

March 7, 2021
UT-AAUP Newsletter

UT Board of Trustees Rejects Shared Governance

The UT Board of Trustees (BOT) has appointed a permanent UT President without a national search and without consulting faculty, students, alumni, or constituent groups, including the UT Faculty Senate.

Shared grievance is not a legal concept in Ohio. However, there is a shared governance tradition at UT that is reinforced by the UT-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) which expressly provide for a robust culture of shared governance. Because this appears in the UT-AAUP CBAs approved and agreed to by the BOT, shared governance has legal standing at UT. In addition, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) speaks extensively to shared governance.

The BOT appointment of Interim President Postel as permanent President at UT for a five-year term caught the campus by surprise and blatantly violates the UT tradition of shared governance.

This is not intended to be an attack on the qualifications of Dr. Postel, but a criticism of the UT Board of Trustees for its decision not to seek input from the Faculty Senate and other constituent groups comprising faculty, students, and alumni. The BOT's effective thumbing-its-nose at inclusivity regarding the search and hiring of a President is inexcusable. Dr. Postel was hired as an Interim President. A national search was to be conducted and should have been done.

There was an extensive national search for Dr. Gaber while Engineering Dean Nagi served as Interim President. Nagi was a campus favorite. There was substantial campus and alumni support not to have a search and appoint Nagi who was highly qualified and highly regarded. He subsequently left UT and has gone on to much success as President at another university.

In spite of Nagi's strong qualifications and campus support, the search went on and Dr. Gaber was hired as our first female President. The pool from which she was hired included an African-American and another female.

The UT Board of Trustees has hired a white male without a search even as the BOT and Administration give lip service to diversity and, yes, also to shared governance.

Don Wedding
Grievance Officer
UT-AAUP Executive Board