

Faculty Senate Welfare Committee
2016-2017 Year End Report

Welfare committee members:

Katherine Weisensee (Chair)	(CBSHS)
Julia Brumaghim	(CSCI)
Alan Johnson	(CAFLS)
Abdul Khan	(CECAS)
Marieke Van Puymbroeck	(CBSHS)
John Whitcomb	(CBSHS)
Jeffrey Hallo	(CBSHS)

Agenda Items addressed during the 2016-2017 Faculty Senate term

- Faculty Mentoring Circles
- Provost website for Family Friendly policies
- Employee benefits

Guests: Lisa Gagnon, James Clements, Josh Brown, Denise Anderson

Faculty Mentoring Circles

The results of the 2015 COACHE survey demonstrate that there is a substantial need for an intentional mentoring program for Clemson University faculty. The Welfare Committee of the Faculty Senate developed a survey that was sent to all faculty on February 3, 2016 regarding interest, need, and willingness to participate in a mentoring program. In one week, there were 79 responses from faculty at all ranks indicating a significant interest in participating in a mentoring program. The topics that individuals identified as being of interest include: research productivity, tenure and promotion, work/life balance, women's issues, promotion to full, minority issues, among others.

Our research indicated that mentoring circles (small group mentoring) is an effective and efficient way of providing support to faculty. A faculty mentoring circle program was established for the 2016-2017 academic year by the Faculty Senate Welfare Committee. These groups consisted of 8-12 faculty members - including one to two mentors per group. Applications for mentors and mentees were sent out in late spring 2016. We received 22 applications for mentors and 45 applications for mentees. Mentor circles were created by matching individuals based on availability, rank, and area of study with a focus on cross-department matches, but within similar areas of study – for example humanities, science and engineering, social sciences.

Seven mentoring circles were created; two for lecturers, one for associate professors, and four for assistant professors. There were 13 mentors and 45 mentees assigned to the circles. The mentoring circle program began with a workshop led by Lois Zachery, a national expert on

mentoring in early August 2016. The workshop provided guidance and best practices for mentors and mentees within the mentoring circles. Following the workshop, mentors were asked to schedule monthly meetings with their mentoring circles. Mentors met in December 2016 to provide mid-year feedback about their mentoring circles. Mentors indicated that they felt the mentoring program was worthwhile and did not require a burdensome time requirement. They indicated that it was useful to have two mentors per group to provide support and help with scheduling conflicts. An end of the year survey of participants showed that 74% were satisfied or very satisfied with the program and 82% would recommend the program to others. Looking ahead to next year, the faculty mentoring circle program can find ways to articulate with the NSF ADVANCE grant initiatives.

Provost website for Family-Friendly policies

Katherine Weisensee met with Matt Bundrick and Josh Brown in Oct. 2016 to discuss changes to the Provost's website to highlight the family-friendly policies implemented by the university. On January 10, 2017 the following proposal for items to include on the website was sent to Matt Bundrick:

Family-Friendly Programs for Faculty

Extension of the Probationary Period – Probationary faculty may receive up to two automatic one-year extensions of the tenure decision for the birth or placement of a child during their probationary period. For a full description of policy and procedures see Faculty Manual, Part IV, B.2.b. <http://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/manual.html>

Family Support and Accommodation Plan - Offering faculty members at Clemson University the flexibility and time needed for balancing their professional and personal responsibilities when they experience a life event which may make it difficult to meet their work obligations. http://media.clemson.edu/humanres/policies_procedures/Faculty_FSAP.pdf

Dual Career Faculty Hiring - Dual career families are common among faculty. This presents both challenges and opportunities. Clemson University aims to provide a clearly articulated dual career hiring programs that can overcome the challenges and become highly competitive for attracting talented individuals. <http://www.clemson.edu/administration/provost/faculty-resources.html>

Lactation Network - Clemson University strives to offer clean, private space for new mothers to nurse and/or express breastmilk and flexible opportunities to do so during the work/school day. <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/lactation-network/>

Benefits

The committee met with Lisa Gagnon about employee benefits and concerns highlighted in the COACHE survey results. Gaps in coverage that could be filled to address employee perceptions of inadequate health benefits:

- Increase employer contributions
- Women's preventative visit coverage
- Dental insurance cover cleanings at 100%
- Employer contributions to Health Savings Accounts for high deductible insurance plans

We also discussed the use of third-party providers, like Bright Horizons, to address faculty needs related to childcare and elder care.

The HR office has created a document to summarize benefits for employees at the university (http://media.clemson.edu/humanres/benefits/position_categories_guidance.pdf).

Possible Future Directions

- Participate in organizing faculty mentoring program
- Regular meetings with Lisa Gagnon for updates on employee benefit programs
- Monitor updates on Provost's website
- Based on the recommendations of the Ad hoc Committee on the Status of Lecturers and Senior Lecturers – find ways to include these faculty in awards and grant programs
- Numerous recommendations provided by the Ad hoc Committee on Diversity and Inclusion are directly related to faculty welfare
- Utilize 2015 COACHE results that provide guiding principles and hallmarks of successful models for personal & family policies and health & retirements benefits.