



# DAEMEN

COLLEGE

**A World of Opportunity**

Office of the President

March 26, 2019

Daemen College  
Faculty and Staff

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you are enjoying the spring weather as we emerge from a rather long winter. I am writing with some updates.

First, I hope you will help me congratulate both the men's and women's basketball teams for a superb season. The women came in second in regular season play, and the men came in first. The men then went on to play in the NCAA tournament.

Yesterday, Vice President Rood invited you to a meeting on April 1 to review health plan renewal options that are under consideration. I hope you will find some time to attend and provide your input.

Finally, I want to update you on an important matter. At the November meeting of the Daemen Board of Trustees, the chair empaneled a trustee committee to examine the board's bylaws and recommend possible changes to the board at its March meeting. Prior to the March meeting, the committee invited me to review their recommended changes. Most of the changes were minor adjustments to the committee structure, but one change that the committee was adamant about was the elimination of the faculty trustee position.

The committee presented substantial rationale for this change, including statements from the Association of Governing Boards, as well as research from a consultant that demonstrates that very few college boards have faculty representatives. It is widely considered a conflict of interest to have an employee of an organization on its governing board because trustees have a fiduciary responsibility to the organization as a whole, while an employee "representative" tends to represent first and foremost his or her specific constituency.

While the trustees were resolute about the need to eliminate the faculty trustee, I asked them to consider a compromise: retain the faculty trustee but make it a non-voting position. This change

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would mirror that of the “president” on the board, which is also a non-voting position. As an employee, I am not able to vote on issues before the board.

Fortunately, the committee decided to adopt my compromise, and that is what the committee submitted and that was adopted by the board at its recent meeting. I believe this compromise works well: it honors shared governance by retaining faculty input and participation at the highest level, but it does not maintain a situation in which an employee (be it the president or anyone else) is voting on governance issues.

I hope you are looking forward to a restful spring break, and I look forward to seeing you at the health plans review and at the spring State of the College Address in April.

Cordially,



Gary A. Olson

President