

September 30, 2008

Ted Beatty
Interim Director, Kellogg Institute
130-G Hesburgh Center
Notre Dame, IN 46556

Dear Ted:

I write to thank you for agreeing to serve on the Task Force on Collaborative Hiring and to share with you information about the Task Force's work, including its charge.

One of Notre Dame's central goals is to become a preeminent research university. If Notre Dame is to achieve this goal, the University must work to hire the best faculty possible and then enable these faculty members—once hired—to excel in their research, scholarship, and teaching. Increasingly, departments and institutes at the University are seeking to hire faculty who are engaged in inquiry at the intersection of numerous disciplines and subject areas. Yet, hiring faculty with an interdisciplinary focus presents unique challenges because the relationship between these faculty members and the University typically involves several academic units. As the University seeks to encourage more interdisciplinary collaborations, through such initiatives as the SAPC, the frequency with which these challenges will arise will only increase. The University must equip itself to address these challenges effectively and consistently if it is to be successful in attracting faculty with interdisciplinary expertise to Notre Dame and in creating an academic environment in which they can flourish.

The charge of the Task Force on Collaborative Hiring is to address several issues raised when more than one academic unit is involved in a T&R faculty appointment, including joint appointments between departments, appointments initiated by a center or institute, and appointments arising from grant-supported activities including the SAPC initiatives. The Task Force will focus on four main issues: (1) challenges that arise when more than one academic unit participates in the recruitment and appointment of a T&R faculty member; (2) the structural challenges that arise when a T&R faculty member has responsibilities to more than one academic unit, including teaching, administrative, and service responsibilities; (3) issues involving the mentoring, evaluation, and tenure of T&R faculty members affiliated with more than one academic unit; and (4) the tension between departmental autonomy and the desire to foster a more collaborative culture among all of the academic units of the University.

The Task Force should assess these issues and any others it believes are relevant to the overall charge. Please include in your report potential strategies for addressing each issue or challenge. Please address as many potential strategies as possible, since the likely goal in most cases will be to provide deans, chairs, CAPs, Directors, and other relevant groups with options that can be considered in various contexts rather than a single solution.

As I mentioned to you, the Task Force will be chaired by Nicole Garnett, Professor of Law. For your information, attached is a list of the other Task Force members, along with their contact information. Nicole will be contacting you shortly to make arrangements for the Task Force's first meeting. I would appreciate receiving the Task Force's report by March 1, 2008.

I look forward to supporting your work in any ways that I can. Thank you again for agreeing to serve on the Task Force on Collaborative Hiring and for the important work you will do through it.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas G. Burish

Enclosure

cc: Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.
Nicole Garnett, Chair