



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Minutes

February 7, 2017

Board of Trustees committee members in attendance: Committee Chair Slakey, Vice Chair Martin, Trustee Magovern, Trustee Sullivan, and Trustee Trafford

Excused absence: Trustee Landrau

Participating Remotely: Trustee Hill

Trustee guests present: Trustees Queenin, Marcus

Dr. Ramon S. Torrecilha, President of Westfield State University was also present.

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Slakey at 10:05AM

Committee Chair Slakey announced that we will be audio recording the meeting

Committee Chair Slakey announced that Trustee Hill will be participating remotely due to geographical distance.

Trustee Hill was dialed in at 10:07AM

Committee Chair Slakey moved to agenda item Approval of Minutes for December 6, 2016.

MOTION was made by Chair Slakey to approve the minutes of December 6, 2016. The motion was seconded by Trustee Magovern.

Chair Slakey asked for discussion or correction of the minutes. Hearing no discussion, Chair Slakey asked for a roll call vote to approve the minutes.

Roll Call Vote was made:

Chair Slakey, yes

Trustee Hill, yes

Trustee Magovern, yes
Trustee Martin, yes
Trustee Sullivan, yes
Trustee Trafford, yes

Chair Slakey invited Dr. Marsh Marotta to present. Dr. Marotta introduced Dr. Lisa Plantefaber, Associate Dean of Institutional Research, to discuss the Student Success Dashboard. The dashboard was presented on the projection screen to give the trustees a live introduction to the Dashboard. Dr. Plantefaber discussed the development of the dashboard and the questions it addresses. An example question was given, “what programs are successful in helping our students?” Dr. Plantefaber showed the board how to navigate the dashboard to gather this information. Dr. Plantefaber used the Urban Education program to demonstrate how the dashboard can discern the impact of a program on student success. The graph showed that the program is very helpful to students of color with low GPAs but not as helpful to students with higher GPA’s. Dr. Plantefaber also demonstrated the dashboard’s capabilities by looking at retention rate by feeder higher school. The data here demonstrated that even students with strong high school GPA’s varied in their college retention rate based on the high school they had attended. Thus the dashboard allows us to use the data to look at gaps in student success.

A third example from the dashboard focused on tracking student success by major. The data indicated that undeclared students (i.e., students who have not declared a major) are at a higher risk for leaving school. President Torrecilha pointed out that this kind of data can help inform policies, such as when students should be required to declare a major. A discussion was held about students declaring a major and what policies we have in place now. It was noted that advising needs to be more intrusive with undeclared students (i.e., seeking the students rather than waiting for them to seek advising).

The final example Dr. Plantefaber used to demonstrate the dashboard is the impact of success in one course on success in a second, related course. Two courses from the mathematics sequence were used as the example. A developmental math class and a supported math course were used. Developmental courses require extra for both instructors and students. The dashboard can help us assess if the investment is paying off for students. In this case, the results varied. Students who participated in the developmental course did not always perform better in the subsequent course. Trustee Trafford commented that how a student does also can depend on which professor they have for the course as well. Trustee Trafford felt there is an important correlation between the grades students receive and the professors they have teaching those courses.

The question was asked if the dashboard is user friendly and accessible to faculty members. Dr. Marotta stated that this data will be looked at by the board and then they will look at making it accessible to the faculty. Right now there are only 5 licenses available for the software supporting the dashboard.

Chair Slakey asked for further comments and questions. President Torrecilha thanked Dr. Plantefaber and her staff for their hard work. Trustee Queenin stated that the dashboard is a great tool. Trustee Martin stated this will be a great challenge to take to the community and have them use it. Chair Slakey noted that the roll out of this process should be done in a positive way.

Chair Slakey then moved on to the item enrollment update. Chair Slakey asked Dr. Marotta to present. Dr. Marotta introduced Dr. Tinkham, Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education and Dr. Pickron, Vice President for Student Affairs.

Handout was passed out - Admission Comparison Report

Dr. Pickron stated the handouts that were given out are the latest data on enrollment for fall 2017. We are 211 applications behind, 86 accepts ahead, and 12 deposits ahead of this time last year.

Dr. Pickron noted that they are preparing for their accepted student day events this spring. There will be five Accepted Student days on campus. Off campus Accepted Student days will be happening starting with a pilot program using Alumni Accepted Students Receptions happening around the state. Alumni have volunteered to host those events.

Chair Slakey asked if there were any other questions. There were no further questions.

Dr. Marotta introduced Dr. Tinkham to present enrollment data from DCGE.

Handout was passed out - winter and spring Enrollments

Dr. Tinkham stated course enrollments were slightly higher this winter than last. She is finding more students are looking for winter courses in preparation for graduate school. She also noted that day students take a lot of the DCGE courses as well.

Dr. Tinkham moved on to discuss spring; we are still enrolling so this might change a little. Total number of DCGE students is down. The seat count is also down by about 50. The drop may be due to higher course enrollments in the fall leading to higher program completion. For the day students in comparison to last year there were 86 additional students enrolled. Day students are able to take courses in DCGE in drop/add and are not charged extra. In total we have more students in seats fewer DGCE paid students. President Torrecilha asked what the goal was for paying students, how this was affecting the budget and how was it going to be made up. Dr. Tinkham noted that these are all concerns to look at and she will continue to carefully monitor enrollment and expenses. She clarified that enrollments from remote courses (courses offered off campus or via a third party) have been excluded from her enrollment reports. The reason for excluding these numbers is that remote course enrollment tends to fluctuate independently from total enrollment. Dr. Marotta also pointed out that DCGE students are also allowed to take day classes.

Handout was passed out - February 7, 2017, Graduate and Continuing Education Graduate Cohort Programs

Dr. Tinkham provided an enrollment update on our cohort programs in Fall 2017. Looking at the Masters in Social work, we have 198 applications, up from 179 last year. The application goal was 175 and the enrollment goal was 90. Last year we accepted 87. Dr. Tinkham spoke about WSU adding a MSW program in Worcester. The enrollment goal for Worcester is 16. We have 8 applications so far and we will continue to accept applications on a rolling basis. The M.A. in Applied Behavior Analysis and M.A. in Counseling are down from last year. Efforts are being taken to get those numbers up and they are taking applications on a rolling basis for both programs. The reasons for the difference in numbers between the two programs (i.e., continued growth in the MSW versus M.A. in Counseling) is that the MSW is considered the stronger because what you can do with an MSW is very broad and what you can do with an M.A in Counseling is very narrow. It is an issue they have been aware of. It has also been noticed that where we are losing applicants among our alumni pool.

Dr. Tinkham asked for questions. President Torrecilha asked about the other graduate programs and what was the sense of the flow. Dr. Tinkham stated she needs to take a look at M.ED. right now. A teacher incentive discount was started last year. We need to keep a close eye on our education numbers because the number of teachers is declining. A 5th year option has been added. We will need to go to a hybrid model (brick and click) to help with the numbers in this program.

Dr. Tinkham spoke about the PA program which should be up and running next January. The OT director has been hired and we are moving forward with program development.

Chair Slakey moved on to the next agenda item, Status report on Structure of Academic Affairs.

President Torrecilha started off with the discussion that this was an important topic. Last year the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning was tasked to take a look at the structure of Academic Affairs. Currently we have a flat structure that served us well when we had fewer students. The task was to look at data and best practices and provide recommendations. The committee recommended the college structure moving forward. They have proposed two college models. The president has accepted the recommendation to move to the college structure and has taken the proposed models under advisement.

President Torrecilha turned the discussion over to Dr. Marotta.

Dr. Marotta stated that the committee met twice last spring and eleven times in the fall. The benefits are clear. We are out of sync with other universities and the collective bargaining agreement. Dr. Marotta feels the new structure will benefit the entire university, not just Academic Affairs.

The question was asked, who the committee members were. Dr. Marotta stated there were 6 members of MSCA, one APA member, two Deans, and a chair.

Chair Slakey asked Dr. Marotta to comment on the two different models. Dr. Marotta spoke about the first model, the five college model noting the workload of the Deans within the five college model. The second model has four colleges and is more traditional in its organization and more balanced in the numbers of faculty and students.

Trustee Martin asked Dr. Marotta if she could expand on the process. Dr. Marotta noted the open forums on campus and discussion at the academic department chair meetings. One of the most important things that was heard was that a change in structure makes sense. There were some worries and concerns among individuals. The response overall were very good.

President Torrecilha spoke about creating an enterprise that responds to faculty and staff. He spoke about existing deans and how we capitalize on those positions. He discussed schools versus colleges and also workload.

Chair Slakey asked what the timeline would be to begin this process and roll it out. President Torrecilha stated they would like to arrive at a firm decision by end of March or beginning of April and roll it all out at one time.

There was a discussion between Chair Slakey and President Torrecilha about the timeline of the hiring process and what the start time would be for the hires, most likely a year and half.

Trustee Magovern asked how many universities have a college structure like this one. Dr. Marotta remarked that it is rare to find an institution of our size that does not have colleges.

Chair Slakey moved the discussion to the next agenda item, High Impact Practices.

Dr. Marotta presented on high impact practices. High Impact practices are engaged learning experiences. Westfield State will focus on a smaller number of high impact practices as part of the Westfield State Experience scale. Academic Affairs is looking to have students complete at least two high impact practices prior to graduation. Dr. Marotta feels this will have a dramatic impact on our graduation and retention rates and reducing our achievement gaps. Dr. Marotta then discussed some of the high impact practices already taking place at WSU.

The First Year Read program provides a common read to all first year students. The book is integrated in courses and there is an accompanying lecture/film/discussion series throughout the fall semester. This program has been very successful. We have had between 700 and 800 students at the culminating author event each of the past five years.

11:13AM Trustee Queenin left the room

11:15AM Trustee Queenin returned to the room

There are four additional high impact practices under the Westfield State Experience: Undergraduate Research, Internships, Civic Engagement and International/Study away experiences. National studies have demonstrated that students who participate in these types of high impact practices have better academic performance, more interaction with faculty and their peers and more appreciation of diversity. The Westfield State Experience will require students to map out a program for their 4 years and include a plan for engaging in high impact practices.

Trustee Slakey asked for further questions. No questions

Trustee Slakey moved on to Item number 4, Items for Action.

Trustee Slakey asked Dr. Marotta to present the candidates for Emeriti Status:

Dr. Kamal Ali, Associate Professor Emeritus, Ethnic and Gender Studies Department

Ms. Judith Carlson, Librarian Emerita, Library

Dr. Trudy Knowles, Professor Emerita, Education Department

Dr. Marilyn Sandidge, Professor Emerita, English Department

MOTION was made by Trustee Slakey to approve nominees for Emeriti status. This motion was seconded by Trustee McGovern. A roll call vote was made:

Trustee Slakey – yes

Trustee Hill – yes

Trustee Magovern – yes

Trustee Martin – yes

Trustee Sullivan – abstain

Trustee Trafford - yes

Motion was approved.

Trustee Slakey asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Martin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was made:

Trustee Slakey – yes
Trustee Hill – yes
Trustee Magovern – yes
Trustee Martin – yes
Trustee Sullivan – yes
Trustee Trafford – yes

Motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:48AM

Handouts presented at this meeting:

Admission Comparison Report – February 7, 2017
DCGE winter and spring enrollment
DCGE Graduate Cohort Programs

Attachments presented at this meeting:

Academic Affairs December 6, 2016 Draft minutes
Justification for Emeritus
Emeritus letter for signature
High Impact practices
Motion Emeriti
Status Report Academic Affairs Structure