

November 10, 2010

Dean Kellye Testy, Chair of the Presidential Search Committee  
Mr. Herb Simon, Chair of the Board of Regents  
University of Washington

Dear Dean Testy and Mr. Simon,

As an organization committed to upholding academic freedom, advocating for faculty, and safeguarding the integrity of the institution, the University of Washington chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP-UW) respectfully requests that the Presidential Search Committee make a strong commitment to shared governance a key criterion for selecting the new UW president.

Washington State Law mandates that the University of Washington faculty “shall have charge of the immediate government of the institution under such rules as may be prescribed by the board of regents” (RCW 28B.20.200). More than merely a legal requirement, genuine shared governance promotes and sustains academic excellence. In order to attract and retain outstanding researchers and teachers, the University of Washington must be a place where faculty can be confident of due process and fair treatment, and of a reliable salary policy born of truly shared governance. The university’s administration justifies such confidence when it respects the Code that governs faculty employment, roles, and responsibilities.

The University is entering a difficult period when the incoming president will need the support and trust of the faculty in order to maintain UW as a world-class institution. At the same time we are coming out of a particularly discouraging period for shared governance. In the final months of his presidency, Mark Emmert gravely undermined the principles of shared governance long practiced at the University of Washington.

In March 2010, President Emmert unilaterally rejected and reversed the findings of a faculty adjudication hearing panel investigating the case of Professor Andrew Aprikyan, who had been charged with scientific misconduct. By overturning and disregarding the findings of a conscientious, experienced, and long-serving panel of senior faculty, the president in effect disregarded the faculty and gravely threatened shared governance.

In May of this year, President Emmert proposed a revision of Executive Order 64 (EO64). This document, which was signed by former President McCormick and approved by the Board of Regents, elaborated the terms of a faculty salary policy that had been carefully negotiated with elected faculty representatives. President Emmert’s proposed revision (EO64R) introduced dramatic changes to this policy, and was put before faculty in a manner that failed to honor the careful process that had produced the original agreement. Acting unilaterally in this way, in disregard of clear and unified faculty advice (expressed at an emergency Faculty Senate meeting), constitutes a dramatic departure from longstanding and successful traditions of faculty-administration working relations at the University of Washington.

AAUP-UW urges the Presidential Search Committee to use the criterion of shared governance as a critical component in evaluating presidential candidates. We believe that only individuals with real commitment to shared governance will gain the level of faculty support that is vital for truly successful leadership of the University of Washington. Thank you for your consideration.

**The AAUP-UW Executive Board:**

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