

THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES' REPORT

August 16, 2023

This document can also be found on the University of Wyoming Board of Trustees secure website.

University of Wyoming

Vision

Use our unique strengths to make Wyoming and the world a better place.

Mission

As Wyoming's university, we unlock the extraordinary in every person through education, research, innovation, engagement, and service.

Values

- Access to an affordable, high-quality education.
- Real-world education where students learn by doing.
- A welcoming and supportive learning community fostered by integrity, inclusivity, freedom of expression, and respect.
- The growth, health, and leadership capacity of all members of the university community.
- Wyoming's wild and working lands as an asset to be utilized, understood, stewarded, and treasured.
- Our partnership and engagement with Wyoming communities in the creation and exchange of knowledge and resources.
- Our role as a catalyst for innovation and economic vitality.

(Accepted January 2023)

**TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
BOARD MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday, August 16, 2023
Via Video Conference/Old Main Boardroom, Old Main 206
Laramie, Wyoming**

OFFICIAL MEETING SCHEDULE/AGENDA

Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Via video conference

8:00 a.m. Call to order

8:05 a.m. Roll call

Disconnect public call and reconnect for Executive Session

8:10 – 9:00 a.m. Executive Session [*see executive session agenda*]

Disconnect Executive Session call and reconnect for public session and discussion/action by the Board.

9:05 – 9:50 a.m. Public Session

Agenda Items for Discussion/Approval:

1. Discussion: UW Board of Trustees DRAFT Meeting Minutes
 - a. July 12-14, 2023, Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes (public and executive session)
 - b. August 2, 2023, UW Board of Trustees “Special Meeting” with the Wyoming Community College Commission
2. Discussion/Follow-up: August 2, 2023, UW Board of Trustees “Special Meeting” with the Wyoming Community College Commission – McKinley
3. *Biennium Budget Committee*
 - a. Consideration and Action: FY2025-2026 Biennium Exception Budget Request – Schmid-Pizzato/Kean.....4
4. Recommendations to the Board regarding reinforcing recruitment and retention efforts – Seidel/Carman/Baldwin/K. Moore.....5

Proposed Items for Action

1. Academic Personnel Report
2. Litigation
 - a. City of Laramie v. UW
 - b. Personnel Matter

9:50 a.m. Adjourn

Date of Next Meeting – September 20-22, 2023, Laramie

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: **FY2025-2026 Biennium Exception Budget Request**, Schmid-Pizzato/Kean

SESSION TYPE:

- Work Session
- Information Session
- Other
- [Committee of the Whole – Items for Approval]

APPLIES TO STRATEGIC GOALS:

- Yes (select below):
 - Institutional Excellence
 - Student Success
 - Service to the State
 - Financial Growth and Stability
- No [Regular Business]

Attachments are provided with the narrative.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The State of Wyoming uses a biennial budget process. The Fiscal Year 2025-2026 biennial budget is for the full two years of the biennium. Beginning July 1, 2024 ending June 30, 2026.

Biennium exception budget requests shall be submitted to the State Budget Department by Thursday, August 31, 2023. A budget hearing with the Governor will be scheduled for a date to be determined September through October 2023, followed by a budget hearing with the Joint Appropriations Committee in December 2023.

PRIOR RELATED BOARD DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS:

The Board approved the FY2024 supplemental budget request on August 17, 2022. The Biennium Budget Committee initially met on May 10, 2023, to discuss potential exception budget requests, and the full board received an overview of the biennium exception budget requests at the July 2023 board retreat. As a follow-up to the board retreat, the Biennium Budget Committee met on July 26, 2023, to further refine the requests and establish final prioritization of the requests to be submitted as part of the state’s budget process. The Committee will meet no later than August 15, 2023, to finalize the amounts and formally recommend them to the full board. The Committee’s final recommendation will be provided as supplemental material.

WHY THIS ITEM IS BEFORE THE BOARD:

The Trustees of the University of Wyoming, a constitutional body, are responsible for the “management of the university” (Wyoming Constitution, Article 7, 17).

ACTION REQUIRED AT THIS BOARD MEETING:

Approval of the 2025-2026 biennium exception budget request for the University of Wyoming as provided in the supplemental material.

PROPOSED MOTION:

I move the Board authorize the administration to submit the prioritized exception budget request list as presented.

PRESIDENT’S RECOMMENDATION:

The President recommends approval.

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Recommendations to the Board regarding reinforcing recruitment and retention efforts, Seidel, Carman, Baldwin, K. Moore

SESSION TYPE:

- Work Session
- Information Session
- Other
- [Committee of the Whole – Items for Approval]

APPLIES TO STRATEGIC GOALS:

- Yes (select below):
 - Institutional Excellence
 - Student Success
 - Service to the State
 - Financial Growth and Stability
- No [Regular Business]

Attachments are provided with the narrative.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The University of Wyoming (UW) is challenged with decreasing enrollment. Since 2018, UW has realized an 11% decrease in total enrollment (12,476 to 11,102) and desires to reverse this trend. With an anticipated decline in the number of incoming new students for fall 2023, and concerns about the declining number of continuing students, UW administration is responding to a request from the UW Board of Trustees (BOT) to prepare recommendations on marketing efforts that can be immediately deployed to drive enrollment (recruitment and retention). Protecting the UW brand by strengthening institutional commitment and focus on marketing, recruiting and retention is critical to ongoing success. Resource alignments and investments will be a necessary strategy in the near- and long-term plans to address enrollment.

PRIOR RELATED BOARD DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS:

In July of 2023, the BOT held a regular meeting in Lander, Wyoming which included a discussion titled “Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention: Future Plan to address Decline.” The BOT requested a plan be brought to the BOT for consideration at the August 2023 meeting regarding immediate marketing actions that could be initiated as soon as August 20th, 2023. A subsequent plan for longer-term investments in Marketing, Recruitment and Retention will be presented at a future meeting.

WHY THIS ITEM IS BEFORE THE BOARD:

Follow up to a request to present a plan to address the immediate marketing needs to address enrollment.

ACTION REQUIRED AT THIS BOARD MEETING:

The UW Administration recommends the BOT approve the “Immediate Action Plan” marketing proposal to address immediate recruitment and retention marketing needs. It is recommended that Trustees Reserves be used as the source for these funds.

PROPOSED MOTION:

I move the Board authorize the administration to execute the Marketing and Enrollment efforts outlined in the Immediate Action Plan as recommended to the Board of trustees, with funding to be provided through the Trustees Reserve Fund.

PRESIDENT’S RECOMMENDATION:

The President recommends authorization.

University of Wyoming | Institutional Marketing Budget Proposal & Recommendations

2023-24 Enrollment Marketing – Immediate Action Plan Executive Summary

This proposal is inclusive of our immediate plans to begin as early as Aug. 20, 2023, and will encompass the 2023-24 fiscal year. This is intended to jumpstart our modest marketing budget in key areas while creating a sustainable foundation to meet long-term goals that are set in coming months. President Seidel has charged a group led by VP Smith to address overall marketing and communications at UW; further, an external firm, Ruffalo Noel Levitz, has been commissioned to work with the university on an enrollment management plan. Additional recommendations from these activities will be available as they are developed, including an anticipated increase in resources and staffing for Enrollment Management to cultivate the additional leads brought into the enrollment funnel through marketing.

We estimate the impact of this Immediate Action Plan to be recruitment of 138-173 additional students and retention of 20-40 students we would have lost, resulting in net revenue gain of \$3.8 million-\$4.8 million in the 2024-25 academic year. Please understand that these are only estimates and that a number of unforeseen circumstances could impact outcomes. Also, please keep in mind that these additional expenditures in the next six months are not just about 2024-25 enrollment; we will be bringing prospective students into the funnel for future years as well. Please also note that this plan cannot be executed without the five Institutional Marketing positions currently funded year-to-year by trustee reserves, along with the immediate hiring of a full-time graphic designer.

Proposed Budget:

- Proposed Additional Budget: \$1,538,925
Includes all additional budget breakdown figures.

DIGITAL ADVERTISING - *Additional Budget Needed: \$500,000*

Digital advertising is one of the most critical touchpoints that drives potential students to the first point of contact such as our application, virtual or campus visits, and information request forms. Applications that can be tracked from digital advertising are *always* direct applications to the university, which has a 20% or higher confirmation rate in some target markets when compared to the Common App. We are confident in our ad performance projections and are anticipating an increase in applications based on this significant increase to our budget.

- *Primary State Increases: \$162,000*
These will include hyper-targeted search ads in Colorado, Texas, Central/Southern California, Nebraska, South Dakota and Illinois where our highest yield outside of Wyoming is coming from.
- *Increased Brand Spend: \$220,000*
We'll need to increase the brand spend to generate the number of impressions needed to flow students into the enrollment funnel. This increase will also create more search traffic in our key primary states.

- **Remarketing Spend Increase: \$34,500**
This increase is needed for our remarketing spends to support the significantly higher impression reach from our increased budget in brand and key states.
- **Increase to Transfer Campaign: \$33,500**
With transfer enrollment showing signs of improvement and our performance on application conversions in last year's transfer campaign, this budget will aid in our reach to more potential students in surrounding areas.
- **Dedicated Increase to Key Social Media Channels: \$50,000**
Social media ad spends in key channels proved to be especially effective for driving applications.

STAFFING RESOURCES - Additional Budget Needed: \$75,475

This Immediate Action Plan has been built on the concept of "What can our current team handle?", with one exception: the need to move a graphic designer position from part-time to full-time. We are already anticipating an increased demand on our designers as we develop and launch digital ads for the Office of Online and Continuing Education for the first time this year. With this proposed increase in recruitment advertising and upgrading of print recruitment materials, we will only be able to meet the creative demand if the part-time position (just vacated) is moved to full-time.

NICHE DIRECT ADMIT & COLLEGE BOARD - Additional Budget Needed: \$225,000

Niche Direct Admissions -- \$125,000

We currently use the [Niche](#) platform for enrollment marketing. As the leader in higher education exploration, Niche connects colleges with students and families during their research and discovery phase. Incorporating [Niche Direct Admissions™](#) is becoming the new standard in college admissions and is used by 25+ universities in 17 states. Direct Admissions eliminates application barriers and engages students earlier in the funnel with auto-admittance based on set criteria.

College Board Enrollment Planning Service -- \$100,000

[College Board Search](#) offers institutions unparalleled reach, helping them connect with millions of high school students each year. This expenditure would allow UW to strategically engage more students to create a pipeline of best-fit prospects.

ADMISSIONS PRINT MATERIALS - Additional Budget Needed: \$310,000

The various print materials Institutional Marketing produces throughout the year serve as a significant contribution to our recruitment and retention strategy. Working in tandem with Admissions and other campus partners, our professionals work to produce over 250 individual pieces annually. The intention of this proposal is to enhance the work we are already completing to increase enrollment. We have worked to assess the current cost of what we produce and projected additional items or added quality that could be incorporated with increased funding.

WEBSITE DEGREE PAGES - Additional Budget Needed: \$100,000

The primary objective of this project is to enhance the visibility and click-through rate of the academic program pages on search engines, specifically Google. Another crucial goal is to furnish prospective students with comprehensive and informative content to aid them in making well-informed decisions about their educational journeys. With more than [100 pages either completed or in the pipeline](#), the need for more programs to have pages created is important for standardization of programs on our website. This \$100,000 would allow IM to hire an agency to help build 100 more degree program pages.

RETENTION MARKETING - Additional Budget Needed: \$100,000

Retention marketing is paramount to the success of our students and achieving institutional enrollment goals. Purposefully coordinated retention marketing to current students and families is an extension of recruitment marketing and further supports students' decisions to enroll and re-enroll each semester at UW. Establishing a general retention marketing budget of \$100,000 will support the wide variety of initiatives focused on engaging students who are on track toward degree completion, connecting with students at-risk of or who've already stopped and strengthening student support networks.

OUT OF HOME (billboards and DIA) - Additional Budget Needed: \$228,450

Out-of-home advertising can be an effective tool in building brand awareness and amplifying our brand message by reaching large audience segments in high-traffic spaces. This funding would allow for one billboard placement each on I-80, I-25 and Highway 287 for a full calendar year (\$38,450); and one static banner or backlit display in Denver International Airport for a full calendar year (\$190,000).