



Board of Trustees

Minutes

September 9, 2016

President's Boardroom, The Horace Mann Center

Board of Trustees members in attendance: Trustees Marcus (Chair), Landrau (Secretary), Johnson, Martin, Queenin, Slakey, Sullivan.

Trustee Terrell Hill was not in attendance due to a previously scheduled commitment.

Trustee Hagan was absent at the start of the meeting.

Newly appointed trustee Robert A. Magovern (August 31, 2016) and student trustee Brandon Trafford (July 1, 2016) were also in attendance, to be sworn in after the meeting.

Dr. Ramon S. Torrecilha, President was also present.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marcus at 9:04 AM. Chair Marcus welcomed all in attendance to the meeting, a follow up to the July 18, 2016 Trustees Retreat program.

Chair Marcus recognized Mr. Robert A. Magovern, our newly appointed trustee as well as student trustee Brandon Trafford. The Chair reminded the Trustees that a swearing in ceremony would be held immediately following today's meeting. He invited Trustee Magovern and Trustee Trafford to comment.

Trustee Magovern stated that he was happy to be back to the Board of Trustees. He pointed out that he served on the Board previously (1997 to 2009). Trustee Magovern stated that Westfield State University is a "phenomenal school." Trustee Magovern has a strong connection to Westfield State University—his mother graduated from WSU in 1926; his sister graduated from here as well as did his daughter with a graduate degree.

Trustee Trafford expressed how happy he was to be seated on the Board of Trustees. He told the Board and meeting attendees that he is from Brimfield, Massachusetts. His major is business with a concentration in marketing. He is in his senior year. Trustee Trafford said he is very excited to be part of the Board of Trustees. He feels he brings his student experience and

student perspective to the Board as well as information as to what students are doing here on the Westfield State University Campus.

Chair Marcus thanked Trustees Magovern and Trafford for their comments.

Regarding the September 6, 2016 Convocation ceremony, Chair Marcus recalled that former trustee Jack Flynn told him that if he could work it into his schedule, “don’t miss the Convocation.” Chair Marcus did attend the Convocation and was very happy that he did saying that it was a magnificent experience.

Chair Marcus spoke of the Convocation presentation by Dr. Hillary Sackett, an Economics and Management faculty member. He said that Dr. Sackett made some very interesting remarks as she presented the book, *The Good Food Revolution*. Chair Marcus pointed out that this book is a mandatory read for all of the incoming students at Westfield State University, and he asked the President if he could share the book with the Board of Trustees. Chair Marcus stated that the book is here today for each of the trustees to read and that the book can be tied back to Board leadership and how the Board of Trustees can become better leaders.

Chair Marcus referenced recently proposed committee assignments. He thanked members of the Board for stepping up to the plate in expressing interest to serve on these committees.

Chair Marcus stated that the focus of today’s meeting is how the Board can interface with whatever department they are involved with as they serve on the Board committees; to be able to “bond” with these departments and develop healthy and open communication. Chair Marcus believes that in this way, positive things will come forward. Chair Marcus then recognized Trustee Slakey, the Chair of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, Dr. Marsha Marotta and Dr. Carlton Pickron of Academic Affairs and Student Life. Trustee Slakey is the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee.

Chair Marcus stated that after the discussion on Academic Affairs, attention would turn to Institutional Advancement. Dr. Erica Broman, Vice President of Institutional Advancement will present. The Advancement, Alumni and University Relations (name to be changed to Institutional Advancement) is chaired by Trustee Robert Johnson. Dr. Broman would present on how that department will work with the committee on the tools, talent, and funds needed to move the university forward.

Before moving forward with the above-referenced presentations, Chair Marcus recognized Dr. Ramon S. Torrecilha, President of Westfield State University.

President Torrecilha thanked the Chair and the Board of Trustees. He welcomed the group to another academic year, expressing his excitement as he begins his first, full academic year at Westfield State University. The President is looking forward to a productive year. He introduced and welcomed four new members of his cabinet, Mr. Stephen Taksar, Vice President of Administration and Finance, Dr. Erica Broman, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Dr. Diane Prusank, Chief of Staff, Ms. Tricia Oliver, Director of Communications, as well as Dr. Marotta and Dr. Pickron, standing members of the Cabinet.

President Torrecilha explained that Sunday, September 4, 2016 was move in day for students, and was very exciting! The President had the opportunity to drive around campus in a golf cart, joined by Dr. Diane Prusank and Vice President Taksar's son, Ely. They delivered donuts to parents, students, and the staff helping out. The move in process went very smoothly. Tuesday, September 6 was "Hoot Day," a day of service. This is when first year students congregate in the town green and really begin their engagement with the city. He stated that he received very good reports from the city about the work done by students as well as positive media coverage. This event was highlighted in the media as far as California, the *San Francisco Chronicle*. President Torrecilha underscored that people are taking notice of our students and the work being done here at the university.

President Torrecilha continues to receive good reports from students and the community regarding the transition to the new food service through UMass. The President encouraged the trustees to visiting the dining commons and sample the food, particularly the popular sushi bar and the made-to-order Vietnamese soup.

He continued speaking about Opening Day (September 6) and that the day went well with a very good conversation with staff and faculty. He was able to outline the priorities for the year and make an effort to get as many people as possible on the same page. The Convocation was "terrific" and Dr. Sackett did a really great job. She spoke about graduate school and during the time there, she had a garden. Rabbits and other animals got into the garden and destroyed it; she was disheartened. She had to stop and re-assess. She used this experience to relate to students as to the work expected of them here at Westfield State University. President Torrecilha said that Dr. Sackett's remarks came from both the head and the heart; important comments.

President Torrecilha went on to discuss enrollment stating that Westfield State University is in a very good position as of yesterday (September 8, 2016). He said there are about 3,519 returning students. The incoming class is at 1,378 with 1,066 first year students and 312 transfer students. There is an additional 17 students (international and student exchange). The total is 4,914 undergraduates which is a good number for the university. From DGCE (Division of Graduate and Continuing Education), we have approximately 1,200. This puts the university at approximately 6,100. The add/drop date is coming early next week so those numbers should be pretty firm. He stressed that there would be some "melt" but not too much. The numbers are very good in that it gives the university a "cushion" with the budget since the budget was based on an incoming class of 1,200, and the university is above that now. The President asked if there were any questions.

The Chair recognized Trustee Johnson who asked for more information about the returning student numbers. President Torrecilha responded that retention is about 73.84 percent; last year it was 72.05 percent. President Torrecilha explained that Dr. Marotta and Dr. Pickron would go into greater detail later in the meeting.

Chair Marcus stated that he spoke with Dr. Jolene Koester who facilitated the July 18 Trustees Retreat. They discussed the Trustees Retreat Report with its Attachment. Chair Marcus

expressed how proud he is of that meeting noting that from what had been researched, this had been the first such retreat here at Westfield State University. Chair Marcus asked himself, what else can we do as a Board? He volunteered that he would like to host a dinner following the first board meeting of the year (to be held October 6, 2016) so that the Board can get together socially. He believes that this social time will reinforce the Board as a team.

Chair Marcus then referred to the Trustees Retreat Report and requested the Board's feedback on that report.

Trustee Johnson said that the report was an accurate depiction of what occurred that day. He felt what was missing from the report was a set of recommendations.

Chair Marcus said that is what today's meeting is about—recommendations and synthesizing where the Board needs to go while being realistic.

Trustee Queenin said that there needs to be a systemic shift. He asked, what is the expectation? What are the working relationships with the rest of the university? He said that it is clear by this report that the Board is being challenged to go into a different direction after years of doing the same thing. He asked, do we agree that this is the type of activity we want to take on? Trustee Queenin agreed with Trustee Johnson that expectations must be defined, but that the Board needs to set the stage first. The Board must ask, what is the next step in this process?

Trustee Martin was unable to be at the Retreat due to a death in the family. However, he did read over the retreat materials and the report. He stated that roughly three things came to mind as he read the report which he described as "valuable." First, how the Board functions. That there needs to be an ongoing discussion at the full Board regarding the committees, their structure, and what they do. What is the level of analysis here? What is the level of discussion? Trustee Martin stated that if the Board can elevate the discussion from here at the Board table to a higher level, the Board will achieve a broader perspective and be well served. Talking about the bylaws and committee charters is fundamental. Secondly, goals must be discussed. Trustee Martin was not sure who should take the lead on this—the Board? The President and administration? Faculty? Trustee Martin stated that this is critical to the Board. He continued, whether the Board leads or follows, as Trustees, we should provide the impetus to see that progress is made. The third point, how does the Board know it is making progress? Trustee Martin encouraged a set of metrics to be available; otherwise, the Board will not know where they are in this process. He recommended that the Board work with the President and the staff to identify a set of metrics—enrollment, student learning, money raised, etc. Trustee Martin concluded that the metrics exist but the Board must regularly look at them.

President Torrecilha pointed out that the metrics described by Trustee Martin are institutional metrics, and that Board metrics are needed. He stressed that these are two different things.

Both Trustee Johnson and Queenin stated that expectations must be set in advance and defined.

President Torrecilha said that is what today is about. To discuss graduation, retention, and the achievement gap as well as advancement.

Trustee Sullivan joined the conversation stating that when he first came onto the Board, he read the strategic plan and that his point of view is from a different angle. He found the plan to be a lot of words but no action. He believes there should be accountability and deadlines established, and the Board needs to be involved in this since the Board sets the goals for the university. This is done through the committees of the Board. Trustee Sullivan pointed out that the strategic plan ends in 2017 and someone from the Board should be working with the Administration and the President's Office in order to set future strategies and goals. Trustee Sullivan feels that the strategic plan is key to the success of the university, stating that words are one thing but to actually be able to go back and define a date, accountability of action—this is the great part in making Westfield State successful. Trustee Sullivan stressed the work should begin now on the new strategic plan.

Trustee James Hagan joined the meeting at this time at 9:36 AM.

President Torrecilha informed the Board that it is the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education that tells the institution when it is time to do the strategic planning process. Currently, the Department of Higher Education is revising the guidelines and expectations for the strategic plan. The WSU strategic plan ends this academic year. Under normal circumstances, this would mean that the planning process would begin at the end of academic year 2015-2016. However, Commissioner Santiago (Massachusetts Department of Higher Education) has advised that Westfield State University wait until the fall of 2017 to begin the process. President Torrecilha feels that it would behoove the Board to wait for the new guidelines to be issued by the state. At this time, the process of hiring a Provost for Academic Affairs for the university is underway. This is a key role in leading and guiding the strategic planning process. Therefore, Commissioner Santiago has agreed to postpone the WSU strategic planning process until fall 2017. President Torrecilha commented that WSU is not alone in this; that Massachusetts College of the Liberal Arts is doing the same thing. He also said that not only does the Board need an action plan to go along with the strategic plan, but the Board must also "cost it out" which wasn't something done with the previous strategic plan.

Trustee Slakey stated that there is some tension with metrics and whether they have been met or not. She said that the Board does not want to micro manage, but it does need an understanding of how things play out here at the university in order that the Board can do its planning. She feels that this is where the tension is, and that the Board should do what it can do to address this, and this, in turn, will inform the Board's thinking at a higher level and its responsibility to the institution. She continued that by using the "grace period" for the strategic plan, the Board can become better informed. Also, the Board needs to look at the bigger picture, particularly the many changes that are now occurring in higher education. These must be brought into the conversation.

Chair Marcus said that this is an excellent point noting that he comes from the healthcare field, not higher education. At Convocation, he was shocked when the President pointed out that not

all of the students present would be graduating in four years. He asked, how long does it take to graduate? Trends such as this must be known by the Board.

President Torrecilha said that this type of creative “tension” can be helpful as it was to him at the Retreat when the Academic Primer was introduced to the trustees. Board members asked questions such as “how does this work? How do class schedules work? How many courses do faculty teach?” These are not trivial questions. This develops a shared understanding of what goes on here on campus. He recommended that at Board meetings, trustees spend some time revisiting these questions and continuing this dialogue.

Trustee Magovern was surprised to learn that many students do not finish their degree in four years saying that this was the expectation years ago. He asked why this is occurring and is there a way faculty advisors can make sure pre-requisites are completed for the four years.

President Torrecilha said that it is more complex than that. And to make matters more complicated is the way graduation rates are accounted for—this applies only to first time full time students; transfer students are not in the mix. This is another conversation.

Trustee Johnson referred back to the strategic plan saying that as the Board waits for the guidelines from the state, the Board should start working on the plan now.

President Torrecilha said that identifying institutional priorities can begin.

Trustee Slakey asked who makes the decisions as to the guidelines.

President Torrecilha responded that there many moving parts and that the state is trying to decide if higher education is for the public good or is an investment. This has funding implications as well as workforce development implications. He stressed that a strong democracy demands a strong system of education, and this is what the state is trying to deal with. At the end of the day, the state will figure out retention, graduation rate, minimizing the achievement gap, and therefore, the state guidelines will revolve around this.

President Torrecilha continued that DCAMM (Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance) will be on campus. DCAMM and the Department of Higher Education are at the forefront of this process. President Torrecilha found this interesting. DCAMM is essentially a state agency that doesn’t necessarily have any dollars left yet it is brought into the conversation about what kinds of investment the state will need to make. So the strategic plan will be tied to what DCAMM puts forth.

Trustee Slakey referred to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* statistics. This chronicle reports for every state what fraction of students are in public and private institutions. In most of the country, 60 percent are in public; 40 percent in private. However, it is the reverse in Massachusetts with 60 percent in private; 40 percent in public. She pointed out that Massachusetts has prestigious, private institutions in higher education. This is a piece of the reality of the politics of higher education—that private institutions are better. She pointed out that many of these institutions are in Boston, and this could influence how the state makes decisions. She acknowledged that she could be a bit cynical about this.

However, President Torrecilha found Trustee Slakey's observations to be correct, stating that there are implications—enrollment, programmatic implications. The process by which programs get approved by the state is night and day between private and public institutions. On the enrollment side, private institutions are making their business trying to cross over into the public education market; having a greater presence in this market. Private institutions can do this because they have greater flexibility such as a discount rate (although, per President Torrecilha, this isn't sustainable). Size matters as well. If a private institution doesn't get 5,000 students or more, the likelihood it will survive diminishes by the year.

Chair Marcus referred to the *Chronicle of Higher Education* stating that he gets it electronically and recommends that it be read. President Torrecilha stated that WSU now has a campus wide subscription for this and would provide the logon information and password to trustees.

The President also recommended *Inside Higher Education* as another good publication. It is more of a summary on what the *Chronicle of Higher Education* is saying and is a daily publication.

Speaking of the retreat day on July 18, Trustee Landrau said that the Board needs to ask what is the low-hanging fruit? How do we tackle issues? How do we collaborate, share information? How does the Board work collectively in moving the university forward? Trustee Landrau said that she enjoyed the retreat but now, the trustees need to continue the work discussed at the retreat—strike while the iron is hot; the Board needs to do it now and not wait.

Trustee Hagan commented that the Board can't have a retreat and not follow up. The worse thing is to do something like this and then, nothing happens. The Board needs to keep the momentum going and focus on the results that came out of that day. He feels that the Board shouldn't wait for the strategic plan, and the Board needs to work collectively to move the university forward; the Board can't put this work "on the shelf." Trustee Hagan referred to Trustee Slakey's comment about "tension" and that tension can be a good thing; that tension can produce good results.

Chair Marcus said that the Board is already producing good results by holding this meeting where topics such as advancement and funding are being discussed; these topics which were not discussed before. He referred to Dr. Broman, the new Advancement leader as an example of a positive outcome.

Trustee Johnson stated that the organizational structure of the Board is critical and that there needs to be a thorough understanding by each committee on what their function is and how that moves up to the full Board. The structure of the Board and everyone's understanding of how it operates is critical. Trustee Johnson feels that this is something that is missing and that this is a "hot button" issue for him. He has made suggestions with regard to Board governance, expectations, and charters in order to generate discussion. Further, how various committee roles and decisions affect other committees, and in turn, the full Board.

President Torrecilha said that Trustee Johnson is beginning to articulate priorities or a "to do" list.

Trustee Trafford referred to the book, *The One Minute Manager*. He stated that there needs to be clearly defined goals for an organization and that these goals need to be communicated to the organization. The goals of the university need to be defined. He acknowledged that he is new to the Board and for right now, he is listening and observing how the Board operates.

Trustee Slakey noted that there is a “to do” list already available and it is the attachment to the Trustees Retreat report. This attachment encompasses the flipchart notes taken during the course of the Retreat day.

Chair Marcus asked the Board members to refer to the attachment and the section titled “To Start;” there are 11 items listed. He stressed the importance of an open dialogue here today and encouraged trustees to highlight three or four of the eleven items listed that would be the Board’s map for the next month or even the next year.

The 11 items are as follows:

1. Subcommittees have more clearly defined charters.
2. Say to Governor we need this kind of expertise (Referring to the expertise of appointed trustees)
3. Open to ex-officio members (previous trustees)
4. Set agreed upon expectations for Board members and evaluate
5. Understand national academic trends (This expertise shown at retreat by Trustee Linda Slakey and Trustee Terrell Hill)
6. Be more involved on campus. People should know who we are.
7. Comprehensive new Board member orientation
8. Board expertise matrix
9. Clearer succession plan for Board leadership
10. Do more fundraising; give or get
11. Evaluating current meeting structure

President Torrecilha pointed out that some of the items are process-related while others are goals.

Trustee Johnson reviewed the list and noted that Board member expectations are important as is structure. There needs to be a better sense of what roles are, especially the collective roles.

Chair Marcus said that he tried to work on this when discussing committee assignments with individual trustees—where the trustees would like to serve; where their strengths would be of the best use, make the most improvement.

But Trustee Johnson thinks there is “waffling” on committee structure stressing that a strong Governance Committee is needed to attack the bylaws, to set metrics, and more.

President Torrecilha offered that if this is the outcome that is desired, the Board needs to structure those conversations. At what level do we structure these conversations—committee level or the full Board?

Trustee Johnson responded, both. That committees are needed to look over various charters, how they are tweaked, and how do those charters fit in. During the course of the year, charters are adopted by the Governance Committee. At this level, there is less overlap and there should be a better understanding of each committee's responsibility.

However, Trustee Slakey said she wouldn't want to do this with the Academic Affairs committee; for the committee to do what someone else has set for the committee.

Trustee Johnson responded that this would not be the case; the Governance Committee would be a starting point for a committee.

Trustee Slakey stated that it is acceptable to produce a charter for a committee but that this process should be started at that committee.

Chair Marcus stated that the work done to date has been very good. He offered Dr. Koester's recommendation of taking what has been done and use this information to develop strategy and succession plans.

President Torrecilha noted that Trustee Slakey is offering an alternative route. At least for some committees, there should be some say as to whether to use the charter as a platform or come up with their own.

Trustee Martin agreed with Trustee Slakey that the conversation (regarding charters) has to take place at the committee level. At this level, the seeds will be planted and the conversations started.

Trustee Slakey likes the idea of a strong Governance Committee and that this committee needs to be a strong committee.

Trustee Johnson stated that what drove home for him is being reactive to the Governor's request for suggested Board members. He feels it is the duty of the Governance Committee to determine what skills, etc. are required from a trustee. In this way, trustees can identify people as potential trustee candidates to offer for review. Trustee Johnson feels that the Board should be proactive in this, and this falls on the Governance Committee.

Trustee Slakey said that this should be done years in advance in order to cultivate a robust pipeline.

Trustee Johnson stated that this also applies in the case of trustee re-appointments. The Board should be able to provide feedback to the Governor with regarding to a trustee's reappointment. He feels that to lose valuable people is a terrible mistake.

President Torrecilha brought up the size of the Board (eleven members). He posed the question, is this the right size considering the amount of work to be done?

Trustee Queenin asked if the Board size is dictated by the state and the general response was yes.

President Torrecilha acknowledged that there needs to be a proactive voice; it is important. He encourages the Board to go to Boston and look at this, saying that our Board is stretched.

Trustee Johnson asked if it is possible to expand outside of the state statute regarding Board size and asked if someone can join (ex officio); this person would not be a voting member.

President Torrecilha responded that as long as roles and expectations are defined.

Trustee Johnson referred to succession planning. For example, in the case of Board chair. Perhaps set up a progression where there is a second and third vice chair where the chair serves one year but others are prepared to assume the chair role. He feels this structure would help in reducing the demands on a trustee's personal life.

President Torrecilha suggested that a conversation take place regarding this. He said that he would have to make the argument that a term of one year for the Board chair is not sufficient. He feels that this goes to the stability of the Board; that there is a correlation between the stable leadership of a Board and everything else that occurs at an institution. He stressed the importance of having a Board chair for more than a one year term.

Trustee Johnson said that the Board chair and the first vice chair would work as a team for two years. He pointed to the 5 year terms of the Trustees with a possible second term for a maximum term of 10 years; yet, some trustees stay on longer until the seat has been filled. This goes to the importance of a succession plan.

President Torrecilha said that Trustee Johnson is pointing out something that is fundamentally out of sync with the internal organization of the Board and the statute of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; the five year number makes it difficult when discussing a succession plan and that perhaps it would be better if trustees were appointed for 3 year terms; up to 9 years of service. He said that this is a Governance conversation and that we don't need to be single voices in this, we can propose change.

Trustee Hagan asked if this structure is the same at Framingham, Worcester? The response was yes.

Chair Marcus acknowledged the great dialogue but suggested a 15 minutes recess, to reconvene at 10:30 AM. Chair Marcus recessed the meeting at 10:15 AM.

Chair Marcus called the meeting back to order at 10:33 AM.

Trustee Hagan re-entered the meeting room at 10:35 AM.

Chair Marcus recognized Trustee Slakey and Drs. Pickron and Marotta for a presentation.

Trustee Slakey referred to President Torrecilha's comments regarding retention, graduation rate, and the achievement gap. She continued that in order for the committee to frame its decisions and thinking, it needs to think about the numbers and the reality here at Westfield State as well as national trends. Trustee Slakey then turned the meeting over to Dr. Pickron.

Dr. Pickron issued a handout entitled, *Student Affairs Retention/Graduation Efforts*. He told the Trustees that what is key is student engagement. He continued that those students engaged from day one—on accepted student days, at open houses—are our highly successful students. Dr. Pickron referred to a comment made earlier in the meeting that the general thought is that every student graduates in four years. However, in “like institutions,” this rate is actually 40 percent. He continued that highly selective schools graduate around 80-90 percent in four years. Westfield State University graduates at a higher rate than the national level with a four-year graduation rate of 53 percent and a six-year graduation rate of 63 percent. Dr. Pickron stated that students like trustee Brandon Trafford, student athletes—these are the students who graduate in four years—not all of these students but a great number. These are the students who know who to turn to for assistance. However, there are students on the edges who, for whatever reason, have not made that hard connection. For example, we receive telephone calls from parents concerned that their son or daughter won’t eat at the dining commons because they have no one to eat with. He explained that in Student Life, we are a living and learning community, reaching out to students. If a student is sitting alone in his or her room, we reach out and say “hey, join me for lunch.” This connection is critical. In Student Life, we operate in the “other classroom;” the theater, concert hall, on the field, the pool or just sitting down with someone on a bench on campus. This is so important—the work of our staff to support our student work and achievements. Dr. Pickron continued that student engagement in the community and volunteer work – these are thousands of hours volunteering not just here in Westfield but also outside the area. For example, our recent Hoot Day for the first year students. Residence Life invites faculty and staff to come in residence halls to speak on anything they like—we have over 100 visits such as this in the last three years. Any topic is discussed; this gives students some perspective. For example, a student may ask, “What does it mean to be a faculty member?” These are the types of questions asked. Dr. Pickron stated that for him, this is just a list (the handout) of what we attempt to do to connect with the vast and diverse student body. Referring to the achievement gap, Dr. Pickron said that this is very real and has very real consequences. He pointed to the “financial gap” as a cause; being able to afford to be here at Westfield State. He said that Student Life does financial literacy training with as many students who will come to these sessions. He finds this critical since the topics are loans, promissory notes, and more.

Trustee Hagan asked if taking longer than four years to graduate is due in part to finances.

Dr. Pickron responded that he isn’t sure but does know that WSU has students who take a break for financial reasons or commute instead of living on campus due to finances. Dr. Pickron said that WSU has 3,100 students living on campus. Commuting students pay approximately \$9,000/year while living on campus is at \$18,000/\$19,000 per year.

President Torrecilha warned that we need to be careful not to reduce student attrition to financial only. Student success also means to the extent of which a student sees himself on this campus—this means a lot. There is no single answer to your question (referencing the question posed by Trustee Hagan).

Dr. Marotta stated that some students will take four courses a semester in order to keep grades up, but this will draw out the length of time it takes to graduate.

Trustee Hagan asked if the students who take 6 years to graduate live on campus.

To this, President Torrecilha replied, probably not.

Dr. Marotta stated that student success is what we do in Academic Affairs. Student success is one of the ways to measure retention and graduation rates but there are more ways—student connection, student satisfaction, etc. She said that President Torrecilha has challenged us to raise graduation rates and there is more work to do with regard to achievement gaps. Also, retention and graduation for students of color and ethnicity. There isn't much of an achievement gap between men and women; it isn't large.

What about first generation students, asked Trustee Slakey.

Dr. Marotta responded that this information is derived from the FAFSA form which isn't always accurate since it is sometimes filled out incorrectly by students. However, the best we can tell, 25 percent of students are first generation. There isn't an achievement gap or retention gap with first generation students.

Chair Marcus inquired about the men/women comment made by Dr. Marotta.

Dr. Marotta responded that Westfield State has more of a balance between men and women than other state universities. Much of this is due to the criminal justice program which has become more mixed with women.

Trustee Slakey pointed out that in higher education across the nation, it is heavily skewed toward women at 60 percent, men at 40 percent.

President Torrecilha said here at WSU, 53 percent female, 47 percent male.

Trustee Martin commented that the male/female ratio often has a lot to do with the major and the culture of a campus.

Dr. Marotta passed out a handout entitled, *Retention and Graduation Rates*. She said that the handout is an example of being in the "weeds." Referring to the graphs in the handout, she said that retention and graduation rates are calculated in very definite ways. The first year retention rate is defined as the proportion of the fall cohort that re-enrolls, full-time or part-time, the following fall semester. This does not include transfer students. According to Dr. Marotta, any other measure of students returning for another semester or year is termed persistence. She explained that we are accountable for every single student coming in. If a student drops out, this will hurt our retention rate. With graduation rates, transfer students are not counted.

President Torrecilha stated that the federal government is really the agency who counts with regard to the retention and graduation rates. He continued that many systems are

recalculating these numbers, including transfer student numbers. For Westfield State University, there are implications since a third of our students are transfer students.

Trustee Hagan asked if the transfer students are coming from community colleges. To this, President Torrecilha replied, yes.

Dr. Marotta added that right now, it is advantageous to come in with an associate degree so students have their core credits accounted for.

Trustee Johnson asked if WSU tracks the students who leave and go to another institution.

Dr. Marotta responded yes. There is the National Clearinghouse where we can see where the student has transferred to. Most of the students who leave WSU move on to another institution. UMass accepts students in January. Some students start here in the fall knowing that they will transfer to UMass in January. She pointed out that if our students make it to the junior year, they graduate at about 93.94 percent.

President Torrecilha asked the trustees to think about this. This is related to institutional priorities as we have been discussing. Picture this: We lose 20 percent from first year to second year then an additional 15 percent second year to the third year. Any given class on average is losing 35 percent. So what do we need to do in Academic Affairs in order to reduce that rate of attrition? What are the investments to make in order to make sure that students stay here?

Dr. Pickron brought forth the topic of engagement and referred to the Westfield State Experience. There are many retention initiatives with students. Something like the Westfield State Experience will make students stay. Financial aid matters but engagement also matters; this is critical. We have to fund this. Yes, we know that there is a decline in the traditional age population of college students. Yes, we want to make sure our presence in this market maintains the same level as now. We brought in about 1,100 first time students. If we do nothing, 35 percent go out the door. In order to recoup these numbers, we need to make the investment. And that is why we need to fund the Westfield State Experience.

Trustee Martin commented that on the other side of the coin, something is done but still numbers are lost. He said that the programs and practices that Dr. Pickron listed on the handout are good ones. He asked, how do we reach students we are not reaching? The ones we don't see at this Board? The students who aren't showing a level of engagement?

President Torrecilha responded that that is why our definition of student success has to be more extensive than graduation rate and retention. If a student doesn't see herself here, she won't succeed. If we don't engage her, we lose her. What Dr. Pickron has presented is critical here.

Chair Marcus referred to the recent Convocation ceremony. He observed three bleachers of students. Now, he realizes that one entire section won't be here in four years. He commented that if this was private business, the business would be bankrupt.

President Torrecilha said this is true but also stressed that if we don't invest, we will lose one third of the students—but that is not what we will do.

Trustee Trafford referred to Dr. Pickron's comments on student engagement and that one of the reasons some students leave campus is that there isn't anything to do on campus. The Student Government Association added a \$10.00 fee and part of the money goes into creating student activities such as Pancakes with the President as a way of getting more students involved on campus. He said that it would be a huge asset if the Board of Trustees engaged with the students by doing something fun—minus the suit and tie! Trustee Trafford thinks it is important to do this the first semester since this is when students are deciding whether they will stay or leave. Example, Pancakes with the Trustees would be a fun event.

Trustee Trafford continued that on campus there is a campus activities board. This is run by students and overseen by the SGA. There is a budget of \$97,000 for these activities such as Movie on the Green, guest speakers, and at the end of the year, Springfest. The problem is that during the year, there isn't enough of these activities/events and therefore, students don't feel engaged throughout the academic year. This goes back to his comment that some students leave because there is nothing to do on campus.

Trustee Hagan asked how many students stay on campus on weekends.

Trustee Trafford responded that quite a few students stay on campus.

But Dr. Pickron pointed out that there are students who live just an hour away, and these students go home and work.

Trustee Hagan said that this defeats the purpose of engagement on campus and brings the issue back to financial.

Dr. Marotta said that some issues have been addressed such as having the library open to midnight and longer hours on weekends. An effort is being made to be more accommodating to students.

President Torrecilha commented that the Dining Hall is now open to 10:00 PM. He has heard what Brandon is saying—that there needs to be more student activities. He asked the trustees to look at the second page of Dr. Marotta's handout—the achievement gap between White and Latino. The four year graduation gap is 19 percent for Latino. African American is 29 percent. We need to delve into this and ask ourselves what is going on here. Why are these groups not graduating at the same rate? The average age of white women in the United States is 43. The average age of a Latina is 27 years old; still in the reproductive years, which means growth in population will come from that segment. So, if we don't ask these questions now, we will miss the boat.

Dr. Marotta said that at the October 2016 Board meeting, the Dashboard will be demonstrated. The Dashboard drills down this data. The Black/White gap in retention is reducing. The Latino/White gap is increasing. We believe this is associated with the four largest feeder high

schools. This allows us to do some work with these high schools and to better prepare students for college. In order to have these students connected, we need to identify who they are.

It was stated that the “feeder schools” are two Springfield schools, Holyoke, and Chicopee.

President Torrecilha added that there is a conversation with school superintendents from Holyoke, Westfield, and Springfield regarding developing a program and partnership.

Trustee Magovern asked about Agawam.

President Torrecilha responded that Agawam sends Westfield State the largest number of incoming students. There is a question of capacity. We want to go after diversity through Springfield and Holyoke.

Dr. Marotta explained that programs such as Reach to Teach (grant) bring students of color into the teaching profession. She mentioned other programs such as Urban Education and Trio. The Westfield State Experience is taking our existing student success programs and adding them under one umbrella. She said that we are very intentional on how we have students transition to college work. Sometimes, a first year student will read a syllabus and think all professors do the same thing and when they discover this isn't the case, the student will go to the Dean to find out why. Other topics include how to use the library, the challenges of reading texts, asking questions in a college classroom. We would like to do a program for undeclared students which is another risk factor, another retention issue. She continued that it is important to get these students engaged in year one and two, then in years three and four, through internships, study abroad, research, and more. All students will be required to do at least one of these. If there is enough funding, a student can do two. These are labor intensive programs.

President Torrecilha pointed out that half the class is undeclared. There are only two advisors for 700 undeclared students. What are the takeaways here?

Trustee Johnson said that the trustees need to think about supporting these goals and as trustees, must support these goals. He said that one thing the trustees do not have is an expectation to be involved at this level. What needs to be asked is what we can do to support the President's proposal as to these goals? What resources are needed? Then, put this in the strategic plan.

President Torrecilha suggested trustees take what has been discussed today and bring it back to their committees. Ask, what does it mean to invest in retention? Give us the resources.

Chair Marcus thanked Trustee Slakey, Dr. Marotta, and Dr. Pickron. Retention rate, graduation rate, and reducing the achievement gap—these are the three common themes we will here from Trustee Slakey and her team over the next year, but these touch all of us here.

Trustee Hagan referenced the student position that there is nothing to do downtown. He was involved with a group that discussed this issue and there was going to be a WSU group formed to discuss ideas and to work on the town/gown relationship. Did anything come of this?

Trustee Trafford stated that he is familiar with this. He explained that the group was strong for a period of time but then nothing. Dr. Marotta added that members of the group graduated and that now, we are trying to do more of this in the early college years.

Trustee Hagan said the group did a presentation to the Board of Stanley Park and it was outstanding. It had tremendous diversity. The group was great. Trustee Hagan offered his help in this respect. The more students engaged with downtown would be helpful. This could help with retention rates as well.

Dr. Marotta issued another handout regarding some campus activities that revolved around first year students and *The Good Food Revolution* required reading.

Chair Marcus then invited Vice President of Advancement, Dr. Erica Broman to the Board table. He pointed out that there are 3,000 community colleges across America and that Holyoke Community College (where Dr. Broman previously worked) is the ninth highest endowed community college in America.

Dr. Broman told the trustees that overall, Americans are philanthropically inclined, more so than other nations. Education does well in this area, coming in second to religion. Higher education receives between 15 to 20 percent of the philanthropic dollars given. Academic research indicates that the institutions that are the most successful are those whose alumni have a strong affinity to their alma mater, usually based on a good academic and student experience. It is important that alumni offices maintain frequent contact with alumni and help to nurture that affinity. Dr. Broman noted President Torrecilha's background in advancement and that he is willing to make an investment in this area. She continued that wealth screening has been conducted. With 40,000 contacts in the database, it is now known who will be the most advantageous person to go after. Dr. Broman said that it is necessary to target time and energies where they will be the most fruitful, and that if we can go after the alumni with the most resources, this will help us. However, efforts will not be fruitful without building the relationship. Relating to what Dr. Pickron and Dr. Marotta have presented, if the students are successful here, this will play a role once they become alumni. For example, at HCC, Dr. Broman would hear that "if it wasn't for HCC, I wouldn't be where I am today." She said she has heard the same thing here at WSU. There needs to be consistency and ongoing investment in advancement to keep this going. Protocols need to be put in place. For example, sending out thank you letters in a timely manner. She said that our endowment level for scholarships is \$10,000. At community colleges, this is around \$15,000. Dr. Broman said that when she left HCC, there was talk of increasing this level to \$25,000. Therefore, Westfield State needs to do better. Students who get scholarships through the generosity of others will give back as well. It has been recognized that some students are struggling financially. Dr. Broman highlighted the need to build a culture of philanthropy on campus that currently doesn't exist, and this is being worked on. She continued, we need to have students see this, engage trustees, and engage parents. The trustees must take a leadership role in this area. She told the trustees that less than 100 percent participation by the Board of Trustees can negatively impact grant applications.

Chair Marcus asked, besides the last two very generous gifts that have been brought to Westfield State, what is the typical gift from an alum?

Kathy Bradford, Director of Advancement and University Relations, responded \$100 or so. For example, the Phonathon was less than \$100.

Trustee Hagan said this isn't unusual for alums. Trustee Johnson said that we can't judge our giving by just the Phonathon.

Dr. Broman pointed out that if an alum gives a \$50 gift every year for multiple years in a row, that alum is now a candidate for a major gift.

Trustee Johnson said that alum is saying "engage me."

Dr. Broman said that there has been a lot of turnover in Advancement; there hasn't been an opportunity to implement or stick to a plan.

President Torrecilha commented that he doesn't believe that this institution has made an investment in what it takes to build up an advancement office in order to get the return we expect. He continued that the one thing Dr. Broman spoke of is the private good vs. the public good. In the Northeast, there is the thought that higher education is for the private good but it is really for the public good.

Trustee Johnson said that he doesn't like to ask for money. Instead, he is always trying to give people reasons to want to give money. For example, if you go to a movie and tell others how good the movie is, those people will want to go to the movie and in turn, you are raising money for that movie. This is the same idea. Tell people about Westfield State (with credibility); this is how we support the efforts of Advancement. He continued that the last couple of years, there has been 100 percent participation by Trustees. If less than 100 percent, a grant application will get set aside so it is important that everyone donate. He asked what the trustees can do to support Advancement. He feels that expectations of the Advancement area have been low and these expectations need to be raised.

Dr. Broman mentioned Worcester State as an example. The Advancement person there has been there for 20 years. She explained that at HCC, it was 5 to 6 years before people started coming to her to contribute rather than Dr. Broman going to them.

Trustee Martin asked about students' experiences here at Westfield State (connecting to Dr. Pickron and Dr. Marotta's presentation). If we lose 35 percent of the students, we also lose future contributions.

Dr. Broman agreed saying that if students have a good experience here, later, they will contribute. She added that everyone needs to have a WSU elevator pitch.

President Torrecilha directed a question to Trustee Johnson asking how do we take this back to the committee? How do we structure the work of the committee around what we are discussing here?

Trustee Johnson responded that Dr. Broman will present a diverse fundraising plan to the committee with timeline and the resources required so that we are all on the same page.

President Torrecilha asked that the committee role be attached to the role of the Board. What do we say to the committee and what does the committee say to the Board in order to generate support in the area of Advancement? It isn't enough just to be at a gala. A trustee must know the top three issues so when seated next to someone, can do a pitch and know what to ask for.

Chair Marcus emphasized: Retention rate, graduation rate, and reducing the achievement gap.

Trustee Johnson added that it is all about engagement.

Chair Marcus asked Trustee Johnson to work closely with the Advancement team in order to get what is needed to bring back to the full Board.

Trustee Johnson replied that advancement is everyone's (on the Board) job.

Trustee Slakey asked, what is the level of faculty and staff giving?

Dr. Broman did not have this information but responded that they do give.

Trustee Slakey asked, what is typical?

Dr. Broman responded that smaller institutions have a higher participation rate than the larger institutions, but it is all over the map. Thirty percent would be great.

Trustee Martin said that this reflects loyalty to an institution.

Trustee Slakey commented that it is a funny part of the mindset. Faculty and staff don't see philanthropy as part of their role.

President Torrecilha added that this is the case in public institutions, but it isn't the same in privates. Private institutions educate faculty on philanthropy, but this doesn't occur in public institutions. There is a "disconnect" between faculty and Advancement here. When we move the Advancement office back to campus, we will do work on bridge building.

Trustee Johnson pointed out that in the case of privates, one's livelihood depends on the ability to raise money.

Chair Marcus asked President Torrecilha if he had any closing comments.

President Torrecilha stated that he found today's meeting productive. We have accomplished what we set out to accomplish. We have defined some institutional priorities and we are now connecting those priorities with the work of the Board and the work of the committees. Going forward, preparing for the September and October meetings, we have a good sense of what we want to accomplish or begin to accomplish. Each individual committee needs to think about their charters. Thank you for being here and giving us three hours of your time.

Chair Marcus announced that the swearing in of Trustee Magovern and Trustee Trafford would be conducted immediately following the meeting and then there would be a light lunch.

The meeting adjourned at 11:46 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

1. July 18, 2016 Trustees Retreat Report
2. Attachment to July 18, 2016 Trustees Retreat Report
3. Student Affairs/Graduation Efforts handout
4. Retention and Graduation Rates handout
5. Film and Speakers Series Schedule for The Good Food Revolution Fall, 2016 handout