Chancellor Rebecca Blank called the online meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. with 175 voting members present (113 needed for quorum.) Memorial resolutions were offered for Professor Emeritus Robert H. Deibel (Faculty Document 2912), Professor Emeritus Herman Goldstein (Faculty Document 2913), Professor Emeritus Thomas M. Julian (Faculty Document 2914), Professor Emeritus Frederick O. Leidel (Faculty Document 2915) and Professor Emeritus Harland Samson (Faculty Document 2916).

Chancellor Rebecca Blank reported on the efforts to make sure all eligible students had the opportunity to vote in November. The virtual winter commencement will be December 13 with soccer player (and UW-Madison alum) Rose Lavelle as the keynote speaker.

A hybrid model of instruction will be offered this spring. In a recent survey of undergraduates, 41% indicated they wanted all, or almost all courses face-to-face and another 34% indicated they wanted a mix of face-to-face and remote instruction. All undergraduates will be tested for COVID-19 twice per week this spring regardless of living on or off campus. Faculty and staff will also be tested regularly.

The Campus Planning Committee considered the student request to remove Chamberlin Rock, which had a derogatory nickname in the early part of the last century. The rock is next to an Indian mound so the Ho-Chunk were consulted as well. The committee recommended removing the rock and is considering options. The Wisconsin Historical Society must approve any removal plan as it would disturb a cataloged burial site. UW President Thomas Chamberlin (1887-1892) would be recognized elsewhere on campus if the rock is removed.

University Committee Chair Professor Kirsten Wolf reminded everyone of the UW System plan to move all employees to a biweekly payroll in July 2021.

Chancellor Blank addressed a couple of questions.

The minutes of the November 2, 2020 meeting were approved by consent.

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Lori Reesor talked about balancing public health and safety with the need for students to engage and connect with others. The Wisconsin Unions have added classroom and study space to their repertoire of services offered. The Nicholas Recreation Center opened at limited capacity. There’s more outreach to students, especially for those in quarantine and isolation. She outlined the support provided in the area of racial and social justice in event programming, and working with student advocacy groups, and creating a new Office for Inclusion Education.

In the undergraduate survey referenced above, 17% of undergraduates were concerned about regularly getting enough food; a majority of first-year students felt somewhat-to-extremely confident about their overall success; 60% felt that there were campus resources where they could get help and 55% felt comfortable seeking help.
Bill Karpus, Dean of the Graduate School, provided an overview of the results of a survey of graduate students this past fall. The response rate was about 35%. Questions centered on factors that may be impeding academic progress. Top challenges for graduate students include a lack of access to field experiences, limited in-person interaction with peers, lack of access to collect face-to-face research data, and limited access to research office space. The data is parsed by degree pursued, school/college, and disciplinary division, and reveal some interesting patterns. The full data is available through NetID access at https://kb.wisc.edu/grad/107389.

Professor Nasia Safdar (Department of Medicine) presented the Campus Diversity & Climate Committee (CDCC) annual report (Faculty Document 2917), Professor Pete Miller (Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis) presented the Athletic Board annual report (Faculty Document 2918), and Professor Michael Collins (School of Human Ecology) presented the first report of the Budget Committee (Faculty Document 2919). Associate Dean Sue Zaeske with the College of Letters & Science presented information about the Discontinuation of the Department of Comparative Literature and Folklore Studies (Faculty Document 2920).

University Committee Chair Professor Kirsten Wolf moved adoption of Faculty Document 2921, which proposed removing all gendered pronouns in Faculty Policies and Procedures and Faculty Legislation. The document was approved.

Professor Matthew Berland (Department of Curriculum and Instruction, District 27, and member of the Committee on Honorary Degrees) 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 4:46 p.m. Professor Berland presented background information on the honorary degree nominee. Senators voted by electronic ballot whether to award the degree. The candidate was approved with 129 votes cast. Professor Berland moved to reconvene in open session. The motion was seconded and passed at 4:56 p.m., at which point Chancellor Blank adjourned the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm.

Heather Daniels
Secretary of the Faculty