

UW-WTCS Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion
Minutes of September 14, 2004 Meeting

Madison Area Technical College, Board Room
10 AM - 3 PM

Committee members present: Brent Smith, co-chair, Charles Pruitt, co-chair, Mary Alsteens, Roger Axtell, Eileen Connolly-Keesler, Kathleen Cullen, Mary Quinnette Cuene, Margaret Cleek, Cora Marrett, Lee Rasch, Erika Sander, Robert Sedlak, Craig Stark, and Lori Weyers. Absent: Allan Kehl and Joseph Stensland.

Staff members present: Gabrielle Banick, Janet Washbon, Frank Goldberg, Larry Rubin, Sharon Wilhelm, and Gail Bergman.

Note: Presentation materials from the September 14 meeting can be found on the committee website at <http://www.uwsa.edu/opar/cobe/meetings/index.htm#Sept>

The meeting was called to order by the co-chairs Brent Smith and Charles Pruitt.

Daniel Clancy, WTCS Interim President, welcomed the group and recognized the rare opportunity that the Committee had in bringing two of the State's major boards together to address the critical issue of increasing the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin.

Kevin Reilly, President of the UW System, expressed his desire for innovative recommendations for curricula and delivery systems that could be used in State budget priorities.

Richard Wells, Chancellor, UW-Oshkosh, and John Berens, Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment & Information Services, UW-Oshkosh, described the UW-Oshkosh "Graduation Project". The project is modeled after a University of New Mexico project that helps students with a large number of credits and who were not currently enrolled, return to school, and complete baccalaureate degrees. UW-Oshkosh will conduct a pilot with 100 students who were within a semester of graduation but for various reasons chose not to complete their degree. Chancellor Wells estimated that 15,000 students meet these criteria statewide and that if they were presented with options to finish their degree, an additional 4,000 – 5,000 baccalaureate degree holders could result. He identified funding for staffing at UW campuses and faculty buy-in as potential issues affecting implementation. Cora Marrett suggested that through the restructuring of JACAP, a region of the state might come forward to serve as a pilot. Chancellor Wells noted that other UW institutions were also interested in the project.

Marvin Van Kekerix, Interim Chancellor, UW-Extension, presented "Proposals for the Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion" that included suggestions for more consistent ways in which to recognize prior and nontraditional learning and ways to translate life experience into credits that can be applied toward a degree. The WTCS has developed a "Credit for Prior Learning" policy that could be used as a resource. Charles Pruitt suggested that the UWS form a group to work with national associations that are recognized as experts for credit for prior learning, enter into the process with the goal of expanding the number of degree holders in Wisconsin, and make sure that any recommended approach pays attention to WTCS as well as the UWS.

Committee members had several other ideas that included: facilitating WTCS and UW faculty members working together to examine work already done in this area, reviewing the ways in which courses taken in the military are evaluated, using the UW HELP website to disseminate

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the information, and looking at other states' use of a state or national transcript (e.g., Thomas Edison College).

Bob Jokisch, Special Assistant to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, UW-System, described the major points of the handout, "Expanding the Role of Online Learning to Increase the Number of Baccalaureate Degree Holders in Wisconsin." He mentioned that Wisconsin needed more of a statewide and systemwide approach to online learning and the advantages, goals, and challenges of such an effort.

Brent Nelson, Director, eTechCollege of Wisconsin, emphasized the need for efficiencies and cost effectiveness in a time of diminishing resources and a growing student market for online resources. A student-centered approach is necessary that results in both faculty and student satisfaction. Reaching students who might not traditionally come to campus has to be a high priority.

Under the agenda topic of "Communication Strategies to Broaden Access," Gabrielle Banick mentioned the proposals made at the last meeting, reiterated that reaching students is a goal of all Systems, and introduced Mari McCarty and Tom Grogan.

Mari McCarty, Senior Vice President, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, described "ThinkHigherWisconsin," a comprehensive web portal for seamless postsecondary transition. A common portal is now used by North Carolina and Kentucky. The portal would increase student awareness of all three Wisconsin systems of higher education and could increase student awareness, provide free test preparation, and/or provide electronic transcripts.

Tom Grogan, private citizen, shared his conceptual outline on "Changing the Demand for Higher Education by Providing Information to Change Opinions and Perceptions." He said a consistent message is needed that can influence opinions and reach students who might not otherwise pursue a degree by increasing the number of students who want a baccalaureate degree and focusing on student needs.

Larry Rubin emphasized the need for organized structural communication that builds on success and capacity of regional areas to address the need to increase baccalaureate degree holders. He described the current restructuring of the Joint Administrative Committee on Academic Programs (JACAP) as a way to accomplish this task and enhance the statewide network of regional partnerships.

Co-chairs Brent Smith and Charles Pruitt opened the afternoon's discussion by presenting the "Themes and Strategies" that organized proposals into five major areas. They emphasized that some of the areas were specific proposals while others were general concepts. They also presented the "Criteria for Recommendations" and the following comments were made in group discussion:

There is a need for a short-term list of recommendations that the Governor could use in this budget cycle and a long-term list that could be introduced in the next budget cycle. Short-term and pilot projects could begin the implementation process within a year.

The State is looking for our leadership statements that should include the increase in number of baccalaureate degrees, the target population served by each

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recommendation, and the cost estimate. Barriers/challenges to each proposal also need to be included in the report.

Collaboration needs to be very visible in the report; categorize ideas by lead agency and indicate the ways in which the recommendations represent new ways of doing business between and within the Systems.

The WTCS is interested in pre-majors where a number of related fields lead to a major at the UW.

Use regional models; start with pilots; build on existing connections.

Communication and outreach through pre-collegiate programs may be introduced in the next biennium.

The Early Math Placement Test was mentioned as an example of an early assessment/intervention mechanism to encourage students to complete more challenging academic programs in high school.

Getting the word out on behalf of higher education in Wisconsin is important, however, it was noted that there are effective communication methods currently in place in all Systems.

Enhanced student advising focused on transitions will be a critical piece in the success of this effort.

The Co-chairs proposed that staff take group members' suggestions and develop preliminary recommendations or areas that could be further discussed at the next meeting. The group endorsed the five areas in the "Themes and Strategies" that are likely to be part of the final recommendations.

Co-chairs queried members on the necessity for a final meeting in November. Members agreed to a November meeting and deferred to staff to set the date. It should be held around the second week so that recommendations can be presented to the WTCS Board on November 16-17 and to the UW Board of Regents on December 9-10.