

MINUTES
EDUCATION COMMITTEE, BOARD OF REGENTS
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Eau Claire, Wisconsin
October 15, 2009

Regent Crain convened the meeting of the Education Committee at 1:02 p.m. Regents Bradley, Crain, Evers, and Vasquez were present. Regent Crain invited the Provosts in the room to the table to join in the Committee's discussion.

1. 2009 Report on Remedial Education

Regent Crain introduced the 2009 Report on Remedial Education by noting that the Education Committee received a status report on remedial education in the UW System every three years. The 2009 Report covered data from fall 2005 through fall 2007. Before turning to Senior Vice President Rebecca Martin, she reminded Committee members that the report was presented for information only.

Senior Vice President Martin provided context for the topic of remediation, noting that remediation was an issue faced by almost all higher education institutions in the country. She observed that all students admitted to UW institutions had the potential to succeed, even though some of those students needed remediation. While remediation requires resources and exerts additional costs on students, she emphasized that it was the UW System's responsibility to meet students who were admitted where they were, developmentally, and to help them succeed. She described a number of UW System initiatives underway that were working to address student preparation and college readiness, all of which sought to reduce the need for remediation. These included partnerships with K-12 and other education sectors such as the American Diploma Project Network, the Math Competency Alignment project, the Early Math Placement Tool, and the Equity Scorecard Project.

Dr. Martin then turned to Interim Associate Vice President Sharon Wilhelm to review the key findings from the 2009 Report. Ms. Wilhelm presented data on the number of new freshmen throughout the UW System who needed and completed remediation in math and English, broken down by gender and race. She also provided data showing that UW System institutions had lower enrollment rates in remediation courses in comparison to institutions nationwide. Of particular importance, noted Ms. Wilhelm, were second-year retention rates for UW students who completed remediation in the first year. These rates were almost comparable to those UW students for whom no remediation was required, and significantly higher than for those students who needed but did not complete remediation in their first year. In other words, she stated, remediation works. Ms. Wilhelm concluded by remarking that the majority of UW students who needed remediation completed their requirements in the first year; students who completed their remedial requirement in the first year were more likely to succeed than students who did not; and that over 1,000 students from each entering class who required remediation eventually graduated.

The Committee then heard from three Provosts, who shared some of the innovative practices in which their institutions were engaged to help students successfully complete

remediation. UW Colleges Provost Greg Lampe began by noting that the two-year campuses had a higher number of students needing remedial or developmental courses, making the topic a high priority for the Colleges. He highlighted several faculty development programs at the Colleges, designed to strengthen faculty teaching of remedial courses in both math and English, as well as an algebra-sequencing initiative involving high schools. He also praised the commitment and collaboration of Colleges math and English faculty, both those who taught developmental courses and those who taught credit-bearing courses.

UW-Green Bay Provost Julia Wallace then described a program piloted at her campus in spring and summer 2009, which was yielding impressive early results. The program was structured as an intensive, seven-week math immersion course, with a brisk pace, high expectations, and lots of student support and mentoring. The program allowed students to complete their remediation requirement in seven weeks; if they did not, they could repeat the program in the next seven. The pass rates for students in the first two pilot cohorts was significantly higher than for students in the non-accelerated remedial course, causing the campus to consider a similar structure for some of their post-remedial math courses. UW-Green Bay would continue to monitor the pass rates for students in the program, and follow those who moved on to evaluate their success in their other college courses.

UW-Whitewater Interim Provost Christine Clements shared several approaches being taken at her institution in order to help at-risk students succeed at the University. She described the new “Pathways to Success” program, which provided skill-building and strengthened the advising that incoming, at-risk students received. She explained that many students entered UW-Whitewater thinking they would major in Business or Education, competitive programs which many students needing remediation had trouble entering. The Pathways program advised students to think about other majors and about obtaining an associate’s degree as a first goal before pursuing the baccalaureate. She also mentioned summer bridge programs and supplemental instruction offered to at-risk students. The Equity Scorecard Project at UW-Whitewater had helped the institution understand that the success of its students depended on multiple programs that were focused on support both in and beyond the classroom.

Senior Vice President Martin mentioned to the Committee the “Access to Success” Initiative, a project of the National Association of System Heads and The Education Trust, which was working with 24 public higher education systems that have pledged to cut the college-going and graduation gaps in half by 2015. The UW System is one of those systems and work on the topic was just getting underway. She emphasized how critical the effort was to the UW System’s overall goals, in particular the *Growth Agenda for Wisconsin*.

In response to a question from Regent Bradley, Provost Clements explained why a two-year, associate’s degree would be of value to students as an intermediate goal towards the baccalaureate and, therefore, worth the investment of campus resources.

In response to a question from Regent Evers, Associate Vice President Wilhelm described the policy change that took place in 2000, thus accounting for a dip and then a steady rise in the numbers of students needing remediation. Senior Vice President Martin explained the

periodic review of remedial cut-off scores that took place at the institutions to help ensure student success in the credit-bearing courses following remedial work.

Regent Evers reported that K-12 expectations would soon change, with the anticipated requirement that four years of math would be needed for graduation from Wisconsin high schools. Senior Vice President Martin added that the work of the American Diploma Project was bringing together high school and university teachers to develop shared understanding of the competencies required for the successful transition from secondary to post-secondary education.

Regent Vasquez asked about the work around remediation at the System's more urban and racially diverse campuses, Milwaukee and Parkside. Dev Venugopalan, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UW-Milwaukee, described his institution's own "Access to Success" Initiative, with its focus on self-paced, module-based curricular redesign in math and psychology, among other disciplines. UW-Milwaukee, he said, was seeing similar data to what was represented in the systemwide remediation numbers, and institutional data clearly showed that early interventions had a higher impact on students of color than on majority students. Other work going on included UW-Milwaukee's Academic Opportunity Center, which provided intensive advising and other support to better engage students with low ACT scores, and faculty collaboration with the Milwaukee Public Schools on math. Senior Vice President Martin added that the System's rural-serving institutions also had higher rates of students needing remediation. The data demonstrated unequal math preparation, in particular, among the state's high schools.

In response to questions from Regent Crain and Evers, discussion ensued on why students needed remediation, and whether the need correlated to low ACT scores, to poverty, and to gender. Provost Lampe noted that the UW Colleges was tracking its non-traditional students carefully, in recognition that their remedial needs were different than those of traditional-aged students. Students who had not had math in 20 years, for example, had different needs than recent high school graduates. The timing of math placement tests for incoming students also yielded different results, causing institutions to encourage spring test-taking or summer bridge programs. Senior Vice President Martin reminded the Committee that the Growth Agenda's Action Step on PK-16 collaboration around Math sought a more global understanding of how best to ensure readiness college-level math.

Regent Crain thanked everyone for their contributions to a rich discussion around a complicated topic.

2. Committee Consent Agenda

Regent Vasquez moved adoption of the minutes of the September 10, 2009, meeting of the Education Committee, as well as the following resolutions as consent agenda items:

Resolution One.One.b.(2), approving the revised mission at UW-La Crosse;

Resolution One.One.b.(3), authorizing implementation of the B.A. in Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latino Studies at UW-Milwaukee; and

Resolution One.One.b.(4), authorizing implementation of the B.S. in Applied Social Science at UW-Stout.

The motion was seconded by Regent Bradley and carried on a unanimous voice vote.

3. UW-Eau Claire: Presentation of Campus Academic Plan

In introducing the presentation of two campus academic plans, Regent Crain reminded Committee members that the Education Committee had already heard a total of eight other campus academic plans since the beginning of 2008. She then turned to Provost Patricia Kleine to present the Campus Academic Plan for UW-Eau Claire. Provost Kleine detailed the ways in which UW-Eau Claire was fulfilling its mission as a premier liberal arts institution in the upper Midwest. She pointed to recognition of the University's excellence using a number of different indicators. And she described Eau Claire's newly developed "centennial vision," with its strong emphasis on inclusive excellence, global knowledge, exploratory studies, and outcomes-based experiential learning. The campus had recently conducted a quality improvement review of all its programs, practices, and services. It was also engaged in an ongoing redesign of general education, referred to as its "liberal arts core." The campus was recognized nationally for its high impact practices, in particular study abroad and undergraduate student-faculty research, and those practices would be increased in coming years. UW-Eau Claire was also working towards more holistic advising of students. Provost Kleine mentioned the University's unimpressive four-year graduation rate, noting that the next few years would see redoubled attention towards improving it. Overall, she concluded, the University's motto—Excellence—was visible throughout the institution.

Regent Crain thanked Provost Kleine and observed that she shared her excitement at all that UW-Eau Claire had to offer its students.

4. UW-Superior: Presentation of Campus Academic Plan

Provost Chris Markwood from UW-Superior next presented his Campus Academic Plan. He described the distinctive process followed by UW-Superior in developing its plan: the campus's faculty senate was asked to take the lead role and focus on the institution's curricular array for the near future and how to best fulfill its mission as Wisconsin's Public Liberal Arts College, a designation it had received through Board approval in 1998. This created a strong sense of ownership among faculty for the work and the plan that emerged, copies of which he distributed to the Education Committee. He introduced Laura Jacobs, Associate Professor of Library Science, one of the campus leaders in developing the plan. UW-Superior, he informed the Committee, was the UW System's smallest 4-year institution, with only 2,400 students, 90% of whom were undergraduates.

Provost Markwood then introduced a video, as a visual representation of the campus's academic plan, created specifically for the presentation to the Education Committee. The video highlighted five academic initiatives on which the campus was focusing its energy and resources, and which had received DIN funding in the last biennial budget. Those initiatives included: the

Center for Academic Service Learning; the First-Year Experience; Global Awareness; the Senior Experience; and Writing Across the Curriculum. The campus had developed goals for each of these areas and was intentionally working its way towards them. The video also featured outreach and partnerships that engaged the University beyond the classroom, and described some of the research and creative activities, including the Lake Superior Research Institute and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, that further contributed to UW-Superior's fulfillment of its mission.

Regent Crain thanked Provost Markwood and Professor Jacobs for their inspiring presentation and the outstanding video.

5. Report of the Senior Vice President: Education Committee Priorities for 2009-10

Senior Vice President Martin reminded the Committee that in September it had identified a set of priority areas to be considered as agenda and discussion items at its 2009-2010 meetings. As agreed upon, she had worked with Regents Crain and Vasquez to further organize the list and identify which of the proposed priority areas should be addressed throughout the academic year, along with a proposed timeline for doing so. Senior Vice President Martin reviewed the revised priorities with the Committee, which included LEAP Wisconsin (the UW System's work on liberal education), Inclusive Excellence, Teacher Quality and the UW System, and the UW System's Evolving Accountability Reporting. She observed that the Committee had already attended to LEAP through the Compass presentation the Regents had heard earlier in the day, and proposed a rough timeline for attending to the other priority areas. She suggested that some of the priorities identified in September might be taken up later, including Transfer Issues, the Role of the UW Colleges, Assessment of the UW System's Precollege Programs, broader discussion of the UW System's PK-16 Partnerships, and the Role of the Comprehensives in Discharging the Recommendations of the *Research-to-Jobs* Task Force.

Committee members expressed broad support for the set of priorities. Regent Evers remarked that there was a shift in the national conversation from "teacher quality" to "teacher effectiveness" and suggested that the Committee think about the topic in this way. Regent Crain asked that the Committee work throughout its discussions to view education holistically, from early to higher education. Regent Vasquez said that the plan appeared manageable and would allow for in-depth discussion of the topics. In response to a question from Regent Vasquez, Senior Vice President Martin answered that the System's PK-16 partnerships focused primarily on public (not private) schools, although System's PK-16 Council included the President of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Schools and Colleges. Regent Evers said he was not aware of any statewide organization that brought together Wisconsin's private secondary schools. Regent Vasquez suggested that it might be a good idea to look at growth in the private sector to understand where those students were going to college and how successful they were.

Regent Crain expressed her interest in keeping all of the priorities, even those proposed for later consideration, on the Committee's radar screen. Senior Vice President Martin agreed that the priorities document provided a working agenda.

Discussion followed on Regent Bradley's suggestion that the Committee take up the role of the comprehensives and the Research-to-Jobs Task Force recommendations as a part of its 2009-2010 agenda. Senior Vice President Martin agreed that this was important, and would complement the System's work on educational attainment and the development of the next biennial budget *Growth Agenda* request. Regent Bradley asked the Committee to consider that, depending on Wisconsin's economy and who the next governor would be, the UW System could have an extremely difficult time in the next biennial budget process. He noted that much of the *Growth Agenda's* success in the last budget cycle could be attributed to the effective communication of the impact the comprehensives had on regions throughout the state. He advocated increased attention to the regional role and impact of the comprehensives in the next cycle, and immediate follow-up on the recommendations made by the *Research-to-Jobs* Task Force. Committee members agreed to add that topic for inclusion at one of its 2009-2010 meetings and expressed consensus for the overall plan.

6. Full Board Consent Agenda

Resolutions I.1.b.(2), I.1.b.(3), I. 1.b.(4) were referred to the consent agenda of the full Board of Regents at its Friday, October 16, 2009, meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.