Chancellor Rebecca Blank called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. with 179 voting members present (109 needed for quorum). Memorial resolutions were offered for Professor Emeritus Paul Bredeson (Faculty document 2621), Professor Emeritus Alfred Kadushin (Fac doc 2622), Professor Emeritus Herbert Kliebard (Fac doc 2623), and Professor Emeritus Terry Oberley (Fac doc 2624).

Professor Chad Goldberg (District 71) moved to set aside the orders of the day to immediately take up agenda items 10, 11, and 12. Chancellor Blank informed the Senate that item 11 had been withdrawn. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote. Associate Professor Chris Walker (District 33) moved approval of a resolution on cultural competency (Fac doc 2628). The motion was seconded. Several people spoke to the motion. The resolution passed by voice vote.

Professor Goldberg moved adoption of a resolution on actions by UW System and Board of Regents (Fac Doc 2630, revised). The motion was seconded.

Revised resolution on actions by UW System and Board of Regents (as introduced)

WHEREAS on November 2, 2015, the UW-Madison Faculty Senate adopted new, campus-specific policies relating to faculty layoff and termination, as required by Act 55;

WHEREAS none of the UW System Tenure Policy Task Force members were ever asked to endorse the report issued by the chairman of the task force, and the chairman’s report failed to outline many concerns expressed by non-regent members of the committee, and it was not released until January 22, 2016, a month after the task force concluded its work, which was too late for adequate consideration;

WHEREAS in March 2016 the Board of Regents adopted new UW System tenure policies based on the report from the UW System Tenure Policy Task Force without adopting any of the modifications requested by UW System faculty, thereby weakening professional standards of academic due process beyond what Act 55 required;

WHEREAS on April 4, 2016, the UW-Madison Faculty Senate resolved that the previously adopted campus-specific UW-Madison policies relating to faculty layoff and termination should be accepted by the Board of Regents without material alteration, or if alterations were deemed necessary, the Board of Regents should return the UW-Madison policies back to the Faculty Senate for modification;

WHEREAS on April 6, 2016, UW System general counsel Tomas L. Stafford made material and substantial changes to the UW-Madison policies to be considered by the Board of Regents on April 7-8, flagrantly violating local faculty governance and failing to provide representatives of UW-Madison time to review and consider the additional changes;

WHEREAS representatives of UW-Madison were asked by the Board of Regents education committee for their opinion of these changes without time for consideration or counsel;

WHEREAS the process by which changes to UW-Madison policies were made—directly by UW System
general counsel and the Board of Regents instead of returning the policies to the UW-Madison Faculty Senate for modification—violates local faculty governance and erodes our tradition of active shared governance;

WHEREAS, owing to the changes to UW-Madison policies made by UW System general counsel and adopted by the Board of Regents, administration now need only “consider” (not “pursue”) alternatives to layoff, the chancellor no longer needs the approval of faculty governance bodies (only to consult with them) to discontinue academic programs leading to layoff, a faculty hearing committee is no longer authorized to question whether program discontinuation is based primarily on educational reasons, Faculty Policies & Procedures 5.02, is not applicable to program discontinuance based on educational considerations that may result in faculty layoff under Faculty Policies & Procedures 10., program changes may now be made on the basis of non-educational criteria such as “comparative cost-effectiveness” and budgetary prioritization, severance pay is now at the chancellor’s discretion and no longer guaranteed, and funds for retraining displaced faculty are no longer guaranteed;

WHEREAS the UW-Madison policies relating to faculty layoff and termination, as modified by UW System general counsel and adopted by the Board of Regents, are not consistent with the high standards set by the American Association of University Professors in its Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure;

WHEREAS the UW-Madison Faculty Senate previously resolved to “engage in all appropriate collective action” to “uphold and defend” the principles regarding tenure that the Faculty Senate endorsed on November 2, 2015 (Faculty Document 2586);

WHEREAS the decades-long tradition of active shared governance has made the University of Wisconsin unique among universities of its stature, fostered a tremendous sense of loyalty and commitment among its faculty, and energized grass-roots creativity in research and teaching;

WHEREAS the failure of the UW System President and the Board of Regents adequately to protect academic due process and shared governance has damaged the reputation of UW-Madison as a great state university that encourages continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found;

WHEREAS the erosion of tenure and shared governance in conjunction with budget cuts is likely to have a disproportionately negative impact on faculty who are already most marginalized and/or engaged in politically controversial research;

WHEREAS program changes based on non-educational considerations, the erosion of academic due process, and the circumventing of faculty governance in conjunction with budget cuts jeopardize the quality of students’ education;

WHEREAS affordable tuition, adequate budget, strong tenure and shared governance are essential to the quality of a university’s educational, scholarly, and outreach missions;

WHEREAS the erosion of active shared governance in conjunction with budget cuts diminishes access, affordability, and educational resources for our students, as well as support for scholarship and its associated economic benefits, as well as outreach and services to the citizens of the State of Wisconsin, and harms the quality of our university;

It is hereby RESOLVED that the actions of President Ray Cross and the Board of Regents give the UW-Madison Faculty Senate no confidence in their commitment to defending the Wisconsin Idea, extending the benefits of the University to every citizen in the state;

It is further RESOLVED that the UW-Madison Faculty Senate calls on System President Ray Cross and the Board of Regents to recommit themselves to the Wisconsin Idea by carrying out their responsibilities and working with us to strengthen the quality of our state universities, in particular by working with the state legislature to make a positive case for improved access, affordability, and educational resources for our students; for additional support for scholarship and its associated economic benefits; for greater
resources for outreach and services to citizens of the State; and by truly respecting, advancing, and participating in shared governance at the UW System.

Professor Goldberg explained how the revised resolution differed from the version included with the agenda materials (Fac Doc 2630). In addition to rearrangement of some clauses, the last four whereas clauses are either new or changed, the first resolved clause was reworded, and a second resolved clause was added. Several people spoke to the motion. Professor Amy Wendt (District 120) moved to amend the resolution by adding the following clause to the end of the whereas clauses.

WHEREAS a primary function of the university, to aid our students in the development of the critical thinking skills they will bring to bear on their personal experiences and the challenges faced by human society, is impaired when the authority for the educational direction of the university may be wielded to suppress instruction in areas that are deemed risky or controversial.

The motion to amend was seconded. Several people spoke to the motion. Professor Laura Schwendinger (District 65) moved to amend the amendment to add the words “or without short-term deliverables” to the end. The motion to amend the amendment was seconded. Several people spoke to the amendment to amend. The motion to amend the amendment failed by voice vote. Assistant Professor Matthew Hora (District 115) moved to amend the amendment to add “their future careers” after “personal experiences.” No second was heard. The original motion to amend the amendment passed unanimously by voice vote.

Associate Professor Chris Wells (District 61) moved to amend the resolution by adding the following clauses to the beginning.

WHEREAS faculty are responsible for ensuring a quality education for students, serving the state of Wisconsin, and contributing to knowledge through research;

WHEREAS fulfilment of these responsibilities has long been guided and enabled by the University’s traditions of the Wisconsin Idea, robust tenure policies and shared governance;

WHEREAS these practices have enabled a state of average size and wealth to enjoy a university system of worldwide renown at unparalleled cost effectiveness;

WHEREAS UW System President Ray Cross and Regents have overseen a weakening of these traditions and engaged in practices that fall short of principles of responsible governance in their stewardship of the University;

The motion was seconded. There were two comments in favor of the motion. Professor Deane Mosher (District 97) moved to amend the amendment to add “by their actions” before “have overseen” in the fourth clause of the amendment. The motion was seconded. There was one comment on the amendment to the amendment, which passed by voice vote. The original motion to amend the amendment passed unanimously by voice vote.

Professor Brian Mayhew (District 24) moved to amend the resolution to remove the first resolved clause and change “further” to “hereby” in the second resolved clause. The motion was seconded. Several people spoke to the motion to amend. Associate Professor Dawnene Hassett (District 27) called the question. The motion to call the question passed by voice vote. The
motion to amend failed by a show of hands.

Professor Bret Larget (District 47) moved to postpone the resolution indefinitely. The motion was seconded. Assistant Professor Hans Freyberger (District 54) called the question. The motion to call the question passed by voice vote. The motion to postpone indefinitely failed by voice vote.

Assistant Professor Hans Freyberger (District 54) called the question on the resolution. The motion to call the question failed by voice vote. Professor Matt Herndon (District 67) moved to amend the resolution to change the first resolved clause into a whereas clause which states that “the actions of President Ray Cross and the Board of Regents demonstrate that they have no commitment to defending the Wisconsin Idea.” The motion to amend was seconded. There were two comments against the amendment. The amendment failed by voice vote.

Professor Judith Burstyn (District 48) called the question on the resolution. The motion to call the question passed unanimously by voice vote. The resolution passed by voice vote.

Chancellor Blank asked consent to postpone the remaining agenda items to a special meeting to be called within a couple of weeks. There were no objections.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Steven K. Smith
Secretary of the Faculty