

Minutes of the Research, Economic Development, & Innovation Committee
University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents
UW System
August 18, 2016

Chairman Hall convened the meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee at 8:30 a.m. Regents Hall, Klein, Erickson, Higgins, and Tyler were present. Regent Hall opened her first meeting as chair and recognized Regent Higgins for his tireless service to the REDI committee and setting the stage for discussing and prioritizing research within REDI. She thanked him for his commitment and passion as chair and looked forward to continuing to work with him on the REDI Committee.

a. Approval of the Minutes of the June 9, 2016, Meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee

Chairman Hall asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2016, REDI Committee meeting. Motion was made by Regent Higgins and seconded by Regent Tyler to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Preview of the UW System Career Connect Web Portal

UW System President Ray Cross reported that Wisconsin loses 10,000 to 14,000 graduates every year, making attraction and retention of graduates a priority. He emphasized the Business and Community Mobilization aspect of the 2020 Forward Strategic Plan by previewing the “**Career Connect**” portal, one of the key system-level priorities. He explained that the Career Connect web portal will provide convenient access for employers seeking talent and for students looking for internships and work experiences. President Cross thanked institutions for their contributions in building the portal as well as the various statewide partners:

- Department of Workforce Development
- Wisconsin Economic Development Association
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
- Wisconsin Technology Council
- Wisconsin Manufacturers in Commerce
- Society for Human Resource Management

Regent Higgins asked if there would be the ability to connect with a single person on every campus, and System Administration staff assured him that this was one of the resources contained within the portal. Regent Tyler asked about whether there would be incorporation of Jobs for WI Grads, and System Administration explained that this was one of the resources contained in the portal as well. Regent Klein acknowledged that this was a fantastic step forward for students and employers.

c. Update on UW-Madison Research

Steve Ackerman, UW-Madison Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Vice President of the Board of the Wisconsin Research Security Consortium, led a discussion of the strong and growing role of research at UW-Madison. With a \$15 billion total economic impact on the Wisconsin economy, and a \$2.3 billion economic impact from UW-connected startups, UW-Madison is continuing to provide the state with significant returns as one of the top five research universities in the country. He stated that research expenditures are made throughout the state in all 72 counties of Wisconsin and that UW-Madison has a history of being ranked among the top five research universities going as far back as the 1980s. He also explained the makeup of the research enterprise and emphasized that if any link within that enterprise is strengthened or weakened, it reverberates throughout campus and has other impacts beyond campus.

Professor Ackerman was joined by William Murphy, Professor of Biomedical Engineering and Orthopedics and Rehabilitation, who reflected on the 20 years since researchers at UW-Madison set out on a course that eventually led to induced human pluripotent, or “reverse engineered,” cells in the late 2000s, and how that research is now helping human health and fostering new companies through the more than 100 patents issued since 2004, the more than 30 license agreements executed, and various other key activities.

Regent Higgins asked them to elaborate on the recent critique in the media of professors avoiding the classroom. Both speakers said that they themselves and their colleagues became faculty to serve three key areas: service, research, and teaching. However, they acknowledged that it would be difficult to maintain a research enterprise if every faculty member took on the traditional teaching load at a traditional four-year college. They both agreed that enthusiasm of undergraduates is one of the positive aspects of their work. Regent Erickson asked about the effects of the budget cuts. Professor Murphy and Associate Vice Chancellor Ackerman responded that they have spent a lot of time on retention that could have been focused on research efforts. They have lost faculty to out-of-state offers. Regent Tyler asked about the sustainability of federal funding. The speakers replied that fund rates are on average in the ten percent range, and renewals are low. However, they have had high success rates, due to the competitiveness of their faculty. Regent Klein asked what type of support services are offered to spin out companies. The speakers highlighted various individual initiatives, such as D2P and Accelerator, as well as support services from WARF. President Cross complimented them on their work and the work of their offices.

Chairman Hall adjourned the meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee at 9:30 a.m.