

Date: February, 28, 2022

To: Robbin Smith (for consideration among the Faculty Senate Steering Committee)

Re: Emeritus Status

It has come to my attention that several colleagues recently have been denied the awarding of emeritus status and are unsure how such decisions are made. In looking at the AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement, the only statement that addresses emeritus status is the following:

5.7 Emeritus Status

Emeritus designation shall be bestowed upon a retiring member of the full-time faculty upon recommendation of the department and approval by the President. Emeriti shall be afforded at least the following privileges: desk space if available, university computer account, library privileges, catalog listing, a printed certificate, professional use of the title, invitations to university functions, course privileges available pursuant to Article 13.13, faculty parking privileges and inclusion on the mailing lists for all university publications.

If my interpretation of this is correct, essentially the department recommends emeritus status (or does not) and the president weighs the recommendation before “bestowing” emeritus status (or does not). This leaves several unanswered questions:

- 1) If the department does not recommend emeritus status, can the president override such a decision and bestow it anyway?
- 2) If the department recommends emeritus status and the president overrides the recommendation/denies such a decision, is there an appeals process of any kind?
- 3) Unlike Promotion and Tenure decisions, it appears (according to the contractual language above) that deans and provosts have no evaluative capacity whatsoever in this decision process. The recommendation of the department, as outlined above, should bypass deans and provosts entirely and land directly on the desk of the president for consideration of “bestowal”. Is this interpretation correct?
- 4) **What is the process for initiating the attainment of emeritus status?**
 - Responsibility of individual faculty member to indicate desire for emeritus status?
 - Responsibility of department chair to notify the member of eligibility?
 - Responsibility of the administration to notify the member of eligibility?

- Is there a defined time period in which a retiring faculty member must request emeritus status? (e.g., solely at the time of retirement—and if so, when is that exactly? Can it be requested years later? Is there a defined time period/expiration?)

5) Who is eligible for emeritus status?

- Full-time faculty only? Part-time faculty?
- Must you be employed at CCSU for a minimum number of years to be considered for and awarded emeritus status?
- May emeritus status be awarded posthumously?

6) Criteria for the awarding of emeritus status

- Solely at the discretion of the president? Is faculty candidate provided an explanation for why he/she was awarded or denied emeritus status?
- As assessment/scoring rubrics have been introduced in recent years for a myriad of decisions on resources (Promotion and Tenure decisions, internal grant competitions, sabbatical leave applications, deans' discretionary release time requests, etc.), why is there no listed criteria or evaluative mechanism in place for emeritus status?
- What, as faculty, would we like to see as the criteria? Something similar to P&T criteria? Something different?

If we as faculty are to forge ahead with taking this issue on and seeking answers and clarification (and perhaps implementation of future contract language), we will also need more empirical data that perhaps are available from the minutes of departments and/or human resources files. Ideally, we should obtain data from the past 10 years or so to gauge if there has been a marked shift in the award/denial of emeritus status.

Need for Empirical Data

- How many faculty have: a) sought emeritus status; b) been approved by their department; and c) been awarded emeritus status? It would be useful to have data to determine the percentage of faculty who seek such status and then are denied.
- What do these percentages look like across the schools within CCSU (C.L.A.S.S; School of Education and Professional Studies; School of Business; School of Engineering, Science, Technology. If there are significant inequalities, these disparities may need to be examined more closely.

Other Issues Related to Emeritus Status

1) Lack of Uniformity in Presentation of Emeritus Status

- Some departments list emeritus faculty on their departmental web pages; others do not
- Some faculty who have emeritus status have it appear in parentheses after their names in the CCSU email directory; others do not.

2) Additional Benefits to Emeritus Status

- Are there additional privileges we would like to see for emeritus faculty?
(Photocopying privileges? Secretarial support? Some in retirement continue to research, write, and publish, so I could see how such privileges may be useful)

While it may appear comparatively insignificant to many of the other battles waging at CCSU right now between faculty and administration, I view this as yet another area in which we faculty need to more clearly (and perhaps more forcefully) have our concerns heard and addressed to our collective satisfaction. With so many retirements looming, the climate/morale at our university, and the fiscal situation we face, I believe this issue to be rather salient to many of the faculty at this time.

I want to thank the committee in advance for considering this issue.