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**ACADEMIC STAFF ASSEMBLY MEETING MINUTES**

**272 Bascom Hall**

**Monday, November 8, 2021**

**3:30 to 5:00 p.m.**

Provost Scholz called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

**Guest: Rebecca Blank, Chancellor**

Chancellor Blank expressed her gratitude to Assembly representatives, alternates, and ASEC members for their service in governance. There are a number of new leaders who have joined campus over the last several months, including Nancy Lynch as the new Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs, LaVar Charleston as the new Chief Diversity Officer and Deputy Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion, Rob Cramer as the Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, and Heather Reese as the interim director of Wisconsin Public Media.

Chancellor Blank reported on the success of the All Ways Forward campaign. The initial goal was $3.2 billion, and we have now raised more than $4 billion, making this the most successful fundraising campaign in our campus’ history. Almost all of these funds were given with signed gift agreements that designate the funds to very specific uses, and much of the money was pledged as endowment funds for investment that will benefit academic programs and research. UW-Madison has the largest freshman class in its history, with 8,400 students from a record 54,000 applicants. The share of students of color in our freshman class is just over 25%, an all-time high, and the share of underrepresented students of color is also at an all-time high of nearly 15%. The Chancellor expressed appreciation for all those working directly with our undergraduates to support the increased number of students. Three new buildings have been announced this fall: the Bakke Recreation and Wellbeing Center, which will replace the Natatorium, the Computer, Data, and Information Sciences Building, and a new academic building for the College of Letters and Science, which will be known as the Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall.

We continue to monitor COVID numbers from the campus and the community very closely. UW-Madison has a very high vaccination rate, with over 94% of students and 95% of employees fully vaccinated, and these numbers continue to increase. Dane County has extended its mask mandate to November 27, and we have an ongoing mask mandate as well. Interim System President Thompson announced that UW System campuses will be complying with President Biden’s Executive Order requiring mandatory vaccinations for federal contractors. There will be more details over the next several weeks. Booster shots are also being provided by University Health Services.

UW-Madison continues to improve in educational outcomes, with our highest 4-year and 6-year graduation rates ever (73% and 89% respectively). The graduation gap for undergraduates between white students and historically underrepresented students has been cut in half over the last decade. We have expanded institutional scholarship aid through Bucky’s Tuition Promise. More than half of our undergraduates graduated with no student loan debt in 2020.

Turning to diversity and inclusion, Chancellor Blank discussed the keynote address at the Diversity Forum related to abuse and harassment directed at people of Asian descent. Chancellor Blank encouraged everyone to think about how they would respond if they witnessed this happening. To attract more underrepresented students, the Raimey-Noland Fund has raised over $50 million for undergraduate scholarships and supporting other diversity and inclusion programs on our campus.

Research continues to expand, with a 15% increase in grant awards in Fiscal Year 2021. We are expecting new federal research dollars, and Chancellor Blank has asked Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education Steve Ackerman to identify areas where we can compete for substantial increases in federal funding. We are also implementing new business systems as part of the Administrative Transformation Project, which is intended to improve how we support expanding our grants. We are also modernizing our facilities, including the Chemistry Building, the School of Veterinary Medicine, the new Meat Sciences Building, and the Babcock Dairy Plant.

On the budget, all of our revenues went down during the pandemic. Our budget deficit was $226 million as of the close of Fiscal Year 2021, which was lower than expected due to additional federal money and the return of the state lapse, as well as budget cuts, furloughs, and the expanded freshman class. We got a new state budget in July. We received no new general funds, and funding for a new Engineering building was not approved. A 2% pay plan was approved for January 2022 and January 2023, and there was funding for Levy Hall as well. Regarding compensation, everyone should have received a letter confirming their job title and salary range. There will also be $4 million in Discretionary Compensation Funding for staff, and another $1 million to bring staff below the minima for their salary range up to the minimum. There is also a $5 million fund for one-time bonuses.

**Automatic Consent Business**

The Academic Staff Assembly minutes of Monday, October 11, 2021, were approved.

**Reports**

ASEC Chair Tim Dalby encouraged nominations for the Chancellor Search and Screen Committee by November 10 at noon. This year’s Academic Staff Excellence Awards will also be announced soon. There have been a number of communications that ASEC, the Secretary’s Office, and OHR have been fielding regarding TTC. OHR is working to resolve those issues. Tim reminded attendees about the TTC appeal process and encouraged them to use it if they found themselves in a title that doesn’t match their job. The deadline for informal resolution is December 10, and the deadline for a formal appeal is December 31. As much as possible, the effects of a successful appeal should be backdated to November 7. Tim reminded representatives and alternates of their ability to add items to the Assembly agendas in advance.

Jenny Dahlberg presented the ASPRO report. There are 14 bills currently at some stage of consideration that impact UW in some way. This week is the last week the Senate and Assembly meet before they break for the rest of the year. The ASPRO Board will review these at its meeting this week, and Jenny encouraged people to contact her with any questions about these bills.

Jason Jankoski, co-chair of the Personnel Policies and Procedures Committee, presented the annual report of the PPPC. PPPC reviewed drafts of the Remote Work Policy and changes to ASPP Chapters 13 and 14, as well as a number of other issues. Over the next year, the committee will continue to look at Title IX impacts to ASPP, as well as conduct its rolling review of ASPP chapters. Annual reports of the other Assembly Standing Committees were submitted as part of Academic Staff Assembly Document #768.

**Resolution in Support of Academic Freedom to Teach Race and Gender Justice and Critical Race Theory (ASA #769)**

Leslie Petty, ASEC member, moved approval of Academic Staff Document #769, the Resolution in Support of Academic Freedom to Teach Race and Gender Justice and Critical Race Theory. Seconded. Approved.

**Updates to the Distinguished Prefix Guidelines (ASA #770)**

Jenny Dahlberg, ASEC member, moved approval of Academic Staff Document #770, Updates to the Distinguished Prefix Guidelines. Seconded. Approved.

**Provost Report**

Provost Scholz reported that the early application deadline for incoming freshmen passed on November 1. Our colleagues in Admissions and Financial Aid are working on these now. Regarding the Chemistry Building, faculty and staff should be able to move back into Matthews/Daniels later in the week. The university has lifted international travel restrictions for faculty and staff. As of January 1, traveler insurance will be required for university-sponsored international travel. Provost Scholz closed by discussing the challenges of our titling system and difficulties securing the data about market compensation levels prior to TTC, as well as securing the resources to address issues that arise from TTC.

Meeting adjourned at 5:09 pm.

*Minutes submitted by Jake Smith, Secretary of the Academic Staff*