

November 5, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to share this summary of discussion topics, institutional accomplishments, and key division updates from our Fall 2019 Board of Trustees meetings October 18-19, 2019. Some of these topics have been shared in previous communications and many will be covered at our Fall All Employees Meeting later this week.

Special thanks to our colleagues, Dr. Lucy Biederman, Dr. Barry Devine, Dr. Salil Khetani, Dr. Marc O'Reilly and Mr. Chris Wimer, for hosting Trustees in your classes. Their feedback about their experience is always positive and I continue to hear comments that "returning to class" provides a fresh perspective about the level of teaching excellence that occurs on our campus on a daily basis.

We were pleased to welcome new Trustees Dale Chorba, '85, and Paul Stallings, '79, back to campus for their Trustee Orientation and to participate in their first official Board meeting. New Trustee Dr. Karen Kovalow-St. John, '79, will complete the process in February.

Ms. Hannah Petitti, Student Senate President, gave her report to the Board. It was excellent. Based on Hannah's report, there was good discussion about the need for more food safety, the opportunity to make our campus more environmentally sustainable, and the support for creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus community.

The Faculty Representatives to the Board of Trustees gave their report to the Board. Chair Kathy Geier expressed her appreciation for the strong engagement of Dr. Emily Isaacson and Dr. Jena Suffel (Academic Affairs), Dr. Robin Heaton and Dr. Steven Velasquez (Enrollment Management), and Dr. Michele Castleman and Dr. Brian Haley (Student Affairs). Most of this discussion centered on the FARBOT's report on low faculty morale, campus communication, institutional governance, and long-term sustainability of faculty staffing.

Many of the Trustees stayed to enjoy Homecoming festivities following the Board meeting. Those included a wonderful dedication of the Denise and Steve Brancheau Exercise Science Lab, an inspiring Science Celebration and reunion, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Center for Water Quality Research, the annual "H" Association Athletic Hall of Fame induction ceremony, and a great win for the Student Prince football team, complete with yet another spectacular halftime show by the Marching Band.

One year ago in this space, I wrote about the hard work that we must accomplish as colleagues together as we evaluate and strengthen our core academic and co-curricular programs. If anything, our work is even more critical now as we both reflect on some great institutional accomplishments and look forward to our shared task of strengthening our **Core Student Mission** of Education Excellence, Full Engagement, Total Student Success, Four-Year Graduation, and Preferred Placement.

#### Institutional Accomplishments

- Our four-year graduation rate in May was 51.8% and our second-year retention rate in September was 71.7%.
- Our full-time undergraduate enrollment this term is 99.6% on budget.
- Our preliminary FY2020 Operating Budget deficit in June was -\$1,814,000 and our revised deficit recommendation for this year is -\$255,000.
- We have successfully launched the new BSN Program, along with a RN-BSN Completion Pathway.
- We have successfully launched the new Video Game Production Major. The new lab (also our eSports Gaming Club Room) inside Krieg Hall is nearly complete.
- We have finished the new Exercise Science Lab inside Saurwein Health & Wellness Center.
- We are progressing in the development of a new Integrated Studies General Education Program led by the Faculty.
- We are in the process of evaluating and improving the HYPE Career Ready® Program by integrating student career development, work study, internships, externships and post-graduate placement under one roof in Student Affairs.
- Our transformative Financial Capitalization Plan implementation is full steam ahead, and we expect the construction of the new Main Street Town Homes and the restoration/renovation of France Hall to begin soon.

- We successfully hosted 500 dinner guests for The Patricia Adams Series 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration featuring former First Lady Laura Bush and her daughter, Barbara Pierce Bush, on October 2, 2019.
- We are ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in Ohio for student 10-years placement rates ([Zippia](#)), 8<sup>th</sup> in the Midwest for student upward mobility (U.S. News), 12<sup>th</sup> in the Midwest for student value (U.S. News), and 18<sup>th</sup> in the Midwest for overall institutional ranking (U.S. News).

### Key Discussion Updates

Within **Administration and Business Affairs**, VP Hoa Nguyen reports that the Finance & Facilities Committee approved the FY 2019-20 Operating Budget with an estimated cash deficit of -\$255,000. We appreciate the collective work to eliminate nearly \$1.6 million through the Operating Budget Strategic Prioritization Process, admirably led by Hoa and AVP Joel Wilkins. We are committed to delivering balanced and then surplus budgets before the USDA long-term debt returns to our Operating Budget in FY 2023. Additionally, the committee approved tuition and fees for FY 2020-21. Hoa also reports that the University's audit is clean for FY 2018-19. The committee reviewed the progress of the USDA Direct Loan and construction projects and continued a discussion of current challenges facing the higher education industry.

In **Student Affairs**, Dean Chris Abrams provided an update on the search for a new Director of Multicultural Student Affairs. There are a number of quality candidates, and the goal is to have the new director in place in the spring semester. The Student Affairs Committee discussed the progress and future of Ubuntu House, which is once again housing underrepresented students with some programming. In response to a concern that Greek students don't have the same understanding of the importance of Greek Life on campus as their predecessors did, the committee talked about the purpose of Greek Life and ways to enhance this understanding with greater education. Chris reports that Student Affairs will look for ways to integrate Board members in HYPE Career Ready®. He continues to collaborate with Provost Beth Schwartz and others to make HYPE more effective. Per the committee's request, Chris and his team will explore ways to implement recycling on campus.

In the **University Advancement & Marketing** Committee, VP Phil Ness and the Trustees discussed progress toward revisions to the Fellows Organizations. The Alumni Council and President Chad Breeden are leading this important process. The committee also discussed the Academic Comprehensive Campaign for Excellence and ideas about its future. Phil announced a Trustee match of \$300,000 for new gifts to The Heidelberg Fund and for gifts from previous donors who increase the amount of their giving this year. UAM welcomed Kelly Lavelle as the new Director of The Heidelberg Fund. In addition to raising funds toward a Heidelberg Fund goal of \$1 million for FY 2020, Kelly will focus on generating more alumni interest and participation in The Heidelberg Fund. Going forward, UAM will refocus on raising the needed funds for the Student & Community Welcome Center. We will be launching the formal campus-wide process of developing our new 5-Year Strategic Action Plan later this year.

The search is underway to hire a strong executive to lead the **Enrollment Management** team and fill other staffing vacancies, including two admission counselors and an associate director of Financial Aid. The Marketing & Communication Office will move from UAM to Enrollment Management when a new VP is hired. The decision is about making the VP for Enrollment Management & Marketing position more attractive to outside candidates and more strategically integrated going forward. Director of Admission Tom Alexander led a discussion on the success of the new admission office structure, focusing on reassigning team duties by academic interest toward the overall goal of building sustainable student enrollment and profitably. The committee heard a report about the implementation of the Common Application and its positive impact on the admission applicant pool. Tom also reported that Enrollment Management is exploring seamless pathways for transfer students to remove the confusion surrounding timeline to degree and discussed the financial aid awarding and leveraging strategy for the upcoming year.

The **Governance** Committee continued a review and discussion of prospective trustees. Retired Trustee and former Board Chair Sondra Libman was nominated for Trustee Emerita status. The committee conducted a review and approved the revised Heidelberg University Travel and Driver Eligibility Policy and discussed the Department of Education revised Title IX regulations.

Chief **Human Resources** Officer and Title IX Coordinator Margaret Rudolph has led the Health Care Consulting "Request For Proposal" review process with a campus committee and Trustee involvement. Going forward, Margaret will be a tri-leader of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and the Administration representative on the

Heidelberg Definition of Shared Governance group. She will also co-lead the Heidelberg Customer Service Delivery Plan team when that gets formed later this year. All of these key strategic initiatives will contribute significantly to our overall efforts to improve Heidelberg's campus culture.

The **Academic Affairs** Committee focused on the Academic Affairs Strategic Program Prioritization process and the development of the new Integrated Studies Model to improve our General Education Program. Provost Beth Schwartz is spearheading both of these important initiatives. The committee also reviewed the programs and resources provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence and the Owen Center for Academic & Career Support, approved sabbatical proposals for Dr. Courtney DeMayo Pugno and Dr. Ryan Musgrave for next year, and discussed Faculty Manual updates.

I appreciate everyone's collaboration and our shared deep and ongoing care about our work and purpose in serving Heidelberg students.

I hope you have found this communication useful and informative. I look forward to seeing as many colleagues as possible at our All Employees Meeting on Thursday, November 7, at 2:30 p.m. in Gundlach Theatre.

Respectfully,

Rob Huntington  
President