Committee Charter Amendment

BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring and protecting, within the context of shared faculty governance, the educational quality of the university and its academic programs. The Academic Strategies Committee (ASC) of the Board was chartered to assist the Board in its oversight of the academic as well as the research and public service missions of the university.

PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT

A review of the ASC charter is timely as the Committee reflects on its activities over the last year and develops its work plan for next year. In reviewing the charter, there are a number of proposed amendments for the Committee to consider as shown in Attachment 1 and described below.

- **Remove outdated references to achievement compacts, which are no longer required by statute**

  Previously, Oregon Revised Statutes required the governing body of each educational entity to enter into an achievement compact with the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB) by June 30 annually. The statutory provisions for OEIB sunsetted in 2015, so the reference to a compact in the Committee’s charter is outdated. The proposed amendment to the charter deletes this reference, while retaining the Committee’s broad responsibility to monitor academic performance goals.

- **Better reflect the Committee’s broad oversight role**

  The Committee charter specifies oversight of “university policies regarding outreach and extension.” In December 2015, staff presented the list of outreach and extension policies to the Committee. The four policies that fit within this area were relatively limited in scope (i.e., policies on extension service district formation, 4-H youth development, safety and risk, civil rights) and did not reflect the full scope of the university’s outreach and extension programs. Changing the charter language from “policies” to “programs” would better reflect the Committee’s strategic oversight of these programs, rather than limiting the Committee’s role to a narrow set of policies.

  Similarly, the Committee has broad oversight of the university’s research enterprise; however, the charter specifies only oversight of research “policies.” The policies for research presented to the ASC in December 2015 documented an important but narrow view of the university’s research endeavors (e.g., policies on institutional animal care and use, intellectual property, etc.). The proposed change in charter language from “policies” to research “enterprise” would better reflect the Committee’s oversight of this critical component of the university’s mission.

- **Delegate academic program approval to the Committee**

  The extensive process for reviewing and approving major academic program changes has been presented to the ASC at a number of prior meetings. As shown in Attachment 2, a proposal for a major change to an academic program (e.g., termination, creation) originates
with faculty in their academic unit and then follows a series of review steps at the unit level and by the Faculty Senate and Provost before being forwarded to the ASC for review and then to the Board for approval. To date, the Committee has reviewed 10 new academic programs, all of which the Committee voted to forward to the Board as proposed and all of which were approved by the Board.

The proposed charter language would delegate the approval of major academic program changes to the ASC. Delegating authority to the Committee would eliminate one step at the end of the lengthy review and approval process. It would also help address the timeliness of Board action on program changes. Right now, program changes can only occur during one of four meetings of the Board over the course of the year. If this authority were delegated to the Committee, the Committee, because of its smaller size, could more readily schedule a telephonic meeting to consider urgent requests for academic program changes or could review and approve any pending academic program proposals whenever the Committee meets between regularly scheduled Board meetings.

Delegation of this authority was considered in 2014 but was not approved by the Board. The timing for considering this change now is better than it was in 2014. In 2014, the Board was just getting underway, and academic program reviews were valuable, early learning opportunities for all of the Trustees. Today, the Board meeting agenda continues to move toward more strategically-focused discussions, and the “two-step” review process by the ASC and then by the Board overburdens the docket for the Board and does not appear to add value.

It is also important to note that, over the course of the last two years, the Committee has put a great deal of thought into its role for reviewing these academic proposals (e.g., new templates that focus the discussion, high-level reports of all new and existing program proposals and reviews, etc.). These efforts have demonstrated a thorough and careful execution of the Committee’s responsibilities in this regard.

In adjusting the charter to reflect this proposed delegation, language referring to the creation or closure of centers or institutes within the university is proposed for deletion. This section of the charter is focused on the Committee’s oversight of academics; however, centers and institutes fall under the research enterprise. Specifically, directors of centers and institutes report directly to the Vice President of Research. The proposed charter language that broadly captures oversight of the research “enterprise” would include the activities of centers and institutes.

**NEXT STEPS**

Based on Committee discussion, staff could revise the draft charter for consideration at the October 2016 meeting.
Academic Strategies Committee Charter

The Academic Strategies Committee is established to assist the Board in its oversight of the teaching, research, and public service missions of the University. The Committee consists of the trustees appointed by the Board Chair. The Provost and Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Research are ex officio, non-voting members of the Committee.

The Committee’s areas of responsibilities are: (1) assisting the Board to ensure and protect, within the context of faculty shared governance, the educational quality of the University and its academic programs; (2) monitoring progress towards the University’s achievement compact and other academic performance goals measures; (3) reviewing and recommending to the Board major changes to the academic programs of the University, such as the creation, merger, or closure of degree programs, schools, or colleges, centers, or institutes within the University; (4) reviewing and approving major changes to the academic programs of the University, such as the creation, merger, or closure of degree programs; (45) oversight of overseeing the University’s athletic programs; (56) overseeing University policies regarding student life and conduct, faculty, and academic affairs; (67) oversight of overseeing the University’s policies regarding research enterprise; (78) oversight of overseeing the University’s policies regarding outreach and Extension programs; and (89) overseeing engagement with accrediting bodies. The Committee is responsible for such other matters as may be referred to it by the Board.

The Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President is responsible for providing staff support to the Committee.

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- Amended March 13, 2014
- Amended ____________