

Academic Matters

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FROM THE PROVOST:

I want to thank all of you for working so hard this past academic year on behalf of our students and our institution. As I reflect on this past year, I am profoundly grateful for your devotion to our mission and your efforts to serve our students, our campuses, our communities, and our state.

This has certainly been an event-filled academic year. We have successfully hired and oriented new faculty colleagues, launched a comprehensive self-study planning process in preparation for the Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation site visit in 2012, and worked to advance the proposed Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree and our proposed mission change to accommodate the degree. We are currently in the process of hiring five new campus executive officers and deans (with two more searches occurring later this summer), and are preparing to transition fully to the Integrated Enrollment Management model.

Our enrollments continue to increase as students—traditional and non-traditional alike—seek out our campuses and our UW Colleges Online program. We offer a high quality student experience and our academic departments offer both breadth and depth across our curriculum. Still, our academic program needs to remain relevant and timely as we work to prepare our students for living a fulfilling life in the twenty-first century. To that end, over the next academic year the institution, under the leadership of shared governance, will be undertaking a comprehensive review of our Associate of Arts and Science degree.

When you find a moment, please read this edition of *Academic Matters*. Within its pages, you will find information regarding recent institutional grants activities, an update on assessment activities, news about undergraduate research presentations, information about our Engaging Students in the First Year initiative, new findings about the importance of accumulating credits in the first year of college, and an update on student services and enrollment management activities institution-wide.

Once again, thank you for your dedication to our students, our disciplines, and the UW Colleges. I wish you a restorative and fulfilling summer, and I look forward to seeing you in August at Fall Convocation.

UW Colleges Recent Grants Activities *By Lisa Seale*

Enhanced Research Infrastructure

As part of the institution-wide budget reduction that took place in 2009-2010, the institutional Grants Office, located in the Office of Academic Affairs, was closed. Some aspects of the work of the grants officer were then assigned to my office. Since January 2010, along with other work in my office, I have had the privilege of serving in the role of grants officer by assisting with submission of external grants and by representing UW Colleges on the UW System-wide grants administrators group.

Four members of this group, including myself, served last Fall on a small working group that helped UW System review proposals submitted in response to an RFP seeking to supply all UW institutions with the kinds of Web-based tools (or, enhanced research infrastructure) that would allow researchers across our campuses and universities to find grants and other types of funding in support of their professional work. Upon the recommendation of this group, the UW System purchased a system-wide license for both ProQuest-COS and AASCU-Grant Resource Center (GRC), with half the cost of the licenses funded for two years by UW System Administration (UWSA) and the other half by the UW institutions. As UWSA Senior Vice President Rebecca Martin wrote in a September 8, 2010, letter describing the two tools and recommending their licensure:

We believe that this enhanced Research Infrastructure will support faculty and researchers in generating new knowledge through scholarly, research, and creative activities; support administrators in promoting research efforts; and support economic development for the State of Wisconsin sustaining the Growth Agenda. We believe that a sizeable return on investment will occur from the acquisition and implementation of the tools we are recommending. This is particularly true in the case of the UW System comprehensive institutions and UW Colleges, where these additional tools will support what is often a one or two person Grants Administration unit, and where the researcher expertise is largely an untapped resource. At the same time, researchers, departments, centers, and research administrators in the doctoral cluster will also benefit from the client centered services provided by ProQuest-COS and the AASCU-Grant Resource Center.

The Grant Resource Center has Washington, D.C.-based liaisons and grants experts who can assist grants officers as they work with faculty and staff in developing successful grant proposals to foundations and federal agencies.

Links to COS services will be placed shortly on the UW Colleges [Grants](#) Web site. In the meantime, those interested in previewing the suite of COS offerings are invited to take a look at the [LSS Web site](#), where these links are currently housed. Also, look for a COS training session

at the UW Colleges Colloquium/ESFY Spring Conference being held on Tuesday, May 24, at UW-Fox Valley.

If you have any questions about grant writing or funding opportunities, please feel free to contact me. I am always happy to help!

Wisconsin Entrepreneurs OnLine

On behalf of the UW Colleges, the Office of Academic Affairs recently submitted a significant federal grant application to the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program. The level of funding requested is \$4,005,103, for a 36-month period that would begin this summer.

The grant is designed to serve adults who are eligible for the TAA for Workers program, which means workers who have lost their jobs due to the impact of foreign trade, as well as other dislocated workers served under the Workforce Investment Act program, and adults who are pursuing career changes that include starting their own business. We see this as a new opportunity to further serve trade-impacted communities that support our campuses.

This proposal for a new project called Wisconsin Entrepreneurs OnLine (WEOL) seeks to support UW Colleges faculty and departments in developing online course offerings leading to an Associate of Arts and Science degree with Emphasis in Entrepreneurship, as well as a Certificate in Entrepreneurship, in partnership with UW Colleges Online, UW-Extension Division of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (DEED)'s Small Business Development Centers, and UW-Extension Division of Continuing Education, Outreach, and E-Learning (CEOEL)'s Academic Advanced Distributed Learning Co-Lab (Co-Lab). In addition to curricular development, the grant would fund entrepreneur centers on participating UW Colleges campuses.

Campus deans and teams at UW-Marinette, UW-Fond du Lac, UW-Fox Valley, UW-Manitowoc, UW-Marathon County, UW-Rock County, and UW-Washington County reached out to local and regional employers and businesses, Workforce Development Boards, Economic Development Corporations, One-Stop Job Centers, and many community groups, seeking their endorsement and support of this project. We appreciate this ongoing engagement with these community groups and thank the communities for their support of this work.

In addition, we are very pleased to be working with UW-Extension in this endeavor. I would like to extend particular thanks to Provost Marv Van Kekerix, Dean Kim Kindschi (DEED), and Dean David Schejbal (CEOEL) for their assistance and collaboration with UW Colleges on this grant project.

Instructional Technology News

By Pat Fellows



In mid-April, Karen Franker announced that she would be leaving UW Colleges. Karen started at the Colleges in October 2008. She worked closely with the Adult Student Initiative (ASI) program and with faculty in redesigning courses for the accelerated/blended format. This program has grown substantially during Karen's tenure.

In her new position, Karen will be the Director of Online Faculty Development at Edgewood College. This is a new program for Edgewood and a great opportunity for Karen. It is with mixed feelings that we all say, "Karen, we wish you the best in your appointment at Edgewood College. You will be missed."

The search for Karen's replacement is underway and closed May 9th.

UW Colleges Assessment Activities (Spring 2011)

By Laura Lee

A major focus of the Senate Assessment Committee (SAC) this year was to further align our work with the goals of the Inclusive Excellence Initiative. To accomplish this, SAC met with both the Department Assessment Coordinators (DAC) and the Campus Assessment Coordinators (CAC) in a joint meeting at Madison in January. Throughout the morning, we discussed how to incorporate diversity and global issues into the assessment process. Some options discussed included inserting inclusivity into the proficiencies of department assessment, and encouraging assessment projects on the campuses that assess diversity efforts. CACs and DACs met separately during the afternoon to further develop these ideas.

The departments are assessing Quantitative and Communication skills this year, and discipline-specific assessment in the departments has been going strong, as well. The DACs worked within their departments this spring, gathering information and feedback on linking department assessment with the Inclusive Excellence Initiative. SAC will be meeting with the DACs again in June and August, as the final department reports are being written.

SAC met again with the Campus Assessment Coordinators via WisLine in early May. Many interesting assessment projects are being carried out on the campuses this year; assessment focuses include advising, childcare potential, curricular issues, accessibility and collaboration. After summarizing the progress of the campus projects, the remainder of the meeting was used for discussing various ways in which the assessment process could be streamlined and otherwise improved. The CACs will be submitting their final reports to SAC at the end of May.

My last year as Institutional Assessment Coordinator will wrap up this summer, and I want to thank everyone for their various contributions to assessment over the past four years. A new Institutional Assessment Coordinator will take over this fall, and some new members will begin their terms on the Senate Assessment Committee as we start to focus on our goals for

2011–2012. There is always room for improvement, and your honest feedback to the SAC members and department and campus assessment coordinators is always welcome. Again, thank you for all of your assessment efforts.

Undergraduate Research Presentations

By Rex Hieser

The UW Colleges had a strong representation at Posters in the Rotunda on April 6 among the 100-plus UW System students who displayed their research in the State Capitol Rotunda. Faculty and staff advisers for the UW Colleges students included Rebecca Abler (MAN), Frances Auld (BRB), Mohamed Ayoub (WSH), John Beaver (FOX), David Demezas (FDL), Lisa Hager WAK), Rick Hein (MAN), Annette Kuhlman (BRB), Sheryl Skibba (RLN), Theresa Weglarz (FOX), and Peter Whalen (WAK). For a more complete accounting of the event, you can find the program and photos at <http://www.wisconsin.edu/posters/>

The 11th Annual UW System Symposium for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity occurred on April 29, 2011, at University of Wisconsin-Parkside. The Symposium gives undergraduate students in all disciplines, from all University of Wisconsin institutions, an opportunity to present their scholarly work on a wide variety of topics from artistic expressions to scientific research. Students participate through oral presentations, poster displays, gallery exhibits, and artistic performances. Mohamed Ayoub (WSH), Malcolm Gold (MSF), Nichole Kathol (BRN), and Theresa Weglarz (FOX) were faculty/staff advisers for UW Colleges students. For more complete information about the event, go to <http://www.uwp.edu/events/symposium/>

Engaging Students in the First Year Update

By Paisley Harris

As I wrap up my first academic year as UW-Colleges ESFY (Engaging Students in the First Year) Coordinator, I'd like to thank all of you for the great work you do with first year students. Thanks to all of us, our students get a wonderfully supportive and intellectually vigorous start to their college careers and their lives.

One of my priorities this year was to enrich my understanding of First Year Experience through professional development. I attended the National First Year Experience Conference this February and brought back many ideas and a much stronger understanding of a successful first year experience as a combination of good orientation, advising, first year seminars and other first year curriculum, and co-curricular programming. I attended pre-conference workshops on best practices for first year seminars and assessment of first year seminars and programming. These have already proved very helpful. Service Learning, learning communities, and peer mentoring are among the most effective practices to give students the kind of engaging, meaningful experiences that help them succeed. Lisa Seale and I will be sharing some of the insights we gained as part of a panel on best practices in first year programming at the Colloquium and ESFY Conference on May 24 at UW-Fox Valley. Panelists from a number of campuses will

share ways they've applied some of these ideas on their campuses, and there will be plenty of time for discussion.

I hope that many of you will attend the Colloquium and ESFY Conference focused on Understanding! Many of the panels address ways to better understand our students. Other panels address ways we can help students better understand and appreciate the value of a liberal arts education.

First year seminar instructors and student services staff who work with promoting LEC 100's are also invited to the First Year Seminar Instructors retreat which takes place the next day, Wednesday May 25, also at Fox Valley. We will discuss what works and what doesn't in teaching and promoting First Year Seminars. If you have any questions about the Retreat or ESFY Conference/Colloquium, feel free to email me.

Finally, I am pleased to report that we were able to increase the number of ESFY-funded sections of our LEC 100 first year seminars for several campuses for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 so that all campuses now have enough sections funded to be able to serve at least one third of first year students.

Next year, my top priorities will be assessment of LEC 100's and first year programming and promotion of collaboration between Student Services, ESFY Coordinators, first year seminar instructors and other participants in ESFY programming. I have learned a great deal this year from the National First Year Conference, from other professional development, and especially from working with all of you. I look forward to the coming year as I build upon that knowledge to continue to improve and strengthen our ESFY programs.

Paisley Harris, UW Colleges ESFY Coordinator; paisley.harris@uwc.edu; 920-929-1165

The Importance of Accumulating Credits in the First Year of College ***By Gregg Nettesheim***

In April, I attended a meeting of UW System institutional researchers and registrars. Part of that meeting included discussion led by institutions participating in the Access to Success initiative. You can learn more about the Access to Success project at <http://www.edtrust.org/issues/higher-education/access-to-success>.

Many of the universities participating in this initiative have begun to closely track the number of degree credits that students accumulate in their first year of college. Research has shown that quickly completing a relatively high number of credits correlates with the likelihood of completing a degree. A typical benchmark used by baccalaureate degree granting institutions is completion of 24 credits in the first year.

To illustrate the importance of credit completion, I created a model that shows how rates of retention to a second year change based on whether or not students successfully complete 24 or more credits in their first year. For the purposes of this model, I included the successful completion of developmental credits and considered any passing grade a successful completion.

The model is limited to students beginning full-time in the fall of 2009 as new freshmen. All completed credits for an entire academic year, including the fall, winterim, spring and summer terms, are accumulated for each student.

The Retention Model

The tables below show the retention ratios for fall 2009 full-time new freshmen to both the spring 2010 term and to the fall 2010 term. Keep in mind that the initial cohort is all full-time new freshmen (enrolled for 12 or more credits in their first term), and that the two initial sub-cohorts include those students who completed 24 or more credits by the end of the 2009-2010 year, and those students who completed fewer than 24 credits by the end of 2009-2010. Students not retained to the spring term but who re-enrolled for the fall 2010 term are considered retained.

Table 1 shows all full-time new freshmen from fall 2009, disaggregated into those who completed 24 or more credits and those who completed fewer than 24 credits. There were more students who successfully completed 24 credits than not (2190 vs 1706). The fall to fall retention rates within the UW Colleges for these two groups were strikingly different at 78% vs 32%. An additional 10% and 4% were retained at other UW institutions, for composite fall to fall retention rates within the UW System of 88% for those who completed 24 credits and 36% for those who did not. Note that the overall new freshman fall to fall retention rates for the fall 2009 cohort were 58% within the UW Colleges and an additional 7% elsewhere in the UW System.

Table 1

All Fall 2009 full-time new freshmen – total cohort size is 3896					
credits successfully completed in first year		% retained to Spring 2010		% retained to Fall 2010	
		UW Colleges	Other UWs	UW Colleges	Other UWs
24 or more	2190	99%	0%	78%	10%
Less than 24	1706	67%	3%	32%	4%

The Retention Model with Control for Academic Success

Beyond this first comparison I extended the retention model seeking to limit the effect that student academic success might be having on retention. To do this I constrained the initial population in three steps based on the student's first term gpa.

Table2 shows the same information as the first, with an initial cohort of students limited to those who completed fall 2009 with a term gpa of 2.0 or higher. Not surprisingly, the initial population of students who successfully completed 24 or more credits dropped only slightly to 1935, whereas the population of students who successfully completed fewer than 24 credits dropped significantly from 1706 to 604. The fall to fall retention rate for the students who completed 24 credits stayed nearly the same as in table 1 at 79% retained in the UW Colleges and an additional 11% in other UWs, while the retention rate for students completing fewer than 24 credits improved to 47% retained in UW Colleges and an additional 10% retained at other UW institutions.

Table 2

All Fall 2009 full-time new freshmen with first term gpa of 2.0+ – total cohort size is 2539					
credits successfully completed in first year		% retained to Spring 2010		% retained to Fall 2010	
		UW Colleges	Other UWs	UW Colleges	Other UWs
24 or more	1935	99%	0%	79%	11%
Less than 24	604	78%	7%	47%	10%

Table 3 further limits the initial cohort to those students with a fall 2009 term gpa of 2.5 or higher. The initial cohort of 1928 students is roughly half the size of the initial full-time new freshmen. The sub-cohort sizes have both dropped significantly, however the retention rates are nearly identical to those shown in table 2.

Table 3

All Fall 2009 full-time new freshmen with first term gpa of 2.5+ – total cohort size is 1928					
credits successfully completed in first year		% retained to Spring 2010		% retained to Fall 2010	
		UW Colleges	Other UWs	UW Colleges	Other UWs
24 or more	1581	99%	0%	79%	11%
Less than 24	347	75%	9%	46%	12%

Table 4 includes only students who attained a fall 2009 term gpa of 3.0 or higher. This cohort is 30% of the initial population of all full-time new freshmen. The fall to fall retention rate for students completing 24 or more credits is hardly changed and the rate for students completing fewer than 24 credits increased slightly to 48% in the UW Colleges and 14% in other UWs.

Table 4

All Fall 2009 full-time new freshmen with first term gpa of 3.0+ – total cohort size is 1176					
credits successfully completed in first year		% retained to Spring 2010		% retained to Fall 2010	
		UW Colleges	Other UWs	UW Colleges	Other UWs
24 or more	996	99%	0%	80%	11%
Less than 24	180	72%	11%	48%	14%

Comparing retention within the UW Colleges for these two groups of high achieving students shows a fall to fall rate that is 32 points higher for those students who successfully completed 24 or more credits. Adding those students retained at other UWs for a UW System-wide retention rate, the gap is still 29 points. These comparisons help to illustrate why the rapid completion of credits in the first year of college is an important indicator of student engagement with the learning process and of institutional effectiveness.

Student Services and Enrollment Management Update
By: Patti Wise

New Coordinator for the Wisconsin Covenant Program

Audra Cooke has accepted the position of Wisconsin Covenant Coordinator for the UW Colleges. This is a new position for the Colleges funded with dedicated money authorized by

former Governor Doyle and implemented by UW System. In this position, Audra will be responsible for the administration, program development, and policy implementation of the UW Colleges Wisconsin Covenant Program.

Audra is joining us from Rock Valley College in Rockford, IL, where she has been the Coordinator of the First Year Experience Program for the past two years. Prior to that position, Audra served as the Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Student Activities at Beloit College for twelve years. Audra will be located in the Registrar's Office at 780 Regent Street.

New Office Assistant for Student Affairs and Administrative Services

Barb Rohlf has accepted the position of Office Assistant for the Central Office, working both for the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Administrative Services. In this capacity, Barb will be responsible for office services functions for the institutional office, and administrative support to Student Affairs and Administrative Services.

Barb is filling the position of Patty Marotz, who retired in December. She will be responding to all WisLine and videoconferencing requests. Barb is joining us from Oshkosh, WI, where she has had a long career as a Legal Assistant. Barb will be located in the Central Office at 780 Regent Street.

We are pleased to welcome both Audra and Barb to the UW Colleges.

Accelerated Blended Course Development

Beginning in Fall 2007, the UW Colleges began offering accelerated blended courses that combine face-to-face classroom time with online instruction and can be completed in a five- to eight-week timeframe. On many of our campuses, these accelerated blended courses are part of targeted programs that are meant to meet the educational needs and goals of the working returning adult learner. Nearly half of the students in these classes are 22 or older as compared to 33% of our overall enrollment.

The number of these course offerings has grown from seven in Fall 2007 to over 240 accelerated blended courses available today. In addition, during that same time period, over 130 faculty members have been trained in accelerated blended delivery.

Provost Greg Lampe recently approved revised guidelines for the development of accelerated blended courses at the UW Colleges. These revisions are intended to address the need for flexibility in getting faculty members trained to design and deliver accelerated blended courses as efficiently as possible. There are now new categories that address the issue of faculty who have already taught blended courses for other institutions as well as faculty who are taking over a course which has already been developed. It is hoped that these new guidelines will facilitate the development of additional accelerated blended courses while still maintaining high standards of quality in course design and pedagogy.

AAS Degree with Emphasis Update

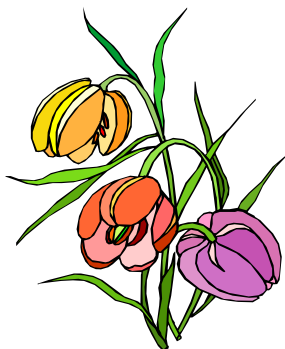
Academic departments within the UW Colleges have developed areas of emphasis in the AAS Degree, allowing students to complete their degree while focusing on a particular area. With the

recent additions of emphases in Geography, Geosciences and Chemistry, the UW Colleges can now offer 26 different areas of emphasis. Eight of the emphases are available at all of the thirteen campuses and include Biological Sciences, Computer Science, Engineering, Health Science, History, Mathematics, Psychology and Theatre Arts. The AAS Degree with Emphasis is now noted on the student's transcript with the first emphasis designations being awarded in Fall 2010.

UW Colleges Woman of Color in Education Award for 2011

On March 26, Pa Vang received an Outstanding Woman of Color in Education award. She was chosen as the 2011 UW Colleges honoree for this UW System award. Pa Vang is a sophomore student at UW-Marathon County. She is the first Hmong student to serve in two different and important student leadership positions. During the 2009-2010 academic year Pa was the student Gender and Women's Issues Director for the campus Straight Gay Alliance. Pa is now the Student Executive Director of the UW-Marathon County Multicultural Resource Center (MRC). The MRC serves as a resource for minority student populations and promotes diversity on campus and in the local community.

As the MRC Student Director, Pa has successfully brought together diverse groups of students to discuss issues related to multiculturalism, organized educational and social activities, and created a safe learning environment for underrepresented and at-risk students. She has been especially effective in her ability to address concerns related to campus climate and to resolve conflict between different student populations on campus. Because of Pa's efforts, the campus has seen a significant increase in the number of students using the Multicultural Resource Center and participating in its activities. Congratulations, Pa!



Enjoy the summer!