

“I’M GOING TO A WHITE SCHOOL”:
THE HISTORY OF MULTICULTURAL PROGRAMMING AND INITIATIVES
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE

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History 489
May 16, 2012

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the history of multicultural programming at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire specifically, and the University of Wisconsin System generally. Its' purpose is to analyze the university's effectiveness at reaching and retaining multicultural students over the past 60 years. It includes a brief introduction of secondary source material, a discussion of the 1965 Higher Education Act, and the implementation of mandated UW-system initiatives versus UW-Eau Claire's. It will be determined that UW-Eau Claire, compared to other system schools, has continually been a back runner in the movement to reach equity and which has had lasting effect into today.

Introduction

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire recognizes diversity as one of its highest priorities in its ongoing mission of excellence. We believe in the importance of acknowledging and engaging with differences—those of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social and economic class, ability/disability, age, religion, and more—within our campus community and academic work.¹

-University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Diversity Statement

It was the fifth day of 2011 freshman orientation. I was standing in the check-in line handing out information binders to the students and parents while perusing the crowd with my eyes. I noticed an African American female from Chicago² waiting in line with wide eyes that scattered about the sea of white freshmen standing in her midst. Her and her family's unease with the situation could be read on their faces from a mile away. I leaned over to my friend Josephine, the only African-American on the orientation staff, and pointed the girl out to her. She replied, "Don't worry Meghann, I got it." After a ten minute talk with the female student, Josephine returned sharing with me this girl's fears of going to an "all-white" school.

This label of UW-Eau Claire as an "all-white" school struck me hard. Being white, I never truly examined my surroundings being defined as uncomfortable. My white working class background meshed with the majority of students I was constantly immersed within. It led me to want to examine just how racially and ethnically diverse Eau Claire (in terms of the city and the university) really was the following fall. By simply walking around campus I saw a sea of white students with a smattering of Southeast Asian American students followed by one—maybe two

¹ "University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Diversity." <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/about/statement.htm> (accessed March 29, 2012).

² At orientation, students fill out name tags with their name and hometown.

if I was in the right place at the right time—African American students and possibly the occasional American Indian or Latino/a student. When I went on the UWEC website, on the other hand, I noticed diversity in an array of promotional materials and photographs that displayed a radically different insight into the way campus actually looked (See Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Students at UW-Eau Claire



This banner highlights shows four out of twelve students of color equaling to be a perceived 33% multicultural student population. In reality, multicultural students at UWEC equal approximately 8% of students.

Source: “About Us,” University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, <http://www.uwec.edu/aboutus.htm> (accessed 4 November, 2011).

Accordingly, it was easier for me to now understand a feeling of deception by a multicultural³ student if they had not visited the campus before they arrived at orientation.⁴ It made me curious as to what support the campus had for multicultural students and how successful these programs and initiatives had been since UWEC was still a primarily white institution. Were other institutions in the University of Wisconsin System facing similar challenges? Was the

³ Throughout this paper I will use the term multicultural to refer to domestic US citizens who identify themselves as non-white/full European ancestry. This includes Southeast Asian Americans, African Americans, American Indians, Hispanics/Latino/as, and persons of self-identified mixed races. It is the current term used by UW-System to refer to minority students/students of color, and the one I deemed most appropriate for the paper.

⁴ The “About Us” page does have quick facts about the University and the cultural available, but it is primarily raw data with little depth/context.

implementation of programs successful at some system schools but not others? Is the attainment and retention of multicultural students a national issue?

The examination of multicultural programming and the experiences of multicultural students in higher education had most popularly been examined within the past ten years. In *Improving Intergroup Relations in Higher Education: A Critical Examination of the Influence of Educational Interventions on Racial Bias*, Mark E. Engberg concluded after the passage of the Higher Education Acts, a great influx of multicultural students flooded institutions that previously had little diversity which created racial bias due to lack of intergroup experience. Thus, higher education institutions needed to adapt quickly to appropriately meet the needs of students in a very limited time span. As Matthew J. Mayhew, Heidi E. Grunwald and Eric L. Dey determined in their analysis *Curriculum Matters: Creating a Positive Climate for Diversity from the Student Perspective*, not only was the need for student support services great, but also a revision of curriculum by the 1990s. Lastly, in *The Contribution of Faculty of Color to Undergraduate Education*, by Paul D. Umbach, he further stressed the impact faculty members directly had on the experience of multicultural student experience and success. Thus, it is important to examine the effectiveness of UWEC's programming when determining why the institution is one of the least diverse in the UW System.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how UWEC's actions towards achieving a racially equitable community⁵ compares to initiatives at both a system and national level. It will be determined throughout this paper, UWEC as an institution is neither on the cutting edge of multicultural programming/initiatives, nor is it completely passive in its efforts for creating a

⁵ In this paper, racially equitable is defined as having similar percentages of multicultural student success and access compared to white students.

more welcoming community. UWEC will be quick to respond to system initiated policies promptly and actively maintain programs as long as funding allows it to continue. The early bird campuses on these issues gets the worm...or in this case, the multicultural students (Oshkosh, Platteville, Whitewater were always first to implement new programming, thus building reputations for themselves as “multicultural friendly” and attracting the majority of these students early on). Lastly, it will be concluded the same problems at UWEC that were being addressed in the 1960s still exist and need to be resolved at the institution.⁶

Higher Education Act 1965

The 1960s proved a progressive time period in which people of color fought for their rights guaranteed to them by the U.S. Constitution. The landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson “prohibited discrimination in public places, provided for the integration of schools and other public facilities, and made employment discrimination illegal.” Like many other areas in life, after the 1964 Act, multicultural students were still finding it difficult to fund/be accepted at many desegregated institutions of higher education. However, the success of historically black institutions, in terms of profits, made legislators and school administrators tempted to get a cut of the profits that could be made from these students.⁷ Thus in 1965, the Higher Education Act was signed into law by President Johnson. UWEC qualified for funding under the act because it served low income/at-risk/multicultural, students making it a Part A “Strengthening Institution.” Title III of the act specifically targeted the issues multicultural students were having from obtaining college

⁶ This includes, but is not limited to high school graduation rates, recruitment, financial aid, and students feeling a sense of community on campus.

⁷ , House of Representatives Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, *The unique role and mission of historically black colleges and universities*, 100 Cong., 2nd sess., 1988, 6.

degrees, financing being key. Thus, federal money was able to be allocated to systems and institutions actively pursuing enrollment of the students.

Funds may be used for planning, faculty development, and establishing endowment funds. Administrative management, and the development and improvement of academic programs also are supported. Other projects include joint use of instructional facilities, construction and maintenance, and student service programs designed to improve academic success, including innovative, customized, instruction courses designed to help retain students and move the students rapidly into core courses and through program completion, which may include remedial education and English language instruction.

Institutions would then be able to create programs and initiatives to cater to the needs of these students, but at the same time could use the funds to improve other parts that may indirectly affect them (such as the building maintenance). The money proved an enticing incentive to bringing multicultural students to campus. This funding would prove critical to the University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin State University Systems as racial issues in higher education was thrown to the forefront in 1968.⁸

Race Becomes a Hot Topic for Wisconsin and the University Systems

Wisconsin was no exception for racial hostility during the 20th century. Formally segregated housing communities, such as the Fairbanks Flats, were built in Beloit; socially segregated housing sprouted in the urban areas of Madison and Milwaukee. This segregation eventually turned into heated protests in Milwaukee from 1962 to 1968—the most militant of which occurred in 1967 due to the city’s lack of response to the housing and educational crisis. Accordingly, with the majority the University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin State University

⁸ Higher Education Act 1965, *Title III-Part A Strengthening Institutions*, US Department of Education <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iduestitle3a/index.html> (accessed 12 February, 2012).

system's students of color coming from these areas of the state, many of the new students had taken part in the protest and obtained knowledge on tactical strategies to acquire their rights.⁹

When these students of color began to attend UW and WSU schools, the students began to examine their surroundings in a similar way to Milwaukee. Thus, many racially homogenous groups began to form for both entertainment and social activist purposes on campus. Students formulated formal outlines for administrators as to how they could better meet the needs of multicultural students to make the campus climate welcoming, but in many cases, student demands were unmet. As extreme examples of protest in Milwaukee were finally met with progress, some distressed students at WSU-Oshkosh attempted similar tactics in order to have their voices finally heard.

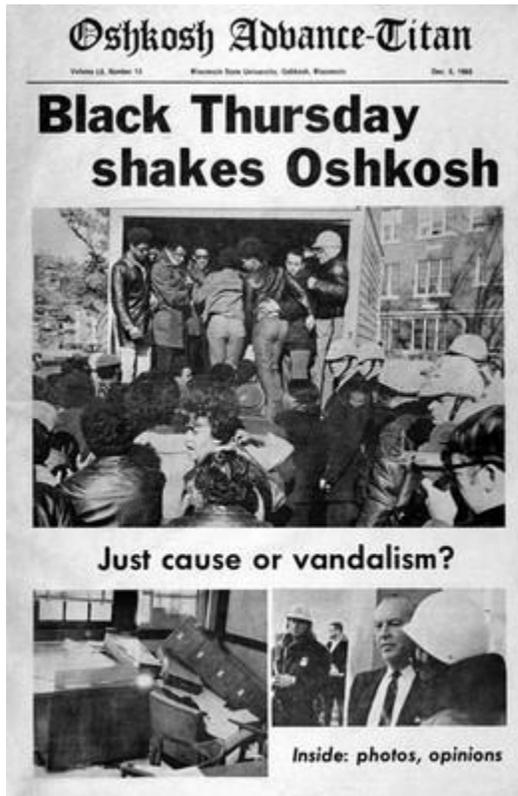
On November 21, 1968, known as "Black Thursday"¹⁰, a group of African American students planned a peaceful protest of the administration in return for a black student union, black instructors/programming, greater financial aid packages, and funding for black presenters on campus. Eventually, the protest moved inside the administration building into Oshkosh President Roger Guiles' office, where students were denied, even a review of their demands. In

⁹ "Efforts at reforming segregation in Milwaukee focused on segregated housing and schools. In August 1967, after five years of inaction by city officials, the NAACP Youth Council marched to Kosciuszko Park (in a predominantly white neighborhood) to protest the Common Council's refusal to pass an open housing ordinance. Alderperson Vel Phillips had first introduced open housing legislation in March of 1962 and continued to submit it to the council for approval despite being repeatedly voted down. The August 1967 march expressed the frustration of the black community but also drew the wrath of three to five thousand white residents, who shouted obscenities and threw objects at the marchers. Father Groppi, a white Catholic priest, was an important figure in the civil rights movement, playing an instrumental role in dramatizing the segregated housing situation in Milwaukee through his frequent demonstrations and arrests. Daily demonstrations continued throughout the winter of 1967-68." "Desegregation and Civil Rights," Wisconsin Historical Society, http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-049/?action=more_essay; (accessed 13 March , 2012).

¹⁰ This is the first example of students of color in mass reacting to racial injustice. It does not mean there were not examples of racial prejudice previous to this. For example at WSU-Platteville in 1962, the President noted an African American dummy hanging from a tree on campus that was removed before the general student population could view it. US commission on Civil Rights Wisconsin State Committee, *The Black Student in the Wisconsin State Universities System, October 1971*, 35.

turn a *minority* of the students reacted in anger running around the building destroying campus property.¹¹

Figure 2. Black Thursday



Source: “Black Thursday.” University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. www.uwosh.edu/african_am/about-the-minor-1/history-of-program/black-Thursday (6 January 2012).

The next day almost every African American student (only 19 had “sufficient enough” alibies) was expelled from the University as conspirators to the property damage. The decision to expel such a large number of students was because, as President Guiles testified, “All black people look alike.”¹² This caused not only local, but national outrage. News outlets as far a New

York covered the incident, but by far the press out of Milwaukee and Madison offered the most coverage revealing the injustice present in the situation. “...a special hearing had revealed that less than half of the accused students had actually been in the ransacked office...no one in the official capacity...the police captain, nor the university president and his associates was able to precisely identify the students who did the damage.” The 19 students, “...notified the school administration Dec 13 in a petition that they would leave the school if the suspended students

¹¹ University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, *Black Thursday*. University Archives. Oshkosh, Wisconsin. (Folder 6, Box 2).

¹² Ibid.

were expelled.” In turn protests arose in Oshkosh by white students under the lead of faculty member David Roth and in Milwaukee by both family members of the students as well as the organized civil rights leaders. The cases were eventually brought to court under Judge James E. Doyle, in which he declared the Board of Regents responsible for deciding the ultimate punishment. The system Regents took a stance of concern, but ultimately supported president Guiles decision and expelled the students. The majority of students (55%), according to a WSU-O poll also agreed with the President’s action, but also overwhelmingly (57%) felt, “the punishment was decided on the basis of color, guilt by association, or both.” Lastly, 74% of those polled said the students should not be readmitted, thus, exemplifying the prejudice toward multicultural students on campus. A continued sense of discontent remained by students of color toward both WSU-Oshkosh specifically and the Board of Regents generally. As a result, multicultural students began looking to other historically black universities to attend or simply no longer wished to attend many state schools in the following years.¹³

Eau Claire’s Response to Black Students in the Wisconsin State University System

With a noticeable amount of black students lacking in the system, and by the urging of the US Commission on Civil Rights, the Regents met to discuss “The Black Student in the Wisconsin State Universities System,” on October 1971. The goal of meeting was to make sure “The WSU system... maintain at least the present number of out-of-state ...black students while enlarging the number of Wisconsin black students to bring the ratio 85% Wisconsin residents and 15% out of state.” This, in turn would raise the current number in the system of eligible black students from .6% to 2% (In terms of black student population WSU-EC lagged behind

¹³ Lessons from Oshkosh, *Milwaukee Journal*, December 24, 1968; Blacks to Quit Oshkosh Over Ouster of 90, *Milwaukee Sentinel*, December 23, 1968; “Student Opinion Survey April 1969” November 21, 1968 Incident, Records 1968-1971 Box 2 UWO Series 1.

with only 50 students while Oshkosh (even after the 1968 incident) had 74 enrolled. WSU-EC did, however, have a larger number of black faculty members (three) and staff (nine) compared to WSU-Oshkosh's two black faculty. It is the first time in WSU history the idea of recruiting and retaining multicultural students was discussed as an important matter of concern and it was also at this meeting when the first comparative analysis of multicultural programming and initiatives existing between the other WSU institutions was discussed.¹⁴

The system-wide concerns presented at this meeting would resonate in similar meetings over the next four decades, highlighting both the difficulty experienced when trying to meet the needs of multicultural students, but also the ineffective and sometimes lackadaisical initiatives taken by the system. The top concerns of black students were identified by the Regents by studies on four different WSU campuses. The top concerns were as follows:

1. *Fitting in socially with the campus and the community the campus is located*

The report detailed the importance the rural white settings had on students, "Black students feel they are regarded as intruders in the Wisconsin State University host communities....it is difficult for townspeople and students to see why they should want to come...foreign students receive a warmer reception...than do native Wisconsin blacks." The idea of police discrimination in college towns echoed as well in the report, there was no information about WSU-EC specifically, but it was highly probable it existed with a white population at the time 99% white. On campus specifically, the greatest desire was to have a separate student union area to socialize, which WSU-EC did not deliver on until the mid-1970s with a multicultural center

¹⁴ US Commission on Civil Rights Wisconsin State Committee, *The Black Student in the Wisconsin State Universities System* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1971), 66; 66.

room in the Davies Center (later moved to the Old Library). This largely was supported by the Regents because, “As black students began to reach the Wisconsin State Universities in the early 1960s they quickly sensed the campus and community attitudes required them to hang together.”¹⁵

2. *Financing their education*

It should be noted this is a universal issue for many prospective students on campuses. The 1965 Higher Education Act previously discussed was enacted to target both low income and multicultural students to bridge the gap in higher education. But, like many acts, the financing for the legislation to be fully enacted trailed behind the need. At this time many of the scholarships available for multicultural students were primarily national and very competitive.

3. *Having administrators/faculty/staff of color available to work with student concerns*

“Black students express lack of confidence that there is any person on campus whom they can go with the certainty of receiving understanding and sensitive help on a broad spectrum of problems.” It is for this reason many students decided to transfer to schools that offered this guidance or dropped out completely in many cases.¹⁶

When the Regents discussed recruitment and retention concerns, WSU-EC President Leonard Haas replied, “The recommendation is ideal to be sought, but every institution is first and foremost a regional institution,” suggesting WSU-EC could not possibly be held to the same standards as those schools with communities that encompass greater numbers of multicultural students (or in this case specifically, black students). WSU-Stout took this further by suggesting

¹⁵ Ibid., 7-35.

¹⁶ Ibid., 22.

the goals of their institutions did not meet the desires of black students when stating, “Our experience is that blacks, as a rule, are not interested in technical subjects.” Oshkosh and Whitewater, on the other hand, detailed specific ways they were meeting the needs of their students by holding black orientations and hiring black administrators to help cater to student need (and demands via protests both schools had requesting these aspects).¹⁷

Although WSU-EC appeared to be taking a very passive role, it did detail a fair amount of progressive efforts as well. It gave multicultural students school survival kits with tips on a successful first year. For orientation a “black student counselor [was] made available...although only nine blacks students took advantage of the program, it was highly successful.” In Arts and Science a handful of professors had also created courses on black literature (created by Estner Arata) and black history similar to Whitewater, River Falls, and Superior. Lastly, they described aiding students through grants and scholarships via booklets detailing the wide variety available and the ways to apply. Nonetheless, all of the above stated initiatives were also being conducted at least two other WSU system school and were by no means particularly innovative.¹⁸

What came out of this committee meeting was a unanimous system-wide decision, there was more to be done to meet the needs of present and future multicultural students. All schools supported proposals to increase the number of grants available as well as increase student employment opportunities to make higher education affordable and attainable to them. But, “This recommendation [was] entirely dependent upon legislative action that would provide much greater funding, both at a state and national level.” The Regents lastly concluded there should be active efforts employ diverse faculty members, but will have a difficult time with doing so

¹⁷ Ibid; 73, 77, 74.

¹⁸ Ibid; 77 There was no information about the way they determined it was successful noted; 80; 82.

because there was a, "...limited pool of qualified multicultural candidates and it has hard to attract those candidates to live in small, virtual all-white areas of the state."¹⁹

Decade of Innovation: The 1970s

Moving into the 1970s (especially after the 1971 committee meetings) UW-Eau Claire (as of 1972) created programs and initiatives that reached not only the multicultural students, but the white students as well to create a more welcoming community. It is now UWEC concentrated most of its efforts on African American and American Indian students, two of the largest multicultural groups in relation to the campus. Admission of multicultural students increased by the mid-1970s, but by 1980, the two targeted groups, in particular, would go down again via lack of reforming efforts by the institution.

Grambling Exchange (Grambling State University is a historically black institution located in Louisiana) was created at WSU-EC in 1970 after the success of the North-South Exchange with UW-system schools.²⁰ The primary reason for UWEC creating the program was to diversify the campus as well as hopefully retain the students by having them transfer, or have them recruit black Wisconsin residents to the institution (which they have no documentation of being successful in doing). The types of students that applied to go to Grambling from Eau Claire, according to exit surveys, were hoping to be immersed socially in a different culture. On the other hand, the students from Grambling noted their primary reason for participating in the program was for the scholarly learning opportunities available in the north. This is primarily because "black exchange students have, for the most part, had considerably more exposure to, if

¹⁹ Ibid; 83, 84.

²⁰ UW-Madison, Green Bay, and Manitowoc were three of the first schools to receive and send students to the historically black schools of: A & T State University (NC), North Carolina Central University, and Texas Southern University.

not personal contact with whites,” in the south, whereas UWEC students tended to come from communities with little to no diversity. With the increased number of African American students on campus many clubs and organizations began to form such as the Afro-American Association and Ebony Ladies Inc. for students to form social bonds with others from similar backgrounds.²¹ Some students tended to separate themselves socially from their white counterparts for important reasons. Black participants often mentioned their realization that northern whites were just as racist as southern whites. “In the north racism is manifested in different and more subtle ways,” told one student. Thus, it can be determined not everyone coming from the exchange found WSU-EC to be welcoming. Nonetheless, the Grambling Exchange continued until 1980 (it later became immersed with in National Student Exchange Program and is still an option for students to attend) proving many students from both schools benefitted from the program enough to encourage others from their home universities to also participate. For that reason, it can be determined this exchange program was one of the first successful multicultural programs UWEC created.²²

In 1972, under the supervision of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the now University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire added an Affirmative Action officer to the university. This was due in part to a Board of Regents decision that applied to each of the UW system schools to have an Affirmative Action program (to be implemented between 1972 and 1975) in hopes to “replace with accurate knowledge any residue of stereotyped perceptions concerning minorities or women, and to maximize inter-group understanding,” for both faculty and students. The

²¹ University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, *Periscope 1970*. Special Collections & Archives, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Eau Claire, WI.

²² University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Grambling State University Exchange Program, 1970-1980. AS182. Special Collections & Archives, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Eau Claire, WI (Box 1 Folder 2 17, 14.)

programs were to be modeled after several successful Affirmative Action programs across the United States; one of the most recognizable examples given to the Affirmative Action Committee to review was created by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.²³

It took over a year for UWEC's program to be up and running, primarily because it was not a priority for those involved. The Affirmative Action Program was divided into two committees, one for women and the other for minorities (It should be noted the action taken by the committee for women was far more active and progressive compared to that for minorities).²⁴ Between February and June 1972 the minority committee met every two weeks which eventually turned into one a month at best. The December 1973 meeting outlined the reason for the lack of contact was due to busy schedules and priority to other commitments of the member taking precedent (such as overabundance of grading). Nonetheless, they chose to focus their efforts on the hiring of faculty and to increase the creation of new programs for students. One of the multicultural groups they showed the most interest in hiring was African Americans. They determined "recruiting should be done at more black colleges or colleges with large black enrollment. Also, there should be more advertising in black magazines." With very little increase in the number of African American hires in the years to follow, UWEC informed the campus this was due to "the lack of any viable black population in Eau Claire [which] is very unattractive to a black teacher and his family...and is a common reason for many to turn down positions here and at other small UW campuses." Unfortunately no evidence could be found to determine whether or not the University implemented the efforts stated above to attract black

²³ University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Office of the Chancellor Affirmative Action Plan. (Box 1 Affirmative Action Task Force folder; Original Plan.)

²⁴ University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Office of the Chancellor Affirmative Action Plan. *December 1973 Minutes*, (Box 1 Affirmative Action Task Force folder).

applicants, or if they simply took the same indolent approach to this as they had their meetings. Nonetheless, with UWEC lacking a diverse faculty compared to other UW schools was becoming less competitive in terms of retaining minority students. Having strong multicultural role models on faculty and staff often showed students a campus' appreciation and acceptance of persons of color. With little to no faculty of color on the campus, students could easily find the campus unwelcoming to minorities compared to places like Oshkosh who now had almost twice as many faculty and staff of color, and was able to boast the availability of them to prospective students.²⁵

In terms of programming for students, many new initiatives sprung. The Transitional Year Program (predecessor to the current Collegiate Bridge program) was started in August 1972 “to provide academically disadvantaged students with a genuine opportunity to succeed in college.” This catered to the needs of multicultural students from low economic areas with lower performing schools in order to get them accustomed to college academic life. But, “the major weakness in Transitional Year Program [were] in the area of recruiting students and expanding the program to them. Minority counselors and teachers [were] desperately needed.” In turn, “special emphasis was given to the recruitment of Native Americans during the summer of 1973. Efforts to recruit Black students [continued].” By the end of the 1970s, black students had the most significant drop in enrollment at UWEC.²⁶

The next notable initiatives were the creation of the Indian Adult Education Program and the creation of a minor program in American Indian Studies (a innovative effort with few schools

²⁵ Ibid; “Affirmative Action Examines Faculty Hiring”

²⁶ Ibid; “Transitional Year Program Folder;” Efforts to Recruit Black Students Continues, *Spectator (Eau Claire)*, February 14, 1974.

across the nation at the time doing the same). Although a Native American Indian Studies committee had formed back in 1972 to bring a minor to our campus, it had “been delayed due to the moratorium on all minority programs throughout the University system which went into effect in December 1973.” The reason for the moratorium could not be pinpointed, but like most moratoriums, financial issues were most likely the cause. In addition to this, all UW schools were working on minority efforts, which there was limited government funding in general.²⁷

The programs had three main purposes. 1. Bring diversity to campus (with more adults coming to our campus, they will be able to promote higher education and UWEC specifically to family members and youth). 2. Improve tribal relationships with the UWEC after the Upward Bound Program took hiatus. 3. Bring greater educational and job opportunities to impoverished reservations.

Enrollment in the program began in 1976 with 15 people registered and eventually increased to a 24 person cohort seeking 64-credit associates’ degrees. The success of the program (along with the success of the creation of an American Indian Studies minor) led faculty members to discuss the idea of creating a major in American Indian Studies to attract more students to the university. By 1978, two years later, courses for the program were beginning to be cut, “finances [were] concerning the committee they [were] not sure if the course offers will be available.” Thus, letters were to be sent to students informing them of the program’s demise; they needed both faculty and students “...to show more interest and determination in this program if we intend to keep it operating to our benefit and satisfaction in order to attain an Associate degree, a minor in Indian Studies, or a B.S. or B.A.” By 1980 the Indian Adult

²⁷ Ibid., “Native American Studies Program Committee Minutes” Folder.

Education program had disappeared, the idea of a major went to the back burner, and only a minor in Indian Studies remained. However, the success of the minor did eventually lead to the creation of a major and 1996. The disintegration of the Adult Indian Program led to a significant drop in Native American enrollment in at UWEC for years to follow.²⁸

To examine the initiatives by all schools in the UW system, the Board of Regents “Future of Minority Centers” conference was held February 23-24, 1978. The purpose of the conference was to collaborate and create ideas with other UW institutions as well as to listen to ideas from various multicultural speakers across the country. Again the focus was primarily on African American students, but with a large Latino population in Madison and Milwaukee they were the second largest concern. The Regents detailed the importance of maintaining multicultural programming, “The validity is actually rooted in our programs to fight the consequences of the class and racial oppression that exists in students as well as the communities where they came from.” Another speaker continued, “I don’t care where the institution is, where they’re getting the student body from, they aren’t going to stay there forever. Students are going to have to go out and deal with the real world, which is a multicultural society,” showcasing the need to not only cater to the needs of multicultural students, but to also implement programming to better educate white students about various domestic cultures they make come into contact with in the future.²⁹

They also acknowledged the UW system had limited funding and they needed to consolidate student services departments. “The problem with Universities [are] that there are so

²⁸ AE News AS 408 e6/6c Box 1 Fall semester 1978-1979 Advisory committee; Robert Bell, “The Struggle For Identity and Education” (Capstone, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 2012), 14-20, <https://uwec-courses-wisconsin-edu.proxy.uwec.edu/d21/lp/homepage/home.d21?ou=1626074>(accessed April 1, 2012).

²⁹ University of Wisconsin System, *Future of Minority Centers Conference* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1978), 17; Ibid; 22.

many separate programs eventually all will compete with each other for resources that none will be beneficial.” Nonetheless a multitude of new programming efforts were discussed for University representatives to bring back to their home institutions. For example, the idea of a bridge program, which UWEC already had, and specialized tutoring was a hot topic at the conference due to a bias evident in the public school system. “Hell, I don’t have problems writing in Black English, but you won’t get through law school with it,” cried a speaker in support. The conference also outlined ways to improve the social/cultural lives of students by introducing minority counselors, social fraternities and sororities, and expanding opportunities for students to teach their culture outside of the designated “History Months”. Lastly, the most provoking part of the conference was the educational programming aspects in which current faculty and student could express individualized concerns. For instance a Native American student lamented, “Indian is only used to say they are not white...but I don’t claim to be Indian... [I] claim to be from the tribe, I’m Oneida. To sum up, we must learn that Indian people are different, want to be different, have the right to be different, and most importantly, are secure in that difference.” Thus, the conference ended with the idea of political politeness in speech when referring to minority students. “Multicultural...as a term is a lot easier to talk about because everybody comes from some culture of some kind. It doesn’t exclude anybody...it depends a lot on whether your term seems to be inclusive or not.”³⁰

Although many great ideas sprouted from this conference, not many initiatives were created in response to it for both UWEC and the system in general. For starters, since the conferences opening the lack of funding was noted; this meshed with continuing unemployment and system schools no noted initiative to seek outside/private funding for these programs, made

³⁰ Ibid 46, 48.

it highly unlikely that anything discussed would be initiated. But for something that did not cost money, such as the conference closing idea of adopting the term “multicultural” to make the UW system schools feel inclusive towards all students, was not even adopted by the system until the mid-1990s.³¹

The 1980s and the 10 Year Plan

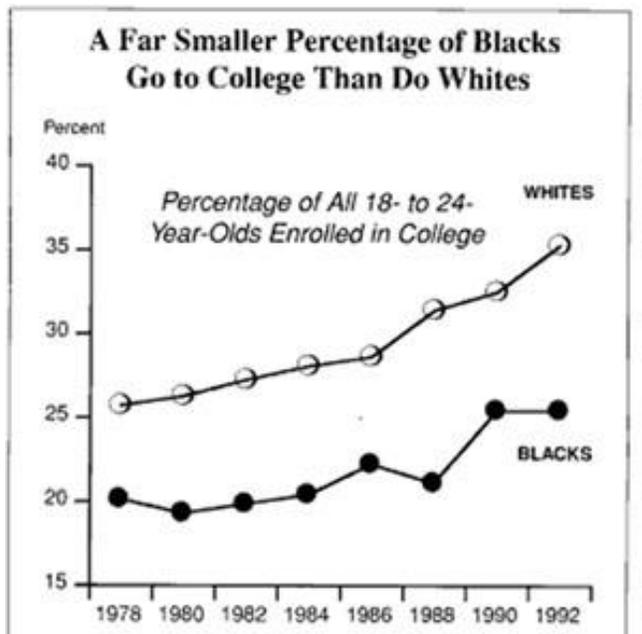
The recession toward the end of the 1970s into the 1980s led to decreased enrollment in higher education institutions across the nation for both white and multicultural students. This occurred for a couple reasons: discontent with the government (what was the point of getting a degree if you couldn’t get hired) and the growing cost of living and unemployment. “The proportion of young blacks enrolled in college fell in the late 1970s, as it did for whites. But while white enrollment rates recovered in the 1980s and black did not,” (See Figure 3). Although some have argued the reason for lower enrollment for black students in particular was due to less success in primary and secondary settings as well as decreased scores in testing, this was not the case. Test scores for African American students actually increased significantly. “The main reason blacks did not respond to higher college income premiums in the late 1980s, despite higher test scores, was drastically changed government policies...Government changed its ideological position on racial inequality –from one that viewed government as a force of reducing discrimination and inequality to one that declared that discrimination was a thing of the past.”³²

³¹ University of Wisconsin System, *Multicultural Student Statistics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1995); University of Wisconsin System, *Multicultural Student Statistics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1996); University of Wisconsin System, *Multicultural Student Statistics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1997).

³² Martin Carnoy, “Why Aren't More African Americans Going to College?” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 6 (1994): 66, 68, 69.

Given our nation's current economic crisis--e.g., over 3 million jobs lost because of a \$123 billion trade deficit last year; tax incentives that encourage U.S. corporations to manufacture and produce goods in cheap labor markets abroad, thus, undercutting the American worker--this administration [Regan] has chosen to use, among other things, affirmative action as a mechanism whereby white males are encouraged to point to blacks, Hispanics and women as scapegoats [sic] and say that affirmative action has taken our jobs.³³

Figure 3. Comparison of White and Black Students Enrolled in Higher Education



Source: Carnoy, Martin. "Why Aren't More African Americans Going to College?" *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* no. 6 (1994): 66-69.

According to Martin Carnoy, a professor of education at Stanford, this economic crisis created fear amongst many multicultural groups that even if they went on to higher educational institutions, they would not be hired into high-enough paying jobs to offset the cost of additional education. "The most crucial element of these new policies for blacks' college enrollment rates was the slowdown for financial aid and a shift from grants to loans at a time of increasing

³³ Reverend Jesse Jackson, "Reagan and Affirmative Action," *Chicago Tribune*, May 19, 1985 http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1985-05-19/news/8501310863_1_discrimination-action-plan-seniority-system (accessed 23 March, 2012).

poverty among minority families.” Financial aid declined 3% while the costs of attending schools rose faster than the cost of living.³⁴

Thus, the Regents reconvened in 1987 to discuss the goals below which eventually turned into the Design for Diversity 10 year plan that would be distributed to all institutions in July 1988 with a system wide requirement for each campus to implement a plan by the end of 1989.

II. UW System Goals

Goal One: Recognize the need to eliminate the underrepresentation of minority and economically disadvantaged people in the UW System.

Goal Two: Educate all students for an increasingly multicultural society in Wisconsin, our nation and the world.

Goal Three: Improve recruiting and retention efforts to better enable targeted minority students* to enroll more easily and function more effectively at our universities.

Goal Four: Improve evaluation efforts in the areas of minority student enrollment/retention and faculty/staff recruitment and retention.

Goal Five: Remove financial barriers that prevent minorities and economically disadvantaged people from viewing college as a realistic option.

Goal Six: Increase the number of minority faculty and staff throughout the UW System.

Goal Seven: Establish effective partnerships with the public schools, the VTAE System, state government, the community and the private sector to assist the UW System's efforts to improve minority education.³⁵

For the universities that were successful at implementing and maintaining unique programs to reach these goals, the UW system was able to allocate large amounts of funding to the institutions. “As part of this effort, up to \$100,000 will be designated by the Undergraduate Teaching Improvement Council beginning in 1989 to match and encourage institutional efforts to develop projects designed to improve the ethnic studies curricula and special programs in the

³⁴ Carnoy, Why Aren't More Going, 68.

³⁵University of Wisconsin System, “Design for Diversity,” Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, <http://www.wisconsin.edu/edi/diversity/index.htm> (accessed February 9, 2012).

UW System.” As well as, “...up to [\$]100.000 of faculty and academic staff development funds will be designated for the development of programs to improve the multicultural environment on campus and for the development of programs that address issues of race and ethnicity.”³⁶

Accordingly, with the prospective of larger funding allocations, UWEC was quick to respond to these demands. By February 1989 the chancellor approved a new curricular program (which included the new system requirement of at least 3 credits of cultural competency upon graduation) in response to the Design for Diversity which required “organized instruction or programs on race and ethnicity as part of every undergraduate educational experience; and integrating ethnic studies into existing courses.” The program was based on the assumption that meeting the requirement should “be ‘a University-wide effort’ ...designed to establish the foundation upon which the individual schools and departments will build.” Thus, for students entering into the 1990 UWEC catalog year, a total of six semester credits, or the equivalent, in content dealing with race and ethnicity was required. “Content in at least 3 credits...must focus on one or more of the following American minority groups: Black, Hispanic, American Indian, or certain Southeast Asian minorities.” In order to better educate families of this new requirement, the University showed the movie “Still Burning” which explained marginality in the United States, proving the need for the competency, during summer orientation.³⁷

The University not only sought to educate the students on multicultural issues, but also its staff. In order for faculty to develop more effective lectures and discussions the Classroom Climate Project was implemented where faculty had their teaching reviewed and altered to meet

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ M/D Annual Report 1989-1990. Box 1, Binder 6. AE News, 1989. AS408. Special Collections & Archives, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI 33-34.

UW-system expectations. Also, at the Third Annual Fall Symposium, the topic “encompassed sensitivity to differences in race, culture, and gender, as well as the challenges of diversification and promoting global perspectives,” in the classroom. There was even a push from the Children’s Center located in the campus school for faculty (and student) parents to talk about race to their children. A pamphlet, ‘Teaching Young Children to Resist Bias—What Parents Can Do’ [had] been distributed to every parent and teacher.” They also worked in conjunction with the Nursing and Psychology departments to “analyze causes of apparent prejudice and develop means of responding to comments and questions from children.” Lastly, the University received grant money from the system to conduct faculty research on Chippewa Treaty Rights, the state of black healthcare, and Hispanics in the UW system.³⁸

The initiatives increased into the 1990s with the development of programs; some continued to be successful into the 2000s. In terms of recruiting in admissions, UWEC focused building relationships with key multicultural schools districts in the Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Chicago for Latino and African American students, La Crosse and Wausau for Hmong students, and the Oneida and Lac Court Oreilles reservations for Native American students.³⁹ Multicultural students were then contacted for individual tours of the campus with the American Ethnic Coordinating Office (now the office of multicultural affairs) and perspective student files were kept for future mailings. Contact with these students and the office continued with information on scholarships available once accepted as well as social activities students could participate in once on campus, such as an Annual Picnic. The office also utilized current students for a short lived Minority-Phone-a-Thon as a recruitment effort to get students in

³⁸ Ibid; 35; 37.

³⁹ M/D Annual Reports 1990-1991. Box 1 Binder 4. AE News, 1989. AS408. Special Collections & Archives, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI.

contact with multicultural students already on campus. Lastly, it was determined the first 90 days on campus were the most crucial in determining whether a student would continue on a campus, or college in general. Thus, there was an increase in tutoring, academic programming, and social events to make students feel at home on the UWEC campus. In turn, at the five year mark the number of Asian students on campus rose 137% African American students 61%, American Indian students 58%, and Hispanic students rose to 34%.⁴⁰

Hmong: The New Student Demographic of the 1990s

The changing demographics with the increase of second and third generation Hmong moving into the Eau Claire area created new concerns for UWEC (With 31 Hmong students enrolled that year, Southeast Asians quickly became the largest multicultural group on campus) and the city itself. “Since 1975, more than 350 families have been re-settled into Eau Claire creating a population of more than 2,160 Hmong citizens.” Prejudice spread quickly against these new neighbors due to a lack of understanding of their culture. In a 1992 publication it was reported a father in Eau Claire ordered his son to beat a Hmong boy. The son claimed he had nothing against the Hmong boy and only hurt him because he was told to.⁴¹

As a result, UWEC found it imperative not only to create programs to cater to the needs of the Hmong students on campus, but also to help acculturate families in the city and to increase the cultural acceptance of Hmong in the Eau Claire community. On campus AECO added a Hmong coordinator, Pang Cher Vue, to create and implement the initiatives. Vue acquired an array of responsibilities. On campus Vue was an academic advisor, head of recruitment for

⁴⁰ Ibid 6; 16; M/D Annual Reports 1993-1994 Box 1, Binder 6. AE News, 1989. AS408. Special Collections & Archives, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI 92.

⁴¹Tim Schmitt, “Pride Vs Prejudice,” *Dimension Magazine*, 1992, 16; 17; 18.

Hmong college students as well as students for the Upward Bound program, a Hmong speaking tour guide for admissions, and also organized social events for students. Through his endeavors of recruitment, he noted “substantial interest and response from the local Hmong community” to become a part of UWEC. Off campus Vue utilized a significant amount of community outreach efforts. First, a community service project was created whose goal was to “teach Hmong English and basic survival tactics”. As to what those survival tactics entailed, it is not explicit, but based on contextual clues it can be deduced it meant how to survive in American culture and receive employment. Vue also worked with businesses in Eau Claire including UWEC to help the Hmong community obtain employment in the area. On campus, for example, he was successful in finding ground keeping jobs to hire workers. Lastly, Vue worked in conjunction with the Nursing department and the Hmong Mutual Assistance Association in the downtown area to provide free/affordable health care for families and their children.⁴²

The initiatives created here were overwhelmingly successful in creating strong ties between the Hmong community and the University. But, within the white community (both on and off campus) there was still a noticeable prejudice against Hmong Americans (which still exists today). For example, in a student publication, *The Participant*, the entire May issue focused on an anti-multicultural assistance stance in response to a March 25, article in *The Spectator* noting a lack of multicultural focus on the UWEC campus. Thus, it was determined more programming was needed to educate the community about minority cultures and affairs. Better publicity of events to the community followed. In turn, larger crowds attended the

⁴² Jim Vance to the University of Wisconsin, June 1990, Review of Minority/Disadvantaged Annual Reports. AE News, 1989. AS408. Special Collections & Archives, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI; Schmitt, “Pride vs Prejudice,” 17.

University's cultural events: the Black History Month speakers in February, the Hmong New Year celebration, and the Pow Wow in April.⁴³

Evaluation of the 10 Year Plan

Although much was done in terms of Hmong programming by the mid to late 1990s the campus community switched its focus from racial issues to that of gender and sexual orientation. Thus, race took generally to the backseat to other, more popular, issues on campus.⁴⁴ After the 10th year (1998) of the UW system instituted Design for Diversity plan expired it appears so did the University's progressive policies until the UW system implemented that last of multicultural mandated programs, Plan 2008 (in a very similar fashion to what happened in the late 1970s to early 1980s). Nonetheless, the programs created an impressive change to the campus compared to where UWEC was in 1988. Faculty and staff of color hires increased, student enrollments increased, courses that met cultural competencies increased and programming initiatives doubled. In 1990 James E. Sulton Jr. the UW-System President of Minority Affairs, commended UWEC as having "one of the finest minority program coordinators in the field."⁴⁵ When you compare UWEC to the other system schools, it still lagged behind the majority of schools in the majority of categories, most importantly the recruitment and retention of multicultural students (in which Madison, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Whitewater, and Platteville still reigned as top programmers). The most significant area in which Eau Claire lagged was that of the percentage

⁴³ J.P. Jonesley, "Teddy Ruxpin Multicultural Edition," *The Participant (Eau Claire)*, 1993. M/D Annual Report 1989-1990, 4.

⁴⁴ This was deduced by the overwhelming amount of student alternative publications and *Spectator* articles on gay issues/controversies dominating the front pages.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*; 2.

of degrees conferred by multicultural students the university stayed steady in its rate, with 24-26% of all eligible multicultural students receiving them.⁴⁶

2000s Design for Equity

After the expiration of Design for Diversity in 1998 it was quickly followed by Plan 2008 another 10 year, two phase, program approved by the Board of Regents to continue the system wide effort to cater to the needs of diverse populations of students with the following goals:

- **Goal 1** Increase the number of Wisconsin high school graduates of color who apply, are accepted, and enroll at UW System institutions.
- **Goal 2** Encourage partnerships that build the educational pipeline by reaching children and their parents at an earlier age.
- **Goal 3** Close the gap in educational achievement, by bringing retention and graduation rates for students of color in line with those of the student body as a whole.
- **Goal 4** Increase the amount of financial aid available to needy students and reduce their reliance on loans.
- **Goal 5** Increase the number of faculty, academic staff, classified staff and administrators of color, so that they are represented in the UW System workforce in proportion to their current availability in relevant job pools. In addition, work to increase their future availability as potential employees.
- **Goal 6** Foster institutional environments and course development that enhance learning and a respect for racial and ethnic diversity.
- **Goal 7** Improve accountability of the UW System and its institutions.

In terms of Phase I of Plan 2008, no information was found as to its effectiveness as the links Phase I on the UW System's website were corrupt and no hard copy could be located. But the

⁴⁶ Minority Statistics 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, The University of Wisconsin System, Madison, Wisconsin. Multicultural Student Statistics 1995, 1996, 1997; Here it should be noted the University System switched the term minority to multicultural. No document could be found explaining the switch, but the term multicultural had been gaining popularity in the late 1970s onward due to the terms inclusivity; M/D Annual Reports 1997-1998 Box 1, Binder 8. AE News, 1989. AS408. Special Collections & Archives, McIntyre Library, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI.

information for Phase II of the plan was obtained. “The Phase II Committee was poised to write a strategic Phase II plan when the process temporarily stalled due to the uncertainty created by the Michigan affirmative action cases. These cases were eventually decided in ways that affirmed the need for proactive steps to enhance diversity on college and university campuses in the United States.”⁴⁷ This incident in and of itself is telling as to where race and Affirmative Action stood in the US at the time. The general population found programs catering to race to no longer be necessary. But based on the findings during the implementation of Plan 2008, it was clear it *was* still necessary at UWEC via the low percentage change Phase I had on the institution (See Table 1 below).

Table 1.

**UW System Total Students of Color Enrollment by Institution
Fall 1998 to Fall 2003**

	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Percent Change	Number Change
							1998- 2003	1998-2003
UW-Eau Claire	452	470	470	520	502	507	12.17%	55
UW-Green Bay	296	273	292	298	292	303	2.36%	7

⁴⁷ “In June 2003, the United States Supreme Court handed down decisions in *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*. These cases reaffirmed the principle that institutions of higher education may use race as a "plus" factor in admission decisions to achieve the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body when such use is narrowly tailored. The court also emphasized that race-conscious efforts should serve institutional missions and the needs of all students.” University of Wisconsin System, *Plan 2008 Phase II* (Madison: Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) http://www.wisconsin.edu/edi/plan/PLAN_2008_Phase_I_Report.pdf; University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Phase II Plans, <http://www.wisconsin.edu/edi/plan/phase2plans/eauclaire-phase2.pdf> (accessed March 30, 2012).

UW-La Crosse	385	426	451	459	452	486		26.23%	101
UW-Milwaukee	3,746	3,805	3,864	4,045	4,007	3924		4.75%	178
UW-Madison	3,704	3,807	3,665	3,734	3,905	4037		8.99%	333
UW-Oshkosh	426	429	414	475	503	576		35.21%	150
UW-Parkside	721	810	856	911	905	902		25.10%	181
UW-Platteville	169	156	177	175	216	214		26.63%	45
UW-River Falls	198	228	249	282	299	343		73.23%	145
UW-Stout	286	293	290	292	333	331		15.73%	45
UW-Stevens Point	257	269	264	285	334	398		54.86%	141
UW-Superior	98	106	97	129	131	114		16.33%	16
UW-Whitewater	690	713	762	789	848	896		29.86%	206
UW Colleges	463	525	584	771	831	808		74.51%	345
TOTAL	11,891	12,310	12,435	13,165	13,558	13,839		16.38%	1,948

Source: UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research.

Toward the end of Plan 2008 a new representative to the UW Institute on Race and Ethnicity office, Jill Pinkney Pastrana, evaluated research efforts on UW system campuses.⁴⁸ She found the campuses requesting the most grants for were schools like Milwaukee and Platteville, rather than Eau Claire. This made her curious as to the strides taken on the UWEC campus. “After I was appointed the representative I, along with other faculty, like Selika Ducksworth [Lawton] and David Shih, held roundtable discussions about [what] Eau Claire was doing to satisfy the diversity credit requirement and invited those professors who has submitted their syllabi [to the

⁴⁸ The research evaluated was in relation to local, national, and university efforts toward equality for minorities.

IRE database] that said their classes were fulfilling the criteria [of the diversity requirement]...what we found was that the faculty did not understand what diversity [the UW systems policy of it] meant.” The UW enacted the Diversity requirement to make sure students in the system were being exposed to diversity *within* the United States. The UWEC professors at the roundtables on the other hand, generalized diversity to other cultures in general. “For example, a world religions professor assumed since he was talking about religions from all over that it qualified for diversity credit which [was] not true.” It was also in these roundtable discussions where it was noted that UWEC had a unique system of distributing the diversity credit. “At other institutions a 3-credit class classified as a diversity class would give you 3 diversity credits. Here they give you anywhere between 1-3 credits of diversity for the same class which is dependent on how much they actually discuss diversity.” It can be argued here that UWEC does not appear to fully implementing the educational requirement, rather keeping diversity as a side note rather than the focus. This was undoubtedly important because the United States was becoming ever more ethnically and racially diverse and the chances that students would come into contact with diversity in their future careers is overwhelmingly probable. It was key they learn more about those around them to successful, but for some reason this learning process was not at the top of UWEC’s list.⁴⁹

In 2008 a consortium of UWEC faculty and staff, under the direction of David Shih, completed an Equity Scorecard for the University. This was implemented to understand how the university was doing in terms of “access, retention, excellence, and institutional receptivity.”⁵⁰

⁴⁹ “Interview with Jill Pinkney Pastrana” University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Education Department Associate Professor, Interview by author, 3 April 2012, Eau Claire.

⁵⁰ “Equity Scorecard is a data-driven process that uses existing data on admissions, graduation rates, GPA, and other fields to identify achievement gaps for African American, American Indian, Southeast Asian American, Asian American, and Hispanic/Latino(a) students, groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher education.

The results were astonishing. After three decades of work, UWEC was still one of the bottom schools in terms of multicultural programs and success with the same issues in 1970 existing in the 2000s. UWEC was significantly behind the national average of faculty and staff of color hires in all categories (See Table 2). They also had some of the worst retention rates especially for minority women (See Table 3).

Table 2. Report on Staff of Color

	UW-Eau Claire	UW System	UW System Peers	National Peers*
White	90.9	81.6	90	84.7
African American	1.3	3	2.2	5.2
Hispanic/Latino	1.3	3.2	1.9	2.2
Asian	3.4	9.2	4.1	2.8
American Indian	.9	0.6	.8	.7
Unknown	2.2	2.3	1	2.2

*International employees are a separate category in our available data for national peers, but are not in our data for UW System institutions. This may account for the larger percentage of Asian and Hispanic/Latino employees at UW System institutions compared to the national peers.

Source: University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, Interim Report on Retention (April 2009), Diversity <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (accessed 3 April, 2012) 5.

Table 3. Report on Retention

	Total (n=141)	White Men (n=58)	R/E Minority Men (n=10)	White Women (n=59)	R/E Minority Women (n=7)
Tenured	59.6%	70.7%	70%	50.8%	14.3%
Continuing	62.4%	70.7%	70%	57.6%	14.3%
Left employment	37.6%	29.3%	30%	42.4%	85.7%

An institution's Equity Scorecard evidence team analyzes this data, disaggregated by race, to find "equity gaps": instances of under representation and overrepresentation of students of color in specific "measures" such as university enrollment yields, academic major and program admissions, financial aid distribution, Dean's list recognition, etc. The evidence team then attempts to understand why these gaps might exist and be perpetuated by campus culture and practice. The goal of the team is not to solve the "problem" of inequity; it is to define the problem of inequity. The Equity Scorecard is an organizational-learning tool intended to initiate self-assessment and dialogue; it can lead to organizational change by motivating institutional leaders to respond to known inequities with purposeful actions." University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, *Diversity Initiatives: Equity Scorecard* (Madison: Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, 2008, 2009, 2010), <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (accessed March 20, 2012).

Source: University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, Interim Report on Retention (April 2009), Diversity <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (accessed 3 April, 2012) 7.

As reported earlier, having a strong faculty and staff of color is key to a university’s retention of multicultural students. With the national average and the UW system average as higher than , it could no longer make the argument as that a pool of qualified applicants did not exist. There is no question UWEC needed to actively recruit progressive multicultural faculty from institutions across the United States.

In the access section of the report, the evidence of poor recruiting efforts was widely evident. Not only were 90% of the applicants white, UWEC was the worst in all of the system schools for multicultural applicants.

Table 4. Applications by Race.

Ethnicity/ Citizenship	MSN	MIL	EAU	GBY	LAC	OSH	PKS	PLT	RVF	STP	STO	SUP	WW	UWC	TOTAL
African American/ Black	718	1,069	77	87	128	243	461	180	76	159	77	19		211	4,077
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	67	65	26	45	19	70	6	11	7	35	49	26	38	86	550
Hispanic/ Latino	680	480	85	64	124	155	141	40	50	107	59	8	209	174	2,376
SE Asian	270	319	139	96	109	162	33	33	90	108	102	3	81	207	1,752
Other Asian	1,316	196	86	23	93	67	36	18	21	51	22	10	77	45	2,061
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	70	19	9	4	5		7	5	4	10	1		16	13	163
Two or more	590	414	125	65	136		130	56	58	140	29	7	73	21	1,844
White/ Caucasian	17,959	8,713	7,319	3,188	6,991	5,152	1,393	3,131	2,898	4,618	3,480	774	5,511	5,397	76,524
Other Race	312	71	37	8	37		22	4	8	13			17		529
Unknown	815	184	105	20	107	70	28	51	50	75	52	15	93	94	1,759
International	2,659	175	51	21	101	42	40	30	28	105	24	103	51	5	3,435
TOTAL	25,456	11,705	8,059	3,621	7,850	5,961	2,297	3,559	3,290	5,421	3,895	965	6,738	6,253	95,070
% White applicants	73%	74%	90%	88%	89%	86%	61%	88%	88%	85%	89%	80%	82%	86%	81%

Source: University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, Interim Report on Access (2008), Diversity <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (Accessed April 3, 2012) 10.

The committee determined this was the case for a variety of reasons. One of the key reasons pinpointed was multicultural students were failing to complete applicants for acceptance to the school, particularly the application fee. Thus, it would be key for UWEC to have created a fund for multicultural applicants to receive a stipend if they applied. A second draw back, was UWEC's reputation for being strict on ACT scores for acceptance to the school. Multicultural students' scores average between 17 and 20 whereas UWEC's average score was 24. Lastly, there was a large gap between those who were accepted to UWEC and those enrolled. African American, Asian American (excluding Southeast Asians), and Latinos enrolled at a rate of 30% compared to over 40% for white students.⁵¹

The most surprising data came from the retention section of the study; multicultural students were being retained at an alarmingly low rate, African American students were being retained the least, while sophomore into junior year was the largest year for students to drop out. (See Table 5).

The reason determined for breakdown between freshmen and sophomore year was a gap in transitional education for students. GPA's, on average, were much lower for multicultural students than their white counterparts. Thus the committee recommended a greater availability of classes like GEN 100, Introduction to University Curriculum, to be offered. In terms of gap between sophomore and junior years, there were three key reasons noted. First, multicultural students were required to retake key general and introduction courses such as English 110; Math

⁵¹ Interim Report on Access (2008), Diversity <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (accessed April 3, 2012) 10; 15; 8.

020, 109, 246; Political Science 110; and Psychology 100. Thus, if the university offered these courses with more of a multicultural focus, it is assumed they will do better, feel their major was

Table 5. Retention by Year and Race

Racial/ethnic group	# Enrolled	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year	# Retained
African American	67	65.7%	58.2%	46.3%	41.8%	44.8%	30
American Indian	40	70.0%	57.5%	47.5%	42.5%	42.5%	17
Southeast Asian	119	80.7%	68.1%	57.1%	54.6%	50.4%	60
Asian American	92	82.6%	65.2%	58.7%	60.8%	57.6%	53
Hispanic/Latino(a)	73	86.3%	76.7%	72.6%	68.5%	63.0%	46
White	7937	80.9%	70.3%	65.3%	63.0%	61.7%	4899
All New Freshmen	8328	80.8%	70.1%	64.9%	62.7%	61.3%	5105

Source: University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Interim Report on Retention (2009) Diversity <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (Accessed 3 April, 2012) 4.

attainable to them, and in turn continue at UWEC. The second reason was the loss of available financial aid to multicultural junior and senior students. Many scholarships, such as those through the federally funded TRIO program, are specifically made available to freshmen and sophomore students where the majority who apply receive some sort of allocation. Whereas, in their junior and senior year, only one of its kind, the SSS Achievement Scholarship is available and given to one student.⁵² Lastly, many multicultural students found the campus climate to be unwelcoming to them as a whole (For example, when asked if they could start their college career all over again only 52.4% of African Americans said they would pick Eau Claire compared to 78.8% of whites). Under OMA Director Jesse Dixon’s survey of multicultural

⁵² Source: Interim Report on Retention, Diversity <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (accessed 3 April 2012) 4-7; Financing Your Education, Student Support Services <http://www.uwec.edu/SSS/services/financing.htm> (accessed April 8, 2012).

students, only 54% responded that they were satisfied by the racial climate. In a similar National Society for Experiential Educational survey that year respondent summed it up well,

Diversity is a very big problem on this campus, it is not respected, promoted or embraced. The small efforts have been good; but the student attitudes are revolting, especially the "student leaders" on this campus. Contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds is highly discouraged which leaves minorities (such as me) feel alienated and disconnected from the average student.⁵³

Thus, the conclusion of the study determined there was much work to be done to improve the quality of UWEC's programming efforts to reach equity. UWEC was still not reaching students at a sufficient enough success rate compared to the rest of the UW System or nationally.

Conclusion: Are We Losing Sight?

With all of this information gathered from the Equity Scorecard finding a significant gap between white and multicultural student equity, one would assume racial diversity would be at again pushed to the forefront of institutional programming, but moves by the UW system seemed to counteract this measure. In 2011, the UW system chose to dissolve the IRE, finding the committee eventual turned into little more than grant reviewers. The UW instead created the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion with the goal of "Inclusive Excellence" in late 2011 which was said to include the former IRE as well as the Office of Academic Diversity and Development—which over saw many efforts of Design for Diversity and Plan 2008. What this meant was that this office was now catering to the needs of disabled, first-generation, LGBTQ, as well as different racial and ethnic students. "The central premise of Inclusive Excellence holds that UW System colleges and universities need to intentionally integrate their diversity efforts

⁵³ Interim Report on Excellence (2009) Diversity <http://www.uwec.edu/Diversity/initiatives/eqs.htm> (accessed March 3, 2012) 16.

into the core aspects of their institutions—such as their academic priorities, leadership, quality improvement initiatives, decision-making, day-to-day operations, and organizational cultures—in order to maximize their success.” It appeared a step backward to lump the very specific needs of these very important groups together. Yes there is the common goal of inclusion, but there are also very different means of reaching the goals. It appears with this merger that there will be even less funds allocated per group because they assume all efforts will be “all encompassing” for these groups. This goes back to the idea of programming competition at the 1978 Future of Minority Centers conference which warned against internal programs competing against one another.⁵⁴

There was also another major drawback. The UW system decided it would not create another 10 year plan. Under Plan 2008 it was decided “Each institution will create a ten year plan specifying initiatives it will undertake to advance the goals of Plan 2008, and identify accountability measures to ensure its success. Institutional plans will be filed with the Board of Regents,” rather than implementing a system wide plan. After examining the results from the Equity Scorecard it was clear UWEC was far behind the rest of the system after Plan 2008.⁵⁵ Since UW-Eau Claire has seemingly always followed the recommendations and leadership from the UW system, and is still arguably one of the least diverse institutions in the state, the attention needed to continue multicultural specific programming at UWEC may no longer be a future reality.

⁵⁴University of Wisconsin System “Institute on Race and Ethnicity” http://www.wisconsin.edu/edi/IRE_closing.htm Accessed March 6, 2012; University of Wisconsin System “Inclusive Excellence” http://www.wisconsin.edu/vpacad/Inclusive_Excellence/ (accessed March 6, 2012).

⁵⁵University of Wisconsin System, Plan 2008.

In 2008 UWEC did implement its own 10 year plan, the Centennial Plan, but the focus remained mainly on academic programming with diversity supposedly immersed throughout (See Figure 4). Similar to what was discovered via the Round Table Discussions and Equity Scorecard research, UWEC was doing an unsatisfactory job at educating both students and faculty on just what diversity entailed. Since it will be immersed with other academic areas, in another four years will we find we are back to square one again? Thanks to the passage of the Blugold Commitment (where a portion of student segregated funds goes to different programming, academic, and research efforts) programming overall has expanded to include more opportunities for students to learn about domestic cultures via trips like The Civil Rights Pilgrimage, and the Foundations of Education 385's trip to schools in Washington D.C. over Winterim, but Jill Pinkney Pastrana stated it best by saying, "Yes, these trips can powerful for students, but a week can only do so much."⁵⁶

Also, according to retention coordinator, Odawa White, the Office of Multicultural Affairs has funding and has continually had cuts since he joined the office in. Thus, concerns directly effecting students (the ones he noted as the top concerns still were financial and trouble with professors) are left unfinanced. He also noted some of the most attended pre-college programs through the office had been cut as well.⁵⁷

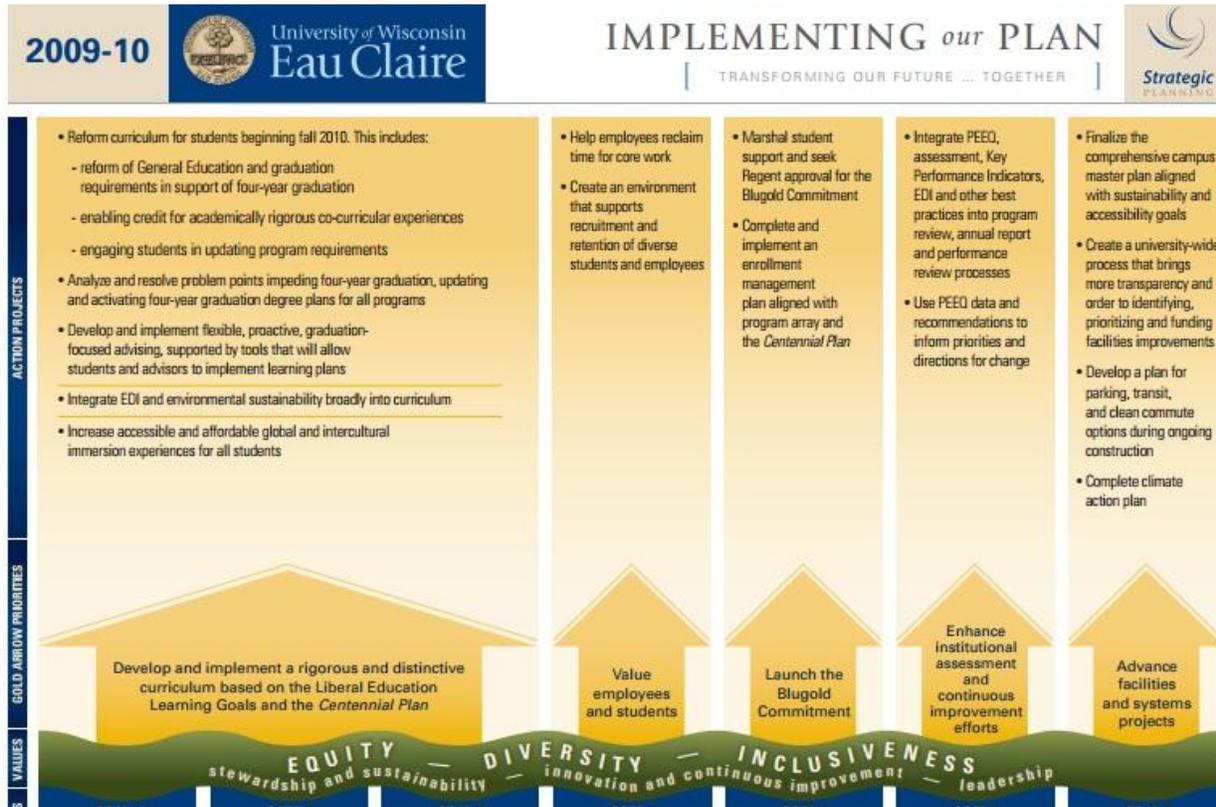
Nonetheless, given the past four decades of multicultural programming at UWEC, there is still a long way to go before equity can be reached. UWEC has created and implemented a wide variety of initiatives and goals to make the community more welcoming to multicultural

⁵⁶ University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, *Centennial Plan 2008-2016* (Eau Claire: University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire); Interview with Jill Pinkney Pastrana.

⁵⁷ Odawa White, Retention Coordinator University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Office of Multicultural Affairs, Interview by author, January 2012, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

students and faculty, but still remains one of the least diverse institutions in the UW System. There have been an abundance of great ideas and suggestions for improvement, but little action.

Figure 4. The Centennial Plan



Source: University of Wisconsin Eau Claire “Centennial Plan”
<http://www.uwec.edu/Chancellor/stratPlan/upload/09-10-Gold-Arrows-FINAL.pdf> (Accessed 5 April, 2012).

Accordingly, if diversity continues to stay in the shadows and public funding continues to be cut, without new allocation of private funds, the future of multicultural student admission and retention remains questionable. There is a lot of work left to be done to reach equity, especially in comparison to the other system schools. Hopefully, UWEC will put into action the recommendations many reports have given, but until then it will most likely still be referred to as a “white school.”

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