

## ATTACHMENT A

### Presidential Search Faculty-only Meeting, November 15, 2002

#### Introduction

On November 15, 2002, CFG held the scheduled faculty-only meeting for the fall semester. With the consent of the faculty, CFG focused the meeting on matters relating to the presidential search. Given such an agenda, CFG invited Charles Joseph, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty, and Sarah Goodwin, Associate Dean of the Faculty, to attend. Gove Effinger, Chair of CFG, called the meeting to order and presided over the discussion. Since faculty-only meetings do not carry the authority of the official faculty meeting, the faculty was informed that any recommendations arising from the discussion would need to be taken to the regular faculty meeting (or to appropriate college committees) for action.

During the course of the meeting, several concerns surfaced, which the group wished to communicate with the Board of Trustees and with the Presidential Search Committee. As discussion developed, it became clear that some faculty members wished to communicate their concerns via motions (assuming those were approved by the faculty at the official faculty meeting), while others preferred to offer the search committee a summary of the most important ideas discussed at the meeting.

In order that the faculty may choose which course of action it wishes to follow, CFG offers here both a summary of the sense of the meeting and a series of motions. The faculty may wish to choose one or the other—or even a combination of both. In CFG's view, the advantage of presenting a sense of the meeting is that the faculty can both forcefully present its concerns while emphasizing that its chosen mode of communication is not the assertive motion but the more informal statement of concerns. The disadvantage is that such a statement might too easily be ignored. The advantage of presenting motions is that such motions make very clear the will of the faculty. The disadvantage is that such motions may not accommodate the complexity of a search once it gets under way; indeed, some faculty members at the meeting spoke warily of passing motions which might seem to limit the freedom of a search committee to act in the best interests of the college. Since the faculty has, in fact, no real power to constrain the actions of the search committee and can therefore only make recommendations, the difference between these two modes of communication is primarily one of tone, we think—but, if we want effective and successful exchanges with the Board and with the Presidential Search Communication, then tone is surely important.

CFG offers first a motion (over) on the sense of the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting; if that passes, we will withdraw the motions under item II.

I. Sense of the Meeting

**Committee on Faculty Governance  
Motion on the Presidential Search, 6 December 2002**

Resolved: That the faculty send the following letter to the Board of Trustees and the Presidential Search Committee.

To: The Board of Trustees and the Presidential Search Committee

From: The Faculty of Skidmore College

Subject: The Presidential Search

On November 15, 2002, the faculty of Skidmore College met under the auspices of CFG (Committee on Faculty Governance) to discuss matters relating to the presidential search. During the course of the meeting, several concerns surfaced, which the group wished to communicate with the Board of Trustees and with the Presidential Search Committee. In the spirit of open exchange encouraged by Sue Thomas, new Board Chair (most explicitly in her message to the community of November 26, 2002), the faculty now offers these considerations for your attention. We recognize that any search can quickly become very complex and that the reasons for that complexity cannot always be shared; we also recognize that contingencies may occur which cannot at present be foreseen. Nevertheless, we hope that, if at all possible, the search committee will bear in mind these concerns raised by the faculty, for they are concerns deeply felt by the majority.

The faculty strongly recommends that the Presidential Search Committee bring more than one finalist in the presidential search to campus. We believe that by seeing more than one candidate, we will be better informed about the pool of candidates and have a stronger basis for making comparative judgments and for forming a consensus around a first-choice candidate. We understand that some finalists may wish to keep their candidacy secret so as not to alert their own campuses to a possible intention to leave but note that comparable colleges have managed to invite more than one candidate to campus with no apparent ill effects. A slate of finalists gives both faculty and search committee more flexibility and more confidence that the final choice is the first choice.

The faculty recommends to the Presidential Search Committee that all finalists in the presidential search possess at least the following qualifications: a record of successful, senior-level, administrative experience, preferably at a liberal arts institution; a record of distinguished scholarly achievement; and a record of successful fundraising. We value the list of qualifications and characteristics drawn up for the last presidential search but believe that the items specified here, and drawn from that list, merit special priority and emphasis. While we would ideally want to welcome a new president with all the qualities described on that list, we recognize that no candidate is likely to possess all of them and wish the search committee to know therefore that these are the most important credentials from the faculty's point of view.

The faculty recommends to the Presidential Search Committee that if the committee is unable to build consensus about one of the finalists across the college's constituencies (Board, administration, faculty, students), then the committee will continue the search until a candidate who can excite such general approval is found. We understand that the college is beginning this presidential search late in the academic year. While we hope that a successful candidate will emerge by the beginning of the next academic year, we trust that such time constraints will not force us to rush to a final choice. We fully understand that the final responsibility for the selection of our new president rests with the Board; nevertheless, the 1999 *CFG Report and Recommendations on Presidential Searches* makes clear that building consensus on campus around a presidential candidate is essential to that potential new president's success in office. Consequently, we trust that the search will be closed only after such consensus is reached. As a footnote here, we are confident that the committee will devise ways to seek evaluations of presidential candidates that will both protect the candidates' privacy and allow for frank and open discussion among community members.

We very much appreciate Sue Thomas's encouragement to voice our concerns and opinions. We respectfully do so here and look forward to further opportunities to be helpful to the Presidential Search Committee.

## II. Motions

### **Committee on Faculty Governance Motions on the Presidential Search, 6 December 2002**

The following motions are offered by CFG on behalf of the faculty, as a means to convey to the Presidential Search Committee and the Board of Trustees the widely shared opinions expressed at the faculty-only meeting of Friday, 15 November 2002.

1. Resolved: That the faculty urge the Presidential Search Committee in the strongest possible terms to bring more than one finalist in the presidential search to campus.

Rationale: Faculty members believe that by seeing more than one candidate, they will be better informed about the pool of candidates and have a stronger basis for making comparative judgments and for forming a consensus around a first-choice candidate. Faculty members recognize that some finalists may wish to keep their candidacy secret so as not to alert their own campuses to a possible intention to leave but note that comparable colleges have managed to invite more than one candidate to campus with no obvious problems. A slate of finalists gives both faculty and search committee more flexibility and more confidence that the final choice is the first choice.

2. Resolved: That the faculty recommend to the Presidential Search Committee that all finalists in the presidential search possess at least the following qualifications: a record of successful, senior-level, administrative experience, preferably at a liberal arts institution; a record of distinguished scholarly achievement; and a record of successful fundraising.

Rationale: Members of the faculty value the list of qualifications and characteristics drawn up for the last presidential search but believe that the items above (drawn from that list) deserve special priority and emphasis. While faculty members would ideally want to welcome a new president with all the qualities described on that list, they wish the search committee to know that these are the most important credentials from the faculty's point of view.

3. Resolved: That the faculty recommend to the Presidential Search Committee that if the committee is unable to build consensus about one of the finalists across the college's constituencies (Board, administration, faculty, students), then the committee will continue the search until a candidate who can excite such general approval is found.

Rationale: Faculty members recognize that the college is beginning this presidential search late in the academic year. While they hope that a successful candidate will emerge by the beginning of the next academic year, they trust that such time constraints will not unduly influence the final choice. The 1999 *CFG Report and Recommendations on Presidential Searches* makes clear that building consensus on campus around a presidential candidate is essential to that potential new president's success in office. Consequently, the faculty urges that the search be closed only after such consensus is reached.