

Governance and Personnel Policy Committee of Faculty Senate
Tuesday, February 13, 2018
Faculty Collaborative Conference Room, D.H. Hill

Attendees: Ron Sederhoff, Kerry Havner, Alton Banks, Karen Bullock, Paul Huffman, Donna Carver, Phil Sannes

Guests: Dr. Courtney Thornton, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and Policy

Discussion: Faculty Diversity and Retention

- Dr. Thornton informed us that the Provost will be speaking to the Board of Governors this Friday in the support of NC State faculty with regards to compensation, operating resources, academic and campus culture, start-up packages, commercialization of innovations, and interdisciplinary culture/cluster hiring strategies. She emphasized the goals of the Office of Faculty Development are to develop and assure full career support for faculty at all levels.
- This led to a discussion on mid-career, post tenure mentoring. Reaching this stage itself is fraught with challenges that differ widely in their nature and outcomes among the various colleges/disciplines. For example, it was noted that in music at NC State, tenure does not even exist. Mid-career faculty sometimes find themselves rudderless and in need of guidance. This issue is being addressed in some colleges, but it remains a silent, under-appreciated problem.
- The key role of leadership by Deans in diversity and retention was recognized. The results of the Coache Faculty Satisfaction Survey of NC State faculty rated divisional leadership less favorably than all other levels. Divisional decision making makes significant impact on how recognized, outstanding faculty and programs are supported and retained – or in some cases lost. This led to a discussion of how resources are apportioned, and how to strategically balance and maintain the best programs while keeping faculty happy. The need for more transparency in administrative decision-making remains a critical issue.
- A sidebar discussion ensued on the importance of strong department heads in support of faculty. This led to the advantages and disadvantages of heads vs chairs of departments – with no hope of resolution of that one.
- The discussion wrapped up by considering what are most important components of a great academic environment. Shared values, mutual respect, and an open, diverse intellectual atmosphere are key elements. Culture was discussed, and it was agreed that everyone is responsible for developing and sustaining a strong culture which by its nature is dynamic and not static.