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Educational Leave

Submitted by Steven Damelin

10/12/2004

Question:

Under Regents policy, "Georgia Southern grants leave with pay for research and study using criteria announced by the Faculty Development Committee in advance of each funding cycle. A limited number of year long leaves at half salary or semester leaves at full salary are available."

Question 1: As Georgia Southern University moves towards a Teacher-Scholar model, wouldn't it be more beneficial to administer and grant such leave based on models currently used at UGA and Georgia Tech?

UGA: "Based on departmental needs and programmatic development, a head or director may recommend that a faculty member be given a leave of absence with pay."

Rationale:

The objective of study leave is to give faculty the opportunity to take time off from normal university duties to advance their research interests so that they may return to their duties with renewed energy, perspective and insight. The study leave program currently in place at Georgia Southern is a competitive and limited program.

It seems more reasonable that study leave be awarded to faculty at the department level, to assume research responsibilities on a full-time basis which are in the best interests of the department.

UGA: "Leaves of absence with pay are earned and are not entitlement. They are to be recommended by the department head [or director] only when the proposed reassignment of responsibilities is of programmatic benefit to the institution."

Response:

11-8-2004: Rice Jenkins notified the committee that the Request for Information of Steve Damelin (COST) was being considered by the Provost, who would advise in the near future on the course of action to be taken.

11-17-2004: The RFI came from Steven Damelin from COST, which sought information on the benefit to Georgia Southern faculty of adopting a faculty professional leave program similar to those in place at Georgia Tech and UGA, particularly in light of the increasing focus on faculty as teachers and scholars. This matter was presented to the Provost who concurred that, in light of the numerous changes that have occurred at Georgia Southern since the inception of our faculty leave program, it was appropriate to reevaluate this and a committee is being put together to do just that.

11-18-2004: This matter was presented to the Provost who concurs that in light of the numerous changes that have occurred at Georgia Southern since the inception of our faculty leave program it is appropriate to reevaluate this and a committee is being put together to do just that.

Minutes: 2/9/2005: Rice Jenkins reported that an action item that remained from a previous meeting was Steve Damelin's query about formal sabbatical policies. The committee has been established by the Provost's office and includes Dean Fred Whitt, acting as the Chair, Dr. Steve Damelin and Dr. Amy Heaston. They are beginning their task by reviewing the history of educational leave at Georgia Southern and will explore other models to see how we might refine our process.