

**Climate Perspectives vis-à-vis May 29, 2015 JFC Actions
for June 4 BOR meetings**

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1. In the context of discussing campus climate, I must address the current situation facing us—at UWM and more broadly across UWS. This is one of the more difficult and important addresses I have ever given. There is likely no ‘win’ in my talk—and I’ll apologize in advance to you, no matter what your position. I’m going to make an appeal that is intended to be positive and constructive, one that underscores what I hope is in the best interest of students, their families, UWM, UWS, and the state of Wisconsin. With that background, I’ll move into my comments.
2. I first recognize that the May 29, 2015 JFC Omnibus Motion still awaits action by both Senate and Assembly chambers of the legislature, and then moves on to final review and approval by the Governor. It is my hope that as the entire legislature debates the Motion, we can achieve consensus among the BOR, UWS, and campus administration, faculty and staff that will, collectively, influence the legislature to enable the great academic institutions that constitute UWS to succeed and eventually prosper. As you all know, the stakes are remarkably high, given the central educational,

research, community involvement, and workforce and economic development roles that our institutions play in our respective communities and regions and across the state and beyond.

3. Because we are in the Climate portion of my talk, I think it will be helpful to talk specifically about where we are and where I hope we can go. By virtue of my previous role as the Chancellor's Designee for Campus Climate, I'm quite familiar with UWM's 2011 vision statement which specified that we would become, "A best place to learn and work for students, faculty, and staff...". At that time, we were cognizant of the importance of climate and the challenges that had long existed on campus (e.g., the 2008 UWM Rankin Climate Survey and numerous other reports and planning documents aimed at addressing morale, climate, and their consequences).
4. Shortly after this, in 2012, as part of a comprehensive UWS Enterprise Risk Management exercise, *campus morale and climate were identified as the number 1 risk factor at UW-Milwaukee*. The concern at that time revolved around faculty and staff retention.
5. It's in this context, especially, that recent budget events related to the removal of tenure and indefinite status from state statute and limitations on shared governance and

faculty involvement on search committees have raised serious concern among our faculty and staff about our campus climate.

6. Given this history, it will be difficult to motivate and retain our existing exceptional faculty and staff and to attract new talent if there is uncertainty regarding their status and role. My background is in organizational management and strategic planning—with over a decade in corporate management positions, 30 years of research and consulting with leading national and global business, educational, healthcare and non-profit firms, and 26 years at UWM, most of it in administrative leadership roles. I am not sharing this background in any form of self-aggrandizement; rather, to merely show I have both internal and external perspectives. From a business and academic background and based on specific knowledge of UWM and UWS, especially my research on employee turnover and organizational decline, I've learned a couple of key things that are relevant to our situation. One thing is that academic institutions aren't well known for their agility—some actually argue quite the opposite. We do need more dynamism and to be receptive to change. But, I've also learned that there is a right way—and optimal way—to change. If we get this wrong, it can be highly problematic. We should never lose sight of the fact that top talent (including our best and brightest faculty and staff) always has options. Many other universities are only

too eager to poach our talent, and I cannot emphasize enough the seriousness of this situation. Simply put, without our faculty and staff, we cannot teach, conduct research, or engage in the community. (example given here about U-Mass-Lowell president's comment about talent migration from WI).

7. Hence, my concern lies with both the impact of the budget cut and the effect of the uncertainty on our faculty, staff, and administrative ranks and our ability to attract, retain, motivate and engage our talent. The risk is that we will lose great employees who have created a remarkable institution through their research, teaching, and service. The related risk is to the work that we do: workforce talent and economic development, life transformations, research that matters, and community engagements. More broadly, of course, we must make certain that the value of our degrees and our institutional academic credibility will not be compromised.
8. My appeal to you, then, is this: Please help us maintain and preserve the core academic principles upon which we have succeeded.
 - a. First, can you please follow through with actions to assure faculty that we will protect faculty tenure and indefinite status for our staff. The hallmarks of intellectual freedom

and the ability to pursue our work in support of our core values of education, research, and service are paramount.

b. Second, preservation of shared governance as a core value and way of operating will be important to maintain, and your explicit support of this will go a long way. In both actions during these BOR meetings and in the BOR task forces on tenure and shared governance, there are opportunities for these supportive actions.

9. I think, but do not assume, that I speak for all of my colleagues in leadership here today in this request for us to support and enable the dedicated, renowned faculty and staff who make our institutions what they are. We have to get this right.

10. Thank you for your consideration and support for UWS. We all share the common goal of student success, continuing to make a positive difference in all that we do, and upholding the core tenets and values of the Wisconsin Idea.

11. Everything in my presentation today, to this point, rests upon our foundation of campus climate and our culture. Likewise, going forward, the vitality of UWM and the entire UWS depends on our collective climate and culture—that each and every one of us can positively influence. Let's move on to discuss this issue of vitality....