



PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas A&M University System

Dear President Wright,

At 9am on Wednesday, September 10, 2014, a Special Campus Announcement was issued regarding a public meeting later the same day with Dr. Sabrina Phillips, the single finalist for the position of Associate Provost for Academic Affairs. This announcement raised several concerns among the faculty that were discussed during the Faculty Senate meeting on the Friday of the same week. The Senate's discussion generated the three points of inquiry that are discussed below.

The Senate body voted unanimously to send these three points of inquiry to you with the request that you address them as soon as possible.

Three Points of Inquiry

1. Why was the notification for the public meeting with Dr. Phillips sent out only five hours before the meeting?

Discussion: Five hours is hardly enough prior notice to allow stakeholders to adjust their schedules to accommodate the meeting. The same practice of announcing public meetings on extremely short notice was evident last year in the search for Vice President of Research & Dean of the Graduate School. The reasons for this practice are very unclear, but the result is that stakeholders are not given an adequate opportunity to meet and evaluate the candidate. The prevailing sentiment within the Faculty Senate is that it would be inappropriate to hire Dr. Phillips or anyone else without giving stakeholders a realistic opportunity to attend the public meeting.

2. Why is there no Faculty Senator on the search committee?

Discussion: During the 2013-2014 academic year, it was the understanding of the Senate that, henceforth, all search committees for positions within the executive administration would include a Senate representative. For this search, I was notified about the initial meeting related to the search, but was unable to attend due to medical reasons. While I take full responsibility for not sending another Senator to the meeting in my place, no attempt was made to communicate with me about the search after that first meeting. The prevailing sentiment among the Senate is that the search should not have proceeded without Senator on the committee.

3. Why is there only one finalist for the position?

Discussion: The announcement for the public meeting with Dr. Phillips seemed to indicate that she is the only finalist for the position. If true, this is the most troubling aspect of the search. During its discussion of this issue, the Faculty Senate could think of only two reasons for this abnormal state of events:

- a. There is only one desirable candidate interested in the position. With no disrespect for the candidacy of Dr. Phillips, this would indicate that the pool of candidates is simply not deep enough to ensure that we are getting the best possible person for the position.

If there is really only one finalist for such a vital position, then it seems that the search should be suspended until there is a deeper pool of candidates to choose from.

- b. The search has been conducted in a way that has limited the number of applicants. Given the importance of this position, it should be advertised as broadly as possible with a long enough application period to allow a broad range of candidates to apply. Since there is only one finalist for the position, the Senate feels compelled to ask for information about how the position was advertised and how long it was (or has been) open.

Thank you for taking the time to address these concerns. The Senate looks forward to your response and to a continuing dialogue on this issue and others.

Sincerely,

Dr. Clement E. Glenn

Speaker of the Faculty Senate