

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND
THE BUSINESS, FINANCE, & AUDIT COMMITTEES, BOARD OF REGENTS
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
May 7, 2009

Regent Davis convened the joint meeting of the Education and Business, Finance, and Audit Committees at 11:05 a.m. Regents Davis, Bradley, Burmaster, Connolly-Keesler, Crain, Cuene, Falbo, Loftus, Smith, Spector, Thomas and Womack were present.

1. Approval: Interim Guidelines for Making Textbooks More Affordable

Regent Davis introduced the discussion by observing that textbook affordability had been a problem for many years but that the current economic climate exacerbated still more the financial impact on students. She turned to Senior Vice President Rebecca Martin and Associate Vice President Stephen Kolison to outline the more immediate actions and the longer-term plan being put into place by the UW System and its institutions to improve textbook affordability.

Senior Vice President Martin explained that the Interim Guidelines the two Committees were being asked to approve proposed actions that all UW campuses were being encouraged to follow in bringing about some immediate relief to students from the rising costs of textbooks. She also described steps the federal government was taking to contain the burden textbook costs placed on students and their families as a part of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008. Some of these steps required action on the part of higher education institutions to disclose earlier and more transparently information about all required and recommended textbooks and course materials. Additional requirements were being put into effect for textbook publishers. Acknowledging that the federal mandate provided additional impetus for action, Dr. Martin said that the UW System had been taking a number of steps in recent years on its own. She turned to Senior Vice President Tom Anderes to describe some of the actions being taken on the business side. Dr. Anderes detailed the work being done to reduce costs by expanding the System's textbook rental program, and the expanded outreach and communication being done with university bookstores and faculty.

Senior Vice President Martin continued by saying that the interim set of guidelines would address more proactively the academic side of the issue. The guidelines were developed by Associate Vice President Kolison with input from the Provosts, the Faculty and Academic Staff Reps, the Student Reps, and others. She cautioned that the whole issue of textbook affordability and cost containment was complex and that there were no easy fixes. In moving forward, it was necessary to remember that the greatest impact fell on students. At the same time, it was necessary to attend to the faculty perspective because that also played a huge role. Implicit in the faculty's authority over the curriculum, she explained, was the right to determine their own syllabi and the books required to support their courses. While faculty members were deeply concerned with the rising cost of textbooks and the financial impact on students, they were also cognizant of the complicated economic and legal issues at stake in the world of textbook

publishing. There was also the factor of rapidly changing knowledge in many fields, another influence on what textbooks faculty selected for their courses.

Dr. Martin informed the Regents that as her office worked to bring to the Board a policy sometime in the next year, it would be necessary to allow for full consultation with faculty and a timeframe that ensured that the UW System's governance structure was adhered to. In other words, she said, adoption of a Regent policy would need to balance some competing interests and respect faculty governance. It was anticipated that the governance process would be completed in the fall and that additional vetting would then take place with other pertinent constituent groups. The plan was to bring to the Education and the Business, Finance, & Audit Committees a draft policy in late fall or early winter, 2009-2010. A final policy would then be in place to coincide with the implementation of the federal guidelines. Dr. Martin turned to Associate Vice President Kolison to review the Interim Guidelines.

Dr. Kolison elaborated on what was already taking place, including the new federal requirements and specific UW institution-led activities like the textbook rental program. He reviewed the individual components of the Interim Guidelines, which focused on: the encouragement of early adoption of textbooks by faculty; more timely and intentional communication by bookstores on the costs of textbooks with faculty and staff; repeated use of textbooks over multiple semesters; criteria for ordering new editions of textbooks; encouragement of availability of unbundled versions of course materials when possible; increased availability of electronic versions of textbooks; and the development of additional creative solutions to alleviate the financial burden on students of college textbook purchases.

Discussion focused on the feasibility of implementing certain of the individual guidelines. In response to questions from Regent Smith, Senior Vice President Martin affirmed that the UW System Guidelines were modeled closely on those adopted by the University of Maryland System in February. She did not know of any other systems that had adopted a similar policy. She pointed to an extensive website developed at UW-Madison on the textbook issue and to additional work at other UW institutions to address the concerns of students. In response to a comment from Regent Bartell, Dr. Martin agreed that there were legitimate impediments to containing costs, including the need to respect the faculty governance process and, above, all the intransigence of the publishing industry. The federal mandate would help deal with the publishers, she added. She expressed her expectation that the policy brought to the Board several months from now would look quite similar to the Interim Guidelines. The process for getting there would involve a productive collaboration with the System's governance groups, but one that would take time.

Regent Falbo asked whether it would be possible to change the direction of the Guidelines with its repeated use of "encourage," by inserting the word "require" instead, thus making the actions stronger. Dr. Martin responded that a lot of thought had gone into the wording and while it remained open to change, she was not sure the policy would end up "requiring" specific actions on the part of institutions and faculty. She reiterated the balancing act required in developing a policy that was both workable in terms of the learning environments faculty sought to create (and over which they had authority), and that would provide meaningful

relief to students. Regent Davis suggested that the final Guidelines might include stronger wording along the lines of what the System “intended” to do through its policy.

Regent Crain pointed out that a policy was needed that was flexible and could change with the times, in particular to keep abreast of technological changes, and the evolving and emerging fields of knowledge and content areas. Dr. Martin agreed, saying that technology would certainly play a larger role in addressing the issue as time went on.

In response to a question from Regent Davis, Dr. Martin elaborated on the ways in which certain of the guidelines would save students money. Regent Cuene questioned the advisability of discouraging faculty from buying new editions of textbooks, given the rapid change of knowledge in certain fields. Dr. Martin agreed that it would depend on the field but that often, changes to newer editions of textbooks were minor and that the UW System wanted to allow for some flexibility in this area. She juxtaposed her own experience of having students who managed perfectly well with older editions of textbooks, vs. that of Regent Spector’s experience with needing newer case law and, hence, newer editions of books.

Regent Davis called for the motion. Prior to the vote, President Reilly assured the Regents that the Faculty Reps and UW bookstores were supportive of helping to reduce textbook costs for students. Regent Pruitt added that, moving forward with developing a policy, transparency would be critical.

I.1.A.: It was moved by Regent Falbo, seconded by Regent Crain, that, upon recommendation of the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents adopts the Interim Guidelines for Making Textbooks More Affordable.

The resolution PASSED unanimously.

Regent Davis concluded that Resolution I.1.A. would be placed on the consent agenda of the full Board at its Friday, May 8, meeting. She expressed the Committee’s appreciation to Senior Vice President Martin and Associate Vice President Kolison for their leadership on the textbook issue.

2. UW-Milwaukee Presentation: Combating Alcohol and Drug Abuse

In introducing UW-Milwaukee’s presentation on combating alcohol and drug abuse, Regent Davis referred to the deaths of two UW-Milwaukee students in recent months, caused in both cases by alcohol and drug abuse. The problem was not unique to UW-Milwaukee, she added, as the abuse of alcohol and other drugs was a problem confronted by all UW campuses and had a huge impact on the teaching and learning mission of the UW System. She then turned the podium over to Chancellor Carlos Santiago and Dr. Paul Dupont, Senior Psychologist and Counseling Director of the UW-Milwaukee Norris Health Center.

Chancellor Santiago named the two students who had died earlier in the semester from substance abuse, which he called an unfortunate way of life for many college students. He noted that such behavior can start well before college, citing a 13-year-old girl from Whitefish Bay who had died

of substance abuse several months ago. He also cited a survey of UW-Milwaukee students, 21 % of whom said they had used marijuana. He mentioned one program designed to promote safe practice and help students set limits and avoid becoming victims, the “Make Good Decisions” Campaign. The program began a year ago through funding from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and was designed for and by students.

Dr. Dupont next provided a brief overview of AODA programs on campus and some of the interventions taken by UW-Milwaukee after the deaths of the two students. He elaborated on the “Make Good Decisions” Campaign, adding that the DOT had provided \$5,000 in funding and that the intervention strategies chosen by the program were required to have a research basis supporting their adoption. The campus was also focusing its activities on improving safety and the reduction of substance abuse in the neighborhoods. The Campaign continued to grow as more and more students requested meaningful training; over 90 students had now received training and materials. The training focused on personal and peer safety, safe drinking practices, promotional materials available in a variety of forms and media, and the creation of a Campaign website which allowed for self-assessment by students of their blood alcohol concentration, e.g., along with strategies for reducing their alcohol consumption. The campus had also received funding from the UW System to support a web-based program called “E-CHUG,” into which students could anonymously enter their own drinking patterns and practices and receive individualized feedback.

Dr. Dupont described the campus’s response to the two student deaths, which included lots of interviews with students and the media, as well as outreach to students on how to avoid overdosing on drug and alcohol and how to intervene on behalf of fellow students in trouble. Emails went out to the entire campus community containing a comprehensive list of university services and resources. A new Student Affairs AODA working group was also formed, in addition to the AODA Task Force already in place on campus, to develop a “next steps” document for the entire campus. The AlcoholWise online education program would be given to all incoming first-year students at the beginning of the academic year and then again three weeks later. Dr. Dupont explained that research had shown that intervening early in the first year of college could make a difference in curtailing dangerous drinking habits. UW-Milwaukee was also expanding its research on young adult drinking through the Center for Addiction and Behavioral Health Research, and looking closely at the Milwaukee results from the UW System’s recently conducted 2009 AODA Survey.

Dr. Dupont continued that UW-Milwaukee had stepped up its counseling services, through outreach to students and staff affected personally by the two student deaths, and better promotion of the availability of counseling faculty and staff. New staff members with AODA expertise were hired in the counseling center. The campus was also stepping up its treatment initiatives in the face of increased numbers of students seeking treatment for opiate abuse and the greater challenges associated with providing treatment outside of prescription options. The campus was also confronting the fact that fewer students had insurance to cover the costs of treatment.

Regent Davis concurred that the lack of insurance was a growing problem for the families she encountered through her work. Her organization was promoting greater educational awareness on AODA issues to the parents of the girls she worked with, so that they could be more proactive. Dr. Dupont said that UW-Milwaukee was doing the same and also looking for other adults in students’ lives who could intervene.

In response to a question from Regent Womack, Dr. Dupont replied that the “Make Good Decisions” Campaign was difficult to evaluate in terms of its effectiveness, as were other prevention programs. He said the campus was working with Milwaukee police to look at their data, and to get data from students who completed the training. In response to a question from Regent Crain, Dr. Dupont answered that there was a lot of research on the benefits—including lives saved—of raising the drinking age to 21. In response to a follow-up question from Regent Crain, Dr. Dupont agreed that addressing alcohol abuse with underage students required extra sensitivity because students were engaging in not only self-destructive but also illegal behavior. In response to a question from Regent Loftus, Dr. Dupont confirmed that the campus had sent an email in which it committed to not disciplining those students who had engaged in illegal behavior with drugs or alcohol but were seeking help for themselves or their peers. Chancellor Santiago added that the commitment was made on behalf of students in emergency situations. The campus wanted to support students who did the right thing to help themselves or others in danger.

The Regents applauded the efforts being taken by UW-Milwaukee to reduce alcohol and drug abuse among students, and the joint meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.