



UPDATE. APRIL 17, 2008

# Self-Study Update

- *Since the completion of the self-study report, UWRF has continued to make progress in several areas. We would note the following developments and additions to our self-study report in recent months.*

## **CRITERION ONE**

UWRF Senior and McNair Scholar Megan Weisbar received the UW System Woman of Color Award in March 2008.

Annual celebrations of Black History month (February), Women's History month (March) and Unity in the Community (April) were accompanied by guest speakers, art exhibits and presentations.

The Wyman Series included performances by Chinese acrobats and a presentation by Damali Ayo, author of "How to Rent a Negro," which looks at the treatment of racial minorities.

The new state budget has provided 2.5 new positions to UWRF to increase the number of diverse students in teacher education and to increase the number of teacher candidates in the high need areas—STEM and special education (1 FTE academic position, 1 FTE academic staff position, a .5 FTE LTE position, and around \$9,000 S&E). We are in the process of filling a tenure track position to take the lead in this initiative.

We have also hired a new director of human relations and a new assistant to the chancellor for equity and affirmative action/compliance.



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The Office of the Chancellor and the Academic Success Center are collaborating on the creation of a summer bridge program for incoming students of color who are planning to major in the STEM fields. The program, slated to begin in summer 2009, will be open to 30 students each summer.

The university is reviewing the organizational structure for minority affairs and diversity services. Student Affairs has identified a position that will specifically work with socio-cultural programs and services on campus. A socio-cultural coordinator will be hired by fall of 2008. This position will report to the director of student life.

River Falls Votes, part of the American Democracy Project, pre-registered 500 students to vote in local and national elections in Wisconsin.

Spriggs Scholars, a new leadership development program, is the result of a \$1 million gift from alumna Lucile Spriggs. The first cohort of Spriggs Scholars will be recruited in fall 2008 and will begin classes in fall 2009. Spriggs Scholars will recognize diverse and highly qualified students who have demonstrated a commitment to service and civic engagement. The program will be designed around the social change model of leadership development.

## **CRITERION TWO**

UWRF participated in Focus the Nation, a national teach-in on global warming held Jan. 31, 2008. The Eco Club and the St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development coordinated a full day of presentations and activities. Presentations included a panel on “Local Partnerships That Make A Difference,” which included River Falls Mayor Don Richards; Jake Oelke, director of energy services for Wisconsin Public Power, Inc; Brian Zelenak, Xcel Energy manager of regulatory administration; and Mike Stifter, director of facilities management at UWRF.

UWRF is one of the college and university campuses selected to participate in the pilot phase of a rating system for sustainability in higher education developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The self-assessment system, called STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System), is designed to help gauge the progress of colleges and universities toward sustainability in all sectors, from governance and operations to academics and community engagement.

### **OTHER SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES**

- By the end of 2007 UWRF recycled 136 tons of paper and more than 30 tons of commingled containers. The new “Single Stream Recycling” program is expected to increase collections in 2008.
- Following a series of tests, custodial services has begun using green chemicals for cleaning and in campus soap dispensers. The new products are providing better cleaning as well as cost savings.



- Agricultural engineering students began to produce bio-diesel fuel by using waste vegetable oil from the campus food service. The fuel is being used in campus tractors and equipment.
- CAFES hosted a two-day workshop in January 2008 on sustainable agriculture for agriculture professionals.
- Funded by a grant from the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, the UWRF Survey Research Center and UW-Extension agents conducted a survey of regional public administrators and facilities managers about the regional potential for the use of renewable energy.
- The university is cooperating with Wisconsin Public Power, Inc. and the city of River Falls to evaluate the potential for harnessing local wind energy.
- The Dairy Learning Center received an award from Xcel Energy in recognition of its use of an equipotential electrical plane (grounding system), which eliminates the effects of stray voltage.
- The St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development has been extremely active in making presentations in the region and nationally, and is providing leadership in a number of sustainability initiatives.

There has been significant progress on the FalconFile project, which provides additional functionality (with remote Web access to documents) and easier collaboration and sharing of documents.

Student access to computer labs has been extended through the addition of a 24-hour computer lab in South Hall.

The university recently received additional UW System funding to support our First-Year Experience office. This new base funding will allow the FYE program to hire 2.5 full-time staff during the 2008-09 academic year in support of first-year and transitioning students and families.

In January 2008, we hired a data analyst as a first step in creating an office of institutional research. At the same time, we conducted a national search for a new director of institutional research. The search process has been successfully concluded and our new director will start in mid June. This two-person institutional research office will address one of the major challenges presented in the self-study.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The University Planning Group has identified priority tasks and is making substantial progress.

- **Goal 7: Invest in Human Resources** was identified as the top priority. Proposals have been developed to begin to address salary compression for full professors; teaching load issues regarding graduate courses, reassigned time, and lecture/lab equivalencies; teaching academic staff compensation; and compensation for department chairs.
- **Goal 6: Promote the University of Wisconsin-River Falls** is working to develop an integrated marketing strategy. Woychick Design was hired to conduct surveys and assist us in implementing a branding and marketing



campaign. Surveys and focus group research have been conducted and a report will be available in May.

- **Task 1.1.2: Increase Support for the First-Year Experience, Honors Program and the Academic Success Center.** New positions are being added to FYE and a motion to adopt a campus-wide modified total intake model for academic advising has been forwarded to the Faculty Senate.
- Substantial work has also been done to address the operating paradigm: **Assess Programs and Set Priorities.** New tasks regarding the assessment of academic and non-academic programs have been developed and a phased approach for academic program prioritization is being developed.

## CRITERION THREE

### CURRICULAR ADDITIONS

- The UW Board of Regents recently approved a new master of arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). This program and a graduate certificate in TESOL were developed in response to both regional needs and our strong ties to universities in Asia.
- An online graduate certificate in alternative education was just approved. For more information, see <http://www.uwrf.edu/ogs/programs/programs-index.php/alt-ed/3/gs>
- The College of Arts and Sciences received a \$179,940 grant (\$89,983 in 2008-09 and \$89,957 in 2009-10) from the U.S. Department of Education under the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program to fund the development of courses in Asian Studies, including additional courses in Japanese and Chinese.

The Faculty Senate assessment committee has approved a new “General Education and University Requirements Assessment Plan and Review Process.”

The assessment committee also initiated a change to place the review of university-wide courses under the jurisdiction of a single Faculty Senate committee to provide greater consistency in the assessment process.

Ellen Schultz, CBE, received an advising excellence award from the Wisconsin Academic Advising Association.

Campus tutoring services have been expanded through support from the differential tuition program.

The health and human performance building committee is making site visits for potential design information in preparation for the next steps toward a new HHP building.

Cyndi Leshner, CEO, Xcel Minnesota, and chair of the committee planning to host the Republican National Convention in the Twin Cities in 2008, served as the CBE Executive-in-Residence for spring semester.



## CRITERION FOUR

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls received \$3.65 million in faculty and staff grants for the 2006-07 school year, a record high for the university.

### HONORS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Ryan Stridde, a UWRF senior health and human performance major and film studies minor, was selected to assist NFL Films in recording the 2008 Super Bowl.
- Athletic Director Rick Bowen received the 2008 Outstanding Service Award from the National Association of Basketball coaches at the NABC convention in San Antonio in April.
- The University of Wisconsin-River Falls Symphony Band won the award for outstanding performance at the annual National Band Association's Wisconsin Chapter Convention, and UWRF music Professor Kristin Tjornehoj was recognized with the association's citation of excellence.
- The UWRF concert choir was one of four college choirs selected to perform at the North Central Regional American Choral Directors Association Conference.
- UWRF students won a number of awards at the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) convention, and Tim Buttles, agricultural education, was selected as the Alpha Tau Alpha National advisor president.

### UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

- UWRF will host the UW System undergraduate research conference April 24-25. The keynote speaker will be UWRF alumna Patty Skinkis, a former McNair scholar, who received her Ph.D. from Purdue and is currently an assistant professor at Oregon State University.
- Tim Lyden, director of the new Tissue and Cellular Innovation Center at UWRF and advisor to our student undergraduate research organization, and recent graduate Travis Cordie briefed legislators on the importance of undergraduate research on March 5 during Posters in the Rotunda and UW Day.

### INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

- The College of Arts and Sciences has created a new grants program to support student international travel.
- Award-winning author Mary Relindes Ellis was selected to be the UW-River Falls Writer-in-Residence on campus in April 2008.
- A memorandum of understanding was signed between UWRF and the University Nord, one of the first independent universities in the Baltic region. University Nord is located in Tallinn, the medieval capital of Estonia.
- UWRF is now an official member of the Magellan Exchange, an international exchange cooperative between a dozen universities in the U.S. and institutions in Mexico and nine European nations.



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- Two Ph.D. students from Izmir Turkey spent a semester working with CBE faculty on research projects and guest lecturing in classes while working on their dissertations.
- Several UWRF elementary education majors will be student teaching in Australia, departing on June 8 for two months in the Australian Study Abroad for Early Childhood student teaching program.

### **SERVICE LEARNING**

By the end of the academic year, 30 UWRF students will have individually completed 300 hours of service to the youth community in River Falls through the Midwest Campus Compact Citizen-Scholars (M3C) Fellows Program. UWRF Falcon Fellows have worked with the River Falls Public Library, tutored children through the America Reads Program in the River Falls School District, and worked with the Upward Bound and pre-college programs.

Other service learning projects included the fraternity and sorority Community's Read Across America Book Drive, free tax assistance for people with incomes below \$30,000, and a Spring Clean for Africa to benefit a daycare center in Kenya.

### **CRITERION FIVE**

For the second year, The Corporation for National and Community Service named UWRF to the 2007 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to disadvantaged youth. UWRF was one of four UW System institutions named to the Honor Roll and one of only three named to both the 2006 and 2007 Honor Roll. Launched in 2006, the Community Service Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement. Honorees for the award were chosen based on a series of selection factors including scope and innovativeness of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.