

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, December 12, 2013**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Peggy Zoro called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 3:04 p.m., Thursday, December 12, 2013 in the Board of Trustees Conference Room, Old Main 340, at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington.

**Board of Trustees**

Peggy Zoro, Chair  
Karen Lee, Vice Chair  
Betti Fujikado, Secretary  
Dennis Madsen  
Dick Thompson  
Ralph Munro  
Sue Sharpe  
Heather Flaherty

**Western Washington University**

Bruce Shepard, President  
Brent Carbajal, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Eileen Coughlin, Senior VP, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services  
Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs  
Stephanie Bowers, Vice President for University Advancement  
Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations and Community Development  
Johann Neem, Faculty Senate President  
Carly Roberts, Associated Students President  
Lisa Wochos, Assistant Attorney General  
Sherry Burkey, Associate Vice President for University Relations and Community Development  
Paul Cocke, Director of University Communications  
Paul Dunn, Senior Executive Assistant to the President  
Barbara Stoneberg, Assistant to the President and Secretary to the BOT  
Elissa Hicks, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**2. LIBERAL ARTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE, Joint Board and Foundation Session**

The Trustees of Western Washington University and the Board of Directors for the Western Washington University Foundation met jointly with the leadership of the university to discuss the role of the liberal arts in education of the future. Brent Carbajal, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs introduced the subject for discussion. Carbajal said a Western education is rooted in the liberal arts and that students on campus live and breathe the many facets of a liberal arts education. He asked those in attendance what they see is the value of a liberal arts and sciences education, as members of the public, as board members and as employers.

Commenters outlined the value they see in an education that includes the liberal arts and sciences and suggested that a well-rounded education allows young people to discover new ways of thinking, teaches them to problem solve, think creatively and opens up critical thinking skills that they might not develop in a technical skill driven program. Discussions lead to what defines a liberal arts education. Consensus was that the liberal arts is an education beyond a specialty field that introduces students to different areas of education and not just their major or chosen field of study. Some suggested that a liberal arts education may have a slight negative connotation in today's society because of the word liberal. Board members agreed that liberal arts isn't necessarily liberal in nature, but is a well-rounded, all inclusive education foundation that better prepares Western students to be productive problem solving citizens after graduation whether they start their careers or go on to graduate school.

Johann Neem, Faculty Senate President and Associate Professor, briefly described his course syllabus for *HIST 131: Going to College in America* and introduced two students from the class, undecided major freshman Katie Thompson and senior History major Taylor Snyder. Thompson described to the Board members her experience of coming to Western, her experience with general requirement classes and what she has learned from Professor Neem's class. She said that many of her general requirement classes were very specific major qualification classes and that she wished they had been more of a general introduction to different fields of study. Snyder discussed how a liberal arts education helped him find his passion rather than just a career choice noting that history was not his original intended field of study, but once he started taking the classes he found it to be his true academic passion.

Carbajal thanked the Board members for the conversation and said that the subject will continue to be an ongoing conversation. He said that there are still improvements to be made and best practices to be implemented, but a liberal arts and sciences education foundation is and will continue to be important at Western into the future.

### **3. EXECUTIVE SESSION MAY BE HELD TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL, REAL ESTATE AND LEGAL ISSUES AS AUTHORIZED IN RCW 42.30.110.**

At 4:43 p.m. Chair Zoro announced that the Board would convene in Executive Session for approximately thirty minutes to discuss (real estate, personnel, and legal matters.)

The Board returned to open meeting at 5:08 p.m. with no action to report, and adjourned the meeting until Friday morning.