

NOTES FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2005 PRIORITY SESSION

Chancellor Sorensen gave an overview of the past 2004-06 goals and what has been accomplished so far and noted that Priority Sessions have been held for nearly nine years. The input received from these sessions will be used to influence the future priorities at Stout and to update and revise the proposed 2005-07 University Priorities. These will be shared with the deans and the Chancellor's Advisory Council and narrowed down during the 2006 Summer Retreat.

The Chancellor said that the Priorities and Goals for Focus 2010 were linked to Stout's mission and values.

- Goal 1: Prepare alumni for success.
- Goal 2: Create a learning community that supports and encourages the engagement of its members in active learning.
- Goal 3: Achieve national leadership and excellence in educating students in the theory and application of a broad range of technologies.
- Goal 4: Strengthen the on-campus organization by focusing on UW-Stout's unique mission within the UW system.

The meeting was then open for comments regarding this year's University Priorities.

Priority A: Achieve Designation as "polytechnic" institution.

Priority B: Create a curricular incubation center that strengthens relationships with WTCS and supports new emerging technology programs.

Priority C: Create a culture of affirmation inside and outside the classroom. (A culture of affirmation is defined as respectful, engaging, inviting, welcoming, inclusive, accepting, comfortable, enjoyable, and genuine.)

Priority D: Implement a school outside a school enterprise that serves learners statewide, nationally and internationally, through distance learning and other deliver methods.

Priority E: Leverage technology infrastructure in academic (teaching and learning) activities.

Priority F: Implement Diversity Plan 2008.

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 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.

Priority D: Implement a school outside a school enterprise

Peters said that most of his colleagues liked the idea, but wanted to proceed with caution with this priority, as CHD has an on-line graduate program that is tied to the campus program. They agreed that they would like to maintain the flexibility of the accreditation and to ensure that the accreditation was maintained. Chancellor Sorensen said that the campus has almost a school outside of a school currently; however, in some areas, there sometimes wasn't adequate alignment between what the campus puts out there and its majors. The colleges have more at stake and this could be embedded more into their areas. Peters said that the campus needed to keep agility in their faculty more than ever.

Priority F: Diversity

One Senator mentioned that the campus needed to try and recruit more students of color, so students could be better prepared to interact with people of color when they go out into their professions. Some students had never even spoken or sat next to a person of color until they've come to Stout. Discussion ensued regarding Stout's location, population sector, and the difficulty of bringing in more culturally diverse students.

Priority C: Need to Increase Student Learning and Engagement

Ondrus said that he was concerned in recent years of budget cuts, faculty decreases, etc. that the class sizes were getting too large and is opposed to what this priority was about. Chancellor Sorensen said that Stout needed to have a larger freshman class because the campus wasn't meeting its targets. Additionally, Stout has the same class size it had in 2001 and 2002. Ondrus noted that there were fewer faculty for the students. The Chancellor said that the campus won't receive additional FTE's for faculty until the faculty/deans decide how to do it. Dean Wesolek, College of Human Development, said that this topic received lots of attention in last summer's retreat and everyone is concerned and have a role to play to make Stout an inviting place. We all must participate in this area and need to move forward and, especially to enhance what's there. An Academic Staff Senator said that she felt tapped out, as the budget cuts have particularly had implications on Academic Staff, as well as impacting secretaries and workers. The Chancellor reminded everyone that our campus didn't make the budget crisis; the state gave it to us, and the campus must change, or it'll only get worse. Galloy agreed, and said that we need to find new ways to do the work. Stout has a wonderful infrastructure to do its work, but we need to change in order to move forward.

Priority B: Create a Curricular Incubation Center

Terry said that he felt Priority B related to all of these issues; however the Center possibly would take more resources to run. He asked the group what does the business world do with budget cuts and how do they find new resources outside of the business or university? For example, a new sports program would find corporations and sponsors to help support it. Galloy said that he thought the state was forcing campuses to have a "lean" education. Terry added that it could be more efficient. There were many various situations in day-to-day life, where people spend more time writing grants, teaching, and looking at sister institutions nationwide to look at things differently.

Priority D: Implement a School outside a School

Flom said she echoed what Peters said earlier. Bensen added that the term could sometimes mean opposite things to different people. How could the college units deliver to their clientele lists in the best way? Is it the most helpful term? Chancellor Sorensen said that we can't do it all ourselves, but part of the entire issue could be to qualify adjunct faculty in a way that wouldn't destroy faculty morale, but in a way to make money on customized instruction. The model works. Schlough said that the campus needed to develop a model that tied in with what happens within the departments, but also provided flexibility with what happens off-campus. We need to have these discussions to help define a structure that benefits everyone.

Priority E: Leverage Technology Infrastructure in Academic Activities

Galloy said that he hoped this was the last year to see this on the priority list, as it could be put under one of the other priorities.

Much discussion ensued. Schultz said that in some companies, information has changed in the way they do business, and we need to think really big and outside of the box. India and China could change technology in a huge way. He added that he felt that a polytechnic university could help strengthen us. Parejko said that there were conflicts in terms of resources. High school students come with less educational skills than ones from India and China. Terry added that there are many factors to Priority C, but no matter how Stout developed its graduates; the primary goal is that they become contributing members of society. McDonald asked the Chancellor where does Stout go from this meeting regarding Priority A, "Polytechnic" Institution. The Chancellor replied that there was a firm in Minneapolis that helped focus groups obtain feedback. After everyone returns from Christmas Break, the issue would be revisited to examine the name and converse with the campus during Spring Semester to carry out more dialogue. He noted that in the Fall of 2002, in a retreat with Katharine Lyall, plans came forward to redirect the UW System and campuses were encouraged to come forward with their special programs (i.e., Platteville to study Engineering). There was a concern that Stout wasn't gathering more students. From that, an idea came out to brand the campus differently and the White Paper asking Stout to become a portal for a polytechnic university arose. If the campus gives a green light, we will move forward. McDonald said that once the campus gets through the process, people will need to go out and ask people what their perception of Stout is. He said that he thinks it would give Stout a distinction and could make the campus a power house. However, it would take a major league marketing effort to advertise us. Much more discussion ensued regarding how to get people of color and recruit other students to attend Stout, how to operationalize the polytechnic idea, and how change is needed in order to move the campus forward, especially with the budget cuts.

Meridith Wentz concluded the session by reminding the group to write additional comments on the blue sheet, and/or to contribute anonymous ideas by using the on-line message board.