WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REGULAR MEETING
August 13, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Phil Sharpe called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 3:00 p.m., August 13, 2009 at Lakewood Lodge, Bellingham, WA.

Board of Trustees
Kevin Raymond
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 External Relations
Paul Cocke, Director, University Communications
Eileen Coughlin, Vice President for Student Affairs & Academic Support Services
Matt Jarrell, President Associated Students
Scott Pearce, Vice President & Parliamentarian, Faculty Senate
Catherine Riordan, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations
Kathy Wetherell, Interim Vice President for Business & Financial Affairs

Guests
Senator Dale Brandland
Representative Kathy Haigh
Representative Kelli Linville
Representative Skip Priest
Representative Scott White

2. SPECIAL REPORT - *The Future of Higher Education in Washington State*

Chair Phil Sharpe welcomed members of the Washington State Legislative.

The following questions were asked of the legislators:

- **What can we (Board of Trustees) do to be more effective in advocating for higher education?**
- **Do you think you and your colleagues value the need for the public four-year sector?**

DISCUSSION NOTES:

Representative Haigh said the legislature preserved as much money as possible for early childhood education (birth to 5 years) since, from a student perspective, they are the most important population. If they are not educated properly, they will not go on to higher education institutions. K-12 students are protected by the state constitution, but they also were cut about 4%. Haigh said the legislature had to cut a significant amount for higher education. They only way to keep the cut to higher education under 10% was to significantly increase tuition (14%). Haigh said that higher education institutions can no longer be dependent on state dollars, and they need to develop more of a business model.

Representative Skip Priest reiterated that the legislature has a constitutional responsibility in funding K-12 education. Priest stated that in 2003, he and Fred Jarrett introduced the Performance Agreements to provide clarity on how higher education institutions spent dollars and what were the outcomes of these expenditures. He noted that faculty across the state have expressed reservations about the performance agreement approach. Priest also stated that when he is "door-belling," people are concerned about social services or K-12 education; no one is talking about higher education.

Priest said that higher education does not get the constituent "out-reach." This is the first meeting he has attended where Trustees are involved; it is very beneficial as it allows more time to meet people and to talk about the issues. He recommends more meetings like this when the legislature is not in session. The 5-10 minute meetings during the legislative session must be reminders, as opposed to presenting new issues.

Priest said there is the issue of the "Ivory Tower" nature with four year institutions. Universities need to be able to translate "the greater good" into jobs or more definitive benefits to the state.

Senator Brandland said the state budget is a matter of balance. In addition to the obligation to fund K-12 education, there is also an obligation to fund state prisons, health care, and other state agencies. Higher education was not talked about very much during the legislative session.

Brandland said the legislature is about "relationships." All the state universities need to make more of an effort to establish a relationship with their legislators.

Representative Scott White said the legislature, as a general rule, does not value the 4-year institutions. He said that people who live in university communities and who are employed by the university are the most concerned about the higher education institutions. White said in the next 4-6 years the legislature needs to be careful about making investments that will have a lasting, multiplier effect, and not a one-time expenditure. The stimulus dollars are not going to be available in the next biennium and there is going to be an "epic battle" for state dollars between human services, and K-12. Higher education will be caught in the middle.

Representative Kelli Linville, said the real "raining day" fund for the budget is in social services, not higher education. Higher education took the biggest cut in education, but not in the state budget. There are a lot of people looking at the impacts of the social service cuts on health care, developmental disabilities, nursing homes, hospitals, long-term care reimbursement rates, etc.

Linville said that people value higher education because of where it is on the continuum of funding. People care about the economic engine of our state and know that without degrees

from 2-year and 4-year institutions, we would not have enough teachers, doctors, and other professionals in our state.

Trustee Warner said that higher education in Washington State, from a quality standpoint, is very good, compared with other Global Challenge States. Not so with K-12 education. If we are successful in the Early Learning and K-12 environment, it will create a higher demand for higher education. Warner said the future economy of the state is dependent on more people having a four-year degree.

Representative Skip Priest said that in terms of cost, the legislature will be looking at what the Community Colleges can provide. Are we utilizing the Community College system effectively? How does the delivery system meet the needs of the students as well as the local economy? Community Colleges tend to be more responsive to local needs. The legislature may have to do a better job of identifying economically driven needs, and provide 4-year degrees at community colleges.

Representative Haigh does not want higher education to be in competition with the community colleges. Haigh said that community colleges have value, but we cannot lose sight of what the regional 4-year and the research institutions have to offer. Our 4-year institutions are different and the legislature needs to do a better job of understanding those institutions' goals and purposes. Haigh said the legislators and the 4-year institutions need to work together before the legislative sessions. The institutions need to explain, (in a possible 1-1/2 hour meeting) how they are using the investments, what their real costs are, how they are making their decision, what is the timing of their decisions, so she can recognize the challenges at a state level.

President Bruce Shepard mentioned that Compass 2 Campus program, the pipeline project piloted by Western Washington University. The project will raise the aspirations of K-12 at-risk student to graduate from high school and go on to higher education. The project is partnered with Skagit Valley College, Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College and Northwest Indian College. The hope is that eventually the program will be statewide.

Shepard said that Western is partnering with 2-year colleges and is now offering degree programs on four 2-year campuses.

Sharpe said Community Colleges offer community education such as programs for Displaced Homemakers and non-degree programs for people in the workforce, i.e. English as a second language for non-English speaking immigrants. There is a risk in turning Community Colleges into Junior Colleges, in that people needing this type of education, are pushed out. If you then turn Junior College into 4-years you are not going offer a high quality of education.

Linville asked what kind of discussion happens between 2-year and 4-year regional and research institutions to define missions and goals so that you are not creating competition amongst themselves. Shepard said the institutions are more effectively talking together to present common positions and are going to test some different models to be even more collaborative. All institutions should be "entangled" with each other as they have a stake in each other's success.

Representative Skip Priest said the Community College Board talks universally with a coordinated agenda, while the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) for 4-year

institutions does not. Shepard said the six four- institutions have more complimentary and less duplicative missions.

Representative Scott White, a member of the Higher Education Committee, said the 2-year institutions and the 4-year institutions are in competition for a finite amount of resources. The 2-year colleges exist in many districts and are a priority for the legislators that represent those districts. The challenge is to get the 2-year and 4-year institutions operating in concert and not in competition. White said the 4-year institutions need to clearly articulate their economic development impact on the state as a whole.

Linville noted that well-educated citizens are good for the economy and good for democracy. They will be making the political decisions in the future and will need a broad well-rounded education.

Haigh said the real value of 4-year and research institutions is to identify higher level skills needed for the future and to articulate to the legislature that they are providing leadership for the future. Institutions need to articulate to their faculty that they need to think differently and move in new directions. Haigh said that Western is well positioned with such programs as Brain Research.

Priest said that when we talk about degree values we also need to talk about the cost of a degree. If we want to promote economic development, meet the needs of the bio-tech sector, or be able to compete with out of state industries, we need to recognize that those types of degrees cost more. Priest said that because people want to move here, Washington has been able to import out-of-state people with 4-year degrees. Consequently, we have not had to meet the demand in some areas in our own 4-year and Master's degree programs.

Trustee Warner agreed. The percentage of Washington high school graduates who go on to get a college degree is much less that the global competitive states, especially in the lower-income level.

Shepard said Western is trying to determine what programs to offer by what programs students are willing to pay for. At Western, with the 14% tuition increase, the average cost for a full-time in-state resident undergraduate is below the national average. The cost for out-of-state tuition is above the national average. Shepard said that the Trustees decided not to raise the out-of-state tuition as we would have forced ourselves out of that market. We are creating additional capacity for resident students through the marginal increased revenue from out-of-state students.

Trustee Zoro said that with the current budget situation, it is critical that higher education speak with a more collective voice. We need more meetings outside the legislative session and communicate more with the legislators as to what is happening in higher education. What is best forum to do that?

Linville said the legislators need solutions; creative thinking from the institutions that will better help them solve the problems. Brandland said the legislators need other ideas for solutions -- other than providing more funding. He emphasized that relationships at this level are very important.

White said that in the future, universities are going to have to think about how they are doing business internally, but also doing business transparently. The legislators need to know the

cost of running a program, have positive incentives for utilizing classroom space – activity based budgeting. The legislators need to know that Western is operating efficiently and that we can quantify the impact on the community.

Priest thanked Western for its leadership on the Math & Science Teacher Initiative. Western had initiative to recognize the need in the state and provide the leadership.

Matt Jarrell, President of Associated Students, asked what was the best way for students to communicate their ideas with the legislators? Linville said that she would welcome being invited to address the students in a formal or informal setting. Brandland said the students and the Trustees should speak with one voice to the legislators.

Brandland recognized the classified staff attending the meeting. The cuts to the higher education budget, impacts not only students but also the staff. The "One Voice" from the students and Trustees also needs to include the faculty and staff of the institution. Budget cuts to institutions impact the whole campus community.

Haigh suggested that Western students put together a forum that includes the faculty and staff to address several issues. There is a value of getting everyone together to see all part of the element. To move it forward, they all have to be working together.

Haigh said that because we are teaching people to be "life-long learners," the 4-year and research institutions need to think of alternative ways to offer classes; to offer the opportunity for working people to go back to school via night classes or online learning, etc. There also needs to be the opportunity for students who were only a few credits short of graduation to return to school to complete their credits. Dr. Coughlin, Vice President for Student Affairs said that Western currently offers "Destination Graduation" for these students.

Shepard said we are beginning conversations on campus about what it means to be a "publicly purposed university" and what that means in how we deliver education, etc. Western currently offers on-line learning.

Trustee Raymond asked the legislators to address the revenue side of the state. How can we be sure government is doing the things we expect them to do and also increase the revenue side. A couple of options could be smaller government or Tax Reform.

Priest said he does not believe increasing taxes is the answer, citing California's and Oregon's deficit problems. If we do ask for additional revenue, we must show that it is directly helping the majority of the citizens of the state.

Haigh said that we need to look at demographics. People retire here because we have no State Income Tax. Haigh also said the university needs to think about different ways to fund-raise and make connections with people who are able to contribute. Connect with the people who care about higher education and ask them to support students who have higher financial needs.

White noted that Tax Reform does not necessary mean new or higher taxes. Some tax reform measures could shift the tax burden, benefitting the working families in the state. There is a marketing issues that needs to be considered in support of an income tax.

Brandland said the university needs to prepare for additional budget cuts in the future. The universities should not simply ask for more money but think about the ways to better deliver their product. The 4-years will have to identify solutions to this problem on their own.

Sharpe said that Western has had to make some significant cuts, but because of the talent of the classified staff, faculty, and administrators, we will come out the better and more efficient for it. Western is going to be able to deliver "more for less." Through the new transparent budget process on Western's campus, we will be able to demonstrate to the legislators the value of what we are doing. In return, we will ask for more freedom from regulatory requirements. Sharpe said that Western needs flexibility in tuition setting. We are a high demand institution and need to be able to capitalize on that asset. Western needs to be able to continue to deliver a high quality product.

The legislators thanked Western for the invitation to present to the Board of Trustees. The Board and the legislators agreed to continue to talk about future challenges.

Meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.