

MEMORANDUM

To: Stella Theodoulou, Dean - College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

From: Herman Debose, Chair - Department of Sociology

Date: April 15, 2011

Re: Post-Tenure Review – Jerald Schutte

The post tenure review committee in the Department of Sociology has reviewed the information provided by Jerald Schutte and herein offer our conclusions as to Professor Schutte's performance during the past five years:

Teaching Effectiveness: Dr. Schutte has been arguably one of the pioneers in progressive teaching strategies at CSUN. From offering the first 6:30 a.m. Tuesday/Thursday class time in the '80s, enabling full time working students to take a class before going to their job, to his pioneering work in on-line instruction in the '90s, providing the lightning rod for national debate on the role of the internet in education, to his developing the seven hour integrated Saturday class schedule during the decade of 2000, he has opened new avenues for instruction, but always providing provocative insights. For example, to date, his early writings on the effects of online instruction have been cited in 70+ dissertations and 100's of articles on the subject. Moreover, as testament to his vision, many of his seminal practices, unknown before his efforts, are now commonplace at the university (e.g. online instruction and Saturday classes).

During the past five years, he has been no less visionary. Using his influence with the administration and his empirical approach to collecting data, he has been successful in redesigning the form and content of teaching in both our department and the university. With his experience in online instruction, in 2007, he helped to define the concept of, and champion the cause for, "hybrid" teaching and "complimentary" class schedules, in which students receive both in class and online instruction, on alternate days, through the use of web based Learning Management Systems. Today, the use of hybrid teaching is becoming the dominant form for course presentation at CSUN. As well, in 2008 he was integral in providing evidence and marketing the concept to Academic Affairs, to reformat regular class scheduling, such that MWF classes became MW classes. In so doing, it has provided full time working students with the opportunity to carry a full schedule in just one working day, coupled with one weekend day (i.e. Friday and Saturdays). In 2009, he developed the concept of, and gathered evidence for, instituting the first ever regularly scheduled Sunday class, which became a reality in 2010. Not only was it successful, but he had to turn away 95 students who wanted to enroll. Also in 2010, Dr. Schutte developed an alternative teaching concept, to replace the s-factor 498 internship course, which alternative will become a practicum for students to develop an understanding of what sociologists do after graduation, how they, as students, fit into that market, what are their skill-sets, how do they translate those into a usable resume, and how they turn that resume into a job or graduate school related interview. APC and EPC have approved the course which will become a part of the fall 2011 schedule.

As yet another example of his innovation, Dr. Schutte has developed, in 2010, the concept of "Satisfaction by Examination" for courses and students who have the need and ability to register for a professor-less, self-paced class environment, thereby potentially adding substantial revenue to the university and providing students with the flexibility to graduate sooner. This concept has been supported by various faculty governance groups, administrative policy makers and, by students. A beta test is scheduled for 2011-2012.

If Professor Schutte were simply a visionary, but without practical skills in the classroom, his teaching accomplishments would be noteworthy, but insufficient to satisfy the ongoing goal of educating students at CSUN. Fortunately, such is not the case. The committee finds that beyond his creative approach to alternative teaching formats, he is an excellent instructor, as well. There is no better indicator than to observe that he teaches his combined weekend course in Social Statistics and Research Methods, arguably two of the hardest courses in our department. Moreover, it is taught in a seven hour single day stretch. Intuition would argue that this combination is a recipe for an evaluation disaster. Quite the contrary; not only is he able to maneuver these obstacles, but receives virtually perfect teaching scores in doing so. For example, his spring 2010 student evaluations scored a mean of 4.9 and a median of 5.0. Moreover, his fall 2010 student evaluations (the first Sunday class) yielded a mean of 4.85 and a median of 5.0. As well, on the written section of the Class Climate form, he received no negative comments, while motivating the likes of "*He is the best professor I have had at CSUN*" or "*We are lucky to have Professor Schutte at CSUN*" or "*I can't thank you enough for believing in us*" (see attached evaluations). Last semester, he received a plaque, signed by his students, praising his teaching and asking him not to retire. One student even suggested starting a Facebook page for his former students, so they could remain in touch post-graduation to continue sharing that which they learned in his class.

These and other indications of his abilities (e.g. resurrecting Soc 680, a course in Advanced Quantitative Methods, not offered in 20-years), cause us to say that Professor Schutte not only meets the criterion of continued success in the classroom, but that we are thankful for his dedication to finding better and more innovative ways to serve our students and look forward to his continued success and creativity.

Contributions to the Community and Profession: If there is a weakness in Professor Schutte's contribution during the past five years, it is the dearth of presentations and publications for this period. While there have been notable attempts to bring together the wisdom of his years, first in a 2006 manuscript entitled: *The Sociology of Computer Technology*, which was not accepted for publication, largely because of the mistimed subject matter; and a second attempt, currently a manuscript in progress, entitled *If You Don't Mind, It Doesn't Matter: Ten Key Mistakes We All Make in Everyday Critical Reasoning*. According to the preface, this is a treatment, using common examples of the misguided decisions people make in their everyday world (see attached). As intriguing as this sounds, because books arguably take longer to write and often can have a lower probability of acceptance, we also encourage Professor Schutte to continue shorter term goals, as well, in the form of more papers, presentations and articles.

Moreover, after he negotiated a difficult path to make the department CATI lab a reality, there has been a notable deficiency in maximizing the utility of this venue. We recognize that Professor Schutte is constrained beyond his sphere of influence. Clearly structural reasons (e.g. the move to active directory and its co-use as a classroom) and well as financial constraints (e.g. the 125% rule and the move away from paid director) have proved to be hurdles. Moreover, we take note of the fact that the Center has been the sources of many campus surveys, for the benefit of the faculty, administration and information technology. However, we encourage Professor Schutte to invoke the same creative forces used to invigorate pedagogy at CSUN, to help revitalize CSR as a profit center. To that end, we have been informed, and are encouraged, that he is actively pursuing a grant, as he puts it, to effectively redefine survey research. In particular, his proposal states that *“I am attempting to merge the trend toward cloud computing, tablet architecture and predictive dialing to produce what will arguably be the first university virtual CATI lab. This will have the benefit of removing the tether from the desktop based environment, thereby freeing the lab for more class time and reducing the cost of equipment and calls, thereby saving on the costs per survey, while at the same time rendering the process completely scalable.”* We recognize his innovative approach and wish him luck in this endeavor, with the caveat that more effort be devoted to practical monetary results.

Service to the University: Being a senior member of the department, we would expect that Professor Schutte would be well integrated into the fabric of the university. However, we find that he excels at this capability. He has served in the Faculty Senate four of the past five years, and has served on the Educational Resources Committee, both as chair and member, five out of the past five years (ten of the last ten). As such, he has been positioned to influence Academic Affairs on a variety of issues. Not only did his position allow him to guide the alternative teaching formats through the layers of university bureaucracy, but has empowered him to be able to carry on dialogues, concerning university finance and budgeting, in discussion formats and with personnel, not available to most faculty. As evidence of this unique position, and his recognized abilities, the President and Provost have asked him to serve on multiple ad hoc committees, including the planning of the provost’s professional development series and the ad hoc budget planning committee, as well as in 2007 being offered the position of interim chair of a department housed in another college (which he ultimately turned down).

Moreover, he has been integral to the development of Information Technology (IT) at CSUN, during the past five years, presenting his innovative strategies to the “Learning Bytes” faculty forum, serving on the IT committee to select the new campus wide LMS and being instrumental in developing and beta testing the newly created CSUN “Virtual Computing Lab.” As witness to his role in technological development, he is the only faculty member at CSUN not directly affiliated as staff of IT, to be sent by the Provost to the system wide CATS conference to provide direct input on CSU technology policy.

As well, he has served the department in a myriad of capacities. He has been on the department personnel committee four of the past five years (eight in the last ten years). He has served as head of the faculty recruitment committee, producing two of three new hires this year. In fact,

during his tenure, Professor Schutte has been directly involved in 9 of the 19 tenure track hires that constitute the department tenure track faculty. Moreover, he has commanded the quantitative and social psychology graduate committees producing questions and grading the comp exams, as well as serving on thesis committees. Finally he has served as mentor, consultant and colleague to the chair and those others seeking historical perspective on the machinations of the department, college and university.

Therefore, we see Professor Schutte's activities as worthy of not only satisfying continuing involvement in university service, but observe that he is a pivotal person in the department and college in his interface with university administration.

Conclusion: During the past five years, Professor Schutte has demonstrated he is a respected colleague, innovative teacher, willing participant in University affairs, valued political ally and strategic thinker. We, and the University, encourage him to stay with us and will miss him when/if he retires.