



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.

June 27, 2017

Senator Alberta Darling, Senate Co-Chair
Representative John Nygren, Assembly Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Finance
Wisconsin Legislature
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Co-Chairs Darling and Nygren:

On behalf of the UW-Madison faculty, we would like to request that the Joint Finance Committee make two important changes to the budget for the University of Wisconsin System before the committee concludes its work on the 2017-19 state budget: **1) Removal of the non-fiscal language relating to the qualifications for UW System President and Chancellor candidates; 2) Amending the language that creates the Thompson Center on Public Leadership to eliminate the “leadership board,” allow for the creation of an advisory committee, and ensure, as is the case for all other UW-Madison centers, that this center is subject to university governance.**

1) Removal of the non-fiscal language relating to the qualifications for UW System President and Chancellor candidates: Item #20 in Motion #253 prohibits the Board of Regents from adopting any policy or promulgating any rule that requires the Board to consider only individuals who are faculty members or who have been granted tenure at other universities or who hold terminal degrees for the positions of UW System President, or chancellor or vice chancellor of a UW institution.

This proposal was first made public on the day Motion #253 was introduced and then approved by the committee. There was no advance notice, it was never given a public hearing, and no legislator publicly took credit for it. Although PROFS had been meeting with members of the committee as well as legislative leadership, this proposal was never mentioned. In addition to the lack of transparency or opportunity for constituent input, this is also inconsistent with the committee leadership’s expressed desire that non-fiscal policy be removed from the budget.

It should be noted that there currently is no regent policy or rule requiring that the UW President, chancellors or vice chancellors have tenure or terminal degrees. But UW-Madison’s Faculty Policies and Procedures (FPP) does state that the UW-Madison chancellor, along with the provost and any vice chancellor to whom the chancellor delegates responsibility for academic program and faculty personnel policies, must hold a tenured faculty rank. This requirement underlines the need for incumbents to have experience, preparation, and understanding of universities, paralleling leadership qualifications demanded by most industries.

If a legislator would like to introduce this proposal as separate legislation, the UW-Madison faculty would welcome the opportunity to defend the current FPP language. This requirement is among the reasons why UW-Madison is consistently ranked one of the top universities in the world.

2) Amending the language that creates the Thompson Center on Public Leadership to eliminate the "leadership board," allow for the creation of an advisory committee, and ensure, as is the case for all other UW-Madison centers, that the Thompson Center is subject to university governance. The idea for the Thompson Center came from the UW-Madison faculty. The faculty of two departments voted unanimously to support creation of the center. The faculty welcome the opportunity to help make the center a success. Unfortunately, some of the language adopted by Joint Finance (Item #13 in Motion #253) to create the center threatens to impede that success.

The provision creating a "leadership board" is contrary to the intent of shared governance of the University of Wisconsin and abrogates the rights and responsibilities of leaders of the new center. It is important that the center be treated like other centers at UW-Madison, with full input from the chancellor, faculty, and others who have roles defined by State statute and University policies and procedures. The "leadership board" language should be removed from the budget.

We would welcome the creation of an advisory committee with membership appointed in part by bipartisan recommendations from the Wisconsin Legislature.

Thank you very much for taking our suggestions into consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with you on these and other university-related initiatives.

Sincerely,



Judith Burstyn
PROFS President



Dorothy Farrar Edwards
Incoming PROFS President



Anja Wanner
Chair, University Committee
& PROFS Board of Directors

CC: President Cross
Chancellor Blank
Other Legislators
Media