

MINUTES

EDUCATION COMMITTEE, BOARD OF REGENTS

1920 Van Hise Hall

Madison, Wisconsin

February 7, 2002

Regent Boyle convened the meeting of the Education Committee at 2:40 p.m. Regents Boyle, Brandes, Marcovich, and Mohs were present. Regents Olivieri and Smith joined the meeting in progress.

1. Approval of the minutes of the December 6, 2001 meeting of the Education Committee.

It was moved by Regent Mohs, seconded by Regent Marcovich, that the minutes of the December 6, 2001, meeting of the Education Committee be approved.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

2. Discussion: Quality: Achieving Excellence: The University of Wisconsin System Accountability Report 2001-2002.

In a short presentation, Associate Vice President Frank Goldberg compared the measures used in "Achieving Excellence: The University of Wisconsin Accountability Report 2001-02" to "Measuring Up 2000," the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education's state-by-state report card. Associate Vice President Goldberg identified six performance categories, but focused on the Learning Category as the most significant difference between the two accountability reports. "Measuring Up 2000" gave incomplete grades in the Learning Category, as the states included were not directly measuring student learning. In contrast, "Achieving Excellence" has multiple measures of learning, including performance on post-baccalaureate exams, participation rates in study-abroad programs, and assessment of the degree of understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures. "Achieving Excellence" also has a series of stewardship measures not employed in "Measuring Up 2000." These measures highlight efficient use of resources by evaluating areas such as the technological readiness of classrooms, the extent of collaborative programming, and the number of credits the average student takes to earn a baccalaureate degree.

Regent Mohs suggested that additional data might be obtained on the extent to which students who obtain a degree actually move into their chosen profession. Recounting an example of people who do not pass the bar exam, Regent Mohs asked if better guidance and assessments during the college years might help increase student success in achieving their chosen profession. Regent Boyle questioned the emphasis placed on credits-to-degree as an accountability measure, noting that taking more courses may improve the quality of graduating students. Regent Olivieri expressed the differing view that continued efforts should be made to lower the target for credits-to-degree, and that while the Board of Regents cannot control time to graduation, they can create targets for credits-to-degree. Regent Mohs acknowledged a need for balance between the benefits a student receives from taking more credits and the university's obligation to provide an education to a larger number of students. Associate Vice President Goldberg indicated that the committee will receive a paper reviewing the credits-to-degree measure at the May meeting.

Chancellor Bruce Shepard commented briefly on the UW-Green Bay institutional report, first making the point that accountability data often are not very useful for program improvement which requires more subtle and timely measures. In developing its report, UW-Green Bay engaged in a valuable process of self-reflection by focusing on core institutional values. The Green Bay report provided a blend of accountability measures and program improvement measures that were used to help determine the institution's direction. He emphasized that different measures are necessary for different institutions, that agreement upon the measures to be used must be obtained, and that the follow-up data must be used to foster institutional improvement.

Chancellor Charles Sorenson highlighted the use of six Baldrige criteria, as adapted for educational institutions, in the UW-Stout institutional report. Over time UW-Stout has developed a clear sense of its identity and changed its culture to become more proactive in finding problems, identifying causes, setting goals, and implementing solutions for campus improvement. As an example, Chancellor Sorenson described how the campus dealt with lower student retention rates during the 1990s by instituting higher ACT requirements during the admission process. In response to a question from Regent Mohs, Chancellor Sorenson indicated that improved advising, special tutoring, and bridge courses can increase retention of at-risk students. Chancellor Keating added that students who attend the university but do not gain a baccalaureate degree still gain skills that will improve their lives and society. Chancellor Sorenson followed by noting that the new information age may require different educational outcomes than the traditional baccalaureate degree, thus requiring different measures of educational success. Regent Olivieri concluded the discussion with a request for specific targets for measures that currently lack them, such as the numbers of distance education courses and pre-college programs.

3. Discussion: UW-Extension in the 21st Century: New Partners, New Revenues, New Issues.

The Education Committee members had no additional comments to those made during the discussion at the earlier session.

4. Discussion: United Council - Student Priorities

Senior Vice President Marrett complimented and thanked the United Council staff members and students for their earlier presentation, which addressed general student priorities rather than specific budgetary items. She noted the genuine correspondence between the student priorities and those of the Board, which focus on building excellence.

5. Discussion: Building Our Resource Base - State Compact.

The Education Committee members had no additional comments to those made during the discussion at the earlier session.

6. Report of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Senior Vice President Marrett began her report by drawing upon the idea of the university as a “community of scholars,” an idea that captures both current developments and aspirations within the University of Wisconsin System. The Sabbatical Guidelines for 2003-2005 and plans for how new programs will be presented to the Board of Regents can illustrate how the UW System and its constituent institutions form a “community of scholars.”

The Sabbatical Guidelines, Senior Vice President Marrett noted, were developed by the Office of Academic Affairs in 1999 at the Board of Regents' request to establish biennial priorities for sabbatical decisions. While the guidelines require no Board action, the Senior Vice President alerted the Board to two small but crucial insertions. First, the guidelines have always expressed preference for sabbatical projects that make significant contributions to teaching. Based on discussion by the Board in December, the revised guidelines now include an assertion of the Board's commitment to the scholarship of teaching and learning. Also included in the 2003-2005 guidelines is language indicating that sabbatical projects should reflect the mission of the institution. This second insertion recognizes explicitly that sabbatical leaves are funded by institutions and are to serve institutional purposes.

Senior Vice President Marrett also called the Committee's attention to the guideline for international education as a means of demonstrating just how far-reaching the notion of community is for first-rate scholarship. She highlighted her recent trip to South Africa as part of a team formed by the National Science Foundation to collaborate with the National Research Foundation of South Africa. Discussions centered on building an "international inclusive community of scholars," not constrained by national borders. Senior Vice President Marrett noted that the sabbatical leaves granted under the revised guidelines had the potential to provide models enabling students, faculty, and staff to engage ever more productively in the global world of scholarship.

Senior Vice President Marrett announced the Office of Academic Affairs' plan for bringing new programs to the Education Committee, which will be debuted next month. UW-Milwaukee will present to the Education Committee a profile of its current and projected array of graduate programs, thereby placing the Ph.D. program in history (proposed in December) within a broader institutional context. Likewise, Associate Vice President Ron Singer will bring before the Committee a presentation on several programs, clustered by discipline, but from different institutions. Senior Vice President Marrett concluded her report by reiterating the intention to make "our practice affirm and strengthen the University of Wisconsin System as a community of scholars."

Regent Mohs commended the new emphases to the Sabbatical Guidelines, and noted that in reading the list of approved sabbaticals from December, few of the projects appeared to focus on teaching and learning as a priority. Regent Olivieri concurred, referring to sabbaticals as a limited resource and questioning how the Board might be most effective in encouraging chancellors, campuses and faculty to focus more on teaching as they propose, approve and undertake sabbatical projects. Senior Vice President Marrett acknowledged that while UW System Administration wants to provide guidance based on Board recommendations, the UW System institutions select sabbatical recipients and provide the funds. In response to a comment from Regent Olivieri, she pointed out that the challenges associated with the scholarship of teaching and learning are the same for comprehensive institutions as they are for the research institutions. Chancellor Wells reported that UW-Oshkosh intends to fund more teaching-centered proposals and help teacher/scholars to be more engaged with the campus community (as opposed to just their disciplines and disciplinary societies).

7. Wisconsin Pk-16 Leadership Council Progress Report.

Francine Tompkins, Director of the UW System PK-16 Initiative and UW System Staff Representative to the Wisconsin PK-16 Leadership Council, briefly described the history of the Council and its mission. The Council uses the expertise of and fosters collaboration between the Department of Public Instruction, public and private universities, and the technical colleges. Dr. Tompkins noted that systemic reform requires the involvement of all stakeholders, and at its formation, the Council membership was extended to include parent, community, business and industry, and government representation. In providing an overview of the Council's activities in its first year, she announced two areas receiving the Council's primary attention: the importance of early childhood (birth - 8 years) and the senior year of high school.

In response to questions by Regent Mohs and Olivieri, Dr. Tompkins explained the importance of the senior year in student development. Regent Brandes commended the Council emphases, commenting on the long-term importance of the early childhood experiences and decisions made during the senior year. In response to questions by Regent Boyle, Dr. Tompkins noted that the Department of Public Instruction, the public and private universities, and the technical colleges will have to collaborate on some issues, and there will be areas where each will have specific assignments with defined courses of action. In response to a question by Regent Mohs, Dr. Tompkins reported that the council was taking up all relevant issues with the goal of identifying problems and solutions.

8. Revisions to Faculty Policies and Procedures: UW-Extension

I.1.e.(1): It was moved by Regent Marcovich, seconded by Regent Olivieri, that, upon recommendation of the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the revisions to the UW-Extension Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures be approved

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

9. New Program Authorization: Ph.D., Second Language Acquisition, UW-Madison (Implementation)

I.1.f.(1): It was moved by Regent Olivieri, seconded by Regent Mohs, that, upon recommendation of the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Chancellor be authorized to implement the Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

In response to a question by Regent Boyle, Senior Vice President Marrett indicated that UW-Milwaukee will present a complete profile, including requested data, of their current and planned graduate programs within the context of broader institutional goals at the March Education Committee meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

