

October 22, 2009

## Chancellor shares plans to replace UW-M/WC dean, add baccalaureate degree

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Marshfield News-Herald*

University of Wisconsin-Marshfield/Wood County students got an opportunity to sit down Wednesday with UW Colleges and Extension Chancellor David Wilson to talk about new programs and Dean Andy Keogh's retirement.

Since Keogh's retirement announcement earlier this month, students had been wondering about the process to replace the campus's executive officer.

"Certainly, I'm disappointed that Andy will not be here for the next several years to provide the outstanding leadership he is providing to the campus," Wilson said. "He is highly regarded among other deans from UW colleges, central administration in Madison, and I consider him a dear friend."

Wilson said in the next two weeks, he hopes to assemble a nine- to 11-member committee made up of faculty and staff members, a student, and local community leaders to begin a nationwide search for Keogh's replacement.

"Andy will be a tough act to follow," Wilson said. But he added he will "conduct a national search that will bring a dean who is passionate about our mission and understands working with students, faculty, staff and the community is not an option, but a requirement."

Wilson hopes to have a number of candidates by spring and possibly a new dean by June.

Wilson also talked with students about the growth of new programs to match the demand of a growing nontraditional class and student body.

The chancellor is working to introduce a baccalaureate degree in applied arts and science for nontraditional students at the colleges that also would connect with the UW-Extension.

That appeals to Amanda Klein, 29, who returned to college after working at the Marshfield Clinic.

"The idea of being able to get a baccalaureate degree would be a great idea for someone like me, who is a returning adult student," said Klein, who won the UW-M/WC's Extreme Education Makeover contest. "I could have the benefit of staying here instead of transferring to UW-Eau Claire."

The Marshfield campus is enjoying its highest enrollment in more than a decade, with more than 675 students attending the college, a 9 percent increase from the 2008 fall enrollment.

"I think the cat is out of the proverbial bag in the state in regards to UW colleges," Wilson said. "Students understand they can come to a UW college for two years and get a world-class education at a reasonable

cost and won't lose a step when they transfer to Madison, La Crosse, Eau Claire or any of the four-year institutions."

UW colleges collectively have been experiencing growth, with a record 13,807 students. By July 2011, they will top 15,000 students, Wilson said.

"Students want to be in small classes where their professors know them beyond just a face in the crowd," Wilson said. "And they're finding that here in Marshfield and other campuses. The custodian knows them; their professors call their cell phones or text and e-mail them. They get that kind of nurturing."

Wilson also lauded the affordability of the UW Colleges, which have had a tuition freeze since 2006. Whether that tuition freeze will continue is unclear.

"I would like the tuition freeze to last for a few more years," Wilson said. "But that's not likely. This might be the last year, but of course I'm going to push the envelope a little more and press (UW System) President Kevin Reilly and the (UW System) Board of Regents to consider just one more year of the freeze."