

3 UTS Trustees on Dr. Panzer's Offer of Resignation

Robin James Graham

January 1, 2015

The 1,300 signers of the "Keep Barrytown College and UTS" petition (as of 1-1-15) are evidence that there is strong support for the Unification Theological Seminary undergraduate program as well as the Barrytown campus and UTS's other academic programs.

Nevertheless, in recent weeks HSA leaders have given conflicting signals as to whether HSA will support the continuation of the undergraduate program. HSA leaders have been asking UTS board members individually to accept privately made assurances that it will do so. However, we think that such private assurances are insufficient to good governance and are not responsive to the strong positive support you have expressed.

It is important for you to know that there are no serious deficiencies in Dr. Panzer's leadership that would lead the UTS Board to demand Dr. Panzer's resignation, per a performance review as recent as October 2014. However, recent maneuvers by HSA leadership have resulted in a situation in which it is nearly impossible for UTS President Richard Panzer to continue to lead UTS, despite his commitment to UTS and his strong passion for making the undergraduate college program a success. As a result, on December 31, 2014, Dr. Panzer presented a letter of resignation that is contingent on four conditions, and that would become effective only when the fourth condition has been met.

To respond to Dr. Panzer's letter, three UTS Board members have called a Special UTS Board Meeting for Tuesday, January 6, 2015, at 9:00 pm by conference call. The sole agenda item is that the UTS Trustees vote to accept the contingent offer of resignation by President Richard Panzer.

Three Steps You Can Take To Help

First, we need your support in recruiting for all of UTS's academic programs, including the graduate seminary and the undergraduate college program. Please communicate to people you know that UTS should be and IS open for business.

Second, we need your financial support. The only viable future for UTS in an environment in which HSA chooses to fund less is to reach out to our constituencies for support. In addition to the UTS Board demonstrating responsible self-governance, which includes demonstrating the will and capacity to hold all of its stakeholders to commitments previously made to UTS, it is important to capitalize on the good will you have expressed and to begin the process of turning this positive constituency into potential financial supporters of UTS. You can choose to give to the graduate school or to the college.

Third, and most importantly right now, you can urge each of the UTS Board members to insist on the fulfillment of the four conditions necessary for us to agree to Dr. Panzer's unfortunate offer of resignation. (Dr. Panzer's resignation would become effective with the accomplishment of the fourth condition). Dr. Panzer's conditions are, that:

- 1) The HSAUWC Board agrees to affirm that the undergraduate degree program known as Barrytown College of UTS deserves a chance to succeed in the coming 3 years, to cease all words and actions which impede that process, and to actively support its marketing and recruitment;
- 2) The HSAUWC Board agrees to fund UTS at current levels through June, 2015;

3) The HSAUWC and UTS Boards agree to collaborate in developing a mutually acceptable funding reduction plan relative to HSAUWC's contribution that is in conformance with maintaining MSCHE accreditation;

4) The HSAUWC Board accepts that the UTS board must enact a search process for a new UTS president in conformance with UTS Board Bylaws with the goal of doing so by March 31, 2015.

We have the potential, through this difficult situation, to stand up and take responsibility as the Elder Son nation and to contribute significantly to the educational environment available to our second and third generation, and young people of all faiths.

Your action will help the UTS Board to stand strong in the face of increasing pressures from the HSA Board that would bypass UTS's own Bylaws and governance procedures. Your voices have already had an impact. These additional steps on your part will strengthen the UTS's Board's resolve and make a long lasting impact for the future of God's providence in America. Please act today.

Signed:

Chad Hoover, UTS Trustee
Chair, Buildings and Grounds Committee
Member, UTS Executive Committee

Katie Zahedi, Ph.D., UTS Trustee
Chair, Advancement Committee

Amy Cuhel-Schuckers, UTS Trustee
Chair, Committee on Trustees
Member, UTS Executive Committee

P.S. Here are the UTS board members:

Balcomb, Michael, Billings, David, Borer, James, Cuhel-Schuckers, Amy, DeGoede, Crescentia, Famularo, Franco, Fefferman, Dan, Guerra, Anthony, Hoover, Chad, Jenkins, Rev. Michael, Kim, Dr. Ki Hoon, Panzer, Richard, Patton, Ernest, Spurgin, Hugh, Zahedi, Katie

P.P.S. If you care to express your views directly to the HSA board members, here are their emails:
Jenkins, Rev. Michael, Jones, Farley, Kim, Dr. Ki Hoon, Kim, Peter, President, Dr. Balcomb HSA, Ward, Alexa, Yang, Chang Shik

Please copy your email to us if you wish at alumni@uts.edu.