

Thursday, February 6, 2020

WISCONSIN'S ACHIEVEMENT/OPPORTUNITY GAP CHALLENGES

REQUESTED ACTION

For information only.

SUMMARY

The achievement gap between white students and underrepresented minority students is a national issue with significant moral and economic consequences. Wisconsin's challenges are significant.

The Board will hear multiple presentations that will allow members to learn about the extent of the issue as well as to what can and should be done to address it.

The first presentation is led by Tim Sheehy, President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC). His presentation will focus on regional efforts to address the achievement gap and its real-life and long-term implications for workforce challenges in Wisconsin. The presentation will discuss efforts MMAC has made with regional employers to encourage a diversified workforce, and how UW System, as part of the educational pipeline, is vital to that goal.

Tim Renick, Senior Vice President for Enrollment and Student Success at Georgia State University, will address evidence-based ways to address the achievement gap, including more intentional use of advisors (precollege and on campus) and what resources it takes to make significant progress.

Dr. Angela Byars-Winston will then present on national STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medical) mentoring programs and practices at undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. Byars-Winston is the first African American to achieve the rank of tenured Professor in the Department of Medicine at UW-Madison. She investigates the impact of culture on career development for women and underrepresented racial/ethnic groups in STEMM fields. Dr. Byars-Winston will discuss her research, evidence-informed effective and inclusive mentorship, and implications for policy and practice.

Regent Eve Hall, President and CEO of the Milwaukee Urban League, will moderate a strategic discussion on opportunities to mitigate achievement gaps with all the presenters.

Presenters

- Tim Sheehy, President, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce
- Tim Renick, Senior Vice President for Enrollment and Student Success, Georgia State University
- Dr. Angela Byars-Winston, Professor, Department of Medicine, UW-Madison
- *(Panel Moderator)* Regent Eve Hall, President and CEO, Milwaukee Urban League

BACKGROUND

The achievement gap between white students and underrepresented minority (URM) students is a national challenge, which is even greater in Wisconsin. A 2016 report from the National Center for Education Statistics found that among first-time, full-time undergraduate students who began seeking a bachelor's degree at a 4-year degree granting institution in fall 2007, the 6-year graduation rate was 63% for white students and 41% for both African American students and American Indian/Alaska native students, a 22% gap. (<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2016/2016007.pdf>)

Gaps also exist between all underrepresented minority groups and white students and students who qualify for Pell grants because of their low-income status.

UW System: Achievement Gap

- In the last 10 years, the 6-year graduation rate gap between African American and white students has increased:
 - 32.0% of 2002 African American freshman enrollees graduated in 6 years compared to 60.7% of white freshman, a gap of 28.7 points;
 - 35.5% of 2012 African American freshman enrollees graduated in 6 years compared to 65.4% of white freshman, a gap of 29.9 points.
- Of freshman enrollees in 2012:
 - 45.6% of underrepresented minorities graduated in 6 years compared to 65.6% of non-underrepresented minorities;
 - 51.5% of Pell grant recipients graduated in 6 years compared to 68.0% of non-Pell grant recipients.
- The retention rate (year 1 to year 2) gap between African American and white students remains in double digits despite closing slightly:

- 67.4% of African American freshmen in 2007 enrolled the next year compared to 79.7% of white freshman, a gap of 12.3 points
- 70.9% of African American freshmen in 2017 enrolled the next year compared to 82.3% of white freshman, a gap of 11.4 points
- The retention rate gap:
 - Widened between Pell and non-Pell recipients, from 6.8 points in 2007 to 7.5 points in 2017
 - Widened between underrepresented minorities and other students, from 6.6 points in 2007 to 7.1 points in 2017

Dr. Angela Byars-Winston is an Associate Director of the Collaborative Center for Health Equity, tenured Professor in the UW Department of Medicine, Director of Research and Evaluation in the UW Center for Women’s Health Research, and Faculty Lead in the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research. Her research examines cultural influences on academic and career development, especially for historically minoritized groups in the sciences, engineering, and medicine with the aim of broadening their participation in STEM fields.

Timothy Renick is Senior Vice President for Student Success and Professor of Religious Studies at Georgia State University. At Georgia State, he has served as Chair of the Department of Religious Studies and Director of the Honors Program. Since 2008, he has directed the student success and enrollment efforts of the university, overseeing among the fastest improving graduation rates in the nation and the elimination of all achievement gaps based on students' race, ethnicity, or income level.

Timothy R. Sheehy is President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC). Prior to being named president, he served as Executive Vice President. He also serves on the board of the Milwaukee Development Corporation, an MMAC affiliate and is a past Chair of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. Sheehy serves as Chair of the Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation and as a director of the State of Wisconsin Investment Board.

Previous Action or Discussion

The UW System Board of Regents in December 2018 entered into a five-year contract with the Education Advisory Board (EAB) to use the company’s Navigate Student Success Collaborative software to improve undergraduate retention and guide students on a path toward graduation, a key goal of UW System President Ray Cross’s 360 Advising initiative.

The software leverages technology to allow advisors, student success staff, and faculty to provide more targeted, personalized, and timely support to students.

Using a system of predictive analytics based on key factors such as class attendance and performance, major status, and financial factors, UW System advisors and faculty will be able to better build effective support around students and provide them personalized guidance at key moments on the path to graduation. Students will be able to access mobile planning and career guidance tools to help them connect with campus resources, schedule meetings with advisors, and make decisions about their college goals.