

**Western Washington University  
Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
Friday, October 14, 2016**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Sue Sharpe called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 9:03 a.m., in the Boardroom, Old Main 340, in Bellingham, WA.

**Board of Trustees**

Sue Sharpe, Chair  
Chase Franklin, Vice-Chair  
John Meyer, Secretary  
Betti Fujikado  
Earl Overstreet

**Absent**

Karen Lee  
Mo West  
Abigail Ramos

**Western Washington University**

Sabah Randhawa, President  
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  
Brian Burton, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Stephanie Cheng, Associated Students President  
Kristen Larson, Faculty Senate President  
Rob Olson, Assistant Attorney General  
Paul Cocke, Director of University Communications  
Paul Dunn, Senior Executive Assistant to the President  
Barbara Sandoval, Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees  
Rayne Rambo, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**Breakfast with the 2016 Introductions and Convocation Winners**

Steven Garfinkle, Outstanding Faculty Leadership Award Recipient  
Jeannine Woelkers, Outstanding Classified Staff Award Recipient  
Lisa Rosenberg, Professional Staff Organization Award Recipient  
Trula Nicholas, Diversity Achievement Award Recipient  
Joseph Trimble, Diversity Achievement Award Recipient  
James Hearne, Carl H. Simpson Bridging Award Recipient  
Pete Elich, Philip E. Sharpe Jr., Community Engagement Award Recipient  
Sue Sullivan, Morse Hall Fire Restoration Team Award Representative

## **2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

As per Amended RCW 28B.35.110, the Board of Trustees provided time for public comment. One person signed up to testify before the Board and Chair Sharpe gave her the opportunity to address the Board regarding collective bargaining for classified staff that are members of the Public Schools Employees Union.

## **3. BOARD CHAIR REPORT**

Trustee Sharpe thanked the Associated Students Board President, Stephanie Cheng and Faculty Senate President, Kristen Larson for the time spent together in the Thursday joint session. Trustee Sharpe stated that it was a very informative session and provided insight into some of the issues and challenges shared governance are facing this academic year. The board appreciated the opportunity to share our joint commitment to supporting and advancing Western under our new leader, President Randhawa and his team.

Trustee Sharpe reported that the board held a work session in August that focused on board governance, assessment, and presidential success. The board discussed issues facing Higher Education and how the board can best help the new President and his team, advance the goals of Western and its role in the state of Washington.

Trustee Sharpe shared that the larger national strategic issues include, student access and success, affordability, and advancing equity, diversity and inclusion, campus safety, financial sustainability, the importance of academic quality, and building the partnerships needed for the future. She said these issues were all identified in the presidential search process and are held as priorities at Western adding that these topics will be the framework by which we think about Western moving forward. Trustee Sharpe also addressed the issue of campus safety. She mentioned the recent front page interview with President Randhawa in the Bellingham Herald. She read from the article quoting President Randhawa, "safety is more than just physically safety, part of it is when we bring students that they really feel at home and they are physically, emotional, and psychologically secure in their new home." Sharpe finished by saying that the quote really captures what we are all here to do.

## **4. FACULTY SENATE**

Faculty Senate President, Kristin Larson addressed the board and reported that Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) is assessing the General University Requirements, (GUR) process and is currently reviewing a report from the task force. The task force from last academic year was asked to bring forward models that are successful nationwide and determine how some features of those models might be implemented into our own GUR program.

The University Planning Research Council (UPRC) will be working towards structuring the strategic planning initiative which will include representation across campus and possibly charging a sub-committee with regards to the biennium budget.

## **5. ASSOCIATED STUDENTS**

Associated Students President, Stephanie Cheng informed the board that she has been working with Provost Carbajal and Dean Francisco Rios to select two students to participate on the search committee for the Senior Vice-President for Enrollment and Student Services position noting that they have now been identified. She reported that the Associated Students Board meetings have begun and everyone is in full swing. Cheng addressed the issue of voter registration, voting, and the legislative agenda on campus. She stated that as a university we are very committed to our motto, "Active Minds Changing Lives, so it is important to encourage students to vote in this very important election. Cheng said it is important that we remind students that we all make choices in all the things we do, and voting is one of those things.

## **6. ENROLLMENT REPORTS AND TRENDS**

President Randhawa introduced Senior Vice President Eileen Coughlin to present the Enrollment Report.

Vice President Coughlin said that the materials and presentation on enrollment were intended to provide a background on Western's enrollment planning process along with an enrollment report for fall 2016. She noted that in recent year's enrollment planning at Western has been focused on shaping enrollment relative to changing needs in the State of Washington, while keeping total enrollment on campus about the same. In addition, Western has moved to a net tuition revenue model in shaping undergraduate enrollment with non-resident students which has allowed investments that support resident students.

Coughlin said that during this period of time, shaping enrollment has been reflected in academic changes such as moving to a full Engineering program, growing Computer Science and responding to an increase in areas such as Kinesiology. In addition, the demand in STEM fields has grown significantly and led to a strong decision package request for the next biennium. Coughlin said that these changes are all a part of shaping enrollment to meet the needs of the State of Washington.

Vice President Coughlin said that the Faculty Senate has been actively involved in supporting these directions through the University Planning and Resources Council. In addition, faculty governance advises Admissions through the Senate Recruitment, Admissions and Support Committee (RASC), and also through representation on an advisory committee to the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Services. Coughlin said that the advisory committee led campus wide conversations that included students, about the needs of undergraduates who are increasingly low income, first generation, and underrepresented in higher education. In addition to these efforts, the Faculty Senate has been working on climate in the classroom, together with evaluating enrollment philosophy and approaches to Extended Education. She added that the University has also been increasing active enrollment in distance sites - the most exciting of which is the new Poulsbo partnership - reflecting the work of key academic leaders in response to direct legislative interest and support.

Coughlin said that the future of enrollment at Western is an important part of the upcoming review of the University's strategic plan under President Randhawa. This commitment is focused on inclusive excellence with diverse and globally prepared students.

Trustees inquired as to the strategic difference between the word objective and planning, asking if the university has an objective with respect to how enrollment should increase and decrease or if the university has a planning outlook that mostly reacts to demand within a plans ability to react. Coughlin responded by explaining that Western has been clear with the legislature that Western will not grow if the legislature is not going to invest. She said that the planning of total enrollment and off campus enrollment has grown because that is where the legislature has invested. Coughlin said that the shaping of enrollment are in response to changing demographics, first generation, low income and diverse students coming through the pipeline adding that Western is well prepared both in terms of the experience that student are having and our ability to attract students to come to Western. She explained that his is particularly important due to Western's location from Seattle, and important because low income, first generation students are comparing the University of Washington that has higher tuition but students can live at home to Western with lower tuition, but students must move away from the Seattle area. Coughlin said that the total cost of education is strained when you have to move away.

Trustee Franklin asked what would happen if the state said there is adequate funding to double the rate of the increase in enrollment. Would that be something Western could respond to? Coughlin stated that it would depend upon the amount of increase. She said that we already see the strain in the sciences with a lack of lab space and capacity. Western continues working to catch up with the demand adding that the STEM proposal for the next state budget to support growth in Computer Science and Engineering is a perfect example of the demand for growth.

President Randhawa added that as we think about the long term in strategic planning, it is worth asking if the state is really serious about the 2023 stated goal that states that every adult in Washington age twenty-five to forty-four will have at least a high school diploma and of those adults 70% of the same population have a post-secondary credential. Randhawa stated that understanding what Westerns contribution can be to help the state meet their objective and what the implications are is important.

Coughlin added that we need to assess quality, ask what Western wants to be, how that quality reflects how much Western grows and whether or not that can be managed. All of those questions are part of the strategic planning process. Coughlin explained that Western has lost some of its position in recruitment and yield within freshman admissions adding that the trend has become challenging due to the rise of students with greater need. Coughlin added that there are some institutions with greater scholarship dollars and Western has looked into investments for next fall that will help with this. Trustee Meyer inquired if this explains why there is a higher percentage of admittances to applications? Coughlin responded that when your yield goes down it takes a greater number of admits to reach the same number in enrollment. She said when Western invested another half a million dollars in tuition waivers in 2013, our yield was higher the following year

Chair Sharpe announced a break at 10:17 am. The board returned and reconvened the meeting at 10:32 am

## **7. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

President Randhawa provided an overview and national context for Western's strategic planning process starting this fall. The core topics of strategic planning include diversity, student success, student access, financial sustainability, and affordability. President Randhawa said these are topics where a lot has been said over the last decade, but nationally the needle has not moved.

He said the task is to not so much to see what no one has yet seen, but to think of what no one has thought about that everyone else sees.

President Randhawa referenced trend analysis charts that provides a snap shot of how Western compares to other state institutions and gives Western a sense of direction. These comparisons will provide information for conversations during the strategic planning process.

In terms of the process, President Randhawa reported that he has asked Brent Carbajal, Chief Academic Officer of the University and John Bowers, Chair, Faculty Senate, University Planning and Resources Counsel to co-chair a group that will lead the strategic planning process. The charge to the group is taking stock of where we are, our environment and what we can forecast about our environment going forward, assessing the educational workforce needs in the state of Washington and the region, recognizing the support from the state, but that the state support is not going to advance us in excellence going forward. He said that the support to sustain the core education enterprise is critical and we should do everything we can to position Western for maximum support from the state. President Randhawa stated the importance of creating a strategic plan that it is aspirational enough to make a convincing case for investment in Western in terms of private philanthropy, organizations, and industry. He finished by stating "What is Western's place in the world, what is the place of our graduates in the world, and what is our North Star moving forward."

Trustee Sharpe inquired about a timeline for the strategic plan. President Randhawa stated that it takes time, but a complete draft would be completed by the end of the academic year giving us the summer to work with external constituents and outside influences. He expects that in late winter/spring 2017/18 we will start working on a business plan allowing time for the strategic plan to develop and the 2017-19 state budget to be shaped as well.

## **8. AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Trustee Overstreet reported that the Audit Committee is committed to the function of the committee which includes integrity, efficiency, and risk management. There is a financial component to each of these characteristics. Over the course of the next academic year there will be opportunities to share this information with the board and the campus community. Reporting on activities of the Audit Committee, Trustee Overstreet said there was a State Auditor entrance conference reporting on upcoming financial statement and accountability audits. Also the committee received a report from Business and Financial Affairs on semi-annual internal controls and the draft 2015-16 annual report. He said there was also a report from internal audit on their activities. There was also a report from President Randhawa regarding internal audit administrative structure. In President Randhawa's presentation he recommended changing internal audit administrative reporting from the Assistant Vice President of Business and Financial Affairs to the Vice President of Business of Financial Affairs. President Randhawa also recommended that while we have identified multiple types of engagements that might be done by internal audit, audit, consultative, and investigative, that the type of engagement be included in the approved schedule and any changes to those types of engagements be approved by the audit committee. The audit committee concurred with President Randhawa's recommendations. Finally, Trustee Overstreet advised the board that a search is underway for a Director of Internal Audit. He said that four finalists have been identified and those finalists are undergoing campus interviews in the near future.

## **9. BOARD GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Trustee Franklin reported that the Board Governance Committee would be selecting trustees to attend the upcoming Association of Governing Boards Conference being held in Dallas, Texas. It was also reported that the Board Governance Committee was working towards clarifying the term, "fiduciary responsibility" in their statement of expectations. The committee seeks to play an active role and will work to help guide future board meeting agendas to support the president and align around key issues including, diversity, equity and inclusion. He said that the joint session that was held on Thursday of this two day meeting was a direct example of this work. And the combined boards were able to highlight these topics in their joint session.

## **10. BOARD OF TRUSTEE WEBPAGE OVERVIEW**

Barbara Sandoval, Assistant to the President/Secretary to the Board of Trustees, gave an overview of the Board of Trustees website. The goal of the most recent changes was to make the website more current and allow trustees to access information more efficiently.

## **11. INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **a. Academic Affairs Report**

Provost Brent Carbajal provided a written report regarding the University's Freshman Interest Groups (FIG) Update.

### **b. Capital Program Report**

Vice President Rich Van Den Hul provided a written report on the University's capital projects.

### **c. University Advancement Report**

Vice President Stephanie Bowers provided a written report on the University's advancement and engagement.

### **d. University Relations and Community Development Report**

Vice President Steve Swan provided a written report on the recent activities of University Relations and Community Development.

## **12. DATE FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

December 8 & 9, 2016 in Bellingham

**13.** The meeting adjourned at 11:14 am.