

December 6, 2010

Re: Garo Kalfayan - Letter of Interest – Dean, College of Business and Public Administration at California State University, San Bernardino

Dr. Robert Carlson, Chair

Search Committee for Dean of Business and Public Administration:

Please consider the following letter of interest as part of my application for the position of Dean, College of Business and Public Administration at California State University, San Bernardino.

I sincerely believe that this position matches the skill set I have been developing over the past several years.

I am currently finishing my third year as the Department Chair of Accountancy at the Craig School of Business at Fresno State. I have also served the Craig School as interim Dean and Associate Dean. In addition to teaching at the Craig School, I have taught at the Orfalea College of Business at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

I hope the following “Statement of Leadership Style, Career Goals, and Fit for the Position” will illustrate my preparation, skills, and excitement regarding this position.

Leadership Style

I have served as the interim Dean, Associate Dean, and Budget Director at the Craig School of Business at California State University, Fresno. I am currently the Department Chair of Accountancy.

As I complete my 5th year in an academic leadership position, I am convinced that there is no substitute for hard work, attention to detail, and transparency and fairness of process.

While serving in various leadership capacities, I learned that my hard work and continual positive effort set an example which others respect and emulate. Long range planning regarding big issues is extremely important. However, I have also learned that attention to detail and creating many small positive changes can have a material difference on a school and its various stakeholders. No issue is “small” to the faculty member, student, staff, or alumni that it may affect.

Although difficult, sometimes a dedicated leader must say “no” and disappoint a various stakeholder or group. I believe that a leader can mitigate the potential for divisive feelings if a decision is made where the process is transparent, stakeholders are consulted, and outcomes appropriately explained.

To me, a leader's ultimate goal is to create a positive environment where faculty, staff, and students feel empowered to perform to the best of their abilities, know that their efforts are important to the organization's success, and realize that they are valued and appreciated.

Career Goals

I entered the education profession to try and positively affect the lives of people. I have loved every minute of it. I had an extremely successful and emotionally rewarding experience while serving in administrative capacities at my current institution. I know I have a lot to contribute to the vibrant quality program at California State University, San Bernardino. My goal is to make a greater positive impact on more students by serving in an administrative capacity at the college level.

Fit for the Position

I believe I have demonstrated that I can operate in an open, transparent, and collegial atmosphere. While serving as Associate Dean, I was given the responsibility of meeting several budget shortfalls which initially meant potential layoffs of many tenure/tenured track professors. Through a consultative process with all faculty, I reassigned faculty and teaching duties among departments and met the Provost's spending limits without layoffs to any tenure/tenure track faculty. I believe my leadership in this time of crisis is the reason faculty support was extremely strong when the Provost appointed me to the interim Dean position the next year.

I worked to expand the Craig School's external community presence. As interim Dean, I expanded the Craig School's nationally recognized Internship Program and met continually with external stakeholders regarding creating opportunities for our students. As Department Chair of Accountancy, I worked very hard with the KPMG and PwC international accounting firms to ensure that they would continue to recruit Fresno State accounting students to the Silicon Valley during this economic downturn.

CSU students are special and I appreciate them and their needs. I am a first generation American, first person in my family to graduate college, worked in packing sheds during high school to pay my own way through college, and another language in addition to English was spoken in my home. I get it. I understand CSU students and the challenges they face. There is no greater feeling than helping them achieve their dreams.

A business school must encourage and promote *both* quality research and teaching. During the last 10 years I have published 8 refereed journal articles (4 in the last 5 years), 3 editorial journal articles, and have continually updated my co-authored textbook. The student evaluations in tax courses that I have taught at both Fresno State and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo have continually ranked me as the top teacher or one of the top teachers in the respective school/college.

I am familiar with AACSB accreditation standards. When I was interim Dean, the new AACSB standards were established. I began our School's establishment of: AQ/PQ definitions and measurable learning goals, objectives, and rubrics. I also proposed and acquired faculty governance approval for a school-wide reassigned time policy to provide incentives for faculty to maintain AQ designation.

As interim Dean, I have spoken on multiple occasions to various large external and internal groups. I helped revitalize and grow the Craig School's external support group, "Business Associates," which provides annual gifts in excess of \$100,000. I was part of the development group which secured a \$1.5 million gift to establish the Gazarian Real Estate Center.

I have experience establishing and implementing new academic programs. I helped the Accountancy Department establish a new Masters in Accountancy Program which involved curriculum design, catalog copy, and all School and University approvals. In my year as a professor at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, I consulted with the Accounting Area faculty to establish its MSA - Taxation Program. Currently, I am developing a novel, but very important "Think Like an Accountant" course which has the potential to dramatically increase the success of all students entering the Accounting Option at Fresno State. The course is a response to assessment data which indicates that students beginning upper division accounting have "gaps" in their basic accounting knowledge and need a foundation "refresher" course in order to really understand intermediate accounting concepts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Garro

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