

**Graduate School-Committee on Academic Staff Issues (GS-CASI)
Five-Year Review
2003-2008**

2008-2009 GS-CASI Committee Members

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Contents

Introduction.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Annual Reports Review.....	5
Bylaws Review.....	6
Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities.....	8
Recommendations.....	8
Addendum.....	8

Introduction

The Graduate School Committee on Academic Staff Issues (GS-CASI) of UW-Madison was established in 2003. The mission of this committee is to advise the Dean of the Graduate School (School) in formulating and reviewing policies and procedures concerning academic staff. The committee also serves as a source of information and representation for the academic staff in the School.

Our accomplishments include:

Increased participation by academic staff on School committees

Increased responsibility in the academic staff Professional Development Grant Program

The establishment of an Honorific Research Professor title series.

Recommendations are developed through ad hoc subcommittees such as Principal Investigator Status as well as our standing committees:

Professional Development & Recognition

Communications

Nominations & Districting

Personnel Policies & Procedures.

The GS-CASI strives to communicate and achieve representative participation and topic relevance through our website, brown bag seminars, issue surveys, liaisons and e-mail distribution of minutes.

Executive Summary

The GS-CASI members initiated its five-year self-study in the fall of 2008. As stipulated in the Bylaws, “at intervals not to exceed five years, the members of the CASI shall review its structure and functions to assess the CASI's effectiveness as a voice for academic staff and its compliance with academic staff Policies and Procedures. The CASI shall submit the self-study report to the Dean and to the Academic Staff Executive Committee (ASEC), and make it available to the academic staff of the School.” The review includes an appraisal of all annual reports, a review of the bylaws for compliance with stated requirements and any needed revisions, and a Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities (SCO) statement.

During this five-year self-study period, the Dean has implemented the following major recommendations arising out of GS-CASI subcommittees:

- In the absence of the GS-CASI chair (the GS Dean), the position of vice-chair was created. The GS-CASI vice-chair, appointed by GS-CASI members, also serves as an academic staff representative on the School Academic Planning Council (APC);
- The Academic Policy regarding Composition of Graduate Examination Committees was revised to include academic staff as additional members of masters and doctoral thesis committees;
- Responsibility for review and ranking recommendation for the academic staff Professional Development Grant Program was transferred from the School administration to the GS-CASI Professional Development and Recognition Subcommittee;
- The practice of including academic staff representation on all search and screen committees appointed at the School level (e.g., associate deans and directors) was established;
- The practice of having academic staff representation on all School committees, with the exception of committees that focus exclusively on faculty issues, was established; and
- An Honorific Research Professor title series was established in the School.

Based upon these actions, the charge of GS-CASI – to be an effective voice to the Dean about issues of concern to unclassified academic staff – was successfully fulfilled.

Our active standing subcommittees are Professional Development & Recognition, Communications, Nominations & Districting and Personnel Policies & Procedures. They have proven an effective mechanism to address the recurring nature of some academic staff issues. These subcommittees serve to maximize the expertise of CASI members, provide opportunities to involve non-CASI members in the governance process, and establish resource networks within the School. They communicate with and solicit input from colleagues through ongoing website development, brown bag seminars, on-line issue surveys, and e-mail distribution of minutes. Oversight in ensuring committee compliance with academic staff Policies and Procedures is provided, as needed, by the Personnel Policies & Procedures Subcommittee.

The self-study revealed that continued effort is required to ensure information flow and adequate representation of academic staff on the Madison campus as well as at the center/unit level. The GS-CASI is aware that representative participation and topic relevance are ever-present weaknesses when the few represent the many. We continue to address these ongoing concerns

through heightened communication efforts and reconsideration of our bylaws and representational structure.

This self-assessment has enabled the GS-CASI to critically review its mission statement and bylaws, and to reflect on the accomplishments of the past five years. A yearly retreat was established in 2008 to address the need for continuing review of the relevance as well as the impact of our work. GS-CASI members will use the findings to set priorities for the coming year.

Annual Reports Review

The annual reports were carefully studied to obtain common accomplishments, indicating abidance to by-law guidelines.

- The four original standing subcommittees remain active:
 - Professional Development & Recognition,
 - Communications,
 - Nominations & Districting, and
 - Personnel Policies & Procedures.

The fifth, Principal Investigator Status, was disbanded after one year with responsibility for its charge transferred to the Personnel Policies & Procedures subcommittee.

- Every GS-CASI member has served on at least one subcommittee during each year.
- Each subcommittee's respective focus was determined by feedback from the general academic staff through personal interactions, surveys, discussion at brown bag lunch events, etc.
- Each year, in accordance with our mission, specific recommendations were made to the Dean about the issues that were studied. We are very pleased to report that the School implemented all major recommendations during this five-year period. See the Executive Summary for the list of recommendations.
- Methods initiated to increase visibility and awareness of the availability of the GS-CASI to the School academic staff included a:
 - "launch letter",
 - website development where all records are posted including meeting minutes for the committee and all subcommittees, and the annual reports
 - sharing news and topics on a one-by-one basis,
 - brown bag seminars, and
 - e-mail alerts pertinent to academic staff issues.

Bylaws Review

1. Mission statement

The mission statement is the original charge to the CASI. No changes were made to the statement during this review process.

2. Responsibilities

- A. The GS-CASI has represented our constituents in the development and review of School policies and procedures including active involvement with Academic Staff Assembly, ASEC, and the APC. More details are available with GS-CASI Annual reports online.
<http://www.grad.wisc.edu/admin/committees/casi/index.html>
- B. GS-CASI representatives have promoted positive climate and appreciation of enhanced diversity through representation on Equity and Diversity committees within units.
- C. GS-CASI has worked with the Dean to understand the frequency of annual reviews conducted by units within the School. Surveys of School centers regarding merit and performance review were conducted. The online performance review system used by Waisman Center was overviewed and shared with other centers. GS-CASI was successful in implementation of the Honorific Research Professor Title series.
- D. Promotion of opportunities for academic staff to participate in university governance was a prominent goal throughout the first 5 years of committee existence. This has led to the creation of an academic staff Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) available on the website.
<http://acstaff.wisc.edu/faq/default.aspx>
- E. GS-CASI has been solidly involved with review and ranking of School Professional Development grant applicants from 2004 through the present. The Honorific Research Professor title establishment provides a new opportunity for academic staff recognition.
- F. Professional development and mentoring programs have been organized by GS-CASI through Office of Human Resources. The training and informational sessions were conducted at several School centers on campus.
- G. GS-CASI representatives also serve in positions within ASA, ASEC, APC, and the Academic Staff Public Representation Organization (ASPRO). They provide liaison support and networking between them and various other committees on campus.
- H. GS-CASI provides a forum to discuss concerns of School academic staff as shown through the accomplishments of the first five years.

No changes have been made to the Responsibilities section of the Bylaws.

3. Membership

This is a record of Bylaws changes for the period of 13 June 2003 – 30 June 2008.

Date passed by GS-CASI: 6 August 2004

Original:

1. Size: B. The Dean is a non-voting member of the CASI. The Assistant Dean for Budget and Personnel and one academic staff member from the Graduate School's Academic Planning Council shall be non-voting members of the committee.

Modified to:

1. Size: B. The Dean and the Assistant Dean for Budget and Personnel are non-voting members of the CASI. As per the Dean's recommendation, The GS CASI Vice-chair shall serve as the Graduate School's Academic Staff Planning Council (APC) representative. In addition, the Committee may recommend to the Dean that additional non-voting member(s) be appointed to provide ongoing expertise in any area(s) that it deems necessary

Date passed by GS-CASI: 11 November 2005

Original:

2. Terms of Office: A. Membership terms shall be three years for each elected and appointed position, with the exception of initial terms that shall be staggered. (One third of the initial elected and appointed positions shall be for one year, one third for two years and one third for three years.) Terms begin on 1 July and end on 30 June.

Modified to:

2. Terms of Office: A. Membership terms shall be three years for each elected position. One third of the membership is elected annually. Appointed positions shall serve a three-year term. Terms shall begin on July 1 and terminate on June 30.

Date passed by GS-CASI: 10 November 2006

Original:

1. Size: B. ...One Academic Staff member from the Graduate School's Academic Planning Council (APC) shall also be appointed by the Dean as a non-voting member of the CASI unless one of the Academic Staff members of the APC is a voting member of the CASI.

Modified to:

1. Size: B. ...As per the Dean's recommendation, the GS CASI Vice-chair shall serve as the Graduate School's Academic Planning Council (APC) representative...

4. Procedures

A record of Bylaws changes for the period of 13 June 2003 – 30 June 2008 follows.

Date passed by GS-CASI: 10 November 2006

Original:

1. Meetings: A. A Vice Chair "Elect" shall be elected annually at the first meeting of the committee year. The Vice Chair Elect shall assume full vice chair responsibilities after serving one year.

Modified to

1. Meetings: A. The Vice Chair Elect shall chair the committee in the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair.

5. Subcommittees

All bylaws stand as written.

6. Bylaws Revisions

All bylaws stand as written.

Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities

A poll of all current GS-CASI members was conducted to ascertain each individual's opinion on the state of the committee as a whole. Respondents listed what they saw as strengths of the group, the challenges before us, and the opportunities possible to address the challenges.

Strengths of having a CASI:

- Provides representation of all academic staff.
- The Dean of the Graduate School serves as the Chair.
- Members learn how different units function within the Graduate School.
- Serves as a vehicle to communicate with the Academic Staff Assembly and Executive Committee.
- Members are dedicated to the issues that concern academic staff.
- All records are available on the web site.
- Facilitates participation with other governance committees on campus.
- One member represents the group on the Academic Planning Council.
- The by-laws are strong and well written. They provide an excellent foundation for our work.

Challenges facing the CASI:

- Members are volunteers, and therefore have a limited amount of time.
- The need to increase visibility of the Committee to all academic staff.
- The loss of institutional memory due to the retirement of large numbers of academic staff.
- The diversity of staff positions requires attention to wide-ranging perspectives.

We will review the strengths and challenges at the 2009 fall retreat. At that time we will include the opportunities we see before us to help guide our work in the future. The online minutes will document the chosen directions.

Recommendations

- A retreat, held early in the fall school year, should occur annually. By coming together regularly at this time of year GS-CASI members will reconnect and recharge ourselves to best represent our constituents.
- The Bylaws be scrutinized for applicability, typographical errors, and modified as appropriate in the coming year.

Addendum

All documents pertaining to the GS-CASI and the business the group conducts are available on the website. <http://www.grad.wisc.edu/admin/committees/casi/index.html>. The documents include the annual reports to date, minutes from meetings of the committee and all subcommittees.