

DRAFT

**Charting a New Course for the UW System
Our Partnership with the State Working Group**

January 7, 2004, 12:15– 2:15 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present: Patricia Brady, Margaret Lewis, Ann Lydecker, Don Mash, Bill Messner, Peggy Rosenzweig, Jesus Salas, Melanie Schroeder, Matt Sirinek, David Walsh

Members Absent: David Beckwith, Mark Bugher, Clint Dederich, Joseph Heim, Don Nichols

Committee Staff Present: David Miller, Kate Kail

Chairman Walsh convened the committee. He reviewed a suggestion, offered by Sen. Alberta Darling at the December committee meeting, to create a forum for legislators and UW System officials to work on economic development and other issues. Walsh said he and President Lyall planned to meet with Darling to follow up on Darling's suggestion and plan a direction for the discussions. Rosenzweig suggested Rep. Mike Huebsch could also be a valuable contributor to the effort.

In discussing possible approaches to the discussions, the group suggested an initial focus on economic development with the broader goal of creating a vehicle for regular communication between the Legislature and the university. Lewis suggested the group be created before the state budget process begins next spring. Rosenzweig said the Joint Finance Committee previously had a subgroups focused on specific issues including the university, and many current members of the Legislature agree on the need to again formalize dialogue with the UW System.

Members of the group asked if the suggested forum would be a substitute or an addition to communicating with existing legislative bodies. Members agreed that it is important to communicate directly with standing legislative committees, which move legislation and are key to changes in statute. Messner suggested asking key leaders, including the Governor, about their specific ideas for creating such a forum for discussion and then presenting a formal proposal. Rosenzweig suggested that the upcoming 'Charting a New Course' progress reports could be used to initiate communication about the vision and utility of the proposed group.

Members of the group agreed that financial aid is a major issue facing all university stakeholders. Rosenzweig said most legislators are unfamiliar with the complexities of financial aid. Lewis added that most are also unaware of how pressing the issue has become for Wisconsin, while other states have already adjusted their tuition and aid formulas. Lydecker suggested that financial aid should be considered as a cost-to-continue item. Salas asked if the group could consider economic diversity in its financial aid discussions. OPAR director Sharon Wilhelm said she would provide relevant data, and said discussions about financial aid should consider public policy, future goals and needed contributors. Brady said an internal financial aid working group will present financial aid options in February.

The group also discussed the effectiveness and goals of the UW System Accountability Report, which is being updated for 2003-04 and will be presented to the board in February. Walsh said many legislators are unfamiliar with the report and wondered about its intended outcomes. The group learned how the report evolved from a document aimed at the Legislature to a continuous improvement document, primarily for internal use. Members of the group suggested that the report could be made simpler for public understanding. Mash suggested that the goals and outcomes in the report could be used to establish a formal partnership with the state. Walsh urged the group to have a fuller understanding of the report to guide future work.

Brady said part of the university's partnership with the state is to meet state needs, and that the group should focus on creating a mechanism to talk about those needs as they arise. Mash said meeting specific state workforce needs

is a part of the working group's study as it relates to state investment. Messner said access and capacity are a part of the larger 'Charting' study, but that responsibilities for meeting needs in specific disciplines should fall elsewhere.

Lewis suggested that the regents consider holding listening sessions to hear from legislators before forwarding formal budget proposals, and Rosenzweig wondered if similar forums could be held on study recommendations.

Mash mentioned a suggestion brought to him by Rep. Rob Kreibich, who is interested in working with System staff to draft legislation that would increase the number of UW System graduates over several biennia. Sirinek said the Kreibich proposal proves the need for communication channels between the Legislature and the university, and stressed that *how* the university communicates with state leaders is more important than *what* is communicated.

The group will focus on generating budget-related proposals by March. The group may also consider other proposals on financial aid and service to nontraditional students. The group plans to discuss its executive summary in February.

The committee adjourned at 2:30 p.m.