



03/24/2008

Mr. Patrick Ryan
Chair, Northwestern University Board of Trustees
1001 Green Bay Road
Winnetka, IL 60093

Ms. Marilyn McCoy
Vice-President, Administration & Planning
633 Clark St #2-112
Evanston IL 60208-1103

Re: General Faculty Committee Nominees for Presidential Search Committee

Dear Chairman Ryan and Vice-President McCoy:

The General Faculty Committee, (“GFC”), recognizes the critical importance of the presidential search process to the success of the faculty’s research and teaching missions and, therefore, to Northwestern’s future as one of the Nation’s elite universities. We are, thus, pleased to respond to your call for faculty representation on the Presidential Search Committee. The GFC trusts that in the tradition of our peer universities and its own past two presidential searches, the Board of Trustees will listen to the voice of the Faculty in deciding which faculty members will serve on the Presidential Search Committee. It is our strong consensus that respect for the Faculty’s deliberations in this regard is essential to informed discussion of the academic qualifications of the presidential candidates, to the Faculty’s confidence in the search process itself and to the Faculty’s ready acceptance of the new President’s academic leadership. To this end, we ask that you choose the faculty representatives on the Search Committee from the attached list developed by the GFC after extensive solicitation of nominations from the faculties of Northwestern’s various Schools and extended deliberation by the GFC about which faculty members best exemplify our highest standards in research, teaching, and deliberative judgment.

Although we do not know the projected size of the Search Committee, we do question whether the projected four faculty members will be sufficient in number to provide the Committee with the breadth of information that is critical to the selection of a president who is able to nurture Northwestern’s intellectual excellence and diversity. We, therefore, urge that the Committee include faculty who can inform the search process with the array of disciplinary perspectives represented by Northwestern’s various

Schools. Inclusion on the Search Committee of at least eight of the faculty members the GFC is recommending would provide the Committee with the reservoir of knowledge that will be necessary to make an informed evaluation of the various candidates' capacities to perform the role of Northwestern's chief academic officer while at the same time keeping the Committee manageable.

Finally, the GFC found instructive the attached AAUP's "Presidential Search Committee Checklist" and commends it to you for its guidance not only as to the conduct of the search process in general, but in particular for its explanation of why the perspectives of faculty representatives are integral to an effective presidential search process.

We would be happy to discuss our recommendations with you.

Sincerely,

John Elson
Professor,
Chair, General Faculty Committee

Laurie Zoloth
Professor,
Chair-elect, General Faculty
Committee

Paul Arnston
Professor,
Immediate past chair, General
Faculty Committee