



FACULTY COUNCIL
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125-3393
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December 20, 2021

Dear Provost Berger,

We write to you with significant concern regarding the outcomes of the Dean searches for both the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Management. In both cases, the faculty of each college communicated to you their very strong, even near-unanimous support and preference that the internal finalist candidates (Rajini Srikanth and Arindam Bandopadhyaya, respectively) be hired as permanent deans. In both cases, you chose to exercise your administrative prerogative and disregard the expressed will of the faculty.

The fact that this has happened not once, but twice, has caused a significant erosion of faculty trust and, we fear, is setting a worrisome trend. We wonder on what basis you find it justifiable to dismiss the popular mandates these internal candidates have had with the faculty whom they would oversee. We worry that this is establishing a performative precedent for shared governance—a model in which faculty are merely allowed to voice their opinions, but where faculty and administration have divergent preferences, administration's preference takes precedence. In our view, true shared governance requires that administration sometimes accept the will of the faculty even if it does not reflect administration's top preference. We believe that this question is particularly acute in regard to the choosing of a college unit's leadership because it has profound implications for faculty trust in administration. After all, deans are the bridge between the faculty and senior administration.

It is with these serious concerns in mind that we request that, in continuing the search for the CM Dean, Arindam Bandopadhyaya be considered a candidate for this position without needing to re-apply. Dr. Bandopadhyaya has successfully been doing the job as interim dean for *four years*.¹ The assertion that he is suddenly unqualified is not tenable.

Sincerely,

The Faculty Council Executive Committee:

Heike Schotten, Chair
Eduardo Siqueira, Associate Chair
Betsy Sweet
Kiran Verma
Kevin Wozniak

¹ Our present critique bears no targeted ill-will toward CLA Dean King-Meadows, whose hiring is complete. We hope that he will become a trusted and successful member of the CLA community over time. We object to the fact that you selected him *in spite of* the expressed preference of the CLA faculty for their longstanding, well-known, and well-respected colleague, Dr. Srikanth.



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