



**Western Oregon University Board of Trustees:
Academic & Student Affairs Committee
Meeting No. 38– February 4, 2025
1:00pm-3:00pm
Minutes**

I. CALL-TO-MEETING AND ROLL CALL

Chair Mitchell calls the meeting of the Academic & Student Affairs Committee to order at 1:10pm on Tuesday February 4, 2025. Chair Mitchell asked Secretary Sorce to call the roll.

Committee members present: Chair Leah Mitchell, Vice-Chair Kari Nelsestuen, Trustee Hunter Hall, Trustee Juan Larios, Trustee Dana Schowalter, Quorum is Present.

Others Present: President Peters, Secretary Evan Sorce, Tina Fuchs, Cameron Mortensen Mortensen

II. COMMITTEE CHAIR’S WELCOME

Chair Mitchell welcomes everyone to the meeting and thanks them all for being there.

Secretary Sorce reminded the committee that this meeting will be recorded and posted because of a new state law requiring the recording and posting of Board Meetings.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

[November 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes](#)

Trustee Nelsestuen moved the approval of the November 18, 2024 meeting minutes, and Trustee Schowalter seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion.

Roll Call on the mention of the motion described above

Chair Mitchell	Aye
Board Vice Chair Nelsestuen	Aye
Trustee Hall	Aye
Trustee Larios	Aye
Trustee Schowalter	Aye

Motion Approved

IV. REPORTS & DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 1) **Showcase & Discussion:** [Introduction to Wolf Ride and National Student Exchange \(NSE\)](#)



Chair Mitchell asked the Executive Assistant for Cameron Mortensen to speak about the Wolf Ride and National Service Exchange. Ms. Mortensen's presentation can be found in the docket starting on page six for review. At the end of Ms. Mortensen's report on Wolf Ride, Chair Mitchell asks who drives the Wolf Ride. Ms. Mortensen reiterated that students are the ones driving the vehicle. Seven students this term must undergo training and certification through public safety and Ms. Mortensen before they can drive. Trustee Hall asked whether there has been any conversation about purchasing a new van or increasing hours with the massive increase in student use (187%). Ms. Mortensen said that if use continues to expand and the program grows in popularity, the determination might be made that there should be increased hours or an additional vehicle, but that would require more data and information.

Ms. Mortensen then transitioned to the National Student Exchange (NSE) presentation, found in the docket on page 14 for review. After Ms. Mortensen finished her presentation, Trustee Schowalter asked if a cross-section of the student body is reflected in the students who participate in this program or if it is just privileged students who participate. Ms. Mortensen answered that 57% of participating WOU students are eligible for the Pell Grant, and 70% receive some financial aid. So it is pretty accessible. Trustee Larios asked if the results of the 2018 study were mentioned on page 18 and if we see similar results at WOU. Ms. Mortensen said that it is consistent at WOU. Vice-Chair Nelsestuen asked about the methods used to inform students about the new programs and opportunities. Ms. Mortensen said it is hard to answer because what works at other campuses doesn't seem particularly effective at WOU. She tries to a number of different tactics to see what sticks.

2) [Division Strategic Plan Alignment to University Strategic Plan](#)

a. Academic Affairs

Chair Mitchell asked Dr. Jose Coll to present the strategic plan alignment for academic affairs at Western Oregon University, emphasizing the alignment with the university's plans and the need to support the rest of the units across campus. He highlighted the goals of institutional sustainability, student success, transformational diversity, community strength, and effectiveness and efficiency. Provost Coll also mentioned the challenges faced by the institution, such as declining birth rates, a need for higher graduation rates (4-year graduations), and the need to attract and retain students. He introduced the provost fellows' program for faculty to spearhead initiatives and improve teaching methods. Lastly, he discussed the importance of using data to make informed decisions and the potential of the institutional research office to support decision-making across the university.

Trustee Schowalter about the potential cuts and the role of shared governance partners to ensure there are full considerations for the impact of cuts on what happens in the classroom and student support. Provost Coll responded to Trustee Schowalter's concerns about shared governance and



faculty involvement in budget cuts. He explains that deans and division chairs were instructed to work together to create scenarios for non-tenure track faculty allocations, considering factors like classroom sizes and the new workload agreement. The Provost's office then used this input and their own analysis to make final decisions. Provost Coll is not asking folks to do more with less, but in reality, there is a need to reevaluate the university's offerings given declining enrollment and resources.

He plans to create a Provost Budget Advisory Council and work with Faculty Senate to develop policies for merging or sunseting programs. Jose expects to have concrete data on progress within a year, with new deans developing strategic plans for their colleges. Chair Mitchell asked what the timeline for this work? Provost Coll said provided a timeline for strategic plans and reductions in the academic affairs budget. He mentioned that strategic plans won't be seen until January of next year (2026).

b. Athletics

Chair Mitchell asked Athletic Director Randi Lydum to speak about the Athletics Strategic Alignment presentation, which can be found on page 24 of the docket for review. Director Lydum discussed the challenges of aligning their department's strategic plan with the university's plan, focusing on business operations, budgeting, and fundraising for scholarships. She discussed the department's goals, focusing on academic and life skills, utilizing campus resources, and improving graduation rates. She highlighted the success of both men's and women's teams, achieving cumulative GPAs over 3.0 for the first time. Director Lydum also emphasized the importance of creating a safe environment, promoting student leadership, and providing diverse support.

She acknowledged the department's diverse makeup and its role in providing community and resources for diverse populations. Lastly, she identified the need for more efficient budget use and accountability among coaches. The trustees raised no questions or comments.

c. Student Affairs

Chair Mitchell called on Vice President for Student Affairs Tina Fuchs to present the Student Affairs Strategic Plan Alignment. The plan can be found on page 25 of the docket for review.

Vice President Fuchs discussed the student affairs strategic plan, highlighting its alignment with the university's strategic plan. She emphasized the importance of student development, engagement, transformational diversity, and organizational investment. Vice President Fuchs also noted the plan's fluid nature, with potential adjustments as priorities change. She underscored



the role of student affairs in supporting students' growth and success, and the need for ongoing professional growth and resource management. VP Fuchs concluded by stating that the plan aims to foster a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable community, with students at its center.

Trustee Mitchell asked about VP Fuchs timeline in all of this work. VP Fuchs mentioned that departments are currently working on their strategic plans, with a deadline of the second week of March. She also highlighted the need for financial sustainability, particularly in the bookstore, and mentioned that requests for proposals to manage the bookstore are being evaluated. Secretary Sorce added that senior leadership will be discussing the full strategic plan process before the next board meeting, ensuring all committee members are informed.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Mitchell adjourns the at 02:45pm