

Notes for University Faculty Meeting

Welcome to our annual University Faculty Meeting. As a reminder this is not a business meeting of the Faculty Senate, rather an opportunity for us to convene the faculty to discuss a few of the larger issues that the faculty senate is tackling. Tonight we will talk briefly about a number of initiatives that we are pursuing—including proposals to expand and clarify our Faculty Ranks, and an introduction of a Faculty Code of Conduct and Ethics.

First though, I wish to take a few minutes to provide an update on current events and an overview of some more longer term initiatives. We will also welcome questions and comments.

Provost Search: The Executive Committee met separately with President Simon and Shaline Kishore (chair of the search committee) to share our thoughts on the process and what we think are the key attributes of our next Provost along with our sense of the challenges they are likely to face.

On the topic of **governance**, we continue to work with the various units and leaders within the university both directly as senate, through the executive committee and through the various standing committees. And while I personally feel that we have made significant strides expressing the faculty perspective into early stage decision-making, we do recognize that we have some distance yet to travel.

At the center of strong governance is **transparency**—particularly in the broad area of decision-making across the levels of the university. On that topic, one area where we feel greater transparency is warranted centers on

the broad topic of university finances. More specifically, on budgets and decisions around resource utilization at the levels of the College, Research Institutes/Centers, around Programming—particularly Masters and Certificate programming, even down to how endowments (programs, chairs, etc...) are managed.

What we are seeking, is broader insight and regular reporting regarding the how funds that relate to these programs/institutes/ whether they are endowed, revenue generating (or both) move through their respective units.

We still in its earliest stages, we plan to seek greater accountability and reporting—income statements that track revenue flows and expenditures.

One conceivable outcome could be an annual report to the faculty, center directors, holders of endowed chairs, that details how the resources are managed.

Another conceivable outcome: greater transparency into the terms and conditions that govern endowed programs and endowed chairs. For example, program directors should know the main terms that stipulated how the gift may or may not be used. While there have been strides made in parts of the university, we still have a long way to go on this front.

Over the next several months, we will work with the General Counsel's Office, Financial services, Development, and with the Deans of each of the colleges to implement both a process as well as a set of

expectations regarding how such information is calculated and communicated.

Inclusive Community Standards into T&P:

Despite our professed commitment to the Principles on an equitable community we continue to hear reports of faculty and staff acting in ways that violate our principles. Some of this conduct is subtle others is more overt.

One measure of an institution's commitment to its Principles is the degree to which the institution is willing to hold itself accountable to embody those principles. This is no-less true for our faculty.

Thus, another avenue of pursuit, in its earliest of stages, is to move toward including principles of inclusivity into our standards for annual reviews for faculty.

We recognize that to do so represents several challenges, but we feel those challenges are surmountable and the cause important enough that we ought to rise up to meet them.

When considering such move, many raise concerns over the potential impact on **Academic Freedom**. While we do not believe that

adhering to our principles is necessarily incongruent with academic freedom, we are mindful that the potential exists. To that end, we will work to define and articulate a vision for incorporating such standards that is both mindful of what it means to maintain a university campus that promotes and defends academic freedom but does so in a way that respects the rights and privileges of all members of our community. If I may speak personally here for a moment: I would add that I firmly believe that, if done correctly and carefully, pursuing this policy change ought to strengthen our ability to freely engage in dialogue both in and outside of the classroom.

Another challenge concerns **training and resources** to help us balance our desire to preserve and adhere to Academic Freedom and yet maintain a classroom/lab/office environment that respects our articulated shared Principles of Equity and Community. To effectively and fairly adopt such criteria we must ensure that the university is making a sufficient investment to provide the faculty with the needed resources. And while there are a number fantastic training opportunities offered throughout the year (For example: the Cornell Interactive Theatre Ensemble) more is needed.

So we will work the administration on this front as we begin to craft how best to incorporate greater accountability for the principles into our lives as faculty. This too will be a lengthy process and one likely that will continue well into the next academic year.

In the meantime, we welcome your thoughts and concerns. But I would know like to turn over the podium to Frank Gunter who will talk about the proposed changes to the Faculty Ranks