

**Western Washington University  
Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
Friday, April 17, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair, Trustee Earl Overstreet called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 8:00 a.m., via Zoom. A quorum was established by roll call.

**Board of Trustees**

Earl Overstreet, Chair – *via Zoom*  
Chase Franklin, Vice Chair – *via Zoom*  
John Meyer, Secretary – *via Zoom*  
Faith Pettis – *via Zoom*  
Hunter Stuehm – *via Zoom*  
Karen Lee – *via Zoom*  
Mo West – *via Zoom*  
Sue Sharpe – *via Zoom*

**Western Washington University**

Sabah Randhawa, President  
Brent Carbajal, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs  
Stephanie Bowers, Vice President for Advancement  
Melynda Huskey, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services  
Donna Gibbs, Vice President for University Relations and Marketing  
Becca Kenna-Schenk, Executive Director, Government Relations  
Jeff Young, Faculty Senate President  
Noelani DeFiesta, Associated Students President  
Melissa Nelson, Assistant Attorney General  
Paul Dunn, Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees  
Barbara Sandoval, Senior Executive Assistant to the President  
Rayne Rambo, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Trustee Overstreet acknowledged the tremendous impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on every dimension of private and public life. Overstreet expressed on behalf of the Trustees their empathy and solidarity with students, faculty, and staff of Western, whose academic, professional, and personal lives have been so roughly disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Overstreet added the Trustees' admiration and deep gratitude for the resilience of the Western community, and for the extraordinary efforts that have been made to keep Western running under very difficult conditions. He thanked everyone for their tremendous efforts and grace under pressure, and expressed the Trustees' pride in being a part of the Western community.

## 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION 04-03-2020

Trustee Meyer moved that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the President, approve the following minutes:

- Board of Trustees Special Meeting April 7, 2020
- Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, April 17, 2020
- Board of Trustees Special Meeting, April 28, 2020
- Board of Trustees Special Meeting, May 8, 2020

The motion was voted on by roll call.

Roll Call for the Vote:

Trustee Sue Sharpe - Yes  
Trustee Karen Lee – Yes  
Trustee Faith Pettis – Yes  
Trustee Mo West – Yes  
Trustee Hunter Stuehm - Yes  
Trustee John Meyer – Yes  
Trustee Chase Franklin – Yes  
Trustee Earl Overstreet, Chair - Yes

The motion passed.

## 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

As per Amended RCW 28B.35.110, the Board of Trustees provided time for public comment. No one signed up for public comment.

## 3. WESTERN'S CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE: PUBLIC SAFETY, ACADEMIC, OPERATIONAL AND FISCAL IMPACTS

President Randhawa expressed his sincere gratitude to students, faculty, and staff for the part that each has played in delivering and engaging in a very different learning environment and educational experience on very short notice, and in ensuring the health and safety of our Western, Bellingham and Whatcom County communities. He noted that the agenda item would be an open dialogue that actively engaged the trustees and the Faculty Senate and the Associated Students Presidents.

Randhawa detailed that the discussion is intended to cover important dimensions of Western's response to the pandemic crisis; specifically, health and safety, teaching and learning, research and outreach, and budget and operations, which are all critical components to Western's work that directly impacts Western's students and Western's community partnerships.

President Randhawa introduced Melynda Huskey, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services and noted that she has been central to Western's response the coronavirus pandemic and has done an outstanding job leading the Incident Command Structure (ICS) team.

Huskey noted that Western has been in an Incident Command setting since the first of March and that there are more than sixty people actively engaged on a daily basis with ICS activities, with over ten thousand hours invested in responding to and implementing plans that serve to Western's students, faculty, staff and protect the University during this unprecedented circumstance. She shared the objectives and framework that guides the work of ICS, including clear and frequent communications to the campus community, maintaining continuity of Western's operations, and protecting life safety, and that they continue to identify and implement strategies to minimize the spread of the disease. Huskey explained that the ICS also determined guiding principles that included acting in the interest of the larger Bellingham community as well as the campus community, and that communication would consistently emphasize Western's rejection of virus-related stigma and bias. She expressed that she has been honored to serve as Incident Commander to a very prepared, collaborative, and devoted group of individuals whose work will be reflected in the discussion at hand.

Huskey explained that Western has been working with Whatcom Unified Command to create a Memorandum of Understanding that will allow for continued communication and collaboration with the larger Whatcom Community. She noted that as response to the pandemic continues, and the sense of urgency transitions to an ongoing operational condition, gradually the functions of ICS are being returned to the existing structures of the University. ICS will continue to exist to maintain certain health and federal assistance reporting and in the event that emergency response is required again.

Huskey acknowledged the work of the Student Health Center that is currently functioning with telehealth visits that include behavioral health and basic medical needs for students. She added that students with respiratory health needs can be seen at a separate Respiratory Clinic that is located on campus as recommended by the American College Health Association. She noted the Student Counseling Center is also functioning using tele-counseling sessions to support students in need.

Huskey highlighted the work of the Admissions Office to provide new Western students opportunities to connect virtually and support their journey throughout the enrollment process. She acknowledged that the Office of Student Life plans to reach out to each incoming freshman to make a personal outreach to support and acknowledge that the disruption of the end of their final year and the impacts that has had in their journey to higher education. Trustee Stuehm commended the work of the Office of Student Affairs and their work supporting students. Trustee Pettis echoed the remark.

Brent Carbajal, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs acknowledged the work of Western's faculty and commended the patience, collaboration, cooperation, and innovation put forward to make the adjustments needed to teach spring quarter online. He explained that the learning curve for making the transition was great, but with the technology available and the expertise of Western's Academic Technology and User Services (ATUS) staff the outcome has been a success. Carbajal provided an overview of the framework used to pivot from in-person class teaching to remote, online learning. He acknowledged the work that was already in place by John Farquhar, Director, Academic Technologies and Justina Brown, Instructional Designer in the Center for Instructional Innovation and Assessment, that provides guidelines and resources on continuing to teach, work, and learn remotely. Farquhar noted that technology resources and software updates were made available to students by lending them equipment for the duration of the quarter so they were able to complete their work from home. Brown reported that professional development was made available to faculty to help assist with the transition to remote learning that included online seminars and informational documents.

Donna Gibbs, Vice President for University Relations and Marketing provided an overview of the communications to the campus community related to the coronavirus pandemic. She reported that

prioritized advertisement continues to students that have been accepted but have not committed to their freshman year at Western. She reported that the communications to this cohort include updates on extended deadlines, virtual campus tours, ask-a-counselor chats, and a virtual admissions micro-site that compiles all coronavirus updates in one site. She added that creative outreach continues to in state and out-of-state high school sophomores and juniors, including a video featuring an undergraduate and graduate alumni research team at the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, CA working with the Mars Rover Team in conjunction with Melissa Rice, Professor of Planetary Geology at Western. She noted that metrics show that there has been increased traffic on the Western web site that can be attributed to more parents and students seeking information and reassurance for their future at Western.

Becca Kenna-Schenk, Executive Director of Government Relations provided an update on the forecast of the impacts of state revenues because of the coronavirus pandemic and a official quarterly forecast report will be available after June 17<sup>th</sup> that will provide a clearer sense of the actual receipt of state revenues for the remainder of the 2019-2020 biennium. The impact can be softened by the Washington State Rainy Day Fund and the federally funded CARES Act that includes two funding opportunities for Western from the Department of Education and support to the state's general fund. She concluded by reporting two positive outcomes for Western from the 2020 Legislative Session that included the reduction of tuition rates for degree programs offered through Western on the Peninsulas and the passage of House Bill 1755 that authorizes Western to offer applied doctorate degrees in education (EdDs).

Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs commended Melynda Huskey's leadership as commander of the ICS team and said he was honored to be her deputy in that effort. He reported on the current view of the financial impact of the pandemic and provided an overview of the contingency planning that is underway. Van Den Hul introduced Faye Gallant, Executive Director, Budget and Financial Planning, who started at Western in January 2020. Van Den Hul provided an overview of FY20 and FY21 budget planning, and outlooks on state support, major impacts to auxiliaries, large self-sustaining areas, and the potential impact of construction projects.

Gallant reported that as auxiliaries and self-sustaining areas report their losses the highest hit area was University Residences, which mitigated costs wherever possible by reduction of expenditures this spring. She added that reduction in expenditure on purchasing, travel, contracts, holding vacant positions campus wide will help to mitigate impacts. She noted that work continues with campus budget officers on FY21 planning, but impacts are expected.

Van Den Hul explained the current mitigation measures that have been put in place through October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 including freezes on hiring, travel, and purchasing with exceptions allowed for incident response and essential operations with Vice Presidential approval. He noted these mitigations will have a positive effect at the fiscal year end. Van Den Hul concluded that Western is positioned as well as it can be to handle financial stress. He added that Western has maintained adequate reserves, there is a buffer on enrollment decreases, and contingency modeling will continue for the uncertain future.

#### **4. BOARD CHAIR REPORT**

"How organizations deal with crisis generally reflects their culture, but also can define or refine who they are. I start my report with some crisis response do's and don'ts based on personal experience and observation. They are easy to remember because they all start with the letter "P".

Don't Panic or Procrastinate. Do Plan and Perform. Do Prepare to Pivot based on results and new information. Do stay Positive. Finally, do remember that the bigger the crisis, the more important People and Partnerships are to success.

That said, the Western community has brought their "P" game to combat the COVID-19 crisis. You can see it in the work of so many groups and individuals. I shared some specifics in my opening remarks, and we covered more in the discussion we just concluded. I hope that when this crisis is in our collective rear view mirrors, the memories of the hardships and losses will fade, but the memory of the power of people and partnerships will carry us to higher levels of achievement in the future.

My last item relates to Trustee development. The Association of Governing Boards Annual National Conference on Trusteeship is one of the key resources we utilize for training and to stay current on issues and ideas pertinent to trustees of a public university. This year the conference was virtual. I would like the trustees who attended sessions to share any significant takeaways from their participation.

Trustee Overstreet invited the trustees who attended the Association of Governing Boards (ABG) National Conference on Trusteeship, which was converted into a virtual event, to report out on the sessions they attended.

## **5. UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT REPORT**

President Randhawa reported that the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) recently completed an accreditation mid-cycle visit, at the end of year three of the seven-year cycle. He noted that the visit was informative and provided feedback to Western to assess goals, teams and mission fulfillment. He said the exit interview was very complementary and the identified area for needing assessment was general education curriculum.

President Randhawa acknowledged that the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation awarded a 2020 fellowship to Chris E. Vargus, Professor Art & Art History, and commended his work to receive the honor.

Randhawa noted that the United States Supreme Court will soon be ruling in two key cases that have an impact on Western's students and broader community, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act protection pertaining to LGBTQ+ people, and the future of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Randhawa highlighted that Western has been a member of the Presidents Immigration Alliance on Higher Education and that the coalition recently finalized a statement to present to the President of the United States and the United States House of Congress requesting the continuation of DACA pending a permanent solution.

## **6. FACULTY SENATE REPORT**

Jeff Young, Faculty Senate President acknowledged the response of Western's faculty to the Coronavirus pandemic and thanked the trustees for their acknowledgment of their work. He noted that faculty were able to complete their winter quarter classes online to allow for social distance health guidelines. He explained that faculty have broadly collaborated to complete the work of transition to online learning for spring quarter.

He reported that he and Rich Brown, United Faculty of Western Washington President, have been added to the Incident Command Structure (ICS) roster as faculty representatives. He noted that they are collaborating with the union and the Faculty Senate Executive Board, working in

consultation with the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) Executive Committee and the University Planning and Resources Council (UPRC) to provide support, guidance and share concerns with faculty during this transition. He acknowledged the tremendous amount of research and collaborative work involved in the transition to online learning, and in particular the contributions of Brian Burton, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Steven Vanderstaay, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, the ICS academic operations group, and other staff and faculty groups. In addition, he applauded the mutual respect and kindness with which it was conducted.

Young reported that the adoption of a pass-fail grading scale would be put into effect to conclude winter quarter for undergraduates and master's graduates. He noted that students, parents, and faculty at Western and across the country have requested a change in assessment as a response to the changed learning environment. He added that the policy will be reviewed again by ACC and UPRC before the start of summer quarter to ensure it is still the most appropriate assessment.

## **7. ASSOCIATED STUDENTS REPORT**

Trustee Overstreet, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, commended the Associated Students for their leadership in hosting a virtual Town Hall for students to answer questions pertaining to tuition and fees. He thanked them for their leadership and partnership for working on issues that matter so much to students and to Western as a whole.

Noelani DeFiesta, Associated Students President thanked trustee Overstreet and acknowledge the work of Trustee Hunter Stuehm as AS Communications Director for his work moderating the live Town Hall. She noted that the Town Hall was a success and that students appreciated the opportunity.

DeFiesta reported that the Student Senate that will be hosting virtual forums to stay connected to their college constituents and will continue meeting virtually throughout spring quarter. She acknowledged the work of faculty making the pivotal switch to online learning in a short amount of time was commendable.

DeFiesta read a statement on behalf of the Vice President for Diversity regarding the safety of undocumented students.

## **8. FINANCE, AUDIT, AND ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Trustee Meyer reported that the FARM Committee had previously received a similar financial presentation to the one that was provided early in this meeting. He noted that the committee discussed Institutional Reserves and their importance as the institution is guided through the pandemic. He noted that the committee received an update on Minority and Women's Business Enterprise objectives that continue to see growth.

Meyer reported that the FARM committee will receive monthly updates as needed for the foreseeable future as a response to the coronavirus pandemic.

## **9. STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Trustee Mo West reported the committee was provided an overview by Academic Technology and User Services (ATUS) of the transition to remote learning in spring quarter.

She highlighted that the faculty see the opportunity for instructional innovation and their creativity will lead to new insights for distance learning.

West explained that a task force was developed by the Dean of Students office to address students' basic needs such as food and housing insecurity. She added that the Western Foundation's Student Emergency Fund has received more than \$34,000 and continues to be a resource for students in need.

Trustee Lee echoed the appreciation for everyone at Western involved in making the transition to online learning a success. Trustee Stuehm added that the gentleness and kindness that has been shown by faculty and staff as they adapt to a new working environment has been tremendous and much appreciated.

## **10. APPOINTMENT OF FY2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENT AUDITOR**

Brian Sullivan, Associate Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs and Interim Director, Office of the Internal Auditor provided an overview of the request that the Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO) services be used for auditing Western's FY 2020 financial statements as well as those of the auxiliary enterprises in University Housing and Dining and the Wade King Recreation Center. He noted that the SAO services for last year's Financial Statement Audit were both thorough and professional.

Trustee Meyer added that the audit would include an Accountability Audit in addition to the Financial Statements and to have that be included in the provided motion.

MOTION 04-04-2020

Trustee moved, upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees FARM Committee, the appointment of the Washington State Auditor's Office to perform an audit of FY 2020 Financial Statements for Western Washington University, Housing and Dining, and the Wade King Student Recreation Center, and an Accountability Audit. This appointment is for a one-year term with an estimated total cost of \$102,000.

Vote by Roll Call:

Trustee Sue Sharpe – Yes  
Trustee Karen Lee – Yes  
Trustee Faith Pettis - Yes  
Trustee Hunter Stuehm - Yes  
Trustee Mo West - Yes  
Trustee Chase Franklin - Yes  
Trustee Earl Overstreet - Yes

The motion passed.

## **11. APPROVAL OF 2020 SUMMER SESSION TUITION AND FEES**

Brent Carbajal, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs explained that the proposed tuition and fees for both resident and non-resident undergraduates and graduates are consistent with the pattern established in previous years. Robert Squires, Vice Provost for Outreach and Continuing Education noted that the increases in tuition follow the guidelines established for academic year increases set by the state.

MOTION 04-05-2020

Trustee Stuehm moved that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, on recommendation of the President, approves the recommended Summer Session tuition for 2020: specifically, that resident undergraduate and graduate tuition will rise to \$267 and \$338 per credit, respectively; and non-resident undergraduate and graduate tuition will increase to \$427 and \$500 per credit, respectively. Tuition rates for programs for the MBA program are estimated not to exceed the approved rates from the academic year: \$391 per credit for resident graduate and \$975 for non-resident. Student tuition will be charged on a per credit basis for Summer Session.

Vote by Role Call:

Trustee Sue Sharpe – Yes  
Trustee Karen Lee – Yes  
Trustee Faith - Yes  
Trustee Hunter Stuehm – Yes  
Trustee Mo West  
Trustee John Meyer – Yes  
Trustee Chase Franklin- Yes  
Trustee Earl Overstreet – Yes

The motion passed.

**12. APPROVAL OF PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS**

Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs provided an overview of the Public Works Projects presented for approval. He noted that the Birnam Wood siding projects is an important maintenance project to support the upkeep of the campus apartments. He explained that Interdisciplinary Science Building project is seeking approval of the next two stages of the project.

MOTION 04-06-2020

Trustee Pettis moved that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the President, award a contract to Dawson Construction, Bellingham, WA, for the amount of \$2,210,000 (base bid and alternate three) (plus associated sales tax) for the construction contract to construct the Birnam Wood Apartments Replace Siding project.

Vote by Roll Call:

Trustee Sue Sharpe – Yes  
Trustee Karen Lee – Yes  
Trustee Faith Pettis - Yes  
Trustee Hunter Stuehm – Yes  
Trustee John Meyer – Yes  
Trustee Chase Franklin- Yes  
Trustee Earl Overstreet – Yes

The motion passed.

Trustee Franklin moved that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the



President, award a contract to BNBuilders Inc., Seattle, WA, in the amount of \$8,790,187 (plus associated sales tax) for bid package #2 (Structures and Elevator) for the Interdisciplinary Science Building project.

Further moved that the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University, upon the recommendation of the President, delegate the authority to the President, in consultation with the Chair of the Board of Trustees, to award construction contract package #3 (Fire Protection and Early Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing) not to exceed \$3,044,000 (and associated sales tax) and execute documents for the Fire Protection, Mechanical, and Electrical package for the Interdisciplinary Science Building.

Vote by Roll Call:

Trustee Sue Sharpe – Yes

Trustee Karen Lee – Yes

Trustee Faith Pettis - Yes

Trustee Hunter Stuehm – Yes

Trustee Mo West - Yes

Trustee John Meyer – Yes

Trustee Chase Franklin- Yes

Trustee Earl Overstreet – Yes

The motion passed.

### 13. INFORMATION ITEMS

**a. Tenure and Promotion Report**

Provost Carbajal provided a written report listing the faculty granted tenure and/or promotion effective September 2020.

**b. University Advancement Report**

Vice President Bowers provided a written report on the University's Alumni Relations and Western's Foundation activities.

**c. Capital Program Report**

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

**d. University Relations and Marketing Report**

Vice President Gibbs provided a written report documenting recent activities of University Relations and Marketing.

**e. Admissions and Enrollment Report**

Vice President Huskey provided a written report regarding the university's general enrollment and admissions.

**f. Legislative Report**

Becca Kenna-Schenk, Executive Director of Government Relations provided an update on the 2020 Legislative Session.

**14. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

June 11 & 12, 2020

**15. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 10:58 the board went into Executive Session for approximately thirty minutes to discuss a personnel matter as authorized by RCW 42.30.110

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:14 am.