

February 13, 2019

Notes: February 13, 2019, meeting with President Helens with current Faculty Senate Chair and Vice Chair, and former Faculty Senate Chairs.

Meeting began a little after 9 AM. Social Room, Leonard Center.

Present: President Joyce Helens, Mardell Wilkins, George Kleeb, Pete Bagley, Jonathan Foster, Steve Theriault, David Friestroffer, Jinho Jung, John Rice. Kathy Schwandt and Mary Doucette were unable to attend.

- Faculty Senate Chair Jinho Jung thanked everyone for coming, then turned communication over to Faculty Senate Vice Chair George Kleeb.
- Vice Chair read draft resolution, a copy of which was distributed to the group. The Vice Chair spoke of faculty concerns over leadership, with multiple instances being reported and documented in regards to the VPAA. The resolution in short:
 - VPAA be placed on administrative leave.
 - Communication from president be made in regards to the future and viability of the college.
- Vice Chair, noting the events of February 8, spoke of the impact on campus, on students and in the community. Vice Chair noted the events of Friday, February 8, but that concerns were broader than that instance.
- Vice Chair noted the reputation of GBC is being impacted and it could lead to donors making decisions regarding their contributions to GBC.
- Vice Chair noted the group's awareness of numerous complaints about the VPAA and that it is possible faculty will leave GBC because of the VPAA.
- Vice Chair stated the resolution requests the VPAA be placed on administrative leave until investigation of multiple complaints, including but not limited to the 2/8 incident, is completed, and to remove VPAA from position as soon as possible.
- Vice Chair stated the group appreciated the President's communications and the forums
- Vice Chair stated the group is offering its services to the President. The group understands the impact of the absence of the position of VPAA.
- Vice Chair said we need to put the college in a positive light.
- President Helens said she is not in charge of the weather, but that we must be prepared for the weather, *[referencing her view on how she handles matters such as the one the group is presenting]*.
- President said we have to control rumors, that it is very frustrating.
 - There are other things we can mitigate so that we can be productive.
 - President, speaking generally in regards to personnel issues, said we have our work product, which is cut and dry. *[It easy to assess.]* Behavior in the workplace is "iffy". *[It is not as easy to assess.]*
 - President considers all sorts of things when making determinations about workplace behavior...
 - General examples not specific to this instance: illness, trouble at home, etc. There are many things that help to explain behavior.

- President Helens said that when it comes to reports of aggressive behavior, we do an investigation.
 - President said when an investigation involves personnel at a higher level, it becomes external. In the case of 2/8 incident, investigation is being conducted by UNR.
 - Hoping to have an investigator from UNR named today.
 - Noted all investigations take time.
- President's comments turned to other matters, many of which were covered in convocation and forum.
 - Some growth strategies are being considered, including women's volleyball.
 - President's concern is that it is an accreditation year and a "count" year.
 - President spoke about recent enrollment growth
 - Silver state dollars, \$500K, accounting for significant growth in fall. Some increases in spring, but not as dramatic. Unused Silver state funds from other institutions came to GBC. Silver state dollars have been spent. Continued funding is needed and has been requested from NSHE to sustain that growth.
 - President talked about "substructures" [*different levels of responsibility*]. We do not have these in place. Gave some general examples.
- President, back to 2/8 incident:
 - VP Sibert is on campus, serving as CFO but is not currently overseeing HR.
 - VP Sibert has asked to work in another location.
 - President is overseeing HR. President's Executive Assistant is now authorized to sit in on certain personnel matters. Other current HR staff continue in their roles.
 - VPAA Brown is on a previously scheduled vacation in Dubai this week. Will return Monday.
 - Center Directors are reporting to VPSA. [*This has been in place for some period of time, not a result of 2/8 incident*].
- A former FacSen Chair said, "Let's get back to the central issue. Trust in VPAA is gone." The former FacSen spoke with faculty members this morning who already have job offers at other institutions.
- President said we will be kept in the loop if there is a change in reporting structure. We will be informed. President said we could expect to hear something early next week
- Former FacSen Chair reminded the group that most of the complaints presented to the president regarding VPAA were formalized before the Friday, 2/8 incident. There has been a hostile work environment coming from the VPAA office ongoing since September, 2018. The former FacSen Chair said those instances alone could warrant administrative leave, even before the 2/8 incident. NSHE Code was generally cited, noting the complaints show the VPAA was being disruptive to campus operations and other NSHE code violations.
- Former FacSen Chair stated that even if the events of 2/8 had not occurred, this meeting would still have been called. The group of chairs/past chairs has been responding to a stream of complaints of VPAA conduct long before the 2/8 event occurred.
- Former FacSen chair asked if formal complaints about VPAA were received by the president in September. The question was asked, "Were they documented?" President responded that she took action on those complaints at that time. Former FacSen Chair said, "Then those complaints were documented?" The President did not respond affirmatively or negatively to that question.

- Former FacSen Chair said faculty are afraid to speak with VPAA. Departments have adopted a policy advising that no faculty meet with VPAA alone.
- Former FacSen Chairs noted there is a pattern of searches to fill upper level administrative vacancies are not being run well. Noted troubles with VPAA, Dean, Distance Education position and CIO search. Each was failed. Stating, “The organization of searches has been dreadful – it has slowed things down making it difficult to recruit.”
- The president said we will hear something more in regards to VPAA and the 2/8 incident early next week.
- The president said we could share the content of the meeting.
- President Helens and Mardell Wilkins left the meeting.
- Group recapped. Meeting ended about 10:20 AM.