

Overview



"...there are many areas in which improvement is needed if North Carolina A&T State University is to attract and retain high quality tenure-track faculty members. In a very real sense, the future of the university's teaching and research quality is at stake."

p. 37, Summary and Future Plans

Background



- *COACHE Survey (2005)*
 - *Widespread job dissatisfaction*
 - *Concerns:*
 - Tenure process clarity, equity
 - Overall satisfaction in depts.
 - Service commitments
 - Research funds

Background



- *Junior Faculty Task Force (2007)*
 - *Tools*
 - Job satisfaction survey
 - Focus group sessions
 - Summary of mentoring program
 - *Concerns:*
 - Tenure process clarity and equity
 - Mentoring
 - Performance feedback (annual review)
 - Workload balance / heavy teaching loads
 - Recognition

A Lack of Trust



"A number of junior faculty members expressed serious concerns about completing the Questionnaire or participating in the Focus Group sessions for fear of information getting back to department chairs or deans and the perceived threat of reprisals."

p. 14, Summary

On Mentoring



I have found my own mentors, and try to mentor those who are new because this is important. It would be appropriate for credit to be given for these efforts.

Although there is a system, it never works. I think there is an "official" mentor, but we have never talked about mentoring even once.

I have found my own mentors to help guide me through this process and keeping things balanced.

On Tenure and Promotion Process



The tenure process appears to be very elusive because from what I have seen it appears to be based on politics. Many senior faculty who are a part of the review process have limited research, service, etc. and yet the new faculty are expected to go above and beyond the senior faculty including the research, service, and teaching despite the teaching load, little to no start-up funding, and the daily "fires" and tasks we have as faculty at our institution. Teaching is valued and needed yet I do not know how much that plays into the ultimate decision. Also the expectations at the department committee, dean, and university level are unclear for what is the most valuable asset. Is it research more than teaching or if you are an excellent teacher with some research...? Which is more important?

On Annual Review Process



I have only met with my department chair once in four years regarding an annual review. The form is completed and put in my box for signature.

Although I meet with my department chair at the beginning and end of the year, specific guidelines are not provided on the evaluation. Also, the items that appear to be most important are inconsistent with what would seem to be important in the promotion/tenure process.

On Teaching Commitments



Teaching is my forte - I am a professor because I love it and I put my all into it. However, with all of the other research and service commitments I have, I have had to sacrifice quality in the classroom - which really upsets me. I cannot possibly teach 12 hours a semester, with 1-2 new preps each semester, and get all of my other work done as well. Additionally, we have 40+ students in each class. Grading is a nightmare!

On Research Commitments



I have not been able to do much research since I began teaching at A&T. The student ratio, class burden, faculty meeting demands and general trouble-shooting efforts make mincemeat of my mind. When I do try to write, it is desultory and weak. Working here is antithetical to scholarship. Moreover, when one looks across the table at faculty meetings and sees tenured faculty members who have published little or nothing in the past ten years, one has to check the anger. What remedy have we newcomers for the blowhards who earned tenure during the era of crony appointments?

On Workload Balance



Since A&T's research category was raised, the research expectations have appropriately been ratcheted up but the support for teaching that would allow faculty members more time to engage in research has not. We are expected to proceed exactly as we did when we perceived ourselves as primarily a teaching institution although our classes are bigger, our students are less prepared and therefore need more assistance, and the expectations for research are more stringent. There are only so many hours in the day and yet we have added stresses to already busy faculty without decreasing them in other areas.

On Recognition



I would love to spend the rest of my career at A&T. But I feel overworked, unrecognized and do not get a sense that I am appreciated, respected or matter within my department, college and university. The students are the reason I would remain at A&T. Students are extremely appreciative of any efforts extended on their behalf and many will rise to meet or surpass classroom expectations. I know that I am making a difference in many students' lives even if no one ever recognizes or acknowledges that fact.

So, What do we Make of This?



"Failure to respond to the tenure track faculty concerns raised in the COACHE and Junior Faculty Task Force reports risks the loss of increasing numbers of tenure track faculty members at North Carolina A&T State University in coming years."

- Executive Report

Recommendations



Professional Support for Junior Faculty Members

- *Develop comprehensive mentoring program*
- *Provide summer junior faculty research grant program*
- *Offer competitive start-up packages*
- *Expand professional development activities*

Recommendations



Tenure and Promotion / Annual Review Processes

- *Increase transparency and clarity of the tenure, promotion, and annual review processes*
- *Increase consistency of these processes across departments*
- *Increase clarity of professional demands*
- *Initiate campus-wide discussion of promotion and tenure criteria and processes*

Recommendations



Teaching, Service, and Workload Balance

- *Increase flexibility of teaching schedules*
- *Limit junior faculty advising, committee, and admin. commitments*
- *Develop a rotating pool of faculty lines to support course-release time*
- *Offer common "new hire" packages*
- *Discuss possibility of a tenure-track teaching-centered position*

Recommendations



Academic/Professional Environment

- *Require ongoing professional training and development for all chairs and deans*
- *Evaluate chairs and deans annually*
- *Provide appropriate academic support for under-prepared students*