

## *Roger Williams University Faculty Senate*

*Executive Committee, 2007-08*

*June Speakman, President*

*Matt Stein, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*

*Charles Trimbach, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President*

July 30, 2007

Dear Chairman Bready:

The Roger Williams University Faculty Senate congratulates you on your election as Chairman of the Roger Williams University Board of Trustees. The faculty are hopeful that your appointment signals a new era of leadership at Roger Williams University and are eager to begin the process of improving communication and collaboration between the university faculty and the Board of Trustees.

The Faculty Senate is naturally concerned about recent media reports regarding ex-Chairman Papitto's conduct at recent Board meetings and the Board's reaction to that conduct. These events undermine the stated core values of the University and call into question the very mission of the university. In order to begin to restore the credibility of the Board of Trustees and establish the integrity that is so essential to a liberal arts education, the Faculty Senate calls upon you and the Board to:

- Join us in condemning the use of racial epithets by any member of the University Community, but in particular by those who lead it;
- Immediately convene a faculty-administration-student task force to redouble the University's efforts to foster diversity in all its forms;
- Report to the University community on the circumstances of, and justification for, the removal of eight members of the Board, including and particularly, Dr. Roberts, Ms. Lapidés and Mr. Caramadre;
- Provide to the University community an explanation for the continuing tenure of the remaining eight Board members, given their reported tolerance of Mr. Papitto's conduct;
- Make public as soon as possible the identity and affiliation of new Board members;
- Ensure the Board includes members with experience in, and knowledge of, the academy;
- Ensure the appointment of a member of the faculty and a member of the student body to the Board;

- Immediately adopt all of the NEASC recommendations regarding Board processes and policies;
- Make yourself available to meet in an open question and answer session with the faculty at the start of the Fall 2007 semester.

Again, Mr Papitto's conduct, the secrecy surrounding it, and the Board's confusing and slow response to it and to the NEASC recommendations are in conflict with the openness, tolerance, diversity and wisdom that we cultivate in our classrooms.

As the NEASC report shows, the Board is long overdue for major reform. We call on you to lead the trustees to act quickly and forcefully to condemn racism and intolerance and to remake the Board according to principles--and with a membership--that foster integrity, credibility and academic excellence.

With regards,

June S. Speakman,  
President, Faculty Senate  
On behalf of  
The RWU Faculty Senate

Matthew R. Stein  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

Charles Trimbach  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President