

To: The Senate  
 From: Edith Benkov, Chair, Faculty Affairs Committee  
 Date: April 10, 2007  
 Re: Information

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## Report on Tenure-Track Faculty

### Introduction

The Senate Faculty Affairs Committee again examined and analyzed a variety of data concerning faculty for its report. We thank the Office of Faculty Affairs for their willingness to supply us with the data we requested.

This year's report on tenure track faculty will focus on three major areas:

- changes in data from last year;
- “progress” towards lowering the ratio of temporary to tenure track faculty;
- assessment of the feasibility of the recommendations made in the original report; concerning recommendations from last year's report.

It will also highlight what we believe are the major challenges facing SDSU in the near future concerning the status of tenure track faculty. We will continue to include data from F'90, the original baseline of comparison for our '05-'06 report, and include data from F'05 so that we may be able to track current movement in faculty.

### I. Ups & Downs

We begin with a brief snapshot of the main figures.

		F'06	F'05	F'90
Headcount		2309	2380	2143
	All TT	745	741	1047
	Temp	920	949	631
	TAs	535	551	392
FTEF		1344	1420	1389
	All TT	722.87	764.28	807.60
	Temp	425.23	437.40	285.35
	TAs	200	217.30	136.90
FTES		28261	26948	26706
SFR	Main	20.68	20.32	19.28
	IVC	17.32	17.15	15.51

As can be seen, there has been an overall decrease in the number of faculty (including teaching associates) between F'05 and F'06. It is down 3%. Conversely, FTES has risen by almost 5% in the same period. The increase in SFR over last year on the main campus is about 1.8% and at IVC, about 1%. The relatively modest increase in SFR reflects the number sections being taught by lecturers .

Tenure track faculty now make up only 62.83% of the total faculty FTEF, down from 63.62% last fall (the F'90 baseline was 77.22%). A comparison of F'05 and F'06 shows declines in FTEF in tenure track faculty FTEF (roughly 5%), lecturer FTEF (just under 3%) and in TAs (roughly 9%). Declines in FTEF correspond to fewer, but larger class sections in some programs.

It continues to be a tenet of the academy that in a research university a higher ratio of tenure track to temporary faculty is desirable. Last year, our report offered a five-year goal of 70%-30% to be reached by F'10 (not the Senate mandated ratio of 75%-25%). We note that with teaching load frequently at 3-3 per year (or 3-2 or 2-2) for tenure track faculty, the teaching, research, and service profile of our tenure track faculty has changed from 1990. Consequently, the 75%-25%, may be unrealistic within the constraints of the CSU budget. As noted in our '05-'06 report, our institution is not alone in seeing an increase in temporary faculty.

II. The FAC made the following recommendations in its original report:

“To increase the number of tenure-track faculty, FAC recommends:

- an aggressive campaign of hiring , with the goal of 70-75 successful searches per year over the next 10 years;”

In 105 searches for position beginning F'06 yielded 79 hires.

However, funding these hires placed an untenable burden on the Academic Affairs budget with the consequence that in '06-'07, a total of 69 faculty and 3 dean searches were authorized. Assuming a 70–75% success rate, we would gain about 50 new tenure-track faculty. If retirements, faculty ending FERP, and resignations were to remain at roughly same level as this year, the number of tenure track faculty could conceivably decline in F'07. For the '07-'08, the provost is committed to authorizing at least the same number of searches this year, depending on the budget.

Nonetheless, the number of tenure-track faculty is down nearly 100 since F'02 which was first period that had a significant increase over mid-90's.

The committee remains convinced that our recommendation for an aggressive hiring campaign is the only solution to rebuilding the faculty. We recognize that there is a fundamental disconnect between what must be done to increase the number of tenure-track faculty and the resources available to accomplish this.

“To institute our commitment to diversity:

- continued efforts to ensure and increase faculty diversity, with a particular emphasis on African American faculty;”

Persons of color were down slightly; female up slightly. Progress was made in assuring diversity in terms of persons of color, especially of African Americans.

The committee acknowledges the difficulty of recruiting diverse faculty in a competitive job market, especially with the limitations of the CSU system. However the committee reaffirms this recommendation and encourages that all efforts possible are made to recruit and retain diverse faculty.

We wish to highlight one other difficulty in our quest for diversity. Data gathered on campus concerning faculty diversity is self-reported and there is an increasing use of the category “other.”

“To rebuild the faculty:

- implementation of strategies for faculty retention.”

Of the 58 separations last year, just over 50%, 30 were resignations. A number of factors seem to be at play here, with no clear pattern emerging. Some faculty left for personal reasons, some left for other positions – excellent faculty who are wooed by other institutions, some may have left knowing that they might not meet our expectations for tenure, yet others may be following the patterns of newer faculty nationwide, not expecting that they are “lifers” at the institution that first hired them. It is possible that this high incidence of resignations is just an anomaly and will not be repeated this year.

Retention data should be carefully reviewed at the end of this academic year on. Should we continue to have a high number of resignations, especially among probationary faculty, it may be necessary for us to develop an aggressive retention campaign as well. However, it is equally possible that we may need to face the reality that they are more mobile and that there are no solutions to increasing retention. In the latter case, hiring projections would need to take into account decreased retention.

“To assure a reasonable faculty workload in light of increasing FTES:

- cautiously and judiciously increase the number of very large course sections”

At this point, we see no systematic increase in very large sections, due in part to the limitations of the number of large classrooms. Very large sections may not meet student needs (one section of a course vs. ten possible choices) and may be under enrolled. Overall, very large sections may not have a significant impact on faculty workload.

- “build graduate enrollments and graduate programs for wider use of teaching associates and graduate assistants”

With a decline in TAs from F’06, there were obviously no gains in this area. We would also like to raise two questions for further consideration:

- How can we achieve an appropriate balance between graduate and undergraduate education given the constraints of CSU funding?
- Can we identify programs that would benefit most from TAs in undergraduate education?
- “offer more assigned time for service duties”

Whether or not this recommendation is feasible is not easily measured. It is an attempt to recognize the importance of service as a part of faculty workload. Increased assigned time will not help the tenure track-temporary ratio, since more assigned time will likely result in more temporary faculty. What is certain is that service demands on tenure-track faculty will not diminish until there are more tenure track faculty take up the service.

To the original recommendations cited above, we add :

- Increase our investment in training for hybrid and online courses, including a review of current Senate policy.

Exploring different modalities of instruction, with an emphasis on the benefits of technology, may serve to mitigate the effects of increasing FTES.

## **Challenges**

### **a) Managing Increasing FTES while Increasing TT**

With the continuing increases in FTES targets, one major challenge faced by the university is how to increase the number of tenure track faculty, within the constraints of CSU funding.

Solution: None on the horizon. Since all CSU campuses are funded in the same way, our uniqueness is not recognized in general fund allocations. Continued dependence on temporary faculty is at present the only way to handle enrollment growth

### **b) Increase diversity in hires**

Few solutions present themselves. However, plans might be developed to focus on strategic hires, such as targeting areas where a diverse hire is more likely. The March 2005 report of the Committee on Diversity, Equity and Outreach offers a number of suggestions and best practices in diversity hiring.

### **c) Retention**

Faculty retention is our second greatest challenge. At this time it is premature to think that a high number of resignations experienced in '05-'06 will become the norm. However, should we see that resignations continue at a similar rate, retention may need to become our top priority, and for that, we will need to better understand the culture of incoming faculty.

### **d) Class Size / Temporary Faculty**

As we look at the new reality, what we see is that there are lower teaching loads for tenure track faculty, salary increases and higher starting salaries, increased start-up costs, and that within the limits of the CSU system, these changes all lead to larger classes and an increase in temporary lecturers.

If, as is likely, we will continue to have a large number of lecturers in our classrooms, perhaps it is time to turn our attention from a preoccupation with the tenure track ratio and consider ways of further professionalizing our temporary faculty. The need for temporary faculty to remain current in their field, to continue to develop pedagogical skills, to be familiar with new technologies in and outside the classroom is as necessary for them to be able to deliver high quality courses as it is for tenure track faculty. Yet we have few mechanisms in place to help temporary faculty meet these expectations. Resources should be set aside to invest in developing training programs and other support for temporary faculty.