

## Tuition Advisory Council

Thursday, February 20, 2025

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

- Erica Knotts – Faculty Member
- ✓ Derek Keller – Faculty Member
- ✓ Josh Lovern – Director of Budget and Planning
- ✓ Kayla Gaches– Student
- ✓ Michael Stilson - Student
- Fiala Noyes- Student
- Dylan Straley – Student
- ✓ Casey Shillam – (Co-Chair) Provost and Executive Vice President
- ✓ Carson Howell – (Co-Chair) Vice President of Finance & Administration

The meeting started at 1:30pm.

### Summary

#### 1. Welcome & Introductions

- Casey Shillam welcomed attendees.
- Noted that the meeting was being recorded for those unable to attend.
- New members introduced:
  - **Stephanie Hanigan** (Bursar's Office, serving as the administrator on the council).
  - **Carson Howell** (VP for Finance & Administration, first week at SOU).

#### 2. Overview of Meeting Purpose

- Catching up after a canceled meeting due to the snowstorm.
- Plan to cover **two sessions of training** in one meeting.
- Josh Lovern to lead discussions on:
  - Legal requirements for tuition and fee management.
  - Fee structures and cost containment strategies.

#### 3. Tuition & Fee Planning Discussion

##### Cost Containment Strategies

- **Budget Overview:**
  - 85% of the education budget is personnel-related (salaries, retirement, healthcare).
  - Retirement and healthcare costs are increasing.
  - Limited flexibility to adjust supply and service costs.
- **Labor Cost Management:**
  - No plans for furloughs or labor consolidation for the FY26 budget.

- Other Personnel Expenses (OPE) like healthcare are difficult to control.
- **Utilities & Infrastructure Adjustments:**
  - Efforts to reduce costs (e.g., solar initiatives, utility efficiencies).
  - Example: Demolition of unused buildings to save utility costs.

## Fee Structure Adjustments

- **Transition to a Single Fee Model**
  - Previously, multiple separate fees created inconsistencies in billing.
  - Consolidation aimed to **simplify student billing** and improve transparency.
  - No major negative feedback from students.
- **Key Mandatory Fees Discussed:**
  - **Building Debt Service Fee:** Used to fund non-instructional building debts (e.g., Student Union).
  - **Technology Services Fee:** Supports IT infrastructure, software, and classroom tech.
  - **Health Center Fee:** Managed by La Clinica, maintaining the previous fee structure.

## Institutional Financial Challenges

- **Gap Identified Due to Online Delivery Fee Elimination**
  - An **estimated \$1.3M–\$1.5M shortfall** in the Education & General Fund.
  - Previous modeling overestimated online student enrollment.
  - Solutions will be explored in future meetings to address this gap.

## 4. Tuition Rate Projections & Scenarios

- **Base scenario: 5% increase in resident undergraduate tuition.**
  - Increase of **\$396 per academic year** for a full-time undergraduate student.
  - Rates for Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) and non-resident tuition are proportional.
  - Financial aid and tuition remission considerations remain at approximately **11% discount rate**.
- **Scenario Planning:**
  - Council members encouraged to request specific tuition modeling scenarios for next meeting.
  - Future discussion to compare SOU's rates with other Oregon public universities.

## 5. Next Steps

- Next meeting scheduled in **1.5 weeks**.
- Focus will be on **Oregon Public University tuition comparisons** and **student credit hour projections**.
- Members to send requests for specific **tuition and fee adjustment scenarios** to Bree for discussion.

## 6. Closing Remarks

- General agreement that the **single fee structure transition** has been smooth.
- No major concerns raised regarding affordability impacts.
- Meeting adjourned.