

MINUTES

EDUCATION COMMITTEE, BOARD OF REGENTS
The Lowell Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin
December 4, 2003

Regent Olivieri convened the meeting of the Education Committee at 2:05 p.m. Regents Axtell, Burmaster, Davis, Mohs, Olivieri, and Pruitt were present.

1. Approval of the minutes of the November 6, 2003, meeting of the Education Committee.

It was moved by Regent Mohs, seconded by Regent Pruitt, that the minutes of the November 6, 2003, meeting of the Education Committee be approved.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

2. Report of the Senior Vice President.

(1) UW System and WTCS Credit Transfer Initiatives.

As introduction to the discussion of the credit transfer initiatives between the UW System and the Wisconsin Technical College System, Senior Vice President Cora Marrett emphasized the extent to which the UW System is a learner-centered organization in which success revolves around the acquisition of knowledge, not of credits. She reminded the Committee that, at the previous month's meeting, the full Board requested that action be deferred on Parts V and VI of the set of credit transfer agreements between the two systems until December. As requested, minor modifications were made to Parts V and VI, and Senior Vice President Marrett reviewed the changes.

Part V addressed: Transfer of WTCS Liberal Arts Degree Graduates:

Students who graduate from WTCS liberal arts (college parallel) programs at MATC-Madison, MATC-Milwaukee and Nicolet with an associate of arts or sciences degree specifically aligned with the UW associate degree will be able to transfer up to 72 credits and have their university-wide general education requirements satisfied at any UW institution, *subject to review and approval by the faculties at each UW System institution.*

The requested modification clarified the "review and approval" role of the faculties at each UW institution.

Part VI focused on the Expansion of Baccalaureate Degree Holders in Wisconsin:

A broad-based committee will be created to explore additional options for expanding the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin *in collaborative and cost-effective ways.*

The revision requested on this part asked that language to "develop a plan" be deleted. In approving the amendment, the Education Committee emphasized its satisfaction with the last phrase of that item, that the process be conducted in as collaborative and cost-effective a manner as possible.

The Committee heard from Provost Dick Telfer of UW-Whitewater that the Academic Advisory Group on Credit Transfer, put together by Senior Vice President Marrett to develop an

implementation process for the institutions, had its first meeting. In response to Regent questions, Provost Telfer noted that some of the institutions are already doing everything that Part V says they will do. Others, he noted, need a lot more reassurance that General Education standards will be comparable between the two Systems.

Chancellor Messner expressed his belief that the broad-based committee created by Part VI will provide a real opportunity to move forward in ways that will demonstrate to the state and to the Legislature that the two systems are engaging in genuine collaboration to address critical state needs. The Committee reiterated its comfort that the two Systems can now move forward on the entire set of initiatives in ways that adhere to their separate missions and uphold student success as the end goal.

I.1.b.(1): It was moved by Regent Axtell, seconded by Regent Burmaster, that, upon recommendation of the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents endorses Parts V and VI of the plan for enhancing credit transfer between the UW System and the Wisconsin Technical College system, and for expanding the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

(2) Announcement of 2004-05 Sabbatical Assignments.

Senior Vice President Marrett presented to the Education Committee a strong case for the Faculty Sabbaticals Program. She recognized that the annual announcement of sabbatical assignments could no longer be just a routine report, given proposed legislation prohibiting GRP funding for the program. She argued that uninterrupted time in which to develop projects leading to new course materials, pedagogical methods, new knowledge and discovery, and public service is crucial for faculty in order to stay on top of their fields and to reinvigorate their work with students. Sabbaticals are also critical to retaining faculty, as well as to preserving faculty morale. She informed the Committee that, over the years, the numbers of sabbatical assignments made annually have remained stable. She reminded the Committee that the program does not cost new or additional money. It is funded through salary savings, reassignments of other faculty, and rescheduling of courses. The benefits are multiple and they accrue over time to faculty, students, institutions and the state as a whole.

Senior Vice President Marrett's points were underscored with testimony from David Kindig, Professor Emeritus in the UW-Madison School of Medicine. His sabbatical year, he informed the Committee, was intellectually rigorous and difficult, and it changed his academic life. He wrote an important book on population health, helped the Medical School reconfigure its entire preventive medicine program into a Population Health Sciences Program, and helped secure major funding from the Robert Wood Johnson foundation, among other accomplishments.

Regent Olivieri asked how many people apply for sabbaticals at the institutions, in contrast to how many are selected each year. Several Provosts responded that this is a complicated question to answer because the process is different at each campus; department chairs and deans do some of the weeding out before the pool of candidates even arrives on the Provosts' desks. The process is competitive and rigorous at each institution. The Committee also heard that most faculty will get only one sabbatical in their careers, at least at the comprehensive institutions. Noticing that the report before the Committee indicated a gender imbalance in terms of the numbers of women vs. men who received sabbaticals, Regent Olivieri was told by Senior Vice President Marrett and others that those

numbers reflect a general imbalance in UW System faculty, not a problem with the sabbaticals program.

Regent Olivieri expressed some dissatisfaction with the fact that, two years ago, the Education Committee passed a resolution asking that certain emphases be placed in the Sabbatical Guidelines, e.g., on technology, teaching and learning. He did not feel, however, that these emphases were incorporated into the report, either in terms of the Executive Summary or the actual catalogue of project abstracts. He asked that the Regent action be more explicitly addressed in future reports, so that the Board would know that the emphases it had identified were being followed. Senior Vice President Marrett and her staff assured the Committee that the emphases were well-represented in the report but that future reports would make this more explicit. Several Provosts pointed to sabbaticals they had approved this year that do explicitly address the Regent emphases, i.e., technology, teaching and learning, and international education (which was something Regent Axtell had asked for several years ago).

President Lyall relayed a conversation she and Regent Burmaster had shared recently with Wisconsin manufacturing and business leaders who said that they spend 5 percent of their salary base on professional development opportunities for their employees. The UW System spends just over 3 percent of its salary base on sabbaticals. Regent Pruitt suggested that the UW System emphasize more clearly, continuously, and loudly that sabbatical assignments are given neither frequently nor generously. The Committee expressed its strong support for the sabbaticals program as necessary and valuable to not only the faculty involved but also to students, entire institutions, and the state of Wisconsin.

3. Program Authorization – Second Reading: B.S. in Engineering Physics, UW-Madison.

In order to accommodate the schedule of the Provost at UW-Madison, the Committee gave an out-of-order approval to the B.S. in Engineering Physics at UW-Madison.

I.1.c.: It was moved by Regent Mohs, seconded by Regent Axtell, that, upon recommendation of the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents approves the B.S. in Engineering Physics, UW-Madison.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

(3) Annual Program Planning and Review Report.

The Report of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs then continued. Associate Vice President Ron Singer walked the Education Committee through the Annual Program Planning and Review Report. The Office of Academic and Student Services, which has responsibility for program planning, array and review, has a strong and dynamic process in place, and a strong record of cooperation and collaboration with the institutions. Associate Vice President Singer reviewed the various steps along the way to getting a program approved (among them., Entitlement to Plan, Authorization to Implement, Implementation, Joint Review). He noted the great input he has personally experienced from Provosts as programs are vetted systemwide prior to entitlements being granted. He also noted the diligence and the scrutiny faculty give new programs at their own institutions.

Associate Vice President Singer explained the institutional process for program review, which occurs at regular intervals. He reminded the Committee of several activities undertaken last year, in part in response to the budget situation, and in part in response to Regent requests: e.g., the Moratorium on New Programs, the Expedited Program Review Process, new guidelines for collaborative degree programs and distance education, and new emphases on diversity, disability, and access in all new academic programs coming forward. In fact, he noted, what the Regents see is the culmination of a fairly comprehensive planning and review process. There are also plenty of programs that never reach the Committee because they are dropped or expire along the way. There are also the development of sub-majors and certificate programs, which contribute to overall program array but do not require Board action. Regent Axtell noted that it might be fruitful to hear about some of the discontinued programs and the reasons for their discontinuation.

Dr. Singer reported that great efforts are being made to improve efficiency and collaboration, and to engage in more comprehensive understanding and review so that program array can be seen from a systemwide perspective, where appropriate. Regent Olivieri noted the work of the Efficiencies Working Group, which is looking into what methods and models might be in place for reducing costs while maintaining the body of programs offered by the UW System.

In response to a Regent question, Provost Rebecca Martin of Parkside responded that her institution always looks at triggers like enrollments, graduation rates, and employment opportunities as it evaluates its program array. Given the limited resource base, it would be impossible not to keep such triggers in mind as program planning and review are conducted. The Committee expressed its confidence in the academic program and review process in place throughout the System.

Resolutions I.1.b.(1) and I.1.c. were referred as consent agenda items to the full session of the Board of Regents at its Friday, December 5, 2003 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.