

JOINT LEGISLATIVE/REGENTS COMMITTEE

2014-2015 Membership Roster

Faculty Members:

Bill Colclough
Heidi Jones
Lori Reichel, Chair

Academic Staff Members:

Florence Aliesch
Karolyn Bald
Natalie Solverson

Classified Staff Members:

Laura Godden

Student Members:

Joint Legislative & Regent Relations Committee Meeting

October 10, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.

1200 Centennial Hall

Attendees:

Lori Reichel	Joe Heim	Natalie Solverson	Laura Godden
Heidi Jones	Bill Colclough	Florence Aliesch	Jeremy Arney

1. Welcome and Introductions (student representatives will be forthcoming)
2. Election of Chair and secretary:
 - a. Jeremy Arney described the role of the chair of the committee:
 - i. It is a tasked oriented committee
 - ii. Involves representatives for the University
 - iii. Enhances the relationships with politicians and regents
 - iv. Helps with data collection
 - v. Supports any politician who visits campus
 - b. Lori Reichel volunteered for the position of chair and unanimously passed.
 - c. Florence Aliesch volunteered for the position of secretary and unanimously passed.
3. The events the committee supports- update by Joe Heim:
 - a. Fall debates
 - i. Tuesday Oct. 21 there will be two debates in Port O' Call in Cartwright Center
 1. 94th district between Steve Doyle and Tracie Happel at 7 p.m.
 2. 96th district between Lee Nerison and Pete Flesch at 8 p.m.
 - ii. Tuesday Oct. 28 in Port O' Call in Cartwright Center between Ron Kind and Tony Kurtz at 7 p.m.
 - b. Spring forums – will probably be at least one
4. Update on the Accountability Reports by Natalie Solverson
 - a. <http://www.uwsa.edu/opar/accountability/>
5. Comments on request for workload data by assembly speaker Robin Vos by Natalie Solverson
 - a. This was a detailed report on faculty and instructional staff that required over 250 hours from Natalie's staff.
6. Other business
 - a. Bill Colclough asked if Thursday's at 9 a.m. would be a good meeting time.

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
University Joint Legislative/Regents Committee Minutes
December 5, 2014

Present: Bill Colclough, Natalie Solverson, Lori Reichel (chair), Thomas Theisen, Karolyn Bald, Joe Heim, Laura Godden, Zachary Koop

Lori Reichel (chair) convened the meeting at 1:30 p.m. in room 2200 Centennial Hall.

M/S/P to approve the minutes from October 10, 2014

<http://www.uwlax.edu/uploadedFiles/Offices-Services/Chancellor/JLRC%20Minutes%202014-10-10.pdf>

1. Review of committee members

- a. Two student representatives, Zachary Koop and Thomas Theisen, joined the committee membership. They introduced themselves and were welcomed by the committee.

2. Discussion of higher education legislative issues

- a. Since the committee's last meeting, Reichel has forwarded the committee members several emails containing pertinent information on current higher education and University of Wisconsin (UW) System matters under state and federal legislative consideration. Reichel will continue to occasionally email information on issues concerning the charge of the committee.
- b. The informational emails sent preceding this meeting covered the Higher Education Act's reauthorization and legislative matters possibly affecting student loans. The committee discussed the emailed information and was primarily interested in issues involving student loan consolidation and Perkins Loans.
- c. The committee reviewed state-level legislative matters. Specifically, Robin Vos' (former student regent and current Wisconsin Assembly Speaker) comments on research being conducted by the UW System were discussed.
- d. The committee discussed the University of Wisconsin System Administration's (UWSA) memo titled, "Key Points Regarding Budgets and Fund Balances." The document was created to combat misinformation about UW System financial management and resources.
- e. The committee discussed growing student loan debt. The increasing costs of higher education may be steering students into majors perceived as higher paying. However, student perceptions about the potential earning power of certain majors may not be entirely accurate. Recent reports have found that liberal arts majors make up many of the highest paid individuals in the nation. Another implication of increasing student debt is that students are working more hours than ever before. Many students work off-campus jobs to try and offset the increasing cost of higher education. This trend could hurt the overall quality of student education because students have less time to focus on studies, internships, volunteer work, and other valuable experiences. On our campus, it was observed that the amount of students attending the annual part-time job fair has significantly increased in the past few years.

- f. The committee discussed a memo put out by the University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross regarding campus workload rates. This memo may indicate that the UW System is exploring the development of a standard/universal teaching workload across the system.
- g. The committee discussed the upcoming release of the Wisconsin state budget. The state budget might include another tuition freeze and funding cut, but we will not know for sure until January 2015.

3. Higher Education Act Reauthorization

- a. An informational piece from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act was emailed to the committee. The status of this legislation is uncertain.

4. Upcoming spring semester events

- a. The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Area Legislators and Alumni Legislators Day
 - i. An invitation to attend this state-level event on February 4, 2015, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Top of the Park, Inn on the Park, 22 South Carroll Street, Madison, Wisconsin, was passed out to the committee. It is the twentieth anniversary of the event. Area and alumni state legislators who will likely attend include: Representative Jill Billings, Representative Steve Doyle (Class of 1980), State Senator Jennifer Shilling (Class of 1992), Representative Chris Danou, Representative Lee Nerison, and Representative Nancy VanderMeer (Class of 1988). Also in attendance will be UW-La Crosse Chancellor Joe Gow and various staff from the UW-La Crosse Foundation and Alumni Association.
- b. Planning for a state legislative forum to take place on campus in February is in the works. This annual forum is scheduled for after the state budget is released and typically takes place on a Friday afternoon because the legislators are not in session at that time. This committee should spread the word about the event because a sizable turnout is essential to its success and continuation in the future.
- c. Later in the semester, an invite will be sent to U.S. Congressman Ron Kind to hold a campus forum about federal issues.

5. Next meeting date

- a. The committee should arrange to meet again before the state legislative forum event to plan and also to discuss the most important issues to address during the forum. An exact date and time will be decided over email.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura M. Godden
February 9, 2015

1
2 **University of Wisconsin-La Crosse**
3 **University Joint Legislative/Regents Committee Minutes**
4 **March 27, 2015**

5
6 **Present:** Lori Reichel (chair), Joe Heim, Laura Godden

7
8 **Absent:** Bill Colclough, Natalie Solverson, Karolyn Bald, Heidi Jones, Florence Aliesch,
9 Thomas Theisen, Zachary Koop

10
11 Lori Reichel (chair) convened the meeting at 1:32 p.m. in room 3100 Centennial Hall.

12
13 **1. Review of the minutes from February 12, 2015**

14 The minutes of the last meeting were not voted on due to a lack of a quorum. The committee will
15 revisit their approval at the next meeting.

16
17 **2. Ideas for gaining legislative support for the UW System outside the region's assembly**
18 **members and state senators**

- 19 a. The committee could draft a formal letter based on the UW System's official talking
20 points. The letter would be endorsed by the committee and approved by campus
21 administration. The letter would be sent to the Wisconsin State Legislature Joint
22 Committee on Finance. The committee would discuss the exact content of such a letter at
23 a later meeting.
- 24 b. Ask friends and family to call their state representatives or the members of the Wisconsin
25 State Legislature Joint Committee on Finance.

26
27 **3. Update on the Wisconsin State Legislature**

- 28 a. In regards to the proposed budget, UW System President Ray Cross has suggested
29 that he would resign his position unless the proposed \$300 million state funding cut to
30 the UW System is reduced. The committee is hopeful that this is a strong indicator
31 that the amount of the proposed cut to the UW System will be reduced. (See: Dan
32 Simmons, "Cross Vows to Quit if UW Loses Protections," *Wisconsin State Journal*,
33 March 26, 2015, A1).
- 34 b. The state legislature might be gearing up to address professor tenure and the
35 healthcare provided to state employees next. Some have suggested that the healthcare
36 provided to state employees may be too generous. (See: David Wahlberg, "State Told
37 its Health Plan is too Generous," *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 26, 2015, A1).
- 38 c. The idea of making the UW System a public authority, despite the draw of increased
39 autonomy, might be losing traction.
- 40 d. UW-La Crosse's Wittich Hall remodel and expansion of the Recreational Eagle
41 Center (REC) capital building projects will still be undertaken despite the proposed
42 state budget cuts to the UW System. However, the new field house and residence hall
43 capital building projects have been put on hold, even though state monies would not
44 have been used for either project. These two building projects were scrapped because
45 the state has cut back on extending bonds.
- 46

- 47 **4. Proposed campus forums for spring semester**
48 a. Forum with U.S. Congressman Ron Kind.
49 i. Heim has emailed Congressman Kind's staff and is waiting on a response.
50 b. Forum/debate with La Crosse County circuit court judicial candidates
51 i. Heim sent out invites to both candidates, Gloria Doyle and Brian Barton.
52 However, slow responses and limited availability on the part of the judicial
53 candidates made scheduling a debate preceding the spring election impossible.
54

55 **5. Report on the Wisconsin State Legislature Joint Committee on Finance's public**
56 **hearing on Governor Walker's proposed 2015-2017 budget that took place in**
57 **Reedsburg, Wisconsin, on March 26, 2015 (Heim)**

- 58 a. This was one of four public hearings scheduled by the Wisconsin State Legislature
59 Joint Committee on Finance. The committee holds at least four public meetings
60 outside of Madison in regards to the state budget every two years. The other meetings
61 were held in Brillion, Milwaukee, and Rice Lake. Many people traveled a
62 considerable distance to attend, and there was a large turnout and a long line to speak.
63 The auditorium the meeting was held in holds 600 people, and it remained full, even
64 packed, over the course of the eight-hour meeting.
65 b. The majority of the 280 people who spoke voiced concerns and disapproval in
66 regards to the large budget cut for the UW System, decreases in aid for K-12 schools,
67 alternations to the functions of the DNR, the elimination of 66 DNR positions, and
68 changes in and privation of programs that provide long-term care for disabled adults
69 and senior citizens. The most passionate and salient topics for those speaking were
70 education and long-term care for seniors. Despite expanding the hearing's scheduled
71 time and limiting each speaker to two minutes, not everyone who wanted to comment
72 got an opportunity to do so.
73 c. Seven or eight students from UW-La Crosse spoke in opposition to the budget cut to
74 the UW System.
75 d. UW-Stevens Point has decided to close its campus's career services department due
76 to the state's budget cut to the system.
77

78 **6. Next meeting date**

- 79 a. The committee is tentatively planning to meet again on Thursday April 30, 2015, at
80 9:30 a.m.

81
82 The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

83
84 Respectfully submitted,
85 Laura M. Godden
86 April 15, 2015

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
University Joint Legislative/Regents Committee Minutes
May 7, 2015

Present: Bill Colclough, Natalie Solverson, Lori Reichel (chair), Laura Godden, Florence Aliesch

Lori Reichel (chair) convened the meeting at 9:35 a.m. in room 336 Cartwright Center.

- 1. Review of minutes from the Feb. 12, 2015 meeting.**
Approved by Natalie Solverson and second Laura Godden

- 2. Review of minutes from the March 27, 2015 meeting.**
Approved by Lori Reichel and second Laura Godden

- 3. Ideas for gaining legislative support outside our own assembly and senate districts for the UW System**
 - a. Discussion for crafting a letter by the Joint Legislative committee to legislators: thoughts included it maybe too late in the semester and it may not make a difference since the vote will be in a week or two. No letter will be created at this time
 - b. One-on-one conversations would have more impact and to continue the conversation year round.
 - c. Invite legislators to campus to help educate them on UW-L and to be sure to include student participation during the visits. Also, to show them the consequences of the budget cuts. Examples of invitations include:
 - i. Chancellor's address
 - ii. Thanksgiving dinner
 - d. Focus energy on the beginning of the Fall semester.

- 3. Items for next year?**

Members for next year will depend on the Academic Staff Madison Representative and student senate rep. Faculty have a choice to participate but will not be determined until closer to Fall semester.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Florence Aliesch
May 15, 2015