

MINUTES

EDUCATION COMMITTEE, BOARD OF REGENTS

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Madison, Wisconsin

November 8, 2007

The meeting of the Education Committee, to which all Regents were invited, convened at 10:08 a.m. Regents Bartell, Bradley, Burmaster, Connolly-Keesler, Crain, Cuene, Davis, Falbo, Loftus, Pruitt, Rosenzweig, Smith, Spector, Thomas and Walsh were present.

A. Presentation on Charter School Performance and UW-Milwaukee's Role in Chartering Schools

Before introducing the presenters on charter school performance, Regent Davis reminded her Regent colleagues of their statutory role in approving those charter schools authorized by UW-Milwaukee and UW-Parkside. She added that the Board's responsibility went beyond mere approval to include ensuring that the charter schools it approved were providing students with a quality education and were performing well. She then introduced Dr. John Witte, Professor of Political Science and Public Affairs at UW-Madison, and co-author of a recent analysis of charter school performance in Wisconsin, a copy of which was distributed to Regents.

Professor Witte began by informing the Board that he was a proud 1968 graduate of UW-Madison. He then described his multi-year research study on charter school performance in Wisconsin. The study looked at aggregated data of Wisconsin Concepts and Knowledge Examinations (WCKE) results from nineteen case studies throughout Wisconsin, centered in cities like Eau Claire, Stevens Point, Green Bay and others. It also included five years of data analysis from the city of Milwaukee. He described the range of charter schools across the state, some of which targeted at-risk and low-income children, some of which targeted upper-income populations. He noted the competitive aspect of charter schools, which competed for students—and the money that followed them to the schools they attended—amid declining state school populations.

In general, Professor Witte reported, the findings on Wisconsin charter school performance are positive. With some exceptions, charter school students were performing well. Eighth-graders did less well on the WCKE, but they mostly attended start-up middle schools so the results were not surprising. Milwaukee charter schools did well in the aggregate, with the greatest impact on improving the performance of White and Hispanic students (although African Americans also showed improvement) and of students in grades five through eight. Students were doing especially well in math. Overall, the results from his analysis suggest that charter schools in Wisconsin are performing somewhat better than the traditional public schools from which they draw students.

The Wisconsin results, Professor Witte observed, stand in sharp contrast to the dismal charter school performance in Ohio, which had been reported on that day in a *New York Times* article distributed to the Regents. The reasons, he suggested, may have to do with the way in

which most charter schools in Wisconsin are chartered by local school districts and the schools districts are invested in their performance. He described himself as a strong proponent of local, district control over charter schools. He compared Wisconsin's local district control (which consequently retained the aid for charter school students within the district) to Minnesota, where districts did not receive state aid for charter school students and, instead, charter schools became "independent" districts. He recognized that some groups in Wisconsin were interested in finding alternative chartering routes besides the statutory one, but added that Minnesota was looking at Wisconsin's statutory model of district control as a more effective alternative to its current practice.

Professor Witte was followed by UW-Milwaukee Provost Rita Cheng. She reviewed with the Board the mission, organization and set of responsibilities for UW-Milwaukee's Office of Charter Schools. She explained that the reason UW-Milwaukee accepted responsibility for chartering schools was because of the potential and flexibility they offered for innovation. The Office currently operated 11 schools, serving a total of 3,948 students enrolled in 2007-8, in grades 4K through 12. Seventy-nine percent of UW-Milwaukee charter school students were low income, and the schools averaged a 94.5% minority population and a 10.8% special education enrollment. Average daily attendance was 90.1%, and the year-to-year retention averaged 70%. Provost Cheng briefly addressed one of the charter high schools which had an exceptionally poor attendance rate. She also reviewed data demonstrating that high-achieving students are not leaving the Milwaukee Public School System (MPS) to attend UW-Milwaukee charter schools.

Provost Cheng then described the controlled cohort, longitudinal assessment of student performance in the UW-Milwaukee charter schools, conducted by the Office of Charter Schools, as compared to students in MPS. In general, she concluded, the charter school students perform better on several assessments, including WCKE. Although students as a cohort tend to enter the charter schools performing below the level of their MPS peers, the cohort scores improve over time spent in charter schools in both reading and math, as measured between fourth and eighth grade. By eighth grade, the charter school students perform above MPS students. There is some variability from school to school, she cautioned, and individual school performance data is available upon request. The Milwaukee Academy of Science, she noted, did not achieve adequate yearly progress in 2006, the first time a UW-Milwaukee charter school had not done so. An improvement plan is in place for that school, and new leadership and foundation support have been brought in.

Provost Cheng concluded by stating that the Office of Charter Schools has an effective, comprehensive program for the authorization of charter schools, and a robust accountability system in place to monitor charter school results and demand continuous improvement, one that goes beyond, in fact, the assessment required by MPS. She commented that the summary data reviewed with the Board points to UW-Milwaukee charter schools as effective organizations, whose students are achieving academic success.

Provost Cheng was followed by Alfonso Thurman, Dean of the UW-Milwaukee School of Education. Dean Thurman addressed the ways in which the chartering of schools fits into the urban mission of the School of Education. He described the work done by the School of

Education in Milwaukee and surrounding areas, in particular its role in preparing teachers, administrators and support personnel for the city's schools. He also mentioned the extent to which the Office of Charter School's mission dovetails with that of the School of Education, with both focused on building successful and innovative schools, and working with schools and districts to establish high performance measures, assessment tools, and research on schools.

Dean Thurman referenced the Milwaukee Partnership Academy (MPA) as one of many partnerships engaged in by the School of Education, along with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), MPS, local businesses, and other area post-secondary institutions both public and private. The MPA works not only to impact individual schools but also the Milwaukee Public School District as a whole. He detailed over \$60 million of grant money that has been brought in, and observed the willingness of MPS, the business community and higher education to work together towards systemic change. The School of Education has been able to make particular progress in the areas of teacher education and math and reading literacy. He expressed his belief that MPA has played an important role in improving the test scores for MPS elementary students. Dean Thurman concluded by introducing two faculty members and a graduate student from the School of Education who were conducting research on charter schools and advising the Office of Charter Schools.

Regent Loftus expressed his appreciation for Professor Witte's national expertise and his lucid comments. In response to questions from Regent Loftus, Professor Witte elaborated on the extent to which UW-Milwaukee charter school students tended to be lower performers upon enrolling, but that their learning gains over time spent in those schools were significant. He reviewed differences in charter schools statewide, both in terms of student populations and school organization. He commented on the promise of charter schools—to free schools of regulation and to allow for more innovation—but that the challenge nationally remained one of accountability. UW-Milwaukee, he observed, is a solid and responsible authorizer of charter schools.

In response to a question from Regent Crain about the effect more broadly of charter schools on public education, Professor Witte noted that it was difficult to evaluate the extent to which public schools improved through their proximity to charter schools but that new data was coming in that might help make such a determination. He also described in more detail what "innovation" meant in terms of charter schools. Innovation in the context of charter schools does not necessarily mean something brand new, but, rather, tried and true alternative albeit effective models of education and curricula. He cited the Montessori model as an effective example of an innovative alternative, as well as a charter school in Oshkosh, in partnership with the Experimental Aircraft Association, which encourages girls in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

In response to a question from Regent Rosenzweig regarding the accountability process of the Office of Charter Schools, Professor Witte observed that the most important piece of accountability is to measure student performance over time and to determine the "value-added" of charter schools. Testing is useful to a point, he added, but for the most at-risk schools and students, testing will be meaningless and the real measure of performance needs to be assessed in terms of the value added. In response to questions from Regent Cuene about class size and

special education students, Professor Witte answered that charter schools throughout the U.S. tended to be smaller although other public schools in Wisconsin had achieved smaller class size in the lower grades thanks to funding designated for that purpose. Special Education, he acknowledged, remained a huge challenge for charter schools because they did not have the support personnel in place that other public schools did. Many charter schools were able to contract out for services from other public schools and the problem was a bigger issue for private schools.

Regent Walsh asked if additional legislative action would help allow for additional charter schools to be authorized throughout the state. Professor Witte expressed his belief that forming a state agency to authorize additional schools would not be productive, and that part of the disarray of Ohio charter schools arose from a state agency and a lack of district control. He suggested instead an appeals board, perhaps housed in the Department of Public Instruction, which would allow good charter schools an alternative way to be authorized outside of school boards.

In response to a question from Regent Bartell regarding high attrition rates for Milwaukee public schools and their impact on cohort assessment, Dr. Cindy Walker, Associate Professor in the UW-Milwaukee Department of Educational Psychology and Faculty Advisor to the Office of Charter Schools, answered that most MPS students transferred to other schools within the district. Professor Witte added that this is a problem for researchers. He advocated the introduction of student ID numbers that would allow for better tracking. Until then, he stated, following student cohorts over time—the longer the better—was the best means of assessing student performance. In response to a question from Regent Falbo, Professor Walker clarified that the comparison group being used for the UW-Milwaukee charter schools was MPS, as had been requested for the presentation. The Office of Charter Schools also compares its charter schools to others statewide.

In response to a question from Regent Loftus regarding the competition for state aid in a period of declining enrollments, Regent Burmaster noted the different governance models throughout the state which determine funding for charter schools, adding that how charter schools are authorized determines how they are funded, and that the purview of the discussion at hand was those charter schools authorized by the UW System. Brian Pahnke, Assistant State Superintendent for Public Instruction, elaborated on the funding models available to Milwaukee charter schools and the proportional shares received by each school per student.

Regent Crain expressed her appreciation to the Office of Charter Schools for their hospitality in arranging visits for her to charter schools and for the wealth of information shared with Regents. She emphasized again, that for her, the critical question boiled down to what is the overall effect of charter schools on the greater educational picture of a challenged urban environment like Milwaukee. Is public education in Milwaukee being improved by the charter schools authorized by UW-Milwaukee? She stated that her interest as a Regent is to ensure that her actions do not weaken public education.

Regent Spector reminded his colleagues that one of the great factors of UW-Milwaukee's involvement in charter schools and MPS was the potential research being done to improve

teaching and learning for public school students in Milwaukee. To him, it was clear that what has been done in the past with MPS has not always worked. He stated that the Regents need to hold UW-Milwaukee accountable on the research component of charter schools, in order to determine the best ways for children in charter schools to learn. That determination, he added, could not take place exclusively through testing. Provost Cheng concurred, noting that it was imperative for the Office of Charter Schools to continue tracking student learning over time, as it had every intention of doing. She considers the chartering of schools as one of many projects at the School of Education focused on understanding the educational needs and improving the teaching and learning of Milwaukee school children. She also noted the hundreds of requests received by the Office of Charter Schools to charter additional schools. The Office cannot, of course, accept all of them but one of the criteria they use for working with new schools is the research potential and impact.

In response to a question from Regent Loftus, Dean Thurman explained the reporting lines in place for the Office of Charter Schools to the Dean of the School of Education, to ensure accountability. In response to a question from Regent Rosenzweig, Provost Cheng reiterated the multiple assessment tools used by the Office of Charter Schools to ascertain evidence of improved learning. She added that new data is coming in each year that helps evaluate charter school performance.

Regent Davis thanked the presenters for all the information imparted, mentioning in conclusion that additional information could be found in the Office of Charter School Handbooks distributed to each of the Regents. The Education Committee meeting, with all Regents invited, recessed at 11:34 a.m.

B. Regular Business Meeting of the Education Committee

Regent Davis convened the regular business meeting of the Education Committee at 1:09 p.m. Regents Davis, Crain, Cuene, Loftus, Spector and Thomas were present.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the September 6, and the October 4, 2007, Meetings of the Education Committee

I.1.a.: It was moved by Regent Spector, seconded by Regent Crain, that the minutes of the September 6, and the October 4, 2007, meetings of the Education Committee be approved.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

2. UW System Strategic Framework: Discussion with Representatives from the “Prepare Students” Think Tank

Regent Davis began by welcoming representatives from the UW System Strategic Framework Think Tank on “Preparing Students.” They included Don Christian, Dean of Arts & Sciences at UW-Eau Claire, Lisa Kornetsky, Director of the UW System Office of Professional

and Instructional Development, and Rebecca Karoff, Academic Planner in the UW System Office of Academic and Student Services. The representatives were invited to engage in informal discussion and brainstorming with Committee members and others present on the broad topic of how the UW System should educate students for the 21st-century global society. Regent Davis reminded Committee members that the Think Tank would not have a finished report, nor specific recommendations, until early December. She articulated two questions that the Education Committee was particularly interested in as they related to the work of the Think Tank: what should student skills, competencies, and abilities look like in fifteen years; and how should Regents get their arms around new and existing assessments of the quality, rigor, and value of the UW System's educational offerings?

As Chair of the Think Tank, Dean Christian, began by describing the Think Tank's membership, process, and the themes on which they were focusing. The group was thinking deeply and broadly on the essential student learning outcomes and values needed for 21st-century citizenship in a global society. Among those outcomes identified, Dean Christian enumerated the following: students need to know something; they need to be nimble and critical thinkers, intellectual risk-takers and problem-solvers; they need to communicate well, as writers and speakers; they need to be multi-culturally competent, globally aware, and able to interact with people who are different than they are. The Think Tank is looking at preparing students not only for careers (in both current jobs and in areas that do not yet exist), but also for citizenship and lifelong learning.

Regent Loftus sought clarification on the impetus for the strategic framework process, the organization of the Think Tanks, and the expectations for what kind of report would be produced and for which audiences. Regent Spector clarified that the entire exercise was initiated by the Board of Regents. UW System President Kevin Reilly added that the Think Tank reports would provide specific recommendations—three to seven “best ideas”—that would be brought to him and the Chancellors, and then shared with the Regents. The reports would provide a kind of systemwide foundation to strategic planning that is either occurring already, or will occur individually at each of the UW institutions. In response to a question from Regent Spector, President Reilly described the meetings with legislators that he and Regent President Bradley have already had and others that would take place in coming months.

In response to a question from Regent Thomas, Dean Christian observed that students were not represented on the Think Tanks, mostly because of the short timeline and turn-around time for producing the report. Senior Vice President Rebecca Martin noted that individual UW institutions were also convening think tank groups on each of the seven Strategic Framework topics and that students were meant to be participate at that level. She added that as the process moved forward, there would be multiple streams of input coming in and that all of the input would be considered in what was presented to the Board. Chancellor Chuck Sorensen informed the Committee that students were involved in the discussions at UW-Stout.

UW-Extension and Colleges Chancellor David Wilson stated that UW Colleges students were especially concerned about transfer and queried whether the Think Tank was looking at a standardized core curriculum across the UW System so that transfer among UW institutions would not be a problem. Dean Christian noted that the Think Tank was concerned with transfer

issues but also with respecting the work of shared governance, each institution's mission and identity, and the faculty's role in determining curricula at each institution. Think Tank member Lisa Kornetsky, added that the Think Tank was devoting a lot of attention to General Education, a critical piece of the student transfer issue. Regent Cuene noted that this issue was one that North Central Accreditation had focused a lot of attention on. She added that one way to continue respecting the faculty's role in developing curricula was to identify a set of core competencies—and not courses—for all the UW institutions.

Regent Spector asked that the Think Tank find a way to make student engagement a conscious goal in its report. Listening to the morning presentation on the Voluntary System of Accountability, in which the UW System would soon participate, he remembered his own experience in taking courses outside his area and how valuable an experience that was. He observed that an art history course he took as an undergraduate from the legendary Professor James Watrous changed his life, years ago, and Regent Crain concurred that she had taken the same course with similar results.

Regent Davis asked the Think Tank representatives how they were approaching what students should look like in 15 years. Dean Christian responded that one of the group's frustrations regarding assessment and accountability was the fact that some learning can only be measured and appreciated years after students leave the university. He noted that more assessment of alumni needed to be done in determining what students would most need upon leaving their undergraduate institutions. He also observed how difficult it was to assess an outcome like, "tolerance for ambiguity." As Dean, he meets with many students and he has heard from them that they are troubled by the uncertainty of their futures, especially in terms of needing preparation for jobs that do not yet exist. Yet, he noted, it is a disservice not to prepare students for uncertainty, given how much it is a part of everyone's lives.

Regent Loftus recommended that the Think Tank include in its report some of the great programs that were already in place, for example, the new transfer agreement that UW-Whitewater had made with Madison Area Technical College. Regent Crain asked whether the Think Tank could come up with a better name for General Education.

Regent Davis invited the input of the Chancellors and Provosts present. UW-Stevens Point Provost Mark Nook wondered whether the Think Tank was looking at the future of online learning throughout the UW, and taking a strategic look at the growth of professional programs like engineering, business and nursing. UW-Eau Claire Chancellor Brian Levin-Stankevich encouraged the Think Tank to look at the changing demographics of the state, as well as changing educational demands in certain disciplines that now required students to gain graduate degrees where previously a baccalaureate degree would suffice. Chancellor Wilson observed that not enough UW students have international experiences and the UW System needs to rethink how it provides students with such experiences. UW-Milwaukee Provost Rita Cheng emphasized the importance of faculty development, stressing that deeper learning and engagement by UW students would require different responsibilities and rewards structures for faculty. Dean Christian responded that the Committee was indeed considering the many of the points being raised.

UW-Parkside Interim Provost Jerry Greenfield cited the remarks made by a local businessman who had spoken to students at UW-Parkside. His advice to students was to learn a foreign language, and that English was no longer sufficient for operating in the constantly shifting global economy. UW-Green Bay Provost Sue Hammersmith observed that adult learners need better attention; that UW institutions are not only preparing traditional-aged students; and that traditional packages of three-credit courses no longer work for everyone. UW-River Falls Chancellor Don Betz asked how the UW System could more effectively collaborate, especially in the area of international education.

UW-Oshkosh Chancellor Rick Wells encouraged the Think Tank to stick to its charge to develop a report that would serve as a guide, to stay at the macro level and frame broad strategic directions that institutions could realistically follow. Think Tank member Rebecca Karoff observed that one of the Think Tank's biggest challenges was to determine how bold its recommendations could be, and still allow for realistic implementation by UW institutions with their distinct institutional missions and identities, not to mention constrained resources.

Dean Christian reiterated the fact that the Think Tank's report was still a work-in-progress, but that it would focus its recommendations in the following broad areas: diversifying campus demographics and learning; supporting and valuing faculty work to achieve the essential student learning outcomes; and breaking down institutional barriers to advance student learning. The report would then identify actions under each of those categories that could lead to real change. In response to a question from Regent Cuene, Senior Vice President Martin answered that the intention was for future budgeting decisions to be guided by the recommendations arrived at through the Strategic Framework process.

Regent Thomas observed that what she was hearing resonated significantly with her own experience as a student. She noted that most students, herself included, were not able to articulate well the value of the liberal education they were pursuing. She recommended that UW institutions figure out a way to help students understand earlier in their education the role and value of the experiences they were being provided. She also emphasized the need to help more students take advantage of opportunities like study abroad by providing the financial resources needed. She encouraged making more faculty-led trips available to students on the academic subjects they were studying, such as the civil rights tour that UW-Madison students were able to take as part of coursework. Finally, she wondered whether campuses could offer summer transfer or exchange experiences to students, so that they could study at other UW institutions from the ones in which they were enrolled.

UW-Madison Provost Pat Farrell remarked on all the advice the Think Tank was receiving but observed that most important was to consider not the *what*, but the *how* of student preparation. Most higher education institutions, the UW included, were too static in their models of student preparation. A more dynamic model was needed, a challenge that UW-Madison's strategic planning process was beginning to address. Provost Farrell continued that institutions do not want to come up with the next static model but, rather, a model that will change with the times. Institutions need to bring good people together and allow them the freedom to fail and to be creative. Dean Christian concurred that risk-taking was needed not only by students but by Think Tank members and others engaged in strategic planning as well.

Regent Davis expressed her appreciation to the members of the Think Tank, and to all of those present, for the opportunity to provide input and engage in substantive dialogue, and noted that everyone looked forward to reviewing the Think Tank's final report.

3. UW-Platteville: Summary of Accreditation Review by the North Central Association Higher Learning Commission and Institutional Report on General Education

The Committee next heard a presentation by UW-Platteville on its re-accreditation by the North Central Association Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Committee members applauded UW-Platteville Provost Carol Sue Butts' opening remarks that the HLC had granted UW-Platteville an unconditional ten-year re-accreditation with no follow-up required. Provost Butts introduced the co-chairs of the campus's accreditation committee, Dr. Machel Schreoder, Professor of Business and Accounting, Dr. Lisa Riedle, Associate Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Sciences, and Dr. Shane Drefeinski, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Director of General Education/Assessment Coordinator.

Professor Schreoder described the campus's self-study process. She then reviewed the HLC report, noting in particular the institutional strengths identified by HLC. These included the institution's student-centered approach; the commitment and enthusiasm of its faculty and staff; the institution's efforts to put continuous assessment and improvement into practice; the stability of administrative leadership; its strong system of shared governance; the institution's community partnerships, outreach activities and close connections to its region; its international efforts; and its plans for financial growth.

Professor Riedle described UW-Platteville's newly developed collaborative engineering programs in mechanical and electrical engineering, established in the Fox Valley and Rock County. Both these programs were developed at the request of these area partners and funding was obtained for faculty and labs. Dr. Riedle noted that there is a lot of demand for these programs, and that UW-Platteville is investigating their expansion through online opportunities.

Professor Drefeinski shared with the Committee several suggestions made by HLC for improving student learning in the future. These included improving how students understood the role of General Education in their wider university experience, and strengthening the assessment of General Education. In response, the campus is now moving forward with a comprehensive review of its General Education program.

UW-Platteville Chancellor David Markee expressed his appreciation for the leadership provided by Provost Butts and the three accreditation co-chairs. Regent Crain added that as the Regent "buddy" to UW-Platteville, she had sat in on the review process and found it rewarding and positive.

4. Committee Business: Approval of Authorization to Recruit a Chancellor at UW-Whitewater

I.1.d.: It was moved by Regent Thomas, seconded by Regent Cuene, that the President of the University of Wisconsin System be authorized to recruit for a Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, at a salary within the Board of Regents salary range for university senior executive salary group three.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

Regent Davis noted that both she and Regent Thomas would be serving on the Regent selection committee to appoint the new UW-Whitewater Chancellor.

5. Report of the Senior Vice President

a. Discussion of Education Committee Priorities and Routine Business

Senior Vice President Martin led the Committee in a continuation of its discussion of 2007-08 priorities and routine business. As requested by Regent Davis at the October meeting, Dr. Martin and her staff presented the Committee with a reorganized set of priority areas. The list included topics that would deepen understanding of both major policy areas and student learning and success. As Committee members reviewed the list, she cautioned that in determining which areas the Committee most wanted to devote its attention to throughout its remaining meetings for 2007-08, they needed to keep in mind the reduced Regent meeting schedule for 2008. She also pointed out that several of their priority areas had already been scheduled for discussion, notably charter schools, academic program planning and the rethinking of accountability in November, and the December presentation the Committee would hear on alcohol and other drug abuse as one component in examining the topic of the student experience.

At the request of Regent Davis, Senior Vice President Martin agreed to arrange a discussion with members of the Collaborations Think Tank for the Committee's December agenda.

Regent Davis requested, and Regent Crain agreed, that teacher education and graduate education be topics for discussion by the Committee. Regent Cuene indicated that she would like to hear about alternative delivery methods of instruction, including a report on what the UW System offers currently and what it is considering offering in the future. In response to Regent Thomas, Senior Vice President Martin informed Committee members that they would hear a final report on *Plan 2008* in spring 2008, and that sometime in the next six months, the Board would be presented with a set of strategic directions for diversity. Regent Davis asked that the Committee's input be sought prior to finalizing a set of strategic directions, and Senior Vice President Martin agreed that the Committee would be involved in the formative stages of determining what should succeed *Plan 2008*. Regent Thomas asked that student voices also be incorporated into these formative discussions. Regents Cuene and Crain asked that the topic of transfer within the UW System also remain on the Committee's list of priorities.

Senior Vice President Martin then led the Committee in a discussion of ways that it could use its time more effectively in its consideration of routine business items. She reviewed with members a handout suggesting that certain recurring agenda items be handled differently, for

example through a committee consent agenda or by delegating additional authority to President Reilly. Regent Crain responded that some of the routine items on the list do not actually take up very much of the Committee's time, but that she was comfortable in following the lead of UW System Administration staff. Committee members agreed to pilot a committee consent agenda in order to improve how they spent their meeting time, and that they did not want to micro-manage the UW System Administration staff. Senior Vice President Martin observed that new processes would be explored with the understanding that they would be evaluated along the way and adapted as necessary.

b. Report on Annual Program Planning and Review

Associate Vice President Ron Singer presented the 2007 Report on Program Planning and Review. He reminded Committee members of the steps that have traditionally been taken by the campuses, System Administration, and the Board in entitling, authorizing, and implementing new programs. In response to several Regent questions, Dr. Singer explained the process by which institutions might express objections or reservations about newly proposed programs during the entitlement process. He also confirmed that, in fact, the Regents do not really see new program proposals until late in the process, and after they have undergone campus input, revision, and approval through governance.

Dr. Singer shared with the Committee a chart demonstrating the frequency of program offerings throughout the UW System. The chart, he informed Committee members, showed the extent to which the majority of the baccalaureate degree programs offered by the UW are offered at only one or two campuses. Eighty-five percent of degree programs are offered at between one and four campuses, demonstrating that duplication of academic programs is not a problem for the UW System. Regent Davis observed that this fact could be construed as both good, in that there was not too much duplication, and bad, in that the chart signaled, perhaps, that there was not enough accessibility to certain academic programs needed by students statewide.

Dr. Singer then reviewed several implemented and recommended changes to the program planning and approval process, changes developed in collaboration with the Provosts. One change in the process that has been implemented is the elimination of the entitlement process for sub-majors to become majors, since they involved programs that were essentially already in place in terms of curriculum, student demand, faculty, and resources. The proposal most relevant to the Committee's work was the recommendation that institutions come forward every five years and present a campus academic plan. Each campus academic plan would include specific information on planned academic program additions, modifications, consolidations and eliminations over a five-year time horizon. Dr. Singer observed that the plan could replace the need for each new academic program to be brought before the Committee for its approval, and allow the Regents to direct their attention instead to a more comprehensive understanding of each institution's academic program planning and array, as well as the alignment of that array to each institution's distinct mission and identity. However, he added, the Committee would still have the option to hear presentations on individual programs and act on them apart from campus academic plans.

Following up on a question from Regent Davis, Senior Vice President Martin confirmed that the Committee could also choose to put a program on its agenda for discussion. She cited the potential Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree under consideration by several UW institutions as a good example of a program requiring discussion because of the policy issues it raised. The DNP was, in fact, still in the planning stages and was on the Committee's December agenda for discussion purposes. In response to a question from Regent Cuene, Senior Vice President Martin observed that by bringing the program to the Committee before action was required, the Committee would have the opportunity for real input. Regents Loftus and Spector expressed their approbation for a revised process that would allow for meaningful Regent input into proposed programs before they were at the approval point.

The Committee asked Provosts to weigh in to the discussion with their thoughts on the proposed changes. UW-Milwaukee Provost Rita Cheng confirmed for the Committee that when UW-Milwaukee changed its biochemistry sub-major to a major, nothing about the program changed except the titling and yet Board approval was still required. She added that the institutions need to assure the Regents of the quality of their academic programs but not necessarily at the individual program level. UW-Stout Provost Julie Furst-Bowe stated that she supported the idea of campus academic plans and their presentation to the Board; UW-Stout already has a campus academic plan and it is instrumental in making resource and other planning decisions. UW-Platteville Provost Carol Sue Butts observed that campus plans would need to be in concert with institutional missions. UW-Platteville, for example, would not be offering nursing or allied health programs, despite regional demand for such programs, because they were not a part of the institution's mission or identity.

Committee members concluded that they would like to move forward with campus academic plans but asked for help in identifying which new academic programs should go on the Committee's consent agenda and which ones should be presented individually for action. Regent Davis asked that Senior Vice President Martin return in December with a list of campus academic programs in the pipeline, both a retrospective look at what the Committee has approved over the past year, and a prospective look at what is coming. Such a list would help the Committee evaluate which kinds of academic programs they might want to look more closely at, and which ones could be brought before the Committee as part of larger campus plans. Senior Vice President Martin also suggested that, following discussion at the next Provosts meeting, the Committee be presented with some draft guidelines for what the campus academic plans would comprise. The Provosts recommended that whatever ultimate form the campus academic plans took, they should allow for agility and nimbleness in response to the changing needs, innovation, and demand of students, institutions, and the workforce. Regent Spector agreed that he and his fellow Committee members were all in favor of nimbleness.

c. Update on the UW Colleges Task Force

A question from Regent Loftus about where the UW Colleges fit into the discussion of academic program planning led to an update on the UW Colleges Task Force appointed by President Reilly. Senior Vice President Martin described the key policy questions being addressed by the systemwide group in its consideration of the role of the UW Colleges in relation to the Growth Agenda and the UW System Strategic Framework. They included

questions on topics such as: whether the UW Colleges could begin offering baccalaureate degree programs under a restricted model; whether additional residence halls should be built on UW Colleges campuses; the opening of satellite operations in underserved areas of the state; and developing a presence in Madison and Milwaukee. Dr. Martin noted that the Task Force would deliver a report to President Reilly in December and that the results would be incorporated into the Strategic Framework discussions.

In response to questions from Regents Loftus and Davis about the Task Force's membership and whether it included representation from the Wisconsin Technical College System, Dr. Martin said that the Task Force was an internal, administrative group. She listed the Task Force members and added that the Task Force did not include students but that there were other UW Colleges groups across the state which did. Regent Cuene expressed her concern with the implications of the Task Force report for the Technical College System. Senior Vice President Martin responded that eventually, any major decisions regarding a changed role for the UW Colleges would come before the Board. For now, she emphasized, President Reilly wanted administrators from within the System to undertake initial consideration of the policy issues at stake.

d. Report on Industrial and Economic Development Research Fund

Senior Vice President Martin concluded her report by reminding Committee members that they had received via email the biennial Report on the Industrial and Economic Development Research Fund and they should let her know if they had any questions regarding the report.

Resolution I. 1.d. was referred to the consent agenda of the full Board of Regents at its Friday, November 9, 2007, meeting. In response to a process question from Regent Loftus, Committee members explained that the Board's approval of an authorization to recruit a chancellor was a preliminary step allowing the UW System President to recruit at a certain executive salary level; the search and screening process was conducted separately.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.