



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.  
Strengthening Wisconsin.

## PROFS Continues Its Advocacy for UW-Madison Faculty

PROFS, the Public Representation Organization of the (UW-Madison) Faculty Senate, has been advocating for faculty since its creation by the Faculty Senate in the 1970s. The political landscapes in the state and country have shifted many times, and they will shift again. Through it all, PROFS keeps making the case to decision-makers about the importance and value of UW-Madison faculty to the people of Wisconsin and the nation. Following are examples of recent successes for PROFS.

- **Competitive compensation for faculty:** Since its inception, PROFS has made competitive compensation for faculty one of its key lobbying priorities. Despite a series of very difficult budgets, PROFS played a key role in ensuring that the Legislature and Governor Evers have provided consistent pay plans (2% per year over four years), which – along with other centrally-funded initiatives – has brought UW-Madison salaries to the median of our peers, something the university had long hoped for, but previously seemed like an unreachable goal.
- **Tuition authority given back to Board of Regents:** One of the biggest challenges confronting UW-Madison and the UW System generally has been the state-imposed tuition freeze over the past eight years. Heading into the 21-23 state budget debate, most believed that eliminating the freeze was not possible. But PROFS continued to lobby for an end to the freeze, coupled with more financial aid and diversity promotion. The budget passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Evers eliminated the freeze.
- **Impact on the debate over COVID-related cuts to the university:** In 2020, the state asked for, and the UW leadership agreed to, cuts to the base budget that were much bigger than those in other state agencies. PROFS put together a letter with other shared governance groups expressing unhappiness with the cuts. A subsequent rescission was much smaller for UW and a smaller percentage of the overall state cut. Most importantly, the state ultimately sent much of the money back to UW in a rollback of the rescissions.
- **New law with streamlined process for faculty-owned businesses and non-profits to work with UW:** 2009 Wisconsin Act 38 arose out of the work of a PROFS subcommittee of entrepreneurial faculty. Prior to 2019, Wisconsin suffered at a serious competitive disadvantage because of outdated laws that restricted the ability of the university to contract with companies and non-profits in which faculty or staff have financial interest. PROFS had the legislation drafted, identified bill sponsors, developed support among other groups, and ultimately got it passed by the Legislature and signed into law.
- **More funding and support for UW Extension:** PROFS supported legislation, which was added to the state budget, to provide \$1 million per year for UW Extension. And PROFS successfully advocated for changes to legislation to give state agricultural specialists better credit for the work they do. That bill was passed and signed into law.
- **Better benefits for faculty:** PROFS successfully advocated to give faculty and staff health insurance coverage upon hiring (state law had been six months), pension payments pre-tax (which saves the average faculty member \$1800 per year), and domestic partner benefits.
- **Important university building projects:** PROFS lobbies for the university's building needs, including the new Letters and Science building, replacing the Humanities Building, which was approved in the 21-23 state budget, and the Chemistry Building, approved in the 2015-17 state budget.