A meeting of the Arizona Board of Regents Academic Affairs and Educational Attainment Committee was held virtually on May 27, 2021.

Committee Members Present via video: Regent Manson, Chair, Regent DuVal, Vice Chair Regent Taylor Robson, Regent Shoopman, Regent Rusk, Regent Penley, Superintendent Hoffman.

Other Regents Present via video: Regent Ridenour, Regent King, Regent Mata


From Northern Arizona University via video: Christy Farley, Provost Stearns, Gayla Stoner

From the University of Arizona via video: President Robbins, Jon Dudas, Provost Folks, Barry Brummund, Kody Kelleher, Jessica Summer, Greg Heilman, Laura Todd Johnson, Craig Wilson, Betsy Cantwell, Craig Wilson, and Steve Voeller.


ABOR Consultant: Jane Kuhn

Closed Captioner: Nicole Flaherty

Chair Manson called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Item 1)

Upon motion by Regent Manson, and seconded by Regent Penley, the committee approved the minutes of the May 27, 2021 Academic Affairs and Educational Attainment Committee Meeting.

Regents Manson, DuVal, Penley, Taylor Robson, Shoopman, Rusk and Superintendent Hoffman voted in favor. None opposed and none abstained. Motion passed.

UPDATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Item 2)

Kathy Hoffman, Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction provided the committee with an update regarding COVID-19 recovery and relief as well as the upcoming school year’s enrollment efforts.
Regent Penley thanked the superintendent for her extraordinary efforts during COVID-19. In addition, he recognized Superintendent Hoffman’s engagement with the committee and the board, especially in the areas of attainment and financial aid assistance for students.

This was a discussion item; no action required.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY’S ANNUAL ENTERPRISE-WIDE METRIC TARGETS AND FORECAST MEASURES (Item 3)

Chad Sampson and George Raudenbush presented to the committee. Mr. Sampson began with a level set discussion about ABOR metrics and accountability and touched on the various categories which are enterprise-wide metrics, institutional metrics, online metrics and comparators.

Regent Penley offered appreciation to the board office and universities for working to get the metrics to this point. He shared that in 2002, our board focused on differentiating the three universities to better serve the state. The current institutional metrics are in line with this and is now fulfilling a vision that the board had intended almost two decades ago. In addition, Regent Penley commented on the enormous number of online students that are enrolled at the universities. He stressed that the board has an obligation to focus on the kind of measurements that assure a quality education for those students.

George Raudenbush provided an overview of the ASU targets and forecasts.

Regent Ridenour asked what constitutes the definition of an online student. Mr. Raudenbush answered in the context of the enterprise metrics and strategic forecast, an online student is a student that is enrolled in a degree program that is specifically partitioned as an online program. Regent Ridenour also asked what is driving the rapid online growth at ASU. Provost Searle said they are seeing online enrollment growth throughout all fifty states and internationally. The drive seems to be that online programs provide opportunity for students to pursue their education as well as career advancement, as they are seeing explosive growth at the master’s level as well.

Regent Manson asked about the significant increases in student retention and graduate rates. Provost Searle answered that President Crow has set out a goal of ninety per cent for retention of undergraduate students. He said that ASU deploys every tool to drive toward that goal, and for in state students, they are very close to achieving the goal.

Regent Manson also asked about the increase in the net price of tuition, the average increase in average debt per degree for Arizona students and the decrease in the percentage of resident students graduating with no debt.

Mr. Raudenbush answered that these rates were suggested in the context of the net price of tuition and the average debt per degree for Arizona residents as a high watermark not to be exceeded. It was meant to draw a conceptual line that won’t be exceeded. Rich Stanley agreed with Mr. Raudenbush and also stated that the numbers are not goals to be achieved but rather a derivative largely of their ability to provide institutional financial aid to our students.
Regent Shoopman added that the universities deserve a great amount of credit to be able to provide the level of student support that they have done, but there is only so much they can do without a greater support from the state, and legislative approval of increases in overall base funding.

Upon motion by Regent Manson, and second by Shoopman, the committee approved forwarding to the full board for approval of Arizona State University’s Annual Enterprise-wide Metric Targets and Forecast Measures.

Regents Manson, DuVal, Taylor Robson, Regent Penley, Shoopman, Rusk and Superintendent Hoffman voted in favor. None opposed and none abstained. Motion passed.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA’S ANNUAL ENTERPRISE-WIDE METRIC TARGETS AND FORECAST MEASURES (Item 4)

George Raudenbush provided an overview of the University of Arizona targets and forecasts.

Superintendent Hoffman inquired as to why UArizona is expecting a decline in the Arizona public high school graduate enrollment share. Barry Brummund answered the major driver behind that does not reflect a decline in Arizona enrollment. They are actually planning to increase enrollment of Arizona graduates. What it reflects is the size and scale of the growth in the Phoenix metropolitan area, and since the campus is over a hundred miles away, it reduces the University of Arizona’s market share.

Regent Penley expressed concern over graduation rate and also the lag by the University of Arizona as representing itself as a major research university. He expressed that he would like to encourage more aggressive goals that will drive the kind of change that will allow this institution to catch up. Regent Manson agreed that the goals were unambitious and asked the University of Arizona to address these issues.

President Robbins agreed that there is a lot of opportunity to be more aggressive in research and added that UArizona is moving toward a strategic investment in research infrastructure which means they are going for some of the high risk, high reward endeavors.

Dr. Cantwell added that the university is clearly going to be a billion dollar a year research revenue university around the 2030 timeframe. But they are being mindful of the effort and challenges that the medical faculty have had especially during COVID times.

Regent Penley appreciated the explanation and took into account how much the university can ask of faculty members. However, he questions if there is a necessity to restructure the medical school and faculty who surround it to drive the research forward. His question about whether the metrics should be more aggressive is really a question about how strategic decisions are made at the institution, rather than pushing faculty members to put together more proposals. He tied the same questions and restructuring concepts into the graduation rate metric which is also
linked to retention, and mentioned other comparable institutions’ graduation rates. Regent Penley asked the University of Arizona to reconsider where they are with these metrics, and to come up with something that's far more ambitious, and worthy of what this university should be living up to.

President Robbins commented that the research growth in the last four years, has been substantial. He agrees that a reallocation of resources and strategies will help the university to continue to grow their research enterprise, as they have over the last four years.

Regent Shoopman brought up the other schools with higher graduation rates and presented the possibility that they may only admit A students. Our universities admit A and B students which can be a significant factor in graduation rates. Other factors that can affect graduation rates are the ability to hire faculty and the amount of support the other schools receive from their states.

Regent Shoopman supports aggressive goals if they are attainable. Jon Dudas expanded on Regent Shoopman’s comments and noted that there is not a single school on the Rutgers list that is a Hispanic serving institution. Some of the other schools on the list, rejects twice and sometimes four times as many applicants than UArizona does. All these factors need to be balanced as UArizona has an eighty-five percent admission rate because they support attainment, so he suggests balancing admissions and student success, as they are not only selecting A students to attend.

Provost Folks remarked about the impacts of the pandemic and commented on the very steady trajectory to improve retention and completion rates. She agrees strongly with Regent Penley that many of, these efforts require system level changes, by the university and their vice provost, Greg Heilman, who is a strong partner in driving systemic change that will increase retention and completion rates. However, they are struck by how challenging the pandemic has been for students and do anticipate that they are going to need to rebuild retention figures following the pandemic. They meet daily to focus on efforts that can be made right now to minimize the harm to a student's educational aspirations that the pandemic has wrought.

Regent Penley did conclude with praise for what President Robbins and his team has done in several areas, and acknowledged there has been substantial change in research over the past few years. He is hoping for more ambitious forecasts that will position this institution to be the kind of great research university that I know it is. Further, he recognized the discussions on graduation rates and the variables discussed and would still propose that the university continue to lead all students to success.

Regent Penley suggested that the university take one more look at these areas before this comes before the board.

Regent Manson agreed with Regent Penley's comments and suggested action.

Upon motion proposed by Regent Manson, moved by Regent Taylor Robson, and second by DuVal, the committee approved forwarding to the full board for approval of the University of
Arizona’s Annual Enterprise-wide Metric Targets and Forecast Measures, with the possibility of potential amendments before the board meeting.

Regents Manson, DuVal, Regent Penley, Taylor Robson, Shoopman, Rusk and Superintendent Hoffman voted in favor. None opposed and none abstained. Motion passed.

DISCUSSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA’S INSTITUTIONAL METRICS (Item 5)

Mr. Barry Brummund presented to the committee.

Regent Rusk commented that even though he will be cycling off the board, he was pleased with diversity success metric. He is excited to see this accountability metric as it is a huge issue with all the different populations in the state of Arizona. Regent Rusk will look forward to watching the board focus on these students and their future success.

There was discussion begun by Regent DuVal pertaining to comparing demographic diversity of incoming resident students, with the metric that measures student success for diverse students, which would include non-residents. The decision was made to not add an additional metric but to change it, so that it gives a consistent measure of a consistent cohort.

This was a discussion item; no action required.

DISCUSSION OF ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES AROUND ONLINE LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION (Item 6)

Helen Baxendale presented to the committee and gave an overview of the growth of online education and the need to develop accountability measures.

Ms. Baxendale proceeded to review the proposed metrics. Pertaining to the online student attrition rate, there was discussion related to timeframes used to measure, as it is typical for online students to stop taking classes and then to start at various intervals. The decision was made to measure over possibly three timeframe intervals, and over time, this measure could possibly be adjusted.

Ms. Baxendale introduced the metric pertaining to faculty who are tenured or tenured track. Provost Searle stated that it should not be differentiated between tenure and non-tenured track faculty but should be specified that the faculty be full time. Both Provosts Folks and Stearns agreed with Provost Searle.

Regent Taylor Robson asked if the board office drew from online program metrics from other institutions? Ms. Baxendale answered yes, online institution metrics were researched as well as the rankings from US News and World Online Program.

This was a discussion item; no action required.
REQUEST FOR GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL FOR UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA (Item 7)

Provost Folks presented the General Education Program for approval by the committee.

Regent Taylor Robson asked about a letter that regents received from faculty pertaining to procedural and substantive points about the General Education Program.

Provost Folks shared that the authors of the letter were not among those who regularly engaged in the development of the framework. Faculty has been regularly advised about the meetings available for them to participate in.

Regent Taylor Robson also mentioned that faculty specifically mentioned the civics education requirement. Provost Folks demonstrated how the civics courses align with the ABOR knowledge areas, and also illustrated that there will be two separate student assessments as this is relatively new to the university.

Upon motion by Regent Manson, and second by Regent Taylor Robson, the committee approved forwarding to the full board for approval the General Education Program for the University of Arizona.

Regents Manson, DuVal, Penley, Taylor Robson, Shoopman, Rusk and Superintendent Hoffman voted in favor. None opposed and none abstained. Motion passed.

REQUEST FOR NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND NEW ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA (Item 8)

Provost Folks presented to the committee to request approval to add a new academic organizational unit, the School of Mining and Mineral Resources, and two new academic programs, which are an MA in Program Design and Evaluation and an MS in Data Science.

Upon motion by Regent Manson, and second by Regent Shoopman, the committee approved forwarding to the full board for approval two new program requests and one new academic organizational unit for the University of Arizona.

Regents Manson, DuVal, Penley, Taylor Robson, Shoopman, Rusk and Superintendent Hoffman voted in favor. None opposed and none abstained. Motion passed.

REQUEST FOR CREDIT EXCEPTION FOR NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY (Item 9)

Provost Stearns presented to the committee to request to change the academic program credit requirements for the Biology, B.S. in Biological Sciences.

Regent Penley lauded Provost Stearns and NAU for leading the way with collaboration with the community colleges.
Upon motion by Regent Manson, and second by Regent Shoopman, the committee approved forwarding to the full board for approval the credit exception request for Northern Arizona University.

Regents Manson, DuVal, Penley, Taylor Robson, Shoopman, Rusk and Superintendent Hoffman voted in favor. None opposed and none abstained. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF LIST OF QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER INCENTIVE BONUSES (Item 10)

Mark Denke presented to the committee and highlighted the changes to the list which had been previously reviewed by each of the universities.

Upon motion by Regent Manson, and second by Regent Shoopman, the committee approved forwarding to the full board for approval the request for approval the Approval of List of Qualifying Examinations for High School and High School Teacher Incentive Bonuses.

Regents Manson, DuVal, Penley, Taylor Robson, Shoopman, Rusk and Superintendent Hoffman voted in favor. None opposed and none abstained. Motion passed.

AJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

Submitted by:

Debbie Sale, Committee Secretary