



TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES | Chicago Tribune/MCT Campus

President-elect Barack Obama takes questions from reporters after announcing his national security team at a press conference at the Chicago Hilton & Towers on Dec. 1, in Chicago, Illinois. From left, Attorney General-designate Eric Holder; Homeland Security Secretary-designate Janet Napolitano; Defense Secretary Robert Gates; Vice President-elect Joe Biden; Obama; Secretary of State-designate Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y.; National Security Adviser-designate Ret. Marine Gen. James Jones; and United Nations Ambassador-designate Susan Rice.

Obama churning out Cabinet members

Andie Diemer
News Editor

President-elect Barack Obama is rounding out his national security team and appointed former campaign rival Hillary Clinton as secretary of state during a press conference Monday. He also announced he will keep the Bush administration's Defense Secretary Robert Gates on in the same position and named former Justice Department official Eric Holder as attorney general.

"She possesses an extraordinary intelligence and toughness and a remarkable work ethic," Obama said when he introduced Clinton. "She is an American of tremendous stature who

will have my complete confidence, who knows many of the world's leaders, who will command respect in every capital and who will clearly have the ability to advance our interests around the world."

Retired Marine Gen. Jim Jones will fill in as national security adviser, Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano as homeland security secretary and campaign foreign policy adviser Susan Rice as ambassador to the United Nations.

Former Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle will step up as Secretary of Health and Human Services and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson will act as commerce secretary.

"I assembled this team because I am a strong believer in strong personalities and strong opinions," Obama said during the press conference.

These individuals will work as the top echelon of advising for Obama on foreign and national security issues during a global "war on terror."

While Obama said he is going to welcome "a vigorous debate inside the White House," he reconfirmed he will still be setting policy as the president.

"I will be responsible for the vision that this team carries out, and I will expect them to implement that vision once decisions are made," he said.

With half of his 15-member Cabinet in place, Obama is continuing to rapidly

name those who will accompany him in office only a month after Election Day.

The most important roles at State, Justice, Treasury and Defense have all been instated.

"[My appointees] share my pragmatism about the use of power and my sense of purpose about America's role as a leader in the world," he said.

The national security appointments were made just a week after his economic team was named, which will be led by Federal Reserve Bank of New York President Timothy Geithner as treasury secretary.

Obama said this is all in an effort to be able to "hit the ground running" when he is inaugurated on Jan. 20.

Provost search narrowed to two candidates, campus visits next

Whitney Bossie
News Editor

Two candidates for the position of provost and vice president for academic affairs have been chosen to visit campus and make public presentations to faculty and staff.

The Provost Search Committee chose Steven House, dean of Elon College of Arts and Sciences and associate vice president for academic affairs, and Elizabeth Paul, vice provost at The College of New Jersey, as the final two candidates.

House will give a presentation at 4:10 p.m. tomorrow in the LaRose Digital Theatre. Paul's presentation will take place at 4:10 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 9 in the same location.

In addition to the presentations, each candidate will meet with students, faculty, staff and trustees

during his or her respective two-day visit. The visits will end with an exit interview with President Leo Lambert.

Several students will be invited to attend sessions with each candidate during his or her visit. Paul Parsons, dean of the School of Communications and co-chair of the search committee, said SGA leaders, student media leaders, Honors Fellows and other members of the student body will attend the sessions.

"Interaction with students is important in both directions," he said. "We want provost finalists to talk with students about academics and student life at Elon so that candidates better understand the motivations of our students, and we value student feedback into the selection process."

The provost oversees academic affairs, admissions and financial planning, student life, intercollegiate

athletics, institutional research, sponsored programs and cultural affairs. The provost also serves as assistant secretary and assistant treasurer of the Board of Trustees.

Current Provost Gerry Francis will move to the office of executive vice president. Francis has served as the provost since 1994.

House began his career by spending 14 years at Seton Hall University, including four years as the associate dean of arts and sciences. He came to Elon as the founding dean of Elon College in 2001 and became associate vice president in 2006.

Paul, a psychology professor, has spent 17 years at The College of New Jersey. She has served as chair of the psychology department, interim vice president for student life and interim provost and vice president for academic affairs. She currently serves

as vice provost.

"Both finalists have significant experience, a commitment to academic excellence and a student-centered mindset," Parsons said. "They have a history of progressively increasing responsibilities at their institutions, which is a sign of high respect and confidence in their ability to lead."

The search committee received 110 applications for the position. The pool was narrowed to 14 applicants who were given serious consideration. From the group of 14, eight were invited for preliminary interviews and then the two finalists were chosen.

Parsons said the committee will gather campus feedback after the visits and report it to President Lambert before Christmas break. Lambert will then make the final decision.

Amount of applications stays level despite economy woes

Keegan Calligar
Reporter

Despite the dwindling economy and fears about future finances, Elon University has received virtually the same amount of early decision applications as it did last year, said Greg Zaiser, dean of admissions.

Nearly all businesses, including colleges and universities, are suffering from the poor economic climate. Declining stocks and failing companies have created great uncertainty and many admissions officers predicted a decline in early decision applications this fall.

Officials at many private colleges were especially worried, where tuitions are generally higher than at public institutions.

When applying early decision, an applicant agrees to attend the university if accepted, before learning about any potential financial aid package.

Surprisingly, many schools — including Elon — have reported equal, and even increased, applications from recent years.

He said this year's number of early-decision

applicants are on par with last year.

"It has increased overall maybe 1 percent," Zaiser said. "We're really excited that our applicant pool is as large as it was last year and it appears as though it is as strong as last year, but we're not taking anything for granted, which means we're diligent again on keeping Elon at the forefront [of colleges]."

Because of the current recession, many colleges are suffering from shrinking endowments and, according to a Nov. 7 New York Times article, schools across the country are implementing hiring freezes, cutting back on renovations and considering changing need-blind policies.

Currently, Elon's admissions are completely need-blind, meaning the admissions office does not look at an applicant's financial status when determining whether or not to admit the individual to the university.

And, for the time being, the university will stay that way.

"We've not discussed [changing from being need-blind]," Zaiser said. "That is not part of our plan at this time."

Zaiser said while it's difficult to predict the future economy, the university does have planned changes to react to the volatile market.

"The hard part here is no one knows how the economy will affect enrollment in colleges and universities," he said. "One could assume or imagine that it will make it harder. We're planning on focusing our efforts on what we call yield, which is converting students who have been accepted to enroll."

To attract new students, Zaiser said university representatives will continue to travel to high schools to educate people about Elon and the school will offer on-campus events for accepted students.

"We've sort of reevaluated our message to prospective families," Zaiser said. "We've never really, in previous years, focused on the word value and there's tremendous value in an Elon education."

Admissions officers will also emphasize the facilities and accessible faculty that distinguish Elon. "What we're trying to do is kind of convey the value of an education, especially when in this economy, public schools are potentially going to be very attractive because of their cost," Zaiser said.