To:  Committee on  Faculty Affairs

From:  Steering Committee

Re:  Modification of Duties-Family Friendly Policies

Date:  January 20, 2011

**Background and charge:**

Attached is a memo from Provost Bresnahan and Vice President Pogue concerning a policy for modification of faculty responsibilities in order to take care of a newborn, an adopted child, or an immediate family member. As the memo points out, leave is available under the New Jersey Family Leave Act, but the provisions of the act may not be useful for meeting faculty needs.  Therefore, the Steering Committee asks the Committee on Faculty Affairs:  1) to determine whether there should be such a Modified Duties Policy that provides flexibility for faculty while also taking into account the distinctive nature of faculty work; and 2) if it is determined that there should be such a policy, to develop an appropriate policy that includes a process for planning and approving modified duties as well as a timeline under which modified duties would be put into place and then regular duties reinstated until full duties were assumed.

In fulfilling this charge, CFA should consult the Office of Human Resources to review the current New Jersey legislation, informal practices already in place at TCNJ, and models successfully used at other colleges and universities. It also should consult the local chapter of the American Federation of Teachers because of the contractual implications such a policy would have.

**Timeline:**

The Steering Committee asks that CFA complete its recommendations by the end of Spring semester 2011.

**TCNJ Governance Processes**

**Step #1 -- Identifying and reporting the problem:**When a Standing Committee receives an issue from the Steering Committee, the first responsibility is to clearly articulate and report the problem to the campus community through regular updates to the campus community and the Governance Web Page ([www.tcnj.edu/~steering](http://www.tcnj.edu/~steering) ).  The problem may have been set out clearly in the charge received from the Steering Committee, or it may be necessary for the Standing Committee to frame a problem statement.  The problem statement should indicate the difficulties or uncertainties that need to be addressed through new or revised policy, procedure, or program.  The problem statement should be broadly stated and should include a context such as existing policy or practice.  Problem statements may include solution parameters but should not suggest any actual solutions.  Clearly stated problems will lead to better recommendations.

**Step #2 -- Preparing a preliminary recommendation:**Once the campus community has received the problem statement, committees can begin to collect data needed to make a recommendation.  Committees typically receive input through committee membership, formal testimony, and open comment from affected individuals and all stakeholder groups.  Committees must be proactive in inviting stakeholder groups (including Student Government Association, Staff Senate and Faculty Senate) to provide formal testimony prior to developing a preliminary recommendation.  When, in the best judgment of the committee, adequate clarity of the principles contributing to the problem are known, a preliminary recommendation should be drafted and disseminated to the campus community through regular updates and the Governance Web Page.

**Step #3 -- Making a Final Recommendation:**Committees must use sound judgment to give the campus adequate time to review the preliminary recommendation before making their final recommendation.  Again, committees are expected to be proactive in receiving feedback on the preliminary recommendation.  If a full calendar year has passed since the formal announcement of the preliminary recommendation, the committee must resubmit a preliminary recommendation to the campus community.  When, in the best judgment of the committee, the campus community has responded to the proposed resolution of the issue, the committee shall send their final recommendation (complete documentation) to the Steering Committee.

**Testimony**

The presenting of testimony is central to the concept of shared governance.  All stakeholder groups will have an opportunity to provide input into governance issues through direct membership as well as invited testimony.  Individuals appointed or elected to the governance system are expected to take a broad institutional perspective relative to issues being considered.  In contrast, invited testimony will reflect the stakeholder perspective on the issue being considered.  Committees are expected to be proactive in inviting stakeholder groups to provide testimony at both step # 2 and #3 of the process.  Committees need to identify stakeholder groups that are interested in each particular issue and invite their testimony at scheduled Committee meetings or hearings.  Committees should report in their minutes which groups were targeted as stakeholders, how testimony was invited, the form of the testimony (written, oral, etc.), and the substantive content of the testimony.