

April 29, 2019

Dr. Gerard P. Clancy  
President, University of Tulsa  
Collins Hall, Room 2230  
800 S. Tucker Drive  
Tulsa, OK 74104

Dear Dr. Clancy:

Since the establishment of the Beta of Oklahoma Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa at the University of Tulsa in 1989, we have partnered with the University in recognizing the value of a rigorous arts and sciences education for students, faculty, alumni, and the greater community. Our partnership represents a shared commitment to excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. As the Society's Secretary/CEO, I am writing to affirm the value of that commitment today, at the core of Phi Beta Kappa's mission since our founding in 1776.

We understand from recent announcements that the University of Tulsa is contemplating major changes to its educational programs that will affect curriculum offerings in the arts and sciences. As a former university president myself (at Brandeis University), I appreciate the time, thought, effort, and energy such an endeavor requires of many University constituencies. We hope in the coming weeks that time and space is given to ensure that the voices of the faculty are heard, especially those charged with ensuring that the arts and sciences thrive on your campus.

There is no doubt that higher education today faces a challenging landscape. Likewise, students today face the challenges and opportunities of an uncharted future. That future requires an education that allows students to flourish and become critical thinkers, suited not just for the jobs of today but for an increasingly complex world and the responsibilities of democratic citizenship. As educational leaders, we are responsible for articulating the importance of a broad-based arts and sciences education and its crucial role in preparing students for meaningful, productive and engaged lives.

With only 290 Phi Beta Kappa chapters across the country, the University of Tulsa can take great pride in its long-standing commitment to the arts and sciences and the high-achieving students the chapter has inducted over the past thirty years. As you will see from the copy of our Membership Eligibility Stipulations attached to this letter, the selection process for these exceptional students turns on both breadth and depth of study in liberal arts and sciences. When an institution's requirements closely mirror those of the Society's, more students have the chance to become Phi Beta Kappa members, a mark of distinction that they will carry for a lifetime, whatever their chosen pursuit.

In many ways the accomplishments of our members – including 17 Presidents, 41 Supreme Court Justices, and over 140 Nobel Laureates – speak for themselves, as compelling evidence of the value of arts and sciences education. Courses in the humanities, mathematics, the social sciences, and the natural sciences together provide a basis for lifelong learning that cannot be matched by a singular field or replaced by pre-professional training. Looking ahead, as Microsoft president Brad Smith argues in *The Future Computed*, "as computers behave more like humans, the social sciences and humanities will become even more important. Languages, art, history, economics, ethics, philosophy, psychology

and human development courses can teach critical, philosophical and ethics-based skills that will be instrumental in the development and management of AI solutions.”

In closing, we are indeed grateful for our 30-year partnership, and in the spirit of that partnership, Phi Beta Kappa stands ready to contribute to the work that lies ahead for your institution. We greatly appreciate the magnitude of the decisions you are making. At the same time, we are convinced that the arts and sciences are the heart of what makes American colleges and universities the envy of the world. We look forward to continued dialogue and opportunities to support your leadership in advancing excellence in the arts and sciences at the University of Tulsa.

Sincerely,

Frederick M. Lawrence

CC: Provost and Executive Vice President Janet Levit

Dr. Jennifer Airey

Dr. Denise Dutton

Dr. Stephen Galoob

Dr. Brett McKinney