

MINUTES OF THE RESEARCH AND PUBLIC SERVICE WORK GROUP OF THE BOARD  
OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

B1A Lowell Center

Wednesday, January 7, 2004

12:15 P.M.

PRESENT: Regent Davis (presiding), Regent Connolly-Keesler, Regent Randall, Chancellor Keating, Faculty Representative Erdman, Faculty Representative Wood, Academic Staff Representative Hank, Student Representative Amys, Vice President Weimer, Assistant Vice President Andrews and Executive Assistant to the UW Extension Chancellor Sears.

Chairman Davis convened the committee at 12:15 p.m. There was a motion to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2003 meeting. The motion passed.

Chair Davis discussed the working group agenda and amended it in light of the decision of the Board of Regents earlier in the day to speed up the timetable for recommendations, especially recommendations that have budgetary implications.

Addressing the group was Paul W. Barrows, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, UW-Madison, who discussed the PEOPLE Program (Pre-College Enrichment Program for Learning Excellence). In Wisconsin, 87% of all high school students graduate; and yet, Wisconsin has only a 40% graduation rate – the lowest in the nation – for black students. The rate is even lower in Milwaukee where only 34% of black students graduate from high school. There are similar low completion rates for targeted minorities, especially American Indian and Hispanic students.

To build the pool of targeted students qualified to apply, be admitted to and potentially enroll at UW-Madison, the PEOPLE program was established. PEOPLE's three-point goal for participants: graduation from high school; enrollment at a higher education institution; and enrollment at UW-Madison. PEOPLE provides pre-college educational services to hundreds of middle school and high school students in the Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha and Madison public school districts. Every PEOPLE student who successfully completes the preparatory program is admitted to an undergraduate degree program at UW-Madison.

Barrows recommended that if each institution within UW System, with access to Milwaukee, would take a similar cohort of kids, it would make a huge difference in increasing enrollment and graduate rates of ethnic minority students.

Tess Arenas, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Senior Advisor to the President for Academic Diversity, addressed the 1988 Design for Diversity plan established as the first UW System ten-year strategic plan to increase diversity by setting numeric enrollment targets. Arenas also discussed the 1998 initiative, Plan 2008, a bottom up initiative to prepare graduates for a diverse workforce. Plan 2008 focuses on recruitment and retention, as well as research and curriculum. She reported that indicators have been positive in terms of increasing minority enrollments and retention, minority faculty and staff, and other key measures of participation. She indicated that specific metrics regarding progress against the Plan 2008 would be presented in the spring at a future Board of Regents meeting.

Following Tess's presentation, there was a general discussion about the need for a greater sense of urgency for increasing diversity across all institutions, considering feedback from business leaders and the situation at MPS.

It was noted that the recent 18% increase in tuition is having an apparently chilling effect on the percentage of low-income minority students enrolling in the UW System and increased financial aid support for students remains a great need.

Christine Anderson, Executive Director of the Milwaukee Partnership Academy, presented an overview of the Academy, a partnership of the Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, Private Industry Council and Milwaukee Board of School Directors, among others. The Academy's goals are to: increase student achievement; improve the quality of teaching and learning; and address systemic issues across educational institutions. Further, a broad initiative is designed to assure that every child in MPS is performing at or above grade level in reading, writing, and math. MPA's priorities include: comprehensive mathematics and literacy; family literacy and tutoring; teacher and principal quality; monitoring and reporting student performance; and evaluation and accountability. Data regarding the success of the program will be available in May at which time Dr. Anderson offered to come back to report results to the committee.

Regent Guy Gottschalk reported that a joint proposal has been drafted by UW Colleges and UW Extension, "Brain Gain for Wisconsin – Center for Adult Access." The proposal is to help place-bound and other non-traditional students achieve access to associate and baccalaureate degrees. He asked the Research and Public Service Working Group to consider the proposal because of its importance and relevance to the mission of the work group. UW-Extension Chancellor Reilly and UW Colleges Chancellor Messner will report on the proposal at the February meeting.

The draft preliminary recommendations for research and communication were considered. The committee also discussed five major areas for recommendations: research, communication, public service, liberal arts and diversity. After discussion, it was recommended that a recommendation in the liberal arts arena would be better handled by the Educational Quality Working Group.

Several suggestions regarding the draft research and communications recommendations were made as follows:

- the research recommendation should explicitly acknowledge both basic and applied research;
- examples and testimonials should be used to describe the importance of the research;
- fiscal support for release time for faculty should be incorporated;
- communications should remain a stand-alone recommendation.
- there should be fewer research recommendations
- document should reflect recommendations the university can do and those that will require partnerships to make them happen.

Budget staff will be invited to the March meeting to assist the committee in determining what resources would be necessary to carry out the draft recommendations.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.