

**Faculty Senate President's Report
December 2015 Faculty Meeting
James A. McCubbin, PhD
December 16, 2015**

Thank you. It's a great honor for me to represent you at this particularly important point in our history. First, I want to congratulate today's awardees. You are each inspiring examples of the highest level of quality in faculty and staff; a level of quality that now serves as the standard at Clemson University. Second, I want to congratulate the entire faculty and staff for the successful completion of another semester at Clemson. I can tell you that there is perhaps no more gratifying work than that of a teacher. Each semester we challenge our students. As Harvey Gant reminded us on this very stage a few years ago, our duty as teachers is to make our students uncomfortable. And I agree; our students should be uncomfortable with mediocrity, uncomfortable with less than their very best, uncomfortable that our society has pressing challenges that need urgent solutions. As members of the Faculty of Clemson University, our jobs allow us the opportunity to change lives in a positive, lasting manner. Each day we seek wisdom and guidance to do our jobs well because the stakes are so very high. Our students will be the future leaders of our nation and our world, and we seek to equip them with the tools they need to pilot the future for our children and grandchildren.

Let's think for a moment about the future of this great institution. Our mission is teaching, research and service, and we have lofty goals. We strive to be the premier public teaching institution in the nation. And we aspire to become a comprehensive land-grant research university at the highest levels. Our students are of unprecedented academic quality; and our student athletes truly are champions, embodying the highest level of integrity and excellence, both on the field and in the classroom.

Working together, we have achieved the unthinkable. Not only is Clemson University a top tier public institution, but with limited revenue streams we've managed to arrive at this level of

success largely through sweat equity. As we climbed the USNWR rankings, we did so at a distinct disadvantage. For example, if you adjust for state funding per student and endowment size, Clemson easily ranks in the Top 10 of public universities.

How do we continue to build the predominant public teaching, research and land-grant institution in the nation? I suggest that we can better manage our effort distribution to maximize faculty success. We have inherited a legacy where we hire world class teachers and scholars, but then we tend to allow overload in our service effort with excessive administrative burden and shadow work. The Clemson Faculty does not compromise our teaching. So discounted shadow work means that our research effort can become the orphan child in many units across campus, with actual scholarly effort encroached upon by subtle, withering housekeeping duties. Essentially, many of us have been busy washing dishes and taking out the trash when we should be writing scholarly books and manuscripts and grant proposals, and advancing science, and technology, and humanity.

Clemson University has inspirational leaders in place who partner with us in this quest for greater faculty success. We are grateful for the solid leadership provided by President Clements and Provost Jones. Workload solutions are difficult to apply evenly across vastly different academic units, but the process is already beginning. There are several ongoing conversations about building our future, and I want to emphasize a few strategies.

- We can address the service effort creep through strategic alignment of faculty effort with our core mission. By application of more strategic roles for teaching specialists and advising specialists, and through further administrative efficiencies, we can increase our meaningful productivity without compromising our standards of excellence.
- We need to incentivize new research revenue streams to invest in our future scholarly productivity growth. We need to systematize and deploy campus-wide release policies for new grant proposal development. More campus-wide research grant proposals

leads directly to more extramural funding, more publications, more support for graduate students and postdocs, and a much higher national profile. That is how we move the needle of reputational rankings and enhance our national prominence.

- We also want to make Clemson an even better place to live and work. We need to address challenges in our work quality of life and our ability to balance our work obligations with our home and family obligations. We recently received results of the 2015 COACHE- survey from the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education. Essentially, this is a nation-wide quality of work satisfaction survey. I want to briefly highlight some overarching results.
 - Compared with our benchmark institutions and the national cohort, we do well in a number of areas, such as the nature of our work in both teaching and research. This indicates a commendable balance between institutional expectations and the time and ability to invest in it, including clarity and consistency of expectations. We also do well in departmental engagement... our departmental discussions and professional interactions.
 - However, I also want to mention some of our greatest challenges, and identify pathways to overcome those challenges. We need better facilities and work resources. This requires strategic institutional investment. And we need clarity in our tenure and promotion standards. Your Faculty Senate Policy Committee has already been focused this year on Faculty Manual clarification of our workload policies and TPR expectations.
 - We need better personal and family-friendly policies to recruit and retain our world-class faculty. Your Faculty Senate Welfare Committee has been busy shepherding policies for better childcare support, for clarification of our family leave policies, and for creation of a family resources web portal.

- According to survey results, we also have leadership challenges at the divisional and departmental levels. I know that well-meaning chairs and deans can often be placed into leadership roles without systematic training on how to lead in an academic culture of shared governance. I recommend regular, systematic, and formalized professional development for chairs and deans. If you are a new chair or dean without much academic leadership training, you will find this that training type of training reduces your stress and uncertainty, increases your effectiveness, and helps boost unit *esprit de corps*.

Now...looking to the future, I believe that we can continue to build a better institution. We can continue to build a faculty of the highest quality. We can continue to build an institution that nurtures employees and their families for greater recruitment and retention success. Through careful assessment of our progress and through responsive strategic planning, we can build the premier public teaching and research institution in this nation.

Thank you again for all you do to make Clemson University one of the truly unique and successful public institutions. Thank you for all you do to change lives for the better in South Carolina and beyond.