

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

WORKING GROUP ON RE-DEFINING EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

Minutes of the Meeting

Thursday, February 5, 2004
10:00 a.m.
The Pyle Center
Madison, Wisconsin

Present: Regent Fred Mohs, Chair; Regent Elizabeth Burmaster; Regent Beth Richlen; Chancellor Rick Wells, UW-Oshkosh; Chancellor Julius Erlenbach, UW-Superior; Interim Chancellor Virginia Helm, UW-Stevens Point; Senior Vice President Cora Marrett; Provost Peter Spear, UW-Madison, Provost John Wanat, UW-Milwaukee; Kris McGrew, UW-Extension; Greg Wypiszynski, UW-Oshkosh; Cliff Abbott, UW-Green Bay; Associate Vice President Ron Singer

Unable to attend: Regent Emeritus Pat Boyle and UW-Milwaukee student Kory Kozloski

For the first portion of its meeting, the Working Group on Re-Defining Educational Quality met jointly with the Working Group on Operating Efficiencies in Room 325/326. The purpose of the meeting was to have further discussion on transforming instructional delivery with Dr. Al Guskin, Co-Director of the Project on the Future of Higher Education, following his presentation to all Charting a New Course Participants. Such transformation has the purpose of enhancing student learning while reducing the cost of education in the long term.

Dr. Guskin pointed out that experiments in transforming education need to be of substantial size in order to have the desired impact, but he recommended that they not be system-wide or even campus-wide in initial stages. He emphasized the importance of tapping faculty creativity for ideas, rather than issuing top-down directives that might prompt resistance on campuses. Experiments would be conducted within quality and financial parameters that would guide the initiatives without stifling creativity.

At 10:40 a.m., the Working Group on Re-Defining Educational Quality reconvened in Room 111 for its separate meeting. Proposed budget recommendations were discussed in the areas of financial aid; attracting and retaining quality faculty; enhancing academic and career advising resources; and enhancing library and technology resources. It was noted that these recommendations relate to the themes of quality, access, and serving Wisconsin that were identified at the January 7th Steering Committee meeting.

In the area of financial aid, it was noted that access for Wisconsin students to high quality education is of key importance and that adequate financial aid is necessary to provide that access and to permit diversity in the student body that also is crucial to educational quality.

In attracting and retaining quality faculty, the intent of the recommendation would be to augment the existing pool of faculty by increasing the number of positions system-wide and to provide a pay plan that reverses the erosion of faculty salaries that has occurred in recent years and that has impeded efforts to attract and retain faculty.

Enhancing academic and career advising resources, it was indicated, has long been a top student priority. Nonetheless, advising resources have diminished in recent years as the number of students served has increased. It was noted that access to high quality advising is crucial to assuring that students are retained and graduate with value-added outcomes.

In the area of library and technology resources, it was pointed out that these resources are fundamental to quality education and that campuses need additional funding to address their most pressing needs.

Representatives of United Council agreed that initiatives in the above areas are important student priorities.

The Chair and members of the working group commented on the importance of including with budget initiatives the kinds of stories and examples that make these needs understandable to decision makers and deserving of their support.

The working group also decided to prepare a budget proposal to support investments in experiments to transform and enhance education, as proposed by Dr. Guskin. Chancellor Wells and Mr. Wypiszynski, working with Ms. McGrew, agreed to take the lead in drafting such a proposal.

The proposed budget recommendations will be brought back to the working group in March for further consideration and approval for transmission to the Steering Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.