



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Minutes

President's Boardroom, The Horace Mann Center
December 11, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Martin, Vice Chair Martinez-Alvarez, Secretary Magovern, Trustees Neves and Williams

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Trustee Sullivan

TRUSTEE GUESTS PRESENT: Trustees Alvarado, Boudreau, Landrau (joined at 9:49 AM), and Queenin

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

The meeting was called to order at 9:36 AM by Committee Chair Martin, who welcomed new Trustee Dr. Gloria Williams to the committee. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Diane Prusank was unable to be at the meeting and Dr. Enrique Morales-Diaz, Interim Dean of Faculty, took her place during the meeting.

MOTION made by Trustee Magovern, seconded by Trustee Neves, to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2019 meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Committee Chair Martin stated the agenda would be slightly modified to address the action items first and then discuss retention.

Dr. Morales-Diaz brought forth the names submitted for faculty emeritus/a status and stated that to be eligible, the nominee must have a minimum of ten years full-time service, be retired or resigned, and not employed as faculty or librarian at any other university. Each nominee has sustained achievement in teaching, advising, scholarship and professional service to the University, community or discipline. Dr. Morales-Diaz gave brief biographies of the nominees.

MOTION made by Trustee Martinez-Alvarez, seconded by Trustee Neves, to approve the granting of Faculty Emeritus/a status, effective December 11, 2019 to the following individuals:

Dr. David Doe, Department of Biology
Dr. Nitza Hidalgo, Department of Education
Dr. Ricki Kantrowitz, Department of Psychology
Mr. John Kurty, Department of Movement Science, Sport and Leisure Studies
Dr. David Lovejoy, Department of Biology
Dr. Ruth Ohayon, Department of Language and Culture Studies

Dr. Beth Ann Rothermel, Department of English
Dr. Jack Szpiler, Department of Psychology
There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Dr. Morales-Diaz continued that we currently offer a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Business Management with concentrations in finance, accounting, marketing, and management. A proposal is being brought forth to rename the degrees to more accurately reflect student coursework and educational experience, support both recruitment and retention, and serve as clear indicators of student experience for internships. There will be no change in requirements, coursework, or resources. Changing the Management degrees would align Westfield State nationally and internationally with other institutions and help with recruiting by clarifying the pathways for students. Board of Higher Education staff will review and approve the requests to rename the degree programs. A Business Management degree with a concentration in Human Resources will continue to be offered. (Trustee Landrau entered the meeting at 9:49 AM). Double majors need to be aligned closely so students are the master of one major. Double majors are no longer “enough.” Accreditation will be discussed at the April committee meeting.

MOTION made by Trustee Neves, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve the Bachelor of Science in Accounting as described in attachment F. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

MOTION made by Trustee Martinez-Alvarez, seconded by Trustee Neves, to approve the Bachelor of Science in Finance as described in attachment H. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

MOTION made by Trustee Magovern, seconded by Trustee Neves, to approve the Bachelor of Science in Management as described in attachment J. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

MOTION made by Trustee Martinez-Alvarez, seconded by Trustee Magovern, to approve the Bachelor of Science in Marketing as described in attachment L. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Dr. Gloria Lopez, Vice President for Student Affairs, gave a presentation on student success in relation to the target in the Strategic Plan and determining our strengths to impact how to retain students. Highlights include:

- Graduation and retention rates from 2013-2018 show Westfield State is at or above the median retention rates for Massachusetts.
- This is a marked increase of students leaving from 2018-2019. There was a decrease in Pell-eligible students, who are more likely to remain enrolled, but the percentage of those students is increasing. The two-year retention rate is similar to the graduation rate.
- Many students do not fill out an exit survey or speak with anyone before leaving, but most students who did listed finances as the reason. The Withdrawal Clearance form gives useful information and the National Student Clearinghouse shows that 90% of students that leave are going elsewhere. It was requested to have a report showing some of the actual reasons for students leaving.
- Develop innovative strategies to close the achievement, retention and graduation gap in black and Latinx students.
- There are a surprising number of students leaving in their senior year. Despite the downtrend in retention, the graduation rate is near other institutions in the state and nation.
- Students living on campus have a higher return rate than commuters do.

- Students are transferring to institutions closer to their homes so we need to think differently about how to support those students by making Westfield State their home.
- The Last Mile scholarship has been very effective in assisting students who are in danger of not graduating. Another donation to the scholarship was recently made. Contact is made each year with students who should be graduating to make sure they are on track with their credits and classes.
- Select initiatives for retention are:
 - Westfield Promise
 - Westfield State Experience
 - Parenzo Hall/Student Success Center
 - Career Center (info graph was handed out on the collaborations between the Career Center and Academic Affairs)
 - Support for Commuter Council
- Everyone on campus is responsible for retention, and that message needs to be constantly repeated. Every opportunity with students should be used, such as advising, as check-ins to find out how they are doing.

Ms. Chris Willenbrock, the new Director of Residential Engagement, was introduced. Ms. Willenbrock gave a presentation entitled "From Retention to Persistence," highlighting the following.

- Retaining and promoting students to persist consists of:
 - Engagement
 - Sense of belonging
 - Self-efficacy
 - Perceived value of the curriculum
- A Maslow-inspired model is being used to address basic and growth needs.
- Engagement and points of contact numbers were shared, showing 2,352 students being reached so far this fall with 95.4% repeat attendees.

There being no further business, **MOTION** was made and seconded to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 11:03 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Draft Minutes of October 10, 2019
- b. Motion: Faculty Emeritus/a Status
- c. Faculty Emeritus/a Status Justifications
- d. Request to Rename Degree Programs
- e. Motion: Bachelor of Science in Accounting
- f. Bachelor of Science in Accounting Draft BHE Application
- g. Motion: Bachelor of Science in Finance
- h. Bachelor of Science in Finance Draft BHE Application
- i. Motion: Bachelor of Science in Management
- j. Bachelor of Science in Management Draft BHE Application
- k. Motion: Bachelor of Science in Marketing
- l. Bachelor of Science in Marketing Draft BHE Application
- m. Handout: Career Center & Academic Affairs Collaborations poster