Communication from an Official Governance Unit

APBC COMMITTEE RESOLUTION REGARDING:

International Enrollment Management

Ended by the APBC Committee on April 24, 2014

BACKGROUND

Successful recruitment of international students presents an opportunity to build UWM undergraduate and graduate enrollment during a time in which domestic enrollment is experiencing a significant downturn. UWM’s track record bears this out. In late 2011 Chancellor Lovell established the goal of enrolling 3000 international undergraduate and graduate students by 2018. Working diligently to realize this goal, UWM has achieved an overall increase in international student enrollment of 34% since Fall 2011, and 80% since Fall 2008.

This growth has significant ramifications for Center for International Education (CIE) workload and budget, since CIE is responsible for every aspect of international student enrollment management: recruitment, admissions, immigration services, federal reporting, orientations, and retention. While significant new campus resources, including out-of-state recruiting staff and Milwaukee Advantage Scholarships, have been allocated to expand domestic recruitment efforts, the 3000 international enrollment goal represents a virtually unfunded mandate.

UWM’s Office of Enrollment Management has denied CIE’s requests to include new international undergraduate degree-seekers in the Milwaukee Advantage Scholarship program. This scholarship, funded through the undergraduate tuition pool, is awarded to all new US non-resident tuition-paying, degree-seeking undergraduates. Denying international non-residents the blanket scholarship awarded to all domestic non-residents is detrimental to efforts to welcome all students as valued members of the UWM community.

Meeting the 3000 target and sustaining this level of enrollment will require expanding UWM’s investment in international recruitment and retention staffing, scholarships, and activities, including the staffing and programs necessary to support international students’ admission, immigration, orientation, English support and cultural adjustment needs once they arrive on campus. Recent enrollment increases have only been achieved with a redirection of CIE’s existing resources and the addition of six new staff lines funded on temporary commitments by Academic Affairs and the Chancellor. Continued enrollment growth will require permanent funding for these staff lines, S&E to support recruiting expenses, and a broader investment in campus internationalization. The financial dimensions of UWM’s international enrollment management efforts, and a budget proposal to sustain these efforts, are outlined in UWM International Student Recruitment and Retention Strategy: Track Record and Prospects for Continued Growth (UWM Center for International Education, April 2014).

UWM’s ability to sustain and grow international student enrollment is hindered by CIE’s heavily 101-based, non-scalable budget model. With virtually no revenue return to CIE from its activities, and with steadily growing demand for CIE-supported programs and services, CIE’s budget model is unsustainable. As programs have grown, CIE’s 101 operating S&E has been
reduced by 46% since CIE’s founding in 2000. More detail is included in CIE Budget History: FY2001-2014 (UWM Center for International Education, April 2014).

Vice Chancellor for Global Affairs for SUNY System Mitch Leventhal, in his April 2012 UWM site visit report, summarized UWM’s need as follows:

*International student recruitment cannot be undertaken in a vacuum. Each new student recruited implies some marginal increment in labor and demand on existing systems and infrastructure. No recruitment strategy should be undertaken without a plan for a scalable budget to support both the recruitment activity and subsequent student support.* (M. Leventhal, April 2012)

WHEREAS
UWM has set the goal of enrolling 3000 international students without allocating resources necessary to meet this goal, the APBC recommends that UWM establish a scalable, sustainable funding model to support international enrollment management, understood to encompass not only international student recruitment, admissions, and immigration services, but also the comprehensive internationalization of teaching, research, and student learning that will make UWM an attractive destination for international students and scholars and that is critical to achieving UWM’s research university, student success, and financial sustainability goals; and

WHEREAS
UWM has established the Milwaukee Advantage Scholarship to provide across-the-board scholarship support to non-resident tuition paying undergraduate degree-seeking students and yet has denied access to these scholarships to non-resident tuition paying undergraduate degree-seeking international students;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED
That CIE requires sustainable funding to support international recruitment, enrollment, and retention activities; and that any UWM scholarships targeted to non-resident tuition-paying students must be open to international non-resident tuition-paying students.