



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.

Legislative Update

PROFS, the Public Representation Organization of the Faculty Senate, is a non-profit advocacy organization of UW-Madison faculty. Formed by the Faculty Senate and governed by the University Committee, PROFS provides a voice to faculty, allowing them to communicate directly with the governor, legislators, and members of Congress.

COVID-19 and the State Budget

Last month, Wisconsin Secretary of Administration Joel Brennan announced \$300 million of additional state budget cuts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These cuts, to be taken in the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, are \$50 million more than Governor Evers called for in July, but UW System's share of the cut was reduced from \$69 million to \$45 million.

In the spring, Evers cut \$70 million in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, with UW System shouldering almost 60 percent of the cut. PROFS, along with the Associated Students of Madison and the Academic Staff Professionals Representation Organization, released a statement decrying the disproportionate share of the burden given to UW System. The governance groups called on Evers to make any future cuts more equitable, return tuition authority to the Board of Regents or fund the ongoing tuition freeze, and give UW System bonding and borrowing authority for capital projects.

Fall Elections

PROFS is looking forward to working with several new Dane County legislators in 2021. State Senator Fred Risser (D-Madison) announced his retirement earlier this year, and Democrat Kelda Helen Roys has no opponent in the election. In the Assembly, Democrat Francesca Hong is the strong favorite to replace State Representative Chris Taylor, who stepped down to become a Dane County Circuit Court judge. The eastside of Madison will also have new representation in the State Senate following the retirement of Senator Mark Miller, a Democrat from Monona.

UW System Update

2021-23 State Budget Proposal In August, UW System Interim President Tommy Thompson announced details about UW System's 2021-23 state budget request. The operating budget proposal — a 3.5 percent increase over the biennium — features ten key initiatives, including a system-wide free tuition program, the Wisconsin Tuition Promise, for Wisconsin families earning less than \$60,000 annually. The proposal extends Bucky's Tuition Promise, a UW-Madison program created in 2018, to all UW System universities. Other funding priorities include student loan forgiveness programs for state teachers, 20 new UW-Madison Division of Extension county-based agriculture positions, and support for the Freshwater Collaborative.

The UW System 2021-23 capital budget includes two projects important to UW-Madison: a new engineering building to support increased growing in the College of Engineering and a new Letters & Science academic building to replace the aging Mosse Humanities Building.

UW System Presidential Search The Board of Regents is not expected to begin its search for a new president sometime until sometime next year. PROFS was deeply concerned about the previous search process and continues to push the board for strong shared governance principles in the upcoming search.

Join PROFS!

PROFS is funded entirely through modest monthly contributions from faculty and needs the support of all faculty to be most successful. Please use the membership form on the PROFS website (profs.wisc.edu) to join.

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