

**Christopher Newport University**  
**Washington Room of the David Student Union**  
**February 20, 2015**  
**3:00 PM - 6:00 PM**

Senators Present: Adamitis, Martin, Grau, Brash, Nichols, Barnello, Holland, Timani, Jelinek,  
Thompson, Winder, Hasbrouck  
Absent: Busch, Hunter, Manning

1. President Adamitis called the meeting to order at 3:06
2. Everyone reviewed the minutes from the January meeting as a shared Google document. Further discussion on the minutes was requested.

Motion to approve the January minutes was moved by Senator Grau.  
Seconded: Senator Jelenik

Vote to Approve: unanimous

### 3. President's Report

President Adamitis reminded Senators that the CNU faculty excellence nominations are due to department chairs by 5pm on Monday, March 9. The Faculty Senate subcommittee on faculty excellence awards will report on the nominations at our upcoming March meeting. At the January Faculty Senate meeting it was announced that Michelle Moody has been appointed Director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity at CNU and so will no longer manage faculty searches. President Adamitis announced that a search has been initiated in Human Resources for someone who will be responsible for faculty recruitment. Hopefully this search will be completed by the end of the semester. In the meantime, Lori Westfall will be the point of contact for the position. Senators voiced the importance of having a faculty member on the hiring committee for this position. President Adamitis will follow up to make certain that one of the search committee members is indeed a member of the instructional faculty.

At the Provost Advisory Staff (PAS) meeting on January 28, President Adamitis discussed the feedback received up to this point on the lecturer proposal. First and foremost, faculty wish to maintain the collegial academic community that we have here at CNU. Throughout all of the town hall meetings and other discussions, faculty consistently expressed their concern about fair treatment of everyone regardless of rank.

President Adamitis went on to share the main points that she made at the PAS meeting.

### **Faculty Governance**

Numerous responses addressed faculty issues that are beyond the scope of the proposal. Shared governance was the most significant topic to arise in several contexts. More specifically, faculty perceive that their voice does not matter and that the administration will do as it will. Faculty also perceive a lack of trust in departments to make hiring and staffing decisions. President Adamitis indicated at the meeting that the Faculty Senate would like to work with the administration to change these perceptions and ensure that university governance is a collaborative process in which the faculty has a strong voice.

## Tenure-Stream vs Restricted Lines

Another issue of great concern was the ratio of tenure stream faculty to renewable contract faculty. Currently the ratio is 68% tenure/tenure track to 32% restricted faculty, which is slightly lower than our target of 70-30. Some faculty had recalled that the number of restricted positions increased in response to economic challenges around 2008. Given that the University budget appears to be more stable, they wondered whether we could still justify maintaining a target 70-30 ratio. If not, they argued that we should increase the number of tenure-stream lines and thereby increase the possibility of conversion for lecturers, rather than asking them to “settle” for restricted positions on the argument that we are offering the best option we can given our fiscal realities. Increasing the tenure-stream lines would help to ensure stronger candidate pools for searches, as more people will apply. It would also help reduce the University's investment of both money and time into searches, as we would reduce faculty turnover. This in turn will increase the time and energy that we can devote to pursuing other institutional goals.

Faculty were also concerned that the introduction of rank streams for lecturers would create an alternate career path to tenure that could be used to justify a reduction in tenure-stream lines over time. The ratio of tenure-stream to restricted lines clearly affects university governance and academic freedom. If the percentage of restricted lines were to increase, the strength of the faculty voice would decrease, as faculty on contingent contracts are less likely to speak out.

At the PAS meeting, some factors that affect the ratio were discussed, including institutional goals regarding a desired 3-3 load for tenure-stream faculty, class size, and adjunct usage, as well as the need to increase faculty salaries, which affects the total number of faculty we can afford. Provost Doughty indicated, as he has before, that the lecturer proposal is not intended as a move toward decreasing tenure-stream lines but rather as a way to recognize and reward lecturers for good work and provide more job stability. Another of his goals is to increase tenure-stream lines by moving toward a 75-25 ratio. After the PAS meeting, the Provost gathered data on pressures that impact staffing with the intension of presenting it at our next general faculty meeting. He shared some of this information in advance with the Faculty Senate for today's (Feb. 20) meeting and will present it to the faculty as a whole on Tuesday, February 24.

The advance information provided to the Senate included a chart covering the past ten years that offered data on student enrollments, annual FTE's, annual faculty count and General Fund appropriations. First, the size of the student body has increased significantly in the past ten years at CNU, going from 4699 in 2005 to our current enrollment of 5221 students. Secondly, our annual FTE's have increased from 4322 to our current 5150, which means that we have more full-time students than we did ten years ago. For both these reasons we must open more seats every semester to accommodate growing enrollment needs. The faculty count increased 25.23% over this ten year period, which has allowed us more or less to keep pace with growing enrollments while maintaining smaller class sizes and reducing the teaching load for tenure-stream faculty. However, the Educational and General (E&G) budget, which supports the academic side of the house, has decreased by .75% over this ten year period due to state cuts in funding for higher education: whereas about 70% of our budget used to come from the state, today only about 30% does. ARRA funds helped CNU weather the state cuts in 2009-20012; annual tuition increases now fill the gap left by ARRA.

*Discussion:* Given the continuing downward trend in the E&G budget, this is a good time to apply analytics to chart out the future of CNU. Variables that go into our academic budget include state funding, tuition funds, desired teaching loads, class sizes and the number of enrolled students; the

scope of the curriculum should also be taken into consideration. The question that arises is, how are the numbers that make up the different variables affecting the number of faculty on 3/3, 3/4 and 4/4 teaching loads? One idea is to make a recommendation to the administration that we have a discussion in the near future about the 70-30 faculty ratio. The discussion might occur via a task force, town hall meetings, or a chairs meeting, as department chairs have many of the best insights into how to distribute faculty loads. President Adamitis suggested that we should make a recommendation on this issue when we respond to the lecturer proposal as a Senate. Finally, President Adamitis would like to acknowledge that the Provost listened to our concerns about the composition of the faculty and has taken steps to address them by including data about the budget in his presentation at the general faculty meeting this February.

Senator Brash then pointed out that the 70-30 ratio only references full-time faculty and not adjuncts. In some departments, adjunct faculty teach a significant percentage of students, and this heavy adjunct usage must also be included in any future deliberations. The administration is asking for more classes with 19 or fewer students, steering us toward greater adjunct usage. Specifically, the administration has asked that we achieve 57% of classes containing less than 19 students. The faculty requests more clarification as to how the 57% figure was derived.

Senators agreed that a more holistic discussion must enter into our lecturer proposal deliberations. We would like to see an open conversation with the administration regarding goal setting for the future of CNU. This discussion will be beneficial only if we have access to all numbers that are driving the academic budget.

### **Conversions**

Turning to the subject of conversions of restricted faculty to tenure track, President Adamitis mentioned that more care may be needed in the interview process for new restricted contract faculty. Feedback from the town hall meetings indicated that, when we first created lecturer lines, restricted candidates were told during the interview process that there was a strong possibility for conversion, but in subsequent years conversion was not presented in this way. In such discussions, it is important that everyone sends an accurate and consistent message throughout the entire hiring process. We must also be careful about presenting lecturer positions as life-long careers, since over the long term the contracts are contingent on institutional need and performance to a much greater degree than contracts for tenured faculty.

Since the President's report on the lecturer proposal feedback and PAS meeting had by this point turned into a group discussion, President Adamitis recommended that we proceed out of order and move to an open discussion of the lecturer proposal. She did note however, that the Provost requested we not vote until our March meeting, so that he might give his presentation at the general faculty meeting first.

### **6. Lecturer Proposal**

The Senate began by acknowledging that lecturers at the town hall meetings agreed the proposal for the creation of rank streams for lecturers is quite welcome. The Senate also recognized that faculty of all ranks presented concerns that need to be addressed. After much additional discussion of the pros and cons of the proposal articulated above in the President's report, the Senate conducted a straw poll to see whether Senators would generally support it. The straw poll was unanimous in favor of the proposal.

The next order of business was to address the concern about the tenure-stream/restricted ratio and potential threats to tenure. The Senate agreed that proactive strategic planning would alleviate these

concerns. Such strategic planning would entail collaboration between the department chairs and deans to develop a five-year plan that indicates how we will (a) move toward a 75-25 institutional ratio; (b) potentially promote lecturers who wish to apply for conversion based on institutional need and individual performance in the short term; (c) determine how lecturer contracts will be staggered within departments, as per the *Handbook*, over the long term; (d) meet institutional goals regarding class size; and (e) limit adjunct usage to an institutional average of no more than 20%.

The Senate then turned to concerns specific to the proposal that will need to be addressed before we formally vote. As time was running short, we identified areas that need attention and will discuss these further at the March meeting. One major issue is the lack of *Handbook* language on the means by which an individual might move from an Instructor to a Lecturer position. In addition, there is no guidance on whether years at the rank of Instructor could be counted toward promotion for faculty members who move from Instructor to Lecturer rank while at CNU. The Senate also acknowledged that this proposal does not apply to Instructors and is concerned that we properly reward Instructors who have performed well over many years at CNU. The *Handbook* currently allows us to grant emeritus status to these colleagues, but we should consider other ways to recognize highly successful Instructors who have devoted their careers to CNU.

Another area that needs much more attention is the evaluation system associated with renewable contract positions. The Senate noted that in the past there has been lack of clarity regarding performance expectations for restricted faculty, especially with respect to research, in the process for retention, Annual Review and three-year contracts. The current proposal does not ameliorate that situation but rather complicates it by adding rank streams. For example, to earn tenure we say that a candidate must have multiple Highest Valued products in the area of scholarship and creative activity, but surely we would expect something different for lecturers to attain Master or Senior status, since that rank gives less weight to scholarship and creative activity. But what would “different” entail? The following difficult situation can be envisioned: Two lecturers come up for promotion, and one has published journal articles while the other has worked extensively on research with undergraduates. Which should be promoted? We must clarify what activities Lecturers are expected to complete to attain these new ranks, so evaluation standards for Master and Senior lecturers need to be developed. But even after evaluation standards are put in place, the question remains as to where these evaluation standards should be published. Certainly evaluation standards should be included in the *University Handbook*, but we might also consider including more specific expectations in the departmental EVAL-4.

Another unaddressed question is how the hiring credentials for tenure-stream factor into the Lecturer proposal. During the town hall meetings, some Lecturers indicated frustration with the fact that they would never be eligible for conversion, even if they perform at the same level as probationary or tenured faculty, because of their Ph.D.-granting institutions. While the rank streams are appreciated, they are not a substitute for tenure for lecturers wishing to be converted who meet institutional needs and have a strong record of achievement. At what point should we grant conversion based upon performance alone?

Finally, the Senate recalls the Provost has stated that pay bumps will be associated with promotion to Senior Lecturer and to Master Lecturer. These pay bumps need to be somehow codified within the proposal.

#### **Senate Recommendation:**

1. Upon promotion to the new Senior Lecturer status, such an individual be given a salary

increase. Also upon promotion to the new Master Lecturer status, such an individual be given a salary increase.

2. We choose our positions based on our own interests, values, qualities and qualifications. Each person brings something unique to the table. We should acknowledge our individual differences with a carefully crafted evaluation process which reflects not only overall university expectations of all faculty, but also the relative value placed on these activities based upon position. We all do the same kinds of faculty tasks but the value placed on those tasks varies depending upon faculty positions. Specifically, the EVAL-4 standards serve as the list for all tasks completed by all faculty members, but perhaps we can adjust what tasks are considered highest valued, highly valued, and valued contributions, among various positions. For instance, grants received, books published, or peer-reviewed journal articles are considered highest valued for probationary/tenured faculty whereas mentoring student research, national conference presentations, or student research publications might be considered highest valued for restricted faculty.

At this point in the meeting, a straw poll was conducted by Senators to decide if departments should be empowered with making the above decisions. The vote was unanimous.

To efficiently speed our deliberations at the next Faculty Senate meeting, all Senators should carefully review the proposed handbook language.

#### 7. Other business

For next time we will look at the final examination schedule and policy. Members of the SEC should share their findings from the recent Board of Visitors meeting. New handbook proposals #1 through 6 will be voted upon at our March meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30