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Technical and Regional University Proposed Governance Structure

Over the past five months, the presidents of Oregon’s four public technical and regional universities (TRUs) and others on their campuses have worked to ensure that any new governance structure established for their institutions will support a high quality, affordable education for Oregonians. Each TRU is committed to a primarily undergraduate mission, to serving under-represented populations, to sharing services in order to keep students’ costs as low as possible, and to collaborating with other Oregon universities, community colleges, and K-12 to achieve 40-40-20.

While committed to these shared values, the four TRU presidents are also committed to preserving the unique elements of their respective institutions and fostering distinctive connections to the communities they serve.

After review of national models, the four TRU presidents identified a framework in the Michigan system that could be adapted to create a “TRU Hybrid Model.” This structure provides the autonomy of institutional boards as well as the collaborative strengths of a consortium. Importantly, this model reflects the values and priorities of the four technical and regional institutions.

On December 10, 2013, the four TRU presidents presented their proposal to the State Board of Higher Education’s Task Force on University Governance. The structure includes two components, institutional governing boards and a Presidents’ Council, that provide a collaborative forum to advance the policy and resource needs of the state’s public technical and regional universities.

Institutional Governing Boards

- Each TRU is governed by its own Board of Trustees with the authorities and responsibilities stipulated in SB270.
- As in SB270, between 11 and 15 members on each of the four boards will serve staggered terms as appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate.
- Each board will have a student member, a faculty member, and a non-faculty member, each appointed by the governor.
- The president of each TRU will be appointed by the Board of Trustees as its principal officer and will serve at its pleasure.
- The president will be an ex-officio non-voting member of the board.
- The four governing boards will meet together once a year on one of the TRU campuses in conjunction with the Presidents’ Council to share issues and strategies for leveraging their combined strengths.

Presidents’ Council

- The Presidents’ Council, composed of the four TRU presidents and one member of each institution’s governing board, will be chaired by a TRU president on a rotating basis.
- The Presidents’ Council will not be a separate legal entity but will work to advance an advocacy and policy agenda to strengthen Oregon’s technical and regional universities for the benefit of Oregonians.
- The Presidents’ Council will ensure ongoing collaboration among the institutions and joint oversight for TRU shared services.

For more information, contact:

Tim Seydel, Eastern Oregon University, tseydel@eou.edu ~ 541-910-1723

Lita Colligan, Oregon Tech, lita.colligan@oit.edu ~ 503-544-1195

Liz Shelby, Southern Oregon University, shelby@sou.edu ~ 541-944-2298

David McDonald, Western Oregon University, mcdonald@wou.edu ~ 503-510-6488