



## Direct Admissions Task Force Charter Fall 2022

### UW System Task Force Direct Admissions

**Charge:** At the August, 18, 2022 meeting of the Board of Regents, Regent Kyle Weatherly, chair of the Education Committee, charged Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Johannes Britz, with convening a task force to explore the feasibility of a direct admissions program within the University of Wisconsin System, and to provide a report to the Education committee by February 2023.

#### **Sponsors:**

- Johannes Britz, Interim Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, UW System Administration
- John Achter, Interim Associate Vice President for Student Success, Office of Student Success

#### **Co-chairs:**

- Corina Diaz-Suazo, Strategic Enrollment and Transfer Specialist, UW System Administration
- Jennifer Jones, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services, Senior Strategic Enrollment Officer (SSEO), University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

#### **Members:**

- Barbara Bales, Director, PK-20 Strategic Initiatives and Educational Innovation
- Corey King, Vice Chancellor, Division of University Inclusivity & Student Affairs, Campus Diversity Officer (CDO), Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO), UW-Green Bay
- Laura King, Vice Chancellor, Enrollment & Strategic Initiatives, Senior Strategic Enrollment Officer (SSEO), UW-Stout
- Rachel Klingler, UW HELP Development Team Lead, UW System Administration
- Jamila Lee-Johnson, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Specialist, UW System Administration
- Tim Opgenorth, Director of Financial Aid, Senior Financial Aid Officer (SFO), UW-Milwaukee

- Aaron Seligman, Senior Advisor, Office of Academic & Student Affairs, UW System Administration
- Heidi Tuescher-Gille, Director of Admission, UW-Platteville
- Dan Younan, Program and Planning Analyst, Office of Policy Analysis & Research, UW System Administration
- Marc Young, Executive Director, Office of Undergraduate Admissions, UW-Milwaukee
- Jamie Zamjahn, Assistant Chancellor for Student Success, Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO), UW-River Falls
- Ebony Grice, Director of the Wisconsin Educational Opportunities Programs, Department of Public Instruction
- Andrea Donegan, Education Consultant, School Counseling Programs, Department of Public Instruction

**Consultants:**

- Dr. Jennifer Delaney, Associate Professor of Higher Education, Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- Dr. Taylor Odle, Assistant Professor, Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

## Direct Admissions Task Force: Background and Context

At the August 18, 2022 Education Committee meeting, Regent Chair Kyle Weatherly asked UW-Parkside Provost Rob Ducoffe to facilitate an initial conversation exploring the idea of direct admissions, which “side steps the typical admissions process by proactively and automatically admitting students to college based on a data match between K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions.”<sup>1</sup> The Committee discussion included academic experts, Professors Jennifer Delaney and Taylor Odle, and UW campus professionals and chancellors about the merits of direct admissions within the UW System. Presenters and speakers considered the potential benefits, implementation challenges, and lessons learned from other states and universities.

Before the meeting, Regent Weatherly had introduced the idea to Provosts, Chancellors, Student Affairs Officers, and other constituent groups as a strategy to increase college access and enrollment, especially from historically underrepresented groups. Several states including Idaho, Hawaii, and Minnesota have experimented with direct admissions programs. These opt-in pilot programs have been established both at individual universities and on systemwide levels.

Typically, in direct admissions programs, “all students are admitted to all open-access and non-selective institutions, while students who surpass a pre-identified threshold based on high school performance (such as GPA, standardized test scores, class rank, or a combination of measures) are also admitted to selective institutions. Students, parents, and high schools receive letters indicating a student has been admitted to a set of institutions that also outlines

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<sup>1</sup> Odle, T. K., Delaney, J. A. You are Admitted! Early Evidence on Enrollment from Idaho’s Direct Admissions System. [Research in High Education](#) (2022).

steps for how students can ‘claim their place’ using a common and free application. Programs can provide both tailored information for students and families about college and provides the guarantee of a place at a set of postsecondary institutions in the state.”<sup>2</sup> Direct admissions programs intend to simplify the application process by leveraging existing student data.<sup>3</sup> They can provide agency for students in the process, and allow admissions counselors to “have more time to spend on outreach, on financial aid packages and on helping students rather than evaluating them.”<sup>4</sup> Preliminary results from Idaho have shown 8-15% enrollment growth from in-state students.<sup>5</sup>

## Task Force Charge and Objectives

- Complete Regent Weatherly’s charge to AVP Johannes Britz.
- Develop a representative and inclusive task force.
- Develop a communication plan that will gather feedback from the campuses and allow the task force to report out to various stakeholder groups in a timely manner.
- Understand the current enrollment landscape across the system through current enrollment data and identify additional data needs.
- Define options for what direct admissions could look like within the UW System.
- Explore and understand the impact a direct admissions program would have on current policy and practice, and identify processes and estimated timelines for addressing any changes that would need to occur.
- Identify the resources needed to implement a direct admissions program, inclusive of system-wide resources, campuses resources and external stakeholder resources.
- Explore barriers or threats to implementing a direct admissions program.
- Provide potential solutions for any identified barriers or threats.

## Task Force Membership and Duration

The task force membership consists of broad representation from UW System campuses, UW System Administration and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Task Force members commit to meeting twice per month starting October 2022 until early Spring 2023.

## Task Force Meeting Guidelines

All meetings will be scheduled virtually and will be held twice monthly. Meeting notes will be recorded and saved in the TEAMS site. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please let Corina

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<sup>2</sup> Odle, T. K., Delaney, J. A. You are Admitted! Early Evidence on Enrollment from Idaho’s Direct Admissions System. [Research in High Education](#) (2022).

<sup>3</sup> Direct admissions show early success boosting enrollment in Idaho. [Higher Ed Dive](#). By Laura Spitalniak Feb. 4, 2022

<sup>4</sup> Direct Admissions Takes Off (July 18, 2022). [Inside Higher Education](#).

<sup>5</sup> Rethinking the Act of Applying to College: A tedious process that puts the onus on students may need an overhaul. [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#). By Eric Hoover, January 27, 2022

Diaz-Suazo know and share any feedback or comments in the documents uploaded to the TEAM site.

### Task Force Means of Communication

The task force membership will use the TEAMS group hosted by UW System Administration. Please upload working documents labeled as such and final documents to this TEAM's site.

Meetings facilitated by Zoom or TEAMS.