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# U. of Wisconsin at Madison Faculty Votes No Confidence in System's President and Regents



By [Brock Read](#)

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Professors at the University of Wisconsin at Madison have voted no confidence in the university system's president, Raymond W. Cross, and its Board of Regents, the Faculty Senate announced on Monday.

The symbolic vote is the latest volley in a long-running dispute over the state of tenure and shared governance in the system. Under an overhaul [signed by Gov. Scott Walker](#) last summer, the Wisconsin Legislature [stripped tenure and shared-governance protections](#) from state law, leaving it to the regents to set new policies for the system on both fronts. The board [enacted those policies](#) in March [over the objection of faculty leaders](#), who argued that the new protections would leave professors vulnerable to arbitrary dismissal and would hamstring the system's faculty-recruitment efforts.

Mr. Cross and Regina M. Millner, the board's president, established the task force that devised the system's new rules. The [resolution](#) approved by the Faculty Senate on Monday argued, among other things, that "the failure of the UW System president and the Board of Regents adequately to protect academic due process and shared governance has damaged the reputation of

UW-Madison as a great state university that encourages continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found.”

Mr. Cross had [also drawn faculty criticism](#) for his handling of negotiations with Governor Walker over the state’s 2015-17 budget, which cut state funds for the university system [by \\$250 million](#).

Chad Alan Goldberg, a professor of sociology who wrote the no-confidence resolution, told the *Wisconsin State Journal* last week that in the wake of changes in the tenure and layoff policies, faculty members had “reached a breaking point.” The Faculty Senate debated Mr. Goldberg’s resolution for more than an hour and a half, according to the *Journal*’s [Nico Savidge](#), voting down an amendment that would have removed the phrase “no confidence” before passing the measure by a voice vote.

Mr. Cross and Ms. Millner both released statements disagreeing with the vote. Ms. Millner was especially critical: “Most regents will be disappointed by this overreaction to the board’s decision to put in place very reasonable and fair tenure and layoff policies — something the legislature directed us to do as part of the state budget,” she said.

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Brock Read directs a team of editors and reporters who produce in-the-moment coverage of breaking news, expert analysis of higher-education trends, and deep investigations of the sector and the people who seek to influence it.