

**Tuition Advisory Council**  
Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

**Council Members (✓ indicates the member was present)**

Blake Jordan – Student

- ✓ Derek Keller – Faculty Member

Erica Knotts – Faculty Member

- ✓ James Miller – Student
- ✓ Keeley Reiners – Student
- ✓ Matt Stillman – Administrator
- ✓ Julissa Taitano - Student
- ✓ Susan Walsh – (Chair) Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Guests Present**

Greg Perkinson, Neil Woolf.

-----

The meeting started at 12:30pm.

**INTRODUCTIONS AND TUITION ADVISORY COUNCIL OVERVIEW**

Provost Walsh welcomed everyone and encouraged all of the Council members and guests to introduce themselves. Walsh said the Council plans to meet primarily by Zoom, but may meet in person if there's a reason.

Walsh explained that Director of Budget and Planning Josh Lovern usually has a large role in the Council's work, but he's currently on leave, so Vice President Perkinson will be leading the discussion in his place. She mentioned that there is a Tuition Advisory Council page on the President's website where materials like meeting presentations and minutes are shared. She discussed the creation of the Tuition Advisory Council and said the statute requiring each of Oregon's public universities to have a Council, HB 4141 actually used the existing process at SOU as a template. She said each of the public universities does this work around the same time, and the rules about the composition of the Council are the same, with the Provost serving as the Chair. She explained that the Council does not make the final decision on tuition rates and certain fees for the following year, but instead makes a recommendation to the President about what it feels is best for the students and university. Then, the President makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for their approval. She said she takes this group very seriously, noting that it touches the lives of students and everyone at the university.

Walsh said the Council will make its recommendation to President Bailey, probably around late-March, and it's likely that he will want to meet with the Council to discuss the

recommendation. He will present his recommendation to the Board of Trustees during their meetings on April 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Walsh said the Council will be invited to attend those Board meetings, in person or via Zoom. She said the Trustees really appreciate the work of this Council, which is a shared governance activity.

Perkinson said he thinks it's important to note that President Bailey has said that higher education finances are broken, but he has very clearly signaled that we're not going to fix them on the backs of students, and he is not interested in seeing very big tuition increases.

Walsh invited the Council members and guests to ask any questions they might have. She said in future meetings the Council will learn about SOU's budget, how decisions are made, the levers at our disposal, and various other topics. She said we're currently in the first year of a two-year budget cycle, so it will be interesting to see the recommended budgets from the Governor, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), and elsewhere.

Stillman said he would encourage people not to hesitate to ask questions. He said a lot of information is shared in these meetings, and if additional context might be wanted, either during these meetings or as a separate conversation, we want people to be fully informed.

Keller asked if the Council meets until the April Board meetings and then it's done. Walsh said yes, for the most part we'll be finished once we've made our recommendation to President Bailey and he makes recommendation to Board.

Taitano asked if tuition and fees are considered at the same time as a bundle. Perkinson said the preferred method is to work through the student fee budgeting and allocation process earlier, then some of those decisions come to this Council to provide context and this Council makes recommendations on some fees. He said this helps set the table regarding affordability, so this group can see things in the broader context. He added that the administration usually likes to take the student fee data to the Board first, then bring the tuition recommendations separately, but he said he thinks there have been instances when they were coupled. Walsh said that because we're in the first year of the biennium, we don't yet know what our budget will look like; next year when this group meets we'll know more.

Miller asked if the role of the Council is to make a recommendation for in-state and out-of-state tuition. He asked if that would include Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) tuition. Walsh said yes, the Council makes a recommendation about in-state and out-of-state tuition, and WUE tuition is always set at 150% of in-state tuition. Miller asked if the Council considers undergraduate and graduate tuition. Perkinson said yes, for each category this council will make a recommendation and the Board will see each category and hear what's behind each recommendation.

Taitano asked if the tuition and fee decisions are applied for the next school year or the next fiscal year. Stillman said they are applied for the next academic year, so the decisions made in the spring of 2023 will take effect for the fall of 2023.

Walsh said the HECC requires that the universities who want to increase tuition by 5% or more must make an in-person presentation to the Commission about their proposal.

Woolf sent the link to the Council's recommendation from last year and said he thought it might be helpful to share an example of the product of this Council, so the members can see what went to the Board. He shared his screen to show the document and said it gives a pretty good look at the work we'll go through.

Woolf said he agreed with Stillman's encouragement to ask questions, but he also wanted to say that it's okay to disagree. If you disagree or have a different opinion, please don't hesitate to share it; that's how we get the best product at the end.

Walsh said the Council is kind of like the supreme court in that we strive for consensus, but if we don't get there, there can be a minority report, that's absolutely fine. She said well-intended people might disagree with the majority.

Perkinson said we will post presentation materials several days before the meeting at which they're presented so people have a chance to take a look at them in advance and have more time in the meetings to get to their questions.

Walsh thanked everyone for giving their time.

The meeting ended at 1:03pm.