

For the Record...



December 2004

The purpose of this publication from the Office of Marketing and Communications is to keep the campus community informed of the latest actions, deliberations and discussions of the YSU Board of Trustees. "For the Record..." is distributed after the regular quarterly meetings of the board. Comments and suggestions may be sent to Ron Cole, manager of news and information services, at 330-941-3285 or racole.01@ysu.edu.

The future of the Wick Pollock Inn, a clean fiscal year 2004 audit report, a discussion of full-time vs. part-time faculty and improvements in a key indicator of the university's financial health were topics of discussion during the YSU Board of Trustees' round of quarterly meetings in November and December. Board members also recognized faculty who received outstanding teach awards, endorsed a new educational partnership with Columbiana County and approved new policies on travel, business-related and entertainment expenses and cell phone usage.

Here's a summary of the board's actions and discussions at the Dec. 15 full board meeting, as well as committee meetings on Nov. 30 and Dec. 2.

Board of Trustees, Dec. 15

*Larry E. Esterly, chair
H.S. Wang, vice chair*

The board met in Tod Hall:

President David C. Sweet reviewed for the board highlights of the fall semester, including continued gains in enrollment, growth in the number of minority students on campus, the opening of the Youngstown Early College in Fedor Hall, receipt of a grant from the Getty, the conclusion of the Penguin Parade project, a record \$6 million in external grant funding and the kickoff of the YSU Enterprise Solution project.

"It's been a very productive fall," he said.

Sweet said he, board chair Larry E. Esterly and the presidents and board chairs of all public and private colleges and universities in the state attended a summit with Gov. Bob Taft on Dec. 14 at Ohio State University.

"There was good news and bad news," Sweet said. "The good news is that there is not any additional bad news. The bad news is that there isn't any good news."

The president reported that, due to a letter sent by Taft in November to all university presidents in the state, that YSU is postponing consideration of a tuition increase until some time in January. Taft's letter asked universities to reconsider plans to increase tuition, to keep tuition as affordable as possible and to implement strategies for improving efficiency and productivity.

"We're dead center behind what he's trying to achieve," Sweet said.

Sweet said that YSU has kept tuition and fees as affordable as possible. YSU's \$5,884 annual undergraduate, in-state tuition is the lowest among the state's 11 major public universities and is more than \$1,500 or 20 percent below the state average tuition of \$7,363. "We think we are in line with the governor's objective in terms of tuition restraint," he said.

He said YSU provides on average \$1,037 in institutional grants per student, the second highest in Ohio. YSU students also receive on average \$1,817 in state and federal grants, the highest in Ohio. As a result, the net annual tuition that a YSU student pays is less than \$2,500, Sweet said. That's about 46 percent of the reported tuition rate, the best ratio in the state. "That's something we need to be cognizant of and brag about," he said.

In terms of improved efficiency and productivity, Sweet reported that the state auditor conducted a comprehensive operations review of YSU, the first and only university in Ohio to undergo such a process. Of the auditor's 96 recommendations, action has been taken on 89. YSU also scores at or near the top in many performance measures from the Ohio Board of Regents, he said. The university also has several other planning activities under way, including the technology master plan, centennial master plan, academic strategic plan and enrollment management plan.

Sweet also noted that state funding for YSU has nosedived from about \$47 million in fiscal year 2000 to about \$40.5 million this fiscal year. In fiscal year 2001, state funds made up nearly half of YSU's general operating budget. This fiscal year, state funds account for 35 percent.

"We've moved from a state-supported university to a state-assisted university to a state-located university," he said.

Esterly noted that collaborative programs at Lorain County Community College and the master's degree in public health were highlighted at the governor's summit as examples of ways universities and colleges can work together to provide services. Esterly said YSU is involved in both of those programs. "It was particularly satisfying seeing the YSU logo on the very large screen and to see the governor look at that very large screen," he said.

The board:

- Heard a brief report from Bege Bowers, assistant provost, who introduced faculty members honored as outstanding teachers by the Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education.
- Approved a resolution congratulating the NOCHE award winners: Rebecca Barnhouse, Stephen A. Graf, Angela Spalsbury, William G. Vendemia, Charles B. Vergon and Hazel M. Pierson. The resolution also congratulates Barnhouse, Graf, Spalsbury, Vendemia and Vergon for being among 100 Ohio faculty members to receive Ohio magazine's 2004 Excellence in Education awards.
- Heard a report from Cynthia Anderson, vice president for student affairs. Anderson reported that YSU's enrollment has grown by 11.1 percent or more than 1,300 students since fall 2000. "We intend to do everything we can to keep those numbers going up," she added. She said there are dozens of reasons for the increase, from recruiting and customer service to stepped up advertising and public relations efforts. "The list could go on and on," she said. One of the major reasons is retention of students. YSU's year-to-year retention of first-time undergraduate students is 68 percent, compared with 64 percent nationally. The retention rate for students who participate in tutoring and other programs in the YSU Center for Student Progress is 74 percent, she reported. "It is truly a success story and a real benefit for our students," she said.
- Approved a resolution to confer an honorary degree at spring 2005 commencement on Tony Lariccia, a graduate of Struthers High School and YSU. Lariccia and his wife, Mary, have contributed to various causes throughout the Mahoning Valley, including the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center at YSU.

- Voted on a resolution to confer an honorary degree at spring 2005 commencement on Dominic Rosselli, legendary YSU basketball coach.
- Endorsed a proposed partnership between YSU, Jefferson Community College and Columbiana County Career and Technical Center to increase post-secondary attainment in Columbiana County.

In committee discussions, Provost Tony Atwater noted that fewer than 11 percent of the adults in Columbiana County have a bachelor's degree, compared to 21.1 percent in Ohio and 24.4 percent in the United States. He also noted that the 2004 report of the Governor's Commission on Higher Education and the Economy set a goal of increasing the number of students enrolled in Ohio colleges and universities by 30 percent by the year 2015.

The proposal calls for YSU and JCC, working with CCCTC, to develop select programs to increase academic offerings in the Columbiana County area. The three initial areas of emphasis would be computer science, education and health sciences. Atwater said a memorandum of understanding is being developed for the partnership.

Sweet, noting that there is no community college in the Mahoning Valley, said the collaboration is being watched closely by the Ohio Board of Regents. "It could be a model that I hope could spread throughout the Valley," he said.

- Accepted 837 gifts from university donors totaling \$876,060.76 for the first quarter of fiscal year 2005. The gifts include \$35,407 to Alumni Relations, \$825,548.26 to University Development and \$15,105.50 to WYSU-FM.
- Approved a resolution to modify the fiscal year 2005 operating budget. In committee discussions, Habat reported that the university received \$1.8 million more in tuition revenue than projected due to increased enrollment. The extra revenue will be allocated to fund enrollment incentive payments for classified employees, security cameras, athletics, the recreation and wellness center and technology.
- Voted for a resolution setting tuition and fees for the new master of fine arts in creative writing. YSU is offering the degree as part of the Northeast Ohio Universities Master of Fine Arts program. The tuition and fees will be \$380 per credit hour.
- Approved a resolution to modify the university's policy on unrestricted fund budget approval, modification and adjustment.
- Voted for a new policy on approving budget transfers.
- Agreed to transfer funds to construct the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center. The university has received \$12.1 million in private pledges to build the center, which is now under construction. But, Habat said in committee meetings that some of those pledges will not be received until after the center is finished in August 2005. The "funding gap" amounts to \$4.2 million, Habat said. The university will use \$2 million in state capital improvement funds and \$834,000 in additional operating revenue that is the result of higher-than-projected tuition revenue to help fund the gap, Habat said. In addition, YSU will use \$1.1 million in capital component funds, money that YSU received in capital funds but "banked" with the Ohio Board of Regents, Habat said. As pledges are received, the capital component funds will be repaid.
- Approved a formal tuition remission policy. Habat said in committee meetings that the remission of YSU tuition and fees to employees, spouses and dependents is a tax-free benefit. The IRS requires a formal plan and policy to maintain the tax-free status. "This does not include any additional benefits, but it assures that these benefits will remain tax free," he said.
- Heard a report from Trustee William J. Bresnahan, chair of the board's Audit Subcommittee. Bresnahan said that YSU received a clean opinion from the external auditor for fiscal year 2004.
- Approved a resolution to modify the university's policy on the investment of non-endowment university funds.

- Ratified faculty and staff appointments for the first quarter of the fiscal year.
- Authorized a mutual aid agreement between YSU police and other law enforcement agencies within Mahoning County.
- Approved a mutual aid agreement between YSU police and police departments at other public universities in Ohio.
- Voted to modify the university's travel reimbursement policy. John Habat, vice president for administration, said in committee discussions that the modifications are in line with best practices as identified by the state auditor. The guidelines include procedures for pre-authorization of travel, transportation (personal vehicle, rented vehicles, airfare, passenger vans, auto allowances, etc...), meal reimbursement, lodging, spousal travel, student travel, foreign travel and documentation of expenses.
- Approved a policy on business-related and entertainment expenses. In committee discussions, Habat said this is the first time YSU has had a formal policy on these expenses. Business-related and entertainment expenses are defined as reasonable food, beverage and incidental costs associated with the conduct of university business. The policy lists what are and what are not authorized expenses and from which funds the expenses will be paid.
- Ratified a new policy on cell phone usage. The policy determines who should have a university cell phone and how it should be used.

Finance and Facilities Committee, Dec. 2

William J. Bresnahan, chair

Scott R. Schulick, vice chair

- Tom Maraffa, special assistant to the president, presented the board with some data in response the questions that some trustees had at committee meetings on Nov. 30. The data shows that the number of students graduating from YSU has increased from 1,822 in 2000-01 to 1,993 in 2003-04. That data also shows the amount of time it takes YSU students to earn bachelor's degrees and the percent of student credit hours taught by full-time faculty at public universities in Ohio. At YSU, 59 percent of the hours were taught by full-time faculty.
- Donna Esterly, chief technology officer, updated the committee on the YSU Enterprise Resource Planning Solution implementation, a campus-wide upgrade in the university's academic and administrative computing systems. Esterly said more than 200 people attended a celebration of the plan's kickoff. She said more than 100 YSU faculty, staff and students are on various teams to help implement the plan. "We're real excited to get started and move forward," she said. Sweet said staff training will be a key component to successfully implementing the plan. "We will continue to brief the board on a quarterly basis," he said.
- The committee reviewed possible modifications to the state capital budget plan for YSU. John Habat, vice president for administration, said the level of funding that the Ohio General Assembly will approve in the next capital budget is fluid. "It's been a 'follow the bouncing ball' situation," he said. So, YSU has outlined three possible scenarios: one in which YSU receives \$12.1 million, one at the \$10.9 million level and one at \$10.4 million. "We do not know which level it will be, but I suspect" it will be the lowest, Habat said.
- The committee received a report comparing the budget amounts of revenue and expenditures in the general fund for the first quarter of fiscal year 2005 to the actual amounts.
- Habat reported that YSU's Senate Bill 6 ratio has increased for the fourth consecutive year to 4.0 The ratios are used by the state to determine a university's financial health. The maximum score is 5.0. Universities with a score of 1.75 or lower for two consecutive years are placed in fiscal watch by the state auditor's office. YSU's score was 3.0 in fiscal year 2000 and jumped to 4.0 last fiscal year. "This is the best rating we've had since they've been doing SB 6 ratios," Habat said. "This is a very good composite score," said Katrena

Davidson, director of general accounting. Trustee Esterly complimented Sweet, Habat and their staffs for the score. "When I first came on this board, these numbers were anemic," he said.

- Hunter Morrison, director of the YSU Center for Urban and Regional Development, and Patti Choby of the Cobalt Group Inc. in Cleveland updated committee members on the Wick Pollock Inn. Sweet said that, with the completion of the rec center fund-raising campaign, his top fund-raising priority is future development of the inn. Morrison said the inn is a critical component of the emerging Wick district and Smoky Hollow. Choby presented a report outlining the history of the inn, including YSU securing control of the site from First National Bank of Pennsylvania this fall. She also presented several possible development scenarios, including the construction of about 36 new guest house/units contiguous to the Wick Mansion, thus establishing a 50-room guest house. The next step in the process would be to draft a "request for qualifications" seeking an experienced developer and property management team for the inn, she said. Projected cost of the project is \$2.3 million to \$8 million. (The committee met again on Dec. 15 and gave Sweet the authority to issue a "request for qualifications" for a developer. A timeline presented to the board indicates that a developer should be selected by the end of March.)
- The committee received a construction progress report on the rec center. Sweet reported that the center should be open as scheduled in August 2005.
- Habat reviewed the university's 2004 annual insurance report, which he said generally shows that insurance rates are down. YSU will spend less than budgeted on insurance this year, he said.
- The committee also received a two-page letter from John Hyden, executive director of facilities, responding to campus safety concerns from Ivan Maldonado, an officer in the YSU-Association of Classified Employees. There was no discussion.

Internal Affairs Committee, Dec. 2

John L. Pogue, chair

Donald Cagigas, vice chair

- The committee entered executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations.
- John Habat, vice president for administration, reviewed updated procedures for searching for and hiring professional staff and faculty. The procedures were developed in consultation with a wide range of campus groups, including the Academic Senate, President Sweet's cabinet, Provost Tony Atwater and the chairs of academic departments. The procedures now require a standardized application for all job candidates. Habat said the application will allow for background checks and will ask applicants to disclose any felony convictions. The procedures also outline advertising for the position; national, regional and local search requirements; selecting members of the search committee; and applicant screening, rating sheets and interviews.
- Committee members reviewed a report showing that YSU employed 1,701 full- and part-time workers on Sept. 30, 2004, up from 1,629 on the same date in 2003. The number of African American employees increased from 101 in 2003 to 111 in 2004. The number of Hispanic employees jumped from 30 to 33, while Asian employees increased from 33 to 37 and Native American employees went from six to two. The report showed the number of white employees increased from 1,459 to 1,518.
- The committee received the quarterly minority business report that is sent to the Ohio Department of Administrative Services. The report showed that of the \$9.3 million in goods and services expenditures in the first quarter of fiscal year 2005, \$771,660 or 8.3 percent went to minority businesses.

- Committee members also received minutes of the University Diversity Council's Nov. 15 meeting. Sweet told the committee about the new student-led diversity banner program on campus and the new Presidential Mentors program.
- Ron Strollo, executive director of intercollegiate athletics, updated trustees on fall and winter sports. He said the football team's 4-7 record was disappointing, but he noted that YSU entered the fourth quarter with a lead in eight of the 11 games. YSU's average attendance of 14,670 led the Gateway Conference and ranked ninth in the nation among Division I-AA teams. He also reported that the softball team posted an 11-4 record, while the men's and women's tennis teams were undefeated. The volleyball team posted a 10-21 mark, and YSU hosted the Horizon League championship. The soccer team had a 1-15-1 record. "We are essentially starting that program again from scratch this year," he said.

External Relations Committee, Nov. 30

H.S. Wang, chair

Larry D. DeJane, vice chair

- Paul McFadden, chief development officer, introduced two new employees in the development office: Jacci Daniel, coordinator of annual giving, and Jill Massas, coordinator of prospect research. McFadden said the hirings are part of the office's preparations for a new centennial fund-raising campaign. He said Daniel and Massas have brought "great energy" to the office.

George McCloud, special assistant to the president for development and public relations, said two more development officers will be hired. Sweet said YSU is looking at "growing our own" development officers, rather than hiring individuals from the outside. He said the "grow your own" approach has been successful at Western Kentucky University.

Wang said YSU has to be "very careful how we spend our money" in terms of new hires.

Sweet said he expects the new fund-raising employees "will earn their keep and more."

- McFadden also presented the development office's quarterly report, which shows that \$825,548.26 in gifts was received from 209 donors in the first quarter of fiscal year 2005. In the Annual Fund, the report shows a 12 percent increase in dollars and a 6 percent decrease in the number of donors from the same period last fiscal year.
- Shannon Tirone, director of alumni relations, introduced Heather Belgin, new coordinator of alumni relations. Tirone said Belgin's hiring is the result of a greater need to interact with alums as the capital fund-raising campaign approaches. Tirone said her office is planning alumni events in California, New York, Florida and Washington, D.C., in 2005.
- Pam Palumbo updated the board on several campus events, including: Academy Award-winning singer Maureen McGovern will receive an honorary degree at the Dec. 12 fall commencement and will perform a benefit concert the next night at Stambaugh Auditorium; Branford Marsalis will perform at Stambaugh Auditorium on March 23 and visit with students as part of the Skeggs Lecture Series; Andrew Young will visit YSU April 20 for a speech in the Chestnut Room.
- Sweet informed the board that he is seeking applications for a new position: assistant to the president for governmental relations. The president said that John Habat, vice president for administration, has been serving in this role, but "we need to have more attention and focus in this area." Sweet said this type of position existed prior to his coming to YSU in 2000, but the job focused mostly on state government relations. The primary focus of the new job will be federal, along with state and local, he said. A search committee hopes to review applicants in December.

Trustee Cagigas said that, considering the university's financial situation, "I have difficulty" in creating new positions.

Sweet said YSU is “woefully under-staffed in this area” and that the new position over time will pay off in terms of more federal funding. If not, Sweet said he will re-evaluate the new post. “This is part of an overall strategy in terms of diversifying our revenue streams,” he said.

- Walt Ulbricht, executive director of marketing and communications, reviewed several advertising efforts by the university, including a new campaign in the Cleveland area titled, “A campus home closer to your home.” McCloud complimented Ulbricht and his staff for the creative work on the ad campaigns. “This is part of an ongoing strategy in getting our brand in the minds of the residents north and east of us,” he said. Ulbricht also showed trustees a new billboard design featuring Miss Ohio 2004 Amanda Beagle and a series of ads featuring distinguished faculty. In addition, he unveiled new ads featuring members of the Gross family, who have earned 10 YSU degrees over two generations.

Ulbricht also reported that the university magazine will be expanded from 44 to 60 pages in January. It also will be the first time that the magazine will accept advertising. He also said that by fiscal year 2006, the magazine will be published four times a year, up from two. “This is part of an ongoing strategy to increase the frequency that we seek attachment with constituent groups,” McCloud said.

Ulbricht also reported on the success of the university’s website. Trustee Millicent Counts complimented the efforts. “If we’re going to move into the 21st century, we have to be aware of these things, and I am super-pleased,” she said.

- Gary Sexton, director of WYSU-FM, updated the board on an engineering study to convert the radio station to digital broadcasting. He also updated trustees on the station’s strategic planning process and promotional events to celebrate the station’s 35th anniversary.

Academic and Student Affairs Committee, Nov. 30

Chander M. Kohli, chair

Millicent S. Counts, vice chair

- Tom Maraffa, special assistant to the president, and Tony Atwater, provost and vice president for student affairs, gave a report called “Enrollment Growth and Academic Quality.”

Maraffa updated trustees on enrollment, which has climbed 11.1 percent since fall semester 2000. The university hopes to reach 14,000 by fall 2008. He said the reasons for the growth are many, including academic quality, the development of academic programs, marketing and recruiting efforts, financial aid enhancements and a campus-wide emphasis on increasing enrollment. Maraffa said enrollment of minority students, graduate students and transfer students is up. The retention of students also is up.

Maraffa reported on several initiatives underway to increase enrollment even more, including a new conditional admissions policy aimed at helping academically at-risk students stay in school, a tuition reciprocity agreement with Slippery Rock University and increased student financial aid.

Atwater reported that “with enrollment growth comes the demands to serve the needs of a growing student population” and the need for more support to maintain academic quality and national accreditations.

The provost presented charts showing that full-time faculty in fiscal year 2003 made up about 54.6 percent of the total faculty workforce, down from 63.7 percent in fiscal year 2000. At the same time, the percentage of student credit hours taught by full-time faculty fell from 66.7 to 56.7 percent. “We have moved into a stronger reliance on part-time faculty,” Atwater said. That is something that the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools could be concerned about in its accreditation site visit in 2007-08, he said.

Sweet said YSU’s goal will be to get back to a 60-40 ratio.

Atwater said that among the many factors that accrediting agencies examine is the right mix of full-time vs. part-time faculty. "If they don't see that, it does cause some issues," he said.

Trustee Esterly said the board will have more discussions on accreditations at its March meeting, but he said the full-time vs. part-time debate is crucial.

- The committee reviewed a report from Peter J. Kasvinsky, dean of graduate studies and research, showing an 18 percent decrease in the amount of grants awarded to YSU faculty and staff in the first quarter of fiscal year 2005. The number of funded proposals, however, increased by 7 percent.
- The committee also received information on current accreditation activity on campus, an update on academic programs being developed and the annual Research Recognition Luncheon.