The University Administrative Structure and the Faculty Manual

Part VI of the Faculty Manual describes the University’s administrative structure, how it is fulfilled, and how it is evaluated. Accordingly, it is of justifiably critical interest and importance to the Board. As the University evolves and functions, it is apparent that this part of the Manual is incomplete and ambiguous in important respects. This needs to be remedied. My experience with this part of the Manual suggests that a substantial rewrite is in order—not to change the administrative structure of the University, but to provide us with clear robust guidelines concerning various aspects of that structure.

There are a few Senators with extensive Manual-related policy experience willing to work hard on this important undertaking. But, we realize it must be a collaborative effort involving administration and the Board. We would welcome such a collaboration to collectively improve this part of the Manual that serves all of us in such an important capacity.

Financial Exigency, Program Termination, and the Faculty Manual

When the Great Recession struck, it quickly became apparent to some of us in the Senate that our Faculty Manual guidelines, based on decades-old recommendations from the AAUP, for dealing with financial exigency and program terminations were impractical—they lacked flexibility to deal with any circumstance but true financial Armageddon. Apparently, the AAUP concluded the same thing, and has released new recommended guidelines for Universities dealing with financial strains via program terminations: [http://www.aaup.org/report/role-faculty-conditions-financial-exigency](http://www.aaup.org/report/role-faculty-conditions-financial-exigency)

These guidelines are more sensible in enabling Boards, administrators, and faculty to dealing with a broader spectrum of possible financial strains. My assessment of the guidelines is that the transparency, shared governance, and collaborations they require are particularly well-suited to Clemson.

The Senate began work with Clay Steadman a few years ago to explore revamped practical guidelines. The new AAUP recommendations provide impetus to continue and finish that work. I have reached out to the administration on this effort, and would welcome collaboration from the Board as well. Otherwise, we promise to keep you posted.
▪ **Federal Rules and Faculty**

The new year brings two important postings in the Federal Register: a) proposed rules changes streamlining rules and regulations for federally-funded faculty research which, according to recent surveys, consume >40% of American researcher’s time (!), and b) proposed rules by the IRS for counting the number of hours worked by part-time faculty for the purpose of PPACA compliance.

The Senate has called these proposals to the attention of the Administration, and will work with faculty in urging Governmental Affairs to respond to these proposals during the public commentary period.

▪ **Update on the University Professor Concept**

The Senate’s Policy Committee continues to work on the Huron recommendation regarding the University Professor Concept. After much consideration, the Committee has taken the recommendation and decided to break it into two components: a) a voluntary performance- and external peer review-based 5-year review for tenured faculty that can be used for merit-based salary adjustments, and b) a time-limited University Professor award with supplemental remuneration similar to other titled faculty awards. We welcome feedback.

▪ **A Constitutional Amendment**

As part of enhanced flexibility for the future, I anticipate a possible amendment to the Faculty Constitution being proposed in the near future. The proposed amendment would make it more procedurally practical (not with less thought or notification or debate or rigor) to change the Constitution by use of extended and/or electronic balloting of faculty. The Board would, of course, have to approve any such amendment. And the amendment itself would not change the Board’s ultimate authority in approving future amendments made via such a proposed process.

▪ **Optimal Faculty-to-Administrator Ratios**

In my October report, I noted the growth during the last decade in the number of students and administrators compared to the (very slight decline in the) number of faculty. The point of that graph was to emphasize that faculty are necessarily doing more nowadays, and I explicitly cautioned about drawing conclusions—often based on identity politics—about the faculty-to-administrator ratio itself.
The Board may be interested in a new Social Science Research Network working paper examining empirical cost data for 137 public research universities over 6 academic years from 1987 to 2008. A significant empirical result of this analysis is the finding that University costs are minimized when tenure/tenure track faculty-to-administrator ratios are in the range of 2.2-3.2. Costs are higher when the ratio is less than OR greater than this range. The Clemson ratio of 2.8, calculated from data in the Office of Institutional Research’s online factbook, lies in the middle of this optimum range.

- **Recent Athletics-Related Reports**

Over the past 2-3 months, I have shared with the Faculty Senate a number of concerns related to the academic and physical health of our student-athletes. I’d like to share those with you given what I believe are the mutual interests of both the faculty and the Board in a sustainable and competitive athletics enterprise, from which springs many benefits to the entire Clemson community.

a) A new University of Pennsylvania report on racial inequities in the major Division I conferences:
https://www.gse.upenn.edu/equity/publications/black-male-student-athletes-and-racial-inequities-ncaa-division-i-college-sports

The report disaggregates the statistics for student-athletes at institution in the six major Division I conferences over the 2007-2010 period and finds the 6-year federal graduation rate of black male scholarship athletes is 50% (39% Clemson), compared with 73% (78% Clemson) for all undergraduates, 67% (61% Clemson) for all student athletes, and 56% (55%) for all black undergraduates.

b) Continued refereed publication of epidemiological and neurological evidence, now over 90 years old (!), that “everyday” subconcussive head blows (like the >1000 taken by the average linemen and backs in college football each year) is associated with huge increases in chronic traumatic encephalopathy—a debilitating neurodegenerative protein accumulation disease of the brain.

c) The University’s admission (which I salute) to ABC News/Nightline concerning the administration of the powerful, and potentially dangerous if chronically used, NSAID drug Toradol to some of our student athletes.
http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/risks-college-football-powerful-painkiller/story?id=18114915 - .UOY4f7aNuT-
Some Universities have banned the administration of this drug in their athletics enterprise. The NHL, NBA, and NFL tracks, via strict required reporting requirements, the administration of this drug by all of its teams to any of its athletes. The NCAA does not.

As always, Board members are welcome to join the Senate at any of our regular monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 2:30 pm in the Madren Center. The Board can also follow the workings of the Senate via our monthly electronic newsletter, which is conveniently available at: http://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/president-newsletter.html

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy King
President, Clemson University Faculty Senate
jking2@clemson.edu