

UWAA Member Feedback

UWAA Board of directors

I support the reducing the size of the Board. An average attendance is probable less than 30. Any meeting larger would be awkward and the cost would be less.

Go forth as proposed. Smaller is better, especially when sized as you propose. You have my support and encouragement.

Thanks for asking. I support the bylaw change. 43 Board members is an unwieldy number. Reducing that number makes sense.

I'm very glad to see the UWAA updating their bylaws. I feel the reduction in the size of the board is critical to long term success of the alumni association. 43 board members is way too many to have a constructive conversation. I wholeheartedly approve and endorse these recommendations.

I still feel that one board member per County is appropriate and a good tradition.. 23 plus the at large regional members (30+/-) would still be a reduction!

Completely support the recommended changes to the by-laws.

I like the new structure - I can imagine scheduling chaos when trying to arrange an ad hoc conference call for urgent matters (even though infrequent need) just as difficult as the routinely scheduled meetings.

The only eliminated seat(s) I question are the young alumni representation. While not having been active myself, my experience and recollection over the years is that the other Board members skew to higher age groups - in some cases, much higher. (Sad but true, even though I like to think my college days are not as "far gone" as they really are.) I would think keeping that engagement with new grads would be a priority for membership in the long term, and the young alumni rep an important part of that.

Maybe consider keeping one or both of them as non-voting members? This would be comparable to the President of the student association being invited to attend and have input at University Board meetings, even though they can't vote. (They still do that, don't they??) I really think these seat(s) deserve preservation.

Thanks for all you do. I'm out of touch with some details, but I do read everything I get about UWAA and think the organization is beyond valuable.

On the map in the summary documents (Exhibit C) it shows only North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska as the Rocky Mountain Region. But in the document it also lists Montana and Utah as being in the Rocky Mountain Region. Am I reading the map wrong?

There is a major discrepancy in the information provided regarding the geographic regions of the United States. Could you please clarify where Montana and Utah are placed? The text says Montana and Utah would be in the Rocky Mountain Region while the exhibit provided shows neither of these states as part of the Rocky Mountain Region. It depicts Montana in the Northwest Region and Utah in the Southwest Region. Can you provide the membership with the accurate apportionment of states to regions and correct the available information to present a consistent message?

Minor issue related to the geographies. I assume the apportionment is based on more or less balancing representation of the number of alumni scattered across the country, but it is odd to see Illinois placed in the southeast and for the majority of the states placed in the Rocky Mountain Region to actually not be within the Rocky Mountain Region (Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota). And if the exhibit is correct rather than the text, none of the states in the Rocky Mountain Region would be from the Rocky Mountain Region. Perhaps, as we represent the alumni of an institution of higher learning, we could select names that do not fly in the face of geography.

Sounds like a reasonable and actionable step for the board to take. Good governance. I look forward to seeing how the volunteer component takes shape. I'm hoping that it can be both outgoing (alums offering volunteer experiences) and University based (the university tapping into Alums to be volunteers on campus.)

Thanks again for all you do.

Dear Ms. Farrell & UWAA Board of Directors:

First, thank you very much for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposals to restructure the governance of UWAA. I apologize in advance for the length of this message.

I am a Wyoming native and a 1971 graduate of UW, who has lived in Texas since the late 1970's. I am a life member of UWAA and have participated in various UW institutions over the years, including the College of Business Advisory Board.

I fully appreciate the challenges the UWAA board faces in designing and implementing the proposed governance changes. That said, here are a few comments for your consideration, which mostly focus on what the real role of UWAA should be in the future:

A significant reduction in the overall size of the board will, most likely, provide a huge gain in the efficiency of institutional governance of UWAA, and I applaud your effort to achieve this goal.

But UWAA is not a business, it is thread running from the individual alumnus back to the University of Wyoming to promote a connection between UW and the individual alumnus. Hopefully this thread will

be strong enough to endure distance from the university (and even from the State of Wyoming) through the years and, at the same time, lead to continuing support (including new student recruiting and financial support) to UW and its current students.

UW was in the national news spotlight recently, when a small group of faculty objected to the new promotional theme approved by the Board of Trustees, "The World Needs More Cowboys." (Even the Wall Street Journal editorial board lauded the Trustee's decision to stick with the new slogan, embodied in a video at https://youtu.be/EbJXn_he_sg

UW's administration recognizes that "enrollment growth will come mainly from outside Wyoming" (http://www.laramieboomerang.com/news/local_news/uw-administration-recommends-no-tuition-increase/article_cfdc6876-28e4-11e8-91ba-df3d39b11840.html) as it struggles to increase overall student enrollment ("more cowboys"), particularly with non-residents of nearby states with competitive universities. Non-resident tuition is already over 400% of resident tuition and is a likely target by some to be reduced, not increased as it has for several years running.

Some of the UWAA governance proposals seem to me to be somewhat "out of sync" with the future direction of the university itself.

For example, the absolute insistence in the proposal that the majority of the voting UWAA board members must always be Wyoming residents is not completely consistent with the university administration's overall goals, which include to attract more and more non-resident tuition payers (but at a tuition price level still competitive with other state universities' cost of attendance).

I was not able to find comparative percentages of residents / non-residents in the current study body (although your FAQs state that about 62% of all current alumni association members reside outside of Wyoming). However, I do believe that if the university administration's policy drive to matriculate more non-resident students is successful, the UWAA should chart a course that is supportive of that policy.

It is hard to know what delivery mechanisms for higher education will prevail in the next 10 or 20 years. The trend certainly supports a scenario of distance learning using technology tools such as the Internet, which once again will surely involve both Wyoming residents and non-residents, but perhaps not in the same proportions given population density differences.

Any concerns met by the proposed majority rule for state residents always holding a majority of the members of the UWAA board could be satisfied by other means (such as stipulating that the Wyoming resident members would hold some sort of "super" voting power or certain decisions could only be approved by some super-majority of the board).

In this regard, you also should consider whether membership voting for directors should be "at large" (all eligible members vote for candidates in all districts or regions) or by district or region (only members residing in the specific geographic district or region may vote only for their own director candidate).

Regardless of the residency control issue discussed above (and quite separately), it appears that the US map published with the proposal is the same map that has been in use for years, if not for decades. Perhaps another look at this map should be made with both the current geographic distribution of UW alumni in mind (including locations of existing and desirable future "alumni networks"), while also resolving some "fuzzy" boundary issues.

For example, on this map both Texas and California, two of the nation's most populous states, are "cut" somewhere. I can tell you that in Texas, it is impossible for me to tell which side of that line I live. I suggest that state boundaries are well-known and should be used throughout so that members can tell without ambiguity at a glance in which region they reside. In that case, I would suggest you consider realigning these regions so that all of Texas be in the Southwest (green) region, and all of California be in the Northwest (blue) region.

And, once again, to be more in "sync" with the university's stated goals, you should consider whether the states (other than Colorado) that share a border with Wyoming be placed in two (or more) separate regions with two (or more) elected members. I should think it might be helpful to a prospective student from a bordering state to know that UWAA also considers them important to UW in the long run (not only with their non-resident tuition dollars while a student).

The map only includes the United States. Alumni living abroad perhaps should be considered too.

For me, a weakness in the UWAA has always been an over-emphasis on older alumni. I believe representation at the board level of young alumni is essential.

In fact, I believe that UWAA should literally give all graduating students their first year membership in UWAA for free, and institute an online micro-donation program that new graduates can easily afford. The objective of UWAA should be long-term inclusiveness of all alums, no matter what stage the alum's working career is in and without respect to their current ability to donate in a supportive way.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposals.

I approve of the by-law changes. The board was too large anyway and the other changes make sense! I miss the mountains of my youth and place of birth often now.

First, I would like to compliment the Board for the time, effort, consideration and process of the restructuring efforts. No doubt, long, long overdue. I once sat on a major health system board that had 25 members -- way to unwieldy!

The Brown and Gold Council is well thought out and quite overdue.

However, as one who has dealt with restructuring throughout my career, I would strongly suggest that you commit to a certain number of Board members and not use the philosophy "between 15 and 22." While I support having the majority of the Board from within the State, I would raise the following question for which does not seem to be addressed in the proposal. That is, what is the on-going role of the Directors from the four quadrants of the U.S. going to be. I foresee the possibility of some issues if there is any expectation of travel or communication from those directors to constituents within their quadrant.

I would also have to ask if you have considered the number of active/life alum members living in each of those quadrants. You have made the exception for Colorado, which is no doubt, justified. But, what about the percentage of total alums living in each California and Texas. I spent five years living in Texas

and I would urge consideration of Texas having its own representative if there is substantial fund raising efforts made within the state. Could California be similar?

As one now living in the Southeast, I would suggest that it is highly impractical to combine states below the Mason-Dixon line with Missouri, Illinois and Kentucky. There is an old saying in the South, "If you want to travel by air to any city in the South, you have to go through Atlanta." Changed somewhat over the years, but, still quite truthful. Don't mix the Yankee states with the Southern states. Although represented by UW grads, It just "ain't" the same mentality.

The summation of this comment is that I would suggest that you have six or seven quadrants for the U.S. rather than having four and you sincerely consider if Texas and California should each have their own representative. It all boils down to what your expectations are for those Directors.

But, do establish a fixed number of Directors and use the at-large process to your best advantage and/or if you have to use it to maintain a Wyoming in-state majority.

Thanks for listening and best wishes/results

I would add my support to your recommendation. It appears the changes would make the board more cohesive and workable. Good luck.

A smaller board always is a more effective board. You have cited many good for a smaller board. In addition to reduced costs, decisions can be made quicker and more effectively with much less social discourse. Wyoming is a small state by population and having a director from each county never made much sense to me. I assume that Colorado provides many members to the UWAA and needs its own representation. If this is not the case, I am not sure why it is not part of the Rocky Mountain region.

I applaud your efforts and will vote in favor of the new board structure.

Questions/comments re board restructuring:

1. **Secretary:** There is currently no provision in the bylaws regarding a Secretary. The proposal does not outline what that persons responsibilities will be. I am assuming that such person would be elected from within the board as you have outlined the treasurer would be. This should all be clarified including whether such person may be elected to serve more than one term in this position.
2. **Treasurer:** A treasurer's responsibilities are clearly defined within the existing by-laws. How the treasurer is selected has never been written into the by-laws. Past treasurers have just been appointed by unknown persons. In eight years on the board – including six on the executive committee I was never once asked to approve or disapprove the selection of the treasurer. The person appointed has always performed admirably. So not a criticism of the past – however – if you want to now elect a treasurer from within the BOD you should clarify that person's responsibilities and something stated about using outside advisors. I don't think

many people would really want to be the Treasurer, with all the responsibilities as now defined. I think that more thought and clarification is needed in this area.

3. **Immediate Past President:** I firmly believe that the IPP should always be a member of the executive committee. Perhaps you could have a provision that the IPP has an option to decline being a member of the executive committee but still be a member of the BOD for his/her last year. If the IPP declined to be on the executive committee then the BOD could elect another at-large member for that year.
4. **“Comments to be posted without attribution”:** I think all the comments should be posted and attributed to the person submitting them. If comments/rebuttals etc. are coming from current board members in favor of – or against the proposed changes we should all know that. Why is the current board not in favor of complete and open transparency in this matter?
5. **Board member terms:** I am all in favor of a board member being allowed to serve a second three year term. However, I strongly believe that such individual be re-elected by the membership and not by the existing board members. It would be okay if the wording was such that the BOD must approve of such individual running for re-election. But the final say should be left up to the alumni membership as a whole.....

I also give permission to you to attribute these comments to me
Bob Archuleta

Hi all,

I hope you all are doing great! After reading the proposed changes and FAQs, I am in support of these changes to the board structure. I know you all put a lot of work and thought into this, and I appreciate all you do! I do have a few comments/wonderings that I wanted to pass on on a few pieces, but overall, I agree with these changes:

For the Brown and Gold Council, I wonder if it is possible for alumni to nominate themselves for these positions? I saw that the Executive Director nominates folks, but if someone wants to sign up to be a volunteer on the B&G Council, can they do that?

It concerns me somewhat that there will be no more Young Alumni representatives. Oftentimes, boards are controlled by people that may have more time or disposable income to make board meetings, get to Laramie, etc..., but it worries me that we may be missing an opportunity to connect young alumni to the board and have their voice heard on issues and board matters. I know that they can run for the other board positions, but I wonder if by eliminating their specific position, it may take away an opportunity to connect.

Lastly, this is something to think about in the future, but I always thought it would be extremely beneficial to have a Wyo-Gold member serve as a non-voting ex-officio on the board. It would be an amazing way for Wyo-Gold members to provide a voice of the Wyo-Gold Leadership Council and student body. It's a way to encourage the concept of the alumni pathway. This may not work now, but if the board changes, it may be something to think about in the future.

Overall, as I said, these proposed changes sound great, and I look forward to voting on the changes soon!

The proposed bylaw amendment is well structured and makes perfect sense. Sounds good.

Dear UWAA Board of Directors,

I write to you today as I have concerns regarding the elimination of the “young alumni” positions from the UWAA BOD. As a young alum ('13 B.S. Biology, Minor in International Studies) I have tried to remain active in the UWAA while working in the state of Wyoming and now during my graduate education out of state. My time at the University of Wyoming was transformative and impactful in ways that I didn't know an educational institution could provide. It instilled a sense of pride in Wyoming and in the great university that we have. I found my closest friends and explored my passions for civic engagement and volunteerism during my time at UW. All while I was afforded an excellent education with substantial financial support from the state and individual donors. Following graduation, I made a point of attending both UW and UWAA events when possible and had a number of friends serve as young alumni on the BOD. Though I did not have substantial financial means I attended the annual scholarship benefit events and donated each year when possible (and proudly drive a vehicle with UW plates in Washington). I do so because I have a passion for the university that gave me so much – and I know those that attended with me and became members of the BOD felt the same.

With this in mind, I now find myself concerned about the elimination of the young alumni positions on the board. I understand that there will still be four at-large members on the BOD that could be from any region. From my reading of the proposed amendment there wouldn't be any age restrictions for these at-large members or regional members so long as they are lifetime members. In reading through the proposed amendment, I concur that there is a need to ensure that the BOD is a cohesive and passionate group of alumni that represent the diversity of graduates and regions represented. The smaller BOD would allow for better coordination and reduce the burden of scheduling so many members. However, by not specifically having a portion of this smaller board set aside for young alumni we are risking a lack of representation from an integral group of UW alumni. These are the future leaders in their industries and regions and should be afforded the opportunity to also serve their alma mater. By keeping the young alumni engaged by providing a secure pulpit from which to express their views, we better create a sense of vested interest. There are myriad concerns for the recent graduate, but I believe there to be enough interested parties to serve the UWAA rightfully if spots are reserved for young alumni on the revised BOD. It can be argued that under the proposed BOD that young alumni could be appointed to any of the regional, at-large, or judicial area seats and I hope that this will be the case. However, by having set young alumni seats it places the onus on the board to stay engaged with, and actively recruit, younger candidates for the BOD. I personally know that the members of the UWAA and the BOD have always been welcoming and generous in their support of UW students and recent graduates. Yet, I also know how intimidating it is to try and speak up as a “younger” person, especially when surrounded by those with more life experience and social capital. I can imagine a scenario in which a person with decades of personal and business connections in the community and UWAA would be voiced as a candidate for the BOD over a recent graduate who is still learning to navigate the intricacies of post-college life. I am not arguing for a board skewed toward a younger age. I am merely arguing for the protected opportunity for young alumni to secure a position on the BOD that will afford them a say in an organization that represents their interests. It affords another opportunity for mentorship of future community leaders and instills the lifelong values that the UWAA extols. I believe it to be a benefit, even with an absolute minority of seats, to have young alumni serve as set members of the UWAA Board of

Directors to ensure we fairly represent the interests of all 20,000 members of the UWAA – from every age, background, and region. Thank you for your time and I welcome any contact regarding concerns or questions at the email address or telephone number listed below.

Alumni Amendments,

Having graduated from UW in 1966, I have had a varied and enjoyable professional career until 2010, when we retired in Wood's Landing, WY area.

My comment is I know that UW is Wyoming's only major school for higher education and that the people who live in the State need to have controlling interest in the board, but this should not stifle out of state and U.S. ability to bring other perspectives. We citizens of the State of Wyoming do not always have the broadest perspective or all the answers.

Jane and Keener,

We have carefully reviewed the proposed By-Laws change to restructure the Board of directors, and have to respond that we think it a very bad idea. Here are our thoughts.

First off, we think it is not reasonable to consider making changes to the structure of the Board without at least discussing the true purpose of the Board. With both of us being former members of the Board, we think we can certainly comment on the purpose of the Board with some knowledge. The prime stated purpose in the current proposal seems to be being presented as the “fiduciary responsibility” of the Board. Frankly, we consider that probably the least significant responsibility of the Board. If our Executive Director is doing his job (and we certainly think Keener is doing that well) and we have a good Treasurer, that should take care of itself. We personally think that the real purpose of the Board is to provide overall direction for the Association – and we do not think that can be effectively accomplished without understanding that the major responsibility of the Board must be the interface between the Association and the 20,000+ members scattered all over the world. We can only ensure that we are doing what our members want and need if we are able to regularly stay in touch with them. And that means a lot of two-way communication.

If we can agree that the member interface responsibility is one of the major purposes of the Board, then it is hard to envision how that can be improved by reducing the number of Board members. We believe that the current practice of having a Director for each county in the state should be considered mandatory in order to maintain close contact with members living in Wyoming. Adding to that is our personal belief that the current number of out of state Directors is already inadequate to truly stay in contact with their assigned members and most definitely should not be reduced. We speak from experience on this subject, since we both have been Directors representing the Southeast US, and one or two Directors is quite frankly, not nearly enough for that large an area. Just speaking honestly, if a change needs to be made, our recommendation would be to increase the size of the Board rather than shrink it and create smaller geographical areas for each of the out of state Directors to represent. That being said, we think it wise to consider just what the ramifications of a smaller Board really are. We think that reducing the depth of member interface would make it impossible to even suggest that our membership is truly represented by their assigned Directors. Rather, we fear that the Board – and therefore the Association – would become nothing more than a “rubber stamp” for whatever the

latest policy change of the month from UW Administration might be. And that is not what this Association has been for its 123 years of existence, nor what we believe it should be.

Both of us trace our UW connections back to the early 1960's, and have been Association members for a long time. We've watched with pride as our Association performed as a truly separate but equal member of the UW team. We sadly remember with some pain the difficult days in the late 1990's and part of the early 21st century when the Association found itself at odds with a new University Administration, but continued to do its job and serve its membership as THE representative of all UW Alums - despite having most of its University financial support cut off. As an Association, we should be proud that we persevered and weathered that storm, probably coming out of it stronger than ever before. However, staying the course, was not the "easy" way to go.

Bill observes that as a long time participant in the running of "Associations" (he served for nearly 20 years on the Board of the National Management Association – NMA - and was its senior officer, the National Chairman of the Board in 1995), he has participated more than once in discussions and desires to create a smaller and possibly more manageable Board for that Association. This was especially true during the time that NMA had almost 100,000 members nationwide, and a full Board of around 70. Luckily, those actions never occurred. And "yes", he says, managing a Board that size was a challenge sometimes, but was generally well worth it in terms of staying in touch with the membership. And he also notes that much of the complicated business of directing the organization's paid staff was conducted by a much smaller Executive Board – but that all decisions in the Exec Board always had to be approved by the full Board, and occasionally some lively discussion occurred while gaining that approval!

So in closing, let us say that we are strongly opposed to the action being discussed. We certainly understand that managing a smaller Board would be easier, but would in our minds compromise the true purpose of the Board. And to put that in perspective, we would like to offer a historical quotation made by JFK when he announced in 1962 that he was challenging NASA and the aerospace industry to take the USA to the Moon and back before the end of 1969, an almost impossible challenge. (It is especially a favorite of Bill's because of his lifelong career launching rockets, including all the Apollo Moon missions.) JFK said then ***"Why, some might ask, go to the Moon? We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard"***.

We would urge the Board to remember that the true purpose of the Board is to represent our membership, and should not decide to change that purpose just because it makes it easier.

P.S. Jane and Keener - We assume this letter will be shared with the full Board, and while we are hopeful that the Board will not come up with the required 2/3 vote to push this forward, either way we think it would poor form to take this on to a vote of the full membership (presumably by mail) without presenting both sides of the discussion. So we formally request that you include this letter with what goes out to the membership as a dissenting viewpoint.

Keener,

The Association asked for comments to the By-law Summary that was distributed several weeks ago. I view this as the second phase of a two phase effort to achieve control over the Association and make it more malleable to the goals of fewer people. Please consider my comments below.

First, as you might expect, I was disappointing to see that another attempt was being made to move the Association away from any vestige of independence and toward a more centralized model, subject to more control by fewer alumni and/or University administrators. I recognize this as one model favored by university administrators, but it is a model that ultimately leaves the rank and file alumni with less influence over their association. The comments I labored over the last time this was attempted still stand. Having now voiced these concerns twice, I am prepared to see the advocates of this model prevail. But it doesn't mean that it is best for the alumni of the University, or in the long run, that it is best for the University. For those reasons, I am not in favor of the proposed changes.

With regard to the latest effort to amend the governing documents of the Association, I have these specific observations:

- The process that has been undertaken is flawed. You are asking for approval of by-law amendments that have not been distributed for review and comment. What has been distributed is a "Summary". This is nothing more than the opinion of the author of the summary as to what the amendments will eventually be when proposed and adopted. While the summary is helpful in understanding the intent (at least of the author of the summary), the amendments cannot be analyzed, approved or disapproved from a summary of what some unknown person believes will eventually be the amendments when drafted.
- Board candidates are nominated based on their commitment to "support the strategic goals". Strategic goals change; they are ephemeral and there may well come a time when the alumni disapprove of a specific articulated goal or goals. What is being done is to eliminate any possibility of dissent or disagreement with "strategic goals", regardless of what they may be. That may be convenient but it is not wise.
- In numerous ways, the summary suggests opportunity to "pack" the board and its committees to achieve a result or for other reasons. Again, this may achieve a desired result but it is not wise and certainly not democratic.
- Under the amendment procedure set forth in the current by-laws (enacted 2017), the disjunctive "or" is used and this means that by-law amendments can be enacted either by the board "or" by the members. It also means that the procedure allows for the membership to disprove, and still the bylaw amendments dealing with Board composition can be enacted, effectively overruling the wishes of the membership. Or, the opposite could happen. The net affect in this situation is to allow the proponents of the amendments two bites at the apple. That does not seem right.
- There are other, more mundane, comments I have regarding specific parts of the proposals, and I might have other or additional comments to the actual by-law proposals if they were presented. It does not seem to me to be useful to present them here. Feel free to call me if you wish to discuss this response or my unstated comments further.

I do appreciate the opportunity to present these views as the UW Alumni Association has always been dear to my heart. I wish it, you and the Board the best in your endeavors.

Ray Hunkins