

Faculty across campus are justifiably concerned with the on-going standoff at our Board of Trustees. There is widespread frustration and even in some cases overt anger over the current situation and its affect on students, the reputation of the institution and the wider Southern Illinois Community.

Gridlock may be standard operating procedure in Washington and Springfield, but it has no place in Carbondale. We have work to do! We are educating a generation of Illinoisans that will inherit from us a State "blessed" with the politics of 1920 Mississippi and the economics of modern Greece. We cannot afford to provide them with anything less than the best possible education and the current situation is inconsistent with that objective.

The Faculty Senate is a public body and our resolutions are public record. Therefore, I do not believe that it is appropriate for the Faculty Senate to name names or to take sides in the current standoff within the board of trustees. I am sure that opinions on who is to blame for the current impasse vary. I am also sure that all of those involved genuinely believe that they are acting out of noble intentions in the best interests of the institution and that the "other side" is responsible. In the end, such questions are irrelevant and unhelpful. Ultimately when two people or two groups of people with common purpose, cannot work constructively together, the fault rests with both. The only relevant indisputable facts are these: the current situation is dysfunctional and untenable; and it cannot be allowed to continue.

Budget cuts, declines in enrolment and other negative impacts at SIU have a disproportionate impact in Southern Illinois. Other State Universities are also suffering in the current budget climate, but as the region's largest employer and as a major economic engine in this region of the State, damage to SIU has broad impact on businesses and communities throughout the entire region - more so than other State Universities which tend to be located in regions with broader economic foundations.

In the interests of bringing the current fiasco to a swift and final conclusion, and for the benefit of the university, its students and alumni and the broader Southern Illinois community, I believe that the Faculty Senate should charge the Executive Council to draft a resolution calling on all current members of the board of trustees to voluntarily tender their resignations, without prejudice, and further calling on the governor to accept these resignations as the magnanimous gestures of selfless individuals who are placing the good of the university above their individual interests. We should further resolve that thereafter, the Governor should consult with the legislature and swiftly emplace an entirely new Board populated with well qualified, individuals, with relevant experience, who can help position SIU for future prosperity as major research university.

And I so move.