



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

June 25, 2020

Minutes

Meeting held virtually 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: Committee Chair Martin, Vice Chair Martinez-Alvarez, Secretary Magovern, Trustees Neves, Sullivan and Williams

TRUSTEE GUESTS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Trustees Alvarado and Queenin

Dr. Ramon S. Torrecilha, President of Westfield State University, was also participating remotely.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM by Committee Chair Martin.

MOTION made by Trustee Magovern, seconded by Trustee Martinez-Alvarez, to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2020 meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE taken:

Trustee Magovern	Yes	Trustee Neves	Yes
Trustee Martin	Yes	Trustee Sullivan	*Not audible
Trustee Martinez-Alvarez	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Chair Martin welcomed Dr. Diane Prusank, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, who shared that the Education Programs have been approved for a full seven-year accreditation by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP). Thanks to the visionary leadership of Dr. Cheryl Stanley, Associate Dean of Education, Westfield State is the first of our sister institutions to apply for and receive accreditation from this progressive national accreditor. We were also the first institution accredited by AAQEP to receive a commendation, being commended on Standard 1 for Candidate and Completer Performance. Dr. Prusank praised the faculty and staff in the Department of Education for their commitment to extend expertise in antiracism to our P-12 partners through the Westfield State Professional Development Network.

Dr. Prusank continued that on behalf of the Music Department, she is bringing forward a Letter of Intent (LOI) for Music Therapy for Board approval to submit to the Board of Higher Education (BHE). The BHE has changed the process for approval to have a higher level of involvement, requesting information on how

programs align with the state’s priorities and the campus’s strategic plan and financial objectives. Once local approval for the LOI is obtained, it will be submitted to the BHE for review and vote to either fast track with authority to the Commissioner for final approval or to follow the standard approval.

MOTION made by Trustee Martinez-Alvarez, seconded by Trustee Magovern, to approve the attached Letter of Intent for the Bachelor of Music in Music Therapy.

Discussion: The letter is to be submitted by September 15, 2020.

ROLL CALL VOTE taken:

Trustee Magovern	Yes	Trustee Neves	Yes
Trustee Martin	*	Trustee Sullivan	Yes
Trustee Martinez-Alvarez	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

*Trustee Martin was not audible at the time of the vote at 9:48 AM, but voted yes at 10:04 AM after being reconnected.

Vice Chair Martinez-Alvarez took over the meeting at 9:48 AM due to Trustee Martin’s technical difficulty in connecting.

Dr. Gloria Lopez, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Shannon Broderick, Director of Student Affairs/Student Conduct, followed up on the April 30 meeting presentation on commuter students.

- Students come to Westfield State primarily as residents for their first year, with 18% being commuters. Upperclassmen leave campus at greater numbers, with 66% of seniors being commuters. Resident students fare better and Student Affairs is collecting and analyzing data to better support, retain and recruit commuter students.
- Trustee Martin was reconnected to the meeting at 9:50 AM.
- With student access to residence halls being limited due to COVID, it creates a greater need to engage with commuter students so their experience is not completely virtual or coming to campus only for classes.
- Students do want to stay connected with the campus. Part of the challenge is affording commuter students a space where they can congregate within the different pockets of the commuter population. We haven’t been able to provide that for them.
- A significant population of commuters are non-traditional and they have full-time jobs and families. We need to be conscious of reaching a broader range of students.
- The gap between residential and commuter students is decreasing in terms of retention and graduation, attributable to an increase of commuter students and a small decline of success rates for residential students. There is an overall decline in retention graduation rates.
- Chair Queenin stated it is important to track this as a Board and asked that they be challenged to help with this. Dr. Lopez commented that they continue to work on students having an exceptional experience whether on-campus or off.
- In response to a question, Dr. Erica Broman, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, stated that as a general rule, the more time a student spends on campus and interacting with others, the more involvement and support they give as alumni, but if commuters feel their experience has been transformational, they can also be very generous.
- The commuter council works very closely with Ms. Broderick to engage commuters, looking at new opportunities for engagement and support.

At 10:04 AM, Trustee Martin stated the LOI for the Music Therapy Program was very well-written and thanked everyone for their work on it. He asked that his vote for the program be recorded as a yes.

Committee Chair Martin continued that for the last two years, updates have been received on the implementation of the Westfield State Experience (WSE), and the following update will be from Mr. Junior Delgado, Director of the Career Center, Dr. Kelly Hart, Executive Director of Admissions, and Dr. Enrique Morales-Diaz, Interim Dean of Faculty.

- Dr. Morales-Diaz gave an overview of the highlights since April, 2019. Restructuring of the WSE took place when Dean Susan LaMontagne left. Mr. Delgado took over and Dr. Hart was added to the team. The working group met weekly during the fall and biweekly through the spring, focusing on the implementation of years one and two and restructuring years three and four. Faculty were formally incorporated into the working group through the governance process.
- Dr. Hart shared a video of Corey, a Westfield State student, highlighting his Westfield State Experience. Students will continue to be featured at future meetings.
- Highlights include the Emerging Leaders Conference, ASPIRE Career Exploration Conference, Applied Learning Projects, CURCA Lunch and Learn, and a goal of meeting with each academic department to receive input from faculty.
- This year the WSE shifted from a program to an institutional fixture to include everything that is done on campus. Initiatives and goals for each year of WSE were shared as follows:
 - Year 1: Students engage with people to support their exploration of opportunities during times of transition and growth. New this year is an end of year milestone – a certificate of completion.
 - Year 2: Students explore decisions by evaluating and aligning their curricular and extracurricular activities with their goals and aspirations.
 - Year 3: Students maximize opportunities through intensive experiential, applied, and high-impact learning opportunities.
 - Year 4: Students ALIGN their WSE to future endeavors.
- One observation this year from the working groups is that all members of the community influence each student's WSE. The goals and agenda for 2020-2021 were shared.
- President Torrecilha thanked the leadership of WSE and is proud to see the evolution of the program, a fantastic job on behalf of students.
- It was noted that the words program, philosophy and marketing were all used to describe the WSE, and it was questioned which it was. Dr. Morales-Diaz commented that the same question came from one of the academic departments. It is a little bit of all. In marketing the WSE, we tell students this is what we have. The philosophy is that we live and breathe the WSE at Westfield State. The moment you walk in, this is your WSE. It is both marketing and a philosophy.
- It was mentioned that it would be good to consider keeping track of how often the students participate in WSE activities. President Torrecilha said to look at CSU Northridge, who created a way to track students and see the impact of their engagement in their similar experience. Determine the relationship between engagement and graduation and retention; that is where you want to demonstrate the impact of the program.
- Trustee Williams applauded the team for the work and suggested looking a little more at inclusivity and providing mentors toward those not participating, who may be a certain segment of the population.
- Dr. Prusank agreed and stated the most important piece of the WSE is that it gives direction and strategic thought on what is happening each year and how programs are being connected together. It helps to look at each year and each program for inclusivity to high-impact practices. It brings groups together earlier to help mentor and help other students. This program has been very important over the last several years to bring departments to work cohesively together.
- Trustee Martin suggested that advising can play more of a central role and be the glue to hold the student experience together to direct and guide through activities and experiences across all four years.

- Mr. Delgado shared that the word they use is GROWTH as they have been continuing to grow the program. The ASPIRE conference had many students of color and first generation students. In all of these initiatives, we want growth in each program. We are now sharing in a comprehensive manner different types of initiatives so each student can choose what fits them best.
- Trustee Martinez-Alvarez challenged Board members to mentor a student going through Westfield State University.
- Dr. Morales-Diaz stated the current challenge in the pandemic is that many students are online and it has forced them to shift programs and ask the following questions: How do we replicate the Westfield State Experience? Who are the students mostly challenged? How does our commitment to their success change to support them?
- Trustee Martin shared that this is Dr. Prusank's last meeting as provost and wanted to extend his appreciation for all the work that she has done. Dr. Prusank thanked the faculty, staff, students, and administrators and said she was honored to go back to the faculty to teach.

There being no further business, **MOTION** made by Trustee Magovern, seconded by Trustee Martinez-Alvarez, to adjourn.

ROLL CALL VOTE taken:

Trustee Magovern	Yes	Trustee Neves	Yes
Trustee Martin	Yes	Trustee Sullivan	Yes
Trustee Martinez-Alvarez	Yes	Trustee Williams	Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:52 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- Minutes of April 30, 2020
- Program Approval (Slideshow)
- Motion- New Program LOI: Music Therapy
- Music Therapy Program Letter of Intent and Information
- Commuter Students (Slideshow)
- Westfield State Experience (Slideshow)
- Westfield State Experience Information Packet