



**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
THREE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING**

**Friday, February 19, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Live Stream/WebEx: <http://wright.edu/bot-stream>**

**Minutes**

**Present:** D. Asarpota, M. Bridges, D. Fecher, S. Fitzpatrick, A. Goyal, M. Grunder, T. Gunlock, B. Langos, B. Montgomery, A. Platt, R. Peters, O. Sneary, V. Soin, B. Whiteside

**Guests:** S. Culley, S. Edwards, B. Foster, B. Kawosa, D. Leaman, L. Luehrmann, S. Mickey-Boggs, H. Rando, B. Rubin, G. Sample, T. Webb

**I. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL**

Trustee Gunlock called to order the February 19, 2021, Wright State University Board of Trustees three hundred and seventy-ninth meeting at 9:00 a.m. Trustee Gunlock welcomed all those in attendance and asked the secretary, Shari Mickey-Boggs to call the roll.

**II. PROOF OF NOTICE OF MEETING**

Trustee Gunlock stated that the meeting has been called by written notification; a quorum was present.

**Chair's Statement**

The Wright State University Board of Trustees is a public body subject to the Ohio Open Meetings Act. It operates on a fixed agenda available to those attending the meeting. Persons wishing to address the Board in its public session should submit a written request to the Board of Trustees' office 72 hours in advance of the meeting in order to be placed on the agenda. However, all persons address the

Board at the invitation of the Board and are subject to time limitations and other guidelines established to maintain the good order of the meeting.

### III. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT**

Trustee Gunlock read the Conflict of Interest Statement:

It is of utmost importance to ensure that all university decisions are free from any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Therefore, please be mindful of all obligations with which you have been charged as a Trustee of Wright State University, and take the steps you deem appropriate to perform your duties fairly and impartially.

### IV. **DISPOSITION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Trustee Gunlock asked for any additions, deletions or corrections to the December 11, 2020 meeting minutes. There being no discussion, Trustee Gunlock asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2020, meeting as submitted. Moved by Trustee Fecher; seconded by Trustee Bridges and unanimously passed by voice vote.

### >> ***RE-ORGANIZATION OF AGENDA FORMAT***

Trustee Gunlock moved to suspend the rules so that the Board of Trustees could discuss New Business. Per Robert's Rules of order, two-thirds of board members are needed for approval for the motion to carry. Trustee Gunlock stated that the purpose of this motion was to allow the trustees to discuss the employment and compensation of President Edwards. In addition, Trustee Gunlock will be announcing the formation of a nominating committee to concentrate on next year's leadership for the Board of Trustees. Trustee Fecher seconded the motion and was unanimously passed by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

### V. **NEW BUSINESS**

Trustee Gunlock announced the following new business:

1. Finance, Audit, Governance and Compliance Committee Meeting, March 19, 2021, 9:00 a.m., Live Stream
2. Board of Trustees' Committee Day, April 29, 2021, 8:30 am, Live Stream

3. Board of Trustees' Public and Executive Session, April 30, 2021, 9:00 am, Live Stream
4. Commencement, May 1, 2021, 10:00 am (Face-to-Face/Live Stream-TBD)
5. Nominating Committee
  - a. Appointing a special committee for nominating purposes as the board of trustees confirms officers for 2022. Trustee Bridges will chair the committee and Trustees Goyal and Soin will work on the committee. They have provided a list of questions, and they have divided the trustees into three groups. Trustees will be called in the next few weeks to discuss these questions. The answers provided will be held in the strictest confidence. At the conclusion of the committee, they will bring a slate of officers for board vote to the April 30, 2021 meeting. Trustee Gunlock will provide voting procedures to the board members in the next few weeks.
6. Financial Disclosure Forms- Reminder to board members that the Financial Disclosure forms are due May 17 2021.
7. Resolution Concerning the Employment and Compensation of Dr. Edwards.
  - a. Trustee Gunlock asked the secretary to read the resolution.

**President Susan L. Edwards, PhD Contract Extension  
Resolution 21-28**

WHEREAS, Susan L. Edwards, PhD, is under contract to serve administratively as the University's President through June 30, 2022; and

WHEREAS, upon her successful accomplishment of goals pre-determined by the Board, President Edwards is eligible for bonus compensation of up to 25% of her base salary; and

WHEREAS, President Edwards has previously informed the Board of her intention to respectfully decline the bonus, if offered for the current fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, President Edwards has asked the Board to consider, instead, offering all University employees who are not already contractually guaranteed an increase for fiscal year 2022 a compensation pool adjustment similar in amount to the increase promised to the bargaining unit faculty;

NOW THEREFORE, the following is adopted as the Resolution of the Wright State University Board of Trustees:

RESOLVED: The Board finds that President Edwards has met or exceeded, or is making exceptional progress towards meeting and exceeding, the goals established for her by the Board, and moreover, that President Edwards has demonstrated steadfast leadership during truly unprecedented times; and

RESOLVED: That the Board Chair is hereby authorized and directed to offer President Edwards a one-time bonus equal to 25% of her annual base compensation for the current fiscal year, and further authorized and directed to accept President Edwards' formal refusal of the bonus, in her discretion; and

RESOLVED: That President Edwards hereby is authorized and directed to investigate the feasibility of a fiscal year 2022 compensation pool adjustment for all University employees who are not already contractually guaranteed a compensation pool adjustment for fiscal year 2022. President Edwards will present her report and recommendation to the Board on this matter as part of the fiscal year 2022 budget presentation; and

RESOLVED: If the Board approves the said compensation pool adjustment, President Edwards' base compensation will be similarly adjusted in a manner and amount comparable to that of the non-bargaining unit employees; and

RESOLVED: That the Board Chair is hereby authorized and directed to extend President Edwards' administrative appointment as President through June 30, 2025, and to renew President Edwards' employment agreement through the same period, but otherwise on substantially similar terms and conditions as those reflected in the current agreement.

Trustee Gunlock asked for a motion to adopt the resolution; moved by Trustee Fecher, seconded by Trustee Montgomery.

Trustee Goyal praised Dr. Edwards for the amazing job she and her team have done over the past year. In the midst of a pandemic and at a time when Wright State University is facing many other challenges, she has developed relationships and brought transparency to the university. As a National Trustee he does not vote, however, he fully endorses this resolution to extend Dr. Edwards' contract to June of 2025. Trustee Grunder concurred with Trustee Goyal's comments and stated she has been a tremendous beacon of hope. National Trustee Peters stated that Wright State University is critically important to businesses/small businesses in the region as well as Wright Patterson Air Force Base. He believes that Dr. Edwards is the right person to lead this university forward and believes she is deserving of the contract extension. National Trustee Whiteside echoed the sentiment of her

fellow trustees. And as an alum, she expressed her full support and confidence in Dr. Edwards' ability to lead the university. Trustee Bridges also concurred with his fellow trustees, stating that Dr. Edwards, and her team, have done an amazing job under very difficult circumstances. As a family of Wright State alumnus, he looks forward to a bright future for Wright State University.

There being no further discussion, Trustee Gunlock asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was unanimously passed by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

Trustee Gunlock asked Mr. Thomas Webb, Director of Disability Services, to begin his presentation.

## **VI. PRESENTATION**

Mr. Webb thanked the board of trustees for the opportunity to highlight the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Mr. Webb shared a PowerPoint presentation (will be attached to the minutes) that shows the core services of ODS. The services include:

- Student Accommodations
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Test Proctoring Center
- Note Taking Services
- Technology Center
- Assistive Technology (two assistant technologists on staff)

ODS has five case managers that work one-on-one with the students to develop an extensive plan for what they might need. Looking at the impact of their disability and identifying barriers and how to mitigate those barriers. Mr. Webb stated that he has a team of eight that makes all of the core services happen. Several are case managers, but they also have specializations that they work on aside from their caseloads. One of the staff members focuses on workforce development, another on STEM (will be liaison with the new CHEH). His team has a combined 120 years of disability service experience.

Mr. Webb gave examples of their clients' disabilities: ADD/ADHD, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Health Impairments, Traumatic Brain Injury, Blindness & Low Vision, Deaf & Hard of Hearing and Mobility Impairment.

Mr. Webb introduced a testimonial from Colin Bramlage, Sophomore from Mason, Ohio. He is studying management information systems and expects to graduate in 2023. After graduation, his goal is to find a meaningful job and pursue a career as a database analyst. Some of his hobbies include reading, browsing the internet and watching films. Courses so far have been microeconomics and macroeconomics. Mr. Bramlage chose Wright State University because of the accessibility and services provided to students with disabilities. This is especially evident by the underground tunnel system. He is especially appreciative of disability services team. Several examples; he has a captionist who transcribes the course material during class and instructors that wear microphones when class is in session so that he may understand the material better – this also allows him to continue his education without interruption.

Mr. Webb reported that ODS currently has 806 registered students, 394 have more than one disability, 13% have a disability you can see and 87% have an invisible disability. Since 2006, ODS has increased their client base from about 400, to the current 806. Mr. Webb highlighted a pilot program, created by Heather Rando-Associate Director- Raiders on the Autism Spectrum Excelling (launched in 2012)—because of the program’s success it is now a standing program in ODS. This program focuses on self-advocacy, resiliency, forming friendships, use of system technologies and social skills. Of the 15-20 students enrolling each year, the retention rate is 84-88% from fall-to-fall. He further noted that ODS has garnered national recognition: Most Wheelchair Friendly University in the country (#3), Top 3 institutions of higher education placing student in the federal workforce recruitment program, American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity and 1<sup>st</sup> service dog park in the country. ODS has national collaborations – one pointed out was the collaboration with the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation Quality of Life Grant—allowing Wright State University to purchase three Obi’s and invention that allows a student to eat without assistance. Their most recent partnership with the Reeve Foundation, ODS submitted a proposal with the assistance of the WSU Foundation to get four adapted powered quad-bikes—have not been purchased yet; but are excited to bring these to campus so that our students can use them safely to use the trails around campus and the Miami Valley. Mr. Webb ended his presentation on a true point-of-pride...personal attendant station. Not only does it have all the supplies needed for the disabled student, there are also highly trained student workers to assist if needed. We have had this since 2019 and it has been a game changer for our students. This service is a Wright State University exclusive – no other university in the country has this available to their students. Currently working to have an endowed fund to keep this legacy going at the university.

Trustee Platt commended Mr. Webb and his team for all they do for diversity of all abilities. He stated that ODS is not just enhancing the lives of the 800, but the 10,000 students on campus. Trustee Bridges also praised the ODS team for their efforts and leadership.

Trustee Gunlock thanked Mr. Webb and asked Mr. Dhishant Asarpota for the student trustee report.

## **VII. STUDENT TRUSTEE'S REPORT**

Mr. Asarpota greeted the trustees and shared a PowerPoint presentation (will be attached to the minutes). He showcased Greek Life (over 300 members) and gave some facts:

- All Greek semester GPA at all time high – 3.31 (3.17 all university)
  - Sorority: 3.31 (3.20-university)
  - Fraternity: 3.307 (3.12-university)
  - Dean's list: 44%
  - Perfect 4.0: 20%

Mr. Asarpota reported that even during the pandemic, these fraternities/sororities (using safety precautions) continued their community outreach. He also reported that students were not letting the pandemic dampen their fun of welcoming the New Year of the OX. There was a WebEx demonstration to make mandu-Korean dumplings- and a panel discussion by Wright State Chinese international students and alumni. The New Year celebration ended with the Dayton Qipao Dance Troupe performing (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5OyhgYpcb4>).

Mr. Asarpota also reported on the campus pride event, iHeart WSU, was held Feb 8-12. Various events were held (social distancing and masking observed). Some of the events included a t-shirt giveaway, Build a Rowdy Bear, Trivia Night, etc.

Mr. Asarpota reported on how parts of the campus are tackling the pandemic. This is a semester long commitment and following is just a one-day snapshot:

- Nursing students administered approximately 8,000 shots in one day
- Medical students have been assisting Premier Health and local clinics deliver vaccinations (weekly/bi-weekly)

It's often said that Wright State University is the university/college of the Dayton community and this shows that our impact will have lasting effects for years by just helping the community vaccinate and move through the pandemic.

Trustee Fecher asked Mr. Asarpota how he personally would rate the mood of the student body. Mr. Asarpota stated that there are days where students feel empowered by the level of creativity they can translate to both local campus and community impact. However, there are other days where they are sitting on their laptop for eight hours doing course work and unable to see their friends/family. He also stated that this last year will shape the character of how the student looks at a problem and working to solve the problem. Trustee Gunlock asked Ms. Sneary her thoughts. She stated that the one thing you can say for Wright State University students – they are resilient. This isn't necessarily the way they want their college experience, but it's here and they are doing with it what they can and being creative along the way. She has a lot of respect for the work that the students have put in throughout this process.

Trustee Gunlock thanked Mr. Asarpota and asked for Dr. Laura Luehrmann, Faculty President, to give her remarks.

#### **VIII. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Luehrmann thanked the board members for including this reporting of Faculty Senate activities on a regular basis. Dr. Luehrmann highlighted an action that only came about because of the close collaboration of our leaders among the students, the staff, and the faculty, and that would be the grade accommodation for undergraduate students that the Faculty Senate approved by consensus last December. After speaking with SGA President Adrian Williams, it was clear that too many of our students were struggling with the demands of remote education, the uncertainties of the Covid pandemic, and other challenges. Faculty Senate listened to their concerns, pulled together a team of staff, students and faculty, and crafted an accommodation that attempts to reach out to our students who are academically struggling the most by completing a batch conversion of any failing grade (F/X) to a "U" grade that does not factor into the GPA.

The Faculty Senate meeting in January introduced a temporary suspension of our Commencement Participation policy so that we can work with the staff who coordinate commencement to consider some type of in person participation option for those students who graduated during Covid interruptions. If adopted by the Faculty Senate when they meet on Monday, this will remove any policy barriers that currently exist, so that, when the logistics are worked out, we may provide a face-to-face option for students who want to participate in a more traditional commencement event.



Dr. Luehrmann reported that the Faculty Senate will consider a resolution to make election day a University holiday to encourage volunteerism and engagement in our community. This initiative was first passed by the SGA, and also advocated for by the Racial Equity Task Force. This is another example of a collaborative effort that is being undertaken to promote the greater engagement of all within our WSU community.

Dr. Luehrmann discussed the recently announced retrenchment. She pointed out the one constant in the three recommendations. The dire need for all us to come together to work to mitigate the need to cut positions. All three recommendations highlighted the essential importance of this fact. While there may always be disagreement over important details, including future enrollment trends and optimal staffing, we do agree that we are here for two very clear purposes; to provide the best educational experience and meet the needs of the Miami Valley.

Trustee Grunder stated that he has had the opportunity to get to know Dr. Luehrmann and has observed her in action in the classroom. He feels she is an asset to the university. Trustee Platt concurred and stated he knows that Dr. Luehrmann cares deeply about the university. He did ask Dr. Luehrmann to be sure that she and her constituents also remember that Dr. Edwards is transparent, empathetic and also cares deeply about Wright State University and its students. Trustee Gunlock thanked Dr. Luehrmann for her report. He asked Trustee Bridges to begin his report of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

## **IX. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD**

- A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee
  - 1. Resolution on Emeritus
  - 2. SACM Resolution
  - 3. Resolution to Approve New College

Mr. Bridges reported that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee met on February 18 and brought forth an emeritus resolution. Mr. Bridges read the resolution.

**Emeritus Requests**  
**RESOLUTION 21-29**

WHEREAS, faculty members who have served ten or more years as fully-affiliated and full-time members at Wright State University will automatically be granted the emeritus title upon retirement and upon written request by the faculty member to the provost; and

WHEREAS, Guy G. Vandegrift, Associate Professor of Physics, Lake Campus, College of Science and Math and served the university from 2007 in a fully-affiliated and full-time status and has requested emeritus status; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the requests for emeritus status for the aforementioned faculty members, as submitted to this meeting be, and the same hereby are endorsed.

Trustee Gunlock informed the board that the resolution was coming from a committee and did not need a second. He asked if there was any discussion; there being none he asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was passed unanimously by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

Trustee Bridges read the next resolution for Tuition Waiver Recommendation Renewal.

**Tuition Waiver Recommendation Renewal for Students Enrolled at Wright State University Transferring from Institutions Supported by the Saudi Arabia Cultural Mission (SACM)**

**Resolution 21 - 30**

WHEREAS, 375.30.30 of Am. Sub. H.B. 119 of the 127th General Assembly requires any waiver of tuition for a particular student or any class of students not otherwise permitted by law at a state-assisted institution of higher education to be approved by the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education; and

WHEREAS, Directive 2009-011 signed by the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education on April 17, 2009, established procedures for institutions to follow when requesting to waive standard tuition rates; and

WHEREAS, 381.170 of Am. Sub. H.B. 49 of the 132nd General Assembly continues this authority of the Chancellor; and

WHEREAS, this resolution is contingent upon the approval of the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education; and

WHEREAS, Wright State University is requesting a tuition reduction of 25% of the out-of-state surcharge for students from institutions supported by the Saudi Arabia Cultural Mission (SACM) and those who are from Saudi Arabia but not financially sponsored by SACM at the time of admission; and

WHEREAS, this request is for a renewal of this tuition reduction which was approved by the Wright State University Board of Trustees on May 3, 2019 Resolution 19-69, and the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education on March 12, 2019, Directive 2019-004; and

WHEREAS, the current approved tuition waiver expires on June 30, 2021;

RESOLVED that the administration of Wright State University is authorized to renew a tuition reduction of 25% of the out-of-state surcharge for students from institutions supported by the Saudi Arabia Cultural Mission and those who are from Saudi Arabia but not financially sponsored by SACM at the time of admission;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the administration of Wright State University will submit a request to the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education to review and approve the tuition reduction renewal.

Trustee Gunlock informed the board that the resolution was coming from a committee and did not need a second. He asked if there was any discussion; there being none he asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was passed unanimously by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

Trustee Bridges read the next resolution for College of Health, Education, and Human Services.

### **College of Health, Education, and Human Services [CHEH]**

#### **RESOLUTION 21 - 31**

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the president and with due regard for the professional judgement of the faculty as expressed through their chosen representatives, has the authority to establish and prescribe the principal functions of major academic divisions, colleges, centers, departments, and professional schools within the university; and

WHEREAS, such units are established, altered, or abolished only on vote of the Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, the President, Provost, and Faculty have expressed support for a reorganization of existing units, programs, and personnel into an academic structure that promotes increased interdisciplinary interaction, research, and shared curriculum oversight between previously disparately organized faculty, students, staff, and programs; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a College of Health, Education, and Human Services [CHEH] is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the School of Professional Psychology, to become a unit of the CHEH, is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the College of Nursing and Health to become the School of Nursing, Kinesiology, and Health Sciences, to become as a unit of CHEH, is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the alternation of the current Department of Kinesiology and Health, to become the Department of Kinesiology, and to become a unit of the School of Nursing, Kinesiology, and Health Sciences, is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a School of Education and Leadership, to become a unit of CHEH, is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the current Department of Teacher Education, to become a unit of the School of Education and Leadership, is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the current Department of Leadership Studies in Education and Organizations, to become a unit of the School of Education and Leadership is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a School of Social Work and Human Services, to become a unit of CHEH, is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the Department of Social Work, to become a unit of the School of Social Work and Human Services is recommended; and

WHEREAS; the alteration of the Department of Human Services, to become a unit of the School of Social Work and Human Services is recommended; and

WHEREAS, the termination of the College of Education and Human Services is recommended; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the aforementioned academic unit creations, terminations, and alterations are hereby endorsed.

Trustee Gunlock informed the board that the resolution was coming from a committee and did not need a second. He asked if there was any discussion; there being none he asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was passed unanimously by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

Trustee Bridges concluded his report; Trustee Gunlock thanked him and asked Trustee Langos to begin his report on the Finance, Audit, Governance and Compliance Committee.

- B. Finance, Audit, Governance, and Compliance Committee
  - 1. Wright Tuition Guarantee Fees
  - 2. COVID-19 Expense Resolution
  - 3. Contracts and Expenditures \$500,000 and Above
  - 4. Resolution to Approve Contracts \$500K and Over

Trustee Langos reported that the Finance, Audit, Governance and Compliance Committee met on February 18, at 1:30 p.m. Trustee Langos stated that the committee reviewed the Wright State University financials. He stated that there have been many benefits from one-time events that have improved our overall results significantly. Trustee Langos reported that the results are also from the finance team's investments, benefits from the Cares Act and the continued discipline on expense reductions.

Trustee Langos read the resolution for the Academic Year 2021-2022 Undergraduate Tuition, Fee & Rate Increases.

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2021-2022 UNDERGRADUATE TUITION, FEE & RATE  
INCREASES**

**RESOLUTION 21 - 32**

WHEREAS, under Ohio Revised Code Section 3345.48 Wright State University established the Wright Guarantee Tuition Program beginning with Academic Year 2018-2019; and

WHEREAS, Revised Code Section 3345.48 states that tuition, fee and rate increases may be increased one time per subsequent cohort by the sum of the 36-month rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (calculated at 1.8%) plus the general inflationary increase that will be determined by the General Assembly as part of the State Biennium Budget process for Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023; and

WHEREAS, the one-time tuition rate increase for subsequent Cohort Group 4 needs to be approved by the Wright State University Board of Trustees effective Fall Semester 2021,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wright State University Board of Trustees delegates authority to the President of Wright State University to establish final tuition rates for subsequent Cohort Group 4 not to exceed the 36-month rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (currently at 1.8%) plus the general inflationary increase not to exceed the increase authorized by the General Assembly for the 2021-2022 fiscal year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees delegates authority to the President to set final Room Rates for 2021-2022 for subsequent Cohort Group 4 effective Fall Semester 2021 once final market data is gathered and analyzed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees delegates authority to the President to set final Meal Plan rates for 2021-2022 for subsequent Cohort Group 4 effective Fall Semester 2021 once final market data is gathered and analyzed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President or her designee will provide a final report to the Board of Trustees on 2021-2022 tuition and fee rates, room rates and meal plan rates at the June 2021 Budget Presentation.

Trustee Gunlock informed the board that the resolution was coming from a committee and did not need a second. He asked if there was any discussion; there being none he asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was passed unanimously by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

Trustee Langos read the COVID-19 Expenses resolution.

**COVID-19 Expenses  
RESOLUTION 21 - 33**

WHEREAS, in order for the university to conduct business on an on-going basis, and provide products and services in a timely manner, purchases must be made; and

WHEREAS, these expenditures may exceed \$500,000; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wright State University Board of Trustees authorizes the use of \$5,070,423 in Higher Education Relief Funds allocated to the University by the Department of Education for financial aid grants to students in accordance with Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Wright State University Board of Trustees authorizes the use of \$12,301,669 in Higher Education Relief Funds granted to the University by the Department of Education to defray expenses associate with coronavirus and in accordance with the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021.

Trustee Gunlock informed the board that the resolution was coming from a committee and did not need a second. He asked if there was any discussion; there being none he asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was passed unanimously by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

Trustee Langos read the resolution for Expenditures of \$500,000 and Above.

**Expenditures of \$500,000 and Above**

**RESOLUTION 21 - 34**

WHEREAS, in order for the university to conduct business on an on-going basis, and provide products and services in a timely manner, purchases must be made; and

WHEREAS, these expenditures may exceed \$500,000; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that authorization is granted for the accompanying contracts now before the Board of Trustees be, and hereby are approved.

Trustee Gunlock informed the board that the resolution was coming from a committee and did not need a second. He asked if there was any discussion; there being none he asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was passed unanimously by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

Trustee Gunlock thanked Trustee Langos for his report. He asked Dr. Susan Edwards, President, to give her report.

## **X. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

### **A. University Update**

Dr. Edwards reported that Provost Leaman was serving his last day as Interim Provost and has accepted a position as the Dean of the College of Science at Auburn University at Montgomery Alabama. He has served as Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics and most recently as the interim provost. Dr. Edwards thanked Dr. Leaman for all the work that he has done and for the support that he has given her throughout her tenure at Wright State University.

Dr. Edwards stated that it was announced that Dr. Oliver Evans will be welcomed by the campus, Tuesday, February 23, to serve in the role of interim provost.

### **B. Confirmation of Academic & Administrative Appointments and Changes**

Dr. Edwards offered the resolution for academic and administrative appointments and changes (as posted for review) to the Board of Trustees for Approval.



### ***Faculty New Hires***

Lindsay Kathleen Benedik, Pharm.D., has been appointed Assistant Professor, School of Medicine Admin, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective January 1, 2021.

Victor Eaton Middleton, Ph.D., has been appointed Instructor, Biomedical, Industrial, and Human Factors Engineering, College of Engineering and Computer Science, effective January 1, 2021.

Jeong Tae Ok, Ph.D., has been appointed Instructor, Lake Campus, effective January 1, 2021.

### ***Faculty Promotions***

Sydney M. Silverstein, Ph.D., has been appointed Assistant Professor, Population and Public Health Sciences, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 1, 2020.

### ***Faculty Separations***

Ji Chen Bihl, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 31, 2020.

Mark Edward Gebhart, M.D., Assistant Professor, Population and Public Health Sciences, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 31, 2020.

Sharon Gibson Heilmann, Ph.D., Professor, Leadership Studies in Education, College of Education and Human Services, effective December 6, 2020.

Melissa Holmes, M.S.N., Clinical Instructor, Nursing, College of Nursing and Health, effective December 31, 2020.

Kennon A. Miller, M.D., Assistant Professor, Pathology, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 31, 2020.

Guy Vandegrift, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Lake Campus, effective December 31, 2020.

Jinju Wang, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 31, 2020.

### ***Unclassified New Hires***

Mark Bateman has been appointed Lake Campus Tech Support , Lake Campus, effective January 4, 2021.

Steven Burke, M.S., has been appointed Research Associate, Biological Sciences, College of Science and Mathematics, effective January 4, 2021.

Nils Castillon has been appointed Service Desk Analyst, Computing and Telecommunications Services, effective January 5, 2021.

Michael Epley, M.A., has been appointed Academic Advisor, Lake Campus, effective December 7, 2020.

Jennifer Rose Geise, J.D., has been appointed Staff Counsel, Office of General Counsel, effective January 4, 2021.

Maryelizabeth Kelly Leeper, M.S., MPM, has been appointed Academic Records & Transfer Coordinator, Office of the Registrar, effective December 7, 2020.

Sarah Napier has been appointed Project Manager, National Center for Medical Readiness, effective December 7, 2020.

Adam Gregory Schwartz, MEd, has been appointed Academic Advisor, Student Academic Success Center, effective November 16, 2020.

Quatez Scott, M.A., has been appointed Intercultural Specialist Bolinga Center, Chief Diversity Office, effective January 4, 2021.

Chase Hunter Slone, B.A., has been appointed Interim Assistant Baseball Coach - Hitting, Intercollegiate Athletics, effective January 25, 2021.

Robert Slowik, M.S., has been appointed Certified Athletic Trainer, Intercollegiate Athletics, effective January 19, 2021.

Michael Carl Sumpter, B.A., has been appointed Program Coordinator, Partnership and Field Experience, College of Education and Human Services, effective December 7, 2020.

Kari Swygart, M.S., has been appointed Academic Advisor, Lake Campus, effective December 7, 2020.

### ***Unclassified Promotions***

Elizabeth Mary Axthelm, MBA, has been appointed Chief Audit Officer, Internal Audit, effective January 1, 2021.

Katelyn Marie Sibrel, A.A.S., has been appointed Assistant Director, Financial Aid, Business and Finance, effective January 1, 2021.

Devonna Christine Wenning, M.P.A., B.A., has been appointed Manager, Fiscal Services, Business and Finance, effective December 1, 2020.

Emily Jane Yantis-Houser, M.Ed., has been appointed Intercultural Specialist of the LGBTQA Center, Chief Diversity Office, effective January 1, 2021.

### ***Unclassified Separations***

Lucas Dominic Abromowitz, M.A., Assistant Director, Transfer Recruitment, Enrollment Management Division, effective December 11, 2020.

Paula J. Ali, B.S. Ed., Coordinator, Developmental Writing and Testing Services, Student Academic Success Center, effective November 02, 2020.

Linda Grace Allen, B.S., STEM School Project Coordinator, Dayton Regional STEM School, College of Education and Human Services, effective October 31, 2020.

Gregory Conrad Asman, Ed. S., Instructional Designer, Center for Teacher and Learning, effective November 6, 2020.

Joan Bernstien, M.B.A., Communications Manager, Student Academic Success Center, effective November 29, 2020.

Mike Castro, B.A., Research Assistant, Biological Sciences, College of Science and Mathematics, effective November 22, 2021.

Shuzhen Chen, M.D., Research Associate, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 31, 2020.

Chialung Peter Cheng, C.P.A., C.I.S.A., M.B.A., Chief Audit, Risk and Compliance Officer, University Audit and Consulting Services, effective November 30, 2020.

Brenda I. Dewberry, M.S., Program Coordinator, Grants, Development and Outreach, Student Affairs, effective December 1, 2020.

Robert Frederick Durdle, M.Ed., Chief Recruitment and Admissions Officer, Enrollment Management Division, effective October 31, 2020.

Adam C. Horseman, M.S., A.T., A.T.C., Assistant Athletics Director, Athletic Trainer,

Intercollegiate Athletics, effective November 13, 2020.

Cynthia Raeann Kaan, M.Ed., Admissions Communication & Data Specialist, Undergraduate Admissions, Enrollment Management Division, effective November 20, 2020.

David Malek, WSRI Research Psychologist, Wright State Research Institute, effective November 22, 2020.

Jacqueline S. Robinson, B.S., Business Operations Manager, Budget Planning and Resource Analysis, effective November 9, 2020.

Harshal Sawant, M.S., Research Assistant, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 30, 2020.

Christopher Suttle, Electrical Systems Design Engineer, Network and Desktop Services, Computing and Telecommunications Services effective November 17, 2020.

### ***Classified New Hires***

Catherine Rose Common has been appointed Account Clerk 3, Office of the Bursar, Business and Finance, effective January 4, 2021.

### ***Classified Separations***

Steven C. Boykin, Custodial Floor Care Tech, Physical Plant, effective January 6, 2021.

Dante Terrell Cook-Morris, Custodial Services Worker, Physical Plant, effective November 16, 2020.

Robert Andrew Cottrell, A.A.S., Police Officer, University Police Department, effective January 22, 2021.

Cortney Ann Darmon, B.A., Account Clerk 3, Office of the Bursar, Business and Finance, effective December 23, 2020.

Paula Esken, Administrative Specialist, Pediatrics, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 1, 2020.

Thomas O. Fleming, Casualty Prevention Worker, Physical Plant, effective December 28, 2020.

Jacklyn D. Geyer, Gift Processing Specialist, Advancement Services, effective December 31, 2020.

Robert A. Glasper, Custodial Services Worker, Physical Plant, effective November 16, 2020.

William A. Hartrum, Custodial Services Worker, Physical Plant, effective November 13, 2020.

Jonah M. Jones, Housing and Grounds Maintenance Worker, Physical Plant, Lake Campus, effective December 2, 2020.

Loren D. Rice, Painter, Physical Plant, effective December 31, 2020.

Teresa S. Rickey, Records Technician 2, Student Affairs and Admissions, Boonshoft School of Medicine, effective December 1, 2020.

Yalanda Winston, Custodial Services Worker, Physical Plant, effective December 21, 2020.

Scott A. Zoeller, Sign Maker, Physical Plant, Facilities Management and Services, effective December 7, 2020.

**Academic and Administrative Appointments, Changes, Retirement, Departmental Reporting, Resignations and Terminations**

**RESOLUTION 21 – 35**

RESOLVED that the academic and administrative appointments, changes, retirement, departmental reporting, resignations and terminations submitted to this meeting be, and the same hereby are approved.

Trustee Gunlock asked for a motion to adopt the resolution; moved by Trustee Fecher, seconded by Trustee Grunder. Trustee Gunlock asked each board member to review the names to confirm there was no conflict. There were no conflicts and Trustee Gunlock asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was passed by rollcall vote (7-0-1) – Trustee Bridges recused.

C. Report of Investments

Dr. Edwards reported, since the last Board meeting, investment reports for September and October 2020 have been received. These reports have been distributed to the trustees and will be filed with the official Board of Trustees' records.

D. Ratification of Contracts and Grants

Trustee Gunlock asked the secretary to read the resolution.

**Ratification of Contracts and Grants**

**RESOLUTION 21 – 36**

RESOLVED that the contracts and grants submitted to this meeting be, and the same hereby are ratified.

Trustee Gunlock asked for a motion to adopt the resolution; moved by Trustee Grunder, seconded by Trustee Fitzpatrick. Trustee Gunlock asked for any discussion; there being none he asked the secretary to call the roll. The resolution was unanimously passed by rollcall vote (8-0-01).

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Trustee Gunlock extended a thank you to outgoing Provost Leaman. The university has dealt with a variety of issues over the past year and has provided steady leadership for academic enterprise. The board wished him the best and professional success as Dr. Leaman begins his new duties in Alabama.

Trustee Gunlock asked Dr. Edwards to read the retrenchment recommendations in its entirety as some on the meeting may not have reviewed previously. He stated that after Dr. Edwards had finished, he would open the floor for questions from board members. Once the Q&A concluded he would allow public comments by the two individuals that have requested to address the board. He will ask for a motion and a second for the draft resolution so that there can be further discussion, if needed. After any discussion, a rollcall vote will be conducted.

## E. Retrenchment Recommendations

President Edwards read her retrenchment recommendations in their entirety.

### **Background**

In November 2020, Wright State University initiated the retrenchment process as outlined in Articles N17 and T17 of the collective bargaining agreement with AAUP-WSU. Within that agreement, retrenchment is defined as the termination of Bargaining Unit Faculty positions with continuing appointments and can be initiated as the result of a significant reduction in enrollment of a college, department, or program continuing over four or more academic semesters and expected to persist.

When Provost Leaman initially recommended retrenchment the University had already suffered enrollment declines over the preceding ten academic semesters, and enrollment decline has persisted going from 11,758 in Fall 2020 to 10,637 Spring of 2021. For comparison, it should be noted that the Spring enrollment last year was 12,298.

After making his recommendation to initiate the process. Provost Leaman then prepared a specific retrenchment plan, and concurrently, a Joint Committee of AAUP faculty and administrative representatives have similarly prepared a report recommending alternatives to retrenchment. I received their respective reports last week.

I trust all parties involved in this discussion now acknowledge Wright State University's enrollment has declined significantly over the past several years, and that the decline is in fact persisting. Not only did enrollment decline in Spring 2021 by 1,121 from the Fall of 2020, but Provost Leaman's detailed analysis indicates a very high probability of declining enrollment persisting through at least 2023. At that time the University's enrollment will likely be in the vicinity of 9,000 (excluding medical students).

I am certain there are some who disagree with the Provost's report, and I am keenly aware of the limitations of modeling and forecasting. Yet, it is difficult to imagine that our enrollment will suddenly break a 5-year pattern of decline given the current circumstances. Wright State finds itself in a highly competitive market fighting to recapture a declining base of incoming direct from high school students. No model exists that can comprehensively predict every data point or identify the specific future results from investments in marketing, enrollment, and retention initiatives. But I believe

Provost Leaman accounted for those factors by relying on not just one, but four reasonable methodologies. And that analysis is consistent with our real-world observations about enrollment trends.

Here, all four models agree: enrollment declines will persist for at least the next several years. I have seen no reasonable evidence, from any source, to support a contrary conclusion. Accordingly, the size of our academic workforce currently sits well in excess of that which is warranted by the needs of the institution. Unfortunately, other University initiatives over the past several years, such as the 2 previous voluntary retirement initiatives, have not sufficiently brought our overall FTE faculty positions numbers into proportion with declining enrollment.

### **Findings**

Provost Leaman documented enrollment has declined and will persist in decline until at least 2023. Using those conclusions to build an operational framework moving forward, the Provost concluded that the University has at least 113 excess faculty positions. I find his conclusions reasonable and persuasive, particularly in light of the multiple dimensions that affect the balance of faculty to enrollment. Workload, course releases, section sizes, and course offerings all influence the number of faculty in each program area. I suspect current practices within many of these areas if adopted, could increase the number of excess faculty positions currently identified by the Provost.

In preparing this recommendation, I reviewed both Provost Leaman's report and the report of the Joint Committee on Retrenchment. Several of the Joint Committee's high-level recommendations included:

- Maximizing University efforts around enrollment and retention
- Viewing retrenchment as a dynamic process interacting with and being offset by the results of enrollment and retention successes
- Developing incentive programs around voluntary retirement or early exit
- Reducing the need/use of adjunct faculty
- Prioritizing the filling of all open administrative positions through internal hires whenever possible
- Improving community public relations efforts, preventing negative headlines, and maximizing the perception of the institution within the community



The Joint Committee also submitted comments related to calculating faculty staffing and projecting enrollment. Their overall approach in the area of faculty headcount appears to be consistent with the modeling used by the Provost although the report provided no specific headcount recommendation. Regarding enrollment, data analyses suggest a weak linear relationship between fluctuations in employment levels and college enrollment. Said another way, unemployment alone is not a strong predictor of enrollment.

I very much appreciate the work of the Committee and endorse many of its recommendations. Some, which require action by the Board, are addressed below. Some do not, such as prioritizing internal hires and minimizing the use of adjunct faculty and will be further considered at the administrative level as we move forward. Others I cannot accept for reasons explained below.

### **Recommendations**

1. **I recommend the Wright State Board of Trustees affirm the elimination of 113 excess faculty positions and approve the formal retrenchment of up to 113 FTE faculty positions.** That number is on the lower side of the Provost's recommendations, but I believe it to be reasonable and appropriate with respect to correcting our disproportionate faculty size compared against current and expected enrollment. I am recommending an "up to" retrenchment number because there are multiple alternatives available that can achieve the elimination of the excess positions and then reducing the actual number of positions formally retrenched and the Board will see further recommendations addressing some of those other options. The Joint Committee has requested the University officially "pause" or "suspend" the retrenchment process in order to implement some of these types of measures. However, it must be acknowledged similar measures have been tried previously with very limited success and it should be noted that if enrollment circumstances significantly improve, the collective bargaining agreement provides a mechanism for Wright State to reduce the retrenchment list, and potentially even callback retrenched faculty. This is potentially a great tool given the retrenchment notice period is long, in some cases up to eighteen months. That affords the opportunity to scale the number of positions appropriately.

With the Board's approval of this recommendation, I will immediately engage the new Interim Provost to work with our Deans to finalize a list of 113 specific faculty positions identified to be eliminated/retrenched. Provost Leaman's recommendations were detailed to respective colleges and the

Interim Provost will use that as a guide as it is recognized the possibility that program-level nuances might influence, positively or negatively, the specific number of excess positions in a given area or a college. As such, some flexibility is necessary to further refine where, exactly, to make particular faculty retrenchment decisions. I will also ask the Provost to contemplate the specific process while staying within the framework of the CBA, which would guide the recall of retrenched positions in the event that situation occurs. I am confident the Interim Provost, working with the Deans and Chairs have the knowledge and experience they need to develop specific plans which will ensure Wright State's continued ability to deliver an affordable, high-quality public education to the Dayton region.

**2. I request the Board's support of an incentive program to be offered to those who are interested in voluntarily separating from the University.**

I recognize that type of program has been approved and authorized in the past, and that prior offerings were not widely successful in the faculty ranks. But such a program may be far more attractive to some today. We will work to structure an incentive plan in a manner that is beneficial to both the University and the employee. Given time is of the essence, the administration will provide the framework of a proposed plan at the March Finance, Audit, Governance, and Compliance Committee meeting and will then be prepared to immediately present the proposal to the AAUP-WSU, whose approval will need to be secured in time for formal action at the April 30 Board of Trustees meeting.

**3. I request the Board's authorization to expend up to \$1 million in the current academic year for enrollment and retention efforts.**

The Board has previously supported our efforts to stabilize and bolster enrollment and retention. Building upon that support, I am requesting an additional investment be made in key areas that could potentially offset the number of faculty positions impacted by retrenchment. If the Board authorizes the additional expenditure, I will consult with Faculty Senate on ways faculty can engage to the greatest effect. Last year the University supported Faculty Senate initiated efforts around specific faculty-led recruitment and retention efforts and this additional investment can build off of that foundation.

Finally, and in many ways most importantly given the subject at hand, I cannot more heavily endorse or emphasize the Joint Committee's recommendation for mutually positive and collaborative efforts between the University administration, the bargaining unit faculty, and other members of the University community, to pre-empt further negative public sentiment for

the University. Given what this University has endured in the past, I am not naive to believe that everyone will share the same perspectives on our issues and solutions, but I do believe in the power of positivity.

Wright State is moving forward and will be an institution where student success is at its heart. We were created to ensure the students of our region have access to a high-quality, affordable education that propels them ahead in life and we should be a place where faculty and staff can find enjoyable, fulfilling employment and engagement. We must embrace a collegial, constructive way to address differences within the campus community all the while working together to elevate the University to new heights. The Dayton Region needs a Wright State that they are proud of, and one that ensures the surrounding communities thrive. I acknowledge that change is sometimes painful, but we will succeed by working together.

President Edwards stated that she wished she was not bringing this recommendation for the elimination of faculty positions. In looking back over the past six years of Wright State University history, there are key events that occurred, which if we could go back, we would change. However, that is not a possibility. President Edwards would prefer to be here discussing the Wright State University of the future, discussing details around the plans to re-establish ourselves as this region's university. Discussing the clear vision of being a student-centric institution, creating opportunities for our students to bring classroom learning to an experiential, real world focus through internships, co-ops, research and volunteering opportunities. Bragging on the successes of our students, faculty and staff, as well as our alumni who are out there everyday making a difference and the exceptional work that everyone at Wright State has done to ensure that we are able to support and educate our students in circumstances, that seemed impossible, and yet we are here today.

Dr. Edwards stated that eliminating any position is not pleasant, but we are restructuring this university to successfully serve a smaller student population and it is necessary to align our teaching workforce to match our student population. She thanked the many business and community leaders that reached out in the last couple of days with support and also to share in our vision of the Wright State future. And to the regional community, she stated that Wright State is your university and we will ensure that our educational mission is upheld. We will continue to provide the region with an exceptionally affordable high-quality, accessible, post-secondary education. We are committed to work with each of our students to meet them where they are and to support and guide them to success.

Trustee Gunlock thanked Dr. Edwards for her remarks and asked for any questions from the board members.

Trustee Gunlock stated that retrenchment is a result of a decline in enrollment from 17,000 students to a projection of approximately 9,000 students. Our rate of decline has to slow considerably versus what we're doing. How much confidence do you have in Wright State leveling out by the time we reach 9,000 students as opposed to dropping further?

Dr. Edwards responded that we have a large number of initiatives that are around recruitment and retention that have engaged very proactive individuals on campus. She believes that there is a momentum that we are there to turn those numbers around. She further stated that it is critically important for us to avoid any further negative publicity. Another reason she was so happy to see that the joint committee had endorsed our recommendations for moving forward with a positive approach.

One area that Dr. Edwards feels we can lead and expand upon is students with disabilities. We have the right people at the table and we have engaged with our community partners to assist us in working with our local K-12 schools as well. As for our community colleges, we have initiated a Stop-out program, where we are re-engaging with student who have stopped out for some reason -life gets in the way of education. We have number of these students that are within 12-hours of graduation and we are reconnecting with those students by phone to say, "We wish you to come back." We want to incentivize their return and complete the degree, because we know that students that do not complete their degrees end up with a large amount of debt and diminished earning power.

Trustee Bridges asked Dr. Edwards to provide the same information with regard to Wright State University's relationship with Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

Dr. Edwards stated that Wright State University was created to ensure that the workforce needs of this region were upheld. Wright Patterson Air Force Base is the largest employer in the state of Ohio and the Dayton region relies heavily on WPAFB. It is our job to be sure we are providing an educated workforce. We have been cementing our relationship WPAFB and working with the many constituents. We need to ensure that we hear them and we understand what they need – not only for today, but the future. We meet with our WPAFB contacts so they can provide us feedback as to the qualifications and skill sets they are needing.

Trustee Fecher thanked President Edwards, Provost Leaman and the many people that worked on these recommendations. He appreciated that there were different models that led to similar conclusions. He stated that it is imperative that, if the Board takes this action today, we do everything in our power to make sure it is the first and last time the university has to face this decision. Trustee Fecher asked if the projected number of 9,000 students in 2023 is actually 8,000 students, why would we choose the lowest retrenchment number (113) and not choose the higher number and work diligently to be as low as possible.

Dr. Edwards stated that she reviewed the recommendations many times and spoke with the Provost. He indicated that there were two primary reasons: 1) a larger number was supported by the raw data-could be and should be adjusted taking into account the need to grow in some areas. One area for example is Nursing. This region is constantly calling out to us to improve. 2) The other factor is that raw data is not everything. It is important that we retain the integrity of our academic delivery system. We need a core number of faculty that are in place to appropriately deliver academic instruction. Finally, as president, Dr. Edwards stated it is her role, in serving the institution, to find a balance between correcting the excesses of the past and having a positive/optimistic outlook for the future. She is willing to take the risk on being optimistic.

Trustee Fitzpatrick stated with the target student number at 9,000-this being approximately a 40% decline; he asked what percentage does the 113 positions represent for the current faculty?

Dr. Edwards stated that she didn't have the detail at her fingertips. Trustee Fitzpatrick asked for a rough number. She stated that it was in the Provost's report and might be around 20 percent, but would get him the number.

Trustee Fitzpatrick asked about the difference in a 40% reduction in student population, but only a 20% in faculty reduction?

Dr. Edwards reported that another factor is in the past two-years we have also had a 20% reduction in faculty positions due to attrition.

Trustee Platt stated while looking at the joint committee report, and seeing their suggestions, what measures were used in the approach to submitting recommendation numbers to Dr. Edwards.

Dr. Edwards stated that she couldn't speak to whether the joint committee ran their own analysis; she did not receive that information with their submission.

Trustee Platt asked if the joint committee could have recommended no retrenchment at all?

Dr. Edwards stated there was no limitation on what the joint committee could/could not recommend.

Trustee Montgomery asked Dr. Edwards to comment on the difference of cut recommendations in each college, but no cuts in the College of Nursing and Health.

Dr. Edwards stated that there is a huge regional demand for nurses and the enrollment losses that the CONH has seen is attributed to what is being offered vs lack of demand. Also, with the approval of the new health college, we want to look at what we are offering and garner input from our regional partners (Mercy and Premier in particular). The provost has used a number of qualitative and quantitative reasoning and looking at his suggestions -he is the chief academic officer- and understands the limitation and opportunities that our system has to offer.

Trustee Gunlock thanked President Edwards. Trustee Gunlock stated that there were two individuals that have asked to speak to the members of the board. As the Board of Trustees bylaws state, they would have no more than 5-minutes each. The secretary to the board, Ms. Mickey-Boggs, will monitor the time.

Trustee Gunlock asked Mr. Rubin for his remarks.

## **XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATION**

A. Mr. Bobby Rubin, Senior Lecturer, English

Mr. Rubin indicated that his connection to Wright State University is deep and complex. He is an alumnus– a proud graduate of the MA program in English, faculty 30 years of teaching at Wright State, parent of an alumna and parent of a current student. He stated that he has spent well over one-half of his life directly affiliated with Wright State University in some way. He is currently serving as the contract administration officer for AAUP. Mr. Rubin asked the board members to carefully consider the scope and ramifications of retrenchment. He stated that something that was not addressed in the reports or president's recommendations:

1. The reports are using 2014 through 2017 as the baseline for faculty-student ratios. The audited statement of the university, in 2015-16 and 2016-17, we ran approximately \$40 million deficits. In the past academic year, 2019-20, when it is argued that we had too many faculty, we ended with a surplus of \$2 million.

2. We have also received news that the university is now projecting a \$7.1 million surplus, instead of a \$32 million deficit.

Instead of the negative headlines of faculty retrenchment, choose to ride this wave of positive news and add that we do not need to retrench faculty after all. Mr. Rubin asked the board to consider the danger in cutting too much, or of even cutting at all—sighting negative headlines. There is a danger in Wright State losing its family appeal, losing its identity as a place where students get personal attention from dedicated, caring faculty and staff – not because the faculty and staff who survive the cuts don't want to continue to offer our students this coveted family atmosphere, but rather, because there are no longer enough of us left to do so.

Trustee Gunlock asked the board members if there were any questions. Trustee Fecher thanked Mr. Rubin and assured him that the board of trustees take this topic very seriously. He stated that, from his perspective, one of the challenges that this topic raises is, under the contract terms it takes on average an 18-month notice period before the actual impact of any action like this can occur. He believes that it is every board member's hope that the actual number of those retrenched will be well below the 113 being recommended. Trustee Fecher stated that in his point-of-view, if this action was delayed and enrollment declines haven't been stemmed, it takes 18-months from whenever the action takes place before the impact can happen.

Trustee Gunlock thanked Mr. Rubin for sharing his thoughts today and asked Mrs. Foster for her remarks.

- B. Mrs. Brandy Foster, Senior Lecturer-CECS, Alumna, and Wright State Parent

Mrs. Foster thanked the board of trustees and President Edwards for the opportunity to share her perspective on retrenchment as a faculty member. She hoped that the trustees would find her perspective valuable as it is informed by all the stakeholder roles she has had at Wright State University (undergraduate, graduate student, intern, teaching assistant, fellow, staff, faculty, researcher, executive director and parent of both an alum and current student). Being a senior lecturer in computer science and engineering, but her degrees are in English Literature. This gives her the opportunity to boast about two colleges (COLA and CECS). Her successful career is just one example of what is possible when people work in a supportive environment where they are valued. Everybody wins. Her faculty

and colleagues have collectively made Wright State a great institution and a valued community partner. She stated faculty joy and morale are diminishing – the university suffers. Losing colleagues to other institutions; taking their grants, papers for publication and prizes/awards they will win add to the prestige of their new university-not WSU. Her concern is a mass exodus of talented faculty. She feels it's not too late to restore our unity and protect Wright State University's core mission; it will not be an easy path and it will require hard choices and the status quo is unsustainable. However, instead of retrenchment we need to draw on our scrappy and innovative spirit that has always defined Wright State. With the announcement of the university surplus and the initiative for enrollment and retention – shouldn't we see if that works? She asked the board of trustees to delay implementing retrenchment until all options that are on the table are exhausted.

Trustee Gunlock thanked Mrs. Foster for her comments today.

## **XII. REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

### **A. Written Reports – WSU Board of Trustees, February 19, 2021**

Trustee Gunlock stated that the Advancement, Communications, Foundation and Marketing written reports as presented to this meeting be, and the same hereby are accepted. The reports are contained in the appendix.

### **B. Chair Remarks**

Trustee Gunlock reiterated that we all wish we were not here today discussing the elimination of excess faculty positions; as a result of significantly reduced enrollment. Hard measurable documents of where we've been, where we are, and where we are headed. The reality, of what people choose to believe or want to say, is that Wright State University needs to resize itself to serve a smaller student body. Adjustments and repositioning the size of an organization is a fundamentally important and proven business practice. Trustee Gunlock emphasized two of his comments:

1. Despite what some continue to say, Wright State University is a business, though not a publicly traded corporation whose goal is to maximize shareholder wealth. We are a not-for-profit organization



and the product we offer is education. Therefore, it is our fiduciary responsibility to ensure that Wright State is a financially healthy organization, so that it may focus on its mission.

2. As a business, we have customers – those customers are students and their families. And they should be treated as customers, because our business sits on a highly competitive market and our customers have multiple options. Our student customers are continually bombarded by marketing plans from other 4-year degree granting institutions and all claiming to be the best option. On top of that there are certificate programs, two-year degrees, online degrees or no degree options knocking on their door. Our students honor us when they make the voluntary decision to come here to learn. Wright State University has been its own worst enemy in the last few years. The way internal constituency groups have argued with each other and made claims against each other has given rise to an otherwise preventable loss to our customer base. So, we can continue pointing fingers and making claims. We respect their right to do so, however, the board and administration are moving ahead, changing the discussion topic and focusing not on past grievances, but on the Wright State University present, the future and details around reestablishing ourselves as the region's public university. In that plan, we will be a smaller student body. This is not a revelation, nor is it a guess; data and trends are irrefutable. Starting several years ago, the university began purposefully resizing its operations. That resizing has included approximately 700 administrative positions being eliminated, purposely going unfilled. In the academic area the university has offered several voluntary retirement incentive plans—met with very limited interest. Last year the administration reached out to the union to hold dialogue; the union declined those efforts and recommended the university follow the collective bargaining if the university wanted to make changes. We sit here now as a board and are receiving those recommendations on retrenchment. The retrenchment recommendations we're being asked to consider outline immediate, mutually agreed upon collective bargaining agreement with the union. The proposed retrenchment plan was developed as a result of our significant reduction in enrollment; which has continued for several years and by all reasonable analysis is expected to persist. Chair noted he is not sure why the union president continues to make public statements attempting to tie this retrenchment to being a budget issue. The fact is this has nothing to do with the budget; we've done an incredible job of managing the budget and restoring a portion of our reserves. This has everything

to do with aligning our resources. The CBA language is clear that there can be other reasons, other than the budget. We sit here with a decision to make. In echoing the president's comments, the provost took a very complicated problem and used the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to form a conclusion as chief academic officer. President Edwards has accepted the Provost's decision. Please remember that the process is built with some flexibility and the impacted faculty members are afforded up to 18 months notice. If actual enrollment and colleges turn out to be materially better and protected, adjustments are going to be made along the way. Some feel the numbers should be larger, I'm confident that the president and provost have taken into account, as they have said, the need to grow in certain key areas that are critical to our mission. Chair further noted that he is not entirely optimistic the supplementing action of another voluntary incentive plan will have any material effect. But, believes it's the right thing to do. Having said that, also believes that making further investment in our current enrollment and retention efforts is critical. Finally, Chair is personally supportive of the recommendation that is being presented today.

Trustee Gunlock asked the secretary to read the resolution.

### **XIII. RESOLUTION CONCERNING RETRENCHMENT**

In recognition that the University has experienced a significant reduction in its student enrollment, which has continued for years and is expected to persist, the President requests authority to "retrench" (reduce the number of positions of) bargaining unit faculty in accordance with the agreed procedures of the University/AAUP-WSU collective bargaining agreement.

#### **Resolution of the Board of Trustees to Retrench Bargaining Unit Faculty**

#### **Resolution 21 - 37**

**WHEREAS**, the University's collective bargaining agreement with the AAUP-WSU authorizes the elimination of bargaining unit faculty positions as the result of a significant reduction in enrollment which has continued over at least four semesters (excluding summers) and is expected to persist; and

**WHEREAS**, the Provost and the President agree that there has been a significant reduction in the University's enrollment which has continued for well over four semesters, falling from a high near 17,000 in 2017, to approximately 12,000 in the current term, and further agree that multiple reasonable analyses all predict with high likelihood that the reduced enrollment will likely persist if not worsen at least through in 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the Provost and President agree that over the same period our enrollment has declined significantly, full-time faculty size at the University has not kept pace with reduced enrollment; and

**WHEREAS**, the University's previous alternative attempts and initiatives to reduce the size of its bargaining unit faculty through attrition and other voluntary programs have not produced sufficient results;

**THEREFORE**, the following is hereby adopted as the Resolution of the Wright State University Board of Trustees:

**RESOLVED:**

First: The Board finds that the University has experienced a significant reduction in enrollment, which has continued over more than four academic semesters (not counting summer), and which is expected to persist, and thus that invocation of retrenchment per Articles T17 and N17 of the AAUP-WSU CBA is warranted;

Second: The University is authorized to eliminate up to 113 bargaining unit faculty positions through retrenchment. The President may reduce, but not increase, the size of this retrenchment if she determines, in her discretion, that real-world enrollment is or likely will be significantly better than current forecasts indicate or that alternatives to reduce faculty positions succeed to avoid retrenchment of some faculty positions.

Third: The President shall have full discretion to allocate bargaining unit faculty position eliminations across the various academic units. The President shall consult with the deans and chairs regarding proposed eliminations in their respective academic units.

Fourth: The President or her delegates are directed to implement this retrenchment in accordance with the applicable procedures delineated in the University/AAUP-WSU collective bargaining agreement, including its recall provisions.

Fifth: The President is authorized and directed to investigate the feasibility of a severance or incentive package for bargaining unit faculty who volunteer for retrenchment. The President shall report on the feasibility and advisability of such a program at the Board's next Finance, Audit, Governance, and Compliance Committee meeting.

Sixth: In addition to previously authorized expenditures, the President is hereby authorized to expend up to One Million (\$1,000,000.00) Dollars, in the current fiscal year, for enrollment and retention initiatives. The President shall consult with the Faculty Senate before expending the funds authorized by this Resolution.

Seventh: The President, or her delegate, is hereby authorized and directed to take and perform all lawful actions she reasonably determines to be necessary, proper, and desirable to effectuate the Board's directives herein.

Trustee Gunlock asked for a motion to adopt the resolution; moved by Trustee Grunder and seconded by Trustee Platt. Trustee Gunlock asked for any discussion; there being none the resolution was unanimously passed by rollcall vote (8-0-0).

#### **XIV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Trustee Gunlock asked for any unfinished business for the board of trustees. Trustee Grunder extended a welcome to the newest National Trustees: Brittney Whiteside and Ricky Peters. He thanked them for joining the board of trustees and stated that their advice and counsel will be greatly appreciated in the coming years.

#### **XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Executive Session was not called.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Gunlock, hearing no further business for the board, moved to adjourn and was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,  
Fran Keeley

**Approved by BOT on 4/30/2021**