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From: Rector <rector@jmu.edu>  
Date: Tue, Jun 18, 2024 at 12:49 PM  
Subject: Re: JMU Presidential Search  
To: AAUP JMU <aaup.jmu@gmail.com>  
Cc: Kirkpatrick, David - kirkpadx <xxxxxxxxx@jmu.edu>

Dear JMU-AAUP Executive Committee,

Thank you for the letter regarding the presidential search process. I have been communicating with the Faculty Senate on this important matter, as well. I want you to know I am taking this process very seriously and am committed to transparency with our incredible faculty throughout the search process.

The search committee is now in place and held its first meeting in what will be a thorough and inclusive process. The Board of Visitors' most important responsibility is to hire the president of the university. We are committed to hearing from the many constituencies that interact with the President. After conversations with search firms regarding the search size, I have chosen to make our committee smaller, thus, adhering to best practices when managing larger committees. The committees you referenced are much larger and, accordingly, have larger participation from each constituency.

Throughout the search, we will be providing significant opportunities for faculty to participate and share their voice during listening sessions. The search committee will work with Kathy Ott-Walter on timing and structure to best capture faculty feedback and expertise. This will also allow for significant participation from our faculty closer to the Fall semester.

In addition, Dr. Ott-Walter will be participating in the selection of our next president. Typically, the faculty representative does not have a vote on matters within the Board of Visitors' purview. In contrast, I have communicated to her that she will be fully included in interviews with our finalists and will have a vote on the selection of our next president. This inclusion is a reflection of my deep commitment to transparency and to valuing our faculty voice here at JMU.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Obenshain, Incoming Rector, JMU Board of Visitors