

COHE Opening Statement

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The bargain that society reaches with a university is widely recognized to special and unique, different than any other institution. Universities agree to educate the next generation to become better citizens, members of societies, to create a public and collective good in the raising of human capital. This investment in people allow faculty to carry out their other missions under a special set of rules, we are not mere public employees.

The proper and effective functioning of a university requires that faculty be involved in decisions that are not the norm in other public institutions. Shared governance means faculty are the primary voice in personnel and curriculum decisions. Only under unusual circumstances should a university President or the Board override the faculty's considered, deliberate decisions.

This higher moral understanding transcends any mere legal authority. Universities are state supported, but not state funded. Yes, we recognize that the state has some authority, especially in terms of budgets, but they do not and should not have exclusive rights over the functional authority of the faculty. The bureaucratic/mechanistic model, top-down command-and-control management style has been debunked. It does not work in business, as demonstrated in the Great Recession. Successful companies and organizations have adopted collegial management styles that provide information to all and encourage wide ranging debates on core production areas.

Just because something is legal to "do to the faculty" does not mean it is the prudent thing to do. I will not accept arguments that just because something is legal makes it right. Because the law is often wrong. I hope the Board is willing to do what is right, not just what is legal.

The faculty are demoralized. Years of constantly taking the brunt of all the work. We work 60+ hours per week on average, because we love our jobs. We care about our programs, we want them to succeed because we are missionaries, who care about the work, our disagreements about the effect on the individual programs we know and love, and on the larger success of our individual universities.

Add to this two years without salary increases, inflation, disrespect by our administrators and the general public, and we hope the Board will give the faculty something to be proud of. Now is the time to expand the rights of faculty, to create true shared governance structure, to go on record and say we support the mission of the faculty, who are the only essential element in any university.

The beautiful words and sentiments I have been hearing at Board meetings for the last 18 months are not reflected in these set of proposals. Throughout this process, my mind will be focused on one large question: how does this proposal help to recruit and retain a high quality faculty who want to build competitive, comprehensive universities? Or will it only further demoralize senior faculty, disgust mid-

career faculty, and drive away junior faculty. Faculty are the heart and soul, the institutional memory of our universities, we carry the traditions and culture of our unique universities. Administrators come and go, but the faculty remain.