Final Report, May 4, 2006

Faculty Senate Tenure, Promotion, and Grievance Committee

Members: Bonnie Blackwell, Dennis Cheek, Sheri Neill, C.A. Quarles, Magnus Rittby, Greg Stephens, Thomas Walsh, Stuart Youngblood (chair), and Blaise Ferrandino (FSEC liaison).

Specific Committee Charges AY 2005-2006:

1. Continue to evaluate the unit-specific tenure and promotion documents for consistency with the criteria and policies stated in the Faculty/Staff Handbook. Special attention should be given to the interpretation and evaluation of the service requirement.

Attached are two sets of documents on service and advising statements by academic units. The first set of documents are the “raw” data of statements contained in academic unit policies (assembled by the TPG Committee in 2004-2005). The second set of documents have organized the raw data into a matrix that summarizes the general and specific requirements enumerated in local academic unit documents.

A key question that such documents can address is whether service and advising activities matter for promotion and/or tenure decisions and, if so, how much? Well-worded documents, in effect, provide truth in advertising for faculty seeking to allocate their efforts across the five identified dimensions of performance: teaching, research, professional and administrative service, student interaction (advising), and professional development.

In general, characteristics of informed policy statements on service included: a description of service to the institution, community and profession; relative weights for service to various constituents; examples of service activities; specification of the amount of service that meets quantity/quality standards; relative importance of service contributions for promotion as a function of rank sought (e.g., associate vs. full professor rank). For advising statements, characteristics of well-worded documents include: clear statement of expectation by academic rank; quantification of amount expected, specification of evaluation criteria; specific examples of acceptable or outstanding advising activity; sources of data to document acceptable activity; and methods of evaluation.

2. Draft a document stating the Faculty Senate's interpretation of the service requirement. The TPG committee recommends the following motion for consideration by the Faculty Senate:

“The Faculty Senate recommends that each academic unit reexamine their policy statements on service and advising as they relate to promotion, tenure, appointment, and/or reward decisions. The Faculty Senate further recommends that such policies state clearly and concisely whether service and advising activities count toward these decisions...
and, if yes, state the nature of expectations in these two areas and how much weight is
given to these criteria, respectively. “

3. *Monitor ongoing work of the Faculty Grievance Policy Taskforce.*

The TPG committee focused on understanding the current policy as well as focusing
discussions with the Chair of the Mediators Committee (Greg Stephens) and the past
Faculty Senate Chair (Blaise Ferrandino) to understand how tenure & promotion-
related grievances are treated under the current policies and the shortcomings of the
current policy. The TPG committee has summarized the current policy in one page
(see attached).

The TPG Committee discussed attributes of a revised Tenure & Grievance policy.
The committee identified key issues that should be considered in the drafting of a
revised policy. These issues include:

**Promptness**- reconcile the current administrative appellate process (AAP) with
the informal/formal steps of the grievance policy. The AAP step appears to be used
procedurally for notification rather than resolution. Create a simpler, progressively
stepped policy. Address tenure/promotion disputes where they begin, at the academic
unit level.

**Responsive** – The procedure will spell out time lines to be followed unless
extensions of the process are negotiated and mutually agreed upon.

**Autonomy of Academic Units** – the process will respect the autonomy of
academic units to make promotion and tenure decisions in conformance with agreed
upon TCU standards. Remove the Faculty Senate from the formal grievance process.

**Ombudsperson** - Consider the appointment of a trained university
Ombudsperson who will serve the informal and formal roles assumed by the Faculty
Senate Chair and the Chair of the University Mediators Committee under the current
process.

**Due Process** – Permit both substantive and procedural grievances at the
department or college level. Procedural appeals only, may be addressed at the
Provost and/or Chancellor levels.

**Alternative Dispute Resolution** – permit the use of mediation at the Department
and/or College level to address substantive and/or procedurally-based promotion and
tenure disputes. ADR encourages the use of informal procedures early in the dispute
process.

**Confidentiality** – Encourage and enforce confidentiality of procedures during
both informal and formal stages of the process.