

## Notes from Faculty Work Subgroup Conversation 3/12/09

**Members:** Deb McGee (secretary), Claire Curtis, Amanda Ruth-McSwain, Tim Lapira

**Issues of top priority have been flagged with a +++ indicator by their heading.**

First, we have a general observation. **There seems to be great inconsistency when it comes to benchmarking faculty workload and compensation.** For purposes that are related to distinctiveness, we are compared with our aspirational peers, while for other purposes we are compared to institutions which we perceive to be our peers. There seems to be a goal to compare our workload and compensation based on averages, especially when it comes to workload and compensation. Do we wish to be distinctive or average? Right now, due to lack of a clear answer to that question, we appear to be sliding down the slippery slope of mediocrity where commitments to teaching, to students, and to research are average at best. **The resources do not appear to match the administration's expectations for productivity.**

We grouped the areas into three areas: Workload, with Research and Teaching subfields, Compensation, and Evaluation.

### Workload

This section addresses Research, Teaching, and then General workload issues.

#### Research +++

1. We strongly support a fourth-year, one-semester research sabbatical for tenure-track faculty who successfully complete their third-year reviews.
2. We would also like to see parity in the availability and delivery of research and travel funding across the School and the College. We recommend that deans have access to supplemental travel funds for use by faculty members who have exceeded departmental travel budgets, but have the opportunity to present papers at additional conferences. In addition, faculty who are performing leadership functions for their respective professional associations should also be eligible for travel support.
3. We would also like to investigate the possibility of having different versions of the sabbatical than those currently allowed.

#### Teaching +++

1. Again, we would like class size and resources (e.g., Smart rooms, etc) to match our goals. If we want to claim small class size and one-on-one-relationships with faculty as an advantage of C of C, then faculty and schools should not be "punished" for not meeting some randomly chosen method for measuring workload (e.g, Delaware targets). This is especially true when different measures result in drastically different assessments of faculty productivity.

2. The Curriculum committee is preparing information regarding team teaching, and other innovations for teaching.

### **General Workload Issues**

Our main suggestion involves allowing faculty more control over how they spend their faculty time. Similar to the evaluation criteria that required faculty to weight their evaluations (50% teaching, 20% research, 20% service, and 10% "faculty preference"), we propose that faculty are able to develop three-year or five-year plans for how they will devote their time. Similar to the Carnegie recommendations published several years ago (I don't recall the year exactly), faculty can allocate their time according to their strengths. For instance, a faculty member who is engaged in a time-intensive, two-year research project could allocate most of his or her time to the research for that period, and perhaps teach fewer courses, including one that focuses on their research project. Afterwards, they may need a "research break" during which they would teach more classes, or more time consuming classes. This plan can be worked out with the chair of the department who can help coordinate plans, so that all responsibilities are still met. This coordination may require some faculty to delay a planned project, while another faculty member finishes up his or her project. Some faculty may not be "research-oriented" or may have family responsibilities that result in them needing to focus on teaching only for some period of time. There would be no punishment or value criteria associated with either choice.

### **Evaluations**

The general consensus of the committee was that the evaluation process could be streamlined significantly. The payoff does not seem to justify the amount of time spent on meeting requirements for evaluation. Also the purpose of various "reports" does not seem to be communicated clearly, and much information does not seem to be used.

### **Compensation +++**

1. Chairs should not be responsible for making decisions that result in the compression of salaries. Salary adjustments should be a priority in order to address compression issues.

2. There should be a clearer reward structure that includes consideration of the following:

- \* No "credit" is given for graduate teaching and advising.
- \* There is no clear reward structure for independent studies or internships.
- \* There is great variation in the amount of time faculty members from different departments must spend On Undergraduate Advising, a required service activity
- \* Some distinction should be made between student contact hours and "seat hours"
- \* Most service activities are allowed only a line in the tenure portfolio; however, there is a great difference between, say, serving on the committee which generated this report (about 4 hours) and advising Public Relations Student Society of America, a co-curricular activity that requires about six hours per week. They are equal in the tenure portfolio.

3. We would like to find ways to recognize excellence, other than merit, especially during tough economic times.

### **Collective Bargaining**

Future discussions of faculty work and life issues may be better addressed by a formal collective bargaining unit representing members of the faculty. As with many other public academic institutions, a collective bargaining could more fairly and equitably negotiate the terms and conditions of faculty contracts, including rights and responsibilities, working conditions, grievance procedures, and other issues. We see the organization of the faculty in the spirit of collaboration with the administration to achieve our shared goals.

### **Notes from Faculty Life Subgroup Conversation 3/12/09**

**Members:** Lisa Thomson-Ross, Chris Boucher, Alison Piepmeier, Catherine Thomas (secretary)

**Issues rated “1” are considered of highest priority and significance. Issues rated “2” are important, but action is not immediately needed.**

#### ***Family Leave and Modification of Duties (Rating 1)***

- Coverage should be comprehensive and flexible enough to include all kinds of situations—childbirth, adoption, elder care, spousal/partner illness/disability
- Recommendation is for C of C to adopt USC’s policy as a model. Terms are as follows:
  - Covers men and women for all situations
  - Covers “significant life events”
  - Provides for semester of modified duties at full pay (NO on-campus duties)
  - Allows both parents to take the same semester off for care, although staggering semesters off is preferable
  - Provides a policy of fair and equivalent work, access, and terms across all departments
- Suggestion is that we have a pool of money set aside to pay for adjunct replacements where needed.

#### ***Tuition Rebates and University Exchanges (Rating 2)***

- Generate tuition exchange programs with a consortium of schools (COPLAC?)
- Will make us preeminent in reputation for faculty welfare
- Helps compensate faculty for high-priced living conditions (especially housing) and below-market salaries by off-setting educational expenses
- Can serve as a recruiting and retention tool for faculty

- May be more affordable than we think, since faculty children will have in-state status. Question: how many student tuitions would this involve per semester?

### ***Improved Childcare (Rating 1)***

- Expand ECDC in size (to accommodate more if not all faculty care requests) and age groups (from infant care through early grades).
- Expand time offerings (during day/after school care, school holiday care/mini-camps)
- Could use MUSC's or St. Andrews Parks and Rec. models for public school holiday camps (nominal fee per day per child; care includes activities of various sorts and full-day coverage)
- Create park and/or green space including mini-field, picnic area, and playground for programming, faculty/child events and enjoyment
- Involve older kids in ECDC in mentoring and tutoring relationships with younger kids
- Employ more C of C students (especially Ed majors) in care and/or camp facilitation

### ***Spousal/Partner Hires (Rating 1)***

- Noted that C of C is losing a lot of money and great faculty in failed searches because of the lack of provisions for partner hires across campus
- Issue seen as important to recruitment, retention, and campus community-building
- Recommended that C of C identify a liaison person to negotiate partner hires among departments and offices and that there be a pool of money set aside to facilitate the hiring of said partners into regular, appropriate positions

### ***Faculty Benefits***

- **Same-Sex Partner Benefits (Rating 1)**
  - See this as an important recognition of equal rights and encouragement of diversity on campus
  - Stands as a big recruiting and retention issue
  - Should permeate all rights and life issues discussed within this document
  - Will bring the College into the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- **Health Care (Rating 1)**
  - Should have more affordable and comprehensive **health care plans** available, including preventative, alternative, special needs, and emergency provisions
  - **Dental Plan** coverage should acknowledge and cover *current* prices for procedures
- **Wellness Center (Rating 2)**
  - Center would increase well-being and motivation of faculty members, supporting their "whole selves." Facilities and services might include:
    - Lounges with and without kitchen facilities
    - Pool—clean, updated
    - Free Yoga and other exercise/meditation classes

- Free massages
- Weight room with up-to-date equipment
- Clean and functional locker room
- Nap cubbies (see model at Google's offices)
- Faculty-only computer/technology lab
- **Community Discounts (Rating 2)**
  - College could provide discounted rates and/or tickets to events and attractions in the local area as incentives:
    - Arts events (concerts, Spoleto, theater, etc.)
    - Sporting events (Riverdogs games, Basketball, Stingrays, etc.)
    - Theme parks
    - Local restaurants
    - Local Stores (grocery, hardware, books, etc.)

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