


Report of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to the Faculty Senate – February 6, 2016

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met on January 27, 2016 and the following items were presented/discussed, and/or approved:

- Reports from standing committees
- Reports of the FS Chair, and representatives of the Student Senate and Staff Senate
- Discussion about the Provost Search Process. A letter was sent to President Ramsey from the FSXC regarding our January 6 Faculty Senate meeting discussion, as well as our discussion at the FSXC meeting. A copy of this letter is attached.
- Preliminary discussion of the Undergraduate Council's proposed changes to six undergraduate catalog policies. Further discussion will occur at the next FSXC meeting on February 17, 2016.
- Discussion about challenges and opportunities facing the Faculty Senate

Submitted by Enid Trucios-Haynes, 
Professor of Law, Vice Chair of Faculty Senate and
Chair of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee
February 1, 2016

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Dear Dr. ~~Ramsey~~, Jim,

This letter is written on behalf of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee held its first meeting this month on January 27, and, at that time, we had the opportunity to discuss your January 19 note to the Faculty Senate. Thank you for taking the time to address the concerns expressed by the Chair and Vice Chair. We appreciate your clarification of details regarding the search process for our permanent University Provost.

We believe it is important to share with you the concerns that were expressed at the Faculty Senate meeting on January 6, as well as the views of Executive Committee members. Here, we would like to clarify the three key concerns raised at the Faculty Senate meeting, and again in the Executive Committee meeting.

First, we are concerned about the lack of consultation with the faculty, from the outset, regarding the decision to conduct an internal search for our chief academic officer. We do not mean to disparage in any way the work of the Interim Provost. No one expressed any concerns about Interim Provost Pinto during these discussions. The opportunity to identify the views of the faculty and provide feedback about this decision is important to the entire University community. In the past, the Executive Committee has been asked for its input about the hiring process for the Provost position. We would appreciate the opportunity to develop regular and established channels of communication *and* feedback for important issues such as this one.

Second, we are concerned about how the University community was informed about the decision to conduct an internal search. This kind of information is important to the faculty and the University as a whole. Two Faculty Senate meetings occurred after the Board of Trustees decision in October 2015 where this information could have been shared. Instead, it was released on the last day of University operations before the holiday break, and at a time when most faculty are unavailable or less connected because they have finished their work for the semester. Clearly, the timing of the announcement was less than ideal. Our first opportunity to discuss this as a group was at the Faculty Senate meeting on January 6, and none of us wanted to raise this when Interim Provost Pinto was present at the meeting.

Finally, many are concerned about the decision to conduct an internal search. At the end of the January 6th Faculty Senate meeting, a straw poll of the faculty in attendance revealed that over two-thirds of those present opposed an internal search. Many cited the need for consistency in hiring practices for senior academic officers. One person noted that the College of Business was not permitted to conduct an internal search for its dean in Fall 2015. Others invoked the general presumption in favor of external searches for high level University positions. Some commented that a failed national search could tarnish the University's reputation; others thought the lack of a national search also could tarnish our reputation. At the Executive Committee, it was noted that both Executive VP for Health

Affairs and Executive VP for Research and Innovation positions were carried out with a national search.

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee wants to ensure that you are aware of the concerns expressed at the January 6 Faculty Senate meeting, and to know that we share these concerns. We appreciate your time addressing this issue and the opportunity to share this with you.

Sincerely,



Enid Trucios-Haynes
Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate
Chair of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee