



Board of Regents

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TO: John R. Behling, President, UW System Board of Regents
Regina M. Millner, President Emeritus, UW System Board of Regents
Ray Cross, President, UW System

FROM: Regent Eve M. Hall and Regent Emeritus Edmund Manydeeds, Co-Chairs,
on behalf of the members of the Task Force on Campus Climate

SUBJECT: UW System Task Force on Campus Climate

The establishment of the UW System was predicated on a desire to serve and educate all of the state's citizens, as codified in our statutory mission: "The legislature finds it in the public interest to provide a system of higher education which enables students of all ages, backgrounds and levels of income to participate in the search for knowledge and individual development" (Section 36.01(1), Wis. Stats.).

The call to serve and educate all of the state's citizens is a central premise of the UW System's strategic framework, *2020FWD*. In its introduction, President Cross states that his dream for the UW System and the state of Wisconsin is a future in which "people in Wisconsin, regardless of their past experience or financial circumstances, can expect an opportunity to earn a college degree" Further, Cross expressed his hope that "students will have a dynamic educational experience in which excellence, originality, and different ways of thinking are encouraged, supported, and celebrated ..." (University of Wisconsin System, 2016).

Teaching and learning are at the heart of the UW System experience. Yet, for some of our students, the UW System experience has for far too long been associated with feelings of isolation, a pervasive sense of not belonging on campus, and conflict directed at them related to their race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or other differences. Research has shown the important role that campus climate plays in students' educational success, and how it can support or undermine achievement for certain student populations (Munoz, 2014).

Members of the UW System Task Force on Campus Climate (task force) believe that if the UW System is to serve and educate students of all races, ethnicities, genders, abilities, nationalities, sexualities, ages, cultures, backgrounds, identities and socio-economic levels, then we have a shared responsibility for providing an environment in which teaching and learning can flourish. With that in mind, we offer recommendations to address the compositional diversity and success of students, professional development and expectations for faculty and other employees, and responsibilities of those in leadership positions at the UW System and our institutions. **We believe it is imperative for all levels of leadership within the UW System to prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and campus climate, and to be held accountable for**

achieving positive outcomes related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and campus climate within the System and at each of our institutions.

The UW System Task Force on Campus Climate respectfully offers the recommendations below for your consideration. The recommendations are summarized here, and a detailed explanation of each is in the report that follows. While these recommendations identify key evidence-based strategies for UW System campuses to pursue, the ultimate success of the initiatives must also involve the continuous assessment of campus climate.

For **all levels of leadership** within the UW System, whether in our classrooms, labs, schools and colleges, academic and student services, administrative operations, or the UW System, the task force recommends:

- (a) UW institutions prioritize the review and assessment of hiring practices to ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion are priorities in the hiring process; (b) hiring authorities be held accountable for developing processes to effectively recruit a diverse pool of candidates and hire a more diverse workforce; and (c) UW institutions engage and retain diverse faculty and staff and have resources available to support the success of those faculty and staff, as desired by those employees (page 6);
- UW institutions prioritize the implementation and expansion of structured interactions, intergroup dialog programs, and academic curricula, using evidence-based practices, across a variety of settings including learning environments, student orientation, residence halls, and student life programming (page 8); and
- the UW System adopt a systemwide approach to assessing campus climate for all students, faculty, and staff by implementing a uniform assessment tool which allows institutions some flexibility to add questions, and that every institution administer a climate survey at least once every three years, with results to be reported to the Board of Regents (page 13).

To address **student** diversity and success, the task force recommends:

- UW System institutions prioritize building the compositional diversity of all students, including undergraduate, graduate, professional, special, and others, by increasing the enrollment of African American, American Indian, Hispanic/Latino(a), Southeast Asian American students, and students of other marginalized identity groups, and eliminating enrollment rate gaps (page 5);
- UW System Administration and UW institutions take a more proactive approach to preparing students of color for college by providing greater support for precollege and bridge programs, as well as strengthening collaborations with the Department of Public Instruction and the K-12 system to increase the graduation rates of high school students of color (page 5); and

- UW System institutions prioritize and increase efforts to attain equitable outcomes, for students at all levels, related to student engagement, retention, and success, and strategically implement initiatives to eliminate the retention rate and graduation rate gaps for students of color and students from other marginalized identity groups (page 5).

For **faculty and other employees**, the task force recommends:

- faculty and instructors participate in professional development on inclusive, equitable, and culturally-responsive pedagogical strategies, with the goal of creating inclusive learning environments in all UW-sponsored spaces (page 9);
- the UW System requires all employees to participate in professional development that enhances self-awareness and respect for social and cultural differences, and also promotes and reinforces their role in building a more positive campus climate (page 10); and
- the job responsibilities of every UW System employee include expectations related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and campus climate, and that performance evaluations address demonstrated skills and expertise related to diversity and inclusion (page 12-13).

Report of the UW System Task Force on Campus Climate

June 2017

The UW System Task Force on Campus Climate respectfully submits this report, which presents the recommendations resulting from our work and discussions.

President Millner and President Cross have both expressed how vitally important it is that each and every UW student receive a high-quality education that prepares them to succeed in a diverse society and global workforce. This is the foundation of the UW System's 2020*FWD* strategic framework which seeks to "increase the enrollment and success of individuals in all educational experiences throughout their lifetimes." (University of Wisconsin System, 2016)

A number of steps were taken last year in response to student concerns about the climate and incidents of hate or bias on UW campuses. Among these steps, President Millner announced the creation of the Task Force on Campus Climate. She made this decision in the context of student presentations to the Board of Regents about campus climate and diversity-related issues during the Board of Regents' April 2016 meeting. By October 2016, a task force had been formed with representation from throughout the UW System (Appendix A). The task force was charged with reviewing and analyzing current efforts related to campus climate, identifying evidence-based models and approaches, and developing recommendations to aid in the continuous assessment and improvement of campus climate (Appendix B).

Dr. Susan Rankin, a leading researcher on campus climate issues from Pennsylvania State University and a consultant who has worked with UW institutions on climate assessments, defines campus climate as "the current attitudes, behaviors and standards of faculty, staff, administrators and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities and potential." (Rankin, 2008) (See Appendix C for a complete list of definitions used in this report.) Research shows that how students experience their campus environment impacts both learning and developmental outcomes (Pascarella, 2005), and discriminatory environments negatively impact student learning (Cabrera, 1999).

While the impetus for the Task Force on Campus Climate grew out of concerns related to incidents of racism, task force members shared a strong commitment to ensuring that UW System addresses climate concerns for all marginalized students and employees.¹ Task force members agreed that the UW System must do more to effectively educate and serve our students of color, LGBTQ students, and other students of marginalized identities because it is the right thing to do and because it will benefit all UW students and the state as a whole.

¹ The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word marginalize as "to relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group." For the purposes of this report, the definition of students of marginalized identities includes individuals who have been marginalized on the basis of one or more aspects of their identity, including but not limited to: race, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, sexuality, age, and/or religion. Some individuals identify with more than one marginalized group, and may experience further marginalization as a result (Syracuse University Counseling Center).

Task force members noted many examples of existing and effective efforts within the UW System to address campus climate, some of which are included in the following discussion. These efforts are consistent with the 2020*FWD* strategic focus on the university experience which emphasizes teaching and learning, the importance of bridging boundaries, and ensuring success for all learners. Despite these many efforts, task force members agreed that there continue to be more opportunities for UW institutions to improve the climate for UW students. Some might suggest these are societal issues, not of UW System's making. However, the university still has an obligation to its students, faculty, and staff, as well as the state more broadly, to engage in activities within its purview to improve the climate on campuses which, hopefully, will also benefit society more broadly.

OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE CAMPUS CLIMATE

Task force members discussed at length the opportunities to improve campus climate for students of color, as well as LGBTQ students and other students of marginalized identities. These opportunities, discussed below, are grouped into four topic areas: compositional diversity; structured discussions and dialog; curriculum and professional development; and leadership and accountability.

COMPOSITIONAL DIVERSITY

First and foremost, our discussions made clear that students of color can feel isolated on UW campuses where the vast majority of the student body, as well as employees, are white. Students of color on predominantly white campuses also may be under additional pressure to explain and educate others who have questions about people who are not white.

From 2007 to 2016, UW System students identifying as students of color or international grew both in proportion (from 13% to 21%) and in number (from 22,420 to 36,498). The biggest increase was in the number of Hispanic/Latino(a) students, which more than doubled over the decade to 9,158 students in fall 2016, or 5% of all students. Despite these gains, at the majority of UW institutions, more than four out of five students identify as white. On most UW campuses, less than 5 percent of the student body is Hispanic/Latino(a), less than 3 percent is African American, less than 3 percent is either Southeast Asian American or Other Asian American, and less than 0.5 percent is American Indian. Systemwide, undergraduates had a lower percentage of students of color or international students (19% in fall 2016) than graduate and professional students (29%), primarily because of the greater proportion of international students at the graduate/professional level.

Racial/ethnic diversity among UW System students, especially undergraduates, is influenced in part by significant differences in the enrollment rates of Wisconsin high school graduates. In 2015, 34% of Wisconsin's white high school graduates enrolled in the UW System, compared to 22% of Hispanic/Latino(a) graduates and 11% of African American graduates and American Indian graduates. These participation gaps have persisted for more than two decades.

Nonresident and international students also contribute to diversity within the UW System. Nonresident students accounted for 6,899 students of color in fall 2016, although nonresidents were no more likely to be students of color (15%) than were Wisconsin resident students (16%). International students accounted for 9,159 or 5% of fall 2016 enrollments.

UW System data suggest that more effort is needed to retain students of color within the UW System. Retention rates for students of color increased for most racial/ethnic groups over the last decade. However, the most recent retention rate for students of color (77.3%) still lagged behind the rates of white students (82.3%), especially among African American (68.9%), American Indian (71.7%), Hispanic/Latino(a) (77.5%), and Southeast Asian (78.7%) students. Students of color and students of other marginalized identities who are the first in their family to attend college may struggle with the adjustment to college, and with finding the necessary resources and support to help with that adjustment. Also, many students who have to work to pay for their education may leave the campus on weekends to work, making it more difficult to engage them in campus activities.

White students experienced greater gains in four-year graduation rates over the last decade than students of color, with the graduation rate for white students increasing almost 10 percentage points (from 28.0% to 37.9%) while the rate for students of color increased by about half as much (from 17.6% to 23.2%).

The gap in six-year graduation rates between students of color and white students narrowed slightly over the decade, but the rate for students of color remained substantially lower in the most recent year, at 46.7% compared with 62.8% for white students. Among students of color, the lowest six-year graduate rates were experienced by African Americans (31.9%), American Indians (43.0%), Southeast Asian Americans (45.2%), and Hispanic/Latino(a)s (48.2%).

Task force members noted that demographic data regarding students of color and other marginalized identities are sometimes problematic because the data are often aggregated for all minority groups. This data aggregation leads to analyses and decisions that ignore the different experiences and outcomes of individuals within different demographic groups.

A lack of diversity among faculty and staff at UW institutions also was cited by our group as having a negative effect on campus climate. Having faculty, staff and administrators who are members of underrepresented minority groups or other marginalized identity groups is an important component of creating a supportive campus climate, as these employees can serve as role models for all students. Further, this diversity can be helpful in recruiting and retaining students of color and students of other marginalized identities.

UW System employees have become more racially/ethnically diverse over the last decade, with the proportion of employees identifying as persons of color or international increasing from 17% in 2007 to 20% in 2016. However, student populations with the largest gaps in participation and graduation—African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanic/Latino(a)s—find a relatively small proportion of employees who share their identities. African American and Hispanic/Latino(a) employees each were 3% of the UW System total in

2016, while less than 1% of employees identified as American Indian. At half of UW institutions, diversity was even lower with fewer than 1 in 10 employees identifying as persons of color or international in 2016. Systemwide, faculty were slightly more diverse than employees overall, with 21% persons of color or international in fall 2016. Asian Americans (11%) were the largest faculty group of color, followed by Hispanic/Latino(a)s, African Americans, and internationals, each at 3%.

Current Efforts

Task force members identified several examples of how campuses have effectively increased the compositional diversity of students. Some efforts focus on the recruitment of low-income and underrepresented students through pipeline programs for elementary and middle school students, summer-bridge programs for incoming students to help ease the transition from high school to college, and financial literacy and college access workshops for families in their communities. Student retention efforts include a focus on lowering drop-fail-withdraw (DFW) rates for students of color through department-level analyses of rates, and facilitated dialogs on the relationship between race and academic success. Other retention efforts focused on bringing underrepresented graduate students together for a range of social, academic, professional development, and research-related activities, while also providing faculty and peer support.

Task force members also identified efforts to increase the compositional diversity of faculty and staff. Examples include unconscious bias training for faculty and staff search committees, an academic center that supports First Nations teacher education programs, a research center that has become a national leader in research and training around unconscious bias in hiring, and systematic efforts to “grow our own” to encourage and recruit recent graduates and alumni to apply for campus employment opportunities.

Despite these and many other efforts to address the compositional diversity of students and employees of UW institutions, task force members agreed that additional action is necessary due to current compositional diversity, climate issues raised by students and employees, and compelling research.

Need for Action

Research shows that a diverse student body provides a strong basis for the development of leadership and critical thinking skills (Milem J., 2003). Students at campuses with higher concentrations of students of color report fewer incidents of stereotyping and discrimination (Nunez, 2016). Research also shows that the likelihood that students will engage with students who are from different backgrounds increases as the compositional diversity of the campus increases (Chang, 1999).

The diversity of faculty, staff and administrators is another important component of creating a supportive campus climate. The greater the diversity an institution possesses in terms of students, faculty or staff ranks, the greater the opportunity to engage with someone different than one’s self and explore a broader collection of experiences, ideas, and opinions (Hurtado, 2003) (Milem J., 2005). The literature related to the diversification of faculty has been

especially clear about the important ways a diverse faculty serves an institution and its students. Institutions with a diverse faculty support more interdisciplinary work, offer a broader range of course offerings, are more student-centered in their learning and teaching approaches, and contribute to an overall climate on campus that is more responsive to students' social and intellectual needs (Milem, F. 2003). Research on organizational performance has shown that diversity also contributes to higher creativity and innovation, better problem solving, and more organizational flexibility, providing diverse organizations with a competitive advantage in the marketplace (Cox, 1993).

Efforts to increase the compositional diversity of students, faculty, and staff are consistent with 2020FWD's strategic focus on the educational pipeline. As articulated in 2020FWD, by strengthening the educational pipeline, we maximize the number of students, including students of color, who enter and remain in the educational system and increase the number of college graduates in the state (University of Wisconsin System, 2016).

The task force concluded that the UW System must do more to increase the compositional diversity of students and employees, providing all students and employees with opportunities to engage with others from different backgrounds and cultures and to explore a broader set of experiences and ideas. ***The task force recommends that UW System institutions prioritize building the compositional diversity of all students, including undergraduate, graduate, professional, special, and others, by increasing the enrollment of African American, American Indian, Hispanic/Latino(a) and Southeast Asian American students and students of other marginalized identity groups, and eliminating enrollment rate gaps.***

Additional recruitment tools are needed to increase the enrollment of students of color and other students from non-dominant identity groups. Pipeline and summer bridge programs are an important component of increasing the undergraduate enrollment of students of color, lower-income students, and first-generation students. The task force concluded that the UW System must do more to help Wisconsin's K-12 students aspire to enroll in and be successful at UW institutions. ***The task force recommends that the UW System Administration and UW institutions take a more proactive approach to preparing students of color for college by providing greater support for precollege and bridge programs as well as strengthening collaborations with the Department of Public Instruction and the K-12 system to increase the high school graduation rates of students of color.*** These programs should be adequately staffed and funded to support students entering college, and be better coordinated, organized and shared across the UW System. Task force members emphasized that UW institutions also need to continue outreach efforts to families and students, and to help enrolled students successfully adjust to college. Finally, task force members agreed that more needs to be done to encourage students to aspire to and continue on to graduate and professional school.

The task force further recommends that UW System institutions prioritize and increase efforts to attain equitable outcomes related to student engagement, retention, and success, and strategically implement initiatives to eliminate the current retention rate and graduation rate gaps for students of color and students from other marginalized identity groups and at all student levels. Examples of possible strategies could include the following:

- a. assess learning environments for patterns and practices that impact retention and success;
- b. ensure that students of color and students from other marginalized identity groups are equally represented in high impact practices and other student engagement efforts;
- c. provide opportunities for paid employment or “work-study” jobs on campus, to keep students of marginalized identities engaged on campus;
- d. provide culturally-specific programs and services to help and support students and families of marginalized identities, including but not limited to mental health services;
- e. increase scholarships and emergency funds for students of marginalized identities; and
- f. disaggregate student demographic data for underrepresented groups, wherever possible, and identify opportunities and challenges related to recruitment, engagement, retention and success.

As for employees, the task force concluded that UW System institutions must do more to increase the compositional diversity of faculty, staff and administrators. ***The task force recommends that: (a) UW institutions prioritize the review and assessment of hiring practices to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are priorities in the hiring process; (b) hiring authorities be held accountable for developing processes to effectively recruit a diverse pool of candidates and hire a more diverse workforce; and (c) UW institutions engage and retain diverse faculty and staff and make resources available to support the success of faculty and staff, as desired by those employees.***

Chancellors and other administrators could be expected, for example, to implement strategies for achieving compositional diversity such as the following:

- a. conduct a thorough review of required qualifications for jobs posted to ensure they do not negatively impact certain under-represented groups;
- b. encourage institutions, and departments within institutions, to “grow their own” faculty by supporting, mentoring, and encouraging students to pursue a career in higher education;
- c. encourage and support joint hires or cluster hires, hiring multiple faculty at one time;
- d. review and evaluate existing promotion and tenure process policies to identify barriers in retaining faculty of color; and
- e. require chancellors to report to the Board of Regents regarding their progress in achieving compositional diversity goals.

UW System Administration can facilitate the efforts of UW institutions by identifying and sharing promising practices for the hiring and retention of diverse faculty and staff.

Other universities and university systems have undertaken similar efforts to address the compositional diversity of their students and employees. In 2016, the University of Michigan released a strategic plan for diversity, equity and inclusion—Many Voices Our Michigan. This plan grew out of campus-wide studies that (1) concluded that the university needed to do more to recruit and retain a diverse student body, faculty and staff; and (2) identified the need for more

robust cultural skills training across all campus constituencies to help create a more inclusive campus environment. Similarly, Penn State's strategic plan for 2016-2020 includes goals for creating a welcoming and inclusive campus climate, as well as advancing and building a diverse student body, workforce, and management. It will be important to continue monitoring these and similar efforts elsewhere for new ideas.

STRUCTURED INTERACTIONS AND DIALOG

Task force members discussed at length the importance of providing intentional opportunities for students to meaningfully engage with people of different social identities. Without deliberate efforts, students tend to stay in their own groups and do not naturally push themselves to engage with and learn about someone from a different background. Or, interactions are not as productive as they could be, even leading to arguments at times. This tendency to stay within one's own group can negatively impact a student's overall learning, knowledge of other cultures, and ability to effectively navigate an increasingly diverse society. As also noted in *2020FWD*, the UW System must prepare students to compete in a global and diverse workforce.

Current Efforts

Task force members identified a variety of existing programs that provide opportunities for structured discussions and interactions regarding social group differences. Some UW institutions offer residential living and learning communities that specifically focus on diversity and inclusion, academic areas or interests for multicultural students, or social and identity interests. One institution offers a counseling psychology course focused on educational equity and diversity, and includes group dialogs to further students' learning and understanding. Another institution offers similar dialog programs for faculty and staff. Many institutions offer spaces, environments, and activities for students to interact based on identities or common interests, as well as first-year experience programs. At least one institution offers a certificate program that focuses on cultures and diversity and provides ways for people to bridge differences through facilitated discussions, which in turn often leads to other types of positive interactions. Despite these and other efforts, task force members agreed that institutions need to provide more opportunities for these types of structured dialogs and interactions.

Need for Action

In addition to bringing students from diverse backgrounds together, researchers have also suggested that campuses must "create additional opportunities for students to interact across racial and other social differences." It is especially important for institutions to intentionally create these opportunities "because it is easier for students to gravitate toward people of the same racial background" (Milem J., 2005). Nurturing cross-racial interactions that contribute to learning and reducing prejudice is an important component of promoting inclusive environments and advancing the educational benefits of diversity. However, for these interactions to contribute to student learning and growth, the interactions must "challenge students' preexisting stereotypes, beliefs and world views" (Garces & Jayakumar, 2016).

In teaching students how to bridge boundaries, “the UW System can encourage greater understanding of differing perspectives and provide the necessary skills to communicate across boundaries,” as noted in *2020FWD* (University of Wisconsin System, 2016).

Task force members agreed that UW institutions need to provide more structured opportunities for students to engage with one another across the social, cultural or ideological differences that exist between them. ***The task force recommends that UW institutions prioritize the implementation and expansion of deliberately structured interactions, intergroup dialog programs, and academic curricula using evidence-based practices across a variety of settings, including learning environments, student orientation, residence halls, and student life programming.*** Task force members agreed that these types of programs and opportunities are essential for first-year students, but should also include other undergraduate students, as well as graduate and professional students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Other university systems are considering similar efforts. The University of Michigan is considered a leader in the field of facilitated dialogs through its Program in Intergroup Relations. A recent audit of the University of Missouri System’s efforts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion offered recommendations to explore models to elicit the participation of underrepresented students and expose white students and students of color to each other. Examples offered in the audit report included: the creation of learning communities that explore a common topic; collaborative learning and study groups within a course; and requiring students to take two or more linked courses as a group, working closely with one another and with their professors. The audit also recommended that institutions encourage more connection with organizations and groups across race, class, culture, religion and ability.

CURRICULUM AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Task force members discussed opportunities for engagement specifically in academic contexts. They observed that classrooms and other learning environments on campus, such as research laboratories and clinics for graduate and professional students can provide very different experiences for students of color. These students may experience a sense of isolation, with others making assumptions based on a student’s race, ethnicity, or appearance; or general lack of awareness of the history, perspectives, and reality of people of color.

It is important for educators to not only master the subject they are teaching or overseeing, but to do so using inclusive and culturally-responsive pedagogical strategies. It is also important for all campus staff to be trained on implicit bias, microaggressions and working with students of color and other marginalized identities. Task force members noted that developing the cultural competency of all employees and students within the UW System will help to improve the climate for students of color, LGBTQ students, and students of other marginalized identities, and will also benefit the larger student body and employees by enhancing their abilities and knowledge about effectively interacting with and allying with people of different cultures.

Current Efforts

Task force members identified some current efforts related to curriculum and professional development. At least one UW institution has made a concerted effort to address drop-fail-withdraw (DFW) rates for students of color through department-level analysis of DFW rates. Another institution uses a student-created film describing the experiences of students of color on campus and in the classroom as a professional development tool to help faculty, staff, and administrators create an environment in which students feel safe, valued, and included. One institution has developed workshops to help students, faculty, and staff identify and minimize the effect of biases on that campus.

Need for Action

Classroom and research spaces can and should be environments where diversity, and the benefits of diversity, can flourish and positively impact campus climate. Research has shown that student outcomes are positively impacted when a classroom is engaged with diversity, particularly when faculty, course content, and pedagogy are considered in conjunction with the compositional diversity of the students (Milem J., 2005). Building conditions for “curricula that are responsive to the realities of students of color, instead of the common narratives that tend to exclude non-white perspectives,” is an important component of creating a supportive campus climate (Nunez, 2016). Pedagogical and advising/mentoring strategies that encourage student engagement, and that are culturally inclusive and responsive, will provide educational benefits for all students, not only students of color or students of marginalized identities. Task force members discussed at length the importance of ensuring that classroom environments and other learning environments are conducive to learning for all students.

Professors, researchers, and instructors who are prepared to provide meaningful opportunities for students to develop cultural competence will help produce the diverse and inclusive workforce that employers need. The UW System plays an essential role in ensuring that Wisconsin’s workforce has the skills needed to adapt to changing demographics and a global economy. Many employers place significant value on employees who can demonstrate that they are able to work effectively with people from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds. While employers may seek diverse and culturally competent employees for a variety of reasons, this ability is increasingly viewed as a significant factor for achieving business success (Bersin, 2016).

The task force recommends that faculty and instructors participate in professional development on inclusive, equitable and culturally-responsive pedagogical strategies, with the goal of creating inclusive learning environments throughout UW System campuses and remote or virtual learning spaces. Professional development for faculty and instructors is particularly important for those teaching gateway courses that are often critical to the retention of underrepresented students and students of color. However, professional development should not be limited to introductory courses and should be provided to all faculty and instructors teaching any undergraduate or graduate courses. Other opportunities could include offering incentives to faculty for developing and implementing new pedagogies; providing administrative time to

participate in professional development opportunities; and possibly realigning salary incentives, promotion, and tenure guidelines.

UW System Administration can support these efforts by identifying high-quality, effective professional development opportunities, and by providing institutions with a toolkit for operationalizing professional development requirements. System Administration can also facilitate the sharing of model pedagogical practices among UW institutions.

The task force recommends that the UW System require all employees to participate in professional development training that not only enhances their own self-awareness and respect for social and cultural differences, but also promotes and reinforces their role in building a more positive campus climate. Every employee should be expected to successfully undertake this type of professional development on a continuous basis rather than on a one-time basis. Administrators should ensure that all employees are provided with time to periodically complete the required training, and might also consider requiring students to take a cultural competency course or offering similar content through other means.

Other universities and university systems have undertaken similar efforts related to curriculum and training. The University of Michigan is creating professional development programs to meet the unique pedagogical needs of each school and college to make learning more inclusive and effective across a diverse student body. In 2015, the State University of New York Board of Trustees approved a policy on diversity, equity and inclusion, which requires the development of tools to provide “cultural competency” training to campus leadership teams, faculty, staff, and system administration. The audit report on the University of Missouri system recommends training and support for faculty members and administrators in cross-cultural competence, inclusive teaching methodologies, and how to create an inclusive teaching and learning environment, and the sharing of teaching approaches that include diversity as a lens for examining issues within a given course, such as directed readings or projects that incorporate issues of diversity into an established course structure.

LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Task force members identified a number of challenges related to leadership—at all levels of the UW System and institutions—that must be addressed if UW institutions are to make progress toward improving campus climate. Task force members questioned whether there are system-level expectations of UW institutions related to campus climate, diversity, equity, and inclusion, or strategies to address climate, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Task force members believe that the job responsibilities of every employee of the UW System should include climate, diversity, equity, and inclusion; and every employee should be evaluated on their performance in these areas through the employee evaluation process, the promotion/tenure process, and/or course evaluations.

In addition, those in leadership roles have a responsibility for holding other people accountable. Plan 2008, the UW System’s plan for diversity adopted in 1998, stated that institutions would be held to account for accomplishing realistic goals and initiatives through the

UW System’s annual accountability report and through other means. The plan also stated the purpose of accountability “is not to lay blame for failure, or to brag about success, but to find solutions that can be shared with all faculty, staff, administrators and students, as well as all employees, alumni, donors, legislators, and others who hold a stake in the success of the UW System.”

Task force members identified resource limitations—both financial and staffing resources—as a challenge in addressing climate issues. During a time of limited resources, good ideas, programs, and plans either are not implemented or are the first items eliminated when budgets are tight. Task force members also cited a lack of mental health resources and other supportive services for students, employees of color and other marginalized identities as a challenge for serving these populations and addressing climate issues.

Despite competing priorities for resources, college and university presidents/chancellors and other leaders play a critical role when it comes to establishing a truly “multicultural university.” Without their commitment to the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion, the system of higher education in this country will never fulfill its potential as “the institution most fundamental to economic and social advancement” (Rosser, 1990). The notion of institutional commitment—which university and college presidents have a strong hand in establishing—can have an impact on student life and learning. Researchers have found that at institutions where such a commitment was perceived as strong, students of color reported less racial tension and higher grade point averages, as did their white counterparts. In institutions where the commitment was perceived as weak, students reported higher levels of racial hostility, discrimination, and alienation (Milem J., 2005).

Current Efforts

Approximately ten years ago, UW System Administration initiated a process for assessing campus climate at each institution. Some of these efforts continue today. Plan 2008 included a recommendation for UW institutions to use periodic surveys of students to continue to measure and report student opinion about campus climates and how they can be improved. Between 2008 and 2011, nearly all of the UW institutions administered a systemwide climate assessment survey tool developed by Rankin & Associates to students and employees. Since that time, some institutions have continued to administer periodic climate assessment surveys, while others have not. Some have modified the original survey instrument, while others have chosen to use a different survey instrument.

Task force members considered and discussed whether the UW System should use a uniform campus climate assessment tool that all institutions would be required to use, yet also provide some flexibility for campuses to include questions that address issues specific to their campuses. Members noted that campus climate assessments should not be solely an exercise in data collection; survey results should be analyzed and used to address identified problems, as well as to identify the impact and effectiveness of climate initiatives that have been implemented.

Need for Action

In a 2016 article for *Higher Education Today*, William (Brit) Kirwan, Chancellor Emeritus of the University System of Maryland, addressed the level of unrest related to diversity and inclusion on many of the nation's university campuses. Kirwan said "efforts to address the underlying causes of the protests cry out for presidential leadership, leadership that permeates the entire campus community so that diversity and inclusion goals are shared with all and progress toward them becomes a prominent measure of the university's success." Kirwan also said that while it is necessary for leaders to be visible on issues of inclusion, visibility in and of itself is insufficient. "The essential rhetoric must be coupled with resources and infrastructure to buttress a president's commitment so that there is a persistent and consistent attention paid to nurturing an inclusive culture throughout the institution" (Kirwan, W., 2016).

The central premise of *2020FWD* is that the UW System has an "opportunity to lead" and be the driving force to help the state overcome challenges related to changing demographics and significant obstacles to economic growth. In the introduction to *2020FWD*, President Cross noted that "the UW System is widely recognized as one of the finest and most respected systems of public higher education in America." If we are to maintain this reputation and be the driving force that helps the state overcome its challenges, leadership—at both the system and institutional level—must be a driving force in addressing the challenges we have related to campus climate.

The work that needs to be done will require sustained commitment and strategic coordination. Coordination of diversity efforts within an institution would allow institutions to maximize the benefits of its diversity work. In his discussion with task force members, Dr. Mitchell Chang, Professor of Education from the University of California-Los Angeles, identified several factors that make it challenging for campuses to maximize their diversity efforts. He noted that diversity efforts are often poorly resourced. In addition, because diversity efforts are often the result of campus unrest, efforts may be piecemeal, fragmented, and redundant. For example, programs for students may target only new freshmen or students living in university housing, and not reach others such as transfer students, upperclassmen, and graduate and professional students who are also dealing with climate issues and/or could benefit from greater cultural competency. Coordination of efforts between UW institutions, as well as sharing of information and effective programming, would provide opportunities for institutions to learn from each other and maximize efforts within the UW System.

The task force concluded that those in leadership roles need to communicate and demonstrate that diversity, equity, and inclusion are important, and that campus climate matters. For those in leadership roles in the classroom and other learning environments, such as faculty, instructors, teaching assistants, etc., it is imperative that they model appropriate behavior in all their interactions with students and colleagues. Task force members discussed the need for all levels of leaders within the UW System to prioritize climate issues—leaders in our classrooms, labs, and other learning environments, in our schools and colleges, in our academic and student services, in our administrative operations, and at every level of our institutions and our system. ***Therefore, the task force recommends that all levels of leadership within the UW System prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and campus climate and be held accountable for***

achieving positive outcomes related to diversity, equity, inclusion and climate. The task force further recommends that the job responsibilities of every UW System employee include expectations related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and campus climate; and that performance evaluations address demonstrated skills and contributions related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Task force members discussed the importance of the entire campus community sharing in the responsibility for providing a welcoming and respectful campus climate and a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, task force members also noted that holding people accountable for actions or inactions, and policies and practices that impact campus climate, diversity, equity, and inclusion, is equally important. Specific examples of areas that might be addressed include:

- a. addressing and eliminating enrollment, retention and graduation rate gaps for students of color, lower-income students, and first-generation students;
- b. examining and addressing patterns in DFW rates (the rate at which students receive D-grades, F-grades, or withdraw from courses) among students;
- c. assessing hiring, promotion, and tenure practices within departments to determine if UW institutions are doing enough to attract the highest quality talent available and retain that talent over the long term;
- d. participating in professional development related to cultural competency, inclusive and culturally-responsive pedagogical and mentoring strategies, creating inclusive learning environments, implicit bias, and working with students of marginalized identities;
- e. administering climate surveys, and developing and implementing strategies to address the results; and
- f. evaluating classroom climate and efforts of faculty/instructors to address climate.

Campus climate assessments offer a number of important insights into the life of a college or university, including how different students, faculty, and staff experience the institution; where an institution's strengths and weaknesses lie when it comes to diversity; and where policies, practices or programs can be most effective in creating greater engagement and interaction across a wide spectrum of differences (Edgert, 1994). Research suggests that institutions should regularly assess campus racial climates to learn about and address the experiences of historically excluded students (Garces & Jayakumar, 2016) and then take action by studying the results and formulating actions based on the data (Nunez, 2016).

The task force recommends that the UW System adopt a systemwide approach to assessing campus climate for all students, faculty, and staff by implementing the use of a uniform assessment tool that allows institutions some flexibility to add questions. The task force further recommends that every institution administer a climate survey at least once every three years, with results to be reported to the Board of Regents. UW System Administration can support these efforts by working with institutions to develop or identify a quality survey tool, analyzing results, developing strategies to address survey results, and preparing regular reports to the Board.

Other universities and university systems have found it necessary to emphasize the importance of leadership and accountability in addressing climate and diversity issues. One of the key recommendations in the audit report of the University of Missouri was to ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion is integrated into all key aspects of the system's and campuses' strategic plans, with timelines and accountability measures for the leadership and high-level administrators and metrics that include levels of engagement and a sense of inclusion for students, faculty, and staff. The audit report also included a recommendation to evaluate leaders based on their understanding, awareness, skills and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Task force members discussed and considered several strategies for addressing campus climate, and ultimately decided to limit their recommendations to those strategies that are likely to have the greatest impact on improving campus climate. However, task force members recognize that various levels of leadership within UW institutions can implement some strategies immediately that will help to improve campus climate. Examples of such strategies include:

- speaking out in support of institutional diversity efforts and initiatives and the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion and a positive campus climate for all;
- incorporating some measure of inclusivity and climate into course evaluations and sharing the feedback with faculty and instructors;
- including in all course syllabi and program handbooks a statement that sets the tone for creating an inclusive learning environment, demonstrates that the faculty or instructors value and respect difference in intellectual exchange, and promotes an awareness of campus conversations regarding diversity (Brown University, n.d.); and
- moving quickly to review results of most recent campus climate surveys and developing strategies to address negative survey results.

CONCLUSION

The UW System has a long history of pursuing educational excellence and diversity. In 1988, the UW System was the first university system in the country to adopt a long-range plan for racial and ethnic diversity. This was followed by several other long-term plans designed to increase educational opportunity for underrepresented groups, including Plan 2008, adopted as a ten-year plan in 1998.

Our conversations as a Task Force made clear that many of the goals of Plan 2008 are still applicable today. These goals pertain to increasing the number students, as well as faculty, staff and administrators of color; closing gaps in retention and graduation rates; fostering environments and course development that enhance learning and a respect for diversity; and improving accountability of the UW System and UW institutions.

Teaching and learning are at the heart of the UW System experience. In order to build and maintain a strong community of teaching and learning, UW System institutions must provide

a climate where teaching and learning can flourish. We live in an increasingly global economy and multicultural society. Providing a healthy campus climate is essential to ensuring that all of our students, faculty, and staff are well equipped to thrive, both professionally and socially, in this multicultural society.

We would hope to reconvene this task force in the next 12 to 18 months to consider how our climates have changed and the status of our report recommendations. We appreciate having been appointed to consider these issues which are so important to the future of the UW System and the state of Wisconsin.

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TASK FORCE ON CAMPUS CLIMATE

INSTITUTION	NAME	TITLE
Task Force Members:		
	Eve Hall	Regent Co-Chair
	Edmund Manydeeds	Regent Co-Chair
Eau Claire	David Shih	Associate Professor, Department of English
Eau Claire	Ashley Sukhu	Student and President of the Student Body
Green Bay	Lisa Poupart	Associate Professor, Humanistic Studies
La Crosse	Crystal Champion	Counselor, Counseling and Testing Center
Madison	Allison Ebben	Student
Madison	LaRuth McAfee	Assistant Dean of Diversity, Inclusion and Funding, Graduate School
Madison	Katrina Morrison	Student
Milwaukee	Joan Prince	Vice Chancellor, Division of Global Inclusion and Engagement
Milwaukee	Eli Walker	Student
Oshkosh	Kevin Cathey	Student and President of the Black Student Union
Oshkosh	Jordan Landry	Interim Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning; Associate Professor, Department of English
Parkside	Shewanna Brown-Johnson	Nurse Practitioner, Student Health and Counseling Center
Platteville	Dennis Shields	Chancellor
River Falls	Gregg Heinselman	Senior Student Affairs Officer/Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Stevens Point	Michelle Fournier	Coordinator for Gender and Sexuality Outreach Services
Stevens Point	Ta Xiong	Student
Stout	Patrick Guilfoile	Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
Stout	Markie Twist	Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies Department
Superior	Monica Roth Day	Associate Professor, Social Work
Whitewater	Natalie Arriaga	Student and President of Latinos Unidos
Whitewater	Tom Rios	Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
Colleges/Extension	Malcolm Brett	Director, Division of Broadcast and Media Innovations
Task Force Staff:		
Office of the Board of Regents	Tou Her*	Program and Policy Analyst
Office of the Board of Regents	Jess Lathrop	Special Assistant
Office of Academic Affairs	Christine Navia	Senior Academic Planner
Office of the Board of Regents	Jane Radue	Executive Director and Corporate Secretary

*Tou Her retired from the Board of Regents Office 1-3-17.



Board of Regents

Appendix B

1860 Van Hise Hall
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DATE: October 24, 2016

TO: Natalie Arriaga, Student, UW-Whitewater
Markie Blumer, Associate Professor, UW-Stout
Malcolm Brett, Director, Div. of Broadcast & Media Innovations, UW-Extension
Shewanna Brown-Johnson, Nurse Practitioner, UW-Parkside
Kevin Cathey, Student, UW-Oshkosh
Crystal Champion, Counselor, UW-La Crosse
Michelle Fournier, Coordinator, Gender and Sexuality Outreach Services, UW-Stevens Point
Patrick Guilfoile, Provost and Vice Chancellor, UW-Stout
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Tom Rios, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, UW-Whitewater
Monica Roth-Day, Associate Professor, UW-Superior
Dennis Shields, Chancellor, UW-Platteville
David Shih, Associate Professor, UW-Eau Claire
Ashley Sukhu, Student and President of the Student Body, UW-Eau Claire
Ta Xiong, Student, UW-Stevens Point

FROM: Regina M. Millner, Regent President
Ray Cross, UW System President

SUBJECT: Task Force on Campus Climate – Appointments and First Meeting

As we announced earlier this year, we are appointing a task force to examine the climate for students on our UW campuses. Having received Chancellors' nominations for membership, we are pleased to appoint you as members of the Task Force on Campus Climate. We are continuing to work with some institutions to identify additional student appointees and will share the definitive task force membership list once it is finalized. Regents Eve Hall and Edmund Manydeeds have graciously agreed to co-chair the task force.

The co-chairs are eager to begin; they have scheduled the first meeting for Friday, **November 11, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to noon**, in Madison. More information will follow, but please set aside this date. While we strongly encourage you to attend this and future task force meetings in person, staff will arrange for members to call in, should this be necessary.

The charge of the task force will be discussed and affirmed at the first meeting. Our current expectation is that the task force will address the following:

1. Review and analyze UW institutions' current efforts related to campus climate.
 - a. How have UW institutions successfully created more inclusive and welcoming learning environments?
 - b. What key challenges have UW institutions encountered in their efforts to improve campus climate?

2. Identify evidence-based models and approaches that have been effective in improving the climate on campus that could be implemented by UW institutions.
 - a. What effective institutional programs, practices or policies currently in use within the UW System could be shared or replicated at other UW institutions?
 - b. What effective programs, practices or policies at colleges and universities outside of Wisconsin that could be considered for implementation by UW institutions?

3. Recommend changes in practice at UW institutions that will aid in the continuous assessment and improvement of campus climate.
 - a. What kinds of institutional assessment and evaluation processes should be in place so UW institutions can regularly measure their progress in improving campus climate?
 - b. What common student outcomes might be defined so that progress can be measured across all of the UW institutions?

We sincerely appreciate your willingness to participate in this important effort. We look forward to the results of your work.

cc: Regent Eve Hall
Regent Ed Manydeeds
UW System Board of Regents
UW Chancellors
President's Cabinet

Appendix C

Definitions

Campus climate: The current attitudes, behaviors and standards of faculty, staff, administrators and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities and potential.

Cultural competence: A commitment to social justice and inclusivity characterized by behaviors, attitudes and policies which foster mutual adaptation to cultural differences and enhance effective cross-cultural relationships.ⁱ

Culturally responsive pedagogy: A pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning. Culturally-responsive teaching practices include the following principles: communication of high expectations; active teaching methods; practitioner as facilitator; inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse students; cultural sensitivity; reshaping the curriculum or delivery of services; student-controlled discourse; and small group interaction.ⁱⁱ

Diversity: The condition of having or being composed of differing elements. The inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization.ⁱⁱⁱ

Equity: Fairness and justice in allocating resources, opportunity, treatment and success. This is different from equality. Equality means getting the same, equity means getting what is fair.ⁱ Dr. David Shih suggests that in the context of the UW System, the definition of equity is that state of an institution whereby outcomes are not predictable by social group identity.

Intergroup dialog programs: Programs that promote greater engagement and understanding between students of differing social and cultural identities by bringing them together to talk with one another over a sustained period of time. Intergroup dialog has been found to be an effective means of preparing college students with the knowledge and skills necessary for living and working in increasingly diverse world.

Learning environment: Includes traditional classrooms as well as other settings in which learning occurs such as laboratories, on-line classrooms, placements, etc.

Marginalized identities: Individuals who have been marginalized on the basis of one or more aspects of their identity, including but not limited to: race, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, sexuality, age, and /or religion. Some individuals identify with more than one marginalized group, and may experience further marginalization as a result.

Microaggression: Brief and commonplace everyday exchanges that communicate hostile, derogatory, denigrating or negative slights and insults to certain individuals because of their group membership. They are often automatic and well-intended.ⁱ

Students: Includes all students in the UW System including undergraduate students, graduate students, and professional students.

ⁱ Source: UW-La Crosse Campus Climate website, Diversity Terminology, <https://www.uwlax.edu/campus-climate/resources/diversity-terminology/>

ⁱⁱ Source: Ladson-Billings (1994). *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: Merriam-Webster dictionary, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/diversity>