

Open letter to the Chair of the Board of Governors of l'Université Sainte-Anne

Monsieur Martin Marcoux
Chair of the Board of Governors
Université Sainte-Anne

Dear Sir:

Last November 1st, the Executive of the *Association des professeurs, professeures et bibliothécaires de l'Université Sainte-Anne (APPBUSA)* [Université Sainte-Anne Faculty Association] met with you with a proposal for changes to procedures for the selection and hiring of the university president. The proposed changes concerned both the criteria for the selection of candidates, the composition of the nomination committee, the evaluation of applications and the maximum number of times the appointment could be renewed. The aim of these proposed changes, put forward at a meeting of the general membership of the APPBUSA, is the modernization of internal management policies. They were presented to you in the hope and expectation [*dans le but*] that they would be discussed at the meeting of the Board scheduled for February 2020.

The membership of the APPBUSA were thus shocked to learn that an extraordinary meeting of the Board had been organized for the 4th of December with the purpose of amending a single clause of Regulation No. 1 of the Internal Management Policy, namely clause 3.4.5, which now reads as follows:

3.4.5 Term of Office

The first term of office for the position of president [*recteur*] and vice-chancellor is a maximum of five years. The incumbent is eligible for renewal by the Board of Governors for one **or several** additional **terms of office** [*un ou des mandats supplémentaires*] with a maximum duration of five years in each case, in conformity with sub-section 3.4.4.B. [TRANSLATION]

The proposals of the faculty members were thus completely ignored, which is contrary to the spirit of collegiality which is supposed to prevail within a university. This change in the rules not only allows the university president to remain in office after having completed two terms but also to apply for as many renewals as he/she may wish, which contradicts a fundamental principle of democracy, which is that of alternation.

The proposals of the APPBUSA aimed at greater collegiality and transparency in the process of selection and hiring of a new university president. Moreover, **this amendment to clause 3.4.5 by the Board was adopted in the absence of any consultation of the university community.** Finally, the APPBUSA has received no formal response from the Board to the proposals which were submitted to it.

We, the professors and librarians of l'Université Sainte-Anne, who participate actively in the promotion of this university, who work long and hard in order to give the best possible education to students and who devote ourselves to the expansion of knowledge, vigorously protest against the manner in which the Board has proceeded.

The institutional evolution of a university feeds on change, on exchange of ideas, on progressive visions and on new leadership. L'Université Sainte-Anne thus needs renewed management which will allow it to distinguish itself as part of the Canadian university landscape.

Since you are committed to the development of our institution, in the francophonie of Nova Scotia and St. Mary's Bay, for which l'Université Sainte-Anne is a major engine of economic development, you cannot ignore the extreme importance of limiting the number of terms of office of the university president. You cannot, in all good conscience, maintain our university in this status quo without taking into account the aspirations of students, professors and all other members of the university community. It should not be possible that the position of university president could be occupied for the lifetime of its holder, which would be the equivalent of an institutionalized monarchy and would only hinder the development of the university.

We therefore ask you respectfully, Monsieur Marcoux, to please request that the Board of Governors reverse the decision taken on the 4th of December last. If the Board persists in its original decision, please be informed that this will be without the support of the APPBUSA, which will then be obliged to assume its responsibilities in this regard. Finally, we invite you cordially to meet the Executive of our faculty association so that a genuine dialogue may take place with the professors and librarians on the implications of the resolution adopted by the Board and the proposals submitted by the APPBUSA.

Yours very sincerely,

Association des professeurs, professeures et bibliothécaires de l'Université Sainte-Anne (APPBUSA)