

**WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY**  
**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

December 20, 2019

The one hundred seventy fifth meeting of the West Virginia University Board of Governors was held on December 20, 2019 in Morgantown, WV. Board members in attendance/participating by telephone included David Alvarez, Charles Capito, Elmer Coppoolse, Kevin Craig, Dr. Stanley Hileman, J. Thomas Jones, Taunja Willis Miller, Dr. Emily Murphy, Richard Pill, Ed Robinson, J. Robert (J.R.) Rogers, Benjamin Statler, Dr. Kimberly Weaver and William Wilmoth. Board members Marty Becker and Lisa A. Martin were absent and excused.

**WVU officers, divisional campus officers, representatives (and others) present included:**

President Gordon Gee;  
Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Rob Alsop;  
General Counsel, Stephanie Taylor;  
Provost, Maryanne Reed;  
Vice President for University Relations, Sharon Martin;  
Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Paula Congelio;  
Associate Vice President for Finance, Anjali Halabe;  
Associate Provost for Budget, Facilities and Strategic Initiatives,  
Mark Gavin;  
Vice Provost for Academic Strategies, Curriculum and Assessment,  
Paul Kreider;  
Deputy General Counsel, Gary G. Furbee, II;  
Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, Evan Widders;  
Senior Executive Director, Office of Communications, John Bolt;  
Executive Officer and Assistant Board Secretary, Jennifer Fisher; and,  
Special Assistant to the Board of Governors, Valerie Lopez.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Alvarez, at 12:40 p.m. A roll call was taken to determine who was in attendance and a quorum established.

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATES**

Provost Maryanne Reed provided the following Academic Affairs Updates:

**Commencement:**

This Saturday, the University will host its December Commencement. Nearly 900 students will be recognized individually at two separate ceremonies held at the Coliseum. In the morning, students will be recognized from Eberly College, the Chambers College of Business and Economics and the Reed College of Media. The afternoon's ceremony will include students from Engineering, Creative Arts, Law, CPASS, Education, the Davis College, and students from the health sciences programs.

We have two outstanding commencement speakers, who both happen to be women of color. They include Nesha Sanghavi, a 2008 Finance graduate who is now a successful entrepreneur, and Dr. Patrice Harris, the first female African American president of the American Medical Association, who has earned multiple degrees from WVU and currently serves on the WVU Foundation Board.

As you know, President Gee is at home recovering from hip replacement surgery, so he won't be physically present at commencement, although he will there in the form of a video — that captures both his humor and humanity.

**Engaging Faculty:**

Last week, our colleagues at the EAB gave their “higher education landscape” presentation to the Faculty Senate, similar to what was shared at TriBoard meeting last month.

While it was a somewhat sobering presentation about the challenges we face, EAB's report also outlines a number of paths forward – ways that can help us not just weather the storm but reimagine ourselves for the future. Faculty feedback has been mostly positive. They seemed to appreciate both learning about the big picture and being included in the conversation.

At the institutional level, we feel it is vital that faculty have a strong sense of the current landscape so they can better understand our strategic priorities and can contribute to our efforts to increase retention and develop academic programming that is highly relevant to traditional students — and new audiences.

**Transfer Students – Recruitment and Retention:**

According to EAB, “new” audiences include adult learners, veterans and transfer students. An immediate focus is to increase our transfer student population, which is sizably smaller than some of our peers. With the “West Virginia Invests” program, we believe there is an even greater opportunity to recruit students from two-year colleges, including Potomac State.

Working with University enrollment and admissions, my team is reducing barriers to admission for transfer students, and we're updating our articulation agreements with West Virginia Northern Community College, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College, and Blue Ridge Community and Technical College. In addition, we're developing memorandums of understanding with the remaining members of the West Virginia CTC system. In addition, a newly formed Transfer Enrollment SWOT Team will begin meeting in January to address additional recruitment opportunities and onboarding for transfer students.

**Student Success Updates:**

Improving student retention and completion continues to be a top priority and major focus. I wanted to share a couple of new student success initiatives coming out of Academic Affairs.

**Completion grants:**

We know that unmet financial need continues to be a barrier to completion for some WVU students. Nationally, 15 percent of students who complete three-fourths of the credit hours required for graduation leave their institution without earning their degree. The Association of Public Land-Grant Universities (APLU) and Urban Serving Universities (USU) partnered with nine public universities to fill the unmet gap and improve students' chances of completing their degree. Greater than 90 percent of the students who received those "completion grants" either retained or completed their degrees.

Next semester, we will be implementing our own completion grants (or "mini grants") program, which will serve students in good academic standing, who are close to finishing their degrees but have exhausted all other forms of financial aid.

The WVU Office of Student Financial Aid estimates that there may be as many as 150 students who fit this profile.

Awarded by the Office of Student Financial Support and Services, the amount of the completion grant will be determined by the student's unmet need for the respective term. Students do not have to apply for the grant, as the Office will determine who is eligible and automatically dispense the award. The amount of each award will vary but will not exceed \$1,500. This program will more than pay for itself because of the tuition dollars saved. It's estimated for every dollar we spend, we will retain four-times that amount.

**First-generation initiatives (FirstGen):**

Another initiative led by the Office of Student Success is focused on improving the retention and completion rates of first-generation students at WVU. First-generation

students – those with neither parent nor guardian having earned a four-year college degree – make up at least 22 percent of WVU’s total student population. Currently, the Office of Student Success provides a central point of contact and programming designed to help FirstGen students transition from high school to college through graduation.

The Office also offers academic and social programming to ensure students have every opportunity to succeed and find their fit on campus, as well as celebrate their achievements. Specifically, FirstGen students are connected with peer mentors through the Peer Transition Leaders program and with trained faculty and staff who serve as mentors and commit to regular engagements with the students.

The Office also is home to the “Sue Day-Perroots First-Generation Student Success Foundation Fund,” which provides financial support to FirstGen students who need help with buying textbooks or school supplies.

**Georgia State as a national model:**

We’re also learning from other institutions. Next month, a contingent from WVU (including members of my leadership team, the Eberly College and Enrollment Management) will visit Georgia State University, which has been identified as being a national model for student success. They were named second on the U.S. News and World Report’s spring 2019 “Most Innovative University” list and first for “Best Undergraduate Teaching Among Public Universities in the U.S.”

Over the past decade, Georgia State increased its graduation rate by 23 percentage points and is graduating 2,800 more students a year than just five years ago. They’ve also reduced the time to degree by half a semester, saving students millions of dollars each year. Their efforts also have eliminated achievement gaps based on race, ethnicity or income.

We will be visiting their campus on January 31st to learn more about their student success initiatives and to see what we can implement here at WVU.

**Hiring for Purpose:**

We also are continuing to build our team with strong, innovative academic leaders. We currently have three dean’s searches underway. In November, we brought four finalists to campus for the Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources dean’s search. Two of those candidates, Dr. Pedro Mago from Mississippi State and Dr. Eric Loth from the University of Virginia, were brought back this month for follow-up interviews. The President and I are reviewing the feedback we’ve received from the search committee and various constituency groups and hope to make a decision by early January.

Dean searches for both the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design and WVU Extension Service are currently underway. Search committees have been formed, and the positions are posted and being widely disseminated to ensure a strong pool of candidates. The goal for these two searches is to bring finalists to campus this spring.

In addition, we continue to move forward with our plans to bring on a Director of Translational Artificial Intelligence. This is a partnership with the Research Office with the goal of establishing a new AI collaborative at WVU. This director will be tasked with identifying particular areas of opportunity in AI that WVU can be known for — and will help to develop a multidisciplinary approach to embedding AI across colleges and programs.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

December 16, 2019 – Ad Hoc Governance Committee Meeting – Committee Chairman J. Thomas Jones reported that this committee met by telephone - wherein they reached a consensus on best practices and recommendations that will be reported to the full board.

December 20, 2019 - Joint Finance and Facilities and Revitalization/Strategic Plans and Initiatives Committee Meeting: Board Chairman David Alvarez (who chaired this joint committee meeting) reported on this committee meeting, during which there were Execution Session discussions on a wide variety of topics, including updates on several projects related to athletics, MEA steam plant and University Park – in addition to the current legislative session. Chairman Alvarez further stated there were no actions emanated from said Executive Session.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Gee joined in celebrating tomorrow's two graduation ceremonies – and extended his wishes for a safe and happy holiday season to everyone.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Alvarez called for any discussion of today's Consent Agenda items and asked whether any items needed to be pulled for a separate discussion/vote. There being no such request made Dr. Stanley Hileman moved that today's Consent Agenda be approved. This motion was seconded by J. Thomas Jones and passed.

Thereupon, the following Consent Agenda items were approved:

- 1. Approval of Undergraduate Program Review Omitted Program (B.S. in Forensic Investigation – WVU Institute of Technology)**  
Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the Undergraduate Program Review (B.S. in Forensic Investigation – WVU Institute of Technology) that was omitted from the previously approved Undergraduate Program Reviews, submitted on June 21, 2019 conducted by the Undergraduate Council in this cycle, for the 2018/2019 academic year.
- 2. Approval of the Bachelor of Science in Coaching and Performance Science**  
Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the creation of a Bachelor of Science in Coaching and Performance Science in the College of Physical Activity and Sports Sciences.
- 3. Approval of the Healthcare Master of Business Administration (MBA) Degree Program within the John Chambers College of Business and Economics**  
Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the creation of a Healthcare Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program within the John Chambers College of Business and Economics
- 4. Approval of the Major in Digital Technologies and Connected Learning within the Master of Arts (MA) in Education in the College of Education and Human Services**  
Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the creation of Digital Technologies and Connected Learning within the Master of Arts (MA) in Education in the College of Education and Human Services.
- 5. Approval of the Master of Science (MS) in Economics Degree Program within the John Chambers College of Business and Economics**  
Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the creation of a Master of Science (MS) in Economics degree program within the John Chambers College of Business and Economics.
- 6. Approval of the Major in Elementary Math Specialist within the Master of Arts (MA) in Education in the College of Education and Human Services**  
Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the creation of Elementary Math Specialist within the Master of Arts (MA) in Education in the College of Education and Human Services.

**7. Transfer of Buildings and Property to Bridge Valley Community Technical College**

Resolved: That pursuant to BOG Governance Rule 5.1, the West Virginia University Board of Governors authorizes the transfer of certain buildings and parcels of real property, located in Montgomery, WV, to BridgeValley Community and Technical College (“BridgeValley”).

**8. Approval of FY 2019-2020 Tuition and Fees for Program Fees for the Honors College Summer Bridge Program**

Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the FY 2019-2020 tuition and fee program fee schedule for the Honors College Summer Bridge Program, as presented.

**9. Approval of FY 2019-2020 Tuition and Fees for Program Fees at the Health Sciences Campus – Laptop Fee**

Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors approves the FY 2019-2020 tuition and fee program fee schedule for the Health Sciences – Laptop Fee – as presented.

**10. ITS Network Upgrade**

Resolved: That the West Virginia University Board of Governors authorizes management to negotiate contract(s) with vendor(s) to upgrade WVU’s network technology.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Alvarez requested a motion that the Board go into Executive Session, under authority in West Virginia Code §§6-9A-4(b)(2)(A), (b)(9), (b)(10) and (b)(12) to discuss: a. Confidential and deliberative matters regarding University strategic priorities and personnel matters; b. Approval of Honorary Degree Candidates; and c. Report by General Counsel. The motion was made by Kevin Craig, seconded by J. Robert (J.R.) Rogers and passed. Following the conclusion of Executive Session, J. Thomas Jones moved that the Board rise from Executive Session. This motion was seconded by William Wilmoth and passed.

**DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS EMANATING FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Alvarez stated that during today’s Executive Session the board reviewed names of individuals submitted for Honorary Degrees from West Virginia University. Each year nominations are received and reviewed by a committee of faculty,

staff and students. Those selected by the committee are then forwarded to the Faculty Senate for approval, and then to the governing board. The WVU Faculty Senate has endorsed the names discussed during today's Executive Session, as required by University policy.

Chairman Alvarez requested a motion for Approval of the Honorary Degree Candidates discussed during today's Executive Session - with a notation that the persons to be honored will be announced at a later date. J. Thomas Jones so moved, seconded by Taunja Willis Miller, and said motion passed – with a notation from Chairman Alvarez, for the record, that Board members Kate Dye, Dr. Emily Murphy and William Wilmoth abstained from the vote on today's Honorary Degree Candidates – since they were members of the Honorary Degree Selection Committee involved in this process.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Alvarez announced that the Board will conduct its next regular meeting on February 28, 2020 in Morgantown. There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Stanley Hileman moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Kate Dye and passed. The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

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Taunja Willis Miller, Secretary