

October 8, 2014
Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, Washington

MINUTES

Members attending:

Marty Brown, Jeff Charbonneau, Maud Daudon (until noon), Paul Francis, Ray Lawton, Karen Lee, Gil Mendoza, Rai Nauman Mumtaz, and Susana Reyes.

Staff attending:

Gene Sharratt, Aaron Wyatt, Becky Thompson, Crystal Vaughan, Don Bennett, Emily Persky, Erin Peck, Marc Webster, Noreen Light, Rachelle Sharpe, Randy Spaulding, Steve Thorndill, Weiya Liang, and Kristin Ritter.

The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Chair Maud Daudon.

Welcome

– Dr. Thomas Krise, President of Pacific Lutheran University

Dr. Krise welcomed the Council, staff, and attendees to the Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) campus. He shared the history of PLU, its diversity, and heritage. The University is proud to say that although they are located in a high-poverty community (Franklin-Pierce School District has about 72 percent of its student population eligible for free and reduced lunch), the local high schools boast 83 percent and 91 percent graduation rates. The current state average graduation rate is 76 percent and the national average is 81 percent.

PLU is also excited to announce their new continuing education focus. They aim to increase applied and professional degrees in the graduate realm. They are also committed to international education. This year marks a thirty-year relationship with Sichuan University of Shaungliu, China, one of five gateway programs around the world, which also include: Oaxaca, Mexico; Trinidad and Tobago; Namibia; and Norway.

Students at PLU represent 26 countries and 45 states. One third of PLU students are the first in their families to go to college. Half of PLU students study abroad.

Consent Agenda

Motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

August 20-21, Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes with the noted changes.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

- Jeff Charbonneau added to Members attending section of the notes.
- Future meetings will capture motions made and final vote count, including abstentions.
- It will also be noted when members arrive or leave a meeting to make clear who is present at the time of each vote. The draft minutes will be completed within five working days after a meeting and sent to Maud Daudon, Karen Lee, and Ray Lawton for their approval, edits, or clarifications. Once agreed upon by this initial group, the draft will be sent to the remaining members for approval at the next Council meeting.

September 9, Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes with the noted changes.

- Jeff Charbonneau and Marty Brown were added as call-in members.
- A note will be added regarding the WSAC legislation submission extension request.
- Ray's abstention will be noted on the vote regarding dual credit legislation. (As ICW's representative, Ray must recuse himself from matters pertaining primarily to public institutions of higher education.)

Motion seconded.

Motion carried. Gil Mendoza abstained because the meeting was prior to his appointment to WSAC.

Executive Update

- **Gene Sharratt, Executive Director of the Washington Student Achievement Council**

Gene introduced the newest member of the Washington Student Achievement Council, Dr. Gil Mendoza. He also introduced the agency's newest staff member, Madeleine Thompson (Maddy), WSAC Director of Policy and Government Relations, starting October 16. Maddy shared that she is very excited to start with the Council and will begin by meeting with each member to discuss their legislative priorities for the council. Maddy also expressed her commitment to the continued development of partnerships and advocacy for education in Washington State.

Meeting dates for 2015 were presented.

- February 11 will take place in Olympia due to the legislative session.
- April 8 in Olympia, again because of the legislative session.
- June 10 in Eastern Washington.
- August 13 in Eastern Washington.
- October 15 in Western Washington.
- November 18 in Western Washington.

Members were asked to provide their availability within the next two or three working days. Once dates are confirmed, venues will be secured.

The National Governors Association awarded the Student Achievement Council a \$170K grant to provide Washington with funding for a two-year effort to coordinate STEM work across the state. The first meeting of the core group was September 22, 2014, and went very well. Next, all fourteen awarded states will meet October 9-10 in Seattle to learn how each is implementing STEM education in their states. With this grant, Washington will align educational workforce training opportunities with identified workforce needs. Maud and Jeff will join Gene at the two day STEM meeting.

Future efforts involved with outreach and advocacy include an Independent Colleges of Washington panel presentation on agency communications, Commission on Hispanic Affairs radio spots, and initiation of the "Office Hours" blog.

In the area of policy and research, one-page documents were developed for the 2014 Strategic Action Plan. Smarter Balanced Assessment scores will now be used to influence course placement in Washington colleges, and an Improving Student Learning at Scale (ISLS) meeting was held in Chicago on September 22-23.

Other highlights include: the agency internal plan teams and metrics were identified; an affordability symposium was conducted at a recent SHEEO conference; over 2000 Dreamers applicants; a ten-site high school counselor's tour was conducted; and College Bound Scholarship achieved 89 percent sign-up completion.

Finally, continued effort is being made to outreach and meet with legislators and legislative staff.

Strategic Action Plan Draft Review and Discussion

– **Marc Webster, Randy Spaulding, and Rachelle Sharpe**

The Ten-Year Roadmap plan is complemented by a short-term Strategic Action Plan, submitted in December of even-numbered years to establish budget and legislative priorities necessary to implement the strategies to achieve state goals identified in the Ten-year Roadmap.

The Strategic Action Plan (SAP) addresses the needs of high-priority Roadmap action items as well as needs related to other action items expected to emerge during the next biennium.

The Council reviewed the content of the maintenance and policy recommendations for the SAP. Marc explained that there are four parts to the SAP: the transmittal letter, the introduction, a summary of the action items, and a brief on each of those action items.

The transmittal letter or executive summary is a letter to the Legislature and Governor directly from the Council. The executive summary was the topic of discussion during October's meeting. In reviewing previous Council discussions on this topic, three general themes emerged which include: Affordability, Predictability, and Alignment.

With just eight years left before 2023, the Council needs to address the achievement gap. The draft list of recommendations were discussed, prioritized, and unanimously approved by individual motion. Maintenance level priorities include fulfilling caseload requirements for College Bound Scholarship and protecting maintenance level funding for public two-and four-year institutions. The priority order for SAP policy recommendations is:

- 1) Enhance service in State Need Grant;
- 2) Expand the reach of dual-credit opportunities;
- 3) Support underrepresented students;
- 4) Reinvest in State Work Study;
- 5) Develop affordability framework.

The State Need Grant recommendation is \$16 million per fiscal year, which would increase as tuition increases. The \$16 million is the first installment of eight steps to fully fund the almost \$125 million needed to serve the current 33,500 unserved students in Washington state. The recommendation is evidence-based, data-driven, and evaluated by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP). It was noted that the unserved population has outlasted the recession and Council members were encouraged to help educate lawmakers by attending hearings and talking to their own district legislators to explain that these are the attainment goals they approved.

The Student Support services recommendation is \$5 million per year and would fund three activities. First, about \$3 million would provide support services to College Bound students in schools other than where services currently exist using a GEAR-UP-like model. Second, about \$1 million would provide seed funding to communities to develop regional collective impact networks to engage the business community and municipalities and third, funding to institutions to expand support services similar to the federal TRiO programs that exist on 22 campuses. The majority of funding would be “pass through” and a small amount would be retained to develop a call center at the agency and administer grants. Paul suggested that services need to be well coordinated to avoid duplication and that a graphic be included to clarify the three areas.

Access to Work-Based Learning Opportunities is a \$5 million ask of the \$20 million it would take to restore work study to its previous level. Paul Francis suggests including a quote from a student as well as adding a STEM language component, as that would resonate with legislators. The work study program has been cut by 66 percent in past years. Financial aid administrators are confident there would be more than enough student workers to fill the newly available positions, especially with this stair-step approach.

Marty Brown started the Dual Credit discussion, explaining that the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges is fine with this recommendation now with the changes in the draft legislation discussed at previous meetings.

The main concern with this recommendation is to not harm the Running Start in the high school programs currently functioning around the state. The intent of the “null and void” clause is to avoid a situation where the current model of Running Start in the high school would be eliminated without new funding for college in the high school. Marty expressed his concerns and opposition to including the null and void language in the legislation.

Ann Anderson from Central Washington University (CWU) addressed the Council and said that CWU and Eastern Washington University (EWU) each have a currently functioning Running Start program which is one of the fastest growing models for Dual Credit. CWU alone has over 100 schools across the state with programs that meet all the objectives of the Council such as being located in low-income areas where students live, and where they do not pay for extra fees, books, etc. If the current bill is passed as written it would be fine, but if the null and void clause is not included and new funding for college in the high school is not provided in the budget, current Running Start in the high school programs could no longer be offered because the law would say these programs must be offered on a college campus.

CWU and EWU requested the “null and void” clause be included to avoid the above stated concern.

Paul suggested the word “minority” be changed to the word “underrepresented” and further suggested the report due dates be pushed back due to time constraints. Staff will take these suggestions as well as some from the Attorney General into consideration when drafting the final version of the bill to submit as agency request legislation this week.

Marty Brown suggested that the “null and void” clause be removed, stating this could send a message to the legislature that this is not a vital ask. Paul Francis agreed that we need to send a message to the lawmakers that policy and budget are integrally linked.

Eastern Washington University was represented by Dr. Melinda Ackerman who reiterated the concerns raised earlier by Ann Anderson from CWU.

Prior to the public comment period, Gene Sharratt introduced Dr. Alan Hardcastle, candidate for WSAC’s director of research position.

Public Comment

Marcus Morgan, Superintendent Reardon-Edwall School District, statement attached.

Jim Huckabay, Faculty Legislative Representative, statement attached.

Dr. Melinda Ackerman, EWU, no written statement provided.

Barbara Peterson, Executive Director Northwest Learning and Achievement in Wapato, WA, no written statement provided.

Agency Budget Request Submitted to OFM

– Don Bennett, Deputy Director of the WSAC

At its August meeting, Council members reviewed the Office of Financial Management (OFM) instructions for submission of state agencies' biennial budget request and a presentation on the recommended approach to the WSAC budget request.

As required by the budget instructions, the agency request completed on September 12, 2014, includes prioritized budget reductions equal to 15 percent of unprotected Near-General Fund Maintenance Level.

Requests for new funding align with three of the SAP recommendations:

- Increase State Need Grant to serve more of the unserved students
- Coordinated support for underrepresented students
- Reinvest in State Work Study

Don provided copies of key components of the budget request submitted to OFM, including the transmittal letter, recommendation summary, and a summary of decision packages for reductions, restorations, and enhanced funding.

Gene acknowledged Don for his work. Don thanked his co-workers for their work on the budget request.

Public Comment

Phil Venditti, Clover Park Technical College, no written statement was provided. Taylor Pilcher, Computer and Technology Program from Clover Park Technical College. Taylor said that Clover Park Technical College is an amazing college and he is grateful for financial aid as it made it possible for him to attend college. He further stated that financial aid inspires students who would otherwise not attend to attend college. Rachel Arteaga, UW, No written statement provided.

Noon Lunch

Vice Chair, Karen Lee reconvened the meeting at 1:08 p.m.

Strategic Action Plan Follow Up, Next Steps, and Timeline

– Marc Webster, Senior Fiscal Advisor

Marc Webster reminded Council that the Strategic Action Plan items have been approved and now the document needs to be finalized. The current document will be finalized with graphics recommended earlier in the meeting. If there are additional thoughts and comments, they should be submitted by October 25. Once these changes have been made to the document it will be presented to Council for final approval at the November meeting and submitted to the Legislature.

State Need Grant Review

– Rachelle Sharpe, Senior Director for Financial Aid and Support Services

Rachelle introduced Becky Thompson and Steve Thorndill, Associate Directors of Student Financial Aid. The financial aid division is responsible for administering state financial aid of over \$350 million to 68 institutions and about 80,000 students, fund management, policy work, training, and compliance.

Rachelle Sharpe provided the Council with an overview of the highlights of a draft State Need Grant (SNG) report due to the Legislature by December 2014. This review evaluates the effectiveness of SNG, student outcomes, how the programs helps the state achieve its attainment goals, and also includes policy options.

The report includes findings from a national expert, Nate Johnson from HCM Strategists. HCM conclusions will be included as an appendix to the report.

A few highlights of recent trends are also addressed, such as eligible enrollments, service levels by sector, prioritization by income level, and other aid received.

Proposed recommendations included in the report are as follows:

- Close the funding gap to serve more students.
- Establish the state policy goal and improved predictability.
- Develop statewide messaging for students and families.
- Explore the “shared responsibility” formula used by Minnesota and variations to evaluate the impact of students by income level and sector.
- Evaluate methods to incent student progress.

The report includes a summary of the WSIPP findings, a summary of student survey results, an analysis of loan amounts for SNG recipients versus those who did not receive an award, and institutional participation and WSAC’s annual oversight and compliance. WSAC’s update on the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) with 2,000 applications from undocumented students will also be included.

Next steps are to route the report to the Funding and Affordability and Financial Aid Workgroups next week. Feedback from the workgroups will be incorporated into the report and a draft will be made available to the Council at the next council meeting on November 19.

Paul Francis suggested Results Washington be mentioned in the SNG report, as well.

Paul recommended to his fellow-members the Less-than-Halftime (LTHT) program discussion. He would appreciate discussion around access and success to determine its future as a pilot program, whether it should continue as a pilot program or be taken out of pilot status. Rachelle will forward information to the Council to determine if this recommendation should be incorporated into the SNG report.

Paul asked how much State Need Grant was given to WGU this biennium. Rachelle indicated that WGU’s allocation was \$100,000 in 2013-14 and WGU students are projected to receive \$5 million in 2014-15.

Jeff Charbonneau asked how Washington compares to other states in terms of state funding per student and whether aid is included in the metric.

Closing Remarks

Ray Lawton reminded the Council to get on the National Governors Association website and look around. There are some fascinating articles which can help Council members understand their role for the upcoming legislative session. The articles provide an overview of what members are expected to do in their communities as they get closer to the legislative session.

Vice Chair Karen Lee thanked the Council members for having an opinion, voicing it, and researching it. Each opinion is vital to the process. Every member has different purposes. We have worked through some difficult systemic issues in a healthy way. We have made a good start moving the agenda forward.

She thanked the Council Members for coming to the meetings and always being willing to listen to the public input. She suggested everyone get some sleep because it's going to be a long session.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m. by Vice Chair Karen Lee.