Proposed Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2022

The Western Michigan University Board of Trustees (BOT) Meeting Formal Session was called to order by Chair Chen-Zhang at 11:19AM on Thursday, September 15, 2022. The meeting was conducted in a mixed modality with participants both attending in person at the Bernhard Center, North Ballroom or engaging through Zoom, a virtual platform. The engagement was streamed live through the BOT website. Prior marketing encouraged the public to engage and those interested in providing comment were asked to notify Board Secretary Schuemann by 5PM, Wednesday, September 14th. Presiding in person were Chair Chen-Zhang, Vice Chair Edgerton, along with Trustees Penn, Rinvelt, and Turfe. Trustee Trevan participated via a phone link. Trustee Johnston made prior arrangements to be absent.

A motion to accept the September 15, 2022 BOT agenda was made by Trustee Rinvelt with a second by Trustee Penn. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to accept the minutes as exhibited from the June 23, 2022 BOT Meeting was made by Vice Chair Edgerton, with a second by Trustee Penn. The motion passed unanimously.

Remarks were provided by Chair Chen-Zhang – Attachment A, followed by remarks from President Montgomery – Attachment B.

Faculty Senate President Summy, Western Student Association (WSA) President Sun, and Graduate Student Association (GSA) Director of Outreach Antonio provided comments regarding their respective areas and their ongoing activities and initiatives relating to shared governance, promoting student involvement, and academic enrichment.

President Montgomery introduced Dr. M Sultan who presented on Inspiring Global Impact; Earth Sciences Remote Sensing (ESRS).

There was no indicated public interest in providing commentary regarding any Action Items.

As Action Items, VP for Business and Finance J. Van Der Kley presented the State Capital Outlay Plan Priority List. A motion to accept the State Capital Outlay Plan Priority List was made by Trustee Rinvelt with a second by Trustee Penn. The motion passed unanimously.

The next agenda item regarded Closing of Quasi-Endowments Valued Less Than $50,000 and was recommended by VP for Business and Finance J. Van Der Kley. A motion to accept Closing of Quasi-Endowments Valued Less Than $50,000 was made by Trustee Rinvelt, with a second by Trustee Penn, and passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the Consent Items was made by Vice Chair Edgerton, with a second from Trustee Rinvelt. The BOT unanimously approved the following Consent Items as exhibited: Personnel Report; One-Day Liquor License Application, Richmond Center for Visual Arts, October 14, 2022; Annuity and Life Income Funds Performance Report; and the Operating Cash Investment Performance Report.
There was no indicated public interest in providing commentary during **General Public Comments**.

The BOT meeting ended at 12:31 PM following a **motion to adjourn** by Trustee Penn, with a second from Trustee Rinvelt, and unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,

\[Signature\]

Kahler Schuemann, Ph.D.,
Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Western Michigan University
Good morning! Welcome to our first board meeting of the 22-23 academic year.

This period of the academic year feels particularly full of promise, as the campus is reinvigorated by students returning to continue their academic journeys and by new Broncos who are just starting out. Our faculty and staff are prepared to help them pursue and achieve their goals.

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend a gathering of faculty and staff, hosted by Dr. Timothy Light, namesake of the Light Center for Chinese Studies and a wonderful steward and supporter of Sinology at Western stretching back decades.

Every interaction that evening demonstrated how fortunate we are to have so many committed and talented individuals drawn to Western for the expressed purpose of providing our students with the highest-quality educational experience possible while at the same time advancing their fields. They are difference-makers, and it shows in what our students go on pursue and be in the world. It also shows in the scholarship produced at Western that literally helps make the world a better and more enlightened place.

These outcomes underscore the critical nature of the board’s fiduciary responsibility. It’s our charge to ensure resources are managed in a manner that serves the needs of our campus community today and sustains this great institution for the generations of students that will follow.

I know my trustee colleagues would agree that while this is an enormous responsibility, it’s also an enormous honor and we’re reminded of that with every student and employee success story we hear. I have no doubt this year, there will be many more such stories to come.
Thank you, Chair Chen-Zhang, and good morning to all. It’s good to be with you today as we cross the two-week mark of this new academic year.

We began the year with an affirmation of Western’s status as, more and more, a university of choice. This was evidenced by enrolling the largest first-year class we have seen in several years. Our official census on Friday confirmed that we are up in first-year students by about 24%—year over year.

In the months leading up to this semester, we had a strong indication that freshmen numbers would be robust because we had record applications for new first-year students. Compared to last year, applications were up 8.4%, which is the second consecutive year we set a record in apps.

Additionally, our residence halls are flush with students. Occupancy is up overall, but particularly encouraging is a rise in the percentage of new freshmen who signed on to housing. So, not only do we have more new freshmen in general but a larger portion of them have chosen to make campus their home.

Students who live in our housing have higher retention from year one to year two and, in some instances, tend to do better academically compared to those who live off campus.

All these developments, particularly amid the national decline in college-going rates, are reasons for celebration. They mean more are experiencing Western’s first-rate education, which we know will help students thrive in their academic pursuits and prosper in life.

Working together, every corner of this campus contributes to providing our high-quality experience. What’s more, we understand it’s not sufficient to simply bring students through the door. Our mission is to create the conditions that will support our students’ ability to succeed—from the moment they first step foot onto campus to the moment they step off the stage at Miller, diploma in hand, cheered on by faculty standing in the wings.

One of our newest initiatives, announced earlier this week, is a perfect example. We expanded our mental health support network to include Uwill, a service that supplements our well-established range of mental health services. This new resource is responsive to our students’ request for after-hours support for crises and other concerns.
Uwill provides teletherapy with licensed counselors that is accessible 24/7/365. We’re pleased to offer this additional means of support among our array of existing resources on campus. It’s one more example of being responsive to students’ needs so they can reach their full potential.

But we wouldn’t have this excellent educational environment and services were it not for our exemplary faculty and staff. Because people here pursue excellence, we can do things like retaining our students and maintaining our stellar reputation for scholarship.

Tomorrow, we’ll have an opportunity to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of our top-performing faculty and staff at the 2022 Fall Convocation awards ceremony. I hope you can join us in recognizing these colleagues. The ceremony begins at 11:30AM in this room.

Finally, I want to remark on an experience I had this past Friday. I had the opportunity to address the 2022 Student Leadership Summit hosted by the Western Student Association, Graduate Student Association, Campus Activities Board, Student Media Group and the Sports Club Council. Facilitated by the Office of Student Engagement, this was a gathering of Registered Student Organization leaders.

It is encouraging to see our student leaders start the academic year by reflecting our values, as the theme for the day was Empowering Broncos. And that is just what we do here at Western.