



July 27, 2007

Speaker Mike Huebsch
211 West, State Capitol

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I want to share my thoughts with you regarding my recent conversation (July 26, 2007) with UW-Baraboo Campus Dean, Thomas Pleger. I have learned that for about the past five years UW Baraboo been without tenured staff in five departments. This came to be due to sudden multiple retirements and departures of staff. These positions were subsequently not filled with tenured staff due to fiscal constraints from the last budget. With the Assembly version of the budget this year, the campus will not be able to replace any of those vacant positions creating an even bigger hole.

Psychology, Communication Arts, English, Math and Biology, are core subjects no longer taught by tenured staff. It is of great concern to me that students at UW Baraboo are being short changed in these subject areas. Also, tenured staff is valuable to the community at large because they must participate in governance and committee work for the campus and they must participate in community service. These expectations cannot be imposed upon non-tenured staff.

With that said, if "cost to continue" were authorized in the budget it is likely that some, though not all, of these vacant positions would be filled in this biennium. However, if the amount allocated is less than cost to continue the number of vacant positions may never be filled in this budget cycle. That should concern all of us. UW Baraboo, due to an inordinate number of retirements, has a higher number of vacancies than other two-year campuses.

It is my hope that as the conference committee continues its work on the budget, that "cost to continues" is one of the areas in which a compromise can be reached so that the critical staffing situation at UW-Baraboo is satisfactorily resolved at least in part for the sake of students, faculty and the community.

Sincerely,

Sheryl K. Albers
State Representative

SKA:tsg

c: Representatives Fitzgerald, Rhodes and Hines
Senators Olsen and Schultz
Thomas Pleger, Dean UW Baraboo