

MINUTES  
*EDUCATION COMMITTEE, BOARD OF REGENTS*

October 10, 2013

Committee Actions

Regent Bradley convened the meeting of the Education Committee at 2:38 p.m. Regents Evers, Drew, Hribar, Manydeeds, Petersen, and Vasquez were present. Regent Landes was absent.

Committee Consent Agenda:

Regent Bradley presented the minutes of the July 11, 2013, meeting, along with the following resolutions as consent agenda items:

Resolution I.1.a.(2), UW-Whitewater: Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts in Criminology;

Resolution I.1.a.(3), UW-Whitewater: Master of Science in Applied Economics;

Resolution I.1.a.(4), UW-Superior: Bachelor of Arts in Writing;

Resolution I.1.a.(5), UW-Stout: Professional Science Master (P.S.M.) in Conservation Biology; and

Resolution I.1.a.(6), UW System Re-appointments of Dr. James Bennett and Dr. Patrick Robinson, for terms effective July 1, 2012 and ending July 1, 2015, to the Natural Areas Preservation Council.

The consent agenda, moved by Regent Vasquez and seconded by Regent Drew, carried unanimously.

Resolution I.1.b., Revision of Regent Policy 14-6 on Racist and Other Discriminatory Conduct and Regent Policy 14-9 on Discriminatory Harassment.

Associate Vice President Vicki Washington introduced the background to the proposed policy changes. The proposed revisions to RPD 14-6 and the elimination of RPD 14-9 create a single policy focused on protecting students and employees from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and contain definitions of discrimination and discriminatory harassment that comport with current case law and state and federal statutes. In essence, the revised Regent Policy Document 14-6, titled "Racist and Other Discriminatory Conduct Policy" would remove unconstitutional language and eliminate a related but duplicative policy, RPD 14-9, by addressing discriminatory harassment. Washington informed the Regents that the proposed changes were part of a larger effort initiated in 2011 to review and update all of the Board's policies. She added that "a

number of years ago, a portion of UWS Chapter 17 that prohibited certain types of expressive behavior directed at individuals was deemed unconstitutional.” At the time, the Board of Regents revised the administrative rule, but did not formally revise or repeal similar language contained in RPD 14-6 to reflect the court ruling. As such, Washington elaborated, RPD 14-6 at present still included certain language that was deemed unconstitutional.

In April of 2013, then-Regent President Smith was contacted by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, a group of faculty members at UW-Madison known as the Committee for Academic Freedom and Rights, and a group of UW-Stout and UW-Eau Claire faculty, urging the Board of Regents to revise Policy 14-6 to be consistent with Supreme Court decisions and fundamental First Amendment and free speech principles. In response, Regent President Smith had directed the Board of Regents Office to initiate a review of RPD 14-6 to determine whether changes to the policy were necessary in response to applicable court rulings and state or federal law. The Board Office and the Office of General Counsel conducted a full review of the policy and proposed changes to reflect current legal standards. Washington finished her introduction by reiterating that the proposed changes were reviewed by various UW System groups, including human resources directors, affirmative action directors, legal staff at UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee, senior student affairs officers, minority/disadvantaged coordinators, LGBTQ coordinators, as well as the faculty groups from UW-Madison, UW-Stout, and UW-Eau Claire.

Regent Vasquez asked Washington whether the proposed policy changes would in any way affect current initiatives regarding students of color, for instance efforts directed at increasing targeted programming, to which she responded that participation in special affirmative targeted programming was limited regardless of protected category. Thanking Washington for her introduction, Regent Drew strongly affirmed that the intended changes were not to be interpreted as “taking a step back from the UW System’s longstanding opposition against discrimination based on protected categories. We are still strongly opposed to discriminatory behavior and speech [... such as homophobic jokes and comments about somebody’s race] addressed to any students and employees.”

The motion to authorize a revision to RPD14-6 and to remove RPD 14-9, moved by Regent Manydeeds and Regent Drew, and seconded by Regent Hribar, carried unanimously.

### UW-Parkside Presentation

After introducing Associate Provost Dennis Rome and other members of the UW-Parkside leadership team, Interim Provost Fred Ebeid outlined UW-Parkside’s progress in promoting academic excellence. Elaborating on the university’s recent re-affirmation of accreditation and approval to pursue a so-called Open Pathway granted by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), also mentioned in Chancellor Ford’s presentation earlier that day, he highlighted UW-Parkside’s longstanding commitment to developmental

(remedial) education and access for post-traditional (adult and non-traditional) students. Ebeid described in some detail UW-Parkside's success in developing competency-based remedial mathematics courses enhanced by the use of high impact practices and community-based learning. As a result of their investment of a variety of institutional resources, Ebeid reported that "Student success rates in [UW-Parkside's] elementary algebra course increased from around 53 percent to nearly 70 percent in the first year." Ebeid further explained that increased student success and retention was primarily brought about by new delivery models, alternate pathways, improved transfer options, affordable global learning options, as well as strategic articulation agreements with technical and two-year institutions, participation in the UW Flex Option, and the involvement of students in various economic growth initiatives via internships. UW-Parkside is planning to offer two Flex Option certificates, starting in fall 2014. The ensuing video: "*A Day in the Life of a UW-Parkside Student*," depicting the individual challenges and successes of three UW-Parkside students, was well received by the Committee, and received praise for its realistic depiction of contemporary students' complex lives.

#### Education Committee Priorities and Goals – Faculty Workload, Educational Quality, and Compensation

Regent Bradley characterized the intent of the continued conversation on the Education Committee's goals and activities as a process that would yield a clearer understanding of the different perceptions of the diverse roles of the Regents and the role of the institutions in pursuit of shared goals. He emphasized that the proposed changes in language presented to the Committee in the most recent version of the *Goals and Priorities* document did "not change what the roles do, but articulates the relationship (between the Regents, the institutions, and UW System Administration) in a different way." Regent Vasquez commented that goals must be measurable and the targets and outcomes must be achievable, and he wondered whether or not the revised language sufficiently met the criteria of measurability and achievability. Acknowledging this important point, Regent Bradley recommended that the described goals could be seen as guidance on "where we are going to pay attention," even as they may not all be measurable goals. The provosts were invited to add any comments; there were none.

Turning to the specific topic of faculty workload, Regent Bradley remarked that the discussion on workload would often quickly turn into a discussion of teaching hours, which does not accurately reflect the true workload of most faculty. Responding to Regent Evers' inquiry what the Committee should initially ask staff to work on, the Committee accepted Regent Bradley's recommendation that UW System Administration should conduct a review of Board, System, and institutional policies relating to faculty workload, including teaching, service, and research. The Committee will work together with the Board leadership in scheduling a series of presentations to the Committee, and one presentation to the full Board, on the nature of faculty work and workload in a national context. Finally, the Committee recommended a study of faculty compensation and its impact on faculty hiring and retention, and on the quality of education and research within the UW System.

## Report of the Senior Vice President

Senior Vice President Nook invited President Reilly to make a few introductory remarks in support of framing the topic of remedial education within the UW System and within the Higher Education landscape. President Reilly announced that he will be appointing a work group to examine remedial education efforts across the UW System. The work group would be charged with reviewing the current Regent, System, and institutional policies relating to remedial education in the UW System and would complete its report by the end of the 2013-2014 academic year. The charge would include a review of national studies on remedial education to identify best practices that might be implemented at UW institutions. Noting that national data clearly indicate that the number of college freshmen who are being placed into remedial classes is rising, the President expressed concern that remedial classes can extend students' time-to-degree, as remedial courses do not carry college credit, and can increase the cost of a college education. "Neither of these outcomes is acceptable," said Reilly. It is in the interest of the UW System" he added, "to make sure that students "acquire skills they need to succeed."

Senior Vice President Nook then led a discussion on trends in students' remediation placements, retention, and degree completion. In the UW System, per Regent Policy, all remedial education must be offered on a cost-recovery basis; this means that students pay in full for remedial courses. Further, remedial courses must also be completed before the student completes 30 credits.

After presenting some data based on the 2012 Report on Remedial Education (which had been postponed for presentation to 2013) and some background on why a larger discussion and review of remediation was needed, Nook emphasized the opportunities and advantages of taking a fresh look at remediation practices and policies. Non-traditional students or students returning to school are twice as likely to be placed into remedial courses than students fresh out of high school. Nook's analysis of the data appears to confirm that diverse ways of handling remedial education at different UW institutions, while warranted by their different student bodies and missions, also presents some challenges and opportunities, as different methods and approaches can lead to some skewing of the overall picture, particularly when using aggregated data.

It was important, Nook said 'to understand fully what works" and he agreed with the President that it is time to develop "some new policies and practices with the right level of customization and standardization." While it appears from a first glance at aggregated System data on remediation that "remediation is not working, that interpretation is not actually supported by the data we have, as disaggregated numbers on individual retention rates of students at some of our UW institutions show that students who needed remediation actually have higher retention rates than those students that did not place into remedial courses in the first place." Overall, the UW System's retention rates are good if one looks at the data institution by institution. For non-completers, however, the retention and graduation rates do not look good, Nook concluded.

Turning to the future and outlining his vision for creating shared understandings about college-readiness, Nook saw much use-value in the Common Core Standards adopted in Wisconsin. “The Common Core Standards”, he said, “could also be the beginning of a better alignment between expectations for college readiness and students’ skills at the time of graduation from high school.” The Office of Academic and Student Affairs will work with the Department of Public Instruction to mine the available data more thoroughly and to create systems for feedback, so that DPI also knows how high school students fared in college and can potentially introduce early interventions and warning systems. Regent Evers said that he was fully on board with this proposition.

As the UW System continues to evaluate national approaches and recommendations in support of strengthening remedial education, Nook cautioned the Regents that one needs to be careful about some of the conclusions that have been drawn from the nationally available data, as the latter are often focused on the technical colleges and two-year institutions.

In response to Regent Vasquez’s question whether students receive financial aid while enrolled in remedial courses, President Nook responded in the affirmative. Responding to Regent Drew’s question regarding which specific tiered, customized approaches Nook had been referring to, Nook named Massively Open Online Courses, known as MOOCs and other innovative pedagogies, bridge programs, and delivery systems that reduce the need for courses and “losing semesters towards graduation.” Regent Hribar asked which methods were used to track, beyond graduation, if the remedial education a student received was adequate and helpful. Nook responded that it was difficult to answer as multiple factors applied to success in the workplace or in graduate school but that the main measure used in higher education was degree attainment. Regent Evers thanked President Reilly and Senior Vice President Nook for their support of the Common Core Standards. Participation in the Remediation Work Group by representatives from DPI would establish good cooperation and data-sharing as additional ACT data (via the mandatory ACT testing of all Wisconsin students) will now also be part of the accountability system. Regent Evers shared his perspective that the UW System and DPI should take a focused look particularly at remediation in mathematics.

A full report on Remedial Education in the UW System will be presented at the December Board of Regents meeting.

Regent Vasquez moved to adjourn and Regent Manydeeds seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Carmen Faymonville, Ph.D.

Secretary of the Education Committee