

**TO:** Members of the A&S Faculty  
**FROM:** Lauren Benton, Dean of the College of Arts and Science  
**DATE:** Friday, October 20, 2017  
**SUBJECT:** Update on Challenged Ballots in A&S Union Election

Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday afternoon, a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Hearing Officer issued her report on challenged ballots for the union election sought by Service Employees International Union Local 205 (SEIU) for non-tenure track faculty in the College of Arts and Science. The Hearing Officer recommended to the NLRB Regional Director (RD) that the 28 remaining challenged ballots in A&S be opened and counted. The report is only a recommendation, and the RD will not make his decision on the challenged ballots until after the parties have had an opportunity to file exceptions to the report.

The university challenged the 28 ballots for several reasons. In some cases, the individual had left Vanderbilt employment at the end of last semester and no longer shared a connection to the proposed bargaining unit. In most of the cases, the challenged individuals hold administrative or supervisory roles that we believe exclude them from voting eligibility.

Both the university and the SEIU have until Thursday, Nov. 2 to file exceptions to the Hearing Officer's report. Sometime after Nov. 2, the Regional Director will issue a decision on the challenged ballots. After the RD issues his decision, either party may file an appeal to the NLRB in Washington, DC.

The university's goal from the beginning of this process has been to be as transparent as possible while also upholding the values that make Vanderbilt a supportive and collegial place to work and study. We'll continue to approach this process in good faith and with the wellbeing of the Vanderbilt community and its faculty at the forefront.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we pledge to continue to respect the faculty members who will be affected by the outcome of the vote, and by subsequent rulings, and to make certain that all faculty are receiving the communication and resources they need with regard to this process. To that end, I would be happy to address any questions or concerns you may have about next steps and/or possible outcomes, so please don't hesitate to contact me. The Provost's Office will also continue to update [the faculty unionization website](#) with information on this issue.

I'll continue to share updates on the process as it develops.

Best regards,  
Laurie Benton