

**Report to the Senate
Interim Provost
April 3, 2006**

There are two things that I want to mention to you in this report. The first is a summary of questions and concerns that arose during the Promotion and Tenure process. The second is an elaboration of the two academic initiatives that the President mentioned in the convocation and were funded for next year's budget—assuming that we receive the currently projected allocation from the Legislature.

PROMOTION AND TENURE

As the Senate reviews the Recommended Changes for Promotion and Tenure, it might be helpful for you to be aware of a few questions and concerns that were encountered during this year's process.

Questions:

1. Should work for which an individual receives additional compensation, whether it be internal or external, be considered in the promotion and tenure review?
2. Should work done prior to coming to ECU count toward promotion?
3. Is a significant publication record required for promotion to professor? To any rank? That is unclear from what was sent forward through the process.
4. Are publications in process, no matter what the stage, counted or not counted?
5. Can a person be promoted with no teaching responsibilities as part of his or her basic assignment?
6. Should a person receive a complete review if he or she withdraws since earlier decisions are occasionally reversed?

Concerns:

1. The Ad Hoc Committee made a number of recommendations for standards for tenure. Currently the Handbook states, "A faculty member shall be eligible for tenure after completing a five year probationary period of continuous full-time service and attaining the rank of assistant professor or above. If, by the end of the five year probationary period, promotion beyond the rank of instructor cannot be justified or if for any other reason a faculty member is not recommended for tenure, a one year terminal contract shall be tendered." Unless there are other specific criteria put forward by the department, serving five years and attaining the rank of assistant professor is all that is needed to achieve this major commitment of appointment from the University.
2. The Ad Hoc Committee specifies for both tenure and promotion that the individual have a terminal degree "relevant to the faculty member's appointment." As the Committee recommends, "terminal degree" needs to be defined and delineated, and any exceptions need to be noted clearly at the time of hire.
3. With regard to the Senate amendment that positive as well as negative recommendations continue to be reviewed by committees as well as administrators as is the current practice, it should be noted that several individuals without appropriate or with questionable relevant credentials made it to the provost level without any such notation or concerns in

the file. This would support the continuation of even positive reviews.

4. It should be required that each reviewer provide a written statement recommending either support for or denial of the application and the reasons for that decision stated in terms of the standards. With just check marks indicating approval or non-approval, it is difficult for subsequent reviewers to determine why earlier reviewers supported or denied the candidate's request. As a result the process must begin anew rather than build on the previous reviewers' work.
7. There needs to be specific criteria established for special title series and categories of employees, so that the candidates from the beginning of their employment and the reviewers in the promotion and tenure process know what the standards are.
8. There should be included in the file documentation if the individual has received credit toward tenure.
9. Another problem that arose in tenure cases (that is, barely meeting the minimal requirements set for Assistant Professor) will be addressed if tenure and promotion to associate professor, except in special circumstances, occur at the same time. This will raise the bar to require meeting the standards of Associate Professor prior to receiving tenure.

Observations:

1. In my two years at ECU, I have noted that appeals often contain personal and emotional information not relevant to the candidate's case for achievements in teaching, scholarship, and service. In my opinion appeals should be made strictly on material added to the dossier and considered at the next highest level and not at the level making the decision that is being appealed.
2. One final observation is a recommendation that no files undergo review outside of the college for years 1, 2, 3, and 5. The only formal reviews that must go through the entire process should be at the 4th and 6th years. This would allow for quicker response and more meaningful review of the candidates in the two crucial years.

2006-2007 ACADEMIC INITIATIVES

There were two academic initiatives that were funded in this year's budget guidelines: advisors for a three-tiered advising program and a three-year rotation of faculty computers.

Three-Tiered Advising

Last year a committee chaired by Larry Collins conducted a study of advising. It noted a number of deficiencies that need to be addressed. To address some of those concerns, a three-tiered approach to advising has been proposed and will be funded if we receive the state funds the President mentions in her report. Support for advising undecided students is in place in Enrollment Management; and faculty advise majors. Where improvement most commonly is needed is in the 0-75 credit range for those who have decided but are not upper-level. This plan will put six advisors—two in CAS and one at each of the other colleges to supplement the individuals they have doing graduation checks and change the focus of these individuals to advising these students as well as checking credentials. A new system will be developed to make sure all students are receiving the information they need to make wise choices and move toward graduation.

Three-Year Replacement of Faculty Computers

As part of our new Strategic Plan we need to make sure that equipment for faculty and in classrooms is current and effective. What we are proposing to do is to provide 3-year rotation of computers for all tenure-track faculty. This would be done by leasing laptops and docking stations. The laptops would be PC's from one vendor or, if the faculty member prefers, a Mac. They would be high performance machines with wireless and CD/DVD capability. Benefits of this method would be that it would

- Allow faculty to have a machine in the classroom that they understand

- Allow for ease of repair, service, and replacement

- Negate the need for VCR, DVD, computers, and possibly overheads to be stored in classrooms. Only needed would be a projection device, which could be secured

- Allow the unlocking and better utilization of a number of classrooms

- Finish making all classrooms wireless with projection devices by the fall

- Allow faculty to have computers for library research since it too is wireless

- Provide for ease of installation and disposal of computers.

The allocation from the new money is about \$130,000. From funds the Provost's Office received this year, I will provide the rest of the money for the first year lease payment; the deans have committed to back that up from their funds next year and thereafter, if new funds are not available from the state appropriation. This will eliminate the need for the colleges to budget for faculty computers in the future. We also will be able to cascade current faculty computers to staff and part-time faculty. The next phase will be to put all staff computers on a three-year rotation as well.

We are making good progress on a number of fronts. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to ECU.

Jim Chapman