

October 6, 2011

Ms. Kathryn Grant Madigan
Mr. James W. Orband
Presidential Search Committee

Dear Ms. Madigan and Mr. Orband,

We, the Governance Leaders of the Faculty Senate of Binghamton University and members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, write to express widespread faculty concern with the process for the selection of the next President of Binghamton University. The search is proceeding without any provision for direct faculty input from outside the search committee. Faculty firmly believe that principles of openness and access should guide important decisions at public institutions like Binghamton University. While we recognize, in the wake of the last search, that confidentiality must be maintained to secure well qualified candidates, we believe that faculty can and should be involved, while agreeing to the same confidentiality standards and agreements that bind committee members.

Many of us who have been involved with searches in the past realize how insular the logic of a search committee can become without additional perspectives from outside. Although members of the search committee bring critical viewpoints shaped by the relative merits of the candidates they have evaluated within the pool, meetings with a representative faculty body are likely to contribute different and crucial perspectives, seeing the candidates in relation to the history, diversity, and future of the academic culture of this campus. Such meetings can help the search committee identify the best candidates, contribute to convincing the chosen candidate to accept an offer, and insure a smooth and productive transition for the new President and the campus. To lead effectively, the new President will need to understand the academic culture that is unique to Binghamton, establish a relationship of trust with faculty, and work collaboratively with them. A president who arrives with the support of the official faculty body of elected campus governance leaders—those with whom the President actually works on a regular basis—will have significantly greater chances of a rapid and successful transition to the position, as well as clearer reasons for wanting to accept it.

In point of fact, faculty expect involvement in some form. We have suggested face-to-face meetings with all those candidates remaining at the penultimate point in the process (that is, with all members of the group from which the final list would be chosen to send to the Chancellor), so our responses can be shared with the search committee. Of course, faculty would prefer the largest group possible (the FSEC would seem appropriate), but in any case to be composed at a minimum of the six faculty governance leaders (the Chair of the Faculty Senate, the Chair of the

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Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the two SUNY Faculty Senators, the Chair of the Faculty Senate Budget Review Committee, and the Chair of the Faculty Senate Educational Policies and Priorities Committee). This group would, of course, willingly sign confidentiality agreements and attend meetings that might take place off campus or outside Binghamton. Since faculty have an even greater stake than other constituencies in the successful outcome of this search, we understand and accept as a matter of course the commitment to protecting the anonymity of the candidates.

We believe that the success of the next President relies on mutual trust in a working relationship with faculty that this meeting can begin to establish.

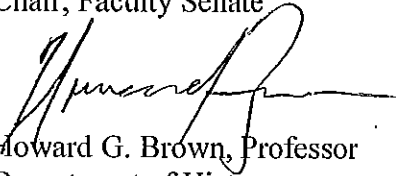
Collegially,

Faculty Governance Leaders



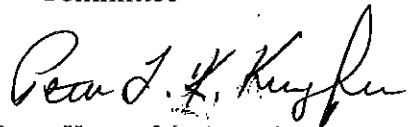
Susan Strehle, Distinguished Service Professor
Department of English, General Literature and
Rhetoric
Chair, Faculty Senate

Chair, Faculty Senate



Howard G. Brown, Professor
Department of History
Chair, Faculty Senate Budget Review
Committee

Chair, Faculty Senate Budget Review
Committee



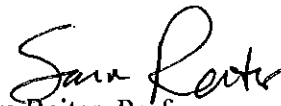
Peter Knuepfer, Associate Professor
Department of Geological Sciences and
Environmental Studies
Director, Environmental Studies Program
SUNY Faculty Senator

Director, Environmental Studies Program
SUNY Faculty Senator



Richard E. Lee, Professor
Department of Sociology
Director, Fernand Braudel Center
Chair, Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Chair, Faculty Senate Executive Committee



Sara Reiter, Professor
School of Management
Chair, Faculty Senate Educational Policies
and Procedures Committee

Chair, Faculty Senate Educational Policies
and Procedures Committee

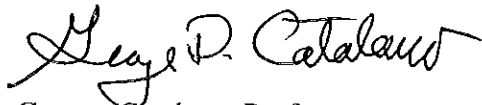


Rosmarie Morewedge, Associate Professor
Department of German and Russian Studies
SUNY Faculty Senator

Department of German and Russian Studies
SUNY Faculty Senator

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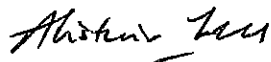
Members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee



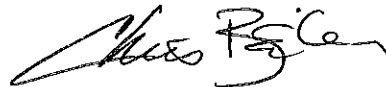
George Catalano, Professor
Department of Bioengineering



Solomon Polachek, Distinguished Professor
Department of Economics



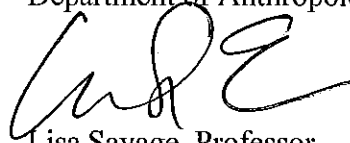
Alistair Lees, Professor
Department of Chemistry



Christine Reiber, Assistant Professor
Department of Anthropology



Sarah Maximiek, Subject Librarian
University Libraries



Lisa Savage, Professor
Department of Psychology



Marcin Mazur, Associate Professor
Department of Mathematical Sciences



Thomas Sinclair, Associate Professor
Department of Public Administration



Thomas McDonough, Associate Professor
Department of Art History



Gary Truce, Professor
Department of Health and Wellness Studies

- c: Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor, State University of New York
David K. Lavalley, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs,
State University of New York
Peter Magrath, President, Binghamton University