Collegiality as a Fourth Criterion for Personnel Decisions

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Introduction

• Who We Are...
  – Dr. Bob Cipriano
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  – Dr. Richard L. Riccardi
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• Where We’re From...
  – Southern CT State University (SCSU)
  – Located in New Haven
  – About 11,000 students
  – 7,289 FT Undergraduates, 845 FT Graduates (Fall 2012)
  – 434 FT Faculty, 686 Adjuncts
Today’s Topics

• Collegiality Operationally Defined
• Civility Operationally Defined
• What the U.S. Courts Have Ruled
• Proactive Measures to Employ
• Collegiality – Personnel Decisions
Collegiality

• Facts about collegiality – what collegiality is and what it is not.
• Identify strategies to use to develop collegiality within a department.
• Collegiality as a 4th criterion for promotion and reappointment.
• Roles and responsibilities of academic leaders in promoting collegiality.
Collegiality [Continued]

• Intervention strategies academic leaders can employ to foster a collegial and civil campus.
• Proactive strategies academic leaders can use to bring processes that generate and retain candidates that support and maintain a collegial environment within the department.
A Good Leader Needs:

- Courage
- A Heart
- A Brain
- An Ability to Q. T. I. P.
- Quit Taking It Personal
Do you think collegiality should be a criterion for personnel decisions – e.g., tenure, promotion in rank, and reappointment?

_____ YES  _____ NO  _____ Not Sure
A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand
(Honest Abe Lincoln)
Agree to Disagree Without Being Disagreeable
(Honest Bob Cipriano)
I know it when I see it.
(Justice Potter Stewart)

I know collegiality when I see it.
(Justice Rick Riccardi, channelling his inner Potter Stewart)

The beatings will continue until morale improves!
Words to Remember

• Uncivil and nasty behavior often elicits like behavior and like responses toward the person who precipitated the encounter.

• **YOU CAN CHOOSE** to meet others’ poor behavior with effective responses that do not take the same approach.

  [Mark’s story: The stuff of urban legends]
Collegiality Operationally Defined

• As a NOUN, *collegiality* means cooperative interaction among colleagues.

• As an ADJECTIVE, *collegial* indicates the way a group of colleagues take collective responsibility for their work together with minimal supervision from above.

• To many DETRACTORS, *collegiality* is merely a code word for a person who is overweight, smokes, dresses badly, has a “different way” of seeing things, is outspoken, et al.
An Operational Definition of Civility

Civility indicates politeness and courtesy. In higher education, civil behavior is demonstrated by the following:

1. **Collaboration.**
2. Speaking in a *professional and respectful* manner toward others.
3. “Stepping up” when needed and agreeing to serve on committees, helping colleagues in personal crises, et al.
An Operational Definition of Civility

[Continued]

4. Following through on professional tasks and deadlines.

5. Respecting the decision-making processes of the unit. [NOT bringing up the past!]

6. Consistently communicating respectfully.

7. Relationships are constructive, supportive, and professional. [NOT personal]
Rise of Incivility – WHY?

Some of the reasons for the rise of incivility are:

• Economic uncertainty
• Mandate to do more with less
• Less prepared students
• Less motivated students

Why so much incivility?

What do you think are some additional reasons for the rise of incivility in higher education?
Reasons for Incivility. . .

- Shift to online teaching
- Corporate culture influence
- Diverse students & faculty
- Ratcheting up of the workload
- More rigorous standards for tenure & promotion
- E-mail as primary mode of communication
- Faculty work scrutinized by peers
- Amy Bishop!
Getting Along...

• Ultimate irony
  – The boundaries of “getting along” are being tested about that very topic: getting along.

• Posted on a recent thread in the online forums of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*:

  “Only higher education has to have a word for ‘not being a big jerk.’”
Collegiality Matters

• A collegial department figured higher in faculty satisfaction than work and family policies, clear tenure policies, and compensation. (Trower & Gallagher, 2008)

• Having just one slacker or jerk in a group can bring down the team’s overall performance by 30 to 40 percent.

  (Felps, Mitchell, & Byington, 2006)
Collegiality Matters

• Stanford University professor Robert Sutton – “Having just a few nasty, lazy or incompetent characters around can ruin the performance of a team or an entire organization – no matter how stellar the other employees.”
Collegiality REALLY Matters

• AAUP’s Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure
  – **Purpose**: Promotes principles of academic freedom, tenure, and due process in higher education...

• Developed a statement on collegiality as a fourth criterion for faculty evaluation
  – Statement approved and adopted by the Association’s Council in November 1999
AAUP’s Position

• Increased tendency to use collegiality on the part of administrations, governing boards, and faculty members (department chairs, P & T committees)

• Collegiality, in the sense of collaboration and constructive cooperation, identifies important aspects of a faculty member’s overall performance.
AAUP’s Position

• Should not be a separate criterion
• Focus on developing clear definitions of teaching, scholarship and service
  – The virtues of collegiality are reflected in these three pillars
  – Collegiality: “A quality whose value is expressed in the successful execution of these three functions.”
AAUP’s Concerns

• May promote homogeneity
  – Exclusion of people based on their differences from the perceived norm

• May threaten academic freedom

• Holds the potential of “chilling faculty debate and discussion”

• May invite the suppression of dissent

• Potential to “cast a pall of stale uniformity”
AAUP’s Position

• Little to be gained in the establishment as a separate criterion ("unnecessary")
  – Absence of collegiality manifested in the dimensions of teaching, scholarship, and service
  – Independent matter
    • Professional misconduct or malfeasance
    • Efforts to obstruct the ability of colleagues to carry out their normal functions
    • Personal attacks
    • Violation of ethical standards
“Gadflies, critics of institutional practices or collegial norms, even the occasional malcontent, have all been known to play an invaluable and constructive role in the life of academic departments and institutions. They have sometimes proved collegial in the deepest and truest sense.”
Do you think collegiality should be a separate criterion for personnel decisions – e.g., tenure, promotion in rank, and reappointment?

_____ YES    _____ NO    _____ Not Sure
Hire Somebody (ANYBODY)!!

We could lose the position due to budget constraints! (OH NO!)

No guarantee the position will be open next academic year! (NOOOO!)

Even if the choice is the ‘best of the worst’, he will CHANGE when he is in our collegial department!

“The greatest derangement of the mind is to believe in something because one wishes it to be so.” (Louis Pasteur)
Collegiality in Hiring

Arguably, the two most important decisions a university can make are:

Whom to Hire

Whom to tenure/reappoint
Overheard at a luncheon meeting to discuss candidates by a member of the search committee:

“I don’t give a damn if he is a Nobel winner: he is a total jerk and I don’t want to spend the rest of my career having coffee with him!”
But he had a great C.V.
“Long range planning does not deal with future decisions, but with the future of present decisions.”

- Peter Drucker

Like Awarding Tenure!
Awarding tenure to an uncivil, nasty person just feels like a sucking chest wound – *taking the life out of* a potentially great and viable department.
Working with a mean spirited, uncivil, selfish, self-serving non collegial person is like being ...

pecked to death by a duck!
Tenure or Not – Mitigating Variables That May Effect Your Decision

Mini Discussion – Any variables . . . ?

1. Person is a member of underrepresented group (e.g., disability, minority status, et al.)
2. Person brings in grants and contracts.
3. Person is married to a tenured person who brings in major grants and contracts.
4. Person is a terrible colleague.
5. Person has several sexual harassment charges against them.
Mitigating Variables [Cont.]

6. Person has a major health issue – going blind
7. Person is a wonderful colleague
8. Person is overweight
9. Person dresses inappropriately
10. Person has ‘weird’ political beliefs
11. Person is undergoing major life style changes – has to take care of their elderly parents
Mitigating Variables [Cont.]

12. Person has stated they want to ‘work from home,’ only teaching online courses
13. University is fearful of a lawsuit brought by this person
14. College is fearful of bad publicity in local and national papers, radio, and television
15. Department is fearful they will lose this tenure track position.
Hire and Tenure Well

Can We ‘Change’ People? From Nasty to Great? (Yes? No? Not Sure?) What Skills Can Be Taught?

“Hire for attitude, train for skill.”
Southwest Airlines
What Constitutes Collegiality?

If we can’t agree on what collegiality is (consistent and well-defined) we resort to Justice Potter Stewart’s definition of pornography:

“I KNOW IT WHEN I SEE IT.”
If there was an objective, validated tool that assessed collegial behavior, would you be in favor of having collegiality as a criterion for tenure and promotion?

___ YES   ___ NO   ___ NOT SURE
Collegiality

The following question was asked of 451 chairs:

If there was an objective, validated tool that assessed collegial behavior, would you be in favor of having collegiality as a criterion for tenure and promotion?
Collegiality - RESULTS

- YES, 354, 79%
- NO, 46, 10%
- NOT SURE, 49, 11%
Collegiality [Continued]

• Why did more people (N = 49) select “NOT SURE” in greater numbers (N = 46) than responded “NO”?
  – Ambiguous Term
  – Imprecise
  – Can be used to “Get someone”
  – SUBJECTIVE
The Facts About Civility . . .

1. Can “lack of collegiality” be used as a basis to terminate a full-time faculty member?
   YES ✓ NO _____ NOT SURE _____

2. Are climate, culture & collegiality more important to the satisfaction of early-career faculty than compensation, tenure clarity, workload & policy effectiveness?
   YES ✓ NO _____ NOT SURE _____
Facts About Collegiality [Cont.]

3. Do most institutions of higher education specify collegiality as a distinct criterion for tenure and promotion?
   YES _____ NO ☑️ NOT SURE _____

4. When considering collegiality in faculty employment decisions, courts of law have consistently upheld its importance.
   TRUE ☑️ FALSE _____ NOT SURE _____
Facts About Collegiality [Cont.]

5. Collegial behavior implies mindless conformity or total absence of dissent.
   TRUE _____   FALSE _____ ✓ NOT SURE _____

6. The courts do not perceive collegiality as important to the university to fulfill its mission.
   TRUE _____   FALSE _____ ✓ NOT SURE _____
Facts About Collegiality [Cont.]

7. Destructive conflict can immobilize departments.

TRUE ✔ FALSE ______ NOT SURE ______
Ideas for Dealing with a Non-Collegial Faculty Member

- 21 Question Survey
- Survey Themes
  - Do nothing
  - Positive
  - Punitive
  - Proactive
Data from Current Study

• Survey Themes
  – Do nothing: 11.7%
  – Positive
    • Totally support: 13.1%
    • Serving as a mentor: 3.6%
    • Legacy building: 51.9%
    • Ask what you can do to help: 66.7%
Data from Current Study

• Survey Themes: **Punitive**
  – Place in smaller office: 0.2%
  – Five-day a week teaching schedule: 4.7%
  – More students to advise: 0.4%
  – No summer employment: 15.7%
  – Serve on more committees: 4.5%
Data from Current Study

• Survey Themes: **Punitive**
  – Unpopular courses to teach: 1.1%
  – Late evening classes: 1.9%
  – Early morning classes: 2.3%
  – Do not invite to any department social functions: 2.7%
  – Observe teaching in classroom: 17.8%
  – Scrutinize use of sick/personal days: 9.1%
Data from Current Study

• Survey Themes: **Proactive**
  – Contact Dean: 80.3%
  – Contact Provost: 21.2%
  – Contact Human Resources: 57.0%
  – Write letter explaining problems: 60.2%
  – Have an open and frank discussion: 92.8%
    • 79.8% would have this meeting on-campus

• 79.8% would have this meeting on-campus
Data from Current Study

• Survey of 528 department chairs
• In response to the question:
  – Have you ever had an uncivil or non collegial faculty member in your department?

440 YES (83.3%)

88 NO (16.7%)
Favorite Response #1

“I modeled my responses (1, 9, 8, 15, 22 (isolate him)) to an actual case in my department. I even tried to get him to retire early. Tragically, shortly after that, he dropped dead of heart failure.”

“Case closed!”
Favorite Response #2

“See Matthew 18:15-17; has good advice for this situation.”

Matthew 18:15-17 (New International Version)

Dealing With Sin in the Church

15 “If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. 16 But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”
Favorite Response #3

“I wanted to provoke him into throwing a punch at me so I could have banged him out.

New Jersey solution – probably not a good one!”
The CAM & S-AM

Collegiality Assessment Matrix (CAM) used to i.d. observable behaviors most commonly associated with collegiality in the academy.

Self-Assessment Matrix (S-AM) – faculty completes the S-AM [similar to CAM]

Possible to compare a person’s rating of his own collegiality with how others (chairs, deans, peers) perceive the same behavior.
The CAM and S-AM [Continued]

• Both instruments were pilot-tested by chairs and faculty.

• Results: both matrices were highly useful, easy to complete, associated with observable behaviors rather than interpretations of someone’s personality or attitudes, and valuable for promoting productive discussions of collegiality within departments and throughout campus.
Applying the CAM & S-AM

Both instruments have multiple uses.

• In a department or college, the chair or dean completes a CAM for each faculty member, while each faculty member completes his or her own S-AM [MOST COMMON]

• In a 1-on-1 conversation, supervisor & faculty member can discuss where their perceptions of the faculty member’s level of collegiality agree, where they differ, and what might be done to improve matters for the future.
Applying CAM & S-AM [Cont.]

- At other times, especially as part of a tenure review where a faculty member’s collegiality (or lack thereof) is a matter of ongoing interest, faculty member can complete the S-AM while the chair and all other members of the department assess the candidate’s level of collegiality with the CAM.
Applying CAM & S-AM [Cont.]

By calculating medians of the faculty ratings, the review committee will have 3 useful data sets to compare:

(1) Supervisor’s assessment
(2) Individual’s self-assessment
(3) Aggregated scores of candidate’s peers
Applying CAM & S-AM [Cont.]

• NOTE: Since items left blank or scored as N/A do not enter into the averages, faculty members can feel comfortable rating only those items about which they have direct knowledge and observation.

• Both the CAM & S-AM contain 10 statements. If a person rates all 10 statements and adds the numerical total for all 10 statements, that score is divisible by 10. If he only completes 8 statements, the total is divisible by 8.
What’s Next for CAM & S-AM?

- ATLAS is developing a national data base on the aggregate scores for both assessment instruments. Specific variables will be analyzed (e.g., gender, geography, rank, et al.) and the results will be shared with all colleges and universities that participate.

- S-AM has been effectively used in new faculty searches.
4 Causes of Non Collegial Behavior

1. Self-image is different from perception by others.

2. Poor communication skills.

3. Lack of ownership or investment.

4. Perception that non collegiality is permitted.
COLLEGIALITY

Chair has department meeting:
1. What is collegiality.
2. The importance of collegiality.
4. Expectations – what is collegiality, and what collegiality is not.
5. Use of CAM and S-AM
6. Do not want affable Babbits?
7. Productive dissent – Yes.
8. Non collegial behavior can ruin a department.
Understand that the most valuable assets in a university/department are...

their people
the intellectual capital they possess
the culture they create
This financial crisis is forcing universities to make tough decisions:

There is a risk that we might need to lay off André...
Creating a More Collegial and Harmonious Department
Questions?
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