


Valerie L. Epps, Ph.D.
Vice President of Student Affairs

May 29, 2013

TO: Dr. Connie Webster, Chair
Faculty Senate

FROM: Valerie L. Epps, Ph.D. 
Vice President for Student Affairs

Subject: Faculty Senate Motion Regarding the Election of the Student Representative to the Board of Trustees

I am in receipt of the correspondence from the Faculty Senate. A copy of this correspondence has been forwarded to Dr. Elaine Crider, Chair of the Board of Trustees and Interim President, Dr. James Lyons. It was recommended by Dr. Crider and Dr. Lyons that this matter be reviewed and resolved by the University administration.

Please find below my response to the motion brought before the Faculty Senate at its meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2013:

Motion:

It was moved that the Faculty Senate send written notice to the UDC Administration and the Board of Trustees requesting that the 2013 election for the Student Member of the Board of Trustees be set aside.

Rationale: The election process was seriously flawed whereas:

1. There was no legitimate election committee; that is, no regular teaching faculty chaired the election committee as is prescribed in the elections guidelines

The Election Guidelines require that a faculty member chair the election committee. Ms. Melba Broom, Student Trustee Election Chair for the 2012 and 2013, has faculty status (academic rank) as outlined by the faculty contract, Article XXIV, page 63.

Article XXIV – Learning Resources Faculty

Learning Resources faculty shall be granted academic rank. The determination of the appropriate rank to be awarded an individual shall be based on criteria established by the University after consultation with the Association.

2. There was no fair and reasonable timeframe for students candidates to campaign for such an important position; that is, requiring student candidates to campaign the week that students returned from Spring Break and within a four and one-half day period where one of the days was a Friday when the majority of students at the Flagship and Community College campuses were not on campus and two of the days were Saturday and Sunday when very few undergraduate students were available resulted in lack of proper notification of elections. The five-day period for campaigning for Student Trustee should be work days, only, Monday through Friday.

The guidelines do not designate a minimum number of days that must be allowed for candidates to campaign. Orientation to the election process, approved candidates were free to campaign 24 hours a time during the specified days, using emails, flyers, social media, and face to face campaigning. These are the same guidelines that were followed last year. The time frame for elections as approved by the Board of Trustees requires that Student Trustee elections be held not less than thirty days (30) days nor more than 60 days before the expiration of the term of the incumbent (May 15). Therefore an election cannot start before March 16 and must be held no later than April 15.

The same calendar was used last year by the Student Election Committee.

3. Glitches in the on-line link for voting may have resulted in disenfranchisement of students at both the Community College campus and the Flagship campus.

To date, neither the Vice President for Student Affairs nor the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs have received any formal written statements or complaints regarding the elections as required by the election procedures. These complaint guidelines to contest the election were provided to all candidates at the orientation meeting for candidates and were posted on the election website.

A member of the Election Committee received a complaint about voting issues at the Community College. The member investigated and confirmed

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that there were not problems at the Community College. This complaint came after the allowable time to contest the election.

No recommendations to set aside the election have been received by the Vice President for Student Affairs as required by the Election Committee (composed of four (4) students and a faculty member) not the Faculty Senate.

I have volunteered to appear before the full Faculty Senate and Mrs. Kimberly Pennamon, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Student Life and Services, and I appeared before the Admission and Retention Committee of the Faculty Senate, to clarify the election process and to address your concerns. For the record, the 2013 Election Committee (composed of four students) have not recommended that the 2013 Student Trustee Election be set aside. After reviewing the motion, I find that the evidence presented does not support the set aside of the 2013 Student Trustee Election.

As always, the Division of Student Affairs welcomes recommendations from faculty and supports faculty volunteers to serve as advisors to student clubs and as student development workshop leaders. Your input is appreciated.

cc: Dr. Elaine Crider, Chair
Board of Trustees

Dr. James Lyons
Interim President

Ms. Beverly Franklin
Secretary to the Board of Trustees