

**NOTES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STOUT
FOCUS 2010 SESSION
NOVEMBER 18, 2003**

Senators Present: T. Allen, M. Arora, C. Bendel, S. Deckelman, M. Decker, B. Evans, M. Galloy, G. Godfrey, A. Hoel, D. Johnson, L. Milanese, L. Miller, S. Orme, A. Parsons, J. Pejsa, J. Roiter, S. Schlough, F. Schultz, M. Sherman, M. Spencer, S. Terry, G. Wheeler

Guests: Chancellor Sorensen, B. Sedlak, D. Moen, C. Smith, A. Ramage, L. Meinen, D. Tyson, S. Beckham, B. P. Hall, B. Meyer, J. Murphy, J. Wesolek, D. Weber, W. Argo, J. Brown, R. Johnson, R. Olson, J. Jordan, L. Wagner, L. Young, S. Thurin, J. Kapus, J. Enger, B. Fitch, B. Horan, M. Wallen, K. Ingala, D. Hays, R. Tafalla, R. Sirabian, and many others

Faculty Senate Chair, Mike Galloy, thanked everyone for attending the Focus 2010 Session and introduced the Chancellor at 2:35 p.m.

Chancellor Sorensen welcomed everyone and explained that the reason Focus 2010 was being done was because “It is crunch time for higher education—an age of revenue diets, legislators bent on micromanagement, regulators demanding greater institutional accountability, and consumers insisting on more service at lower prices. It is no longer a question of whether institutions must change but of who will control that recasting—the nation’s colleges and universities, or an increasing competitive market for post-secondary education that holds little sympathy for institutional tradition” (source: Policy Perspectives, The Pew Higher Education Roundtable).

He explained that 27% of students were enrolled in public higher education and this figure was decreasing from competition of private and other universities. Stout receives 44% of students from a four-to-five county area. Wisconsin’s growth is in southeastern Wisconsin, not here. In order to survive, new audiences must be reached, and we need to be aware of serious competition. How can this be done? We must maintain the core values of our institution and then stimulate change. Change needs to happen, but how can Stout deliver these core values and give service to the students? Change is necessary in order to meet future needs.

The Chancellor invited everyone present to participate in a direct unfiltered discussion to help develop a broad understanding in examining issues and developing Stout’s visualization. He explained that each fall, budget sessions were held to receive input from anyone on campus. The Chancellor’s Advisory Council meets during the summer to review all the information gathered, examine trends, compare it to other institutions, establish past and current priorities, survey the data, review financial information, and to consider input from previous feedback and reports. Priorities are drafted for the next year and shared in the fall. Since 1996, Stout has had 45 priorities funded; every one has focused on strengthening education, distance education, graduate education, technology, new network, salary inequities, and workload.

Galloy asked the group what the learning community should look like in the future. As the student population decreases, Stout must clarify its vision and mission. Can we compete against other universities in our area (UW-Eau Claire, UW-River Falls, and UW-Superior)? What strengths does Stout have that sets it apart and provides opportunities for growth and venture into nontraditional learning methods, as well as other areas?

Decker asked how the 9-month contract would impact people like him. The Chancellor said that Stout was using a teaching model based on an agricultural model and it doesn’t work anymore. Decker suggested using modules over the course of 12 months, where only one person could be utilized. Miller asked how the newly-proposed learning communities clarify the roles of faculty/academic staff. The Chancellor replied that Stout was already involved in an e scholar environment and a more hybrid model could emerge. Students are engaged in e scholar after coming to this campus, and we will continue to incorporate quality teaching. Teaching would still be kept in the hands of faculty/academic staff, but different learning styles would be used. Newer technology was driving the way students learn; students don’t learn the same way as they did 30 years ago—they are more technology-driven.

Allen suggested examining responsibilities that could be more global across more sections; faculty could take on a leadership role and academic staff could be working under the leadership of the faculty member. Models would be an alternative to the current compartmentalization. Chancellor Sorensen asked the group why can't a student learn from a peer group of students (Guskin) and be validated by a teaching academic staff or faculty? Galloy said that his workload would change and he'd adapt to the environment if some of the proposed possibilities would take place. What would the workplace look like? What would our roles look like? Orme suggested that we must still value faculty validity if the campus moved to certain models; students won't like it when faculty are not available. If we look at roles for team leaders, we need to have access to students, as well as them to us. If we reduce faculty with teaching academic staff, it's possible not very many students would come here. Chancellor Sorensen stated that the role of faculty wouldn't be reduced. Terry stated that he thought that technology and different teaching modes for student learning were the driving factors. Parent/students don't want to see a brick and mortar school go away—but the end product is what we can deliver to society in four years. Students need to develop people skills. Students need to learn to solve problems; part of this is learned and part is relating to people and developing people skills. Chancellor Sorensen agreed and stressed that it's important for Stout to not change its core values; we don't want to lose the students' creative thinking and interpersonal skills.

Arora asked if Stout would become global: would there be a possibility of exchanging faculty at an international level in order to get ideas from the outside to learn. He noted that there are some things faculty can teach that are very effective, but mathematical interaction was more difficult—there needs to be one-on-one instruction and actual class meeting time.

Milanesi said that he was concerned about where Stout was going as a community in accepting its students and also about the retention rate. The issue, he said, was for students coming from a direct, controlled environment and then coming into a less structured environment. There could be too great a disconnect between where students were coming from and where they are now. Chancellor Sorensen noted that there were learning communities that have forged these issues and have kept students for over four years. However, he said that we need to recognize change and be very sensitive to this, but don't want to hurt the university. Wheeler noted that what differentiates Stout from other schools was its "hands on" programs and said that he was struggling with seeing how e scholar and distance education worked into this. The Chancellor said that any distinct programs and hybrid programs would be merged in, but not to replace traditional courses; they would only be used as tools. Sedlak explained that the new hybrids could increase hands-on time because the lecture mode would be decreased; students could replay the lecture over again to suit their different learning styles. The campus would realign its priorities, and this could be a vehicle to help develop that. The Chancellor added that the campus could provide more creative time in labs with hands-on learning and develop ways to adapt to new changes. Hays asked if there could possibly be a way to strengthen hand-on, minds-on learning, while shifting away from the classroom structure. Perhaps we need to view ourselves as an entire learning community or a university center. Sedlak reminded the group that Focus 2010 was only assumptions, and not exactly what Stout would want for its future. Galloy stated that each generation tends to view themselves differently; how can we build a work environment to accommodate the different values? Decker said that values aren't absolute and stated that he and his wife wanted to find a place to call home and where he could connect with students. That's why a person becomes a professor—it's for the students, for the love to teach and interact with them. Galloy said that he lives in Eau Claire and teaches in Menomonie. Stout has expanded beyond the Menomonie community, with people coming from different cities and towns to teach, making a more cosmopolitan environment. Evans agreed that the campus was becoming more and more a cosmopolitan environment and stated that he found different ideas with good possibilities. However, he felt that there was some difficulty in reading the material. He said that Stout's students have to gain knowledge while they are here and must learn/know certain things in order to pass their certifications. Knowledge must be gained and the end result is for the students to become citizens. We need to determine what students need to learn in class. Sedlak agreed, but noted that it was not enough to develop outcomes for us to assess students because students don't know what they need to learn; they wait for us to tell them what to learn. We need to help create and set the stage for students to have an outcome-based education, as well as programs. However it could take years to develop if this is where we want to go. Arora asked the Chancellor what the faculty goals should be and if it could be better to offer more expertise from other people. Chancellor Sorensen replied that Stout relied on much expertise from people off-campus, as well as system-wide. Meyer said that these sessions simply refine the ideas and issues. Galloy stated that as faculty, we're the professional educators and we can add to these ideas or define other ideas. Milanesi commented that as a learning community, we're trying to build and manage quite an amount of a change and he

said that he was concerned about how transient people on campus have become. It would be helpful to discuss succession planning, including senior leadership. Chancellor Sorensen replied that we are driven by guidelines for open searches, there are open corporations that hire internal CEO's; it is becoming more difficult for succession planning. Milanesi suggested developing a strong core from the bottom up. Galloy noted that leaders would emerge within if we could create an ideal community—perhaps it would be better to bring promotion from within. Orme said that we need to keep in mind if whether we were an education institution or a training institution/school? There is a tremendous difference in priorities and where we would see ourselves. Allen said that there was a huge challenge in how our institution competed with other ones to fill vacancies. He noted that over half of some departments could retire in a handful of years, and that the medium age of faculty is 53. Allen added that 2010 was a key year for tremendous competition to fill these vacancies. In the past, Stout has held its faculty for the long term; faculty who chose to live here and raise their children. Now when vacancies open up, competition could be brutal. Deckelman asked what Guskin's discipline area was. The Chancellor replied that it was Social Psychology. He said that change will have to occur on campus whether we like it or not, as Stout was driven by state and UW mandates, financial budget reductions, as well as other regulations, We need to maintain what we have now, but also prepare for the changes in the future. Tyson agreed that we were becoming a more transient faculty; the transient scholar could have fewer faculty and more detachment of academics. He noted that the correspondence schools in 1960's went through a popularity period, but overall had been a failure with the majority of students dropping out before completing their plan of study. They were also very expensive. Do employers use and credit a correspondence school degree the same as a "hands-on" education, or could the degree be compared to earning a GED? We may probably have a more diverse student body in the future.

Galloy asked the group what could put an organization out of business? What would that organization look like and what could Stout do differently that could create different and unique institutions? Chancellor Sorensen noted that the Regents were considering having a single Chancellor over three different campuses and were asking ways to reorganize the state into regions. Milanesi said that more thought needed to go into our curriculum and other learning activities, so that our campus would become a place that would be open where students could come in and share with others. Schlough said that the only thing that sets Stout apart from other campuses was its technological base. If we try to mimic the other campuses, we would be the one to shut down. Stout needs some fresh ideas to differentiate itself so it can grow. Chancellor Sorensen agreed and said Stout needs to balance and maintain its core values, but also needs to prepare for the future. Change is a driving factor that we need to keep pace with. (For instance, we didn't have the internet eight years ago.) Orme agreed and said that technology should make life easier, not harder. The Chancellor asked the group how we could change, as change was inevitable. Meyer stated that he was impressed by some of Guskin's ideas. Stout was doing many of the things he suggested, as the campus was already a leader in change. But we can't be afraid of the future—instead we need to keep abreast on the appropriate changes we need to take.

Arora said that perhaps the departments could be broken down further in order to provide more mentoring and care for new faculty. Schlough said that Stout can't compete with MIT, as they put "technology" in their name. Decker stated that Stout needed strong humanities in order to compete against other universities. Galloy said that the question should be how do we change in order to have a more integrative environment to support each other? How can we move the campus and the entire learning community forward? Decker noted that he didn't see general education a priority in the documents and that he wanted to see the humanities remain at Stout. Schlough agreed and said that the math, science, and general education courses were professional; Stout would not be able to survive without them. Meyer said that the colleges had come up with various proposals; the campus needed to constantly examine programs/classes and change them to meet market conditions. Everything needed to be on the table in order to determine a better solution and that the campus needed to do it together. Evans reminded the group that the Board of Regents gave implementation for the General Education Component at Stout and that it was mandated by System. Years ago, he noted, there was a "them vs. us" mentality which was an ugly situation. Evans said that he'd seen tremendous improvement in the professionalism here at Stout, including the thinking that we were supporting each other and were on a strong foundation. General Education was part of this. Stout was strong because students graduate with professional degrees and skills to make them better people. We share the same institution--we love and work on it. We should find ways to enhance and value working together for the institution. What we're doing wasn't incompatible, but we were facing change. Change will always be there and always happen. The question was how can we harness change to the best availability?

Horan asked what program clustering was. The Chancellor replied that it's when different courses overlap in various areas. One idea, he said, that was being proposed was artificial divisions where more synergy could be created to work on program ideas and create more sensitivity to market values. Definite firm ideas wouldn't be formed yet, but we just need a "think tank" to form new ideas and suggestions. How can Stout shape itself for the future? On the internet there are schools (law schools, etc.) that were just differently-aligned models. Milanese asked how this could work across the colleges. The Chancellor replied that CAC didn't go that far. Decker cautioned that faculty needed a department home for interaction and mentoring. Tyson said that there were other issues concerning customizing programs of study and noted that there was a big market out there with various economies and niches. How can we think through the issues to make it economically feasible? Chancellor Sorensen replied that there were models at work now on campus that resulted from limited access to state dollars. However, we need to look at various sources to maintain our core values and mission/courses. Schlough noted that departments could be reorganized by courses, rather than by programs, and those courses could be just realigned differently. Deckelman agreed that there was some overlap in every area/discipline, including art, but cautioned that there could be some risk with trying to do too much combining that could lead to problems on a larger scale. Ramage said that she didn't see much in the material that focused on out-of-the-classroom learning. How could we deliver these courses in new and different ways? She noted that there were additional issues students faced, such as alcoholism. Students don't always have the basic social and people skills needed to handle major issues/problems. Arora said that perhaps we're putting too much emphasis on customizing; people were being laid off from their jobs and we need to give students more skills that they can use as a back-up if this happens to them. Milanese said that the student population we serve now was mainly first-generation students—this goes hand-in-hand with career placement focus. Are we still looking for those same students? Chancellor Sorensen replied that during the last decade, this has changed to more second-generation students being enrolled. However, many more graduates were returning to Stout for advanced degrees. Roiter said that change will happen—how can we adapt to it? What's being planned as far as what kind of student careers these students would have in their future? Our students are Stout's final product. Chancellor Sorensen replied that over half the jobs in 2010 haven't been invented yet. We don't know what the basic technologies and human resources needs would be. Sedlak agreed and said that Stout's graduates would be out there—maybe not in the same fields they graduated in, but we need to find ways on how we can prepare our students for whatever comes their way. The solutions to this could be divisive on some issues, but the basic assumption is that Stout will be driven by change—change by the stakeholders, UW-System, the students, and the people we serve.

Adjournment: 4:25 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
David Johnson, Secretary**

**Recorded and prepared by,
Joy Morical**