

Statement from President John Bardo May 8, 2015:

The policies of the Kansas Board of Regents and of Wichita State University are clear: As chief executive officer, I have responsibility and authority for the administration and operation of the university. That includes hiring or replacing key executives.

I have enough contact with senior managers such as vice presidents and deans that I am able to assess their leadership qualities, judgment, performance and potential. Members of the Kansas Board of Regents do the same for me.

Dr. Wade Robinson is free to talk about the reasons his appointment will not be renewed as vice president for student affairs. In fact, it was Dr. Robinson who spread the news he wasn't being reappointed. The legal confidentiality of personnel matters means that I can't talk about it. Everyone who has ever run a business knows that feeling of wanting to tell his or her side of the story, but not being permitted to do so.

I'm glad Matt Conklin raised culture issues from the 2012-13 strategic planning process. It was a process I initiated soon after my arrival in summer 2012. The planning team did lots of listening – 650 people attended meetings and 2,848 responded to a survey. The culture issues Mr. Conklin identified were among numerous observations received by the committee and included in its archive, available here:

http://webs.wichita.edu/depttools/depttoolsmemberfiles/wsustrategy/Stage2_docs/Artifact_Primary_Data_Process_Print.pdf

Many of the changes we've made on campus have been to address issues raised in that strategic planning process.

Dr. Robinson and his supporters have created an inaccurate narrative about an event two years ago involving an alleged sexual assault that occurred off campus. It was investigated by the Wichita Police Department, with full cooperation from the WSU Police Department, WSU Athletic Department and anyone the Wichita Police Department wanted to talk to. The Sedgwick County Prosecutor's Office didn't file charges and the matter was dropped.

This week I sent a communication to all students, faculty and staff about a 2013 incident that alleged that student safety was threatened because we let police investigate rather than immediately getting Dr. Robinson involved. We take all concerns of student safety seriously. WSU followed all applicable state and federal laws – including Title IX and the Clery Act – and all internal university policies.

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