

MINUTES  
Joint Meeting between the Boards of Regents of  
Washington State University and the University of Washington  
December 4, 2010

The Boards of Regents for Washington State University and the University of Washington met in a joint meeting on Saturday, December 4, 2010, beginning at 11:00 a.m. in room 210 of the Compton Union Building, on the Washington State University Campus in Pullman, Washington.

Present from Washington State University: Regents Laura M. Jennings (Chair), Theodor Baseler, Scott E. Carson, Harold A. Cochran, Elizabeth Cowles, Francois X. Forgette, and Connie M. Niva; and President Elson S. Floyd.

Present from University of Washington: Regents Herb Simon (Chair), Kristianne Blake, Craig Cole, Sally Jewell, Frances J. Youn, and President Phyllis M. Wise.

Special guests: Governor Christine Gregoire, and Chief Economist for the State of Washington, Dr. Arun Raha.

**1. Opening Comments and Introductions.** Regent Jennings opened the meeting with introductions of the Regents. She also welcomed Governor Christine Gregoire and Dr. Arun Raha.

Following introductions, Regent Jennings expressed the importance of having both institutions discussing the issues that affect them both. She thanked the Governor for attending their annual meeting. She said that there has never been a more important time for them to focus on areas where they need to collaborate to have their voices heard more strongly, in a more coordinated way, and more broadly than just those of them in the room. She also thanked President Wise and Regent Simon for their thoughtful manner in working with them and bringing ideas to the table. She said it has been a real pleasure working with them. She asked UW Board Chair, Herb Simon, President Wise, and President Floyd to say a few opening remarks.

Regent Simon thanked Regent Jennings and President Floyd for their leadership and involvement. He said that they are at a point where the stakes are high and when we do not know what the return can be based on the difficult situation that the Governor is facing. He said that it is going to take all of their leadership and the leadership of others to be a successful voice.

President Wise thanked everyone for the great partnership between Washington State University and the University of Washington. She added that she thinks the only time they are rivals is the short time "on the field." She said that she looks forward to

working together for the betterment of the students, and for the betterment of the State as a whole through research and engagement with issues that face the State.

President Floyd congratulated Dr. Wise for doing an amazing job leading the University of Washington. He thanked Regent Simon for his leadership that he has shown consistently throughout the State over the last several months. He said that it is a great privilege of spending time with him and Dr. Wise. He said that one of the incredible assets we have as a State, is having two amazing research universities and noted that these institutions collaborate as often as they possibly can and that the faculty members have almost a seamless relationship. He said that that is the return on the investment that Washingtonians have made in both of the research universities and that they are going to do everything they possibly can as a leadership team to continue to realize that investment even during these incredibly difficult financial times. He said to both Boards that it is through their intellect, leadership and stewardship of these two institutions that they will be able to reach the goals and the expectations that are laid out in the State. He said that they have one goal and one goal only and that is to do nothing to compromise the quality of the investment that has already been made.

Governor Gregoire thanked both Boards for their service and leadership at a very critical time. She said that she could not be more proud of these two institutions and how they are ranked not only nationally, but internationally as well.

**1. Opening Comments by Governor Gregoire.** Governor Chris Gregoire reiterated the fact that Higher Education has taken significant cuts from the State budget. She said that when tuition was raised last time in such a dramatic way, it was done to avoid cutting into the institutions. She is concerned that additional cuts could cause over enrollment, which also means that quality could be compromised. She stated that if quality is to be preserved than this means institutions may need to turn students away. She added that quality is extremely important in order to maintain national rankings and that it is difficult to get that ranking back once quality is compromised.

Governor Gregoire also provided an overview of the difficult decisions that need to be made due to the lack of state revenue ([State Budget at a Glance, Exhibit A](#)). She stated that everyone has to take cuts and that she is leaving no stone unturned. As Chair of the National Governors Association, Governor Gregoire is a prime leader on the initiative "Complete to Compete." She requested the full support of the Regents to make Washington a leader in advancing education. She said that the initiative is designed to raise national awareness about the need to increase college completion and productivity ([Complete to Compete Initiative, Exhibit B](#)). She said that the Higher Education Funding Task Force has embraced the goals of this initiative. She also said that she intends to support the recommendations of the Higher Education Funding Task Force in their entirety.

Governor Gregoire also asked the Regents to focus discussions on the students and the opportunities that a quality education provides.

**2. Presentation: Economic Forecast for Washington and Higher Education.** Dr. Arun Raha, Chief Economist of the State of Washington, presented the economic and revenue outlook for the State. He said that the current recession is a “once in a lifetime” event and the worst since the Great Depression. He said that it started with the financial meltdown and because state taxes are dependent on spending and not on income. He said that the sector that is dragging down the economy is construction. He said when construction recovers; revenues will recover. ([See further, Raha presentation, Exhibit C](#)). Questions and discussion followed Dr. Raha’s presentation.

**3. Discussion: Higher Education and the State Budget.** Members of the Boards of Regents inquired about the correlation between level of education and unemployment in the state of Washington. The Governor reported the following:

<b><u>Level of Education</u></b>	<b><u>Unemployment Rate</u></b>
Less than High School	10.8%
High School Diploma	10.5%
Some College or Associate Degree	7.7%
Bachelors Degree or Higher	4.6%

Regent Jennings began the discussion of the planned action of the UW and WSU to form a coalition to build public awareness about higher education. President Wise said the two University Presidents and Board Chairs had been meeting to strategize ways to disseminate the message of the importance of higher education. The firm of Sound View Strategies has been retained to work with the Universities to form a communication strategy, and then ask community groups to be active advocates for higher education. She said the mission is to explain the importance of higher education to students and to the community at large, stressing the impact of higher education on the quality of the state. She said this will be supported by private, non-state funds.

President Floyd said he is committed to working together to share a common agenda and unified statement for the state’s four-year institutions. He said he and President Wise support forming a coalition to present to the legislature a compelling and convincing case regarding the importance of investment in public higher education. President Wise said she and President Floyd plan to discuss this with other university presidents and invite them to join.

Regent Jennings said they intend to start this project with a kick-off in December. The initiative will involve agreeing on the message and mobilizing people, especially alumni, to help impart the message during the legislative session.

Regent Simon said the Governor has asked the Boards to do this in the past—mobilize alumni and various organizations in the state to advocate in Olympia in support of public higher education. He said the students, rather than the institutions themselves, are the economic drivers for the state and the four-year public higher education institutions are the common goal of educating students for the future.

Questions and discussion followed. The Regents discussed how budget cuts may affect the relationship between community colleges and four-year universities in the State, and the articulation agreements and academic readiness of transferring students, with the goal of maintaining quality of education. The Governor encouraged the institutions to administer proficiency tests to assure students are prepared in subjects taken in high school or community college. Regents also discussed the role, and economics, of community college in preparation for a baccalaureate degree, as well as the value of an associate degree to students, parents, and employers. Regent Simon said community colleges can agree with four-year universities and colleges on the value of higher education.

Regents discussed preserving the quality of education while maintaining access.

Regent Jennings summarized the Governor's request of Regents to consider five items:

1. Put a human face, citizen face, student face on the issue of higher education;
2. Think about the quality of education versus enrollment levels;
3. Understand and support the Governor's budget;
4. Join the Governor to advance and support the recommendations of the Higher Education Funding Task Force;
5. Support and embrace the "Complete to Compete" initiative.

Regents thanked Governor Gregoire and Dr. Raha for attending the meeting.

**Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Approved by the WSU Board of Regents at its meeting held January 28, 2011, Consolidated Information Center, Rooms 212-214, Richland, Washington

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