**Board of Trustees of the University of Oregon**

**Meeting Summary | September 10, 2020**

**Attendance.**

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| Marcia Aaron | Present | Elisa Hornecker | Present | Ginevra Ralph | Present |
| Peter Bragdon | Present | Ross Kari | Present | Michael Schill | Present |
| Andrew Colas | Present | Chuck Lillis | Present | Connie Seeley | Present |
| Allyn Ford | Present | Laura Lee McIntyre | Present | Mary Wilcox | Present |
| Joe Gonyea, III | Present | Jimmy Murray | Present | Katharine Wishnia | Present |

**Convening and Approval of Minutes.** The Board of Trustees of the University of Oregon (Board) met via video conference on September 10, 2020. A livestream and a teleconference option were made available to the public for purposes of listening in on the proceedings. The meeting was called to order by Chair Chuck Lillis at 8:32 a.m. A quorum was verified.The Board approved the minutes from the June 4, June 24 and August 27 meetings of the Board without amendment. Below is a summary of the meeting’s proceedings; a full audio recording is available upon request.

**ASUO and Senate Presidents’ Reports.** ASUO President Isaiah Boyd noted the unprecedented time that students face this fall. He referenced the goals articulated in his written report, and provided some additional information about key initiatives he hopes ASUO can focus on this year. Those included food insecurity, support for DACA students, making sure students understand the importance of their votes, and the need to continue breaking down barriers in order to successfully implement change. University Senate President Elliot Berkman introduced himself and then introduced Spike Gildea, the senate vice president/president-elect. Berkman emphasized the senate’s work to address systemic racism, research, and core education. Trustees engaged in discussion and questions with Boyd and Berkman on a variety of topics, including textbook affordability and open access resources, the retention of faculty of color, and the importance of deeper work on issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, particularly from a faculty-led perspective.

**President and Provost Reports.** President Michael Schill reiterated his concern for those affected by the numerous wildfires in Oregon and noted support offered by the university for its employees and the community. He then spoke about the importance of keeping an eye on the university’s mission of teaching and research through all of the issues facing society. He noted that students will be moving into UO residence halls later in the month, and then discussed the importance of student readiness as a factor in making sure students can graduate in a timely fashion, and noted the topics that will be discussed throughout the day which support this work. Schill then turned to the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion and the institution’s work in this area, and noted that he intends to bring a robust conversation on this to the board at its December meeting. He emphasized a few steps taken over the past several months, and asked Provost Patrick Phillips to provide more information on the new Black Studies minor. Phillips noted the value of a positive relationship between the administration and the University Senate, and his appreciation for the work of the senate, faculty, and students on establishing goals to advance real change. Phillips provided a quick update on various academic leadership searches which were postponed last spring, and noted that the Dean of the College of Design and the Vice Provost and Dean of University Libraries searches will restart with the beginning of the new academic year. He also updated trustees on the transition of Gabe Paquette, formerly the dean of the Clark Honors College (CHC), to a vice provost position within the Office of the Provost, and the selection of Carol Stabile, an associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, as interim dean for the CHC. He noted that much work remains with respect to detailed planning for fall resumption, which was an in-depth topic at the Board meeting in late August. He acknowledged Chair Lillis’ request that in the future he speak with trustees about those academic initiatives that will be at the forefront of the institution’s planning. He then noted that the internal discussions and planning are instrumental to this work, but that the state’s higher education perspective and policy is also pivotal to this conversation.

**COVID-19.** Andre LeDuc, associate vice president and chief resilience officer, provided a brief update on the current state of affairs relating to COVID-19. He provided the latest Lane County case figures, reiterated the importance of managing the move-in process on campus and working with community parties for those who live off campus, and noted the ongoing work to increase testing capacity. LeDuc noted that there have been no changes to the Health and Safety Operational plan approved by the Board on August 27. Trustees discussed a few additional topics with LeDuc and other Incident Management Team leaders, including: more detailed information on the testing strategy, particularly given the rapidly-changing testing environment; lessons from other institutions; possible legal issues; move-in and housing policies; and dining practices.

**University Finances.** Jamie Moffitt, vice president for finance and administration and CFO, provided an update on Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) finances. She noted that the FY20 deficit is $7.6 million, which is less than the third quarter (Q3) projection of $10.9 million. Moffitt highlighted some of the key variations between the original FY20 financial projections (developed in spring 2019) and the final actual figures for FY20. These included a reduction of $10.1 million in tuition and fees revenue (-2.3%) due to declines in international students, higher four-year graduation rates, and increases in remissions; a reduction in services and supplies expenses of $9.4 million (-7.9%) primarily due to decreased expenses in the Division of Global Engagement and other savings realized due to COVID-19, such as travel; and an increase of $5.0 million (+1.1%) in personnel expenses due to higher graduate employee head count and remissions, SEIU contract increases, and decreased employee leave usage due to COVID-19.

Moffitt then turned to an analysis of FY20 with regard to the institution’s auxiliary operations, noting that this is where the university saw the biggest budget financial impacts resulting from COVID-19 this past spring. She noted a total net loss of $16.9 million for the fiscal year across the auxiliary budgets. This was down from the initial projected impact of $20.9 million. The largest FY20 auxiliary impacts were in Housing and Dining Services ($11.6 million), PE & Rec ($2.6 million), and the EMU ($1.1 million). She explained that the initial impact estimated for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics was $2.3 million, but that the Department was able to implement cost savings measures and retain conference revenue at levels that mitigated this gap.

Moffitt then turned to FY21. As required by the FY21 expenditure authorization adopted by the Board in June 2020, Moffitt provided a report on whether that authorization remains appropriate for FY21 at this time. She noted that she has no recommended changes at this time, given the preliminary nature of any FY21 data and that she will continue to monitor expected revenue and expenses relative to this authorization. She explained that the vast majority of the university’s state allocation for FY21 is, at this time, unchanged as the Public University Support Fund (PUSF) was held harmless in state budgets cuts implemented during a special session this summer. Moffitt also explained a number of steps taken on campus to reduce expenditures in anticipation of reduced tuition revenue and longer-term COVID-19 impacts.

FY21 scenarios were discussed, including scenarios for the E&G Fund and the major auxiliary units (Athletics, Housing & Dining, PE & Rec, EMU, and Health Services).

* For the E&G Fund, scenarios looked at a range of enrollment figures for first-year students and extrapolated possible revenue and expense changes related thereto. The scenarios resulted in a potential budget gap of anywhere from $5 million to $14 million, depending on enrollment and the relative tuition and cost savings.
* The Housing and Dining scenarios were based on the total number of students living in university housing along with other assumptions, such as the use of Barnhart Hall for isolation and quarantine, aligning dining services to current guidance and regulations, and taking significant HR actions. The scenarios resulted in anticipated net losses ranging from $11 million to $15.1 million.
* Scenarios for the Athletics budget looked at assumptions including which sports would engage in competition and what fan levels (if any) might be allowed. These scenarios resulted in a range of possible deficits ranging from $56.3 to $81.1 million.
* With regard to the EMU budget, the four scenarios look at a range of possible reductions in total students paying the EMU fee. In most of these scenarios cost-savings measures could be implemented to offset any potential revenue reductions. The one exception was the scenario in which there was both a15% reduction in fee-paying students and a full shutdown of one term, which could result in an estimated net loss of $1.6 million.
* Scenarios analyzed for the PE and Rec budget also look at a reduction in the number of fee-paying students. Under three scenarios, there is no / minimal ($200,000) net loss, but if there were a 15% reduction in students plus a one-term shutdown, there could be a $2.1 million net loss in this budget.
* Projections for University Health Services looked at possible reductions in the number of fee-paying students, but, unlike the EMU or PE & Rec, the health center is not expected to ever shut down due to the need to maintain critical services for students. The range of scenarios analyzed for the health center resulted in an anticipated net loss of $1.0 to $2.2 million.

Trustees engaged in discussion with Moffitt and Schill on a number of topics relating to finances and the projections, including: the timing of when enrollment and tuition revenue will be more predictable; what, if anything, we are learning from peer institutions which have already started; the impact of moving to predominantly remote instruction for fall; the importance of solving the massive athletics department deficit with non-E&G funds; the institution’s cash position, particularly as it relates to the ability to cover short-term needs, while maintaining necessary balances for dedicated payments; and the impact on students and student workers.

**Student Crisis Funds.** Kris Winter, associate vice president and dean of students, provided an overview of the $1+ million institutional Student in Crisis Fund offered by the UO. She discussed the process used to evaluate need and make distribution decisions, and walked trustees through the outcomes and lessons learned from this effort during the spring and summer. Winter shared some statistics about the requests and distributions, and noted that greater detail is in the meeting materials. Jim Brooks, associate vice president and director of financial aid, then provided an overview of the UO’s use of $8 million in federal student support funding received through the CARES Act, noting that additional detail is provided in the meeting materials. He explained some of the details regarding the program as established by the federal government, including requirements for distribution, disbursement processes, and compliance components. Brooks noted that these funds were also awarded through a workgroup process and that categories of support included expenses relating to housing, meals, technology, transportation, moving, textbooks, healthcare and childcare. Brooks and Winter both acknowledged that need for support will not subside and they are actively working to make improvements to processes going forward. More than $477 thousand will carry into this academic year in the institutional fund, and approximately $2.7 million will carry forward in the CARES fund. Trustees engaged in discussion with Brooks and Winter on a variety of topics, including the specific limitations on the funds, allocation analysis by race and ethnicity, and work study opportunities.

***The meeting was recessed; it was reconvened at 1:02 p.m.***

**Mental Health and Student Services.** Deb Beck, associate vice president and director of University Health Services (UHS), Shelly Kerr, director of the University Counseling Center, and Kris Winter, associate vice president and dean of students, talked with trustees about student mental health trends, issues, and support services. Beck provided an overview of University Health Services and noted that mental health services also extend to the health center, meaning they are not just isolated to the Counseling Center itself. She provided additional background on the structure and staffing within UHS relative to mental health services. Kerr provided a look at the 2018-2019, thus pre-COVID, “Healthy Minds Survey,” which provides some information about the percentage of students experiencing various mental health issues both at the UO and nationally. Specific data is available in the meeting materials. Kerr also talked specifically about the impacts of COVID-19 and other current socio-political events on student mental health and well-being and discussed some findings related to the use of tele-therapy, which was widely employed when the institution transitioned to a remote environment in spring 2020. Winter discussed a few general findings from the work her team is doing, particularly with regard to student care. Those include, but are not limited to: safety is a top concern of students; that students report a difficulty focusing and a lack of motivation; that students are under significant financial distress and are concerned with things such as income instability, employment, housing costs, health care, and food insecurity; and that students are seeking social connection in the virtual learning environment. Trustees engaged in discussion and conversation with the panel about a variety of issues including issues of stigma; how best to communicate the Counseling Center’s services to students, particularly incoming students as they enter the UO *and* upper classmen who face unique pressures and concerns about life after college; the intersection of advising and the identification of mental health issues and referrals; the crisis support line; and whether tele-therapy is a growing area for providing service.

**Student Success.** Doneka Scott, vice provost for undergraduate education and student success, Sung-Woo Cho, a research professor in the College of Education, and Yvette Alex-Assensoh, vice president for equity and inclusion, provided an update on the UO’s student success initiatives with a particular focus on two areas: the impacts of COVID-19 on student success and the efforts to close opportunity gaps for underrepresented minorities, first-generation students, and Pell-eligible students. Scott reminded trustees of the policy decisions enacted to support students during the turbulence of COVID-19, including grading options changes and graduation extensions, among others. She also reported on a COVID-19 survey conducted in spring 2020. The survey went to nearly 17,000 undergraduate students and saw a 23% response rate (self-selection). Key findings relate to a sense of belonging, satisfaction with instruction and remote courses, and the top obstacles students face with regard to learning in the COVID environment. Additional data from the survey are in the meeting materials. Scott also emphasized the impact that financial distress has on student success. Cho then discussed opportunities gaps with trustees. He provided various data points that demonstrate these gaps between underrepresented students, Pell-eligible students, and first-generation students against the overall student population. Data analyzed includes, but is not limited to, graduation and retention rates, degree progress, and GPA. Alex-Assensoh then spoke about a framework to help close these opportunity gaps, beginning with an articulation of key areas where gaps exist and the potential causes of the gaps. She dove into two specific examples for intervention strategies: potential faculty bias (conscious and unconscious) and under-preparation for college-work. Trustees engaged in discussion and conversation with the panel around issues relating to: intra-institutional coordination of equity and inclusion work so that it is not too diffuse, underlying causes of college preparedness issues and inequities, various ways to segment data by using descriptive statistics, and next steps, including reports back to the board regarding actions taken.

**UOPD.** University of Oregon Police Department (UOPD) Chief Matt Carmichael provided an overview of the department, beginning with services provided and resources employed. He emphasized the work the department does to protect and support the overall campus community, in addition to more standard policing services. He also provided an overview of the work UOPD does to respond to individuals in crisis, including the coordination with CAHOOTS in Eugene. Carmichael acknowledged that he is engaged in many conversations with community members about defunding or disarming the UOPD, or disbanding it altogether. He noted that these would be unwise approaches to keeping the community safe. Carmichael emphasized the importance of a balanced approach to protecting the community, using sworn police officers as well as unarmed community service officers, student employees, technology, and community partners. Moffitt then provided five years of financial information regarding the UOPD’s sources and uses of funds. She noted the key sources of funds, including growth over time and specific responsibilities that were added to UOPD’s portfolio (for example, the ASUO-funded “Safe Rides” program and responsibility for security at the White Stag facility in Portland). Moffitt then discussed major uses of funds, noting key changes over time, including investments in new technology related to campus security, as well as training programs. Carmichael then discussed efforts within the department to engage in diversity, equity and inclusion work, acknowledging that historic and systemic issues of racism in policing exist and that there is always room for improvement. He noted that a diversity, equity, and inclusion audit was conducted for the department in 2019, which they will make public, and discussed the student cadet academy as a strategic initiative to help build more diversity in the pipeline for future police and security officers. Carmichael discussed the VPFA Complaint Review Committee, and discussed the information that is available on the UOPD’s website. He noted a strong commitment to building relationships across campus to both inform the department’s practices and the information it shares, and to continuously improve the UOPD’s stature as a resource for the community. Trustees engaged in discussion and conversation with the panel around issues relating to: the UOPD’s relationship with the Portland Police Bureau and activities in Portland, particularly around the White Stag Block; top goals for the department’s work over the next year; CAHOOTS and community coordination; and the importance of strong leadership, which we have in Chief Carmichael.

**President’s Evaluation.** Vice Chair Ginevra Ralph provided a brief summary of President Schill’s annual performance evaluation on behalf of herself and Lillis. Ralph recapped the process used for the evaluation, noting that it is similar to a 360-degree process. Ralph thanked President Schill for his work this past year, particularly as it relates to continued progress on student success, building the Knight Campus, successfully onboarding Patrick Phillips into the role of senior vice president and provost, and—importantly—navigating extraordinary times due to COVID-19. She also noted some of the areas of focus for the president’s ongoing work. Lillis emphasized the comments about Schill’s commitment to the overall academic quality of the intuition, expressing gratitude for his unwavering focus on this work.

**Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:16 p.m.