Memo to: Steering Committee

From: Carol Bresnahan, Provost

Re: Sabbatical applications scored as ties

Dec. 20, 2010

**Background**. The state of NJ allocates to the College a fixed number of one-semester sabbatical leaves; for the academic year 2011-12, that number is 22. This year, a challenge arose that needs a permanent solution: a single one-semester sabbatical slot remained, but the Sabbaticals Committee ranked the next two applicants in a tie, leaving it unclear which faculty member should be offered the one-semester sabbatical. The sabbaticals guidelines do not appear to offer a solution for this eventuality.

**Request**. I request that Steering remand to the Committee on Faculty Affairs, or the appropriate governance committee, the following request: devise tiebreakers for the use of the Sabbaticals Committee for times when sabbatical requests are ranked in a tie and where there exists less funding than approved requests for funding. No approved sabbatical requests, whether funded or not, should be ranked in a tie, as some faculty awarded sabbaticals may decline in advance of the sabbatical, and the open slot would then be offered to the next best-ranked application. The following are examples of solutions, though the appropriate committee may certainly identify others it prefers.

1. Require the Sabbaticals Committee to continue voting until the tie is broken.

2. Award the preferred ranking to the person who has had the longest interval between a previous TCNJ sabbatical and the present request. Persons who have never had a TCNJ sabbatical would, under this plan, always receive a preferred ranking over those who have previously had sabbaticals.

3. Ask the provost to review the tied applications and select the one s/he sees as more worthy of support.

4. Flip a coin.

The committee should identify multiple tiebreakers; the Sabbatical Committee may be unable to resolve a tie, for instance; the tied individuals may have an equal duration between their last sabbaticals and their current requests, etc. Note also that some solutions would require that the Sabbaticals Committee be made aware of its rankings, which (at least this year) has not been the case.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.