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**TO:** Boston University Faculty and Staff

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

**DATE:** October 11, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Formation of Search Committee for the Next Dean of the College of Fine Arts

In December 2014, we suspended the search for a new Dean of the College of Fine Arts after identifying a series of structural and strategic challenges that would have hindered our efforts to execute a successful national-level recruitment.

At that time, I appointed Professor Lynne Allen, Director of the School of Visual Arts, to act as Dean *ad interim*. Dean *ad interim* Allen assumed her role in May 2015 and has provided outstanding leadership during this crucial period of transition.

Among Dean *ad interim* Allen's duties during this time was assembling a Task Force of CFA faculty and staff to carefully explore fundamental questions about the existing structures within the College's three schools, to examine their strategic visions and budgetary constraints, and to recommend substantive next steps that would place CFA on the strongest possible footing as it re-initiates a national dean search.

This summer, the Task Force completed its work after a series of far-ranging internal conversations within the CFA community and has submitted a set of thoughtful recommendations to President Brown and me for how best to move forward. I would like to thank the Task Force for its ideas and for what I know were many hours of difficult work in an effort both to gain input and reach consensus. Our efforts to elevate CFA's position both within BU and as a national destination for artistic study and creation are stronger for their contribution.

With the important work of the CFA Task Force now complete, it is time to advance a search for the next Dean of the College of Fine Arts. Given the very special role that the College of Fine Arts plays at Boston University, the search for the next Dean of CFA presents a critical task for the whole of the BU community.

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 teachers, leaders, scholars, and creators. Potential committee members should demonstrate the capacity to proactively attract and recruit outstanding candidates for the CFA deanship; the faculty most well positioned to carry out this work will be actively engaged in significant ways in their professional communities and within their academic and creative disciplines. Please note that no member of the Advisory Committee may be considered him or herself for the position of Dean.

I am requesting that faculty in the College of Fine Arts organize internally to solicit nominations and to elect three faculty representatives – one from each of the three Schools of Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts – to the Search Advisory Committee. Any individual who would have a role in overseeing the election within CFA should neither want to serve on the Dean Search Advisory Committee nor want to be a candidate for the Dean’s position him or herself. Accordingly, I have asked Assistant Dean John Amend to take responsibility for facilitating the election of the three faculty representatives. I will hold a special meeting for the CFA Faculty in the coming weeks to discuss the search effort.

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 CFA 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, November 4, 2016**. Following receipt, I will appoint additional members so that the Committee will be assembled and prepared to begin its work by **Monday, November 14, 2016**.

The CFA 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 or creative 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 CFA and other College 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 CFA 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 **Friday, April 28, 2017**.

The next Dean of CFA 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  
J. Robb Dixon, Chair of the Faculty Council  
Provost's Cabinet