

Tuition and Fee Advisory Board of the University of Oregon Meeting Summary | January 17, 2020

The 2019–2020 Tuition and Fee Advisory Board (TFAB) of the University of Oregon met in the Johnson Hall Conference Room on the UO's Eugene campus at 3:00 p.m. on January 17, 2020. Below is a summary of the meeting; documents reviewed during the meeting are available [online](#).

Attendance: Deb Beck (guest), Jim Brooks, Robin Clement, Erica Daley, Michael Griffel (guest), Saul Hubbard (guest), Nyla Jamison (guest), Randy Kamphaus, Shelly Kerr (guest), Stuart Laing, Rocco Luiere (guest), Kevin Marbury (co-chair), Andy Marcus, Jamie Moffitt (co-chair) JP Monroe, Sabinna Pierre, Vanessa Robles, Hal Sadofsky, Jackson Smith, Kathie Stanley, Janet Woodruff-Borden.

Staff: Debbie Sharp (Office of the VPFA).

Welcome and introductions. Co-chair Kevin Marbury, vice president for student life, welcomed the group and invited all participants to introduce themselves. He thanked everyone for their participation during the January 14th student forum on tuition and fees and gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

Health and counseling fee proposal. Roger Thompson, vice president for student services and enrollment management, explained that after last year's request for a significant increase in the health and counseling fee, there is no increase being requested for the coming year. He explained that last year's increase was in response to the student mental health crisis which saw student waitlists of almost 100 students at the counseling center. Thompson further explained that the additional resources plus good leadership and stewardship has resulted in counseling center waitlists reduced to 10 students or less this year. He noted that the Health Center is dealing with the same cost pressures as other parts of the university, including rising employee and benefits costs, but they are able to manage these increased costs without requesting an increase in the student health fee this year. Thompson credited University Counseling Center Director Shelly Kerr and University Health Center Executive Director Deb Beck for their work and thanked the Tuition and Fee Advisory Board for helping to address these issues and assist students.

Housing fee proposal. Thompson provided an overview of the housing fee proposal, explaining that the rate structure follows a similar pattern to that of 2019-2020. He explained that within the [proposed 2020-21 academic year room and board rates](#), there are still some packages under \$10,000 per year, with the UO offering some of the most affordable housing options in the Pac-12 conference. Thompson shared that average rates are going up less than 4%. He noted that rates are being increased as a result of staffing cost increases—labor, salaries and benefits for professional staff and approximately 800 student employees—as well as increases in food commodity prices. He also explained that students impacted by the construction of Hamilton and Walton residence halls will receive a \$550 rate discount next year. Finally,

Thompson reminded the TFAB that the Residence Halls Association (student residence halls advisory group) will be consulted about the 2020-21 residence halls budget and proposed room and board rate increases. TFAB members discussed the proposals, including the variety of meal plans and student requests to be able to use more affordable meal plans in a wider range of locations on campus. Materials presented by Thompson are available online: the [proposed residence hall room and board rates](#) and the [proposed family housing rates for 2020-21](#).

Student forum debrief. Kevin Marbury invited the group to debrief the student forum on tuition and fees that took place on Tuesday, January 14th from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Some participants commented on the difficulty of discussing the concept of guaranteed tuition without any actual numbers as the concept is still in preliminary stages of consideration. TFAB discussed a broad range of issues that came up in the student forum table discussions including general tuition issues, concerns that guaranteed tuition could inappropriately disadvantage marginalized students, impacts on student advocacy around tuition increases, the increasing cost of books, questions about the strength of the guarantee, and the need for students to be educated about rising tuition costs.

Undergraduate education. Co-chair Jamie Moffitt, vice president for finance and administration/chief financial officer, presented [some conceptual models of how guaranteed tuition and floating tuition rates would compare for students taking 4 years, 5 years and 8 years to graduate](#). The charts presented illustrate the various rates that students would pay. Moffitt then provided the TFAB with actual data regarding the historical average annual tuition rate increases for resident and non-resident students over the last 10 years and the last 5 years. She shared how those average rates would translate into “step in” cohort rates that would provide the institution with the same long term projected recurring revenue streams. Finally, Moffitt provided the TFAB with two sensitivity analyses that showed various combinations of tuition increases under both the guaranteed tuition model and the floating tuition model, along with the tuition revenue that each scenario would generate.

TFAB members discussed ways to mitigate the risk of guaranteed tuition, requirements related to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), how the step in rates were calculated, impact on UO tuition rates compared to other schools in the AAU (Association of American Universities), and the importance of low step in rates to minimize financial barriers to higher education. The sample models presented by Moffitt are available [online](#).

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.