

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

November 6, 2003, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present: David Beckwith, Patricia Brady, Clint Dederich, Joseph Heim, Margaret Lewis, Ann Lydecker, Don Mash, Bill Messner, Peggy Rosenzweig, Jesus Salas, Melanie Schroeder, David Walsh

Members Absent: Mark Bugher, Don Nichols, Matt Sirinek

Committee Staff Present: David Miller, Kathy Dickerson

Chairman Walsh convened the committee. He reviewed the original committee goals and proposed for the December meeting a discussion on economic benefits to the state. Chairman Walsh also proposed to discuss in February the review of accountability issues in connection with presentation of the 2004 accountability report.

Sharon Wilhelm of the UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research gave a presentation on "Access and Financial Aid Provided to UW Students." The presentation included participation rates of immediate new freshman in Wisconsin, family income trends of new freshmen, financial aid eligibility, sources of financial aid, and some policy considerations.

It was noted that while enrollment in higher education by Wisconsin residents has declined among immediate new freshmen, enrollment by this population in the UW System has increased. However, the percent of Wisconsin high school graduates not enrolled in higher education anywhere has increased from 35.6% in 1992 to 43.1% in 2000.

Concern was expressed that students from low income families enrolling in the UW System has decreased while the percentage of high income families has increased. Members concluded that financial aid must be provided to ensure access for lower income students. Regent Emeritus Beckwith asked that the committee be provided with similar income comparisons from other Midwestern states.

Regent Salas pointed out that work-study funding has been flat for ten years. He further expressed the view that working on campus is more beneficial to students' education than working in service industry jobs. Chancellors Messner and Lydecker urged that we lobby for federal increases in work-study funding.

Wilhelm illustrated that Wisconsin does not provide as much state funded, need-based financial aid as some neighboring states. However, Wisconsin students' debt upon graduation is near the national average for students that graduate with debt (60%). Salas repeated his request for information on the impact of the 2003 tuition increase on student affordability. Wilhelm said a review was underway and would be forthcoming.

Regent Walsh asked committee members if the essential question about financial aid was simply the level of state support. Wilhelm pointed out that an improved formula in the federal student needs analysis would benefit Wisconsin students. Chancellor Messner requested a summary of changes that would benefit Wisconsin students. Chancellor Mash said perhaps UW tuition should be more progressive. Regent Salas pointed out that UWM has a high percentage of lower income students and asked for income comparisons by UW campus.

Building Capacity for More College Graduates

Chancellor Don Mash presented the committee with a proposal to seek additional state investment to increase enrollment in the UW System, particularly for part-time non-traditional students. His presentation focused on three goals currently being discussed by Wisconsin policy makers.

- Higher paying jobs and increased tax revenue
- Enhanced infrastructure for economic development
- Quality of life enhancements

Mash noted that Governor Doyle's "Grow Wisconsin" plan and Republican leaders' "Growing and Reforming Our Wisconsin" (G.R.O.W.) both call for more highly trained workers to transition into the high end jobs of the new economy. Budget reductions and enrollment limitation have reduced the UW System's capacity to produce additional graduates who will remain in Wisconsin.

It was noted that non-traditional part-time students are under enrolled and underserved by the UW System and that enrollment limitations and budget reductions have forced quality to be chosen over broader access. Wisconsin ranks 31st in the nation in the percent of population with four-year degrees. Mash will be working with UW System staff to obtain data on how we rank nationally in enrolling non-traditional, part-time students. He is certain that we rank very low.

Mash argued that focusing on part-time non-traditional students would result in a "brain gain" for Wisconsin because this working population is committed to remaining in the state. He urged better coordination with UW Colleges and the WTCS to provide access to non-traditional students. Furthermore, he maintained that state investment in non-traditional students would result in important infrastructure development through educating more teachers, nurses, technology workers, and entrepreneurs. The state would benefit from higher tax revenue that would result from higher incomes.

Chairman Walsh then opened the floor for discussion. Chancellor Messner told the committee that he and Chancellor Reilly were developing a plan to develop a "Center for Adult Access" based on non-traditional access. He said the plan may be presented to the Regent Study Committee on "Re-defining Educational Quality" and would be glad to present to this committee as well. Messner also said the UW should address issues of reallocation, maximizing technology, and tapping private resources for non-traditional students before asking the state for additional resources. Chancellor Lydecker and others pointed out that it would be difficult to divert dollars away from current student services.

Regent Rosenzweig asked why UW-Milwaukee and UW-Parkside could serve more non-traditional students than other campuses. It was pointed out that the mission and capacity of those institutions better serves non-traditional students. Chancellor Mash reiterated that more non-traditional students could not be served without additional state support. Chancellor Messner discussed the fact that position control by the state was a major barrier to serving additional students.

Chairman Walsh and committee members agreed that legislative leaders would be invited to the December meeting to discuss the major issues facing the UW and seek consensus on areas such as financial aid, access, and accountability. The committee will also discuss the economic benefits of the UW System to the state.

The committee adjourned at 12:30 p.m.