



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

June 28, 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:** Committee Chair Dr. Gloria Williams, Vice Chair Madeline Landrau, and Trustees Dr. Robert Martin and William Reichelt

**MEMBERS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY:** Secretary Chloe Sanfacon

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Trustee Lydia Martinez-Alvarez

**TRUSTEE GUESTS PRESENT:** Trustees Melissa Alvarado [until 11:00 AM], Chris Montemayor, and Ali Salehi

Also present were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson; Provost Dr. Juline Mills; Dean of Assessment and Accreditation Dr. Brian Jennings; Assistant Provost Dr. Enrique Morales-Diaz; Center for Student Success and Engagement Executive Director Dr. Azanda Seymour; Dean of Students Maggie Balch; Counseling Center Director Brian Cahillane; and Course Achievement, Retention and Engagement Director Nicole West.

The meeting was called to order at 9:51 AM by Committee Chair Williams.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Landrau, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2022, meeting.

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

Trustee Landrau	Yes	Trustee Sanfacon	Yes
Trustee Martin	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes
Trustee Reichelt	Yes		

**Motion passed unanimously.**

It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above.

President’s Remarks. President Thompson stated that in the next year we will create enrollment targets for each school and engage alumni to help with those targets. Fundraising efforts include training for deans

and faculty to help raise merit-based scholarships and creating advisory councils of industry leaders for each school to support fundraising and enterprise.

Degree Name Change: Bachelor of Science in Regional Planning to Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Planning. Provost Mills stated that it is hoped to have full Board of Higher Education (BHE) approval so that a full curriculum will be ready in the spring to start accepting students for the fall of 2023. Programs are being reviewed to see where updates are needed, for example, department name changes to make them more recognizable to the student population.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Martin, to approve the name change of the Bachelor of Science in Regional Planning to the Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Planning.

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

Trustee Landrau	Yes	Trustee Sanfacon	Yes
Trustee Martin	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes
Trustee Reichelt	Yes		

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Retention, Persistence, and Graduation. Provost Mills started the presentation by defining retention, persistence, and graduation rates and shared the student retention cycle from “Tinto’s Model of Student Retention.” Highlights of the presentation were as follows.

- Retention cycle planning and retaining students takes the entire institution and requires data in enrollment goals and outcomes, institution capacity, historical data assessment, continuing student attrition, recruitment and the summer melt, and planning for the next year’s class.
- Seventeen students are needed to efficiently run a class
- Total enrollment of 6,300 is the academic carrying capacity for enrollment growth
- Enrollment of 4,900 full-time day undergraduate students is needed for financial sustainability
- Example analyses for full and part-time undergraduates and incoming first years and transfers was shared. To retain students, target goals must always be hit.
- A 9% attrition loss and 6% voluntary withdrawals help to understand how to identify and retain certain students. Last year there was a 15% melt.
- The expectation of annual student loss and turnover is 39% - how do we address that problem? We should bring in one and one-half classes each year. We saw that many this year but could not convert them. We need to identify the moment of decision for both enrollment and retention for each student and offer individualized student support such as counseling and tutoring.
- The University needs to figure what its true size is and should be.
- A summary of student attributes was shared.
- First-time, full-time fall to fall retention rate for the last ten years decreased from 80% to 73%, which is a national trend. We need to intentionally focus on first-year students. Early completion of English and math classes is a good indicator of success.
- A five-year review of persistence data shows:
  - A consistent approximate 90% persistence rate for fall to spring retention.
  - A lower persistence rate for spring to fall, dropping from 85% to 81%.
  - When students leave Westfield State and go elsewhere, they are doing well.
  - There is close to 80% in first-year housing, but only 53% total live on campus. We are turning into more of a commuter campus instead of residential, especially for upper classmen. Dean Balch stated the housing rates were changed to flat rates as an incentive for upper classmen to stay on campus, which adds to retention.

- The first-time, full-time (FTFT) cohort graduation rates (including by gender and race/ethnicity) were provided for 2005 to 2016.
- We need to be realistic and set reasonable goals. Once students arrive, we need to keep them.

Dr. Seymour stated that the Center for Student Success and Engagement was created in 2020 to address the DHE’s vision project to 1) increase college completion and rates, 2) close achievement gaps, and 3) assist the underserved. The Center is housed in Scanlon Hall and assists 25% of the students in specific populations through the Banacos Academic Center Learning Disability Program, TRiO Student Support Services, Urban Education Program, and Veteran and Military Services and 75% of the general student population through the Course Assessment, Retention and Engagement (CARE) center and the Tutoring and Learning Center (TLC). The Urban Ed program will welcome 74 students next week for the summer bridge program, double the number of students from two years ago. It is hoped to create a student retention committee to address concerns of why students are leaving.

Ms. West shared a retention road map and stated she performs exit interviews with students who want to leave. She engages them and shows them how to return to the institution. The top reasons for students leaving during the past three academic years was shared. The CARE and TLC programs are helping the 75% of students more likely to fall through the cracks. The WSU 360 program tracks those students who may be at risk by data entered from faculty progress surveys (currently 34% responding). Through a retention committee, faculty representatives can assist in offering suggestions on successful engagement of more faculty. CARE and TLC contacts with students over the past four years was shared. Some examples of data (flags) reported in the WSU are missing assignments, attendance, class participation, danger of failing.

Some general retention examples of being proactive, reactive, and corrective were shared.

- Proactive: Dean Balch stated that at risk students are connected to someone on campus, this tool usually serves 100 students through a case management model.
- Reactive, Proactive, and Corrective: Mr. Cahillane stated the Counseling Center has significant outreach, with over 8,500 interactions this year, which includes prevention, promotion of services, identifying resources. In an average year the Center spends 200 counseling hours per full time equivalent (FTE). Last year there were over 400 hours per FTE. Additional counseling staff is needed. Eighty-two percent of students said counseling was important to their retention.
- Training: Assistant Provost Morales-Diaz stated a team attended the Equity Retention Academy through the Gardner Institute which stressed being intentional when retaining students. A retention plan that aligns with the state requirements and focuses on racial equity will be developed to be approved by cabinet and then shared with campus.

The next steps are to launch a Student Retention and Academic Success Team and create a solid multi-year retention plan. It was stated how important support is for first-year cohorts and to engage other students to help with retention.

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

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

Trustee Landrau	Yes	Trustee Sanfacon	Yes
Trustee Martin	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes
Trustee Reichelt	Yes		

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Draft Minutes of April 27, 2022
- b. Memo on Degree Name Change
- c. BHE Name Change Request
- d. Motion: Approval of Degree Name Change
- e. Retention, Persistence, and Graduation Overview
- f. Power Point Presentation: Retention, Persistence, and Graduation
- g. Supplement 1: Who Are Our Students
- h. Supplement 2: Specific Retention Outcomes
- i. Supplement 3: General Retention Efforts
- j. Supplement 4: Retention Technologies