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DATE: May 14, 2002

TO: Regents' Committee on Academic and Student Affairs

FROM: Richard Roehm, Chair Committee on Academic and Student Affairs

RE: Decisions For the May Meeting

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee has, as part of our Committee agenda, a proposal to name a building at Western after Mr. Chuck Swysgood. We also have an extensive Nursing Report. Due to broadened interest in these two topics and with the concurrence of the Committee, I propose to defer discussion of these two items until the full board convenes. I will seek Committee approval to defer discussion of these two items when we convene.

As we consider new procedures for approving new program proposals, we need to have Committee and Board input about proposed process and schedules. This appears on the Submission Agenda for the May meeting. The extent to which the Board chooses to revise the draft proposal will dictate when we may initiate the new process and what it will comprise.

In your Committee materials, you will find under the Submission agenda for the Board's consideration *New Procedures for Level I and II Items*. This item includes:

- the updated procedures which the Board approved at an earlier meeting,
- a *Level I Program Change Request* form for tracking requests and reviewers' actions,
- a *Level II Program Change Request* form for tracking requests and reviewers' actions,
- a *New Academic Program Proposal Summary* form which includes the information that our Committee members wanted about program fit with campus mission, Board strategic planning directions, State needs, and resource constraints, and
- a draft calendar for moving Level II requests through Board review in three cycles.

As I study the materials and consider the new program proposals likely to come to us, I am convinced the tracking forms and summary sheet will facilitate decision-making. I am not satisfied with the draft calendar and do not think it gives enough time for careful staff analysis, public notice and input, campus input and Board deliberation. Academic programs are at the heart of our institutions mission, and constitute the most costly investment we make. Further, approval of new programs often commit us to at least six years of course offerings, as we

have an obligation to students to not cancel programs once students are in the pipeline. This, combined with faculty salaries, and associated library support, make our decisions concerning new program approval crucial. Our ultimate responsibility is to deliver quality teaching and learning. We should not unduly rush our decisions.

I therefore propose we retain the previous calendar—allowing three meetings for programs to be analyzed and processed through the public, the staff, the campuses and the Board. This would retain two review cycles: July-September-November and January-March-May. Rather than have the Board deliberate over the proposals in July or January, we will request that the proposal first go to the Deputy Commissioner and the academic officers for their deliberations and recommendations. Proposals at the start of the review process would be noticed publicly via the Level I memo, and then the proposals would appear in full on the Board submission agenda for September or March and on the action agenda for November or May. In the past, this calendar has been responsive to academic needs and has provided for careful analysis and constructive use of resources as well as allowed for demands for excellence, accountability, and productivity. I see no compelling reason to increase the frequency of submission times.

By maintaining the old calendar and introducing the improvements noted in the revised procedures, I believe we can address program proposals efficiently, allow adequate staffing, afford good opportunities for public input and garner more input from the academic officers.

I offer my opinion concerning the frequency of submission times to stimulate discussion and to seek alternatives. I ask your consideration of this issue so we may decide upon appropriate procedures during our May meeting.

Pc: Regents
Commissioner Crofts
Deputy Commissioner Scott