

TO: Acting Chancellor R. Grey and Executive Vice Chancellor E. Wartella

FROM: Reinhard Schultz, Department of Mathematics Faculty

DATE: March 19, 2008

SUBJECT: Confidential comments regarding CNAS Dean candidates

First of all, I would like to thank everyone involved for their efforts in arranging the five forums for the candidates and to say that I attended each of them.

Prior to last year's restructuring of CNAS, the three largest departments in the physical and mathematical sciences expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the level of support and attention that the College had provided their programs. The restructuring of the College provides some hope for more equitable priorities and resource allocation in the future, but the next Dean will certainly be a factor in determining the extent to which these changes are beneficial.

Having served as Mathematics Department Chair at UCR for seven years and having worked with several deans for 20 years in my previous position at a Big Ten University, I have considerable experience in working with a Dean's Office and seeing examples of both good and bad leadership. In my experience and opinion, the best interests of both the physical/mathematical sciences and the College as a whole will require leadership with a well-balanced perspective on the roles of traditional core departments and current or future interdisciplinary programs. Neither can be neglected if a university wishes to maintain or improve its reputation. In my opinion, three of the candidates (Drs. Baldwin, Page and Riha) projected a clear understanding and appreciation of this principle, while a fourth (Dr. Welter) was more tentative and the comments of the fifth (Dr. Mukasa) were limited to a brief sentence which seemed to be added as an afterthought. In more detail, based upon my experiences with Deans, my opinion is that Dr. Baldwin definitely appears to be the best qualified candidate to lead CNAS for the next several years, and Dr. Page and Dr. Riha (in that ranked order) also appear to be quite good candidates. My feelings toward Dr. Welter's candidacy are considerably more uncertain. He projected a great deal of energy and advanced many intriguing, ambitious ideas, but on occasions he made highly debatable assertions when there was no need to do so, by his own admission some of his major priorities could slow down the growth of UCR's research status, and his interest in creating additional administrative bureaucracy at a time of tight budgets raises obvious concerns. It appears that there are good arguments both for and against choosing this candidate, but to me it is not clear whether the potential pluses really outweigh the potential minuses. Turning to the remaining case, I strongly feel that although Dr. Mukasa would probably be an excellent person to have in our College, he should not be considered further. As indicated above, evidence of his commitment to balance between core areas and interdisciplinary programs was minimal, and I was also concerned that his responses to several College issues indicated a lack of experience or understanding in working with a Dean's office. Learning the job of CNAS Dean will be a challenge even for someone with a reasonable level of experience and understanding, and less than one year running a department or program normally does not provide enough background for moving up to the level of Dean.

There is one important issue that was only covered briefly in one of the forums; I did not think it was appropriate to raise the issue with candidates because it requires more familiarity with the College than one can expect of interview candidates. When UCR was smaller, it was understandable that appointments Associate Deans in the College involved virtually no real faculty input. However, as UCR grew and the administration of the College became more demanding, the roles and powers of the Associate Deans for different areas increased to a point where more openness and faculty input into the choices were needed to be consistent with the principles for appointing

Department Chairs, Deans, and leading administrators at the highest levels. With the transition to Divisional Deans, the need for more openness and faculty input is even greater. Any candidate who is offered the CNAS Dean position should be willing to guarantee an open (preferably internal) selection process for future CNAS Divisional Deans.

Finally, I appreciate your willingness to consider faculty input and hope you will find it useful. In a previous CNAS Dean search on this campus, the University Administration totally ignored faculty opinion and some excellent candidates, offering the position to someone who had very little support and wasting an important opportunity to enhance both the College and the University. I urge that top University administrators think very carefully before taking similar actions this time.

Thank you for considering my views.