



# The Board of Trustees of Oregon State University

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## Meeting of the OSU Board of Trustees

January 17, 2025

9:15 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Memorial Union Horizon Rm.

### MINUTES

- Trustees present: Kasaundra (Kassy) Bonanno, Julia Brim-Edwards, Stephanie Bulger, Kate Carter-Cram, Karla Chambers, Susan Clark, Lisa Hale, Román Hernández (*chair*), Grant Kitamura, Toby Luther, Greg Macpherson, Elise McClure, Marlena (MJ) Mirho (*nonvoting member*), Jayathi Murthy (*ex officio*), Camille Palmer
- Trustees absent: Maria Chávez-Haroldson, Julie Manning
- University staff: Jackie Bangs, Bruce Daley, Kevin Dougherty, Ed Feser, Alix Gitelman, Becca Gose, Carla Ho‘ā, Jen Humphreys, Stacy Jeffries, Stephen Jenkins, Deb Mott, Vincent Nguyen, Paul Odenthal, Melanie Rose, Patti Snopkowski, Irem Tumer, Scott Vignos
- Invited guests: Penny Atkins (OSUF), Ben Cannon (HECC), Whitney McFarlane (ASCC), Audrey Schlotter (ASOSU), Andrew Valls (Faculty Senate)

#### 1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Declaration of a Quorum / Land Acknowledgement

Board Chair Román Hernández called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. Board Secretary Jackie Bangs called the roll and verified a quorum.

Chair Hernández read the university's land acknowledgment statement.

#### 2. Opening comments and reports

##### a. Chair's comments

Board Chair Román Hernández began with an update on the agenda, noting that the general public comment period had been moved to later in the day and extended from 30 minutes to a full hour if needed. He added that there would still be an opportunity to provide comment before the board votes on any action items. He noted that the change had been communicated to all individuals who requested to give public testimony.

Next, the chair addressed public testimony from the last meeting regarding a referendum passed by ASOSU (Associated Students of Oregon State University) in August, which proposed retroactively increasing mandatory student fees to the beginning of the academic year. He clarified that the board had not refused to take up this issue during the public comment period, but rather that the fee-setting process established by statute and board policy was not followed. Hernández expressed concern over the failure to adhere to normal procedures and requested that ASOSU bring the fee increase proposal to the board in March, when fiscal year 2026 tuition and fee setting will be considered according to the board's established work plan. He highlighted the importance of careful

deliberation and adherence to policies, procedures and state statutes in making decisions that impact students and stakeholders.

Chair Hernández recognized the leadership of ASOSU President Audrey Schlotter for navigating an unprecedented departure from established processes and noted that more details would be provided in Schlotter's report to the board.

Finally, the chair shared that he had been approached by Lisa Keohokalole Schauer, chair of the Washington State University Board of Regents, to discuss potential collaboration and a review of best practices between the boards.

#### **b. President's report**

President Murthy began by welcoming everyone back after the holidays and expressing excitement about the energy and inspiration brought by the students returning to campus and Ecampus classes.

She highlighted the ongoing implementation of the strategic plan, which focuses on increasing student enrollment and ensuring their academic and career success. She noted that the university was working across Oregon with industry, donors and local and state leaders to advocate for investment in higher education.

The president provided an update on leadership changes, announcing that Provost and Executive Vice President Ed Feser had accepted an appointment as St. Louis University's 34th president and that March 31 would be his last day at OSU. She noted that a national search for Feser's replacement has already begun and is being led by Tuba Özkan-Haller, dean of the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences.

Murthy provided an enrollment update, noting that winter term registrations are up nearly 3% based on headcount and more than 4% on credit hours, with undergraduate applications for the spring and fall terms also showing positive trends.

She mentioned last week's grand opening of the new Student Success Center at OSU-Cascades in Bend, adding that the building demonstrated OSU's commitment to student success and marked an important step toward reaching strategic plan targets.

President Murthy gave an overview of the university's research enterprise, noting that OSU is working on multiple large proposals to attract federal investment, including \$45M from the US Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration for the Corvallis Microfluidics Tech Hub. She mentioned other proposals, including one with the National Institute of Standards and Technology and three with the National Science Foundation research innovation engines in the fields of mass timber, smart grid technologies and semiconductors.

To solidify support for the \$160M research innovation engines proposal, *Frontiers of Advanced Semiconductor Technology*, Murthy noted that OSU, the Technology Association of Oregon, Intel and others hosted a summit on the Intel campus with more than 300 representatives from education, industry, government and trade organizations.

She emphasized the university's commitment to advocate strongly for increased state support during the upcoming Legislative session. She noted that Oregon's seven public universities are collectively asking for a \$275M increase, for a total of \$1.275B in base funding. She added that universities and community colleges are supporting a \$150M increase to the need-based Oregon Opportunity Grant.

Murthy provided an update on the “Believe It!” fundraising and engagement campaign, which has raised over \$1.4B of its \$1.75B goal. Looking to 2025, she said the joint priorities of the board and the foundation are aligned with *Prosperity Widely Shared*, including student success and efforts to increase the graduation rate to 80%.

She noted several important issues addressed by the ASOSU (Associated Students of Oregon State University) this year, including student fees and governance. She explained that administrators are working closely with student government to emphasize that their work must follow established processes, policies and state statutes. She noted OSU’s long history of shared governance and successful work with student government.

In closing, Murthy announced that OSU will commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with events including a peace breakfast and a keynote address by Dr. Ruha Benjamin, Alexander Stewart 1886 Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University.

**c. Associated Students of Oregon State University Report**

ASOSU President Audrey Schlotter began by introducing ASOSU Vice President Zach Kowash, Student Fee Committee Chair Sophia Nowers, and Judicial Council Chair Madison Jones.

Schlotter said that ASOSU is currently at a tipping point, with significant internal dynamics affecting the student body. She noted that ASOSU represents 23,000 students and operates under the jurisdiction of shared governance documents and Oregon State law. She then detailed the challenges currently faced by ASOSU leaders, including harassment and bullying.

She highlighted the systematic issues within ASOSU, such as the senate's decision to strip powers from other branches of student government and the lack of adherence to established procedures. She called on the board for their assistance in ensuring the integrity of student government.

Chair Hernández thanked Schlotter for the thorough report and acknowledged the negative impact on ASOSU leaders, stressing the importance of addressing bullying and harassment.

Trustee Bonanno asked about the future of student fees, considering the current constitutional crisis. Nowers and Kowash said they were uncertain about where the student fee process stands, given current challenges, the need for reform and the manipulation of other student leaders.

Chair Hernández voiced his concern for the student leaders and emphasized the importance of accountability for any harassment or bullying. President Murthy added that harassment and bullying are serious violations of OSU’s statutes that needed to be followed up on through OSU policies and processes. The chair and other board members expressed their support for students’ wellbeing and the importance of student government.

**Associated Students of Cascades Campus report**

ASCC President Whitney McFarlane highlighted significant events and achievements at OSU-Cascades, starting with the grand opening of the Student Success Center on January 7. She said that over 300 students attended to explore the new facility, noting that students had also contributed \$5M toward the funding of the building, which is set to be fully operational by February 3.

McFarlane mentioned the January 8 Circle of Excellence dinner to acknowledge OSU-Cascades alumni and donors and the January 10 advocacy reception to discuss lobbying efforts for the upcoming legislative session. She added that the focus of the advocacy reception was on securing

\$42M from the state for land remediation and the construction of a student health and recreation center at OSU-Cascades.

She gave a report on the OSU-Cascades food pantry, which will move to the new Student Success Center and offer an expanded inventory including perishable foods. She noted the success of the composting bins trial project and reported that 10 housing subsidy applications had been received and \$4,600 allocated to students.

McFarlane also noted that the trial position of ASCC Director of Student Affinity Experience has been successful in connecting with a broader range of students, adding that the trial is scheduled to end in June.

President McFarlane reported that voting for ASCC elections will open on March 10 and that the Elections Committee is aiming for 12% student participation.

She announced that the Student Fee Committee had allocated \$2,000 to students for professional development funds, with recipients required to complete a campus presentation after their trip or certification.

In conclusion, McFarlane reiterated the importance of leadership presence at OSU-Cascades events and expressed appreciation for the board's support.

Trustee Bonanno asked about potential collaboration between the ASCC and ASOSU. McFarlane and ASCC Vice President Allison Barr expressed enthusiasm for continued collaboration and emphasized the importance of maintaining strong communication between the two organizations.

#### **d. Faculty Senate Report**

Andrew Valls delivered his inaugural report as president of the faculty senate.

He mentioned the strong and constructive relationship between the faculty senate and university administration, which he said was based on mutual trust and respect. He introduced Susie Sprinson, the senate's new director of operations.

Valls outlined several goals for the year, including updating and streamlining the faculty senate's processes to take advantage of available technologies and increase efficiency. He also announced significant revisions or complete replacement of the senate's bylaws, which have remained largely unchanged since 1964.

Valls expressed his intention to maintain and strengthen the senate's partnerships on campus, including with the administration, the faculty union and student government. He emphasized the importance of open lines of communication and cooperation.

He highlighted the essential role of faculty senate committees in the running of the university and noted the Core Education Committee in particular, which is responsible for approving courses for the new campus-wide undergraduate curriculum, Core Ed. He commended committee members for their thoughtful work.

Trustees voiced appreciation for the faculty senate's hard work and commitment to student success. Chair Hernández expressed personal gratitude to faculty, who are changing students' lives every day.

In response to requests from Trustee Chambers and Trustee Bulger, Valls said he would address new technologies and AI in the classroom and share more about the Core Ed curriculum and its expected impact in a future report.

**e. OSU Foundation report**

Penny Atkins, chair of the OSU Foundation Board, provided an update on foundation activities.

She highlighted fundraising activities, noting that donors have given \$102.2M towards the baseline goal of \$147M for the fiscal year, with a stretch goal of \$180M. She noted that number was \$20M ahead of giving at this time last year and above the five-year average of \$80M.

Atkins noted that fall is a crucial time for engaging the community and reported on activities hosted by the foundation and the alumni association to celebrate Beaver football. She noted that over 300 guests attended the 2024 President's Dinner at the Portland Art Museum honoring the newest members of the Harris Society.

She reported that the endowment market value reached its highest point in the history of the foundation at \$951.45M as of September 30.

Atkins stressed the foundation's support for the university's strategic plan, *Prosperity Widely Shared*, with its goals of doubling research expenditures and increasing six-year graduation rates to 80%. She noted key initiatives in support of *Prosperity Widely Shared*, including the opening of the Jen-Hsun Huang and Lori Mills Huang Collaborative Innovation Complex in 2026; the provost's faculty match program; and the Believe It! Campaign, which has raised over \$1.4B toward a \$1.75B goal.

In closing, Atkins noted that the Beaver Caucus, the foundation's legislative advocacy group, participated in a lobby day at the Capitol with Oregon's other public universities, urging legislators to prioritize students and higher education.

Chair Hernández emphasized the critical role of the foundation in supporting the institution's success, and Trustee Macpherson expressed appreciation for the foundation's work, highlighting the importance of advocacy during the legislative session.

**f. Higher Education Coordinating Commission report**

Ben Cannon, executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), joined via Zoom to deliver his standing report.

He began by mentioning the Governor's recommended budget to the Legislature for investments in higher education and workforce development, adding that the HECC will advocate strongly for this budget and present it to legislators in the coming months. He emphasized that, while the budget meets the state's definition of a current service level, it may not fully address the cost pressures and revenue issues faced by institutions.

He discussed the HECC's potential involvement in reviewing tuition increases adopted by boards of trustees of public universities, noting that state law requires the HECC review and approval for any year-over-year tuition increase greater than 5% for resident undergraduate students. He outlined the three criteria that HECC staff would use to assess such increases:

1. Inclusive and transparent tuition setting process
2. Safeguarding access and support for degree completion by historically underrepresented students
3. Demonstrating the university's financial warrants a tuition increase greater than 5%.

Chair Hernández thanked Cannon for his thorough report and stressed the importance of state support to avoid pricing Oregonians out of higher education. Trustee Chambers shared concerns about tuition increases and reiterated the need for investments in higher education.

Cannon acknowledged the board's concerns and noted that the HECC does not expect to receive a request for a tuition increase greater than 5% but is prepared to address such a request if it arises.

### **3. Consent agenda**

#### **a. Minutes of the October 25, 2025, Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

#### **b. Minutes of the October 25, 2025, Executive Session of the Board of Trustees**

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Trustee Brim-Edwards and seconded by Trustee Bulger. The consent agenda was approved by all board members in attendance.

### **4. Reports of standing committees of the board**

#### **a. Academic Strategies Committee**

Committee Vice Chair Stephanie Bulger provided a brief overview of the previous day's Academic Strategies Committee meeting.

(See minutes of the Jan. 16, 2025, Academic Strategies Committee meeting for full details.)

#### **b. Finance and Administration Committee**

Committee Chair Elise McClure provided a summary of the previous day's meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee.

(See minutes of the Jan. 16, 2025, Finance and Administration Committee meeting for full details.)

#### **c. Executive, Audit and Governance Committee**

Board Chair Román Hernández summarized the previous day's meeting of the Executive, Audit and Governance Committee (EAGC).

(See minutes of the Jan. 16, 2025, Executive, Audit and Governance Committee meeting for full details.)

### **5. Action Item**

#### **a. Capital Project Stage Gate II: Richardson Hall Chiller Mid-Life Renewal**

Finance and Administration Committee Chair Elise McClure introduced the Richardson Hall chiller project, noting that the FAC voted to advance it to the board at the previous day's meeting. Paul Odenthal, senior associate vice president for administration, was available to answer questions.

McClure gave an overview of the project, noting that Richardson Hall accommodates more than 200 faculty and graduate students; 57 laboratories; and key programs within the College of Forestry, such as the Indigenous Natural Resources Office and the Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Program.

McClure noted that the project includes the replacement of aged mechanical systems and controls, fire alarms and other systems, extending the building's life by 15 years. She added that new mechanical systems will contribute significant energy savings and carbon reduction, supporting the university's path to carbon neutrality and earning incentives from the Energy Trust of Oregon. In

addition, the estimated energy savings of \$423K per year from the new systems are expected to retire the debt service for carbon reduction bonds within 10 years.

She added that the project also provides needed updates and modernization to the Wood Pressure Treatment Laboratory using funding provided by the College of Forestry.

There was no further discussion and no public comment on this agenda item.

Chair Hernández sought a motion to approve the capital project budget of \$14.75M for the Richardson Hall chiller midlife renewal project and advance the project to the construction phase. A motion was made by Trustee Chambers, seconded by Trustee Brim-Edwards and approved by all board members in attendance. The motion carried.

## **6. Discussion item**

### **a. Legislative Update**

Katie Fast, executive director of Government Relations, provided written updates in lieu of an in-person report.

## **7. Public comments**

Gene Eakin, Ph.D., an OSU alumnus and long-time educator, provided public comments regarding OSU's role as a land grant institution in addressing the mental health and school counseling needs of rural Oregon.

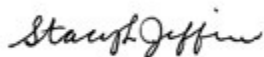
Amanda Granrud, instructor in speech communication and UAOSU officer, provided a personal account of the financial struggles faced by many faculty members.

Henry Wise provided comments on the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza and called for divestment and immediate action in support of the Palestinian people.

## **8. Adjournment**

With no further discussion or business before the board, Chair Hernández adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Stacy Jeffries

Executive Assistant, Office of the Board of Trustees