



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Academic Affairs Committee

December 9, 2024

Minutes

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Loughman Living Room, Scanlon Hall

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Chris Montemayor, Secretary Daniel Currier, Trustee Michael O'Rourke, Trustee George Gilmer, and Board Chair Ali Salehi, ex-officio member.

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Trustee George Gilmer

EXCUSED MEMBERS: Trustee William Reichelt

Also, present were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson and Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. William Salka.

Committee Chair Montemayor called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM 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 O'Rourke seconded by Trustee Gilmer to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2024, meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE**, motion passed.

WISE Update

Provost Dr. William Salka informed the Board of Trustees that the Special Committee on Reforming General Education (SCORE) will be dissolved at the end of the semester and taken over by a general education committee called Westfield's Integrative Student Experience (WISE). Guest speakers, Beverly Army-Williams, Executive Director of General Education and High Impact Practices and Professor Lynn Shelley, Program Area Coordinator for General Education explained the WISE Program to the Board.

A first-year journey course helps students "find their people," to engage with others, create community and provide baseline skills for academic success. The creation of the WISE program took three years, is a NECHE requirement and will be assessed.

Retention by Race, First Generation, Pell Grant Eligible

Retention number by all students, gender, race, Pell eligible and first-generation students were presented to the Board. The data is, unfortunately, not 100 % accurate due to lack of historical documentation.

Discussion of why Hispanic retention rate is low and how we can help. Data is coming from multiple sources with different measurements therefore Dr. Salka is putting together workshops for similar measurements and similar terms so future data is more accurate.

Retention Projections for Spring

By February 20, 2025 meeting there will be more accurate data but right now 25% of fall registered students have not registered for their spring semester.

NECHE Report, January 2025

SCORE committee did a nice job adding a comprehensive assessment on the program review closing achievement gaps. There is progress from NECHE's last visit to Westfield State University and that will be reported. The strategic plan is on track to be approved this Spring.

Student Success Money from the Commonwealth

SUCCESS pilot program was introduced at the community colleges. It was successful and offered Westfield State University \$1.5 million to focus on at-risk students on campus, which can include the Hispanic population. Some of the monies can be used toward scholarships, advisors, and peer mentors to keep students on track while providing support every semester.

MOTION made by Trustee O'Rourke seconded by Trustee Currier to adjourn the meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE**, motion passed by majority.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Draft Minutes of October 23, 2024
- b. Retention 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 December 9, 2024.

Daniel Currier, Secretary

Date