

## **Virtual Campus Investigation Committee Recommendations**

In June 2015, Chancellor Cathy Sandeen appointed the Virtual Campus investigation Committee (VCIC) with the charge to “Conduct an investigation and issue recommendations to the chancellor regarding establishing the UW Colleges Online and Distance Education Program as a virtual campus within the UW Colleges.” The official charge is as follows:

### *Identify and Investigate:*

- The current processes and structures that make UW Colleges Online operate like a campus and the structures and processes that are unique to UW Colleges Online.
- The structure and designation that best serves UW Colleges Online students, faculty, and staff thereby supporting the vision and mission of the UW Colleges.

### *Recommend:*

- The structure, processes and designation that enables UW Colleges Online to integrate seamlessly and consistently within the UW Colleges campus organizational structure.
- The structure, processes and designation that ensures UW Colleges Online as an integrated and consistent entity within the shared governance and administrative structure of the UW Colleges.

### **Process**

The committee met between July and November 2015 by phone and in person. The VCIC began by identifying areas of concern, policy gaps, inconsistencies, and potential problems as a starting point, then grouped related issues together. Over the course of our meetings, committee members reported on information they collected in response to charges from the committee co-chairs, and all information was considered as part of the process of determining one of three status recommendations: a virtual campus status; no change in status / address issues through policy change; or create a new structure or entity within the institution. The result of that process is outlined in a series of recommendations listed on the next few pages.

The committee then considered the structures and processes that will enable UW Colleges Online to position itself for the future while maintaining an identity within the institution, creating a role for shared governance, and aligning with the mission of the UW Colleges. We make the following overall recommendation for the status of UW Colleges Online:

### **VCIC Recommendation Regarding Status of UW Colleges Online**

The committee’s recommendations below define a structure in key areas of student governance, faculty involvement, identical student processes, policy inclusion and administration very similar to a campus. Based on these recommendations, the committee supports the “virtual” campus designation for UW Colleges Online. This document identifies findings, recommendations, and rationales for this status recommendation.

## Key Findings

In response to the first charge that asked us to identify and investigate the processes and structures that make UW Colleges Online operate like or not like a campus, the VCIC drew several conclusions:

- *Online degree-seeking students are not represented in shared governance.*
- *Online degree-seeking students do not have the same level of rights and responsibilities pertaining to academic actions as campus-based students.*
- *UW Colleges Online faculty and IAS do not have an equitable voice in how the program operates, as faculty and IAS do on a campus through shared governance and service opportunities.*
- *UW Colleges Online Faculty with a predominantly UW Colleges Online appointment do not have the opportunity to serve as representatives of UW Colleges Online in UW Colleges Senate.*
- *UW Colleges Online does not currently fit into existing Senate policy as either a Campus or an Academic Program.*
- *UW Colleges Online has adopted processes that are similar to campus processes, though the governing policies are unclear in their application to UW Colleges Online and, in some cases, conflicting.*
- *UW Colleges Online has unique elements (such as the lead-instructor versus section-instructor relationships) that are not duplicated in other parts of the institution.*

In response to the additional charges that asked the VCIC to make recommendations regarding the structure, processes, and designations that allow UW Colleges Online to be seamlessly integrated into the UW Colleges administrative and shared governance structures, we offer the following recommendations in four areas: overall recommendations, student-specific recommendations, faculty and teaching-staff recommendations, and administration-specific recommendations. A brief rationale for each recommendation is available beginning on page 4.

## Overall Recommendations

1. UW Colleges Online needs to be structured in way that enables it to remain true to the mission of the UW Colleges.
2. Like other UWC Campuses have, UW Colleges Online should develop its own mission and value statements. Those statements should ensure UW Colleges online is fulfilling the academic mission of the UW Colleges while continuing to operate under the cost-recovery and revenue-sharing financial model.
3. UW Colleges Online should be organized and structured to be flexible enough to grow in response to any changing demographics and/or market conditions in ways that support and respect institutional ethos and policy.
4. UW Colleges Online needs to be an integral part of and an included unit within the UW Colleges and identified as such.
5. Online faculty, staff, and students should have comparable opportunities as campus-based faculty, staff and students (governance, scholarships, activities, professional development, ease of registration).

6. UW Colleges Online needs to be governed by the same processes and policies as a campus to ensure that students receive a quality learning experience.
7. UW Colleges Online should continue to participate in the practice of sharing revenue with campuses and departments as a cost recovery unit.

### **Student-Specific Recommendations**

8. Online students should have the opportunity to actively engage in student governance.
9. Online students should be able to form organizations and leverage student segregated fees to support those organizations and activities if they choose.
10. All students should have similar processes and representation in regards to their academic rights and responsibilities (for example, academic actions).
11. Students should be able to seamlessly enroll in both online and campus-based classes.

### **Faculty and Teaching Staff-Specific Recommendations**

12. UW Colleges Online should first and foremost continue to partner with campuses for hiring new faculty and continue to use existing UW Colleges faculty and IAS for staffing classes.
13. Online faculty and staff should be active participants in the decision-making processes including curriculum, budget, appointments, evaluation, and new course development planning.
14. Given VCIC's overall recommendations for greatly increased faculty and staff governance, VCIC recommends that the Senate grant UW Colleges Online full senate representation following the guidelines it uses to calculate membership for current campuses. VCIC recommends that, once this is accomplished, SOPC be removed as a standing Senate committee.
15. VCIC recommends that SSC charge FPSC with reviewing section E 1 and 2 of FPP #501 in conjunction with ongoing revision of FPP #301 regarding faculty merit in order to spell out more specifically the responsibilities and guidelines for positions that are shared between the online program and a campus.
16. The VCIC asserts the need for the formation of a committee made up of online faculty to identify how UW Colleges Online can participate in the faculty tenure, retention, promotion, and merit processes, as well as the merit process for IAS.

### **Administrative-Specific Recommendations**

17. Student affairs and advising processes should remain aligned with campus and centrally-based processes in ways are equitable to both units and meets the needs of students.
18. UW Colleges Online should be structured to provide stability and decrease rates of turnover in administrative and support positions.
19. Non-Online Distance Education (NODE) serves an important role within the Institution and opportunities should be sought to expand it and make it more flexible.
20. UW Colleges Online would benefit by a 501(c)3 foundation paralleling those independent but affiliated foundations which support each UW Colleges campus.

21. The Virtual Campus Investigation Committee recommends UW Colleges Online should continue to maintain its current administrative structure including a Dean, Associate Dean, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Manager/Director of Business Services.
22. UW Colleges Online should work with departments to develop a policy that clarifies the roles and responsibilities for reviewing, updating, and evaluating online classes.

### **Additional Information and Rationale**

Provided below is additional information regarding each recommendation. It includes the rationale behind each recommendation and the VCIC feels strongly that this information be considered during any future implementation.

### **General Recommendations**

1. UW Colleges Online needs to be structured in way that enables it to remain true to the mission of the UW Colleges.

*During its research and deliberations the committee has focused on the mission of the University. To that end, the committee has endeavored to ensure that each of this report's recommendations comports with the standards and spirit of the mission statement:*

*"The University of Wisconsin Colleges is a multi-campus institution committed to high quality educational programs, preparing students for success at the baccalaureate level of education, providing the first two years of a liberal arts general education that is accessible and affordable, providing a single baccalaureate degree that meets local and individual needs, and advancing the Wisconsin Idea by bringing the resources of the University to the people of the state and the communities that provide and support its campuses." Approved by the UW Colleges Senate April 23, 2010. Approved by the UW Board of Regents, June 9, 2011.*

*While new financial realities, educational norms and environments, and the marketplace may be evolving any resultant structural modifications to UW Colleges Online should maintain all elements of "The Wisconsin Idea".*

2. UW Colleges Online should develop its own mission and value statements. Those statements should ensure UW Colleges Online is fulfilling the academic mission of the UW Colleges while continuing to operate under the cost-recovery and revenue-sharing financial model.

*The committee agrees that the mission of the UW Colleges, at this time, drives the decisions and policies of the institution as well as UW Colleges Online; however, given the unique nature and structure of online teaching and learning, the committee recommends that UW Colleges Online could benefit from developing a complementary mission statement (much like our UW Colleges campuses have) that can capture those unique dimensions and be used to guide decision-making, particularly as the unit faces changes in the future and seeks to balance its cost-recovery (and increasingly, a revenue-generating) responsibilities with the meeting the high academic, curricular, and instructional standards of our institution.*

3. UW Colleges Online should be organized and structured to be flexible enough to grow in response to any changing demographics and/or market conditions in ways that support and respect institutional ethos and policy.

*The committee acknowledged that UW Colleges Online is a great asset to the UW Colleges and one of the areas of UW Colleges that is experiencing growth. Given that many institutions are viewing online education as a long term strategy, the market forces are becoming extremely competitive; the committee supports an organizational structure that allows for flexibility and independence to meet these challenges. As part of this recommendation, the committee also agreed that a campus designation would facilitate this by giving UW Colleges Online an organizational structure with a stronger identity with students, faculty, IAS and the marketplace in general. However, it was also acknowledged that the structure of the campus would be similar in many ways to a brick and mortar campus but also different. As the structure is determined, the committee recommends that flexibility be balanced with the institution's mission, objectives and culture.*

4. UW Colleges Online needs to be an integral part of and included unit within the UW Colleges and identified as such.

*It became clear to the committee during the investigation that the position and designation of UW Colleges Online within UW Colleges is unclear. UW Colleges Online currently lacks campus designation, but also does not fit well into the definition of an Academic Program. It was noted that often UW Colleges is left out of initiatives in which campuses are automatically included such the first stages of the Undergraduate Research Grants, Kaplan Awards, and most recently in the Faculty Compensation decisions. This oversight has not been a deliberate action and the UW Colleges administration have been responsive when these questions are raised, but this lack of identity leaves students and shared faculty open to the potential of being overlooked in important initiatives. The campus designation for UW Colleges Online clearly positions it as an included and integral unit within the UW Colleges campus centric culture.*

*Further, the committee believed that a campus designation creates a great market impact in a very competitive environment. Many big schools are stepping into the online market, and while the UW brand is powerful one, it is less impactful without a campus designation such as UW Colleges Online – A Campus of the University of Wisconsin Colleges. It was noted that the quality and brand of UW is already high and a campus designation would allow greater ability to leverage the brand. The committee discussion highlighted the hyper-competitive market for online education and increasingly savvy students signing up for online education; it was viewed that this necessitates the cultivation of an individual identity for UW Colleges Online within the UW Colleges as a way to position itself for the next 5 to 10 years. It was felt that this designation would also ensure the continuing expectation to evaluate and maintain the quality education and student experience that exists within the UW Colleges. Internal issues such as delineation of roles and responsibilities of faculty, students, and UW Colleges Online would be clearly articulated through the implementation of campus structures since the check and balances are already in place. This would also allow greater faculty involvement in areas of curriculum planning, budgets, and academic actions.*

5. Online faculty, staff, and students should have comparable opportunities as campus-based students.

*The committee identified several areas where UW Colleges Online did not operate like a campus, which resulted in lost opportunities for online students, faculty, and staff. Those areas include the following: (note that many of the items on this list warranted their own recommendation)*

- *Participation in shared governance for fully online students.*
- *Ability to create student organizations.*
- *Access to UW Colleges Online only scholarships.*
- *Academic actions process similar to that of a campus.*
- *Ability to participate in decision-making process through service and shared governance.*
- *Access to professional development funds.*
- *Ease of registration in classes, both for campus-based students wanting an online course as well as online students wanting a campus-based course.*

*Recently, UWC Online has taken steps toward providing opportunities similar to brick-and-mortar campuses for online students, faculty, and staff. Those include Kaplan Awards (2014) and Undergraduate Research (2014-2015). These opportunities should be continued and expanded.*

6. UW Colleges Online needs to be governed by the same processes and policies as a campus to ensure that students receive a quality learning experience.

*The committee felt that students and staff should be consistently governed by the same policies that their campus parallels would have. These include consistent evaluation of teaching, curriculum input, and budget input for faculty and teaching staff; academic support, academic actions processes, governance, and ability to form organizations as students. By providing a structure similar to a campus, the processes and policies become clear, as do limits and boundaries. Clear policies will need to be created regarding UWC Online governance responsibilities and thought given specifically to the instances where UWC Online operates differently than a brick-and-mortar campus. It was recognized that many of these processes are currently governed by the Senate Online Policy Committee (SOPC), and the VCIC further recommends dissolving the SOPC when UWC Online has its governance structure in place.*

7. UW Colleges Online should continue to participate in the practice of sharing revenue with campuses and departments as a cost recovery unit.

*Regardless of status, UW Colleges Online a) partners with campuses, drawing from the human capital and professional resources campuses offers; b) partners with departments, benefitting from the professional and pedagogical support and other labor of departments to train, mentor, and evaluate its instructors. This arrangement will not change in the near future; for the overall financial health of the institution and as part of equitable resource sharing, the online program will continue the practice of sharing revenue with campuses, departments, and the institution moving into the future.*

## Student-Specific Recommendations

8. Online students should have the opportunity to actively engage in student governance.

*Campus-based students in the UW Colleges have the opportunity to participate in student governance as provided by Wisconsin statutes and UW System policy. These provide student representation in shared governance structures and creates institutionalized processes for input and cooperation, benefitting both students (those elected and those being represented) and the institution. UW Colleges Online students do not currently participate in shared governance in any substantial way, but anecdotal evidence suggests that there would be significant interest. A formally elected student government representing UW Colleges Online students will provide these opportunities for involvement, within Online as well as in institutional governance through appointing representatives to Student Governance Council. A virtual campus model would also allow UW Colleges Online students the opportunity for UW System-level representation through UW System Student Reps.*

9. Online students should be able to form organizations and leverage student segregated fees to support those organizations and activities if they choose.

*UW Colleges students at campuses are currently able to set allocable segregated fees and determine how they are distributed, within policies set by the Board of Regents. These fees can be used to support clubs, activities, and services to students. While the needs of online students in these areas may look very different from a campus, online students should have the opportunity through an elected student government to determine whether segregated fees are to be implemented and how they should be used.*

10. All students should have similar processes and representation in regards to their academic rights and responsibilities (for example, academic actions).

*UW Colleges Online degree seeking students (who do not have a brick and mortar campus affiliation) do not have the opportunity to participate in shared governance as described in the first recommendation of "Student-Specific Recommendations." Therefore, they do not have representation on governance committees such as Academic Actions and Curriculum. The committee feels that these students should have the same rights and responsibilities when it comes to academic procedures. For example, in the policy currently governing Academic Actions for online students, students seeking an appeal through an academic actions process must appeal to the Senate Online Policy Committee, a committee of the UW Colleges Senate. This committee is made up of Faculty, Academic Staff and students who are not all required to have experience teaching, working, or taking online course work. The committee feels that UW Colleges Online degree seeking students should have the same opportunity to have student peers serve on governance and that appeals are heard by representatives teaching or working with the program.*

11. Students should be able to seamlessly enroll in both online and campus-based classes.

*Currently students enrolled on a brick and mortar campus can enroll in an online course at the same time they enroll for their campus courses. Online students are not able to enroll in a campus based course without contacting the Online Student Affairs Office who coordinates with the campus and the Central Registrar's Office. The committee encourages the institution to explore ways to eliminate these barriers so that UWC Online students can have more academic options.*

## Faculty and Teaching Staff-Specific Recommendations

12. UW Colleges Online should first and foremost continue to partner with campuses for hiring new faculty and continue to use existing UWC faculty and IAS for staffing classes.

*While VCIC has found that, in many ways, UW Colleges Online is similar to brick and mortar campuses, there are also distinct differences. In a manner unique to all other campuses, UW Colleges Online serves the institution as a whole in providing revenue sharing and also partnering with campuses in funding split appointments. Especially for smaller campuses, continuance of this policy of splitting appointments (and distributing costs) is critical, as it allows for brick and mortar campuses to have faculty expertise in departments on those campuses which otherwise might not be able to support a full position. Given our increasing reliance on highly skilled and experienced IAS instructors, it is in the best interest of the institution to make sure that we can provide IAS with sustainable course loads so that we can retain them as members of UW Colleges.*

*Further, there was much discussion about the existential question of whether or not all UW Colleges faculty should be part of a brick and mortar campus or whether a virtual campus could begin to hire fully online faculty. There was no agreement reached on this question but there was a consensus that, currently, the conditions for hiring fully online faculty were inadequate to support and engage tenure track faculty and the committee does not support the hiring of faculty with a 100% online appointment at this time. A critical part of the tenure process is acclimating faculty to the ethos, mission, and culture of the UW Colleges.*

*If such hires occurred in the future, there would need to be a far more robust sense of community and connection within UW Colleges Online. VCIC believes that the creation of shared governance bodies and committees may lead to this sense of community and further recommends that UW Colleges Online work to create opportunities for its faculty and staff to gather and meet. VCIC recommends that the decision as to whether or not to hire fully online faculty be revisited in the future, in light of progress in establishing this robust online virtual community.*

*Finally, VCIC acknowledges that there may be limited exceptions to this; in particular, it does support the possibility of a fully online appointment in exceptional circumstances for faculty who have already achieved tenure and are fully socialized to the environment of the institution.*

13. Online faculty and staff should be active participants in the decision-making processes including curriculum, budget, appointments, evaluation, and new course development planning.

*Regardless of status, the committee felt that faculty, staff, and students should have an increased role in the decision-making processes at UW Colleges Online. With a virtual campus status, this would occur by the use of committees (Steering, Curriculum, Budget, Appointments, Evaluation, etc) as determined by a UW Colleges Online campus constitution. Similar to a brick-and-mortar campus, these committees would be composed of faculty, staff, and students who teach or take classes online and have a vested interest in UW Colleges Online programs and structure. The committee felt that an increased faculty, staff, and student voice in decisions would help ensure that UW Colleges Online virtual campus programs and curriculum align with the mission, identity, and ethos of the UW Colleges.*

14. Given VCIC's overall recommendations for greatly increased faculty and staff governance, VCIC recommends that the Senate grant UW Colleges Online full senate representation following the guidelines it uses to calculate membership for current campuses. VCIC recommends that, once this is accomplished, SOPC be removed as a standing Senate committee.

*UW Colleges Online began as an experimental program under the auspices of NODE. Even at that time, it was critical that there be Senate oversight of the program and the Senate Online Program Committee (SOPC) was created. However, as UW Colleges Online has grown, the amount of oversight necessary has become far too great for the SOPC to effectively fulfill its charge. In its stead, VCIC has recommended significant expansion of shared governance within a virtual campus model instead. If accepted, there will be no need for SOPC. There will, however, still be a need for Senate representation. If UW Colleges Online becomes a virtual campus, it should fully share in faculty and staff governance and be represented in the same manner as other campuses.*

15. VCIC recommends that SSC charge FPSC with reviewing section E 1 and 2 of FPP #501 in conjunction with ongoing revision of FPP #301 regarding faculty merit in order to spell out more specifically the responsibilities and guidelines for positions that are shared between the online program and a campus.

*Under a virtual campus model, UW Colleges Online would be subject to existing senate policy regarding shared positions. The Senate Steering Chair will recommend charging the Faculty Professional Standards Committee with revising Faculty Personnel Policy 501 to review, revise, and formalize the expectations for service by tenure-line faculty who have split appointments between the online campus and brick-and-mortar campuses. The current policy is rarely used and was designed for exceptional circumstances. A virtual campus mode, however, will result in a larger number of faculty with split appointments. The committee should work to spell out expectations for faculty performance and faculty evaluation of service in order to account for the unique structure of an 'online' campus.*

16. The VCIC asserts the need for the formation of a committee made up of online faculty to identify how the Online Program can participate in the faculty tenure, retention, promotion, and merit processes, as well as the merit process for IAS.

*Given the absolutely critical function of merit and retention/promotion review for tenure-line faculty and the importance of providing regular performance evaluations to all instructors, the VCIC requests the UW Colleges leadership in consultation with the Senate Steering Committee convene a committee of faculty with appointments split between UW Colleges Online and a brick-and-mortar campus to develop recommendations (and or draft policy language) that would reflect an appropriate role for the online program in faculty and IAS merit, promotion, and retention. This group should be appointed and convened immediately. At least one department chair with online teaching experience should be among the members. The committee should address ongoing concerns about the nature of online teaching including the complications that emerge in evaluating instructors of scaled sections designed by a 'lead' instructor and the traditionally lower response rate of online student SSIs.*

## Administrative-Specific Recommendations

17. Student affairs and advising processes should remain aligned with campus and centrally-based processes in ways that are equitable to both units and meets the needs of students.

*The committee discussed the current advising procedures and assigned loads for the current Student Affairs staff. The VCIC believes that as the institution changes in response to the budget cuts and resulting consolidation, the brick and mortar campuses will not be able to accommodate the previous level of support of academic advising for their students taking online courses. Therefore, the advising need for online students (who are based on a campus) will increase. This recommendation reflects this observation and intends to ensure that the UW Colleges Online is able to staff itself to accommodate this increased need within the new intuitional Student Affairs paradigm.*

18. UW Colleges Online should be structured to provide stability and decrease rates of turnover in administrative and support positions.

*The committee notes that due to the competition and high demand for professional personnel at all levels with online expertise and experience, UW Colleges Online has encountered instability and high rates of personnel turnover. Accordingly, the committee recommends an analysis of the relationship between revenue targets and reinvestment in the human resources of UW Colleges Online. It is noted that efficiency exists in avoiding the large number of searches for and training of new personnel over relatively short periods of time. The committee suggests that reinvestment in terms of incentives or salary adjustments could very well lead to stability through reduced turnover of UW Colleges Online personnel, while enhancing future recruitment efforts to meet expansion needs.*

19. Non-Online Distance Education (NODE) serves an important role within the Institution and opportunities should be sought to expand it and make it more flexible.

*A recommendation has been made by the Provost's office to move the NODE program (with existing director and budget) to be a free-standing program under the Office of Academic Affairs. This change will also take into account the BISC reorganization that will shift the reporting structure of the 13 campus ITS staff to the Director of NODE. It has also been suggested that the name of the program will be changed to the Office of Distance Learning, rather than the Non-Online Distance Education Program. Since this relates to UW Colleges Online, the following is recommended*

- a) A process/communication structure should be put in place to continue collaboration on curriculum. Many times NODE can be an alternative to online and vice versa. The NODE office will also be taking on some of the facets of organizing campus point to point and BAAS courses, so it's imperative to have communication between all programs for best use of resources.*
- b) The NODE budgets will remain 103 based as a program and are already compartmentalized from UW Colleges Online.*
- c) The NODE director and program support position will remain within the Office of Distance learning.*

20. UW Colleges Online would benefit by a 501(c)3 foundation paralleling those independent but affiliated foundations which support each UW Colleges campus.

*Each UW Colleges Campus has an independent foundation "affiliated" with it. Each takes the form of a Section 501(c) (3) entity that allows for federal tax exemption of nonprofit organizations. Such UW Colleges-focused foundations can be impactful in providing student scholarships, professional*

*development funds and discretionary funds for desired campus programs to enrich students' educational experience. It is suggested for consideration that any such foundation, should it be established, include ex officio, non-voting members such as the Dean, or designee, a faculty/staff representative and a student representative.*

21. The Virtual Campus Investigation Committee recommends UW Colleges Online should continue to maintain its current administrative structure including a Dean, Associate Dean, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, and Manager/Director of Business Services.

*The committee acknowledged that the deliberate effort on the part of the central administration to structure the administrative team to a Dean, Associate Dean, and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs has had a positive impact on UW Colleges Online. It is clear that this structure has contributed to the increasing positive interactions UW Colleges Online has developed with campuses and departments in recent times. The peer to peer interactions with Deans, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans for Student Affairs, and Business Services have proven to be invaluable for the growth of UW Colleges Online as well as the collaboration and cooperation engendered with campuses and departments. It is the committee's view given the regional model currently being implemented that this structure should be maintained since UW Colleges Online will now serve, partner with and interact with 4 regions, 13 campuses and 18 departments and programs. For all intents and purposes, UW Colleges Online is already regionalized by serving all 13 campuses through revenue sharing, partnering with campuses through shared faculty positions, and providing revenue to the central office that serves all campuses. Since UW Colleges Online is serving in this capacity and working towards growth it requires a robust centralized staff and administration to accommodate these functions.*

*Given the size and complexity of the UW Colleges Online budget the Virtual Campus Investigation Committee recommends UW Colleges Online should continue to maintain the current budgetary process and specifically the position of Manager/Director of Business Services.*

*Based on the UW Colleges tuition revenue report for FY 2015-2016 UW Colleges Online currently has predicted revenue larger than the Southwest region and the largest campus in the UW Colleges. Due to the size, complexity and importance of the financial services it is clear that UW Colleges Online should maintain an onsite-dedicated position to oversee the financial services especially as it moves to a campus designated model. Once again since UW Colleges Online will now serve, partner with and interact with 4 regions, 13 campuses and 18 departments/programs for all intents and purpose UW Colleges Online is already regionalized. Having the peer-to-peer relationship with regional personnel will clearly have a positive impact for both the institution and UW Colleges Online within this regional model.*

*The committee noted that UW Colleges Online has been impacted by the current consolidation analysis, recommendations and implementations brought about by the UW Colleges budget reduction. These impacts include*

1. *Several administrative functions have been consolidated with the central office including admissions, financial aid, veteran certification, recruitment and outbound communication flow.*
2. *Marketing, Business Services, and HR functions are currently under consideration for consolidation.*
3. *The consolidation of the UW Colleges Online One-Stop center as the UW Colleges consolidated Solution Center has already been implemented.*
4. *UW Colleges Online personnel losses. UW Colleges Online has lost personnel in Student Affairs and Business Services directly related to the uncertainty of the impact of the budget reductions..*

5. *Due to the consolidation analysis UW Colleges Online has been unable to initiate the search for a Business Services Manager or a Financial Specialist.*

23. UW Colleges Online should work with departments to develop a policy that clarifies the roles and responsibilities for reviewing, updating, and evaluating online classes.

*The committee recognized that tension may exist between the instructional design team and departmental or faculty developers. The committee would like to have clear delineation of responsibilities for departments (content experts) and instructional design (online learning experts) and a process and Senate policy to follow in the event of conflict between the two units. Regardless of the future structure of UW Colleges Online, the committee also felt that all departments should develop online class visitation policies and course review policies to ensure that online courses are consistent with academic department course guides and learning outcomes.*

### **UW Colleges Community and Senate Feedback**

There was not extensive feedback from the greater UW College community on the draft report. The committee acknowledges that there was a short turn-around time for feedback and some people may have preferred time for a discussion during their campus collegium. Following the UWC Senate meeting, the committee did add a recommendation that the roles and responsibilities between Online and the departments should be clarified. There are clearer delineations between departments and brick-and-mortar campuses, which were born from both policy and historical practice. Due to unique relationships that exist in UWC Online (lead / section instructors, content experts / instructional designers), it seemed prudent to ask that UWC Online work with departments and the UWC Senate to outline these roles and responsibilities in a more formal manner.

The feedback that the committee did receive followed a few overall themes. First and foremost, the UWC community wants UWC Online to remain an integral part of the institution. The importance of revenue sharing was highlighted more than once. Additionally, there were some concerns about UWC Online eclipsing or breaking away from the UW Colleges, though there was also noted appreciation that the recommendations carried a strong sentiment of maintaining the relationships between UWC Online and brick-and-mortar campuses.

There was frustration with recommendation #21, specifically the maintenance of a separate Dean, Associate Dean, and Business Administrator for UWC Online in light of the regionalization of other campuses. The committee had considered the question “if UWC Online becomes a campus, what region would it fit into?” The committee felt that the population served by UWC Online included students from across the state, and therefore UWC Online did not fit well into a smaller geographic region. The rationale in #21 was revised to include the functions and services that would be centralized similar to all other brick-and-mortar campuses.

Several UWC community members had comments and questions about implementation of the recommendations if they are accepted by the Chancellor. More than one concern was raised about the demands and evaluation of faculty member’s service to UWC Online, including who would be “expected” to serve a virtual campus. The committee recognizes that they stopped short of specifics for implementation, though many of these ideas were discussed. The committee strongly encourages the Chancellor to involve faculty members, departments, and the UWC Senate in implementation.

It was also noted that any implementation will need to be thoughtful and focused, and one commenter suggested that the Administration consider compensating implementation working groups over the summer when teaching and service demands are lower for many faculty members. There was also a question of implementation costs and the short-term budget impacts to the UWC Colleges and UWC Online revenue. The committee does note that the UWC Senate will be revising many policies in light of the new regionalized structure. It may be possible to integrate the required policy changes with other necessary revisions.

Finally, there was positive feedback regarding the draft report as well. The committee encourages the Administration to continue to seek input from the broader UWC community during implementation if the recommendations are accepted.