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By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

WACO (ABP)—For the second time in a year, Baylor University's Faculty Senate has voted “no confidence” in President Robert Sloan.

The 28-5 vote, taken in a closed-door session May 4, was similar to the group's 26-6 no-confidence vote last September. At that time, the senate cited a climate of fear and mistrust on campus that had produced a chilling work environment among faculty. Little has changed since, the faculty leaders said.

“We still have a much-divided faculty that has not healed, nor is it healing,” Joe Cox, president of the Faculty Senate, told the Waco Tribune-Herald.

“The problems have not gone away.”

The senate claimed Sloan “has made only limited and inadequate attempts” to address Baylor's problems and asked the school's regents, or trustees, to conduct an independent referendum on Sloan's leadership among the entire 820-member faculty.

“It's pretty easy to say (the Faculty Senate) is a small group of disenfranchised faculty or something like that,” Cox said. “Well, if that's the case, let's find out what the numbers are.”

Larry Brumley, associate vice president for university relations, questioned whether the 33-member senate represents the interests of the entire faculty. Criticism of Sloan's attempts at reconciliation is “baffling,” Brumley added, “given the fact that the president has held a number of meetings with faculty since February.” Those meetings have included senate members, he added.

Doug Henry, director of Baylor's Institute for Faith and Learning, criticized the senate for meeting and voting in private. And he noted that, at the time of the senate's May 4 vote, Sloan was conducting a positive meeting with 50 new faculty members.

“It's a remarkable and wicked irony that at the very time (Sloan) was engaging in that kind of bridge-building ... behind closed doors in another part of campus, the Faculty Senate was making the charge that he wasn't engaging in those sorts of efforts,” Henry said.

The world's largest Baptist-affiliated university has been steeped in controversy for more than a year over Sloan's leadership, the regents' long-range plan, a coaching scandal and an athlete's murder.

The regents voted 31-4 last September to affirm Sloan. They met again May 13-14.

For updated coverage from the Baylor regents meeting, see baptiststandard.com.

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