

**Dr. Kenneth Lutchen, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer ad interim**

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**TO:** Boston University Faculty and Staff

**FROM:** Kenneth Lutchen, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer ad interim 

**DATE:** September 5, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Professor David Chard to Step Down as Dean of the Wheelock College of Education & Human Development; Formation of the Dean Search Advisory Committee

I write to share news that Professor David Chard, who has guided the Wheelock College of Education & Human Development as its dean since 2018, will step down from his leadership role at the conclusion of the 2023-2024 academic year and return to the faculty.

Since arriving first as interim dean following the [historic merger](#) of BU and the former Wheelock College, Dean Chard (who'd previously served as the college's president) has been the leader Wheelock has needed, helped both ensure its successful integration into the BU community and steered its continued development as one of the country's preeminent institutions of education. He has been a relationship- and community-builder within Wheelock and a valued partner at the University level, playing a vital role in our 10-year strategic planning process and actively engaging in our efforts to advance BU as a diverse and welcoming community for faculty, staff, and students of all backgrounds.

Dean Chard was appointed [permanent dean](#) in 2021. In the time since, he has continued to build on Wheelock's stature through efforts to enhance its relevance and increase diversity, maintain and grow graduate enrollment, substantially elevate its extramural funding, and help ensure its long-term financial stability. This has included the creation of high-profile named professorships focused in the areas of early childhood wellbeing and education innovation; the development of international partnerships and financial aid initiatives that have helped boost master's enrollments and added important new degree programs; the expansion of external research support by over 50%; the renovation and modernization currently underway of 621 Commonwealth Avenue and 2 Silber Way; and, most recently, the [recruitment](#) of Dr. Anthony Jack from Harvard University as an associate professor of higher education leadership and inaugural faculty director of the Newbury Center. Five years after the merger, Wheelock is a strengthened and competitive college, with nationally respected programs that consistently turn out talented and accomplished teachers, school leaders, child mental health professionals, policymakers, and researchers. Dean Chard's strategic vision, experienced leadership, and collaborative approach have been essential to this, and we thank him for his service.

A national search is planned to identify the next dean of Wheelock. 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 Wheelock 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 disciplines. Please note that no member of the advisory committee may be considered for the position of dean.

I am requesting that the faculty in Wheelock organize internally to solicit nominations and to elect three faculty representatives to the search advisory committee. Faculty members well-positioned to serve in this capacity will be those actively engaged in significant ways in their professional communities and within their academic disciplines. They should additionally be willing to coordinate with faculty not on the committee who have colleagues and networks likely to yield excellent candidates. Any individual who would have a role in overseeing the election within Wheelock should neither wish to serve on the dean search advisory committee nor want to be a candidate for the dean’s position. Accordingly, I have asked Catherine O’Connor, professor of language education and linguistics, to organize the election to identify the Wheelock representatives. I will hold a special meeting for the Wheelock faculty later this week 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 Wheelock to fill the two elected seats on the dean 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 no later than September 28. Following receipt, I will appoint additional members so that the committee will be assembled and prepared to begin its work immediately.

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

- Proposing refinements to 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 Wheelock and other school and University stakeholders on finalists; and

- Recommending the names of 3-5 qualified candidates to me, outlining the strengths and limitations of each, for final selection by the president and me, with approval by the Board of Trustees.

The members of the Wheelock 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 March 1, 2024.

Please join me in thanking David Chard for his service to Boston University and to the Wheelock College of Education & Human Development. The formal appointment of the dean search advisory committee for Wheelock is forthcoming, and I appreciate your contributions to and support of the search effort.

cc: Kenneth W. Freeman, President ad interim  
Kimberly Howard, Chair, Faculty Council  
Provost's Cabinet