The University of Wisconsin's Faculty Senate passed resolutions Monday for shared governance and public authority, and members said they were unable to support a public authority until a commission has had time to evaluate its implications.

Faculty Senate passed the Resolution on Proposed Public Authority, which stated they could neither support nor oppose a public authority until all campus governance groups have had the opportunity to "vet in a thorough, transparent and responsible fashion a detailed implementation plan of a public authority model for UW System."

In the resolution the Faculty Senate also recommended the Board of Regents to convene a commission of UW System faculty, students and staff members to evaluate the effects of a public authority and complete a public report of their findings before the end of this legislative session.

Various Faculty Senate members spoke on the deadline for the report.

Faculty Senate Chair Jo Ellen Fair said it would take longer for the UW System to organize a committee and conduct the study.

Sara Goldrick-Rab, an educational policy professor and member of Faculty Senate, said she believes the resolution needs to be modified so it has stronger language. The resolution should be vetted and postponed before any policymaking occurs, Goldrick-Rab said.

"It's remarkable that a university system would support an effort to upend state-elected legislators to unelected regents selected by a governor," Goldrick-Rab said. "It's imperative that we as scholars object to a rash and inappropriate budget bill."

Faculty Senate also passed the Resolution on Shared Governance, opposing the repeal of shared governance language from state statute.

The resolution said the Faculty Senate expects the wording in state statute to be transcribed verbatim into Regent policy, all participants in the shared governance process be recognized, shared governance processes continue without interruption and all shared governance partners be actively involved in any changes to Regent policy.

The Campus Planning Committee presented its annual report for 2013-14. Chancellor Rebecca Blank discussed the potential fate of the chemistry building construction.

Due to concern about state budget cuts, UW has cancelled all construction projects, Blank said. However, conversation about reworking the proposal is ongoing, she said.

"There is some conversation with bringing some construction projects back," Blank said."I put our chemistry building front and center. This is one we certainly need because we want more students in STEM professions."
The Faculty Senate nominated members Noah Weeth Feinstein, community and environmental sociology professor, and Sarah Moore, geography professor, to fill vacancies on the Committee on Committees in the Social Studies Division. Elections will open April 6.

The Faculty Senate also made memorial resolutions for the deaths of the following professors: Professor Emeritus Anatole Beck, Professor Emeritus Howard Conner, Professor Emeritus Edward Hauser, Professor Emeritus John (Jack) Matthews, Professor Emeritus Jan Rapacz and Professor Emeritus Charles (Chuck) Salmon.

Credit: Emily Neinfeldt