

11 April 2006

Mr. Fred Hagemann, Chair
Wartburg College Board of Regents
1406 Cedar River Drive
Waverly, IA 50677

Dear Mr. Hagemann:

Though we have not received a response to our letter of November 16, 2005, we trust that the Board of Regents continues to give due consideration to the opinions expressed by the elected representatives of the Wartburg chapter of the American Association of University Professors. While we recognize that Wartburg AAUP is a private organization and not part of the college's official governance structure, our membership comprises more than half the college's teaching faculty, including most of its elected leadership. But even if the board no longer welcomed our communications (as the president has indicated), we would nevertheless feel obliged, as central participants in the college's educational mission, to make our concerns known to those ultimately accountable for the welfare of the college.

Although there are a number of topics that we could address, our purpose in this letter is to share our perspective on recent controversy surrounding the filling of the Saemann Chair.

Most faculty first learned that the search was underway on March 29 when they received the position announcement, via e-mail, from the Office of Human Resources. Faculty found the news surprising since they had assumed that the search would begin after faculty finished reviewing the Regents' amendment to the faculty handbook allowing a successful candidate for the chair to receive tenure upon appointment (a special meeting to discuss that amendment is scheduled for April 13). Since tenure-track faculty searches generally begin early in the fall and progress into the spring, faculty also assumed that the search to fill a position of this importance would follow a similar schedule in order to attract the best possible pool of candidates.

Members of Faculty Council and the Appointment, Rank, and Tenure Committee were particularly surprised. In a February 29 e-mail memorandum to the faculty, President Ohle had stated that in seeking to fill the chair as the board had directed he would "work with the Faculty Council and the Appointment, Rank, and Tenure Committee to develop processes for announcing the position and the subsequent search."

But neither committee had been consulted about these processes. Only by inquiry did some faculty learn that the administration had already appointed a search committee and decided upon a search process. (One member of Faculty Council resigned from the committee in protest over this and other governance issues.)

Faculty also discovered that the procedures to be used for the search do not accord with the faculty- and board-approved processes in Sections 2.1.1.4, 2.3.2, and Appendix D of the *Wartburg College Faculty Handbook*. These official procedures are designed to ensure that

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searches for endowed chairs are conducted in the same manner as searches for other faculty positions.

The faculty's sense that the college was conducting this search in haste and without appropriate transparency increased when they learned that several members of the search committee would be off campus during May Term, which suggests that the search will have to be completed in the next few weeks, not the usual timeline reputable institutions follow when seeking the most distinguished candidate for an endowed chair. Similar suspicions emerged when faculty discovered that the college had placed the advertisement nine days before informing the faculty and that it had been posted in only three places—the college's website, the *Chronicle's* website, and the ELCA online job service (no printed announcement has been published).

But most troubling to many faculty were indications that the administration had already selected an appointee and that the outcome of the search was therefore predetermined. This concern and others regarding the legitimacy of the search have been expressed publicly on campus, most recently in a widely-shared e-mail letter to the dean from a professor of international politics who sits on the Global and Multicultural Studies Committee.

We offer these observations to you and the other members of the Board of Regents because we continue to have grave concerns about the way in which decisions are being made on this campus. As academic professionals, we believe that the best academic decisions result from shared processes of decision-making that are transparent and open. We also believe that promises should be kept and that official college policies should be followed—by everyone. We would be pleased to discuss this and other campus matters further with you at any time.

Sincerely,

Gregory Scholtz

Josef Breutzmann

Paula Survilla

Paul Hedeem

Warren Zemke, Past President

cc: Wartburg College Board of Regents
President Ohle
Dean Menzel
Wartburg AAUP