**Madison Advisory Committee on Academic Hiring**

(September 29, 2017)

**Background**

The Madison Advisory Committee on Academic Hiring (MACAH) is comprised of the following UW-Madison faculty:

* Terry Warfield, Member of the University Committee and chair (PwC Professor, Richard J. Johnson Chair of Department of Accounting and Information Systems)
* Jo Handelsman (Director, Wisconsin Institute for Discovery, and Vilas Research Professor/Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professor of Plant Pathology)
* David McDonald (Alice D. Mortenson/Petrovich Distinguished Chair in Russian History, former chair of History Department)

The MACAH has been convened by the UW-Madison University Committee to gather faculty input on proposed revisions in hiring practices developed the UW System Hiring Process Workgroup to be presented to the Board of Regents (BOR). MACAH commends the Workgroup for its evaluation of a range of issues to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative hiring practices within in the UW-System. However, as representatives of UW-Madison faculty, MACAH, would urge that in regard to the System’s Research-One campuses in Madison and Milwaukee, the Working Group reconsider its proposals related to: (1) Chancellor having credentials that would merit the rank of tenured full professor and (2) changes in the size and composition of the search committee.

**Chancellor Credentials**

These changes are necessitated by the recently passed State budget, which included this non-fiscal provision. UW-Madison faculty have previously voiced opposition to these changes to the Joint Finance Committee and the Governor. Chancellor qualifications are of significant importance to the UW-Madison faculty, with tenurability a long-standing provision in Faculty Policies and Procedures (FP&P). To be addressed in FP&P means that a policy or procedure has passed through a rigorous due process, indicating the commitment of the faculty to the underlying motivations for the provisions. UW-Madison faculty support these provisions because these qualifications for the leadership align with mission and vision of the UW-Madison. That is, as a premier Research-One institution, UW-Madison needs leaders that understand and have experience operating in and advancing the university in the areas of research, teaching, and outreach (WI Idea).

What does it mean to be granted tenure at the University of Wisconsin? Tenure is granted based on significant contributions and demonstrated excellence by the candidate - as recognized by colleagues and other leaders in the candidate’s discipline in:

1. Research – has conducted and published nationally/internationally recognized articles, many times with the support of external research funding,
2. Teaching – has taught effectively within an academic program with familiarity and experience in curriculum and program development,
3. Service/Outreach (Wisconsin Idea) – has provided leadership and service to the institution, the academic community, and to society at large.

Thus, candidates who meet the tenurability criteria have demonstrated their ability to work within a multifaceted organization and are better prepared to lead the university in advancing its research, teaching, and outreach missions. Such standing in turn should command the respect of faculty and other campus constituents. This is important, because:

* Universities (UW-Madison is no exception) require leaders to have deep appreciation of the importance of a collaborative management style in order to succeed in a shared governance environment. This is especially relevant in the higher education context in which all leaders are challenged to manage in a constrained resource environment, balancing the demands of the research, teaching, and service missions. Furthermore, tenurable leaders will be more credible to leaders of other academic institutions with whom UW-Madison must partner.
* Experience and accomplishment in an academic setting (as reflected in a tenurable candidate) is also important as it corresponds to understanding of, and the ability to manage, a research funding infrastructure inherent in a campus, such as the UW-Madison – in which external research funding represents a significant source of overall campus funding.

The staff document provides a good summary of extant campus leadership hiring practices within the UW-System and at other universities in the U.S. While the report documents non-tenured leaders at two universities (University of Iowa and Purdue University), no evidence is provided on outcome measures of success of these universities under tenured versus non-tenured leaders (i.e., Time to graduation, research funding rankings, faculty turnover).

While these changes are designed to enhance the pool of chancellor candidates for consideration, removal of the tenurability requirement could send the wrong message about the System’s commitment to the university’s multifaceted mission (research, teaching, and service). This in turn could result in good candidates ***not*** applying and has the potential to slow down the hiring process, as the search committee must work harder at searching for more good candidates.

Opposition to this change should not be construed to mean that the faculty do not value other candidate attributes (management, financial acumen). Indeed, position listings should articulate the importance of these features as well as scholarly accomplishments. We should demand both. Finally, it is not clear that the tenurability criterion has had a negative effect on the outcomes of the hiring process at the UW-Madison. The faculty generally believe we have had a strong and lengthy tradition of effective tenured chancellors.

Given the passage of the budget, we will need to move forward under these less than ideal provisions. In that regard, as noted above, we encourage a robust search process with development of position listings that articulate the importance of candidate accomplishments in the areas of research, teaching, and outreach, as well as deep knowledge and experience in a complex enterprise to advance those missions in a shared governance environment.

**Search and Screen Committee Composition**

The Second issue of concern for faculty is the change in search committee composition, with a total size of 10, including five regents and

“… five non-Regent members of the committee to include two faculty (one of which must have a focus on research if the search is being conducted for UW-Madison or UW-Milwaukee), one staff representative from the institution, one student, and one local community member.”

The limit to 10 members does not advance the goals of shared governance in terms of adequately representing the interests of campus and local stakeholders. The limited structure places a significant responsibility on this small group to have the depth of knowledge to represent the interests of the broad array of students (undergraduate/graduate), faculty (junior/senior, professional/ STEM/ liberal arts), staff (research/academic), administrators (Deans/ Directors), and community members (alumni / employers, etc.)

Similar to the importance of chancellor credentials, search committee composition sends a signal to the academic leadership labor market. The search committee should be a valid reflection of campus stakeholders, thereby reiterating our support of shared governance. This will support a search that encourages applications from great leaders with credentials that align with the mission of the institution, as well as the requisite experience leading in such an environment.  Moreover, a long tradition of strong hires suggests that the existing process has served UW-Madison and System very well.

We encourage the BOR to increase the size of the search committee to at least 15 and that the minimum number of faculty be increased to five, staff increased to two, and a Dean be added. This ratio is consistent with prior practice and is more typical of what exists in other systems. In addition to a representative search committee, the search process should encourage active and serious consultation/discussion with on-campus governance groups and individuals as the position listing is developed and as the committee develops screening criteria. This supports the goal of assuring the future success of the appointee, who will ultimately have to persuade these groups to unify around the key attributes of the mission and strategy that she or he will want to achieve.