

Minutes of the UW System Board of Regents
Education Committee
October 8, 2015

Regent Whitburn convened the meeting of the Education Committee at 10:47 a.m. Regents Farrow, Higgins, Langnes, Petersen, Manydeeds, and Tyler were present.

Committee Actions

The Education Committee unanimously approved the Minutes of the September 10, 2015 meeting and adopted the following four resolutions:

Resolution I.1.c., approving a B.A. in Sustainable Food and Nutrition at UW-Stevens Point;
Resolution I.1.d., retroactively approving an M.S. in Therapeutic Recreation at UW-La Crosse;

Resolution I.1.e., approving a Waiver of the Nonresident Enrollment Limit at UW-Madison;

The Education Committee adopted the resolution to waive the 27.5-percent nonresident enrollment limit for UW-Madison from 2016-17 through 2019-20. UW-Madison will be enrolling at least 3,600 Wisconsin freshmen each year. UW-Madison Chancellor Blank told the Committee that the institution would intensify their efforts to recruit Wisconsin's top high school graduates and also step up efforts to keep more graduates in the state by connecting students with Wisconsin businesses. President Cross and Chancellor Blank both suggested that enrolling more nonresidents could help to address any shortages of college-educated workers in Wisconsin. Several Regents expressed concern that narrow admission criteria as defined by high ACT scores and grade-point averages might disadvantage some highly talented students and recommended that UW-Madison keep its existing holistic admissions process. The Board will review outcomes of the waiver at a mid-term report from UW-Madison in academic year 2017-18. President Cross supported the resolution and indicated that giving UW-Madison flexibility would help to meet the high quality talent needs of the State, grow the economy, and build a stronger future for Wisconsin.

Resolution I.1.f., approving the Reappointment of UW-Madison Professor James Bennett and the Appointment of UW-Madison Professor David Mladenoff to the Natural Areas Preservation Council.

Report of the Vice President

Vice President Ward reported on High School to College Success Reports. For two decades, UW System has been providing information to Wisconsin high schools on the college readiness and progress of their graduates at a three-year interval. The goal is to help high schools evaluate and strengthen their efforts in preparing students for success beyond high school through aligning the curriculum, and thereby reducing the need for developmental education. The high school feedback reports are made available through a contract with ACT, Inc. Outcome information provided in the reports includes the need for remedial English and mathematics, college G.P.A., and persistence to the second year of college.

In 2015, the Wisconsin legislature enacted legislation (Act 28) requiring the UW System to report to appropriate standing committees of the legislature and to the state superintendent of public instruction, the number of students from each high school required to take remedial English or mathematics. Only high schools with more than 6 students requiring remedial coursework are to be identified. Students are not identified by name. The UW System will provide its report, as mandated, by September 1 annually, starting September 2016.

The Committee heard a presentation entitled “Data-Sharing Project with the PK-16 Schools: Partnership for Success” by UW-Stout Professor Jackie Weissenburger. UW-Stout brought together its major feeder high schools to give feedback on ACT composite scores; overall Freshmen G.P.A.; English, Math, and Reading placement test scores; average Freshmen English G.P.A.; average first-year math grades; average science ACT scores; average first-year science grades; academic dismissal rates; retention rates; and a Freshmen survey. Data sharing with high schools can achieve shared responsibility and better curricular alignment between high schools and UW institutions and facilitate a successful transition for students to college.

Ward then discussed accreditations maintained by UW institutions in professional academic disciplines. UW institutions maintain a total of 76 distinct accreditations in professional fields. Professional accreditations may help maintain quality and may be worth the cost as accreditation standards instigate productive reviews on campuses and accelerate academic innovation. Typically, faculty members are highly engaged in meeting accreditation standards and creating reports, reflecting the changing nature of faculty workloads. Ward recommended updating the UW System policy on accreditation.

In concluding, Ward reported on preliminary UW System fall enrollments, which, he said, will still change significantly, as some courses only start later in the semester, and winter-term students are added. For 2015, the preliminary numbers reported by the institutions show the following:

- Student headcount decreased by 1.4% from fall 2014
- Ten UW institutions had total enrollment decreases
- Total FTE enrollment shows a decrease of about 2,824 FTE (-1.8%)
- New Freshmen Headcount enrollment increased by 1.2% from fall 2014
- Eleven UW institutions had overall new freshmen increases
- Systemwide, resident new freshmen decreased by 194 students
- Systemwide, nonresident new freshmen increased by 520
- Total transfers are up 1.9% from fall 2014
- Graduate Student Headcount enrollment has decreased slightly but is stable (-0.4%)

The Committee adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Dr. Carmen Faymonville

Secretary to the Education Committee