

**The UW System's Participation in
*Liberal Education and America's
Promise (LEAP)***

Rebecca Martin, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

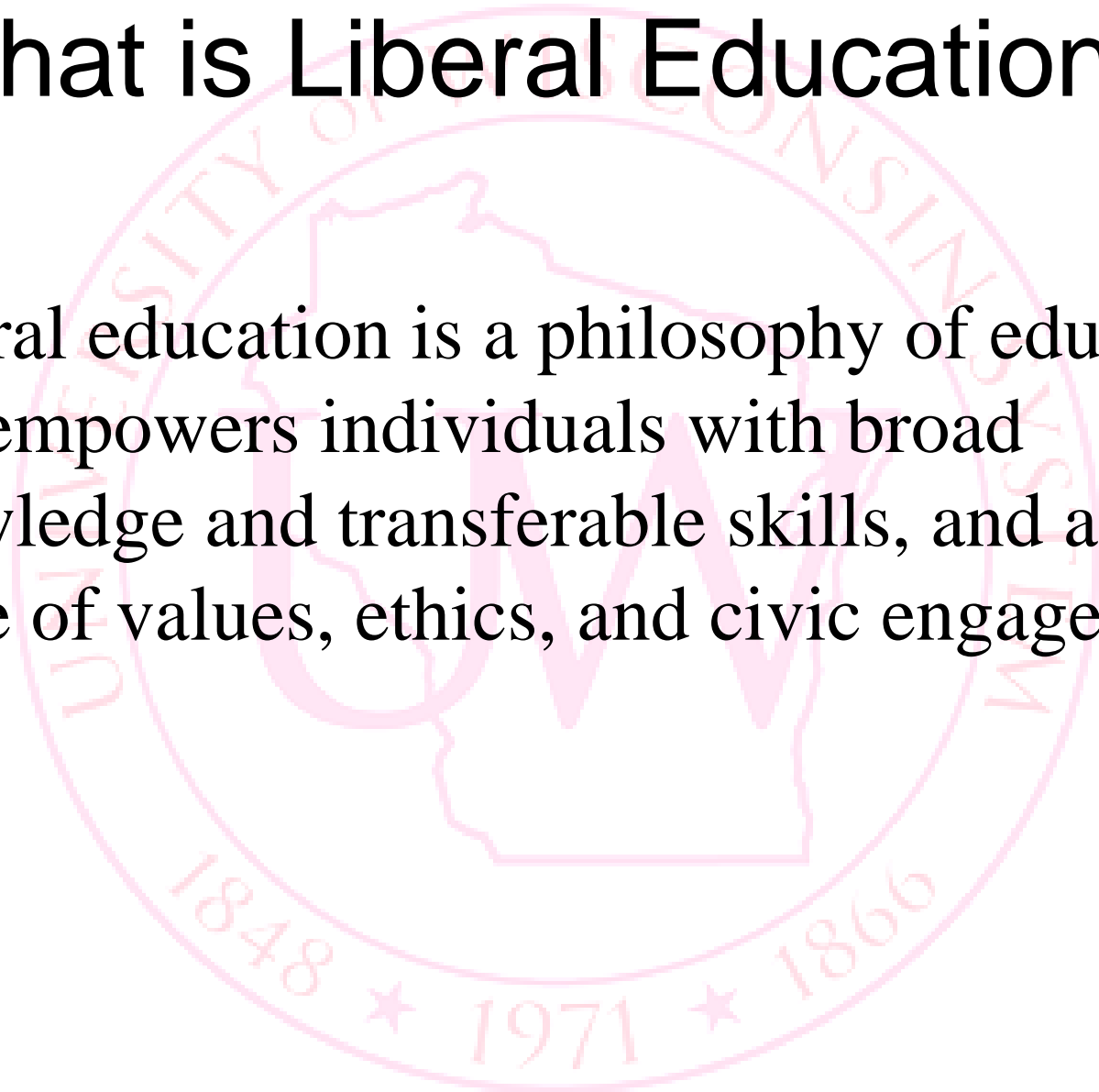
Lane Earns, Provost and Vice Chancellor, UW-Oshkosh

Don Christian, Dean of Arts & Sciences, UW-Eau Claire

Board of Regents
October 4, 2007
UW-River Falls

What is Liberal Education?

Liberal education is a philosophy of education that empowers individuals with broad knowledge and transferable skills, and a strong sense of values, ethics, and civic engagement.



What is Liberal Education?

- Prepares graduates both for work and for civic leadership.
- Includes general education and more in-depth study in a major.
- Is global and embraces the diversity of people, ideas and experiences.

Why Now?

“The liberal arts make us ‘competitive’ in the ways that matter most. They make us wise, thoughtful and appropriately humble. They help our human potential to bloom. And they are the foundation for a democratic civic polity, where each of us bears equal rights and responsibilities.”

Chester E. Finn Jr. and Diane Ravitch, “Not by Geeks Alone,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 8, 2007.



Employers Endorse Key Elements Of a Liberal Education

*% saying colleges should put
more emphasis on each learning outcome*

Concepts and new developments in science & technology	82%
Teamwork skills and the ability to collaborate with others in diverse group settings	76%
The ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world settings through internships or other hands-on experiences	73%
The ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing	73%



Employers Endorse Key Elements Of a Liberal Education

*% saying colleges should put
more emphasis on each learning outcome*

Critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills	73%
Global issues and developments and their implications for the future	72%
The ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources	70%
The ability to be innovative and think creatively	70%

The Essential Learning Outcomes

- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- ★ Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
- ★ Intellectual and Practical Skills
- ★ Personal and Social Responsibility
- ★ Integrative Learning



LEAP in Wisconsin

The LEAP Campaign in Wisconsin is working to address the topic of student preparation through a variety of coordinated strategies, focused on:

- Campus action
- Leadership
- Public outreach and advocacy

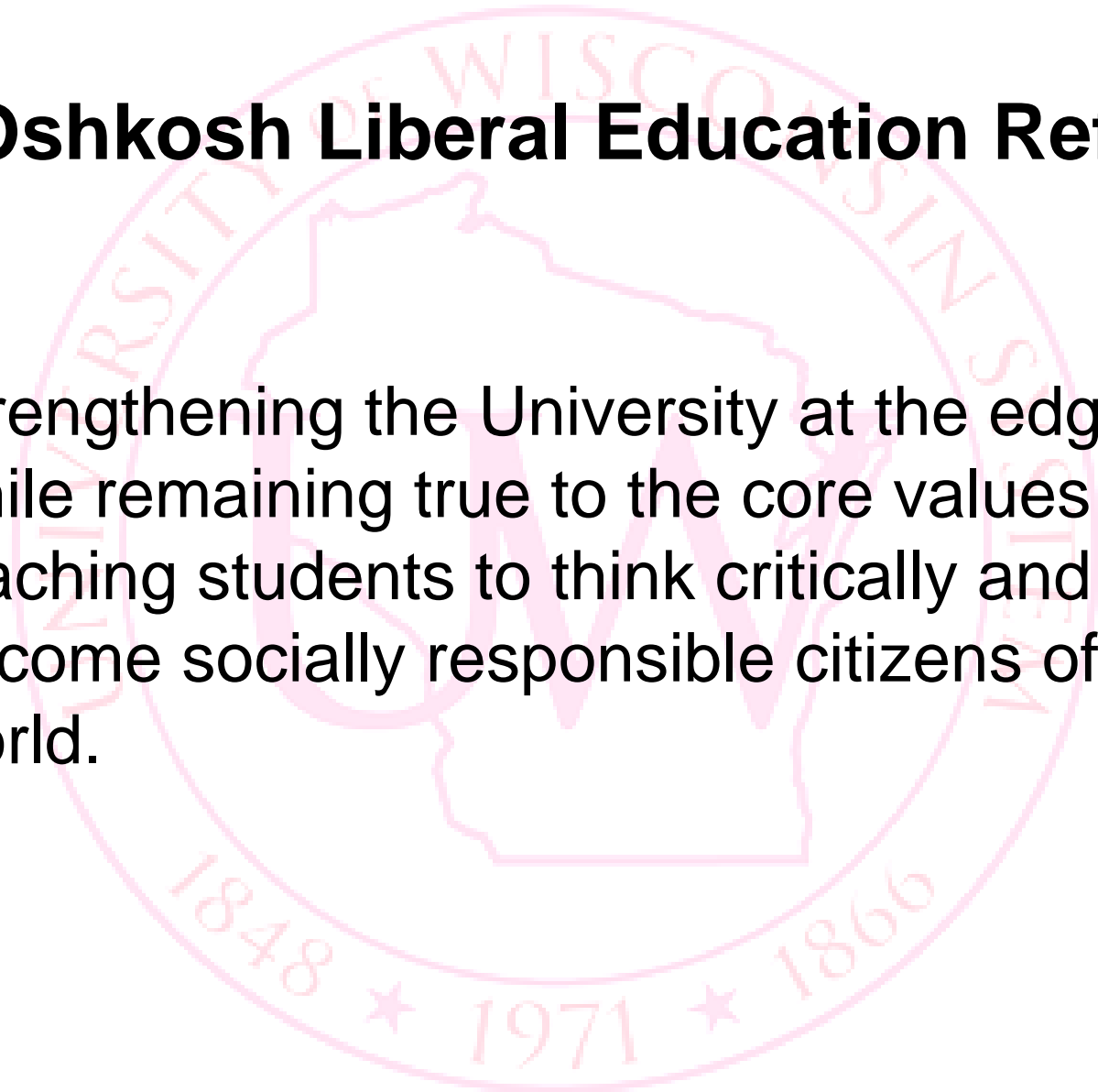
UW-Oshkosh's Liberal Education Reform

Building upon a planning process initiated by Chancellor Wells, UW-Oshkosh has:

- Developed a unified focus supporting traditional scholarship and the values of a liberal education;
- Included faculty, students, staff and community leaders; and
- Expanded the University's engagement with the people of the Fox Valley and Northeastern Wisconsin.

UW-Oshkosh Liberal Education Reform

Strengthening the University at the edges,
while remaining true to the core values of
teaching students to think critically and
become socially responsible citizens of the
world.



3-Part Series in UW-Oshkosh Magazine on LEAP

Focus on:

- Letters & Science Faculty, Staff and Students
- Value of a liberal education within professional studies
- Connecting liberal education to the community



UW-Oshkosh Liberal Education Reform

Institution-wide effort working to distribute liberal education across all colleges and at all levels of the curriculum, including General Education and the professional schools.

Professional School Accreditation Standards

Professional School Accreditation for Engineering (ABET), Business (AACSB), and Nursing (AACN) require attention to the essential student learning outcomes.

Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs

“Liberal Education is not a separate or distinct segment of professional education, but an integrated educational experience, recognized and valued as an on-going, life-long process. Courses in the arts, sciences and humanities provide a forum for the study of values, ethical principles, and the physical world as well as opportunities to reflect and apply knowledge gained to professional practice....”

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The Currency of the Liberal Arts and Sciences: Rethinking Liberal Education in Wisconsin

Re-focus attention and interest on the value of liberal education in the 21st century

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System Advisory Group on the Liberal Arts (SAGLA)

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Discuss and share useful models among campuses
- Public advocacy
- Multi-campus and system-wide initiatives
- Primary contact and collaboration with AAC&U on LEAP

System Advisory Group Membership

1 Chancellor (honorary)

1 Provost/Vice Chancellor

11 Letters /Arts and Sciences Deans or Associate Deans

6 Faculty-Staff-Department Chair-Campus Leaders

4 UW System Staff Members

VP for Communication and Public Affairs, AAC&U
Executive Director, Wisconsin Humanities Council

Meet 3X annually, additional work by phone, email,
working groups/committees

Sharing Good-Practice Models Among Campuses

Syllabus Projects

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The Integration of the Liberal Arts Across the Curriculum in the College of Letters & Science

The faculty and staff in the College of Letters and Science are committed to the promotion of the liberal arts as the key to understanding the value of a broad education and the connectedness among the various disciplines. Many have crafted statements included in their syllabi that speak directly to the importance of general education in relation to other disciplines and in the development of critical thinking across the curriculum. The following are some thought provoking statements that have been presented to our students via course syllabi. Feel free to utilize these comments in your own efforts to promote the liberal arts.

Sharing Good-Practice Models Among Campuses

Liberal Education Discussions
among faculty

Liberal Education Dialogue
(LED)



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Public Advocacy

Campus-Community Dialogues about liberal education



Developing minds for 21ST-century challenges:
A campus and community discussion about university education

Monday, February 27 | 6:30-8:30 p.m. | Plaza Hotel, Eau Claire | Two Rivers Ballroom

Public Advocacy

- Public Radio Programming
 - Single programs
 - New series at UWSP



**Monthly Radio Segment on Value of Liberal Education
Launched in Wisconsin**

As part of its involvement in LEAP Forward Wisconsin -- the first pilot state-wide LEAP initiative -- the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point has launched a monthly radio segment on WSPT 1010 AM.

Public Advocacy

- Editorial and opinion pieces

The screenshot shows the homepage of The Badger Herald. The main header features the site's logo and a large title "THE BADGER HERALD". Below the header, there is a navigation menu with links to Home, News, Opinion & Editorial, ArtsEtc., Sports, Comics, Blogs, and Classifieds. The main content area displays an opinion piece titled "Rossmeissl correct on liberal arts" by a Guest Columnist, dated Monday, March 27, 2006. The article discusses the issue of liberal arts education at the University of Wisconsin. To the right of the article, there is a sidebar with a "Looking for a print version?" notice and a list of other articles by the same guest columnist. Further right, there is a vertical menu with links to Archives Search, Today In Print, Podcasts & Feeds, Contact Us, Corrections, About the Herald, and Advertising. At the bottom right, there is a section for "Top Classified Ads" featuring an advertisement for GUMBY'S PIZZA.

THE BADGER HERALD

OPINION & EDITORIAL

Rossmeissl correct on liberal arts

by Guest Columnist
Monday, March 27, 2006

Rob Rossmeissl ("Colleges increasingly shun liberal arts," The Badger Herald, 3/22/06) called attention to an issue of concern nationally and within Wisconsin. We agree that not enough attention is paid to the value and purpose of a liberal education, despite the fact that many UW students pursue baccalaureate degrees in liberal arts and science disciplines, and many professional education programs incorporate essential liberal education elements. Badger Herald readers may be interested in current efforts within the UW System to

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Also by Guest Columnist:

- [Abbott dishonors Wisconsin Idea](#) (May 7, 2007)
- [Societal strife gives Marxism renewed clout](#) (May 2, 2007)
- [Education will help drinking culture](#) (April 26, 2007)
- [First time must be thought out](#) (April 20, 2007)
- [Attempting to understand a troubled mind](#) (April 23, 2007)

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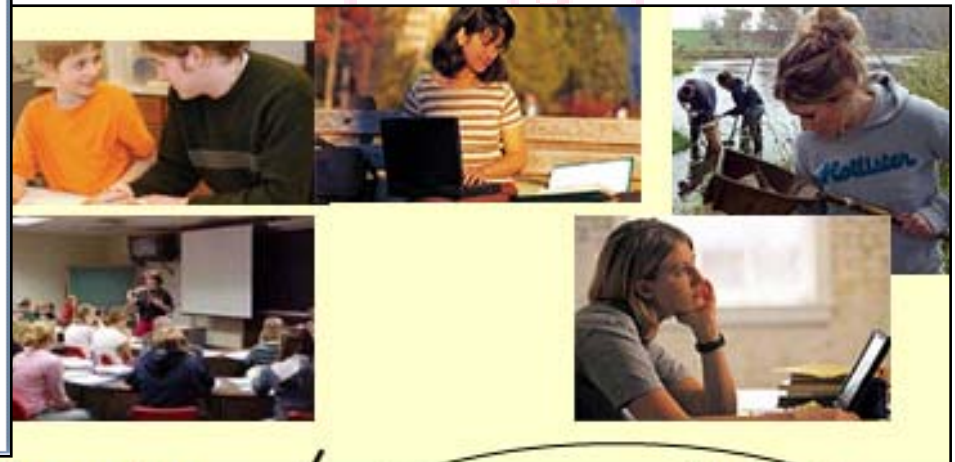
Presentations for alumni and other groups



Association of American Colleges and Universities

College Learning
for the
New Global Century

Association of American Colleges and Universities



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Coordinated system-wide efforts

Support for November 2007
Liberal Education Conference at
St. Norbert's College

(UWS, WTCS, WAICU, AAC&U)

Focus on faculty and instructional
staff (campus teams)

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Coordinated System-wide efforts

Planning Liberal Education
conference (November 2008)

*Liberal education as a focus for
“de-fragmenting” our universities*

Instructional, administrative,
support personnel (all campuses)
+ business leaders

Coordinated system-wide efforts

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**Announcing the Recipients
of the
Annual Liberal Arts Essay
Scholarship Competition**

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Liberal Arts Essay Scholarship Competition

- To promote understanding of the value and purpose of a liberal arts education
- \$2,000 scholarships, three awards based on essay competition
- Doctoral/comprehensive campuses and 2-year campuses
- On some campuses, scholarships for nominees to system level encourage participation

2008 Essay Theme

Imagine yourself as a graduating senior with a younger sibling who will be starting college next year. What advice would you offer to this brother or sister who is setting off on the path of a liberal education? What experiences should your sibling anticipate—or seek out—that might afford a richer comprehension of liberal education's ideals?

2007 Essay Theme

Choose a contemporary issue or problem that you consider significant and write an essay demonstrating the ways in which your liberal education helps to understand, contextualize, and address the issue or problem.

Our Students' Best Work

Heather Damitz, UW-Sheboygan, *Significant and Applicable Knowledge: Liberal Arts in the 21st Century* . (2006)

Last year at this time, I was wandering the streets of Japan. With my digital camera and a sense of adventure, I explored the shrines and temples... I recall the industrial city... Gradually the landscape changed. It seemed that I had just stumbled into a whole different dimension... I realized that there was an equilibrium between the sacred shrines and the surrounding community. My understanding of the world and how it worked changed in that moment. I feel that the liberal arts is much like my neighborhood in Japan, a mixture of elements coming together to serve a purpose.

Our Students' Best Work

Brian Reisinger, UW-Eau Claire, *My Liberal Education: Repairing the Foundations of Journalism* . (2007)

I remember when the news broke in the fall of 2005 that UW-Eau Claire had enforced a policy prohibiting senior RA Lance Steiger from holding Bible studies in his room or residence hall. I was news editor for *The Spectator* at the time... The Associated Press had picked up the controversy before us, leaving us scrambling to catch up on our own turf... “This could be big,” I said in one of the all-time great understatements of my career...

Suddenly, I was directing and contributing to coverage that had some serious implications. .. The difference between the ideal journalism of the classroom and the journalism of practice... hinges on two conditions: the efforts of individual journalists and the expectations society expresses...

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Drawing Motivation and Support from Each Other

“...not a lone voice in the
wilderness any more.”



Liberal Education Initiative

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Visit the System Advisory Group website at UWS homepage (A-Z Index, SAGLA)

<http://liberationeducation.uwsa.edu/sagla.htm>

Questions?

- What do you think are the key components of an undergraduate education? Have we captured them here?
- How do we articulate and advance the importance of liberal education for Wisconsin's future?
- Besides public advocacy in their own sphere of life and influence, what can the Board of Regents do to support UW institutions in the teaching and learning of liberal education?