



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Advancement and Enrollment Management Committee

February 17, 2022

Minutes

Loughman Living Room, Scanlon Hall

And 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 PRESENT: Vice Chair Melissa Alvarado, Secretary Theresa Jasmin, and Trustees Chloe Sanfacon and William Reichelt.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Committee Chair Lydia Martinez-Alvarez

TRUSTEE GUESTS PRESENT: Trustees Dr. Robert Martin, Ali Salehi, and Dr. Gloria Williams

Dr. Linda Thompson, President of Westfield State University, was also present.

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 AM by Committee Vice Chair Alvarado and it was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and captured as recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Jasmin, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2021 meeting. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

President's Remarks. President Thompson is challenging the entire University to work on increasing enrollment on campus.

Enrollment Update. The first Accepted Student Day is one week away. This is the season of yield in trying to convert interested parties from acceptances to deposits. The funnel report was presented, showing we are up 800 accepts compared to last year, but deposits are lagging. Applications exceeded those three years ago. It is very early for transfers, but the numbers are comfortable.

- Because inquiries are so high, we are still seeing more applications, but it affects the next conversion. More interest is generated, but the level drops as it goes through the process.
- The accept rate is higher because SAT scores were made optional.
- Conversion rates from 2019-2021 were reviewed to estimate where we expect to be. We reached the goal for prospects and are 95% of the way to expected inquires and 90% of the goal for 6,000 applications. It is hoped to have 5,000 accepts. For the yield rate, expect a 2% reduction after instituting the Common App. We have removed 3%, putting us at 1,086 after melt.
- 3E Marketing, which helps with digital media, ad buying, and converting applications to yield has projected a little over 1,100 after melt based on the region, the market, and how students are

responding in the marketplace. This would bring us close to budget for this year. The rate of deposits has been reduced.

- Visits are down 30%-40% which need to increase through accepted student days. There is still a financial aid gap for our highest-need students, which is one-third of the class. Financial aid is not keeping up with inflation. Students' costs are higher because most live on campus. Department chairs are working with Admissions to plan events and be engaged with the process. Funnels are being distributed to each department, and faculty have been reaching out to students.
- Another offer of financial aid is going out soon and an appeal fund is being set up for those families who need more assistance. Families will reach out to us if they are offered more from other schools. We also have work study funds to offer students who request it and we awarded the Massachusetts Grant Plus up front this year with an estimated total for all students of \$1 million for 2022-2023. Staff in the financial aid office are reaching out to students who are accepted but haven't submitted their FAFSA to offer to help complete it.

Spring Events. There are 180 registrations for accepted student days with the hope for another 40-50.

These days tend to yield very high. There are many smaller accepted student events taking place in person and virtually to supplement the main accepted student days to connect with individual students.

- There has been a good response from text messaging selling Westfield State as the right fit and a fun place to attend. Handwritten note cards were sent to approximately 3,400 students. Faculty are calling potential students and a letter from President Thompson was sent.
- EduCo is an international site we started working with last fall. We are live and recruiting students from all over the world. The challenge is that visa appointments are difficult to obtain. We are establishing the program now to be ready when travel relaxes. It was suggested that international students could fill the gap by holding a couple of college fairs in Brazil or other places. Chair Martin requested this subject be revisited in June-August and report back on the outcome data of what is working and the success for each initiative, for example, the phone calls and texting. The Admissions office wants a return on every effort done, so we need to make sure we can sustain and support each event. Electronic communication can be measured and the EdSights report was shown with responses to digital messaging.
- Enrollment Management may be coming back to the Board for additional funds for financial aid, and it was requested to do that sooner rather than later. President Thompson stated students still have a gap of \$4,000 and asked the team to reduce that figure and look for ways to hire students on campus. It was stated that there needs to be a major shift of the financial planning process and how expenses and reduced revenue are reviewed as we think of the long-term affect.

Quarterly Dashboard. Highlights from December 31 include \$424,045 in gifts and \$45,000 in grants. There were 741 donors; 82 new, 269 reactivated, and 390 retained. All categories have increased since last year. Board participation is increasing, and all three volunteer boards need to talk about giving. The Trustees were challenged to participate in the Florida golf tournament and the April 6 Interfaith Breakfast. There is great synergy on campus with the associate deans and directors. A fundraising strategy was presented to cabinet and the Foundation Board, looking back over the last five years, which averaged just over \$1 million in straight fundraising. Foundation metrics are being developed, looking to stretch and build in the FY23 goals and targets. In 2012 there was a \$4 million endowment and as of December 31 it was \$18 million. There is quiet fundraising around the president's community conversations and investiture. It is the 50-year celebration of Title IX. The Foundation Board approved three new board members, Dr. Carlton Pickron, Dr. Isabelina Rodriguez, and Ralph Studley, who bring so much knowledge from the University. There have been three new scholarships since July and three more coming. There has been much discussion around the importance of academic scholarships, however we are finding we also need to assist with books, food insecurity, internships, travel abroad etc. We continue to look at the percentage of alumni participation,

which is presently at .97%, and that needs to increase. The real donor numbers come in the 3rd and 4th quarter since most funds come from big events, bequests, and planned giving. We find that our student's stories are what compels giving.

Owls in Florida/Hogan '77 Classic. Alumni and donors are invited to participate in the Naples, Florida, St. Patrick's Day parade walking with matching t-shirts next to a WSU-decorated van followed by a reception with Dr. Thompson. The Hogan Classic Golf Tournament is March 14 and it is hoped to raise \$15,000-\$20,000 from that event.

GiveAHoot is March 23-24 and information is being sent by email, text messages, and postcards. There were 317 donors and \$79,000 raised last year. This year's goal is 350 donors and \$85,000.

Take a Seat. There is \$40,000 left to raise in this fundraiser for Dever Stage seating. During the holidays it was advertised as "Give a Seat." Two sets of parents bought seats for their students who are currently attending. This campaign will close in July. On February 19 Advancement, Athletics, and the President's Office will host a reception at the men's and women's basketball games to promote Owl pride. A large student turnout is expected at the games.

Owls Around the Globe (OATG). The alumni trustee election name will be given to governor's office this week. Alumni Relations is trying to promote fun. They are pushing initiatives on social media and measuring engagement. This also gives an opportunity to update alumni information. Last month, the *Owls Around the Globe* campaign had 118 submissions from all over the world. There were 12,770 people who saw the post and 2,623 who engaged with it. Last weekend the *Owls in Love* campaign highlighted couples who met at Westfield State. A chair of the Washington, DC alumni chapter was identified to start that group up again.

President Thompson said she is looking for major gifts of \$25,000 and above and will find what is most important for each school to get the biggest benefit from the donations.

There being no further business, **MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Jasmin, to adjourn. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a) Draft Minutes of Minutes – December 16, 2021
- b) Enrollment Update
- c) Spring Events PowerPoint
- d) Quarterly Dashboard
- e) Owls in Florida
- f) Give A Hoot Postcard
- g) Take a Seat Poster
- h) Owls Around the Globe (OATG)

Secretary's Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Advancement and Enrollment Management Committee meeting held on February 17, 2022.

Theresa Jasmin, Secretary

Date