



Board of Trustees

Governance and Nomination Committee

1:45 pm

June 29, 2021

Owl's Nest (Room 018), Ely Campus Center

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing will also take place on YouTube at the following link: <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/live>

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|---|------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | Trustee Alvarado |
| 2. Approval of Minutes
April 29, 2021 | Trustee Alvarado |
| 3. Items for Discussion
a) 2020-2021 Board of Trustees Self-Assessment
b) Nominations for Board of Trustees Officers 2021-2022 | Trustee Alvarado |

Attachment(s):

- a) Draft Minutes of April 29, 2021
- b) WSU-BOT Self-Assessment 2021 Tabulated Results
- c) Proposed Slate of Board of Trustees Officers for 2021-2022



Board of Trustees

Governance and Nomination Committee

April 29, 2021

Minutes

Meeting held virtually via Zoom

In accordance with Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker’s Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20 dated March 12, 2020.

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Committee Chair Alvarado, Vice Chair Boudreau, Secretary Salehi and Trustees Landrau, Martin and Williams

TRUSTEE GUESTS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Trustees Magovern, Martinez-Alvarez, and Queenin

Dr. Roy H. Saigo, Interim President of Westfield State University, was also present.

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 PM by Committee Chair Alvarado, and a roll identified the committee members listed above as participating. It was also announced the meeting was being livestreamed and, as a result, being recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Landrau, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve the minutes of the December 17 2020 meeting.

There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** taken:

Trustee Alvarado	Yes	Trustee Salehi	Yes
Trustee Boudreau	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes
Trustee Martin	Yes	Trustee Landrau	Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Chair Alvarado brought forth the following items:

Mandatory Department of Higher Education (DHE) Trustee Training. The DHE training must be completed by November, 2021. An updated course tracker will be emailed to trustees showing which trainings are still outstanding for them to participate in.

Draft Board Self-Assessment Instrument and Timeline. The board self-assessment will be sent to trustees to complete and send back for compilation and discussion at the June meeting. This will create dialogue for the coming year and will help the board do an internal assessment on the last year. It will help identify where growth is needed and where to focus in moving forward. It may also be helpful to discuss the results of the assessment with president-elect Dr. Linda Thompson so she understands the Board’s strengths and

weaknesses. This exercise is for the Board’s internal self-reflection. For those members of the campus community participating remotely, constructive feedback is welcome any time and can be sent to Jean Beal.

Officers of the Board and Committee Assignments. The Board chair is responsible for committee assignments, with feedback from the Executive Committee. Surveys will be sent in the next few weeks asking for committee interest and input for officers of the Board. The information sent will include officer term limits and limits for committee membership to review in making selections. The committee interest will be vetted and be helpful to the new Board chair in selecting committees.

There being no further business, **MOTION** made by Trustee Landrau, seconded by Trustee Williams, to adjourn.

There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** taken:

Trustee Alvarado	Yes	Trustee Salehi	Yes
Trustee Boudreau	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes
Trustee Martin	Yes	Trustee Landrau	Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a) Draft Minutes of December 17, 2020
- b) DHE Training Cycle 2020-2021
- c) DRAFT Board Self-Assessment Instrument

Secretary’s Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Governance and Nomination Committee meeting held on April 29, 2021.

Ali Salehi, Secretary

Date

Westfield State University

BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT | 2020–21

TABULATED RESULTS

Date: June 17, 2021

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
Board Operations					
The board understands and adheres to its legal responsibilities.	6	3			
The board follows a code of ethics or standards of practice.	5	4			
Board members treat one another with respect, accommodating differences of opinion.	8	1			
Board members are prepared for board meetings and attend regularly.	4	3	1		1
Once a decision is made, board members cease debate and uphold the decision of the board.	4	4		1	
The board maintains confidentiality of privileged information.	8	1			
Through its behavior, the board has set a positive example for the president and campus community.	4	4		1	
The board actively encourages creativity and innovation.	3	4	2		
The board is willing to take a stand for what it believes is right for students and the community.	7	1		1	
The board understands the political implications of its actions.	4	5			
The board works to build positive relationships with all stakeholders.	4	4	1		
New members receive an orientation to the board and the institution.	5	3	1		
Board members are knowledgeable about the roles and responsibilities of trusteeship.	6	2			1
The board adequately studies issues prior to board action.	4	4			1
The board periodically evaluates itself and strives to become increasingly more effective.	2	1	3		2
The board self-evaluation process provides useful information on board performance.	1	2	2		4

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
Board-President Relations					
The board provides a high level of support to the president.	4	5			
The board maintains open communication with the president.	4	4	1		
The board effectively evaluates the president on an annual basis.	2	3	1		3
The board has clear protocols for communicating with staff that include the president.	1	6	2		
The board clearly delegates the administration of the university to the president.	5	3			1
Advocating for the University					
The board recognizes positive accomplishments of the university.	6	3			
Board members support the university by attending various events.	1	4	3		1
Board members are knowledgeable about state and national educational policy issues.	1	4	4		
The board actively supports the university's foundation and fundraising efforts.	6	1	1		
The board understands and protects the academic freedom of the faculty and administrators.	4	4			1
Institutional Performance					
The board ensures the university regularly evaluate program effectiveness.	3	2	2	1	1
The board demonstrates a concern for the success of all students by monitoring broad student learning outcomes.	4	2		1	2
The board monitors and advances the impact the university has on the community.	3	4	2		
The board monitors performance related to safety and security.	5	4			
The board monitors performance related to fiscal management.	9				
The board understands the financial audit and its recommendations.	7	2			
The board monitors performance related to its policies on employment.	2	4	1		2
Standards for University Operations					
The board understands the budget documents and the fiscal condition of the university.	8	1			
The board is committed to equal opportunity.	7	1			1
The board's policies ensure participation in decision-making through an effective governance model.	3	5			1

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
Community Relations					
The board is knowledgeable about community and regional needs and expectations.	2	4	2		1
Board members adhere to protocols for responding to community members and the media.	6	1			2
Board members keep the president informed of community contacts.	2	2	1		3
The board, through its diverse composition, fairly represents the community it serves.	4	3			2
Policy Direction					
The board ensures a relevant Strategic Plan that is responsive to students and the community.	5	3	1		
The board spends sufficient time discussing the future direction of the university.	2	4	2	1	
The board is knowledgeable about the university's educational programs and services.	4	5			
The board is appropriately involved in the planning process.	3	4	1		
The board encourages partnerships and cooperative agreements with business, government, community agencies, and other educational institutions.	4	3	1		1
Policy Role					
The board understands that the primary function of the board is to establish the policies by which the university is to be administered.	7	2			
The board periodically reviews and evaluates its policies.	1	3	3		1
The board focuses on policy and strategy in board discussions, not on administrative matters.	2	5	1		
The board policy manual is current, relevant, and useful.	2	2	2		3
The policy-making process is clear, public and inclusive.	3	4	2		
The board is aware of the campus governance model and the means through which policy recommendations are vetted through the campus community.	1	6			2
Policy recommendations contain adequate information and are presented so that sufficient time is allowed for study and discussion.	4	3			1

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

What are the major accomplishments of the board in the past year?

1. COVID:
 - a. Monthly meetings to discuss COVID and other timely matters
 - b. Surviving the COVID-19 virus
 - c. Navigating through a pandemic and its adverse effects on the University
 - d. Strong engagement by the Board in the University's handling of the COVID pandemic & related financial issues
 - e. Ensuring the continuation of access to high quality educational opportunities during the pandemic
2. PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH:
 - a. Transitioning from a President to an Interim President to interviewing and hiring WSU's next president
 - b. Presidential Search / A successful, open, transparent presidential search process that had strong University engagement
3. BUDGET:
 - a. Working with administration to reduce or eliminate budget shortfall
 - b. Management of University finances in the face of considerable challenges (COVID and enrollment)
4. UEAAC:
 - a. Reevaluating the entire operation of the University
 - b. Working with and supporting the UEAAC
 - c. The encouragement and support of the campus-wide UEAAC and their work
 - d. Strong engagement by the Board and support for the work of UEAAC and for its recommendations while also delineating organizational areas that needed the Board's involvement and approval
5. CAMPUS CULTURE:
 - a. Collaborating with various constituencies across the Institution (Foundation, Alumni, Union, Faculty, etc.)
 - b. Proactive effort by the Board to engage with collective bargaining units and to improve relationships
 - c. Building a more trustful relationship with campus constituents
6. Trying to maintain as strong a University as possible this past year
7. Appointing a new interim Provost

What are areas in which the board could improve?

1. Many of the trustees are very informed on matters pertaining to the University and they care about the University because they have either worked here or are alumni. However, some of the other trustees only see the University as a business, not a home. Most trustees have a fantastic business and financial background to contribute to the University, but the only trustee with a full pulse on the campus culture is the student trustee, and that is why I think campus listening sessions for the BOT could be helpful.
2. Attendance/participation at University-sponsored events to demonstrate Board commitment (especially during evening events)
3. Getting answers back when asked at board meetings. On several occasions I asked why we didn't retain more students. Everyone had great answers and studies but they didn't answer the question.
4. Establish clear and concise policies that the Board of Trustees, in conjunction with all other departments, can make all decisions that effectively run the University.
5. Better communication with the stakeholders to eliminate even the perception of lack of trust between the parties involved
6. Community relations
7. As a Board I believe we need to find the time, not just once a year, but periodically throughout the year, to setp back and to have discussions with the president, cabinet, and University governance about the general direction of the University, perhaps keyed to the Strategic Plan (and now UEAAC recommendations).
8. The Board can continue to be proactive in reaching out to members of the University and inviting them into Board and committee meetings.
9. In addition to more discussion about University direction, I'd like to see more time/discussion devoted to periodic reviews of program effectiveness, including both academic and non-academic programs and services. A focus of this should include data on program and learning outcomes.
10. Frequent and open communication relative to decisions made by the Executive Board/President before presented at the full Board for a vote.

I recommend the following goals for board improvement for the coming year:

1. I think the board should have community listening sessions and invite the whole campus community to share their perspective on campus matters. I think that the board has struggled with campus community relations and more opportunities to have a constructive dialogue could be beneficial for the BOT and the community.
2. Continue to collaborate and build on the momentum with various constituencies across the institution (Foundation, Alumni, Union, Faculty, etc.)
3. Onboarding President-elect Thompson:
 - a. Not sure of the process, but need to make sure that adequate support is provided to ensure success
 - b. Successful transitioning for President-elect Thompson
4. To expand the applications for Westfield State and increase the retention rate of students already attending the school.
5. Demonstrate that the Board of Trustees are responsible for establishing the policies that the University operates under.
6. Quarterly or half year town hall style meeting with the campus to listen, answer, and prevent issues to become obstacles down the road
7. Statement of expectations for Board member involvement with the University and the WSU Foundation
8. Some mechanism for strengthening engagement by the University community with the Board, e.g. a committee that regularly meets with union groups or a time when the Board can hear regularly from various union and/or employee groups or having designated individuals who are liaisons to the Board at full Board meetings or committee meetings.
9. Fully developed orientation program for new trustees
10. Implementation of UEAAC recommendations
11. Updates (perhaps 3 times per year) on Strategic Plan progress (with appropriate and relevant dashboard data)
12. Periodic review of decisions made by HR that may impact the campus community

Additional comments:

1. I have not been through the full cycle so do not know the answer to the evaluation and self-assessment portion of the survey
2. I believe that we've experienced a busy and productive year. I am pleased to see that campus constituents are working collaboratively, and are willing to let the past negativity fade.



Board of Trustees

June 29, 2021

Proposed Slate of Officers for the 2021-2022 academic year:

Dr. Robert Martin, Chair

Ali Salehi, Vice Chair

Lydia Martinez-Alvarez, Secretary