

OREGON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Governance Forum with Chris Maples

Tuesday, October 28, 2013

College Union Auditorium

The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) will function for all of the universities for the rest of this year. Beginning July 2014 through June 2015 there will be a smaller board that the regional schools will report to. Each of the larger schools Portland State University (PSU), University of Oregon (U of O) and Oregon State (OSU) will have their own board which will report directly to the Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC). President Maples reported that he recently traveled to Butte Montana and met with the Chancellor of Montana Tech of the University of Montana (U of M). The Montana Tech representatives reported that in their affiliation with the University of Montana there have been pros and cons to the relationship. It was reported that Montana Tech is still able to raise money, have their own foundation and run their own faculty and student governments. One thing that has changed for them is that promotion and tenure for faculty is handled at the U of M and depending how much that President or Provost wants to be involved, they could potentially overrule the recommendation coming from Montana Tech. That has occurred in the past in a few instances. One of the things we heard from the consultant is that in any sort of affiliate model, it really depends on how the President or head of the larger university wants to handle the smaller institution. Whether they want to move things around, whether they want to get involved in daily activities and whether they have a micro managerial approach or a hands-off approach.

In addition to providing what we would hope to be the best governance choice for the university, we have been told that we have to present a second choice. If an affiliation comes out of this it would be an agreement between the two universities.

Question: I am a little concerned that if we chose a consortium board and put forth a program proposal involving health or sciences that we will meet resistance from the three smaller arts schools, preventing us from taking it to the HECC. Do you think this will happen?

Answer: I am also concerned about this. Part of the reason I am concerned is that two, if not all three of the remaining universities will have an audit in enrollment this year and anything they do to increase their enrollment, they are potentially going to do.

Q: If we choose an independent board and the remaining universities wanted to duplicate some of our non-tech or health science programs how would we stop them?

A: It is supposed to stop at the HECC. So having direct access to the HECC would be the way to do it but it is all dependent on how strong the HECC is going to be and whether they act in the interests of the students in the state of Oregon or if they act in the special interests because of their government appointee.

Q: If we have an independent board, are we inviting more opportunity for that board to get involved with issues such as salary, promotion, tenure, missions and program development?

A: An independent board would not worry about salary; they would tend worry about tuition, enrollment and the overall plan for the university including new programs and opportunities.

Q: When looking at influential industry-involved candidates for an independent board, if we are seeking new program development and there is no current representation for that industry on the board, how will that affect our ability to create new programs?

A: It will typically work the way it does now. It will go through the Provost in terms of opportunity and we will hear from students. In some of our talks, the students have come up with an alternate consortium model by combining with only one of the smaller universities, rather than one of the larger universities. I think some of that has been driven by additional program measure opportunities.

Q: We are working on business plans and researching different governance models but what are the large schools doing right now to prepare information on what will happen?

A: Nothing at this point, it is only the four small schools involved in this process.

Q: Since you have the most information and the most feedback, do you have a model in mind that you think would be a good move for the school at this point?

A: I am not going to say, because I do not want to influence the decision at this point. I want people to think and come up with their own ideas about each model but I urge everyone to think long term rather than just the short term.

Q: It seems like if we go with the independent board it could be great if it turns out that we are able to get the right kind of board members and have enough money to make it work. Whereas if we go with OSU, it could be great if they stay out of our business and they let us continue on as we normally would. Would it be possible for us to say what qualities we want? It seems like we do not have enough details to make a decision.

A: We are going to be forced to decide but we do not have to present our final presentation until January/February. We have time to gather additional information, these types of discussions and meetings that we are doing right now is helping us to gather the types of information that you are talking about. The TRU presidents are scheduled to meet tomorrow to discuss the different models.

Q: When we first started talking about the idea of an independent board, the major concern was cost. Has that been recognized?

A: It has, everyone is unclear on the concept and differences of shared services and the board. If we choose an independent board, it will cost us more in terms of shared services. The cost of having an independent board is estimated to be about \$250,000 per year. One of the goals of the upcoming legislative session is to make sure there is enough money set aside to go into the base budgets for the four small schools so that there is minimal impact as possible.

Q: If we decided to be an affiliate campus, do we get to pick any of the three larger schools or do the four smaller schools all go with the same one? How does that work?

A: As far as I know, any of the four small schools could go with any of the three larger schools. Right now, OHSU is not on the table but yet there could be an affiliation there. I heard resounding opposition to that yesterday.

Q: Going back to the affiliate options, are any of the three (or four with OHSU) interested in having our campus as an affiliate?

A: There are at least two that would probably be willing to have us as affiliates.

Q: A lot of students that we have on campus were initially drawn to Oregon Tech for its career service driven programs and applied services. What impact if any, would we see with each model?

A: If there was a change to our brand or our reputation that would be a deal breaker.

Q: As far as program approval, I know there has been concerns expressed repeatedly about program accreditation with the affiliate school model. What is your take on that?

A: I learned at Montana Tech that was one reason they ended up choosing University of Montana over Montana State. Montana State was going to move programs to Bozeman. I will be honest, I think if you look at the 5 and 10-year plan for Oregon State Cascades, it looks like a 4-year university that will offer similar programs that we offer at Oregon Tech.

Q: Part of the brand at Oregon Tech is that we are a state-wide institution, not a regional institution. If we opted for a consortium with the regional schools would we lose that?

A: Yes, most likely.

Q: Can you go over the timeline of what is going to be next?

A: There will be a series of meetings like these on both campuses. A university governance working group will meet in November and December. A recommendation will be made the university working group in January or February the working group will make a recommendation to the full board in April. At about the same time each of the

smaller universities will make a recommendation to the full board, which could be interesting if our recommendation does not match that of the working group. My final recommendation will go to the Governor in June of 2014 and no implementation will occur until July 2015. So for one year, whatever the recommendation is, there will be a consortium model of the small universities.

Comment: We are going to put a survey on the website. The person taking the survey will be asked to identify if they are a student, faculty or a community member and state their preference of a governance model. We are being asked to include this information in our business plan.

Q: For the consortium board that we will be implemented next year, will that be made up of the current Higher Education Board or are we going to have input on new members?

A: We have been asked for input and we will provide names for consideration. Brittany Kenison will be on the board until then, she is the first Oregon Tech representative on the board since 2003. The current board has five members that will be responsible for making the broader decision recommendation for our governance structure.

Q: What if we get into this and things do not work out the way we anticipated?

A: We will do our best to determine our own destiny and do what we think is in the best interest for our students and the people in the state of Oregon.