

UW System: Dr. Jennifer L. Mnookin named new chancellor of UW-Madison

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MADISON, Wis.—Dr. Jennifer L. Mnookin, Dean of the School of Law and Ralph and Shirley Shapiro Professor of Law at the University of California, Los Angeles, has been named the 30th leader of the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents today unanimously approved Mnookin’s appointment as chancellor, following a recommendation made by a selection committee. Mnookin replaces Rebecca Blank and will begin as chancellor on Aug. 4, 2022.

Mnookin has been dean of the UCLA School of Law since August 2015. She has also served as Vice Dean for External Appointments and Intellectual Life and Vice Dean for Faculty and Research. She began work at UCLA as a professor in 2005. Prior to that, she was a professor at the University of Virginia School of Law and spent one year as a visiting professor at the Harvard University Law School.

She earned her Ph.D. in the History of Social Study of Science and Technology from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a J.D. from Yale Law School, and an A.B. in Social Studies from Harvard College.

“Dean Mnookin’s passion for public higher education, her vision for its future and the crucial challenges it faces were so impressive,” said Karen Walsh, regent vice president and chair of the Search and Screen Committee. “The choice of leader for our flagship is one of the most important tasks regents can face. We were fortunate to have the help of an outstanding search committee and valuable campus participation, both of which were crucial to the process. Dean Mnookin is a

collaborative, visionary leader for whom student success and the Wisconsin Idea will be paramount.”

“Jennifer Mnookin’s innovative approaches to education, research, service and diversity provide a strong foundation for leading Wisconsin’s flagship university,” said Jay O. Rothman, incoming UW System President. “She has a personal, intimate understanding of the Wisconsin Idea and will be a tremendous asset to our state.”

“I’m absolutely thrilled to have this opportunity to lead UW-Madison, one of our nation’s truly great public universities,” Mnookin said. “I deeply admire UW-Madison’s dual commitment to educational access and research excellence, as well as its mission to serve and to contribute to the state as a whole. I’m both humbled by and grateful for the confidence that the Special Regent Committee and the regents are showing in me.”

Under Mnookin’s leadership, the UCLA law school recruited a more talented and diverse student body, set fundraising records and established endowments for numerous key initiatives along with student scholarships, and achieved its highest rankings. She is the founder and faculty co-director of the Program on Undergraduate Law, Science and Evidence, known as PULSE @UCLA law.

“UW-Madison is going to be in great hands under Jennifer Mnookin’s leadership as she takes the baton and builds on the strong legacy of Chancellor Blank,” said Susan Hagness, vice chair of the Search and Screen Committee and Professor and Department Chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering. “Collaborative leadership is at her core, and she has extensive prior experience with shared governance. She brings vision, high energy, a deep appreciation of the Wisconsin Idea, a passion for students who are at the heart of all that we do, a genuine commitment to fostering an inclusive campus, and an impressive understanding of the opportunities before us.”

“I am excited to welcome Jennifer Mnookin to the UW-Madison campus,” said Regent President Edmund Manydeeds III. “Her energy is infectious, and her knowledge of Wisconsin and the Madison campus community is impressive. She is ready to be a Badger. Incoming Chancellor Mnookin is a dynamic leader, and I look forward to working with her.”

“Chancellor-designate Mnookin’s energy and enthusiasm made a powerful impression on those of us who interviewed her as well as the campus community

during her public forum,” said Michael J. Falbo, interim UW System President.

After reviewing campus feedback, the Special Regent Committee, chaired by Manydeeds and including Regents Amy Blumenfeld Bogost, Mike Jones, Tracey L. Klein, John W. Miller, and Walsh, recommended Mnookin to the Board of Regents.

A diverse 21-member Search and Screen Committee including regents and student, faculty, staff, and community representatives conducted initial interviews and forwarded candidates to the Special Regent Committee for further consideration.

Blank’s last day in office will be May 31. UW-Madison Provost John Karl Scholz has agreed to serve as interim chancellor from the time of Blank’s departure until Mnookin begins.

“We deeply appreciate Provost Scholz’s willingness to serve as interim chancellor. His dedication ensures strong leadership continuity,” Falbo said. “As for Chancellor Blank, Wisconsin is a better place because of her stewardship of our flagship campus.”

To view the UW-Madison announcement, a video message from Dean Mnookin, and other information, go to <https://chancellorsearch.wisc.edu/>.