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President's Report for February 2015

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to another bustling semester!

As always, there are a number of issues that you should be aware of:

1.   Got elections?

It is that time of the year - think about your service load and consider running for a faculty governance position for the Academic Year 2015-2016! The official call for nominations and notice of elections went out on February 1. A reminder email will be going out the 15th. We need representatives from each College to serve on the Faculty Assembly. This is very important service – if we do not use our voice as faculty, we risk losing it! This is your place to voice concerns and make suggestions that will help guide this campus as we grow and impact our work lives and the experience of our students. Our participation on Faculty Assembly serves as a vital communication link between the faculty and the administration. Please consider serving!

In addition, College Representative is an ideal service position for junior faculty – it is a great way to become more involved and learn about your campus and the system and to network. If you have questions, wish to self-nominate, or want to nominate someone for any of the positions, including President and Secretary, please contact Monique French, FA President-Elect, at mfrench3@uccs.edu.

2.   RPT, Merit, and APS 1022

Back in late October, it was brought to the attention of the CU Faculty Council that there had not been much integration of APS 1022 (links and details are included below) to campus, college, or departmental RPT and merit criteria across the system. I included a discussion of this issue in my November President's Report. The Administrative leaders of all campuses were supposed to have received a communication CU System leadership and CU Faculty Council Chair Laura Borgelt regarding the implementation of these changes. As folks have been busy filling out FRPA forms and self-evaluations, questions have arisen regarding the incorporation of Regent Law into review criteria and what this means for faculty.

On Monday, I spoke with Provost Coussons-Read about the status on implementation. She noted that these types of changes take time and that this would be incorporated into RPT criteria as departments make updates. This raises some concerns. First, this approach does not do much to ensure that change

is not forgotten. Secondly, as people have been working on their FRPA reports and self-evaluations, they have raised issues that I am not capable of answering.

These questions include the following:

If this is a part of Regent Law, can faculty request that new criteria be applied to their service evaluation even if their department hasn't officially changed their documents to properly reflect this yet?

What if a department has adopted the criteria but the college has not?

What of dossiers being submitted in the fall? Will all departmental, college level, and campus level criteria be in place by then? If not, does this put the university in an actionable position with regard to grievances?

Is this delay fair to faculty?

What has happened on the other campuses? Are they in compliance?

I have submitted these questions to Jennifer George (UCCS Legal Counsel), Laura Borgelt (CU Faculty Council Chair), and Tom Napierkowski (Chair of the CU System Promotion and Tenure Committee). I have only heard back from Tom at the time of this writing. He and I will be meeting late Thursday afternoon to discuss some of these issues. I will submit an addendum to this report once I have answers.

Weblink:

http://www.cu.edu/regents/laws-and-policies/regent-laws

"Appendices - 1.Standards, Processes, and Procedures Document Rescinded 01/14/ 2009 - Replaced by Administrative Policy Statement: Standards Processes and Procedures for Appointment, Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion."

In the appendix of this document, you will find the following statement:

"Appendix A: Examples of Appropriate Criteria for Faculty Evaluation

C. LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

1. University committees and administrative leadership and service 2. Leadership and service to profession and discipline (state, national, international level) 3. Consultation and public leadership and service 4. Skill and devotion in the care of patients"

This link will take you to the document:

http://www.cu.edu/sites/default/files/1022.pdf

This change from "service" to "Leadership and service" is designed to encourage greater participation in Campus and system-level committee work and to recognize this work as a valuable contribution to the

University that should be acknowledged and rewarded in the RPT Process and in Merit evaluations. It is also designed to acknowledge and reward the work that people are doing in administrative leadership.

3.   Faculty Retreat!

Many thanks to Mary Coussons-Read, Kelli Klebe, Andrea Hutchins, and members of the Undergraduate Research Steering Committee for helping to organize this event and to the faculty who participated! We are hoping that this will be the first of many similar types of events, designed to engage the campus community in discussions and to help find practical approaches to addressing issued raised. We envision having topical discussions that wind through a semester or an academic year. We have selected "Engaging Students in Scholarship" as the theme for the spring semester.

This kickoff event was held on Thursday February 5th and approximately 60 people signed up. The morning started with some great open time to network and catch up with colleagues. The sessions that followed opened up an important dialogue about what we are currently doing to engage undergraduates, whether or not we want to "brand" our campus as an undergraduate research focused institution, and what opportunities and challenges would arise from that. A good deal of time was spent with faculty sharing thoughts about what we are doing already, what benefits would arise if we were to pursue a stronger focus on all forms of undergraduate research, that challenges would this pose, what resources might be needed to accomplish such a goal, and how might this threaten what we currently offer (basically, a SWAT analysis).

After lunch, practical steps and action items were discussed. In order to keep this discussion moving forward, some faculty members have volunteered to write up a report to be submitted to the Provost, which will also be distributed to the faculty. This report and faculty feedback from the event will be used to help shape the direction of the next retreat, tentatively planned for a Friday in April.

Remember, it is important that we all contribute to these discussions. If you cannot attend the events, please talk to colleagues about what occurred, read and comment on the summaries and reports as they come out, and talk to your Faculty Assembly College Reps. Kelli Klebe and members of the Undergraduate Research Steering Committee are eager for discussions and feedback, so please seek them out! These retreats are a great opportunity to increase communication with administration and amongst ourselves and build community! This works the best when many of us participate!

4.   Teaching in an On-Line World

There are a number of exciting opportunities and challenges that come with changes in technology. As we are asked to create more fully on-line degrees, issues such as teaching load, training to teach on-line courses, quality control, staffing, etc. are becoming increasingly more pressing. As faculty, we really do not have representation in this arena, and I believe that we need to improve our avenues of communication about concerns, resources available, etc. To rectify this, the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee has recommended that a new Regular Standing Committee be formed, which would replace our currently inactive Academic Computing Advisory Committee. There are three motions on the Faculty Assembly agenda related to this issue. Venkat Reddy has graciously offered to come and talk about the Online Initiative with the Faculty Assembly before the vote.

5.   Mentorship Update

The administration is still moving forward on ways to address concerns raised in the mentorship report. Chancellor Shockley-Zalabak and Provost Coussons-Read have scheduled "Mentoring Tables" for the Spring Semester. Watch your emails for announcements about dates and times. We also had a really great discussion about creating similar types of forums about how to improve mentoring skills and what it takes to be an effective mentor. The Provost and I are looking into ways to move that forward. I also have a meeting scheduled with Kelli Klebe and Terry Scwartz (Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Faculty Affairs) during the first week of March to develop and action plan to address issues raised in the report.

Respectfully submitted this 12th of February, 2015

Michèle Companion, FA President 2014-2015