

**Board of Trustees**  
**Committee on Academic and Student Affairs**  
**March 23, 2022**  
**8:00am-10:00am**

**Committee Report**

*UW Trustees: Michelle Sullivan (Chair), Macey Moore, Laura Schmidt-Pizzato, Brad Bonner*

**1. Consideration and Action– Notice of Intent: MS in Nutrition and Dietetics**

1. **Information/Discussion:** Professors Jill Keith and Chrissy Wade provided a notice of intent for a new Masters degree in Nutrition and Dietetics. The College of Agriculture & Natural Resources in partnership with the College of Health Sciences is proposing a new 4+1 program that would include a Master of Science degree in Nutrition and Dietetics. The program will prepare entry-level Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) to practice in areas of clinical, community/public health, and foodservice nutrition. The initial phase of the program will be delivered primarily on campus. In the last two years of the program, students will enroll in a majority of online courses while completing clinical and community-based supervised experiential learning throughout the state of Wyoming. Experiential learning requirements will take place at sites such as hospitals, medical clinics, schools, University of Wyoming Extension offices, and public health agencies. There is high demand for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) in Wyoming and beginning in 2024, all RDNs must have a master's degree, thus the need for this proposed program. Trustees expressed concern that expenses in the preliminary budget and the projected number of students were overly conservative and inquired about whether projected compensation was based on realistic market rates. Jill Keith and Chrissy Wade provided explanations on the compensation range and workload and stated a conservative approach was used on student enrollment projections. Trustees asked Provost Carman about any potential complications with the current reorganization. The Provost responded that the nutrition program would continue to reside in Family Consumer Science and explained that the a decision has not yet been made about whether the department will stay in College of Agriculture and Natural Resources or move to College of Education. He expressed no concern with adding the Masters program at this time and reiterated that currently approximately 90% of undergraduate students go on to pursue their master's degree at another institution. This program would help to retain those students.
2. **Action:** Motion passed.
3. **Next Steps:** Trustee Sullivan to propose motion with full board:
  - i. *"I move to recommend the full board approve the Notice of Intent for the Masters of Nutrition and Dietetics.*

**2. Information & Discussion Recommendation of 4-year Academic Calendar**

1. **Information/Discussion:** On a recurring basis, the Board of Trustees review and approve three-to-four-year increment of academic calendars. Vice Provost Steve Barrett Academic Affairs provided final draft academic calendars for AY 23/24 to AY26/27 for review by the AA/SA subcommittee. Final academic calendars will be provided to the Trustees at their May 2022 meeting for approval. The academic calendar committee has wide representation from across UW and other related agencies including ASUW, Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, OTR, Athletics, ACSD #1, Financial Services, Scholarships and Financial Aid, RLDS and Union, Alumni

Association, LCCC, Graduate Education, UW at Casper, Admissions, Student Affairs, Distance Education, and Academic Affairs. The committee has gathered feedback from constituents on calendar principles. Based on their feedback, the final draft calendars were assembled and reviewed for AY 23/24 to AY26/27. All four academic year calendars have been posted for comment on the AA website to solicit feedback.

- i. Trustee Moore suggested the committee discuss adding time for Easter break.
2. Action: This is an information item.
3. Next Steps: This is an information item.

### **3. Information and Discussion – Review and Approval Process for Proposed Expansion of the MSW program to UWC**

1. Information/Discussion: Vice Provost Ahern provided historical context around the previous Notice of Intent and noted that we are moving forward with the proposal to expand the degree program and will go through the appropriate campus discussions. In the September 2021 meeting, the Board expressed support of the expansion of the Master of Social Work program to UW-Casper. As a major curricular change and not a new degree program, the proposed program must undergo internal (campus) review but does not necessitate approval of the Board. Therefore, the proposal for the expansion of the MSW to UW-Casper will undergo review by Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate, ASUW, Staff Senate, and the Provost and will not refer the matter to the Trustees for approval. If the startup request will require special project reserves, that request would be a part of the regular budget process that occurs in May. Trustee Sullivan noted that if there will be a future request for start up funds, this would be discussed with and recommended by the Budget Committee. VP Ahern stated that there will be a need to ask for a request for funding for start-up, but the timeline on this request is uncertain at this time. Trustee Schmidt-Pizzato emphasized the continued urgent need in the state for these services.
2. Action: This is an information item.
3. Next Steps: This is an information item.

### **4. Information & Discussion – Next Gen USP update**

1. Information/Discussion: Dr. Jacqueline Bridgeman, Dr. Susan Aronstein and Dr. Rick Fisher are co-chairs of the Next Gen USP committee. The committee is currently gathering information with stakeholders on campus and in the state to think about how a university studies program can and will best prepare our students. The committee has sub-committees working on various areas of campus perspectives, students, extra/co-curricular, off-campus, and data collection. The committee is also including the community colleges in discussions. The current timeline is expected to be at least a year out as more dialogue and revisions are needed.
2. Action: This is an information item.
3. Next Steps: Trustees recommend continued updates to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee. Provost Carman provided that digital literacy is a component being looked at with the approval of the School of Computing.

**5. Information and Discussion: Student Success Annual Metrics Review**

1. Information/Discussion: Vice President Kim Chestnut and Dr. Nycole Courtney provided a review of current efforts around student success, and the importance of reviewing associated impacts and outcomes. The AA/SA committee requested an annual review of relevant metrics that provide information across time regarding the University's impact on engaging, retaining, and graduating students. March 2022 will be the first year of this annual review process and will provide an overview of student retention, graduation rates, and academic probation percentages. Further years will include new categories as additional data become available.
2. Action: This is an information item.
3. Next Steps: Trustees suggest continued discussions on student populations needing further review and attention.

**6. Information and Discussion: ACT/SAT Test Optional for Admissions and Scholarships Discussion**

1. Information/Discussion: Administration would like support to engage campus in a discussion around adopting a permanent test optional admissions policy to begin for students entering Spring 2023. Universities are increasingly interested in the academic potential and capacity a student can achieve while at the institution, more so than what they have achieved based on their previous access to quality educational resources and test prep materials. As such, many universities, systems and state Boards of Education have adopted permanent test optional admissions policies. This imbalance in the evaluation method is most obvious in low economic and rural student populations. The University of Wyoming welcomes a significant population of students with limited financial capacity and more than 75% of its students come from rural backgrounds. This suggests the University may be inadvertently screening out students with the academic capacity and ability before given the opportunity to display their potential. The COVID pandemic accelerated this national trend of test optional policy adoption. During the 2020/2021 academic terms, the CollegeBoard reported an all-time low of 43% test completion, a drop from 73-77% completion rates ahead of the pandemic. Many students were simply unable to sit for an examination due to the cancellation of test sites as a result of the requirements for in person activities. This created the opportunity for many institutions to pilot test optional admission policies and evaluate the success of students who entered without test scores, alongside students who were able to secure a test creating an ideal case study and control for evaluating effectiveness of predicting student success.