

FCTCP Work Group on Tri-Campus Relations Final Report

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Executive Summary

This document serves as the final report from the Work Group on Tri-Campus Relations of the University of Washington Faculty Council on Tri-Campus Policy (FCTCP). The Work Group's activities spanned the 2008-09 and 2009-10 academic years, with strong support provided by a graduate research assistant during the first year. The report reviews the development of the Bothell and Tacoma campuses; highlights organizational and developmental issues that have been raised over time, including in the most recent accreditation report; recommends actions to be taken over the next academic year to clarify and strengthen the tri-campus relationship; and provides a bibliography of sources from within and outside the University consulted during the course of the study.

Recommendations include the following:

- (1) Strengthen the FCTCP's voice in tri-campus governance by adding experienced faculty leaders to its membership, raising its profile among UW Seattle faculty, and having it sponsor regular campus forums on tri-campus issues.
- (2) Set aside part of one UW Senate meeting each year for presentation and discussion of issues related to UW Bothell, UW Tacoma, and tri-campus governance.
- (3) Organize a meeting among administrator, faculty, staff, librarian, and student leaders to air reactions to this report and forge a collaborative response.
- (4) Engage the FCTCP with the Provost's tri-campus advisory group.
- (5) Identify opportunities for revising the Faculty Code to bring it more into alignment with the realities of governance at and among the three campuses.

The Work Group

In November 2008, Janet Primomo (UWT), 2008-09 chair of the FCTCP, convened the FCTCP Work Group on Tri-Campus Relations to provide a forum for discussion on the relationships among the three campuses of the UW. The Work Group was designed to follow-up on the 2005 University of Washington Presidential Tri-Campus Steering Committee and Task Force Retreat that addressed "future challenges and opportunities facing our three-campus university." The 2005 report summarized "the current state and future possibilities for a three campus University of Washington." In addition to following-up on the 2005 report, the Work Group tracked the ad-hoc tri-campus administrative group's (Provost's office, UWB and UWT Chancellors) discussion on tri-campus relationships that was underway to address issues in the recent Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities Accreditation Report. JW Harrington (UWS), Susan Jeffords (UWB), Johann Reusch (UWT), and Alan Wood (UWB) joined Professor Primomo as members. Steven Collins (UWB), 2009-2010 Chair of the FCTCP, took over the leadership of the Work Group.

The Work Group was greatly aided by the work of Laura Meyers, who served as a Research Assistant during the spring of 2009, with funds provided equally by Executive Vice Provost Doug Wadden, UWB Vice Chancellor Susan Jeffords, and UWT Vice Chancellor Beth Rushing. She conducted a literature review of multi-campus universities, completed a

detailed matrix developed by Professor Primomo of the governing structures, faculty organization, and student issues in 10 university systems (Arizona State, Montana State, and the Universities of Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, and Washington), and compiled a large list of resources that includes publicly available case studies of university systems in seven states (see Attachment). We examined various institutional arrangements among campuses around the country, not with an intention to locate a single model to emulate, but rather to pick and choose those elements from various models that seem appropriate to our present structure and future goals. Among concerns we reviewed were the balance between autonomy and integration, and allocation of responsibilities between local and central administration. Our work in spring 2009 only began to plumb the insights that can be gained from these case studies and comparisons.

Our present aim is to affirm a common set of principles that can help to guide the institutions forward in the coming years of enrollment pressures and scarce resources; identify opportunities for improving tri-campus governance in the context of the continually evolving relationship among the three campuses; and to suggest processes that would encourage dialog and promote information sharing among faculty, administration, and students on tri-campus issues.

To guide the Work Group, the full FCTCP discussed the values that are shared by most parties at the two newer campuses. These include:

- Balance of autonomy and integration
- Commitment to high quality scholarship and teaching
- Interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching
- Student centeredness
- Problem-focused scholarship and learning
- Responsiveness to the local community
- Flexibility and innovation
- A commitment to consistent and faithful application of shared governance

Furthermore, our discussions considered and we suggest that subsequent discussions should consider the “core assumptions” of the 2005 Steering Committee:

Core assumption I. As we proceed with tri-campus discussions and decisions, we should regularly revisit the questions of what is best for students, what is in the public interest, and what will maximize the public good.

Core assumption II. Discussion of a tri-campus future must always consider the place of the UW in the larger context of higher education in the State of Washington.

Core assumption III. The UW Board of Regents has a statewide responsibility to articulate how UW will contribute to higher education in the State.

Core assumption IV. Decisions about mission must shape discussions about a three-campus management structure.

Core assumption V. Because what is good for students and the public interest will change over time, programs and management structure must evolve to meet that good.

Core assumption VI. To have a common brand, UW needs to balance centralized authority and control with localized needs and interests.

Historical Background of the University of Washington Bothell and Tacoma Campuses

The two new campuses of the University of Washington at Bothell and Tacoma are now twenty years old. They are successes in terms of enrollment, innovation, and faculty recruitment. They are also different from each other, in spite of their being established at the same time and given similar missions. The UW Tacoma has evolved in partnership with the Tacoma community, forming the core of an urban campus, or, depending on one's terminology, a metropolitan university that has dramatically revived the downtown community. The UW Bothell has grown in tandem with Bothell and adjacent jurisdictions to the north and east of Seattle, evolving programs resonant with the diverse needs of growing suburban communities that draw immigrants from all over the world, and are home to large numbers of biotechnology and software engineering firms.

As we begin our third decade, and as we head into a period of financial uncertainty in the state, the timing seems propitious for a review of the relationship between and among the three campuses. The foundation for such a review was reported in the 2005 University of Washington Presidential Tri-Campus Steering Committee and Task Force Retreat Report, which identified dozens of areas of interaction among the campuses and noted that each area manifested a slightly different dynamic, with some functions becoming gradually more autonomous and others remaining integrated. It also noted that there were many areas where there was confusion over exactly where the lines of jurisdiction of a particular campus lay in this constantly shifting spectrum between autonomy and integration. The need to regularly review compacts that address institutional interactions was noted. After twenty years, there remains a good deal of ambiguity in their daily interaction. To be sure, a certain amount of ambiguity of purpose and function has sometimes been a benefit over the past twenty years, providing wiggle room that has made possible innovation and creative institution building. But ambiguity in some areas has also created misunderstanding.

Issues

The fundamental issue is that the relative roles and structures of the three campuses have evolved organically. This is a good thing insofar as it reflects the growth of the two campuses established in 1989, the changing characteristics of the region and the state, and the changing set of individuals attempting to guide the development of our system. However, innumerable reports have called for greater and more explicit clarity regarding roles, missions, and structures of and among the campuses. The most pressing of these reports is the 2008 Regular Interim Report of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities:

The self-study describes the continuing "transformation from a university with three campuses to a coordinated multi-campus university," but these words appear to have little meaning on any of the three campuses. There is no apparent reconciliation of the clear diversity of the three campus missions and the concept of "one university." The consequences of the resulting confusion may be

serious if not addressed carefully and thoughtfully, as the Committee now recommends [p.3].

In addition to this overarching (and long-term) issue, the Work Group recognized more specific and pressing issues, including formation of schools and colleges at UWB/UWT; locations of UW's off-site and online UW programs such as those in Educational Outreach; the authority to name degree programs; oversight of distance learning and residency requirements; undergraduate student cross-campus enrollment; and the plans for campus-specific accreditation of some programs.

UW's mission, comprehensiveness, and research excellence are unique among the public and private universities in Washington State. While we understand that the UW Administration does not want to create separate research-intensive campuses in Bothell and Tacoma, there is the possibility and desire among faculty to work together in research units; this should be encouraged. Research is core to the university's mission, and is a key feature we offer our students at all levels. At the same time, we recognize the importance of work environments conducive to diverse forms of scholarship and to maintaining a sustainable work-life balance. We affirm a commitment to diversity across the three campuses while upholding the mission and values that define UW as a world-class research institution.

Maintaining a culture of clear and strong faculty governance and advisory roles at the UWB and UWT campuses is vital and requires ongoing efforts. One reason for this is the HEC Board's System Design study calling for concentrated enrollment growth at branch campuses of the research universities—both on-campus and online—rather than at entirely new campuses or institutions. Shared governance is a key element of a university's strength and includes but is not limited to faculty involvement in the development and approval of curricula, admissions policies, consultation on budgets, and general matters of academic policy (see UW Handbook Section 13-23. Legislative Authority of the Faculty).

Faculty governance structures have evolved over time in ongoing efforts to address ambiguities, and also require regular review. In the late 1980's and early 1990's, a special committee of the Faculty Senate functioned to address key issues of faculty governance. As the campuses grew, faculty councils were established on the UWB and UWT campuses, and as these local structures grew, there developed an even greater need for coordination among campus faculties. The Faculty Council on Tri-Campus Policy, established in 2001, has played a key role in airing issues of tri-campus coordination, and has designed and now runs a process by which undergraduate programmatic changes on each campus are reviewed and commented on (but cannot be vetoed) by colleagues on the other campuses (or in other schools or colleges). The participation of administrative and student liaisons from each campus has allowed this Council to be a major clearinghouse for issues beyond faculty governance.

Specific Recommendations and Requests

1. In cooperation with the Faculty Secretary, the FCTCP should work out a plan for making itself into a more robust institution for the equal and legitimate representation of the

faculty voice in Seattle, Tacoma, and Bothell as they bear on shared governance of the tri-campus relationship. Recommended changes and new initiatives include the following:

- (a) Adding to the standing roster of council members the immediate past faculty chairs (or chairs emeritus) of UW Bothell and UW Tacoma to leverage their accumulated expertise and ensure continuity in the faculty voice on tri-campus relations;
- (b) Publicizing of the council's work more broadly to Seattle faculty; and
- (c) Convening of annual tri-campus forums that bring together students, faculty, and administration around salient issues while sustaining an ongoing conversation on shared governance in the context of the continually evolving tri-campus relationship. An agenda for the first such forum in 2010-11 should include a discussion of the issues raised in this report; development of a list of issues shared by the three campuses whose management might benefit from improved coordination and clarification of roles and responsibilities across the campuses; and discussion of the concerns raised by the Northwest Commission in its accreditation report and laying out of a plan for addressing them.

These changes will enable the FCTCP to take on a stronger role in brokering conversations between faculty and administration in matters of governance that cut across the campuses.

2. The FCTCP should work out with the UW Senate leadership a plan for designating part of one UW Senate meeting each year for presentation and consideration of issues pertaining to the tri-campus relationship. At a minimum, chancellors of UW Bothell and UW Tacoma would present reports on the state of their respective campuses. Other issues related to the tri-campus relationship would be taken up as circumstances warrant. Inviting chancellors to speak before the Senate, and offering tri-campus issues a regular block of time in the Senate's annual meeting cycle, would raise awareness of the tri-campus relationship among faculty. At the same time, it would acknowledge that campuses are organizationally distinct from schools and colleges, and thus should articulate differently from them in their relationship to the UW Senate and position within the shared governance of the university. Perhaps most importantly, by devoting a part of one meeting each year to tri-campus matters, the UW Senate would signal its resolve that the University sustain an ongoing effort to clarify the nature of the tri-campus relationship as it continues to evolve in the years ahead.

3. The FCTCP should engage the Provost's tri-campus advisory group to identify and publicize the key offices and authorities at each campus responsible for accreditation, student issues (admissions, curriculum, support, and advising), faculty development, research support, budget planning, key infrastructural activities (libraries, computing and communications), and perhaps others such as identifying peer institutions.

4. The FCTCP with support from the Faculty Secretary should examine the Faculty Code to determine needs for further modifications to reflect the changing realities on and across the three campuses. It should report its findings and recommendations to the Chair of the Faculty Senate at the end of the 2010-11 academic year.

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