Chancellor Rebecca Blank called the online meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. with 176 voting members present (115 needed for quorum.) Memorial resolutions were offered for Professor Emeritus Emily Bentley Campbell (Faculty Document 2922), Professor Emeritus Helen Marsh (Faculty Document 2923), and Professor Emeritus Kenneth Kunen (Faculty Document 2924).

Chancellor Rebecca Blank reported on campus safety protocols for spring. Students—even those living off campus-- are required to have two COVID-19 tests a week, and most faculty and staff are required to have one test a week. The Safer Badger app will track testing results, can notify you if you are in close contact with someone who tests positive, and will allow entry to a campus building. There have been a few glitches, but things are on track. The rejection rate of samples is down to 1% and test results are mostly within 24 hours. UW-Madison will be processing 60,000-70,000 tests a week.

The campus has vaccinated nearly all eligible employees in category 1a and are now working on 1b, which includes employees who are 65 or older. Those who have regular contact with the general public, including faculty, are next in line. Dependent on supply, the chancellor’s goal is all employees vaccinated by the end of the spring semester and that students will be vaccinated as they arrive in fall.

The recent federal stimulus legislation includes $9.9 million in student aid for UW-Madison, about the same amount as last year and the same distribution plan will be used this year. Federal aid is limited to domestic students; other funds will be used to cover international students.

University Committee (UC) Chair Kirsten Wolf announced a new task force to consider changes to spring semester academic policies due to the pandemic. The faculty representatives are Professor Eric Sandgren (UC), Professor John Parrish (Animal & Dairy Sciences), and Professor Sue Babcock (Materials Science & Engineering). The task force will look at disruptive grading policies, deadlines for course drops, withdrawals, and tuition refunds, final exam policies, and other topics as needed. They will make preliminary recommendations this month.

Chancellor Blank addressed a couple of questions.

The minutes of the December 7, 2020 meeting were approved by consent.

Missy Negard and Alex Frank provided an update on the Office of Sustainability. Professor Vaishali Bakshi (Psychiatry) presented the Committee on Women in the University annual report (Faculty Document 2925) and Professor Michael Bernard-Donals (English) presented the PROFS annual report (Faculty Document 2926).

University Committee member Professor Erica Halverson presented a first reading of changes to Faculty Policies and Procedures adding a section on promotion from associate professor to professor (Faculty document 2879 Rev 2). Questions and comments were received.
University Committee member Professor Bill Tracy moved amending the functions of the Budget Committee and University Committee and removing the Commission on Faculty Compensation and Economic Benefits (Faculty Document 2907 Rev). The changes were approved.

University Committee member Erica Halverson presented the election slates for the faculty April committee elections (Faculty Document 2927).

Senator Noah Weeth Feinstein (Community and Environmental Sociology) presented a first reading of a climate divestment and procurement resolution (Faculty Document 2928). Questions and comments were received.

University Committee member Kristyn Masters moved changing the name of the Committee on Women in the University (Faculty Document 2929). The change was approved.

University Committee chair Kirsten Wolf moved to rescind Faculty Legislation on Student Housing Policies and Regulations (Faculty Document 2930). This was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 pm.

Heather Daniels
Secretary of the Faculty