

## **Charles D. Hurt**

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Dr. George S. McClellan  
Chair, VCAA Search Committee  
2101 E. Coliseum Boulevard  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805  
VIA EMAIL

Dear Dr. McClellan and Members of the Search Committee:

Please accept my letter and accompanying materials as an expression of my interest in the position of Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne.

I believe I have much to offer IPFW by way of intellectual and administrative leadership. I have 21 years of experience in academic administration, the last 7 of which have been in senior leadership positions.

The qualifications you list for the new Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs fit well with my strengths. Each of the qualifications you note will be addressed below.

**Earned doctorate or other appropriate earned terminal degree from an accredited institution.**

- I received a doctoral degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1981, focusing on communication among scientists and engineers with an emphasis on quantum physics.

**Successful experience teaching in the classroom, and a substantial record of published scholarship.**

- I have what I consider to be a successful record and, most importantly, have received the approbation of my faculty colleagues for my teaching and scholarship. My successes in terms of academic rank have been recognized by McGill University where I was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure after three years and by the University of Arizona where I was promoted to Professor in 1991.

**Proven record of academic program development and assessment.**

- Developing excellent, strong graduate and undergraduate programs and encouraging significant, ongoing research activity were mandates in my various positions

at the University of Arizona. Building, maintaining, and enhancing five programs ranked in the top twenty by the National Research Council in the face of budgetary constraints defines my experience and my success at the University of Arizona and in later positions.

- West Chester University is located in an area surrounded by the pharmaceutical industry. While there, I implemented and managed two programs that were targeted at serving the pharmaceutical industry and its ancillary industries. The program was built with the input and assistance of the pharmaceutical industry.
- On my arrival at UW-River Falls, I was asked to jump-start the assessment process. I worked with Deans, departments, and relevant Faculty Senate committees to develop a much more open and accepted process. The result is that within a semester, all programs had an assessment plan in place and by the end of the Spring semester, all had some form of data on which to judge both their programs and their assessment plans.

#### **Significant administrative experience beyond the departmental level.**

- I have the experience, over 21 years, and the ability to build and sustain collaborative structures which will assist the programs, services and activities of IPFW to move forward. The last seven of those years have been in positions at the level of dean or higher.
- My facility with budgets can be seen in my accomplishments at West Chester University. On arrival, I was greeted with a \$500,000 shortfall. The University graciously allowed this shortfall to be repaid over 5 years. I retired this debt in 3 years. In my second year, a budget shortfall at the state level led to a \$900,000 permanent reduction to the college's budget. My ability to move the college from a deficit position to one where we enjoyed a "profit" could not have been done without significant effort and agreement on direction and priorities by department chairs and others in the college.

#### **Experience in collaborating with Student Affairs and others to promote student learning and success.**

- UW-River Falls is deeply involved in co-curricular activities. An example is the Falcon Tutors program which is a special project in conjunction with Arlington High School in St. Paul, MN to assist students completing their secondary education. For UW-River Falls at large, over 80% of our students report being involved in experiential education.
- Retention of students is a nationwide problem and can be an indicator of a negative college experience. I helped UW-River Falls develop and implement the First Year Experience Program, aimed at retaining more students from first year to second year. This program, in less than one year, has moved our retention rates higher.

#### **Experience in innovation and collaboration.**

- To assist UW-River Falls's academic growth strategy, I met with chief academic officers of the regional technical colleges. The positive outcome of our meetings was a transfer agreement. The agreement allows students to transfer arts and sciences credits from technical colleges directly into UW-River Falls at the end of their first or second year, effectively creating a 2+2 program. This collaboration was previously nonexistent with the exception of some course-by-course articulation agreements.
- As part of what we are calling the *IQ Corridor*, I worked with UW-Eau Claire, UW-Stout, and the regional technical colleges to develop ways to share resources and increase research activity. The synergy resulted in several research collaborations including: stem-cell research conducted jointly with UW-Stout and a nanotechnology initiative with UW-Eau Claire and the technical colleges.

#### **Commitment to multiculturalism and internationalization.**

- On my arrival at UW-River Falls I required that searches include women and minorities in the final pool. This led to the hiring of a number of individuals in areas that traditionally had not evidenced diversity. The world is diverse—higher education must also be diverse else we are badly shortchanging our students.
- While associated with West Chester University, I was a member of the Social Equity Advisory Board and a member of the Administrative Social Equity Task Force. Both of these bodies were involved in equity issues across the institution.
- UW-River Falls is committed to global literacy and action. As an example of how UW-River Falls fulfills this commitment, we recently signed agreements with several South Korean universities to develop cooperative programs in teaching English as a second language.
- At the community level, the City of River Falls and UW-River Falls entered into a partnership to define the City and the University as models of inclusion and sustainability.

#### **Dedication to making high quality university education accessible and affordable to a wide array of learners.**

- While at the University of Arizona, I directed one of the first outreach efforts offering academic programs to students in as many as 16 states and 6 foreign countries. I also collaborated with the Navajo Nation and Tohono Oodham Nation to deliver coursework and offer educational activities. My experience included working with the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, the Arizona Board of Regents, and the Western Governors' Association in addressing issues in distance education.
- UW-River Falls is now using a Title III grant to move more of our courses to an online or hybrid model. Outreach activities at UW-River Falls are working with the non-traditional student, often an adult student, who is seeking additional knowledge and skills related to his or her present or future employment. Business courses offered online or during evenings or weekends are examples.

Desired qualifications include:

**Achievement in the design and management of a broad, multicultural and international, undergraduate, and graduate curriculum.**

- My experience, beginning at the University of Arizona, with developing undergraduate and graduate programs is substantial. The distance education programs at the University of Arizona were, at one time, in 16 states and 6 foreign countries. West Chester University and UW-River Falls have programs in a number of countries. UW-River Falls has programs in Scotland, India, China, and Korea as examples. The design and management of these programs falls to the International Programs Office which is under the scope of the Provost and Vice Chancellor's office.

**Experience in evidence-based decision making processes.**

- I have extensive experience with personnel, budget, resource, and curricular decisions. Making such decisions requires use of data sets and evidence that have both local and external validation. An example of my use of external evidence in making decisions was my decision to involve UW-River Falls in the Delaware Study project. The engagement with the Delaware Study project, together with the use of IPEDS data and other locally validated data sets, assists in transparency and fairness in decision making. Management by spreadsheet cannot take the place of good decision making, but the use of evidence in decision making is a critical part of the process.

**Effective management of academic personnel, budget administration, and strategic planning.**

- for the past seven years I had management responsibilities for academic personnel, budget administration, and strategic planning.
  - As Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, over 235 permanent faculty members in four colleges reported to me. The budget for UW-River Falls is over \$80 million with approximately \$65 million used by academic affairs. UW-River Falls began a new strategic planning process last year. Much of the planing has a significant impact on academic affairs and, as such, the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs office is intimately involved in the process.
  - While serving as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at West Chester University, I was responsible for over 245 permanent faculty members. The budget for the College exceeded \$30 million. The College and each unit in the College began a strategic planning process that mapped out the specific directions for unit would take in the future.
  - Beginning with my service as Dean at the University of Arizona, I have had management responsibilities for over 250 permanent faculty members, the personnel and operations budgets associated the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences which, at that time, was over \$24 million in state funding. While

serving at the University of Arizona, I was a member of the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee, a university-wide committee, reporting directly to the Provost.

**Leadership experience in accreditation processes.**

- Beginning with my experience at the University of Arizona, I have been involved in program evaluation, curriculum development, and assessment of educational outcomes. I was part of the process at the University of Arizona when they underwent NCA reaccreditation. I was part of the process at West Chester University when they underwent Middle States reaccreditation. UW-River Falls is now drafting its self-study in anticipation of a site visit by the NCA Higher Learning Commission. As a consultant/evaluator for the Higher Learning Commission, I am familiar with accreditation processes.

**Knowledge of contemporary and critical issues in higher education.**

- I was an active member of the Council for Colleges of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) and am active in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). I regularly work with members of the UW System staff and fellow provosts in the UW System to address issues related to access, retention, diversity, and accreditation.
- As a consultant/evaluator for the Higher Learning Commission, I received training to identify the efficacy with which an institution is meeting the goals of access, retention, and diversity.

**Appreciation and support for shared governance.**

- Collaborative decision making and a team orientation are a part of my administrative background. My colleagues at the University of Arizona twice elected me to Faculty Senate. During my service at Arizona I helped write the Shared Governance Agreement. At West Chester University, a unionized faculty environment, I managed the largest college and did not have a grievance in four years.
- UW-River Falls operates within a state constitutional statute of shared governance for the University of Wisconsin System. I worked with our Faculty Senate with the result that our new strategic plan is moving forward. This was a truly collaborative, successful effort with our governance structure and one that lays the groundwork for positive activity in the future.
- One of the great joys of working in higher education as an administrator is that one is surrounded by some of the world's smartest people. I am committed to seeking the best advice prior to making decisions. The process by which the decision was made should be transparent. Making decisions is only part of what an administrator does—making informed decisions that demonstrate collaboration is what a good administrator does.

**Proven success generating external resources.**

- My experience with generating external funding is excellent. Examples are:
  - While serving at the University of Arizona, the University initiated a \$1 billion campaign. The College of Social and Behavioral sciences was given the target in my final year to raise \$2 million. Together with departments and faculty, we exceeded our target.
  - While serving at the University of Arizona, I secured over \$1 million in external funding through grants and contracts.
  - While at West Chester University, we successfully raised over \$900,000 to meet a challenge grant from NEH, the only institution of higher education to meet its challenge in that year.
  - I was principal investigator for a \$1.4 million NSF grant to assist West Chester University develop an Information Assurance program.

**Demonstrated understanding of the changing role of libraries and emerging educational technologies.**

- The move from a print-based organization to an electronic and knowledge-based institution has significantly changed libraries. Coupled with the technological advances in areas such as distance and asynchronous learning, libraries have and continue to change the role they play on and off campus.
- UW-River Falls is located in one of Wisconsin's prime agricultural regions and at the eastern edge of the Minneapolis Metropolitan Statistical Area, one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country. Recognizing that potential, I examined possibilities for expanding undergraduate programs and increasing the number of transfer students where we have program capacity. One of the positive outcomes is a Title III grant UW-River Falls received in partnership with Chippewa Valley Technical College to develop and offer significantly more online courses.

**Communication and advocacy skills suitable for engagement with a wide variety of constituencies on and off campus.**

- Vice Chancellors are, in large part, chief visionaries. Working with internal and external groups, they must articulate vision and engender greater vision in the administrative ranks as well as throughout the institution and beyond. This requires energy and enthusiasm because it means thinking about and acting on change. Convincing any group to actively engage in change requires persuasion, passion, and persistence. Change is a dynamic component of higher education—changing and expanding how individuals, students, and others, think about the world they live in is our goal.
- One of the characteristics others suggest defines me is that faculty, staff, and students find me approachable and receptive. I work at being open and to listen actively to individuals at whatever level on campus.

- One of my strengths is my ability to work with University System staff, legislators, and others. While at the University of Arizona, I worked with the Arizona Board of Regents to develop intellectual property policies and to design distance education policies. I worked with the Western Governors' Conference, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, and other groups regarding regional and national higher education issues. At UW-River Falls, I met several times with our state legislative delegation and lobbied a number of critical legislators for UW-River Falls and the UW-System. I regularly worked with and met with members of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents.

My time at UW-River Falls has been short and there may be some question as to why I would wish to leave UW-River Falls. What I have found is that UW-River Falls, while an institution of many strengths and resources, is not as receptive to the strengths that I bring to the institution nor as ready for change and leadership from the Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs as faculty suggested at the time of my hiring. Chancellor Don Betz and I discussed the issue and he is in full agreement with this analysis and, as one of my references, can speak directly to this point. As a result, I am seeking a position in an institution that is a better fit with my leadership skills and one that will enable me to serve in the role of active leader. From my inquiries and research to this point, I believe IPFW is just such an institution.

I appreciate the opportunity to share some of my accomplishments and qualifications for this critical position. I look forward to a more in-depth discussion and exchange of ideas on these and other topics you may wish to explore.

Sincerely,

Charles D. Hurt

encl: curriculum vitae  
list of references