

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

of the

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

Held in the Symphony Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Gordon Dining and Event Center  
770 W. Dayton Street  
Madison, Wisconsin

Thursday, November 10, 2016  
9:45 a.m.

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-President Millner presiding-

PRESENT: Regents John Behling, José Delgado, Lisa Erickson, Tony Evers, Margaret Farrow, Eve Hall, Tim Higgins, Tracey Klein, James Langnes, Edmund Manydeeds, Regina Millner, Janice Mueller, Drew Petersen, Bryan Steil, Mark Tyler, and Gerald Whitburn

UNABLE TO ATTEND: Regents Mark Bradley and Michael Grebe

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**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 2016 MEETING**

The minutes of the October 6-7, 2016 Board of Regents meeting had been provided. Upon the motion of Regent Whitburn, with a second by Regent Petersen, the minutes were approved on a voice vote.

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**REMEMBRANCE OF UW-STOUT STUDENT HUSSAIN SAEED ALNAHDI**

On behalf of the Board of Regents and President Cross, President Millner expressed her deepest condolences to the family, friends and others who knew Hussain Saeed Alnahdi. By all accounts, the young man from Saudi Arabia was an enthusiastic, well-liked and valuable member of the UW-Stout campus community. It was clear that he would be missed and remembered. President Millner said she took heart in the message coming from both the campus and Menomonie communities recognizing that there is much more drawing people together than dividing them.

She then asked Chancellor Meyer to speak about the UW-Stout student. He said Mr. Alnahdi's death had also illustrated the magnificent ability of a campus community to pull

together and put aside differences to give comfort and assistance to grieving family and friends some 7,000 miles away.

On October 31, 2016, Hussain Saeed Alnahdi, a bright and passionate young Saudi Arabian student, died as a result of injuries sustained in a violent attack in downtown Menomonie the day before. Chancellor Meyer called it “the darkest day” of his tenure as chancellor. He had since spent many hours with Hussain’s friends and heard about his gregarious spirit, sharp sense of humor, love of America, and the deep bonds that he forged with anyone that he met.

It did not matter to Mr. Alnahdi if someone was Saudi or American – if you had the capacity to laugh and enjoy life, you were his friend forever. Chancellor Meyer recalled the UW-Stout students, some wearing traditional white Saudi dress and others in American jeans, who took the podium at Mr. Alnahdi’s memorial service to pour out their hearts over what Hussain meant to them and the heartache that they were now experiencing.

Chancellor Meyer said that his spirits continued to be lifted by the expressions of sympathy, support and offers of assistance from across the state, the nation, and the world. On campus, UW-Stout students, faculty and staff have pulled together to comfort each other, collectively discuss their loss, and try to find some ray of hope in each day.

He had also heard from state and national leaders from both parties, UW-Stout alumni, and his colleagues in the UW System. He noted that President Cross had made the trip to Menomonie to share words of support and comfort at the memorial service, and Regent Mark Tyler had visited campus to attend a session on intercultural competence in times of crisis.

President Millner thanked Chancellor Meyer for his remarks. She then asked everyone to join in a moment of silence.

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## **UW VETS CERTIFICATION ANNOUNCEMENT**

Moving on, President Millner congratulated the winners of Tuesday’s elections – both those returning to office and those newly elected. The UW System would reach out to elected officials from both sides of the aisle and keep lines of communication open with new and experienced lawmakers alike.

President Millner called attention to Veterans’ Day, which would be observed on Friday. Veterans’ Day is a time for recognizing the service and sacrifice of our country’s men and women in uniform, both past and present. She indicated that, as for so many others, military life is familiar and personal to her.

President Millner recounted her family’s history of military service. Her paternal grandfather fought Pancho Villa with General Pershing, got mustard burns in World War II, and

served in the Pacific during World War II and the Korean War. In December 1941, her father came out of breakfast at Hickam Field in Hawaii and was puzzled by a low flying aircraft – until he realized it was shooting at him. Her mother – a teacher who worked her way through college in the Depression – left her job in a wave of patriotism to join the Women’s Army Corps, where she then met President Millner’s father.

Her parents’ rich war experiences were followed by a G.I. Bill education, as happened with so many other G.I.s after World War II. Her father was recalled to duty during the Korean War, and subsequent journeys had the family crisscrossing the United States and the Atlantic Ocean, making their home in nine different states and two countries. President Millner recalled that her K-12 years were spent at seven different schools, including high school in two states.

While she understood what it is like to live in a military family, President Millner observed that President Ray Cross has first-hand experience through his service with the U.S. Army in Vietnam, for which he was awarded four medals. Similarly, millions of Americans are touched directly or indirectly by those who wear, have worn, or will wear the uniform in service of our country. President Millner expressed her deep respect and gratitude for those who serve, both on and off the battlefield, and who steadfastly stand on-guard to ensure our freedom, our security, and our way of life.

She then asked President Cross to speak about the UW System’s VETS Certification Program, which he had launched in his first year as President of the UW System.

President Cross began by thanking the University of Wisconsin-Madison ROTC joint color guard, commanded by Midshipman Evan Lallensack, as well as Katie Anderson, who sang the Star Spangled Banner before the start of the meeting, in recognition of Veterans’ Day. He also welcomed Assistant Deputy Secretary Dan Buttery from the State of Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

President Cross then invited all veterans and active military personnel in the room to stand and be recognized.

President Cross announced that, over the years, the University of Wisconsin System has made a strong commitment to veterans who come to its campuses. The System is regularly recognized as providing veterans’ benefits that are among the most comprehensive in the nation. The university is also well known for the supportive services provided for veterans and their family members.

Student veterans still represent a relatively small portion of the total students on UW campuses – less than 3 percent – but they are also a growing segment of the campus population. Since the Wisconsin G.I. Bill was implemented in 2005, the number of student veterans served by UW institutions has nearly doubled to 5,500 annually.

Two years earlier, the UW System had announced the creation of a new UW System Veterans Education and Transition to Success (VETS) certification program. VETS certification

is designed to recognize campuses that go above and beyond in helping student veterans succeed. To earn this certification, institutions have to meet a rigorous series of criteria. They must:

- train faculty and staff on issues that student veterans may face in transitioning to college, including scheduling, making connections, study habits, and health and welfare challenges;
- conduct regular surveys of student veterans to identify needs and get input;
- establish a campus steering committee composed of student-veterans, faculty and staff to share information and to provide guidance to campus leadership;
- provide student-veteran-focused orientation programming;
- identify internal and external counseling resources to assist student veterans with academic, financial and social concerns; and
- provide a dedicated space on campus where student veterans can meet peers and receive help with benefits, enrollment and connecting to supportive resources.

The VETS Program helps to publically salute an institution's commitment in these broad areas of facilities, training, data and research, affordability, leadership, services, and collaboration – all with the larger goal of making their educational experience more accessible, affordable, and successful.

Before announcing which institutions would receive the inaugural VETS certifications, President Cross invited Assistant Deputy Secretary Buttery to say a few words.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Buttery thanked President Cross and the Board of Regents, stating that it was an honor to attend the meeting on behalf of Secretary John Scocos, who was currently at the Governor's Northern Economic Summit. Mr. Buttery then highlighted some of the initiatives that the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs has been working on specific to student veterans and mental health.

The previous week, his department had spoken to over 300 attendees at the third annual Veterans' Ball, presented by the Military and Veterans Resource Center at UW-Milwaukee, regarding mental health and the Zero Veteran Suicide Initiative. The initiative was launched by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs and its various community partners in mid-October. Mr. Buttery indicated that veteran suicide is a real issue with greater numbers and significance than many people understand, as suicide deaths are not always identified as veterans.

General Mark Graham was the guest speaker at a mental health summit conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Recently retired out of active duty, General Graham lost his first son to combat in Iraq in 2004, due to a roadside improvised explosive device (IED). One year later, his second son committed suicide while undertaking pre-med studies at the University of Kentucky. Since then, General Graham and his wife have established a foundation at the University of Kentucky that provides QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) suicide prevention training.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Buttery explained that this is the core basis of the Zero Veteran Suicide Initiative. Looking forward, his department hoped to work with not only veterans' organizations, but also with campuses, to expand the QPR certification process. He suggested that every student and every employee in the State of Wisconsin should be QPR-trained, as it is a highly effective method for preventing crises before they occur. He emphasized that, even in the general student population, 10 percent of students on campus have a plan to commit suicide.

Assistant Deputy Secretary Buttery stated that society owes assistance to its combat tour veterans, some of whom have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan multiple times, when they struggle after returning home. Veterans do not leave behind their active duty time after receiving discharge papers; it stays with them. Noting that veterans are some of the most dedicated, loyal and motivated individuals in society, Mr. Buttery credited the UW System for the progress its campuses have made in becoming environments that can grow, nurture and prepare veterans to make that next transition and become great leaders of society. He then thanked President Cross for launching the VETS certification program, and for his military service.

President Cross thanked Assistant Deputy Secretary Buttery for his remarks.

President Cross then invited the chancellors of six institutions that had met the VETS certification criteria to come forward: UW-Green Bay Chancellor Gary Miller, UW-Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank, UW-Milwaukee Chancellor Mark Mone, UW-Stevens Point Chancellor Bernie Patterson, UW-Superior Chancellor Renée Wachter, and UW-Whitewater Chancellor Bev Kopper.

Offering his congratulations to the chancellors and their respective campuses and communities, President Cross presented each chancellor with a plaque commemorating the VETS certification. Stating his expectation that all of the UW institutions would eventually be VETS certified, President Cross said that the high caliber of services and programs offered by this inaugural class is what all of the System's student veterans deserve.

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## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD**

### ***Wisconsin Technical College System Board Report***

The report of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) board had been provided. Regent Tyler elaborated on the report, commenting that the WTCS board had recently taken up the issue of post-secondary degree attainment. Data show that most future careers will require post-secondary education of some type. The Lumina Foundation has been working nationwide to encourage states to set attainment goals. State legislators Representative David Murphy and Senator Sheila Harsdorf were engaged in discussions with the Lumina Foundation to consider having Wisconsin join the 26 states that have already set attainment goals.

The WTCS board passed a resolution encouraging and authorizing WTCS President Morna Foy to work in collaboration with UW System President Ray Cross and WAICU President Rolf Wegenke to develop an attainment goal for the state by the end of the year. Regent Tyler indicated that a similar resolution was expected to come before the Board of Regents at its December meeting.

President Millner noted that she had the opportunity to discuss this issue with a representative from the Lumina Foundation.

There were no other questions or comments.

### ***Budget Update***

With the 2016 elections over, the Governor's Office and the Department of Administration would be turning their attention to developing the 2017-19 biennial budget. Noting that the UW System has a vested interest in what that budget will look like, President Millner indicated that the chancellors and Regents would continue to engage in discussions with legislators both in Madison and in their districts, as well as with the Governor's Office.

President Millner, President Cross, and Regent Vice President Behling were working to schedule a number of face-to-face meetings with legislative leaders. Those opportunities would be used to discuss ways that the state and university can collaboratively work together in the upcoming legislative session.

In the meantime, the UW System was picking up endorsements for its budget request. Since the last Board meeting, the Wisconsin State Journal ran an editorial under the headline, "State Should Grant UW Regents' Modest Budget Request." The Racine Journal Times' editorial board said, "Giving UW Construction Authority is Worth Considering." An Eau Claire Leader-Telegram editorial urged the Governor to consider the positive impact of the UW on the state when making the budget decisions. These are all very positive signals of support for the UW System's message and budget request.

### ***Board of Regents Resolutions Database***

On behalf of the Office of the Board of Regents, President Millner said she was pleased to announce the completion of a project that had been more than four years in the making – an online, searchable database of the Board's actions. She noted that, in a way, this project had been more than 45 years in the making; the Board of Regents of the UW System held its first meeting and adopted the first resolutions related to the organization and operation of the newly formed Board of Regents on October 19, 1971.

Since that meeting 45 years ago, the Board of Regents has adopted nearly 11,000 resolutions. These resolutions range from routine resolutions related to academic calendars or reporting requirements, to the resolutions that form the foundation of what makes the UW System a great system of higher education, such as the appointment of its chancellors and System presidents, faculty promotions and tenure designations, establishment of outstanding



degree programs, or statements such as the Board's recent statement on academic freedom. The Regents have a rich history of resolutions that recognize core UW System values and principles or that endorse key initiatives or new policies.

The Board of Regents Office, with the technical assistance of UW System's Office of Information Services, has developed and created a new online, searchable database of the Board's resolutions, dating back to the time of merger and that very first meeting of the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. In the past, anyone looking for one of the thousands of resolutions adopted by the Board would need to contact the Board of Regents Office, or search through years' worth of meeting minutes.

The new database will save time by conveniently linking each resolution directly to the relevant meeting minutes, and will allow users to search by resolution number, adoption date, subject, affected institutions, or committee of origin. By providing a more accessible record of the Board's actions, the resolution database will make research into the UW System's history quicker and easier. It also serves as another way to keep university stakeholders informed about the Board of Regents' actions.

The new compilation of Board of Regents resolutions can be found online at the Board of Regents website. President Millner extended her thanks to the Board of Regents Office for dramatically improving access to the record of the Board's historical – and more recent – actions, with special thanks to Megan Wasley and Executive Director Jane Radue.

### ***Post-Tenure Review Policies***

Finally, President Millner provided a brief update on post-tenure review policies. On March 10, 2016, the Board of Regents adopted Regent Policy Document (RPD) 20-9, "Periodic Post-Tenure Review in Support of Tenured Faculty Development." That RPD states that within nine months, each UW System institution must submit an institutional policy to the Board.

UW-La Crosse's policy was addressed at the Education Committee's meeting that morning. President Millner reiterated the December deadline for all institutions to submit their policies. Once those policies are approved, the chancellors, with the advice and counsel of the faculty, are responsible for implementing the policy and operating the institution consistent with its provisions.

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## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SYSTEM**

### ***Legislative Updates***

President Cross began his report with an update on the UW System's biennial budget advocacy. In the past month, he had a number of visits around the state – in places like Brookfield, Superior, Hayward, Rhinelander, and the Fox Valley – meeting with legislators, business leaders, community leaders, and educators. System leaders had met with

Representatives Nick Milroy, Jeff Mursau, Rob Swearingen, and Dave Murphy; Senators Jerry Pertrowski, Rob Cowles, and Howard Marklein; and Lieutenant Governor Rebecca Kleefisch.

The UW System also participated in the Department of Workforce Development and Wisconsin Technology Council forums around the state. President Cross reported that people are asking great questions and are consistently expressing support for the UW System. He said that the university's advocacy work would continue.

### ***Search for UW System Vice President for Administration and Fiscal Affairs***

President Cross also updated the Regents on an upcoming search that had been announced in October. David Miller, UW System Vice President for Administration and Fiscal Affairs, has accepted a new position as Chief Financial Officer for the University of Tennessee System. Vice President Miller plans to take office there in January 2017, and the UW System has already launched the search for his successor.

### ***News from Around the UW System***

President Cross next shared some news from around the UW System.

#### **UW-Madison's Office of Quality Improvement Wins International Award**

UW-Madison's Office of Quality Improvement won an international award for facilitation. The office received a silver Facilitation Impact Award from the International Association of Facilitators. President Cross offered congratulations to Chancellor Miller, Director Maury Cotter, and all of the office's exceptional staff.

#### **UW-La Crosse Physician Assistant Program Celebrates National PA Week**

The UW-La Crosse Physician Assistant Program celebrated National PA week in October by highlighting its successes, which include a 100-percent graduate pass rate on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam. The program maintains partnerships with two leading healthcare institutions, Gundersen Medical Foundation and Mayo Clinic School of Health Science.

#### **UW-Milwaukee Fundraising Campaign Raises \$114 Million**

UW-Milwaukee has raised \$114 million in the quiet phase of its "Made in Milwaukee, Shaping the World" campaign. Its most recent \$1 million gift came from Milwaukee-based artist Jan Serr and her husband, John Shannon, who made the lead gift for the creation and operation of a multidisciplinary arts studio at the Peck School of the Arts. The studio will be used for performances, screenings, exhibitions, and filming, and will serve as a resource for community arts organizations.

### **UW-Oshkosh Offers State's First Doctoral-Level Nurse Anesthetist Program**

UW-Oshkosh is offering the first doctoral-level nurse anesthetist program in Wisconsin. President Cross indicated that this program would help alleviate the nursing shortage in Wisconsin and beyond.

### **Stout University Foundation Awards Record Amount in Scholarships**

The Stout University Foundation awarded a record \$760,000 in scholarships to students during its annual ceremony. The scholarship program has helped more than 8,700 students receive a college education since its beginning in 1962. President Cross offered congratulations to Chancellor Bob Meyer, who was himself a scholarship recipient as an undergraduate student at UW-Stout.

### **UW-Whitewater's Research Apprenticeship Program Wins Diversity Award**

UW-Whitewater's Research Apprenticeship Program is the winner of the 2016 Diversity Program Achievement Award from the Wisconsin State Council on Affirmative Action. The student retention rate after the first year of participation in the program is 96 percent.

### **UW-River Falls among "2017 Top 100 Best Value Colleges"**

UW-River Falls has been named a "2017 Top 100 Best Value College" in the most recent Educate to Career College Rankings Index. The index analyzes the profile of students when they enter a given college, the total costs of attendance, and student outcomes when they enter the labor market.

### **UW-Eau Claire Receives Research Grant to Reduce Suicide Risk among College Students**

UW-Eau Claire has received a grant to fund research to reduce the suicide risk among college students. Dr. Jennifer Muehlenkamp, a UW-Eau Claire associate professor of psychology, and a team of student researchers will use the \$300,000 federal grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to help advance suicide prevention.

### **UW-Extension Selected as Economic Development University Center for Wisconsin**

UW-Extension has been selected by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) to be an EDA University Center for Wisconsin. The center will link applied research and action to building sustainable economic development efforts in many historically underserved areas.

### **UW Professors Receive 2016 Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Awards**

UW Colleges' Kristin Plessel, an associate professor of chemistry at UW-Rock County, UW-Madison's Jennifer Smilowitz, a clinical associate professor and medical physicist, and UW-Platteville's Keith Thompson, a civil and environmental engineering professor, are all

recipients of the 2016 Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Awards, which recognize outstanding commitment to student success. President Cross congratulated all three faculty members and their campus communities.

### **UW-Green Bay's Phuture Phoenix Program Hosts Annual Fall Tour Days**

UW-Green Bay's award-winning Phuture Phoenix program hosted its annual Fall Tour Days in October, welcoming a record 1,500 fifth-graders to campus. Students toured UW-Green Bay and were invited into dozens of classrooms and lab areas for various experiments and activities.

### **UW-Parkside's Pre-Med Program Featured in Racine Journal Times**

UW-Parkside's pre-med program was featured in a recent story in the Racine Journal Times. Since 2001, 90 percent of its graduates have been accepted to the medical schools of their choice, including many at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health. President Cross congratulated Dr. Bryan Lewis and his team at UW-Parkside.

### **UW-Superior Recognized among Top Public Online Colleges in Wisconsin**

UW-Superior has been recognized as a top public online college in Wisconsin for 2016-2017 by Affordable Colleges Online for its student-teacher ratio and percentage of students receiving financial aid. With 15 programs available online that range from certificates through graduate level coursework, UW-Superior has recently added three Master of Science in Education (M.S.E.) programs to its list of online offerings.

### **UW-Stevens Point Opens Five New Academic and Career Advising Centers**

UW-Stevens Point has opened five new Academic and Career Advising Centers which are helping students to chart their paths toward graduation and career success. Past and present Student Government Association leaders joined Chancellor Bernie Patterson and state Representative David Murphy, chair of the Committee on Colleges and Universities, in a recent ribbon-cutting event. These centers are designed to reduce time to degree and increase graduation rates.

### **UW-Platteville Offers Dairy Science Major**

This year, for the first time, UW-Platteville is offering a Dairy Science major, and partners like Badgerland Financial are stepping up to support it. Dr. Michael Compton, director of the School of Agriculture, has explained that such gifts are important because it takes some financial stress off of the students.

President Cross reminded the Regents that, as always, more stories of the impact that the UW System institutions make on lives, organizations, and communities can be found through the UW System's social media channels and on its website.

## **Faculty Spotlight**

Turning the Regents' attention to the faculty spotlight, President Cross said he was delighted to introduce Dr. Anne Basting, a UW-Milwaukee theater professor who was recently named a 2016 MacArthur Fellow. This prestigious fellowship and award are commonly known as the "Genius Grant," and Dr. Basting is one of just 23 new fellows nationally this year. She is also the first UW-Milwaukee faculty member to earn the MacArthur Foundation's highest honor.

President Cross then shared a brief video prepared by the MacArthur Foundation, which offered a look at Dr. Basting's work. The video described her efforts to understand and transform aging from a time associated largely with tragedy and loss to one that is understood as a time of growth and possibility. Dr. Basting stated in the video that "late life should be a rich time for growth and learning, all the way to the end." She explained that when she began volunteering with people with Alzheimer's, she used improvisation techniques that were mostly based on reminiscence. For about six weeks there was not much of a response; then she decided that, rather than rely on memory and the expectation of memory, she would instead invite her patients to respond with their imaginations.

Her breakthrough project, TimeSlips, uses a creative storytelling approach – improvisational storytelling – that was born in that first moment of volunteering at the nursing home. She then replicated the approach, teaching other people to do it, wrapping research around it, and disseminating it as broadly as possible.

Dr. Basting said that the beauty of the approach is that anyone can be taught to use it, including those in housekeeping, nutritionists, family caregivers, and even neighbors. After wondering whether it could be infused into the entire care system, she started the Penelope Project, which used the approach for community-building on a larger scale. It culminated in a professionally-produced play that was staged at sites throughout the care community. Family members, staff, and volunteers came to participate with the residents, and people from different areas of care began collaborating when they never had before.

Dr. Basting said she hopes that, when this creative engagement work is shared publicly, it will help people realize the remaining capacities and strengths that older people have, particularly people with dementia. Ultimately, TimeSlips is an effort to reduce stigma and ease isolation and loneliness.

The video ended with Dr. Basting stating that she considered the MacArthur award to be a vote of confidence in her choice to commit her career to working with older adults in this unconventional way – having her work be recognized and valued has given her the courage and confidence to keep thinking bigger.

President Cross then welcomed Dr. Basting to the podium. She described herself as a poster child for the UW System – she attended a public high school in Janesville, earned her master's degree at UW-Madison, took her first teaching job at UW-Oshkosh, and has been teaching for over 15 years at UW-Milwaukee. Having spent her entire career in public higher

education, Dr. Basting said she would offer some insight about the nature of innovation and the power and potential of collaboration and community partnerships.

She explained that her work involves at least ten different fields, requiring that she become a master of translation across all of those fields. Dr. Basting suggested that this situation is, and should be, becoming more normal. Currently a professor in the theater department, Dr. Basting has a B.A. in English and has taught in the English department, and is also an artist with a Ph.D. in theater studies. In graduate school, she took courses for, but did not complete, a graduate certificate in gerontology. She did complete a graduate certificate and minor in advanced feminist studies. This varied education taught her how to see the gaps and cracks between what we see and what can be changed.

As the only person in the arts to ever receive the prestigious national Brookdale Fellowship, Dr. Basting commonly presented her work to about 300 medical geriatricians and social scientists. All of them doubted every single word she said, except for one person who uses Shakespeare to teach his medical students. Dr. Basting indicated that this “sometimes humiliating” experience taught her these groups’ language. She also learned never to apologize for her work, but to translate it instead.

For ten years she directed UW-Milwaukee’s Center on Age and Community, where she fostered dialogue between government, for-profit and non-profit business professionals, and university researchers. Among those researchers were people from the fields of nursing, psychology, social work, history, and sociology.

As an artist and a humanities scholar, Dr. Basting adapted improvisation techniques into evidenced-based programs that infuse improvisation and flexibility into health and human services systems. These same improvisation approaches teach family caregivers how to use flexible thinking to better connect to their loved ones with dementia. This creative care training started at 50 nursing homes across the state. Her program was also collaborating with five museums on creative prompts to engage and build community.

As a teacher, Dr. Basting oversees students in the newly-designed Arts and Social Entrepreneurship Certificate in the Peck School of the Arts to embed artisans in an agency or organization, identify a social challenge, and collaborate to use the arts to design a sustainable solution. She currently oversees three art students living in long-term care communities, where they receive free room and board in exchange for offering innovative, community-building programming. Five other students are embedded in city governments and school districts.

Dr. Basting emphasized that job titles or descriptions do not yet exist that capture what these incredible students are capable of doing. However, she said that because of the strong and trusted partnerships with the community, because of the space and time for reflection, and because she has tenure, she and her students can risk, imagine, teach, and model what the jobs of tomorrow can be.

Her students and colleagues, the other 275 community-engaged scholars at UWM, and their many community partners are innovating in their many fields because business models

erode and evolve faster than the university can ever design its educational programs. She noted that it is nearly impossible to draw a straight line between those innovations and existing job titles.

She and her colleagues train thinkers, designers, planners and communicators. These students are fearless as they follow a path that translates between rapidly evolving disciplines and business models to arrive victorious at a job that they can define, in a world that they will make. Dr. Basting added her hope that they would do this in Wisconsin, because the state needs them.

She noted that innovation comes from diversity – bringing together people who do not speak the same language and who come from different world views, but can look at the same problem and collaborate to find a sustainable solution. Collaboration across the university and community, across departments, and across languages needs to be incentivized.

Dr. Basting added that the university also needs to incentivize the work of the 275 community-engaged scholars at UW-Milwaukee alone who generously and genuinely coach students for a job market where entrepreneurship is just code for “make it up yourself.” The faculty are training students to be creative, to improvise, to translate between fields and to build their own new worlds.

Dr. Basting said that she felt blessed to have the chance to address the Regents, and by the MacArthur Fellowship’s award and her work in public higher education.

President Cross and President Millner thanked Dr. Basting and congratulated her for the MacArthur award.

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## **REPORT AND APPROVAL OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

President Millner called on Regent Whitburn to present a report of actions taken by the Education Committee.

Regent Whitburn recalled that the Board approved a systemwide post-tenure review policy in March. That policy in turn required each institution to develop its own post-tenure review policy that fits with the Regent policy, and to submit those policies to the Board for approval by the end of the year.

The post-tenure review policy proposed by UW-La Crosse was recommended for approval by Chancellor Gow and President Cross. The Education Committee heard an explanation of the policy from the chancellor and provost, and then voted to approve it.

Regent Whitburn then moved adoption of Resolution 10771. The motion was seconded by Regent Petersen, and President Millner opened the floor for discussion.

Regent Evers noted that he had voted against the resolution in the Education Committee's session, and that he would do so again for two reasons. First, the policy included language about administrative overview of the nonrenewal process that was not required under the Board's policy. That same language was also not approved by the UW-La Crosse faculty, but was instead added after their discussion.

With no other comments or questions, Resolution 10771 was adopted on a voice vote.

### **Post-Tenure Review Policy, UW-La Crosse**

Resolution 10771      That, upon the recommendation of the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Chancellor is authorized to implement the University's Post-Tenure Review Policy.

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## **REPORT AND APPROVAL OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE BUSINESS AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

President Millner next asked Regent Mueller to present a report of the actions taken by the Business and Finance Committee.

Regent Mueller said that the committee had discussed and subsequently approved revisions to Chapter III, Section 3, of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents, to create a Subcommittee on Investments within the Business and Finance Committee.

The UW System has more than \$500 million in assets under management. If approved, the goal of this subcommittee is to better manage those assets in a very focused and transparent manner with the assistance of advisors. The subcommittee would discuss these matters, with the authority to vote and recommend action to the full Business and Finance Committee.

Stating that approval would help the Board better exercise its fiduciary responsibility, Regent Mueller moved adoption of Resolution 10772. The motion was seconded by Regent Steil and adopted on a voice vote.

### **Approval of Revisions to the Bylaws of the Board of Regents to Create a Subcommittee on Investments within the Business and Finance Committee**

Resolution 10772      That, upon the recommendation of the President of the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents approves revisions to Chapter III, Section 3, of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents,



to create a Subcommittee on Investments within the Business and Finance Committee.

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## **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: UW STUDENT AFFAIRS AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

Turning the Board's attention to student affairs, President Millner stated that the Regents must recognize and reinforce that the overall experience students have in college is only partially determined by what happens in the classroom. Learning that occurs outside the classroom is increasingly important in ensuring a high-quality and successful university experience.

This includes learning that takes place in student organizations, residence halls, and extracurricular activities. It also includes the learning that is required when tensions or conflicts arise. Student affairs professionals are on campus to help students navigate these issues and learn from these experiences. Their work also impacts student retention and graduation rates, which are of keen interest to the Board and other stakeholders.

To lead the Board in its discussion of student affairs, President Millner welcomed Lori Berquam, Vice Provost for Student Life and Dean of Students at UW-Madison; Gregg Heinselman, Assistant Chancellor for Student Affairs at UW-River Falls; and Al Thompson, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Chief of Diversity at UW-Stevens Point. The Board would also hear from two current students: Chris Morgan, a senior at UW-River Falls, and Carol Vang, a junior at UW-Stout.

Vice Chancellor Thompson thanked President Millner, President Cross, Vice President Jim Henderson, and the Board of Regents for the opportunity to speak. He also thanked his student affairs colleagues on the campuses, as well as the chancellors, provosts, and chief business officers for their daily support of student affairs efforts. He then asked the Senior Student Affairs Officers present at the meeting to stand and be recognized for their efforts.

### ***Student Affairs Goal of Contributing to Student Success***

Vice Chancellor Thompson stated that the goal of this presentation was to provide a better understanding of how student affairs influences the student experience, and how student affairs professionals contribute to the overall success of UW graduates.

At its core, student affairs is the work of helping each and every student get the most out of his and her unique college experience. The ability for a student to thrive and graduate is a short-term goal, but the UW System's long-term goal is to be a catalyst for students to have lifelong learning, growth, and curiosity; to become world-wide citizens who care for one another; and to create a more just and humane society for generations to come. This involves talking to students about serving; building community involvement; leadership; being competent,

including being culturally competent; influencing the world and state; taking action; being engaged; and, more importantly, having empathy.

The portfolio of student affairs varies from institution to institution across the System. There is no consistent pattern of what units constitute a student affairs division, except that it is influenced by the organizational history and mission of the university. Student affairs divisions have the responsibility for recruiting students, finding financial aid for them, housing them, feeding them, and getting them connected. Student affairs divisions provide recreation, counseling, and disability services. They manage million-dollar budgets, capital building projects, athletics – and the response to student deaths. These divisions are heavily involved in students’ lives, helping them transition from their homes to find a new home on the UW campuses.

Vice Chancellor Thompson said that classroom experiences teach students’ “heads,” by developing their critical thinking, but student affairs teaches their “hearts,” by showing students how to think, feel and believe in a more holistic way, combined with what they learn in the classroom. Describing student affairs staff as brokers and problem-solvers, he indicated that when issues become messy, his colleagues address them with passion and long hours.

### ***Range of Student Affairs Responsibilities and Issues***

Next, Vice Provost Berquam explained that a growing body of evidence suggests that the most important thing about college is not where students go, but what they do when they get there. As the first and only college graduate in her family, she said she explains her work to relatives by talking about the five “senses” she hopes UW students will develop:

1. A sense of belonging: Research shows that if students have a sense of belonging they will be more successful academically, outside the classroom, and later in their careers.
2. A sense of self: The university experience helps students to know who they are, what they stand for, and who they want to become.
3. A sense of place: As world citizens, students should develop a sense for the history and culture of the space they are in, no matter where they go.
4. A sense of passion: Passion fuels the futures of students, the state, and the world.
5. Living a life of purpose: If they develop the other senses of belonging, self, place and passion, students will be led to live a life of purpose.

Student affairs staff at each of the campuses help students develop these senses.

Vice Provost Berquam then discussed the varied responsibilities of student affairs professionals, which include:

- addressing the issues of the day on a campus, which sometimes garner media attention;
- serving as the “touch point” with students, families, donors, athletic coaches, faculty and staff, and community members;
- helping students who have been victims of sexual or violent assaults and incidents of bias or hate;

- managing students deaths, both on and off campus;
- helping students transition from family communities to their campus community;
- applying high-impact practices to help students develop skills;
- helping veterans, returning students, and international students acclimatize to being on the campuses;
- holding students accountable when they violate community standards and conduct codes;
- listening to students' learning, relationship, and financial struggles;
- meeting with parents, siblings, community members, faculty, donors, and administrators on behalf of students;
- working with student government;
- discussing segregated fee issues; and
- coaching and guiding students into careers.

Vice Provost Berquam said that student affairs professionals want the student experience to be transformative, and they challenge students to bring their best selves to the classroom, to the workplace, and to the nation as they graduate and become leaders. They prepare students to tackle some of life's biggest problems, and strive to develop world leaders and engaged citizens who demonstrate respect, are open and inclusive, take pride in themselves, and want to leave a positive legacy.

Vice Provost Berquam then highlighted a few of the critical issues that affect student affairs, including emotional wellness and mental health issues. More and more students come to campus with pre-diagnosed conditions. As previously mentioned, 10 percent of UW students contemplate suicide. Student affairs staff manage behavioral intervention and threat assessment teams, none of which existed five or ten years ago. Student affairs staff also:

- manage disability accommodations and learning issues;
- address drug and alcohol issues, including the rise in prescription drug and opioid use and the legalization of marijuana in other states;
- respond to cases of sexual assault or sexual misconduct;
- address compliance issues with Title IX, the Clery Act, the Violence Against Women Act, and the Campus Save Act; and
- manage students' financial well-being, including the impacts of increasing costs and rising homelessness among the student population.

While these are all critical issues, Vice Provost Berquam said that student affairs professionals want to focus on UW students' success. Student affairs staff recruit students to campus, coordinate their orientation, help faculty in the classroom by managing and providing just-in-time resources to assist in student interventions, and work to make sure students are classroom-ready each day. They believe strongly in partnering with faculty and other administrators around campus to create the best student experience possible.

High-impact practices, including freshman seminars, living-learning communities, service learning, and internships, help students make sense of what they are learning in the classroom and channel it into careers. Experiences outside the classroom help prepare students

for careers by developing leadership and problem-solving skills. Vice Provost Berquam concluded by suggesting that student affairs professionals want students to develop curiosity about learning and about other people and to develop confidence through opportunities to practice their intellectual skills in practicum experiences and internships.

### ***Campus Climate***

Stating that student affairs professionals work daily to improve campus climate, Vice Chancellor Thompson expressed his support for the Board's formation of the Task Force on Campus Climate. Student affairs staff have a goal to engage students with the hope that they will graduate as proud alumni who have enjoyed their time and personal growth on campus. However, pain and struggle also happen on the campuses, he said, and staff need to find ways to build students' resiliency, empowering them with the tools to succeed at the university.

To achieve the goal of student success and graduation, student affairs professionals must have cultural fluency, so that all students learn to appreciate human diversity, to understand differences, and to have civil discourse. Vice Chancellor Thompson said that UW-Madison's "Our Wisconsin" is a great example of a cultural competency program for incoming students, noting that other campuses are modeling some aspects of that program.

Student affairs staff also have tools, mechanisms and support systems to deal with conflict situations, including bias response teams, behavioral intervention teams, and threat assessment teams. He stressed that being well prepared will help UW institutions handle any situations that arise.

Vice Chancellor Thompson said that student affairs professionals strive to develop empathy and humility towards all UW students, who are developing a true cultural understanding of themselves and others. Staff engage individuals on campus and in the local community as partners in making students feel comfortable at the university.

Next, Assistant Chancellor Heinselmann introduced the two student presenters, Mr. Morgan and Ms. Vang.

Mr. Morgan stated that he is a senior at UW-River Falls studying economics and political science and serving his second term as student body president.

Speaking about the impact that Student Affairs has had on his time as a UW student, Mr. Morgan explained that it began with his acceptance letter to UW-River Falls, which he selected for its distinguished and engaging academic programs, close proximity to quality internships and jobs, affordability, and location that allowed him to go home to family and friends.

Mr. Morgan said that upon arriving at the university, he did not engage in any activities related to student affairs, or that were not directly related to academics. Mr. Morgan said his plan at the time was to complete his general education requirements and, at the end of his sophomore year, to transfer to the University of Minnesota, where he would complete his degree and start his professional career in the state of Minnesota.

At the end of his freshman year, Mr. Morgan started to become involved on campus with student affairs activities, including serving as a leader and desk assistant in his residence hall and being elected to student government. With each passing day that he became more involved on campus, he said he grew more attached to both UW-River Falls and his home state of Wisconsin.

As his sophomore year came to a close, Mr. Morgan reflected on the positive experiences he had with Student Affairs and decided to stay at UW-River Falls, working hard to get good grades and to make the world a better place. With this motivation and the encouragement of many people in Student Affairs, he ran and was elected to become the university's student body president.

Mr. Morgan said he worked tirelessly to represent students on a wide variety of pressing issues, such as advocating for proper funding of the UW System; supporting student safety, such as sexual assault prevention, mental health and wellness, and safe drinking; and working every day to ensure that all students at UW-River Falls – regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation – are empowered to be successful and valued members of their shared community.

Mr. Morgan explained that his values were learned and strengthened through his interactions with colleagues in Student Affairs, without which he would not have had the opportunities afforded to him as student body president. These included attending numerous meetings in the West Wing of the White House, travelling to Israel, and developing relationships with leaders such as Wisconsin Senator Sheila Harsdorf and U.S. Representative Ron Kind.

Mr. Morgan added that travelling across the state to meet with UW students, staff, and faculty who embody the Wisconsin Idea has made him proud to play a small role in the state and the UW System. Thanking the Board of Regents for its leadership, he once again emphasized the important role that Student Affairs plays in the lives of the 180,000 students throughout the System. Student Affairs helps to improve inclusivity, students' safety and wellbeing, and recruitment and retention on campus, and helps create the next generation of Wisconsin's leaders.

Next to speak was Ms. Vang, a fourth-year student studying business administration at UW-Stout.

As a Hmong American student, Ms. Vang shared her view that Student Affairs, or Student Life Services, helps teach students how to understand and appreciate different people and perspectives in order to work together to achieve common goals, whether academic or personal. Student Life Services programs teach skills, such as how to work with others, how to strategically solve issues, and how to manage time.

Among the services in which Ms. Vang has participated were the TRIO programs, federally-funded outreach programs designed to provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds across the nation. In high school, she was part of two TRIO programs called Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search, both of which were created to assist high school students with getting into higher education by funding campus visits and college application fees, or hosting tutoring and ACT prep sessions.

Ms. Vang said that as a first generation college student she was not expected to attend college, and without the push provided by these TRIO programs and their staff members she would not be at UW-Stout today. Unfortunately, both programs have since been cut and are no longer available to the Menomonie community.

Ms. Vang indicated that there were many other TRIO programs that inspired her at UW-Stout, assisting her with getting into courses and figuring out her four-year plan. She is one of 40 students in the McNair Scholars Program, which assists disadvantaged undergrad students with getting into graduate school.

She added that Multicultural Student Services has been one of the most impactful Student Life Services departments on campus. The program is committed to inclusive excellence – enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion by supporting the retention and graduation rates of African American, Native American, Asian, Latino and other students of color. She credited the program with helping her to understand more of her identity and inner values.

Ms. Vang also said that she is serving her first year as Director of Diversity on the UW-Stout Student Senate. Calling it an inspirational experience, she said she was grateful to be able to connect with other student leaders at UW-Stout and across the UW System. She is also serving a second term as president of Hmong Stout Student Organization, which she said has helped her grow and become a resource for other Hmong students at UW-Stout.

Ms. Vang observed that University Housing has also been influential. She explained that as someone who commuted during her freshman year, she was not very involved with any residence hall activities, departments or programs. However, she applied for a resident advisor position after talking to residence hall directors in her sophomore year, and was promoted to her current position of desk service manager in her junior year. Working in one of the first-year experience residence halls has given her the opportunity to help freshmen get involved and to answer their questions.

Ms. Vang said that all of these services have impacted her by shifting her understanding of political and social issues, connecting her to individuals that she otherwise would not have had the chance to know, and giving her insight into potential careers with Student Life Services. Specifically, she has learned how to network with very different people by finding common ground. She has developed new leadership skills, including how to delegate, facilitate, and manage; how to hold herself and others accountable; and how to be a resource for other students. She has learned how to solve issues, support others, and build community.

Ms. Vang concluded by indicating that her experience with Student Life Services has given her “soft” skills that may not be taught in class but can be used even after graduation. She said she was even considering a Ph.D. in student affairs. She also recognized the recent efforts of UW-Stout’s Student Life Services in responding to the death of a student and organizing a beautiful and inspiring memorial service for his friends, family, and the community.

Assistant Chancellor Heinselman thanked both students for sharing their experiences. As their testimony demonstrated, student affairs has a unique and formative impact on UW students

and provides a wide range of experiential opportunities that complement the academic experience.

Noting that campuses are experiencing a variety of changing dynamics, Assistant Chancellor Heinselman mentioned the evolution of social work in student affairs. A case management approach to the student support services offered by student affairs is necessary.

Assistant Chancellor Heinselman observed that other issues on the horizon for student affairs divisions include workforce development, emotional wellness, bias response and education teams, campus climate and community management protocols, documentation of co-curricular and experiential learning, enrollment and retention challenges, the achievement gap, and compliance challenges.

Student affairs and student life services divisions will experience continued portfolio expansion and contraction as they work to meet students' shifting needs and demands. The final question for these divisions is what students will remember about their collegiate experience. Assistant Chancellor Heinselman noted that this is also tied to developing young alumni who will remain engaged with and support the UW System and the education of Wisconsin's citizens.

### ***Discussion***

President Millner asked the students to share their experiences working with both student services advisors and traditional academic advisors.

Mr. Morgan stated that he only sees his academic advisor to register for classes or to check that he is still on time to graduate, but he talks to student affairs advisors every day about current events in the state.

Ms. Vang agreed that she speaks to student affairs advisors and staff much more than she does with her academic faculty counselors, who she sees only a couple of times a semester to talk about her courses and five-year plan.

President Millner asked the staff panelists to speak about their own interactions with traditional academic counselors.

Assistant Chancellor Heinselman said that UW-River Falls has a four-college model, where two of the colleges have professional advisors who advise all students within the college, and the other two colleges give each faculty member a group of advisees to work with. That advising model leads to a different relationship from college to college.

From a core student affairs standpoint, he said that student affairs professionals have a very direct working relationship with many of the academic advisors on campus, serving as a concierge, clearinghouse, or point-of-contact for all questions and concerns. Faculty members who need a resource typically contact somebody within student affairs to address anything outside of a pure academic advising issue. He added that student affairs professionals are trained through their degree disciplines and programs to be generalists, understanding enough about

almost every area at the institution to be able to identify who the specialists are and then referring students to them.

Vice Chancellor Thompson said that UW-Stevens Point has just opened up five new academic advising centers – four in the academic colleges, and one general center that is a collaboration between academic affairs, student affairs, and student government. Student affairs professionals use their relationships with faculty advisors, professional advisors and advising centers, and the Dean of Students Office to work on issues involving students on an almost daily basis.

Vice Provost Berquam highlighted an electronic system called Advisor Notes, which is used by both student affairs and academic advisors at UW-Madison to share concerns about students and to offer resources to help them continue to be successful.

Regent Mueller inquired about what percentage of funding for student affairs activities comes from student fees, and what percentage comes from other sources within the university.

Vice Chancellor Thompson estimated that about 3 percent of UW-Stevens Point's \$47 to 48 million student affairs budget comes from general purpose revenue (GPR). Student fees and program revenue are other sources. He noted that the amount of GPR funding has been reduced over the last decade, requiring increases in other forms of revenue.

Student government is actively involved in deciding what services UW-Stevens Point should commit to providing with student fees. Every year the student affairs division has budget meetings with the student funding committees, which determine how the budget will be set up before it goes to the chancellor for final review and approval. Counseling, mental health and campus safety are significant components of the student affairs budget.

Assistant Chancellor Heinselman agreed that the shift from GPR funding to program revenue funding has led to a very different working relationship with students about how to apply their funds to address their primary needs and interests at UW-River Falls. The declining support for career services, mental health and disability services, and police and safety services means that the university has had to use the segregated-fee process or the user fee process to continue delivering these core support services to students. He said that the elected student leaders are entrusted with reviewing those fees, and so he and Mr. Morgan have spent many hours talking about how the university can be a good steward of those funds.

In response to a follow-up question from Regent Mueller, both Vice Chancellor Thompson and Assistant Chancellor Heinselman confirmed that student affairs divisions are largely funded by student or user fees, and so only compete with other campus entities for a minimal amount of funds.

In response to a question from Regent Steil about resources for students who are victims of sexual assault, Vice Provost Berquam explained that the UW-Madison Division of Student Life meets with every student who files a report as quickly as their schedules allow to make sure



they know they are not alone. Victims are provided with advocates and connected to community resources in the City of Madison, such as the Rape Crisis Center.

She added that there is a federal requirement for campuses to educate all incoming new students about sexual violence. UW-Madison uses the Tonight program, and also has subsequent conversations in every residence hall to help students understand sexual misconduct and its impact. When a report goes forward, the disciplinary process of Chapter UWS 17 is used.

Assistant Chancellor Heinselman said that UW-River Falls does many similar things, but as a smaller campus it lacks resources in certain areas, including for victim advocates. The institution recently partnered with a community agency called Turning Point to issue a formal memorandum of understanding where the university provides space on campus for one of their victim advocates, who is not a mandatory reporter.

Like UW-Madison, UW-River Falls Student Affairs staff meet with every student who files a report or is connected to an alleged occurrence on campus. They also provide a variety of required trainings, beginning with the fall orientation program and following through with online training modules for faculty, staff and students.

Mr. Morgan stated that student leaders consider sexual assault one of the most serious issues they will deal with. At UW-River Falls, significant amounts of time and segregated fee dollars were being spent to address the issue on campus. Nonprofit organizations were also being contacted to host summits on campus to bring student leaders together to collectively discuss how to address these issues.

He thanked Chancellor Dean Van Galen for his willingness to speak about the issue of sexual assault. Speaking for himself, Mr. Morgan indicated that he did not recognize the extent of the problem until he became involved in student government and heard survivors' stories, which have mobilized students to mount a statewide movement to stop sexual assault on college campuses.

Regent Tyler thanked the students and staff for their participation in the panel. He indicated that through his service on the WTCS board he had worked with Great Lakes on research on the effects of student services on student success. Calling the outcomes "incredible," Regent Tyler emphasized that investment in student services not only helps students' academics but also improves retention and graduation.

Regent Tyler then asked the panelists to speak about efforts or relationships with the broader community to address challenging situations involving non-campus individuals, such as the recent death of a UW-Stout student or reports of threatening drive-by incidents at UW-Stevens Point.

Vice Chancellor Thompson said that Chancellor Patterson and campus leadership have worked closely with the city police, mayor and other community leaders to discuss the incidents at UW-Stevens Point, and they have agreed to increase efforts to survey those areas of campus. He added that it is not uncommon for student affairs professionals to have discussions about how

the campus and the city can work more closely together to deal with campus climate and student safety issues, and credited city of Stevens Point officials with having been very receptive on all issues. Finally, he emphasized that the common goal of all UW institutions is for students to feel safe, welcome, and able to commit to their educations.

Vice Provost Berquam highlighted two initiatives recently started by Chancellor Blank. The first is the Community Advisory Board, which brings community leaders together to talk about the intersection of community and campus. The other is a regular weekly meeting of the Madison Police Department, UW-Madison Police Department, and the Dean of Students Office staff to review trends or hot spots of activity that need to be addressed.

Vice Provost Berquam also suggested that having elder persons on campus can provide students with grounding perspectives that they might not get from student affairs staff or hear in classrooms. This older generation can listen to students and can also urge students to focus on their classes.

Regent Higgins said that this was a topic close to his heart. In 1971 he was serving as UW-Madison's Student Body President. Through that position he developed a lifelong relationship with the late Paul Ginsburg, then the Dean of Students, and then-UW Police Chief Ralph Hanson. Regent Higgins thanked Mr. Morgan and Ms. Vang for embarking on the path of student leadership, which he said would teach them about handling issues and connecting with other students, and would inspire a lifetime commitment to their universities. He also thanked Vice Chancellor Thompson, Assistant Chancellor Heinselman, and Vice Provost Berquam for their hard work.

Regent Higgins emphasized the importance of reaffirming students' sense of belonging on campus, especially in light of the state's demographic challenges and the System's responsibility for supporting the success of students of color and first-generation students. He indicated that part of that sense of belonging is affirmation – hearing voices and seeing faces like one's own on campus. He suggested that the university was not doing a very good job of building that affirmation for the traditional rural or small-town Wisconsin student, pointing to the lack of conservative or traditional faculty or speakers on UW campuses. He urged both the student affairs staff and the Task Force on Campus Climate to take this into account.

Regent Higgins also spoke of the importance of cultural competency, noting that there is a difference between campuses' having a diverse student population and students' having a diverse campus experience. He indicated that during his many visits to UW campuses, he had observed that students tend to “clump” with others of similar race or ethnicity in public spaces. He also reported hearing from both students and parents the desire for more “cultural mixing” on campus. He suggested that while the university can bring in speakers to talk about cultural competency, students also have a personal responsibility to reach out to and learn from people who are different from them.

Regent Farrow thanked the panelists for briefly summarizing their extensive work for the Board. She suggested that students and their families might benefit from similar information. Noting that many students rely on their families for guidance, she said that the adults in their

lives should be made aware of the services that are available so they can encourage students to make use of them.

Regent Farrow also expressed concerns that certain events or spaces were being made unavailable to white students in the university's efforts to make students of color more comfortable. She spoke of a family whose grandchild graduated from a very diverse high school; when the student attended a UW orientation session, a treat was available afterward only to the non-white students in the group. She agreed with Regent Higgins that students will not grow if they remain sequestered from each other.

Vice Chancellor Thompson noted that student affairs staff have relations with parents and families on a daily basis, but also inform them about the services and programs offered during orientation and welcome week events. The student affairs divisions also reach out to parents who contact the campuses with their thoughts or concerns on their students' financial aid, adjustment to campus, etc.

Speaking to the student affairs divisions' work on diversity and cultural competency, Vice Chancellor Thompson explained that it is not an issue of people of color versus people not of color. Rather, every single person on campus has to look into themselves and understand how they were raised and what values and views affect them. To know how a person thinks and feels requires productive discussions about differences. He added that those conversations cannot dictate how people should behave, but instead should let people share their own experiences.

Reiterating the impact that a "sense of belonging" can have on retention and graduation, President Millner noted that it is the job of student affairs professionals to make sure students connect with even one person on their campus. She thanked the presenters for providing the Regents with a clear understanding of the responsibilities and importance of student affairs.

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The Board recessed for lunch at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 12:53 p.m.

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## **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: 2020FWD STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOCUS ON OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

Introducing the next topic, President Millner noted that in August 2016 the Board approved a bold new vision for the UW System, the 2020FWD strategic framework. She indicated that the Board has since spent considerable time looking individually at the four main focus areas of that framework. To date, the Regents have discussed the educational pipeline, the university experience, and community and business mobilization.

The present discussion would cover the final UW System priority expressed in 2020FWD: operational excellence. Framing this discussion is the reality that the UW System

needs to educate more Wisconsin students but with declining resources. As previously reported, state support for the UW System (when adjusted for inflation) was at an all-time low in 2015-16. At the same time, enrollments are approaching 180,000 – about 26,000 more students than 20 years earlier.

President Millner noted that, in the listening sessions that were a key part of the strategic planning process, people made it clear that they recognize that the UW is being asked to do more with less. However, they still want and expect the UW System to provide a quality education, and to do so with transparency, efficiency and accountability.

Stating that this is a big part of operational excellence, President Millner noted that one of the Board's key responsibilities is to examine and analyze the performance of the UW institutions and use that information to inform its policy decisions. She then called upon President Cross to begin the afternoon's presentations.

### ***Components of Operational Excellence***

President Cross indicated that, as described in the 2020*FWD* framework, there are four main priorities in operational excellence:

1. The CORE initiative (Commitment to Operational Reform and Excellence): Through CORE, the UW System is reaffirming its commitment to standardizing, streamlining, and consolidating its non-instructional operations throughout the state.
2. The dashboard: The current UW System online dashboard was presented to the Board in September 2015 as the latest version of the UW System's accountability reporting, which dates back to the mid-1990s. Drawing from and building on the extensive range of performance measures in that dashboard, the UW System will be framing a 2020*FWD* annual report card to benchmark efforts and assess progress toward achieving the goals for each of the 2020*FWD* strategic framework priorities and initiatives.
3. On-time degrees: Operational excellence goes beyond backroom operations to include academic process efficiency. Students need to move through the UW pipeline as efficiently and effectively as possible, having a dynamic and robust experience while costs are contained. As discussed at the Board's last meeting, time-to-degree is one of the most important components of college affordability.
4. Rewarding faculty and staff excellence: The UW System is committed to prioritizing resources to increase compensation for its faculty and staff, considered among the best in the world.

While the first three operational-excellence priorities would be addressed during the afternoon discussion, the fourth area would be addressed at the Board's December meeting, in accordance with the UW System's usual timeline for faculty and staff compensation.

President Cross then introduced Vice President for Administration and Fiscal Affairs David Miller to discuss the CORE Initiative. He was joined by Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Jim Henderson, who would discuss the dashboard and on-time degrees.

### ***CORE Initiative***

Vice President Miller stated that the UW System has consistently had lower administrative costs than its peers, and that the CORE project will build upon a long history of collaboration and shared services in financial administration, human resources, facilities planning, legal services, risk management and information technology.

The CORE project's primary goals are to reallocate administrative staff time to more critical priorities, to control administrative costs and reinvest in instruction, and improve decision-making ability through enhanced data quality. Put it into a single goal, the CORE initiative will leverage the power of the System to transform operations.

Noting that continuous process improvement has consistently been undertaken throughout the UW System, Vice President Miller explained that the CORE project is taking this to a new level by targeting increased collaboration, standardization and streamlining.

### **Origin of CORE Project**

Vice President Miller said there were several primary drivers for the CORE project:

- Budgetary pressures: The UW institutions have absorbed \$362 million in state funding reductions since FY 2012.
- Staff attrition/recruitment challenges: Retirement, recruitment and retention challenges have taken a toll on administrative staff, leaving vital positions vacant and sometimes unfillable even after a search.
- Institutional requests for assistance: UW institutions face resource challenges and increased regulation, and are looking to System Administration and other institutions for partnership.
- Inefficient or redundant processes: Due to budget pressures, many manual processes persist, and investment in new streamlined approaches has been difficult.
- High costs of customizing systems and operations.
- A need for consistent data for reporting and analysis: The System's current capacity for data-driven decisions and efficient responses to regulatory requirements is limited.

Vice President Miller indicated that another factor that had accelerated the project was the strategic planning effort and the prioritization of operational excellence as the fourth pillar of the 2020*FWD* framework.

## **Project Principles**

Moving on to the principles guiding the CORE initiative's work, Vice President Miller explained that the first principle, standardization of business processes across management systems and institutions, must precede the automation or sharing of services. The triangle of productivity – people, processes, and technology – must be aligned appropriately before the UW System can achieve effectiveness.

For example, some operations are too people-intensive, despite the existence of technology in the marketplace that could relieve that people-driven process, because that technology would require some investment to start up. Other operations sometimes have in-house technology solutions, but lack the people to fully utilize them. Finally, business processes that vary widely among institutions limit the effective use of technology and people.

The second principle, facilitating partnerships or sharing services to increase sufficiency, can take several forms. Operations may be centralized at one location, or shared among a specific set of institutions. Vice President Miller indicated that this principle is designed to fit the correct sharing structure with each specific service.

Noting that limited resources have stunted investment in operations that could lead to improved efficiency, Vice President Miller said that the final principle clarifies that some of the UW System's resources will need to be reallocated and reinvested in operations to save money in the long run.

## **Project Scope**

Vice President Miller emphasized that the CORE project is not a single initiative, but rather consists of multiple projects being undertaken simultaneously. For example, replacing an outdated, inadequate budget management system with a new, standardized system will increase data access and analysis, while freeing staff time to be spent on higher-priority activities than data entry or repetitive tasks. He also listed other examples from each area affected by the CORE initiative:

- In human resources, the System seeks to centralize and manage routine operations in standardized and basic benefits advising to increase consistency.
- In information technology, improvements to IT security are being achieved through standard policies, procedures and tools.
- In financial administration, specialized services such as travel expense audits are being provided centrally.
- In procurement, the System is leveraging shared technologies such as the spend-down analytics tool, which maximizes the spending power of UW institutions across the state to get best pricing.

- In risk management, UW institutions are sharing staff for specialized functions as opposed to having those staff at every institution.
- In capital planning and facilities, the System is implementing a streamlined planning and construction process for projects already delegated to the UW System, and is also seeking authority to do so for all program revenue projects.

### **Process for Evaluating Potential Initiatives**

Vice President Miller next described the processes used to evaluate potential CORE initiatives. More than 70 activities have already been identified for review by surveying and sorting functions that are common among institutions.

The sorting involves examining the people involved in an activity, the relevant policies and processes used, and the technology used. Some services are already shared by more than one institution, but may be expanded to additional institutions. Vice President Miller noted that the centralization may not involve System Administration if one of the institutions can best provide that service for the other institutions.

In reviewing shared services, UW System Administration looked at the Educational Advisory Board's work with other universities and systems across the country and found five major areas of focus for efficiency opportunities: finance, human resources, information technology, procurement, and payroll. In these five categories, the UW System already operates centralized or shared services in some functions, while others are in progress or are being examined. Some areas are a poor fit for standardized service.

Vice President Miller explained that the candidates for standardization are determined based on cost, uniqueness, ability to standardize, volume, and complexity. From this process, a pool of functions were identified as the most viable CORE projects. Higher priority is given to projects that have the greatest benefits and ease of implementation.

Finally, the best model to deliver or implement a shared service must be identified. Some may have a low level of difficulty to implement, such as merely providing centralized guidance, tools and support. Other models involve select institutions collaborating for regionalization. There are also some cases where the greatest efficiency may be in fully centralizing the service. The final steps are to standardize the business process to fit the chosen service model, set the strategy, and plan implementation.

### **Examples of CORE Projects**

Providing some specific examples of CORE initiatives, Vice President Miller first mentioned that the UW institutions are transitioning away from the traditional telephone service purchased through the State of Wisconsin's contract with Centrex Landline. They would now prefer to use voice-over IP service, which carries telephone calls over the Internet and has been used in households by cable companies for years.

Vice President Miller then introduced a brief video of Chief Information Officer David Stack explaining that, in addition to being more flexible and costing less, new Internet phone systems offer additional capabilities that could open the door for video phones or the use of phones as an emergency public address system.

Mr. Stack noted that UW-Whitewater and UW-Platteville led the way in this transition, and that other institutions would now like to leverage what they have done. In particular, UW-Colleges and UW-Extension and UW System Administration are partnering together to leverage the model that UW-Whitewater has built.

The hope is that within a few years most institutions will see a cost savings and actually recoup investments in any new phones or new equipment they need. Mr. Stack added that the Centrex contract for the current phone system was recently renegotiated by the state and will now have greater costs, creating another incentive for the UW System to move forward quickly on this initiative.

In his next example, Vice President Miller described self-service opportunities and outsourcing of non-critical functions to save staff time in the area of human resources management.

All UW institutions now use eBenefits for new hires and annual benefits enrollment, which has eliminated many paper processes and taken some of the data entry burden off of institutions' HR teams. This allows HR staff to do higher-function activities, such as directly consulting with employees. Vice President Miller reported receiving very positive feedback from institutions and employees about the efficiencies of this initiative.

He also noted that the nearly-complete upgrade to the Human Resource System is on time and under budget, and has added new functionality to the system that allows for the centralization of more routine operations.

Another achieved efficiency is related to the consolidation and centralization of employment verification services. Through a survey it was discovered that staff across the System were handling 400 requests every week from external organizations attempting to verify information about UW employees. This time-consuming process was outsourced at no cost to the university, saving staff time equivalent to approximately three full-time positions. Again, this staff time can now be spent on higher function activities.

Vice President Miller said that the next example would highlight a case of inter-institutional shared services. First UW Colleges and UW-Extension centralized their help desk functions; then they entered a partnership to have UW-Madison serve as a first responder and triage their help desk needs. By handling only the most complex requests, UW Colleges and UW-Extension staff are able to redirect their efforts to increase coverage hours and simplify the user experience.

He then introduced a brief video of UW-Extension Chief Information Officer Werner Gade, describing the project. In the video, Mr. Gade emphasized that customer service was the



main objective: they wanted to provide quicker answers, on a first-call resolution basis, over a wider period of coverage that includes weekends. A higher number of issues are being addressed on a first-call resolution basis since the implementation of this project than when UW Colleges and UW-Extension IT staff tried to handle everything themselves.

Mr. Gade explained that IT services were consolidated on the UW Colleges campuses as a result of the budget cuts for the current biennium. UW Colleges and UW-Extension then had to consider how to provide this service without people worrying about who to call on their particular campuses, and so it was decided that they would provide one statewide help desk phone number. However, UW-Madison now answers the phone and notifies the appropriate IT staff when critical issues occur. This allows IT staff to respond in a consolidated manner across the entire state, including the 13 UW Colleges campuses as well as the 72 counties that occasionally experience IT issues.

Moving on, Vice President Miller reported that the UW System is currently replacing its old budget system. He indicated that when the System decided to make this update, Associate Vice President Freda Harris was among those who advocated that time should first be invested in changing the System's business processes before developing the requirements for a new system. For the past year the System has been working with many people at all of the institutions to develop a set of requirements for a state-of-the-art budget system before looking at available technology.

Soon the System will select a vendor to implement its new budget system, which will integrate with the Human Resource System and Shared Financial System. The current system of manual data entry into Excel budget spreadsheets will be replaced with a unified budget system that will save staff time and have the capacity for improved forecasting and scenario planning.

Vice President Miller's next example was the implementation of travel expense audits. While the UW System has a clear set of policies guiding the reimbursement process for its managed travel program, each institution handles reimbursements separately. Combined with the infrequency of travel, people are often confused about how to appropriately navigate the reimbursement process.

System Administration currently provides audit expense reports for its own employees and for UW-Eau Claire, UW-Platteville and the UW Colleges. It expects to do so for UW-Milwaukee, as well, beginning December 1<sup>st</sup>, and is currently having conversations with four other institutions about providing this service. Service-level agreements are used to ensure clear roles and responsibilities.

System Administration has repurposed one existing employee as a travel auditor to complete these reports, alleviating staff time at the institutions. Having dedicated staff for this purpose provides greater efficiency, and also allows for a more complete understanding of travel policies and procedures and a reduced error rate.

In its second phase, System Administration is considering whether to regionalize front-end travel management, which would involve having regional staff to address training needs and provide travel assistance for institutionally-sponsored travel.

Next, Vice President Miller explained that the UW System uses several systems to buy goods and services and pay suppliers – including the 70 percent of its purchases that go through state mandatory contracts – and so the data about what the university buys and how it pays resides in many different places. The System needs to merge all of that data from multiple sources to truly know how much it spends on goods and services, what suppliers it buys from, and what type of products are being purchased across institutions. This would also allow the System to group institutions' spend together and leverage the volume of purchases.

Through the CORE Project, the System has invested in a spend analytics tool that integrates and enriches its multiple sources of spend data in a flexible dashboard. The dashboard analyzes the data to show how much UW institutions spend together on specific products and services by institution, by supplier, and by quarter. The next step will be to use the data to manage spend and gain the leverage in the marketplace. The tool also provides the ability to benchmark against other universities, which will help the System determine if it is obtaining the best pricing available.

Another example was related to student information systems. Each campus has a PeopleSoft-based student information system configured based on its own definitions and information needs. Before UW-Stevens Point implemented its version of PeopleSoft, Chancellor Patterson and his team agreed to partner with System Administration to closely reexamine their business needs and practices before highly customizing the PeopleSoft implementation.

Vice President Miller then introduced a brief video of Jim Barrett, UW-Stevens Point Chief Information Officer and Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, and Greg Summers, UW-Stevens Point Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, discussing their experience with the successful PeopleSoft installation.

Mr. Barrett explained that there was an understanding of the project's goals and essential outcomes, which included having the least number of customizations and making sure that all essential tools would be ready when the student information system went live.

Mr. Summers added that while UW-Stevens Point wanted to implement PeopleSoft without any modifications, it also wanted to ensure that the technology would not drive decision-making. UW-Stevens Point wanted to keep its students, its teaching, and its learning mission first. Beneficial discussions revealed that departments had many prerequisites that did not necessarily make sense for students. Advising practices and course withdrawal policies may also change in ways that would benefit students.

In a final example, Vice President Miller introduced a video of Senior Associate Vice President for Human Resources Shenita Brokenburr discussing her plans to offer institutions a web-based automated benefits advising tool.

In the video, Dr. Brokenburr explained that this tool would promote greater consistency in delivering benefits information, efficiencies and terms. That greater consistency in service delivery through automated benefits advising would in turn lead to increased productivity for HR directors and their staff.

Vice President Miller added that additional changes to the human resource system are in progress. These changes would similarly relieve institutions of some of their administrative burdens by centralizing and automating routine functions, such as COBRA compliance, and uncommon functions, such as foreign national payroll.

Vice President Miller concluded that these projects will collectively add up to savings of staff time and expenses, which can be redirected to help the institutions absorb their budget cuts.

### **Discussion**

President Cross thanked Vice President Miller for his presentation and opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Regent Klein expressed her approval of the outstanding work being done to bring costs in line and put standardized systems into place. She asked whether the System would ever mandate that institutions join these efforts, or if participation would always be voluntary.

Vice President Miller answered that one of the goals for the new budget system is to make it so attractive that staff at institutions would gravitate toward it; UW professionals will not want to waste time doing routine and monotonous work if there is a better way available. He indicated that the issue at the root of Regent Klein's question is that the UW System is a system of multiple universities, not a university of multiple campuses. The different cultures at each institution are the biggest barrier to standardization.

He predicted that the greatest challenge would soon be the Student Information System. A unified system can maintain data about all students within the UW System using common definitions. At the same time, institutions can also maintain independent data in the same system that is not common to all institutions. However, Vice President Miller suggested that President Cross and the Board of Regents would have to wrestle with a fair amount of culturally-rooted resistance to moving away from the current independent systems, which are built on different definitions.

President Millner inquired as to whether a more unified student information system would help students transfer between the UW institutions. President Cross indicated that a new system would likely have an impact, although the extent was uncertain. He added that System Administration was interested in revisiting the current transfer arrangements between campuses. The Transfer Information System has been praised, but it needs to be updated.

Responding to Regent Klein's earlier comment, President Cross noted that higher priority would be given to projects that are easy to accomplish and offer quick benefits. That assessment takes into account institutional resistance to changing long-standing processes. The System will

also make sure that processes are analyzed before they are streamlined, so that time is not wasted on automating bottlenecks and inefficiencies.

That said, President Cross acknowledged that there are going to be some situations that will require a consolidated effort, and the System will have to be forceful on certain issues. As Dr. Summers said, the priority is to take care of students first. The institutions have every right to defend current practices, but will also be asked to keep an open mind when looking at new ways of doing things.

President Cross explained that every institution captures similar student data but orders it differently in their spreadsheets; while one institution lists students' first names first, another may list last names. In those cases, the System would insist on having some consistency. However, each institution may also capture unique data that does not need to be aggregated.

President Cross stated that some things should not be standardized, given that one of the principles of the UW System is to respect and value the diversity of institutions and their histories. However, he argued that many back-office support data systems can be completely standardized, though institutions might use them differently. Any new systems will need to balance between these two goals, and any attempts at standardization need to have obvious benefits.

Vice President Miller reported that more often over the past two years institutions had been coming forward in favor of more collaboration, because they cannot afford to maintain a lot of independent systems in the future.

President Millner recalled that she was once involved with a private business that had to standardize its unique systems to comply with Sarbanes-Oxley, even though the unique systems that had been more effective. In the long run, however, uniformity was better for the whole organization.

Vice President Miller commented on a recent success story involving compliance with the new federal Title IX requirement. The requirement required a quick response, which led the UW System to take a centralized approach in developing one system to provide training to all institutions and track compliance by each individual.

Regent Farrow pointed out that the lack of funding for the UW System was providing a great ongoing motivation for institutions to find better ways to use what they have, and to free up resources in order to do other things.

Responding to a question from Regent Farrow about potential cybersecurity concerns with centralized systems, Vice President Miller explained that the implementation of standardized IT security policies would address that issue.

Regent Mueller requested that System Administration quantify the savings from these projects as the data become available. She noted that the current budget process and the decentralized nature of some of these functions makes it difficult to quantify how much all of

these activities cost before being standardized. It will be important to stakeholders that the UW System is able to both quantify these savings and reallocate funds to higher-priority areas.

President Cross agreed with Regent Mueller's suggestion. He pointed out that estimated savings for these projects range wildly depending on which steps are ultimately implemented. In an effort to be more precise, the System is waiting until projects are finished to announce the actual savings.

Regent Tyler commented that in a private company reallocating funds to higher-purpose work would not be considered savings. While doing so may make the System more effective, it will not reduce costs.

He also noted that when private companies pursue greater operational efficiencies, people become nervous about their roles being eliminated. Companies might combat resistance to implementing new processes or systems by promising not to terminate positions as a result of efficiency improvements. He asked if there had been any discussions about this for the UW System.

Vice President Miller said he was more concerned about recruitment and retention than the possibility of laying off people due to automation, as the UW System was having difficulty filling key positions.

He observed that institutions had been protecting instruction by taking as many of the budget cuts out of administration as possible, and that the UW System has consistently performed below any benchmark measure on low-cost services, both of which mean something is not getting done. Saving staff time to be reallocated toward higher-priority activities means that staff will be working on something that should have been done all along, but is not getting done right now.

President Cross indicated that some of these improvements, such as replacing the budget system, are necessary for the UW System to operate as a modern organization. Other changes will make processes more efficient while also reducing opportunities for error, which is another goal. He stated his confidence that these projects will produce savings, but added that he did not want the System to misstate how much those savings will be.

### ***Accountability Dashboard and On-Time Degrees***

President Cross asked Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs James Henderson to present two more pieces of the operational excellence initiative: the online dashboard and time to degree.

Vice President Henderson stated that two very important ideas woven into the 2020FWD framework and the area of operational excellence are accountability, now and in the future, and time to degree. Support for timely degree completion is infused throughout the strategic framework because stakeholders have cited it as the key to affordability.

## **Accountability Dashboard**

Vice President Henderson began by acknowledging the past work that has been done to make the UW System a national leader in data transparency. The UW System has the longest history of accountability reporting in the nation, and was the first public higher education system to provide a report on accountability to its Board, the Governor, the legislature, and the people of the state.

That first report, “Accountability for Achievement,” was published in 1993-94 through 1998-99 and was the result of the Taskforce on Accountability, a blue ribbon panel convened by Governor Tommy Thompson. Over time, the UW System’s accountability report has evolved to reflect broader initiatives and budget priorities. Most recently, Acts 32 and 55 added new levels and layers of requirements to report out to the legislature and stakeholders.

The current tool used to document the System’s progress is the interactive UW System Accountability Dashboard, which was launched in fall 2015. The web-based dashboard accomplishes four tasks. The dashboard:

- displays key performance indicators in an interactive and user-friendly way that can be manipulated to display trends over time using data from single UW institutions, the entire System, and a set of peer institutions;
- addresses the needs and interests of legislators, serves as a resource for the Board of Regents, and is an internal management tool for UW System Administration and the UW institutions;
- includes 46 key performance indicators, which were determined by a consensus process involving input from the Board of Regents and internal and external stakeholders, including key leaders, legislators, chancellors, provosts, and others; and
- provides supplemental information regarding 20 additional items.

Vice President Henderson focused on one particular dashboard indicator, “Progress and Completion.” Among the metrics within that indicator is a time -to-degree metric, which is directly connected to the total cost of a degree and student indebtedness. As stakeholders made clear during the strategic listening sessions, the issues of student loan debt and college completion are paramount.

Graduation rates are the first metric in the Progress and Completion indicator. Both four- and six-year graduation rates have increased over the last 30 years. Vice President Henderson stated that the System is proud of this improvement and must maintain that success.

The UW System has also made progress on time-to-degree over the last 20 years, reducing average time-to-degree by nearly a full semester. However, there is still room for some improvement, and both students and the System face pressure to make progress on this metric.

Vice President Henderson explained that time to degree can be affected by many different factors. For example, many students can only attend part-time because they are working to support themselves, support their families, or pay for tuition. Other factors might include changing majors; personal or family financial issues; and educational opportunities such as study abroad, internships, or double majors.

Another important concept related to timely completion is the metric of credits attempted to degree. Again, there have been some notable improvements over the last 20 years, with room for further improvements in the future.

### **On-Time Degrees**

Vice President Henderson focused on four major areas for improving time to degree:

- **Seamless transfer:** The UW System receives the most questions from students and their families in this area. While progress has been made in improving transfers between UW institutions and with WTCS, the UW System still needs to know more about which students are transferring, what their experiences are like, and how transfers can be better facilitated. The UW System has plans to modernize its Transfer Information System and to develop new transfer articulation agreements.
- **Remedial education:** The UW System has set common cut scores for math remediation for all of the UW institutions, with the eventual goal of reducing the number of students taking remedial courses. A workshop has been planned for math instructors from across the System to learn from the successes at peer institutions such as the University of Maryland System, the Tennessee Board of Regents, and the Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin. The UW System will also collaborate with K-12 staff to do more professional development aimed at improving effective instruction in mathematics and helping students prepare better for college.
- **Degree requirements:** System Administration will work with institutions to review degree requirements, with the intention to limit the number of degrees that require more than 120 credit hours for completion. Certain degrees may require more than 120 hours due to accreditation and other professional standards, but there may be other opportunities to streamline.
- **College options:** The UW System wants to work with K-12 education to provide students the opportunity to complete college credits while they are still in high school. The credits can then be applied to their degrees when they attend university.

Vice President Henderson emphasized that there is no more important issue for a UW institution than student success. With the number of students served by the UW System increasing over the past 20 years, the number of students needing additional support to be successful has also increased. Many other areas in the *2020FWD* strategic framework, such as 360-degree advising, new traditional students, and cultural fluency, will play an important role in ensuring that more students graduate in as efficient a manner as possible.

## **Strategic Framework Report Card**

As the UW System implements the 2020*FWD* strategic framework, the current accountability dashboard will remain an important resource for monitoring and demonstrating performance. However, as the System identifies performance measures for the new strategic priorities, it will leverage existing measures to serve as part of an annual strategic framework report card geared toward measuring the success of its strategic initiatives.

Teams are working to build an operational plan for how the UW System will pursue each of these desired priorities. They will identify performance metrics to go with each of the operational plans and will set benchmarks and goals. Existing and new performance metrics will be integrated into the current accountability dashboard as appropriate.

Vice President Henderson stated that a separate annual strategic framework report card also will be developed to track and communicate progress against these strategic priorities. This new report card will be presented to the Board of Regents in the fall of 2017, with annual progress updates to follow.

## **Discussion**

Regent Whitburn observed that UW-Madison and UW-La Crosse positively affect the numbers and charts related to time to degree. He suggested that holding them separate from the rest of the UW institutions would provide an important view of the numbers.

Regent Whitburn also said that he was challenging economists to help the UW System understand the bottom line economic impact – for students and families, and for the institutions – of reducing time to degree from 9.5 semesters to 8.5 semesters. He suggested it is important to gain a greater understanding of the real-world economic implications for both the institution and the student and family.

Vice President Henderson indicated that many students find it difficult to continue full time due to the cost. Those who are unwilling to take on debt burdens may instead choose to stop out, which is why the six-year graduation rate may be a more appropriate measure. The costs of longer time to degree must include actual expenses to attend school, and also the loss of earning capacity if a person were instead employed full time after earning their degree.

In response to a question from President Cross to Regent Whitburn, Regent Whitburn indicated that he was not sure how the cost savings of reduced time to degree should be expressed, but perhaps it would be a percentage of cost. He added that another challenge would be to consider the drop in enrollment and subsequently in revenues as the UW System moves people through quicker.

Regent Langnes expressed appreciation for the UW System's commitment to helping students achieve their degrees in a timely manner, especially given current financial stressors. He also urged caution with some policies that could potentially have adverse effects on students by infringing on their right to choice and their ability to chart their own academic futures.



Policies should not be made at the expense of student choice, to make a metric look better, but rather should be developed to help students achieve their academic goals, which in turn will improve the time to degree metric. He asked Vice President Henderson to commit to policies that help students achieve their academic goals in a timely fashion while not limiting student choice.

Vice President Henderson agreed that the ability to change majors is vital, saying that the goal is for students to have the opportunity to pursue their educational opportunities without barriers, but also in a cost-effective manner.

Regent Whitburn noted that Wisconsin is below the national average for the percentage of adults with four-year degrees. One in five Wisconsin citizens has attended college without finishing a degree. These challenges are part of what drove forward the Flex Option initiative three years earlier. He concluded that conversations about the interests of students and the offerings of institutions must also recognize these challenges, as there are limited resources.

Regent Erickson stated that she could be a “poster child” for taking a long time to get a degree. She cautioned against applying a cookie-cutter mentality or establishing road blocks, and instead argued for providing incentives for students to get things done.

She pointed to the advising program at UW-Eau Claire, which encourages students to sign four-year contracts. Advisors keep students informed about whether they are on track to graduate on time and what the consequences will be if they do not. Regent Erickson also noted that students like herself, who have changed degree choices and career goals, often have credits that do not count toward their degree. Another UW-Eau Claire program offers a discount to alumni if they return for additional classes after graduation.

Regent Erickson advocated for more programs like these to make things as easy as possible for students, especially for the nontraditional students that 2020FWD would target.

## **Conclusion**

President Cross concluded the day’s presentations by noting that student affairs positions are going to play an increasingly greater role in helping students succeed. By experimenting with predictive analytics, student affairs professionals can identify triggers that prompt action, such as absences from class. Institutions that utilize predictive analytics tools and provide intensive advising have been extremely successful in reducing the achievement or opportunity gaps. He suggested that savings from operational excellence initiatives can help student affairs staff support more students.

President Cross quoted from an article in *The Hechinger Report* that week that described a series of recent surveys showing “widespread skepticism about how colleges and universities are run, how much they cost, and whether or not they’re worth the money.” It went on to state that the firm Public Agenda had found that nearly 60 percent of respondents said that colleges mainly care about the bottom line, and 44 percent said that colleges are wasteful and inefficient.

The survey also found that nearly 60 percent of respondents said having a college education is no longer really necessary for a person to be successful.

President Cross said that the last finding is particularly disturbing because it is the opposite of what the System is hearing from employers. Wisconsin needs more educated people.

The UW System has a longstanding commitment to administrative excellence and to an efficient, effective academic process. It has a longstanding track record of successfully achieving both, providing maximum value for minimum investment.

In its report last summer, the Wisconsin Technology Council pointed out that the average expenditure per degree granted by the UW System is considerably lower than the national average and also is lower than virtually all of its Midwestern peers – Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Indiana, Minnesota, and Ohio. The UW System’s tuition is among the lowest in that group, meaning that the System is producing graduates more cheaply while charging the least to those students, all with the lowest contribution from the state.

Even though the UW System is efficient, President Cross said that more can be done for students and families. It is incumbent on the university to find ways to maximize the return on what students invest. That means offering the best possible educational opportunities while at the same time addressing the five components of college affordability: state funding, financial aid, the cost of delivering the educational experience, tuition, and time to degree.

Time to degree is particularly impactful in successfully getting students through college. Several initiatives – including 360 Advising, Seamless Transfer, Career Connect, and others – are designed to improve and build upon what the UW System is already doing.

President Cross described collaborations with corporate partners, such as Thrivent, to provide IT talent in the Fox Valley region. Together the university and its partners are designing and developing a 1+3 program with UW-Oshkosh, UW-Green Bay, UW Colleges, and the Wisconsin Technical Colleges in the region to provide that first year of IT education in high school. Doing so allows businesses and corporate partners to engage with high school students and offer them summer jobs. Students then continue to work with those businesses during the three more years it takes to finish their degrees. Programs like this attract students into high-demand disciplines, reduce their college costs, and fill a huge need for Wisconsin’s employers.

As a system of public higher education, the UW System is known and respected for its transparency, and the initiatives in the 2020*FWD* framework reflect that. President Cross suggested that much of the streamlining, sharing and consolidation of services would not be possible with a system.

As noted in the Wisconsin Technology Council’s report, Wisconsin is “blessed to have an exceptional university system by any national or international measure...with many attributes that are the envy of most other institutions and states.”

President Cross assured the Board of Regents and the people of Wisconsin that the UW System is committed to the operational excellence effort. He added that the System would openly and clearly demonstrate its progress and success so that students and other stakeholders can continue to have confidence in the university.

President Millner thanked President Cross, Vice President Miller, and Vice President Henderson for making excellent presentations.

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## **CLOSED SESSION**

President Millner called upon Vice President Behling to offer the resolution to move into closed session. The motion was seconded by Regent Petersen and adopted on a roll-call vote, with Regents Behling, Delgado, Erickson, Evers, Farrow, Hall, Higgins, Klein, Langnes, Manydeeds, Millner, Mueller, Petersen, Steil, Tyler, and Whitburn voting in the affirmative. There were no dissenting votes and no abstentions.

### **Closed Session Resolution**

Resolution 10773      That the Board of Regents move into closed session: (a) to consider UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee honorary degree nominations, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(f), Wis. Stats.; (b) to deliberate regarding a recommendation for dismissal with cause of a UW-Madison faculty member, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(a) and (b); (c) to consider a faculty member request for review of a UW-Whitewater personnel-related decision, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(f), Wis. Stats.; (d) to confer with legal counsel regarding pending or potential litigation, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(g), Wis. Stats.; and (e) to consider annual personnel evaluations, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(c), Wis. Stats.

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The Board recessed at 2:25 p.m. to relocate to the Sonata Room and reconvened at 2:34 p.m.

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The following resolutions were adopted during the closed session:

### **Adoption of Decision and Order of Dismissal, UW-Madison**

Resolution 10774      That the Board of Regents adopts the attached decision and order of dismissal in the matter of King-Jau (Sam) Kung, UW-Madison.

**Faculty Member Request for Review of a UW-Whitewater Decision**

Resolution 10775      That the Board of Regents adopts the attached Proposed Decision and Order as the Board's final Decision and Order in the matter of a faculty member request for Review of a UW-Whitewater personnel-related decision.

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The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

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Submitted by:

/s/ Jane S. Radue

Jane S. Radue, Executive Director and Corporate Secretary  
Office of the Board of Regents  
University of Wisconsin System