

RESOLUTION

of the

Faculty Senate

Regarding Solidarity with Faculty During the Pandemic

April 2021

(Approved by the Faculty Senate, May 6, 2021)

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has created and exacerbated grief and bereavement, isolation, loss of income and fear for many CSUN community members, including many faculty, resulting in decreased wellness and mental health; and

WHEREAS, caregiving burden has significantly increased for CSUN employees in two-working parent families, single-income families, single-parent families, under-employed families, multi-generational families, families without access to affordable and safe childcare, families with elderly people that require care, families with members who have chronic illnesses, families with members with mental health issues, and families with members with special needs that required more attention; and

WHEREAS, caregiving labor inequitably affects women, and such inequities can be further enhanced by issues of class, race, and other social categorizations; and

WHEREAS, pivoting to online instruction has increased time and labor spent on teaching and service for many faculty; and

WHEREAS, increasing course cap sizes and reducing access to course release time creates unhealthy working conditions for faculty; and

WHEREAS, the university's response for impacted faculty to take unpaid leave (which is neither equitable nor reasonable), delay the tenure clock (a practice that has been shown to negatively impact women and people of color in particular), or rely on individual supervisors for accommodation has proven inadequate to address the devastating burdens created by a global pandemic on many of our faculty individuals; and

WHEREAS, the CSU system is one of the largest employers in the state, and taking the lead on supporting caregivers, especially women from underserved communities will significantly contribute to offsetting the dangerous gendered and racial divide caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, significant scholarly work demonstrates that teaching evaluations are normally biased against women, people of color, and faculty from other under-represented groups, all of

which will likely be augmented during a time of crisis in our community that disproportionately affects the very targets of such biases; and

WHEREAS, the current situation has negatively impacted the ability of many faculty to engage in research and scholarship, including challenges such as travel restrictions, lab and archive closures, conference and performance cancellations, cuts to faculty development funds, closure of research and art production venues, inability or limited ability to conduct human subjects research, publication delays, and systemic closures of schools/childcare; and

WHEREAS, all the aforementioned excruciating working conditions for faculty often affects the quality of education for students; and

WHEREAS, CSUN's response to this crisis will determine what the professoriate at CSUN looks like for years to come; and

WHEREAS, CSUN makes an important contribution to the workforce of the state and the country, and any failures to fully protect its diverse faculty will have a negative impact on the training, preparation and social empathy of its graduates for years to come; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Faculty Senate recognizes the dual roles of colleagues and caregivers, stands in solidarity with all caregiving faculty, staff, students and administrators, and will encourage institutional policies that advocate for support of caregivers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Faculty Senate will encourage efforts of relevant campus entities, including but not limited to the CFA, Faculty Senate's Personnel Planning & Review committee, and the colleges' and departments' personnel committees to implement policies that conform to Achievement Relative to Opportunities (ARO) principles, which enable Retention, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) reviews to evaluate candidates fairly based on their individual review-period professional accomplishments by taking into account unexpected or disruptive circumstances during that period that may have curtailed the candidate's normal ability to achieve expected outcomes; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Faculty Senate will advocate that caregiving faculty will be given more opportunities to avoid new course preparations each semester; and be it further

RESOLVED, that caregiving faculty will have flexibility in selecting modalities in teaching and office hours for fall 2021 and spring 2022 in compliance with existing CSUN COVID regulations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate will support initiatives by the Personnel Planning and Review Committee, in partnership with the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs, Chief Diversity Officer, and other relevant entities to examine and implement established best practices in supporting caregivers on the tenure track, and propose Administration Manual language on the

rights and accommodations of caregiving faculty, including but not limited to how to present a gap in teaching, research, or service due to the birth or adoption of a child or unusual need to become a full-time caregiver; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Faculty Senate will advocate to lower the increased workload added during the pandemic, including lowering course enrollment caps to pre-pandemic numbers and making them more equitable across colleges and departments; and that minimum enrollments be reduced as faculty and students transition from online to face-to-face; and be it further

RESOLVED, that course releases for time intensive administrative labor will be reinstated and protected; and be it further

RESOLVED, that caregiving librarians, coaches and counselors will be given greater flexibility that is equivalent to their unit 3 colleagues; and be it further

RESOLVED, that additional counselor faculty should be hired to deal with the ongoing demand for mental health services as a result of the pandemic; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a campus-level COVID-era Career Support Committee (CFCSC) – or an alternatively named equivalent – be created to examine COVID era impacts on faculty, staff and students and make recommendations to the campus leadership on steps to mitigate the harm experienced; be it further

RESOLVED, that Faculty Senate will advocate for transparency, accountability and timely dissemination of information on COVID-impacted matters, including but not limited to RTP processes and budgets and allocation of resources, including obtaining and reviewing reports of dispensation of funds; and be it further

RESOLVED, that CSUN will advocate to revise and extend for the 2021-2022 academic year the Impacts related to COVID-19 on Operations MOU signed on June 5, 2020 by the California Faculty Association and the California State University; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this be distributed to President Erika Beck, Provost Mary Beth Walker, Vice Provost Matthew Cahn, Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs Diane Guido, Associate Vice President of Academic Resources and Planning Diane Stephens, Senior Director of Institutional Research Janet Oh, Associate Vice President of Student Success Melanie Bocanegra, Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies Elizabeth Adams, all Deans and Chairs, all faculty, the ASCSU, and the CFA.