

September 28, 2018

Dear Dr. Reiter,

The Stetson University Board of Trustees values all members of our Stetson community, and deeply appreciates the faculty's role in preparing our students for lives of significance. The Board diligently works to understand the impact that the faculty are having, and to understand the challenges and opportunities that faculty face in developing curricula, mentoring students, participating in governance, and ensuring that our students' educational experiences provide meaningful outcomes in our 21st century world. To that end, the Board continues to make headway in broadening our communication with faculty. Last year alone, the Board held a reception for new faculty in DeLand and for a group of law faculty in Gulfport, hosted dinners with select faculty in DeLand, involved faculty in meetings of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board, and invited presentations this past May by members of the DeLand Faculty Senate Executive Committee to the full Board.

The Board appreciates the Faculty Senate representatives taking the time to participate in the May 2018 panel discussion; many found the discussion to be informative. However, the Executive Committee of the Board and I were disappointed that you took advantage of this opportunity with the Board to read a summary of the "Friday Group Report" and then distributed copies to at least one Trustee without proper review and partnership with President Libby, Provost Painter, and other members of the President's Cabinet. On May 1, 2018, Dr. Libby clearly communicated to you via email prior to the Board meeting my directive that reports may not come to the Board of Trustees until they have been reviewed by Dr. Libby and relevant members of her Cabinet. Dr. Libby's email to you was clear: "Consequently, [the Friday Group Report] will not go to the Board of Trustees this week."

After review and discussion, the Executive Committee of the Board found that your actions went against the requirement of the Board chair and the instruction of the President, and in so doing, breached the trust of the Board. It is for this reason that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees voted to limit your attendance at Board of Trustees meetings for the entirety of the 2018-19 academic year. You should submit a written report on the work of the DeLand faculty and Faculty Senate, as has been the practice in previous years, and you are invited (but not required) to deliver this report in person at the Board's general session usually scheduled on Friday of the Board's meeting time. You are, however, not permitted to attend any other committee meetings, receptions, dinners, or other parts of the Board meeting. The Executive Committee will review this action at the end of this academic year and will consider reinstating access to other portions of the meeting for 2019-20 at that time.

The Executive Committee of the Board and I are well aware of the need for the Board to interact meaningfully with faculty, and therefore not only are we continuing our previous efforts at communication with faculty at large both inside and outside of the Faculty Senate, but also we are extending these efforts in the 2018-19 academic year. The Board understands that the work to move Stetson University forward should always value respectfully presented differing opinions and disagreements, and we are not opposed to learning from faculty about their collective and individual concerns or recommendations that may differ from the Board or the President's Cabinet. We do, however, insist that proper protocols are followed, and that all of us are prioritizing collaboration over dissension as a way forward.

We continue to appreciate your work with the Faculty Senate in DeLand to foster excellence in our academic enterprise and advance productive partnership with the Stetson University administration toward common university goals.

Regards,

Joe R. Cooper
Chair
Board of Trustees
Stetson University

cc: Dr. Wendy B. Libby, President
Dr. Noel Painter, Executive Vice President & Provost