

Editorial -- Paul S. LaFollette, Jr.



Historically, professors have regarded themselves as a *universitas magistrorum et scholarium* – a community or collective of teachers and scholars. As a community, we tend to believe that our academic leaders should also be scholars, and that we should be able to interact with our administrative leadership with the respect due to colleagues. As the corporatization of the American university grows, this model is changing to one of education providers working for management to serve education customers. In the process, we are losing our sense of collegiality. We apparently especially lose the sense of respect that we all, faculty, and administration, owe to one another because we can recognize the commitment to learning and education that we all should share.

President Theobald has relieved his colleague Provost Dai of his administrative responsibilities, and has named Dean JoAnne Epps to be our new Provost. Both of his emails to the faculty are included in this issue.

With regard to the first letter, I have three concerns:

First, it is disrespectful to Professor Dai. There were a number of points in Hai-Lung's vision that I disagreed with, but there is no question that he has contributed much to Temple. This email mentions his titles, but gives no recognition of his

Provost Dai Relieved of Administrative Responsibilities.



On June 28, 2016, the following email was sent to the Temple community by President Neil Theobald:

To the Temple community:

I would like to share an important announcement with you. Hai-Lung Dai, Temple University's executive vice president and provost since 2013, has been relieved of his administrative responsibilities, effective immediately. Dr. Dai joined Temple in 2007, when he became Dean of the College of Science and Technology, Laura H. Carnell Professor of Chemistry and then also senior vice provost for international affairs. He remains a member of Temple's faculty.

I want to assure you that Temple's upward momentum will continue during this time of transition. A successor will be named promptly.

Thank you, our faculty and staff, for your time and understanding in this matter, and for all you do for Temple.

Sincerely,

Neil D. Theobald

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contributions. Announcing that he is “relieved of his administrative responsibilities, effective immediately has already caused substantial speculation on social media as to whether there be serious, undisclosed matters behind this. I would argue that the fact that he will remain a Temple faculty member belies this idea, but this email does nothing to emphasize the notion that he will remain a valued member of the Temple community.

Second, the manner in which this proceeded has been disrespectful of our faculty and its bodies of governance. Was this action truly so urgent that it needed to be announced, in mid-summer, with no opportunity for faculty input? I understand that the Provost serves at the pleasure of the President, but a long tradition of shared governance in the academic world would suggest that the faculty be given some opportunity to comment upon the Chief Academic Officer of the university. The idea, prevalent in the corporate world, that personnel decisions are nobody’s business but management does not carry over well into the academic world precisely because we the faculty, and we the administration are best modeled as scholarly colleagues who respect and consult with one another.

Finally, this action was also disrespectful to Temple University. I have already mentioned that it has generated discussion and speculation both in the press and on social media. Announced in what appears to be a cold and uncaring email, such speculation can only hurt Temple’s reputation. What effects will this have on the search for a Dean of CLA, or a new Dean of the Law School. Will it make it more difficult to recruit desirable faculty members?

I am also disturbed by the decision to name a new permanent rather than interim Provost with little faculty input and without a national search. I am quite pleased with the result – I admire and respect Dean Epps -- but the process leaves much to be desired.

I hope that some discussion with the Senate leadership will be forthcoming. I would like to be convinced that this was not as badly handled as it appears to have been. If you agree that this whole process was not handled well, I would encourage you to share your thoughts with the *Herald* at paul.lafollette@temple.edu, and with the Board at trustees@temple.edu.

New Provost to be Dean JoAnne Epps



On July 5, 2016, President Neil Theobald sent the following email to the Temple community:

Colleagues:

I’m thrilled to announce that I have nominated JoAnne Epps as Temple’s executive vice president and provost effective immediately.

Anyone who knows JoAnne is impressed by her vision, intelligence, energy, collaborative working style, passion for our students, and open mind. Most importantly, JoAnne has a strong grasp of Temple’s unique mission and our commitment to Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the world.

JoAnne’s tenure as Provost will herald an era of renewed vibrancy and purpose for our faculty, our staff, and – most of all – our students. She shares my student-centered approach and will work tirelessly to improve the academic environment for all Temple students.

I know you join me in offering JoAnne your full support as she assumes her new post. The link below will take you to an announcement with more details.

<https://news.temple.edu/news/2016-07-05/temple-nominates-joanne-epps-university-provost>

Sincerely,

Neil D. Theobald

Letter to the Editor from Past President Tricia Jones



The Quality of Mercy is Not Strained .

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This Saturday we lost one of the great people of the 20th century. Elie Wiesel was a Nobel Peace Prize winner, Holocaust survivor and author who consistently spoke on behalf of those without voice. He has been a hero of mine since I read his book, *Night*, as a middle school student. It was in attempting to understand his recounting of his Holocaust experiences that I decided to study and practice conflict resolution and peace education. And over this past week I have been drawn back to thinking of how seemingly small behaviors create trajectories that define us – for better or worse. I have also been reminded of his admonition:

There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.

So, I am protesting the manner in which we have talked about each other this week in a far too public format. As I stated in an earlier Letter to the Editor of the Faculty Herald on another issue this winter, “. . . we all have a responsibility to Temple University to consider how our discourse affects others. . .”

I stand with Paul LaFollette in his critique of the ways that the dismissal of Provost Hai-Lung Dai was communicated to the Temple community and beyond. And I stand with Paul in his congratulations and sincere acknowledgement of the quality of our newly appointed Provost Joanne A. Epps. I believe we are fortunate to have her in this position. I was very pleased, in my last days as Faculty Senate President, to send her name forth from the Faculty Senate Steering Committee to President Theobald as an example of the kind of leader who we believed would successfully move us forward in action and tone.

Nor am I questioning the right of President Theobald to make whatever decision he deems necessary regarding the person who serves as his provost. He clearly has that right. President Theobald did communicate with the Faculty Senate Officers at points in the dismissal process and received two letters from the officers and FSSC about our concerns. We appreciate and acknowledge that.

I wish the manner of discussing the dismissal of Hai-Lung Dai was more respectful of what Provost Dai contributed to Temple. That there was no acknowledgement at all from the administration of Dai’s work and accomplishments in the announcement to the university or in the initial story in the *Inquirer* struck me as harsh and sad. I believe others shared this perception. I also believe that this method diminished our institution in the eyes of the academic community.

One response from the administration has been that “we do not discuss personnel issues in public.” Well, actually they do and did and in a very public way. Firing someone is a personnel decision. That response also comes with a secondary barb quite difficult to defend against. It implies that there are aspects of Provost Dai’s performance that went beyond a difference of opinion between leaders about the direction of the academic programs. It suggests, hopefully unintentionally, some level of wrongdoing on Dai’s part. Further, that suggestion happened in an arena in which there is not an equal access to voice. Without being able to respond the suspicion lingers and impacts all of us.

What did it gain Temple to air these decisions in this way? What did it cost us? We may have different perceptions of that, but it is difficult for me to see why we needed to go in this direction or to see how the gain could outweigh the costs.

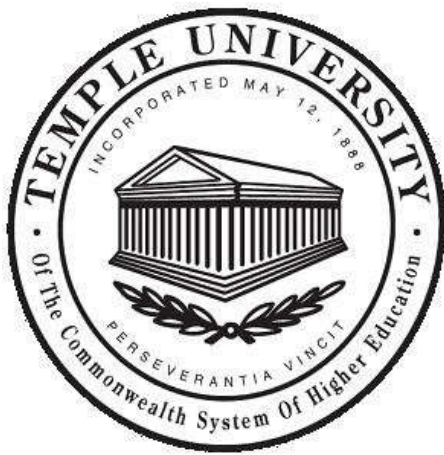
Does this behavior model what we would hope to enact as standards of civility and collegiality? I’m not a perfect person and I own that, so please don’t consider this a “holier-than-thou” sermon. Over the last two years I have seen increasing incivility in our conversations with and about each other and we need to address this head-on. As I said at the end of the December 2015 University Faculty Senate meeting on this issue, “If we don’t treat one another with respect, how can we demand that others treat us that way?” I respectfully ask all

faculty and administrators to take our highest roads – listen to and follow our better angels. We can communicate difficult decisions without *ad hominem* attacks.

How would it help for the President to issue a statement of acknowledgement of Dai's contributions without calling into question the President's right to remove his provost? Many would welcome this as the behavior of a strong leader interested in healing this rift and moving forward. Honestly, such acknowledgment for Dai is deserved. Whether you agreed or disagreed with Provost Dai it is undeniable that he contributed to Temple during his term as Provost.

As with almost every condition of the human experience, Shakespeare said it well if not best. Thus, I end this with Portia's lament from *The Merchant of Venice*. Let us show respect and mercy to one another – let us answer Paul LaFollette's call for collegiality in spirit and action not merely for instrumentality.

“The quality of mercy is not strained.
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest. It becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown.
His scepter shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings,
But mercy is above this scepter'd sway.
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings.
It is an attribute to God himself.
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.”
-Merchant of Venice, Act 4, Scene 1



A Letter to the Editor from Professor Marina Angel – Beasley School of Law



I was an employee-side Employment lawyer and a union-side Labor lawyer and am therefore very pro-employee. I have written extensively for over 30 years about colleges and universities and especially about the need for faculty participation in university decision making.

BUT, if ever a Provost deserved to be removed from office, Hai-Lung Dai did. A \$22,000,000 (Twenty Two Million Dollar) overrun in his budget alone is justifies removal from office.

Have some of the Officers of the Senate and some of the Members of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee (FSSC) forgotten, that Dai ignored recommendations of the Senate's Committee on Administrative and Trustee Appointments (CATA), when he even bother to consult CATA, to the point where it was difficult to find faculty to serve on that committee?

Have they forgotten that Dai cut the budget of the Faculty Senate's Research Programs and Policies Committee (RPPC) (which I was elected to chair), a committee half of whose members were elected by the faculty and half appointed by the FSSC, to less than \$25,000 for grants to faculty throughout the university. AT THE SAME TIME he created his own committee composed of faculty and administrators he picked without any faculty consultation to administer a MULTI-DOLLAR POT OF GRANT MONEY? Dai's committee gave a very large grant to a faculty member whom RPPC refused to give a \$2,500 grant.

Have they forgotten that Dai denied tenure to faculty overwhelmingly supported by their colleagues, deans, and the Council of Deans for

his own unstated reasons? That he ignored all requests for reasons for the denials of tenure?

All these actions of Hai-Lung Dai and multiple other actions during his tenure show not only a lack of collegiality but contempt for faculty and faculty governance. The call by Editor and Past President Paul LaFollette and Past President Tricia Jones for "collegiality" regarding Dai's removal are inappropriate.

As soon as Dai was removed, he "lawyered up."

He wants reasons publicly stated by Temple University, so that he can scrutinize them to try to find grounds for a lawsuit. He stands no chance for winning a lawsuit. He was an "employee at will," which means he could be removed at any time for any reason.

