June 26, 2012

To the Faculty Senate at the University of Virginia:

Shared governance ensures that the voices and expertise of faculty, staff, and students are given their proper weight in carrying out a university's mission of teaching, research, and service that benefits society. Dialogue among these constituencies, university administrations, and their overseers is not a luxury. It is necessary for effective functioning.

The anger and outcry surrounding the current crisis of leadership at the University of Virginia resulted, in large part, from a grave failure of process. This failure could well have been avoided had the rightful role of shared governance been observed.

We stand with our colleagues at the University of Virginia in demanding that, however late the hour, the vital role of shared governance be respected – and the voices of faculty, staff, and students be heard – in the resolution of this troubling ordeal.

We wish to be clear that we send this letter not in our official capacities as faculty governance leaders at American Association of Universities institutions, but as concerned individuals involved in shared university governance.

Very truly yours,

Andrew Torrance, President, Faculty Senate, Professor of Law, University of Kansas

Chris Crandall, President, University Senate, Professor of Psychology, University of Kansas

J. Paul Robinson, Chair, Purdue University Senate, SVM Professor of Cytomics, Professor of Biomedical Engineering

Jan Boxill, Chair of the Faculty, Director, Parr Center for Ethics, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Martha Nell Smith, Chair, University Senate, Professor of English and Distinguished Scholar-Teacher, University of Maryland

Craig Martens, Chair, Academic Senate, Professor of Chemistry, University of California at Irvine

Walter Daugherity, Speaker-Elect, Faculty Senate, Texas A&M University

Susan Astley, Chair, Faculty Senate, Professor of Epidemiology and Pediatrics, University of Washington

Ezra B.W. Zubrow, Chair, Faculty Senate, Professor of Anthropology, University at Buffalo, NY

Jerry Peterson, Chair, Boulder Faculty Assembly, Professor of Physics, University of Colorado

Harry W. Tyrer, Chair, MU Faculty Council for University Policy, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Missouri

Wanda Howell, Chair of the Faculty, University of Arizona, Distinguished Professor, Nutritional Sciences