

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

Report of the Faculty Representative
Friday, May 18, 2018

- A. **Major Information Sources for this Report.** The main information sources on which this report is based are a) regular communications that are shared with the Faculty Representatives by the UW System; b) The System's UW/EXT Restructuring Task Force, and c) Regular meetings of the UW System Governance Groups, including meetings of the UW System Faculty Representatives.
- B. **Report on Activities, Developments, and Initiatives.**
1. **Wittich Hall Renovation Project Advances.** The Executive Committee of the UW Board of Regents [BOR] is scheduled to meet on Tuesday of next week [May 22] to consider three budget-related issues, including an increase in the budget to fund renovation of UW-La Crosse's Wittich Hall. [Please contact Vice-Chancellor Hetzel if interested in additional information.]
 2. **UW Colleges/Extension Restructuring Issues.** The UW-Colleges/UW-Extension Steering Committee met at UW-Madison on Thursday, May 17. The items that are of interest to our campus are many, including those for which details are provided below.
 - **Proposal to Reduce the UW System's Admissions Application Fee. A proposal to change the UW System's application fee is still being discussed.** As the process moves forward, our chancellor, our provost and our CFO will be included in discussions of this issue. The proposals that have been advanced thus far call for reducing the UW admissions application fee [currently \$50 per application]. As I have indicated in previous reports, our campus' position on this proposal is that, while we very much support any initiative to make our universities more accessible, we cannot support a reduction in the application fee at this time. A reduction in the application fee would have a negative impact on our Admissions Office and its operations [VC Hetzel can provide information on this issue if anyone is interested in additional details.]
 - **Status of Tenured Faculty at UW-Colleges. Faculty who hold tenure in UW Colleges will have their tenure "memorialized" at the June UW Board of Regents meeting in Milwaukee.** This process will confirm the tenure status of tenured UWC faculty within the universities to which they are being joined. At yesterday's meeting, a UW-Madison representative took issue with this proposal, as – in his view – this represents unilateral action by the BOR with respect to tenure. The UW-Madison rep's position is that this proposed action by the BOR sets a dangerous precedent, by excluding the faculty of the receiving campuses in the tenure decision.

In reaction to the position of UW-Madison, we proposed that a *proviso* be added to the "memorialization" language of the June meeting to address the concerns of the UW-Madison representative. UW System representatives [including the VP for Administration] indicated that such a *proviso* is being considered.

- **Status of Tenured Faculty, UW-Extension.** Issues of tenure for those individuals who hold tenure with UW-Extension are being negotiated with the faculty and administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The UW-Madison representative to the UWC/EXT Steering Committee, Casey Nagy, has given ongoing reports on the process of integrating EXT into the Madison faculty. While differences in standards for tenure between UW-Madison and UW-Extension are substantial, Casey Nagy reports that progress is being made to integrate tenured EXT faculty into UW-Madison. The latest report on progress in this initiative can be found @: <https://kb.wisc.edu/images/group222/shared/2018-05-08FacultySenate/2755TenureatUWforFacSen.pdf>
- 3. **UW System Academic Program Initiatives Moving Forward Through Governance.** Two significant initiatives were discussed at the May 4 meeting of the Faculty Representatives, in Madison.
- **The Faculty Representatives heard a report on the UW System’s initiative to harmonize math standards for entry-level math courses.** Our own senator Jennifer Kosiak chairs a UW System committee that is developing standards to harmonize math requirements between campuses. An important proposal being considered is that all campuses would agree to common outcomes for entry-level math courses. The acceptance of common standards and outcomes for certain math courses would allow – among other things – easier transfer of course credits between campuses.

There has been some concern, particularly among UW-Platteville faculty, that the adoption of common math standards by UW System schools could take away the curricular authority of individual faculty on UW campuses. Information gathered in the May 4 report to the Faculty Representatives by the committee indicates no apparent threat to faculty curricular decision-making.

[For information on this System math initiative, contact Jennifer Kosiak.]

- **A UW System Initiative to Establish Criteria to Discontinue “Underperforming” Programs.**

In March, 2016, the BOR adopted Regent Policy Document 20-24, which allows – among other things – the layoff of tenured faculty due to program “discontinuance”

[<https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents/policies/procedures-relating-to-financial-emergency-or-program-discontinuance-requiring-faculty-layoff-and-termination/>].

Thus, the UW System has established a committee to propose criteria for the elimination of “underperforming” academic programs. Based on the committee’s report to the Faculty Representatives on May 4, the committee’s work is only at a preliminary stage. The current committee draft suggests that a major or program will

be “low performing” if it graduates less than 5 majors in 5 years. [This generous provision will likely not be the key criteria for program continuation as the work of the committee moves forward.]

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