

**UW System Board of Regents
Education Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday August 18, 2022**

Proceedings of the Education Committee Meeting. The Education Committee convened in person from 8:45 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. Committee members in attendance were: Regents Weatherly, Colón, Underly, Tucker, Manydeeds, and were joined at 8:55 by Regent Pasch and 9:00 by Regent Adams. No Regent declared a conflict of interest regarding any of the items listed on the meeting agenda. Regent Weatherly noted that provosts were seated at the table with Regents, and student affairs officers were invited to the meeting as well.

Agenda Item C. Proposed Consent Agenda: Given the number of agenda items to be covered during the meeting, the Chair requested a motion to move the following routine, non-controversial items to a consent agenda. Note: Items on a consent agenda may be acted upon by the committee in a single vote. Any Board Member may remove items from a consent agenda for separate discussion and consideration. The meeting minutes must reflect the motion and vote on each item.

The meeting agenda reflected the following four items on the consent agenda:

1. Approval of the June 9, 2022 Meeting Minutes of the Education Committee
2. UW-Green Bay: Approval of a Master of Public Administration
3. UW-Madison: Approval of a Master of Science in Engineering Management
4. UW-Parkside: Approval of a Master of Science in Physician Assistant

All items remained on the consent agenda. A motion to approve item was made by Regent Colón and seconded by Regent Manydeeds. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item D. Host Campus Presentation by UW-Green Bay: “This Is How We Rise—How UW-Green Bay Thinks Differently About Higher Education

Dr. Kate Burns, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UW-Green Bay shared how the university lives its access mission to serve the local region. Provost Burns also described changes they have made to strengthen student access and success.

Agenda Item E. Direct Admissions: Potential Benefits, Challenges, And Examples

Regent Weatherly introduced a discussion about the idea of direct admissions, and stated an intention to have an inclusive conversation about it as a potential idea to increase access and enrollment at UW institutions. He invited UW-Parkside Provost Rob Ducoffe to facilitate the discussion. Provost Ducoffe introduced professors Jennifer Delay from the University of Illinois and Taylor Odle from UW-Madison to present via WebEx and explain what direct admissions is and how it has worked in other states. The Professors explained that direct admissions side-steps the traditional admissions process by having schools pro-actively reach out to students, offering a guaranteed admission spot based on existing student data and threshold criteria. They explained differences in policies in Idaho, Hawaii, and Minnesota. They also explained preliminary data on impact of the program in Idaho, which has seen an increase in enrollment and a decrease in students going out of state. The Professors shared guiding principles for direct admissions programs.

After the presentation, Provost Ducoffe invited Heidi Tuescher-Gille, Admissions Director at UW-Platteville, Erin Grisham, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at UW Oshkosh, and Jennifer Jones, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services at UW-Green Bay to answer questions about the potential impact of direct admissions within the UW System. He asked what criteria or information might be used for admissions decisions and the availability of the information, how campuses might help admitted students matriculate, and what kind of support the students might need on campus. In response, the speakers discussed high school grades, including if they were weighted and the coursework involved. They also cited admissions tests, noting that UW institutions are currently test-optional. Speakers also stated that Wisconsin does not have a centralized education database system for K-12, but that data sharing agreements would be possible. They added that direct admissions could be linked to other initiatives to increase affordability and provide academic support.

Provost Ducoffe then asked chancellors Mark Mone from UW-Milwaukee, Joe Gow from UW-La Crosse, and my boss at UW-Parkside Debbie Ford to offer their overall opinions about direct admissions for their respective schools. Chancellor Mone expressed enthusiasm for the idea and its potential to increase access in the Milwaukee area. Chancellor Ford expressed interest in direct admissions and the potential to streamline the admissions process, and asked to clarify the problem the policy would address and ensure students can be supported. Chancellor Gow expressed support for increasing enrollment, and confidence in the current model used by UW-La Crosse to recruit and retain students.

Regent Manydeeds then asked why enrollment might be declining and if it could be due to institutional reputation, and how direct admissions might work if it is not a unified UW System approach. He also questioned if student data would be readily available. Regent Weatherly responded that the idea would be to develop a pilot and allow for campus flexibility. Regent Pasch suggested a policy also consider student prior learning. Regent Underly asked Professors Delaney and Olde if Minnesota's pilot program would impact Wisconsin students and about data access. Professor Delaney responded that other states have reached data agreements with third party vendors, and that Minnesota's program would only involve current Minnesota residents.

After the discussion, Regent Weatherly asked Interim Senior Vice President Johannes Britz to lead an inclusive task force to analyze and issue recommendations regarding the feasibility of direct admission for the UW System. VP Britz stated a commitment to lead the task force to provide a report and recommendations for the Education Committee in early 2023.

Agenda Item F. Report of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

Johannes Britz, the Interim Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs provided three updates from the Office of Academic and Student Affairs: 1) UW System is reopening discussions about dual enrollment for high school students, which will be the subject of a future Education Committee discussion; 2) Provosts and other stakeholders are working on a strategic approach to program array management; and 3) the Vice President has charged a working group to plan for online program growth.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.