

Tuition Advisory Council
Thursday, February 22, 2024

Council Members (✓ indicates the member was present)

- Demetrius Davis-Boucher – Student
- ✓ Derek Keller – Faculty Member
- ✓ Erica Knotts – Faculty Member
- ✓ Josh Lovern – Director of Budget and Planning
- ✓ Elena Pereira – Student
- ✓ Matt Stillman – Administrator
- ✓ Rook Smith - Student
- ✓ Susan Walsh – (Chair) Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- ✓ Neil Woolf – Chair Vice President of Enrollment Management

Guest Presenters

The meeting started at 12pm.

Summary

Meeting Minutes Approved

Keller motions to approve minutes, Smith seconds the motion. Vote: 5Y/0N/0A – Minutes approved from previous meeting.

Training Agenda and Fee Discussion

Lovern led a discussion on the matriculation fee, explaining its ambiguity in approval levels and deciding to keep it at \$350 for the upcoming academic year due to reduced enrollment. He differentiated between enrollment and incidental fees, noting that the latter go through the student fee process. Discussion on the building and technology infrastructure fees, with Lovern confirming the bond payment for the Stevenson Union will end around 2030 and potential future implications of the fee once the bond is paid off.

Tech Fee Increase and Transparency Concerns

Lovern explained the purpose of the tech fee, which is to build a reserve, replace infrastructure inter-yearly, and modernize classroom equipment. He suggested a modest increase in the fee from \$25 to \$28 per term. Josh acknowledged concerns of the increase, explaining the cost of upgrading a single classroom is significant and thus affects the overall fee.

An increase in the fee may be due to the need for more digital resources in and out of the classroom. Woolf then discussed the financial challenges faced by the student health and wellness center, which led to a deficit. He proposed that Le Clinica could manage and run the center, expanding services and locations. Keller raised concerns about the privatization

and potential for future fee increases, which Woolf addressed by highlighting Le Clinica's nonprofit status and their commitment to providing free services. Knotts questioned whether this would impact faculty and staff fees, to which Woolf clarified that this would not be the case as Le Clinica would be an additional site. Woolf also mentioned that under the agreement, Le Clinica would hire all staff, potentially offering higher salaries.

Tuition Setting Mechanisms and Impact on Affordability

Lovern discussed the tuition setting mechanisms available through the pro forma, highlighting the potential impact of fee changes on the affordability of tuition. He explained that a 4.99% tuition assumption was set as a baseline for budgeting purposes and its impact on different rates, such as the Western Undergraduate Exchange rate. Lovern also clarified that the Student Fee Process locks certain fees into place, while others are subject to change. He emphasized that the Total Affordability Committee's focus should be on mandatory enrollment fees and tuition, which must not exceed 5% if extra approval is not required at the state level. The current recommendation stood at a change per term per credit of \$16, an annual change of \$510 for the academic year.

The team discussed the process of working on tuition and fees, with Lovern explaining the legislatively mandated pieces and Walsh highlighting the use of a tool to model different scenarios. Woolf noted the need to keep tuition in line with other institutions, and Knotts raised a question about housing rate increases, which Walsh agreed to follow up on. The team also discussed the university's previous achievement of having the lowest tuition increase in the state of Oregon and the potential for using this as a marketing strategy. The ongoing negotiations with classified staff and their potential impact on projections and retirement contributions were also discussed. Lovern demonstrated how adjusting the tuition rate influences other components.

The meeting ended at 1:00pm