University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Academic Staff Senate Resolution of No Confidence in UW System President and Board of Regents

May 17, 2016

WHEREAS the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee unanimously passed a resolution of no confidence in the UW System President and Board of Regents on May 10, 2016;

WHEREAS affordable tuition, adequate budget, academic freedom, and shared governance are essential to the quality of the University’s educational, scholarly, and outreach missions;

WHEREAS faculty and academic staff are responsible for ensuring quality education for students, serving the state of Wisconsin, and contributing to knowledge through teaching, research, and public service;

WHEREAS fulfillment of these responsibilities has long been guided and enabled by the University’s traditions of the Wisconsin Idea, academic freedom, 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 affordability;

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

WHEREAS unilaterally modified UW System policies were made public without adequate time for consideration by shared governance groups or administrators, and were adopted by the Board of Regents without any opportunity for reconsideration;

WHEREAS in February 2016, UW-Milwaukee was classified as a Research 1 institution in the Carnegie Classifications for the first time in its history, an achievement dependent on academic freedom, shared governance, and state fiscal support for the integral campus missions of Access and Research;

WHEREAS in January 2015, the Carnegie Foundation recognized UW-Milwaukee as a top university for community engagement;

WHEREAS changes based on non-educational considerations, the erosion of academic due process, and the circumvention of shared governance jeopardize the quality of students’ education and imperil the Access and Research missions of UW-Milwaukee;

WHEREAS the erosion of active shared governance in conjunction with budget cuts diminishes access, affordability, and educational resources for our students;

WHEREAS the erosion of active shared governance also diminishes support for scholarship and its associated economic benefits, as well as outreach and services to the citizens of the State of Wisconsin;
WHEREAS the erosion of active shared governance in conjunction with budget cuts is likely to have a disproportionately negative impact on academic staff and on students who are already most marginalized and/or engaged in politically controversial research;

It is hereby RESOLVED that the Academic Staff Senate of UW-Milwaukee have no confidence in System President Ray Cross or in the Board of Regents’ commitment to defending the Wisconsin Idea, extending the benefits of the University to every citizen in the state;

It is further RESOLVED that the Academic Staff Senate of UW-Milwaukee call on System President Ray Cross and the Board of Regents to commit 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 in the UW System.