



Western Oregon University

Tuition Advisory Committee

March 10, 2017

Werner University Center, Ochoco Room

MINUTES

Present: Carter Craig, Blanca Escobar, Natalie Legras, Dave McDonald, Reina Morgan (Assistant), Rosita Olalde, Dana Richardson, Eric Yahnke (Vice President for Finance and Administration)

Dana Richardson, Executive Director of Oregon Council of Presidents, provided the following updates on legislative matters associated with higher education. The [Governor's Recommended Budget](#) allocated the same amount of money for the universities as last biennium. Universities are requesting an additional \$100 million in order to cover the costs of rising expenses, but uncertainty remains on whether that request will be granted. If the legislature approves an additional \$100 million for higher education, universities will still need to raise revenue, operate more efficiently, or cut costs, in order to continue at the current service level.

Dave McDonald, Associate Provost, led a discussion about active retention efforts happening at WOU. Currently, there are 3 full-time student success specialists who can reach out to students and develop a plan of action when a faculty member is concerned about them. Work is being done to improve pathways to 4-year graduation for every major and smoothing out the transfer process for community college students.

WOU is also putting more effort into retaining sophomores and juniors because the university is losing 10-15% of those students each year. Other major efforts to increase retention rates include: attempts to grow the Student Enrichment Program, improving advising, increasing the number of distance education classes, reaching out to students in the residence halls, and addressing the affordability of tuition.

VP Yahnke explained how enrollment directly impacts tuition rates at Oregon universities because state funding is based partly on the number of students enrolled. Fixed costs have to be paid regardless of how many students we have and higher enrollment allows for those costs to be spread out across more students, making what each individual student pays less.

The next meetings will be held March 21, 2017 at 3pm in WUC Ochoco Room and April 4, 2017 at 2pm in WUC Ochoco Room.