

MINUTES
EDUCATION COMMITTEE, BOARD OF REGENTS
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Memorial Union
December 9, 2010

Education Committee

Regent Crain convened the meeting of the Education Committee at 1:07 p.m. Regents Crain, Davis, Evers, and Schwalenberg were present. Regent Crain welcomed the Provosts to the table. She informed the Committee that Senior Vice President Rebecca Martin was recovering from shoulder surgery and that Associate Vice President Stephen Kolison would provide the Report of the Senior Vice President in her place.

1. Committee Consent Agenda

Regent Davis moved adoption of the minutes of the October 7, 2010, meeting of the Education Committee, as well as the following resolution as consent agenda items:

Resolution I.1.a.(2), approving the amendments to the UW-Oshkosh Faculty Personnel Rules.

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

2. UW-Madison Presentation: “Benefits of the Madison Initiative and Transdisciplinary Crosscuts Taking Us in New Directions”

Regent Crain welcomed UW-Madison Provost Paul DeLuca to report to the Committee on the Madison Initiative for Undergraduates, referred to on campus as MIU. He described the circumstances and the process that led to the development of the MIU, and called the initiative a prototypical example of how added flexibility and resources could have a significant and positive impact on student outcomes. He reported on how the MIU funds had been generated and distributed, with half going to need-based financial aid, and half to goals developed through a “bottoms up” call for proposals to faculty and staff throughout the campus. Provost DeLuca said that three calls for proposals had now been issued and that certain issues were rising to the top for increased attention, including advising and the expansion of high-impact practices. He then introduced Aaron Brower, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning, and students Tom Templeton, a junior majoring in political science, and Adam Sheka, a senior majoring in medical microbiology and immunology.

Dr. Brower thanked Provost DeLuca for his leadership of MIU and then described the process by which MIU proposals had been evaluated, as well as some of the early impacts. These included significant increases in need-based financial aid for undergraduates, faculty hiring focused on curricular access and expansion, academic and career advising, and high-impact and other innovative educational projects.

Students Tom Templeton and Adam Sheka then spoke to the ways students had been engaged in the MIU process, including having a prominent role in the review of proposals. They expressed their appreciation for the process, noting that it fulfilled shared governance and resulted in the cross-fertilization of ideas and voices representing many different units, departments, and groups on campus. Mr. Sheka observed that the process allowed for the student evaluators to go back to the proposers and ask for additional input or collaboration with others on similar proposals. He noted that student feedback resulted in revisions to, more than rejections of, proposals. Mr. Templeton remarked that, moving forward, it would be critical to keep students engaged and informed about the process and the impact of MIU on their educations.

Dr. Brower pointed out that funded MIU proposals were being held to their goals and outcomes. Provost DeLuca concurred that tracking the success of these initiatives was critical. Two funding cycles into the project, he reported, it was already clear that MIU had advanced innovation in and out of the classroom, the re-imagining of academic support systems, increased need-based aid, an exciting explosion of cross-campus collaboration, and new thinking about impact and accountability.

In response to several questions about the funding for the program, Provost DeLuca replied that the initial influx of money underwriting new MIU projects would be gone by the next year. However, he explained, the plan all along was that the funded programs would be long-term and sustainable through ongoing differential tuition. Feedback over time would help determine how to embed some of the projects into the fabric of UW-Madison's budget.

In response to a question by Regent Davis about the extent to which students of color were engaged in the MIU process, Mr. Sheka noted that the student advisory board was diverse in terms of discipline and included one student of color. In response to a follow-up question from Regent Davis, Provost DeLuca said that the campus was paying attention to achievement issues and how students of color were benefiting from MIU. He mentioned the Math Emporium project as one that responded to the loss of students of color in math courses. Dr. Brower added that the next presentation on high-impact practices would speak to the positive impact certain innovative educational practices, like some of those funded by MIU, had on students of color.

Committee members expressed their appreciation to the presenters. In response to questioning from Regent Crain, Mr. Sheka and Mr. Templeton described their post-graduation plans.

3. Presentation and Discussion on Student Success Programs for Populations of Opportunity through High-Impact Practices

Regent Crain introduced the presentation on "Student Success Programs for Populations of Opportunity through High-Impact Practices," one of the Committee's priority topics for the year. She referred to these programs as critical to the success of the UW System's *More Graduates for Wisconsin* initiative, and central to the System's goal of more and better prepared graduates. She introduced Patricia Kleine, Provost at UW-Eau Claire, Fernando Delgado,

Provost at UW-River Falls, and (again) Aaron Brower, Vice Provost at UW-Madison to make the presentation.

Dr. Brower provided an overview of the educational practices known as “high-impact” and a snapshot of the research indicating why they were so effective at raising student achievement, especially for students historically under-represented in higher education. He noted that there were no prescriptions for how high-impact practices worked best, and that they were offered and embedded in the curriculum and co-curriculum in different ways at each UW institution, depending on campus culture and mission. He cited the research of George Kuh, of Indiana University, which demonstrated that students who participated in two high-impact practices while in college were significantly more engaged, learned more deeply, and had better retention and graduation results. The benefits were especially advantageous for “populations of opportunity,” including students of color, first-generation, and low-income students. And yet, Kuh’s research found, those populations were least likely to participate in high-impact practices while in college.

Provost Kleine described two components of two larger projects taking place at UW-Eau Claire, both of which were designed to address UW-Eau Claire’s low four-year graduation rate. The first project involved changes to the university’s honors program, which began putting aside traditional criteria for admission, like high-school GPA, and focused instead on factors like creativity and motivation. Students defined as “under-served” at Eau Claire were invited to participate in the honors program according to these alternative factors and were performing well, with better learning and persistence outcomes. The second project involved providing undergraduate research opportunities (another high-impact program) to under-served students, who—campus data revealed—tended not to receive strong science preparation in high school. This project paid students to conduct research with psychology faculty and was also yielding strong results.

Provost Delgado echoed Provost Kleine’s comments, observing that UW-River Falls also had a low four-year graduation rate. He noted that UW-River Falls had been tardy in analyzing its Equity Scorecard data, but that the tardiness turned out to be timely in terms of the Chancellor’s interest in expanding student access to and participation in high-impact practices like study abroad, undergraduate research, and first-year experiences. His campus had put together a modest differential tuition proposal that would fund high-impact practices with a focus on under-served students. The proposal was currently being considered by the student body.

In the meantime, Provost Delgado continued, campus data had revealed that the students most likely *not* to succeed and persist at River Falls were those who entered the university as undeclared majors. These students were increasingly first-generation and transfer students. In response, the campus had developed a first-year learning community composed of linked, interdisciplinary classes designed to deepen student inquiry and understanding of the liberal arts. This high-impact practice was being put in place the following academic year for the roughly 400 undeclared majors and it was expected that it would help them be more engaged in their first two years on campus, and thus more likely to persist to the upper division, which already had more high-impact practices in place.

Dr. Brower then shared data on UW-Madison student participation in high-impact practices, including the statistic that 92% of under-represented minority students graduated with at least one high-impact practice, which was a higher rate than majority students. He highlighted UW-Madison's Freshman Interest Group or FIG program, a curricular learning community similar to what UW-River Falls was implementing. He provided data showing improved GPAs for both minority and majority students who participated in the FIG program, and that the improvement lasted through the seventh semester for students even though the FIG was taken in the freshman year. He concluded by noting that he was a big fan of high-impact practices but that they needed to be done right, according to key elements, in order to be truly effective for students.

In response to a question from Kathleen Enz Finken, Provost at UW-La Crosse, Dr. Brower and Provost Delgado noted that the students participating in the high-impact practices they described were not necessarily self-selecting and that, at UW-River Falls, the campus was requiring undeclared majors to take the first-year learning experience. In response to a question from Associate Vice President Stephen Kolison, Provosts Kleine and Delgado said that many residence halls were already serving as high-impact practices, led by Student Affairs staff who were very familiar with the research on student engagement. Julia Wallace, Provost at UW-Green Bay, added that one-third of Green Bay students were participating in first-year experiences and that the biggest impact her campus had noted was for commuter students.

Christine Quinn, Provost at UW-Extension, asked about strategies being used to bring adult students into high-impact practices. Provost Delgado cited the challenge of helping transfer students participate in study abroad, adding that short-term courses helped address this population. Lane Earns, Provost at UW-Oshkosh, mentioned a special pathway for transfer students being developed as a part of the *Give Students a Compass* project.

In response to a question from Associate Vice President Kolison, Provost Kleine answered that high-impact sometimes meant high cost, with study abroad being the prime example. Eau Claire's Blugold Initiative was helping students afford study abroad, as was the UW-Eau Claire Foundation. Dr. Brower commented that UW-Madison's FIG program involved "re-packaging" existing, rather than adding, new courses. Undergraduate research, in contrast, remained expensive. In response to a question from Regent Evers, Provost Kleine elaborated on the kinds of alternative criteria used to admit students into the honors program.

Regent Crain thanked all the speakers, and Regent Davis observed that in her eight years as a Regent, this had been one of the best presentations she had heard. She was especially pleased with how local and national data was informing changes to practice.

4. Annual Program Planning and Review Report

Associate Vice President Kolison presented the UW System's Annual Program Planning and Review Report. He reviewed for the Committee the general principles and the key components that guided the System's program array. He then summarized the planning activity from the previous year (resulting in the implementation of 19 new academic programs), and provided data for the past five years on the entire spectrum of program planning, from entitlements to discontinuations. He

illustrated the share of implementations by campus for the past five years, as well as the breakdown by degree levels (bachelor's, Master's, Ph.D.s, and professional doctorates). He presented the fluctuations in total numbers of baccalaureate degree programs since 1981-82, as well as that for graduate degree programs. The last decade had seen a steady increase in total numbers, but these numbers were still lower than the peak from 1981-82 and would presumably remain lower given the budget climate. He also shared a pie chart indicating the frequency of baccalaureate programs throughout the System, with the majority offered at only one UW institution.

Associate Vice President Kolison next reviewed selected outcomes from the 2009 Program Realignment Initiative, which resulted in the development of guidelines for program closures or discontinuations, program suspensions, and low-degree-producing programs. He reminded Committee members that the guidelines had been developed through a collaborative process among the institutions and UW System Administration, and would entail a review of undergraduate programs every five years to determine degree productivity. Dr. Kolison concluded by saying that, despite budgetary constraints, UW institutions had been successful in introducing new and high-quality academic degree programs designed to meet the needs of Wisconsin citizens.

Regent Crain expressed her appreciation for the report, noting that she found it more readable and responsive to questions raised a year ago when last presented. UW-La Crosse Provost Enz Finken pointed out that most new academic programs approved in the last few years were self-sustaining, through tuition revenue, a necessity given the decreases in state funding incurred by every UW institution. UW-Green Bay Provost Wallace concurred, adding that the decline indicated by Dr. Kolison in the 1990s was a result of declining budgets, whereas the uptick of new programs in recent years resulted from a very different funding source and, hence, different kinds of programs. UW-Parkside Provost Terry Brown requested that future reports include the breakdown of new programs by funding source, whether cost-recovery or differential tuition or state GPR. Dr. Kolison agreed that such information would be valuable to include.

UW-Stout Provost Julie Furst-Bowe recalled that several years ago, there had been a moratorium on new programs imposed by UW System Administration. She considered that such a move had been short-sighted and hoped it would not be repeated. UW-River Falls Provost Delgado expressed his concern that the state would not be in a position to support the current array of academic programs, indicative of the changing compact between the state and the UW System, and that historical programs which had always relied on GPR funding might suffer the most.

5. Reports from the Office of Operations Review & Audit

Regent Crain introduced two reports from the Office of Operations Review & Audit, the primary responsibility of which was to ensure that UW programs, policies, and practices were conducted in accordance with state law and Board policy. She explained that such reports were presented usually to the Business, Finance & Audit Committee. Because of the academic issues at stake in each of the reports, however, they were being presented to the Education Committee.

a. Student Evaluation of Instruction

Julie Gordon, Director of the Office of Operations Review & Audit, presented the results of the

review of Regent Policy Document (RPD) 20-2 on Student Evaluation of Instruction. Adopted in 1974, RPD 20-2 encouraged each UW institution to develop policy supporting the widest use of student evaluation of instruction, and required the development of systematic and consistent procedures for their administrative use. Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) was not meant to be a substitute for peer review, and UW institutions retained discretion over its implementation. Ms. Gordon detailed the scope and results of her office's review, which surveyed and visited 33 departments throughout the System. The review addressed the timing and frequency of SEI, and how student feedback was collected, including such issues as the content of the evaluations, instructions for its administration, ensuring student anonymity, and whether paper-based or online evaluations were used.

The review also examined, Ms. Gordon continued, the uses of SEI results, which include the improvement of instruction and input into tenure and promotion decisions. The review resulted in several recommendations, among them that UW institutions and departments assess their policies and practices to ensure the "widest possible use" of SEI for the improvement of instruction; that they evaluate their instructions to ensure that assurances of anonymity and SEI purposes are clearly stated; and that those UW institutions considering online SEI take steps to adequately ensure that confidential data will remain secure. Ms. Gordon briefly addressed one purpose of SEI that was not a part of the Regent policy: course selection. While making SEI data available to help students select courses was rarely done at universities throughout the country, some UW student government leaders had expressed an interest in such a purpose.

Regent Davis asked the Provosts to share their views on why faculty and staff would not want SEI data used for course selection. Provost Delgado cited examples, encountered throughout his career in higher education, of bias against female or faculty of color expressed in student evaluations of instruction, even when course curricula were identical. Provost Wallace added that students who wanted to use SEI for course selection had web-based options already available to them and that institutions did not need to provide them.

The Committee then heard from Nicholas Sloboda, Faculty Representative and Professor of English at UW-Superior, who shared some faculty perspectives on the topic of SEI. Professor Sloboda emphasized that faculty take SEI seriously, not only because it is used for merit and promotion purposes, but also because they have a genuine interest in improving their teaching. He also stated that faculty take the anonymity of SEI seriously, as well. On behalf of the other Faculty Representatives, he noted that online course evaluations held potential but because the response rates were currently so low, their usefulness was limited.

Regent Schwalenberg affirmed the importance of SEI, noting that it gives students a voice and helped them understand and articulate what good teaching was. Regent Evers pointed to the purposes and value of SEI in the PK-12 arena. Regent Crain thanked Ms. Gordon and added that the Committee might want to return to the topic at some point in the future.

b. Credit for Prior Learning

Joshua Smith, Assistant Director of the Office of Operations Review & Audit, presented the report on Credit for Prior Learning, also known as prior learning assessment (PLA). Mr. Smith defined PLA as "the evaluation for college credit of the knowledge and skills one gains from life-experiences

(or from non-college instructional programs) including employment, travel, hobbies, civic activities and volunteer service.” He reminded Committee members that the Advantage Wisconsin strategic framework, the basis for the *Growth Agenda for Wisconsin*, had recommended that the UW System adopt a more formal prior learning assessment program. Potential advantages for students included college costs reduction, flexibility and control, expanded educational opportunities, and incentives to begin or complete a college degree. PLA could benefit universities by helping them attract more students and meet their enrollment targets, increase the number of graduates, and free up classroom space. The main objective of PLA was reducing time-to-degree, which students and universities alike wanted.

Mr. Smith outlined PLA methods, including: credit by examination, whether through national or departmental exams; portfolio-based assessment; and other non-examination options such as evaluation of military service and informal student assessments. He reviewed the use of PLA in the UW System, which varied from institution to institution, college to college, and department to department. Overall, campus data were not always available or reliable although Mr. Smith did share some institutional data. There was also variation in the processes and criteria used to assess and award credits. More limited participation was also influenced by faculty and student perceptions of PLA. In addition, there were certain administrative and programmatic challenges that had thus far prevented PLA from being widely adopted in the System, including transfer and transcript notation issues, implementation costs, training of personnel to conduct PLA, and better promotion of PLA opportunities.

Mr. Smith concluded his presentation by sharing the review’s recommendations, among them: that the Office of Academic Affairs adopt a uniform process and format for collecting and reporting data on how UW institutions are awarding PLA credit; that UW institutions offer a course for credit to help students develop portfolios in order to receive credit for PLA; that the UW System develop a standard method of transcript notation for PLA credit and help facilitate transfer of PLA credit among institutions; that the Office of Academic Affairs develop a coordinated strategy by which to increase understanding and usage of PLA among faculty and students, adult students in particular; and that pilot PLA programs be developed.

Associate Vice President Kolison followed up by stating that many of the recommendations of the PLA review were, in fact, already being implemented. This was due in large part to the \$800,000 grant the UW System had received from the Lumina Foundation as a part of Lumina’s “Adult Degree-Completion Commitment.” Associate Vice President Larry Rubin elaborated on the activities that would be funded over the four years of the grant program. He described three areas of focus, some of which are already underway: 1) the convening of a faculty group that would develop guidelines and principles to ensure consistent use and transfer of PLA; 2) development of a standard method of transcript notation for PLA; and 3) the funding of 3-4 pilot PLA programs at UW institutions. In response to a question from Provost Earns, Mr. Rubin replied that, for now, the PLA group that had been convened was looking at internal transfer, and not to and from institutions outside the UW System.

In response to a question from Regent Crain, Mr. Smith described what happens following the presentation of the Operations Review & Audit reports. Recommendations are made to UW System and to the institutions, as appropriate, and decisions are made as to whether they warrant follow-up. Mr. Rubin mentioned that the Business, Finance, & Audit Committee sometimes requested

management response documents from System that would determine appropriate follow-up, and Regent Crain expressed interest in this.

6. Report of the Senior Vice President

Associate Vice President Kolison then presented the report of the Senior Vice President on behalf of Rebecca Martin. He began by acknowledging Christine Quinn, outgoing Provost at UW-Extension, who was leaving the UW System to take a job at National Louis University in Chicago. Provost Quinn responded that the decision to leave UW-Extension was a difficult one for her but that she was deeply attracted to National Louis University's commitment to under-served adults and first-generation students. She added that she would miss her colleagues in the UW System and the intellectual capital of Education Committee meetings.

a. Review of Sabbatical Guidelines

Associate Vice President Kolison informed the Committee that every few years members were asked to review the System's sabbatical guidelines. Last reviewed in 2008, the guidelines recommend areas of emphasis for institutional sabbatical decisions. In consultation with Senior Vice President Martin, it was felt that the guidelines could use some updating but that major revisions were not needed. They both advised removing the emphasis on technology and adding one on Inclusive Excellence. Provost Furst-Bowe responded that she would like to see Inclusive Excellence added and would advocate keeping the technology focus in the guidelines given the huge range of what faculty were doing with technology. In response to a question from Provost Delgado, Dr. Kolison affirmed that campuses could weigh the areas of emphasis however they liked in making sabbatical decisions; they were recommendations not requirements. Provost Earns recommended more major updating to the guidelines and asked that the Provosts undertake a more meaningful revision process prior to the Education Committee's next review of them.

b. Summary of 2011-12 Sabbatical Assignments

Associate Vice President Kolison briefly reviewed the 2011-12 sabbatical assignments, which had been emailed to the Regents earlier in the week. He reported that 273 faculty members had been selected to receive sabbatical leaves for 2011-12, 42% of whom were women and 15% of whom were minorities.

7. Full Board Consent Agenda

Resolution I.1.a.(2) was referred to the consent agenda of the full Board of Regents at its Friday, December 10, 2010, meeting. The meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rebecca Karoff
Secretary, Education Committee