Chancellor Rebecca Blank called the online meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. with 185 voting members present (116 needed for quorum.)

Chancellor Rebecca Blank is cautiously optimistic about COVID-19 test data. After a concerning spike for a couple of days, the rate has fallen back down to .05%. She thanked everyone who’ve made the testing run smoothly. Masks, social distancing, and hand washing remain important to stopping the spread.

University Health Services (UHS) has provided more than 4,800 first doses of the vaccine, with nearly 4,000 of those receiving both doses. Supply remains the biggest hurdle in vaccinating the next eligible group, although UHS will keep pace with vaccinations as supply increases. There was a town hall about vaccines on campus on Thursday. The Chancellor hopes all employees will be vaccinated by the end of May. Based on this, the plan is for in-person classes for the fall semester. The schedule will be available in late March with enrollment in April. Summer courses will mainly be remote and enrollment will also begin in April.

The increased costs and losses due to the pandemic amount to $320M for UW-Madison. Steps to mitigate – and to limit the impact to this and next fiscal year– include providing additional central funding, cutting costs, employee furloughs, and budget cuts to all divisions.

The biggest financial unknown is the state budget. Governor Ever’s budget includes $191M in new funding for UW System, almost double the UW Board of Regents request. The tuition freeze is extended, but new funding would offset the lost revenue. There are additional positions in Extension and CALS, a 2% annual pay increase for faculty and staff, plus two new academic buildings for Engineering and Letters & Science. Also included is short-term borrowing authority and the ability to invest working capital in a sensible manner. The Joint Committee on Finance will develop a budget that must be passed by both houses of the legislature before going to the governor.

There are three ongoing searches of note: Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs, Chief Diversity Officer, and Director of Division of the Arts. Final applications for admission for fall 2021 are up 17% from last year.

University Committee (UC) Chair Kirsten Wolf shared that the UC suggested edits to drafts of the new Conflict of Commitment Policy. Unfortunately, the first day of instruction in fall 2021 is on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, which is impossible to change at this point, but Convocation has been rescheduled to Friday, September 3.

Chancellor Blank addressed a couple of questions.

The minutes of the February 1, 2021 meeting were approved by consent.

Professor Steph Tai (Law) presented the Committee for GLTBQ People in the University annual report (Faculty Document 2931).
University Committee Chair Kirsten Wolf presented the report on Faculty Senate apportionment (Faculty Document 2932).

University Committee member Eric Sandgren moved to substitute the current document (Faculty Document 2879 Rev 2) on the section of Faculty Policies and Procedures that covers the promotion of faculty from associate professor to professor for the document previously considered in spring 2020. The proposal passed. The Faculty Senate voted to delay a final vote on this until the May 3 Faculty Senate meeting.

Senator Noah Weeth Feinstein (District 18, Community and Environmental Sociology) moved approval of a climate divestment and procurement resolution (Faculty Document 2928). The resolution was approved.

University Committee chair Kirsten Wolf moved approval of amendments to the name and composition of the Committee for GLBTQ People in the University (Faculty Document 2933). The changes were approved.

University Committee member Lauren Papp moved to rescind Faculty Legislation II-307, the Consensual Relationships and Reporting Policy (Faculty Document 2934). This was approved.

University Committee chair Kirsten Wolf moved to rescind Faculty Legislation II-302, Nondiscrimination Policy of the Athletic Board (Faculty Document 2935). This was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 4:39 pm.

Heather Daniels
Secretary of the Faculty