

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**REGULAR MEETING
February 12, 2009**

I. 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., February 12, 2009 in Old Main 340, Western Washington University, Bellingham,

Board of Trustees

Hannah Higgins
Howard Lincoln (via conference phone)
Dennis Madsen, Secretary
Phil Sharpe, Chair
John Warner
Peggy Zoro, Vice Chair

Western Washington University

Bruce Shepard, President
Wendy Bohlke, Assistant Attorney General
Sherry Burkey, Associate Vice President for University Relations
Stephanie Bowers, Vice President for University Advancement
Paul Cocks, Director, University Communications
Eileen Coughlin, Vice President for Student Affairs & Academic Support Services
Erik Lowe, President, Associated Students
Dennis Murphy, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
George Pierce, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs
Paula Gilman, Executive Director for University Planning and Budgeting
Buff Schoenfeld, Executive Assistant to the President
Elizabeth Sipes, Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Barbara Stoneberg, Administrative Assistant to the President
Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations

II. SPECIAL REPORTS

A. Discussion of President's Mid-Year Report – The Strategic Direction for the University

President Shepard's Mid-Year Report is the result of 90 listening sessions across the campus, the Bellingham community and around the state. Shepard's remarks were shaped by Western's commitment to become the premier public comprehensive university the country.

There was brief discussion of some of the 15 initiatives outlined in Shepard's Mid-Year Report. In response to a question, Shepard said that the campus will receive reports on a "as needed basis." The next major report will be the decisions and outcome of the completed budget process. An annual report to the university community is also planned for the future. Shepard said it will take the entire campus community, engaged and working together, to make Western the premier institution in the country. Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations, noted that there is a level of excitement on campus because people now have an opportunity to contribute, to be a part of the solution and make a difference.

Shepard thanked Barbara Stoneberg and Buff Schoenfeld for their hard work on this project.

B. Update on Budget Scenarios and Budget Process

Paula Gilman, Executive Director of University Planning and Budgeting updated the Board on the budget process and distributed the Timeline for the 2008-09 and 2009-11 Budget Processes. Gilman said the planning units budget reduction proposals, including reduction scenarios, necessary investments or opportunities for new investment, reallocation of existing resources to fund priorities, planning unit SCOT analysis, and response to unit-relevant cost savings suggestions from the campus community, will be posted to the web on March 10.

Gilman said the Planning Units will present their budget proposals on March 18 & 19. The President, VPs and Deans will meet April 14 through 29 to discuss proposals and recommendations will be posted to the web for public comment on May 11. The final budget recommendations will be posted to the web on May 22. At the June 12 Board of Trustees Meeting, the 2009-11 tuition levels and the 2010-11 Operating Budget Plan will be presented to the Board for approval. The Board will also be presented the 2011-12 Draft budget allocation plan.

President Bruce Shepard presented the Board with two budget scenarios based on the Governor's budget. Scenario 1 will result in a \$13 Million net cut for Western and Scenario 2 will result in a \$24 million net cut. The consequences of these kinds of budget reductions would result in cuts in instruction, loss of class seats, increased class size, and increased time for students to graduate. Shepard said that many jobs will be lost, adversely affecting both the university and Whatcom County.

Shepard said they are considering several alternatives under Scenario 2, including admitting tuition-paying students, knowing that classes would not be available to serve many of them; making the university smaller; and through a combination of revenue measures – at the state level, Federal Stimulus dollars, and tuition – bring Scenario 2 back to Scenario 1.

In response to a question, Shepard said that WWU is following the Governor's directive and is freezing all employees' compensation and not filling vacant positions. Sherry Burkey, Associate Vice President for University Relations, said that at the state level, there is talk about early retirement plans, increasing employees' contribution towards their health benefits, and delaying state commitments to pension funds.

In a response to a question regarding reduction in financial aid to students, Burkey said the Governor has proposed reducing the State Need Grant eligibility and eliminating the Washington Scholars Program. Burkey said the state is looking at several different budget reduction scenarios and their impact on higher education.

The Presidents of the state regional institutions presented the impact of the proposed budget cuts to the Higher Education Committee in Olympia on February 11. They will be presenting to the Senate Ways and Means Committee on February 16 and to the Education Appropriations Committee on February 17.

Erik Lowe, Associated Students President, expressed his concern on trying to cover the budget shortfalls with tuition. The cost of attending university is the number one barrier to access. If tuition is raised, this will have a negative effect on current and future students. Trustee Sharpe noted that access will be affected by all of the budget scenarios.

Shepard reported that the leadership of WWU meets at 7:30 a.m. every Thursday for a briefing from Burkey and to discuss the budget issues.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:43 p.m. Chair Sharpe announced that the Board would go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter and pending legal matters authorized under RCW 42.30.110 for approximately 15 minutes.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.