

Faculty Senate Resolution 2004-05-13 (Amended 3/18/05)
Faculty Hiring Policies

WHEREAS both CNU faculty and administration wish to recruit the strongest, most well-credentialed and well-prepared candidates to join the CNU faculty, and

WHEREAS it is our belief that the administration has rejected several recent search committee hiring recommendations because the candidate's graduate school or program of origin did not appear on a 'top schools/top programs' list such as the Gourman Report, causing CNU to lose talented, well-qualified candidates, and

WHEREAS the goal of recruiting a strong, well-credentialed, well-prepared faculty requires the careful, thoughtful weighting of myriad factors, including the candidate's superior ability

- to manage a 4-4 teaching load (This load has in fact proved a deterrent to candidates in several Spring 2005 searches because of how little time it provides for faculty scholarship and research.),
- to serve the university's students well,
- to serve the curricular and administrative needs of the department and program in question,
- to produce exemplary scholarship in the field, and

WHEREAS the quality of a candidate's preparation to perform these tasks cannot be divined solely on whether the candidate's graduate program has appeared on a 'top schools/programs' list, but must take into account with whom the candidate has studied, discipline-specific aspects of the candidate's graduate school preparation, background and experience in or aptitude for undergraduate teaching, and the candidate's own graduate school performance, among other factors, and

WHEREAS in the best case, 'top schools/programs' lists are problematic instruments because they fail to weight the myriad factors indicating candidate's superior ability to fulfill CNU's unique needs, and in the worst case many such lists are internally problematic, being produced for use as marketing tools and, as in the case of the Gourman Report, suffering from undisclosed methodologies that discredit their viability, (See Chronicle of Higher Education, 7 Nov. 1997, "A Self-Published College Guide Goes Big-Time, and Educators Cry Foul"; Available: <http://chronicle.com/free/v44/i11/11a00101.htm>), and

WHEREAS departmental search/hiring committees composed of disciplinary experts invest tremendous amounts of time identifying superior candidates, interviewing them in multiple venues, and judging their ability to excel at diverse departmental and university needs, and in fact have a strong record of selecting professors who are both exemplary teachers and scholars, and

WHEREAS the professional achievement of CNU faculty—their reputations and contacts in their fields based on scholarship, research, and other professional activity—offers a potent resource for assuring that the best CNU students gain admission to top graduate schools, and

WHEREAS the quality of the faculty and the quality of faculty-student interactions are CNU's principal strengths in the eyes of its students, as evidenced by the results of the latest Student Satisfaction Index, and this result has been produced by faculty who hail from a variety of institutions,

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the administration should respect the integrity of the search committee process and the recommendations it produces. In particular, when search committees recommend a superior candidate in accordance with factors listed above, the administration should not reject the candidate based on the non-appearance of his or her graduate school on a list such as the Gourman Report.

LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED THAT such lists should never be used by any party in the evaluation, retention, tenure and promotion of faculty at Christopher Newport University.

Sponsors: Senators Schwarze, Wheeler, Kidd, Hicks, Berry, Doyle, Whiting, Cartwright, Grau, Vachris, Knipp, Underwood