

Union Meeting 12-9-14

Present for the meeting was Marshall Guthrie (SEP) who is the “staff representative” to the new governing board to answer questions about the board from the members of WOU 082.

Marshall stated that the new governing board members are busy getting to “know” WOU and its concerns better so that when they go “live” in July as a functioning board they will know the campus they are making decisions about.

Marshall is encouraged by the diversity of the board members, and thinks there will be an openness to all viewpoints based on board member’s experiences with their own education or the education of a group of people they care about, rather than perhaps a board made up completely of business people with little ties to the university and its systems.

Board members are replaced on a rotational basis, with service on the board being 2 years to 4 years.

How board members will be selected in the future Marshall is not clear on.

The staff representative to the board does not have a vote.

Any discussion of wages/compensation/working conditions done by the board will be in private without the staff representative’s presence since it would be a “conflict of interest.”

President Weiss retires June 30, 2015. Board begins its official work July 1, 2015.

Discussion of shared services: Marshall let us know that the bigger schools are rejecting the previous funding model of sharing income/services with the smaller schools even though they were supposed to continue funding when the new governing boards were approved. Marshall doesn’t see how WOU could change this, but Pres. Weiss is still lobbying for money that was promised to the smaller schools in the initial understanding of OUS new funding model.

The governing board will be meeting monthly starting in January to get things ready to begin governing by the July 1 start deadline.

“Outcome” based state funding is being looked at. Rather than funding from the state based on how many students have enrolled, funding will be based on how many students graduate from the university. The mechanism of how this would work is being discussed. No clear picture as of yet.

The governing board will make public their email addresses. Marshall encouraged the union to engage in email discussions with the various board members, and to make it a point to meet the board in person. The next two meetings of the board at WOU are Jan. 28 and Feb. 25, pending final confirmation. It would be a good idea for the union to ask to meet with the board before or after their meeting.

Marshall advises us to be careful when talking about contract/funding/wages to not paint with a broad brush. Many non-classified staff members are also not making a lot of money or have raises every year. There is resentment on the part of some non-classified staff of being “lumped in” by the union with various administrators that make much more.

Marshall was unaware that 40% of classified staff at WOU are “topped out” and don’t receive any increases in wages nor was he aware of the current issues of the classified staff at WOU.

Marshall was also unaware of the contractual issues between GTF of U of O/U of O administration, resulting in a current strike. Marshall was unaware of the U of O Senate Faculty concerns regarding their representation on campus with the new wording in their new governing board by laws that states the new boards decisions will supersede any existing authority/ decisions by the Faculty.

Marshall seemed to think what went on at the bigger schools was out of WOU's influence, so he didn't see the need to look at a broader picture of higher ed in the state, was concerned only with WOU's governing board process as it is are being worked out. Trusted that because WOU's board was "local" and had WOU alumni on it, that things would be decided with all interested parties in mind for our benefit.

Melissa asked if Marshall would be willing to give her a "heads up" when issues that affect the union and its members come up at board meetings. Marshal would be willing but thought that he would be "excused" from the room before those kind of discussions were held.

Melissa asked for us to think about a date to meet with Paul Evans in the near future and get back to her. Marshal would be included in the invitation to the meeting with Paul.