

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES
April 14, 2011**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dennis Madsen called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 3 p.m., April 14, 2011, in Old Main 340, Bellingham, Washington.

Chair Madsen thanked everyone who went to Olympia to meet with legislators to try to preserve Western's resources; their effort is making a difference. The cuts to Western are not as large as they might be, although as he noted, the legislative session is not over. Madsen said that there are many difficult choices to be made during these challenging times, but Western is going to come out a stronger institution.

Board of Trustees

Ramiro Espinoza
Betti Fujikado, Secretary
Karen Lee
Dennis Madsen, Chair
Ralph Munro, Vice Chair
Phil Sharpe
Dick Thompson
Peggy Zoro

Western Washington University

Bruce Shepard, President
Suzanne Baker, Interim Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Stephanie Bowers, Vice President for University Advancement
Paul Cocke, Director, University Communications
Eileen Coughlin, Vice President for Student Affairs and Academic Support Services
Paul Dunn, Senior Executive Assistant to the President
Paula Gilman, Executive Director of Planning & Budgeting
Scott Pearce, President, Faculty Senate
Catherine Riordan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Liz Sipes, Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations
Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs
Colin Watrin, President, Associated Students
Lisa Wochos, Assistant Attorney General

2. INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

President Shepard said that in his listening sessions around Western's campus, he learned that International Programs was underdeveloped and that people wanted to see a stronger program. To stimulate additional discussion, a White Paper about the strategic future for international

initiatives was developed. Shepard said that in Western's partnership in the North West Education Consortium (NWECC), one of the top priorities is collaboration on international education. He noted Western's new Strategic Plan states that our vision is to help strengthen the state of Washington to become globally competitive and globally aware.

Dr. Roger Gilman, Interim Director, Center for International Studies and Dean of Fairhaven College, said that over 200 people commented on the White Paper which resulted in five new priorities for international initiatives: Curriculum Objectives, International Experiences, Implementation of Programs, International Students and Faculty, and Funding. There were also many suggestions on ways to accomplish these initiatives.

Gilman noted that as part of the Curriculum Objectives initiative a new Minor in International Studies was implemented. The minor includes a general education class in global studies, learning a second language, and Study Abroad requirements. Learning a second language provides the skills necessary for global employment and global citizenship. The Study Abroad programs reinforces the language learning by providing an opportunity to travel to a different country to use the second language.

Gilman led a team of faculty and students presenters, who provided an overview of International Studies and International Programs at WWU:

- Paul Storer, Professor in the Economics Department and the Center for Canadian-American Studies, spoke on the role the center plays in International Studies. The center serves to connect faculty and students who have an interest in Canada. Western offers approximately 12 courses focused exclusively on Canada and numerous other courses with a component that relates to Canada. The center's mission is to inform and foster the development of the broader community and also works closely with the Border Policy Research Institute to study cross border trade, migration, and environmental issues.
- Richard Bruce, International Programs and Exchanges, talked about the international community at Western. This fall quarter Western had 256 international students from 36 countries, making up 1-2% of the entire student body. International students are both degree-seeking and non-degree seeking. Non-degree seeking international students enroll in one of three self-supporting English language and cultural orientation programs: The Asia University America Program, The Korea University Cultural Program, and The Intensive English Program. Bruce noted that in addition to the international students, Western currently has 26 international faculty and visiting scholars from 15 different countries.
- Larry Estrada, Director of American Cultural Studies, with the help of International Studies Programs, developed a Study Abroad course to help students broaden their knowledge and experience of the Caribbean region. The course has a strong Spanish language component and a strong service learning component to help the students understand the culture, etc. The Fairhaven 337 students traveled to the Dominican Republic. Since returning, Estrada noted that many of the students have maintained their connections with the people and leaders they met, and networks they made.
- Fairhaven 337 students Ariel Morgan, Emily Carlquist, and Elian Carbone presented on their individual experiences in the Dominican Republic.

3. REBASING THE BUDGET FOR THE 2011-2013 BIENNIUM

Bruce Shepard opened discussion about rebasing Western's Budget by presenting his PowerPoint ***Rebasing for FY 2011-13***. He said many decisions will be made based upon the predictions we make about Western's future. Shepard said we would be talking about the budget, vision and priorities at the state level, and courage at the local level to help make the decisions that are right for the long run.

Shepard began his discussion at the State level with vision and priorities. He noted that the State spending and revenue relative to the state's economy (measured by personal income) has been declining over the decade; the citizen's tax burden has been dropping. Shepard noted that as indicated in the State's General Fund, support for higher education is not a top priority and no significant improvement is expected in the future. He also noted that state support for Western is way below average and we have been underfunded for at least a decade. With the governor's proposed budget it gets worse. With the House and Senate budgets it's brought back to the historical gap, which adds up to Western's shortfall of approximately \$14M. Shepard said we are a long way from an actual budget. The proposed 2011-13 Governor's, House, and Senate budgets indicate large tuition increases and larger cuts, and a net cut to Western which ranges from \$9M to \$19M. The final numbers could be outside this range.

Shepard said in planning Western's future, we must consider the proposed budget reductions as well as the budget cuts that have already occurred. Shepard said a net reduction of \$24M for 2009-11 is now being implemented at Western.

Shepard said our strategies for the future need to be based upon an accurate view of the opportunities and threats facing Western. What are the assumptions that we should build upon for our strategies? Shepard said we should not assume that when the state's rainy day fund is replenished, state support for higher education will increase. Today's level of state support could be the "new normal." There are many options facing Western under the "new normal" -- become elite serving; offer smaller, less costly programs; or become a mediocre regional university, i.e. time to degree increases, more reliance on adjunct professors, graduation rates decrease, and undergraduate collaboration with outstanding faculty vanishes. Each option negates the Western Vision or the Western Promise, or both. Shepard said another option is "Rebasing." Assuming that state support does not increase, we adjust to the programs we can support on that new base budget and phase out programs that we cannot. Rebasing would be strategically driven by Western's Vision and Promise. What we continue to do, we will do well. Western will offer high quality courses at an exceptional value. This strategy will place Western in a good position for future reinvestment should state support increase.

Shepard said the difficult decisions made during the rebasing process will affect our entire campus community. He noted that under the governor's proposed budget, the net cut is equal to the entire budgets of 3 of our 7 colleges, the salaries of 20% of our faculty and all academic and student support services. The average of the House and Senate budgets the net cut is equal to the budgets of 2 of our 7 colleges, the salaries of 12% of our faculty and all building and grounds maintenance, repairs, heating and cleaning. Shepard said that rebasing needs to be done thoughtfully, carefully, and with the engagement of the campus. A preliminary rebasing process has begun and several options have been developed and scrutinized. When the final budget from Olympia is received, the entire campus must be involved in the decisions.

Shepard said that rebasing is the only acceptable option. It does not abandon Western's Vision and Promise.

In discussion with the Trustees, Shepard said that Western has worked hard to develop a bottom-up, transparent process for budgeting and planning. However, you cannot “bottom-up” to decide program eliminations. Discussions on rebasing and program elimination have been happening in a fairly restricted group of people. It will eventually be shared with the entire campus.

The Trustees expressed their concern that with the possible increase in tuition, Western will become unaffordable for most students and therefore become elite serving. We need to think about who are the students that we want to serve. Can we maintain accessibility for the At-Risk students? The Trustees are also concerned about the difficulty to constantly maintain the high quality without additional resources. There is the risk of becoming mediocre. Western needs to think about ways to increase revenue and ways the upcoming Comprehensive Campaign could factor in. They would like to see more detail on how the rebasing will protect Western’s core strengths.

Rebasing is being looked at by all areas of the university. The Associated Students are cutting programs and reinvesting the resources in other programs. Dr. Eileen Coughlin, Vice President for Student Affairs and Academic Support Services, noted that one outcome of the rebasing is that time to degree may be faster, which would offset some of the increased cost of tuition.

Shepard said that in Fall Quarter, there will be a comprehensive review of all graduate programs. Graduate programs that are weaker will be phased out. Those resources will be reinvested in the quality of the remaining graduate programs and our core of undergraduate programs.

Shepard said that Western is in daily discussions on the Kilmer-Carlyle Bill on Tuition Flexibility. Sherry Burkey, Associate Vice President for University Relations, will report on this bill at tomorrow’s meeting.

It was noted that the Board of Trustees’ responsibility in rebasing is to make sure that Western is very clear about the direction it is taking in the upcoming budget cuts, and the cuts that have already happened. The Board will hold Western accountable for delivering on those. If there are actual program eliminations, it is the Board’s responsibility to act on those. It is not their role to decide which program is eliminated.

Chair Madsen recommended that members of the Board read the AGB Cost Project: An Initiative on College Costs. Copies will be ordered and distributed to the Trustees.

At 4:47p.m. Chair Madsen announced that the Board would go into Executive Session for approximately 20 minutes to discuss matters as authorized by RCW 42.30.110.

At 5:10 p.m. the Board of Trustees meeting adjourned with no action to report.