

March 2009

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STATE BUDGET ROUNDTABLE

More than 25 faculty and staff attended PROFS's budget roundtable at the Memorial Union on Monday, March 9. PROFS President Louise Robbins served as facilitator for the roundtable. Vice Chancellor Darrell Bazzell and political science professor Katherine Cramer Walsh joined PROFS legislative representative Jack O'Meara to discuss Governor Jim Doyle's proposed 2009-2011 state budget.

Vice Chancellor Bazzell opened the roundtable quoting Yogi Berra, "It's like déjà vu all over again." The university is facing the same budget issues that it faced during the previous two budget cycles. Much of that can be attributed to the fact that the state began each of those biennial budgets with a structural deficit. Years of stop-gap measures have led to the current budget situation.

Cramer Walsh discussed her research on public perception of the university, which was done to collect background information for the Badger Poll. She has spent significant time talking with citizens around the state, asking them their opinions about UW-Madison. She's learned that while people have favorable opinions about athletics, the marching band, research (especially stem cell) and the hospital, they have serious concerns about access to the university – both in cost and admissions – and the perceived liberal and elite leanings of the faculty. She also found that the UW's outreach efforts and partnerships are unknown to most.

How can faculty work to counter these perceptions? The Campus Strategic Framework offers a starting point, with the reinvigoration of the Wisconsin Idea a top priority. PROFS assists in that mission by regularly meeting with legislative leaders and members of Governor Doyle's office to share stories of success on campus.



Vice Chancellor Darrell Bazzell with Tom McKenna



Jack O'Meara, PROFS legislative representative, and Katherine Cramer Walsh

GOVERNOR'S 2009-2011 BUDGET PROPOSAL

As expected, Governor Jim Doyle's budget for the University of Wisconsin-Madison included several cuts, but also included a few items of good news.

Budget Reductions

First, the state budget requires all state agencies, including UW System, to implement a one percent across-the-board budget reduction (not including federal appropriations). UW-Madison's share is approximately \$8 million. This one percent reduction does not apply to gift funds or income raised through gift monies.

The budget includes a government efficiency measure reduction of \$100 million General Program Revenue (GPR) over the biennium. UW-Madison's share of this reduction is approximately \$40 million.

Finally, the budget as proposed will transfer \$25 million from auxiliary enterprises to fund financial aid for Wisconsin Higher Education Grant (WHEG) eligible students. UW-Madison's share of this transfer is still to be determined.

Bright Spots

The budget partially funded the cost-to-continue with \$40 million in GPR/fees for the university. The governor also fully-funded the competitive compensation fund with \$7.8 million in GPR/fees. This funds pay increases that help keep faculty here at UW-Madison.

Policy Changes

The budget also includes non-fiscal items that directly affect the university. First, the budget includes a proposal that would offer benefits to domestic partners of state employees, including faculty and staff. PROFS has been lobbying hard on this topic for several years and is hopeful the proposal remains in the bill and is signed into law.

Also included is authorization for collective bargaining rights for UW faculty and staff. In 2005, the faculty senate reaffirmed an earlier resolution on collective bargaining. That resolution identified seven criteria essential to any collective bargaining proposal affecting faculty and academic staff employed across the UW System. The resolution instructs PROFS to communicate its support for these principles to the legislature while continuing to oppose any enabling legislation that fails to conform to these principles. The resolution can be found here:

<http://www.secfac.wisc.edu/senate/2005/0502/1623d.pdf>

Not Included

The graduate student DIN, which would have provided \$5.2 million in GPR, was not included in the budget. This item, a collaborative effort between the Council for Affordable Public Education (CAPE) and PROFS, was included in the Regents' budget request to the Governor.

Next Steps

The budget is currently being discussed in by the Joint Committee on Finance. This committee, comprised of 16 members of the legislature, is chaired by two Dane County legislators – Senate Mark Miller (D-Monona) and Representative Mark Pocan (D-Madison). Public hearings are currently being held around the state, and the committee will begin deliberations on the bill soon. The committee is not likely to pass the bill until late spring. After the bill is passed out of committee, it goes to both the Assembly and Senate for approval. The governor is hopes to sign the bill until sometime in July.

This is a lengthy process and one that offers several opportunities for you to get involved. If you are not already a member, please join PROFS today (see below). If you're already a member, encourage your colleagues to join. You can use your home or cell phone and your personal e-mail account to contact your legislators, too. All PROFS members received a legislative directory earlier this month. The following website can tell you who your representatives are if you are unsure: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/w3asp/waml/waml.aspx>. PROFS will be meeting with individual legislators this spring. Please contact Michelle Felber at mfelber@bascom.wisc.edu if you'd like to participate. Finally, consider a letter to the editor of your local newspaper sharing the importance of UW-Madison to the state.

Great People Scholarship Initiative

As PROFS meets with legislators and others, we are letting them know that faculty and staff are digging into their own pockets to help pay for need-based scholarships.

Last March, the UW-Madison Faculty Senate overwhelmingly approved a resolution that commits faculty support to fundraising for need-based scholarships. Academic staff and classified staff have also stepped up to the plate and joined the campaign, now known as **Faculty-Staff Great People Scholarship Initiative**. Monies raised are being matched dollar-for-dollar by the University of Wisconsin Foundation.

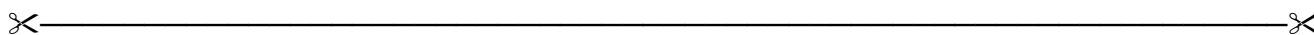
University Committee Chair Ann Hoyt encouraged the creation of the fund after reviewing a 2005 Faculty Senate report that found that the percentage of students from the lowest income levels had decreased noticeably over the past ten years. The report listed the top reasons that keep low-income students from attending UW-Madison, and noted that fewer students were even applying to the university because cost seemed to put attendance out of reach.

A 2007 survey of the faculty found that access and affordability to UW-Madison was a top concern, leading to the creation of the scholarship fund. Upon introduction of the resolution, Professor Hoyt said "There is nothing more valuable that we can do for the people of Wisconsin than to assure that their children have access to a quality college education."

Funds raised will be placed in permanent endowment to benefit students who have been accepted to the university but cannot afford the cost of attendance. The university will select scholarship recipients each year based on financial need.

During the Fall 2008 semester, the quiet phase of the initiative took hold, with faculty/staff contributions totaling \$850,000. With matching funds from the foundation and the UW Credit Union, the initiative reached nearly \$1.7 million. This semester, the initiative has entered its active phase. Faculty and staff are actively promoting the initiative among their colleagues.

The faculty at UW-Madison are proud to be leading the effort to keep the doors of our great university open to all Wisconsinites!



PLEASE JOIN PROFS TODAY!

PROFS, Inc. is the voice of the UW-Madison faculty in working with the Legislature, state officials, federal officials, and the general public. Our work is never-ending. We thank the 1,000+ members of PROFS who support our efforts. We need the support of the entire faculty to have greater impact. All faculty not currently affiliated with PROFS are invited to join the organization by filling out the dues coupon below and sending it to 258 Bascom Hall.

PROFS, Inc. PAYROLL DEDUCTION

NAME OF EMPLOYEE _____ **Department** _____

In order to activate your deduction, the payroll department requires the following:

1) The last four digits of your Social Security Number _____ **AND**

2) Your Date of Birth _____

I hereby authorize the University of Wisconsin to deduct from my salary each month of the academic year (September through May payrolls) a voluntary contribution to PROFS, Inc. of 1/10 of one percent of my gross salary for that month. This authorization will remain in effect each year until a notice of cancellation is received by the UW-Madison Payroll Office.

Signature _____

This authorization should be forwarded to 258 Bascom Hall.