

Dear Faculty Senate President Manning,

UW Oshkosh is strong. Our top leadership is not. We are deeply invested in the success of this institution and the quality of the education we provide. Our purpose is to seek a beneficial change in management practices that will result in better decisions that emphasize educational quality and positive student outcomes. We take no joy in listing the failings of our current leadership. Indeed, we live with their impact every day. Last semester, we gave the administration the opportunity to meet a set of reasonable expectations for collaboration that were unanimously endorsed in the Faculty Senate. A top-down, opaque management style has persisted. We make better decisions together and with full information. At such a critical juncture for our institution, we feel it is important to get a sense of the views of the whole faculty on our administrative leadership.

Pursuant to Article I, Section 6 of the Faculty Constitution, we, the undersigned, petition you to schedule a faculty referendum regarding the job performance of Chancellor Andrew Leavitt. We lack confidence in his ability to effectively lead UW Oshkosh, as he:

1. has overseen the substantial overspending of revenues year-by-year throughout his tenure, leading to a crisis that prompted severe layoffs, substantial operational disruption, and loss of educational and support services that took decades to build, significantly impacting our ability to serve our students and community; and,
2. was well aware of the potential enrollment decline but failed to implement consistent and effective marketing, enrollment management, and budget strategies to address it; and
3. oversaw frequent turnover and use of interim positions in the upper administration, creating instability that prevented successful implementation of efforts to stabilize UW Oshkosh's financial situation and enrollment concerns; and
4. filled the Chief Financial Officer position without a competitive, nationwide search and hired an individual who lacks professional training in financial management and accounting; and
5. has not led a strong public defense for adequately funding and supporting UW Oshkosh as a high quality, regional comprehensive university, but instead has accepted and imposed the state's regimen of fiscal austerity; and
6. has long demonstrated a disregard for shared governance, which the Faculty Senate has noted before (2019), and has not been fully transparent about the financial situation and decision-making at the University, despite repeated requests from shared governance institutions and others to do so; and
7. relied on a consulting firm, rather than shared governance, to determine layoffs, producing substantial human costs and disruption to student services, while substantially and unilaterally increasing workloads for faculty and other workers; and

8. presided for years over significant growth in upper administrative positions and salaries and then refused to make meaningful cuts to administration during the crisis, ignoring pleas to save programs and frontline jobs by doing so; and

9. limited diversity on campus through layoffs concentrated among low-paid, contingent employees, which had a substantial presence of underrepresented groups.

Resolution to be voted on in the Referendum: I do/do not have confidence in the leadership of Chancellor Leavitt.

Signed:

Name (printed)

Department

Date
