

Advocacy and Advisory Board – Meeting Summary

Monday, January 11, 2021

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Attending: AAB Members: Rod Ray (Chair), Melanie Widmer (Vice Chair) David Ford, Lisa Hale, Chris Vlessis, Alan Unger, Mark Copeland, Bruce Cummings, Mike Hollern, Dan Hobin, Scott Allan, Verenice Alvarez-Sanchez, Dino Vendetti, Mark Kralj

OSU-Cascades Leadership Team: Becky Johnson, Kelly Sparks, Brittany Preston, Blair Garland, Julie Hotchkiss, Andrew Ketsdever, Jane Reynolds, Kristin Steinke, Erika McCalpine, Amy Snyder, Taha Elwefati

Guest: Dr. King Alexander, President, OSU

Faculty Presenter: Erika McCalpine, Director, OSU-Cascades Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Laboratory

3:00 pm to 3:40 pm **Welcome and Introductions** by Becky Johnson, Board Members and President King Alexander

3:45 pm to 4:30 pm **Breakout Discussions**

The group split up into 5 breakout rooms and were asked to discuss one of the following challenges; highlights from each discussion are included:

1. What's your experience of doing "business" in this [COVID] environment?
 - a. Embrace the motto, "***We will stay virtual until we lose customers to competitors!***"
 - b. ***Emails no longer seem impersonal***—communication has changed and likely permanently. We will adapt, learn and get used to this way of working.
 - c. Working in ***virtual meetings can be beneficial***—there are benefits.
2. What has worked and what has not worked to keep employees engaged [during the pandemic] and has helped keep morale high?
 - a. The overwhelming sentiment was to ***remain flexible*** and allow employees the grace they need to take care of their families during this time. Many folks are unable to work from home—they need to feel supported by their leadership and peers as they navigate childcare challenges, their own health, work stress and pay cuts. Another point that was made was trust in employees to get the job done while working remotely.
 - b. ***Transparency*** was another common thread—when employees understand the position of leadership, they are more understanding when it comes to the need for pay cuts, work changes, why adjustments need to be made and they feel included in the decisions.
 - c. A way to kill morale was do try to control everything without allowing for good communication and flexibility.
3. What are you hearing from families with college-aged kids about what they want to see from a university next year? Any safety concerns? Do people want to stay closer to home? Do they want to go back to normal with no restrictions?
 - a. ***Communication from the university to students and families*** is considered the most commonly heard request.

- b. **Consistency of messaging** is another important point—when messaging changes constantly, people start feeling confused and disenfranchised. Stepping back, evaluating the messaging and keeping it consistent is best.
- c. **Being proactive** and showing the advantages of a smaller campus offers a sense of security.
- 4. Have you heard of any innovative ideas around affordable housing for students?
 - a. One idea is to create a program that allows for/facilitates **host families** in the community for students.
 - b. Another idea is **mirroring the Veterans Village model** to create student housing
 - c. Finally, a **public-private project (P3) land model** was mentioned—using university land to build affordable housing
- 5. Given the experience of the last year for high school seniors, are there things OSU-Cascades could do over the summer or right before classes start in the fall to get students “back on track?”
 - a. The group noted the junior year of high school is the most challenging, so the **kids who are juniors now will need the most help later**—the Freshmen class of 22. Keeping this in mind as we create transition programs is important.
 - b. **Meet students where they are**—be understanding, patient and helpful.
 - c. **Strengthen our partnership with COCC** so their students will be well prepared (in more than just math).
 - d. **Stress to high school kids the importance of attendance in college**—it is different from high school and teaching them early will serve them well later.

4:30 pm to 5:00 pm - Erika McCalpine gave a presentation about the new DEI Lab. Her slides are attached.

Due to time limitations, we had to forgo our standard updates so they are included here.

Kelly Sparks, Associate Vice President for Finance and Strategic Planning

Edward J. Ray Hall progress update—see attached slides

Andrew Ketsdever, Dean of Academics

- For Winter term: Faculty given choice in their required/preferred modality
 - 23 courses (12%) on-campus
 - 52 courses (26%) blended
 - 125 courses (63%) fully remote
 - 202 on-campus registrations (not unique instances)
- Credit hours: 13,057 which is up 5.5% compared to last year at this time

Brittany Preston, Director of Admissions and Recruitment

Applications for fall 2021:

- As of Monday, January 11, OSU-Cascades is up 100% in first-year applications for fall 2021
 - o Factors may include:
 - Addition of WUE scholarship and increased interest from nonresident students

- Oregon applications are tracking up as well and may be students applying to more schools or applying earlier in the cycle due to increased time at home
- Nationally applications of first-generation students are down so we continue to monitor for OSU-Cascades
- Transfer applications for fall 2021 are up just slightly as compared to applications at this point in time last year

Blair Garland, Senior Director of Community Relations and Marketing

Marketing – Video Tours

- The pandemic is preventing students and families from visiting colleges, which is a key step in deciding which college to attend.
- We built a series of [videos](#) that show off our beautiful campus, and we heavily leveraged our location by featuring students' favorite hotspots around Central Oregon.
- 10-second teaser versions are running in social media channels – so we're bringing our campus to them. They have gotten 3 to 10 times the normal click through rate.

Jane Reynolds, Executive Director of Student Success

- 89% retention of degree-seeking students from fall 2020 to winter term 2021
- Students are concerned about their classes and class delivery methods
- With rising COVID rates over the holidays, many students are anxious about COVID's impact on them or their family
- Up to this point there has been low level conversation/concerns about events in DC

Julie Hotchkiss, Executive Director of Development

OSU-Cascades scholarship [video](#):

- I encourage you to watch the longer (6-minute) version of the scholarship video we shared during our AAB meeting. In this version, you'll appreciate the quality of production as well as the more complete scholarship promotion story.
- Although this video is exactly what is needed to promote scholarship support, we would not have been able to afford it. So, we are deeply grateful to Will Davis and Intrix Media for their in-kind donation of the video's production.
- To further encourage philanthropic support of scholarships, OSU is matching new endowed scholarship funds of \$50,000 or more in support of students with high financial need.
- Scholarships remain OSU-Cascades' top philanthropic priority and are essential to serving our students, providing the campus with the ability to recruit and retain students and, ultimately, to developing the community's future workforce.

Fund Matching Effort Underway:

- We're hard at work raising funds for the new DEI Lab that Erika described. We've been fortunate to receive another OSU match for that effort, up to a total of \$25,000 (we're about halfway there). If you're interested in supporting this important endeavor, here's the [link](#) to donate.