

Good morning

I am your faculty representative to the Board of Trustees. This position is part of the shared governance of the University.

“Shared governance requires transparency, communication and accountability at all levels of decision-making within the

University.” I am a firm believer of utilizing open

communications to improve how we operate. For, it is ultimately

the faculty who are the ones responsible for the success of this

enterprise. Therefore, the distance between the doers and the

deciders needs to be minimized.

So how do we do this?

The last time I spoke to this assembly, a year ago, I asked the audience to join me in drinking the purple Kool-Aid.

[pause]

This is something I am still getting grief for.

[pause]

But let me take a moment to reinforce the core of my message.

When I am communicating the views and needs of the Clemson

Faculty to the Board of Trustees, I always try to emphasize our

one common tie.

We are all leaders.

As Clemson faculty, the expectation is that each of us are leaders in our respective field of scholarship. When others think of Clemson, they do not think of all 1,493 of us. Rather, they think of the fascinating work by that research group, the author who wrote that inspiring book, or that brilliant panelist at the conference. It is through our collective scholarship that our reputation is built.

Beyond our scholarship, we are the ones guiding and mentoring students through the transformative process of being a Clemson student. When we talk about this Clemson experience we can break this down into a series of moments. In my discussion with Board members I often ask them about what made their own “Clemson Experience”. The response I get most frequently is a story about a particular faculty member that had a major impact on their life. It is this close connection between the students and faculty that make Clemson a special place.

So, when I encourage you to drink the purple Kool-Aid, I am asking you to commit to two things.

1. Strive to be the best in your field
2. Strive to be the best for your students.

As your representative to the Board, I have strived to be my best for the faculty on three main areas.

These are: recruitment, retention, and reputation.

As your representative, I have been working on identifying areas that could make Clemson more attractive to a faculty candidate.

These have included improved family policies and the inclusive nature of our campus climate.

To improve retention, I have pushed for enhanced leadership development among our chairs and deans as well as honoring some of the unsung heroes among us.

With regards to reputation, I have pushed for greater facilitation of scholarship. It is my belief that by adopting a philosophy of continuous improvement we can provide more support for scholastic enterprises, while reducing needless distractions.

There is still much to do to better Clemson. If you as a faculty will continue to be the best in your fields and best for your students, I will continue to strive to be the best for you as your representative to the Board.

Thank you.