

Professor Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer

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**TO:** Boston University Faculty and Staff

**FROM:** Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer

**DATE:** September 15, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Formation of the Search Advisory Committee for the Dean of the Boston University College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Virginia Sapiro, Dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Political Science, recently announced that she plans to step down from her role as Dean at the conclusion of the 2014-2015 academic year.

Dean Sapiro has served with distinction since her appointment in 2007 and has led a wide variety of important efforts to advance the College Arts and Sciences (CAS) during her term as Dean. Her notable achievements include the development of the CAS First Year Experience to ensure the academic success of our undergraduate students early in their time at BU, transformation of the BU Center for the Humanities into a vibrant organization for the promotion of humanities scholarship across campus, the launch of the Pardee School for Global Studies to capitalize on our strength in International Relations and Area Studies, and countless administrative and organizational improvements within CAS that ensure that we continually strive for excellence in service to our faculty and students.

A national search is planned to identify the next Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Transitions in leadership at the decanal level provide important opportunities for the University community to reflect on the experiences and attributes that we seek for the individuals charged with providing vision and future direction for our academic units. Further, because of the role that CAS occupies as the hub for liberal education and its status as the largest academic unit of the University, the search for the next Dean of CAS is a particularly important undertaking.

The process for constituting a Dean Search Advisory Committee, outlined in the [BU Faculty Handbook](#), specifies that: *“the advisory committee shall consist of three faculty members elected by the faculty of the School for which a dean is to be selected, two faculty members elected by the Faculty Council from other Schools, and as many as three members designated by the provost.”*

The faculty members who are appointed to serve on the Advisory Committee will have responsibility for directing the search effort and should be among our most thoughtful, engaged, and committed scholars, teachers, and leaders. Potential committee members should demonstrate the capacity to proactively attract and recruit outstanding candidates for the CAS

deanship; the faculty most well positioned to carry out this work will have significant research and professional profiles within their disciplines. Please note that no member of the Advisory Committee may be considered him or herself for the position of Dean.

Accordingly, I am requesting that faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences organize internally to solicit nominations and to elect three faculty representatives to the Search Advisory Committee. I have asked Susan K. Jackson, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, to work with each of the groups of Divisional Department Chairs in CAS to identify one Department Chair from each Division (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural and Computational Sciences) to serve as an Election Committee that will conduct the election of faculty who will then serve as members from CAS on the Dean's Search Advisory Committee. The three individuals who would comprise the Election Committee should neither want to serve on the Dean Search Advisory Committee nor want to be a candidate for the Dean's position themselves. I will hold a special meeting for the CAS Faculty on **Monday, September 22, 2014**, from 4pm to 5pm in CAS 522 to discuss the search effort.

In addition, President Brown and I welcome input into the state of the College, the qualities and qualifications the next Dean should possess and the search process itself. We are eager to hear directly about the issues that are of greatest concern to faculty as we begin the process of selecting the next Dean of CAS. This input will help to inform our deliberations about the next Dean of CAS, and we encourage you to write to us directly.

Boston University's Faculty Council will also be sending an email communication to all members of the faculty on both campuses requesting nominations of candidates external to CAS to fill the two elected seats on the Dean's Search Advisory Committee. Nominations or expressions of interest can be sent to the Faculty Council ([fafc@bu.edu](mailto:fafc@bu.edu)). Please note that membership on the Faculty Council itself is not an eligibility requirement for election to the Search Advisory Committee by the Faculty Council. I request submission of the results of both of these elections by **Friday, October 10, 2014**. Following receipt, I will appoint additional members so that the Committee will be assembled and prepared to begin its work by **Monday, October 20, 2014**.

The CAS Dean Search Advisory Committee will be charged with responsibility for:

- Refining the initial position description;
- Actively soliciting nominations for candidates from appropriate sources within the University and nationally;
- Actively recruiting outstanding candidates who have a record of administrative leadership and achievement and an academic profile suitable for appointment at the level of Professor at Boston University;
- Evaluating the qualifications and assessing the strength of nominees and applicants;
- Consulting with the faculty of CAS and other School and University stakeholders on finalists;
- Recommending the names of 3-5 qualified candidates, outlining the strengths and limitations of each, for final selection by the President and approval by the Board of Trustees.

The members of the CAS Dean Search Advisory Committee should not vote as part of its process and deliberations. Rather, the work should be accomplished by discussion and consensus. Ideally, the committee will conclude its work and submit its recommendations no later than **Monday, April 13, 2015**.

The College of Arts and Sciences is frequently referred to as “the heart of Boston University” – nurturing the discovery, creation, transmission and application of knowledge and understanding across the humanities and social, natural and computational sciences. The next Dean of CAS will be charged with further enhancing the quality and stature of the College. I encourage all faculty to contribute their expertise and assistance to the formation of this Dean’s Search Advisory Committee and to the success of its important charge.

cc: Robert A. Brown, President  
Steve Brady, Chair of the Faculty Council  
Provost’s Cabinet