

UW System: Connie Foster appointed UW-River Falls interim chancellor

Posted on Tuesday, May 26, 2020

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MADISON, Wis.—University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross has named Connie Foster as the interim chancellor of UW-River Falls. Foster is a higher education and leadership consultant who spent 23 years as a faculty member, administrator, and interim chancellor at UW-River Falls.

“Connie has a national reputation as a university expert due to her variety of experience at UW-River Falls,” Cross said. “She is the right person to lead UW-River Falls given the challenges ahead.”

Since 2009, Foster has owned Connie Foster Facilitation and Consulting, which she began after retiring from UW-River Falls. Certified by the Institute for Cultural Affairs, her work in higher education focuses on strategic, academic, and action planning.

She was interim chancellor at UW-River Falls from August 2008 to July 2009 and prior to that was interim provost and vice president for academic affairs. She has been the university’s Dean for the College of Education and Professional Studies; Athletic Director; Chair of the Department of Health and Human Performance; Professor of Health and Human Performance; Women’s Athletic Director; and Gymnastics Coach.

“We’re extremely pleased Dr. Foster has accepted this position,” said Regent President Andrew S. Petersen. “Having served as interim chancellor before, she is poised to provide seamless leadership at UW-River Falls.”

Foster will replace Dean Van Galen effective July 1. Van Galen is stepping down to become president of Missouri Southern State University in Joplin, Mo.

“I am humbled and honored to serve as interim chancellor at UW-River Falls,” Foster said. “We are operating in a challenging and unpredictable environment. I look forward to talking with Chancellor Dean Van Galen and the many faculty and staff who are hard at work planning our path forward.”

The membership of the Search and Screen Committee and the Special Regent Committee will be named soon.

“I am very supportive of the selection of Dr. Connie Foster as UW-River Falls’ interim chancellor,” Van Galen said. “She has had a distinguished career of leadership and service on the campus and is widely respected. Dr. Foster’s past experience as interim chancellor and her excellent perspective on higher education make her the perfect person to provide wise and thoughtful leadership during this challenging time.”

Foster has served on several statewide education study groups, is a founding member and past president of the River Falls Rotary Group, and has served on the board of directors of the Melpomene Institute for Women’s Health Research, Kinnic Falls Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Inc., and River Falls Community Gymnastics.