

FACULTY EMERITI PROCEDURES

1. Purpose

Faculty Emeritus is a recognition¹ bestowed by the Academic Senate to recognize our retiring academic colleagues for their service to the college, students, and peers; as well as an acknowledgment that their service will not be forgotten after they leave the college.

2. Qualification

- A. To be considered for the award of Faculty Emeritus, an individual must be a tenured COC faculty member in good standing who is retiring from full-time service at College of the Canyons and the California Community College system. Subsequent post-retirement service as an adjunct faculty member does not disqualify an individual from emeritus status.
- B. Administrators who earned faculty tenure at COC, and who subsequently become a COC administrator, are eligible due to their COC Faculty Tenure status.²
- C. Emeritus status may be granted posthumously to tenured faculty members who died prior to retirement.

3. Selection Process³

- A. After consultation with the appropriate school senators⁴, the Academic Senate President will present a recommendation to the Senate that an individual be recognized as a Faculty Emeritus.
- B. The recommendation for emeritus status should be presented at the last Senate meeting before the effective date of retirement. If that is not possible, the recommendation should be presented at a Senate meeting as soon as practical.⁵
- C. Emeritus status will be granted upon a majority vote of the Senate.
- D. If there are questions whether the faculty member is retiring in “good standing” the Senate President may convene a small ad hoc committee to review and make a recommendation to the Senate.⁶

¹ In some universities this is considered as a Rank. However, this might not be appropriate in this situation. In most rank-granting institutions, rank has an impact on salary – at community colleges “rank” is an honorific.

² Example: Nancy Smith, emeritus professor of Psychology, Division Dean

³ While some colleges require retiring faculty member to complete an application to reach emeritus status, after some discussion it was felt that such a practice would not be appropriate for COC. The goal is for us (continuing faculty) to recognize and honor our retiring colleagues; this rank is not intended as a way for retirees to seek personal recognition.

⁴ This allows the Senate President the opportunity to gauge the attitude of faculty members close to the retiree. This will provide the Senate President with an “early-warning alert” that the awarding of emeritus status to a particular faculty member may be problematic.

⁵ A candidate should not be denied the recognition because we (the Senate) forgot to take action. Bureaucracy was rampant through the candidate’s career; it should not follow them into their retirement.

⁶ While we do not want to create a witch hunt fueled by personal vendetta, there may be a few cases when it would not be appropriate to recognize a colleague with emeritus status. Since this process should be a joyous affirmation and celebration of a colleague’s career, a full Senate meeting should not be the first place to “air our dirty laundry”.

4. Honorary Faculty Emeritus

- A. There may be unique and compelling circumstances where the Senate may decide to grant honorary faculty emeritus status to retiring members of the college's academic community who did not earn faculty tenure at COC.⁷
- B. Honorary Faculty Emeritus status is a recognition from the Academic Senate for an individual who, while they did not earn faculty tenure at COC, has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to working collegially with the college faculty as well as a long and successful history of dedication toward student success here at the college.⁸
- C. A resolution to grant honorary tenure will be presented to the Senate by the Academic Senate President at the request of faculty senators.⁹
- D. A super-majority vote of 75% will be required to grant Honorary Faculty Emeritus status.¹⁰
- E. Honorary Faculty Emeritus status may be granted posthumously.

5. Rights and privileges of faculty emeriti

In addition to rights and privileges granted to all District retirees, Faculty Emeritus status will include the following:

- A. An emeritus may make a written request to have any of the following recognitions removed.¹¹
- B. A photograph of all emeriti faculty will be placed in the Faculty Center.
 - i. Emeriti faculty will have the opportunity to have a new picture taken by college reprographics. If it is not possible for a new photograph to be taken, a photo may be used from the college collection.
 - ii. The photos will bear the name of the individual, their employment dates at the college, and their title (e.g., Professor of xxxx).
- C. All emeriti will be listed in the college catalog.
 - i. The Senate office will review and provide updates to the appropriate college office developing the catalog.
 - ii. The Senate office will ask the appropriate college office for any updates on retirees who have died. A notation will be placed to indicate a deceased individual (eg, "Carter Doran *").
- D. All emeriti will be able to retain the use of their COC email address, as well as have access to appropriate college letterhead for the purpose of writing letters of recommendation.¹²

⁷ This is not unprecedented. Although they did not earn faculty tenure here at COC, faculty emeritus status was awarded to Carter Doran, Rav Manji, and Sue Albert.

⁸ This allows for the possibility of Honorary Faculty Emeritus status to be granted to both Academic Administrators as well as long time adjunct faculty.

⁹ If the Senate is granting faculty emeritus status to someone who normally would not be receiving that honor, the Senate should delineate the rationale for the recognition. Without providing any rationale, we risk creating a situation where honorary faculty emeritus status would be granted to non-tenured faculty....just because everyone else go it..

¹⁰ The 75% threshold for honorary faculty emeritus status should be seen as an indication of the high level regard that the Senate holds for an individual.

¹¹ An individual may be extremely private and we should respect that privacy (or an individual may be so angry at the college when they retire that they want to cut all ties with the college).

¹² It has been suggested that we work with PIO to develop a separate, distinct Emeritus letterhead.

- i. Use of the college email and letterhead by emeriti is subject to all COC policies that would apply to active employees. The college retains the right to remove access to email and/or letterhead violation of these policies.
 - ii. An emeritus who uses the college email or letterhead must identify themselves as holding emeritus status.
- E. Library privileges applicable to current faculty members should be extended to all emeriti faculty.

Emeriti Faculty – Background

When we first began to recognize Faculty Emeriti we were still a very small college¹³, and many of our practices were somewhat informal and based on shared institutional memory. Yet over the years our college has grown, not only in the number of students and employees, but also in our approach to many of our practices. We need to formalize what was once “tribal knowledge” so that it can continue to be implemented in a coherent, rational manner. Such is the case with the Faculty Emeriti recognition.

When the college first began, there was very little emphasis on honoring retirees: the college was so new that no one was going to retire for quite some time. The focus was on building the campus and hiring new employees, not saying “goodbye” to long serving colleagues.

In the mid-1970s we began to have our first retirees. To recognize those retirees, wooden plaques with the names of the retirees were placed on upright poles placed in the ground near the front of the Bonelli building. Thus was born the Honor Grove.

By the late 1980s the signs in the Honor Grove were showing their age as the wooden name plaques showed signs of weathering. A backlog emerged as there was a period when no new plaques were being made for additional retirees. In time, even the existing plaques were removed to be refurbished, with the hope that the backlog would be addressed at that time. Later, a new area was established to list the names of retirees. This was set up in Independence Grove (named after trees planted as part of COC’s participation in the national Bicentennial celebrations).¹⁴ However, Independence Grove no longer exists; the trees (and plaques) were removed to during the construction of Hasley Hall.

In the early 1990s a retirement incentive saw the departure of a large number of faculty members (including many of the charter faculty members). It was felt that these colleagues, who had dedicated their professional careers to building this college, should not be allowed to simply disappear from our institutional memory. It was during this time that the Academic Senate began to develop the recognition of “Faculty Emeriti.”

¹³ We were a member of the “Small College” caucus of the California Community Colleges.

¹⁴ Causing one faculty member to remark that “there is no honor left in the honor grove”.