Chair Ormsby called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 9:35 a.m. A quorum was present. Mr. Ormsby turned the meeting over to President Jordan to present the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) information. Dr. Jordan gave a brief overview of the DPT proposal. The summary document requests authority to move forward with legislation to be approved to offer the DPT. Board members should have received a copy of the specific legislation and two additional documents: a question and answer document and a policy document. The President’s Office also faxed one additional question and answer piece this morning which covers the questions we think are most likely to be asked by the legislature. President Jordan emphasized that this is still a draft, and we have not yet included answers for A1 and B1. We will also include a five-year history of enrollments in Physical Therapy that will show numbers of applications, numbers of students accepted, and the GPA’s of each class that was accepted. This information will show that this is our highest quality program.

President Jordan noted that last summer he began raising the issue of regional universities being allowed to offer limited doctoral programs. He felt this would stimulate economic development and help meet manpower requirements. From Eastern’s standpoint, the degrees needed to be limited (due to cost and quality issues), and should be offered cooperatively with other institutions to keep the costs down. We realized we could make a significant case in the area of Physical Therapy, which is already a master’s program and is aligned with our mission. We realized the importance of this program to Eastern and Eastern Washington—healthcare specifically to Spokane. A compromise was developed in which the institutions would be prepared to support a single degree in Physical Therapy to move forward. We began discussions in how the research and regional universities might begin to discuss other programs in a cooperative way.

The other state universities have supported Eastern moving forward with this specific degree. WSU has signed off on the legislation, and all Presidents and some provosts, fiscal officers and government relations officers, including President Rawlins, have indicated their support. The recommendation that we move forward came from President McCormick. In this particular case we are very close to having everything
we need to offer this degree on our own. We will have space for 40 students per class in the new facility, but plan to begin with 30 and grow to 40 over time.

Dr. Mays asked if the master’s degree will subside into the DPT, and Dr. Jordan replied yes. For a period of time we will offer those who have already matriculated the opportunity to take the coursework for the DPT or stay with the master’s. Donna El-Din confirmed that statement. She will talk to the Undergraduate Affairs Committee and Graduate Affairs Committee about the coding of the courses and the work required so students have the choice of finishing their Masters or increasing their program to achieve the DPT. The curriculum is already taught in modules, so will be easy to modify or expand.

Mrs. Beschel asked if all the faculty possess doctorates. Dr. El-din replied that 7 have doctorates (6 in Physical Therapy and 1 in Exercise Science) and 2 of the other 3 faculty have taught in the field a long time, and haven’t finished their doctorates but are currently enrolled in doctoral programs. The third member is developing her plan and will be enrolled in a doctoral program soon. From now on the department will only hire at the doctorate level.

President Jordan said the Higher Education Coordinating Board will discuss this issue on January 24, but do not have it on their agenda as an action item. Dr. Jordan doesn’t need to be there, but Eastern will have a representative present. The chair of the Provost’s committee will be there to speak on behalf of the Council of Presidents on this item. There will also be a discussion about cooperative degrees.

Mrs. Beschel asked if there are any indications that the HECB would not approve this proposal. President Jordan said the indication so far is that a majority of the HECB support the concept—there is some split about the best way to proceed. Director Marc Gaspard feels we should go ahead with the single degree to prove ourselves. We committed that the legislation would include that the HECB approve the degree as well as the legislature. This is also a public policy issue—the legislature shouldn’t make these decisions alone.

Ms. Shiota suggested adding that approval piece to the briefing paper, and also highlighting the importance of this program to Spokane. She noted that in the impact section we state that there will be no significant cost increase, but in the Q&A piece we spoke to needing $50,000 to upgrade the current faculty—we might want to make these two a little more consistent. Mr. Ormsby also addressed the cost issue, pointing out that it will be a minimal additional cost program, so we need to be a little clearer on that.

Dr. Mays said he supports the DPT, but voiced a concern around question of diversity—not just color, but background e.g. grade point average (GPA) requirements. President Jordan pointed out that our McNair Scholars program looks at first-generation low-income students who have the potential to go on to graduate programs. We have been successful in this program, but obviously have sent these students on to other institutions for doctoral programs. We now have the chance to send these students to our own doctoral program. Dr. El-din said EWU has shown itself to be among the top schools in terms of attending to this particular issue. She said GPA is the only predictor of success in Physical Therapy school in terms of a valid predictor. Her department has not ignored trying to bring in a diverse group—noting they have had at least one minority in each class. They’ve had two national winners of the national minority award in the last five years (out of the 175 schools in the country). The faculty have developed a cultural diversity seminar as part of their curriculum.

Dr. El-din said the department will have a gap between the bachelor and doctoral level; but will explain and describe this in printed material and in personal contacts. She noted that Eastern’s Human Biology degree includes all prerequisites for the Physical Therapy program. Dean Soltero also noted that the GTE program reaches down into the high schools.

Dr. El-din said the PT faculty support the degree 100%. A group of faculty is meeting regularly to look at courses and the overall curriculum structure. They are excited as professionals as well as Eastern faculty.

Mr. McReynolds asked about the split in the HECB that President Jordan mention earlier. Dr. Jordan said the split is in their motivation for offering doctoral programs—some are more interested in the branch
Mr. McReynolds then asked about the cost issue. Dr. Jordan replied that cooperative degrees will mitigate the cost. He said we need to be selective in the way we move forward. Ms. Shiota said this program gives us the opportunity to show that the costs are relatively minimal, and the program is good for the region and the state. Mr. McReynolds believes we are missing a demonstration of need beyond Spokane—we should demonstrate the need across the state. Dr. El-din replied that the practitioner environment comes from the national association, which has worked for the past 4-5 years and has recommended that physical therapy, by the year 2020, will be provided by doctors. Ms. Voves asked if Mr. McReynolds was actually looking for marketing data, and he replied affirmatively. Dr. El-din said the job market for PT came to a strict restriction recently—PT went to a 2.4 unemployment, but has dropped to 1.8 and has leveled out again. Trustee McReynolds suggested beefing up that portion, and Trustee Shiota agreed. Ms. Shiota also suggested breaking out the background and summary from each other, as well as emphasizing career opportunities generally as well as in the Spokane area.

Mrs. Beschel asked how we will you counter the argument that this is just the nose of the camel? President Jordan responded that there is an important role for regional universities and branch campuses, but we also realize that we have to be true to our mission. There has to be a limit to the number of these degrees that we can do. Mrs. Beschel mentioned questions from those people with long memories who might recall President George Fredrickson’s attempt to offer doctoral degrees. President Jordan said we have made significant progress with our sister universities on this issue, and he suspects that wasn’t done in the past. Also, most states have moved away from the notion that only state universities and land grants should offer doctoral degrees. Ms. Voves said there is also a controlling mechanism with an impact statement.

Trustee Mays asked about other health professionals, such as chiropractors. Dr. Jordan said we will separate the licensing issue from the quality of the program. Dr. El-din said there is a need for the profession to provide its services to the public at the level required, such as Pharmacists have. Mr. McReynolds asked where the opposition is likely to come from. Dr. Jordan replied that chiropractors will raise concern, and some people will say the fiscal issues are overriding, but we hope and our intent is that the chairs of the higher education committees will be the cosponsors of the bill, which would diminish much of the opposition that might come. We don’t know if this bill will have to go to the Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees, which is where that issue may come up.

President Jordan noted that it is critical that there be a large group of co-sponsors which reflects the Spokane region delegation—to demonstrate broad-based support.

Chair Ormsby asked if there were any other questions. He then commended Dr. Jordan and Vice President Voves regarding the policy issues they have tackled; and commended Provost Dual, Dean Soltero and Chairperson Dr. El-din for coming forward with a strong program. President Jordan thanked the Trustees for today’s suggestions about how to frame and present this program. Chair Ormsby asked Dr. Jordan and Ms. Voves to keep the Board members apprised of activity as this project moves forward.

Motion: “I move that the Board of Trustees authorize the administration to move forward with the legislative request to offer a doctoral degree in Physical Therapy as presented in these documents, and if successful seek HECB approval.”

Motion by Trustee Beschel; seconded by Trustee Shiota. Motion carried unanimously and enthusiastically, with a quorum present.

Chair Ormsby reported that he and Vice President Voves were in Olympia on Friday, January 12, where they testified before the House Higher Education Committee. Terry Teale and the Council of Presidents worked very well at creating a framework for the presentation. Ms. Voves did a very good job of presenting the Governor’s budget impact on EWU. All comments from the universities were tied together as a mosaic rather than being repetitive in their comments. Ms. Voves thanked Mr. Ormsby for representing Eastern in the hearing process, noting that he did a great job in regrouping his presentation to
be supportive of Central and building off of their comments rather than repeating information that had already been shared.

President Jordan summarized by saying we will now make revisions in the DPT background information prior to using it at the legislature this Thursday. Members of the administration will be meeting with the sponsors of the bill, and our primary efforts are directed toward getting a higher enrollment number, the Cheney Hall initiative, and the doctoral program. Mrs. Beschel asked that, with the assumption that we will get Cheney Hall and the DPT, will Eastern, at some point in the future, consider doctoral programs in areas such as computer science? President Jordan replied that we would clearly be interested in pursuing an area such as informatics, but it would have to be in conjunction with another institution. Provost Dual reminded everyone that any Ph.D. would take three to five years to ramp up.

Stefanie Pettit will prepare a press release to go out either today, if she receives inquiries, or Friday after Dr. Jordan and Ms. Voves meet with legislators.

The meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.