

Faculty Senate Search Committee Complaint Response

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To: Alfred, Marcus <marAlfred@Howard.edu>

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Office of the Provost



February 20, 2019

Dear Howard University Faculty,

This correspondence addresses the complaint communicated by the Howard University Faculty Senate on February 14, 2020, regarding the decanal searches currently underway for the School of Business and College of Engineering and Architecture.

The process for conducting decanal searches is explained in the 2019 Faculty Handbook as follows:

Deans of schools and colleges do not have a definite term of office but serve at the pleasure of the President. Deans are appointed by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the President. When appointing a new dean, the Provost shall name the chair of the search committee and appoint or arrange for the election of a search committee. The majority of the search committee members shall be from the school/college that the new dean will head, and two members will be selected by the Faculty Senate. The Provost's recommendation, together with that of the school/college search committee, shall be forwarded to the President for final decision.

A4.2 Appointment, Term and Evaluation of Deans, p. 16, Faculty Handbook (June 7, 2019).

Pursuant to the foregoing, the Office of the Provost began the process of composing the membership of the respective search committees for the School of Business and CEA, which were to be diverse and balanced in several aspects, including gender, rank, departmental affiliation, and other characteristics important to a particular academic discipline or field. This process started in the spring of 2019 as I met with faculty in Business and CEA to discuss the search process and solicit any volunteers to serve on the search committees. At the beginning of the fall 2019 semester, I met with the leadership of the Faculty Senate. On August 19, 2019, during that meeting, I requested nominations from the Faculty Senate regarding the decanal search committees. This request was formalized in an email to Faculty Senate Chairman Dr. Marcus Alfred on August 19, 2019. Having received no response from Dr. Alfred by September 2, 2019, I sent a reminder email on that date, again requesting nominations from the Faculty Senate and noting: "We have identified search firms for the Business and Engineering & Architecture Decanal searches, and will convene those search committees shortly. Please provide your recommendation from the Faculty Senate regarding faculty to serve on those search committees."

By September 18, 2019, I had developed a prospective list of faculty, staff, student, and alumni representatives to serve on the decanal search committees, which I believed to be sufficiently diverse and balanced in the relevant aspects. I shared this list in consultation with President Frederick, and then disseminated invitations to the prospective search committee members requesting confirmation of their willingness to serve. (As an aside, I note that Section A4.2 of the Handbook charges the Provost with the formation of

decanal search committees and does not prohibit my ability to confer with others in undertaking that task.) Upon receipt of responses (with some individuals declining to participate), the committee members were finalized, and a charge meeting was scheduled for the search committees between September 23 – October 1, 2019, with attendees to include representatives from the executive search firms, committee members, the President, and myself. It was not until September 23, 2019, that I received finally a response from Dr. Alfred submitting the names of faculty to serve on the search committees on behalf of the Faculty Senate. Given where we were in the process by this date, I evaluated these nominations in consideration of the current composition of each committee and concluded that one Faculty Senate nomination for each committee would be appropriate to serve without disturbing each committee's diversity and balance. I communicated this decision to Dr. Alfred on September 25, 2019.

Effective shared governance also requires shared responsibility and shared accountability. The Faculty Senate must take responsibility and accountability for its failure to participate timely in the decanal search process. It is likewise disappointing that the Senate did not communicate to me its objection to my decision until January 24, 2020 (regarding the School of Business committee) and February 14, 2020 (regarding the CEA committee), several months after my September 25, 2019 email. As Dr. Alfred is aware, an attempt to address the Senate's concerns and add additional committee members by this point was not practical, as the search committees' work was well underway. For future decanal searches, the Office of the Provost will continue to engage the Faculty Senate pursuant to the directive of the 2019 Handbook; however, as with any committee's operations, the failure of any individual to timely participate cannot serve to stall the process.

As the University continues in preparation for the Middle States re-accreditation process in the next several weeks, it is my sincere hope that all members of the University Community will focus on the critical importance of the re-accreditation of the University, the progress that has been made recently in our fundraising efforts, record gifts received, new partnership with Adventist HealthCare, opportunities available through the Prioritization process, and how we can each individually and collectively contribute to moving Howard Forward and further improving this institution we love. I am committed to continuing to work with each member of the faculty, including Faculty Senate representatives, to address concerns. I am confident that we can do so effectively without unnecessarily involving the chairperson of our Middle States

Visitation Team. Unfortunately, this is the second complaint that the Faculty Senate has communicated to the chairperson during this critical time. Thank you.

Excellence in Truth and Service,

Anthony K. Wutoh, Ph.D., R.Ph.
Provost and Chief Academic Officer



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