



Delaware State University

Dover, Delaware 19901

Board of Trustees Special Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2014

**DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
DOVER, DELAWARE**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees
Delaware State University
Thursday, May 1, 2014**

A special teleconference meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, May 1, 2014 which was called to order at 9:45 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Claibourne Smith, chair (via phone)	Dr. Harry Williams, president
Mr. Charles McDowell (via phone)	Dr. Alton Thompson, provost & vice president for Academic Affairs
Mr. Wesley Perkins (via phone)	
Mr. Jim Stewart (via phone)	
Dr. Devona Williams (via phone)	

The University's Awards and Honorary Degrees Committee approved the recommendation to award three honorary degrees at the DSU Spring 2014 Commencement on May 11. Two members of the Board of Trustees (Mr. Josè Echeverri and Mr. Wesley Perkins) sat on the Committee. After the Awards and Honorary Degrees Committee's approval, the recommendation was submitted to the Faculty Senate which approved the candidates by a unanimous vote.

The conferring of degrees may be approved by the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees when such action is deemed necessary for the welfare of the University. Chairman Claibourne Smith requested an Executive Committee meeting following review of the candidate information which was placed in the Board portal for review on April 30.

Dr. Alton Thompson highlighted the backgrounds of the three candidates.

Mrs. Bythema Byrd Bagley

Dr. Yvonne P. Johnson of the Music Department wrote a letter of recommendation.

- Mrs. Bagley has a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from the Crane School of Music at the State University of New York at Potsdam, Master's Degree in Education from the State University of New York at New Paltz, and a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Secondary Education.
- She held Primary and Secondary principal appointments in Kingston, New York.
- She contributed to the DSU College of Education program, including but not limited to, conducting workshops and mock job interviews for prospective teachers, auditioning potential soloists for the Messiah concerts with the Concerto Ensemble of Philadelphia, and recommending senior students as candidates for teaching positions in her school district.

- Mrs. Bagley was chosen for the prestigious position of Head of School at the internationally acclaimed American Boychoir School in Princeton, New Jersey. She became the first woman and person of color in the history of the school to serve in that capacity. She initially agreed to serve for one year, but her contributions were so outstanding that she was invited to remain for a total of four years.
- Mrs. Bagley was instrumental in directing a DSU Music faculty member to a potential donor to fund a proposal for a Music Technology Laboratory. The donor was impressed with the proposal and as a result the University received \$450,000 in funding for the construction of a state-of-the-art Music Technology Lab & Sound Studio. This provided the foundation for the current DSU Music Industry Program.

Dr. Johnson concluded by stating that “given her consistent dedication, her outstanding contributions to Music Education both in the U.S. and internationally, and her tremendous influence as teacher, administrator and leader for students’ educational welfare in New York, New Jersey and Delaware – most significantly including those at Delaware State University – I highly recommend that Mrs. Bagley be considered for the Honorary Doctoral Degree in Education.”

Mr. Zhang Fuqiang

- Mr. Zhang Fuqiang was born into a poor farmer’s family on January 1, 1954 in Tianjin, PR China. He was the second child among seven in the family. At an early age he assumed responsibility for providing for the family. He held several jobs and barely slept more than two to three hours each day. Both his parents suffered illnesses and at the age of 14 he developed an entrepreneurial spirit. To make ends meet, he sold popcorn, sunflower seeds, sweets and pear cake.
- Over the years Mr. Fuqiang has started numerous businesses and changed his business model as circumstances dictated. In 1981, he brought a horse carriage to transport goods from farms to downtown. He became a goods transport operator.
- In 1985, he set up the Tianyi Construction Leasing Company which leased large construction machinery, scaffolding materials, scaffold flooring, and diaphragm plate. The business enabled him to get out of debt and to support his siblings.
- In 1996, he set up an aquatic product company. He imported seafood from seaports in China and abroad for the wholesale markets he had established. In 2001, due to changes by the Chinese Customs Bureau, his business took a downturn and was in the red by several millions.
- In 2002, following the boom in property development coupled with the massive city development projects in China, he established Chenyi Construction Material Market which now ranks among the top three construction material markets in Tianjin, a city with about a population of 17 million.
- In 2006, he launched the aquarium fish market in Tianjin and made it the second biggest one in China which currently transacts about RMB 5 billion annually.
- Mr. Fuqiang has suffered many challenges throughout his life. He is humbled and very grateful to society for having given him so much and he is eager to give back through his form of corporate social responsibility. He has helped many people in his community to run their own business. He also sponsored and funded numerous education-related activities and projects, e.g. Tianjin Beichen Primary and Middle School students’ activities.

- Mr. Fuqiang has visited the DSU campus on several occasions. He is a key business person who values education and wants to work with DSU students on entrepreneurship. He is a major contributor to DSU.

President Harry Williams indicated that the University supports the recommendation and urges approval and conference of the degree at the December Commencement.

Dr. Charles J. Ogletree, Jr

- Professor Ogletree earned an M.A. and B.A. (with distinction) in Political Science from Stanford University, where he was Phi Beta Kappa. He holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School.
- Charles Ogletree is the Harvard Law School Jesse Climenko Professor of Law, and Founding and Executive Director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice.
- He is a prominent legal theorist who has made an international reputation by taking a hard look at complex issues of law and by working to secure the rights guaranteed by the Constitution for everyone equally under the law.
- Professor Ogletree is well-published. He is the author of several important books on race and justice. His most recent publication is a book co-edited with Professor Austin Sarat of Amherst College entitled *Life with Parole: America's New Death Penalty?*
- Professor Ogletree is the recipient of numerous awards among those is the prestigious ABA Spirit Award in recognition of his many contributions to the legal profession. In 2008, the National Law Journal named him one of the 50 Most Influential Minority Lawyers in America. Professor Ogletree has been named by Ebony Magazine one of the 100+ Most Influential Black American every year since 2006. He received the first ever Rosa Parks Civil Rights Award given by the City of Boston. He has received honorary doctorates from several universities and colleges.
- Professor Ogletree is a person of notable distinction and the DSU Spring 2014 Commencement speaker. It is DSU tradition to award an Honorary Doctorate to the Commencement speaker.

A brief discussion ensued after Dr. Thompson's presentation of the candidates. Mr. Charles McDowell inquired about the criteria for nomination of candidates. Dr. Thompson confirmed that guidelines exist indicating that some of the criteria were related to national prominence and expertise in one's field, affiliation with Delaware State University and the tradition of awarding the degree to the Commencement speaker.

Dr. Devona Williams suggested that it would be helpful to see a consistent format of the candidate information. In addition, Mr. McDowell requested that the Board be provided a copy of the criteria/guidelines to help in evaluating the candidates. Dr. Thompson stated that in the future that information would be provided along with the packet of candidate material. While the Faculty Senate did have copies of the guidelines, it would have been helpful for the Committee to have those guidelines as well.

Chairman Smith said that although voting occurred via the portal, he wanted to take another vote to make sure all votes were captured.

Chairman Smith asked for and received a motion that was seconded to approve the conferring of Honorary Doctorate degrees at the 2014 Spring Commencement ceremony to two candidates, Mrs. Bythema Byrd Bagley and Dr. Charles J. Ogletree, Jr. and the conferring of the Honorary Doctorate degree to Mr. Zhang Fuqiang at the 2014 December Commencement ceremony.


The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Smith asked for and received a motion, duly seconded, to adjourn.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Claibourne D. Smith, chairman



Eleanor Wilson, board secretary