

News Release

Abernethy Receives Trustees' Award of Merit



May 10, 2010 -- Associate Provost Rollin Abernethy on Friday received the UW Board of Trustees' highest honor -- the Trustees' Award of Merit.

The award noted Abernethy's leadership in UW's favorable accreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). UW for two years was engaged in a self-study as part of HLC's reaccreditation process. The process culminated this spring semester with a site visit by an HLC-appointed team.

In March, 11 faculty and administrators from universities across the United States were on the UW campus and in the state to conduct the site visit, the final step in the process in which faculty and staff from across campus engaged in a thoughtful and deliberate self-examination of the university's educational and

support programs.

"The highest achievement of any university is to be accredited, and full accreditation is a tribute to the excellence of the faculty and the university's efforts to meet its educational mission and exceed national standards. The process that actually goes into accreditation requires a tremendous amount of work," UW President Tom Buchanan said when presenting the award to Abernethy.

He added that planning for accreditation actually starts the day after receiving the final decision from the accrediting body for one accreditation cycle and ends after the last member of the site team leaves campus for the next.

"That is about a 10-year span that includes thousands of hours spent contemplating and discussing and writing about how the university can be the best that it can be. Rollin has led UW through not one, but two successful accreditation processes," Buchanan said. "We wrapped up our most recent site visit earlier this spring, with excellent feedback from the site team members. A great deal of the success we have had is directly attributed to the leadership Rollin has provided through the years."

During his more than 30-year UW career, Abernethy has been both a faculty member and an administrator. He came to UW in 1978 as an assistant professor in the Department of Plant Sciences in the College of Agriculture. He was associate dean and director of academic and student programs in the College of Agriculture and in 1998 was named associate vice president for academic affairs.

Abernethy received his B.S. (1970) and M.S. (1970) degrees in agronomy from Kansas State University and his doctoral degree (1974) in agronomy/crop physiology from the University of Arizona.