



**PURDUE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

JULY 16, 2019

MINUTES

A meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees convened at 10:01 a.m. on Tuesday, July 16, 2019, in Room 326 of Stewart Center on the campus of Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

All members of the Committee were present in person or by means of electronic communication (telephone conference call) pursuant to the Electronic Meeting Policy: JoAnn Brouillette, chair; Vanessa Castagna; Malcolm DeKryger; Noah Scott; and Professor Cheryl Cooky (ex-officio). Thomas Spurgeon, vice chairman of the Board, also participated.

Officers and administrators in attendance were: Jay Akridge, provost and executive vice president for academic affairs and diversity; Steve Schultz, general counsel; Janice Indrutz, corporate secretary and senior executive assistant to the Board; Beth McCuskey, vice provost for student life; and Jenna Rickus, associate vice provost for teaching and learning.

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Indrutz conducted roll call, and Trustee Brouillette welcomed the new student trustee, Noah Scott, to the Committee. She reminded everyone that the Committee would meet in executive session following the public meeting.

II. INTRODUCTION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE ROADMAP

Trustee Brouillette identified the priorities of the Committee and the Board for the next year as rigor, civics literacy, resilience, and teaching and learning excellence. She stated that, though Purdue had a strong foundation for undergraduate education, it was important to proactively address changes and headwinds to continue to be preeminent. She then called on Provost Akridge to discuss the vision and strategic plan that had been developed by the Office of the Provost, together with Purdue faculty, staff, and students, with regard to teaching and learning excellence.

Provost Akridge explained that the teaching and learning excellence roadmap was a result of thinking about the decade ahead – changes in the student body, new technologies, new pedagogy – and addressing questions about the relevance of higher education. He described the roadmap as an umbrella framework with five important themes: (1) understand, support, and value great teaching; (2) create a hub for teaching and learning innovation, translation, and scale-up; (3) facilitate meaningful, flexible, and cross-disciplinary curricula; (4) leverage characteristics of a residential campus to increase engagement; and (5) close achievement gaps. Provost Akridge remarked that feedback from the Committee would be timely because action plans would be developed in the fall. He then described how the initiative arose from a free-flowing conversation with the members of the Purdue Teaching Academy's Executive Council, and he outlined subsequent, campus-wide efforts to address key questions for the next decade, saying there was much interest in the initiative across campus.

Provost Akridge then called on Dr. Rickus to discuss the first theme of understanding, supporting, and valuing great teaching. Dr. Rickus said that, because the university expected excellence of both its students and faculty, the first theme considered ways in which to elevate those expectations. She outlined efforts already underway and other ideas. Trustee Castagna expressed her agreement that investments must be made in faculty development. Professor Cooky said the development piece was important because researchers must have the right tools to be successful teachers, and she cited ever-changing technology as another reason for faculty development. Trustee Brouillette drew parallels to the business world and also agreed that it was necessary to invest in faculty development. In response to a question from Trustee DeKryger, Provost Akridge discussed how faculty awards were generally determined and the vision for celebrating recipients in a larger way.

Provost Akridge then discussed the next theme, which sought to address how to create a culture of innovative teaching across campus; for example, implementing a new teaching method in several classes after its initial success. Trustee Brouillette encouraged this idea of a ‘hub for innovation’ and suggested a competition to mine great ideas from the faculty, which Provost Akridge compared to such competitions in the research arena.

Dr. Rickus moved on to the theme of facilitating meaningful, flexible, and cross-disciplinary curricula. She stated that faculty members were very good about educating within their own discipline, but structures were needed to facilitate cross-disciplinary paths for students. Dr. Rickus expressed her belief that removing barriers to developing new curricular paths could significantly improve the student experience. Trustee Scott remarked that this was very exciting because he had personally experienced barriers to cross-disciplinary learning, and he said students needed to be encouraged early in their college careers to look more broadly and outside of their comfort zones; Provost Akridge said this was critical. Dr. McCuskey remarked that Generation Z was interested in putting together disciplines which differ from the typical educational model; therefore, it would be necessary to align degree elements with areas of interest to students, which would have recruiting advantages. Provost Akridge summarized that an administrative, cross-disciplinary structure was needed to allow students to also become educated about their personal passions, and he shared an example of how a student was affected by the current lack of such a structure. He concluded that this theme called for giving faculty members the flexibility to be creative and collaborative for the benefit of the students.

Dr. McCuskey discussed the theme of leveraging characteristics of a residential campus to increase engagement. She described it as building a bridge between academics and activities outside the classroom, and she cited the Data Mine model and Purdue Boiler Tracks ice cream as examples of initiatives that had proven successful in building collaboration in and out of the classroom. Dr. McCuskey said ways would be explored to further leverage study abroad, undergraduate research, and service learning as part of the curriculum. Trustee Brouillette expressed her hope for the ability to breakdown silos in the international community and pointed out that students had the opportunity for an international experience on campus itself. Trustee Scott expressed his appreciation for international students who were now his close friends and said cross-cultural learning experiences were very impactful in making students more well-rounded individuals. Provost Akridge pointed out that the challenge was finding ways to make those connections for students and support deliberative outcomes, and he once again referred to the Data Mine example. Professor Cooky suggested implementing cultural exchange communities much like learning communities. She agreed with Trustee DeKryger’s remark that such exchange happened organically but expressed her belief that it could be expanded upon with intentionality and purpose. Trustee Brouillette added, and the Committee agreed, that diversity included diversity in rural vs. urban upbringings, diversity in disciplines,

etc. Provost Akridge reminded the Committee that, on a campus as large as Purdue, it was easy for students to insulate themselves; therefore, it was important to create opportunities for students to interact with students they may not have met otherwise. Trustee DeKryger spoke about the diverse friends his son had made while a student at Purdue and expressed his support for this roadmap theme. Provost Akridge summarized it as connecting professional skill development happening outside the classroom with classroom activities in order to cultivate critical thinking, team building, conflict resolution, etc.

Provost Akridge then discussed the final theme of closing achievement gaps. He said the university had made a very concerted effort over the last decade, through general interventions, to remove barriers to student success and improve retention and graduation rates, upon which he hoped to expand and identify specific enhancements. Dr. Rickus expressed her belief that this theme connected strongly to the other themes to remove barriers and maximize every student's potential. At the request of Trustee DeKryger, Provost Akridge provided examples of barriers students may encounter.

To conclude discussion, Provost Akridge provided an overview of next steps, some of which were already underway and some which would be taken in earnest in the fall.

Trustee Castagna remarked that it had been a very interesting discussion, and Trustee Brouillette praised Provost Akridge and his team. She asserted that the teaching and learning excellence roadmap was a "wonderful framework" and expressed her appreciation for seeking continued excellence. Provost Akridge thanked the Committee members for their support.

III. ADJOURNMENT

By consent, the meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m., at which time the Committee convened in executive session.