

February 23, 2021

Dr. David Turnbull
Chair, Faculty Senate
PO Box 641038
Pullman, WA 99164-1038

Dear Dave,

I would like to express my appreciation for the careful and thoughtful deliberations by the Faculty Senate over the course of the academic year surrounding Intercollegiate Athletics at WSU. I have read through the Statement to the WSU Board of Regents as proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee chaired by Professor Von Walden, and wanted to add a few thoughts in moving forward.

During my tenure as President I have worked hard to increase the faculty voice around campus decision making. We have added a Faculty Representative to the WSU Board of Regents, added faculty representation to our capital project prioritization process, ensured faculty representation on two different budget groups (the one which assisted with dealing with our 3-year \$30M budget reduction process and the current group redesigning how we do budgeting in the future), ensured that we had a faculty senate nominee on the WSU System Roles and Responsibilities group, and took the Faculty Senate suggestion to hire an external investigator surrounding faculty concerns about the environment for women administrators following former Provost Mitzi Montoya's departure. In each of these cases I have actively solicited faculty advice and taken almost every suggestion forwarded to me. I have also attempted to really open up our budgetary and fiscal information – including around athletics. I made it clear when hiring Pat that his personal engagement with the Faculty Senate was a requirement – and feel that we have been very open with our goals, objectives, and progress towards a balanced intercollegiate athletics budget. I share this because I believe that faculty voice in our decision making is a key to our success as an institution – and I believe that I have been (and will continue to be) transparent with the campus community around decision making, future plans, and our fiscal position.

All of this being said, there are going to be some-times where there is disagreement between the faculty and administration. One of the reasons why I wanted there to be a faculty representative to the WSU Board of Regents was to ensure an unfettered faculty voice with the Regents on topics of interest to the long-term health of the university. When there is disagreement on things – like with the athletics budget – I believe it is fundamentally important for you to share these views. Many of our

February 23, 2021

Page 2 of 2


Regents are reading the Faculty Senate blog on a regular basis and are well aware of the current dialog around our proposal to pay the Pac 12 dues from university resources in Fiscal 2022 – 23 **if we identify the funds and concurrent with cuts to the athletics budget.** I firmly believe that the faculty representative to the WSU Board of Regents should formally present the letter and the faculty viewpoints that you have garnered to the Regents at the March 2021 meeting. Desiree Jacobsen in the Office of the President can assist in placing this item on the agenda and distributing any presentation materials.

The final point I want to make is that there is still a great deal of uncertainty with the WSU budget (including our athletics budget) moving forward through the remainder of this fiscal year. It is too early to withdraw an idea – that may turn out to be needed next year. While I understand that faculty will be upset that I am not withdrawing our proposal – I think it is far worse to withdraw the proposal now and next year bring it back up again at the last minute.

I remain committed to work collectively together on the WSU system planning and a new system wide budget model. I would ask that everyone also understand that as President I have to balance many competing perspectives on controversial topics from faculty, staff, students, legislators, alumni, and others.

Stacy Pearson, Pat Chun, and I will continue to work hard to balance the athletics budget, increase fundraising to athletics, work on debt repayment, and be open and transparent with the Faculty Senate on these issues.

Regards,


Kirk H. Schulz
President