



17-18 BEC 8
February 13, 2018

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: The Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
SUBJECT: 17-18 BEC 8: Faculty Workload Taskforce response memorandum from Provost Inch
PURPOSE: Information to the Academic Senate

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

At its meeting on February 13, 2018, the Executive Committee voted to place Provost Inch's memorandum regarding the Faculty Workload Taskforce on the February 20, 2018 Academic Senate Agenda.

Please see memo attached.

Memorandum

To: Mark Karplus, Academic Senate Chair
From: Edward Inch, Provost
Re: Faculty Workload Task Force
Date: 11 January 2018

I am writing regarding the two Faculty Workload Task Force reports submitted during the 2016-2017 academic year to update you and the Academic Senate regarding their current status and implementation plans.

Background

During Fall quarter, 2016, the Faculty Workload Task Force (FWTF) was convened by Academic Senate Chair Mark Karplus and Provost Edward Inch.¹ The Task Force was charged with examining and recommending courses of action related to 1) assignment of workload for University-wide coursework and 2) release time for research and creative activities. The charge included the following parameters:

1. Funded enrollment growth is not likely to exceed 1-2% through the end of semester conversion and, therefore, the Academic Affairs budget would likely remain flat at near 2016-17 levels;
2. Proposals should be budget neutral;
3. Proposals should “fit” within existing classroom capacity under semesters.

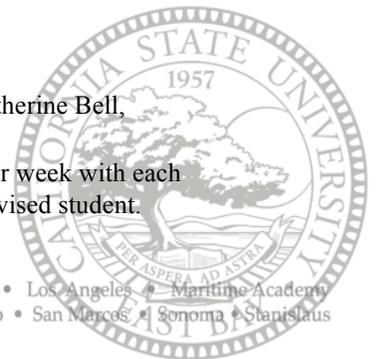
The Task Force’s recommendations came in two reports. The first, “Workload Assignment for University-Wide Supervisory Coursework,” was submitted in December, 2016, and the second, “Report and Recommendations of the Faculty Workload Task Force,” was submitted in May, 2017. Both reports were thorough and reflected careful consideration and input from multiple campus constituencies.

Report 1: Supervisory Credit Recommendations

For supervisory credit, the Task Force recommended that all supervisory coursework for Independent Study (4900, 6900), Project (6899), Departmental Thesis (6909) and University Thesis (6910) be standardized with a K-Factor of 0.33 for 4900 and 0.48 for the remaining coursework.²

¹ The FWTF membership included: Linda Ivey (chair), Rafael Hernandez (secretary), Katherine Bell, Xinjian Lu, Nancy Mangold, Jeffrey Newcomb, and Jeff Seitz

² System guidelines specify that S-25 courses require one and one-half hours of contact per week with each supervised student and S-36 courses require one hour of contact per week with each supervised student.



Based on 2015-16 enrollment data, the FWTF proposed funding 284.88 WTU for a cost of approximately \$356,100. This projection assumes part-time lecturers will “backfill” courses at \$1,250/WTU. Currently, we pay \$1,269/WTU meaning that the budget gap to be addressed is approximately \$361,513. The report presented no recommendations for how the costs should be absorbed into college or division budgets nor how to track effort to assure that faculty members were, for every student involved, meeting the requisite number of contact hours.

Report 2: Workload Recommendations

The FWTF recommended that, beginning in Fall 2018, full-time, tenure line faculty members who do not currently receive a reduction in instructional assignment during their probationary appointment, be allowed to select between two options:

Option 1: Research and Service

0.6 FTE for teaching (18 semester units)

0.2 FTE for research, scholarship, and creative activity (Research, 6 semester units)

0.2 FTE for service to the University, profession, and to the community (Service, 6 semester units)

Option 2: Current Practice

0.8 FTE for teaching (24 semester units)

0.2 FTE for research and service (6 semester units)

Using Fall 2015 tenure line faculty teaching data, the Task Force projected that the proposal would require that at least 1,339.5 annualized FTES be covered within existing resources. The FWTF recommended accommodating student course needs within the budget by:

1. Absorbing 1,339.5 annualized FTES into the remaining, existing courses for an approximate 33% increase in class size
2. Maximize net classroom faculty FTE through a careful reexamination of all assigned time with reductions as appropriate and warranted

Based on discussions in the Academic Senate and Executive Committee, increasing class size, reducing other assigned time, and the perception of creating a “two-tiered” system for faculty (differentiating between those performing research and those not), were not received positively. Other possible alternatives ranging from limiting the number of eligible participants to amount of allocated assigned time to identifying possible budget cuts were not addressed and, currently, no other alternatives have been proposed.

Current Status

I have referred the recommendations to both the Council of Deans and the Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee (AABAC) for consideration and comment.

Resources remain a challenge and the proposal requires significant tradeoffs to accommodate budgetary structures and ensure that student need and demand are met.

While AABAC discussions will involve a lengthy assessment of resources and options, I have asked the deans to move forward identifying possible approaches within their resource allocations. Specifically:

Supervisory Credit

I concur with the FWTF that:

- College deans provide department chairs with the parameters of SCU goals and WTU limits to schedule coursework;
- Administrative decisions be geared toward student need, including decreasing time to graduation, increasing support of high impact practices, and fostering a campus culture of rigorous and engaging curriculum;
- Serious consideration of circumstances in which independent study coursework is a necessity for timely degree completion;
- Department development of guidelines pertaining to University-wide supervisory coursework, in consultation with the college dean, regarding workload assignment issues related to majors.

The FWTF proposal is not budget neutral. However, I have asked each dean to consider the following in alignment with the FTWF implementation recommendations:

- Providing courses for students within college budget allocations remains our highest priority;
- Work with the chairs to identify the critical paths where supervisory units are necessary for the timely completion of a degree;
- Identify ways to save within the college including adjusting class size and reducing assigned time, among others.

The goal is to implement for Fall 2018.

Faculty Workload

The FWTF report is comprehensive and provides a detailed analysis of implications for its implementation. It recommends the following for implementation:

- The Chair of the Academic Senate charge the Faculty Affairs Committee with developing the process to document faculty workload option

selection and the procedures by which faculty select, schedule, and switch options;

- That college deans work with their department chairs to outline and act on the strategies necessary to implement this recommendation so that it is budget-neutral.

I agree with the overall direction and goals of the proposal and I have asked the college deans to consider the following:

- Identify approaches for implementing these recommendations within existing resources and enrollment goals;
- Carefully monitor tenure/non-tenure teaching ratios to be reflective of the tenure density of the college;
- Work with departments to ensure accountability for scholarly productivity for those choosing that option.

Concurrently, I asked AABAC to consider possible alternatives not included in the report. However, based on discussions in the Academic Senate and the Executive Committee, increasing the class size and reducing other assigned time to meet the budget parameters were not received positively. It is more likely that there is not a campus-wide approach as originally proposed and, perhaps, the long-range answer is a local solution based on colleges and/or departments' capabilities and needs.

In the interim, until we are able to identify better and acceptable alternatives, we will use the current system for assigning release time, which is at the deans' discretion based on budget and enrollment needs.

Next Steps

I have asked the Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee to consider the recommendations and work to find possible avenues that will allow faculty members greater flexibility in scheduling workload. That work will continue through this year and possibly into next.

I want to thank all the members of the Faculty Workload Task Force for their effort in producing two reports that stake out some significant issues for us to address over the coming months.