

2006

# Institutional Transformation: A Case Study of an Urban Midwestern University

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Institutional Transformation: A Case Study of an Urban Midwestern University

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

By

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## Acknowledgment

It is often said that it takes a village to raise a child. Pursuing and completing a doctoral program, especially the dissertation, requires a village as well. My efforts are first dedicated to my family—Tom, Meghan and Rory. My girls do not remember when their mom was not in school. I could not have completed this without the love and support of my husband.

Friends and colleagues have also provided invaluable support, energy, and caring. I thank you all for being part of this process. The villagers at St. Michael's have also helped me keep my faith along the way.

My faculty mentors and advisors showed me this was possible and believed in me. Dr. Jon Wergin has been an academic mentor and friend and gave me a wonderful opportunity to become involved in the study of change and The Milwaukee Idea. Dr. Michael Davis is a dedicated, firm, and above all, a caring chair, who provided the discipline I needed and gave so very much of his time. I am truly indebted to you. Dr. Frank Baskind has given generously of his time and pushed me to think critically about this study. Dr. Barbara Fuhrmann has graciously challenged me while also bolstering my confidence. I deeply respect my entire committee and thank you all.

There are many members of this village who have contributed in large and small ways, but often simply by asking me about my progress, letting me vent, or cheering me on. You, too, have been important.

I am grateful to the community at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for their hospitality and openness without which this study would not have been possible.

Finally, I dedicate this to the memory of my maternal grandmother, Ethel Madeline Smith, who showed by her life and earning her master's degree at age 62, that you truly can learn something from everyone you meet.

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## Abstract

INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION: A CASE STUDY OF AN URBAN  
MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

By Jane M. Grassadonia

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2006

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This study is a case study of an institutional transformational change effort in an urban research university. The study's focus is on the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on faculty and students as the soul of the university. Literature on transformational change in higher education focuses on the processes for launching this type of change and the role of formal change leaders. Less is known about the impact of transformational change on faculty and students. Relevant literature on change and institutional culture informed this study, including Kotter (1996), Wilber (1998), Cutright (2001), Peterson and Spencer (2000), Kezar and Eckel (2000), and Astin (2001). National projects sponsored by ACE and the Kellogg Foundation are also reviewed. Sense-making emerges as a critical construct in understanding the culture and values of students and faculty.

Findings reveal that the change agenda brought cultural values around civic engagement, interdisciplinary work, and collaboration to the forefront of the institutional agenda. Faculty have engaged in new and enhanced work as a result of The Milwaukee

Idea initiatives, while traditional university structures, including the faculty reward system, have been maintained. Students were recipients of the change agenda, but not active in its development. Community members have new expectations for their involvement in the university and the university's ability to contribute to the public good. There is an understanding in the community and at the university that their two fates are linked.

The aggregate of faculty and student participants do not report a deep, pervasive impact on their culture and experiences. The Milwaukee Idea brought change to the university in new programs and centers, but it was not transformational. What The Milwaukee Idea did do is bring forward values within the culture and establish the university as a more visible presence and force in the local community.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study**

Higher education has become increasingly disengaged from society. It has lost its sense of civic mission. Higher education seems to be more concerned with rankings, market niche, and funding issues than student learning and serving the public good (Greater Expectations, 2002; National Forum and London, 2003). The system of American higher education is not seen as truly serving society. Funding patterns across the country demonstrate society's perspective that higher education is more of an individual good, with students and families bearing an ever-increasing financial burden. Competition from for-profit and international institutions exists. Students and their families have become more consumer oriented, focusing on educational costs and the likely return in the form of a well-paying job.

Governing bodies are continuing to demand increased accountability, even as state contributions to higher education decline. Rhodes (2001) suggests that the future of higher education institutions "is likely to depend on how skillfully and creatively they are able to combine the virtues of their past governance and style of learning with the demands of a less benign future and a less deferential learning public" (p. 233-34). Over the past several years, there have been numerous calls by professional associations and renowned scholars for higher education to engage with society and renew its civic mission. These reports have included challenges to redefine scholarship, restructure faculty rewards, keep tuition and other costs low, create coherent curricula, and focus on student learning (ACE, 1999; Greater Expectations, 2002; Kellogg, 1995; National Forum and London, 2003; Wingspread Declaration, 1999).

The central issue is higher education's relationship with society. Two of the participants in the leadership dialogues held by the National Forum on Serving the Public Good, Tony Chambers and John Burkhardt (2003), characterize the relationship as a covenant. The term carries some biblical implications, but the essential meaning is a promise and a relationship that carries responsibilities for both parties. A responsibility for higher education is to create knowledge and assist in making meaning of that knowledge in the context of American society. Another fundamental responsibility is to provide education for individuals, which creates an involved, civically engaged citizenry. In turn, society is to allow the academy the freedom to pursue and explore knowledge along with providing reasonable resources to support its mission.

Chambers and Burkhardt (2003) assert that this is the nature of the historical role between American higher education and American society. The values and beliefs associated with this promised relationship are still in existence within the academy and in society. Statements supporting the public service role are found in university mission statements. Institutions of higher education are still expected to develop citizens who will actively serve society (National Forum and London, 2003). However, the relationship is at risk. Those challenging the academic community are asking institutions to focus on serving the public good to renew the covenant. Serving the public good is defined by its characteristics in the literature. It is context specific, defined by each institution and its local community. Engaged scholarship, a focus on student learning, a commitment to civic life and values, and actively involving the public in the life of the university are all descriptors of serving the public good.

## Statement of the Problem

The pressures on American higher education from market competition, government, local communities, resource constraints, students and their families, in addition to the challenges within the academy, call for nothing less than transformational change within individual institutions and across the system. Transformational change is distinguished from other types of change by both its depth and pervasiveness and its values (Astin, 2001; Eckel, Hill and Green, 1998). Transformational change alters the structures and the culture of the institution. It reaches into the heart of the institution to impact the lives and experiences of faculty and students. Transformational change is also inherently value laden and value driven (Astin, 2001). The concept of transformational change for higher education derives from organizational development literature focused on large-scale change in business, industry, and government. The work of Collins and Porras (1997) on successfully transforming companies and Kotter's (1998) work on leadership and change are based in the business sector.

The definitions of transformational change in higher education literature vary in their emphasis on the aspects of transformational change described by Eckel, Hill and Green, (1998) and Astin (2001). For this study, transformational change within an institution, or institutional transformation, will be defined as a systemic, dynamic change process intentionally value driven which alters the culture and meaning making of the institution and has as its goals to enhance service to society and positively impact student learning.

In 1995 The Kellogg Foundation launched an effort first called the Kellogg Network on Institutional Transformation (KNIT), which provided funds to a select group of institutions attempting various degrees of institutional change. The goal of the project was to identify the critical elements of an institutional change process and assess the degree to which the projects were institutionalized and thus transforming. The project directors realized quickly that KNIT was an opportunity to create a broader dialogue on institutional transformation, and the program was expanded and renamed the Kellogg Forum on Higher Education Transformation (KFHET). A final report issued in 2002 provided useful information on institutional change efforts, but also pointed to the need to promote systemic change within American higher education. KFHET has now become The Kellogg Foundation National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good with the explicit agenda to promote systemic change within higher education in order to renew higher education's commitment to public service. The report does not include a discussion of whether systemic change is actually possible. Rather, the emphasis is on creating an ongoing dialogue with institutional leaders, policy makers, and the general public to generate a commitment to the idea of higher education serving the public good.

The American Council on Education also launched an initiative on institutional change and transformation in 1998 producing a five-part series of reports titled *On Change*. The effort was aimed at defining what is meant by institutional change and transformation. The reports describe how transformational change can be achieved and the pitfalls of change processes by observing change in progress at several institutions. Eckel, Hill and Green (1998) found that to achieve transformation, the change must be

broad and pervasive and must reach the values and culture of the institution. The values of the transformation effort are woven into the values, culture, and resulting expectations and behaviors of the institution. They also found that aside from some key guiding principles, there is no single model for change that can be used to launch transformational change one institution after another. Fullan (1999) echoes this perspective on change, noting that each institution must in essence create its own theory of change from the unique elements present within its context and culture.

These two major national level efforts have spawned a large body of literature on institutional transformation and encouraged the efforts of individual institutions to transform themselves. Many individual institutions are actively engaging in change efforts and, in some cases, wholesale institutional transformation. Portland State University, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and the University of Arizona, among others, lead the effort to transform institutions. Transformation initiatives include using technology to dramatically alter institutional values and practice around teaching and learning and creating a coordinated curriculum and co-curriculum focused on social justice. Such initiatives have heightened service to the public good at these transforming universities.

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) is an exemplar of the many facets and complexities of institutional transformation. UWM is an urban institution located within the city of Milwaukee that for years existed within the shadow of the state system flagship institution in Madison. Beginning in 1998 with the arrival of a new chancellor, the institution embarked upon an effort to transform the university. It has

sought to reposition itself with the city of Milwaukee and within the state system through engaged scholarship and public service activities involving faculty, staff, and students. In essence, the university is renewing its covenant or commitment to the public good with the city of Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin. This effort was labeled “The Milwaukee Idea” and became the brand of the institution.

The Milwaukee Idea is drawn from The Wisconsin Idea. The Wisconsin Idea arose out of progressive political philosophies regarding the responsibilities of the state and its educational systems to its citizens. President Van Hise and Dean of Extension Louis Reber, of the University of Wisconsin, articulated this idea in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it is popularly defined as “the boundaries of the University are the boundaries of the state” (Stark, 1995). The Milwaukee Idea was conceived from this history and the definition changed to “the boundaries of the University are the boundaries of Milwaukee.” Engagement is the centerpiece of The Milwaukee Idea. Within the focus on engagement are several themes or “connectors” which in essence are the stated values of the transformation effort. These values are diversity, collaboration, interdisciplinarity, community, culture, support, and communication. Under this initiative and the leadership of the former chancellor, the institution launched a host of “Big Ideas”—programs and centers connected to the community. The institution also garnered significant state budgetary support and was addressing climate and diversity issues on campus.

UWM has faced some of the key challenges cited in the literature that halt or at least stall transformation efforts. During the past three years, they have experienced a



state budget shortfall with the ensuing reduced state support. In September 2003, the chancellor, who was the unequivocal face of their transformation efforts, assumed a position at another university. In his plenary address in September 2003, the institution's interim chancellor pledged to maintain the momentum. During this time, the work of The Milwaukee Idea centers and institutes continued. Programs were expanded and new partnerships formed. A report to the community during the spring of 2004 highlights these accomplishments and the continued commitment to The Milwaukee Idea in a transitional year. A new chancellor was named in 2004, and this academic year announced his agenda, focusing on building research capacity and increasing access to the university.

Also in 2004, The Milwaukee Idea leadership, including the interim chancellor, the chancellor's deputy for The Milwaukee Idea, and the former chancellor, participated in a Wingspread conference questioning higher education's commitment to expanding the culture of engagement and serving the public good. The report from the conference advocates community engagement as a central strategy to re-invigorate higher education's commitment to serving the public good. It also calls for radical change in American higher education to achieve this goal through the support of university presidents, boards, students, faculty, and the local communities. The radical changes suggested include actively involving the community in the life of the university, redefining scholarship, promotion and tenure policies, and making an explicit commitment to serving the public good through engagement. Astin (2001) maintains that any transformation effort is ultimately about values and student learning outcomes and

that any change not clearly about addressing values and students is not transformational. The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good and London (2003) also suggest that any institutional change effort is not truly transformational unless it enhances service to the public good.

A previous case study (Wergin and Grassadonia, 2002) examined The Milwaukee Idea from the perspective of civic engagement and whether the institution's engagement efforts were en route to being institutionalized. The study concluded that The Milwaukee Idea showed evidence that the various initiatives were becoming part of the university's institutional structure. There were, however, both barriers and supports to further institutionalizing the transformation going on at UWM. Among the supports for change was the charismatic leadership of the former chancellor. The participants in the study both on and off campus identified her as the face of the institution and The Milwaukee Idea initiatives. The chancellor actively campaigned for the institution and its role in Milwaukee and in the state. Reportedly, she gave 265 speeches in one year about UWM and The Milwaukee Idea (personal communication, 2006). While representing a force for change, the chancellor also presented a risk to institutionalization. If the initiatives could not be distinguished from her leadership and persona, there was a risk that The Milwaukee Idea would not become embedded in the university culture. Two other barriers identified in the earlier case study by Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) dealt with the faculty and faculty culture and the environment for students. These two groups represent the heart and soul of an institution and are inextricably tied together. The faculty holds the keys to the institutional culture (Keup, Walker, Astin, Lindholm, 2001).

This is due in part to their longevity and also to their relative autonomy within the institutional structure. Faculty culture is extraordinarily resistant to change given its history, disciplinary affiliations, and unique values (Kerr, 1987). The impact of faculty on students in a wide variety of ways is a given in the literature (Astin, 1993, 2001; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991). Ultimately, if a transformation effort is truly institutionalized, in other words a university is sustaining its transformation within its very fabric, it is because the faculty culture has absorbed the values of the transformation and will carry them forward in student experiences and outcomes.

The question now is whether the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has reached, or is reaching, Kotter's (1996) final stage of change—that of embedding the new perspectives and approaches in the institutional culture. At the end of the previous case study (Wergin and Grassadonia, 2002), the authors noted that The Milwaukee Idea had breached the culture of the institution and caused some individuals to embrace new perspectives and apply these perspectives to their work. However, transformational change had not yet reached the deepest layers of the institutional culture, to alter faculty values and student experiences.

#### Rationale for the Study

This study is an opportunity to obtain information from the soul of the university—its faculty and students—about an ongoing and longstanding transformation effort at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The researcher brings to bear familiarity with the research setting and an understanding of the effort required to conduct this type of study. Much of the research on institutional transformation is

focused upon the role of leaders in initiating and sustaining early change and on identifying lessons learned that may be helpful to other institutions considering launching transformational change. How faculty and students are impacted by transformational change efforts and then embody the values of the new culture has not directly been investigated. This study attempts to capture the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on the faculty culture and student experience. Barriers and supports to institutionalizing the transformation identified in the previous case study will be used to inform understanding of faculty and student experiences in the transformational change process. If cultural values and student learning outcomes are really the markers of transformation, then those who hold the values—faculty, and those who experience the outcomes, students—are the determinants of whether an institution has really undergone a transformational experience.

#### Overview of Literature

The literature review begins with current change perspectives commonly used in higher education, drawing from the work of Cutright (2001), Fullan (2001), Wilber(1998), Senge (1999, 1990), and Kotter (1990). In his book, *The Marriage of Sense and Soul* (1998), Wilber describes a framework which he maintains applies to all being and knowing. Four dimensions make up the framework: exterior versus interior and individual versus collective. The exterior dimension concerns external, observable phenomena, while the interior dimension refers to internal processes, such as beliefs and values. The individual dimension refers to a single unit, such as an individual person. The collective is the group or institution. Movement or change in any one quadrant

affects all other quadrants and is evident in each quadrant. Thinking in institutional terms, a change in a department program, which is exterior and collective, will have an impact on faculty expectations, which is interior and individual. The idea that one change creates ripples in disparate areas is also in line with Fullan's (2001) perspective on change. His conception is that once set in motion, change forces ripple outward in a myriad of intended and unintended directions creating ever wider pools of change.

The second half of the backdrop for the study is drawn from the work of Peterson and Spencer (1997) and Kuh and Whitt (1988) on organizational culture. Peterson and Spencer's conceptual model of organizational culture is adapted from the work of Schein (1985) and Ott (1989). Organizational culture is represented as a series of increasingly dense concentric circles on a continuum moving from explicit to tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is exterior. It is openly part of cultural dialogue. Tacit knowledge is interior. It is unexamined and implicit in cultural dialogue. The explicit versus tacit continuum utilized by Peterson and Spencer roughly equates to Wilber's model of change and transformation, where culture and values represent both exterior and interior quadrants. Kuh and Whitt (1988) describe the presence of cultures and subcultures within institutions of higher education using Schein's (1985) typology of culture. They advocate using a cultural perspective when studying institutions and discuss the development of culture within institutions of higher education along with the presence of subcultures.

There is exponential growth in the literature on institutional transformation. Much of this derives from funded projects. The literature review in Chapter Two focuses

on the national projects and discussions from The Kellogg Foundation (2002, 2003), The American Council on Education (2001), the work of Astin (2001), Eckel, Hill and Green (1998, 2001), Eckel and Kezar (2000, 2002), and Keup, Walker, Astin and Lindholm (2001).

### Research Questions

The research questions reflect two strands of inquiry to ascertain whether the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has undergone genuine transformational change and understands that process from the perspective of faculty and students. How are the values of The Milwaukee Idea reflected in the values, culture, and expectations of students and of faculty? Specifically, the foreshadowed questions were:

- How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted faculty and student culture and values?
- What metaphors are used by faculty and students to describe their culture and values?
- How is The Milwaukee Idea reflected in faculty values about teaching and learning?
- How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted the student experience?

### Design and Methods

A qualitative, emergent design (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998) was employed and is most appropriate for ascertaining attitudes, perspectives, and lived experiences in a real life context (Yin, 2003). Use of qualitative, ethnographically thick descriptions through participant observation and interviews and document analysis are the primary methods when studying values and culture (Peterson and Spencer, 1990; Lincoln and Guba, 1985;

Kuh and Whitt, 1988). The research questions are concerned with understanding how the institution's transformation has permeated the culture and values of the faculty and students. They are also concerned with the impact The Milwaukee Idea initiatives and values have had on the learning experience from the perspective of students and faculty.

The primary data collection activity was in-depth interviews at UWM using purposeful sampling to identify information-rich participants (Schumacher and McMillan, 1993; Patton, 1990). The Milwaukee Idea administration was interviewed and then, through network sampling, a purposive sample of faculty and students was identified. Faculty participants included those directly involved in The Milwaukee Idea projects as leaders and members. Dissenting faculty and those not participating in the specific Milwaukee Idea center initiatives, such as Cultures and Communities and the Global Passport program, were sought for interviews to uncover discrepant data (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997; Patton, 1990). Key student leaders from the student government and student organizations, along with rank and file students, were also interviewed. Community members, alumni, and deans were also included in the interview sample.

A basic interview guide was utilized with all participants, but additional probing questions emerged and were developed as the study unfolded. Access to the necessary participants was agreed to by the current university chancellor and the former vice chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea. Each interview was taped with the permission of the interviewee(s). Taped interviews were transcribed and shared with participants to check for accuracy. The data collection required three site visits of three to four days each. A

journal was used to track decisions and to collect observations and emerging ideas. Qualitative analysis software was utilized to aid in coding the interview data and the development of patterns and themes. The confidentiality of the participants was maintained by use of generic descriptors, such as student government leader or faculty member.

### Summary

Forces within American higher education are calling for transformational change within institutions to renew the commitment to serving the public good. Many institutions have sought to achieve transformational change, and the literature reveals that much good work has already occurred. The intimate knowledge of when and how transformational change has permeated the core of an institution—its students and faculty—is lacking. The focus of this study is to understand whether and how students and faculty incorporate and live out the values of a transformational change at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



## **Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

In preparing the review of literature, web-based materials, journals, articles, and books were examined. Specific works are included in this review for their current use and representation in the field, their foundational quality, such as Schein's (1985) work on organizational culture, and because they present a representative cross section of thought on the issues presented. A brief overview of the history of the covenant between higher education and society will begin the chapter, followed by a discussion of various perspectives on change and organizational culture. The literature within higher education on institutional transformation will complete this chapter.

### **History**

The relationship between American higher education and society dates back to the earliest days of European settlement. After homes were built, crops planted, and a worship space established, the focus turned to construction of a college. There, ministers, teachers, and public servants could be not only developed, but developed on American soil. The early colleges were established to combat the uncivilized conditions in the colonies and to preserve the culture and training of gentlemen worthy of Oxford and Cambridge. The colleges also were a means to create unity out of the diverse peoples in the colonies and to imbue in them a sense of loyalty to the government and the responsibilities of citizenship (Rudolph, 1962, 2000). The importance of the role of preparing men for citizenship and with skills for productive lives increased following the

American Revolution. In the now independent United States, it was essential to develop a corps of educated citizens who could ensure the success of the new nation (Rudolph, 1962, 2000). The idea of higher education serving the public good and the unique relationship of the states to higher education were created at the beginning of our nation.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the spirit of revivalism and westward expansion fueled the rapid growth of colleges in the United States. These new institutions were charged with many of the same purposes as the early colleges but filled with religious fervor. These colleges acted as an extension of society by supporting societal goals, acting as a tool of acculturation, and supporting the Jeffersonian ideal of an educated citizenry. This idea of colleges as an investment in and by society is articulated clearly in an 1802 statement by the president of Bowdoin College:

It ought always to be remembered, that literary institutions are founded and endowed for the common good, and not for the private advantage of those who resort to them for education. It is not that they may be able to pass through life in an easy or reputable manner, but that their mental powers may be cultivated and improved for the benefit of society. If it be true no man should live for himself alone, we may safely assert that every man who has been aided by a public institution to acquire an education and to qualify himself for usefulness, is under peculiar obligations to exert his talents for the public good (Tewksbury, *The founding of American colleges and universities before the civil war* p. 62-129 in Rudolph, 1962, 2000, p. 58-59).

Early financial models for colleges also reflected the sense of higher education for the public good. Some colleges were funded under a stewardship model through various denominations, while others were funded on a subscription basis. Subscribers were commonly local farmers and merchants, working and middle class individuals, who supported the idea of a college even if their children did not attend (Rudolph, 1962,

2000). In large part, the states contributed to the maintenance of many colleges because of their role in serving the common or public good. Later, the land grant system established a national model for funding higher education using federal and state funds.

The covenant between higher education and society broadened in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in response to a number of societal events including the Civil War, increasing industrialization, and the rise of universities. The earlier covenant focused on a public good defined as educating white gentlemen. It now grew to include serving other members of society and to produce scholarship in service to society. New institutions, such as Berea College in Kentucky, were dedicated to a distinct service mission. At Berea, this meant serving free African-Americans and the poor in Appalachia in a Christian, liberal education context. Berea's commitment to serving the public good continues today as it seeks to provide a free education to the Appalachian region, teaching the values of inclusive citizenship, work, and stewardship (Berea College Great Commitments, 2001). Through the Morrill Act of 1862, a state-supported higher education system was established to provide education in agriculture and mechanical arts to serve a society seeking to maintain its agrarian past and embrace its future as an industrialized nation. The land grant institutions offered for the first time an education for the average citizen.

The historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were developing during Reconstruction with the critical mission of educating African-Americans who previously had been denied an education. The HBCUs' unique mission was and is to not only educate, but to foster leadership and a lifelong commitment to serving the community.

This mission placed HBCUs alongside the church as a source of leadership within the African-American community.

The university movement established colleges and universities as places where knowledge was created in service to society. They generated important innovations to agriculture, industry, and public life during this time (Rudolph, 1962, 2000). Through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the service role of colleges and universities continued to be emphasized. Universities were called upon to assist in addressing the problems of an increasingly urban, industrialized population, supporting the war efforts through research, and the reengagement of veterans in society through the GI Bill.

The covenant between American higher education and American society after the Civil War through World War II focused on developing responsible citizens, the creation of knowledge and innovations for society, providing support for the government, and acting as an avenue of social mobility. This last element of social mobility, began gaining prominence in the crises of the civil rights movement, student unrest, and the Vietnam War. Higher education's relevance was challenged, and access and equality were demanded on a previously unprecedented level. How institutions should serve the public good and whether they were serving it was called into question (Kerr, 1991).

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, public financial support for colleges and universities was declining, as well as a common understanding of how higher education contributes to the success of society as a whole. Increasingly, the task of colleges and universities was to provide individuals with greater wealth and social mobility as measured by the number of students who graduated into successful careers (Kerr, 1994).

The prominence of this individualistic approach to higher education coincided with the rise of for-profit and corporate universities who offered curricula specifically tailored to obtaining employment.

Many institutions, like the HBCUs and Berea, have continued to strive to serve the public good, albeit in different ways. A newer breed of institutions—large urban universities like Temple University, the University of Cincinnati, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Virginia Commonwealth University—have worked to renew their service missions by focusing on their surrounding communities. These institutions seek to be urban, land-grant universities whose mission it is to aid in the development and renewal of urban communities. The diversity of institutional type in higher education means that serving the public good may be broadly defined as a commitment to engagement, but the nature of that commitment will be specifically interpreted by both the segment of society a particular college or university serves and the specific mission of the institution.

### Change Theory

A review of literature on change theory reveals a focus on developmental and biologic or living systems models, which are to some degree unpredictable. Approaches to change and transformation within these biological and developmental perspectives articulate a melding of traditional linear approaches alongside planning for and recognizing unintended consequences. Change theory comes out of the field of organizational development and has been informed by the disciplines of philosophy, anthropology, social psychology, sociology, and education. In their review of literature

on organizational change, Weick and Quinn (1999) found that theories of change have moved from highly linear models to nonlinear conceptions often graphically represented as a vortex or interconnected blocks. Increasingly, there is a focus on change as a biological, evolutionary force and the systems being altered as living entities (Fullan, 1999).

Weick and Quinn's review also reveals how resistance or inertia is perceived at a particular institution predisposes that institution to conceptualize change in a particular way. Change is likely to be viewed as episodic if an institution's resistance or inertia to change is seen as rigidity. If the inertia is seen as more fluid or biological, then change is viewed as more continuous. Weick and Quinn (1999) point out that change is actually both episodic and continuous. While a transformational change is characterized as continuous, within that process, episodic changes are occurring as well. Episodic change is occurring in response to specific incidents, while the actual state of being of an institution is one of continuous micro-level change (Weick and Quinn, 1999). The literature stresses the importance of understanding how change is viewed at a particular institution before attempting any effort to transform it.

The idea of the continuity of change is inherent in Senge's (1990) systems thinking model of organizations and organizational change. Systems thinking views organizational choices and resulting change processes as loops of interconnected feedback. Actions reinforce or counteract other actions in a continuous cycle of movement. Within that movement are recurring patterns that reveal when the opportune time is to change the institution. Senge labels these patterns "archetypes" designed to aid

in understanding both the life cycle of systems and how transformational change can be achieved. Systems thinking rests upon the foundation of Senge's four other "disciplines." These are personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning (Senge, 1990). His primary thesis is a prescription for transforming institutions. Senge's learning organization harnesses individual creativity, brings cultural assumptions to light, forges a common vision with broadly representative collaborative teams of individuals, and uses the connected nature of institutional systems to bring about change. In this type of organization, members are transforming themselves, their organization, and increasing the capacity to grow and adapt to new conditions.

Kotter's (1996) work focuses on the role of leaders in initiating and sustaining transformational change. Leaders must be learners and risk takers who are committed to communicating with and motivating others. The critical tasks for leaders of transformational change are creating a shared vision, building support, and managing both short-term and long-term results (Kotter, 1996). His eight-stage model begins with readying the institution for change. Extensive open dialogue about the institution's current reality, challenges, threats, and opportunities is needed to establish the necessary sense of urgency to be open to transformation. An institutionally powerful coalition must be formed to create the vision and strategies for transforming the institution and then communicate them to institutional members and constituencies. Broad, diverse methods of communication are essential to creating commitment to the transforming vision and to the strategies necessary to achieve the transformation. The leadership must also eliminate obstacles that prevent action and risk-taking behavior related to the vision.

The strategies for change must include “short-term wins” which are recognized and rewarded. Engineered to occur early in the transformation process, these successes will encourage and motivate institutional members to continue pursuing the new vision. To move forward, the change leaders must reinforce the early change initiatives and begin analyzing institutional structures to determine how well they fit with the change agenda. It is also important to continue to widen the circle of those involved in the transformation process in order to reinvigorate the process and produce more change.

The last stage is embedding the changes within the institution. Leadership succession planning is one element of creating this embeddedness or institutionalization. Communicating achievements and connecting them to the new way of institutional being also aids in instilling the transformation within the institutional culture. Transformational change requires a clear, strong vision with both short-term and long-term successes. If any of these elements is missing, transformational change will either not occur or not be sustainable (Kotter, 1996).

Another perspective on institutional transformation suggests the use of chaos theory as both a description of and prescription for institutional leadership, planning, and policy in higher education. Cutright (2001) argues that chaos theory provides a useful metaphor for leading higher education systems and for how they can be transformed. This is a similar concept to Senge’s (1990) mental models and systems archetypes. Cutright asserts that metaphor is already an established tool within higher education, and chaos theory is an alternative to the current machine metaphor applied to higher education. Seen through the lens of chaos theory, change does not occur with clear



causes and effects. The idea of colleges and universities as loosely coupled systems (Weick, 1976) is seen as an opportunity rather than an obstacle. Loose, but still connected systems have room to be flexible and possess gaps, which allow for adaptation to change. The gaps allow an institution to respond to expected but unanticipated and continuous changes. Organizational interconnectedness is also important, since it is necessary for feedback to occur.

Within chaos theory, systemically random activities are actually complex and repeating patterns. The patterns are created and bounded by self-organizing elements called “strange attractors.” An example of an attractor in higher education is institutional culture (Swenk, 2001). The patterns operate on the feedback loops where the effects become part of the cause as the pattern is replicated. In successive iterations of a pattern, the whole can be ascertained from the part (Cutright, 2001). Such systems are highly reactive to new elements. Applying these concepts to higher education, institutional culture and resource limitations operate as attractors creating and limiting patterns of change. Within these patterns or systems, a small change in programs and services as part of a strategic plan may have significant effects but will be bounded by its congruence with institutional culture or access to resources. The small change will also have unanticipated effects which become the cause of other connected changes. A specific example would be an institutional decision to increase the size of its freshman class as part of a larger plan to increase the overall size and position of the institution. This generates the need for additional residence hall space causing the placement of freshmen students in an area usually reserved for graduate students. One of the impacts of this shift

is a younger clientele at the health services clinic, which is accustomed to serving adult students already familiar with personal health care procedures. Routine exams now take twice as long, and the health center staff must re-orient themselves to serving and educating a younger population. The capacity of the center to see as many patients is diminished because of the time involved, and they must seek additional staff positions.

Cutright's change model begins with planning as the ideal. A strategic direction is identified, and then a central strategy and process is communicated. Key values and purposes must be clarified and attractors made explicit. The core principles of the transformational change have to be reflected in the goals and motivations of every part of the institution in order to be evident in the experiences of students, faculty, and staff. Communication and feedback are essential and must be broad and continuous. Conflict is positive and produces broadly conceived change ideas. The institution and the transformation leaders have to allot resources for both psychological and fiscal failure. To minimize the potential for failure, sufficient time has to be invested at the beginning of the process. Typically, this investment will come from the formal leadership. The leaders of the transformational change are often empowered by the process and can be strange attractors themselves. The institutional leadership is in a position to both shape the transformation and be the face of it.

Chaos theory has been described as just another spin on complexity theory (Fullan, 1999). Cutright argues, however, that the two are distinguishable based upon the dimension to which each theory refers. Chaos theory is focused upon irregularity in time, whereas complexity theory is focused upon irregularity in space. Fullan's perspective is

that since the assumptions about change are essentially the same in both theoretical perspectives, they are indistinguishable. Both theories do view change as nonlinear with causation, therefore difficult to define. Chaos theory and complexity theory also both subscribe to the idea that creativity arises out of the gaps and conflicts.

In Fullan's book, *Change Forces: the Sequel* (1999), he views all change or transformation as inherently imbued with moral purpose. Any change effort is motivated by values or moral purpose. However, understanding the implications of a specific moral purpose is very complex. Fullan sees all organizations as consisting of webs of nonlinear feedback loops and organizations themselves as filled with paradoxes, constantly existing in a state of tension between stability and chaos. Within such a view, predicting the long-term effects of a specific change effort is impossible. Leaders can only hope to fully ascertain the short term and discover the future. He does, however, subscribe to Senge's idea of archetypes and templates and Cutright's concept of self-organizing patterns, so that the future is only murky, not absolutely unreadable. Fullan offers in this reprise of his first book, *Change Forces* (1993), a revised list of change lessons for education. While the context is public education, the lessons readily apply to higher education. Understanding that moral purpose is complex and difficult to maintain is lesson one. This seems fairly clear for anyone who has attempted to lead a large change effort within an organization. It is difficult to adhere to a single focus in the face of changing circumstances, different players, and the unintended impacts of the change. Fullan's solution to managing these challenges is to combine both top-down and bottom-up strategies for change, providing challenge and support for those involved in the

transformation effort. Recognizing the connectedness of theories of change and theories of education is lesson two. Change theories have inherent theories of learning and pedagogy, and, likewise, learning theory and pedagogical strategies have implicit theories of change. At issue is the congruence between the assumptions in an institution's educational philosophy and the transformational change strategy it is adopting.

Fullan is more explicit than Cutright and Senge in valuing conflict, labeling it a friend of the change process in his next lessons. Conflict and diversity are essential to breaking open new ideas, discovering strategies for managing change, and delving into a multi-layered university. The new and innovative strategies for achieving transformational change are interdisciplinary and at the margins of an institution in Fullan's view. Embracing conflict along with the diversity of ideas, perspectives, and training present within an institution requires balance. The university must be able to maintain its balance in the midst of the transformation process. Fullan's approach is to achieve this by institutional "self organizing." Self organizing is constantly focusing on the moral purpose involved, knowing what theories are in use, and holding the transformation process loosely. All of this must be supported by communication within and across groups in the institution. He specifically addresses the fact that students themselves are underutilized as agents of change (Fullan, 2001). Students should be active in the transformation process as well as recipients of it. The meaning of the transformational change must be instilled in all areas of the institution, including within its student body.

The next two lessons highlight the importance of highly developed group relationships and communication skills in carrying out transformational change. A certain level of anxiety is necessary for change, but abilities such as being able to manage emotions and being effective interpersonally are critical to handling that anxiety and facing what the changes bring to the organization or institution. Communication aids in the development of emotional intelligence among the members of the organization which both provokes and contains anxiety (Fullan, 1999). Supporting and developing a more emotionally intelligent organization requires a collaborative culture that also creates anxiety and yet limits it. A group representing a wide variety of ideas and backgrounds can be very stressful. However, if the group is built on a foundation of trust, mutual respect, and an awareness of shared connections, then the stress is controlled.

This sense of connectedness leads to Fullan's seventh lesson, "attack incoherence." Creating connections and making meaning in the confusion of organizational life is necessary to bring knowledge and information out into the open. This allows members to better understand how well they are doing, what they are doing, and why. Creating an awareness of connections and making the tacit explicit establishes a sense of shared meaning within the organization, allowing it to be effective at the edge of chaos. Fullan's final lesson asserts the importance of organizational culture and history in adopting a specific change theory. Each institutional community must be its own innovator drawing from its knowledge of change theory and the unique elements present in the living systems within the institution.

Ken Wilber's (1998) focus on integrating science and religion through exploration of the Great Nest or Chain of Being represents a developmental approach to change. He has created a framework that looks at phenomena from four distinct but closely connected quadrants. The quadrants are interior-exterior and individual-collective. Structured in a 2x2 matrix, each quadrant interacts with every other quadrant. Every quadrant is also hierarchical or "holarchical" in that each level transcends and yet includes each previous level. This relationship places each "holon" in a state of dynamic tension. It must retain individual agency, but also retain its web of relationships in order to exist. Wilber maintains that all phenomena, for example, institutional transformation, can be viewed through this framework of developmental change.

The interior-individual quadrant relates to an intentional, internal awareness of the mind. It refers to individual impulses, emotions, conceptual understandings, cognition, and creativity. The interior-collective quadrant concerns culture, specifically the values, meanings, and experiences shared by the members of the culture. The behavioral aspects of an individual are represented by the exterior-individual quadrant. This includes both internal physical systems functions and observable behavior. The exterior-collective quadrant is the social or explicit organization of the group or entity. The exterior quadrants concern outside, observable behavior. Applying this framework to higher education, a single institution could represent the collective. Its published organizational structure is the exterior, and the institutional culture represents the interior of the collective. An individual academic department or individual faculty member could

represent the “individual” within the framework possessing observable behavioral characteristics and interior vision, symbols, and concepts.

Astin (2001) has taken Wilber’s (1998) framework and adapted it to the issue of institutional transformation in higher education. In Astin’s version, the interior-individual quadrant is consciousness—an awareness of values, beliefs, and expectations. The exterior-individual is culture as in Wilber’s scheme. The exterior-collective is institutional structures, for example, policies and programs. Wilber’s model emphasizes the symbiotic relationship of each of the four quadrants and the ensuing effects if there is a change in any one quadrant. Astin (2001) mirrors this relationship in describing the interconnectedness of institutional culture and institutional structures. Along with Eckel, Hill and Green (1998), Astin asserts that systemic change is necessary to achieve institutional transformation, and such change affects every level of the institution in much the same fashion as described by Wilber (1998).

### Culture and Institutional Transformation

Understanding institutional culture is essential to achieving successful institutional transformation. Schein (1985) maintains that understanding culture is critical because it pervades the institution and impacts it at the deepest layers of the organization. He contends that the only real role for leaders is in creating and managing culture. Culture creates a pattern for the members of the institution and can function to assist members in dealing with stress produced by change. Schein has created a frequently cited typology for understanding culture. Culture is comprised of 1) artifacts, 2) values and beliefs, and 3) basic underlying assumptions (1985). Artifacts are the

observable, physical manifestations of culture. Physical spaces, technology, art, and rituals are examples of artifacts. Values and beliefs are the espoused values of the culture, like those seen in mission statements. The conscious and articulated values and beliefs serve a normative function providing group members with a perspective or approach to various situations. Underlying assumptions are the unarticulated, basic operating frameworks within the culture. These “theories in use” (Argryis & Schon, 1978) ultimately determine member behavior within the culture and can be in conflict with the articulated values of the culture. Group members develop a culture if they have shared enough experiences to have a common view of the world and their place in it. Culture and cultural knowledge are primarily tacit and develop as the social unit copes with external and internal forces. Large organizations such as colleges and universities actually have a number of subcultures within an overall institutional culture, so smaller groups like an academic department or student organization are functioning within many levels of culture (Kuh & Whitt, 1998).

Ott (1989) adds an additional level to Schein’s (1985) typology. He contends that behavior patterns should be added as a distinct area of artifacts. He views behavior as a separate element from the physical and textual artifacts of institutional culture. Writing from an organizational theory perspective, Ott is arguing for the study of institutional culture as an alternative to structural and systems theories of organizations. Broadly adopting Schein’s typology, he asserts that all organizations have institutional cultures that include both observable and unobservable elements. They are all unique and are conceptual in nature (Ott, 1989). Culture is a socially constructed energy that provides



meaning and motivation for group members according to Ott. Understanding and then changing the culture will be limited by the level at which culture is perceived. If a researcher ascertains the culture only through artifacts, a limited understanding will be achieved, and any change will be limited to that level. The institution's systems of meaning and individual metaphors for making meaning have to be changed in order to achieve transformational change. This is level three activity in Schein's (1985) typology, altering tacit assumptions and values.

Similar to Ott, Kuh and Whitt (1988), in their monograph on higher education culture, support the use of a cultural lens as opposed to a rational organizational theory perspective when studying colleges and universities. Using a cultural framework provides another means of looking at how institutions respond to change and perhaps anticipating or navigating those responses within a given change agenda. Institutional culture is both a process and a product according to Kuh and Whitt (1988)—process because it shapes and is shaped by the interaction of people, and product, because it is also the result of those interactions. According to Trice and Beyer (1984), culture has two structures: one is its “substance”—the norms, values and meanings, or product—and the other, its “forms”—methods for communicating the norms, values and meanings, or process.

Kuh and Whitt's (1988) description of the markers of culture in higher education is closely aligned with Schein's work. Higher education culture is:

the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in an institute of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. iv).

Colleges and universities possess many cultures. An institutional culture exists along with multiple subcultures with each having some discrete values and assumptions. For each individual, the cultures overlap. An example given by Kuh and Whitt (1988) is of four cultures that impact a faculty member's behavior—disciplinary culture, academic professional culture, institutional culture, and the national higher education system culture. The subculture of his/her department or school could be added. Every culture and subculture interacts with the other in the life of a faculty member. Subcultures are defined as a group that has ongoing interaction, and from that interaction has developed shared values that are communicated to new members. Members are also punished for violating the subculture's value system (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). A subculture has a norm and value system that differs to some degree from the larger culture of which it is a part. Clark (1984) maintains that often university subcultures are inconsistent with the larger university culture. The subcultures frequently establish "territories" which they guard against threats. Within a college or university exist many subcultures—student groups by residence hall, Greek house, faculty by department and disciplinary specialty, student affairs staff, and business affairs personnel. The development of the modern university with its differentiated structures and academic specialization has given rise to a variety of higher education subcultures (Peterson & Spencer, 1986). This culture development process is described in the research conducted by Kuh and Whitt (1988):

Culture develops from an interplay between the external environment and salient institutional features such as an institution's historical roots, including religious convictions of founders (if applicable) and external influences particularly the support of constituents (alumni, philanthropic sponsors); the academic program; a core faculty group of senior faculty and administrators; the social environment as

determined by the dominant student subcultures; cultural artifacts such as architecture, customs, stories, language, and so on; distinctive themes that reflect core values and beliefs and make up the institution's ethos; and the contributions of individual actors, such as a charismatic president or innovative academic dean (p. v.).

Those who pass on the culture are the senior faculty, some longstanding administrative leaders, and upper-division students. Newer faculty, staff, and students are not passive recipients, however. Each group contributes individually and collectively to the meaning, making, and shaping of the institutional culture and subcultures. It is a continuous and dynamic process (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Faculty, in particular, transmit cultural norms revolving around academic issues. Students transmit norms about socialization to the university or college, such as level of involvement, adjustment, and overall satisfaction. In addition, norms for what is worth learning and how much effort should be applied are conveyed from student to student (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). The power of student culture in areas such as retention and achievement has been documented as well by Astin (1993) and Pascarella and Terenzini (1991).

Assuming a cultural perspective requires recognizing that culture can only be ascertained within its context in the university. Meaning will be defined in a variety of ways given the diversity of persons and existence of subcultures within a university. Navigating the existence of multiple meanings is critical for the formal leadership and more difficult at larger universities where a dominant culture is more difficult to discern (Kuh & Whitt, 1988). Like Peterson and Spencer (1984), Kuh and Whitt (1988) assert that culture is hard to change, requiring intense, often dramatic efforts.

Keup, Walker, Astin, and Lindholm (2001), in their review of literature on institutional culture as it relates to institutional transformation, found that culture plays three critical roles in transformational change. Organizational culture impacts the change process with respect to the institution's readiness and responsiveness to change, its resistance to change, and the final results of the transformation. They use Farmer's (1990) definition of culture as the "sum total of the assumptions, beliefs, and values that its members share and it is expressed through what is done and who is doing it" (p. 8). Echoing Ott (1989) and Schein (1985), the authors acknowledge that culture is largely unexamined and tacit until tested by external pressures. Any attempt at institutional transformation must include an understanding of the institution's culture and subcultures, or it can mean failure for the change agent. The culture can aid or inhibit efforts at transformation, and this is largely determined by whether the change(s) are in line with the existing culture. Additionally, the type of institutional culture significantly determines institutional readiness for change. A culture which already values trust and openness is more likely to be ready for substantive, transformational change. Keup, Walker, Astin, and Lindholm (2001) suggest an organizational assessment to begin readying the institution for change and in order to begin understanding the culture. One key aspect of transformational change is the notion of resistance.

Simsek and Louis (1994) utilize a framework reminiscent of Kotter's change model which includes consideration of resistance. Their paradigm shift model is dynamic and incorporates five phases or levels: 1) normalcy, 2) confronting anomalies, 3) crisis, 4) selection, and 5) renewed normalcy. It is in the crisis and selection phases

that resistance is highlighted, as individuals encounter competing paradigms in the transformational change process. The conflicting values and priorities of the subcultures most frequently contribute to resistance to transformational change (Keup, Walker, Astin, Lindholm, 2001). The largest conflict is usually between the faculty and administration (Kashner, 1990; Swenk, 1999). Due to their longevity, faculty are often the gatekeepers of campus culture and tradition, and, therefore, faculty culture must be addressed, or any effort at transformation will fail (Keup, Walker, Astin, Lindholm, 2001).

Conversely, if transformation efforts have met with significant resistance, then the changes have breached the culture(s) of the institution. Transformation is achieved if a significant cultural shift occurs (Keup, Walker, Astin, Lindholm, 2001), and changes have occurred in decision-making processes, strategies, and reward structures (Farmer, 1990).

#### Higher Education Research on Transformational Change

Alexander Astin (2001) examines institutional transformation first by attempting to define exactly what is meant by transformation. In his report, *The Theory and Practice of Institutional Transformation in Higher Education*, he begins with a working definition taken from the work of Eckel, Hill and Green (1998) that transformation changes the culture of the institution, is deep and pervasive, is intentional, and occurs over time. Astin expands this definition, stating that transformation also heightens the ability of the institution to carry out its fundamental mission of teaching, research, and service. Astin also suggests that transformation is valued based. A transformation effort has a purpose, and within that purpose are desired outcomes which inherently include values. The

values may not be as clearly articulated as the purpose of the transformation, but they exist nonetheless. Ultimately, Astin asserts in his definition of transformational change that unless a transformation effort affects student educational outcomes, it has not truly been a transformational change.

In his review of the higher education literature on transformational change, Astin has identified two perspectives for examining transformation. One seeks to understand what happens in a transformation; the second seeks to know how to do it. Astin's focus is to understand both how a successful transformation is accomplished and to also look at the intended outcomes and implicit values of a transformation. Eight basic principles of transformation are identified as fundamental. They act as a guide for planning and as a framework for the study of transformational change. Each principle is drawn from or related to other work on change in higher education or from more general change theory.

The first principle is that transformation is systemic. This is a living, dynamic perspective of change where every part is interconnected to every other part within a system. Other change theorists, including Senge (1990), Cutright (2001), and Wilber (1998), share this perspective.

Borrowing directly from Wilber (1998), the second principle is that transformation is both exterior and interior. Transformation alters both structures and beliefs and values.

The kind of impact described in the first two principles leads to the third one—that transformation involves time. It is a process, which must develop and change along with enveloping and changing those involved at the university or college.

The next two principles are that transformation efforts generate resistance and can create real pain for those involved as change agents. Astin believes pain is inevitable in a transformation effort. Change agents are heavily invested in their efforts, and attacks from professional critical thinkers like faculty can be emotionally and intellectually difficult to surmount.

Also inevitable are changes in the transformation plan, which is Astin's sixth principle. Working with individuals, institutional cultures, and institutional structures will result in shifts from the initial plans. However, the focus should be the educational priorities of the transformation, not the specific strategies to achieving it. Success will not be one hundred percent participation. Astin's seventh principle is that there will always be those who choose not to change. He sees this as a form of insurance against complacency.

The final principle could be the first. In order to transform an institution, there must be a readiness to change on the part of at least a few members of the institutional community.

The report goes on to examine what factors most commonly initiate institutional transformation. There are three major catalysts apparent from the literature: administrative initiatives, internal pressures, and external pressures. The first frequently happens with a change in the president or as a result of the president's personal vision for the institution. The second stems from some sort of internal crisis, such as declining enrollment, budget concerns, or retention issues. External pressures frequently come

from governing boards, state commissions and state government, accrediting agencies, or the local community.

Whatever the catalyst, there are several elements critical to beginning a transformation effort. Formal leaders are essential, but the transformation strategies must include the broad involvement of various members of the institution. This happens by identifying those who early on will support the transformation process. These early supporters are those who express a readiness for change and typically are experiencing some role-related stress. A successful transformation effort capitalizes on these supporters' anxiety to encourage commitment to expending the energy necessary to be part of the transformation process. The next step is to expand this group through aggressive use of communication strategies. Communication is central to a transformation process and involves almost as much effort as the overall transformation initiative. Information must be disseminated in a manner that allows various constituencies adequate time to process it and attach meaning to the information. The transformation leaders must anticipate that various interpretations of formal communications will arise, creating the need to keep the university community focused upon the goals of the transformational change effort.

The formal leadership plays a significant role in the success of any transformation effort, both structurally by their positions and as symbols of the process. The leadership group's central responsibility is to communicate the breadth and focus of the transformation effort and the process and expected outcomes. Delineating process and outcomes is important to monitoring that implicit values in the process serve the intended



outcomes. A thorough awareness and understanding of the institutional culture and subcultures is important to successful transformation. The fit between the transformational change effort and the institutional culture is a critical factor in successfully transforming an institution. Some aspects of the culture are likely to be changed, while others are preserved. Certain aspects of the culture may also represent obstacles to the transformation process and must be taken into account. As an example, traditionally, faculty culture values critical thinking and autonomy. These values can enhance the development of a transformational change effort by reflection and analysis or cripple it through extensive critique and lack of ownership.

Governance structures are another part of the institutional culture that may aid or hinder a transformational change effort. A specific transformational change strategy that often occurs is the rise of processes outside of the formal governance procedures in response to perceived issues with regular governance groups. Astin's (2001) resolution of this dilemma is to suggest that change leaders involve formal governing groups early in dialogue about transformational change strategies.

A final element of any transformational change effort that is often overlooked, according to Astin (2001), is assessment. Assessment is a key component in initiating and carrying out transformational change. Assessing the institution's readiness for change and its cultural values and priorities are essential activities prior to beginning any change effort. It is also important to plan from the outset how the transformational change will be assessed as it unfolds. This aids in focusing change leaders and the university community on the intended outcomes of the transformation process. It also

assists in uncovering unexamined values, which are revealed as more individuals are actively engaged in the transformational change. An assessment plan also can provide a narrative of the transformational change as it progresses.

Kezar and Eckel (2000) sought to identify the core strategies associated with transformational change in their ethnographic study of six institutions. They argue that no empirically-based, specific strategies have been identified in previous literature. In their review of the literature on change, they identify six categories of change process theories: biological, lifecycle, teleological, political, social cognition, and cultural. Kezar and Eckel (2000) frame their study in teleological theory, which includes activities such as strategic planning, assessment, incentives, and re-engineering. This is a rational, linear approach to change. It is widely used in higher education because it asserts the importance of actor influence and control and is also easily obtained by practitioners (Kezar and Eckel, 2000). Based upon their review of literature using teleological models, they identified seven strategies to use as a framework for examining the transformational change processes of the institutions in their study. These strategies are: 1) a willing president or strong administrative leadership, 2) a collaborative process, 3) persuasive and effective communication, 4) a motivating vision and mission, 5) long-term orientation, 6) providing rewards, and 7) developing support structures (p. 5).

They found in their study that five strategies, not entirely consistent with the seven previously listed, comprised a common core of transformational change strategies for each of the institutions. The importance of a particular strategy varied among the institutions depending upon the campus context, culture, and institutional type (Kezar and

Eckel, 2000). These strategies were: a) senior administrative support as evidenced through values statements, new resources, and new administrative structures, b) collaborative leadership involving formal and informal leaders, c) a robust design, where a desired and flexible vision of the future is developed with clear goals and objectives but the design remains open to potential opportunities, d) staff development which includes workshops and programs deliberately planned to enable individuals to learn new skills or knowledge related to the transformation effort, and e) visible action through activities that are noticeable and can be used to promote further momentum. These five strategies coalesced into a super-ordinate strategy, that of sense making. The impact of the strategies was to help people ascribe new meaning to their work, roles, personal perspectives, and attitudes. They provided the mechanisms to allow people to change their mental models or cognitive frameworks (Senge, 1992) as they adapted to the new realities of the changing institution. Kezar and Eckel (2000) labeled them core strategies because they were shared by all institutions and because they all led to the creation of new perspectives and patterns of behavior.

Kezar and Eckel discovered that the five core strategies were interconnected with each other and to secondary strategies. Secondary or sub-strategies included: bringing in outside perspectives through the use of consultants, using external factors such as the involvement of a foundation, keeping feedback loops open so there were opportunities for participants to influence the results, creating synergy and connections by drawing on smaller change initiatives already occurring, inviting participation as a communication strategy, moderating the momentum of the plan, and putting the local institutional change

in a broader context of change within higher education. The core and secondary strategies also tended to occur in groups rather than sequentially. An example of the clustering which occurred at the institutions under study is the coupling of robust design, a core strategy, with several subsidiary strategies such as using outside perspectives, situating efforts within the institutional culture, putting the change in a broader context, and creating synergy and connections. Balance among and between the employed strategies also appeared as a critical issue. This appears to be linked to moderating the momentum of the change process so that sense making can occur.

Sense making is a reciprocal process where people obtain information, make meaning of it, and then act accordingly (Thomas, Clark & Gioia, 1993). It is also defined as a collective process of making meaning out of uncertain and changing organizational situations (Weick, 1995). Core strategies such as staff development gave individuals the opportunity to learn about the transformational change and discuss it with others. This helps individuals to figure out their places in the change process and where their roles fit. According to Kezar and Eckel (2000), this involves more than reframing what is already known. Sense making means developing new metaphors that guide the attitudes and behavior of the institutional community. New symbols, norms, and relationships among members are critical elements of this process.

Kezar and Eckel (2000) concluded from their findings that of the six institutions pursuing transformational change, those who were most successful had utilized processes that allowed the university community to make meaning of the change, in other words, to engage in sense making. This involved the core strategies identified previously, but with

the time to engage in adequate dialogue and discussion as the transformation process progressed. Using a strict teleological perspective was also found to be lacking in framing everything that occurs in transformational change. The interconnectedness of the various strategies which were also occurring simultaneously reflects a more biological description. Also, the concept of sense making derives from social cognition models, not a rational, linear approach. Kezar and Eckel ultimately advocate utilizing multiple change theories or perspectives.

#### National Projects on Institutional Transformation

The American Council on Education launched a national project in 1996 studying leadership and institutional transformation titled *On Change*. In a five-part series, Eckel, Hill and Green chronicle their observations, insights, and findings from 26 institutions attempting various levels of change over a five-year period. The ACE project arose out of the need to understand how change is managed within higher education and to determine if deep pervasive change is possible within higher education in order to meet the challenges of a new societal environment. The project focus was to assist institutional leaders, as they managed change efforts at their respective institutions, to learn from those efforts and then share them with the broader higher education community. The ACE project generated a definition of transformation which is widely quoted in the literature:

Transformation 1) alters the culture of the institution by changing select underlying assumptions and institutional behaviors, processes, and products; 2) is deep and pervasive, affecting the whole institution; 3) is intentional; and 4) occurs over time (Eckel, Hill and Green, 1998, p. 3).

Eckel, Hill and Green (1998) utilized a matrix scheme to differentiate transformational change from other types of change at the outset of the study. Depth and pervasiveness are the primary elements of change and represent the two axes of the matrix. The four quadrants range from low depth and pervasiveness (adjustment) to high depth and low pervasiveness (isolated change) to low depth and high pervasiveness (far-reaching change) to high depth and high pervasiveness (transformational change). The distinction between far-reaching change and transformational change is the impact on the institutional culture. Far-reaching change has a broad impact, but has a relatively shallow effect on the institution. Transformational change has a broad impact, as well as a deep effect on the institution. The authors point out that while they have displayed these concepts in a fairly discrete manner, change efforts actually overlap in reality and occur along a continuum of the quadrants. Few of the 26 institutions in the ACE study were attempting transformative change.

The second report in the series, *Reports from the Road* (1999), focuses on the success and challenges experienced by the participating institutions. The challenges or pitfalls as they were described by the authors result largely from mistakes made by the leadership and issues within the institutional environment or culture. When a leader did not sufficiently link proposed changes to identified needs or the values of the institution, then the change efforts stalled. Leaders also need to stay on message and constantly communicate with the institutional community. Not fully exploring institutional issues or involving a broad enough spectrum of the campus community also caused change efforts to flounder. Finally, the leadership group must be comprised of individuals who are truly

powerful within the institution, both formally and informally. An institutional environment characterized by conflict or constantly operating in a reactionary way overwhelmed attempts to launch a change agenda. Losing the champions of the institutional change too early in the process also caused change efforts to fail because changes were not yet embedded within the institution.

The first two reports resulted in a third, *Taking Charge of Change: A Primer for Colleges and Universities* (1999), designed for institutions considering launching a major change agenda. The primer provides a synopsis of the lessons described in the earlier reports. The fourth report, *What Governing Bodies Need to Know and Do About Institutional Change* (2001), is directed at governing boards and emphasizes the role of governing bodies in creating a nurturing climate for change, while also modeling the new behaviors and values. A critical role for boards is to utilize their vantage points to take long-term perspectives and monitor transformation processes as they unfold. The final report, *Riding the Waves of Change: Insights from Transforming Institutions* (2001), reflects on the factors that made some institutions more successful than others in accomplishing transformational change.

One factor that contributed significantly to a successful transformation effort was an external environment and internal environment favorable to change. External pressures were present at a sufficient level to provide motivation to the institution without overwhelming it. At the same time, the institution possessed an adequate infrastructure and a history of trust in decision-making. The perspectives and behaviors of change leaders were another important factor at the successfully transforming institutions.

Change leaders were focused on the principles of the transformation effort and paid careful attention to the process. Successful change leaders also were maintaining a long-term perspective, balancing action and reflections, being persistent, and anticipating surprises. The successful institutions also had deliberate strategies to assist the university community in thinking in new ways. Multiple opportunities existed to engage in dialogue, articulate ideas publicly, and gather outside perspectives. Communications were frequent, open, and aided in redefining familiar terms and ideas in the context of the transformational change. Overall, the process at successful institutions was positively focused; topics and timelines were well chosen and well thought out. Governance groups were actively part of the process and linked to the ad hoc change groups which formed. Additional sources of financial support were identified, often through grants and donors to support transformation initiatives.

Institutional size also impacted institutions. Specifically, the size of an institution affected attention to the transformation process, communication strategies, and opportunities for involvement. For example, at a large institution, the concern about communication was to have it reach the entire community in a timely manner. At a small institution, the concern was to regulate communication so that too much information was not relayed too quickly. The differences in community, institutional memory, and culture between large and small institutions also had an effect on change activities. The ACE final report emphasizes the influence of institutional culture on any change process. Transformational change strategies must be customized to fit the specific institutional culture.



Markers of transformed institutions were also identified. These include a significantly changed curriculum in both content and goals, improved student learning outcomes, budgets and policies aligned with the new mission and goals, and new organizational and decision-making structures. The culture of the institutions also changed, as indicated by new relationships and methods of interaction, both internal and external to the institution, an improved self-image, and a new willingness to examine the institution's state of being.

In 1995, KNIT or the Kellogg Network on Institutional Transformation project was launched with five institutions. KNIT became the Kellogg Forum on Higher Education Transformation (KFHET) in 1998 with a goal of providing a guide map so other institutions could follow the successes of the original five institutions. This effort in turn was transformed into the Kellogg National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good in 2000. The original change model used with KNIT and KFHET presumed that widespread transformation would occur through innovation, dissemination and replication. KFHET (1998) found that large-scale change required much more and actually involved an intertwined set of nonlinear activities.

The goal of the KFHET (1998) project was to motivate individual institutions to engage in transformational change through learning about successful institutional transformation, share the lessons learned with other institutions, and eventually transform the entire American system. The project involved extensive case studies with a team of scholars working with each identified institution, supporting institutional efforts financially through the Kellogg Foundation, and observing the successes and failures of

the participating colleges and universities. Among the individual changes noted in each successful transformation process were differences in how faculty perceived their roles as educators, a more reflective and critical approach to teaching and learning and new patterns of interaction. Students became more independent learners and also viewed their institutions differently after the transformation process. On an institutional level, policies, practices, organizational structure, and budgets were some of the areas altered by the transformation. Interactions with the external community also changed, as did how individuals were socialized into the university community.

Out of this massive effort to understand and promote institutional transformation, several important understandings emerged. The first was a very real acknowledgement that higher education lives in two often-conflicting worlds. One sphere is the institutional mission and values focused on preparing students as citizens and contributing to the common good. The other sphere is money, markets, and competition (KFHET, 1998). The latter is necessary to support the former, but the appropriate balance is difficult to achieve. Communicating the institution's values and vision must be reflected in the institution's hopes and goals, and it must be clear that all change is about values. Many of the transformation efforts also generated a higher commitment to serving society, both on an individual level and an institutional level.

The successful institutions were reflective and intentional about their principles and actually lived them out in policies, procedures, and faculty and student roles. KFHET (1998) also found that shared leadership is critical and that all participants in the process must also be learners, even at the highest levels of leadership. New, powerful

relationships must be formed across all levels of the institution for transformation to succeed.

The Kellogg Foundation's current efforts have moved beyond trying to understand how institutions engage in transformational change to trying to promote transformation with the specific focus of serving the public good. The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (2003), supported by the Kellogg Foundation, seeks to use the data it has collected to define a new relationship between higher education and American society, one that is characterized by a commitment to serving the public good. They are attempting to utilize what educational research has found about educational change and change theory and to apply it to the whole academy. It is unclear from the National Forum report if system-wide change is considered possible, rather than just desirable.

The National Forum describes serving the public good as renewing higher education's involvement in society. Renewed involvement can take the form of a new partnership between city schools and an urban university that fosters interaction between faculty, students, and schoolteachers. It can also be a renewed commitment to research which is used to improve farming practices at a land-grant university. Serving the public good also includes a continued commitment to liberal education as the foundation for developing critically-reflective and civically-oriented students. Engaged universities and colleges are committed to broad access to higher education. A diversity of voices are welcomed and represented at the institution as well. Such institutions collaborate with their communities and are willingly accountable to them. A public presence is evidenced

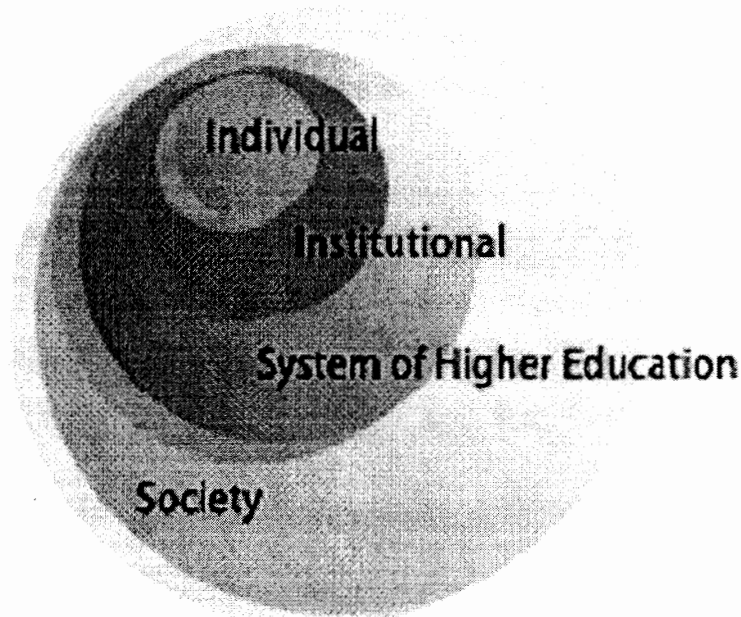
by the nature of student learning and the service, teaching, and research focus of the faculty. The institution presents a trusted public voice within the community, and its commitment to the health of society is evident. The goal is to establish higher education as a societal good, restoring its public role and changing society's expectations of higher education. This is moving away from the current perception of higher education as primarily an individual and instrumental product.

The report from the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (2003) is intended to create a sense of urgency within the leaders of American higher education. Among the results of the four gatherings or summits is a visual conceptualization of how transformational change would occur within the higher education system. The diagram is of a series of interconnected concentric circles. The innermost circle contains the individual. This is contained within an institutional circle. Next is the system of higher education, and the outermost circle is society. This view of change places individual and institutional change activity within the larger context of the education system and then within society.

It is a holarchical representation of change where each ascending aspect contains the elements below with each element retaining its individuality. Change in any one aspect will affect all of the others. The various constituencies within an institution are critical to achieving the transformation advocated by the National Forum. In particular, formal leaders, faculty, and students are the players in this process. This model clearly utilizes the thinking of Wilber (1998) and Astin (2001). The individual represents the individual and interior quadrants of Wilber's (1998) framework. The institutional area

can be conceived to represent the individual and exterior quadrant. The system of higher education falls into the individual and collective quadrant, while society represents the exterior and collective. Applying Astin's (2001) definitions of the quadrants for higher education, the individual and system represent the individual and shared values, beliefs, and culture of higher education. The institutional and societal aspects represent the actions and structures of the individual and system.

**Figure 1**      **An Ecological Impact Model** (National Forum, 2003)



Concern exists, however, about the current state of faculty work and roles and whether the academic culture will allow faculty to get on board with the transformative change outlined by the National Forum report. Promotion and tenure structures, particularly at research universities, discourage the type of engaged scholarship identified as serving the public good by the National Forum (2003). Participants in the national dialogues described faculty as anxious, detached, and individualized entrepreneurs.

Junior faculty do not necessarily come in with these traits, but the demands of the academic system and the reward structures foster them. Golde and Dore (2001) found this effect in their national study on doctoral education. The report found that a gap existed between preparation for the faculty role, the new faculty's expected contributions, and the realities of a tenure-track position. Doctoral students felt under-prepared for the institutional service and governance role of faculty members. The multiple demands on faculty time and departmental politics were also areas of concern.

Over half of the doctoral students in the survey were interested in community service and in applying their knowledge within the larger community (Golde & Dore, 2001). The reality is that promotion and tenure policies typically do not support engaged scholarship (Commission on Community-Engaged Scholarship in the Health Professions, 2005), so new faculty must devote their energy to activities that will gain them tenure.

The current competitive institutional environment exerts additional pressure on faculty. Conducting research now includes being a revenue center. Faculty are pushed to pursue grant funding for research that also will put overhead dollars in the department's coffers. These funds are then used to support other necessary functions of the department or school. Independent scholarly projects that do not provide extramural funding are a lower priority, and institutional funds for this type of work are limited. This has encouraged the siloing effect on faculty, where there is more identification with one's disciplinary association than with the institution or institutional goals. In sum, it appears that the culture surrounding faculty work, roles, and rewards will have to be transformed

in order to pursue a system-wide transformation to serving the public good (National Forum, 2003).

Students are generally conceived as the recipients of any educational change, implying a fairly passive role. Even recipients, however, can shape the delivery and ultimate success of a particular initiative (Fullan, 1998). The need exists to include students and their voices in the process of transforming higher education by garnering their ideas and harnessing their energy and passion.

The annual survey of freshmen students conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA reveals that today's students see themselves very much as consumers or customers of higher education. College is about getting the degree to get the job. Students study less and also increasingly seek to explore their spirituality. They come to college with community volunteer experience, but their commitment to civic contributions during college varies widely. Students engage in their own form of civic involvement, counting personal reflection, reading, and the arts among the forms of civic engagement. Developing a public-service focus for colleges and universities necessitates changing what students expect from their college experiences and what is expected of them.

The National Forum (2003) report calls for a focus on educating the whole student. Creating empowered intentional learners who are engaged and actively taking on civic responsibility requires a very different set of expectations for students and for faculty. The National Forum (2003) is advocating that in regards to students, higher education should create model communities where values are openly discussed and the

values held are consistent with the actions of the communities. The model communities would inculcate in students an understanding of civic responsibility, reflective decision-making, and ethics.

A number of action plans and strategies are offered by the National Forum (2003) to effect change with administrators, faculty, and students. The American Association of Colleges and Universities report *Greater Expectations* (2002) has suggested similar strategies. Administrators are called upon to renew the institutional commitment to a civic mission focusing on how the institution can be a force for civic change. Promoting civility on campus and demonstrating democracy in action through decision-making processes are two other recommended strategies. Emphasizing diversity and civic engagement in hiring and promotion practices is also advocated. Administrators also are critical to communicating with trustees about the importance of service and civic engagement activities.

Strategies for changing faculty culture and roles include altering promotion and tenure guidelines to value collaborative, engaged scholarship and the use of nonacademic peer reviewers. Partnering with the community in developing curricula and cross-disciplinary work are also suggested. Faculty have a unique opportunity in graduate education to infuse the next generation with a genuine commitment to civic engagement and service as well. The National Forum report (2003) also calls for faculty to assume a more public role in addressing community issues, bringing their specific areas of expertise to bear.



Students need to become re-engaged, according to the National Forum (2003). Engaged students are invested in civic responsibility and service and actively connecting their classroom learning with community concerns and issues. Specific strategies to accomplish this are developing active student leaders, involving students in the transformational change process at the university, and by making community-based learning part of the curriculum. Faculty and administrators can also facilitate change within the student culture through fostering active dialogue on campus about community involvement and social responsibility and by promoting career opportunities, such as non-profit management to encourage a long-term commitment to civic involvement and service.

#### The Milwaukee Idea

Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) conducted a case study in 2000-2001, which chronicled the development of The Milwaukee Idea and provided an assessment of the likelihood that The Milwaukee Idea would be institutionalized. Wergin and Grassadonia interviewed the chancellor and her core leadership team along with faculty and staff involved in developing The Milwaukee Idea initiatives. Community members and dissenting faculty were also interviewed. The Milwaukee Idea developed from the vision of the chancellor and a gathering of 100 faculty, staff, community leaders, and students at a community center in 1998. From this meeting, several focus areas were identified, including education, economy, and health. These were refined through the work of successive broad-based strategy and implementation groups into what were labeled Big Ideas. Each Big Idea had to be linked to one or more themes or connectors.

These themes were diversity and multiculturalism, partnerships and collaboration, interdisciplinarity, campus life and culture, communication, and support. The first Big Ideas were announced in 1999. The specific initiatives included Cultures and Communities, which centered on the creation of a new multicultural general education curriculum and which included service learning and the Global Passport Project, which centralized and expanded international studies and study-abroad activities. Each idea moved through an evaluation process for feasibility and then through a negotiation process to figure out how to implement them within the university's structures. Part of this negotiation process was the establishment of deans' councils, which provided oversight over these new and interdisciplinary initiatives. The first round of ideas was implemented in 2000, and by 2001 another round of ideas had been developed.

Funding for The Milwaukee Idea came from internal reallocation and a simultaneous planning process labeled The Milwaukee Initiative. The Milwaukee Initiative was a comprehensive planning and budget request asking for the state's investment in UWM and The Milwaukee Idea. The plan yielded the largest dollar amount from the state ever invested in UWM. Also at this same time, a plan to increase the diversity of the student body and faculty was unveiled. Required by the University of Wisconsin system administration of all state institutions, the Milwaukee Commitment proposed to increase pre-college programs, increase minority student recruitment and retention, and establish an evaluation team. Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) found that the Milwaukee Commitment had not made significant progress at the time of their study.

Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) identified both forces for institutionalizing the changes engendered by The Milwaukee Idea and barriers to doing so. The open and inclusive process which captured an idea that fit with the university's culture were two of the positive forces. The support of the upper-level administration, sufficient resources, and the development of partnerships were others. The presence of a charismatic leader in the chancellor was a significant force for change. The chancellor very much filled the roles described by Astin in the process of transformational change. She was the catalyst for the Milwaukee Idea. This was acknowledged by participants in the first case study. She was described as a breath of fresh air and that she opened up the university.

The chancellor played not just a symbolic role; she was the symbol of the university and The Milwaukee Idea. From her clothing choice in UWM's black and gold to her frequent public presentations, she was the face of The Milwaukee Idea. The processes she set in motion to develop the first set of ideas developed relationships and built commonly-oriented working groups. Leaders of transformational change fulfill their functional roles primarily by relationship building and shepherding the flow of information. The chancellor used her key team to publicize and constantly maintain communication about The Milwaukee Idea. However, transformational change cannot rely on positional leaders permanently. It must have a broad enough base of support within the institution that it becomes embedded in the institution's operations and culture (Astin, 2000).

The barriers to change identified by Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) reflected the need to broaden support for and understanding of The Milwaukee Idea. The chancellor is

also identified as a barrier because of The Milwaukee Idea's close association with her personally. The authors also found that ideas such as partnership and engagement were not commonly understood. Traditional university structures and territoriality were also barriers to embedding the changes. A particular barrier identified was the presence of an overburdened infrastructure and the real need for continued infusion of new funds. Many at the institution were concerned about over promising, both to the university community and the greater Milwaukee community.

Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) felt it was likely that The Milwaukee Idea would become institutionalized. They recommended several strategies to support furthering the goals of The Milwaukee Idea. Among these were suggesting that the university engage in widespread conversations about diversity, engagement, partnership, and scholarship to clarify the meaning of each topic within the institutional community. They also recommended that university structures and policies be aligned with The Milwaukee Idea efforts and the number of programs involving the Milwaukee community be increased.

### Summary

The literature on change theory and the importance of culture inform higher educational research on institutional transformation. We know what institutional transformation should be by definition. We have the steps or best practices to apply. The common mistakes are known, and the roles and skills required of formal leaders are well established. However, change that impacts the formal leadership, the administrative staff, and the trustees, while engaging some of the community, is not sufficient to say that the change is transformational (Astin, 2001; Eckel, Hill & Green, 1998).

What we do not know from the literature is when and how the soul of the university is impacted. That soul is the faculty and the students. Faculty are the institutional culture bearers, and students are the recipients of its meaning and values. The essence of the university is what happens between students and faculty in the classroom, in the library, and in the union.

It is unclear from the literature how and when students and faculty engage in sense making in the wake of significant institutional change. As discussed previously, at the intersection of change and culture is the concept of sense making. Kezar and Eckel found that sense making was the overarching strategy occurring at institutions attempting transformational change. This is sense making at a collective level. Institutions, however, are aggregates of individuals, so understanding what happens at an interior, individual level with faculty and students becomes important in thoroughly understanding transformational change from the perspective of the soul of the university. It is also important in understanding the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on the cultures and experiences of faculty and students.

### **Definition of Terms**

Culture—persistent patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that shape the behavior of individuals and groups in a college or university and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus (Kuh, Whitt, 1988, p. iv).

Institutional Transformation—a systemic, dynamic change process intentionally value driven which alters the culture and meaning making of the institution and has as its goals to enhance service to society and positively impact student learning (Eckel, Hill, Green, 1998; Fullan, 2001; Astin, 2001).

Change—(verb) “to adopt different customs, methods and attitudes, to give a different position, status, course or direction to; (noun) a passing from one state to another marked by radically different makeup, character or operation whether by sudden mutation or gradually by evolution” (p. 373, Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, 1986).

Mission—(noun) “the chief function or responsibility of an organization or institution, a specific task with which a person or group is charged” (p. 1445, Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, 1986).

Faculty—persons who are tenured and tenure-track academics with rank of assistant professor, associate professor, and professor at UWM.

Student—individuals who are enrolled as full- or part-time students at UWM and have attended the institution continuously for at least one academic year.

Administrator—person whose primary role at UWM is in administration of a program, unit, or division at UWM. This includes the chancellor, vice chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea, deans, and administrative heads of The Milwaukee Idea centers.

## **Chapter Three: Design and Methodology**

### Introduction

This study seeks to understand how the goals and values of The Milwaukee Idea have penetrated the student and faculty experience at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, potentially creating transformational change. As stated previously, a truly transformational change permeates the culture of the institution affecting norms, beliefs, expectations, structures, and behavior. To understand how The Milwaukee Idea has impacted the faculty and student subcultures necessitates understanding the current culture and context of both groups. The purpose of the methodology is to answer the following questions:

- How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted faculty and student culture and values?
- What metaphors are used by faculty and students to describe their culture and values?
- How is The Milwaukee Idea reflected in faculty values about teaching and learning?
- How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted the student experience?

### Methodology and Role

The methodology was a case study. A case study is the qualitative study of a bounded system which can be an organization, a program, a group, or an individual (Stake, 1995). This approach is used frequently in the social sciences and where the phenomena of interest relies on study in context and the researcher seeks to understand



the how and why of the phenomena (Yin 1989, 2003). To ascertain value and cultural shifts, multiple methods of data collection must be employed because culture is perceived at the level at which it is studied (Ott, 1989). Data must be collected at each level of Schein's (1985) typology: 1) artifacts, 2) values and beliefs, and 3) underlying assumptions. Case-study methodology incorporates multiple means of gathering data (Yin, 1989, 2003) and so is well suited to the study of culture and values.

Case studies can be defined to serve a number of purposes. For example, this case study is descriptive (Yin, 1989, 2003), as it seeks to ascertain how The Milwaukee Idea has impacted students and faculty to determine if true transformational change has occurred. This study can also be defined as instrumental (Stake, 1995) in that it focuses on the issue of how faculty and students reflect the values of The Milwaukee Idea.

The orientation of the researcher was constructivist and interpretive, in accordance with a qualitative case-study approach (Stake, 1995). In this study, the researcher's roles focused on interpretation and evaluation. Within a case-study design, the researcher can have many roles. Stake (1995) describes several roles for case researchers employed at different stages in the case and often in concert with each other. The teacher role carries the responsibility for providing opportunities for learning and understanding for the readers of the case study. The researcher can also function as an advocate, whether it is for agreement with the case findings or for the issues presented within the case. To some degree as well, the researcher functions as an evaluator—even in descriptive studies—because of the nature of interpretation.

The role of interpreter is significant for the case researcher. Stake (1995) asserts that this role is similar to that of an artist creating a new meaning or perspective of the world around us. In case-study research, the researcher is offering new connections, acknowledging new meanings, and sharing them with an audience. The researcher can also function as a biographer. More typically seen in studies of specific persons, this role can be evident in organizational studies that closely examine the organization's leaders.

### Case Selection and Sample Population

The study was conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. This site was selected because of its lengthy involvement in The Milwaukee Idea, a transformational change effort. The goals of The Milwaukee Idea are similar to the goals of the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good and appear to meet both the National Forum's (2003) and Astin's (2001) definition of the elements required to achieve transformation. The researcher also has experience with the site and case-study methodology, having previously been involved with a case study at UWM which focused on transformation through engagement with the Milwaukee community. Access and support for this study were obtained from the former vice chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea.

Faculty and students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee are the units of analysis. The sample population includes The Milwaukee Idea vice chancellor, past and current faculty leaders of the individual Milwaukee Idea change initiatives, such as the Cultures and Communities and Age and Community projects, and faculty and students who are in courses directly tied to the new centers developed from The Milwaukee Idea.

Students and student organizations, along with faculty in disciplines not directly assigned to The Milwaukee Idea, also formed part of the sample. Alumni and community members were also interviewed. Interviews were obtained from the chancellor and provost to provide a larger backdrop for the study. The faculty project leaders for the specific Milwaukee Idea centers and former vice chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea served as initial key informants. With their assistance, additional participants were identified. This purposeful sampling strategy is known as chain or snowball sampling (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

**Figure 2 Interview Sample**

Role	Student	Faculty	Administration	Community
	Graduate/Undergraduate Alumni	Primary roles are teaching and research	Primary role is administration	Resident of Milwaukee area not employed at UWM
<b>Affiliation</b>	*TMI sponsored course *Non-TMI sponsored Course *Student government experience *No student government experience *Lives on or off campus *Service-learning experience *Volunteer experience *No service-learning or volunteer experience	*Courses targeted by TMI *Courses not targeted by TMI *Faculty Senate members *Social Welfare *Letters and Sciences *Architecture *Humanities *Health Sciences *Business *Nursing	*Chancellor *Provost *Vice Chancellor-TMI *Vice Chancellor-Partnerships & Innovation *Director-Service Learning Center *Directors-TMI Centers *Deans	*Involved in a university-community partnership or program

▶ Note: TMI refers to The Milwaukee Idea

A chart of participants is included above. Participants are defined by role, role characteristics and affiliation, or position title. Diverse participants were sought to enhance the variety of perspectives anticipated in the data collections. An attempt was made to incorporate variation in class year, race/ethnicity, gender, and organizational affiliation for students. Variation in rank, race/ethnicity, gender, and discipline was sought in faculty participants. Demographic data was collected for potential inclusion in the analysis and final report.

#### Data Collection Methods

This study utilized observation, interviews, and document collection to obtain data. An iterative design was employed with the qualitative interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). In an iterative design, information is gathered, analyzed continuously, sorted, and tested. This process is then repeated with each set of interviews to obtain rich, descriptive, and meaningful data. In-depth, semi-structured interviews of an hour to an hour and a half were planned with participants. Preliminary questions were drawn from the research questions and the relevant literature. Additional probing questions were developed as each interview progressed. Preliminary interview guides are provided in Appendix B. The interview design was flexible in order to follow and capture participant ideas and meanings. Three site visits of four days were conducted to reach the point of saturation (Rubin & Rubin, 1995) in the interview process. Signed consent was obtained to tape each interview. Participants are only identified by the generic descriptors of student, faculty member, community member, or administrator. Transcriptions are coded, and sign-offs for member-checking are also coded.

Document collection includes published materials from The Milwaukee Idea office, class syllabi, student organization publications, current promotion and tenure guidelines, minutes, and admissions materials. Observations were conducted of the chancellor's spring plenary address, a faculty senate meeting, and a two-day conference sponsored by several Milwaukee Idea initiatives. The first visit included meeting with the former vice chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea, interviewing faculty leaders, collecting documents, gaining familiarization with the campus location, identifying additional informants, and setting up interview schedules for the second visit. The second visit entailed several rounds of interviews and observations. Interviews were also conducted during the third visit. A primary activity was to engage in member-checking to verify emerging themes and patterns from the first two visits.

A summary of data collection activities is provided in Figure 3. Data collection occurred during the months of November 2005, January 2006, and February 2006. A typical daily schedule included several interviews and one or two observations, scheduling interviews for the next visit, reviewing notes after each interview, and preparing for the next interview session. Campus event schedules and newspapers were also reviewed to identify possible observation opportunities and to learn about any new developments related to The Milwaukee Idea initiatives. A brief midday period and evenings were utilized to review that day's interviews, make notes, and update the field log.

**Figure 3** **Data Collection**

	<b>First Visit</b>	<b>Second Visit</b>	<b>Third Visit</b>
<b>Interviews</b>	Vice Chancellor–TMI Idea Center Leaders Students	Faculty Students Chancellor Provost Administration	Vice Chancellor–TMI Faculty Students Community partners Deans
<b>Documents</b>	TMI reports, structure Governance structure Accreditation reports Mission statements Admissions information	Course syllabi Service Learning reports P & T Procedures Internal community reports	Local community documents related to TMI
<b>Observations</b>	Student union Library Other campus common area spaces Classrooms	Faculty senate meeting Chancellor’s Plenary Diversity Conference	Student union, library, common spaces in the evening

### Data Management and Analysis

A general schedule was developed for each site visit. The schedule was maintained and updated while at the site to reflect changes. Interviews were taped. During interviews the researcher also took notes and recorded impressions. Observational data was manually recorded. Daily cumulative impressions, thoughts, and ideas were documented during each site visit. Documents were tracked with references on an Excel spreadsheet. A complete record of researcher actions and decisions was kept

in a log to maintain the transparency of the data collection process (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Data analysis began with the first site visit as information was received, considered, and applied in the next interaction or interview. This process of progressive focusing began immediately and continued throughout the emergent design (Stake 1995, Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Analysis and synthesis occurred in the moment, to form an interpretation (Stake, 1995). Case-study research uses direct interpretation in order to understand the case and search for patterns or correspondence (Stake, 1995). Based upon the research questions, key words from the literature and the revealed patterns coding categories were developed to organize the data. Documents as a form of cultural artifact were examined in relationship to the research questions. Atlas TI qualitative software was used to facilitate coding and analysis of data (Lewins & Silver, 2005).

#### Validity and Verification of Interpretation Issues

A qualitative focus seeks to understand constructed knowledge and maintains a personal research role. Qualitative research embraces subjectivity because the object of study is best understood in context and from the perspectives of those within the context. Case-study research, particularly, seeks to understand phenomena in context and is only truly applicable to the specific case. It is the study of complexity in particularity (Stake, 1995). Stake (1995) suggests that naturalistic generalization is possible from a well-conceived and well-written case study. Naturalistic generalization occurs in the interaction between the reader of the case and the case material. Related ideas, contexts, and other connections are formed by the reader so that a type of generalization occurs.

To increase the validity of naturalistic generalization, it is important to provide enough raw material in the case report so that readers may form their own interpretations, specify how triangulation was done, and document efforts to confirm or disconfirm the primary assertions. The goal of the case-study researcher should be to engage in vigorous interpretation and the preservation of multiple meanings (Stake, 1995).

Yin (2003) suggests using multiple sources of evidence or triangulation along with maintaining the chain of evidence to heighten construct validity in case-study research. Developing patterns and themes can be validated through the use of member checking to further increase construct validity. Internal validity is addressed through attention to matching patterns and carefully constructed explanations. To enhance analytical generalizations, the logic of the case-study design should show how the findings generalize to theory. Reliability is strengthened by following the established case-study protocol until the process is completed in order to preserve the whole and pinpoint individual parts of the data collection.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997) emphasize the value of immersion in the context under study and the use of participant or informant language and meanings to enhance the validity of qualitative research. Triangulation, member checking, and searching for discrepant data are also suggested. Researcher bias can be minimized by use of a field log and field journal so that assertions and decisions are recorded. Use of the resulting study can be extended by a clear, detailed description in the final report of every strategy employed by the researcher.



This study design planned for the triangulation of data through observation, interviews, and document review. Interviews were recorded so they would be available for future reference. Member checking was employed by sharing interview statements and summaries of themes and patterns for accuracy and understanding of meaning. The responses of study participants to the researcher's interpretations are also included in the final report to clarify how the transcriptions may have changed. Rich descriptions of observations, interviews, and settings, along with emic coding categories, were used to heighten the trustworthiness of the data and preserve participant meaning. A peer debriefer was used to review the patterns and themes derived from the data.

**Figure 4 Strategies for Verification of Interpretation**

Activity	Strategy
Interviews	Recorded, transcribed Member checking Triangulation Search for discrepant views Pursue until saturation
Documents	Logged in database, maintained Author and audience defined Triangulation Text analysis
Observations	Field log of activities and schedule Journal of decisions, ideas, questions Member checking for meaning Discrepant information sought Triangulation
Coding/Theme/Pattern Identification	Key words in literature, TMI themes Participant language and meanings Peer debriefer Member checking Discrepant perspectives, meanings Constant comparative process Data maintained in database
Final Case Report	Action and decision process detailed Participant narrative included

Participant language is included in the final report to increase naturalistic generalization. An audit trail was created through the researcher log, site schedules, interview transcriptions, and computer database. Figure 4 provides a synopsis of research activities and strategies to support verification of interpretation and provide transparency in the research process.

#### Institutional Review Board

Research was conducted under the approval of the VCU Institutional Review Board (IRB). This study was submitted to the IRB for review and approval. The consent form meets the covenants of the IRB and is found in Appendix C. Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study, and written consent was obtained from each individual. Transcriptions of individual interview statements were shared with the interviewees not only for accuracy, but also to respond to concerns about any sensitive issues. Confidentiality was protected by coding both the interview transcripts and the responses received from member checking. Participants' names were not used, and the interview data is aggregated in the final report.

This research follows the case study approach to address the question of whether transformational change has occurred at UWM as evidenced by the values and culture of faculty and students. Through multiple methods of obtaining data, triangulation, and the emergence of themes and patterns, an understanding of the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on faculty and students should emerge.

## **Chapter 4: Emergent Design Methodology**

In an emergent design, the researcher is constantly evaluating and making decisions in response to events at the study site and to participant responses. The resulting actions alter the initial design so that the final design emerges from the researcher's interactions with the object or objects of study.

In preparation for the first visit, the researcher had coordinated the logistics of the trip with the former vice chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea to determine a reasonable time and to gain assistance in scheduling some initial interviews. The researcher was also in contact with the study site's Institutional Review Board (IRB) coordinator to arrange delivery of a copy of Virginia Commonwealth University's IRB approval for this study and to arrange to meet to address any questions or concerns about the study. The first site visit occurred between November 15 and 18, 2005. During this trip, the researcher read and obtained copies of various documents. Electronic copies were procured, as well as paper copies, which necessitated mailing two packages of documents back to the researcher's home campus. The documents included syllabi for Cultures and Communities courses, reports on service learning, the university annual report, The Milwaukee Idea initiative brochures, and other promotional publications. The researcher also collected the campus and local newspapers at this site visit and each subsequent visit. This proved to be helpful to learn about events on campus and as background to know what the campus issues were within a given time period.

The researcher did meet briefly with the university's IRB coordinator, and no concerns were raised about the study. Six interviews were conducted during this visit,

which included faculty who had been among The Milwaukee Idea leaders, faculty associated with the Cultures and Communities program, alumni, faculty involved in Global Studies, and administrative faculty involved with Campus Design Solutions. The researcher also learned that two potential interview participants, who were leaders of two of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives, would be unavailable for the study. An alternative participant was identified during this visit for the leader who was on sabbatical. The other initiative leader was seriously ill, and the individual who was substituting was unable to participate in the study.

The question guide was followed closely by the researcher during this visit. Each interview was taped, and notes were also taken. The researcher spent approximately an hour with each participant. Reflections and questions raised by observations and the interviews were noted in a logbook. A faculty member who was an original Milwaukee Idea leader was able to give a thorough overview of the status of each of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives, which helped inform the researcher's questions during interviews with initiative leaders during this visit and the subsequent two site visits.

Various campus spaces where students spend time were visited and observed during this visit, including the union, various lounges and eating facilities on campus, and the library. This enabled the researcher to identify possible locations to interview students, as well as gain a sense of where and with whom students spent their time while on campus and when not in class. Signage, posters, and other posted advertisements were reviewed to learn about activities and programs that were occurring on campus. The

researcher also desired to get a sense of the demographic makeup of the students on campus, along with the location of various student services and organizations.

The current chancellor's agenda on access and research growth had just been approved by the faculty senate on November 17, 2005, and there was considerable concern about what it meant and where The Milwaukee Idea initiatives would fit. The people associated with the various initiatives were very positive about their programs, but uncertain about their status and somewhat guarded in their responses to questions about the future. The Milwaukee Idea label clearly was no longer part of the campus conversation. Participant conversations were about the Research Growth Initiative proposal process and whether they could develop a proposal to fit within its guidelines. Among the guidelines was the expectation that the seed money for a research project be recouped at a three-to-one ratio. A proposal workshop scheduled for December 2, 2005, was announced during this site visit.

In regards to The Milwaukee Idea, some participants were unsure about how much to reference it, given its association with the former chancellor. This feeling persisted and was expressed again in the second site visit. The banners remained on campus and on the website, but each initiative area talked about its specific program individually, not as part of The Milwaukee Idea, except in the past tense. The researcher had not anticipated the hesitancy expressed by interview participants about The Milwaukee Idea. As these initial interviews progressed, the researcher began thinking about how to approach The Milwaukee Idea interview guide questions for the next site visit.

Faculty participants during this site visit suggested several other faculty the researcher could interview and also suggested several students as potential interviewees. An alumni participant also referred the researcher to a vocal student leader who had organized a student rally about diversity on campus the day before the researcher arrived. Some of the faculty suggested to the researcher were described as supportive of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives, others relatively uninvolved, and still others opposed to The Milwaukee Idea. They also represented a number of disciplines and schools. A faculty member who was an original Milwaukee Idea leader was able to give a thorough overview of the status of each of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives which helped shape the researcher's questions during interviews with initiative leaders during this visit and the subsequent two site visits.

Due to the hesitancy regarding The Milwaukee Idea label or brand, on the second visit, the researcher led the questions about The Milwaukee Idea with a question about the participants' thoughts, reflections, and perspectives about The Milwaukee Idea. This would lead to information about the participants' involvement or lack of involvement in its development. The study introduction was also modified to reflect more clearly for participants the researcher's interest in transformational change and institutional transformation. The researcher also clarified for participants her interest in the themes and values behind The Milwaukee Idea.

The second trip was originally planned for December, but due to the institution's academic schedule and its impact on participant schedules, this was delayed until January 7-10, 2006. The second trip was heavily scheduled with interviews and observations.

Twelve interviews and three observations were completed. Each day was spent interviewing participants, making notes, reflecting between interviews about particular responses or issues that may have arisen during an interview, and conducting observations. Evenings were spent making additional notes and reviewing the day's interviews and observations, along with preparation for the following day. The campus and local newspapers were collected and read, and the university website checked for announcements and scheduled events. The second round of interviews was also taped and reflective notes logged. Initial ideas and themes from previous interviews were explored during interviews. The researcher encountered some wariness and suspicion from a few participants during this visit. On these occasions, the researcher engaged the participant in conversation about their work or research before beginning the formal interview questions. These informants ended up providing in-depth perspectives on The Milwaukee Idea and on the possibility of transformational change within higher education institutions.

During the second site visit, it was made very clear by participants that The Milwaukee Idea structure was gone and that each initiative was independent, so interview questions were asked about each program specifically. Participants were direct in saying that The Milwaukee Idea was now an old brand of the former chancellor. By this time, the Research Growth Initiative proposals had just been submitted on January 23, 2005, and faculty and administration participants were focused on the new agenda at the university.

The interview guides were followed with the changes made from the first site visit. The new introduction used by the researcher describing her interest in transformational change and emphasizing her interest in the themes and values behind The Milwaukee Idea elicited positive responses. Leading with a question asking for perceptions about The Milwaukee Idea was effective, both with participants who were not involved in it and for those who were. Many of the faculty said they found it to be a good experience to reflect and offer comments. Some faculty mentioned the lack of an assessment or evaluative component to The Milwaukee Idea in relationship to their reflections. One faculty member commented that he had not taken the time to really think about all of it.

Participants were hesitant to make broad generalizations about culture, whether for faculty, students, or the university as a whole. The researcher reworked the questions about culture several times to elicit comments and perceptions from individuals because the interview guide questions about student and faculty culture usually were met with a puzzled look, after which participants would ask for clarification. Asking about the culture of their own departments or classes was most effective. Some hesitancy could have been related to comments about how decentralized the institution is, so interviewees did not feel comfortable commenting about other areas.

Students were difficult to schedule and sometimes forgot to keep the appointment. However, the majority of student participants were willing to be interviewed and interested in sharing their experiences. Most student interviews were conducted in the library in a study and coffee bar area. That location was selected because of its known,



central location on campus and provided a comfortable, but quiet enough atmosphere for interviews. One student interview was conducted at the student's place of work at an off-campus location at the request of the student. This student had to reschedule the interview multiple times and found it most convenient to meet at his workplace as it opened one morning. The student appeared most comfortable in this setting, although he had been offered a meeting on campus and at any hour convenient for him.

Interview guide questions regarding students and student learning were not as useful in garnering perspectives on those issues. This was an issue with students, in particular, but also with some faculty. Student participants required examples to understand the questions initially. The researcher modified the questions to reflect participant language and also focused on listening to answers in other areas for perspectives on student learning. Faculty in applied or clinical disciplines tended to give responses within the framework of their disciplines where the focus already employed a more individualized approach to learning and used more active-learning methods. Faculty in content-oriented disciplines responded either with direct examples about how they engaged students in learning or described it as inherent in their teaching roles.

The second site visit also coincided with the chancellor's plenary address in which he addressed the new campus focus on increasing access to the university and growing research funding. The plenary session had a broad range of the campus in attendance, including students. The researcher took notes during the address. Given participant concerns about using The Milwaukee Idea brand and its close association with the former chancellor, the researcher added questions about the current chancellor's

agenda and how The Milwaukee Idea initiatives fit within that agenda with the information learned during the plenary address. Questions were also developed about the relationship between the values of The Milwaukee Idea and the perceived values of the new campus agenda. In response to these questions, participants shared perspectives on leadership, the role of leaders, change and approaches to change, and the state of the university.

The researcher also attended a faculty senate meeting which followed the plenary address. Only official faculty representatives stayed for this meeting, which focused on a procedural question involving the reporting of discriminatory incidents and did not address the chancellor's plenary topic. A campus diversity conference also occurred during this visit which the researcher attended. Two interview participants associated with Cultures and Communities had informed the researcher that the conference was going to occur. Several departments on campus and community agencies had coordinated the conference, titled "On Common Ground." The conference featured several speakers including faculty who are engaged in research relating to diversity and social justice issues and community members. The goal of the conference was to provoke dialogue and establish an ongoing working group to address various issues of racial disparity in the city of Milwaukee. Sessions included studies on housing and homeownership disparities in the city and exploring issues of white privilege. Faculty, students, administrators, and community members attended the two-day conference. Several interview participants were also in attendance at the conference.

The third visit occurred February 7-10, 2006, and included ten interviews with students, faculty, university administrators, and community members. Again, the researcher conducted guided interviews each day, made notes between interviews, and read the university and local papers for news and events. Each evening was spent reviewing the day's activities and preparing for the next day. Metaphors and themes from the first two visits were tested with participants during this visit for verification. The researcher particularly sought to hear from senior university administrators during this visit regarding their perspectives about The Milwaukee Idea, its values, and its impact on faculty and students. The researcher also had the opportunity during this visit to hear from the community about their expectations of the university, in regards to civic engagement and partnership. Community participants had been identified during the second site visit based upon referrals from a few faculty members. The community interviews were conducted at community agency locations rather than on campus.

Questions initially developed for the community members had to be reduced in number eliminating the student learning and culture questions because these individuals lacked the contextual information to answer those questions. The researcher asked questions about their specific programs or agencies, how they operated, and their relationship to the university. Community members were also asked about the university's current agenda and how that is perceived in the community.

Once interviews were transcribed, the researcher also completed a summary of each participant interview, attempting to accurately capture the participant's perspectives. The transcripts and summary of each individual participant was shared electronically

with that participant for review and comment. Participants were asked to respond within one week. Participants responded positively to this activity and, in some instances, offered additional information.

## **Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis**

### **Introduction: The Milwaukee Idea, Themes, Values, Visions, Priorities**

The Milwaukee Idea was conceived out of the vision of the former chancellor and the initial involvement of a hundred members of the university community and the local community. The Milwaukee Idea agenda was designed to reposition the university and redefine its relationship with the community. The Milwaukee Idea's overarching agenda of civic engagement was comprised of several broad themes and value areas, which were to serve as the connectors for each of the initiatives that arose from the Idea development groups and action teams. These themes were diversity, collaboration, interdisciplinarity, community, culture, support, and communication.

### **Document Review and Observations**

Documents related to the various Milwaukee Idea initiatives were collected and reviewed under the lens of The Milwaukee Idea themes and values. Other documents reflective of campus life were also reviewed. The documents collected included campus newspapers, the university annual report, the recent accreditation review reports, official publications of the university, class syllabi and organizational charts, and status reports from the initiatives. Web materials were also reviewed. The last status report on The Milwaukee Idea by The Milwaukee Idea office was produced in spring 2005. The official website contains a section on The Milwaukee Idea on the bottom of the first page. The page now begins with a section titled, University Priorities, and listed are research, access, the council on inclusion, and fundraising. New documents with The Milwaukee

Idea headings have not been produced for a little over a year. Current university publications mention the urban mission of the university, and civic engagement is included within the new agenda of research and access. Documents and syllabi related to the initiatives were used to provide additional context and background to participant statements and to increase researcher understanding of each of the projects.

Observations consisted of attendance at the chancellor's plenary address, a faculty senate meeting, and a university-community conference on diversity held on the campus. Many people across the campus attended the chancellor's plenary, and faculty interviewees reminded the researcher multiple times that day that the plenary was occurring. At the plenary, the new chancellor talked about the university agendas on research and access. The chancellor described the university as at a crossroads with a significant need to align its resources with its mission. He discussed the Research Growth Initiative, the research development program, and his goal of generating 300 million dollars over the next few years. The research agenda was described as necessary not only to improve research productivity at the university, but also to strengthen infrastructure and enable the university to serve a larger public good, that of creating transformational change in the city and the region.

The chancellor said he does not equate all research with funded research and that other activities at the university are equally critical. He also said the university is seeking to serve a larger public good by investing in students, particularly underrepresented students. He announced the Access to Success program and the opening of two student recruitment offices in the city. The chancellor stated that everyone in the university

could contribute time, talent, and treasure through following their calling within higher education.

The faculty senate meeting occurred shortly after the plenary address. Many faculty and staff left after the plenary, and the remaining faculty all appeared to be the official representatives from their departments or schools. There was no discussion of the plenary. The meeting consisted of routine reports and then a discussion of routing alternatives for reporting incidents of discriminatory conduct.

The campus conference on diversity, titled “On Common Ground,” was a two-day event. Participants included students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community members. The conference was sponsored by a local faith organization, the Cultures and Communities program, the campus activities program board, and others. The researcher attended two sessions of the conference. One session was on home ownership in the community and the variation based upon race and socioeconomic status. The session also offered statistics on the segregation of neighborhoods in the community. The facilitators included faculty and community members. The second session was facilitated by two faculty members and was an information and discussion session on the impact of white privilege. The goal of the conference was to provide education on community issues impacted by race and to develop a network to begin working to ameliorate those issues. A network has been established, and smaller events have occurred each month following the conference.

Findings from the interview process are organized by the research questions regarding the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on student and faculty culture through the

use of subheadings identifying each of the themes and values behind The Milwaukee Idea. Participant responses are grouped by these subheadings.

To understand how The Milwaukee Idea has impacted student culture, values, and experiences, students were asked about their knowledge of the Idea and their involvement in any of its related initiatives. Students and alumni were also asked about their overall academic and social experiences at the university. Within these latter questions, students and alumni were specifically asked about their relationships with faculty. Student and alumni participants included students of color and majority students, men and women. Class year varied and included one student who had transferred from another institution. Three of the student and alumni participants were first-generation college attenders. All of the students and alumni currently live off campus.

Faculty participants represented a range of disciplines, including the humanities, sciences, and the professional schools. The length of time faculty participants had been at the university varied from six to thirty-six years. Faculty were asked not only about their involvement in the development of The Milwaukee Idea, but also for their perspectives about the process and its impact on faculty and the institutional culture as a whole. Faculty also were asked specifically for their perceptions about the status of each of the themes and value areas undergirding The Milwaukee Idea and the relationship to faculty culture. As the study emerged, faculty were also asked about how these themes and values were or were not being carried forward under the current university agenda.

Administration participant perspectives were sought with much the same focus as with faculty. Administration participants ranged from mid-level managers to senior



university and academic administrators who had been at the university anywhere from two years to thirty-five years. All of the administration participants were familiar with The Milwaukee Idea. However, individual involvement in its development ranged from no involvement to a leadership role within a particular initiative. Several administration interviewees currently have some role responsibility for a Milwaukee Idea initiative.

The community members interviewed had participated in both programs developed through The Milwaukee Idea and in the development of some Milwaukee Idea initiatives. Community members were asked about their perceptions of the university's relationship with the community and the community's expectations of the university.

#### Theme: Diversity

Students and alumni expressed significant interest in the institution's commitment to increasing diversity on campus. Each student participant spoke the most about this issue. All of the students stated they would like to see the diversity on campus increased. The measure students used was the proportion of people of color in the community juxtaposed against the number enrolled at the university. Participants who were students of color reported more of a sense of segregation on campus than majority students. A minority student leader felt that differences were emphasized at the university, both in the student culture and throughout the larger university culture. Students of color also felt that faculty of color were more interested in them than majority faculty.

Students of color reported that they had organized to actively lobby the administration to increase enrollment diversity on campus. A vocal leader of one of the minority student organizations, who is known by university administrators, stated that he

and his organization actively communicated with the administration about this issue and felt it was important to continue to challenge the university. During one site visit, this organization had distributed a flyer on campus, which disputed the institution's enrollment figures for students of color. The organization also hosted an open forum for all minority student organizations with the stated intent of building a coalition to challenge the university administration to address diversity issues on campus.

Another student organization leader stated that he was working through university processes to impact minority student enrollment and retention, but that change at a university was very slow. The student leader said he has met with the chancellor and a lot of "big wigs." This student said he understood that things have to go through a process, but said, "We are a university that is about meetings, but no action. We're stuck in procedures; we're stuck in meetings, boards, and things on paper." He added that the university's commitment to diversity is on paper, and if that plan is not made into action, "it's a bunch of baloney." The majority students did not report involvement in any organization which was involved in promoting increased diversity on campus, but expressed concern that the campus was not as diverse as it should be given its setting.

While students were only partially aware of The Milwaukee Idea, they were aware of the Milwaukee Commitment and saw this diversity plan as part of The Milwaukee Idea. Students were unclear about how the current university focus on access will achieve the diversity goals the students themselves have in mind. As an underlying theme of The Milwaukee Idea, diversity was largely to be achieved by engaging in the

community and exposing the campus to the diversity found there. The new access agenda appears to be more internally targeted by bringing diverse students to campus.

Faculty participants said diversity is a concern and a core value for the campus. They also described different ways that diversity issues are part of their work. Faculty said there is uncertainty about how to increase the diversity of students and faculty on campus. One faculty member said the current university focus on access to address diversity in the student population is one of the ways the university is responding. Another faculty member commented that the cost of attending the university has impacted student diversity. Some faculty saw diversity as a more global issue to be addressed in a local and international context through coursework and study-abroad opportunities.

The Cultures and Communities program was mentioned by faculty as a curricular and programmatic unit that intentionally incorporates diversity issues. An administrative faculty member said that the cultural diversity requirement on campus “ghettoizes cultural diversity, but in Cultures and Communities, the classes carry diversity credit, are general education courses, and this mainstreams diversity in the curriculum.” Faculty involved in engagement activities saw themselves as contributing to diversity issues, particularly issues of access, through their work in the community by building capacity and making the university accessible to the community. Examples given by faculty include outreach and mentoring programs that are extensions of community nursing centers, the relationships built with different parts of the local community in service-learning classes, and partnerships, such as those with the Community-University

Partnership grants out of Cultures and Communities aimed at developing new courses. The concept is that exposure to different communities will make the university more accessible to those communities. The faculty who saw their activities in the community as supporting diversity and multiculturalism are operating within the original framework of The Milwaukee Idea where diversity was to be achieved through civic engagement.

Administration participants said the university was committed to addressing diversity issues on campus and also said the racial issues in the external community made it challenging. One administrator said that it was a core value for everyone, and people on campus genuinely desired a more diverse student and faculty population. When asked about the value of diversity at the university, another administrator said, "I think people think it should be a core value. Whether it is truly integrated and made a real goal, I wouldn't be so sure." A senior administration participant said the campus is talking about diversity issues more openly than in the past, and so the struggles are more visible. Some in administration describe diversity issues as being presented differently now than when diversity was the underpinning for civic engagement activity under The Milwaukee Idea. An example given is the current access agenda targeted at recruiting students of color and encouraging local economic development through the Research Growth Initiative. An administrator said the shift now is that there is less focus on diffusing diversity and multiculturalism throughout the curriculum.

Some in administration see the research agenda potentially contributing to diversity, as well as through recruitment of faculty and graduate students who are attracted to a solid research structure. A senior-level administrator said that of the two

current university priorities, research and access, increasing access, especially of students of color, is more challenging. The largest population of minority students in the state comes from the local public schools. The local school district has a graduation rate of fifty percent, and eighty percent of the students who go on to college require remediation in math and English. The university retention rate for students of color is fifty percent. One administrator said, “It is really hard to recruit more diverse students without improving secondary education and addressing the problems that keep kids from succeeding in an urban environment. We can all beat our breasts about how much we want students of color to be here, but it’s not going to happen until there are other changes.”

Administration participants also said they saw the current university focus on access as a positive vehicle for improving diversity on campus. The access initiative is called Access for Success and replaces the original university diversity plan titled The Milwaukee Commitment. A council for inclusion comprised of senior administrators, faculty, and students has been formed as part of the access agenda and to address current issues on campus. One concrete step shared by an administration member is the relocation to a common building of all support services for students of color to enhance service delivery. Another initiative just launched to take effect the fall of 2006 is an early warning system for students who are in academic trouble. A senior administrator said that while it is aimed at supporting all students at risk, it is especially targeted at retaining students of color.

Administration members said the challenges were significant. One administrator said the walls are high and institutionalized. An example was given of a new graduate student of color who was unfamiliar with university processes, encountering stumbling blocks and misperceptions while attempting to register for classes. The student had received a communication that her registration was incomplete and was trying to find out what else she needed to do. She made an appointment to talk to someone, and when she came in, she was asked why she was there. Once there, the assumption was that as a person of color, she did not have or know how to use e-mail. Some administration members expressed that the commitment to diversity is primarily lodged with certain people and programs. An example given was the Cultures and Communities program, which was developed under The Milwaukee Idea. Cultures and Communities was also described by another administration member as a refuge for students and faculty of color and the place on campus where diversity issues can be discussed.

Diversity is a priority and significant concern for students on campus. It is a core value for faculty and administration. However, there are different perspectives about how to improve the diversity climate at the institution. Some believe it should be achieved through engagement with the community and an awareness of community issues through curriculum infusion, while others believe diversity issues are better addressed through the recruitment and retention of students of color.

#### Theme: Student Learning and Student Academic Experiences

In response to the interview questions about their academic experiences, students expressed an overall satisfaction with the university. Student comments about faculty

interest in engaging students in class and demonstrating concern for students' education varied. One student expressed that she felt lucky that all of her faculty seemed to genuinely care about her academic success. Another student gave an example of seeing one of her professors while she was working and having him ask her about how she did on the class test. A minority student said that one of his professors had talked with him about his educational goals, advising him to slow down and take advantage of his experiences at the university.

A recent graduate stated that she felt that students were a low priority for faculty and that research and publications were more important. Another student participant felt that many faculty did not know how to teach, and that as an adult student she expected faculty to establish some credibility and take the time to explain the logic behind why a student's response might be right or wrong. She also expressed that faculty did not know how to connect the class material to students' lives and realities. The student said she had repeatedly asked faculty how her classes related to her life goals or other classes and that she did finally have a psychology faculty member connect the psychology class to her education coursework. This same student shared later in the interview that she had recently had some faculty who did engage her in the class material and who had expressed interest in whether students were actually learning the material. A minority student leader expressed that he felt a cultural disconnect with Caucasian faculty and that minority faculty offered more challenge and support to students of color. The student linked the disconnect to a lack of awareness of his culture and issues within his community and failure to use examples from the local community in his classes.

Students were also asked about their specific academic involvement with any of The Milwaukee Idea programs. Student participants indicated that they were aware of the Institute for Service Learning, the Cultures and Communities program, and the Global Studies program. Two of the students were enrolled in the Cultures and Communities certificate program, and another two had participated in service-learning. One of the students in the Cultures and Communities certificate program said when she tells other students she is pursuing the certificate that, “Ninety percent of the people don’t know what I’m talking about. I’d say most people are unaware of the opportunities available to them like this program.”

The Cultures and Communities certificate program is an alternative general education curriculum which also meets the campus diversity requirement. Students can complete the program, meet all of their general education requirements, and earn the certificate. The program covers five broad areas: science, art, global issues, U.S. history, and society. The foundation course is titled Multicultural America, and is offered in a variety of disciplines. There is a service-learning component to most of the certificate courses, and approximately 120 courses are affiliated with the program. The recent alumnus was a volunteer in the service-learning office, but had not previously participated in service-learning. The students in the Cultures and Communities program said they chose to enroll in the program because they were interested in learning about different cultures. They also chose it because it filled their general education requirements. The students’ service-learning experiences included working at a community center and cleaning up a nature preserve. Students described the experiences



as positive and expressed that they liked helping out in the community. Those who were not involved in any of the aforementioned programs stated that they did not have the time and were focused on courses in their majors.

Faculty perspectives about a focus on student learning were largely based upon their disciplinary cultures. Faculty in practice-based disciplines said they emphasized experiential learning and tended to work with students individually or in small groups. Faculty associated with The Milwaukee Idea initiatives said they sought to emphasize experiential and interdisciplinary learning experiences for students. One example mentioned by a faculty member was a class in Global Studies called the Think Tank. In this course, students engage in critical thinking through examination and discussion of a variety of materials grouped around a global theme. This course is linked to others within a specific track in the degree program. Another example is the Multicultural America course in the Cultures and Communities program. The course is offered in both humanities and science disciplines and is also linked to a service-learning experience which connects the specific discipline and the concept of culture. Faculty also expressed the sentiment that they were concerned with student learning, since teaching and transmitting knowledge were primary faculty roles. One faculty member when asked about focusing on student learning said, “Well, we’re not trying to teach monkeys.”

Administration participants saw only certain Milwaukee Idea initiatives as impacting student learning. Examples given were service-learning and Cultures and Communities. Administration participants said that such initiatives were still limited in scope and so had no broad impact on student learning. Other administration participants

linked the idea of student learning to efforts to improve student services, such as increasing residence hall space, co-locating advising functions, and school-based and college-based committees concerned with services for students.

Theme: Interdisciplinary Work and Collaboration

Student participants did not understand the academic terms interdisciplinary and collaboration, so the researcher revised the interview questions for this area. Students were asked if they had classes where coursework included information or perspectives from another discipline. The students involved in service-learning reported applying their service-learning experiences in one class to another class in the form of writing assignments. These students also experienced service-learning in a variety of classes, such as environmental geography and social work. Students expressed interest in seeing how different courses connect. A senior stated that she was able to see some connections between her classes this academic year and that the experience of this was a bit frightening. She described having taken an astronomy class and then later taking geoscience and realizing how it was all tying together for her. She said she recognized the importance of the information when Hurricane Katrina occurred. Students in the Cultures and Communities program, which is an interdisciplinary certificate, described the courses as learning about different cultures. Student participants did not report doing any class work in groups or teams. One student's service-learning experience did require that a group of students work together on a trash clean-up project.

Faculty participants responded in a variety of ways regarding the presence and value of interdisciplinary work and collaboration. Some humanities faculty said they feel

that collaboration and interdisciplinary work are important to developing students as global citizens. Other faculty in the humanities said they saw the new university focus on research as continuing to promote collaboration or partnership, but of a different form than under The Milwaukee Idea. One faculty member described the form as intellectual partnerships with practical outcomes versus specific partnership groups. The Milwaukee Idea spawned the development of a large number of working groups with community members deliberately included. The faculty member implied that the previous groups were more about the groups themselves and the process of collaborating.

Another humanities faculty member stated that people regularly come forward to develop courses in her area of study and that there is significant interest in interdisciplinary work. This faculty participant acknowledged that her disciplinary area is interdisciplinary by nature and sees that as an advantage to developing collaborations. A faculty member in the arts stated that interdisciplinary and collaborative work continues and that these types of activities are well within his disciplinary culture. Other faculty said there was evidence of ongoing collaboration and interdisciplinary work in programs such as Age and Community and the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management. The Age and Community initiative includes faculty from nursing, social welfare, arts, and architecture working with local aging agencies. The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management currently offers a certificate, and the program is staffed by faculty from a variety of disciplines including business and education. Other efforts that faculty shared as examples of collaboration and interdisciplinary work included an interdisciplinary teacher preparation program titled, Teachers for a New Era.

The program is funded by the Carnegie Corporation and involves approximately ninety faculty members from a variety of disciplines. A faculty member in the sciences said faculty collaborate regularly on campus and that resistance to collaborative efforts comes from administrators concerned about resources.

A different perspective was stated by a senior faculty member in the humanities who described collaboration and interdisciplinary work as “buzzwords with no grip.” This faculty participant said faculty had not been assisted in identifying other faculty who may have similar research or teaching interests, and there was no mechanism to facilitate this. The faculty member did not feel it was a priority for the administration saying, “You have to know who your workers are and they don’t know.” Another faculty member in the humanities who works with the Global Passport program felt that interdisciplinary work was not continuing and had been the first aspect of The Milwaukee Idea to decline. She described it like a rubber band snapping back to its original shape and added that, “Junior faculty are at risk in this situation as departments become more wary of their borders, and anybody participating outside of the department or in outside of the box thinking is under scrutiny.” This interviewee also felt that collaboration and partnership were essential for the survival of the humanities.

A faculty member affiliated with the Age and Community initiative said that while collaboration and interdisciplinary work are continuing, these efforts cannot be sustained without infrastructure support. She expressed concern that the new focus on research would reduce interdisciplinary, collaborative work among faculty. While supportive of the university’s move to become an entrepreneurial research institution, she

was concerned it may make people more conservative and change the faculty tradition of being risk takers in their research. This faculty member and others also said that The Milwaukee Idea established a path for this type of faculty work that remains in place.

Administrators generally saw interdisciplinary and collaborative work as continuing and at a higher level than before The Milwaukee Idea. One administrator said that cross-school collaboration was significantly greater. Another said that interdisciplinary work was also a byproduct of the current university focus on research development. The proposal process for seed money fostered conversations across disciplinary lines, as well as within different areas of a single discipline such as the sciences.

Administrators also said that evidence of interdisciplinary work was coming primarily from the interdisciplinary initiatives developed under The Milwaukee Idea. The development of additional degree tracks within the Global Passport Program and the expansion of the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management from a certificate program to a master's program were among the examples cited as evidence of the growth of interdisciplinary and collaborative work. Another example mentioned several times was the Teachers for a New Era initiative out of the School of Education. This project was up for review and was renewed by the Carnegie Corporation during the course of this study. A senior academic administration participant described a recent effort involving several units to develop a new school or department of urban affairs or public policy as evidence of ongoing collaborative work on campus. The discussions have involved a

number of existing units with an urban public policy focus and a new community foundation.

#### Theme: Community Engagement

Student participants expressed several times the desire to have course material linked to real-world concerns and issues. Students reported that in their experiences, faculty did not discuss community issues except in social work, the department of Africology, and in Cultures and Communities.

Students also acknowledged that their service-learning experiences did engage them with the community, but that other opportunities to volunteer in the community were limited to the neighborhoods bordering the campus. Civic engagement was defined by students who were from the local community as an awareness of the community as a whole—its issues and concerns, not just the areas surrounding the university. Students said it was the university's mission to work with the community and know what's going on. One student acknowledged he was not familiar with the whole Milwaukee Idea but said, "Is not part of engagement to be engaged in the university and with the local community? What I see is we're stuck on the eastside. To have a Milwaukee Idea, you have to engage with the community, and if you only engage in one community, you are really being biased. You are staying with what you know."

Concern was also expressed by students and an alumni participant that the university's new focus on research partnerships was a type of community involvement that would, in essence, "privatize" the university. The concern was that developing corporate partnerships through the new research growth initiative would result in the

corporations determining the university's mission. Students saw this as a threat to a more diversity-oriented community engagement agenda.

Engagement was viewed by faculty as an activity that occurred both on campus and off campus in the community. Civic engagement was also described by faculty as a partnership, working with the community and community work. It was also seen as a natural part of certain disciplines by faculty. Applied fields such as social work, nursing, and public health, and areas such as civic history were given by faculty participants as examples. Arts and architecture faculty who were also engaged in community projects which involved students saw this activity as an essential part of their disciplines. Civic engagement was also not seen as a new activity for faculty. An administrative faculty member who works with Cultures and Communities said, "We provide a hub for people to network. We haven't created this interest; it was just there. Individual faculty have been doing community engagement work forever."

Faculty interviewees also said it is important to engage the community and that the university has the responsibility to provide support in addressing community issues as an urban institution. A faculty member said she had learned over time how important community work is and valued that type of relationship over an ivory tower perspective. This faculty member gave an example of a pre-college program which partners with public school teachers to enhance language instruction and better prepare high school students for foreign language study.

Some faculty members did not limit the concept of civic engagement to only the local community. For these individuals, civic engagement is both local and global. An

example given was of students learning about a recent immigrant community in the city and then doing an internship abroad in the immigrants' native countries. Some faculty said in order for civic engagement or community partnership to really work, it needs to be grounded in education and research. A faculty member specifically stated that it must be grounded in intellectual expertise that is distilled into something that can be used in the community. One faculty member described her engagement efforts as education and research built on community partnership. She also said that engagement really requires three partners—the university, the community, and foundations.

Faculty who were involved in work with the community said they thought this type of work would continue, but that it just was not as visible as under The Milwaukee Idea. One health sciences faculty interviewee said, “I know our participation in the community is higher than it was eight years ago. But again, the focus, the impetus, the real titling and visibility, is not there at the same level.” A senior faculty member stated that the community had expressed concern about whether engagement activities would continue and that there had been some slippage. Under the new university research agenda, it will be important for engagement work to be closely tied to research and fundable. As one faculty member described it, in the past he would do good work solely because it was good work and now will choose good work that generates funding. Faculty participants expressed uncertainty about whether activities, such as a well-regarded oral history project in an African-American neighborhood, would continue to be supported in the new environment.



The new projects mentioned by faculty included a program involving the School of Social Welfare and a local foundation, which provides support services for minority students who are single parents and a public-private partnership that develops documentaries for nonprofit and for-profit organizations. This partnership includes students, communications and film faculty, and community members. The program was submitted as a proposal for initial funding to the university's research development initiative.

A faculty member not engaged in community work said no attempt had been made during the height of The Milwaukee Idea to include her discipline, although there were ways it could have been done. Most faculty participants said that a path or mechanism was now in place that allowed faculty to become involved in civic engagement, and it was no longer a new idea. All of the faculty participants said that barriers still existed for junior faculty who were interested in civic engagement that did not have a clear research agenda.

Administration participants said partnerships and engagement with the community are continuing and are expected. Community members acknowledged this, saying that the relationship with the university will never return to the way it was before The Milwaukee Idea. A community participant saw the university as continuing to be involved in the city in ways that were thoughtful about services and service delivery. He added, "I'm glad to see the new chancellor not dropping the ball, and I'm assuming it's a big challenge. I think education is vitally important to the Milwaukee area." Another community member stated, in reference to the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit

Management, that the university has really staked its claim as a major player for the nonprofit sector. A senior administration member said the community is constantly contacting the university with new ideas about possible partnerships and engagement work. Administration members also see the research agenda as developing new forms of community engagement through partnerships with local business and industry and technology transfer. Collaboration with community partners for grants was another area given as an example of engagement activity. One administrator shared the perspective that engagement must be linked with research to be powerful under the new university agenda, citing how the successful Milwaukee Idea initiatives have solid research bases.

Another administration member described engagement as more inwardly focused at this time. This administrator described The Milwaukee Idea as less targeted on engaging students and on engagement across the university community as compared to the current campus dialogue. A newer administration member said that acknowledging the community is tough for the campus and that she sees a kind of schizophrenic response on the part of faculty and staff to engaging with the community. This was described as people either being very engaged or not all, with not a lot of people in the middle.

Another administration participant felt that a key piece of civic engagement for students—service-learning—is not being executed the way it needs to be in order to impact a large number of students.

In general, administration participants and community participants described a kind of intertwining that has occurred in terms of expectations, current projects, and cross-community and university participation on advisory boards and governing councils.

Examples given of this include the make-up of the advisory boards for Age and Community and the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management, the leadership of the university's capital campaign, and faculty involvement on community boards, including one faculty member who heads the city planning board.

#### Theme: Culture

##### *Student Culture*

The student culture at the university was described by students in several ways. The student participants all shared that one aspect of the student culture was focused on partying and not on pursuing a degree. A recent alumna said, "I heard more discussions between classes about where the parties are tonight than I've heard actual discussions about the coursework. There is a real separation between the value of knowledge and social life." All of the students also said that the student population was racially diverse, but not as diverse as they desired. Older students were the other group specifically mentioned as adding to the diversity of the campus. The student participants said that most of the students at the university were Caucasian, from small towns and rural areas, and were unfamiliar with the city except for the area bordering the university. One participant said, "There is a separation between student life and the city of Milwaukee. They know the eastside, the mall downtown, where the hot bars are, but understanding the community as a whole?" Student interviewees reported that this created a situation where students congregated with others like them.

One majority student said she felt as if students were open to new people and willing to engage in conversation with different others. A minority student participant

shared that he thought differences among students were emphasized on campus. He also stated that students of color had a network on campus and regularly mixed with and communicated with each other. He gave an example of how, when advertising for an event on campus, minority student organizations use word of mouth to get the word out, but that for majority student groups it was necessary to use a variety of publicity mechanisms. Another student participant used an image to describe the range of the student culture. One image was of a woman with bleached blond hair wearing makeup and dressed well. The other image was a man, in dread locks and a hat, wearing obviously wrinkled and soiled clothes. Student participants described a “look” to some of the students that they associated with dorm students and partying. The “look” involved dressing up a certain way, having hair nicely done, and, for women, wearing makeup to class. A minority student described the general student culture as heavily socially oriented.

All of the student participants live off campus in apartments. One participant had lived in the residence halls for one academic year. She said she enjoyed it largely due to the residential staff person who was in charge of her hall. She said that working with him helped her get involved in campus activities. Student participants said there were many student organizations which provided a large number of activities and programs. Students also stated that student governance was important. One student said that she would like to begin being more active on campus and planned to join a club. Another student described students as, “wandering souls, just going to class and then back to their own little worlds.” She said they did not know that the minority student organizations

were working to increase diversity on campus, create awareness of social events, share how to become involved in different departments, and heighten understanding of university politics. One of the student participants described the official student association as having power, but the majority of its membership is Caucasian and male, so a diversity of voices is not heard.

Student responses about the general lack of an engaged student community and the desire to become more involved on campus reflect the difficulty shared by an original Milwaukee Idea participant that knowing how to engage students was challenging. Students' comments also reflected communication issues, which was one of the themes of The Milwaukee Idea. Through The Milwaukee Idea process, the desire was to open up the university internally and externally to its constituents.

Faculty descriptions of students were primarily demographic in nature. Faculty were aware that most students are Caucasian and come from suburban and rural areas and were a mix of traditional and nontraditional students. Faculty also commented that many students worked and that a significant number were first-generation college attenders. Some faculty felt the student body was becoming more traditional in age and that this was not widely recognized as of yet. Administration participants expressed similar perspectives, but also commented that students come to the university seeking to experience the city and be exposed to diversity. Students of color are seeking to have their experiences and histories acknowledged, according to another administrator.

Administration participants differed in their perspectives about whether students want to be engaged at the university. One administrator said students are busy working,

live off campus with little family support for education, and have no time to be part of the university community. As evidence of this, the participant pointed to the fact that businesses designed for students adjacent to the university cannot stay in business. A senior administrator said students are looking for a more residential experience and want to be involved on campus, citing an increased demand for university-sponsored housing and a new apartment building scheduled to open in the fall 2006.

### *Faculty Culture*

Both long-term and newer faculty described the faculty culture at the university as inventive and creative. Faculty frequently said that that was what drew them to the university, along with the urban mission of the institution. Several times faculty participants described the caliber of faculty at the institution as outstanding, world class, and better than faculty at the neighboring flagship institution. Many faculty interviewees said that faculty in general valued collaboration and interdisciplinary work. Faculty members also described faculty as having a “DIY or do it yourself mentality.” This was attributed to the chronic underfunding of the institution and shortage of infrastructure and faculty lines. Other faculty participants said that faculty were demoralized due to the severe resources constraints at the institution. Newer faculty voiced that they felt as if everyone was really invested in seeing students succeed and that faculty were truly saddened when a first-year student did not return the next year.

Administration participants responded to the question about faculty culture in a variety of ways. One administrator commented that faculty are continuing to value and engage in work related to The Milwaukee Idea themes and values. Another administrator

said faculty are responding to the new focus on research and following the dollars. An administration participant characterized faculty as the people who live here and stay here, while others (students and administration) move on. Other administration participants saw faculty as siloed, and one participant said there was a divide between staff and faculty. Community members expressed appreciation for specific faculty partners and their expertise. There were also comments about the challenge of working with traditional faculty governance structures and faculty being in silos.

### Analysis

Preliminary coding categories were derived from the themes and values articulated within The Milwaukee Idea. Metaphor was also defined as a coding category to identify references to cultural perspectives and values. As participant interviews progressed, codes were revised to reflect participant language. Students described a student-learning focus on the part of faculty as interest in students learning course material. Therefore, a second code was identified for student learning as interest in students. Other codes emerged directly from participant language. When faculty and administrators discussed the development of each of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives, the term evolution was used. The researcher used this term initially in coding these sections of the transcripts. Upon further analysis, participant reflections included commentary on the role of formal leaders and the mission of the university.

Individual conceptions of institutional change also emerged, and this theme was added to the coding scheme. This was added with the understanding from the literature on change and on institutional culture, that the perception of change as continuous or

episodic impacts the level at which those affected perceive the effects of a change initiative. Transcripts were also coded for evidence of sense-making. Sense-making is the process in which individuals and aggregates of individuals such as institutions engage in response to a potentially transformational change. Sense-making activity is comprised of establishing new roles, new meanings, new activities, and new expectations.

*The Milwaukee Idea Today*

Thirteen of the original 15 Milwaukee Ideas remain. Some have shifted reporting lines, some have been absorbed within their parent schools, and others have remained independent and interdisciplinary. A few Milwaukee Idea initiatives were never launched. Administration members and faculty members cited both financial and political issues as the reasons.

Interview participants describe all of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives as at a critical maturation or evolutionary point. The new university focus on research development and generating research funds at a ratio of three-to-one has some initiative leaders concerned. The leaders shared that they do not know what the future holds when asked about how their program fits within the new agenda. The Idea initiatives were funded on a combination of monies coded as instruction and research. Under the new research development program, the Research Growth Initiative (RGI), research dollars were captured into a single pot to be awarded competitively. Each Milwaukee Idea initiative which received research dollars will have to compete for those dollars.

With the exception of some continuing seed money, the original structures behind the individual Ideas have dissipated. The current chancellor has also eliminated the vice



chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea position, and staff positions within The Milwaukee Idea office have been reassigned. According to the former vice chancellor for The Milwaukee Idea, there has been no move to eliminate the Idea initiatives by the current university administration. The initiatives remain, but the name, The Milwaukee Idea, has faded as a brand too closely associated with the former chancellor. Faculty and administration members did not use the title, The Milwaukee Idea, when referring to any of the initiatives. An administration member said The Milwaukee Idea label “melted away.” In discussing the various Milwaukee Idea initiatives, the programs that were based in teaching and research were seen as successful and embedded in the institution by interviewees. The ability to generate external funding was another measure of success cited by interview participants.

The two Ideas frequently mentioned by interview participants as growing and successful are Age and Community and the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management. Both are interdisciplinary, collaborative community-based projects with governing boards comprised of university and community members. Age and Community, an interdisciplinary center physically housed in the School of Nursing, partners with agencies, community groups, the Helen Bader Foundation, and university faculty on a number of activities associated with aging. The Age and Community program now has an endowed chair along with a full-time director. The director said the program is growing rapidly and is at a “walk the plank” point in terms of university support. A proposal for infrastructure support has been submitted under the Research Growth Initiative, and without the additional funds, the concern was expressed that the

program would be reduced to a networking operation only. The program comprises both education and research in the context of community partnership and has been successful at obtaining grant funding. One recent project, a video on aging, Alzheimer's disease, and addiction, has been shown on PBS. According to a senior academic administrator, Age and Community has one of the last functioning dean's councils. As referred to earlier, a dean's council was established in the beginning phases of every Milwaukee Idea initiative to provide as an oversight and coordinating group.

The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management is the only Milwaukee Idea that was initiated by the community. Members of the nonprofit sector in the city approached the university during the launch of The Milwaukee Idea asking that a management education program be developed for the nonprofit sector. The Institute for Nonprofit Management is governed by a governing board equally made up of university and community members. The powers of the board are documented, and decisions are subject to the veto of the provost of the university. The director said that university expectations for enrollment in the program have been exceeded one hundred percent. Currently, the Institute for Nonprofit Management offers a certificate in nonprofit management. A new master's degree program has been proposed and has gone through the university approval process. It is now under review by the state university system. A community member described the community's support of this program as fierce and said the nonprofit community was pushing the university to expand the faculty base and research capabilities of the Institute for Nonprofit Management.

Cultures and Communities is a first-round Milwaukee Idea that is also continuing to grow and was offered as an example of institutionalization by interview participants. A member of the administration said the program has become institutionalized because it is anchored in the curriculum and has impacted campus perceptions of the connection between curriculum development and community engagement. Cultures and Communities is an alternative general education certificate program. The program offers a foundational course, Multicultural America, which explores the development of the United States from a cultural community perspective. Multicultural America is offered in several disciplines ranging from English to anthropology. Each course section includes a service-learning component. The Institute for Service Learning is now part of the Cultures and Communities program but retains university-wide responsibilities. Information obtained from The Institute for Service Learning indicates that service-learning placements have grown from approximately 400 students in 2004 to almost 900 students for the 2006 spring semester.

The Cultures and Communities program continues to offer grants to faculty to develop courses, which include a community member in the planning and design of the course. An administrator in the program said this has encouraged new faculty to become involved in Cultures and Communities. The Cultures and Communities program is also involved with the Carnegie grant program in the School of Education, Teachers for a New Era. There is interest on the part of the School of Education to have students obtain the Cultures and Communities certificate. An administrator commented that this would be a challenge for Cultures and Communities due to the need for more class sections to

accommodate education students. The issues of needing to grow in scale and the shift in university priorities represent real challenges for the program. One administrator said she is uncertain about the outcome and that these issues will test how much Cultures and Communities has become embedded in the institution.

The Global Passport Program was an initiative that combined a number of services and academic areas focused on international issues. It is now known as the Center for International Education. The program is a partnership between the College of Letters and Sciences and the School of Business. A new bachelor's of global studies with five tracks has been developed over the past six years. Faculty affiliated with the program said the degree program is designed to give students a globally-focused education through a combined liberal arts and professional education curriculum. The tracks include global management in conjunction with the School of Business, global cities which is connected to the School of Architecture and Urban Planning, and global communications. The global communications track includes faculty from the Schools of the Arts, Business, Information Technology, and the College of Letters and Science. Faculty interview participants said the development of the degree program has become a campus-wide agenda, involving extensive collaboration and interdisciplinary effort. Faculty also said student interest has grown in international studies, citing a seventy percent increase in study-abroad applications over the past five years and a waiting list for the new degree tracks.

The Institute for Environmental Health and the Freshwater Center have also continued to grow, doing basic science work and activities in the community. Faculty

associated with these initiatives said it is important to have fully developed community outreach and education programs in addition to scientific research. The Institute and Freshwater Center have produced three videos with three different local minority communities on the risks of eating fish. Each community was involved in the development of the projects from focus groups to providing music for the videos. Faculty from a variety of disciplines participated as well. These initiatives have also received funding from the National Institute of Health as part of a longitudinal study of factors associated with health and disease in children. As part of these efforts, faculty are engaged in a childhood obesity study with the Latino community. The project involves faculty from the sciences, health, and mass communications, along with a local chef. A family program is being developed to teach healthier ways to prepare traditional dishes.

Campus Design Solutions has continued to run design teams comprised of faculty and students for campus and community projects. The focus of the program has been community engagement and providing student-learning experiences. An administrator said that students learn a significant amount and enjoy working on real-life projects, but that awareness of the program is not as high as expected in the School of Architecture. In response to that concern and to the shift in university priorities, the center is planning to offer competitive research grants to faculty. The process for these will mirror the larger university research development process. An administrator affiliated with the program said it is important that the center stay nimble and continue to be engaged in partnership with the community. Another administration participant also said that Campus Design

Solutions is possibly at risk in the current environment because the funding it still receives from The Milwaukee Idea is coded as research dollars.

Healthy Choices was a program developed out of the Center on Addiction and Behavioral Health Research. The center is an interdisciplinary program engaged in research and training with campus and community organizations. Two other higher education institutions and a large healthcare organization are also partners. The founding director left the university in 2003, and a new director was appointed shortly thereafter. The Center has undergone reorganization, and one aspect of the new structure is Milwaukee Idea teams. An administrator said these teams are designed to continue involving the Center in civic engagement activities. The name Healthy Choices no longer appears in the Center's organizational chart, publications, or website.

Another Milwaukee Idea initiative, the Consortium for Economic Opportunity, is comprised of two longstanding units, the Small Business Development Center and the Center for Economic Development. The Consortium partners with community agencies and small businesses to stimulate economic development. These efforts are tied to student experiences through their fellows program, which involves students in local development projects. An administration participant shared that the Consortium has created an innovative Peace Corps program and currently has a significant EPA grant.

Partnerships in Education was the title given to a number of projects in the School of Education. A member of the administration shared that The Milwaukee Idea simply captured all of that activity rather than beginning a new program. Currently, the School of Education also continues to coordinate the Milwaukee Partnership Academy, a

consortium involving the public school system, the Chamber of Commerce, Milwaukee Industrial Council, and the Milwaukee Area Technical College. The academy began as a grant-funded math and science initiative involving public school teachers. The Academy also functions as the advisory body for the Partnerships in Education programs. One of these programs is a Carnegie grant program titled, Teachers for a New Era, which targets the entire teacher preparation process.

A program launched under The Milwaukee Idea umbrella that was targeted to engage the university community was Quick Wins. This initiative was set up as a campus-wide suggestion box process where the university community could suggest simple, low-cost improvements to the campus and its operations, and the Quick Wins team would promptly respond. A faculty member associated with the program said that Quick Wins has become part of the “woof and warp” of the campus. It has also evolved into a communications mechanism by which university members can ask about university procedures and operations. The team no longer reports to the chancellor, but to the provost of the university. The program is also currently under review to be expanded to Quick Wins Plus. Faculty and administration members associated with the program recently conducted a survey of peer institutions to find out about similar programs. The goal as stated by a faculty member is to develop a more formal assessment and feedback mechanism from the basic Quick Wins structure, given its recognition on campus, and to use that mechanism in a strategic planning process.

*The Milwaukee Idea Process Reflections*

In the interviews with students, alumni, and with former leaders of The Milwaukee Idea, it was made clear that the process by which The Milwaukee Idea developed did not involve students to any substantial degree. One administrator who was a central part of launching The Milwaukee Idea stated that they had considered involving students as committee members for some of the initiatives, but there were not really roles for students, and connecting The Milwaukee Idea to the student experience was difficult. When student participants were asked about their knowledge of The Milwaukee Idea, students responded they were generally aware of The Milwaukee Idea from seeing the name on the university website or on banners around campus. Students and alumni also expressed they were aware The Milwaukee Idea had something to do with the community. None of the students interviewed had participated at any level in the launching process for The Milwaukee Idea. Student participants knew about the Milwaukee Commitment, the institution's diversity plan, and thought it was part of The Milwaukee Idea.

Faculty perspectives on The Milwaukee Idea process revealed a number of perspectives about the role of formal leaders in a change agenda, the mission of urban universities, and the nature of change at institutions, how change is perceived by different members of the university community, and the role of resistance. Faculty participants also shared that they had not had the opportunity to reflect on The Milwaukee Idea process and found it interesting to do so. When asked to reflect upon The Milwaukee Idea, faculty responded with comments that ranged from laughter to describing it as



finally feeling respected for the work they were doing, to commenting they had not really stopped to think about it. Faculty for whom the themes of The Milwaukee Idea resonated with their disciplinary values spoke positively about The Milwaukee Idea. A faculty member in the arts said that the idea of working with the community was very sympathetic to how he and his colleagues viewed their work. Another faculty member said her area of study required interdisciplinary work and collaboration, and so The Milwaukee Idea focus on these two values was positive. Faculty also said they enjoyed the democratic and inclusive processes associated with the development of the initiatives and that the agenda was smart and timely.

The Milwaukee Idea agenda was alternately described as populist and optimistic and also as too focused on community service which threatened to “dumb down” the university. Even supportive faculty who felt strongly that it was the mission of the university to be engaged with the community and to engage in new forms of scholarship acknowledged that The Milwaukee Idea did not engage the intellectual heart of the university. These faculty said that it was not clear how The Milwaukee Idea connected to teaching and research. Some faculty were more direct in saying that The Milwaukee Idea redirected scarce resources away from the core responsibilities of teaching and research. Faculty did articulate that the university as an urban institution had as part of its mission to serve the local community and contribute to the common good. This perspective was independent of the Wisconsin Idea of the university’s service to the state. The Milwaukee Idea was described as only superficially related to the Wisconsin Idea. Faculty participants varied in how they saw the urban mission to be carried out. Some

faculty viewed it as engaging in community partnerships and applied research with faculty and students involved. Others saw it as “keeping the trains running” so that students could complete their degree programs.

A criticism stated by faculty was the lack of an evaluation component, which they felt was necessary to determine when and if real goals were being met. One faculty member said The Milwaukee Idea initiatives were more like demonstration projects, and the remaining initiatives are just now evolving into permanent programs. Faculty participants who were involved in developing specific initiatives also said that they had desired a level of coordination or coalescing among the various initiatives that did not occur. If it had, they said that the power of The Milwaukee Idea might have been greater.

A concern that was raised in the initial case study was that of expectations. Some faculty and administration participants said The Milwaukee Idea raised expectations both within the university community and in the external community. Faculty said they were told to dream big, but that positions and funding never materialized at that level. The various initiatives still launched well according to faculty, but with fewer resources. It was challenging to meet the high expectations in the community as a result. Some faculty and administration participants said they are concerned about continuing to meet and manage those expectations, given the change in the university agenda. Faculty, administration, and community participants all agreed that The Milwaukee Idea enhanced the image of the university and raised its profile in the community. Participants said that there was much more awareness in the community of how the university can contribute to, and be a partner in, issues within the larger community.

Faculty described the leadership of the former chancellor who championed The Milwaukee Idea as enthusiastic, a breath of fresh air, and what was needed at that time for the university. The former chancellor was a highly respected leader, according to the faculty and administration participants. The chancellor was credited with being the sole force behind heightening the university's visibility in the community. Community members also acknowledged this. One faculty member described the former chancellor as a one-of-a-kind leader. Faculty also said The Milwaukee Idea was closely connected to the former chancellor and perhaps too closely. This sentiment was echoed by administration participants as well. In regards to formal leadership and change, faculty participants said that the formal leadership sets the agenda through resource allocation.

Concern was expressed by some faculty and administration about the formal leadership's ability to effect real change, given their relatively short tenure in universities. From the perspective of faculty, the usually short terms of university presidents and deans lead to quick, aggressive agendas. A faculty member shared that a retired colleague refers to formal administrative leaders as "itinerants." Another faculty participant was critical of leaders, saying that they always come in with a new agenda that does not tap into the faculty expertise already present at the institution. Senior administration participants said that formal leaders are critical to getting the university's message out there, but that the institution should be larger than the formal leadership. The heavy focus on the formal leadership in The Milwaukee Idea was described by some administration participants as a sign of a young institution.

There were faculty participants who felt that nothing really changed with The Milwaukee Idea, that it was simply a top-down agenda, that did not impact their real work. One faculty member described the lack of lasting change at the institution as a rubber band snapping back to its original shape. A few administration participants also did not think the institution was well suited for real change, given its urban quality and decentralized structure. Faculty also said that the values behind The Milwaukee Idea had always been present at the university, and those who held those values were continuing to do work consistent with them.

Other participants in administration and faculty said there were lasting changes, but of a more evolutionary or sedimentary nature. One administration member said the notion of transformation was too dramatic. A faculty participant said he viewed change more from a cultural production model—that old methods or ideas did not disappear; new ideas simply sift down and mix with old ideas in a sedimentary fashion. The faculty member said this is what has happened with The Milwaukee Idea in relationship to the new university focus on research and access. Senior members of the administration said that the values and priorities of The Milwaukee Idea remained, but were mixed in and being presented differently in the current university agenda. Other faculty and administration members said the changes were more evolutionary and were still in process. These participants said five years is not long enough to ascertain true change and that the various Milwaukee Idea initiatives were still maturing and evolving.

Several faculty and administration members said two lasting changes as a result of The Milwaukee Idea were increased communication and relationships across school and

college divisions, and that a path or mechanism now exists to launch projects similar to The Milwaukee Idea initiatives. Participants said that people now talk to each other and are willing to think about and develop new partnerships in research and in instructional formats. Participants gave examples such as the discussions underway about forming a new school of urban studies, a documentary production program titled, docUWM which is an interdisciplinary community partnership, and the plan in Education and Architecture and Urban Planning for a new charter high school focused on urban planning. Community members cited the visibility of the university and awareness of its resources as lasting changes which impact the community.

Based upon participant responses, resistance to The Milwaukee Idea and its associated themes and values was primarily due to two issues. Both faculty who supported The Milwaukee Idea and those who did not said that scarce resources and concern about shifting funds from the basic functions of faculty—teaching and research—generated resistance. A faculty member said that scarce resources caused a department chair to deny a buyout for one of his faculty to teach in one of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives. Another faculty interviewee echoed this concern, “People have been hired to teach in Global Studies, and their departments won’t release them because they need core courses taught and there have been fewer hires—it’s the same old constriction.” Faculty participants also said that concern still exists about how well The Milwaukee Idea included the academic mission of the institution. One faculty member said, in reference to teaching and helping students move through their degree programs, that it was like managing all of these trains with no conductor.

Administration participants echoed the idea that resistance to The Milwaukee Idea was in part based upon different understandings of the institution's mission and how to validate both an urban mission and a research and teaching mission. Another faculty member who supported The Milwaukee Idea described it as a populist agenda, which generated concern that the university was being "dumbed down" to make it more accessible to the community. A faculty member who is heavily engaged in community work said faculty need to be valued for what they know and can contribute and that this was not always a clear value. This sentiment was echoed by another faculty member in the humanities who said that the formal leadership does not learn about and utilize the talents and expertise of its faculty when formulating a university change agenda. Traditional promotion and tenure structures were also a source of resistance, according to a senior faculty member. As reported in the previous case study, junior faculty were and remain at risk when engaging in interdisciplinary course development or community engagement activities. Senior faculty participants said they feel they must warn junior faculty when recruiting partners for interdisciplinary and applied programs. Another senior faculty member who recruits junior faculty to work in her interdisciplinary area assists them in preparing articles and making the material "quack like a duck" to meet tenure and promotion requirements.

#### *Review of Barriers and Supports*

The first case study conducted by Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) identified barriers and supports to transformational change under The Milwaukee Idea. The supports included a charismatic leader who had a collaborative style and a strong sense of

mission with an urban commitment and who brought new energy. Administrative support and an open and inclusive process were two other areas identified. The institutional culture was described as flexible, open, and innovative, and The Milwaukee Idea was seen as a galvanizing idea that fit the culture. Partnerships were established in the community with community members as players at the planning table and as participants in research efforts. Initial resources for a long-term commitment had been obtained, and the authors said “a change in how the university supports the way people work is a key factor in bringing about transformative change” (p. 25).

Interview participants generally acknowledged that the former chancellor was the champion of The Milwaukee Idea. She departed in 2002, and the dean of Architecture and Urban Planning was interim chancellor until the arrival of the current chancellor in 2004. The new leader has brought a new agenda, and participants were divided on whether the new agenda encompasses many of the values of The Milwaukee Idea. Some senior administration participants said The Milwaukee Idea laid the groundwork for the current agenda through increasing faculty lines and developing collaborative and interdisciplinary work. They also saw the current agenda as supporting civic engagement and diversity. Faculty participants expressed both that nothing had changed with the former chancellor’s departure and that the momentum of The Milwaukee Idea had stopped with her departure.

Faculty participants mentioned the current provost repeatedly as the ongoing primary administrative support for The Milwaukee Idea initiatives. In one instance, a faculty member associated with the Quick Wins program described how previously she

had worked directly with the chancellor and that now the provost is her primary contact. Other faculty associated with Milwaukee Idea initiatives also talked about the provost as supportive of their programs. Deans were also mentioned as continuing to provide support, including the deans for Letters and Science, Nursing, Education, and Arts, among others.

Faculty participant responses indicate that for many faculty The Milwaukee Idea did tap cultural values, such as innovation similar to the “do it yourself” or “DIY” description offered by one faculty participant. Faculty for whom it did not resonate also do not feel included in the current agenda. Faculty participants acknowledged that The Milwaukee Idea did not adequately connect to research as a value. Faculty and administration participants who did participate in the development of The Milwaukee Idea said the energy of the process was positive. One faculty participant described it as inclusive and democratic and that it gave her pleasure to work with so many people.

Cultivation of partners continues and is not considered new anymore, according to one administration participant. Keeping it in the forefront and fresh for the campus community is the issue. Faculty, administration, and community participant opinion varies on the motivation for the partnerships. One administration participant described partnerships with the community as now more motivated by whether they are needed for a specific project or grant. A faculty member involved in Age and Community said her program thrives as a result of partnerships and is built on them. Other participants from the community and faculty said that while they value partnerships, the expectations of the community will continue to drive them.



Initial resources were identified for The Milwaukee Idea, and the university received its largest state investment at the time. However, following September 11, 2001, there was statewide retrenchment, and the investment funding was drastically cut in the last two years of the three-year investment plan. The capital campaign which was tied to The Milwaukee Idea also floundered, although now the campaign is moving forward with a \$100 million dollar goal. The net result is participants who worked in Milwaukee Idea initiatives saw their budgets reduced, but in line with other cuts at the institution. Plans for additional faculty and infrastructure support were halted. A senior administrative participant said the university is currently funded more like some of the state comprehensive universities than a research university and reflects a chronic state of underfunding. The Milwaukee Idea initiatives did, however, retain their seed funding and have continued to utilize that funding to create additional funding in several cases, including in Age and Community, Cultures and Communities, and the Institute for Environmental Health. An academic administration participant said that the strong Milwaukee Idea programs all had been successful in garnering additional sources of support.

Among several barriers identified by Wergin and Grassadonia (2002) were the lack of common understandings of partnership, engagement, and diversity. Institutional policies and behaviors, specifically promotion and tenure policies and traditional academic values, were also identified as barriers. Issues with what the authors identified as territoriality were also evident. Milwaukee Idea participants remained partially in silos and did not really know one another. Funding priorities was another barrier, as The

Milwaukee Idea was created largely by expansion and not restructuring, and new money was needed to support the high level of expectation created in the community and on campus.

This barrier was related to another, that of an overburdened infrastructure. The institution had been severely underfunded and managing this was further complicated by the shared governance system. The governance system is defined by the Wisconsin state legislative code, Chapter 36, which specifies the shared governance roles of faculty, administration, and students. Each group's powers in decision-making at the university are defined by the code (Wisconsin Statutes, 2005). Resistance was evident in those who felt left behind, particularly faculty in Letters and Science and Humanities and academic staff in general. Lack of student engagement and a sense of community were also identified as barriers. The authors stated that if this was not addressed, an "important element of The Milwaukee Idea agenda will be missing" (p. 35). Students were also skeptical about the university's commitment to diversity and multiculturalism. The final barrier listed by the authors was dependence upon the chancellor as the face of The Milwaukee Idea.

In the current study, engagement and partnership were defined by participants as both within the university community and in the external community. Faculty and administration participants said they most often thought of The Milwaukee Idea in connection with civic engagement. When asked about engagement and community partnerships, some faculty said they were not clear if the term civic engagement should be used anymore. Differing expectations from the community and the university about

the nature of partnerships are still challenging, but participants said they were continuing to work on the issue. An administration participant said the key was building trust through lasting relationships and approaching challenges as part of the community, not apart from it. A faculty participant described the challenge of having community members present faculty with notes taken on yellow sticky pads, hoping the faculty can use the information for research and having to approach that situation tactfully. Another faculty member described realizing how important the host community is to his endeavors and learning to really listen to members of that community. A faculty member associated with Age and Community said she saw the tension around these issues as positive because she saw it as evidence of participant commitment and involvement.

Institutional policies around promotion and tenure have not changed. One faculty participant admitted the former chancellor was not willing to risk The Milwaukee Idea challenging the system. Issues with traditional academic values remain, but participant comments about how the successful initiatives include research indicates a sort of evolution in the understanding of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives relative to core faculty values and the roles of teaching, research, and service.

The territoriality and communication issues identified in the first study among schools and colleges seem to have lessened. Faculty participants who were involved in the development of The Milwaukee Idea said they felt as if they met people, and now when they are on committees they see people they know. One faculty participant said she felt as if this familiarity created a sense of good will towards her department that might not have been there had she not worked with other people during The Milwaukee Idea

process. A senior academic administration participant said that people regularly talk to one another now, and the environment is much more harmonious. Several faculty participants and a few administration participants who were heavily involved in a Milwaukee Idea project did say that the process did not do enough to create coordination of all of the initiatives. One administration member said, “We were a strand waiting to be brought in, and it never happened.” A faculty member said that he thought greater coordination could have made The Milwaukee Idea more powerful and more likely to survive the departure of the former chancellor.

As mentioned previously, funding remains a challenge at the university. According to both university and community participants, expectations are high in the community, so the university needs to have the resources to meet those expectations. This was reflected by the description of one program being at a critical point in terms of funding. Infrastructure concerns remain, and the plenary statements by the new chancellor indicate he is concerned and is looking to the research growth agenda to remedy some of the issues. One faculty member described the chancellor’s assessment as apocalyptic, but said he appreciated the chancellor’s frankness.

People who were left out of The Milwaukee Idea process were identified as a barrier in the first study, and this group included some humanities and science faculty, along with academic staff. This study did not include academic staff as a focus. However, some of the faculty interviewed in this study did reflect that they did not feel included. Many of these same faculty and faculty in disciplines that typically do not garner large extramural dollars also feel left behind under the current university agenda.

Transformational change does not mean that everyone must be an adopter, and some resistance is healthy for the change enterprise to encourage monitoring of its focus (Astin, 2001).

Understanding how to achieve diversity and increase multiculturalism on campus remains a significant challenge. A senior faculty member said that these are core values for the university, but like many universities, they do not know yet how to achieve them. Participants identified differing mechanisms for how increased diversity and multicultural awareness can or should be accomplished. Some faculty participants, who also felt community engagement was at risk under the current university agenda, see interaction with the community through programs such as service-learning as the mechanism. Another perspective is to focus on curriculum infusion through expansion of the Cultures and Communities program or similar efforts. Administration participants and some faculty participants saw current efforts under the Access for Success program to recruit and retain students of color as the best mechanism. Student participants articulated the most concern about diversity and multiculturalism on campus and continue to remain skeptical of the institution's commitment.

Student engagement and a sense of community also remain issues. Student participants described themselves as separate in images and reality. Students also said that the student culture was open and social. One student participant, after describing the separation she saw among students, said she had found people open, however, and always approachable and willing to talk. Students of color were described as having more of a

connection among different ethnic and racial groups. Student participants also expressed the desire to be more engaged and to get other students more involved on campus.

The last barrier described in the earlier case study was the former chancellor who was also described as a support. As reflected in participant comments, the former chancellor is clearly tied to The Milwaukee Idea, and it is identified as her brand.

### *Change Perspectives*

Interview participants all acknowledged that change is slow in an institution of higher education. Faculty and administration participants described change as evolutionary, occurring in phases, and also as sedimentary, where ideas are sifted and mixed together. Another conception of change was a notion of “idea modules” which are floating in a spatial realm—as modules are added, some are pushed down and not remembered. Other participants identified change as more incremental. Evolutionary or sedimentary perceptions of change reflect a more biologic and developmental approach to change. It is both an episodic and continuous view of change. The sense of some participants that the institution’s mission was about change also supports a biological and developmental approach to change. How change is viewed within an organization is informed by the organization’s culture and also shapes how the organization responds to change (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Several other focal areas, including the university mission and culture, the role of formal leaders, faculty work, and sense-making, emerged from the analysis which seem to capture the themes and ideas expressed by interview participants.

*University Mission and Culture*

Change, as seen by participants as the university mission, has already been mentioned. This coordinates with participant descriptions of the culture as creative and inventive. It is also linked to participant descriptions of the culture being supportive of interdisciplinary and collaborative efforts. Serving the public good in the form of work and research in the local community is also seen as the institution's mission by a number of faculty and administration participants and all of the community and student participants. Their comments about the mission of the university and its purpose echo the statements of the National Forum Report on Higher Education (2003). Addressing issues around race is a specific focus to this idea of serving the public good. Participants also described the presence of subcultures at the institution as well as disciplinary micro-cultures. Thinking of cultures versus a culture is in line with the research of Kuh and Whitt (1988) on university culture.

*Role of Formal Leaders*

Within change theory, formal leaders are critical to initiating and initially sustaining transformational change. Participants in the study alternately were positive and negative about the role of leaders. Participants ascribed to formal leaders the role of setting the agenda and also tapping into the knowledge and skills of the university community. University and community participants expect the formal leaders to be visible. Participants also said that the length of the leader's presence impacts the success of a change initiative. Some participants acknowledged that a change initiative has to be supported long enough so that it will survive a change in leadership.

Interview participant statements indicated they looked to the formal leadership to articulate institutional values. The provost is viewed by faculty and administration participants as the bridge and interpreter between the former institutional agenda, The Milwaukee Idea, and the current agenda, and its focus on developing research infrastructure and increasing access to the university for minority students. The provost was the associate dean in the School of Business prior to her current role, and, as associate dean, had been active in a number of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives. The provost has continued to meet with and guide on an institutional level many of the former Milwaukee Idea initiatives. Her support, along with the support of deans in Letters and Science, the School of the Arts, and in the School of Business, was described as critical by some faculty and other administration participants in continuing the values behind The Milwaukee Idea. For example, an administrator in service-learning said the provost is committed to diversity and that she represents the institution, so there is an institutional commitment to diversity.

### *Faculty Work*

Participant comments regarding the work of faculty were closely tied to comments about the mission of the university. In examining the effect of change on faculty work and roles, it is important to understand how faculty view their work and rewards. Faculty rewards remain traditional at the university. The promotion and tenure process is tied to the priorities of a research university. Faculty participants said they value teaching, research, and the chance to use those unique skills in the community. Even faculty participants who felt most strongly about the transient nature of The



Milwaukee Idea and who were concerned with the core academic enterprise, expressed ways that their disciplines could be brought into the community. Based upon participant responses, the faculty culture values interdisciplinarity and collaboration. Logically, this informs how faculty conceive of their work. Participants reported that faculty interest in collaboration, interdisciplinary work, and community partnership has increased during the past five years and gave examples of new efforts and new faculty involvement.

### *Sense-making*

References to sense-making were identified in participant responses. Most frequent were instances of new activity. Examples were of new projects that involved faculty who had previously not engaged in collaborations or community work. Faculty and administrators also gave examples of students involved in activities, such as service-learning projects and classes at community nursing centers.

Faculty also described instances of new meaning being generated, particularly for students. Service-learning experiences were most often referenced as impacting student learning and creating a new perspective about the larger urban community and its issues. A faculty member also described his experience of working with local minority communities as leading to a new understanding of how members of these communities can contribute to the scholarly knowledge base. He also described feeling he understood more about why he chose to engage in community work. Another faculty member, describing her transition from a highly research-focused institution to this one, said she came to realize the unique responsibility that an urban university has to its community.

Interview participants said that The Milwaukee Idea did raise new expectations both within the university and in the external community. Community participants described themselves as fierce about the current university-community partnerships and the commitment to maintaining them. One community member said in regards to the university-community relationship, “I think sometimes some of the university folks just wish we’d shut up and go home. It is kind of like be careful what you wish for. You say you want an engaged community, well, here we are, like little pit bulls.” There are new university expectations about communication across divisional lines and the ability to pursue new ideas in the spirit of The Milwaukee Idea, according to many participants. Other faculty and administration participants maintain that those who have always communicated and taken risks with projects are simply continuing to do so.

A few individuals who are faculty or administration were identified by other participants as engaging in new roles as a result of The Milwaukee Idea. Some initiative leaders identified themselves as having taken on new roles. An administration participant felt that some students involved in service-learning and in the Cultures and Communities program were considering new roles or possibilities for themselves as a result of their experiences. Specifically, the administrator said students had reported that as a result of science courses in the Cultures and Communities program, they were considering incorporating some aspect of science in their academic plans and careers.

### Summary

The Milwaukee Idea has become a label associated with the previous chancellor. However, the majority of the initiatives that arose out of The Milwaukee Idea process

continue to exist, and, from the perspective of interview participants, have become part of the institution. Some of the initiatives were reported to be at a critical point in their development and in need of additional human and fiscal resources. Other initiatives have an established structural home within a school or college and are continuing to expand within that framework. Expectations for civic engagement were also created in the wake of The Milwaukee Idea process. University and community members both stated that the university will continue to be responsive to local issues, but to a lesser degree than during The Milwaukee Idea process.

Participant interviews revealed cultural values around diversity, interdisciplinarity, creativity, collaboration, and involvement in the community. Students, in particular, expressed strong feelings about increasing diversity on the campus. The interviews also revealed traditional faculty values around teaching, research, and service.

Reflections on The Milwaukee Idea produced specific ideas about change processes, including whether transformational change is possible at a university, the mission of the university, the nature of faculty work, and the role of formal leaders. Participants also reported instances of engaging in sense-making in reference to participation in a Milwaukee Idea initiative, but these were limited. Some faculty participants reported that a mechanism or path now exists for collaborative, interdisciplinary work as a result of The Milwaukee Idea. However, decision-making and reward structures have not changed, as evidenced by faculty promotion and tenure policies.

The Milwaukee Idea, as such, no longer exists at the university. The new administration is focusing on developing funded research and increasing enrollment diversity at the university. The programs and centers that were developed under The Milwaukee Idea are supported by the current administration, but are not among the top priorities.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion**

### **The Milwaukee Idea Influences**

To understand the influences of The Milwaukee Idea on the experiences and cultures of faculty and students requires ascertaining if they have engaged in sense-making. Sense-making is a reciprocal process where people obtain information, make meaning of it, and then act accordingly (Thomas, Clark & Gioia, 1993). Sense-making means developing new metaphors that guide the attitudes and behavior of the institutional community. New symbols, norms, and relationships among members are critical elements of this process.

This study sought to ascertain the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on the experiences and cultures of faculty and students. In seeking those understandings, information about The Milwaukee Idea's impact on administration and community members was also gleaned. The research questions were designed to ascertain whether the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee had undergone genuine transformational change and, if so, to understand that process from the perspective of faculty and students. The foreshadowed research questions were:

- How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted faculty and student culture and values?
- What metaphors are used by faculty and students to describe their culture and values?
- How is The Milwaukee Idea reflected in faculty values about teaching and learning?

- How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted the student experience?

Culture change is part of sense-making because if individuals are changing their symbols, norms, relationships, and metaphors, it is changing their culture. None of these activities are devoid of individual cultural values. To really understand the impact of the values of The Milwaukee Idea on faculty and students is to understand its impact on the values held by faculty and students. Participant interviews suggest that many of The Milwaukee Idea values were already present to some degree in the institutional culture. One way to illuminate The Milwaukee Idea values is to examine the initiatives described as powerful examples of the spirit of The Milwaukee Idea. Institutions are aggregates of individuals, and so understanding what happens at an interior, individual level with faculty, students, and administration becomes important in thoroughly understanding transformational change. Given the focus on civic engagement in The Milwaukee Idea, understanding its impact on the external community is also important.

Interview participants repeatedly mentioned a few of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives as examples of successful, exemplary programs. These programs are Age and Community, the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management, Cultures and Communities, and the School of Education initiatives—the Partnership Academy and Partnerships for Education. Each program was described as successful because it continues to visibly grow in services and degree offerings, and is able to procure external funding. The ability to link research to community efforts was cited as a particular strength area with the School of Education and the Age and Community programs. All of these programs were described as good representations of the spirit of The Milwaukee

Idea, defined by participants as civic engagement and the university's commitment to the community.

The Age and Community center offers a graduate certificate in applied gerontology, training for practitioners in aging services, postdoctoral opportunities, and a program for artists interested in art and aging. Cultures and Communities is a curriculum-based community engagement program. The focus of the program is on creating multicultural awareness and competency through engaging students with diverse local communities via classroom experiences. The Institute for Nonprofit Management offers a graduate certificate in nonprofit management, and in fall 2006 will begin offering a master's degree program in nonprofit management. The School of Education projects include professional development for current teachers with a specific focus on math and science education and a collaborative teacher preparation program that includes university and community members.

These programs share some similar characteristics, even as the specific program logistics vary. Each has a clear sense of mission and has brought together a collaborative team of individuals from inside and outside of the university. They are also interdisciplinary programs involving faculty from a variety of schools and departments.

#### Centers and Institutes

In Age and Community, the interests of some faculty, aging agencies in the community, and the Helen Bader Foundation were merged under the auspices of The Milwaukee Idea to form the Age and Community center and to establish an endowed professorship. This group is committed to creatively researching and employing best

practices in aging and gerontology in the local community. Age and Community works with faculty from Architecture, Letters and Sciences, Social Work, Nursing and the School of the Arts, among others. Age and Community captured the existing interest in aging issues and, with resources from the university and the Helen Bader Foundation, created a new enterprise valued by the cultures of the community and university alike.

A community member described the energy of the center as “brain candy.” A lead faculty member characterized the center as a place where “it is all popping” and described the partnerships as incredible. In addition, four new junior faculty are working with projects sponsored by Age and Community. In conjunction with a number of national aging groups, the center has also produced a January 2006 PBS documentary, which chronicled a year in the life of a continuing care facility. The documentary is titled “Almost Home” and covers the described culture change of an adult care facility from a hospital model to a social, community model. Currently, in partnership with Nursing, the Center has a grant through the National Institutes of Health to study pain in patients with dementia. The Center is also working with the School of Social Welfare in developing a new doctoral program in gerontology. Viewed through the lens of sense-making, Age and Community has created new activity in regards to enhanced interdisciplinary research and community education partnerships, while continuing to maintain existing faculty values and roles.

The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management developed out of the combined interests of local nonprofit agencies and the Helen Bader Foundation, whose members approached the university because of The Milwaukee Idea to push for



development of the institute. An outgrowth of the Institute is a technology initiative called Empowering Nonprofits in Technology (ENTECH). Originally, the initiative was part of a local nonprofit consortium and was transferred to the university in 2001. It provides technical assessment and support to nonprofits and was developed collaboratively from the needs of local nonprofits and the skills of university faculty and students in technology fields.

The Institute for Nonprofit Management currently has no faculty of its own and utilizes faculty from a variety of disciplines, including business, letters and science, art, continuing education and social work. The director describes the Institute as a multidisciplinary, comprehensive, university-wide, nonprofit academic center. Faculty who are involved in the Institute were described as having a variety of motivations for participating. Some are interested in the courses, others utilize the grants program to support their research, and still others are already involved with the Institute in engagement work that enhances their efforts.

The governance structure of the Institute for Nonprofit Management represents a significant new relationship between the university and community. The leadership council serves as the principal governing board for the Institute and is comprised of nine university members and eight community members. The leadership council operates with a set of bylaws that delegates significant responsibility and decision-making to the board. The council sets policies for the Institute and engages in strategic planning. It also approves the annual budget, develops partnerships for the Institute, and carries on fundraising efforts. The provost is an ex-officio member and is the sole person who can

veto council decisions if needed to protect the university's vital interests. In the four years the Institute has been operating, the veto has not been used.

A few interview participants commented that there were expectations held largely by the deans that the Institute would be unable to attract sufficient students. In reality, enrollment has exceeded expectations twofold and has reached the point where the program is generating a surplus of revenue over expenses. On June 9, 2006, approval by the university system of a new master's of science degree in nonprofit management and leadership was announced.

The creation of the Institute has created a new role for the external community which is an element of sense-making. It has also partially altered the role of the university in its governance of curriculum and in its relationship with the community. However, university structures and culture remain essentially intact.

### Programs

Cultures and Communities was one of the early initiatives to come out of The Milwaukee Idea process. The Cultures and Communities program seeks to increase multicultural awareness and community engagement. Cultures and Communities tapped faculty and student interest in diversity and in community involvement. The program offers an alternative undergraduate general education curriculum, which results in a certificate program, community partnership grants to develop future courses, and the encouragement of faculty research in multicultural issues.

The certificate program is fifteen credit hours and encompasses five theme areas. Approximately sixty courses are affiliated with the Cultures and Communities program

and involves about fifty faculty. The certificate program was launched in 2004, and 250 students have enrolled. Students may also take Cultures and Communities courses for their general education requirements without pursuing the certificate. Interview participants associated with Cultures and Communities said a large number of students have done so. Cultures and Communities involves a wide range of faculty, including faculty from sociology, anthropology, geoscience and education. An academic staff member associated with the program said that the availability of interdisciplinary science courses for non-science majors, coupled with service-learning experiences, has made the sciences less intimidating for students. She said students are able to share more with her about their class content, and more students are seeing careers in areas like environmental conservation and urban redevelopment as possibilities.

The mission of Cultures and Communities is to promote multicultural awareness and civic engagement with students. These goals are implicitly about creating new meanings, activities, and understandings for students, which is sense-making. The Institute for Service Learning is part of Cultures and Communities and seeks to connect students' classroom learning with experiential learning in the community with the direct intention of creating new meaning, relationships, and understanding for students, also reflecting elements of sense-making as goals.

The School of Education's Milwaukee Partnership Academy was launched in 1999 as a collaborative effort between the university, the Milwaukee public schools, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors, the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association, the Helen Bader Foundation, Milwaukee Area Technical College, the Milwaukee

Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Milwaukee Committee, and the Private Industry Council. This partnership initially developed as a result of a Title II grant targeted to improve teaching and learning in the public schools. In 2001, Partnerships for Education was formed within the School of Education. The Partnership Academy functions as the advisory body for this initiative which focuses on teacher workforce preparation and the use of technology in teacher education.

The Milwaukee Partnership Academy and Partnerships for Education encompass several initiatives, including a community-based tutoring and family literacy program. The program most frequently mentioned by participants during this study was the Teachers for a New Era funded by the Carnegie Corporation. The grant project, which started in 2003, focuses on teacher preparation as a clinical practice profession and involves master teachers providing instruction for pre-service teachers. Local veteran teachers are brought in as scholars in residence to teach and mentor education students in preparation for working in an urban school system. The Teachers for a New Era project involves faculty from education, English, social sciences, science, Cultures and Communities, foreign languages and math. This project is seeking to significantly change teacher education—creating new meanings, values, and metaphors for pre-service teachers. The School of Education projects overall are seeking academic improvement in the local school system.

According to interview participants, the School of Education provides many of the teachers for the Milwaukee public schools, and there is a sense that the university has a real responsibility to help them improve. The School of Education was described by a

senior faculty member and former Milwaukee Idea leader as a place where so much is going on that one can hardly keep up with its initiatives. In June 2006, it was announced that the Institute for Intercultural Research was moved to the School of Education, further broadening the school's interdisciplinary efforts.

### Research Funding

The partnerships, interdisciplinary nature, and research focus of these initiatives have resulted in each program, center, and institute garnering significant external resources. Cultures and Communities was awarded a one hundred thousand dollar grant in December 2005 to support multicultural education through the Ford Foundation's Difficult Dialogues program. The Ford Foundation program is designed to encourage academic programs and conversations on campus that address challenging multicultural issues and promote academic freedom.

The Helen Bader Foundation is responsible for funding two of the programs, Age and Community and the Institute for Nonprofit Management. Age and Community's five million dollar award in 2001 was the second largest single gift to the university.

The School of Education's programs have also procured substantial funding. The Carnegie Teachers for a New Era grant is five million dollars. Overall, the Milwaukee Partnership Academy and Partnerships for Education have garnered approximately twenty-six million dollars in federal and local grants.

Each program strives to ground their work in research and encourages research and curriculum development activity by faculty. Age and Community's mission was described as engaging in research through work with the community. The director of the

center said the starting vision for the center was to “link university researchers with innovative work in the community and have access to community research subjects.” According to the executive director, the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management is seeking to increase its research focus. The Institute has collaborated with the university’s Center for Urban Initiatives and Research to conduct research on nonprofit agencies and services in the state. The Milwaukee Partnership Academy and Partnerships for Education research partnerships with the local school system include early intervention services for children and development of alternative assessments for children with disabilities. In the Teachers for a New Era program, research evidence that guides teacher education is one of the foundational design principles, and research is being conducted in conjunction with this grant project.

The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management, Cultures and Communities, and Age and Community each offer mini-grant programs to faculty to encourage work in their specific topic areas. The grants range from \$1,000-\$4,000 for short-term or one-time projects.

Over the past five years, Cultures and Communities has awarded approximately fifty Community-University Partnership (CUP) grants, which link academic courses with community partners in projects, such as creating a digital collection at the art museum, bringing pre-service and in-service teachers together to develop curricula, and community-based science internships for elementary education students. One-time grants are awarded up to \$2,000, and three-year renewable grants are offered up to \$3,500. The

CUP grants program is designed to support creative teaching and learning partnerships around cross-cultural literacy, science, art, and community development.

The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management faculty research mini-grant program began in 2003. Four grants of \$4,000 have been awarded annually. Topics have included a study of transformation of nonprofit hospitals, governance issues in nonprofits, and architectural planning and nonprofits. Faculty recipients have come from architecture, sociology, geography, business, and continuing education.

Research fellows in Age and Community focus their work in one of three concentration areas—healthy aging and quality of life, long-term care issues, and building elder-friendly communities. The program began in 2003 and has awarded eight fellowships. Topics include a cultural history project involving an intergenerational documentary, a study of persons aging with HIV/AIDS, and a study of elder care by family members. Faculty participants come from a variety of disciplines, including architecture, nursing, art education, social work and human movement science. In 2002-2003, one curriculum fellowship was awarded as part of the development of the certificate in aging studies.

A residency in applied arts program was launched this academic year and will begin in January 2007. The residency is designed to bring a professional artist together with researchers in aging to work with elderly persons with dementia. The program is being sponsored by Age and Community, the Helen Bader Foundation, and the Brookdale Foundation.

The focus on research in these initiatives was valued by both faculty and administration participants as a traditional academic value and because it was linked to these programs' abilities to obtain resources. A chemistry faculty member said that all of The Milwaukee Idea initiatives should have had a strong emphasis on research and that intellectual expertise is really the only thing the university has to offer. A senior university administrator emphasized the fact that the successful Milwaukee Idea initiatives are all doing "state-of-the-art research in the area and connecting that back to the community and service to the community." This administrator also said that these efforts have contributed significantly in bringing external funding to the university.

#### Collaboration

These programs were described as exemplary because they operationalize what appear to be shared cultural values. These values are research, collaboration, diversity, innovation, interdisciplinarity, and an urban mission. One faculty member describing faculty culture regarding collaboration and interdisciplinary work said, "There are a good number of people on campus who have always been more inclusive and see this as a big family." She also shared that her department had a reputation for being collegial. A faculty member in the arts said that he collaborates with another artist in his primary research, so when The Milwaukee Idea promoted collaboration and cross-disciplinary work, he found that easy to do. A humanities faculty member associated with the Global Studies program believes there are faculty who remain interested in working across disciplines, even without a focus on it by the formal campus leadership. She said collaboration with other disciplines is essential to the survival of the humanities.



Collaboration and service to the community are critical, according to a faculty member in foreign languages. This faculty member established a pre-college partnership with local schools before the advent of The Milwaukee Idea. She stated that a collaborative approach was essential to developing students as citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A faculty member involved with the Institute for Environmental Health said that faculty collaborate all the time and are ready and willing to do so. He also reflected on the importance of research and shared that The Milwaukee Idea did not focus enough on its intellectual content and that faculty “begin to feel sold down the river if fundamentally they aren’t being valued for what they know, and can contribute at that level.” A faculty member in letters and science echoed the importance of scholarship, saying “We’re faculty members because we have expertise in some discipline, and we’re here to develop that expertise and convey it to others.”

Administration participants also described valuing collaboration, service to the community, and diversity. A senior administration member viewed collaboration as necessary to be competitive in obtaining research grants. An administrator who works heavily with the local community saw partnerships with the community as critical to moving forward with the current institutional focus on research and access, and also as a means to increasing diverse populations on campus.

#### Characteristics of Successful Initiatives

This study began with a definition of transformational change gathered from the relevant literature on change and institutional transformation. Accordingly, transformational change is a systemic dynamic change process, intentionally value

driven, which alters the culture and meaning making of the institution, and has as its goals to enhance service to society and positively impact student learning.

Significant characteristics of transformational change drawn from the literature are: 1) the change is deep and pervasive, or systemic; 2) individuals and organizations engage in sense-making, altering the culture; 3) it alters roles and rewards; 4) it is value driven and, at least in part, draws on already held tacit values; 5) it positively impacts student learning; and 6) the change becomes embedded in the institution.

These initiatives do display some of the characteristics of transformational change described in the literature. Each has become embedded in the institutional structure (Kotter, 1998). A senior academic administrator described the successful initiatives as having matured and found homes within the institution. These initiatives were also described as no longer being “experiments” or “demonstration projects.”

Age and Community and the Institute for Nonprofit Management, in particular, represent movement from the margins to the interior of the institution (Fullan, 2001). The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management is the only “outside-in” initiative brought by the community to the university, and thus represents a new area of focus at the university. It did not have a life prior to the approach to the university, according to the Institute director. A community member said, “The Milwaukee Idea provided an opportunity for us to go knocking at the university’s door.”

All of the programs are also interdisciplinary, have tapped implicit values, and have established a collaborative, common vision (Senge, 1990). The mission of Cultures and Communities is explicitly about engaging with the community and enhancing

multicultural awareness in student learning. Age and Community is focused on creatively researching and developing best practices in aging issues in conjunction with the community. The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management is committed to being a top academic center and represents a true partnership between the university and the community, according to interview participants. The Partnership Academy and Partnerships for Education have linked teacher preparation to the success of the local schools and have joined forces with community and business leaders to improve both.

In regards to altering the culture and evidence of sense-making, the programs have, in the words of one participant, “provided a hub for people to network.” In each initiative area, individual community and faculty members were already working, but these programs have brought together a critical mass of interested individuals with resources to enlarge and create new efforts.

Each initiative is also focused on creating new learning opportunities for students. These opportunities were not available to students prior to the establishment of each of these programs. A community member who completed the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management certificate said that his learning experiences were invaluable and that he could not run his agency effectively without the knowledge he gained. An administrative faculty member affiliated with Cultures and Communities feels the program has had a real impact on students. This participant said that often it is a Cultures and Communities student who stands up and is comfortable asking questions at campus programs involving race and cultural issues.

Each program has also sought to address faculty roles and rewards and to encourage the participation of junior faculty. One mechanism has been the mini-grant programs. In Age and Community, the center is based upon a traditional research model in an applied field and so has been able to bring in four junior faculty to work with the center. In the School of Education, the dean has explicitly stated that faculty will be evaluated for promotion and tenure in part on their engagement work and work with the partnership projects. Cultures and Communities is supporting the efforts of a faculty member who is pursuing promotion to full professor using five years of work with a community revitalization and oral history project.

#### The Institutional Impact of The Milwaukee Idea

The findings from participant interviews reveal varying levels of impact on students, faculty, administration, and community members.

##### *Students*

Students encounter the themes and values of The Milwaukee Idea through the initiatives which have developed new academic programs and the Institute for Service Learning. Faculty associated with these initiatives report that students are attracted to the programs and say they want the kind of learning experiences offered within them. An administrative faculty member in Cultures and Communities said, “Students are our strongest supporters, they really like Cultures and Communities, and we have the largest certificate program on campus.” Students said they desire learning that connects to their lives, to community issues, and to other pieces of their overall learning experiences. As one student put it, “The classes that are the most engaging are the ones that apply to my

own experience and culture.” Administration and faculty participants who involve students in local and global community engagement activities view those experiences as transformative for students. A fall 2005 mid-semester service-learning student survey conducted by the Institute for Service Learning reveals that seventy percent of the responding students felt that service-learning increased their understanding of diverse cultures.

Student interviews revealed that students were largely unaware of The Milwaukee Idea and knew only that it involved something with the community. Of primary concern to all of the student participants was the university’s commitment to diversity. One student participant made a statement that summarizes the student participants’ perspectives. He said that “The mission of our institution, any institution of higher education, is that students should come and get a well-rounded education, not just academically, but socially, culturally, and learn about who you are as an individual, but also about other people.”

The literature on transformational change says students should be active players in the transformation process, as well as recipients of it. The meaning of the transformational change must be instilled in all areas of the institution, including within its student body (Fullan, 2001). Students were never active in The Milwaukee Idea; they were simply recipients. Some of the Ideas addressed students, and others did not. A former Milwaukee Idea leader acknowledged that they did not know how to really involve students in the development of the various initiatives.

*Faculty*

Many faculty were involved in the development of The Milwaukee Idea. In reflecting on The Milwaukee Idea process, some faculty participants found it had been “exciting,” “refreshing,” and “good to finally be acknowledged.” Other faculty did not think The Milwaukee Idea focused on the real values at the university. For these faculty, it did not appear to value teaching and research. “It did not tap the intellectual heart of the university,” according to a faculty member in the sciences.

Some faculty and administration participants said a more accepted path exists now within the governance structure and administrative structure to pursue interdisciplinary, collaborative community work. As one faculty member described it, a mechanism now exists for new ideas that would previously have come under The Milwaukee Idea but now, “They are just ideas; it’s just another generation of it, just being incorporated into what the university already does and is.” For some faculty, this has created a new perspective about their work and the possibilities within their work. There is also both an acknowledgement of the civic mission of the university and an acknowledgement of the importance of research. A faculty member said simply, “We’re in a better position than a university in a rural area to help the city.”

Some faculty believe behavior has not changed in the wake of The Milwaukee Idea either because it never changed initially, “faculty have always collaborated” or because once the priorities at the university changed, “the rubber band snapped back.” The reward structures for faculty have not changed, and while junior faculty are reportedly drawn to many of the initiatives, it is a risk if the faculty member cannot

generate research from their involvement. A senior faculty member shared that she works with junior faculty on publishing articles in exchange for their involvement in her Milwaukee Idea initiative. If a significant cultural shift occurs, a change in reward structures and expectations is evident, and this is an indicator of transformational change (Keup, Walker, Astin, Lindholm, 2001, Farmer, 1990).

### *Administration and Community*

Administration participants generally believe the values behind The Milwaukee Idea remain, but are not the “number one or two priority.” The values have also shifted slightly under the new university agenda. A senior administrator says engagement is focused more internally now—for example, assessing how well the institution engages its students in the university. Another administration participant said interdisciplinary work and collaboration are good byproducts of the new focus on research, but not required. Administration and community members both said expectations have been created on and off campus that the university will actively participate in addressing community issues, particularly in the school system and in economic development activities.

The Milwaukee Idea was broadly conceived and based upon widely articulated values. For many at the institution, it felt as if they were finally being recognized. The Milwaukee Idea developed using the gaps and the connections at the university. The institution is described as decentralized, which, using Cutright’s (2001) perspective, means there are perceived gaps in the institutional system in which to foment change. Participants described the institution as made up of different silos, and the connections were people who shared similar interests. Many faculty participants also said that the

culture was innovative and yet collegial, which implies room for creativity but also a sense of connection.

**Figure 5 Findings Matrix**

<b>How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted faculty and student culture and values?</b>	<b>What metaphors are used by faculty and students to describe their cultures and values?</b>
<p>The Milwaukee Idea enhanced existing faculty values regarding collaboration, interdisciplinary work, and civic engagement.</p> <p>Cross-school collaboration is accepted.</p> <p>The Milwaukee Idea initiatives are embedded in institutional structures.</p> <p>Many faculty were involved in The Milwaukee Idea process and communication across lines has improved.</p> <p>There is an acknowledgement of the civic mission of the university.</p> <p>The Milwaukee Idea did not tap the intellectual heart—faculty values concerning research.</p>	<p><u>Faculty</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family</li> <li>Do it yourself (DIY)</li> <li>Rubber band snapping back, a return to traditional status</li> <li>Creative and inventive</li> <li>Silos</li> <li>Invested in students</li> </ul> <p><u>Students</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social, open</li> <li>Wandering souls</li> <li>The Look—a dichotomy between on campus and commuter, partying versus working</li> <li>Disengaged from the city</li> </ul>
<b>How is The Milwaukee Idea reflected in faculty values regarding teaching and learning?</b>	<b>How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted student experiences?</b>
<p>Faculty in practice-based disciplines which emphasize individual, experiential instruction found it refreshing.</p> <p>Faculty associated with an initiative emphasize experiential and interdisciplinary teach and learning.</p> <p>Faculty in content areas said teaching and transmitting knowledge are valued primary roles.</p>	<p>Students were recipients of change, not active participants.</p> <p>Students were largely unaware of The Milwaukee Idea and confused it with the Milwaukee Commitment.</p> <p>New academic programs which focus on diversity and interdisciplinary learning are available to students.</p> <p>Service learning opportunities now exist for students.</p> <p>Students continue to desire more diversity on campus, a greater connection with the community, and learning that connects to their personal experience.</p> <p>Students feel faculty that overall, faculty are invested in student success.</p>
<p><b>Additional Findings</b></p> <p>The community has new expectations for partnership with the university and for university involvement in addressing community issues.</p> <p>New roles and relationships have been established for community members in relationship to the university.</p> <p>There is a new understanding of the intellectual resources of the university.</p> <p>The university is continuing to respond to the new expectations and recognizes the need to remain responsive.</p>	



Interdisciplinary programs and centers arose in these gaps. Faculty were also hired into these “spaces” initially and then moved to disciplinary homes. A senior academic administrator said that these initial faculty line investments set the foundation for the current growth at the university. The decentralization also provided room for those resistant to The Milwaukee Idea to voice concerns and to continue pursuing their own goals. Figure 5 provides a matrix of the findings relative to the research questions.

### The Milwaukee Idea and Transformational Change

The Milwaukee Idea tapped the institutional culture and highlighted existing aspects of it—engagement, a sense of civic mission, innovation, collaboration, and interdisciplinary work. The Milwaukee Idea did serve as a wake-up call for the university and the city, as it was described by an interview participant. The city now expects to work with the university. There is an understanding in the community and at the university that their two fates are linked, and there is general agreement the university will never return to its pre-1998 status of a “sleeping giant.” Based upon participant descriptions, prior to 1998, the university was not well known in the community or valued as a resource. Reportedly, prior to the former chancellor’s arrival, the chancellor could not simply pick up the phone and call the mayor and have the phone call accepted. A senior faculty member said the university had, at that time, moved away from its urban mission and was trying to become “another Madison,” in spite of the fact that the university was established with an urban mission.

The Milwaukee Idea initiatives described as successful exhibit some of the characteristics of transformational change. Some participants also shared evidence of

new and enhanced activity, which is an aspect of sense-making. However, the aggregate of faculty and student participants do not report a deep, pervasive impact on their culture and experiences. The structures and decision making of the institution have also not changed as a result of The Milwaukee Idea. While the institution is more focused on serving the public good, this is not a new value for many faculty or students. The Milwaukee Idea brought change to the university in new programs and centers, but it was not transformational. In order to meet the definition of transformation stated at the outset of this study, the impact of The Milwaukee Idea would need to be systemic and be reflected in deep cultural changes in significant units, such as the College of Letters and Sciences. What The Milwaukee Idea did do was to bring forward values within the culture that were held by pockets of individuals and to bring those individuals together in the various initiatives and centers. What it also did was establish the university as a more visible presence and force in the local community.

If the former chancellor had remained at the institution, some participants felt that The Milwaukee Idea would have continued and become a more significant, longstanding force at the university. A senior faculty member and former leader of The Milwaukee Idea said he had already begun thinking about a major cultural revolution and “doing a real evaluation of whether or not we are meeting our cultural values” as a result of The Milwaukee Idea. Another senior faculty member who described it as a “really neat idea” felt it would have benefited from more time to develop and mature. Central in the thinking of many faculty and administration participants who were supportive of The Milwaukee Idea, was this idea that more time and a maturing process was needed.

Interviewees expressed that an evaluation component was needed and was critical to moving The Milwaukee Idea beyond the level of demonstration projects. One administration participant said the university had reached a sort of pinnacle, and, had the chancellor stayed, the university might have become a national model for civic engagement. However, with the chancellor's departure, the administrator compared the situation to an avalanche where everything came crashing down. There were also indications that the former chancellor was moving in a new direction, by entering into conversations about a healthcare consortium with the Medical College of Wisconsin.

The former chancellor would also have had to deal with the state budget cuts that came after the events of September 11, 2001. These cuts reduced the investment plan substantially, causing The Milwaukee Idea initiatives to scale down or eliminate planned growth in infrastructure and faculty lines. With The Milwaukee Idea so closely tied to the former chancellor, there is a risk that had she stayed, she would not have been seen as meeting the expectations that had been created on campus and in the community. Additionally, faculty and administration participants all commented on the level of state funding provided to the university, which has been an issue for some time. Resources to support the infrastructure are limited and, eventually, any chancellor was going to have to address this in a long-term, substantive way.

In attempting to determine the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on faculty and students, this study sought evidence of sense-making. Sense-making involves the translation of change into new meanings, roles, activities, and metaphors. As sense-making occurs at an individual level it expands to an institutional level—altering culture,

structure, expectations, and values. The Milwaukee Idea initiatives did generate some new activities for students and the community. It did not, however, create new meanings, roles, or metaphors within the faculty and student cultures. It did not generate sense-making at an institutional level. In other word, it was not transformational change.

The Milwaukee Idea was, however, a significant change effort at a large, complex, urban university. New academic programs have been developed which create new opportunities for students and faculty. It also facilitated the establishment of networks of faculty with shared interests. Work with and research with the community also expanded. The Milwaukee Idea heightened the visibility of values held by many at the institution and provided them with a prominent voice in priority setting at the institution. It also gave the community a voice at the university, which will continue to be exercised.

While it was not transformational, The Milwaukee Idea did bring change to the university. As some administration participants described it, a foundation was laid that will continue to inform the development of the future of the university.

#### Implications for Higher Education Change

Faculty and students represent the soul of the educational enterprise. Any institution considering transformational change has to include these two groups. As one administrative participant put it, “I think if you want to go about changing things, you have to look at your student body more. I don’t think they were really looking at the people they were trying to transform, either the faculty or the students.”

The Milwaukee Idea leadership acknowledged that it did not know how to include students in a meaningful way in developing the change agenda. As a result, students were bystanders in the process. Reaching students and having them really embrace the values and culture of a transformational change will take intentional, consistent effort over multiple generations of students.

Faculty acknowledged the realities of the impacts of institutional funding, mission, and infrastructure on change efforts. Faculty are to some degree marginalized and siloed in their departmental and disciplinary subcultures. Real culture change from an institutional level agenda, which in a given department meaningfully impacts the teaching and learning process for faculty and students at a large university, may not be possible.

Transformational change takes significant time, energy, and resources. The perception of time varies widely among constituent groups at the university. This impacts awareness of whether any change and the adoption or integration of change have taken place. The process of sense-making is thereby impacted on both an individual and collective, institutional level.

The focus in the literature on change and institutional transformation is largely on the leadership creating or responding to an environment favorable to change. The emphasis is on how the formal change leaders can involve a critical mass of individuals in the change effort. This is a top-down orientation to change. The Milwaukee Idea was also essentially a top-down change agenda. The literature also says that a transformational change agenda must be congruent with institutional cultural values to be

successful (Eckel, Hill & Green, 1998). However, a top-down strategy which harnesses some shared cultural values provides insufficient momentum to achieve transformational change. Momentum must also come from the bottom up, or the interior of the institution. This study did reveal partial bottom-up support, but also that it requires resources and recognition as an institutional priority for a long enough period of time to take hold. Many participants in this study talked about “needing the strands to be brought together” to create a genuine grassroots momentum around The Milwaukee Idea. Transformational change requires both top-down and bottom-up initiatives and energy. This reflects Wilber’s (1998) and Astin’s (2001) understandings of the relationships between interior-exterior and individual-collective quadrants of developmental change and the flow of impacts among the quadrants.

#### Areas for Further Exploration

Sense-making is an important concept which appears to be more widely used in business literature and in cognitive science from which it derived, than in the literature on change in higher education. Exploring its application in these other fields may lead to a better definition and understanding of it in examining transformational change in the context of higher education.

The issue of differing perceptions of time by students, faculty, administration, and also community participants came out in the interviews. Time perceptions appear to be linked to understandings of change processes, specifically how much time does change take and what is a sufficient amount of time elapsed to assess the impacts of a change agenda. One’s place in the institution determines the time space he/she is in.

As some faculty participants shared their perspectives on The Milwaukee Idea, their concepts of time were measured in no less than semesters, and they viewed significant change as requiring years of effort. One faculty participant who had been at the institution for six years, when describing different time perspectives, said he felt as if he was an old timer, given the frequency with which senior administrators move.

Students move in and out of the university at regular intervals, and, as stated by one student leader, for them the institution moves slowly. Their cycles at the university are understandably shorter than most faculty and administrators, and thus their time perspectives are also shorter. Community members echoed the sense that things take time at the university and that faculty operate on a different schedule. The Milwaukee Idea began in 1999, and, while almost seven years have elapsed, participant responses may be colored by their perceptions of time and thus their understanding of change processes.

Another area for future investigation is the impact of institutionally-based transformational change on the community, specifically when transformational change is intended to enhance the public good. A few administration and faculty participants thought that perhaps the real transformation coming out of The Milwaukee Idea was in the local community through the various engagement activities undertaken.

This study also attempted to capture the experiences of faculty and students at an urban research institution and the impacts they may have felt from a transformational change agenda. Institutional type varies widely, as do institutional cultures. The

experiences of faculty and students at a comprehensive university or liberal arts institution in a transformational change effort may be very different.

### Summary

Transformational change is difficult to achieve, and many participants in this study doubted whether it could happen at any large urban public institution. It is a complex change process that requires sufficient time to unfold and requires the extended investment of energy by formal and informal leaders. The formal leadership alone cannot effect transformational change. However, as evidenced by The Milwaukee Idea, the formal leadership is critical to a change effort's continuity both in message and in resource allocation.

Transformational change by definition alters the culture of the institution, but must it alter all of the subcultures represented in order to be considered transformational? In Wilbur (1998) and Astin's (2001) thinking, any change in the larger exterior culture will impact the individual interior subcultures. However, resistance is assumed to be part of any change, including transformational change, so impact does not necessarily mean transformation. The Milwaukee Idea championed values already held by many at the institution; however, increased visibility and heightened activity do not constitute transformation. What has occurred as a result of The Milwaukee Idea is a strengthening of the university's commitment to engage with the community and to serve the public good.



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Appendix A  
Preliminary Coding Categories and Final Coding Categories

### Preliminary Coding Categories

1. Student Culture
2. Faculty Culture
3. Metaphor
4. Teaching focus
5. Learning focus
6. Values from TMI Themes:
  - a. Communication/openness
  - b. Diversity
  - c. Engagement
  - d. Culture
  - e. Support
  - f. Interdisciplinary
  - g. Collaboration
  - h. Sense of community
7. Other values
8. Sensemaking
  - a. New role
  - b. New philosophy or approach
  - c. New activity
  - d. New meaning
  - e. New expectations
9. Resistance

## Coding Categories - Etic and Emic

	Researcher	Student	Faculty
1	Student Culture		
2	Faculty Culture		
3	Metaphor		
4	Teaching Focus	not interested in us	
5	Learning Focus	interested in us	student learning
6	Values from TMI Themes:		
	a. Communication/openness		
	b. Diversity	Diversity	
	c. Engagement	Relates to life, community	civic engagement work with the community
	d. Culture		
	e. Support		
	f. Interdisciplinary	Connects to other classes	Multi disciplinary Partnership
	g. Collaboration		
	h. Sense of Community		
7	Other values		disciplinary values
8	Sensemaking		
	a. new role		
	b. new philosophy or approach		
	c. new activity		
	d. new meaning		
	e. new expectations		
9	Resistance		Teaching and Research value as core business
10	Leadership Role		
11	Change Perspective		
12	TMI Process		Evolution

Appendix B

Preliminary Interview Guides

## Preliminary Interview Guide –Faculty

### Institutional Transformation: A Case Study of an Urban Midwestern University

**Introduction:** Self introduction, name and general affiliation

#### **Purpose of Interview**

This study is to ascertain from faculty and students if genuine transformational change has occurred through the vehicle of The Milwaukee Idea. The literature on transformation in higher education reveals that truly transformational change does not occur unless the experiences, values and learning of students and faculty have been impacted. This is the idea of sensemaking where individuals and institutions attach new meanings, new metaphors to their work, their perspectives and their roles as a result of experiencing transformational change.

#### **Interview Begins**

##### Milwaukee Idea involvement

What has been your involvement with The Milwaukee Idea?

How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted faculty in general?

Faculty governance structures?

What has been the impact of the new chancellor on The Milwaukee Idea?

What metaphor would you use to describe the Milwaukee Idea?

##### Community engagement

Describe the university's relationship with the community before The Milwaukee Idea?

After The Milwaukee Idea was implemented?

##### Student Learning

To what degree is there a focus or emphasis on student learning and student outcomes in the classroom in general? How about in your courses?

What has been the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on student learning?

Do students see a difference in focus on student learning?

How do faculty interact with students? How do you interact with students?

Do students see difference in faculty-student interaction?

##### Scholarship/Interdisciplinarity/Collaboration

How prevalent is collaborative work among faculty? Within The Milwaukee Idea centers? Outside of them?

What are your thoughts about “engaged scholarship”?

Who is involved in this kind of scholarship?

How is engaged scholarship viewed in terms of promotion and tenure?

Diversity/Community

What are the university's values around diversity/multiculturalism? How is this borne out in your experience or from your perspective?

How would you describe the university community?

How would you describe the student community?

How would you describe faculty in general?

**Close**

*Thank you for your time today. I will be contacting you to share a summary of your comments today with you to ensure I have captured your thoughts and ideas accurately. I will also be happy to share my final report with you.*

## **Preliminary Interview Guide - Students**

### Institutional Transformation: A Case Study of an Urban Midwestern University

**Introduction:** Self introduction, name and general affiliation

**Confirmation of Eligibility:** The persons interviewed for this study must be 18 years of age or older. Are you 18 or above?  yes  no - Thank you anyway for your interest and willingness to be interviewed however we will not proceed further.

### **Purpose of Interview**

This study is to ascertain from faculty and students if genuine transformational change has occurred through the vehicle of The Milwaukee Idea. The literature on transformation in higher education reveals that truly transformational change does not occur unless the experiences, values and learning of students and faculty have been impacted. This is the idea of sensemaking where individuals and institutions attach new meanings, new metaphors to their work, their perspectives and their roles as a result of experiencing transformational change.

### **Interview Begins**

#### Milwaukee Idea involvement

What do you know about The Milwaukee Idea?

How do faculty talk about The Milwaukee Idea?

#### Student Learning

How do faculty involve you in class?

How would you describe your academic experience here at UWM?

How would you describe the student culture at UWM? The faculty culture?

How do faculty interact with students?

#### Community engagement

How do you see your classes connected to the UWM/Milwaukee community? Your residence hall? Your organization?

How would you describe the relationship between UWM and the Milwaukee community?

Have you had the opportunity to work on projects with/for the Milwaukee community?

#### Diversity/Community

What are the university's values around diversity/multiculturalism? How is this borne out in your experience or from your perspective?

What do you think of the community here at UWM? What words would you use to describe it?



Scholarship/Interdisciplinarity/Collaboration

How are students involved in research projects that impact the university or city of Milwaukee?

Have you been involved in one of these research projects? What are your thoughts about this kind of research and the involvement of students?

Have you had the opportunity to work with students from other majors and disciplines as a deliberate part of one of your classes?

**Close**

*Thank you for your time today. I will be contacting you to share a summary of your comments today with you to ensure I have captured your thoughts and ideas accurately. I will also be happy to share my final report with you.*

## **Preliminary Interview Guide - Administration**

### Institutional Transformation: A Case Study of an Urban Midwestern University

**Introduction:** Self introduction, name and general affiliation

#### **Purpose of Interview**

This study is to ascertain from faculty and students if genuine transformational change has occurred through the vehicle of The Milwaukee Idea. The literature on transformation in higher education reveals that truly transformational change does not occur unless the experiences, values and learning of students and faculty have been impacted. This is the idea of sensemaking where individuals and institutions attach new meanings, new metaphors to their work, their perspectives and their roles as a result of experiencing transformational change.

#### **Interview Begins**

##### Milwaukee Idea involvement

What has been your involvement with The Milwaukee Idea?

What do you see as the mission of The Milwaukee Idea?

How is that being met?

What is the future as you see it of The Milwaukee Idea and UWM?

What challenges to that future are present?

##### Diversity/Community

How would you describe the student culture? Faculty culture?

How do you think The Milwaukee Idea has impacted the student experience? What descriptors would you use?

How do you think The Milwaukee Idea has impacted the faculty experience? (culture, values)

What are the university's values around diversity/multiculturalism? How is this borne out in your experience or from your perspective?

##### Community engagement

Describe the university's relationship with the community before The Milwaukee Idea?

After The Milwaukee Idea was implemented?

##### Student Learning

To what degree is there a focus or emphasis on student learning and student outcomes in the classroom in general?

What has been the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on student learning?

##### Scholarship/Interdisciplinarity/Collaboration

What are your thoughts about "engaged scholarship"?

Who is involved in this kind of scholarship?

How is engaged scholarship viewed in terms of promotion and tenure?

How has The Milwaukee Idea impacted faculty in general? Faculty governance structures?

**Close**

*Thank you for your time today. I will be contacting you to share a summary of your comments today with you to ensure I have captured your thoughts and ideas accurately. I will also be happy to share my final report with you.*

## **Preliminary Interview Guide - Community**

### Institutional Transformation: A Case Study of an Urban Midwestern University

**Introduction:** Self introduction, name and general affiliation

#### **Purpose of Interview**

This study is to ascertain from faculty and students if genuine transformational change has occurred through the vehicle of The Milwaukee Idea. The literature on transformation in higher education reveals that truly transformational change does not occur unless the experiences, values and learning of students and faculty have been impacted. This is the idea of sensemaking where individuals and institutions attach new meanings, new metaphors to their work, their perspectives and their roles as a result of experiencing transformational change.

#### **Interview Begins**

##### Milwaukee Idea involvement

What has been your involvement with The Milwaukee Idea?

What do you see as the mission of The Milwaukee Idea?

How is that being met?

What is the future as you see it of The Milwaukee Idea and UWM?

What challenges to that future are present?

##### Diversity/Community

How would you describe the university culture?

How do you think The Milwaukee Idea has impacted the Milwaukee community? What descriptors would you use?

How do you think The Milwaukee Idea has impacted the university? (culture, values)

What are the university's values around diversity/multiculturalism? How is this borne out in your experience or from your perspective?

##### Community engagement

Describe the university's relationship with the community before The Milwaukee Idea?

After The Milwaukee Idea was implemented?

##### Student Learning

To what degree is there a focus or emphasis on student learning and student outcomes in the classroom in general?

What has been the impact of The Milwaukee Idea on student learning?

Scholarship/Interdisciplinarity/Collaboration

What are your thoughts about “engaged scholarship”?

Who is involved in this kind of scholarship?

**Close**

*Thank you for your time today. I will be contacting you to share a summary of your comments today with you to ensure I have captured your thoughts and ideas accurately. I will also be happy to share my final report with you.*

Appendix C

The Milwaukee Idea

## The Milwaukee Idea

# *A Powerful Force for Change*

*"I believe that universities are put on the face of the earth to make a social contribution. We make our contribution in terms of our teaching, the programs we offer, the lives we enable, the discovery and inquiry we conduct through our service. Our links to our community give legs to our mission because our partnerships and connections benefit the community and in turn, that benefits us."*

Nancy L. Zimpher

Chancellor

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

A single idea has the power to transform our thinking, enrich our community, and change our lives. So it is with The Milwaukee Idea, the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee’s ground breaking effort to bring its rich store of intellectual energy and proven expertise to partnerships with the people of greater Milwaukee and Wisconsin. Through The Milwaukee Idea, UWM is developing new ways of learning, expanding basic and applied research and scholarship, fostering creative approaches to economic development across the state, and forming partnerships for tackling threats to the health of young and old alike. Consider the impact of this powerful idea: Innovative UWM programs developed in partnership with the Milwaukee Public Schools are improving how teachers teach and students learn in our urban schools. 🌀 Pioneering research at UWM conducted in partnership with major corporations like Rockwell Automation, Intel, and Ford holds the promise of greatly reducing industrial breakdowns. 🌀 Expanded educational opportunities created in collaboration with Milwaukee’s non-profit organizations are strengthening the management and leadership capacity of non-profits and the vital services they provide. 🌀 New urban housing that is energy efficient, affordable, and easily integrated into city neighborhoods is taking shape through a partnership that brings together UWM, the City of Milwaukee, Wells Fargo Bank, Wisconsin Energy Corporation, and several other public and private partners. The Milwaukee Idea builds on UWM’s long tradition of research, teaching and service. Its spirit and philosophy grow from the Wisconsin Idea, championed by progressive state leaders at the turn of the century. In expressing the importance of the University of Wisconsin–Madison to the state’s people and commerce, they asserted, “The boundaries of the university are the boundaries of the state.” Likewise, UWM is not bound by the geography of its campus: There is no ivory tower here. Rather, the university reaches out to metropolitan Milwaukee, the state, and beyond, playing a vital role in improving the quality of our lives. The Milwaukee Idea energizes and reaffirms UWM’s urban mission, set forth at its founding in 1956: UWM was to be “Milwaukee’s university,” a powerful partner in the life and livelihood of the community.

Today UWM is indeed that university: a premier urban research institution committed to a shared future and working as an equal partner with the community to address critical issues in education, the economy, the environment, and community health.

## *Right Time, Right Place, Right Idea*

*“Our location in metropolitan Milwaukee is a tremendous asset that helps bring even greater vitality to student learning, research and teaching. What better place than Milwaukee for students to enrich their academics with community learning experiences? What better place than the urban heart of the state to study issues like welfare reform, school choice and economic revitalization? In short, what better place to celebrate our expanding role as an engaged university?”*

Stephen Percy,  
Chancellor's Deputy for the Milwaukee Idea

In 1956, when J. Martin Klotsche became the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee’s first chancellor, he envisioned a future for UWM in which the university would “find strength in its urban setting” and through its scholarship and outreach give new meaning to the quality of urban life. When Nancy L. Zimpher became UWM’s sixth chancellor, she took charge of a university poised to renew and expand the mission that Chancellor Klotsche had articulated nearly 50 years earlier. Building on its strong tradition of service, UWM would engage with the community more broadly than ever before and in doing so make an even greater contribution to the quality of urban life. Shortly after her arrival, Chancellor Zimpher challenged faculty, staff, and students to imagine this future for UWM – a future as a new kind of university inextricably linked to its community: “It’s not just us serving the community. It’s not just the community serving us,” she said in her first campus speech. “It’s the notion of together building a city and university that are the heart of metropolitan Milwaukee. This is the essence of The Milwaukee Idea.” The Milwaukee Idea reframes the Wisconsin Idea for UWM, an urban university in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It expands the boundaries of the university.

It puts UWM’s research, scholarship, and teaching in service to all citizens, not just those who are its students. And it answers the call for universities, particularly urban universities, to get out there and get engaged with their communities – to experiment, to open up new avenues for discourse, to become more involved in solving the pressing social, political, and economic issues facing our world.



## *100 People, 100 Days and Some Really Big Ideas*

*"I believe The Milwaukee Idea has made a significant difference in Milwaukee. I think there are many people like myself who have a renewed interest in the university and want to be part of this ambitious idea. This is something that will be enduring..."*

Johna Rogovin, Director, Southeastern Wisconsin Community Health Charities, and member of a Milwaukee Idea Action Team

To take The Milwaukee Idea from vision to action, UWM mounted a planning process unprecedented in its inclusiveness and scope. All who wanted to get involved were invited to do so. Participants included UWM students, faculty and staff, union representatives, campus neighbors, corporate and social service agency leaders, clergy and elected officials. More than 100 people spent 100 days in affinity groups discussing, debating and drawing up rough plans for what would become First Ideas –bold initiatives for community/university partnerships in education, the environment, and economic development. Then action teams stepped in. Made up of community and university members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, the teams fine-tuned the plans and sent them on for evaluation to another group of campus and community representatives. The initiatives that emerged build on UWM's academic strengths and offer fertile ground for community/university collaboration. Among them are a Consortium for Economic Opportunity linking university expertise with small and minority-owned businesses, a Healthy Choices program focusing on substance use and abuse on campus and in the community, and a new set of general education courses celebrating multiculturalism and expanding opportunities for community-based learning. All of the initiatives reflect several important principles that are at the heart of The Milwaukee Idea. They include a commitment to: # Build lasting partnerships in which the university and the community come to the table as equals. # Bring people together across academic disciplines and professional backgrounds to apply their collective expertise to complex issues. Create strategies that promote diversity and multicultural appreciation.

## *Taking the Initiative for Change*

*"...I am inspired by the efforts of the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee to reshape the Wisconsin Idea for its urban setting. With The Milwaukee Idea, UWM has taken seriously the challenges of community engagement, enhanced research and student learning to find a meaningful path to concrete action." "Of all the definitions of engagement, the one I*

*find most relevant to universities and communities underscores relationship. To be engaged is to be committed to a lifetime partnership. UWM was formed to be Milwaukee's university, and together – urban community and urban university – it will create its future.”*



Katharine C. Lyall, President,  
University of Wisconsin System

Milwaukee Idea initiatives address our health, the education of our youth, the economic vitality of our community and state, and the quality of our environment. Here is a sampling of their work.

**Age and Community** is an important community-wide effort to expand our understanding of aging and to improve the quality of life for older adults. This Milwaukee Idea initiative brings the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee together with a wide array of community professionals to plan for a future in which the number of people over age 60 is expected to double in the next 25 years. Age and Community is: Working to greatly expand research and scholarship on aging. Developing new degree and nondegree programs in gerontology, including courses to train practitioners in the latest techniques for working with older adults. Creating a new Age and Community Center where the community and the university can come together to share knowledge and transform theory into practice.

*Bill Mayrl, Interim Coordinator, 414-229-4217*

*Nikki Panico, Interim Program Manager, 414-229-2729.*

**Campus Design Solutions** is improving the physical environment of UW System campuses and the neighborhoods and communities in which they are located. Housed at UWM's highly regarded School of Architecture and Urban Planning, this initiative is involved in a variety of projects. Among them:  Developing the Maryland Avenue Plan in concert with UWM's neighbors to address concerns such as property values, student housing, and campus/community relations. Creating a “Quick Response” Team to efficiently respond to nonprofit organizations and neighborhood groups seeking help with design issues. Designing The Milwaukee Idea Home, a prototype for low-cost, energy-efficient urban housing which is being developed in partnership with the City of Milwaukee and local business and industry groups.  Developing a model to help plan for and monitor a sustainable energy system for the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center's new visitor center.

*Bob Greenstreet, Dean,*

*School of Architecture and Urban Planning, 414-229-4016;*

*Susan Weistrop, Administrative Program Coordinator, 414-229-6165,*

*[www.uwm.edu/MilwaukeeIdea/CDS/](http://www.uwm.edu/MilwaukeeIdea/CDS/).*

### **Consortium for Economic Opportunity.**

Through the Consortium for Economic Opportunity, UWM is building on its partnerships with economic development agencies, community organizations, and small businesses to

help spur economic growth throughout metropolitan Milwaukee. The consortium has a presence in the city with offices at the Ameritech King Commerce Center, 2745 N. Martin Luther King Drive. Among its numerous accomplishments are:
 

- Sponsoring an entrepreneurial training program designed to help both emerging and established entrepreneurs gain critical business skills, develop business plans, and attract financing.
- Providing technical assistance to enhance the economic development capacity of a variety of organizations, including the Wauwatosa Economic Development Corporation, Burleigh Street Community Development Initiative and Northeast Milwaukee Industrial Development Corporation.
- Working with the Harambee Ombudsman Project to help secure funding for a major training and education grant for at-risk youth.
- Assisting Work for Wisconsin, a community-based organization focusing on training and placement of disadvantaged workers, with development of a database to help match job seekers with employers.

*Marc Levine, Director, 414-229-5881*

*Lucy Holifield, Associate Director, 414-227- 3242,*

*[www.uwm.edu/MilwaukeeIdea/CEO](http://www.uwm.edu/MilwaukeeIdea/CEO).*

**Cultures and Communities** is a new set of foundation courses for undergraduates – one of just a few of its kind in the country – emphasizing cross-cultural literacy, interdisciplinary study, and community-based learning. It aims to prepare students to successfully take their places in an increasingly complex and diverse work force and world. Its accomplishments include:
 

- Bringing together educators and members of the community to explore how cultural diversity can be integrated into coursework and research, and how students can contribute to their communities while earning their degrees.
- Developing a rich array of new courses in Disciplines ranging from anthropology and visual art to sociology and dance.
- Making grants to more than 20 faculty members and community partners to develop courses or projects for the Cultures and Communities curriculum. Among them is an oral history project that pairs UWM with the Walnut Way Conservation Corporation to give students a chance to learn about Milwaukee’s oldest African American neighborhood.
- Partnering with Milwaukee’s Riverside University High School to help students acquire essential computer skills while they learn about and create virtual museums.

*Gregory Jay, Director; Sandra Jones, Assistant Director*

*414-229-5960, [www.cc.uwm.edu](http://www.cc.uwm.edu).*

### **Freshwater Initiative**

This new initiative focuses on the preservation and sustainability of local and global freshwater resources. UWM, located on the world’s largest system of freshwater lakes and rivers, is strategically positioned to become an international leader in creating knowledge and disseminating learning about the full array of freshwater issues. Early accomplishments include:
 

- Receipt of a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Defense for research at UWM’s Great Lakes WATER Institute. The grant will support extensive study on safeguarding the nation’s drinking-water

supply systems. ☞ Mounting a major community forum to explore and improve understanding of water quality issues in metropolitan Milwaukee.

*Val Klump, Director, Great Lakes WATER Institute, 414-382-1700.*

**Global Passport Project** seeks to equip students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in this era of globalization. The project is expanding study abroad programs, increasing the number of international students and faculty on campus, and offering programs on international issues to the community. Its efforts include: ☞ Developing a new degree in global studies – unique in the state – designed to give students the academic foundation and practical training to understand, predict, and respond to global change. ☞ Partnering with the Milwaukee Public Schools to bring UWM’s international students into elementary and middle school classrooms to promote intercultural understanding and awareness. ☞ Bringing elementary and high school teachers together with postsecondary scholars to develop strategies for integrating international content into teaching. ☞ Increasing student participation in overseas study through more than 30 UWM-sponsored programs that give students a chance to gain intercultural skills and experience life in more than 20 countries.

*Patrice Petro, Senior Director, Center for International Education, 414-229-3757; Sara Tully, Director of Program Planning and Development, Center for International Education, 414-229-3767, [www.uwm.edu/Dept/CIE](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CIE).*

**Healthy Choices** is addressing the personal and public health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and abuse with a variety of strategies, including community education, research, and evaluation of treatment services. Housed at UWM’s nationally recognized Center for Addiction and Behavioral Health Research, the Healthy Choices initiative is: ☞ Evaluating drug abuse and violence prevention efforts at several middle schools in the Milwaukee Public Schools system. ☞ Mounting a major effort to research drinking on campus and educate students and the community about its effects.

☞ Assessing alcohol and other drug abuse treatment services provided to women and children who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. ☞ Publishing and distributing the bilingual alcohol and drug prevention “Self-Help Guide” to Milwaukee-area residents.

*Lynda Braatz, Program Manager, 414-229-4766*

*Ron Cisler, Director of Research and Evaluation, 414-229-5425; [www.uwm.edu/Dept/CABHR/](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CABHR/).*

**Knowledgefest** offers the community a lively opportunity to learn about the full breadth of research at UWM (the state’s only urban research university), and the variety of ways it is working to improve the quality of our lives. Knowledgefest activities include: ☞ The Chancellor’s Research Forum, an annual symposium that brings together guests from the community and UWM scholars for a look at noteworthy research and community/university partnership opportunities.

☞ “Knowledgefest on the Air,” a program high-lighting university research achievements

broadcast on WUWM-FM, Milwaukee's National Public Radio affiliate. ☞ Showcasing research and community/university partnerships at local festivals and fairs.

*Joan Prince, Assistant Chancellor for Partnerships and Innovation,  
414-229-3101; [www.uwm.edu/Dept/partnerships/](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/partnerships/).*

**Millennium Information Technology Education and Careers (MITEC)** is a new initiative that provides comprehensive computer skills training and career development for low- to moderate-income high school students. Students learn academic, social, and personal applications of technology and how it influences their quality of life. Partners include the Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Private Industry Council of Milwaukee County, Manpower International, and a number of community-based organizations.

*Mohammed Aman, Dean, School of Information Studies,  
414-229-4709; Beverly Pickering Reyna, Special Projects Coordinator,  
414-229-3123, [www.it2kmitec.org](http://www.it2kmitec.org).*

### **Milwaukee Industrial Innovation Center.**

This initiative draws on the substantial research capability of UWM to foster technology innovation and help generate new businesses and new jobs in the city and the state. The consortia is: ☞ Providing technical training and intellectual property support services, and is playing an important role in commercializing innovations in bioengineering, software development, and information technology. ☞ Expanding opportunities for technology transfer by connecting university expertise with the technology needs of Wisconsin companies. ☞ Supporting the research of UWM's Center for Intelligent Maintenance Systems. The center is developing technology that allows machines to monitor their own performance and predict breakdowns before they occur. ☞ Facilitating both intra-industry and multi-industry research consortia.

*William Gregory, Dean, School of Engineering and Applied Science,  
414-229-4126, [www.uwm.edu/CEAS/ims/](http://www.uwm.edu/CEAS/ims/).*

### **Nonprofit Management Education.**

This initiative to strengthen Milwaukee's nonprofit organizations has been recognized with a total of nearly \$2 million in grants from the Helen Bader, Faye McBeath, and Greater Milwaukee Foundations and the United Way of Greater Milwaukee. Nonprofit Management Education is the product of collaboration among several major foundations, leading nonprofits, and UWM. Through the Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management Education at UWM, the initiative is:

☞ Developing a variety of educational offerings, including degree, nondegree, and continuing education programs, to enhance leadership and management of nonprofit organizations. Offering technical assistance to nonprofits in areas including fund development and planning, marketing, financial management, and technology assessment.

*John Palmer Smith, Executive Director,  
414-229-3176, [www.nme.uwm.edu](http://www.nme.uwm.edu).*

**Partnerships for Environmental Health** is a new initiative that addresses major threats to environmental health – such as air and water pollution and occupational exposure to toxins – with expanded research, education, and community/university partnerships. Areas of concentration will include lead poisoning in children, ergonomic injuries in the workplace, brownfield remediation, and consumption of mercury-contaminated fish.

*David H. Petering, Director, 414-229-5853*

*Jeanne B. Hewitt, Associate Director, 414-229-5463.*

**Partnerships in Education**, supported by more than \$26 million in federal grants, is an exciting, community-wide effort to revitalize our urban schools. UWM, the Milwaukee Public Schools, and other educational institutions throughout Southeastern Wisconsin are joining forces to prepare more students for college (particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse families), create a strong and energetic teacher work force prepared to meet the challenges of urban schools, and integrate information technology into teacher education programs. Among its notable activities are: # Bringing a select group of experienced Milwaukee Public School teachers to UWM for nine-month residencies. They join UWM faculty in the classroom to help write new courses and mentor beginning teachers, adding a new dimension to schooling tomorrow's educators. # Partnering with the Milwaukee Public Schools to support the work of technology consultants at several elementary schools in the city. The consultants are working with classroom and student teachers on the uses of educational software to enhance the curriculum. # Uniting members of the community and faculty to explore how to strengthen the quality of care and education for children from birth to age four. Taking a lead role in the Milwaukee Partnership Academy, a community-wide effort to prepare teachers for high-need urban schools and to recruit and retain top-quality teachers. In addition to UWM, partners include the Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Milwaukee Teachers Education Association, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, Private Industry Council, and other important school community representatives.

*Corliss D. Wood, Program Manager, 414-229-2667.*

**Urban Health Partnerships** enhances the health and quality of life for urban communities through partnerships among UWM, health and human services providers, community residents, and policymakers. The initiative draws on the resources of several UWM schools and colleges, including the School of Nursing, Helen Bader School of Social Welfare, and the College of Health Sciences. It builds on a variety of successful collaborative efforts, including UWM's community-based nursing centers, a training program for day-care providers caring for sick children, and adolescent pregnancy prevention programs.

*Randall S. Lambrecht, Dean, College of Health Sciences,*

*414-229-4712; Sally Lundeen, Dean, School of*

*Nursing, 414-229-4189.*

**Women's Health Research** is a new initiative that aims to substantially advance research on women's health, provide a vehicle for increasing community/university partnerships, and expand educational opportunities for women of color, of varied ethnic backgrounds and disadvantaged women. It will build on research now being done at UWM in areas such as the impact of welfare reform on the lives and health of low-income women, personal and workplace factors that affect the choice and ability to breastfeed, women and cardiovascular disease, and adolescent pregnancy prevention.

*The Milwaukee Idea Office, 414-229-6913.*

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Appendix D

THE WISCONSIN IDEA



## THE WISCONSIN IDEA: THE UNIVERSITY'S SERVICE TO THE STATE

By Jack Stark

Legislative Reference Bureau

WISCONSIN BLUE BOOK 1995 – 1996

Excerpted. Full text available at [www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/pubs/feature/wisidea.pdf](http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/pubs/feature/wisidea.pdf)

But the Wisconsin tradition meant more than a simple belief in the people. It also meant a faith in the application of intelligence and reason to the problems of society. It meant a deep conviction that the role of government was not to stumble along like a drunkard in the dark, but to light its way by the best torches of knowledge and understanding it could find.

Adlai Stevenson

Madison, Wisconsin

October 8, 1952

The Wisconsin Idea is a magical expression for many residents of this state. It stands for something that distinguishes us from residents of other states. However, there is no consensus on its meaning or causes. References to it are scattered in histories, biographies and speeches, but no one has written its own history. A book that appears to be the only detailed analysis of it is really a campaign document and an account of one legislative session. The Wisconsin Idea needs to be clarified, and the history of the phenomenon that it describes needs to be told so that we can better understand ourselves and our state.

### **1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WISCONSIN IDEA**

The Wisconsin Idea deserves a lengthy analysis only if it is rare and very important. Eminent scholars and educators who lived during one of the eras when the Idea was particularly strong, the early years of this century, believed that it fulfilled those two criteria. For example, during 1908, President Charles William Eliot of Harvard University, while granting an honorary Doctor of Laws degree to Charles Van Hise, president of the University of Wisconsin, called him the “president of the leading state university.”<sup>1</sup> Lincoln Steffens thought that President Eliot made the statement to a large extent because of the University’s service to its state; that is, because of the Wisconsin Idea. A few years later, Theodore Roosevelt wrote that “in no other state in the union has any university done the same work for the community that has been done in Wisconsin

by the University of Wisconsin.” More recent experts concur. Much later, Frederick Rudolph, the author of the standard history of American higher education, claimed that the University was entitled to President Eliot’s praise because of “the success with which it incorporated in its rationale two curiously conflicting currents of Progressivism: the resort to an *expertise* in the affairs of state, and the development of popular nontechnical lectures which carried the university to the people.”<sup>3</sup> Rudolph also acknowledged the historical significance of the Wisconsin Idea: “in varying degrees other state universities revealed the same spirit, but none came as close as the University of Wisconsin in epitomizing the spirit of Progressivism and the service ideal.”<sup>4</sup> The Wisconsin Idea certainly appears to have been important not only to this state but also to the development of American higher education.

## 2. DEFINITION OF THE WISCONSIN IDEA

One would expect an historical phenomenon that is as important as the Wisconsin Idea appears to be to have a generally agreed upon meaning. Many residents of this state, if they were asked to define the Wisconsin Idea, would respond, “the boundaries of the University are the boundaries of the state.” Oddly enough, the person who coined that expression is not known, although President Van Hise and Dean of Extension Louis Reber made similar remarks. Robert H. Foss, the editor of the University’s Press Bureau during the presidencies of Glenn Frank and Clarence Dykstra, has claimed credit for the expression, but his claim cannot be verified. That is a vivid expression but it is a slogan, a bumper sticker, not a useful definition. One can divide more careful attempts to define the Idea into two categories. One consists of definitions that emphasize the Idea’s political dimension, even its partisan political dimension (progressive or liberal politics). The other consists of definitions that emphasize the University’s service to the state. The definitions in the second category are more convincing. The political definitions are somewhat appropriate for the early years of this century, but even for that era they leave out important contributions. Moreover, the Idea has changed since that time. As David Cronon and John Jenkins point out, Charles McCarthy, who wrote the only book ostensibly about the Idea (but really about the 1911 Legislature) thought of the Idea as “various ameliorative activities of the Wisconsin progressive movement, including those of the University. After the stalwarts [the conservative wing of the Republican Party, Robert M. La Follette’s political opponents] returned to power with the election of Governor Emanuel L. Philipp in 1914, the term increasingly referred more narrowly to University public service.” As we have seen, persons who lived outside of Wisconsin, such as Theodore Roosevelt, President Eliot and Frederick Rudolph, thought of the Idea as primarily the University’s service to the state. Also, restricting the Idea to its political manifestations would result in ignoring many accomplishments, such as agricultural discoveries and outreach programs, that most persons would consider to be part of the Idea. In order to sort effectively through the massive amount of available information about the

history of the state and of the University and thus make it possible to write an analysis and history of the phenomenon that is called the Wisconsin Idea, it is necessary to formulate a definition of the Idea that is a bit more inclusive than any of the previous definitions. I propose to define the Wisconsin Idea as the University's direct contributions to the state: to the government in the forms of serving in office, offering advice about public policy, providing information and exercising technical skill, and to the citizens in the forms of doing research directed at solving problems that are important to the state and conducting outreach activities. This article is a history of those types of service. For the sake of brevity, I will use "Wisconsin Idea" more frequently than "the University's service to the state".

## VITA

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Ms. Grassadonia has taught undergraduate courses in leadership and counseling and a seminar on change in higher education.

She is the co-author with Dr. Jon Wergin of, *The Milwaukee Idea: A Case Study of Transformative change in Lasting Engagement*, v. 2. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.