



Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.

February 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.

2023-25 State Budget

Governor Tony Evers will deliver his state budget address on Wednesday, February 15. The Board of Regents budget request includes a \$115 million increase in the annual operating budget and full funding for 4% raises for all employees in each of the next two years. Regents also requested funding for to continue the Wisconsin Tuition Promise, a financial aid program like Bucky's Tuition Promise at UW-Madison.

Newly released figures show the state will end the fiscal year with a record \$7.1 billion budget surplus. Republican leaders are in favor of substantial income tax cuts, including a possible flat tax, while the governor would like to direct a significant amount to aid to municipalities, K-12 education, and a middle-class tax cut. The budget process is lengthy and stretches into the summer when the legislature passes the budget. PROFS is actively engaged through every step of the process and will communicate progress to faculty at key points throughout.

Meeting with the Governor's Office

PROFS leaders recently met with the Governor's higher education advisor, sharing that paid family leave for faculty and university employees is a top legislative priority for PROFS. We explained that the university is currently working to develop its own paid parental leave program, and the faculty support paid leave for all state and private sector employees. PROFS also asked for a strong pay plan to allow salaries to keep up with inflation and offered general support of the regents' budget request.

UW System Student Survey on Free Speech

Last week, the University of Wisconsin System [released results](#) from a survey of students on their perceptions of free speech on campus. The survey was proposed last spring, but its implementation was delayed due to questions about how the survey would be administered. PROFS was very concerned about the survey and [called on](#) UW System Interim President Michael Falbo to cancel, rather than postpone, the survey.

Nearly 10,500 students representing every four-year campus within UW System completed the survey last December. About 40% of students identified as liberal or very liberal, while more than 52% indicated they were moderate, conservative, or very conservative. Results showed that many students are concerned about how others may view their opinions and worry their grades could suffer if they expressed themselves in class.



PROFS Forum on Free Speech

PROFS will host a forum on free speech at **noon, Wednesday, February 22** in the Executive Dining Room in Grainger Hall, 975 University Avenue. Refreshments will be served. Panelists include:

- University of Wisconsin System President Jay Rothman
- State Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara (R-Appleton)
- UW-Madison Professor Howard Schweber (Political Science)
- UW-Madison Professor Alex Tahk (Political Science)

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](#) to join. New members will receive a PROFS mug as a thank you.

 @PROFSUWMadison  PROFSUWMadison

February 6, 2023