

**Sent by email on September 10, 2019**

Dear Sheridan,

Thank you for your prompt reply. We appreciate RUSO's practice of including faculty in presidential search committees.

The AAUP would like to request time to address the RUSO board at its October 10<sup>th</sup> meeting at Southeastern. We continue to be grateful to have had the opportunity once before, at their meeting at Southeastern on April 6, 2017 (System Advancement Committee). We would sincerely appreciate the opportunity to do so again.

The two topics we would like to address are (1) the value of meaningful faculty input in presidential searches, and (2) the importance of shared governance in advancing the goals of a university.

At Southeastern, meaningful input from faculty into decisions affecting the direction of the university has become a practice under the leadership of President Burrage. The Faculty Senate and the AAUP – together with President Burrage – have built a robust system of shared governance which has had a profound effect on the culture at Southeastern. In this time when adversarial relationships between administration and faculty are commonplace, Southeastern stands out as an exemplar of what shared governance can do, and has done, to contribute to the health of an institution. It is not an exaggeration to say that shared governance has brought about a dramatic turn-around at Southeastern.

The message to the RUSO board is this: shared governance works, and Southeastern is a shining example of what can be done with a culture of openness and mutual respect. A critical component in whether this culture continues is the selection of a new president. I am convinced that meaningful faculty input in the selection of our president will increase the likelihood that what we have all worked so hard to build will continue. Whether we continue on the path of excellence – or not – is determined, in large part, by the choice of our new executive and their willingness to continue Southeastern's practice of shared governance and collaboration between faculty and administration to work towards common goals.

Thank you for considering our request for time to address the RUSO board on October 10<sup>th</sup>. I look forward to your decision.

Sincerely,

Carolyn