The regular meeting of University Senate was called to order by Chair Freymiller at 3:06 p.m. on Tuesday, March 25, 2014 in the Dakota Ballroom of Davies Center.

1) March 11, 2014 University Senate minutes approved as corrected
   - The list of those in attendance was corrected as well as the date

2) Administrator Remarks
   - Comments from Chancellor Schmidt
     - Hope everyone found that the recent spring break was rejuvenating
     - Chancellor continues to be focused on the enrollment and finances of the institution
     - Some enrollment trends have been happening across the country, particularly the upper Midwest
       - Some sister institutions have announced layoffs and other drastic cuts
       - UWEC has been strong, but we have had enrollment slippage over the last couple of years
         - We have accepted students that would not normally have made the first cut
       - The Enrollment Task Force will report to the Chancellor in June
         - What will UWEC look like in terms of size, scope, and make-up of our student body
           - That will be a big determinant for how we shape future decision-making
         - We will have an Open Session where we will discuss demographic trends and challenges
           - We have not done as good of a job as we should in telling the Eau Claire story of our strengths, what we are known for, how we communicate to potential students and donors
     - Mind Over Media
       - Have received feedback from more than 3000 constituents of the university
       - All are invited to join us on Wednesday, April 16th at 7:30 a.m. in the Ojibwe Ballroom when we unveil the new brand for the university (breakfast will be served)
       - An email should come out shortly
       - Will share results of the research and feedback and how we will roll out the new brand
         - What is a BluGold? What is UW-Eau Claire? Why should people care?
         - Hope that it is a reflection of what you have told them
           - If it is not real, it will not be effective
     - There is an election on April 1st and you are encouraged you to vote
       - Please take an interest in the Confluence Referendum
3) Reports

a) Report from University Senate Chair Freymiller
   - The Chancellor has signed off on the following motions
     - Establish a certificate in Entrepreneurship in the Department of Management & Marketing
     - Change the service provider for the Ghana study abroad program from ISEP-Direct to University Studies Abroad Consortium
     - Change Part III, Section D.5.b.2)c(1)(b) of the Faculty and Academic Staff Rules and Procedures to remove references to collegial coverage
     - Rescind the motion passed October 8, 2013 that renamed the Comprehensive Major: Exercise and Rehabilitation
     - The Liberal Education Steering group completed its meetings with Department Chairs and University Faculty Senators to discuss the status of the Liberal Education Reform motion that is being held for further consideration

b) Committee Reports
   - Compensation Committee
     - Conducted a survey and wanted to present the results to the Senate
       - Handouts given, excluding comments (approximately 175)
       - Had 685 results from 1300 individuals who received the survey
     - Overall, the most dissatisfaction was over compensation/salary
   - Executive Committee
     - Did not meet during Spring Break, but will meet on April 1st
   - Enrollment Management Taskforce
     - Alex Smith presented
       - The Committee is comprised of 11 individuals (4 faculty, 5 administrators, 1 student, 1 external member)
     - Committee has been busy trying to understand issues related to its charge
       - As with many complex systems, we started to see the positions of simpler systems, some of which are more dominant
     - Personal opinion is that there is a shrinking pool of 18 year old high school graduates and increased competition with other universities
       - Since 2008 our admission rate has risen from about 65% to over 80%
         - Concern that our tier one competitors (La Crosse, Stevens Point, Oshkosh, St. Thomas, Winona State, etc.) have maintained a fairly constant admission rate through these years and have maintained their enrollment base, while the number of students applying to UWEC has been declining; in fact, for Fall 2012 the number of applications dropped by about 1000 students, or 16%
         - The percent of incoming freshman in the top 10% of their high school class has dropped from about 20% to 18%, which is statistically significant
           - Since class rank is correlated with retention and graduation rate, this change is of practical significance
         - The average ACT score has dropped
         - We are faced with a challenge that will most likely have institutional challenges
         - Too soon to know what recommendations the committee will make
         - We may need to make adjustments to make us more marketable to transfer, non-traditional, international students, and so on
     - The multicultural student issue was not brought up, but the committee has been mindful of that
       - Will get data on retention and how to retain as well

4) New Business
   - None

5) Announcements
   - Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Hanifin is proposing the formation of a Comprehensive Parking Review Work Group
     - He is seeking members from the Faculty and Academic Staff
If you are interested or know of someone from your department or unit who might be interested in participating in this Work Group, please contact Tanya Kenney in the University Senate Office by Monday, March 31st.

The next meeting of the University Senate is scheduled for April 8, 2014 in the Schofield Auditorium.

6) Topic of the Day: Graduation and Retention

1) What opportunities and benefits are there for improving our 4 year graduation rate?

AND

2) What strategies make sense for UWEC to employ to improve our time to degree?

- Keep student indebtedness down
  - If we can reduce indebtedness, it would be a good marketing tool to attract more students
    - Attractive recruitment that they will graduate in 4 years
  - Students can be productive in society sooner
- Increase accessibility of on-line and hybrid technologies to attract non-traditional and returning students for seamless transfers
- Find ways for transfer credits to be utilized
- Sort through how you can utilize credits
- Proactive advising so students are taking the right courses
  - Communicate to students that they also need to be proactive
  - Students who do not graduate in four years are indecisive and need better and more effective advising
- Get to students early because the sooner they make up their mind, the sooner they get into the right area
- Expose students early to Career Services and Advising
  - Late in the first year or early in the second year
  - Have them talk to two different advisors or department chairs
- Important to brand and advertise
  - Get students coming in that know about a program that we have that is good
- UW System includes information on retention and graduation
- Advisors could be more precise and well informed so they can see average credits taken over the course of semester/year
  - Graduating in four years means that a student would need to average 15 credits a semester; sometimes advisors see 15 credits as the upper limit of credits that a student should take and when a student drops a class and doesn’t replace it, advisors could recommend taking a Winterim or summer class
  - Need flexibility and variety
  - A structured program that is very sequenced will take four years, but if we could identify majors like that we could keep students on sequence even if they take other courses (so there is a gateway)
  - Maybe there could be an express class to bridge a previous class
- The PEEQ Report has a section on cost and one of the components was credits/time to graduation
  - Results can be found in Degree audit, transcript, and transfer analysis
  - Want flexibility, but still be able to move into a major without having to retake courses
  - Could get creative with Winterim tuition to encourage more students to take Winterim courses
    - Take two, get one free
    - Declining cost: the more you take the less it costs
    - Make better use of Winterim
    - Lengthen Winterim to make courses more accessible
    - Make it more attractive for students who don’t want to be home that long
  - The time that students can stay undeclared requires that the student choose earlier or that students be required to meet with a certain number of department chairs or advisors if not declared
    - Can often direct them when the chair finds out what they want
- Transfer students
  - Encourage them to come earlier, maybe after one year if they are already interested in a particular major
- More contact between undeclared advisors and departments
- Students sometimes major by a professor
  - A professor they like to dislike; maybe bring them into contact with exciting professors very early
• Liberalize prerequisites
  • Nursing majors could have options of Sociology, psychology, social work course-
  • May find that they stay in social work instead of first failing to get excited by Nursing
• Can departments develop catch-up bridge courses or online modules for students who come late to shorten the time to graduation
  • We could call it an express class (express lane analogy)
    • Pre-experiences: shadow a professor or a scientist in the field to find out what you will need to know to work in the field as a professional
    • Another way might be to bring alumni into the classroom via technology
    • Could be done in introductory courses or with groups of students with undeclared majors.
• Reason for transfer
  • Is it a failure if students start here, do well, and then transfer to Madison
  • Some transfer to live at home (finances)
  • We may be getting the first products of NCLB and they may be challenged here unlike high school
• Strong university, happy students, happy governor make better use of Winterim

3) How can my department/unit contribute to improving the graduation rate?
• Make courses part of a major
  • Don’t waste courses
• Eliminate prerequisites
  • Allows students to move more freely across the curriculum
  • Gets them to the core quicker
  • Gives more flexibility in scheduling courses
• We need to make it part of our culture
  • Every department needs this as a value
• When study abroad programs do not offer the classes that students need, some take independent study so they do not lose that semester
• We need to support students with mental health issues so they can graduate on time
• Programs that have an accurate four-year graduation plan are very beneficial to students
  • Sample four-year plans are a good step in the right direction
• From a Nursing standpoint, they just need to get the students into the program
  • Availability and faculty workload are the issue
• There are limits on compression
  • Some majors are more compressible than others
• Viterbo advertises some majors that can be completed in three years (with stringent requirements)
• Reach out to the community so students know what is needed to be prepared for college
  • Remedial work slows them down
• Would be nice to have a better idea (statistically) of who is and who is not graduating in 4 years
  • Those that are undeclared, those at-risk, those with double majors, etc…
• Identify which courses are in high demand with wait times because those create bottlenecks
• When a student has passed a course with a low grade and they were advised to take it, they feel like they have to retake that particular course when they could have taken another course
• Should have data on how students explain why they can’t graduate in 4 years
  • What is their perception
    • Are there institutional barriers or misconceptions
  • More data might be helpful

4) What questions will the campus community have and how can they be addressed?
• Would like to see data for those not graduating in 4 years pulled from the student’s perspective as well as the access to different departments and their analysis
• Academic Affairs is where people should ask the questions
• Utilize alumni to help mentor students and connect them to the community
• It is rare that it is important to students that they graduate in 4 years
  • Need to change that cultural climate
  • This might also be an advising issue
    • Might be beneficial to let students know the cost of attendance versus how much they could be making in a job
More important to non-traditional students that they graduate in 4 years
One of the keys is that students know what they want to do
We have been accepting students that would not have been previously accepted and we have not created enough support that they will need to succeed to graduate in a timely fashion
Empower faculty to remove flunks for certain scenarios
    Would necessitate changes for when students can withdraw
This may lead to more withdrawals

Without objection, meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Submitted by,

Tanya Kenney
Secretary to the University Senate