



Rensselaer

Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D.
President

To: Robert Palazzo, PhD.
Acting Provost

From: Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D.
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley Ann Jackson".

Date: December 11, 2006

Re: Proposed Faculty Senate Amendment

At its December 9, 2006 meeting, the Board of Trustees considered the Faculty Senate request to amend its constitution regarding the definition of "faculty". Please convey to the President of the Faculty Senate that the proposed amendment, as submitted, was rejected by a unanimous vote of the Board. The Board did however, use the proposal as an incentive to engage in an intensive and lengthy discussion resulting in the Board's definition of Faculty at Rensselaer.

It is the sense of the Board that for policy purposes, the "faculty" of a world class institution of higher education should be a term confined to those who are either currently invested or have declared their intent to invest their academic credentials and intellectual energies into the long term well being of the Institute; and that they undergo a rigorous examination relative to being accorded the status of tenured faculty. The Board is familiar with this criteria having been previously confronted by our various accrediting agencies with opinions consistent with the conclusions expressed in your transmittal memo of November 20, 2006 on this issue.

It is the unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees that, henceforth, the Board defines the Faculty of Rensselaer to be only the active tenured and tenure track faculty currently holding the titles of Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor at Rensselaer. For purposes of receiving the formal view of the Faculty at Rensselaer, the Board will look only to those that fit this definition.

Furthermore, the Board requests that the Faculty Senate initiate the process to effect the change in Article II.A.i. (and elsewhere as appropriate) of its constitution, and all other aspects of faculty governance, to embrace the will of the Board of Trustees as expressed in its vote.

Memo to Robert Palazzo
December 11, 2006
Page 2

It is appropriate, as Rensselaer makes a step change in how it positions itself in the arena of world-class research universities, that it should take this opportunity to clearly define the roles of the various constituent groups within its professional teaching and research community. The Board acknowledges that those who serve as Clinical Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, Clinical Assistant Professor, Research Professor, Research Associate Professor, Research Assistant Professor, Librarian, Archivist and Assistant Archivist consistently make valuable and continuous contributions to the intellectual vibrancy of Rensselaer. Their focus and energy should be preserved within the committee structures of each of the various schools and programs and their academic vitality. It was further recognized by the Board that, although they have no official role in faculty governance, on occasion, Rensselaer may call upon retired members of the community for their advice and wisdom.