

Minutes – Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention Committee
October 6, 2006

Attendees: Martha Brennan, Sarah Egerstrom, Natalie Hagberg, Dan Marchand, Ashley Olson, Lisa Schneider-Rebozo, Kris Tjornehoj, Alan Tuchtenhagen, David Trechter

1. Minutes from September 29, 2006 were approved
2. Growth Agenda Resolution – Tuchtenhagen and Trechter provided some background regarding the growth agenda: it is a proposal by UW-System President Reilly and the Board of Regents and is consistent with an interest in increasing the size of the UWRF student body by both Chancellors Lydecker and Betz. Marchand asked about the relationship between the growth agenda and the governor’s proposed “educational covenant”, which would offer students graduating from a Wisconsin high school with a 3.0 average discounted tuition. While the educational covenant would have ramifications for the growth agenda, these seem to be two independent initiatives. It was suggested to re-order the points to start with a more positive item. It was also suggested that a press-release be developed to accompany the resolution so that the points contained in the resolution could be made in a less stilted fashion.

The following resolution, as amended was moved by Marchand, seconded by Tjornehoj, and passed by the committee:

Whereas, the University of Wisconsin System was rated by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems in 2006 as one of the five most productive public university research systems, and as one of the five most effective public baccalaureate and master’s institutions in the country; indicating that we have been very effective and efficient managers of investments made by the citizens of Wisconsin in its state university system; and

Whereas, while the number of students enrolled in 4-year public institutions universities in Wisconsin expanded by more than 8,000 students between 1990 and 2006, state appropriations for higher education decreased from \$262 per capita in 1990 to \$204 per capita in 2006 – in contrast, Minnesota’s expenditure per capita was identical to that of Wisconsin in 1990 (\$262) but rose slightly to \$266 by 2006; and

Whereas, according to the U.S. Census only 25 percent of Wisconsin citizen’s over the age of 25 had completed at least a bachelor’s degree as of 2005, making our state 33rd in the nation – we are substantially behind our sister state, Minnesota, where 31 percent of adults have bachelors’ degrees; and

Whereas, in today’s knowledge-based economy, access to higher education is increasingly an imperative for continued economic prosperity as illustrated by the fact that household income, as reported in the U.S. Census, stood at \$52,024 in Minnesota in 2005 compared to only \$47,105 in Wisconsin – in 1990 Minnesota’s gross state product was \$2.1 billion greater than Wisconsin’s and by 2006 Minnesota had a \$16.8 billion advantage; and

Whereas, studies confirm that not only do college graduates boost their own incomes and the tax receipts for the states in which they live, but they are also engaged citizens, lead healthy lives, and serve the public good in myriad ways; and

Whereas, Wisconsin, like most states in the U.S., received a grade of “F” in a recent U.S. Department of Education report on affordability of higher education in the state – in 1990 Wisconsin received a grade of B+ and between 1990 and 2006 average tuition at public 4-year universities in the state increased from \$2,960 to \$5,665; and

Whereas, the proportion of students enrolled in higher education who come from lower-income families has declined during the past decade and, according to the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education (NCPPE), Wisconsin’s “investment in need-based financial aid is very low compared to top-performing states” – the percentage of children living in poverty in Wisconsin was 14 percent in 1990 and remains at that level today while in Minnesota this percentage has fallen from 14 percent to 11 percent; and

Whereas, many states benefit from the in-migration of people with bachelor degrees or higher, Wisconsin does not – in 2006 data compiled by NCPPE indicate that the state had a net out-migration of 834 people with college degrees – so the University of Wisconsin System will be the primary supplier of the knowledge workers the state will need to prosper in the future, therefore,

Be it resolved that the University of Wisconsin at River Falls:

- stands ready and willing to work with the State of Wisconsin to mobilize additional taxpayer investments in the University of Wisconsin System; and
- enthusiastically endorses the University of Wisconsin System’s Growth Initiative to use these additional investments by the taxpayers to increase the access of the citizens of Wisconsin to the first-class educational experience we offer; and
- is excited about the prospect of expanding the positive role that this campus plays in the life of this region, the state, and the national and international community.

This resolution was forwarded to the Executive Committee of Faculty Senate for consideration at their October 18th meeting. Subsequent to the meeting the following press release was drafted by Trechter, circulated to the committee, and, after receiving comments, was also forwarded to the Executive Committee:

**UW-River Falls Faculty Senate Endorses the Growth Agenda Proposed by
UW-System President Reilly**

In February of 2006, President Kevin Reilly called for a re-investment by the state in the UW-System in order to build a brighter, more prosperous future for the state. In today’s global economy, access to higher education is becoming ever more important. Unfortunately, the data suggest that Wisconsin urgently needs to increase the access of its citizens to the UW-System.

Data from the U.S. Census and other governmental agencies, and compiled by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems indicates that Wisconsin:

- Ranks 33rd among the states in the U.S. in terms of the percentage of our citizens with a bachelors degree or higher – only 25 percent of those 25 and older hold a 4-year degree compared to over 30 percent in Minnesota
- Families are losing ground economically to other states – In 2005, median household income in Wisconsin was \$4,919 less than in Minnesota and our state’s gross product (the total value of all goods and services produced in the state) is now \$16.8 billion less than our neighbor to the west
- Has witnessed an erosion in per capita taxpayer support for higher education – in 1990 \$262 per capita was spent by the state’s taxpayers on higher education but only \$206 in 2006 – in contrast Minnesota started at the same level of state-support for higher education and actually increased spending modestly to \$266 per capita
- Like most states received a failing grade (F) in providing access to higher education, in part because tuition at 4-year public universities increased by 91 percent between 1990 and 2006
- Is enrolling a smaller proportion of its student body who come from the lower income households – a problem compounded by the fact that, according to the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education (NCPPE), Wisconsin’s “investment in need-based financial aid is very low compared to top-performing states”
- Does not have a large in-migration of people into the state with college degrees – meaning that if the state is to have people with college degrees, we are mostly going to have to educate them here

Over the past 15 years, in the face of declining public support for higher education, the UW-System has increased enrollment by more than 8,000 students. In addition, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems in 2006 rated the University of Wisconsin System as one of the five most productive public university research systems, and as one of the five most effective public baccalaureate and master’s institutions in the country. These facts support the conclusion that the UW-System has been very effective and efficient managers of investments made by the citizens of Wisconsin in its state university system.

Because of the need for increased funding for the UW-System and the access this will provide for Wisconsin’s students to this top-flight public university system, the UW-River Falls Faculty Senate passed a resolution stating that the university:

- stands ready and willing to work with the State of Wisconsin to mobilize additional taxpayer investments in the University of Wisconsin System; and
- enthusiastically endorses the University of Wisconsin System’s Growth Initiative to use these additional investments by the taxpayers to increase the access of the citizens of Wisconsin to the first-class educational experience we offer; and
- is excited about the prospect of expanding the positive role that this campus plays in the life of this region, the state, and the national and international community.

3. Freshman Profile – Tuchtenhagen discussed a number of graphs and tables that profile this year's freshman class. Key points include:
- The average ACT declined slightly (21.8) from the previous year and generally continues a pattern of slowly falling ACT scores from the peak reached in 1997 (22.7)
 - There is a somewhat sharper decline in the average high school percentile rank since 1997 than we see for the average ACT, falling from 71.2 to 64.3
 - There has been an increase in students who are in the 5th and 6th deciles in their class and a decline in those who are in the top two deciles
 - Retention rates have been fairly consistently between 73 and 77 percent over the past 10 years with two exceptions (1995 = 66.4% and 2001 = 69.9%), despite the ups and downs of average ACT and rank in class scores
 - UWRF is exactly in the middle of the UW-System schools in terms of retention rates and is better than average when it comes to our current rate 6-year graduation rate of 61.1% (4 schools are better, 8 are worse)
 - Slightly more freshmen are from Wisconsin (51%) than Minnesota (48%)
 - For the 4th year in a row, UWRF admitted more than 1,200 students – a record 1,296 in 2006
 - In 2006, the number of applications dropped by nearly 500, to 3,925, but admissions increased, representing a 3% increase in “efficiency”
 - The number of admitted students in CBE, CEPS, and CAS increased, while the number in CAFES and pre-majors dropped
 - 401 different high schools are represented in the entering class and 56 percent are first generation college students (from families in which the parents did not attend college)
 - We are about to enter a period in which high school graduates in Wisconsin and Minnesota are expected to fall. The decline in Wisconsin is expected to be from about 61,000 in 2007-08 down to 55,500 in 2012-13 (down 5,500) and from about 59,000 to 53,700 (down 5,300) in Minnesota over the same time period. So, at a time when the UW-System is offering to increase its enrollment, the “supply” of students in our main markets is expected to drop by more than 10,000 students

4. Other