



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

UW-Madison Caves in to Conservativism and Racism

Joshua Wallace, University of Wisconsin-Madison

On Wednesday, in an 11-6 vote, the Universities of Wisconsin Board of Regents approved a deal from the Republican-led state Legislature that will freeze hires for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) positions. The deal will also develop a position focused on conservative thought and reimagine DEI positions as student success roles.

In return, the Legislature will green-light \$800 million to fund pay raises and building projects, including a new engineering building.

Prior to the vote, UW-System President Jay Rothman and UW Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin agreed to the deal, effectively bartering with DEI positions, many of which support racially minoritized students who make up just 13% (including a paltry 2.4% of Black students) of UW-Madison's student population. The agreement by Rothman and Mnookin to "reimagine" DEI positions as student success positions sent a crystal-clear message to those students: Your support is up for sale.