



Cornell University
Office of the Provost

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MEMORANDUM

March 21, 2022

To: Members of the Faculty Senate
From: Michael I. Kotlikoff, Provost
Subject: Part-time Bachelor Degree for Non-traditional Students

It has been brought to my attention that my March 3 and March 9, 2022 memoranda to the Faculty Senate committees that reviewed the report on the potential creation of a part-time bachelor's degree program at Cornell were the subject of last week's Faculty Senate meeting. The memoranda communicated my intention to begin the search for the next dean of the School of Continuing Education (SCE) who would be tasked with considering the development of such a program. I understand that the memos have been viewed by some as an implementation decision and therefore an attempt to bypass further discussion within the Senate. I apologize if my memos conveyed that impression; I would like to assure the Senate that I welcome further consideration of such a program, and (as stated in my memos) "anticipate continued consultation following the recruitment of the new dean."

Since receiving the report of a committee co-chaired by Vice Provosts Avery August and Lisa Nishii last year on this initiative, I have consulted with the Dean of the Faculty, the Educational Policy Committee (EPC), the Academic Programs and Policies Committee (CAPP), and the Academic Freedom and Professional Status of the Faculty Committee of the Faculty Senate (ASPSF) and discussed the report several times with the University Faculty Committee (UFC). The discussions and reports of the Senate committees were thoughtful and supportive of the goals of such a program, but also raised a number of academic issues that, if not carefully considered during program development, could undermine such an effort. I also attended the Faculty Senate meetings in which these reports were considered and in which these points were raised. Many of these concerns had been identified by the initial committee that explored the possibilities of such a program, which included a Senate member of the UFC, and had been discussed with the provosts, college deans, and the Dean of the Faculty.

Having sought and attended to the views of the faculty on this matter, it seems clear that the Senate will need to know more about specific implementation details in order to adequately consider such a program. Such details can only be achieved through a careful planning process undertaken by leadership of SCE with consultation with the

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faculty and college leadership. For this reason, and because we need to move forward to replace the current Interim Dean of SCE, we are initiating a search. Following the development of a plan that addresses the issues outlined by the committees who have considered this initiative, the program will be brought back to the Senate for consideration before any decision is made to move forward with implementation.

cc: Eve DeRosa
Neema Kudva