

To: All students, faculty and staff
From: Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin
Subject: Our upcoming leadership transition
Date: Feb. 11, 2026

To our campus community,

You have no doubt seen the announcement earlier today by Universities of Wisconsin President Jay Rothman, who has appointed College of Letters & Science Dean Eric Wilcots as interim chancellor following my departure for Columbia University in mid-May.

I have every confidence that Eric will steer the university with strong vision and clear-headed leadership, even amid challenging headwinds. I am grateful to President Rothman and Board of Regents President Amy Bogost for the care they took in considering interim leadership for the flagship campus of the Universities of Wisconsin, and I am confident that they made an excellent choice for supporting UW–Madison's ongoing strength and excellence.

Eric has been a respected faculty member here since 1996 and has been a thoughtful and effective dean of our largest college since 2020. He is well acquainted with campus leadership, faculty, and staff inside and outside of L&S, shares our commitment to the student experience, and already knows many of our most important external stakeholders. Moreover, he is a collaborative leader who values dialogue, engagement, and shared governance and deeply believes in the transformative power of the Wisconsin Idea.

Dean Wilcots and I will work closely together between now and mid-May to ensure a seamless leadership transition. I will work with our new provost (who will be named in early March) to determine interim leadership in L&S.

Please join me in congratulating Dean Wilcots on this appointment and in working together to ensure his success.

Jennifer L. Mnookin
Chancellor