

FAST FACTS



FEBRUARY 4, 2019

President's Letter: An open search for UM's new President -- Show your support on Feb. 6!

You heard last week that President Barnard's term will end in 2020, and a search committee has been established to fill the President's seat. UMFA has been given one representative on that committee, and like all the committee's members our rep must adhere to strict confidentiality rules as the search will be a completely closed process.

The president exerts strong influence over the direction of the university, and It's hard to accept how little influence the teachers and researchers at this university have over the selection of their next president.

Following concerns raised by Mark Gabbert, Mike Shaw (UMFA's VP), and other Senators on January 9 of this year, the Senate overwhelmingly adopted a motion to request that the Board of Governors make the presidential search process accessible to the University Community. At the Board of Governors open session on January 29, that suggestion was rejected.

Worse still, when the concern was raised by UMSU and UMFA about the consequences of rejecting a Senate recommendation endorsed by all student senators and the vast majority of Faculty Senators, **President Barnard said he did not believe there would any consequences because Senate knows that the Board has authority over the search and hiring process.**

UMFA suggests that there should, in fact, be consequences to this cavalier dismissal of Senate's desire to see collegial governance in a process whose outcome has both financial and academic ramifications for our university. Accordingly, **we ask that you support Senate's recommendations by gathering in the atrium outside Senate chambers (E3-262 Engineering Building) at 1 pm on Wednesday, February 6 in advance of the 1:30 Senate meeting.** At minimum, President Barnard should have to face all of us who will work and study here after his departure under the leadership of a President that we have virtually no input in selecting.

The University President has a great deal of influence over the allocation of resources between the core mission of teaching and research versus capital projects, unit funding, university strategy, relations with the government, how surpluses in excess of the budget are spent, and which administrators keep their jobs. The President also sets the tone regarding whether both the letter and spirit of labour law and our collective agreements are respected or treated as impediments. All of these powers directly impact what our work as teachers, researchers, librarians, and community leaders look like and feel like. For this reason the University community deserves an open search process.

We ask that the board of governors re-visit its decision to reject Senate's recommendations, which are:

- That the names of short-listed candidates be made known to the University community,
- That each short-listed candidate deliver a public presentation to the University community of his or her vision of the University, and
- That members of the University community be permitted to make submissions to the search committee regarding their assessments of short-listed candidates.

We also ask for two more small, but important, changes to this and other processes of the BoG to improve the bicameral governance of our university:

- That UMFA representatives to the Board of Governors and BoG committees be given the ability to at confer with the UMFA Executive Council on all Board of Governor matters discussed in closed sessions.

- That the Board of Governors provide justification for all matters that are treated in closed or “hyper-closed” sessions rather than the open session of their meetings.

Please join me on February 6!

Yours,

Dr. Janet Morrill
President, UMFA

For Senate’s discussion of the motion see pages 11 to 13 of the draft minutes of the Jan 9 meeting of Senate, available here:

http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/2019_01_09_Senate_Minutes.pdf

For a list of upcoming UMFA meetings, please visit our website:

<http://www.umfa.ca/news/meetings-events>.

If you have information or an event that you’d like to share in an upcoming issue, please email the item to umfa-communications@umfa.ca for consideration.

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