To: Dr. Hyma Gogineni
CC: WesternU Faculty

Dear Dr. Gogineni,

A heartfelt "thank you" for the wonderful opportunity to engage in an open dialogue and to have the opportunity to clarify areas of confusion regarding the topics provided by you.

I appreciate that although the concerns and questions provided by you represent issues raised by some faculty, but not all faculty, I have still chosen to include the entire Academic Assembly as a recipient to ensure that all faculty are fully informed on these putative concerns and not just a select few faculty.

Thank you for meeting with me on April 24, 2023 regarding the WSCUC Institutional Response. During that meeting you presented a series of concerns from some faculty to my attention and I asked that you share them with me in writing for my informed review and response.

On May 26, 2023, you forwarded me your talking points. Enclosed below you will find my responses to each of the concerns raised. To ensure there is no misunderstanding, I have also embedded the exact excerpt from your original document into my response.

As you are aware, my priority has been open communication and dialogue, and transparency, between my office and other branches of governance. In fact, over the past year, I have prioritized regular meetings (e.g. weekly and monthly) with the Academic Senate, Dean's Council, Staff Council, Student Government Association, and Academic Assembly at which time any and all topics are encouraged for discussion.

Most recently, to enhance communication and dialogue further, I initiated "State of the University Address" meetings (e.g. three time yearly), and Coffee and Tea meetings (e.g. monthly).

This document and my responses represent yet another example of the evidence-based civil, open, transparent, and communicative dialogue that we enjoy.

Thank you again for providing these questions.

1. **Shared Governance:**
   a. *Academic Senate Chair and Grievance Committee Chair were placed on administrative leave within 3 weeks after WSCUC visit - This was a significant concern to faculty.*
      i. *Lack of communication to faculty at large from administration – raising much speculation and faculty are demanding transparent account leading to their sudden leave of absence as this is impacting faculty governance.*
      ii. *President during the "State of the University" address said, "Our Academic Senate Members, Raj Kandpal (gestures to the audience*

as if Dr. Kandpal is present), and Vice-Chair Hyma Gogineni. I've been meeting with them regularly, and it's really great to get their input." This did not address faculty concern that Dr. Kandpal's removal and gag-order from campus has not been announced to the faculty, and gave the impression that it's "business as usual". WSCUC asks that all administrative decisions include the rationale and evidence for a given decision and that rationale and evidence be clearly communicated to the faculty.

Response:

Thank you for raising this concern.

As stated in the University Faculty Handbook, the University supports nationally recognized standards of shared governance, as well as the role that faculty play in the planning and decision-making processes which are outlined in the University Faculty Handbook ("Handbook"). At WesternU, shared governance refers to the shared governance principles articulated in this Handbook, which in relevant part stated the following:

> *All decisions made must align with, and decision makers must respect, institutional and programmatic accreditation requirements and legal and regulatory compliance; budgetary implications must be balanced with financial resources.*

At WesternU, we appreciate and strongly endorse transparency and evidence-based decision making at all levels with respect to shared governance activities, subject to the shared governance principles outlined in the Handbook.

Fortunately, as you well know, WesternU's priority has been open communication and dialogue between my office and other branches of governance. In fact, over the past year, I have prioritized regular meetings (e.g. weekly and monthly) with the Academic Senate, Dean's Council, Staff Council, Student Government Association, and Academic Assembly. Furthermore, please know that the University Council was created for the specific purpose to empower the voice of all 5 branches of governance and to build dialogue between the 5 branches of governance. Moreover, most recently, as you know, to enhance communication and dialogue further, I initiated "State of the University Address" meetings (e.g. three time yearly), and Coffee and Tea meetings (e.g. monthly).

As was previously communicated to you, and to the Academic Senate, Academic Assembly, and during the Coffee and Tea events, the University policy regarding confidential personnel/Human Resources matters is to protect the psychological safety of all personnel involved by respecting the confidentiality of the personnel matters and adhering to legal obligations under associated privacy laws.

Personnel matters, which include the implementation of administrative leave, are subject to legal requirements, such that the associated information is deemed confidential and the University is restricted from disclosing any information related to such matters. Consequently, the University is legally prohibited from broadly disclosing information related to personnel matters such as any identifying information related to the issuance of administrative leave. To do otherwise would be a violation of confidentiality and privacy laws, institutional policies and procedures governing personnel matters, and would undermine the integrity and objectivity of the on-going matter.

I can understand the curiosity and concern around the item raised; however, the shared governance principles in the Handbook, does not include personnel matters of this scope or nature, likely because this subject matter is highly regulated. In general, personnel matters that pertain to and/or involve personnel records, compliance requirements, complaints, and/or incident reports are subject to certain standards which significantly restrict the University's ability to disclose information on such matters.

According to our shared governance principles detailed in the Handbook, all decisions must align with legal or regulatory requirements. Given that, our adherence to this important principle in addressing personnel matters (and other items subject to legally-mandated privacy restriction), would not represent a violation of shared governance principles. Further, I must highlight that I have addressed this issue with the Academic Senate when this inquiry was specifically raised during an Academic Senate meeting, initially. During that meeting I conveyed to the Academic Senate that this matter is subject to confidentiality as it was a personnel matter. Given that I shared this information with the Senators in attendance, I anticipated that the Senators, as representatives of faculty in their applicable Colleges, would have conveyed this information to those faculty who raised such concerns.

This might represent an excellent opportunity to learn more about how Academic Senate conveys important information from Administration and/or my office to its broader constituents. It is imperative that the entire faculty body be fully and clearly informed on updates that I provide to the Academic Senators during our regular meetings and to date I have been relying on Academic Senate's communication mechanism to achieve that goal.

I would love to explore opportunities to assist in addressing any communication gaps and would be happy to revert to a formal communication channel to address raised concerns and circulate such responses to the faculty-at-large.

Lastly, I must emphasize that the personnel matter is a wholly separate and independent matter from the WSCUC Site Visit and process. During the "State of the University" I shared pictures of individuals in leadership positions representing the 5 branches of governance.

Likewise, I shared pictures of senate leadership, including pictures of the elected leaders: former Senate Chair, Raj Kandpal, and Senate Vice-Chair, Hyma Gogineni. I am not aware that Dr. Kandpal was ever removed from that role and to my knowledge he occupied the elected role as Senate Chair during the on-going personnel matter, until you

assumed the position in accordance with his term. Furthermore, regular meetings with senate leadership have continued as well.

In conclusion, the University's legal inability to broadly disclose more meaningful information related to this concern is aligned with the shared governance principles in the Handbook and the explanation related to the University's inability to share more information was previously communicated to Academic Senate on several occasions. The shared governance principles require decisions to adhere to legal and regulatory requirements and therefore the University's position on personnel matters is not indicative of a lack of shared governance nor is it inconsistent with the shared governance principles.

2. **Board Resolutions:**
   a. *An email communication from President Farias-Eisner within one month of the WSCUC visit raised further concerns related to Shared Governance "a few resolutions the Board of Trustees have passed after hosting a Special Site Visit and Exit meeting with members of the WSCUC Senior College and University Commission last month.*
      i. *Dedicated to a culture of civility and inclusion*
      ii. *Creation of the division of institutional ethics, compliance and culture*
      iii. *Strategic plan on Shared Governance What is this? Do you know? Can he clarify how this will be done?*
      iv. *Enactment of a campus-wide referendum process.*

   Faculty raised significant concerns related to the last bullet point as the BOT did not follow policy on policy creation which requires going through the University Policy Office, was not approved by all constituents, violates autonomy of Robert's Rules of Order in regard to the introduction of new business items and voting protocols during regular Academic Senate and or Academic Assembly meetings.

Response:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this item and provide important clarification on this issue.

As stated in the University Faculty Handbook, the University supports nationally recognized standards of shared governance, as well as the role that faculty play in the planning and decision-making processes which are outlined in the University Faculty Handbook ("Handbook"). At WesternU, shared governance refers to the shared governance principles articulated in this Handbook, which in relevant part stated the following:

> *While the Board of Trustees is the legal fiduciary of the University, it recognizes that decisions and policies are best made when there is*

significant contribution from those with expertise and those who will carry out the decision or policy. Therefore, the Board delegates varying degrees of decision-making authority. All decisions made must align with, and decision makers must respect, institutional and programmatic accreditation requirements and legal and regulatory compliance; budgetary implications must be balanced with financial resources.

The Association of Governing Boards (AGB), provides instructive guidance on the concept of fiduciary duties. As legal fiduciaries, the Board of Trustees bear the major and ultimate responsibility for stewardship of our institution. While state laws may address certain expectation for the Trustees, the application of a Trustees fiduciary duties typically looks like a Trustee exercising sound judgment guided by integrity, observation, experience, insight, and institutional policy to ensure that the institution is aligned with, at a minimum, institutional and programmatic accreditation requirements, and legal and regulatory compliance.

Within the scope of the Trustees absolute authority as our legal fiduciaries and to demonstrate their commitment to WSCUC's recommendations, the Board ratified three resolutions; however, the consternation appears to be limited to the following:

A. BOT Resolution # 2: Addressing operationalization of shared governance.

WSCUC commended the Board on the development of the shared governance principles and the expanded shared governance structure which includes the five branches of governance. To build on this foundation, it is imperative that appropriate guidance be provided to all the governance groups regarding the operationalization of shared governance activities. WesternU currently already has several policies in place that already operationalize the shared governance principles which may not be widely known to the campus. Accordingly, the Board issued a resolution directing the University to develop an operational manual to meet the WSCUC recommendation. This resolution is not a decision or policy but a directive to the University.

In accordance with the Board resolution, it is expected that the university president will take the initiative to "formulate and present an operational document that systematically addresses the efficacy of shared governance principles, policies, structures, and activities at the University." This document will serve to operationalize the shared governance practices at WesternU, while also improving processes to ensure the timely dissemination of information. All university governance bodies will be encouraged and invited to actively participate in the development of this document, expanding upon the principles advocated in the University Faculty Handbook and widely embraced within the academic community, as endorsed by respected organizations such as AAUP, AGB, and numerous other universities and colleges.

B. BOT Resolution #3: Campus-wide referendums.

Based on the concerns raised related to this resolution, I see that there is a clear misunderstanding related to this specific resolution. Particularly, you shared the following:

> *Faculty raised significant concerns related to the last bullet point as the BOT did not follow policy on policy creation which requires going through the University Policy Office, was not approved by all constituents, violates autonomy of Robert's Rules of Order in regard to the introduction of new business items and voting protocols during regular Academic Senate and or Academic Assembly meetings.*

The University Policy Committee governs the review and development of institutional policies and procedures. Policies and Procedures that apply to the Board of Trustees would be subject to review and development at the level of the Board of Trustees and through their Governance Committee, not at the University level. This Campus-wide referendum process, as communicated in the campus communication, is a Board initiative and subject to the purview of the Board of Trustees.

As is the case at other mature universities, a resolution from one governance group may request action from the Board or President on matters or concerns that may impact other governance groups and which may require informed feedback from the other governance group before an institutional decision is rendered.

However, this process would only apply to resolutions from esteemed bodies such as the Academic Senate, Academic Assembly, Deans Council, Staff Council, Student Government Association, or the University Executive Operations Team, which are submitted to the President or the Board.

Moreover, this process will not modify any procedural requirements associated with the resolutions of any specific governance group nor interfere with the facilitation of their voting protocols or Robert Rules of Order.

The campus-wide referendum process allows the Board to receive such important feedback and thereby ensure the University is engaging in a fully informed timely decision-making process and ability to communicate comprehensively with the campus community related to any associated rationale or justification associated with institutional decisions.

In essence, this process serves as a valuable means of facilitating efficient and effective communication, thereby enabling the university to uphold the principles of shared governance.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge and recognize the crucial role played by the Academic Senate in conducting faculty affairs, as emphasized in Section III and Appendix 1: Constitution and Bylaws of the Academic Senate within the University Faculty Handbook. The introduction of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Academic Senate explicitly states that "the Academic Senate possesses the

authority to conduct studies, generate reports, and provide recommendations on all matters significantly impacting the faculty's work." By utilizing the referendum process, these recommendations can be extended beyond the faculty alone, when such recommendations may have an impact beyond solely faculty, reaching the entire university community. This process only occurs after the parliamentary procedures for discussion, debate, and voting, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the Handbook, which the Academic Senate diligently follows.

In conclusion, the Board of Trustee's issuance of the above identified resolutions is within the Board's absolute authority as legal fiduciaries of the University and is aligned with the shared governance principles. These resolutions are not indicative of a lack of shared governance nor is it inconsistent with the shared governance principles contained in the Faculty Handbook.

3. <u>**University Level Administrators Searches:**</u>
   a. *Shared Governance principles on the Selection of University-level administrators and selection of interim university level- administrators*
      i. *Faculty participated and the Academic Senate provided its opinion based on the Shared Governance Principles section, Part III in the University Faculty Handbook*
      ii. Faculty felt that the decision were not made in a timely manner and the decision process regarding the selection of various administrative positions and the justifications were not communicated to the university constituents
      iii. Faculty raised concerns regarding the actual selection process even though the National searches yielded excellent candidates for these administrative positions most positions were filled with internal candidates whose qualifications were far below those of external candidates
      iv. The description that was provided in the WSCUS response report is misleading as it only describes the processes but not the outcomes of these processes.

<u>**Response:**</u>

Thank you for the opportunity to address this concern.

As stated in the University Faculty Handbook, the University supports nationally recognized standards of shared governance, as well as the role that faculty play in the planning and decision-making processes which are outlined in the University Faculty Handbook ("Handbook"). At WesternU, shared governance refers to the shared

governance principles articulated in this Handbook, which in relevant part stated the following:

> *Faculty are delegated defined levels of responsibility and authority through shared governance in various aspects of academic, personnel, and administrative decision-making areas. All decisions made must align with, and decision makers must respect, institutional and programmatic accreditation requirements and legal and regulatory compliance; budgetary implications must be balanced with financial resources.*

> *Selection of University-level administrators (president, vice president, Provost, and Deans): Administrators are selected for appointment according to university procedures that include national searches. Faculty participate in administrative searches as committee members. National searches for these positions are recommended.*

> *Selection of interim University-level administrators: For interim University-level administrators, the Academic Senate provides its opinion to the president or Board of Trustees, as appropriate.*

As is the case at other mature universities, each search process at WesternU is conducted independently, separate from one another. According to the University Faculty Handbook, shared governance is demonstrated when the hiring of University level administrators occurs through a search process facilitated in alignment with University procedures and through the participation of faculty as committee members in such searches. Further, shared governance is further supported when decisions are made in alignment with institutional and accreditation requirements and legal and regulatory requirements.

As you may be aware, the University implemented a procedure related to the hiring of University level Administrators and related to the interim and acting appointments of University-level Administrators in July 2022, titled "Institutional Guidelines: Appointment of University-level Administrators" and "Institutional Guidelines: Acting or Interim Appointments of University-level Administrators". The Institutional Guidelines were designed to ensure that imminent and immediate searches are facilitated in accordance with legal and HR requirements related to confidentiality, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles, conflict of interest and ethics, and fairness.

The University has made diligent efforts to promptly assemble search committees, considering the available resources and individuals who generously volunteer their time to serve on these committees, and ensuring appropriate faculty representation on such searches.

As desired, there was significant involvement of faculty in numerous administrative search committees. Approximately half of the identified administrative searches for this past year have been concluded.

Some searches, such as those for the provost and vice president for research positions, have also involved the assistance of external search firms. These firms have been responsible for advertising the positions, recruiting qualified candidates, and providing thorough reference checks and media reviews when appropriate.

Many of our searches have entailed multiple rounds of interviews and even included the candidates visiting our campus to engage with various constituent groups relevant to the respective positions. It is important to understand that these comprehensive processes do require a significant amount of time. Once the search committee has submitted its recommendations to the appointing officer, there are several additional steps that need to be taken before a candidate can be officially appointed and announced to the appropriate university community.

All hiring decisions adhere to university policies and legal requirements as stipulated by federal, state, and local laws. Administrative positions that also involve faculty appointments necessitate additional consultations with the dean of the respective college where the appointment will take place and the respective College level process governing faculty appointments would also need to occur before any campus announcement would be issued.

The time required to complete these actions can vary significantly. For instance, reference checks may require additional follow-up, and negotiations regarding the date of hire may result in a more extended start date. To comply with respective privacy laws, it is imperative that all records, deliberations, and consultations remain strictly confidential throughout and following this process, which limits the University's ability to disclose substantive information related to the scope and depth of hiring decisions and supporting rationale.

When administrative appointments are announced, they are accompanied by detailed statements that summarize the qualifications of the selected individuals. Under this administration and in accordance with the approved Institutional Guidelines, new administrative positions have been filled by candidates who have been endorsed as finalists by the respective search committees and presented to the appointing officer. Each finalist underwent a thorough evaluation by the respective search committee, affirming their competence and suitability for the position. The appointing officer subsequently selects from this pool of highly qualified finalists.

I am happy to share these Guidelines; and with the arrival of the new Chief Human Resources Officer, as you know, these Guidelines are currently being converted into institutional policy through the University's Policy on Policies.

In conclusion, the facilitation of the University-level Administrators searches was performed in compliance with the shared governance principles in the Handbook and the issues raised are not indicative of a lack of shared governance.

4. **Representation on University Committees:**
   a. Faculty raised concerns related to the current structure of the existing university committees including the HR Advisory Committee, the University Council, and COLA/Salary parity *Ad hoc* committee as being too large, heavy on representatives from the top Administration and are overwhelming for many members. This may lead to fear, intimidation and possible retaliation. In addition, any voting process would be unfair due to the large representation of the administration and its sub-units.

Response:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this question.

As stated in the University Faculty Handbook, the University supports nationally recognized standards of shared governance, as well as the role that faculty play in the planning and decision-making processes which are outlined in the University Faculty Handbook ("Handbook"). At WesternU, shared governance refers to the shared governance principles articulated in this Handbook, which in relevant part stated the following:

> *Decisions about support services including HR, IT, Facilities and Buildings (e.g., demolitions, new construction, renovations): Faculty provide advice and information relative to institutional support service decisions that affect their academic roles, duties, and responsibilities.*

> *Institutional academic budgetary planning: Faculty influence budget actions that affect the faculty's academic roles, duties, and responsibilities. Faculty are included on University-level committees charged with review and recommendation regarding budgets, capital programs, and facilities.*

> *Institutional strategic and capital programs planning: In the setting of University strategic plans, annual budgets, and facilities and capital programs, mutual decision making is achieved through frequent communication during the development phase. Faculty do not formally approve the documents, but they are consulted and heard throughout the development process. Communication and explanation constitute integral parts of the process. College and sub-unit plans are developed with faculty following the customary procedures in the various Colleges. Faculty participate in the development of the University-wide strategic plan through faculty membership on study committees, the publication of drafts inviting comment, and ultimate recommendation of the plan by the academic senate.*

> *Institutional non-academic budgetary planning: In the event of an unexpected, significant change to budgeted expenditures, immediate*

capital plans, or facilities support, the most cognizant senior administrative officer meets with the academic senate to explain the circumstances, answer questions, and receive comments, whenever practicable, before final decisions are made.

The Committees that are being referenced in the faculty concerns fall into the categories outlined above by the shared governance principles. As you will note above, some of the shared governance principles do not require faculty participation on such Committees; however, the University, in its commitment to ensuring broad representation of all the governance groups, have endeavored to include appropriate representation on such committees. These committees relate to matters that are of broad institutional administrative impact and require appropriate representation from University administration, as a matter of accountability and ownership, to ensure that the concerns from all the potentially impacted representative groups are heard.

It is crucial that we foster an environment where individuals can engage in meetings and conduct business without experiencing intimidation or retaliation. Considering this, we would appreciate hearing suggestions from the faculty on how we can alleviate or even eliminate these concerns. Specifically, we would like to understand which interactions within the committees have contributed to these apprehensions and whether they were discussed within the committee itself. Additionally, it would be valuable to know if other constituent groups share these concerns.

The HR Advisory and COLA/Salary Parity committees were established as temporary ad hoc committees. The insights gained from addressing the queries could guide the formation of future ad hoc committees. The establishment of the University Council aimed to support shared governance in a comprehensive and efficient manner. As part of this process, the council may consider assessing its composition and purpose, and subsequently make recommendations to the university president. Additionally, certain task forces such as the HR Advisory Committee and the COLA/Salary Parity committee were established in response to faculty inquiries and requests.

As emphasized in Section II.L of the University Faculty Handbook, faculty members are expected to engage in service activities within and outside the university, alongside their teaching and scholarship responsibilities, as an integral part of their core responsibilities. We have observed that a few faculty members appear to be assuming numerous service obligations, particularly in terms of university-wide service on committees. It may be worthwhile to explore opportunities for more equitable distribution of these responsibilities among faculty members to alleviate the burden. As the university continues to expand and evolve across two campuses, it is essential to remain mindful of individual workloads and evolving needs.

In conclusion, the composition of the University Committees referenced above are consistent with the shared governance principles in the Handbook and the issues raised are not indicative of a lack of shared governance.

5. **Institutional Principles of Civility**

    a. *Implementation of Principles of Civility* was recommended in the WSCUC report as part of all Shared Governance Activities – The response to the report shows that *"BOT issued a resolution directly responsive to these recommendations and adopted the Principles of Institutional Civility"* this is another example of not following Shared Governance Principles.

Response:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this question.

As previously addressed in Section 2, our Board of Trustees bears the important responsibility of providing diligent oversight to WesternU, especially with respect to accreditation requirements. In its resolution titled "Dedicated to a Culture of Civility and Inclusion," the Board expressed its commitment to fostering an environment characterized by evidence-based practices, civility, open communication, and respectful dialogue on our campuses.

These principles should form the basis of our campus community interactions. These principles are not only aligned with WSCUC's recommendations, but also supportive of the faculty raised concerns related to collegiality and psychological safety, which in fact was raised in your April 24th meeting and addressed in Section 4 of this document.

In conclusion, the adoption of these principles demonstrates support for shared governance and advancing the University's commitment towards enhancing interactions within our campus community.

6. **Hiring of Executive Liaison Officer/Board Professional and Creation of New Division:**
    Faculty raised significant concerns related to the new administrative appointments and unilateral decisions of the administration on both creating these positions and hiring practices for them. These are additional examples of lack of Shared Governance:

    i. Appointment of former academic senate leader as Executive Liaison Officer, gives the appearance and an increased Shared Governance when in fact this is another barrier between the President and the Academic Senate

    ii. Creation of the Division of Institutional Ethics, Compliance and Culture

    Faculty raised significant concerns regarding the institutional non-academic budgetary planning as many new administrative positions were created and consulting firms were hired without full disclosure of the overall cost of these new positions and consulting firms and its impact on the budgeted expenditures – this is another example of lack of shared governance principles.

Response:

Thank you for the opportunity to address this concern.

The Board Executive Liaison Officer (ELO) is a support function for the Board of Trustee and is not specifically related to the academic roles, duties, or responsibilities of faculty.

This role fulfills two primary WesternU needs, facilitated by the Office of the President:

1) A Board Professional to the Board of Trustees, with duties which include the day-to-day management of board affairs and management of relationship between the Board of Trustees and University leaders; and
2) As the functional manager responsible for the day-to-day responsibilities of facilitating and coordinating the intramural and extramural engagement for the Office of the President (e.g. internal and external engagement).

This position reports directly to the President of Western University of Health Sciences with a dotted line to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. This position was posted in 7/1/2022 and was formulated in response to WSCUC recommendations and follows precedent set by other institutions.

The creation of the ELO role was communicated to the Academic Senate over the course of several months prior to its posting and the formation of a search committee. The selection process for filling this position adhered to the same policy as other administrative positions within the university.

A crucial aspect of the ELO's job is to serve as WesternU's board professional which includes leading the planning, coordination, and facilitation of the Board of Trustees' work to effectively govern the university. The ELO provides support to the Board leadership in continuously reviewing the roles, responsibilities, and structure of Board committees.

The ELO strives to enhance clarity, accountability, and effectiveness within these committees and make recommendations to identify areas that may require additional support or changes. The ELO also assists in facilitating effective communication and engagement on behalf of the Office of the President with various groups, including the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, administrators, community partners, industry representatives, donors, alumni, and elected officials, among others.

The ELO collaborates with the President and executive leaders in strategic planning and problem resolution that impact significant segments of the university. Job responsibilities also include managing high-priority projects and programs aimed at accomplishing the university's mission and strategic vision across multiple divisions. The ELO informs and communicates with representatives of various constituents about project activities and encourages participation as needed.

I am disheartened that faculty would perceive the selection of a former Chair of Academic Senate as the ELO as creating a barrier between myself and Academic Senate and I can confirm that will simply not occur.

The University is extremely proud to have Dr. Cameron serving as the ELO and I firmly believe that his unique background, experience, and institutional knowledge will only enhance the role and relationship between the Office of the President and Academic Senate.

In conclusion, the hiring of an ELO and the performance of such duties is not indicative of a lack of shared governance nor is it inconsistent with the shared governance principles.

With respect to the Division of Institutional Ethics, Compliance and Culture, the University Faculty Handbook, the University supports nationally recognized standards of shared governance, as well as the role that faculty play in the planning and decision-making processes which are outlined in the University Faculty Handbook ("Handbook").

At WesternU, shared governance refers to the shared governance principles articulated in this Handbook, which in relevant part stated the following:

> *<u>Institutional non-academic budgetary planning:</u> In the event of an unexpected, significant change to budgeted expenditures, immediate capital plans, or facilities support, the most cognizant senior administrative officer meets with the academic senate to explain the circumstances, answer questions, and receive comments, whenever practicable, before final decisions are made.*

Consistent with the shared governance principles related to institutional non-academic budgetary planning, I met with Academic Senate on several occasions and shared the proposed Division of Institutional Ethics, Compliance and Culture. This division, as was communicated previously, is part of a larger university restructuring of administrative offices and reporting structures. Academic Senate was provided an opportunity to opine, ask questions and provide input.

This new division will house the OTIXEO office, and a dotted line from the already existing HEAR office, which has broad support from students, faculty, and staff. The division will also house a new institutional compliance and ethics office and an ombuds office that has been long sought by faculty and others.

While this division is still in the planning phases with respect to infrastructure and specialized roles, we are committed to providing additional information as it is available. Budget transparency is an ongoing effort.

WesternU is committed to supporting transparent budgetary planning and disclosure as appropriate and required under institutional policies and in alignment with the shared governance principles. If there are specific concerns, we would be happy to have additional discussions.

In conclusion, the establishment of this new division, occurred in a manner that was consistent with the shared governance principles and is not

indicative of a lack of shared governance nor is it inconsistent with the shared governance principles.

7. **WSCUC Institutional Committee:** The Academic Senate Vice-Chair [who was serving on the WSCUC Institutional Committee as a representative of the Academic Senate] was instructed to not share the response to WSCUC Recommendation letter with the Academic Senate, impeding major principles of Shared Governance.

Response: Thank you for the opportunity to address this concern.

To ensure complete clarity, and to share an exemplary demonstration of institutional shared governance, kindly refer to the following facts:

1) WesternU established an Institutional WSCUC Committee to review, edit, and offer input to Institutional documents sent to WSCUC,
2) The WSCUC Committee is comprised of representatives from all 5 branches of governance,
3) Following the special site visit team a report was generated by WSCUC with Commendations and Recommendations and a pre-final outline of the institutional response to the special site visit team report was circulated to the WSCUC Committee members for review, edit, and to offer further input,
4) To create an additional unprecedented opportunity, independent of the WSCUC Committee process, for WesternU's 5 branches of governance to review, edit, and offer input, a first time ever request was sent to WSCUC by WesternU to secure an extension of the WSCUC submission deadline;
5) The institutional request was submitted within 48 hours of the WSCUC deadline to the WSCUC Liaison Officer,
6) The extension was granted and permitted broad circulation to the 5 branches of governance for an unprecedented additional review, edit, and input prior to submission and independent of the WSCUC Committee process, and
7) The additional review, edit, and input opportunity was particularly unusual because it was independent of the established WSCUC Committee and it was facilitated by an extension of the deadline.

In conclusion, the process that was implemented for the review of the draft Institutional WSCUC Response demonstrates support of the shared governance principles as it was shared with all governance groups for review and input.