



BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Academic Affairs Committee
June 6, 2023
Minutes

Via Zoom in accordance with Massachusetts 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 Dr. Gloria Williams, Vice Chair Chloe Sanfacon, Secretary William Reichelt, Trustee Madeline Landrauⁱ and Board Chair Dr. Robert Martin, ex-officio member

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Trustee George Gilmer

TRUSTEE GUESTS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Trustee Ali Salehi

Also participating remotely were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson; Associate Provost Dr. Brian Jennings; Executive Director of The Center for Student Success and Engagement Dr. Azanda Seymour; Registrar Dr. Monique Lopez; Director of CARE Nicole West; Director of Urban Education La-Toya Wilson; Director of Banacos Center Sarah Lazare; and Director of TRIO Dr. Celeste Donovan

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM by Committee Chair Williams and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Sanfacon, to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2023, meeting. **There being no discussion, ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Landrau, Reichelt, Sanfacon, Williams, and Board Chair Martin.

Approval of Academic Affairs Committee Charter. Committee Chair Williams presented the revised committee charter.

MOTION made by Trustee Martin, seconded by Trustee Landrau, to approve and adopt the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee Charter, as presented.

Discussion: The criteria for admissions standards falls under academic policies and the BHE sets its own standards. Enrollment Management follows the standards from the BHE and Academic Affairs. **There being no further discussion, ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion

unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Landrau, Reichelt, Sanfacon, Williams, and Board Chair Martin.

Tenure Motion - Amended.

MOTION made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Sanfacon, to approve the granting of tenure, effective September 1, 2023, to:

Dr. Joan Kuhnly	Nursing
Dr. Tracy McLeod	Education

To approve the granting of tenure with automatic promotion, effective September 1, 2023, to:

Ms. Jessica Grabowski	Health Sciences
Dr. Alina Gross	Geography, Planning & Sustainability
Ms. Amber Monroe	Library

Discussion: At the April 24, 2023, meeting, the Motion for Tenure listed Dr. Tracy McLeod as receiving tenure with automatic promotion where it should have been listed as tenure only. This motion corrects that error. **There being no further discussion, ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Landrau, Reichelt, Sanfacon, Williams, and Board Chair Martin.

Institutional Definition of Retention. Dr. Seymour presented the institution’s definition of retention which was approved by cabinet as “A university-wide effort that employs a combination of institutional measures, actions, and initiatives to support the continued enrollment of Westfield State University students in their attainment of a degree or credential.”

Retention Data. Dr. Lopez presented current retention data, which has dipped from early 2020 but holding at 3,574. Seat utilization has improved from last fall. Classes are capped at 25 and faculty are being used before adjuncts.

FY23 Retention Strategies, Initiatives, and FY24 Goals. Dr. Lopez shared updates from the International Programs (IP) office, stating there are 83 international students consisting of newly admitted or active Westfield State students. These students do not qualify for financial aid. The IP office supports them during campus closures and after they graduate with visa status, taxes, and academic support. The University has a partnership with an organization in Northampton to build an ESL program to assist students with language barriers and with international Universities who want to partner with us.

Goals were shared for the following programs of The Center for Student Success and Engagement (CSSE):

Course Achievement, Retention and Engagement (C.A.R.E.): Ms. West shared this is the program that faculty refer students to for support. She then refers students to other departmental programs if they fit the criteria. Examples were given of students supported by the CARE program (housing, food, and other basic needs insecurities) as well as financial assistance through the Foundation, DHE, grants, and scholarships.

- Withdrawals – University withdraw/admission policies will be reviewed. Directors from CSSE will be trained in processing withdrawals with students they have relationships with. CARE is partnering with institutional research to look at data metrics that are common for predicting withdrawal.
- WSU360 retention platform – targeting increased faculty participation.

- Tutoring and Workshop Usage – participating students are receiving a C or better. The goal is to encourage tutor usage to 600 hours per term.
- Academic Warnings – a snapshot of students on academic warning was given, together with goals for the next year to create better academic habits for students.

Urban Education: Ms. Wilson stated Urban Ed started in 1968 and is the longest running support program on campus, providing academic, social, and emotional support. Retention support starts in their five-week summer bridge program, which had an eighty-seven percent matriculation rate from the 2022 program.

Banacos Academic Center: Ms. Lazare shared that the Banacos Center was built in 2010 and provides support for students identifying with a disability. The learning disabilities program (294 students) is admission-based, while disability services (787 students) can start any time during a student’s college career, providing academic strategies.

TRIO Student Support Services: Dr. Donovan stated the TRIO program has been running for over 50 years. A federal grant provides for the program’s assistance to 160 eligible first-generation, low income, and/or disabled students per year. They receive referrals from faculty, staff, and other students. TRIO’s grant program helps students identify and achieve their personal and academic goals.

It was requested or offered for the following additional information to be provided:

- Longitudinal data on retention at each meeting for the last three-to-five years, benchmarked to comparable institutions.¹
- A comprehensive report at the end of the year on all tutoring programs and their effectiveness, including TRIO, math, and reading and writing programs, which provide separate tutoring and are not included in today’s numbers.
- The WSU360 numbers can be disaggregated. It is critical to provide support for an institutional research office to aggregate data down to specific groups to find the most at-risk students to create communication with them.
- Identify which gateway courses have high numbers of F, D, and W and determine if resources can be allocated for additional instruction assistance for those.
- Data on the effectiveness of the Reading and Writing Center and math tutor program.

It was noted these support programs should be proud of the retention and graduation rates shared. Whatever these programs are doing, the University should do more of.

There being no further business,

MOTION made by Trustee Sanfacon, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to adjourn. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Reichelt, Sanfacon, Williams, and Board Chair Martin.

Meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

1. Draft Minutes of April 24, 2023
2. Motion – Academic Affairs Committee Charter
3. Draft Academic Affairs Committee Charter
4. Motion – Tenure (Amended)
5. Amended Tenure Documents – Dr. Tracy McLeod
6. Definition of Retention

7. Retention Data
8. Retention Strategies, Initiatives and Goals Presentation

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 Academic Affairs Committee meeting held on June 6, 2023.

William Reichelt, Secretary

Date

ⁱ Trustee Landrau left the meeting at 2:31 PM.