

To: Kean University Board of Trustees
From: A. Bryan Lees
Date: March 7, 2005

Re: Speaking at the March 7, 2005 Meeting

I regret that I will not be able to attend today's meeting of the Board of Trustees during the time assigned for public speeches.

I have given my written comments to Dr. James Castiglione who has kindly agreed to distribute and present them in my absence.

March 7, 2005

Members of the Kean University Board of Trustees, President Farahi, Members of the Kean Community:

I have not come here today to remind you of issues of which you are undoubtedly aware. Rather, I have come to ask for your support.

As former chairperson of the Kean University Faculty Senate and currently elected member of the KFT Executive Council, I am approached by members of the university community with questions and concerns that are often beyond my ability to answer. I would like to summarize for you a few of the more far-reaching questions that merit your attention.

- To what extent have we relinquished a long-valued tradition of participatory governance and replaced it with an assertion of managerial prerogative under the guise of expediency?
- To what extent is new policy governed by consensus, by default, by committee or by decree?
- To what extent have we abandoned long-cherished efforts to link our budget to university-wide planning in a manner that supports the goals and development of all campus constituents?
- To what extent have we short-changed the support for essential academic services to enforce an expansionist budget that, while greatly improving the campus facilities, relies upon an escalating proportion of adjunct faculty?

- To what extent have we debased the definition of research to focus upon the acquisition of funds and fame and to diminish the exhilaration that accompanies the uncompromising search for new knowledge?
- To what extent can we blatantly and consistently demean the professionalism of faculty and staff?
- To what extent have we lost the ability to laugh at our foibles and learn from our mistakes and, instead, manufactured a veneer of self-serving public relations? And to what end?

The answer to these questions, at your choice, will sustain or imperil the very heart of the University. Unfortunately, questions like these have been asked for the most part by individuals behind closed doors because they do not see the opportunity for a non-punitive public forum. I ask your support in addressing these questions openly as a community.

Thank you for your kind attention.

A. Bryan Lees, Ph.D.
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