**Western Oregon University**

**Academic Sustainability Committee Draft Proposal**

**Informational Presentation to WOU Faculty Senate**

**May 25, 2021**

*David Janoviak, Theater / Creative Arts*

*Steve Taylor, Earth Science / Natural Science and Mathematics*

*Ad Hoc Working Group: Rob Winningham, Kathy Cassity, Mark Girod, Leigh Graziano, Steve Taylor, Bev West, Breeann Flesch, David Janoviak, Ethan McMahan, Melanie Landon-Hayes, Mike Baltzley, Stewart Baker*

**PROJECT HISTORY**

**WOU FACULTY SENATE SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE (FST) – STATUS SUMMARY 10/23/20**

**Committee Charge**

* The FST was convened to provide an opportunity for additional faculty input to the Article 15 Taskforce.
* The FST charge was to provide incremental budget models to reduce faculty salary and OPE.
* The timeline to do this work was of short duration, over a 3.5 week period, with a final report due to the university president by October 28, 2020.

**Committee Process**

* Chair and vice-chair elected, committee vote following established Faculty Senate procedures.
* Institutional data review including: notes from Summer 2020 Article 15 panel discussions; July 2020 budget reduction scenarios and proposals from College Deans and Divisions/Departments; various budget document summaries (student credit hour production (SCH), revenues-expenses, enrollment trends, student census of majors, General Education enrollments and faculty salaries).

**Key Factors Informing Taskforce Assessment**

* Projected WOU budget shortfall in the next fiscal year that requires immediate action.
* Steady decline of University enrollment over the past 10 years.
* Ongoing global public health crisis is impacting University operations, enrollment, and revenues.

**Taskforce Assessment**

* The short 3.5-week timeline provided to the FST as a working group is insufficient to render a meaningful, well-informed, data-driven decision regarding budget reductions to academic programs.
* The act of faculty members from their respective academic program areas recommending budget reductions or program elimination in other areas outside of their home Divisions would be highly detrimental to the long-term collegial health and success of the institutional community.
* The Deans and Division Chairs previously formulated a collection of budget reduction proposals back in July 2020, totaling millions of dollars in cost savings. These existing draft proposals should be reviewed by the various academic stakeholders, leveraged, finalized and utilized by administration for developing a final budget management plan for submission to the Board of Trustees.

**Recommended Actions**

*For Immediate Action:*

* Convene the respective Deans, Division Chairs, and relevant stakeholders to review and finalize the existing draft budget reduction plans that were developed in July 2020. Utilize these plans as the basis for budget reductions to the academic program areas, while maintaining the integrity of established institutional values regarding academic excellence, general education and student success.

*For Near-Future Action:*

* Convene high-priority working groups of faculty-staff-administrators to address recruitment-retention-declining enrollment trends, and to optimize efficiencies for program delivery and class scheduling.
* Optimize strategies for Institutional Research data collection, analysis, dissemination, and utilization by academic program areas with clearly defined goals and incentives for increasing productivity.
* Develop and/or augment existing formalized processes for academic program development, review, management and adjustment with clearly stated objectives.

**PROPOSED ACADEMIC SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE CHARGE / MEMBERSHIP *(FEB. 23, 2021 DRAFT)***

***Ad Hoc Working Group:*** Rob Winningham, Kathy Cassity, Mark Girod, Leigh Graziano, Steve Taylor, Bev West, Breeann Flesch, David Janoviak, Ethan McMahan, Melanie Landon-Hayes, Mike Baltzley, Stewart Baker

**DRAFT GOALS (TBD):**

1. To sustain the financial viability of WOU academic programs, and the institution as a whole;
2. To cultivate trust, teamwork and collaboration between administration and faculty over a sustained period;
3. To identify, create, monitor, and share performance metrics as a campus community
4. To review existing academic programs and recommend/review new programs and revenue sources

**DRAFT REPORTING PROCEDURE (TBD):**

Committee is advisory and reports, with recommendations, to the Provost and university stakeholders (e.g. University Council, Faculty Senate, other advisory committees, as needed)

**DRAFT CHARGE (TBD):**

* Assess fiscal sustainability of academic programs and support, by looking at both revenue and expenses
* Cultivate improved awareness and knowledge about academic budget, fiscal affairs and demographic trends in higher education
* Gain better understanding and ability to use market and labor research data
* Collaborate with WOU’s Institutional Research to provide regular and consistent data reports to academic programs
* Identify new programs and initiatives that could bring new students and revenue to the university, including WOU-Salem
* Collaborate with University Budget Advisory Committee; Retention and Student Success Committee and Graduate Programs; Faculty Senate and other campus offices and groups as needed
* Solicit input from students and staff to maximize sustainability
* Collaborate with the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration to get information about the academic budget
* Make recommendations for adjustments in FTE distribution at the program level for FTE / budget distribution
* Lead broad campus conversations on the work of this committee and disseminate information to academic groups

**DRAFT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (TBD):**

* Faculty Senate President or designee
* 3 faculty identified by Faculty Senate Executive Committee (preferably with COE, LAS, or LAI)
* Graduate Programs member or graduate Dean or designee
* COE Dean or designee
* LAS Dean or designee
* Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness
* Director of Academic Resources and Services, ex officio
* Student representative or designee (with an alternate)
* Staff? (ask Jenna)

**DRAFT MEETING FREQUENCY (TBD):**

* Once per month initially for the academic year (and then adjusted as committee sees fit)

*NOTES: \*\* Solicit membership and roll out committee process in Fall term 2021; Share at Faculty Senate Spring 2021, request feedback; The ulitimate objective is to proactively avoid another “Article 15 situation”.*