

To: President Naganathan
From: Tuition Recommendation Committee
Date: May 15, 2019
Subject: Tuition Recommendation Committee Report

The Tuition Recommendation Committee (TRC) submits this final report outlining its recommendations, as well as a description of its deliberations and observations regarding the 2019-2020 Academic Year tuition setting process.

This report is a consensus-based document, as was the process and decision making of the diverse group. The report provides the following information:

- Academic Year 2019-2020 Tuition Recommendation Committee Tuition Recommendation
- Tuition Recommendation Committee Charter, Principles and Membership
- HB 4141 Process Requirements & HECC Tuition Increase Criteria
- Campus Forum Feedback and Tuition Recommendation Committee Deliberations
- Meetings and Topics of Discussion
- Conclusion

All documents distributed to the TRC are appended to this document.

Respectfully submitted,

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Oregon Institute of Technology

Tuition Recommendation Committee

Academic Year 2019-2020

Tuition Setting Process Report

May 15, 2019

Academic Year 2019-2020 Tuition Recommendation

The Tuition Recommendation Committee (TRC), through an inclusive and consensus based process, has established a “middle path” tuition increase for the 2019-2020 Academic Year. This recommendation assumes state funding levels contemplated in the Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means budget framework from March 2019 (Co-Chairs’ Budget). The TRC discussed in significant depth Oregon Tech’s remissions and scholarship system; its budget and alternative tuition scenarios if the Oregon Legislature approves, and the Governor signs, legislation that funds the Public University Support Fund (PUSF) in excess of the Co-Chairs Budget. These deliberations were guided by a set of principles established by the Committee with a particular focus on balancing the quality and return on investment of an Oregon Tech degree; and protecting all students, and in particular those most sensitive to tuition increases, from the unfortunate budget realities faced by the Committee and the university.

Specifically, in order to maintain the quality and strong return on investment an Oregon Tech education provides, ensure continued investments in equipment intensive programs, and create the space for increased levels of financial aid to support student affordability and completion, the TRC recommends changes in tuition for the 2019-20 academic year are as follows:

- Base undergraduate tuition: increase by 9% over current rates.
- Health Programs and Engineering & Technology Programs Differentials: increase by 5% from 25% to 30% premium on base undergraduate tuition.

The TRC also recommends increases in remissions of 1% of tuition during the 2019-2020 academic year. Though it is outside of the Committee’s direct purview, after receiving feedback from students, the Committee encourages the President to prioritize investments in IT including, classroom and lab computer and technology replacement, WiFi systems, and other technology systems directly tied to improving the academic experience and enhancing student life.

If additional funds for the PUSF, beyond those outlined in the Co-Chairs’ Budget, become available, the TRC discussed reducing tuition in the amount of 1%; and increases in remissions for every \$20 million dollars in additional state support. The TRC believes this is an important component of setting tuition while uncertainty exists regarding the total amount of state funding, and have thus incorporated it in the recommendation.

This recommendation is supported in a joint letter by the recognized student governments, the Associated Student of Oregon Institute of Technology – Klamath Falls (ASOIT-KF) and the Associated Students of Oregon Institute of Technology – Portland Metro (ASOIT-PM) dated May 1, 2019.¹

¹ ASOIT 2019-2020 Tuition Recommendation Memo. May 1, 2019. < [https://oregontechsfstatic.azureedge.net/sitefinity-production/docs/default-source/finance-and-administration-documents/trc/\(2019-5-1\)-asoit-tuition-recommendation-memo.pdf?sfvrsn=753307cd_2](https://oregontechsfstatic.azureedge.net/sitefinity-production/docs/default-source/finance-and-administration-documents/trc/(2019-5-1)-asoit-tuition-recommendation-memo.pdf?sfvrsn=753307cd_2)>

Tuition Recommendation, Committee Charter, Principles and Membership

The Tuition Recommendation Committee is established by Board of Trustees policy and is operationalized through a charter and committee membership approved by the president annually.

At its January 24, 2019 meeting, the Oregon Tech Board of Trustees amended its tuition policy to be in compliance with recent changes in Oregon Revised Statutes related to tuition setting. The Board Policy on Resident Undergraduate Tuition and Mandatory Enrollment Fee Process² establishes a minimum number of meetings, public forums and notification requirements to the student body. The policy also outlines the President, or President's or designee's responsibility to support and provide information to the TRC related to the budget of the university and impact of state funding. The Board Policy further assigns the TRC the role of recommending to the President changes in tuition and conveying the substance of the group's deliberations and feedback provided at campus open forums.

Oregon Tech's President annually approves charters and membership of university standing committees, commissions and councils³. Administrative members of the TRC are appointed by the president and student members are appointed by the Vice President of Student Affairs in consultation with the ASOIT. There are certain membership requirements established by HB 4141 (2018). These are incorporated into university policy by the Board of Trustees and were followed when establishing the composition of the committee. The TRC Charter, as approved by the President, is as follows:

The Tuition Recommendation Committee is responsible for recommending the tuition and mandatory fee rates to the President who must in turn report and recommend mandatory tuition and fee to the Board of Trustees in accordance with ORS 352.102. The Board of Trustees shall request that the President transmit to the Board the joint tuition recommendation of the President and the recognized student government.

This committee is comprised of six students representing both the Klamath Falls and Portland-Metro campuses and is appointed by the ASOIT president(s), two of which represent ASOIT and two of which represent historically underserved students of the university, as defined by the university; the Fiscal Operations Advisory Council (FOAC) chair and at least two administrators. Any changes to the Committee structure required by ORS 352.102, subsequent controlling statutes or Board Policy may be made without notification. The President shall designate one member to chair the committee.

Before making any recommendation to increase tuition and mandatory fees, but especially when the proposed increase is more than five percent annually, the

² Oregon Institute of Technology Board of Trustees' Policy on Resident Undergraduate Tuition and Mandatory Enrollment Fee Process. January 24, 2019. < https://oregontechsfstatic.azureedge.net/sitefinity-production/docs/default-source/board-of-trustees-documents/2019-meetings/january/policy_tuition-and-fee-process_amended-2019-01-24.pdf?sfvrsn=cc26d5c_2 >

³ Oregon Tech: Standing Committees, Commissions, and Councils. August 2018. < https://oregontechsfcdn.azureedge.net/oregontech/docs/default-source/faculty-staff-documents/councils-commissions-committees/standing-committees/2018-19-standing-committees.pdf?sfvrsn=35d16567_10 >

Committee must document its consideration of the impact on students, and the necessity of the increase in achieving the mission of the University. The Committee shall provide meaningful opportunities for members of the student government and students at large to participate in the process and deliberations.

The committee will meet at least twice during January – February. Its meetings shall be open to the public and broad notification of the meetings shall be made to the university community. The committee will consider the guidelines provided by the Board, information provided by the Administration, and such other matters as shall seem appropriate.

The membership and affiliation of the Tuition Recommendation Committee is listed below:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Campus Location</u>
Brian Fox, <i>Chair</i>	Vice President for Finance and Administration	Klamath Falls
Richard Bailey	Faculty, Department of Business Management, ETM	Klamath Falls
Osvaldo Capistran-Perez	ASOIT Vice President	Portland-Metro
Erin Foley (<i>ex-officio</i>)	Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students	Klamath Falls
Ernesto Hernandez	Student Representative	Klamath Falls
Erik Johnson	Director of Admissions	Klamath Falls
Taylor Kimura	Student Representative	Klamath Falls
Gary Kuleck*	Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	Klamath Falls
Faith Lee	Student Representative	Klamath Falls
Anne Malinowski	Assistant Registrar	Portland-Metro
Kathryn (Katie) Mura	Student Representative	Klamath Falls
Johnathan Nguyen	ASOIT President	Portland-Metro
Rosanna Overholser	Faculty, Department of Mathematics, HAS	Klamath Falls
Junmin Yee	ASOIT President	Klamath Falls

*Provost Kuleck appointed Paul Titus to act by proxy for the Office of the Provost for TRC process.

The Committee was supported by, and is grateful to a key set of staff members, from varying units across the university, tasked with providing information to the Committee, these include the following:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Campus Location</u>
Cindy Childers	Business Affairs Office	Klamath Falls
Karissa Guthrie	Business Affairs Office	Klamath Falls
Jaron Hartman	Institutional Research	Klamath Falls
Brittany Miles	Government Affairs	Portland-Metro
Stephanie Pope	Budget and Planning Office & Business Affairs Office	Klamath Falls
Farooq Sultan	Institutional Research	Klamath Falls

At the TRC's first meeting on November 27, 2018, the Committee discussed and approved, by consensus, a set of governing principles and process guidelines for the tuition development process. These guidelines established both *how* the group would conduct its meetings and engagements with students throughout the development and decision making process and, importantly, *what* priorities it had to balance in recommending tuition levels to the President for the 2019-20 Academic year. These principles were referenced or reviewed at every TRC meeting and in all campus and community forums, as these were integral to the TRC's deliberations. The TRC Guiding Principles and Process Guidelines⁴ are as follows:

Guiding Principles:

- Consider long-term factors when recommending the single year decisions (important to have a forward looking vision)
- Recognize the importance of affordability for students
- Tuition levels should be developed using data and information, including internal budget, comparator institutions, and external cost indices
- Ensure we maintain the current service level, quality and support that Oregon Tech provides to students

Process Framework:

- Communicate openly and transparently with all stakeholders
- The committee will utilize data and information throughout the process
- Communicate respectfully and ask questions

HB 4141 Process Requirements & HECC Tuition Increase Criteria

During the 2018 Legislative Session, House Bill (HB) 4141 was passed and signed into law.⁵ HB 4141 outlines certain requirements for the composition of each university's tuition advisory body and the process by which it operates.

Oregon Tech has a long and successful history of an inclusive tuition setting process, including students, faculty and administrative staff. The Oregon Tech Board of Trustees' policy on tuition setting and the presidential charge of the TRC included in the Oregon Tech Committees, Commissions, and Councils (2018-19) are in alignment with the requirements of HB 4141. Below is an analysis of the requirements outlined by HB 4141, and the steps taken by the TRC to meet these requirements.

- *Section 2(1)* requires that each public university establish "...an advisory body to advise the president of the university on the president's recommendation to the governing board regarding tuition and mandatory enrollment fees for the upcoming academic year."

⁴ 2019 Tuition Recommendation Committee Charter and Principles. January 25, 2019. <[https://oregontechsfstatic.azureedge.net/sitefinity-production/docs/default-source/finance-and-administration-documents/trc/\(2019-1-25\)-1-trc-committee-charge-and-process-requirements.pdf?sfvrsn=fa03212b_2](https://oregontechsfstatic.azureedge.net/sitefinity-production/docs/default-source/finance-and-administration-documents/trc/(2019-1-25)-1-trc-committee-charge-and-process-requirements.pdf?sfvrsn=fa03212b_2)>

⁵ House Bill 4141 (2018). April 3, 2018. <<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2018R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4141/Enrolled>>

- The TRC is the advisory body, as contemplated by HB 4141 for Oregon Tech.
- *Section 2(2)* outlines certain requirements regarding committee membership and “...establish a written document describing the role of the advisory body[.]”
 - This was accomplished through the distribution of membership as agreed to between the Vice President of Student Affairs and ASOIT for student members, and as assigned by the president for faculty and administrative members of the Committee. The president’s charge for the committee and the Oregon Tech Board of Trustees’ Policy on Resident Undergraduate Tuition and Mandatory Enrollment Fee Process outline the role and relationships of the advisory body, the university, the President and the Board of Trustees in the tuition setting process.
- *Section 2(3)* includes training requirements regarding the university’s budget, state appropriations and mechanisms of their distribution, historical relationships between state appropriation and tuition for Committee members.
 - Training requirements under this section were accomplished through a series of meetings at the outset of the TRC process spanning from November 2018 through February 2019 when tuition setting deliberations began. High level information regarding these topics were provided to the student body during the first and second tuition forums held on each primary campus location to ensure participants had sufficient background information to meaningfully participate in the deliberation and recommendation process.
- *Section 2(4)* requires the university provide “[a] plan for how the university is managing its costs on an ongoing basis and how resident tuition and mandatory enrollment fees may be decreased if the public university receives more moneys from the state than anticipated.”
 - Information on how the university is managing its cost structure was incorporated into the TRC’s deliberations through modeling the medium-term impact of different tuition and state appropriation scenarios in relation to known and anticipated cost drivers and then identifying required use of reserves or budget cuts necessary to maintain the financial integrity of the university. This task is challenged by the need for consistent replacement and updating of high-cost equipment in the university’s technology focused programs, and the fact that the university continues to grow in enrollment and complexity. The TRC incorporated a recommendation related to reductions in tuition with incremental increases in state funding for the PUSF into its tuition recommendation.
- *Section 2(5)* requires the advisory body, if its recommendation is to increase tuition and mandatory enrollment fees greater than five percent, to document the impact on historically underserved students, the mission of the university.
 - The TRC accomplished these requirements through material provided by the university and TRC deliberations, establishing three tuition scenarios with varying levels of cuts, use of reserves, tuition and remission levels. The TRC allowed for broad student engagement and discussion of such scenarios, including how increasing tuition and the use of increased remissions would offset these impacts.
- *Section 2(6)* requires that the TRC “[p]rovide meaningful opportunities” for the student government and students more broadly to participate in the TRC process and deliberations

and report such deliberations in writing to the President. The written report must provide any minority report requested by a member of the advisory body.

- ASOIT Leadership from both the Portland-Metro and Klamath Falls campuses were members of the TRC. During the deliberation process, the TRC held meetings that were open to the campus community and public generally, as well as multiple student forums on both campus locations, specifically designed to elicit student feedback and incorporate it into committee deliberations. This feedback is posted on the TRC’s website. At Oregon Tech as a further step to involve ASOIT, the student government is requested to provide a final tuition recommendation to the President outside of the TRC’s recommendation to ensure that students are highly involved in the process. This document constitutes the TRC’s written report as required by HB 4141. No member of the advisory body has requested the inclusion of, or submitted, a minority report.
- *Section 2(7)* requires the university establish a website including all material provided by the university and utilized by the advisory body during its deliberations.
 - The university hosted and advertised a website for the TRC, www.oit.edu/trc, and ensured that it was easy and simple for students to find the website. This website includes all material, meeting minutes and tuition setting calendars. This website also includes links so that students or members of the public could join meetings remotely if they were not able to make it to either the Klamath Falls or Portland-Metro campuses.

At the Higher Education Coordinating Commission’s (HECC’s) December 13, 2018 meeting, the Commission approved criteria to be utilized in determining whether or not a proposed tuition increase of greater than five percent is appropriate, as is required by Oregon Law.⁶ Barring extreme or unforeseen circumstances, these criteria will be the only criteria utilized by the Commission in evaluating tuition increases. The university’s compliance with the criteria will be judged using a “reasonableness” standard and determined using the totality of the institution’s submission. The TRC was briefed on the draft HECC criteria at its first meeting in November 2018 and again with the final HECC approved criteria at its January 2019 meeting. These criteria are split into three areas of focus, and are outlined below. A brief description of the TRC’s steps taken to ensure that Oregon Tech met the criteria is also provided.

Focus Area One: Fostering an Inclusive and Transparent Tuition-Setting Process. Specifically, the institution must demonstrate that students had multiple opportunities to engage in the tuition-setting process, and that information about the tuition-setting process was easily accessible and in compliance with HB 4141.

The TRC is comprised of primarily students and held multiple tuition forums on both the Portland-Metro and Klamath Falls campuses. These forums were sponsored and organized by the respective campus student government and advertised heavily in written and electronic communications and through multiple channels, including email, website,

⁶ Higher Education Coordinating Commission. University Tuition Increase Criteria. December 13, 2018. <<https://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Documents/Commission/COMMISSION/2018/13%20December%202018/12.1a%20AI%20Tuition%20Increase%20Criteria%20updated%2012-11-18.pdf>>

electronic and hardcopy newsletters, student mobile apps, and information screens across campuses. All TRC material and meetings were publically posted on the TRC's website and material was available electronically. Means for feedback from students, either electronically or in person, were provided and supplied to the Committee. All process requirements of HB 4141 were met, as outlined previously in this document.

Focus Area Two: Safeguarding Access and Support for Degree Completion by Historically Underrepresented Students. Specifically, the institution must demonstrate the impacts of tuition increases above and below five percent on remission programs and support services for underrepresented students; and that the university has a plan for reducing tuition if there is additional state funding available.

The TRC considered multiple tuition scenarios, including some at the five percent threshold and others significantly above. Because of the TRC's principles which required it to balance the impact of tuition increases on students with maintaining the quality, return on investment and current levels of service at Oregon Tech it was determined that increases of tuition at or below five percent would endanger the very reason students enroll at Oregon Tech – its high quality, high value programs. The committee heard from the university's financial aid administrator about remission programs, including funding levels and design in order to evaluate the impact of tuition increases and remission programs on underrepresented students. The TRC has discussed and made recommendations related to both tuition and remission levels as well as how to reduce tuition levels and/or increase remission levels if there is additional state support. These are outlined in the TRC recommendation and incorporated in the ASOIT tuition recommendation to the President.

Focus Area Three: Financial Conditions Demonstrating the Need for Resident, Undergraduate Tuition to be Increased More than 5%. Specifically, the university is required to explain the cost drivers and revenue dynamics that are causing tuition to increase above five percent and the impact on the university's mission; and that the university is implementing cost containment efforts.

The TRC began its tuition development process by examining the composition of the university's budget and the forces acting on all major budget categories, many of which are direct responses to meeting both the university's mission of statewide polytechnic education and the HECC's focus areas, including broad access to and completion from high quality degree programs in a broad and equitable manner. Recommending increases in tuition rates below five percent during a budget cycle in which state imposed cost increases related to retirement and health care expenses are increasing dramatically and are not being funded, was quickly determined by the TRC to be impractical and damaging to students and the university. All tuition recommendation scenarios brought forward by the committee to students required significant use of reserves and cuts in operating expenses. The TRC's direct purview does not include the development of a university budget. However, it recognizes that tuition increases at the recommended level will necessitate ongoing reductions in operating expenses. It has made a recommendation to the President to increase investments in certain areas, including remissions and spending on IT equipment directly related to the student experience, including classroom technology and equipment.

It is the TRC's belief that the university has, through its good faith efforts, met the HECC Tuition Increase Criteria given the depth and breadth of information provided to the TRC by the university and through the TRC's deliberations and outreach to students.

Campus Forum Feedback and Tuition Recommendation Committee Deliberations

As noted earlier in the report, during the TRC's first two meetings it established a set of guiding principles and process framework. The guiding principles were established to support the deliberation process and ensure the Committee was able to bring into the conversation the type of data and information necessary to provide an informed recommendation, and establish what objectives were important to balance. These principles helped the Committee navigate the *what* of its charge. Conversely, the process framework provided guidance regarding the *how* of its deliberations. Both were reviewed or mentioned during each TRC meeting and described to the campus during the open forums.

In order to make an informed recommendation to the President the TRC utilized its first several meetings to familiarize itself with the university's current and historical budget and the drivers, which are affecting major budget categories, including both revenues and expenses. This process included learning about the legislative and political processes and timelines, which lead to the allocation of funds to the PUSF as well as how the PUSF is distributed to each university in the state. The tuition setting process this year was slowed significantly by the level of uncertainty created by multiple PUSF recommendations from the Governor, discussions regarding revenue enhancement packages from the Oregon Legislature, and finally from increased review of certain funding items within the Co-Chair's Budget Framework like the Engineering Technology Sustaining Fund, Sports Lottery and the Oregon Renewable Energy Center. When combined, this caused the TRC to delay its work significantly, and precipitated a request by the TRC to delay the Board of Trustee's consideration of tuition from its March 21, 2019 meeting to its May 30, 2019 meeting.

The effort of the TRC to understand in detail the budget, state finance drivers, allocation methodology, and importantly tuition and remission history of the university allowed it to understand more deeply the budget hydraulics which are causing increases in overall costs at Oregon Tech; and in particular cost increases in areas outside of the university's control such as mandated retirement (PERS) and healthcare (PEBB) benefits for employees; and through investments in the university's core teaching mission which are driving changes in the operating budget. Because increases in PERS and PEBB are also negatively impacting other portions of the state budget, it is unlikely that the state will be able to invest sufficient resources to shield students from paying for these costs, which have little or no direct positive impact on student success. These budget dynamics were presented to students at the first two campus forums on both campuses.

Because the TRC laid out a series of principles, which included balancing three major items -- student affordability, the quality of programs within the university and the long-term impact of a single-year decisions (tuition for the 2019-20 Academic Year) -- the committee was able to approach a recommendation by creating a balanced approach. This included increases in tuition, recommending ongoing cuts to the universities operating budget and use of reserves to stabilize changes in the short-term.

During the final two campus forums on each primary campus location, the TRC presented a range of options with varying levels of impacts designed to close Oregon Tech's significant budget gap in the next fiscal year. These included tuition increases ranging from 7% to 15%. The forums were hosted by ASOIT leaders on both campuses and designed to elicit feedback from participants.

At the campus forums it became clear that students were concerned that tuition increases of such magnitude were being considered, or were necessary. However, there was broad understanding that maintaining the high level of quality and return on investment of an Oregon Tech degree was as important as price for most students. Students generally understood that merely maintaining the university's quality and strong reputation was insufficient, but continuing to grow and strengthen the university would serve them in the future as their degree became more valuable, and would also serve future students.

Part of maintaining and enhancing the quality of education at Oregon Tech includes investing in state-of-the-art equipment in all degree fields and programs. This is only possible if the university is fiscally sound.

There was significant frustration on the part of students that the state was not stepping up to its responsibility to fund universities at levels which offset the mandatory cost increases imposed by past legislative choices. Because of this, students at Oregon Tech have shown their interest and willingness to become involved in the political process to help persuade legislators of the importance of funding universities and in turn students. ASOIT and the university are providing opportunities such as participation in TRU Day at the Capitol, where students can directly advocate university needs to legislators, as well providing links for students to easily call or write letters to their representatives and senators.

Given that state funding at the Co-Chair's Budget Framework level is not sufficient to keep the university on strong fiscal footing without tuition increases in excess of five percent, students at the open forums were supportive of the TRC's "middle path" tuition increase. This included three additional conditions below.

That the university should:

- Make investments to support continued increases in remissions and scholarships that support students who are in need of additional support;
- continue to make investments in equipment and IT systems that have a direct and positive impact on students' experience and education; and
- establish a schedule of reductions in tuition levels if the state were to provide additional investments in the PUSF (see below for details).

This approach provides a balanced approach which will help to sustain the university over the long-term for the benefit of current and future students and was included in the TRC recommendation.

Conclusion

After significant deliberation and discussion spanning nearly five months and all three academic terms, the TRC has completed its charge as outlined by the President, and to the extent possible met

all process and review criteria established by the HECC through its Tuition Increase Criteria and the law, as embodied in HB 4141. Through this document, the TRC outlines its recommendation for tuition levels at Oregon Tech for the 2019-2020 Academic Year.

The TRC finds it important when discussing any tuition recommendation that maintaining if not increasing the quality and strong return on investment an Oregon Tech education provides must remain paramount. This is one of major the reasons why students enroll in Oregon Tech as their institution of choice.

Specifically, the TRC recommends changes in tuition for the 2019-20 academic year as follows:

- Base undergraduate tuition: increase by 9% over current rates.
- Health Program and Engineering & Technology Differentials: increase by 5% from 25% to 30% premium on base undergraduate tuition.

The TRC also recommends increases in remissions of 1% of tuition during the 2019-2020 academic year. Though it is outside of the Committees direct purview, after receiving feedback from students, the Committee encourages the President to prioritize investments in IT including, classroom and lab computer and technology replacement, WiFi systems, and other technology systems directly tied to improving the academic experience and enhancing student life. .

If additional funds for the Public University Support Fund (PUSF), beyond those outlined by the Co-Chairs' Budget, become available the TRC discussed reducing tuition in the amount of 1% and increases in remissions for every \$20 million dollars in additional state support. The TRC believes this is an important component of setting tuition while under significant uncertainty in the total amount of state funding and have incorporated it into its recommendation.