Dear Faculty, Students, and Staff,

With the full endorsement of President Mark Schlissel, I am recommending to the University of Michigan Board of Regents for consideration the appointment of Dr. Sonja Feist-Price, Vice President for Institutional Diversity and Professor, Department of Early Childhood, Special Education, and Counselor Education in the College of Education at the University of Kentucky (UK) as our next Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. After a nationwide search, Dr. Feist-Price’s exemplary record of education, scholarship, and service makes her the ideal person for this key leadership position at UM-Flint.

A preeminent voice on diversity, student success, and public higher education, Dr. Feist-Price serves as Vice President for Institutional Diversity at UK, advising the president and provost on all academic, fiscal, programmatic, and administrative policy decisions regarding the university’s diversity and inclusivity goals. She has advanced student and faculty diversity at UK and led programmatic and policy changes that have been institutionalized.

Prior to her current position, Dr. Feist-Price was the senior assistant provost and assistant provost for faculty affairs. In the provost office, she worked with the deans of the 19 colleges and schools at UK on matters relating to faculty recruitment, promotion, and retention. She led program development and assessment in the areas of faculty conduct, leadership development, academic integrity, women’s career and leadership development issues, faculty recruitment and retention, mid- and late-career faculty development, and the implementation of unconscious bias initiative and training for students, faculty, and staff. She also served as the academic ombudsperson for UK.

Dr. Feist-Price has served as the Director of African American Studies and Research Institute and the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Early Childhood, Special Education & Rehabilitation Counseling. She is passionate about student success and has a keen grasp of challenges in the areas of retention and graduation rates, particularly for underrepresented students. Her training as a licensed psychologist, certified rehabilitation counselor, licensed professional clinical counselor, and trained mediator all complement her leadership abilities.

University of Kentucky President Eli Capilouto speaks enthusiastically about the many contributions Dr. Feist-Price has made to that campus. “Sonja Feist-Price has helped lead our institution during a time of unprecedented growth in becoming a community of belonging and acceptance,” said President Capilouto. “We are more diverse and inclusive than at any time in our history. We are doing more to ensure the success of underrepresented student populations. Sonja is deeply committed to, and passionate about, the success of our students and it shows in everything that she does.”

A member of UK since 1992, Dr. Feist-Price came up through the ranks to the level of full professor before moving to administrative roles. She is an accomplished scholar, with research publications in areas such as ex-offenders with disabilities in correctional settings, service provisions among veterans with disabilities, and HIV prevention among persons at greatest risk, particularly women and adolescents. She has secured many state and federal grants including several from NIH. Her
work is published in top academic journals and presented at prestigious conferences.

Dr. Sonja Feist-Price received a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Kentucky in 2006, a Doctor of Rehabilitation from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL in 1992, a Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling Psychology from Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1990, and her B.S. in Psychology from McNeese State University, Lake Charles, Louisiana in 1985.

The search for this critical position began in mid-February 2020 with a broad and committed search advisory committee of faculty, staff, and students, co-chaired by Professor Chris Waters and myself. A large pool of candidates was eventually narrowed to a small group of finalists who were thoroughly vetted by the search firm, the search advisory committee, and myself. I am grateful to the search advisory committee for their thoughtful, collaborative, and thorough work that resulted in the pending appointment of Dr. Feist-Price to the role of Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Dr. Keith Moreland, Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs has done an outstanding job during these last six months under disruptive and unprecedented circumstances. I am very appreciative of his strong efforts and oversight of Academic Affairs during this time. We will thank him for his service to the university community, formally and virtually, in the coming weeks.

Dr. Feist-Price will begin her role at UM-Flint on August 1, 2020, pending regental approval at the June 25, 2020 board meeting. I look forward to the opportunity to welcome her to UM-Flint as we prepare for the new academic year.

Sincerely,

Deba Dutta
Chancellor