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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear WKU Community:

During the past ten days, I have heard from, and visited with, faculty, staff, students and administrative leadership in Potter College and across the University. I have had similar conversations with alumni, friends and supporters from outside our campus as well. Each of them had the best interest of WKU at heart, even if their opinions, advice and counsel differed.

I also have received from the chair of our University Senate the results of yesterday's special called meeting. A vote of no confidence is a powerful statement and one that I take very seriously.

The Provost and I have discussed how to proceed, and she has agreed that it is in WKU's best interest that she step down from her role, effective immediately.

To ensure we continue our forward momentum, Dean Cheryl Stevens has agreed to serve as Acting Provost for our University, effective today. Dean Stevens has been Dean of Ogden College of Science and Engineering since January 2012 and is our longest serving Dean. She is also President of the WKU Research Foundation and Director of the Applied Research and Technology Program at WKU.

Because her departure will create a vacancy in Ogden College, I also have asked Associate Dean Greg Arbuckle to serve as Interim Dean, effective today. Associate Dean Arbuckle joined the WKU faculty in 2005 as an Associate Professor, became Professor in 2016, and has served as Associate Dean of Ogden College since 2017.

You will be hearing from our new leadership, both in the Provost's Office and Dean's Office, next week.

Academic Affairs also will immediately implement a plan of action to address the concerns of the campus community and to regain the trust of those who have lost confidence. Clearly, we must do more.

To that end, I am announcing several immediate changes that will improve how the Provost and Academic Affairs work together with academic units across the University:

- To ensure stable operations for Potter College of Arts and Letters, Professor Merrall Price will immediately relocate to the Dean's Office. While she will have some wrap-up responsibilities in the Provost's Office, she also will begin her work as interim dean.
- As we work through the CAPE committee's recommendations, given the centrality of the Provost in the final stage of the process, any program decisions will not go beyond the CAPE committee recommendations.
- We have been operating without three Associate Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs this spring. In the next several weeks, the Provost will appoint a Senior Vice Provost to work with her and the Deans to advance WKU's strategic plan and also to strengthen relationships between Academic Affairs and each of our five colleges.
- To ensure policies and decisions are being vetted more broadly and with input from and conversation with a larger group from across campus, a Provost's Council will be created that includes senior faculty and leadership representatives from each college. The council will meet monthly during the academic year to provide guidance and feedback to Academic Affairs.

These moments in the life of an institution are painful. As we move forward together, where damaged, we must repair our organizational bonds. Most importantly, we will refocus our time and energy on the things each of us was brought here to accomplish. At our core are student learning, knowledge creation and public engagement that elevate our region.

The advancement and success of WKU are important to our students, to our campus community, to our alumni and friends, to our region, and to our state. I look forward to our continued conversations as we work together to elevate WKU.

Best,



Timothy C. Caboni