

Approved August 16, 2023

**The UW Board of Trustees Special Meeting
with the Wyoming Community College Commission**

August 2, 2023

Walter H. Nolte Gateway Center, Casper College

Casper, Wyoming

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

PUBLIC SESSION

**Final minutes can be found on the University of Wyoming Board of Trustees website at
www.uwyo.edu/trustees**

MINUTES OF
The UW Board of Trustees Special Meeting
with the Wyoming Community College Commission
August 2, 2023
Walter H. Nolte Gateway Center, Casper College
Casper, Wyoming
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

As will be reflected in the public meeting minutes, the Board of Trustees of the University of Wyoming met in Casper, Wyoming, on Wednesday, August 2, 2023, for a Special Meeting with the Wyoming Community College Commission. No action was taken during this meeting.

Trustees participating: Brad Bonner (via video conference), Kermit Brown (Vice Chairman), David Fall, Elizabeth Greenwood (via video conference), Brad LaCroix (via video conference), Jim Mathis, John McKinley (Chairman), Macey Moore (via video conference), Laura Schmid-Pizzato (Secretary) (via video conference), and Michelle Sullivan (Treasurer). Trustees Carol Linton and Dave True were absent.

Ex- Officio Trustees participating: ASUW President Saber Smith (via video conference), and Wyoming Community College Commission Executive Director Sandy Caldwell. UW President Ed Seidel, State Superintendent for Public Instruction Megan Degenfelder, and Governor Mark Gordon were absent. Senior Policy Advisor Lachelle Brant attended on Governor Gordon's behalf.

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AGENDA

I. Welcome, context setting, and reiteration of the meeting goals:

- a. The ultimate long-term goal is to effectively communicate and cooperate by engagement through on-going discussions which maximize higher-education opportunities that benefit students and the state of Wyoming.
- b. Opportunity to engage in honest dialogue about key topics of concern and/or interest with the hope of coming out of the meeting with three or four topics on which we will work together – Ideally one or two of these areas showing significant progress in the coming one or two years.
- c. Solidify common understanding of and commitment to the WIP Initiative for the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Community College Commission/Community Colleges, together working with the Wyoming Business Council and Department of Workforce Services with an emphasis on developing innovative solutions that support and enhance Wyoming's economy, workforce, and sources of revenue. Consider how to ensure accountability and strong success measures.

II. Discuss opportunities and challenges in areas where UW and Commission/Community Colleges can work together to more effectively serve Wyoming students and communities:

- a. *Bachelors of Applied Science (BAS)*
 - i. Online offerings
 - ii. UW BAS Programs
 - iii. Community College BAS Programs February 2023 Update
- b. *Transferability of credit*
 - i. Common Course Numbering System (CCNS)
 - ii. Program alignment
 - iii. Common transcript/transfer process (WyoTransfer)
 - iv. Articulation
 - v. Solution to lab problems
 - vi. Elimination of premature PELL Grant exhaustion
 - vii. Templates leading to a four-year degree (2+2, 3+1 etc.)
 - viii. Successful Efforts: Coordination of special programs for nursing (ReNEW) and combat veterans (Veterans programs and OCV)
- c. *Wyoming Innovation Partnership (WIP)*
 - i. Market sector areas of emphasis

- ii. Energy
- iii. Healthcare
- iv. Hospitality and tourism and WORTH
- v. Digital Infrastructure including AI
- vi. Entrepreneurship
- vii. Creative Economy
- viii. Consortia Efforts—Course sharing Platform and Virtual Reality
- ix. Agriculture (PLENTY)

III. Where are opportunities to work together to achieve some wins?

Prior Discussion Highlights; Identification of Topics to Work further together on short-term and long-term.

a. *Research*

- i. Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System
- ii. Cooperative projects
- iii. Experiential learning

b. *Other considerations*

- i. Affordability pursuant to Wyoming Postsecondary Educational Attainment 5- and 10-Year Strategic Plan
- ii. Coordination with H.S. and college guidance counselors

The UW Board of Trustees and the Wyoming Community College Commission met jointly on August 2, 2023, at the Walter H. Nolte Gateway Center, Casper College.

Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) Chairman Megan Goetz called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Goetz invited introductions (see Attendance Sheet for more information). Goetz went on to state the number of goals to the meeting, and that chief among them was to effectively communicate and cooperate through engagement and ongoing discussion to maximize higher education opportunities that benefit students and the state of Wyoming. Goetz stated the meeting provided an opportunity to engage in honest dialog about key topics of concern with a goal to identify and agree on three to four outcomes. University of Wyoming Board of Trustees (UW) Board of Trustees Chairman John McKinley and Goetz discussed the governing structure of the UW Board of Trustees and the WCCC, stating authority is granted to the UW Board of Trustees by the Wyoming Legislature and in accordance with the Wyoming Constitution, and responsibilities of the WCCC which acts as a coordinating entity is enabled by state statute. Goetz described the collaboration with UW Trustees Kermit Brown and Michelle Sullivan on determining agenda items, which represent overlapping aims. Goetz went on to discuss the Wyoming Innovation Partnership (WIP) and expressed support for its mission and goals.

Goetz invited a discussion about challenges as well as opportunities in areas where UW and the WCCC and Wyoming Community Colleges (WCC) might work together to serve Wyoming students and communities more effectively. Central Wyoming Community College President, and President of the Wyoming College Presidents, Brad Tyndall, provided context to the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees offered by WCCs and described the programming as an additional vocational career readiness pathway for students. Tyndall described the design of the Tribal Leadership degree program as an example of meeting the needs of a WCC service area and constituency, and discussed the distinction between missions specific to UW and the WCC and what each offers to students and the state. Northern Wyoming Community College District President Walt Tribley discussed the recent collaboration between Sheridan College and UW as it relates to the creation of a four-year degree in software development in concert with UW's School of Computing. There was consensus UW and WCC's should seek to avoid competition, and duplication of course offerings. McKinley discussed UW's recent review of its programming, and acknowledged such examination can be difficult. Wyoming Community College Commission Executive Director Sandy Caldwell discussed the WCCs rigorous process to evaluate programming and its requirement of proof of coordination with UW.

Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Mark Gordon Lachelle Brant acknowledged the unique dynamic to the governance structure of UW and WCCC which can present difficulty as it relates to coordination. Brant discussed the WIP, Governor Gordon's wish to fill educational gaps in Wyoming communities and the need for strategic thinking to avoid duplication of requests for state resources. Tyndall made reference to former Wyoming Governor Matt Mead, and current Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon's economic development initiatives and stated that WCC BAS programming is region specific and has proven to be critical to this mission. McKinley discussed the importance of providing site bound students professional advancement, and stated his view that the responsibility of UW and the WCCs is to deliver a quality education and provide students with a competitive edge in the workforce, but that economic development is not the driver. Goetz stated

that by statute the WCCC is charged with supporting economic development in the state. WCCC Past Chairman Jackie Freeze remarked that economic development is a natural outcome of the design of WCC programming, and welcomed effective cooperation between UW and the WCCs particularly as it relates to elementary education and the need to grow the teacher population in the state and further described the gaps in degrees and certification in the education field.

Western Wyoming Community College President Kim Dale stated that the core mission of WCCs is to provide access and meet students where they are. Dale further stated that WCCs work closely with business and industry in the state and described the utility of the BAS degree in Business in support of the workforce in western Wyoming. Dale illustrated and emphasized the need for elementary educators by discussing the receipt of a letter of support from the K-12 school districts in western Wyoming for a BAS in elementary education and the specific challenges to providing online asynchronous learning. Dale frankly stated that the recurring change to UW leadership has been an obstacle to effective cooperation. Dale pivoted to describe the productive meeting with UW Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Kevin Carman and Interim UW College of Education Dean Jenna Shim, on August 1, 2023, and the forward momentum on the creation of online asynchronous programming in elementary education at UW.

Trustee Kermit Brown discussed the UW Board of Trustees conversation with the members of the Wyoming Legislature during its July 2023 meeting regarding budgetary support to grow UW's enrollment. Brown reported the takeaway was that the state does not have the ability to fund competition and duplication between UW and the WCCs. Brant acknowledged the history of poor communication and collaboration between UW and the WCCs. Sullivan discussed the urgency to address enrollment and retention, and the existential threat to the value of higher education.

The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:30. UW Board of Trustee John McKinley called the meeting back to order at 1:00 p.m. stating a hard stop at 2:00 p.m. and the need to adjust the agenda. The afternoon session focused on issues related to the transferability of credits.

McKinley discussed the topic of obstacles around transferability of credits, discussed the myriad of working groups convened to help identify barriers and provide recommendations, and expressed the desire to pinpoint common concerns. Tyndall discussed the improvements to the process since legislation enabling common course numbering, though acknowledged the time it takes to alter stakeholder perception of transfer obstacles. Brown inquired whether UW and WCCs would benefit from a reorganization of staff structure to allow for dedicated attention to articulation. Brant discussed the frequency of concerns regarding articulation issues that come to the governor's attention and encouraged a change to structure if necessary. Caldwell discussed existing infrastructure to attend to articulation and the ongoing maintenance of common course numbering, and noted the success resulting from the annual Articulation Summit. Caldwell noted the statewide college system strategic plan and the annual report to be presented at the WCCC October 2023 meeting. McKinley stated the reports of concern to the governor are an indication there is still work to be done in support of students. Sullivan discussed the various nuances that contribute to the complicated messaging around credit transferability.

Wyoming Community College Commission Deputy Director Ben Moritz stated the importance of partnership, and the need for frequent and consistent review of courses and the need for issues to

be addressed. Moritz discussed recent progress in aligning institutional policies related to articulation and 2+2 agreements. In response to inquiry from Trustee Jim Mathis, UW Assistant Provost for Enrollment Management Kyle Moore discussed the WyoTransfer platform (wyotransfer.org). Moore went on to discuss the UW Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP) regarding best practices for evaluating course content, and the ability to have processes and policies that provide the flexibility to meet the needs of individual students as necessary. In response to inquiry from Chairman McKinley, Moore stressed the need for effective communication with and among faculty as curriculum changes to assure appropriate infrastructure to support students is in place. Freeze inquired about continuity as personnel changes. Mortiz discussed the benefits to policies and frameworks, and acknowledged the importance of agreement among institutions that transferability is a priority. McKinley recommended solutions be identified to assure sustainability and long-term success, with regular updates provided to UW and the WCCC. Brown made clear that UW welcomes transfer students and that it is vital to meet student needs and keep Wyoming students in state. Trustee David Fall discussed the shrinking freshmen pool, and that transfer students are the population to support the growth of UW. Goetz discussed the need to assure the boards are following the attainment plan. Sullivan discussed the various nuances that contribute to the complicated messaging around credit transferability. McKinley and Mathis requested administration create a place online where articulation and transfer information can be clearly understood by prospective students. Moritz further discussed the utility and functionality of WyoTransfer and the need to advertise the tool particularly to working adults.

The group went on to discuss a number of challenges related to providing graduating high school seniors effective counseling. Brant described conversations with the State Superintendent for Public Instruction Megan Degenfelder about strengthening career planning for K-12 students and creating supporting policies as necessary. Tyndall discussed the dismantling of UW's Outreach School and the impact it has had on service to Wyoming students, and the void of losing UW counselors at WCCs through budget cuts.

McKinley closed the meeting with a specific request that Moore provide the UW Board of Trustees an update during its September 2023 meeting about progress on improving collaboration and coordination between UW and the WCC BAS programming to avoid duplication of offerings; an update on improvements to the transferability of credits between WCCs and UW broadly; and recommendations related to installing UW counselors/advisors at WCCs. McKinley stated that he and Goetz would provide an update on the outcomes of the joint meeting to Governor Gordon. It was agreed that UW and WCCC should continue their discussions to support student success and mission to the state. Goetz and McKinley thanked the group for its participation.

Meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



RoseMarie London
Deputy Secretary, UW Board of Trustees



UW BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING ATTENDANCE SIGN IN

All individuals attending meetings of the UW Board of Trustees are asked to sign this official meeting attendance log indicating your attendance at the meeting (this is a public document). Individuals who wish to attend a meeting of the UW Board of Trustees are not required to provide their name as a condition of attending the meeting. Please print your name, the name of the organization you represent (or indicated you are representing yourself), and an email or telephone number where staff can contact you for additional information, if needed. If you would like to provide public comment to the Board, please fill out the Public Testimony sign in sheet.

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