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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release

UW System commits to developing a Tribal consultation policy with the Native Nations in Wisconsin

Wisconsin is home to 12 Native Nations

MADISON, Wis. – To strengthen relationships with the Native Nations of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin System has committed to creating and implementing a Tribal consultation policy that will guide the System's work with Tribal communities.

It is believed such a policy would be just the second for a statewide system of higher education in the country.

"Working in partnership with Native Nations can help us craft a successful educational experience for Native students," said UW System President Ray Cross. "With most Native students being dual citizens of both Wisconsin and their Native Nations, the UW System has an obligation to build and strengthen our partnership."

A Tribal consultation policy emphasizes an organization's desire to develop relationships with sovereign Nations with respect for and acknowledgment of Nations' cultures, traditions, beliefs, governance, laws, codes, regulations, and protocols as well as to comply with all applicable Tribal practices.

The policy will strengthen working relationships and deepen understanding between the UW System and Native Nations to develop partnerships that will foster greater Native American student enrollment and graduation rates at UW System campuses.

Wisconsin is home to 12 Native Nations, each with unique needs and geographically located near one of the 13 four-year campuses and/or one of the 13 branch campuses. The new policy will help the UW System serve each Nation to its fullest capacity.

Consultation is a deliberative process that aims to create effective collaboration and informed decision-making, promoting open and transparent communication that emphasizes trust, respect, and shared responsibility without compromising the rights of Native Nations. Consultation conducted in a meaningful and good-faith manner further facilitates effective organizational operations and governance practices.

While several government-to-government Tribal consultation policies have been implemented both on a national and local level, it is believed only one Tribal consultation policy exists within a university system setting. In 2016, the Arizona Board of Regents approved a Tribal consultation policy that implemented communication and consultation principles governing the interactions of Arizona's public universities with Arizona's Native Nations on issues such as land use, education policy, and research.

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The University of Wisconsin System serves more than 170,000 students. Awarding 36,000 degrees annually, the UW System is Wisconsin's talent pipeline, putting graduates in position to increase their earning power, contribute to their communities, and make Wisconsin a better place to live. More than 80 percent of UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after earning a degree. The UW System provides a 23:1 return on state investment. UW System institutions also contribute to the richness of Wisconsin's culture and economy with groundbreaking research, new companies and patents, and boundless creative intellectual energy.

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