Introductory Remarks to the Faculty Senate
by Mark D. Schwartz on April 21, 2011, regarding
“Creating an Organization to Publicly Represent the UW-Milwaukee Faculty Senate”

Given recent events, the UC is convinced that the time has come to fully explore the possibility of forming an organization to publicly represent this body, as a way of expanding the influence of UW-Milwaukee faculty governance.

The model for this organization will be the Public Representation Organization of the UW-Madison Faculty Senate (PROFS). As described in the document I shared with you and the whole faculty, PROFS counts about 1000 UW-Madison faculty as voluntary contributors. Its annual income of about $80,000 allows for the employment of a half-time legislative representative and a half-time administrative assistant.

Clearly, an immediate concern for our situation is the smaller size of the UW-Milwaukee faculty. The UC estimates with a similar percentage of voluntary contributors among our faculty, as at UW-Madison, would generate about $30,000 per year. This significantly lower income suggests that alternative strategies need to be considered.

We want to move forward pragmatically, and with input from our faculty. So the UC plan involves three steps: a) As outlined in the document, we ask your permission today to survey the faculty regarding their interest in the Senate forming an organization as described, indicate their maximum level of voluntary contribution, and whether the organization (if formed), should seek to collaborate with an similar organization, if formed by the Academic Staff; b) Informed by input from the survey, the UC will bring a full proposal for creating a PROFS-like organization to represent the UW-Milwaukee Faculty Senate to the Senate meeting on May 12th; and c) If created by action of the Faculty Senate, the PROFS-like organization would not become active until at least 50% of the UW-Milwaukee faculty voluntarily agree to financially support it.

The UC supports moving forward with the process to create this PROFS-like organization because it will become a “value added” natural extension of the voice of faculty governance on this campus. Further, based on the UW-Madison experience, there is no conflict between PROFS and other organizations that represent faculty interests, because they serve different functions, and represent faculty interests in different, complementary ways. We see no reason why a PROFS-like organization created by the UW-Milwaukee Faculty Senate could not have a similar collegial relationship with other existing organizations.

So at this time I would first like to make a motion to authorize the survey, and then I can entertain your questions and comments, with the assistance of Prof. Joe Salmons, President of PROFS, and Dr. Bryan Kennedy, President of The Association of University of Wisconsin Professionals (TAUWP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

The motion is: The UC is authorized to survey the faculty regarding their opinion regarding the Faculty Senate forming a PROFS-like organization, using the three questions provided in today’s documentation to the Senate.