



Memorandum

To: University Community
From: Gary L. Miller
Date: May 13, 2015
Subject: Update and a Look Forward

GARY L. MILLER
Chancellor

Saturday we will celebrate the achievements of our graduates in our spring commencement ceremony. I hope all of you will attend that celebration. After that, many of you will begin your summer activities. Thank you to those who will teach summer courses, participate in camps, ensure food service and operation of facilities and other important work to keep the university functioning during the summer. I hope all of you will find time for rest, rejuvenation and time with family and friends in the coming weeks.

As we move into summer let me bring you up-to-date on developments with the state budget and other initiatives that will continue through the summer months.

Budget

I am sure you saw recent reports indicating no additional state revenues are expected this year. This news was not unexpected. We continue to plan for significant budget reductions.

As the Joint Finance Committee deliberates, we continue our discussions with our legislative colleagues in search of some relief to the proposed budget reductions and the approval of important flexibilities for the university system. The sustained efforts of our Trustees have been particularly helpful in stressing the importance of investment in higher education to the economy of Wisconsin.

It is unlikely the state budget will be resolved before the end of the month at the earliest. Thus, our final decisions regarding how to deal with the budget reduction will occur after the semester ends. I encourage you to follow your university email for updates regarding the budget situation.

Voluntary Separations

As you know, we offered the opportunity to voluntarily separate from the university to approximately 150 qualified UWGB employees. Thirty-eight of those employees have volunteered. Those selected for the program were notified last week and will have 45 days in which to make a final decision whether to accept the offer or not. We will provide information on the amount of our expenditure for the program and the number of individuals involved once the 45 day period is over.

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Summer Initiatives

The work of the Cabinet, the UPIC and the University Committee will continue through the summer months. This work is a continuation of intensive efforts over the past several months as part of the budget reduction process which we need to continue. Unfortunately, some decisions will be announced and important new initiatives will be started after commencement and through the summer months when many of you are engaged in other activities. We encourage you to track your email and to keep in touch with UPIC and UC members through the summer to keep abreast of our continued work. Please feel free to contact me as well. Among these ongoing projects are:

Executive Reorganization – Retirements, anticipated voluntary separations, budget reductions and reallocations provide an opportunity to reorganize our executive management structure to save money, expand our external operations, consolidate marketing and communications, invest in philanthropy and provide the structure for a future expansion of Student Affairs. I will be announcing the details of this reorganization near the end of June.

New Guidelines for Reassignments – We have spent considerable time working on a more rational set of guidelines for faculty reassignments. Some reassignments will continue to be necessary. Guidelines on reassignments will be issued in the near future from the office of the Interim Provost.

Director-level Reorganizations – As you know, enrollment and growth are critical to future financial stability for the university. In the coming months, we will closely examine the operations and organization of the Enrollment Services unit and the Office of Adult Access. We will also have conversations about enhancing the representation of student affairs on the senior leadership team. Reviews of these areas will also include an examination of how we deploy resources for advising on campus. There will be announcements on these processes in the coming weeks.

Faculty “Services” Reorganization – Currently, faculty perform significant amounts of work related to important special projects affecting the student or faculty experience. Among these are the GPS and CATL programs. Through the summer and fall we will be working with faculty leaders to determine the best configuration of these programs. We do expect funding for these programs to be somewhat reduced for the coming year – as with nearly every other program – as they continue to operate. Going forward, we will be considering alternative operating models.

Council of Trustees

At its last meeting, the Council of Trustees undertook a review of the university select mission statement and our engagement orientation. Working in small groups, these community leaders generated a rich set of observations and recommendations which are now being transcribed. Through the summer and into early fall, I will be asking leadership and shared governance groups to consider this extremely important input from the Trustees with the goal of having a broader discussion with them at their fall meeting. Ultimately, we must consider whether our current mission is appropriate for the future, particularly as it relates to community engagement and growth.

This summer, the Council of Trustees Program and Initiatives Advisory Committee (PIAC) will provide advice to us about several new academic programs that are being prepared for submission to System. The role of the PIAC committee is to assist in developing local support for new programs and building support – in concert with the Council of Trustees Advocacy Committee – for the new programs in the state once they are submitted by the university. This is an exciting new function for the Council, one that will provide us great support for program growth at the university.

I N N O V A T I O N T R A N S F O R M A T I O N P L A C E

50 Year Anniversary Celebration

Planning for our year-long 50 year Anniversary Celebration continues with great energy. The official kickoff for the year will be on Wednesday, September 2, 2015. A number of announcements and planning activities will be taking place during the summer which may involve faculty and staff. It will be great to have your participation as we plan for this signature event.

Finally, I want to thank each of you for the courage and optimistic spirit with which you have faced our current challenge. I have visited nearly every academic unit over the past several months. Your concern for your students and your colleagues and your determination to preserve what is so very special about this university have been obvious. You have presented innovative ideas, expressed a willingness to grow and reshape, and continue to serve this great community. Because of you I am certain the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay will emerge from the time with a bright future.