

ADVICE TO NEW FACULTY AT CNU

The Provost recognizes that individuals hired in academic appointments are varied in their professional and personal circumstances. The University realizes that high morale is achieved when the faculty employee and the institution's needs and interests are mutually served. "Fit" is the handmaiden to success, and so CNU faculty and administration were happy to learn that 89 percent of our pre-tenure faculty recently surveyed by the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education are satisfied or very satisfied with their sense of 'fit' at CNU.

The Provost desires that incoming faculty members understand the nature of undergraduate-emphasis appointments in the early 21st century. Faculty are asked to be involved in many aspects of University life while shouldering instructional and scholarly responsibilities. CNU faculty members are busy: the most successful manage their time effectively to meet both obligations through the term and important career and personal objectives.

Effective instruction is our University's first priority. What it means to be "effective" will be ultimately determined by the institution. Regrettably, there are no perfect or even close-to-perfect instruments to determine instructional efficacy. So we rely on proxies—such as [student surveys of instruction](#)—to assist our understanding of how students are learning. A faculty member is expected to have a strong awareness of continuous improvement opportunities—and to act on them. It is the institution ([through its review procedures](#)) which possesses the obligation and right to determine if a new faculty member is offering effective instruction.

Tenured colleagues are excellent sources of information on time management, teaching strategies, and scholarly practice. Seeking your colleagues' advice and support is a good way to learn about CNU, its students, and its culture. It is worth noting that 96 percent of CNU's pre-tenure faculty responding to the COACHE survey agreed with the statement, "on the whole, my institution is collegial." In addition to collaboration with senior colleagues, new faculty members can take advantage of a variety of [faculty development workshops](#) sponsored by the Office of the Provost, beginning with a new faculty orientation held during Getting Started Week, and continuing with workshops on teaching Writing Intensive courses, the faculty evaluation process, student surveys of instruction, and undergraduate advising.

As a young institution that is rapidly advancing its regional and national reputation, CNU and its leaders solicit good ideas and advice from all quarters. How might a new faculty member contribute to CNU's progress?

New faculty possess an especially valuable perspective: they often see things differently because they are so new. By getting involved in shared governance as a member of various [University committees](#) or even the [Faculty Senate](#), you will be able to share, debate, and hone your ideas with other members of the faculty and then discuss them with University administrators for possible implementation. In this process, you will also discover the competing interests that the Provost's Office must balance in order to

nurture a strong and vital University. In fact, 90 percent of our pre-tenure faculty surveyed by COACHE report being satisfied or very satisfied with opportunities to participate in departmental and institutional governance.

CNU's administrators and faculty are committed to working together and we take seriously our commitment to shared governance. Faculty recommendations often play an important role in administrative decision-making. Please remember that we make decisions for concrete, specific reasons, and never to exert authority arbitrarily. You may not agree or even understand why a decision is being made, but you have the right to ask for reasons.

It is good to have personal goals for one's professional work. Complete the work well that is assigned to you, but also develop interests that motivate and sustain you, such as intellectual or creative or community interests.

Finally, if the Provost knows about your primary professional motivators, he can help in small ways over time to advance your interests. Please get to know him. He wants to meet with you and learn your story. You are very, very important to this college. Please do what you can to be successful.