

MINUTES

EDUCATION COMMITTEE, BOARD OF REGENTS
The Lowell Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison, Wisconsin
November 6, 2003

Regent Olivieri convened the meeting of the Education Committee at 2:20 p.m. Regents Axtell, Burmaster, Davis, Mohs, Olivieri, Pruitt and Richlen were present.

1. Approval of the minutes of the October 9, 2003, meeting of the Education Committee.

It was moved by Regent Burmaster, seconded by Regent Pruitt, that the minutes of the October 9, 2003, meeting of the Education Committee be approved.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

2. Report of the Senior Vice President.

(1) UW System Initiative on the Liberal Arts.

Senior Vice President Cora Marrett announced the UW System Initiative on the Liberal Arts, entitled *The Currency of the Liberal Arts: Rethinking Liberal Education in Wisconsin*. She noted that the liberal arts are the core disciplines, at the academic heart of what UW System institutions are about. Dr. Rebecca Karoff, Senior Program Administrator in the Office of Academic and Student Services, described the initiative to the Committee. Sponsored by the UW System Office of the President and the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the initiative invites the participation of UW System students, Regents, faculty and staff, parents and families, local communities, PK-12 educators, private and technical colleges and universities in Wisconsin, and political, media, and business leaders to embark on a reconsideration of the value and purpose of the liberal arts degree and liberal education in the early 21st century.

The goals of the initiative are to: 1) Increase the visibility and understanding of the purpose, the goals, the outcomes, and the value of liberal arts education for UW System students and the tax-paying citizens who support public higher education in Wisconsin; 2) Ensure that students graduating from the UW System with degrees in the liberal arts are able to articulate for themselves, their families, and the public (i.e., future employers, their communities back home) the value and currency of their degree; 3) Instill in all students graduating from the UW System an understanding of the meaning and value of liberal education; 4) Initiate dialogue between UW System institutions and the communities of which they are a part on the role of public higher education in the early 21st century; 5) Disseminate and replicate best practices in effective liberal arts pedagogy; 6) Promote outreach activities that bring the liberal arts into the community, and the community into the liberal arts.

Dr. Karoff outlined the desired outcomes of a liberal arts degree, and spoke to why this initiative was important to focus on at this point in time, even in a time of budgetary constraint. She described some of the initiative's inaugural events, including a forum held at Economic Summit IV. Dr. Karoff noted the widespread support for the liberal arts in the business community and elsewhere, yet also acknowledged that there is little public outcry about the need for liberally educated graduates, or even for attention paid to the liberal arts. The initiative seeks to address how to most effectively communicate the goals of a liberal arts education to the wider public, as well as how best to include underserved and disadvantaged populations in its goals for liberal education. The initiative plans to

take these issues and others to the institutions, where there are plans for a systemwide working group, and plans for campus-community dialogues to be convened.

Regent Mohs and other members of the Committee expressed strong support for this initiative. Regent Davis suggested that there is indeed lots of interest from the business community in liberally educated students, noting that her work with the Research and Public Service Working Group has confirmed that. Students, she agreed, need help in understanding what such a degree means to them. Regent Pruitt noted that there are lots of potential partnerships with the business community on this topic, but they need to be asked.

(2) UW System and WTCS Credit Transfer.

Regent Olivieri expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to bring the topic of credit transfer to the full Board prior to the Education Committee's meeting. Senior Vice President Marrett noted the important strides that have been made in this area, thanks to countless people putting in countless hours. She referred to the work of JACAP, the Joint Committee on Academic Programs, and the numerous faculty members throughout the System who have worked diligently to review and approve courses, including several Faculty Representatives who were present at the meeting.

Regent Burmaster expressed her support for the resolution and the set of proposals, reminding the Committee that in her role as State Superintendent of Public Instruction, she serves on both System Boards. She stated her confidence that both Systems would respect their commitment to the primary missions which set their institutions apart, and emphasized that remaining true to their unique missions is vital to the success of the transfer agreements, to student success, and to economic growth and development. Regent Mohs expressed two concerns that he trusted would be addressed throughout the implementation process of the transfer agreements: 1) that students who transfer would be adequately prepared as they move on to more advanced coursework; and 2) that faculty truly have the opportunity for meaningful input into what courses are accepted for transfer.

Professor Dave Trechter, Faculty Representative from UW-River Falls, noted the crucial role that the newly created Academic Advisory Group on Credit Transfer will play. Formed by Senior Vice President Marrett, this systemwide group is charged with developing an implementation process that will move the set of transfer initiatives forward. Professor Ed Erdmann, Faculty Representative from UW-Whitewater, emphasized that no student is served well by a revolving door, and that each course deserves careful scrutiny in order to ensure that each student admitted as a transfer may succeed.

Regent Olivieri expressed his appreciation for the months of hard work and attention that Senior Vice President Marrett and her staff have devoted to this topic, naming Assistant Vice President Larry Rubin in particular, for the clarity and helpfulness of his multiple presentations to the Board.

I.1.b.(2): It was moved by Regent Pruitt, seconded by Regent Axtell, that, upon recommendation of the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents endorses the plan for enhancing credit transfer between the UW System and the Wisconsin Technical College system, and expanding the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

3. Program Authorization – First Reading: B.S. in Engineering Physics.

The Committee heard a first reading of the B.S. in Engineering Physics at UW-Madison. This program essentially involves the merger of two existing departments into one, reorganized department, and is designed to meet and adapt to emerging technology needs. UW-Madison Provost Peter Spear and Professor Michael Corradini, Chair of Engineering Physics, provided the Committee with salient information on the program. The program puts research experience for undergraduates at the core of the curriculum, allowing students with strong math and physics skills to work at the fore-front of emerging technology focus areas such as nano-engineering, plasma science and engineering, and scientific computing. The Program also engages students in team projects and senior theses.

The Committee heard that the outlook for graduates is excellent, whether they want to pursue jobs in the fast-growing technology sector or graduate school, and Professor Corradini listed several technology-sector employers in Madison and elsewhere, who wrote letters in support of the program. Regent Axtell commended the proposed Bachelor of Science for the high employment prospects it offers students, for the fact that there is no duplication of this program anywhere in the System, and for its reallocation of existing resources.

Stating his intention not to deflect attention away from the excellence of the Engineering Physics program, Regent Axtell asked Provost Spear and Professor Corradini whether this high-cost program would be a candidate for differential tuition? Provost Spear responded that the topic of differential tuition was complicated and that UW-Madison preferred not to place any undergraduate programs in that candidate category, whether they are high cost or not. As an example, he listed Madison's astronomy program, which is hugely expensive but world-renowned. If such programs had to recover their costs or be self-funded, they could never survive. He also indicated the difficult logistics for implementation of differential tuition, citing students who start out as liberal arts majors and then switch, e.g., to business. Both Regent Axtell and Regent Olivieri noted that the Efficiency Committee is looking closely at differential tuition as an area where some revenue relief might be found.

Regent Olivieri informed the Committee that the B.S. in Engineering Physics would come back before the Committee in December for a second reading.

4. Report on the Industrial and Economic Development Research Fund.

The Committee was informed by Regent Olivieri that Section 36.25.(25)(c) of the Wisconsin State Statutes requires the UW System to report biennially to the Joint Committee on Finance regarding the use, duration, and potential economic benefits funded by Industrial and Economic Development Research Funds. These Funds were created in 1987 by Wisconsin Act 27, and are intended to promote technology transfer and/or collaborative projects that have the potential to stimulate economic development in Wisconsin.

Senior Vice President Marrett noted the variety of projects contained in the Report, pointing to several from the Center for Dairy Profitability, for example, which effectively leverage research dollars, contribute to economic development, and help make the dairy industry more profitable. Regent Axtell asked how the Committee could know whether these projects are worthy, given that the Regents do not have expertise in these areas? Both Professor Bruce Smith and Jane Sherwood of UW-Madison, who work with some of the specific projects detailed in the report, assured the Committee of the rigor of the review and approval process for all the projects that receive funding.

I.1.d.: It was moved by Regent Axtell, seconded by Regent Mohs, that, upon

recommendation of the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the report on projects undertaken in the UW System during fiscal years 2001-02 and 2002-03, and supported by the Industrial and Economic Development Research Funds, be received and approved for transmittal to the Joint Committee on Finance, in accordance with s.36.25(25)(c), *Wis. Stats.*

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

5. Revised Faculty Personnel Rules, UW-Green Bay.

The Committee considered several amendments to the Faculty Personnel Rules at UW-Green Bay. As required by Wisconsin Administrative Code, the Board of Regents must approve such changes for faculty personnel rules. UW-Green Bay Provost Sue Hammersmith summarized the rule changes for the Committee, most of which ensure that due process will be followed in the handling of complaints made by and against faculty members. The amendments had been previously reviewed and endorsed by UW System General Counsel and the Office of Academic Affairs. In response to a Regent question, the Committee was informed that while there may not be a common set of faculty personnel rules that apply to all the institutions, there are common System guidelines and a framework that each institution follows.

I.1.e.: It was moved by Regent Axtell, seconded by Regent Davis, that, upon recommendation of the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents approves the amendments to the UW-Green Bay Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

Resolutions I.1.b.(2), I.1.d., and I.1.e. were referred as consent agenda items to the full session of the Board of Regents at its Friday, November 7, 2003 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.