

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2024**

5. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Faith Pettis called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, August 16, 2024, in the Board of Trustees Conference room, Old Main 340, at Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington.

Board of Trustees Attendance:

Faith Pettis, Chair
Chris Witherspoon, Vice Chair (on Zoom)
Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee, Trustee
Ash Awad, Trustee
Sue Sharpe, Trustee
Mo West, Trustee
John Meyer, Trustee

Western Washington Attendance:

Sabah Randhawa, President
Becca Kenna-Schenk, President's Office Chief of Staff
Brad Johnson, Provost and Executive Vice President
Joyce Lopes, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs
Melynda Huskey, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services
Donna Gibbs, Vice President for University Relations & Marketing
Kim O'Neill, Vice President for Advancement
Jim Sterk, Athletics Director
Jacqueline Hughes, Chief Diversity Officer, Associate Vice President for Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (on Zoom)
Michael Slouber, Faculty Senate Presidents
Julie Nichols, AAG
Kerena Higgins, AAG
Elissa Hicks, Government Relations and the Board of Trustees Policy Coordinator
Rebecca Hansen-Zeller, Executive and Liaison to the Board of Trustees
Robert Clark, ATUS

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, June 13-14, 2024

The Board reviewed the minutes from the June 13-14, 2024, regular meeting.

Motion 10-01-2024: Trustee Mo West MOVED, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the president, approve the following minutes: Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, June 13 & 14, 2024.

Trustee Ash Awad seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Nobody signed up for public comment.

8. BOARD CHAIR REPORT

a. ACTION ITEM: RESOLUTION 2024-03, RECOGNIZING WWU WOMEN'S ROWING TEAM

The student athletes were introduced and recognized at the June 2024 Board meeting and were given a standing ovation from attendees. Today, the Board formally recognized the team's national title with a framed Resolution.

Trustee John Meyer read the Resolution.

WHEREAS, on June 1, 2024, the Western Washington University Women's Rowing Team won the 2024 NCAA Division II National Championship; and

WHEREAS, the team edged-out the second place team by one point in a tight four-way race to finish the historic season; and

WHEREAS, this victory brought home the ninth NCAA II Championship for the Vikings; and

WHEREAS, the team was the 2024 Great Northwest Conference Champions and seven student athletes earned All-GNAC Honors; and

WHEREAS, three student athletes earned All-American honors, including Division II Rower of the Year, *Mia Kipe*; and

WHEREAS, the team's accomplishments in the classroom were also impressive with fifteen student athletes earning GNAC All-Academic Awards; and

WHEREAS, the Coaching Staff was recognized as the NCAA Division II Coaching Staff of the Year; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University officially recognizes the Western Washington University

Women's Rowing Team for its outstanding accomplishments and extends to the team the Board's sincere congratulations on behalf of the entire university community.

John Meyer made a motion to approve this Resolution. Trustee Mo West seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

Athletics Director Jim Sterk and Coach Courtney Moeller accepted the plaque for the trophy case.

b. ACTION ITEM: RESOLUTION 2024-04, WELCOMING TRUSTEE TINA EKHTERAEE-SANAEE

Trustee Mo West read the Resolution.

WHEREAS, beginning on July 1, 2024, Governor Jay Inslee appointed **Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee** of Edmonds, WA to serve a one-year term ending on June 30, 2025, on the Western Washington University Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, **Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee** is a student in good standing at Western Washington University pursuing a bachelor's degree with a major in Psychology, and a double minor in Theatre and Honors; and

WHEREAS, **Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee** has a record of involvement in activities at Western including a lead mentor for Compass 2 Campus and as a research assistant in the Eating Disorder and Body Image Lab; and

WHEREAS, **Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee** excelled throughout the student trustee application and Associated Students committee review process; and

WHEREAS, **Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee** has declared her commitment to serve as a member of the Western Washington University Board of Trustees;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University officially extends a warm welcome to **Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee** as she begins her term on the Board.

Trustee Mo west made a motion to pass the Resolution. Trustee Sue Sharpe seconded. The motion passed 6-0 with Trustee Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee recusing herself.

The Trustees warmly welcomed Trustee Ekhteraee-Sanaee who expressed excitement about serving in the role.

c. ACTION ITEM: RESOLUTION 2024-05, RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF TRUSTEE SUE SHARPE

Trustee John Meyer read the Resolution and made a motion to approve.

WHEREAS, on October 1, 2012, **SUSAN K. SHARPE** of Bellingham, Washington, was appointed by Governor Christine Gregoire to serve a term on the Western Washington University Board of Trustees through September 30, 2018, and was reappointed for a second six-year term by Governor Jay Inslee ending September 30, 2024; and

WHEREAS, SUSAN K. SHARPE brought to her appointment the perspective of a proud WWU alumnus and her experience working as Executive Director of Chuckanut Health Foundation, Owner of Sue Sharpe Consulting, and as a health care planner, hospital manager and executive; and

WHEREAS, SUSAN K. SHARPE's service on this Board has added to an already distinguished record of community service with numerous statewide organizations and locally as a Board Member on the Northwest Economic Development Council, and Member and former President of the Bellingham Bay Rotary; and

WHEREAS, SUSAN K. SHARPE was recognized for her distinguished professional career and commitment to community service with a 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce; and recognition as one of '52 Women of Whatcom,' a recognition that celebrated local changemakers; and

WHEREAS, SUSAN K. SHARPE provided outstanding leadership as Chair of the Board of Trustees and as Chair of the Board's Finance, Audit, and Enterprise Risk Management Committee; and

WHEREAS, SUSAN K. SHARPE challenged and inspired her Board colleagues and University leaders to think boldly about the future of Western Washington University, accelerating progress toward achieving Western's strategic goals and priorities; and

WHEREAS, SUSAN K. SHARPE understood the role of the Board of Trustees and articulated a clear understanding of the governance responsibilities of the Board and its committees; and

WHEREAS, SUSAN K. SHARPE, combined steadfast leadership, thoughtful engagement, and warm collegiality with a personal commitment to advancing the best interests of each member of the Western community; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University that **SUSAN K. SHARPE** is hereby honored for outstanding service and dedication to the University and is extended the gratitude and best wishes of the entire university community.

Trustee John Meyer made a motion to pass the Resolution. The Resolution was approved 7-0.

Following presentation of the Resolution, Trustee Sharpe was presented with a gift from the Board. President Randhawa and each individual Trustee offered comments thanking Trustee Sharpe for her exemplary service. Trustee Sharpe then reflected on her close affiliation with Western Washington University as a student, as a community member, and as a Trustee. She noted specific strengths, including the stability of the university's leadership, that position Western to be a prized public gift with a positive reputation and bright future. Attendees recognized Trustee Sharpe with an appreciative standing ovation.

Chair Pettis then began the Chair's report by noting that Student Trustee, Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee, attended orientation and participated in her first Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee meeting, as well as yesterday's work session. She also reported that the NWCCU acted at their June meeting and confirmed a positive accreditation report. She also noted that over the summer, work has been done to form a Board Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing. The Board plans to consider a charter to form that committee this fall. Chair Pettis also shared that the Board held an executive session at their work session the day before and discussed the President's evaluation. In closing, Chair Pettis informed everyone that a special meeting will be called in the coming week to consider a lease agreement.

9. UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT REPORT

President Randhawa began by acknowledging the work being done to charter the ACSRI and added that we will be seeking input on the draft charter prior to bringing it to the Board for approval in October. During his assessment at the work session, President Randhawa noted the challenges associated with moving forward while maintaining stability. He shared that the university is facing critical issues related to the budget, both with revenue from the state and private sources, and with operational expenses. He emphasized that we need to chart a course for long-term stability and success for the institution. He closed by recognizing that the community faced challenges this past year and thanked Chief Diversity Officer, Jacqueline Hughes, for the work being done to strengthen the sense of community and belonging. He also noted appreciation to the Faculty Senate for planning forums to promote academic freedom and civil dialogue.

10. FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Chair Pettis noted that there was no Associated Students report at this meeting because their work does not begin until September. The Board looks forward to welcoming the AS representative at the October meeting.

Michael Slouber, Faculty Senate President, noted that the Senate did not meet over the summer. He has been working on administrative tasks such as filling vacancies and tracking issues that are emerging over the summer. He shared that he is looking at the Equity and Justice Task Force and examining how they can continue the work they are

charged with related to review of the General Undergraduate Requirements. President Slouber also raised the issue of generative AI use on campus and highlighted ways Faculty are addressing the issues associated with their use. He noted that Humanities and Social Sciences and Computer Science assessments face unique challenges related to AI tools being used by students and it is impacting individual programs in different ways. He shared that software is being offered to faculty across the country to generate letters of recommendation, which raises another set of ethical issues. He also shared that Academic Free Speech continues to be an important issue for Faculty. The Senate is partnering with Chief Diversity Officer, Jacqueline Hughes, to offer training for faculty, students and staff on how to have difficult conversations and then will host modeled conversations to discuss controversial issues. In the coming year, The Faculty Seante also wants to reinvigorate their participation in 360 performance reviews for Deans and other administrators. In closing, he stated that he is looking forward to working with a strong cohort this academic year.

11. BOARD FINANCE, AUDIT, AND ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Chair Sue Sharpe and FARM Committee Member Chris Witherspoon summarized the June 24 discussion about the enterprise risk management structure and priorities. At that meeting, Trustees discussed how identified risks are prioritized, managed and tracked. Trustees also discussed the difference between operational risks that are addressed primarily be the administration versus strategic risks that are of primary concern to the Board.

The FARM committee met again on July 25 for a business meeting. Many items from that agenda will come before the Board for further discussion and consideration for approval today. Committee Chair Sharpe reported that the Board has contracted with CliftonAllenLarson for the annual external audit. She thanked Vice President Lopes and her team for their willingness to work on the audit.

Board Chair, Faith Pettis, shared that Trustee Chase Franklin will assume the role of FARM Chair.

12. BOARD ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Chair Mo West gave a report on the July 17 AASSC meeting. Dean of Woodring College, Kevin Roxas, joined the committee for a discussion about the strengths of the college's programs and the unique challenges the college faces. The committee was interested in the idea of providing scholarship to students during their internships and shared Dean Roxas' observations about the need to elevate the stature of careers in social services and teaching and advocate for higher wages for those professions. The committee also heard a report on the Committee on Expressive Activity, a newly formed group that is exploring First Amendment activities on campus and communication of the university's policies. Provost Johnson reported that Faculty are working on forums for training and modeling ways to engage in difficult conversations.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

13. RECRUITMENT: REFLECTIONS ON 2023-24 CYCLE AND PLANS FOR 2024-25

Shelli Soto, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, began by sharing where we are in the recruitment, enrollment and registration process for Fall 2024. She noted that the challenges associated with the changes to FAFSA have been significant and will have impact fall enrollment. The disparate impact on specific student populations was noted. The enrollment goal for Fall 2024 was 3,300 first-year students. The actual number is expected to be closer to 3,100 is expected.

Associate Vice President Soto provided past enrollment numbers beginning in 2018, and shared projections through 2027 for both new first-year students, and total number of students. Despite national trends, Western is in a strong position to maintain healthy enrollments. The 2020 national census data was shared and indicates a significant decline in the number of individuals who will reach 18 in coming years. WA data on expected high school graduates shows a similar cliff, though not as stark as the national decline.

Shelli Soto then turned to recruitment strategies for 2024-25. She excitedly shared that Western will be granted access to contact information for all high school students in WA State. Western is prepared to use that information and implement tailored communication for those high school students and their parents. She next talked about direct admit to majors, which is of increasing interest to incoming students who have a preferred major. To address that interest, the College of Business and Economics is piloting a direct admit to major program to meet the growing interests in their high-demand programs. AVP Soto then shared that there is a group investigating the possibility of a Western Promise scholarship program. In closing, Shelli Soto shared that Western has long benefited from a robust pool of transfer applications and moving forward, we now have dedicated staff working exclusively with transfer recruitment and admissions.

14. 2025-2027 BIENNIUM STATE OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST FRAMEWORK

Becca Kenna-Schenk, President's Office Chief of Staff, introduced the broad budget concepts and how the information presented will provide context for the Board's consideration of approval of the 2025-27 State Biennium Operating Budget Request. Due to the university's budget challenges, Western's budget request will focus primarily on changes to our per student funding from the state.

Nora Selander, Director of Government Relations, began her report by sharing that Western has an outstanding reputation in Olympia and makes a strong case for our remarkable economic impact on the State. Director Selander shared that despite that positive economic output, Western has the lowest per student base funding of any of the state's 4-year institutions. Adjusting this per student base funding is Western's primary budget request.

Other requests include a coordinated request among the 4-year universities to change the fund split for employee compensation and ask the state to take on a greater share of employee pay increases. Another significant request is funding for an IT project to shift our Enterprise Resource Planning to a cloud-based system.

Nora Selander emphasized that despite Western's strong reputation, we will have to work hard to educate legislators and advocate for our requests. Chair Pettis offered that Trustees will be available to meet with legislators and work to advocate for these important requests.

15. S&A FEE AUDIT, PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Priya Sall, Interim Executive Director of Internal Audit, reported on the recent audit of the student and activity fees that are used to fund student programs across the university. The audit covered the 2023-24 school year and looked at both the allocation and disbursement of the funds. The objective of the audit was to ensure that the amounts allocated and disbursed were in line with existing laws, regulations and university policies. No non-compliance was identified in the audit.

Moving forward, Interim Executive Director Sall identified four opportunities for process improvement. The first is related to the S&A committee structure and oversight. The recommendation is that members of the committee should conduct themselves professionally and ensure that funds are used to benefit students broadly. A restructuring of the committee was recommended to avoid conflicts of interest, improve the culture, and promote broad student benefit from the decision-making. The second recommendation was to make reserve balances accessible. The third recommendation was for improvements in training and succession planning for AS officers so that there is stability during transitions. The final recommendation is that the AS budget for wages be consistently aligned based on the number of hours in the approved job descriptions. The management response from Enrollment and Student Services accepted the recommendations and has plans to implement changes in the coming year.

Chair Pettis asked Vice President Melynda Huskey to expand upon the first recommendation related to the committee structure and oversight. Vice President Huskey shared how changes to our current committee make-up and decision-making structure would result in a more transparent and equitable distribution of funds. Trustee Sharpe asked what changes can be implemented in the short-term to be sure conflicts of interest are managed differently this year. Vice President Huskey explained how this year is a transition year and that they are balancing stability of funding levels with changes to the process. Trustee Ekhteraee-Sanaee asked about potential resistance to the proposed changes. Melynda Huskey responded that she is committed to leading an inclusive process that includes an opportunity for students to express concerns, then agree on a set of principles on what S&A fees are meant to be for and how the committee's decisions will be made. Trustee Sharpe shared thoughts on the unique and important role that Internal Audit plays for the university and the reassurance it gives the governing Board.

ACTION ITEMS

16. APPROVAL OF S&A FEE DISTRIBUTION

This item was tabled and will be considered at the next meeting.

17. APPROVAL OF 2025-2027 BIENNIUM STATE OPERATING BUDGET REQUEST

Faye Gallant, Assistant Vice President for Strategy, Management and Budget, built upon Director Nora Selander's presentation of our state budget requests. She outlined the six decision-packages that the Board is being asked to consider for approval to submit to the state.

Motion 10-02-2024: Trustee Sue Sharpe MOVED, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the President, approve the 2025-2027 Biennium State Operating Budget Request of \$68,410,285 in incremental state funding in support of academic, administrative and department operations. With concurrence of the Board Chair, the President may make adjustments to the approved budget request in response to subsequent instructions from the Office of Financial Management, to advance consistency among submissions of Washington's six public baccalaureate institutions, or other adjustments as appropriate.

Trustee Ash Awad seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

18. APPROVAL OF SUMMER QUARTER DEGREES

Motion 10-03-2024: Trustee Tina Ekhteraee-Sanaee MOVED, that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, on recommendation of the faculty and subject to the completion of any unmet requirements, approves awarding undergraduate and graduate degrees to the candidates listed in the files of the Registrar and Graduate Dean, for Summer Quarter 2024, effective August 17, 2024.

Trustee John Meyer seconded the motion. The motion was approved 7-0.

INFORMATION ITEMS

19. WRITTEN REPORTS

- a. Enrollment Management Summary
- b. University Advancement Report
- c. Capital Program Report
- d. University Relations and Marketing Report
- e. Affirmative Action Programs Report

The Trustees accepted the reports.

20. TRUSTEE REMARKS

There were no additional remarks from Trustees.

21. DATES FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING

Chair Pettis noted that a special meeting will be called, likely next week. The next regular meeting is October 17-18, 2024, in Bellingham, WA.

22. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:57am.