

Ray Stuart Fertig III

From: Faculty Senate
Sent: Wednesday, April 2, 2025 8:37 AM
To: uw-faculty
Cc: Ray Stuart Fertig III; Robert W. Godby; Treva Sprout Ahrenholtz; Vladimir Alvarado; Gregg Cawley; Ashley H. Carlisle; Tiger Robison
Subject: Faculty Senate Executive Committee Response to the Firing of Dean Wright
Attachments: CEPS Heads memo 3-31-25.pdf

Colleagues,

In light of the news today that Dean Wright has been removed as Dean of the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences, we write to express grave concerns regarding the leadership of the President. The actions today are symptomatic of a systemic failure of leadership that has spanned several years and seen multiple deans and other administrators dismissed under a shroud of secrecy that prevents holding leadership accountable for any decision that is made. The prevailing view is that these administrators are at-will and serve at the pleasure of the President. But we would like to remind those in leadership that we do not operate like a corporation with the President as a CEO – we operate on the principle of shared governance. For a brief refresher, consider the preamble of UW Regulation 1-4 Shared Governance:

*This Regulation articulates and establishes the University of Wyoming's strong commitment to the principles and practices of Shared Governance. **The University expects leadership to seek, listen, consider, and reflect back input in decision-making and to define processes and procedures that will hold them accountable to students, faculty, staff and other constituents.***

It is in the vein of holding our leadership accountable that we bring up UW Regulation 2-8 Appointment, Evaluation, and Removal of Academic Officers, Section III, which not only states that the removal of Academic Officers is indeed the business of the faculty, it requires that significant faculty participation **shall** be the norm in these decisions.

*College and unit level administrators serve several roles as managers of the university, leaders of their academic units, and representatives of the views and interests of their academic colleagues. **Therefore, the appointment, evaluation or removal of Academic Officers normally shall involve significant faculty participation.***

In the past five years, we cannot recall the removal of any Academic Officer that has involved significant faculty participation. In the times when faculty have tried to give voice to their concerns, such as in the case of the College of Health Sciences, their concerns are ignored by the by the President and for their efforts they are intimidated and threatened by upper administration. Their unanimous vote of no confidence was treated with contempt. Not even a formal evaluation of the dean was called for! Today, we have the removal of another dean, again without any faculty input solicited. In this case, the dean has the unanimous support of the department heads within the college (see attached memo). Yet, again, our voice goes unheard and unacknowledged.

UW will not achieve its goals without trust in leadership and a willingness to work together, based on mutual respect. The President's seemingly arbitrary actions, unwillingness to listen to others and lack of concern for shared governance has eroded what little trust remained between the faculty and his office and has led to a state where the faculty do not have any confidence in his leadership. We plan to discuss our options moving forward at our upcoming Faculty Senate meeting.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee:

Ray Fertig – Chair

Rob Godby – Chair-elect

Treva Sprout-Ahrenholtz – Secretary

Vladimir Alvarado – Member-At-Large

Gregg Cawley – Member-At-Large

Ashley Hope Carlisle – Member-At-Large

Tiger Robison – Member-At-Large