiring a transfer associate director in Enrollment Management, continuing to test a project to site staff at community colleges to provide better advising, and streamlining admissions processes for applying to Corvallis or OSU-Cascades to better reflect options available for students. Feser shared that the university is working on a \$14M to \$14.5M budget gap between revenue and expenses due to growing retirement and benefit costs, slowing enrollment, and the need to continue to invest in priority areas. Feser noted that this has led to holding some positions vacant and cancelling some recruitments, with about 70 FTE impacted to date. Feser noted that the university is seeing higher enrollment numbers than projected driven in part by a significant investment in financial aid at \$3.2M which helped with recruitment and retention. Trustee Callahan asked about the academic focus of Portland, and Feser shared that while the majority of activity is focused on business, liberal arts and public human health and sciences have a presence as well. He further noted that moving forward the university will be focusing more emphasis on professional masters and professional education.

Provost Feser also noted that the university is still in negotiations on a new contract with United Academics of OSU, and that economic proposals have been exchanged with updates posted regularly on the faculty affairs website. Feser also shared the university's College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) grant was recently renewed for five years.

Following the report, Trustee Bailey asked Feser about the status of legislative conversations regarding credits for advanced placement and international based classes. General Counsel Gose shared that an inter-institutional committee of faculty has been established which will be staffed by the HECC to review scores and report to the legislature. Chair Kelly asked about the timeframe for having a collective bargaining agreement in place, and Gose noted that the university anticipates that an agreement could be in place this spring. Vice Chair Eder expressed an interest in having a more in depth understanding of Portland program offerings and students, and Feser committed to incorporating that information into the next briefing by Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education Alix Gitelman.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes of the May 30, 2019 Academic Strategies Committee Meeting**
- b. Academic Program Termination: PSM/MS in Applied Physics**

Kelly noted that the consent agenda included the proposed termination of the Professional Science Masters/Master of Science in Applied Physics. He shared

that the program has been dormant for more than eight years, and there are no students or faculty impacted by this termination. With that brief explanation, a motion was made and seconded, and the committee approved the items on the consent agenda.

4. Action Items

a. Academic Program Extension: BS in Biological Data Sciences

Kelly invited Joey Spatafora, head of the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, and Jeff Chang, professor in the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology to present this item. Chang began by sharing that development of this academic program was led by the deans of the colleges of Agricultural Sciences and Pharmacy and developed proactively with 20 faculty members across nine colleges. He shared that the academic program is responsive to the needs of federal and state government and private sector demands for biological data scientists, noting the particular need for biologists that can work across disciplines. Chang shared that this program will be unique across Oregon with few such programs offered across the nation. Students in the program will be required to participate in experiential learning and a capstone course and will take classes within learning cohorts. Trustee Hurd asked why this type of program has not been developed previously. In response, Chang described the challenges of integrating so many disciplines to create the program and the transformative technologies have only recently been available. Spatafora added that transformations in technology have driven a quantum shift in the volume of data produced. Trustee Borkar commended Chang and Spatafora for pursuing this program, underscoring the significant need across many disciplines and industries for data analysis. Borkar also expressed the hope that this effort will result in a blueprint for others who want to create this type of multidisciplinary program. In response to a question from Trustee Bailey, Chang shared how courses will be staged for freshman and others entering or transferring into the degree program. Trustee Manning encouraged Chang and Spatafora to think about ways to expand this program to other applications and industries.

Following this discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the establishment of a BS in Environmental Sciences, effective in fall 2020, pending the support of the Statewide Provosts Council and the approval of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. The motion carried.

b. Academic Program Extension: BMus in Music Studies

Kelly welcomed College of Liberal Arts Dean Larry Rodgers and Steve Zielke, director of choral studies and the Patricia Valian Reser professor of music, to present this item. Rodgers began by sharing that this academic program responds to student needs in a number of ways. The new program will provide for multiple paths for students on a variety of career paths, shorten the time to degree completion, and allow students to become licensed teachers with a baccalaureate degree. Chair Kelly asked about the number of students anticipated for the program; Zielke responded that there may be no change in the total number of students as this is a redesign of an existing program. Kelly asked about similar programs at other universities in Oregon. Zielke emphasized that this will be the only four-year program with music education licensure in the state

and other institutions are following OSU's implementation of this redesign. In response to a comment and question from Eder, Zielke shared that the existing program was a seven or eight year program due to curriculum requirements and the nature of how music skills are developed.

Following the discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the establishment of a Bachelor of Music program, effective fall 2020, pending the support of the Statewide Provosts Council and the approval of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. The motion carried.

5. Discussion Items

a. 2020 Academic Strategies Committee Work Plan and 2019 Board

Assessment Results

Kelly reminded the committee of the briefing approach developed by Provost Feser for topics scheduled before the committee, noting that in 2019 the committee will complete a full cycle of briefings. Kelly shared that he anticipates briefings in the next cycle being focused more on progress on goals and emerging issues. Manning commented that she appreciated the briefing approach as a way of addressing the broad scope of the committee's charter and the opportunity to dive more deeply into topics over the course of the year. She appreciated the combination of strategies where the committee has deeper dive briefings combined with the provost's regular reports, which include updates on prior briefings and other top of mind, emerging topics. Kelly underscored that the committee relies on the provost to keep them apprised of emerging issues and topics outside of the briefing cycle. Borkar asked Feser his point of view on the value added by the committee; Feser responded that the briefing approach is particularly helpful since it requires leaders to step back and succinctly describe what they are doing and why, and then committee members can give feedback on whether the approaches and priorities address the challenges and opportunities. Manning asked if there was a way to intersect the Strategic Plan 4.0 implementation actions with the work plans for the committees. Feser noted that this cross-walk is built into the briefing approach, and Board Secretary Colbert noted that she would follow up with other committees to ensure a similar cross walk is occurring with SP4.0 actions falling within those charter areas. In looking at the self-assessment survey results, Borkar asked committee members if there are things they would recommend doing differently next year. Kelly noted frustration in the past among some committee members in terms of the amount of time allotted to engage in discussion, which he noted may have lowered the responses. Kelly went on to say the move to the briefing approach will hopefully continue to address those concerns. Eder encouraged committee members to continue to ask the provost questions about prior briefing topics during his regular report. Kelly raised the question of how to incorporate the ideas from the Board retreat into the committee work plan. Colbert shared that, at the close of the retreat, the plan was for the provost to return to the Board in January 2020 with a summary of ideas generated and a sense of how those ideas overlap with ongoing work of the university. Following the Board discussion in January, committee work plans would be adjusted, if needed. In thinking about the committee's work, Eder noted that the Board was testing during this meeting the idea of concurrent committee meetings as a way of providing more time for

committee discussion. She voiced her support for returning to the practice of consecutive meetings, reasoning that attendance at all meetings help trustees develop a well-informed and holistic view of complex issues facing the university. Borkar reiterated the commitment to review the feedback from trustees on this pilot approach. In response to a question from Borkar, Feser noted that student success crosses over multiple domains of the briefings. Manning asked if there would be additional reports on accreditation, given where the university is in the seven year cycle. Provost Feser suggested that an annual update should be sufficient.

b. Faculty Affairs Briefing

Kelly welcomed Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Susan Capalbo for a discussion of faculty affairs. Capalbo introduced the topic by describing the faculty as the fundamental building blocks for innovation and student recruitment and success. Capalbo reminded the committee that faculty are responsible for creating new programs and building curriculum. She talked about investing in faculty development and the many connections across all of the goals and actions of SP4.0. She provided feedback faculty have shared about what attracts and keeps them at OSU – examples were low barriers to collaboration, opportunities to work on multidisciplinary efforts, the connection to students, and the opportunity to engage in the land grant mission. Capalbo summarized opportunities and threats facing this domain. She noted the challenge of communicating the role of the professoriate at a land grant institution, how faculty roles and interests are changing, and forward thinking strategies to support faculty development and advancement. She also discussed the increasing demands on faculty time and the need to support the productivity and well-being of faculty given these demands. Kelly asked if there are significant limitations on the university's capacity to use start up packages and other strategies to attract faculty. Capalbo acknowledged that putting together attractive start up packages takes resources and can be challenging. The university has been relatively successful at putting packages together but may have to get more creative in partnering internally and externally in the future. Capalbo shared details on several initiatives planned in fiscal year 2020, including creating a commission on the 21st century professoriate, reviewing recruitment strategies and hiring procedures to enhance diversity, assessing promotion and tenure standards and professional development opportunities, and creating the Academic Leadership Academy. She shared specific implementation actions and challenges related to each initiative. In response to a trustee question, Capalbo discussed the potential bias in student evaluations and described a task force that will be reviewing how the university evaluates teaching effectiveness. Eder asked about the specific role of student evaluations of teaching, the weight given to these scores, and variation in the use of these scores across units. Feser shared that there is a body literature that shows, when done appropriately, student evaluations can be useful input on evaluation of overall teaching effectiveness but done poorly it can be detrimental, which underscores the importance of the task force work related to this topic. Borkar asked why the faculty development opportunities are focused on new faculty, and Capalbo clarified that these opportunities are open to all faculty recognizing that initial opportunities have been customized to meet the needs of new faculty. Kelly asked about the primary reasons for losing faculty.

Capalbo shared that the reasons vary across faculty such as the lack of spousal hiring and opportunities at other institutions. Borkar asked about how the university is anticipating and planning for faculty turnover as faculty retire over the next five to ten years. Capalbo explained that the potential for retirements is part of the motivation for looking at and preparing for the professoriate of the future. In response to trustee questions, Capalbo described initiatives and efforts to recruit and hire an outstanding and diverse faculty. Regarding the question of average teaching loads of faculty, she noted that teaching load varies by college and discipline. Following this discussion, Kelly thanked Capalbo for her informative presentation on one of the university's primary assets.

c. Internationalization and Global Engagement Briefing

Kelly introduced Kendra Sharp, senior advisor to the provost for international affairs, Richard and Gretchen Evans Professor in Humanitarian Engineering in the School of Mechanical, Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering, and founder and director of OSU's Humanitarian Engineering Program. Sharp described her role as senior advisor to the provost for international affairs and the importance of internationalization and global engagement (IGE) to the university's mission, its research and scholarly impact, and the experience and skills of students. She shared recent changes in the administrative structure for central IGE units to better support the comprehensive, integrated nature of the university's efforts across the portfolios of several senior university leaders. Sharp went on to describe how this administrative structure translates to support different forms of global activity including inbound international students, scholars, staff, and faculty; outbound international educational opportunities; international research; international outreach and engagement; other forms of global learning; and international alumni engagement and philanthropy. She described special initiatives and projects including the development of an IGE strategic plan underpinned by SP4.0. In response to a question from Kelly, Sharp explained the patterns shown in the heat map of OSU international activity. Sharp discussed a number of challenges and strategies the university is pursuing to address these challenges. Challenges included softening international student enrollment across the U.S., the risk of plateauing in education abroad enrollment, increasing concerns about foreign influence in the U.S. higher education and research enterprise, and up-front costs that discourage faculty leadership in international activity. Manning noted that the briefing document discussed the challenge in cataloging OSU's IGE efforts and asked Sharp to give a sense of why that is so difficult to track. Sharp discussed the broad range of faculty work funded through a variety of mechanisms, some of which does not show up in formal tracking by existing offices and there is no single place where this activity is entered. This year, Sharp's office will be exploring how to get at this by pulling from existing databases and other sources. She related this back to the development of the IGE strategic plan, which will inform priorities and set metrics for measuring those efforts. In response to a question from Manning, Sharp discussed some of the drivers behind flattening international student enrollment and the university's efforts to streamline pathways for international students, especially for graduate program, and adjust academic offerings to increase the appeal to a more diverse set of students. Referencing the briefing material, Kelly asked about the comparison with peers in terms of student participation in study abroad. Sharp

shared that some universities have pushed study abroad, which increased participation. She also discussed barriers to participation from a student perspective in terms of academic fit, financial burden, exchange agreements in place, and the quarter system. Manning complimented the information in the brief and the work to restructure and create a more cohesive framework for the university's IGE efforts going forward.

d. Lab Safety including risk management report

Kelly asked Provost Feser and Tom Doyle, director of environmental health and safety personnel, to present this item. Feser started the presentation remarking on the extensive work that has been done to systematically improve policies, programs, and procedures around lab safety, which can be complex for an RI institution like OSU. Doyle remarked on the commitment to lab safety reflected in the priority placed on this topic by the Board. Doyle echoed Feser's remarks on the significant improvements in lab safety that have been achieved at OSU, as demonstrated by the compliance improvements noted in a recent inspection report from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. He noted data provided in the docket showing increases in lab safety training, the number of facility assessments completed, and lab waste pick up. In response to questions from Manning, Doyle shared that only a small percentage of the approximately 2,800 labs across campus are inspected by an outside agency. However, he noted the OSU Environmental Health and Safety visits each of the 2,800 spaces on a 12 to 18 month basis. Manning asked about the standards used in lab safety inspections and Doyle shared that there are specific federal laws on lab safety with which the university must comply. Eder commended the demonstration of the university's commitment to safety in the report language emphasizing "safety as a critical component of scholarly excellence." In response to a question from Bailey, Doyle shared that regulatory requirements drive which employees are required to take lab safety training, noting that his office is working on improving the methods for tracking completion of the training.

6. Adjournment

With no further business proposed, Chair Kelly adjourned the meeting at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Debbie Colbert
Board Secretary