

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**REGULAR MEETING
October 8, 2009**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Phil Sharpe called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 3:04 p.m., October 8, 2009 in Old Main 340, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.

Chair Sharpe welcomed new Student Trustee Sarah Ishmael and Trustee Ralph Munro.

Board of Trustees

Betti Fujikado
Sarah Ishmael
Howard Lincoln
Dennis Madsen
Ralph Munro
Phil Sharpe, Chair
John Warner
Peggy Zoro

Western Washington University

Bruce Shepard, President
Wendy Bohlke, Assistant Attorney General
Stephanie Bowers, Vice President for University Advancement
Sherry Burkey, Associate Vice President for University Relations
Paul Cocke, Director, University Communications
Eileen Coughlin, Vice President for Student Affairs & Academic Support Services
Matt Jarrell, President, Associated Students
Paula Gilman, Executive Director for University Planning and Budgeting
Catherine Riordan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Barbara Stoneberg, Administrative Assistant to the President
Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations
Kathy Wetherell, Interim Vice President for Business & Financial Affairs

2. SPECIAL REPORT ON THE BUDGET

a. What It Means to be a “Publicly-Purposed” University

President Bruce Shepard began the discussion on “What it Means to be a Publicly-Purposed University”. A copy of *Washington’s Now and Future Premier Comprehensive University: Thoughts for a Discussion*, was included in the meeting packet. Shepard said that because of the severe cuts to the State Budget, Western needs to reassess how we strengthen our political base. What do we do when state support drops from 60% to 43% of the operating

budget? How do we respond to the diminishing support for public higher education when Western aspires to be the “premier public comprehensive university in the nation?”

Trustee Sharpe reported that the Governor has directed the Trustees and Regents of the state institutions to coordinate their efforts and speak with a “unified voice” to the legislature to bolster the efforts to enhance funding reform and support for higher education in the state. A Council of Trustees & Regents will be re-formed under the Council of Presidents and will meet to discuss common issues among the state 4-year institutions. COP needs to sign-off on the process and each institution will appoint two trustees/regents to serve on the council and work with the COP to develop an agenda for the next legislative session. Sharpe said that we need to be careful not to create a “Super Board” that will undermine the leadership of the institutions’ presidents.

Trustee Warner asked who will meet to create the needed political strategy, since at the August BOT meeting it was clear that the legislators do not see the value of the 4-year education vs. the two-year degree. Shepard said Western will continue to play a prominent role to ensure there are a variety of political strategies. We need to emphasize that a baccalaureate education is important. The data shows that Washington imports people with 4 year degrees from out-of-state to take the better paying jobs in our state. Western is already making itself relevant in the immediate region with the Compass 2 Campus Program, technology innovation at the waterfront, collaboration with the two-year institutions in the area, and “100 Community Conversations” to engage people to care about higher education across the state.

Sherry Burkey, Associate Vice President for University Relations, said that we are collaborating closely with our employee unions, the United Faculty of Washington State, Washington Student Association, Council of Faculty Representatives, and League of Education Voters, and WWU alumni groups. Burkey said the state higher education institutions are trying to develop a coordinated agenda and a general message on the economic impact on our institutions. Burkey said it is critical that we work closely with and use the regents and trustees strategically as we prepare for the legislative session. We need to move higher education up higher on the legislative priority list.

Trustee Madsen said that the state is economically challenged right now and it is not going to get better. What do we do to prepare ourselves for the shortfall to continue for several more years? Shepard said we need to fight or we will get cut even more. The premise for the “publicly-purposed” university is based on the fact that the economic situation will not change for some time. The “100 Community Conversations” discussion is also based on the low level of state support and planning for the future of our university.

Trustee Ishmael asked if we had an outreach effort to involve students’ parents in our political strategy? Shepard said in the past we have had quite a few parents get involved in the process but legislators are still not getting the message. A lot of people don’t think things are as bad in higher education as they are in K-12, but parents and grandparents of Western students are a key part of an advocacy group.

Trustee Munro said it is important for President Shepard to spend time in Olympia connecting with the freshman legislators, as well as working with local legislators Kelli Linville and Dale Brandland. Munro suggested we bring legislators to campus to show them the university and/or present seminars, etc.; work with TVW to broadcast happenings at Western; and work with Western alumni who are staffers in Olympia. It’s also important to work with lobbyists at the Federal Level, including Senator Murray and Congressman Dicks.

Trustee Ishmael suggested we need to show Western's "publicly-purposed university" faculty and students at a grassroots level. Shepard said the "100 Community Conversations" allows us an opportunity to do this and tell people about our university and what it has to offer.

Trustee Sharpe asked how can we change the legislator's opinion that the four-year institutions in the state are "elitists?"

Bill Lyne, Faculty Assistant to the President and Provost, and President of the United Faculty of Washington State, said that they are working on an initiative to start communication with WWU alumni who are teachers in Washington State and WWU alumni who are education-oriented voters to encourage them to contact legislators in their districts. Lyne said a meeting will be scheduled in December with the four regional university presidents, faculty union presidents, and student body presidents to meet as a unified group with the legislators before the legislative session.

Lyne said that a past poll of the Washington Education Association (WEA) regarding higher education in the state indicated that the citizens think highly of the state universities, but they also think they are well funded, which is not true. Lyne said that Washington has the best university system in the country in terms of "bang for the buck." We produce very high quality degrees for less dollars per degree and less dollars per student FTE than any other state. However Washington is 5th in the country in participation rates in two-year colleges and 48th in country in participation rates in 4-year colleges. Washington also ranks 3rd in the country for percentage of the population that has a 4-year degree or better; the state has outsourced the education of the best jobs. In the last legislative session, the budget cut for four-year institutions was 4X as that for two-year institutions. By do so, Washington is encouraging its college-age citizens to not set their sights higher than the type of job requiring an Associates' degree. Those who have the best jobs in Washington are either imported or are from among those who can afford a four-year education. Lyne recommends that Western's message emphasize this issue.

b. Higher Education Coordination Board

i. Tuition Policy Report

Catherine Riordan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs reported that Trustee Ishmael, Paula Gilman, Executive Director for Planning & Budgeting, and Karen Copetas, Director of Admissions have been involved with the "tuition flexibility study." Riordan said the initiative to study tuitions happens on an annual basis. The group was asked to review the options for setting tuition, to make recommendations on tuition policy at the state level, and to evaluate the impacts of those policies on administration and financial aid. They were asked to recommend a tuition policy that will allow for flexibility, accessibility and differentiation among the four baccalaureate institutions and also be supportive of the 2008 HECB Strategic Master Plan.

The study made the following recommendations: 1) establish a cost sharing of undergraduate instruction costs at 45% tuition and 55% state support, and 2) authorize institutions to set undergraduate resident tuition based on role and mission. Riordan said that Western argued against #1 because of the unpredictability at the state level and the fluctuation of state support. She said that Western is supportive of #2, to allow each institution set their own tuition based on their role and mission.

The study had a third recommendation to the Governor and Legislature that a comparative based approach be used in determining an appropriate level of undergraduate instructional cost. Burkey said that it is more appropriate to compare Western to the Global Challenge State Peer Institutions established by the Office of Planning and Budgeting than an in-state comparison group.

In response to a question as to what costs were covered in the costing sharing recommendation, Shepard said that there are many studies on bench mark costs and we will use good national models to bench mark against. He said Western's position is to have maximum local tuition flexibility. Chair Sharpe said the Board is looking at the university's cost side and will have a discussion on how cost is talked about in higher education.

Lyne observed that two-year institutions received better budget support because there is a community college in every legislative district. Shepard noted that Western has students, parents, and alumni in every legislative district. The six four-year institutions work collaboratively with the two-year institutions with "two plus two" programs and are providing services in the areas. Burkey noted that there are efforts in 34 cities across the state and to address the large state unemployment levels with "work force" training.

ii. System Design Study

Catherine Riordan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, said that the legislature has initiated a System Design Study, as part of the goal of the 2008 HECB Strategic Master Plan -- to educate more people to higher levels. The legislature in Substitute House Bill 1244 asked for a system design planning project that defines *"how the current higher education delivery system can be shaped and expanded over the next ten years to best meet the needs of Washington citizens and businesses for high quality and accessible post-secondary education."*

Riordan said some of the things the study group will be discussing are new campuses, branch campuses, online courses and programs, the right mix of 2 and 4 year and research institutions, growing Latino population, new kinds of degrees, etc. They will be considering many recommendations such as expanding the pipeline, i.e., the Compass 2 Campus program, fully utilizing existing capacity at the comprehensive institutions, expand applied baccalaureate degrees, etc. There are also recommendations being considered around the graduate programs including encouraging collaboration among the institutions.

Shepard said Western will be in discussion on how we can best serve educational needs off of our campus and meet the demand of the legislature. Burkey said the legislative will be looking for recommendations and criteria from this study as to how and where higher education will grow in the state as part of the agenda in the next legislative session.

c. Capital Planning & Budgeting Process

Postponed until a future meeting.

At 4:34 Chair Sharpe announced that the Board would go into Executive Session for 30 minutes to discuss personnel and legal issues as authorized under RCW 40.32.110. No action will be taken.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.