

Trustees Attending: Monica Alexander
Lucera Cox
Karen Fraser
Fred Goldberg
Irene Gonzales
David Nicandri
Miguel Pérez-Gibson
Ed Zuckerman

Staff Present: George Bridges, President
John Carmichael, Vice President for Finance and Operations
Jennifer Drake, Provost and Vice President for Student and Academic Life
Susan Harris, Executive Associate to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Farra Hayes, Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications
Jeremy Mohn, Director of Government Relations
Sandra Kaiser, Vice President for College Relations
Eric Pedersen, Chief Enrollment Officer
Amanda Walker, Vice President for Advancement and Executive Director of The Evergreen State College Foundation

Others Present: Melinda Bratsch-Horsager, Geoduck Student Union (GSU) Representative to the Board of Trustees
Cathy Flora, Staff Representative to the Board of Trustees
Aileen Miller, Assistant Attorney General
Paul Przybylowicz, Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees

In accordance with Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-28, and to curtail the spread of COVID-19 this meeting took place via Zoom. All participated remotely.

Chair Fraser called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

Chair's opening remarks

Chair Karen Fraser confirmed the meeting will focus on continued discussion regarding COVID-19 and impacts to the College. She expressed appreciation for staff, faculty, and students who have transitioned quickly to modified operations.

President's report and agenda overview

President George Bridges reported that he spoke with Washington's other public four-year Presidents and all institutions are being heavily impacted by COVID-19. He noted that the College's commitment to students, quality education, and safety remain the priorities and that efforts have been monumental. President Bridges stated that there are still some outstanding issues regarding technology and internet

access despite our many successes in this regard and reported that the College is expected to receive additional funds to use for student access from the legislature.

President Bridges shared that the College has provided students with Chromebooks, increased emergency grant funds, created new student employee positions, provided training, enabled staff to work remotely, undergone a deep cleaning of campus, and eliminated some fees for services that cannot be offered. The College plans to convene various town halls in order to address continuing needs. President Bridges expressed appreciation for Chair Fraser's leadership of the Board and Vice Provost for Student Success Wendy Endress' student support, policy development, and dedicated commitment to the College.

President George Bridges presented an overview of the meeting agenda.

Public Comment

Chair Fraser called for public comment.

Students Eric Duvall-Winscher and Cody Cook requested to share a pre-recorded video with the Board. Executive Associate to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees will share the video with Trustees once received.

Student Melinda Bratsch-Horsager shared that the Geoduck Student Union (GSU) had more students than ever at their weekly meeting held last Wednesday. Students expressed concerns about their own futures and the future of the College. Melinda expressed concern for the well-being of fellow students, including mental health, and encouraged an emphasis on shared governance and collaborative communication. She asked for leadership to focus on maintaining the mission and culture of Evergreen.

College response to COVID19

Serving students

President George Bridges reported on student services and potential gaps that represents an institutional risk. Gaps identified include students struggling to meet basic needs, access to online technology for online learning, need for and accurate and holistic assessment of student needs, capacity of employees, and planning for future quarters and the communications. He noted that College is continuing to work on technology and internet access needs for students.

Trustee Monica Alexander shared gaps in access to bandwidth and digital technology are real for our community and encouraged continued work on this to support our students.

Representative Melinda Bratsch-Horsager shared that students let her know they do not feel heard by staff, faculty, or administrators.

Representative Cathy Flora raised a questions regarding commencement. President George Bridges shared that details have not yet been confirmed and many options are being considered. Graduating seniors will be contacted regarding plans and a decision about the format is expected to be made by spring week 2.

New federal funding and legislative outlook

Government Relations Director Jeremy Mohn provided an update focused on the impact of COVID-19 on higher education at the federal and state level. He stressed the importance of speaking with a unified voice. Director Mohn reported that the 2020 State supplemental budget will be signed today. He said that there may be a reduction in higher education funding, especially as Bill 2158 provides funding underwritten by taxes from businesses that are now experiencing reduced revenue. The Federal CARES Act provides funding to the higher education sector, to be allocated as follows: half the funds allocated to student needs and the other half to institutional expenses and lost revenues.

Director Mohn stated that coordinated messages to legislators will be very important, emphasizing our unique models and service to marginalized and low-income students. He added that coordination with the Council of Presidents (COP) will be an essential piece of our strategy.

Trustee Dave Nicandri asked about the Governor's veto actions that may impact the approved budget. Director Mohn noted that the vetoes had not yet occurred, however it may be that he will veto sections of the bills requiring new funding or new programs. Director Mohn is in communication with the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the Governor's office frequently.

Trustee Miguel Pérez-Gibson noted that following the June state budget forecast, we will have a better idea of additional constraints the College may face, adding the importance of considering how best to position our needs in discussion with our congressional delegation.

Representative Melinda Bratsch-Horsager raised a question regarding student involvement in legislative strategy. Director Mohn stated that he cannot activate individuals to lobby on behalf of the College, but with that in mind would be glad to answer questions after the meeting.

Budget and risk

Vice President for Finance and Operations John Carmichael reported on the budget from a risk management framework which centers uncertainty and assigns probabilities to likely scenarios. The largest expense related to COVID-19 so far has been the Chromebook purchase. The revenue risk remains our largest financial risk by looking at three categories: past financial crisis data, tuition collections, and auxiliaries.

Trustee David Nicandri raised a question regarding how the funds for students via the CARES Act will be distributed. Vice President Carmichael noted that the answer is unclear at this time, but the understanding is that they will come from the department of education and given to the institutions for distribution. He will learn more as additional guidance is received.

Trustee Miguel Pérez-Gibson raised a question regarding yield for prospective students for next academic year and suggested the Marketing and Communications look at the home page again and consider updating the page to be more student centric and COVID related information.

Curriculum and paths of study

Provost and Vice President for Student and Academic Life Jennifer Drake reported on curriculum development relating to recruitment and retention. Students and faculty were able to spend more time adjusting to remote learning and teaching with a delayed start to the spring term. She noted that conversations are happening regarding how best to teach during summer and fall—in-person, remote, or a mix—and that the Keep Teaching Team and Learning and Teaching Commons has been very

successful. Provost Drake reported the Keep Learning institutes provided by Academic Technology and Media Services provide students with the same training that faculty are receiving, including additional conversations about wellness. She announced that faculty are generating alternative options for students who cannot participate online.

Impacts on enrollment/marketing

Vice President for College Relations Sandra Kaiser, Chief Enrollment Officer Eric Pederson and Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications Farra Hayes report on enrollment and recent marketing strategies.

Chief Enrollment Officer Eric Pederson reported that registration for spring quarter remains open until the end of next week. Currently there are 2,451 students registered for spring quarter with 2,202 of those students being undergraduates, 97 for the Tacoma program, and 249 graduate students. Enrollment is 2-3% lower than would have predicted prior to the Coronavirus outbreak. Overall, the College is in a better position than anticipated considering the setbacks from COVID-19.

The possibility of increasing enrollment, which happens historically in economic downturns, was discussed. In this instance, there may be a tendency for students to stay closer to home and our relatively low tuition may continue to draw students during an economic downturn.

Vice President for College Relations Sandra Kaiser shared the stories of students who are transitioning to online education smoothly. Marketing and Communications remain in constant communication with the Evergreen community and recently provided links to updated resources. She reported that College Relations is also working with local media, such as the Tacoma News Tribune and The Olympian, who have highlighted our quick shift to remote teaching and learning. The website is regularly being updated and improved with increasing focus on accessibility. Vice President Kaiser shared a video highlighting faculty-student relationship in the program Experimental Responses, Climate Change, and Art.

Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications Farra Hayes reported on balanced responses to the community that demonstrate we are open and ready to serve students, but not ignoring the difficult situation that presents new challenges. Marketing and Communications has placed print and digital ads in a variety of traditional and targeted news outlets and social media strategy includes campaigns to engage students through different platforms, targeting diverse audiences.

Trustee David Nicandri commended President Bridges and the College on adapting during these times.

Trustee Miguel Pérez-Gibson expressed an interest in hearing a faculty representative report as we have not had one in some time due to the COVID-related agendas.

Trustee Ed Zuckerman suggested that we request the Governor to make a presentation to the student body. President Bridges agreed to investigate.

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.



Karen Fraser, Chair



Irene Gonzales, Secretary