

Address to the Faculty - August 16, 1999

Dr. Stella Anderson, Senate Chair

Good morning. I want to take this opportunity to talk about several key issues facing your faculty senate.

1. Post-tenure review.

It's HERE! Some of you have already had the dubious pleasure of being among the first to suffer through this process.

As you likely recall, the Board of Governors' mandate allowed each institution to develop its own procedures and requirements for post-tenure review, under general guidelines.

As it turns out, ASU put into place a system considerably unlike most of the others: Ours is among the most stringent and taxing on the affected faculty. There are only 2 others (at most) - 1 for sure - that require what we require. To top it off, for some unknown reason, ASU exempts department chairs from PTR.

The procedure now in place at ASU closely resembles a process of reapplying for tenure. And let's be clear: post-tenure review was never supposed to be a reapplication for tenure. Our process needs simplifying, and the burden on faculty -- significantly reduced. The Senate intends to accomplish both objectives.

2. Faculty Work Load.

As most faculty realize, there are inequities in teaching loads across campuses in the North Carolina system and within departments/colleges/schools at ASU.

There exists no clear, compelling rationale for these inequities -- only longstanding memories that things have always been like this - apparently, it's tradition.

In the September 1998 BOG's Plan for Rewarding Faculty Teaching -- the standard for comprehensive universities is a 9-hour teaching load per semester. Also, faculty who teach more than the standard load are to be rewarded accordingly. Obviously, that is not the tradition at ASU.

We in the Senate whole-heartedly agree with this 9-hour standard, and we ask the administration to do something about bringing ASU into line with that standard for comprehensive universities in the state. Either this is the goal of the administration -- in which case something ought to be done to achieve it -- or this isn't the goal of our administration, which is what many faculty have reluctantly concluded is in fact the truth of the matter.

3. Terms for Chairs

A new policy approved at the May Board of Trustees meeting is now in place, and I encourage you to read the policy statement in its entirety on the Senate's web page. Go to the March 22 minutes. In a nutshell, department chairs CAN serve an initial term of 5 years, with subsequent 3-year terms. At the end of a term, the chair position is open for nominations of others that would like to serve. Also, there is a phase-in schedule for existing department chairs.

The Senate pursued this issue for two primary reasons:

- a. We wanted faculty to have far greater say in the appointment of their department chair. Now, department members will establish any nominating committee.
- b. We believe that a department Chair is first a faculty member and second a faculty member with a special set of administrative duties. As such, a chair may return full-time to teaching, research, and service.

4. Mandatory Office Hours.

There is one, and only 1, other campus in the system with mandatory office hours - and that mandate is 5 hours per week. Because modern technology, specifically email, has changed the ways we communicate with students, the Senate has recommended a reduction in the number of mandatory office hours. The old policy is simply out of step with the ways in which faculty and students communicate.

5. Grievance Hearing Process.

As the system currently exists, the administration is both prosecutor and judge. The administration presents the case against a faculty member, and the Faculty Grievance Hearing Committee makes its recommendation to the Chancellor, who then decides the matter. Not surprisingly, (over the course of 6 years) the Chancellor has always upheld the recommendation of the Grievance Committee when the Committee has found in favor of the administration. However, the Chancellor has always rejected the Grievance Committee recommendations in every case in which the Committee found in favor of the faculty member. Apparently, the Grievance Committee is 'always right' as long as they agree with the Administration - yet they are always 'wrong' when they agree with the faculty member.

We believe that this very telling - there are serious flaws in the current grievance system and we intend

to push for changes. Currently, the Faculty Assembly and the General Administration are both looking at the merit of outside binding arbitration as an alternative means of resolving grievances. We will be following developments closely and promise to keep the faculty informed.

6. Faculty Salaries.

Here is an interesting quote from an article in the June 30th, 1999, Raleigh News & Observer: (Quote) "The legislature has agreed to order the UNC system to conduct an analysis of faculty salaries. The study will compare the faculty salaries on the state's campuses with those at peer institutions across the region and the United States. The mandate says that the UNC system will report its findings by December 1, along with recommendations for salary adjustments to (quote) "maintain and enhance academic excellence." (endquote)

We certainly look forward to this report. However, we don't need to wait for a sign from above to tell us that there are massive inequities in the system. When we compare ASU's average salaries for Full, Associate, and Assistant professors to those at five other NC institutions most comparable to us, the results are not pretty.

For UNC-Wilmington, UNC-Greensboro, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Asheville, Western Carolina, and ASU ... ASU salaries for Full and Associate professors rank 6th out of six. And the difference is significant - for Associate professors, our average is about \$2,000 below the average of the other five comparable institutions. For Full professors, our average is \$5,000 below the average of the other five. You'll be glad to know that for Assistant professors, our average is in line with the others.

I guess this means that the longer you stay here, the worse you fare. If you're teaching faculty, that is. Administrators take care of themselves somewhat differently.

In years when faculty at ASU received, on average, 4% increases, our top-level administrators, over a 2-year period, received 25 and 38% increases. Moreover, these increases were made in spite of the fact that their salaries were already above their counterparts from comprehensive universities nationwide.

Here is what this means in \$ terms: Over the same time period, while teaching faculty were lucky to get a \$3-4,000 salary increase, these administrators got \$27,000 and \$52,000 increases. This issue alone should swell the membership rolls of the AAUP.

This entire salary situation is demoralizing. Some would say shameful. This yawning gulf between the teaching faculty and the administration sends a clear message about what the people at the top take care of first.

As faculty we hear from the administration over and over again that we are among the best in the system. This simply does not ring true as long as we rank dead last in pay.

Let's consider what we have here:

An overloaded PTR system, an above standard teaching load, a flawed grievance process, and pay that ranks dead last. Obviously the Senate has its work cut out. We have to demand change - we simply can not afford to accept as 'tradition' the way things have been done in the past.

The Senate will go to bat on these issues - you can support us by staying informed, speaking up on the issues, and bringing your concerns to the Senate.

Thank you.