“Proposed Faculty Workload Policy and Modification of Graduate Faculty Status”: One Faculty Member’s Response-

By Henry North, Ph.D., Professor

The University provost met with the faculty at a town hall meeting held on September 27, 2013 in the College of Education Auditorium. The administration based its arguments and request for a change to the Faculty Workload on two planks: 1) Trust the academic administration or academic leader to do the right thing regarding the faculty workload policy and 2) Acknowledge the decrease in enrollment at the university. Additionally the administration made a case for changing Graduate Faculty Status as an automatic reduction of teaching load.

The administration asks the faculty to trust its leaders, yet by admonition, in the same breath tells the faculty that the administration has usurped the published faculty process or policy for faculty attainment of Graduate Faculty Status and independently makes the determination for such. Prior to the 2005 Faculty Workload change Graduate Faculty Status was not coupled with the Faculty Workload Load Policy. As a consequence of being thought of solely or primarily as a teaching faculty, many faculty did not seek Graduate Faculty Status which nearly imperiled the Graduate School from acquiring SACS accreditation.

*See Faculty Workload on page 5*
Faculty Spotlight

That’s NICE: No, it’s NASA Innovations in Climate Education
By Emiel Owens, Ph.D., Senate Parliamentarian

On July 29 - August 2, 2013 The NASA Innovations in Climate Education (NICE) Program convened at the University of New Hampshire. Elizabeth City State University joined with the University of New Hampshire under the NASA Innovations in Climate Education (NICE) Program to empower faculty of education programs at Minority Serving Institutions to better engage their pre-service teachers in teaching and learning about global climate change through the use of NASA Earth observation sets. The workshop provided the faculty with approaches to understanding climate change and its impacts on terrestrial and ocean ecosystems.

The faculty conducted fieldwork that emphasizes place-based pedagogy. They worked with an ecological model in STELLA that utilizes authentic inputs from historical and future climate scenarios, with NASA satellite imagery data from the MODIS and SeaWiFS sensors, and discussed the challenges and to integrating all the lessons into their courses.

SNAP SHOT of the Next Faculty Speaks Edition:
• Race and Crime in Canada and the USA
• TSU’s Academic Standing Policy
• Women: We’ve Come a Long Way, But...
Research Funding Opportunities through the University Faculty Development Committee

By Collette M. Bloom, Ed.D., Associate Professor & Research Coordinator/ College of Education

The road to tenure and promotion passes through the land of research and publication. When university faculty need financial support for travel to participate in research presentations, the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR)—through the University Faculty Development Committee—offers Faculty Development Awards for this purpose. Each award must fulfill technical requirements and deadlines that conform to the Faculty Development Committee Policies and Guidelines as outlined in the application packet.

INSTITUTIONAL GOALS
Institutional goals for the faculty development awards are listed here:
1. Provide support for faculty development that enhances the quality of teaching, learning, and overall student personal and professional development.
2. Implement an entrepreneurial philosophy that (1) takes an active approach toward delivering quality services, and (2) creates and serves new and non-traditional markets and clientele with innovative seminars, degree programs, and consultative training and technical assistance through a range of different delivery strategies.
3. Develop a state-of-the-art library/information center for undergraduate, graduate and professional students, the teaching and research faculty, and the greater Houston community.
4. Enhance and support the University research environment and opportunities.

ACADEMIC REVIEW CRITERIA
In addition to the technical criteria stipulated, proposals will be reviewed according to the following.
1. Evidence that the theme of the proposed project fits priorities stated in this announcement. In that Texas Southern University is an urban institution with a legislative special purpose designation, priority is given to those projects that show a direct relevance to the fulfillment of the University mission.
2. Soundness of the proposal indicating academic quality as reflected by focused goals, detailed description of the project, and a statement of how the project will be implemented and evaluated.
3. Feasibility of the program plan as it relates to the stated goals and selected topics and activities.

ELIGIBILITY
Faculty members who apply for funds through the University Faculty Development Committee must meet the following criteria:
1. Must be a full-time faculty member at Texas Southern University.
2. Must have submitted a progress/final report from a previously funded trip.

To read more about award applications go to: http://www.tsu.edu/About/Administration/Division_of_Academic_Affairs_and_Research/research/pdf/Faculty%20Development%20Travel%20Package.pdf

University Curriculum Council

By Aladdin Sleem, Ph.D., Associate Professor & Chair, University Curriculum Council/ Department of Computer Science

The University Curriculum Council (UCC) meets the second Wednesday every month. Since the beginning of 2013, the UCC has discussed and approved twenty three curriculum related proposals from different programs. Among the approved proposals, four requested the offering of new minors in the following fields:
1- Minor in Aviation Science and Technology
2- Minor in Forensic Science
3- Minor in Naval Sciences
4- Minor in Emergency Management and Homeland Security

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Dedicated to those who lost their fight and to those who are fighting.

...University Curriculum

Additionally, the UCC approved a new Academic Standing Policy which was approved by the Administration. The UCC is working very closely with the University Undergraduate Catalog Committee to produce the 2014-2016 undergraduate catalog. Also, the UCC and the General Education Subcommittee are currently revising the General Education Core Curriculum based on the new requirements from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The new Gen. Ed. Core Curriculum was approved by UCC.

DO YOU LIKE? LET US KNOW:

If you would like to submit an article for the Faculty Speaks, please email the editor, Dr. N. Saha-Gupta at saha_sn@tsu.edu. For further inquiries, call the Faculty Senate office at 713-313-7124. Thank you!

UNDERGRADUATE CATALOG

By J. Kenyatta Cavil, Ed.D., M.B.A., Assistant Professor & Vice Chair, University Curriculum Council/ Kinesiology & Sport Management

The University Catalog Executive Committee is currently in the process of constructing a high-quality, user-friendly university catalog (undergraduate) with less than 10% error within five months at a cost not to exceed the current expenditure. The Committee will provide historical documents and data for this catalog process as well. The team will analyze the processes to uncover causes of variability and present recommendations, which may reduce variability, improve accuracy in reporting, and present an end-user document. The mission is to ensure that we have a catalog that ensures progression in students and that it is clear, in order for students to matriculate. The current emphasis of this project centers on the timeline and involving key stakeholders early in the process. Key dates (outside of unforeseen legislative or administrative requirements) for this project consist of the following:

10/10/13 – Committee Meeting III
10/18/13 – Second Draft of document is issued by representative to chairs for review
10/22/13 – Send final draft of document to Enrollment Services to create the proof
12/03/13 – Share proof with representatives – for area approvals
12/03/13 – Committee Meeting IV Update / Critical Path Review) Get final approval for proof from all areas by 12-16-13
12/20/13 – Final upload and approval of proof is sent to Enrollment services
02/28/14 – Document ready for distribution
Faculty Workload Policy and Modification

...continued from page 1

Graduate level instruction requires more than meeting or holding certain academic faculty credentials and work related experiences, according to SACS. Offering of graduate level instruction requires more of the teaching faculty. Thus, Graduate Faculty Status achievement is one of the universal ways or best practices used for showing such. The Graduate School met SACS accreditation by incentivizing Graduate Faculty Status and requiring the presentation of evidentiary documented production of scholarly publications as sufficiency for faculty productivity.

Historically, the TSU Faculty Workload Policy remained unchanged from the published policy found in the October 2002 Faculty Manual until the University Board of Regents approved a change in May 2005. Tandem with that change, the subsequent Board of Regents in August 2005 approved a modification to the University’s Graduate Faculty Policy. That 2005 Policy raised the standards and level of requirements and difficulty for becoming and maintaining graduate faculty member status. The administration’s proposed change (decoupling) to the University’s Graduate Faculty Policy could be detrimental to the University’s SACS accreditation. History has shown us that faculty productivity tend to exist through buy-ins and incentives. Graduate Faculty Status is such an incentive.

The background for these changes was that in the past, TSU faculty has concentrated on being outstanding teachers in an open admissions institution; consequently the faculty was very committed to teaching and student contact. Thus, the Faculty Manual (Section 5.2) mandated a 24 and 18 credit hour teaching load for undergraduate and graduate teaching respectively. Under the leadership of the Faculty Senate/Assembly, a recommendation was made to visit the 24/18 rule in order to enable faculty to meet the new challenges of a Doctoral/Research level university. Today, TSU has moved from primarily a teaching-focused institution to one in which teaching, research, publications, and service are required of all faculty. Beyond addressing the needs of undergraduate students, current TSU faculty must now also address the needs of master’s students, as well as an increasing number of doctoral students.

In recognition of TSUs standing and academic level the following teaching load adjustments were made and Board of Regents approved:

- 21 hours annually-Undergraduate teaching only
- 18 hours annually-Undergraduate teaching faculty
- 15 hours annually-A mix of graduate and undergraduate courses.
- 12 hours annually-Graduate courses exclusively.
- In any of the categories listed above, the teaching load may be reduced by the appropriate administrator if the faculty member is engaged in extensive research, scholarship, or creative activity, or has an administrative assignment.

In some corners, the University administration is now asking the faculty to back track and retreat from the relatively recent approved Faculty Workload Policy with full implementation of or about six years starting in 2007. The Faculty Workload Policy had a two year operational phase in provision. The Administration wants to decouple “Graduate Faculty Status” as a definitive rationale or automatic reason for a 3 semester credit hours reduction in faculty workload because of a false notion or wrongly perceived finding that economically based research is the only reason d’etre for such. While economic or externally funded based research is worthy, it is not the sole reason or only type of research needed or worthy if the University is to achieve and accomplish its missions and goals and keep its accreditation and standing in the academic community. It is noted that economic or externally funded based research is but one metric used in the assessment, evaluation, and measurement of the University quality and standing. The University in this area, I dare say, has been woefully lacking in its support of faculty development and effort in terms of fiscal support of say, providing stipends, sabbaticals, equipment, assistants, and so forth.

The workload policy that culminated in Board of Regents approval in 2005 was based on fulfilling the University’s vision, mission, and goals and of meeting the accreditation standards of SACS and the accrediting bodies of various academic units and in the case of the College of Education the recommendations suggested by The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Equity Program Plan.

The current University Faculty Workload Policy was made in conformity of a review of the University’s five-year strategic planning cycle and alignment of the faculty workload with the duties and responsibilities expected of a 21st century Carnegie classified doctoral intensive research institution and ...continues on page 6
of a doctoral level granting institution by the state of Texas.

As one of the shared governance responsibilities of the faculty, a change in the workload policy should be based on sound academic principles and rationale. Economic considerations in and of themselves while important are insufficient and unsupportable justifications for changing the approved workload policies based on whimsical financial principles (decisions) and fluctuations in its financial health, such as in funding, enrollment, or expenditures. However, such considerations might have tremendous effect on programmatic and fiscal policy and offerings. Hence, the 2005 Board of Regents approved Faculty Workload Policy and Graduate Faculty Status Policy was based on a fiscally sound financial basis of review of the total academic offerings of the University. That review showed both upstream and downstream that such a modification was sound at that time and long term.

Argumentatively or analogously, many want to make a case for discourse and confrontation of administrative excess and irresponsibility for the current state of the financial affairs of the University.

This paper will not address the bloat in the University’s administration or student enrollment or student persistence and retention or the possible mismanagement of the instructional budget that might have significantly more import and impact on the University’s budget than the address of graduate faculty status or faculty workload. Perhaps a better focus would be on the overall administrative excess and/or leadership and/or management deficiency, as a suggestion. Radical emphasis on faculty workload causes many faculty with suspicious minds to portend and see on the University’s horizon looming and impending trouble and difficult budgetary woes and times. However, such thoughts and arguments are beyond the scope, intent, and/or purpose of this paper and I will leave those arguments and propositions to be made by my betters and the many others.

Many believe as I, that modification or change in the faculty workload policy or decoupling or eliminating graduate status will result in the most minimal effort to benefit or ameliorate the fiscal position of the University when consideration has to be given for accreditation maintenance and achievement. The three semester credit hours reduction that serves as an incentive to conduct research and publish and achieve graduate faculty status pays for itself with dividends when faculty have to submit and offer up their credentials for consideration to the various approval and accrediting bodies. Historically, I have suffered the embarrassment, pain, and scorn of having an accrediting body tell us that collectively we (University faculty) appears to be a bunch of highly paid parasites living on the government trough given that the faculty was instructed to submit resumes or vitae that did not show any scholarly publications, peer review or otherwise and other academic activities or productivity other than name, rank, degrees, length of service, courses taught, employment experiences and (university or community) service. I have seen the University having to buy faculty to meet its mission and goals because of a relative faculty presenting and having only the previously cited qualifications. It is even harder to hold up your head in today’s fact check academic environment given all the electronic technology, transparency, open records requirements, and state of Texas requirement that CVs for most professors be posted on their respective University’s websites.

Based on the above and as the then chair of the Faculty Workload Committee that shepherded the 2005 Faculty Workload Policy, I have heard or read no cogent reason for the faculty to agree to the administration proposed workload policy change or modification. For the record, that Faculty Workload Committee was comprised of Professor Lalita Sen, Professor Cary Wintz, Faculty Vice Chair, Dr. Dianne Mosley, Faculty Chair Professor Daniel Adams, Faculty Secretary Dr. James Opolot, Assistant Provost Robert Moreland, Dean Merline Pitre, Associate Dean Dr. Fenneye Thomas, Dean McKen Carrington, and Chair, Dr. Henry North, Assistant Provost for Professional Effectiveness. That Faculty Workload Committee devised a policy aligned with the values and vision set for and needed of the University to manifest the mission established for the University by the administration as set forth by the Board of Regents to accomplish the University’s Strategic Plan for moving the University to the next level of academic achievement and performance. It was viewed as essential that faculty buy into achieving the vision and mission of the University given that the above prescribed faculty presentation based solely on teaching, service, and faculty qualifications proved...

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insufficient, indefensible, and antithetical to a showing of a highly qualified, accomplished, and productive faculty.

That Faculty Workload Committee believed that faculty welfare and development are essential ingredients to reaching the vision and achieving the goals and objectives of the mission of the University.

That Faculty Workload Committee recognized that faculty worth, productivity, and satisfaction is integral and significant to the goal accomplishment and achievement of the University and they strongly supported the notion that every regular faculty member teaching undergraduate only should enjoy a 21 semester credit hours annual workload which is consistent with the general faculty workload requirements, rules and regulations of Section 51.402 (a), (b), (c), and (d) of the Texas Education Code.

Of the myriad other reasons that might be used or employed by the administration to reduce a faculty’s workload, the University’s faculty collectively felt that the achievement of Graduate Faculty Status manifestly should be without question a valid reason for a workload reduction given that limited term achievement of Graduate Faculty Status is predicated on most if not all of the known requirements asserted or cited or used for faculty workload reduction. Regrettably, the collective or majority of the University faculty felt or feels that identifiable, quantifiable, transparent true equity and equality would be achieved and rightfully obtained by having the requisite workload semester credit hours codified and memorialized in policy as opposed to reliance based on “trust” or “an individual” or “an official” however esteemed and/or trustworthy.

That Faculty Workload Committee devised a policy that accorded the TSU faculty a comparative workload equivalency based on a review, assessment, and analysis of the best practices employed at its sister and peer institutions that provided the faculty with an opportunity to effectively and efficiently achieve the University’s mission and too compete with its sister institutions.

The collective wisdom of the faculty and the academy based on the principles of academic freedom, free speech, and equity to all, to the provision of a level playing field, and access and opportunity for publication where effort, performance, and productivity could be readily discerned and assessed (counted) through an open and transparent process based on merit and irrefutable, measurable, and quantifiable existence of academic variables of production as opposed to the reliance on the subjectivity of trust and/or faith of an individual or official however esteemed and/or trustworthy. The faculty believes in trust, but in an era of accountability and assessment believes greater in verification, documentation, transparency, and predictability of outcome.

Unquestioningly, the faculty trusts in the jus fiduciarium of the administration and its leaders in their respective authorities; albeit, the faculty has both a trust and faith in the jus scriptum or lex scripta of the traditional democratic processes and academic, foundational, and/or structural principles of the academy of transparency, academic freedom, fairness, equal opportunity, shared governance, seniority, tenure, freedom of speech, and the numerous and various applicable local, state, and federal edicts governing this subject matter.

Consequently, the faculty should deny the administration’s proposed faculty workload changes as they are antithetical and deleterious to the morale, vision, mission, and goal accomplishment of the University and the academy. My hope, desire, and prayer is that both the administration and faculty accept this response in the spirit, good intentions, respect, collaboration, and cooperation that is expected of faculty in its shared governance role in influencing, effectuating, participating, formulating, developing, and/or revising policy of the University. Faculty workload plays an important role in the University’s ability to carry out and achieve its mission and direction and to provide for a satisfying, motivating, rewarding, and productive work environment and a great place to work.

Notes:

2. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
3. Texas Education Code, Section 51.402 (a), (b), (c), and (d)
4. TSU Faculty Workload Policy
5. TSU Faculty Manual, October 2002
6. TSU Board of Regents Minutes, May 2005
7. TSU Board of Regents, Academic Affairs & Student Services Committee Meeting Minutes, “Recommendation for Approval to Modify the University’s Graduate Faculty Policy,” August 2005
8. TSU Board of Regents Minutes, August 2005
9. TSU Faculty Research Journal, Volume 1, Number 1, November 1976
10. TSU Faculty Workload Committee Meeting Minutes, 2004
11. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Equity Program Plan
12. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)