

RESOLUTION 2004-05-07

I understand and appreciate the concern expressed for new faculty, but I do believe that the rationale for this resolution is somewhat overstated. For example, including – even as “expected” activities for new faculty – lunches such as Monday’s picnic, Tuesday’s lunch with the President, Wednesday’s lunch at the Writing Intensive Workshop, and Friday’s lunch following the convocation seems something of a stretch, given that we must expect that new faculty will be eating lunch anyway. Excluding these, my count of “required” activities for new faculty totals 19.5 hours, with an additional maximum of 5.5 added as “hoped for” attendance at the TLSR Conference on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning. Ms. Moclair and I are currently considering shifting the Writing Intensive Workshop to another time for 05-06, but it is not yet clear that we will be able to make that work. I will be mindful of the existence of this expression of sentiment in this and subsequent years, but I cannot at this point give assurance that it can be made to work as it is offered.

RESOLUTION 2004-05-13

This resolution deals with faculty recruitment and has two resolves. While I appreciate the sentiments expressed by the Senate here, I do not agree that either is appropriate to integrate into the *University Handbook* regulations governing the recruitment of faculty. In all this, it is important to recognize that the identification, selection, and appointment of potential members of the instructional faculty is an activity in which the appropriate dean, the provost, and the president – as well as the department and its search committee – have legitimate interests. The respect to which the first of the two resolves refers is a respect which must be mutual. Thus, when an administrative request is made to find, interview, and recommend for appointment candidates from the most highly respected graduate programs in the country, it is not surprising that administration’s reaction to searches which have respected this request is more favorable than its reaction to those which have not. And to contend that recruiting and appointing such candidates necessarily requires compromising any of the qualities listed in the third recitation of resolution 2004-05-13 is, in my opinion, not only erroneous but also without any historical precedent.

Accordingly, I wish to affirm my previous statements on this matter and to encourage departments to seek out applicants for faculty positions who not only meet the expectations noted in the resolution’s third recitation but who are also products of graduate programs in their respective disciplines which are widely-recognized and well-documented as the country’s best. If we are to become – as *Vision 2010* pledges us to become – one of the country’s premier liberal arts and sciences universities, we should settle for nothing less. Indeed, I would go further. I believe we should, for example, also be aggressive in finding candidates who, in addition to fulfilling our other expectations, have had an undergraduate experience at institutions which we might well call our “aspirant peers” – institutions which are already recognized as being among the country’s premier liberal arts and sciences universities. I am satisfied that departments and search committees which genuinely commit themselves to such priorities can be successful and that this success can be attained without any sacrifice whatever in terms of the qualities essential for success as members of our faculty.

Apropos of the second resolve, I reiterate what I said on this matter when I met with the faculty senate to discuss these matters earlier this year. To the best of my knowledge, such considerations have never been used in these contexts at Christopher Newport University. I know of no person who has advocated their use in these contexts in the future. I cannot envision them ever being used, but forever is too long a time for me to be absolutely certain. I do believe that it is not good policy to incorporate such a statement into our *University Handbook* regulations on such matters because, given that it pertains to what was in an evaluator’s mind at the time of the evaluation, violations of it would be materially undetectable.

Richard M. Summerville  
Provost