
Board of Trustees
Theme: Student Experience
Minutes

Trustees Present:

John Davis, Chair	Kanth Gopalpur	Cec Amuchastegui
Don Gentry	Vince Jones	Mason Wichmann
Phong Nguyen	David Cauble	
Vijay Dhir	Mike Starr	
Michele Vitali	Stefan Bird	Nagi Naganathan (<i>ex officio</i>)

University personnel present in person (non-public comment):

Abdy Afjeh, Vice Provost for Research and Academic Affairs, Interim Chair, MMET
Neslihan Alp, Dean, College of ETM
Ruth Claire Black, Dean of Online Education & Global Engagement
Mandi Clark, Vice President of Student Affairs
Alicia Dillon, Associate Vice President-Controller
Ken Fincher, Vice President of University Advancement & Interim Board Secretary
Tony Richey, AVP ITS
David Groff, General Counsel
Sandi Hanan, Associate Vice President-HR
John Harman, Vice President Finance & Administration
Gaylyn Maurer, Executive Director, Center for Wellbeing, and Chair, Administrative Council
Beverly McCreary, Associate Vice Provost of Faculty Relations
Michelle Meyer, Director of Audit and Compliance
Adria Paschal, Senior Executive Assistant to the President
Matt Schnackenberg, AAUP
Terri Torres, President of Faculty Senate & Professor
Bryan Wada, Information Technology Consultant 2
Nate Bickford, Interim Dean HAS
Keri Lundgren, AAUP
Anna Clark, Assistant Director, Budget Office
Joanna Mott, Provost & VP for Academic Affairs & SEM
Greg Stringer, Associate Vice Provost, Strategic Enrollment Management

University personnel contributing to the meeting virtually from other campuses/sites

Aaron Hill, President, PM-ASOIT

David Johnston

David Hammond

1. Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum: Chair Davis

Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. The Board Secretary called the roll, and a quorum was declared. **Chair Davis** recognized **Trustees Nguyen and Wichmann** who are rotating off the board at the end of June 2024.

2. Consent Agenda: Chair Davis

2.1 Approval of the Minutes of the April 12, 2024 Board Meeting

No changes or objections were made, and the minutes were adopted.

3. Public Comment & Regular Reports

3.1 Public Comment

- Invited Comments from OT-AAUP **Kari Lundgren** Vice President of Oregon Tech AAUP. Her comments regarded the student experience at Oregon Tech and expressed student concerns for class availability, faculty and student retention, salary increases, and working together with the administration for success.
- Public Comment from student **Jeff Thompson** who represented Oregon Tech's Chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine. He reported the chapter is asking for Oregon Tech's divestment and will revisit the board in the fall.
- Chair Davis reminded everyone that the theme of the meeting is "**Student Experience.**"
- Public Comment from **Kari Lundgren**, who read a letter on behalf of **C.J. Riley**. The letter indicated a concern for a lack of shared governance, the Program Reeducation Elimination Committee process, and a response as per SB 273 for previous comments.

3.2 Reports from Shared Governance Organizations

- **ASOIT** - *ASOIT Presidents Aaron Hill and Vice President Ryland White*
 - **White** described their end-of-the-year Bash. Chair Davis recognized the great job being done by the PM ASOIT.
 - **Hill** announced that **Ryland White** has been selected as the incoming PM ASOIT President. **Hill** has been selected to serve as the incoming Oregon Tech Student Trustee (voting).
 - **Hill** reported their current initiatives: Food Availability, and Fitness Options, and finished his report with the 2023-24 Summary of activities, programs, and successes.

- **Faculty Senate** - *Senate President Terri Torres*
 - **Torres** reported that she is finishing her term as Faculty Senate President in September and Yuehai Yang will become the Senate President in thereafter.
 - **Torres** shared several senate successes over the past year and noted several items in the process. She noted new faculty trustee Mark Neupert has been appointed by the governor. Torres also noted several projects that they plan to address in the future and collaborative goals with the administration.
 - **Torres** indicated they are still looking forward to the disaggregated results of the stay survey and how survey findings can be utilized.
- **Admin Council** - *Chair Gaylyn Maurer*
 - **Maurer** reported on the success of the council for the 2023-24 academic year, these included their Kudos recognition program, the admin council structure and elections, open feedback, compensation, awareness, and professional development & welcoming to new staff.

3.3 **Foundation Report** *Chair Alan Polaski*

Chair Polaski gave an update on the Foundation's events.

- Already met and exceeded our annual goal, of \$2.65M and could well hit \$3M.
- The foundation successfully hosted the 2nd annual Presidential Gala.
- Give a Hoot Day was a huge success with approximately \$350K raised that one day.
- The Foundation campaign consultant from CCS has provided their final report to the foundation and a goal of \$35M has been identified for the foundation campaign over 5 years. The foundation board has approved this recommendation. **Executive Director Fincher** answered **Chair Davis's** question related to projects being identified, he answered the Field House, academic programs and research, scholarships, the center for well-being program, and others. Polaski added that these all fall under the foundation and university strategic plan.
- **Polaski** announced **Jacen Bridges** has been named as the Director of Alumni Relations and shared some of the alumni events being planned. He also shared we are always looking for foundation directors and campaign support.
- **Polaski** then shared the success of the Ribbon Cutting for the renovated Track and Field and **Chair Davis** was recognized for his and his wife's contribution to the campaign.

3.4 **President's Report** *President Nagi Naganathan*

- **President Naganathan** thanked the outgoing trustees and welcomed the incoming trustees. He then recognized the 2024 commencement speakers, recent additions to the university staff, and changes in OMIC leadership. **Chair Davis**

asked about the level of investment Oregon Tech has received because of OMIC, President Naganathan answered over \$65M has been received.

- **President Naganathan** spoke on the “*Student Experience*” theme. He shared slides related to student activities, success, events, and academic excellence, including IdeaFest, Student Steel Bridge, Baja, Free Dental Day, Veteran’s Services, Catalyze Klamath, and several examples of the “*Student Experience.*”
- **President Naganathan** noted donations being made to the Athletic Fieldhouse, **Chair Davis** remarked about the location of the fieldhouse and its utilitarian utilization. He also reiterated the Give a Hoot Day success and its growth since 2018. He also recognized Don McDonnell and Dr. Mandi Clark for their leadership of the university’s United Way campaign.
- He shared the process of the 2024-25 Budget Build Process and the need for proactive budget prudence, and a measured budgeting process in future budgeting. **Trustee Starr** shared his experience in budgeting diligence during his professional career.
- **President Naganathan** requested **Dr. Mott** to address questions related to academic offerings, **Chair Davis** asked **Dr. Mott** to answer related to workload guidelines and its process, President Naganathan thanked Senate President Torres for hosting **President Naganathan** at the senate. He also addressed the Collective Bargaining Agreement and questions related to compensation and workload.
- **Provost Mott** discussed the workload guidelines, the CBA agreement and modifications as well as the meetings that took place between the union and academic leadership. The committee provided recommendations and some changes were made, a final meeting took place and the final version was shared and posted online. The CBA was followed throughout the process.
- **Chair Davis** asked the **Provost** to share some of the steps taken to address the MIT comments made at the last board meeting. A meeting with students was planned, but at the students' request was deferred to the fall. **Provost Mott** also discussed the faculty hires, 4 open positions with 2 new faculty being hired and 2 remaining positions are open but are being recruited. A recruiting firm is being utilized in this endeavor. Adjunct faculty are recruited and are utilized in the MIT program.
- **Provost Mott** shared that significant investment has been made into the MIT program with several million dollars being spent to purchase and maintain equipment.
- **Provost Mott** was assured by MIT faculty that students are meeting the requirements to practice in their field and that employers recognize our students as qualified. Accreditation standards are met and the next accreditation is in 2026. MIT applicants and admits are going up. A continued investment is being made in the MIT programs. **Chair Davis** expressed gratitude to **Dr. Mott** for addressing past concerns. **Trustee Dhir** suggested growing the professional development for MIT adjuncts so they can become faculty.

- **Chair Davis** asked about the budget and its impact on programs. **Provost Mott** addressed the question that the programs are being reviewed and at this time no programs have been cut. The accounting program was discussed as an example of a program in decline. The provost also discussed general education (gen-ed) programs and what areas should be reviewed. **President Naganathan** commented on the enrollment and hours enrolled drop within some programs and how we need to manage against those factors.
- **Chair Davis** added that we need to remain optimistic because we have the facilities, the faculty, and degree offerings that meet market demand.
- **Dean Alp** spoke on the new Construction Management, accreditation, faculty, the search for the construction management program director, and she answered questions related to transfers, majors, and course offerings.
- **President Naganathan** shared the upcoming State Legislative Activity that includes the Emergency Board Funding opportunity and shared the recent campus visit by HECC Vice Chair **Dr. Greg Hamann**. President Naganathan also shared an update on Tech’s State Capital Request for Semon Hall and the Learning Resource Center. The president also shared federal requests that have been realized and those in current consideration.
- He completed his remarks with a video of the Track and Field dedication and a special thanks to donors and attendees. **Dr Dhir** congratulated **Dr. Nagi** for all things going well at Oregon Tech and added, that we need to add more scholarships to increase our enrollment and help our budget. **Dr Naganathan** answered in the affirmative and shared a look back at the historical scholarship award process and how more awards would be beneficial. **Executive Director Fincher** added that growing the scholarship program is a part of the comprehensive capital campaign.
- **Trustee Starr** added that we are all in this boat together and the better our relationships are, the better off we will all be and we will be able to better serve our customers, who are our students. He noted we are all in this together.

4. Special Reports and Discussion Items

4.1 Strategic Enrollment Report by AVP for Strategic Enrollment and Retention (SEM), Dr. Greg Stringer

- **Dr. Stringer** shared an admissions update with a solid-looking incoming class. His slides included admits, declines, confirms, and deposits. **Chair Davis** asked about the application process and its status. **AVP Stringer** answered that with more boots on the ground and that housing deposits are a new indicator of success.
- **Stringer** shared New Wings (up 7%), there is an increase in digital marketing, but that the math placement is currently running 50% below engagement. **President Naganathan** inquired about the meaning of “below engagement.” **Stringer** replied it means that 50% less than 50% have taken or studying for the math placement test. Chair Davis asked about its history and where is this in the

recruitment cycle. Stringer answered it is standard practice at most STEM universities and that we need to be more accommodating to students to take the placement test. He added that post-COVID barriers exist.

- **Vice Chair Jones** asked about the consequences of not taking the test, **Stringer** answered there is a process a student can take to overcome barriers if they so choose. **Trustee Ngyuen** added that he has personal experience with the need for the placement test and the need for the advisor to bear responsibility within their program for the test. He added the test can be retaken if needed.
- **Stringer** shared the advising and retention programs at both campuses and how he plans to leverage resources effectively and efficiently with the expansion of *Inspire*.
- He shared that we cannot grow our way forth by enrollment only, retention is vital to our success. Retention needs to be 80% consistently and his goal can be met if we utilize the multi-faceted approach directed as enrolled to retain.
- Stringer shared that a robust student engagement plan aligned with an academic plan will lead to growth. **Chair Davis** asked about the slides related to advising and retention that AVP **Stringer** answered the difference is in the term versus annual. **Trustee Wichmann** asked about Sophomore to Junior and Junior to Senior retention to which **Stringer** answered we are much better at retention at those levels. **Trustee Starr** asked if we know why students leave, **Stringer** answered we do not have a good way of finding out why, preliminary information points toward engagement, or lack thereof.
- **Chair Davis** added, we see those who have left through the trackable data, the intangible are harder to know, but we know that faculty taking students under their wing is important and was shared at the Portland Metro campus. Stringer concurred.
- **Stringer** reported on the impact *Inspire* can have on retention and how engagement is important to success. Trustee Wichmann mentioned that the very low-impact change presented was on the least impacted section of the slide.
- **Stringer** shared the success and plans for Dual Enrollment and its potential to help Tech's enrollment.

4.2 Faculty Pedagogical Initiative – Dr. David Hammon & Dr. David Johnston

- **Drs. Hammon** shared his experience with presenting video lessons on course content and how his approach to teaching course material has been received and appreciated by students. He shared examples of their “pen-cast” lessons with audio, full-set lessons, live-action videos, and videos as supplemental material. It was noted that this teaching methodology is not meant to erode the in-person experience.

- Additionally, **Dr. Johnston** shared about recording live lectures and how it was in response to students’ requests. He shared how his computer cart set-up came to be, that he continues to utilize his cart, and how effective it has been in his teaching. He can customize his presentations, the platform *Panopto* is utilized which provides for superb optics and course material integration. **Chair Davis** about the modality of his presentations, **Johnston** answered he asks his students to be on campus in class and the lab, and that he is mindful of students' schedules, and will allow students to attend remotely if prudent. **Trustee Jones** asked about tracking who is watching the videos and if exams have questions presented on videos. **Johnston** answered there are reports on who watched the videos and downloads, viewership does peek during finals. **Dr. Naganathan** congratulated the two for their presentation and work. **Trustee Wichmann** added, as a student, he found the videos very helpful.

4.3 Avian Conversation and Management in the Oregon Cascades, Dr. Jherime Kellerman, Professor, Natural Science

- **Dr. Kellerman** introduced himself, his research program, his graduate students, and their current research projects. He explained the avian habitats in Oregon, their evolution, and the extinction of species, as well as population risks.
- **Kellerman** shared various avian species ranges and habitats, partnerships with governmental entities, acoustic monitoring, and the research of distinct Avian species such as the Greater Sage Grouse. He also discussed the impact of the removal of the Western Juniper.
- He noted the utilization of cellular tracking for Pinyon Jays and how the resulting data can help with habitat management. **Trustee Jones** asked about predators and the potential loss of the trackers. **Kellerman** explained the process of gathering post-death data. **Trustee Jones** asked how the trackers are attached, **Kellerman** responded they are placed on the birds by backpacks which do not impede the bird’s ability to fly, walk, etc.
- **Kellerman** shared the research on the intelligence of crows and concluded his presentation with slides related to Harlequin Ducks, their range, current population concerns, and partnerships to address the population decline.
- Future research on genetics and migratory connectivity is planned. **Interim Dean Bickford** added the program is growing and is growing in awareness and potential. **Chair Davis** remarked such programs are engaging students and allowing for the recognition of the university. **President Naganathan** added his compliments for **Dr. Kellerman** and his research and how he provides credibility to research programs.

4.4 Student Innovation Project: Second Life Solar Panels, Adama Tourre

- **Dr. Naganathan** introduced **Adama Tourre**, a participant in Catalyze Klamath. **Tourre** provided a brief background and how as a child in New Guinea, Africa, he wanted to help provide a solution to climate change. He spoke about the second life of Solar Panels and his related research.
- **Tourre** described the life cycle of a second panel, why and how solar panels fail, the negative impact of failed solar panels within landfills, and how there is a need to develop a low-cost solution to allow for solar panel second life and to have a solar panel fault detection process/product.
- **Tourre** described the degradation process and how a solar panel detection system will allow for a longer life for solar panels and will allow less landfill use, and how recycling (second-life) use can be a cost-effective, environmentally friendly option.
- **Tourre** concluded his presentation with a prototype of a solar farm and the fault detection system he has created and showed his proper end-of-life management recommendation. **Chair Davis** asked what's next for **Tourre**, he answered that he is looking to raise money to develop his ideas to take them to market.

4.4 Baja Team and Competition, Owen Haugh and Matthew Haines

- **Haugh and Haines** explained the Baja Team, its organization, advisory, systems, subsystems, and the design & build process. The pair shared the student skills needed and developed through the competition. The timeline and milestones were shared with about 1,200 hours of work completed.
- Testing was explained and its importance to having a successful result. The final assembly was shown with the final shakedown explained. The competition was explained, and the results were shared. Static and dynamic competitions were held, and the team achieved record-setting results, overall 17th Place out of 65 teams.
- **President Naganathan** shared that the team does an incredible job with their limited resources. **Trustee Jones** asked about past success, and who drives the vehicle. Haugh answered that this was the best we've done, and the driver is determined by weight, ability, and number of hours put into the program.

6. Action Item (moved forward in the agenda)

6.1 2024-25 Budget, Vice President John Harman

- **Harman** shared the FY 2024-25 Budget development calendar and provided a background on the budget funding process, as well as the sources of funding. He also shared the major components of the E&G budget, including revenues and expenses.
 - **Harman** noted that the 2023-24 Public University Support Funding (PUSF) distribution is 7% of the total funding allocated by the state. Harman shared the budget challenges and the need for strategic budget investments.
 - **Chair Davis** asked if our labor costs are similar, in relation to, the reduction in enrollment and noted other costs that we incur. **Harman** answered that over the past 10 years, the number of employees has been pretty flat and that outside of strategic investments academic affairs has been pretty flat as well.
 - **President Naganathan** added that this year we are budgeting less, and we need to look at that closer with great granularity, **Harman** also answered that many costs are step variable.

- **Harman** addressed how institutional costs change over time stating they have gone up but have been stable at about 12% over time. He also addressed the new DPT program and the start-up costs that are associated with starting a new degree program. He also shared the costs incurred by the dissolution of the shared services system.
- **Harman** reported on the Budget Build Calculation Sequence and the need to close the gap between revenue and expenses via a 5.7% budget reduction. The budget development process was reviewed with each unit utilizing an appropriate budget planning process, zero-based, centralized, etc., and the need to plan for anticipated revenue and budget variables.
- **Harman** reviewed the budget by division and the variance between the FY 23-24 and FY 24-25 proposed budget. **Chair Davis** noted the two largest reductions are in academic affairs and finance and administration, **Harman** answered that there were position eliminations made, **Provost Mott** added that faculty and administrative staff positions were cut. **Chair Davis** asked if these were filled positions and the answer from **Provost Mott** was no, these are currently vacant positions. **President Naganathan** added that there would be a percentage of indirect costs from research goes back to the faculty researcher. **Harman** added that is correct.
- **Trustee Jones** pointed out that the university tried to solve the issue as a team and the president showed leadership by taking the largest percentage reduction. He asked **VP Harman** to address the 1% reinvestment pool and how that works. **Harman** answered with the process that was undertaken to make that work, including DPT, respiratory therapy, dental hygiene as well as payroll support, and marketing. He noted that while we have budget challenges and there are unknowns, we should remain optimistic about our future.
- **Harman** presented the FY2024-25 General Fund Budget. He explained the rationale for the anticipated and expected revenues (tuition, state, etc.). **Chair Davis** added that the utilization of remissions and foundation scholarships have been successful for student enrollment. **Chair Davis** asked for an explanation of the administrative salary pool, **Dr. Naganath** added the budget line should be noted as an increase, **VP Harman** agreed. He also noted the strategic investments, their purpose, and rationale. He noted the E&G funds budget and its 2024-25 budget expectations.
- **Trustee Cauble** asked if the use of reserves comes off the balance sheet and is related to prior years. **VP Harman** answered yes, the reserves are based on the prior year, and he also explained the quai-endowment. **Trustee Cauble** asked if there are investment earnings from the reserves, **Harman** answered yes, and we have earned about 4.1% from the investments. **Trustee Jones** also pointed out that there is a board policy to maintain a 10-15% reserve balance. The current percentage is a 19% reserve balance. He also noted past comments that address the utilization of reserves and there is a policy that will be utilized to keep reserve funds within that percentage. **Trustee Jones** notes that last year's budget reserve fund draw will be less than what was requested. He added that the 2024-25 budget scenario is the most reasonable budget scenario.
- **Chair Davis** announced a brief recess. Upon return, **Trustee Wichmann** noted the need to maintain retention because of its impact on the budget, he added there is a real need for new tactics for retention. **Trustee Gopalpur** noted you cannot cut your way into profitability and that he looks forward to hearing more from **Dr. Stringer** at the retreat. He added his compliments to **VP Harman** for leading the budget process.

- **Chair Davis** asked **Dr. Naganathan** for his thoughts. **Dr. Naganathan** added that a request for the use of the reserves was a last resource ask and was well thought out before it occurred. He noted the engagement of students and others in the budget process. He agreed that retention is vital to our success.
- **Dr. Naganathan** respectfully asked for the board's support of the budget. **Trustee Jones** added that the Finance and Facilities Committee reviewed the budget and made a motion to approve the budget and present it to the full board. Chair Davis asked if there is a motion to approve.

MOTION:

After review of the proposed FY 2024-25 All-Funds Budget and related documents, and with the recommendation for the Finance and Facilities Committee, staff requests a Motion by the Board for approval of the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Oregon Tech All-Funds Budget.

Motion: Trustee Amuchastegui
Second: Trustee Wichmann

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Amuchastegui aye, Trustee Bird aye, Trustee Cauble aye, Chair Davis aye, Trustee Dhir aye, Trustee Gentry aye, Trustee Gopalpur aye, Co-Chair Jones aye, Trustee Nguyen aye, Trustee Starr aye (by phone), Trustee Vitali aye, Trustee Wichmann aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Davis noted, Trustee Early who could not attend voiced his early support of the motion.

5.1 Academic Quality and Student Success Committee Report

AQSS Interim Chairs Davis & Jones, Chair Davis reporting

- Chair Davis presented the AQSS report and highlighted the state of academic affairs, online education, each college, new administrators, enrollment, MIT, and a presentation from the Dental Hygiene program and the Free Dental Care Clinic. He noted a federal asks for support of dental hygiene, and a report from Student Services including the athletic department's success, and a report from the Director of Veterans Services.

5.3 Executive Committee Report (moved up in the agenda)

Chair John Davis

- **Minutes of the April 2024 Meeting were approved**
- **The committee went into executive session**

5.2 Finance and Facilities Committee Report *F&F Chair Vince Jones*

- **Trustee Jones** provided highlights from the Finance and Facilities Committee, which also serves as the audit committee. He discussed the reports from **Professor Don DaSaro** and FOAC, and his thoughts on closing the budget gap. He noted VP Harman's report on the FY 23-24 budget as of April 2024.
- **Trustee Jones** reported a written report was submitted by Thom Darrah and the report is within the board materials. He highlighted the new residence hall construction and an update on the geothermal renovation process, and the status of the Boivin Hall improvements and the Applied Behavioral Application clinic.
- Internal auditor Eide Bailey reported on the two internal audits they are conducting. They also reported on the hotline and their action status, completed or open.

7. **Additional Discussion – Chair Davis expressed his appreciation to all those involved in the budget process and that the university is poised to grow and there is a lot to be proud of.**
8. **Other Matters**
9. **Adjournment at 4:42 pm**