



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

October 19, 2022

Minutes

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 PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Chair Dr. Robert Martin, Vice Chair Ali Salehi, Secretary Dr. Gloria Williams, and Trustees Melissa Alvarado, Theresa Jasmin, Madeline Landrau, Lydia Martinez-Alvarez, Chris Montemayor, William Reichelt, and Chloe Sanfacon

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Paul Boudreau

Also participating remotely were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson and cabinet members Maggie Balch, Daniel Forster, Richard Lenfest, Jr., Lisa McMahon, Juline Mills, Michael Freeman, LaRue Pierce, Tim Rooke, Stephen Taksar.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Chair Martin. It was announced the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded and a roll call was taken of the Trustees participating as listed above.

Chair Martin stated there is one agenda item to combine the divisions of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

President's Remarks. Student Affairs consultant Dr. Gail Sabatino recommended merging the divisions of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs after holding town halls and having conversations with students and the staff of both divisions. This would provide more efficiency in student life and streamline the process of bringing students to campus and keeping them here, helping enrollment, graduation rates, and retaining alumni. This model works and will make campus more effective and efficient. It is supported by student leadership and the staff in both divisions.

Student Trustee Sanfacon stated the recommendation included many student voices throughout the process who thought the merger would provide more student focus. They are already seeing the benefits.

Chair Martin stated the bylaws specifically designate the Board having a role in reviewing and approving the organizational structure with specific attention to vice presidents and deans.

President Thompson stated that while students and many people in the two divisions are supportive of the merger which has been discussed since last December, there are some on campus who are neutral and others that do not support the merger.

Vice President for Enrollment Management Daniel Forster and Dean of Students Maggie Balch shared feedback:

- After meetings between the divisions, both directors and staff saw opportunities for collaboration, especially when challenged for resources. Natural connections are happening, moving departments out of silos.
- At a summer retreat, the divisions planned operationally how to put students in the center and move them smoothly through processes of admissions through health services and housing. There has been innovation and discovery in this process.

President Thompson shared that Bay Path, other Massachusetts state universities, and universities across the country have merged these two divisions with success. Chief of Staff Dr. Freeman stated he was a vice president for student affairs and enrollment management at two universities where it worked very well.

The biggest challenge was in the beginning there was fear that others may take over jobs, or there may be a requirement to job share, but the staff understands this is more about communication than delegation. By sharing what is happening across the divisions, there is more potential of collaboration.

Dean Balch stated she has worked in a combined division at two institutions and understands the challenges and benefits and has been working with Vice President Forster about potential issues.

Trustees were eager to hear how retention will be embraced beyond Enrollment Management and Student Affairs. President Thompson stated that Vice President for JEDI Dr. Pierce will focus on more than diversity and will work with student success in Academic Affairs. There is a need to integrate a comprehensive approach to recruitment, retention, and the development of every person coming through the door. Chair Martin stated that an important part of the Board's role is to review the success of changes and would like to have an update in June with meaningful data of how the merge is working and if mid-course corrections are required.

MOTION made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Landrau, to combine the divisions of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs into a single division. A review of the integration will be conducted annually and presented to the Board of Trustees at its June Board meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE passes motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Alvarado, Jasmin, Landrau, Martinez-Alvarez, Montemayor, Reichelt, Salehi, Sanfacon, Williams, and Martin.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE passes motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Alvarado, Jasmin, Landrau, Martinez-Alvarez, Montemayor, Reichelt, Salehi, Sanfacon, Williams, and Martin.

Meeting adjourned at 5:09 PM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Motion – Combining Enrollment Management and Student Affairs
- b. New Model of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs
- c. Current University Organizational Charts as of October 14, 2022