

Howard Thoyre

1979-1989

1989-1995

Howard Thoyre, who rose through the ranks of administration during his 40-year career at UWSP to become provost and vice chancellor of academic affairs, served twice as acting chancellor. His first stint was to replace Phillip Marshall, who retired after serving as chancellor from 1979 to 1989. Later Thoyre replaced Keith Sanders, who took an administrative position at UW-System after serving from 1989 to 1995.

Thoyre began his successful career on campus as a member of the mathematics faculty. He became chairman of his department, assistant dean then dean of the College of Letters and Science. In 1997 Marshall appointed him vice chancellor, and he received the additional title of provost in 1993.

During Thoyre's career as vice chancellor and tenures as chancellor, the campus participated in a critical planning process, revising the institution's goals and objectives. He was instrumental in improving the academic quality of UWSP's students, for several years attracting the best freshmen in its history. During that period, UWSP also was cited by the U. S. Department of Education as a national leader in collaboration between secondary schools and the university.

A native of Wing, N.D., Thoyre holds a bachelor's degree from Minot State College, a master's degree from Louisiana State University, and a Ph.D. from UW-Madison. He is a founder of the Central Wisconsin Mathematics League and author of a book for elementary school math teachers. After his retirement from UWSP in 1996, Thoyre served in an acting administrative position at UW-System and as acting dean of the UW-Colleges.

Thoyre was the second person to serve two terms as acting chancellor or acting president of the school. Charles Watson, a geographer and administrator, was chosen twice in 1920 and 1940 upon the deaths of President Sims and President Smith. Gordon Haferbecker held the post through most of 1967 when James Alberston was on an educational mission to South Vietnam and was killed in a plane crash there, and John Ellery served in 1978-79 when Lee Dreyfus went on a leave of absence to successfully pursue the office of governor.

During the 2003 academic year, UWSP had another acting chancellor when Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Virginia Helm served as the first female leader of the campus in its 109-year history after the departure of Chancellor Thomas George who left to become head of UW-Missouri St. Louis. In 2009 Provost and Vice Chancellor Mark Nook served for a year as interim chancellor upon the resignation of Linda Bunnell.