Chancellor Rebecca Blank called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. with 138 voting members present (110 needed for quorum). Memorial resolutions were offered for Professor Emeritus Haskell Fain (Faculty Document 2789), Professor Emeritus Fred Dretske (Faculty Document 2790), Professor Emeritus Anthony Barresi (Faculty Document 2791), Professor Emeritus Roger Boom (Faculty Document 2792), Professor James Baughman (Faculty Document 2793), and Professor Emeritus William Hachten (Faculty Document 2794). Chancellor Blank addressed recent weather-related events, including the process for closures and the impact of flooding, and reported on ongoing leadership searches (provost, VCRGE, Business dean, UHS director, and Dean of Students). She also announced the creation of a VCSA-sponsored task force to review mental health resources on campus and make recommendations for a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of our students. Other updates from the chancellor included her response to proposed changes in Title IX investigations, increases in graduate assistant stipends, upcoming Black History Month programming, and a preview of the upcoming Madison-hosted Board of Regents meeting.

University Committee chair Rick Amasino reported that campus has a wealth of information on and experience with the best ways to measure productivity in higher education and that we are poised to mobilize this expertise should the issue of program productivity be raised again by UW System or others. There was a comment agreeing with the Board’s decision to allocate funds to chancellors in recognition of their service and a question about funding guarantees for graduate students. On the latter, Graduate School Dean Bill Karpus clarified that no changes have been made to the admissions process, which remains with the departments. What is being emphasized now is getting applicants the information they need to make a decision, including clear communication of what their funding will be; a 4- or 5-year guarantee is something to strive for, but unfunded students can still be admitted. The minutes of the meeting of December 3, 2018, were approved. The academic calendar through Spring 2026 was approved.

Professor Dan Vimont (Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences, District 64) presented the annual report for the Committee on Committees (Faculty Document 2796) and nominations for election to the Committee on Committees. Prof. Vimont also identified slates still needing nominations and emphasized the importance of service. Professor Pete Miller (Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis) presented the Athletic Board annual report (Faculty Document 2797). There was a question about head injuries and Chancellor Blank commended the Board for its safety audit. Professor Ankur Desai (Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences) presented the annual report for the Budget Committee (Faculty Document 2798). There was one comment commending the committee for its work. Professor Joe Salmons (GNS; Jewish Studies; Linguistics, District 59) presented the annual report for the Information Technology Committee (ITC) (Faculty Document 2799), thanking his predecessor for his many years on the committee and also looking forward to a productive relationship with the new CIO, who has already demonstrated shared governance awareness and engagement.

Prof. Salmons moved adoption of a change to the ITC leadership structure to include the past chair and the chair elect (Faculty Document 2800). The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote without dissent. Associate Professor Kurt Paulsen (Planning & Landscape Architecture, District 22) moved to convene in closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats. 19.85(1)(c) and (f) to consider the recommendation of the Committee on Honorary Degrees. The motion was seconded and passed at 4:27 p.m. Professor Leann Tigges (Community & Environmental Sociology and chair, Committee on Honorary Degrees) presented background information on the honorary degree nominees. Senators voted by paper and electronic ballot whether to award the degrees. Both candidates were approved with 125 votes cast. Prof. Paulsen moved to reconvene in open session. The motion was seconded and passed at 4:35 p.m., at which point Chancellor Blank adjourned the meeting.

Steven K. Smith
Secretary of the Faculty