History of the debate
over the polytechnic initiative

(Taken from the minutes of meetings of the Faculty Senate and Senate of Academic Staff)

Combined meeting of the Faculty Senate and Senate of Academic Staff, Oct. 18, 2005
The Chancellor said that he sent out a Polytechnic Campus paper, explained that this could distinguish Stout from other campuses, and would like to discuss this idea further with the Senates and campus. Schlough asked if Stout’s Mission Statement would change if the polytechnic campus idea was approved. The Chancellor said it wouldn’t necessarily change. Weckmueller asked how Stout could identify itself to the public if its name doesn’t change. The Chancellor said that the idea would only be a campus brand name and noted that UW-Platteville has something similar. Galloy suggested that Stout should change its Mission Statement in order to give the campus more leverage down the road and give more breadth to operate in. Nold asked if there would be an administrative structure that could support all of the interdisciplinary needs, as some peripherals seem to be getting in the way. Chancellor Sorensen replied that a “Curricular Incubation Center” could help address these needs, as well as be a center that could cross the lines between colleges and departments. It would be a “think tank” and “initiation tank.”

Faculty Senate, Oct. 18, 2005
Polytechnic Designation (Steve Schlough) – Chair Schlough said that he had only heard from one person who was concerned with the designation; however, the Chancellor sent an e-mail out to all faculty and staff earlier in the day. Schlough recommended moving this item to the next Faculty Senate Meeting in order to give Senators more time to gather feedback on the issue. Chancellor Sorensen explained that the idea came forward almost three years ago as a result of an extensive discussion. McDonald said that he felt it was a very positive and clear paper, and moving forward could give Stout a distinctive advantage over other colleges and schools.

Motion: Weckmueller/McDonald moved for the Faculty Senate to support Chancellor Sorensen in delegating Stout as a polytechnic university.

Motion to Table: Terry/Galloy moved to table the vote until the next Faculty Senate Meeting.

Vote to Table: Passed.
Faculty Senate priority session, November 1, 2005
Priority A: Polytechnic

Peters said that he would like the brand of “UW-Stout” to be first and foremost in its name, as the campus was known by that and people from Stout were known as “Stouties.” Chancellor Sorensen replied that he and the administrators do not plan to have the word, “polytechnic,” come before the word, Stout.” They plan on carefully listening before moving forward in a systematic way. Mauldin asked about the recent Stoutonia article and if the proposal went to the Board of Regents in October. The Chancellor replied that it was not official yet. Mauldin asked the Chancellor about the Channel 13 interview and if the name change was a “done deal.” The Chancellor replied that it’s not a done deal. The subject had been discussed off and on for three years, he added. Mauldin asked if some type of student survey could be done to see if it would be a positive impact for Stout. He added that it would be interesting to see if any studies could be done on what the perceptions to a polytechnic campus would be and suggested to further study the effect of any marketing or branding change to see if moving to a polytechnic university would help or hurt Stout. Terry suggested polling seniors in high school right now to see how they felt, what makes sense to them, and also how the data could impact Stout’s enrollment. The Chancellor said that Stout’s audiences would be asked what their perceptions would be. Bob Meyer, Dean of the College of Technology, Engineering and Management, said that he felt that giving Stout a polytechnic title would fit the campus’ mission very well, as there was a vast array of different schools with different descriptions for what it means. He added that the campus needed to examine what was best for Stout and explore the polytechnic schools out there and find those that would fit Stout’s mission. Decker said that the people in his department and in General Education classes don’t know what to make of it. Most all of the polytechnic schools have strong humanities, but people don’t really know if will mean anything and don’t want to get their hopes up. In light of the current budget situation, could the campus even bring an expansion to the Humanities programs? The Chancellor said that if the campus could see that categorization, it would receive a higher profile, better Foundation dollars, could open more doors for corporate giving, and strengthen the campus, as it would be different than other schools. It could give us a chance to brand ourselves differently and an opportunity for growth, but not overnight. Dean Murphy, College of Arts and Sciences, said that he felt that the Applied Social Science major had a better chance in a polytechnic school than a regular one, and a major way to improve CAS and move forward would be for Stout to go polytechnic. It would be a great opportunity the college. Koepke said that she e-mailed colleagues in her department for input and a change would be difficult for them and might possibly harm student enrollment in the Human Development and Family Studies area. Technology is a means to an end and not an end to itself. The University supports the use of technology in many areas, but primarily it’s used in helping students in their relationships. The funding streams would support all the areas. Koepke concluded by adding that her colleagues felt that Stout must make it very clear, especially when students are recruited, that they understand that our university is well-rounded and not all about technology. Flom said that she checked the web for other polytechnic campuses and felt that it could help strengthen Stout’s programs. Mauldin asked what System could do to help expand the programs and wondered how it could impact the bigger growth programs, such as Art, Psychology, Early Childhood, Hotel &
Restaurant, and other CHD programs. Schultz suggested for the campus to do a study on the issue. Schlough said that the campus needed correct data, as technology is needed at the university and most of the majors have the word, “technology,” in them. This is the foundation that Stout was built on.

Parejko said that he felt there was a damaging perception among faculty that this was, in a sense, a “done deal.” Whether information came from the Stoutonia or WEAU, it needs to be clarified. However, there could be potential consequences of renaming the university and the campus needed to be cautious. Perhaps the words, “technology” or “institute” would be a better choice to use in Stout’s title. If we move forward and the focus of the university is changed, it must be done in the best way possible. Additionally, the sciences would require more resources if the campus goes this route. If new concentrations are added after the campus brands itself as polytechnic, the sciences would require more funding and resources (staffing, supplies, program assistant help, etc.), as they are currently stretched very thin at this point. Parejko said he chairs the General Education Committee and was additionally concerned that funding would come from General Education and go into the sciences and technology areas instead. Chancellor Sorensen said that Stout could be available to receive more grant money if the title was changed. More discussion ensued. Parejko said that if the two items were molded together, it could possibly create tension. Bensen said that he felt if the superficial name change was a good alignment with the array of campuses in the System, it wouldn’t be a bad thing. Schlough said that it would need to be carefully analyzed. He recently visited an Arizona college polytechnic campus and Stout was five years ahead of them. It could be difficult for the public to distinguish what Stout does from other campuses, and especially what a polytechnic campus meant. Stout currently has a reputation of being a technical campus. However, anything that could be done to help market Stout better would be good. Terry said that if the name change would open more doors for opportunity, let’s do it. However, it’s only a superficial name change, we should proceed with caution because people are proud of Stout’s General Education Program, as well as other good programs. Meyers said that he hoped that the name change would not be superficial and felt its future mission would be a fantastic opportunity for Stout. Nold said he just searched for a polytechnic university on his laptop, and it named a multi-disciplinary broad-reaching collection of people. He asked if a curricular developing institute would be only a beginning, as the campus may need more in order to be proactive and to create an infrastructure that could help make Stout better. Chancellor Sorensen said that we needed to start somewhere and focus to better ourselves and asked the group how could the campus change for the necessary improvement to happen? The campus needed to discuss what we want to be and how to get there—and the need to start somewhere. Decker suggested beginning within General Education. Peters said that in his department, there is a strong mental health counseling program. One issue they were having was that they weren’t a currently accredited counseling program. They would benefit greater if they were. Accreditation would be an issue he would like pursued and to increase resources for FTE and an on-line program.
The Chancellor reported that he met with System President, Kevin Reilly, and Don Mash, System Executive Senior Vice President, last Friday regarding the polytechnic issue and gave them copies of the Discussion Paper. Their support was general and they liked the idea of a branding effort for Stout. The Chancellor also added that he intends to hire a firm from the Twin Cities to come and meet with various focus groups/stakeholders to help decide what could be done to enhance Stout and asked all campus governance groups to continue discussion. All discussions and focus session feedback should be completed by mid-March, when a decision would be made. If the polytechnic brand is approved on campus, the Chancellor said he would work with the Board of Regents and move forward with the proposal. Currently, Chancellor Sorensen was visiting departments to talk about the issue.

Faculty Senate, Nov. 29, 2005
Focus Groups and Discussion of Polytechnic (Steve Schlough)
Motion: Galloy/Howarton moved that the Faculty Senate continues to engage in the polytechnic discussion.

Weckmueller asked the Chancellor if there was a timeline. Chancellor Sorensen replied that he would like the results from the focus groups by mid-March. Weckmueller asked if the focus groups would parallel the Faculty Senate discussions, or be different. The Chancellor replied that he would like them to parallel what was being discussed, and added that he was visiting campus departments to discuss the item internally. Weckmueller said that he felt comfortable with leaving this item on the Senate Agenda until mid-March. Chancellor Sorensen said that he was planning to appoint a steering committee within the next two weeks that would obtain ongoing information and run comparisons, as well as send a few campus groups as delegates to visit comparable polytechnic schools to obtain more information. Polytechnic representatives could also come to Stout to share their information. Additionally, information would also be gathered from the student population in other schools. Sorensen clarified that all information would be shared with the Senates. As the campus looks at increased competition from other schools in higher education, it’s important for Stout to brand itself differently from the others—and the issue of branding is important. Sorensen then asked the group if there could be another alternative or direction Stout could go if it doesn’t move toward polytechnic. Much discussion ensued. Mauldin explained that his department wanted the faculty to have an opportunity to give more input on the subject and wanted to ensure that data collecting didn’t substantiate where the leadership wanted to go. The department also wanted to ask people how they feel about it, rather than being convinced. Polytechnic could mean completely different things to other schools; we need a clear indication of marketing appeal of all groups, especially as the campus is trying to strengthen relationships with the two-year schools. Mauldin said that his colleagues further discussed the possibility of faculty voting for a referendum later on in the process, as well as possibly hiring an outside consultant to prevent bias research. Teleb said that everything should complement each other as the campus acquires its research, and the polytechnic campus needs to be thoroughly explained to the campus, so they can comprehend it. Bensen added that if a faculty survey was done now, it would show a
negative and uninformed viewpoint—everyone needs to understand all the benefits and obtain more information, so the campus could make a knowledgeable decision.

Decker said that his department was wondering if polytechnic would gain anything for General Education and would like to see information that could compare Stout with other polytechnic campuses. Flom agreed and said that the more SOE people learned about it, the less negative they would feel. Galloy interjected and added that it all had a lot to do with marketing and branding. The Chancellor said that being polytechnic also dealt with the campus’ program array. Perhaps Stout should market which student careers could be obtained from its majors instead. How could the campus craft a successful marketing plan? What types of careers do students have when they leave Stout? Galloy recommended seeing the data first before making a decision. Allen made the point that Stout faculty and administrators are likely to be familiar with polytechnics all over the nation. Polytechnics such as Cal Poly were selected as benchmarks for comparisons in the Baldrige processes because they have distinctive missions similar to Stout and because they represent levels of excellence to which we aspire and would choose to be compared. The concern is that our prospective students, their parents and teachers and other major stakeholder groups may be thinking of institutions on a far more regional basis. Polytechnic is not a descriptor used in Wisconsin and Minnesota universities. Illinois, Michigan, and Indiana have universities with the label, but probably few of our prospective students seriously consider going to these states. It would be interesting to see how the term is interpreted in the focus groups by those who are unfamiliar with prestigious institutions like Cal Poly. It is suggested that reactions to the Polytechnic label be solicited before any mention that Stout is considering using the descriptor. The Poly label that we see as positioning our campus among some highly prestigious campuses could bring to mind the local two-year tech college for our Wisconsin and Minnesota stakeholders. We need to know how this label might enhance or diminish how stakeholders view Stout. McDonald asked if the focus group was affiliated with a professional firm. The Chancellor replied that it was. Anderson said that the Morale Report showed that faculty felt they were typically at odds with campus administration and suggested that they possibly felt that not “all cards were on the table.” Would the polytechnic decision create a healthy climate for Stout?

Bensen asked the group if the polytechnic campus would present Stout as favorable or unfavorable and would it lower the campus’ hiring standards? It is very important to benchmark ourselves against comparable institutions for growth opportunities as a campus. Are we asking the right people and asking the right questions? Schlough encouraged Senators to send all feedback to Chancellor Sorensen or the Senate Office, as the campus needs to pass all information to the consulting group to help them make an informative decision. Chancellor Sorensen concluded by saying the polytechnic idea didn’t come out of a single mind—it came out in 2001 from many different people; the idea has been out there for quite awhile. Change is inevitable—how can we best position Stout for the next level? Chair Schlough said that this item would be kept on the Agenda, so discussion could ensue week by week.

Vote: Passed with 1 abstention.
Combined Senates, Dec. 13, 2005

Provost Furst-Bowe reported for the Chancellor, as he was unable to attend the meeting. Plans were being made regarding the ongoing research into the polytechnic design from various focus groups including parents, students, stakeholders, and faculty/staff. A consultation has been done with two market research companies, which gave quotes of $160,000 and $25,000. However, other alternatives include having Stout’s BPA Office perform the focus group research or asking UW System’s Research and Policy Operations to do the study. One Senator asked how much the UW System group would cost. Vice Chancellor Moen replied that the fee would be very minimal, if at all. Maudlin emphasized that many colleagues desired the campus to implement an unbiased quality research procedure, and said he was concerned that an in-house study could be more biased and rather limited in the data that was collected. He further asked the group that if the university would hire a cheaper marketing analysis company, would the study have quality, especially since the results would have a huge impact with students, faculty, etc. McDonald stated that he and Pete Heimdahl recently consulted with a company that charged $400,000, so the company that would cost the campus $160,000 was a “buy.” Schlough asked the Provost what was wanted. She replied that the Chancellor was requesting feedback. Schlough asked how the steering committee would function. Furst-Bowe replied that Forrest Schultz would serve as Chair and other members would include governance and dean’s representatives, as well as other members from across campus, Mauldin again voiced concern that this committee should be as unbiased as possible and not out-weighted by administrative opinions. Hoel said that Stout’s student leadership was doing their own survey to determine students’ understanding of “polytechnic,” which included a thorough researching of other universities and background data. Terry elaborated that student recruiting was vital for the campus, especially how the programs and campus would be viewed by seniors in high school. He also suggested that it would be desirable to have a representative from High School Relations serve on the committee. Galloy asked if the Chancellor sent a written proposal to these companies before they submitted their quotes. Furst-Bowe replied that he had and could send the proposals to Joy for distribution, if desired. Schlough added that the Faculty Senate would appoint their representative to the steering committee later during the meeting.

Faculty Senate, Dec. 13, 2005.

Chair Schlough stated that the Faculty Senate needed to appoint a representative to serve on the Polytechnic Steering Committee. Vice Chair Schultz explained that the Chancellor asked him to facilitate the group and he said yes. The polytechnic issue has been brought to the forefront, and many opinions have been voiced. As a result, a steering committee has been formed to provide an opportunity for input to be shared with the Chancellor and administration in an informal setting. The group would also serve as a “think tank” on this subject, helping to decide on possible sources for funding, inviting representatives from other polytechnic campuses and counselors from high schools to campus. Furthermore, Schultz concluded by saying that the group also would help disseminate all the information and give input to the Chancellor in his decision on what the campus should do. Mauldin volunteered to serve. Flom seconded Mauldin’s nomination. Discussion ensued regarding the need for untainted data, for all steering committee
members to have open minds that could lead to action, and the importance of being able to provide governance input.

Motion: Galloy/Allen moved to nominate Kirk Mauldin as the Faculty Senate’s representative to serve on the Polytechnic Steering Committee.
Vote: Passed unanimously.

Weckmueller clarified that until the Faculty Senate voted and gave its recommendation regarding if the campus becomes polytechnic or not, no official faculty input would be given. The Faculty Senate has power by representing the faculty and its vote is important, he emphasized. McDonald agreed and said that he felt that the questions being asked concerning the polytechnic issue were critical. Terry added that if we could get our students involved to investigate the issue as well, they could also serve as one of Stout’s marketing tools whether or not to move to polytechnic. Much discussion ensued regarding:
• if moving toward polytechnic would result in a cosmetic change or one that would actually involve a discernable systematic change;
• the importance of Mauldin’s ability to take an agnostic approach on the committee, as well as having an open mind;
• the diverse questioning that needs to take place;
• and concerns that the entire process would be unbiased.

Schultz concluded by stating that the steering group would have the challenge to understand what Stout’s vision could be and how it could also generate this vision for Stout to move forward in the future.

Faculty Senate, Feb. 14, 2006
Polytechnic Report (Kirk Maudlin) – Maudlin reported that the Polytechnic Group was examining different categorizations regarding various universities/schools and created a matrix list that compares Stout to the other campuses. He noted that they met three weeks ago and have not been called to meet again. Senators engaged in discussion on what “polytechnic” meant, if the term brought to mind Calpoly or Chippewa Valley Technical College, and what these words and/or associations say to people, especially Stout’s important stakeholder groups. Mauldin said that the Chancellor has chosen to hire the James Tower Group for $25,000 to research if polytechnic was the way Stout should go. The James Tower Group also works and does research for other technological universities and their focus is a technology service provider, he explained. Discussion further ensued concerning if the students knew what polytechnic meant and the data that showed that twice as many students think it’s not a favorable idea. Why pretend to engage in a process that’s basically confirmatory? Chair Schlough explained that Stout wasn’t the only campus trying to do something different, especially since there was a charge driven by System asking the thirteen campuses to differentiate themselves. Terry asserted that Stout’s most important stakeholders were the students; it’s imperative to find out what they think, especially the ones recruited. What are the actual questions that the James Tower group will ask? He elaborated that if James Tower was a more technical consulting group, they are still obligated to ask the students good questions in order to receive good data. Bensen proposed that perhaps the Faculty Senate should pass a
resolution that offers another alternative to collecting information as well. Senators could get opinions and information from the students in their classes. Peters added that many Senators also have former alumni that could be surveyed. The group then discussed the possibility of developing their own questions with more objective data. Some Senators voiced frustration with the process, especially if the final decision was preordained. Allen suggested that the freshmen in some of the Senators’ large classes could be surveyed, but care must be given to use the best procedures available, and asked Bensen to contact him to discuss this further. Mauldin reminded everyone that the Chancellor would like to make his decision in less than month from now. Parejko reminded the group that Stout was a Baldrige university and asked the group what the Baldrige process would be for gathering additional information and applying it. Bensen clarified that many questions must be answered before the Faculty Senate could make a knowledgeable decision. Mauldin noted that the Polytechnic Committee was formed by the Chancellor, but individuals could be free to analyze the data themselves. Allen acknowledged that he had faith in a focus group process where questions could be developed in a precise way with a clear perspective and used with some of the Senators’ freshmen classes. Much discussion ensued. Dzissah asked the group what polytechnic really meant and added that it’s difficult to talk to people if faculty don’t know what it all means. Bensen emphasized that the faculty needed to examine other polytechnic institutions in order to understand it better, but may not get the necessary answers regarding who it would benefit better (either students or stakeholders) until a decision was made. Schlough reminded the group that there would be no name change, only a designation change for marketing purposes. Questions were raised regarding how Stout compared to other polytechnic universities, especially with the realignment of budget resources, marketing terms of the stakeholders, and if the process was backwards. Schlough clarified that the campus needed to define what it is and where it wants to be in ten-fifteen years from now. Everyone talks about technology and engineering as being polytechnic, he added, but the strong science programs that campus has would be a part of polytechnic as well. Flom mentioned that her SOE constituents were very concerned where their support would come from and how they would fit in the equation. Ondrus added that his constituents in the sciences area were concerned with support and funding, too. Calenberg said that it was very difficult to thoroughly discuss any of these issues because the Faculty Senate doesn’t have enough information yet. Schlough asked Mauldin if any of these questions/concerns came up in the steering committee’s meetings. Mauldin replied that they have and were trying to expand their charge.

Combined Senates, Feb. 28, 2006
The Chancellor stated that the campus’ DIN requests were due to UW-System in March. Stout will compete by submitting a very brief outline to them within the first week of the month and then the entire final request by the end of the month. He explained that an additional request would be submitted regarding a polytechnic thrust, such as a polytechnic studies or collaborative center, that could work in partnership with other areas of the university. Some schools currently have this in place, he explained, and the campus could put together a center, that may possibly include state-of-the-art innovative sciences and technologies, and could be funded as soon as this summer. However, the concept hasn’t been fully developed yet, and a meeting would be held tomorrow to
explore the idea further. The Chancellor then distributed a ‘nanotech university’
document to the group for information that helped illustrate what other areas were doing
in the country.

Faculty Senate, Feb. 28, 2006
Polytechnic Timeline Proposal from Faculty Senate Executive Committee (Steve
Schlough; Attachment 10) – Chair Schlough reminded the group that there were two
polytechnic items under Old Business that allows the Senators time to make some kind of
recommendation to the Chancellor by the end of the year. He explained that the proposed
Timeline was formulated by the Executive Committee and then explained each step to the
Senators. The vote going out to all faculty, he clarified, would only be another way to
gather data that would be used by the Senate to make its decision on May 9. McDonald
said that his biggest concern was what would happen if the referendum was voted down
and the Faculty Senate still recommended the polytechnic--what would this say to the
faculty? Schlough clarified that it was only one step out of four that would be used for the
Senate to obtain its data. McDonald cautioned that all constituents needed to fully
understand the concept before voting.

Motion: Nold/Decker moved to approve the Polytechnic Timeline Proposal.

Much discussion ensued. Allen asked the Chancellor to explain the alternate polytechnic
center that he mentioned earlier in his report. The Chancellor replied that it was a brand
new concept that could create a synergy of programs with a new emphasis in another
area. He will be discussing the item further with the Senate leadership groups on March 2
and invited all to attend and added that he would like to interview Southeast Missouri
State, where this is practiced. One Senator asked if the Steering Committee would be
examining this model as well. Thomas, a member of the Steering Committee, said that it
was not part of the group’s charge. Schultz said that people on campus needed to know
exactly what a polytechnic school was. Schlough commented that they could get a fairly
good idea by doing a web search on the topic and then narrow it down to similar items
comparable to Stout. Peters asked if information could be shared with the Senators
earlier, so it could be shared with their constituents. McDonald asked what would happen
to the Chancellor’s piece. The Chancellor replied that James Tower would be asked to
design a parallel concept. If his Council liked the new model, he would submit a DIN
request, the timeline could be revised, and additional information could be shared. By
May, the campus would have a good sense of what it wanted to do. McDonald said that
he was concerned if Stout could lose its competitive advantage while the university was
being informed and gives its input; it was important to move forward and evaluate this.
The Chancellor said that a model, including a matrix, could be compiled after people
from campus visit Missouri State. This information could be another piece that could be
shared with the university. Much more discussion ensued. McDonald said that he’s
seeing a warming side to the entire polytechnic idea on campus—the faculty just needs to
be more informed to ensure that Stout was positioned correctly to go forward in this
direction. Peters summarized that it seemed there were three items to accomplish—the
first was to get the placeholder DIN; the second were the two information pieces from
James Tower and the Steering Committee; and the third was the center, or “school within
a school” idea. Allen asked the Chancellor to clarify what a DIN was. The Chancellor replied that the DIN (Decision Item Narrative) requests were opportunities for campuses to obtain 102 money from the State in order to help fund certain programs. (The last one received was used to help fund the Graphic Communications Management Program.) He explained that Stout would need to submit a DIN title and outline (to be used as a placeholder) to UW-System within the first week of March and then submit the final, more detailed, proposal later in March. Then in August, System decides which DINs would be forwarded to the state. Additionally, the concept should be in alignment with the Governor’s growth program for the state’s economy and would be an opportunity for him to approve and back new things that have never been budgeted before. The title may be different, but the placeholder will be there. However, Furst-Bowe added, that obtaining the funding was extremely competitive between campuses and each must make a case for its need. A few Senators asked if it were possible to see the proposals. The Chancellor said that he could share them with the Senate.

Discussion then centered on the Timeline and the possibility of eliminating Number 4. Nold said that he felt it was the Senators’ responsibility to poll their own constituents instead of having a vote. Flom stated that the two informational sessions planned would be a key piece to help inform faculty and allow them an opportunity to ask questions. She felt that a non-binding vote would be democratic and consistent with the Baldrige approach. McDonald asserted that the Senators’ constituents have voted for them to sit on the Faculty Senate and trust them to make decisions. He asked the group how many faculty would actually attend an open forum and noted that it probably would not be a very large group. However, whatever the Senate does, it must ensure that its constituents were all knowledgeable and received the same information. Peters said that a couple of years ago, PPC held focus groups regarding tenure and only 8%-9% of all faculty showed up. He suggested that each Senator would probably get a better sense of what his/her constituents felt by polling their departments. Nold said that he could accept the motion better if the word, “vote,” was changed to “opinion” in Number 4.

Motion: Weckmueller/McDonald moved to amend the Timeline by striking Number 4.
Vote: By show of hands: 8 in favor; 11 opposed. Motion failed.

Weckmueller called for the question.

Motion to Amend: Nold/Ghenciu moved to amend the language of Number 4 by replacing “Nonbinding referendum vote goes out to all faculty” with “Sample the faculty opinion.”

Anderson agreed with the change. More discussion ensued regarding the choice of wording and which way to go to obtain a better response rate from the faculty. McDonald stressed the importance for all faculty to receive the same information before they could give their opinion, and suggested that paper documents could be included that could explain the data in a clear, non- partial way. Dzissah and Mauldin agreed and recommended that all perspectives should be shared so faculty could make an informed decision.
Schlough cited that the vote would be taken to revise the wording of Number 4 to: “Survey of faculty opinion regarding the polytechnic.”

Vote on Amendment: By show of hands: 16 in favor; 4 opposed.

The amendment passed.

Discussion continued regarding the possibility of sending faculty a website that could include key documents for their information, having the Senate appoint a special committee to do the work, or have the Executive Committee plan out the process. Schlough summarized by saying the Senators at their February 14 Meeting wanted a process. The Executive Committee formulated the Polytechnic Timeline based on their request. The Chancellor explained that the idea developed from three-and-a-half years of planning, the campus appointed a special task force, hired a marketing group to help gather information, and to brand the campus in a unique way in order to stay competitive with the other campuses. McDonald agreed and felt that polytechnic could benefit the campus to be uniquely positioned for the future. However, he said he was frustrated by the tight timeframe allowed in the Timeline. Chancellor Sorensen suggested moving the timeframe back; however, the DIN placeholder requests would need to go forward.

Schlough specified that the final vote for the Polytechnic Timeline would include the newly-revised wording of Number 4: “Survey of faculty opinion regarding the polytechnic,” and if passed, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee would define how to distribute and process the survey.

Vote: By show of hands: 11 in favor; 9 opposed.

Schlough said that the motion passed and it would now go to the Executive Committee for the March 7 Meeting.

Faculty Senate, March 21, 2006
Polytechnic Survey – Chair Schlough explained that the Faculty Senate approved the Polytechnic Survey Timeline during the last Senate Meeting. The Executive Committee was charged to do an opinion survey regarding the polytechnic. They discussed the options of having the faculty reps take the ballots to their departments, but thought it would be too cumbersome. The committee also discussed the election process whereby the Election Committee could count the ballots and the possibility that an electronic survey could be filled out more than once. Election Committee Chair, Forrest Schultz, was following up with Barb Button. After much discussion, the Executive Committee wanted more feedback from the Faculty Senate, especially with the timeframe involved and only a one-to-two week window for sending out and gathering the survey information. Discussion ensued regarding the wording and structuring of the questions and how many should be used. The group agreed that all responses would need to be in by April 20 for tallying and typing. Thomas recommended the Senate analyze what the students said and then define a matrix for the first page. Schultz reminded everyone that the Steering Committee’s results would be shared with the campus at the two open forums in April. Much discussion ensued. Chair Schlough said that the Senate of
Academic Staff endorsed the polytechnic idea in February; however, the Stout Student Association hasn’t done anything yet. Flom said that she would like to hear more about polytechnic and other schools that have this designation before she votes. Anderson said that there was one key piece that won’t be available until May or June and that was the James Tower Report. Nold recommended that the Senate postpone its decision until all the reports were available, so an informed judgment could be made. Bergquist asked if a date was set that the Senate would need to have its recommendation in to the Chancellor. Schlough replied that May 9 was the last Faculty Senate Meeting for the semester. Furst-Bowe said that the Board of Regents doesn’t meet over the summer and could be told that the campus was still working on it, as there was no set timeline. She added that in talking with other polytechnic institutes, it doesn’t seem to be a real factor as to whether students go there or not. The three main reasons students choose to attend a polytech campus, she added, were the specialized programs, location, and reputation. Thomas said that the polytech dilemma had no set deadline, there was not enough information, no procedure, and asked the group if there was a fear on campus that the Chancellor would do something over the summer if nothing was done in May. Several people said that this was a concern. More discussion ensued and a recommendation came forward to vote on May 9 that the Chancellor can’t take any action until the James Tower Report was done and people had the opportunity to read it.

Allen agreed and said a motion passed could certainly relay that message, with a request for the Chancellor to please not take this forward over the summer. Koepke said that the Senate knew it had a short timeline, but thought it would have more information. This includes the Steering Committee’s Report, the James Tower Report, and the two open forums. As it now stands, the Senate only has the Steering Committee Report and the dilemma is frustrating. Bensen agreed, but suggested moving the timeline’s deadline. Schultz reminded everyone that the Senate agreed to perform a survey and needs to put it together.

Peters suggested using a scale for the first survey, such as from 1 to 5 on how the person felt about Stout becoming polytechnic and a second, more detailed survey could be performed later. Thomas recommended including a comment section. Schlough said that a Likert scale could be used for the survey and it could be administered through normal election procedures.

Peters likes the timeline as it stands, with the forums needing to happen as soon as possible after April 1. Discussion ensued regarding the students seeming confused about the potential polytechnic designation and also needing additional information. Before the Senate can survey faculty, the Steering Committee information needs to be disseminated. Bensen asked about the comparison matrix being completed and Mauldin stated that it will be given to the Chancellor and Senate. Schlough recommended placing it in the daily e-mail. If we only get a 20-30% response rate when surveying faculty, we’ll take this into consideration. Allen stated that if we assume that all faculty decide this is a fantastic idea and want it to happen, given the population response, is this a wise thing to do, as much as we like it? Where would the wisdom be if we’re fighting against this association? Bensen felt it may be a lack of awareness and is therefore a marketing issue.
Allen asked if making a quick decision allowed time to get the message out to people. Schlough commented that people will make the decision from other criteria, too. Cole asked if we had this much discussion on the letterhead change after winning the Baldrige Award. Furst-Bowe explained that changing letterhead is a management system decision and a part of marketing. Bergquist wondered if a polytechnic designation will change the way business is done at Stout. Furst-Bowe stated that nothing different is being planned. Cole felt that it would be nothing different, since we currently do technical, hands-on learning. Stout was a technical college, we’ve heard that for 50 years, and it doesn’t prevent students from coming here. Based on comments from the Cal Poly visiting faculty member, Ondrus believes becoming a polytechnic will necessitate change. Science, math, and engineering must be more important than they currently are. We will need other forms of engineering, and must strongly promote science and math. Furst-Bowe stated that this would affect long-term planning. Schlough stated the Senate had received enough direction on the survey to go on to the next step.

Faculty Senate meeting, April 11, 2006
Polytechnic Designation (tabled from October 18 Faculty Senate Meeting for more input)
Discussion ensued regarding when to remove the topic from the table for a vote. Galloy said that he wanted the issue to come to a closure and recommended to vote on it now. Peters reminded everyone that the Senate had agreed on a timeline that included obtaining information from the survey and James Tower before giving its recommendation. Chair Schlough said that the Senate could supersede that motion if it wished with another motion and reminded everyone that the topic had been tabled since October 18. Cole recommended that the Senate should at least wait until the Polytechnic Survey results came in. The Senate agreed to go through the process until the data was back.

Faculty Senate meeting, April 25, 2006
Polytechnic Designation (tabled from October 18 Faculty Senate Meeting for more input)
– Peters asked Schlough if the James Tower Report would be available by May 9 to help the Senate make its recommendation to the Chancellor. Schlough replied that it won’t be completed until June; however, he explained that it was the only missing piece of information. The Senate of Academic Staff endorsed the designation and the SSA chose not to do anything. Terry suggested that the 1600 students going through orientation also be surveyed. Schlough stated that if the Faculty Senate didn’t make a decision by the end of the school year, the item would not be carried over, as it would lose momentum. Allen said that there was good evidence that students associated the term, “polytechnic,” with technical colleges. The campus has gone through major budget cuts due to student enrollment shortfalls, and students might be turned off by a label they don’t understand correctly, he concluded.

Motion: Allen/Mauldin moved to remove Item B under Old Business from the table for more discussion.

Vote by show of hands: Passed by majority vote.
Motion: Calenberg/Decker moved to take the item off of the table and vote on it. 
Vote by show of hands: Passed by majority vote (15 for; 5 opposed; and 1 abstention). 
Lively discussion ensued. Decker asked Senators to please not try to influence each other 
during the discussion, as each has probably surveyed their constituents and know how 
they wanted to vote. Peters said he was not prepared to vote as he told his peers that May 
9 was the date agreed upon by the Faculty Senate and was established in the Polytechnic 
Timeline. Additionally, it was still a discussion item in his departmental meetings. Galloy 
agreed and reminded everyone that the Faculty Senate voted on the Timeline and needed 
to abide by it. 

Motion: Peters/Gallo moved to table voting on the Polytechnic designation until May 9. 
Vote: Passed by majority vote (16 for; 2 opposed).

B. Faculty Senate Continues to Engage in Polytechnic Discussion (Motion from Faculty 
Senate Meeting of November 29, 2005).

**Faculty Senate meeting, May 9, 2006**
Polytechnic Designation (tabled from October 18 Faculty Senate Meeting for more input) 
Chair Schlough explained that the following motion was tabled from the October 18 
Faculty Senate Meeting: “Weckmueller/McDonald moved for the Faculty Senate to 
support Chancellor Sorensen in delegating Stout as a polytechnic university.” 
Motion: Galloy/Weckmueller moved to remove the item from the table.

Vote: Passed by majority vote.

Schlough stated that the Senate could now vote or amend the original motion. 
Motion: Mauldin/Decker moved for paper ballots to be distributed to Senators and called 
for the question.

Vote: Passed by majority vote.

Vice Chair Schultz distributed and collected ballots from the group, tallied, and reported 
the following results: Vote Regarding the Polytechnic Designation for UW-Stout: 15 
Aye’s; 10 No’s. The motion was approved.

Faculty Senate Continues to Engage in Polytechnic Discussion (Motion from Faculty 
Senate Meeting of November 29, 2005)

Motion: Galloy/Mauldin moved that the Faculty Senate discontinue discussion regarding 
the Polytechnic.

Vote: Passed unanimously.
Senate of Academic Staff, Nov. 1, 2005, priority session

Priority A: Polytechnic

Peters said that he would like the brand of “UW-Stout” to be first and foremost in its name, as the campus was known by that and people from Stout were known as “Stouties.” Chancellor Sorensen replied that he and the administrators do not plan to have the word, “polytechnic,” come before the word, Stout.” They plan on carefully listening before moving forward in a systematic way. Mauldin asked about the recent Stoutonia article and if the proposal went to the Board of Regents in October. The Chancellor replied that it was not official yet. Mauldin asked the Chancellor about the Channel 13 interview and if the name change was a “done deal.” The Chancellor replied that it’s not a done deal. The subject had been discussed off and on for three years, he added. Mauldin asked if some type of student survey could be done to see if it would be a positive impact for Stout. He added that it would be interesting to see if any studies could be done on what the perceptions to a polytechnic campus would be and suggested to further study the effect of any marketing or branding change to see if moving to a polytechnic university would help or hurt Stout. Terry suggested polling seniors in high school right now to see how they felt, what makes sense to them, and also how the data could impact Stout’s enrollment. The Chancellor said that Stout’s audiences would be asked what their perceptions would be. Bob Meyer, Dean of the College of Technology, Engineering and Management, said that he felt that giving Stout a polytechnic title would fit the campus’ mission very well, as there was a vast array of different schools with different descriptions for what it means. He added that the campus needed to examine what was best for Stout and explore the polytechnic schools out there and find those that would fit Stout’s mission. Decker said that the people in his department and in General Education classes don’t know what to make of it. Most all of the polytechnic schools have strong humanities, but people don’t really know if will mean anything and don’t want to get their hopes up. In light of the current budget situation, could the campus even bring an expansion to the Humanities programs? The Chancellor said that if the campus could see that categorization, it would receive a higher profile, better Foundation dollars, could open more doors for corporate giving, and strengthen the campus, as it would be different than other schools. It could give us a chance to brand ourselves differently and an opportunity for growth, but not overnight. Dean Murphy, College of Arts and Sciences, said that he felt that the Applied Social Science major had a better chance in a polytechnic school than a regular one, and a major way to improve CAS and move forward would be for Stout to go polytechnic. It would be a great opportunity the college. Koepke said that she e-mailed colleagues in her department for input and a change would be difficult for them and might possibly harm student enrollment in the Human Development and Family Studies area. Technology is a means to an end and not an end to itself. The University supports the use of technology in many areas, but primarily it’s used in helping students in their relationships. The funding streams would support all the areas. Koepke concluded by adding that her colleagues felt that Stout must make it very clear, especially when students are recruited, that they understand that our university is well-rounded and not all about technology. Flom said that she checked the web for other polytechnic campuses and felt that it could help strengthen Stout’s programs. Mauldin asked what System could do to help expand the programs and wondered how it could impact the bigger growth programs, such as Art, Psychology, Early Childhood, Hotel &
Schultz suggested for the campus to do a study on the issue. Schlough said that the campus needed correct data, as technology is needed at the university and most of the majors have the word, “technology,” in them. This is the foundation that Stout was built on.

Parejko said that he felt there was a damaging perception among faculty that this was, in a sense, a “done deal.” Whether information came from the Stoutonia or WEAU, it needs to be clarified. However, there could be potential consequences of renaming the university and the campus needed to be cautious. Perhaps the words, “technology” or “institute” would be a better choice to use in Stout’s title. If we move forward and the focus of the university is changed, it must be done in the best way possible. Additionally, the sciences would require more resources if the campus goes this route. If new concentrations are added after the campus brands itself as polytechnic, the sciences would require more funding and resources (staffing, supplies, program assistant help, etc.), as they are currently stretched very thin at this point. Parejko said he chairs the General Education Committee and was additionally concerned that funding would come from General Education and go into the sciences and technology areas instead. Chancellor Sorensen said that Stout could be available to receive more grant money if the title was changed. More discussion ensued. Parejko said that if the two items were molded together, it could possibly create tension. Bensen said that he felt if the superficial name change was a good alignment with the array of campuses in the System, it wouldn’t be a bad thing. Schlough said that it would need to be carefully analyzed. He recently visited an Arizona college polytechnic campus and Stout was five years ahead of them. It could be difficult for the public to distinguish what Stout does from other campuses, and especially what a polytechnic campus meant. Stout currently has a reputation of being a technical campus. However, anything that could be done to help market Stout better would be good. Terry said that if the name change would open more doors for opportunity, let’s do it. However, it’s only a superficial name change, we should proceed with caution because people are proud of Stout’s General Education Program, as well as other good programs. Meyers said that he hoped that the name change would not be just superficial and felt its future mission would be a fantastic opportunity for Stout. Nold said he just searched for a polytechnic university on his laptop, and it named a multi-disciplinary broad-reaching collection of people. He asked if a curricular developing institute would be only a beginning, as the campus may need more in order to be proactive and to create an infrastructure that could help make Stout better. Chancellor Sorensen said that we needed to start somewhere and focus to better ourselves and asked the group how could the campus change for the necessary improvement to happen? The campus needed to discuss what we want to be and how to get there—and the need to start somewhere. Decker suggested beginning within General Education. Peters said that in his department, there is a strong mental health counseling program. One issue they were having was that they weren’t a currently accredited counseling program. They would benefit greater if they were. Accreditation would be an issue he would like pursued and to increase resources for FTE and an on-line program.
Dec. 13, 2005, meeting of Senate of Academic Staff
Endorse ongoing discussions on polytechnic initiative
Motion: Senator James moved that Senator Heidi Gilbertson-Gansberg be selected to represent the Senate of Academic Staff on the steering committee that Forrest Schultz will chair. Senator Hartung seconded the motion.

Vote: Passed unanimously.

Motion: Senator Witucki moved that the Senate of Academic Staff endorse ongoing discussions of the polytechnic designation idea. Senator James seconded the motion. Discussion: The Senate wants Chair Jones to relay to the Administration the following discussion points/recommendations:

• Spending $200,000 for an outside consultant would have negative reactions, both from inside and outside the University. (It could pay salaries for 4-5 academic staff or entry-level faculty; or it could provide nearly 50 parking places on campuses.) From a public perspective, it may appear irresponsible in a time of budget cuts.)
• We may want to recommend a neutral person to facilitate discussions on campus. It seems that someone from System is available to do this at little or no cost to us. Let's use that resource. (In addition, let the Senators view the request that was made to prospective consultants).
• Re-distribute the white paper—it had some solid, good reasons for the polytechnic designation.
• Make sure that there is a clear and inclusive process followed before a final decision is made. All stakeholders, especially students, need to be involved.
• We believe that following an inclusive and open process will make it a campus-wide decision.

Vote: Passed unanimously.

April 11, 2006, meeting of Senate of Academic Staff
Polytechnic Resolution

Motion: Senator Sveum moved and Senator Hartung seconded a motion that the Senate of Academic Staff adopts the following resolution:

Senate of Academic Staff Resolution
Supporting the Polytechnic Branding of UW-Stout
WHEREAS, the University of Wisconsin-Stout Senate of Academic Staff is pleased that the administration has put a planning process in place that solicits valuable public input on the idea of branding the campus as the "polytechnic" institution of the UW System; and
WHEREAS, it is very important to clearly differentiate this campus from the other UW System campuses when marketing UW-Stout to potential students and business partners; and
WHEREAS, the administration has assured us that there is no plan to change the official name of this institution even if we are approved for the special designation; and
WHEREAS, our program array does match up favorably with other national institutions calling themselves a "polytechnic" and, therefore, we would not need to significantly change the programs we offer; and
WHEREAS, we see little or no downside and great potential by achieving such a designation; now, therefore be it
RESOLVED, that the Senate of Academic Staff at the University of Wisconsin-Stout looks forward to a positive recommendation in the consultant's report, supports the concept of designating UW-Stout as Wisconsin's "Polytechnic" University and, assuming the campus will indeed recommend the special designation, pledges to work closely with the administration on implementation strategies.

Discussion: Faculty Senate Vice Chair Forrest Schultz was present and answered many questions from Senators. The Senate of Academic Staff thanked the Faculty Senate for putting on two forums so the polytechnic committee could provide a report and answer questions from the community. It was also noted that the term "Comprehensive Polytechnic University" which was mentioned at the forums seemed to broad support.

Vote: Passed unanimously.