

ADVANCEMENT SECTION

REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

To

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For

The Higher Learning Commission

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EVALUATION TEAM

Nancy Ellen Talburt (Team Chair), Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Administration Bldg. 422, Fayetteville, AR 72701

Rodney A. Erickson, Executive Vice President and Provost of the University, Pennsylvania State University, 201 Old Main, University Park, PA 16802

Kelly L. Funk, Director of Academic Assessment, Michigan State University, 221 Hannah Administration Building, East Lansing, MI 48824

Gregory O. Gagnon, Associate Professor of Indian Studies, University of North Dakota, UND Box 7103 213 Merrifield, Grand Forks, ND 58202

Daniel C. Knudsen, Director, International Studies Program, Indiana University
Bloomington, International Studies, 107 S. Indiana Ave., Bloomington, IN 47405-7000
Sally K. Mason, President, University of Iowa, 101 Jessup Hall, Iowa City, IA 52242

Steve O. Michael, Vice Provost & Professor of Higher Education Administration, Kent State University, Executive Suite, Library Building, Kent, OH 44242-0001

Judith Nadler, Director and University Librarian, University of Chicago, 1100 East 57th Street Suite 180, Chicago, IL 60637-0000

John H. Schuh, Distinguished Professor, Iowa State University, N221 Lagomarcino Hall, Ames, IA 50011

W. Randy Smith, Vice Provost for Academic Programs, Ohio State University, 190 North Oval Mall, Columbus, OH 43210

Louis Earl Swanson, Jr., Vice Provost for Outreach and Strategic Partnerships, Colorado State University, 136 Student Services Building, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1050

Susan B. Twombly, Professor and Chair, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, University of Kansas, 418 Joseph R. Pearson Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045

Ben van der Pluijm, Professor and Senior Counselor to the Provost, University of Michigan, Office of the Provost, 503 Thompson Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109

George E. Walker, Sr. Vice President for Research Development and Graduate Education, Dean of the University Graduate School, Florida International University, University Park--MARC 430, Miami, FL 33199-0000

William Randy Woodson, Provost, Purdue University, Hovde Hall of Administration, 610 Purdue Mall, West Lafayette, IN 47907-2040

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I. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The University of Wisconsin-Madison chose the Special Emphasis customized accreditation review process. Focused on envisioning the future, six theme teams responded to the question "What will it mean to be a great public University in a changing world?" The reports produced by this initiative encompass essentially all core academic functions and engage broadly with such issues as integrity, sustainability, building community, global citizenship, discovery and learning, and the public research university. This excellent work contributes to making the institution better informed to identify and prioritize responses to the pressing issues confronting UW-Madison (along with most large public research institutions) and those issues more specifically its own. As it does so, the institution must respond to the great challenge of maintaining its core values and identity and its momentum and strengths as a great public research institution. It must decide how to fund the more critical initiatives, realign, downsize, or discontinue the less critical functions, and find the best evidence to bring its deeply engaged constituencies to a common realization of which initiatives are which.

II. CONSULTATIONS OF THE TEAM

The Higher Learning Commission team provides the following observations, suggestions, and advice related to the comprehensive review of the University of Wisconsin and its Special Emphasis. Topics addressed include issues raised and topics identified in campus discussions and in the self-study report.

A. Governance

The Special Emphasis Study on *Institutional Integrity* provides a comprehensive and articulate statement of the core values and ethical responsibilities needed for UW-Madison to be a great public university in a changing environment. Many of the values recognized in this report are foundational to the "For Wisconsin and the World" strategic plan. There are also recommendations and questions or issues for future consideration. Some of these recommendations concern institutional governance—external and internal. Team interviews and review of documents identify a university that is tightly controlled by the State of Wisconsin in some areas such as personnel and capital expenditures, further restricted by the University of Wisconsin System in other areas such as tuition increase practices, and yet is highly decentralized in its internal decision-making structures and processes. The Institutional Integrity Report recommends examining and cautiously seeking and securing greater freedom from state control. The team agrees that this should be a goal for UW-Madison. By the same token, the report recognized the need to examine the implications and consequences of decentralization and shared governance on overall University management. The team strongly suggests that UW-Madison and especially the Regents review the institution's administrative structure and operating restrictions, including shared governance, to determine where greater centralization makes sense and would enhance the university's ability to carry out its mission.

The institution's highly decentralized structure and number of overlapping units and distributed functions (for example, more than twenty life sciences areas) are increasingly seen as a challenge to effective use of resources, performance monitoring, and strategic planning. While decentralization continues to be seen by some constituents as a source of creativity and an organizational strength, others see it as a "double-edged sword" with potential redundancy of functions and lack of coordination or communication across academic and administrative units. One staff member

commented that it is often difficult to figure out where to go to get started on an initiative. It is also evident in the area of diversity, as with many others, that several offices have some responsibility for diversity and that these offices do not necessarily coordinate or communicate with one another.

Faculty representatives conveyed their satisfaction with the governance system. Indeed, the faculty involvement in decision-making processes at UW-Madison is, perhaps, greater than that of many of its peers. Faculty, staff, and students affirmed that they were well-represented and included in decision-making processes. It is apparent that faculty voice is strong and present in all aspects of the campus administration. One unintended consequence of this might be the perception, expressed by some staff members, that the staff perspective was not being heard. Care is needed to ensure that both academic and non-academic staff members feel included and empowered as valued members of the community.

It appears that a regular assessment of work satisfaction could be obtained through campus-wide work/life climate surveys. Such surveys, if administered at appropriate intervals, can provide a basis for appropriate interventions, including training and development opportunities for supervisory personnel.

Many insightful and useful comments and recommendations are provided in the Special Emphasis Study chapter, *Building a welcoming, respectful, and empowered UW-Madison community*, regarding ways in which to welcome and engage new members of the university community as well as give them voice in governance. As with each of the rich and thoughtful Special Emphasis reports, a wealth of possibilities is presented. Sifting and winnowing these materials will be a challenge to see what can be done, what should come first, how initiatives can be planned to complement what is already being done, and, in short how to create the biggest impact with available resources.

Although in 2002 the NCAA placed UW-Madison on probation for a serious athletics infraction, all indications are that those issues have been effectively addressed and that no further infractions have occurred. Annual athletics reports could be made even more visible to campus constituents to underscore the institution's vigilance and rules compliance. The Team supports the Chancellor's goal of having the Athletic Department become financially self-sustaining, and it appears the Department is well on its way to that goal.

B. Building Community and Diversity

The University of Wisconsin-Madison makes clear its vision and states succinctly its mission. Embedded within both the vision and mission is implicit and explicit support for and commitment to diversity. As a way of strengthening this commitment to diversity, UW-Madison could further enhance its mission statement with expressed reference to diverse learners, faculty, and staff and diversity of learning and experience. This reference could form a basis for the adoption of a bold diversity vision and mission that would guide and help in integrating diversity-related activities, functions, and offices, which, in turn, could benefit from tighter organizational connections. The University understands this challenge and is addressing it through the appointment of a Vice

Provost for Diversity and Climate and Chief Diversity Officer. This officer is anticipated to bring focused leadership to UW-Madison's diversity efforts. His success will likely require strong support from the Chancellor and Provost as well as broad support across the University. Many of the existing campus diversity functions predate the appointment of the Vice Provost for Diversity and Climate. To maximize the campus' investment in diversity, as the vice provost develops a new framework for diversity planning, he could consider a thorough assessment of ongoing diversity initiatives as an important point of departure for more coordination as needed. In line with the university's vision to become a national model of a public university in the twenty-first century, it could exemplify best practice in the establishment, organization, leadership, empowerment, and funding of this set of activities.

With regard to the *Building Community* component of the Special Emphasis, It is important to note that the self-study process itself produced connections, conversations, and relationships that should be lasting—and are important to the future of this initiative, regardless of specific short-term or long-term actions. Perhaps most important is the recognition of diversity in an important sense as broad and inclusive of outsiders and those new to the community whatever the basis of their difference. The leadership could consider presenting to the University community, on a continuing basis, the policies and its expectations for community building, and have related efforts for routine ongoing activities, notably search processes. The University also needs to address perceived issues/barriers related to this initiative.

There have been informal conversations regarding the establishment of a Department of American Indian/Native American Studies that would offer a degree in that field instead of a certificate. Other institutions have found that this approach is superior to non-focused course work offered by faculty across several different departments. The University could consider a core faculty tenured in Indian Studies and continue to utilize associated faculty as well. The department approach adds to the diversity of the campus, as both non-majors and those with only an interest in supplementing their studies in other disciplines will be able to identify a means to fulfilling ethnic course requirements and extending their abilities in cultural competence.

The new American Indian Student and Cultural Center could be widely publicized to existing students, to prospective students, and during orientation for new students in order to make it a focal point for attracting and retaining American Indian students.

Faculty who are also members of ethnic minorities within the larger American society, often commit their scholarship to their communities and use a distinctive type of research. Retention of faculty members as part of the university's diversity efforts could be assisted by efforts to value and reward alternatives such as counter narrative. It is important that departmental and college promotion and tenure committees appropriately assess the quality and value of research and teaching scholarship on topics that reflect a minority focus or perspective even though such scholarship may not yet have found its way into the most mainstream publishing outlets and curriculum.

C. Assessment and Global Learning

There are a wide and rich variety of assessment initiatives taking place on campus in formal and informal settings. To date assessment has been intentionally defined as an academic activity, focused on learning which would occur within a particular academic curriculum. The Essential Learning Outcomes have created an environment in which the institution may move from a sole focus on academic assessment to a more all-

encompassing assessment plan which more truly reflects the ideals embodied within the Wisconsin Experience. Everyone to whom the team spoke regarded this as a positive step, and the institution is excited about having a “common language” with which to discuss student learning across the institution. As UW-Madison moves forward in expanding its assessment efforts, the institution may wish to consider the following:

- In order to maintain the energy and synergy around current assessment practices, it is important to continue to have strong support and leadership from the Office of the Provost.
- What has been successful for the institution is to approach assessment from a framework of consulting, rather than directing. Many academic departments have incorporated assessment; however, there are still a number of areas which are relying heavily upon indirect measures. Measuring the depth and breadth of the essential learning outcomes will present a particular challenge, and so it becomes imperative for the institution to make sure adequate resources, particularly in terms of time, exist to continue to support the consulting process. Approximately 88 percent of the freshman and sophomore credits in the University are delivered through the College of Letters and Sciences (CLS). The CLS serves as the “connection point” for general education and now for the essential learning outcomes. Assessment will be heavily centered in the CLS, and the institution should consider to what extent this addition will strain existing resources and to what extent meaningful and effective assessment can be accomplished within the current structure.
- Specialized accreditation, program review, and assessment all address student learning. It is unclear how these three complementary yet distinct processes interface with one another. There may be some value in integrating program review and programmatic assessment so that organizational structures are more clearly connected and duplication of effort is avoided.
- There is much value in the systemic and decentralized manner in which the institution has approached assessment. As assessment grows in scope, the institution may wish to consider a structure appropriate to its culture which will allow UW-Madison to more clearly align its varied initiatives and more systematically and coherently represent institutional assessment in a way which allows the institution to capture its very rich story while remaining true to its entrepreneurial culture.

The self-study process aptly identifies the Wisconsin Idea as encompassing the world and the Wisconsin Experience as a global-scale learning endeavor and presents the UW-Madison campus as an institution with a formidable array of resources that can be focused on the training of the leaders of the 21st century. That the leadership of the institution has embraced the Preparing Global Citizens emphasis is signaled by the incorporation of elements of this special emphasis into the Campus Strategic Framework for 2009-2011. The institution may wish to formally consider how to address remaining challenges not directly addressed in the Strategic Plan Framework such as the following:

- A lack of organization
- A lack of funding for study abroad, graduate fieldwork, and exchange

- Federal restrictions on the exportation of technologies and materials, and new forms of liability for Wisconsin students, faculty and staff that result from increased international collaboration.

In regard to the first, UW-Madison may wish to consider coordinating international initiatives through a central office, creating a committee or council with representation from participating units, or creating a data base of international activities to promote collaboration and participation. Institutional priorities typically guide fund-raising but some foundations and other philanthropic entities with special interests in these areas of internationalization might respond to proposals designed to take advantage of the institution's stellar reputation and globalization of the Wisconsin Idea. The final challenge is largely federal in nature. There is a history of large research institutions in the U.S. lobbying Washington together over certain issues and meeting with some success. The institution may wish to investigate this approach to see if it feels it can be successful in loosening restrictions on exportation of technologies and materials for collaborative research overseas.

There is, of course, much that can be done to prepare graduates to be global citizens quite apart from traditional forms of study abroad. Some actions involve a more concerted effort to imbed topics involving globalization into the curriculum in a wide variety of relevant fields, and international joint teams with partner peer institutions. The large number of international students and visiting scholars that form an important part of the UW-Madison campus and community represent a rich resource that could be tapped more effectively to promote a better understanding of globalization processes and issues among students, staff, and faculty. Finally, UW-Madison's international alumni have the potential to open up dialogue, networks, and opportunities for students to engage the question of what it means to be a global citizen in the twenty-first century.

As noted in the Assurance Section, the University is making major investments in learning outcomes programs and preparing students for global citizenship. In both these areas, central oversight and data gathering (including surveys) will be necessary to assess the progress and return on investment associated with the initiatives.

D. Research and Discovery

Enrollment pressures from those seeking undergraduate education at UW-Madison are heavy, and institutional outreach/engagement through the Wisconsin Idea is legendary. Although these functions must be retained and continuously adapted to a global environment, it is more specifically on continued achievement in research and discovery that the institution must build and grow to enhance its position as a great public research institution. Critical is a faculty substantial in size, ability, and expertise to work at the edge of known boundaries and produce work of importance for the public good and in alignment with economic needs. Basic (or upstream) and applied (or downstream) research are needed but significant real applications must also be achieved. The faculty and institution must be able to thrive with inter-disciplinarity in research and learning. UW-Madison must have sufficient funding to attract and retain faculty of this caliber and must be able to support their work with facilities, operational funding, and professional staff, graduate assistants, and postdoctoral researchers who match and complement them. Impetus could be provided by clustering on-campus sabbaticals for faculty working across unit lines on high priority projects. Even with these elements in place, without funding to invest and organizational flexibility, the institution will miss many opportunities. This challenge cannot be met by the institution

alone, and Wisconsin stands to lose even more than the institution if the challenge is not addressed. UW-Madison is commended for the *Great people. Great place.* campaign launched in 2008 to raise more funding for need-based student aid, graduate student funding, and faculty retention, along with facilities enhancement. It is clear that such targeted campaigns must be successful in order for the institution to move forward with key priorities.

The institution appears to be particularly at risk in the area of faculty and graduate assistant compensation. Faculty salaries at UW-Madison are consistently near the bottom of the institution's peer group. Likewise, graduate assistant support across many fields represented in the University has not kept pace with the competitive marketplace, and has been recognized for years as a significant problem. Both faculty and graduate assistant compensation issues are the outgrowth of scarce financial resources, which is clearly related to an inadequate state appropriation and a tuition structure that is near the bottom in comparison to peer institutions. It seems exceptionally important for the state, the Regents, and the institution to work together to try to address this challenge by identifying appropriate funding sources, and the UW-Madison campus leadership has been working aggressively to persuade state government to provide additional resources. If such assistance is not forthcoming, UW-Madison will have to consider collapsing more vacant faculty lines and reducing graduate student enrollments to more adequately compensate their key academic personnel, even at the expense of increasing student/faculty ratios and reducing the size of graduate enrollments in some programs.

The movement by the Chancellor toward even more engagement with the Wisconsin Foundations such as WARF, with other philanthropic associations, and with the Alumni Association is an important step in balancing university-wide coordination and the existing culture of decentralization. Team members stress the importance, for the institution as a whole, to recognize and work toward an appropriate role for private philanthropy as such a resource stream will be crucial in helping the institution achieve its vision. Another important step might involve more accountability of academic deans in terms of promoting the university's highest priorities such as interdisciplinary scholarship and transforming curricula to reflect changes in research and scholarship. The use of priority setting at the university level as a basis for allocating funds in addition to the usual competitions for internal funding might help provide more balance and allow the further development of underserved or new programs.

The team commends the continuing allocation of resources to the critical areas of compliance and faculty services in the university research administration office (Research and Sponsored Programs). These resources are badly needed in order for the University to be more proactive and helpful to researchers. Using this approach, the University is more likely to avoid the costly major stumbles in the compliance area which have occurred at other major research universities.

The bio-deans group is to be commended for the many ways in which they have found to work collaboratively in organizing major research initiatives and in outreach to the citizens of Wisconsin and beyond. There are low barriers to working across colleges/schools and the evolving physical infrastructure developed around research themes rather than academic departments supports this collaboration. There are, however, issues that arise in the area of undergraduate education. Given the large number of undergraduate students who wish to pursue careers in the life and health sciences, and the foundational nature of the biological sciences to those programs, there is a significant challenge to the University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty to deliver

these courses, particularly the introductory sequence, to all students who wish to take them and at a high level of quality and consistency. Faculty in the biological sciences are spread through several colleges/schools and many academic departments, and the introductory offering is currently taught in segments by multiple instructors. This can lead to problems in coordinating and integrating materials into a seamless whole. The University may want to consider re-designing the introductory biology course(s) by convening a subset of the biological sciences faculty to reach consensus on the key elements that constitute the foundation course(s) and to develop a common syllabus and a cadre of faculty with a special interest and talent for teaching introductory biology courses who could teach a fully integrated course.

While reaffirming the value of the Wisconsin Idea, UW-Madison's graduate program and research mission is not just about immediate short-term benefits for the state and its citizens. By being of national and international scope, the university's activities contribute significantly to the state's long term economic development and growth by leveraging world-class knowledge production and creating an educated citizenship and job culture for the state. Moreover, the research and graduate program of world-class research institutions like UW-Madison offer a unique opportunity for the university's more than 29,000 undergraduates to develop research skills and have experiences that are not possible elsewhere in the state.

Perhaps a more intentional strategy by university administrators to highlight the (inter)national scope and benefits of its graduate programs and research endeavors could help better underscore the extraordinary value of UW-Madison to the state and distinguish the Madison campus in the UW state system. Exploration of the potential in a Wisconsin Alliance for Global Solutions might play a role as suggested in the Global Impact part of the self-study. Such a strategy could also foster receptivity in the state to greater institutional flexibility in relation to state and system oversight and policy.

E. Rethinking the Public Research University

A decade ago, the NASULGC (now APLU) Kellogg Commission examined what it means to be a 21st century public research university. Signature outcomes were to reassess and recast the core mission areas of teaching-to-learning, research-to-discovery, and outreach-to-engagement. The *Wisconsin Idea* is an almost century old University commitment for engaging its talent and resources with the people of Wisconsin. The *Wisconsin Idea* has changed as Wisconsin has changed. This reaccreditation effort provided yet another opportunity for a campus-wide discussion on what it means to be a public research university.

The university's rethinking effort is worthy of the legacy of the *Wisconsin Idea*, which requires continuous assessment and institutional re-invention in the context of the state's and world's shifting demands and needs for higher education. Emphasis is given to creating more holistic integration of these mission areas in serving the university's diverse constituencies in dynamic political environments. The University's theme area document, *Rethinking the Public Research University*, is a thoughtful narrative on what it means to be not only a public research university, but to be an intentional and broadly engaged university. The document was birthed and given voice by faculty and staff from throughout the university, not just those socialized in the Land Grant heritage. The value of this document is not confined to this University. It offers a case study for other APLU institutions who are engaging similar issues.

The document grows from a theme of what it means to contribute to the *public good* and to foster opportunities for a *public intellectual* in a decentralized campus governance structure. It calls for greater intentionality of purpose in engaging the entire campus with the people of Wisconsin in the context of a knowledge-drive global society. This document consciously challenges the institution's will to stretch its goals for accentuating values for learning, discovery, and engagement with a reorientation of the latter mission to more effectively bring off-campus needs for knowledge to this academy. It proposes a broad range of ideas. Some are addressed in the following section, but the team encourages the University to give attention to the entire document and to continue to foster the dialogue which created it.

F. Focused Advice on a Variety of Topics

Rewards and Standards for University-wide Engagement

The University has a legacy of rewarding scholarly engagement through Extension appointments. However, there is only anecdotal evidence of scholarly engagement as a workload category for faculty merit reviews and for tenure and promotion decisions. The team notes that the faculty and staff work group which crafted this document predominantly comes from units that have not been involved with Extension and may not have a structure or culture for rewarding engagement via explicit public work. The document suggests that not only does the University's administration desire that engagement be a University-wide mission, but so too do the faculty and staff. Appropriately, recommendation 7.1 proposes to "(c)reate a task force, reporting to the Provost and the Faculty Senate, to develop guidelines and criteria that will adequately protect and reward faculty at all ranks who engage in high quality research and teaching that involve explicitly public work."

This recommendation is a logical product of the campus-wide initiative. It is possible that such a group already exists in the form of the work group that wrote the report with its impressive passion and analysis. Other APLU universities have also identified the need for meaning and standards for a scholarship of engagement in a decentralized system of governance. Some have created new categories in their governing codes for scholarly engagement. Lessons might be learned from the University's peers.

Extending Access to Campus through the Division of Continuing Studies (DCS)

Expanding student access to the University is a stated goal of both University administrators and the University's public and private stakeholders. Team member discussions with both stakeholders and faculty suggest that there is an interest in rethinking the function of DCS. Given fiscal and physical constraints for significant expansion of on-campus courses, *and*, given the demand for asynchronous 24-7 instruction by learners bound by place, job, or family, building upon the institutional strengths of the DCS appears to be an opportunity.

Wisconsin's corporate and public sector institutions indicated that they have expanding demand for workforce and professional development. This demand represents a huge potential market of new students and new revenues for UW-Madison. However, it appears that relatively little growth in distance education programming has occurred over the past decade, as well as modest growth in campus-based offerings outside of traditional time periods but in which non-traditional students could participate. The Self Study report and team conversations with faculty and staff point to several perceived barriers to expanding access through continuing education and other programming. These tend to revolve around financial issues and accountability/quality of distance education courses.

The team suggests that the University continue to give attention to both financial and accountability issues. The report points to a concern that DCS courses taken by resident students can create challenges for the University's fiscal goals. This appears to be particularly the case for undergraduate courses. The University might review how peer universities have engaged similar fiscal conundrums in an effort to expand access and to enhance quality for distance, especially on-line courses. Similarly, current on-campus discussions aimed at taking advantage of off-campus engagement opportunities can more fully assess the emerging technologies and advances in on-line learning best practices. For example, attention might be given to the Sloan Consortium's efforts, focused on quality and accountability, to advance distance and on-line education. Nationally, universities are giving more attention to off-campus demand for professional development and lifelong learning which has high quality and accountability.

Systematizing Intentional Engagement

A persistent theme of this report and campus group discussions is the importance of systematizing the intentionality of engagement. The team endorses these sentiments and believes that appropriate processes are already under consideration. For example, team members learned about the *Wisconsin Leads* proposal. While still in discussion, this type of initiative can involve the university-wide participation necessary for advancing the stretch goals identified in this document. For the 21st Century expressions of the *Wisconsin Idea* to have increased traction on campus, scholarly and programmatic engagement can be strategically positioned and given a more significant voice in university administration. The spirit of accountability that pervades the document and related discussion should also be noted. Research on the scholarship of engagement was suggested on numerous occasions. These discussions and this scholarship on engagement scholarship appear most appropriate to the team.

As noted above, recognizing and rewarding faculty for exceptional engagement with external constituencies were discussed with numerous groups during the visit to UW-Madison. Potential strategies to consider addressing these issues include the following:

- For pre-tenured faculty members, developing an element of the promotion and tenure dossier to include the scholarship of engagement is a potential remedy. Faculty who engage in the scholarship of engagement would not only have to demonstrate significant engagement with appropriate constituencies, they would also have to advance engagement through research and creative activity. Many options for advancing engagement are possible, including field-based research, scholarly publications or other creative works, and consultation with relevant constituents in and outside of higher education.
- For tenured faculty members, the creation of "Praxis Professorships" could be useful. Praxis professorships could be awarded on a competitive basis and would be available to faculty members who make the case for devoting a minimum of five years toward engagement with appropriate constituencies. These professorships could be renewable and funded through endowments created by gifts and grants from those external to the institution who are interested in the engagement dimension of the University. Normal procedures for evaluating the work of titled professors would be employed.

Institutional Effectiveness

Numerous evaluation/assessment activities are underway throughout the university. The extent to which they overlap or are integrated is not clear. Some more formal effort at coordination would be helpful. Without it, duplication of effort and confusion over goals and outcomes could occur. The point is not necessarily to centralize control of these activities, but for the Chancellor and the Provost to be able to identify effective ways to gather and use the results thoroughly and effectively.

Issues Not Currently Addressed in Planning Initiatives

Although there is growing evidence of alignment of planning at all levels, this approach soon will lead to the need to address each of the following issues (among others):

- a seriousness of purpose in making difficult decisions about the future of some programs and the need to withstand the reactions that will accompany them. The University of Wisconsin-Madison has been making considerable progress in eliminating and consolidating academic degree programs, certificates, and research centers/institutes that are no longer viable, and the institution should be prepared in the coming years to make difficult choices in terms of the new programs and initiatives it can support along with those that should be rationalized in a period of increasingly scarce resources for higher education. The highly decentralized nature of the University clearly contributes to this phenomenon, but this does not mean that decisions about future programmatic foci cannot occur through continuing dialogue between/among department chairpersons, deans, and the Provost. Routine program reviews and sunset clauses for both new and existing programs can help with this process.
- the direction to take with regard to centralized versus distributed information technologies and other support functions. Many institutions are confronting this issue and trying to determine placement along the continuum from fully centralized to fully decentralized. Members of the university community want and expect such a discussion/analysis to occur.
- physical infrastructure, notably deferred maintenance. The campus has a well-defined and developed, indeed impressive, space and facilities planning process. It was clear, however, that there are pockets of deferred maintenance that some believe are not being addressed as fully as needed. Many campuses are facing similar situations, and a future rebalancing of new construction and renovation of existing facilities may be necessary to provide an appropriate physical infrastructure and teaching/research environment across the range of units comprising the campus.

Addressing Fiscal Realities through Structuring and Consolidation

New initiatives in support of research, study, teaching, and outreach will almost certainly require initial and ongoing investments that cannot all be undertaken in the current economic reality. In this context, opportunities to create administrative efficiencies should be sought.

As an example, the 1999 site team noted concern over the university's tradition of decentralization. There are more than forty libraries on the UW-Madison campus, many not under the management of the General Library System. Library offerings are vital to the fulfillment of the teaching, research, and engagement mission and are among the university's greatest assets. Continued commitment to rich collections and excellent service is paramount. Many changes were made since 1999, but centralization is not

one of them. Responding to the 1999 concern, the 2009 Report states that decentralization is not a priority for the Library because “developments in technology have allowed astonishingly effective connectivity.” As costs and redundancy are also issues, this response is not entirely satisfactory to the team. Significant financial and programmatic benefits could come from a reorganized library system with additional common functionality and oversight. Instead of doing “more with less,” the library could do “much more with same.” The team recommends that University and library administrators consider commissioning an audit of the efficiency of the current oversight structure and function of campus libraries.

Consolidation and streamlining library operations could reduce administrative and programmatic redundancies, strengthen coordination in key-university-wide functions, allow the repurposing of spaces, and release funds to better support collections and outreach activities. Library and Academic Technology have different and discrete roles to play in relation to research teaching, learning, and outreach, but cooperation and shared strategic planning among these units is vital.

Promoting Greater Self Determination

UW-Madison, like many public research and system institutions, functions within an elaborated external regulatory and statutory framework which limits operational flexibility. As a result, the length of time required for the institution to respond to challenge or opportunities and to put positive and even incremental changes in place is a danger to the institution’s vision, its competitiveness, and its ability to perform consistent with its own potential and reputation.

UW-Madison is equipped to use its own management skills and expertise to achieve economies of time and resources not now available to it, if some of the more expensive and limiting effects of its current regulatory environment can be altered. For example, the following decisions would appear to have a very positive effect:

- Permit UW-Madison to break out of the UW System “pack” with respect to a higher tuition that better reflects its status as the state’s premier research institution.
- Implement statutory procurement authority for UW-Madison.
- Allow the UW-Madison to establish Uniform Travel Schedule amounts now established by the Office of State Employment relations (OSER).
- Allow the UW-Madison to join insurance consortia that specialize in providing insurance for colleges and universities instead of being required to obtain insurance coverage through the State Bureau of Risk management’s self-insurance program.
- Develop more efficient methods for filling classified staff position vacancies on the UW-Madison campus.
- Develop ways to underscore the unique character and contributions of UW-Madison and its role in the state, nation, and world, such as by making it a full partner and affiliate of the UW System, able to operate more independently under the Regents, but in consultation with the UW System.

The continued strength and accomplishments of the UW-Madison are a vital interest of the State of Wisconsin, as well as of the Regents and the UW System. In a time of increased national and international competition for advantage, only those public research institutions will thrive whose states create a hospitable environment for them.

III. RECOGNITION OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROGRESS

The powerful Wisconsin Idea continues to shape and illuminate vision and mission at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and proves adaptable to changing times and circumstances, creating a special place for students on campus as well as reaching across the state and international borders with intentional engagement. The University has recruited and retained a faculty of the highest caliber, with many enthusiastic for interdisciplinary work. Substantial reinvestment in the creation and modernization of physical facilities in recent years supports the mission of the institution, and new buildings reflect cluster activity and bring in both teaching and research laboratories. The institution is consistently ranked among the top five public research universities in federal research expenditures. There is a very strong culture of extramural support, and the funding per faculty member is high relative to those of the University's peers. The special emphasis reports contain impressive thought-provoking creativity, analysis, and integration of ideas and possibilities. As the Chancellor puts it, " UW-Madison is one of the highest quality providers of the education and research on which future economic, social, and cultural progress depends," (*A Strategic Framework...*) The self-study, the campus, and the University constituents make the case. Team members applaud this outstanding public research university for its range of significant accomplishments and progress and its continuing commitment to world class education, research, and public engagement. The team advises the institution to continue on its course of engaged and goal-driven progress and anticipates that, ten years on, the next Higher Learning Commission team will again be witness to an institution that has continued to grow in stature and excellence.