

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-3281-17/AA
January 26, 2017

ADVICE TO THE CSU TENURE DENSITY TASK FORCE

- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) encourage the CSU Tenure Density Task Force to recommend medium- and long-range targets for tenure density for the CSU system, and further recommend that campuses set targets concomitant with system goals; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the ASCSU recommend the CSU Tenure Density Task Force suggest that the CSU system and campuses work towards meeting medium-range targets through the hiring of additional tenure-track faculty, and work towards meeting long-range targets through the development of multi-year plans to improve tenure density; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the ASCSU request the Chancellor's Office collect and compile data, for each campus and for the system, on metrics related to instructional tenure-track faculty capacity – including tenure-density, the student-to-instructional faculty ratio, tenure-track and lecturer Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) and Head Count, and the student-to-tenure-track faculty ratio and these metrics be disaggregated by gender and ethnicity; and report these data to the ASCSU, to Presidents, to Provosts, and to campus senate Chairs annually; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the ASCSU distribute this resolution to the CSU Tenure Density Task Force, the CSU Board of Trustees, Chancellor, campus Presidents, campus Senate Chairs, and Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs,

***RATIONALE:** In the Fall of 2016, Chancellor White assembled a Tenure Density Task Force which has at least two additional meetings scheduled and which is directed to provide recommendations to the Chancellor by March 1, 2017. On November 26th, 2016 Chancellor White and the ASCSU discussed the topic of tenure density, probing the rationale for why tenure density is a significant metric, and whether there are other metrics that capture the capacity a campus has in terms of tenure track faculty. In his statements, Chancellor White acknowledged tenure-track faculty as the “soul of the university”. He also made a specific request for an intellectual rationale as to why tenure density is a significant measure, and ASCSU believes the CSU Tenure Density Task Force is in a unique position to offer that intellectual rationale, as well as specific recommendations meant to support the previous calls to action by the legislature, the CSU Board of Trustees, California Faculty Association (CFA), and the ASCSU.*

The context for the Chancellor's request for an intellectual rationale is situated in Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 73, passed by the legislature in 2001 (http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/01-02/bill/asm/ab_0051-

[0100/acr 73 bill 20010924 chaptered.pdf](#). ACR 73 calls for increasing the tenure density of the CSU to 75%, while having a student-to-faculty ratio of 18.0. In response to ACR 73, the CSU Office of the Chancellor developed a plan, jointly with the ASCSU and the California Faculty Association (CFA), to increase the percentage of tenure-track faculty over 8 years (http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Records/Reports/ACR73_07222002.pdf). The ASCSU has repeatedly and consistently called for rebuilding tenure density and has requested a renewed 10-year plan to increase the tenure density in the CSU, through resolution AS-3207-15/FA (Rev), in March of 2015 (<http://www.calstate.edu/acadsen/Records/Resolutions/2014-2015/documents/3207.pdf>). Chancellor White and others, however, have questioned the rationale for an aspirational goal of 75% tenure density, so his latest request for an intellectual argument in support of tenure density as a metric offers an important opportunity for the Tenure Density Task Force to address this issue and to make recommendations regarding medium- and long-range targets for tenure density along with suggestions for plans to improve it.

Tenure density is defined as the number of tenure track faculty (Full-Time Equivalent - FTE) divided by the total number of instructional faculty, and is usually expressed as a percentage. It is a relevant metric of what percentage of the faculty are permanent employees (in other words, on the tenure-track). It also gives an indication of how many students per tenure-track faculty member there are in the system, although a ratio of full-time equivalent students (FTES) to tenure-track faculty is a more direct measure of that. The decline in tenure-density over time has decreased the CSU's capacity to serve our students.

As it stands, the majority of our classes in the CSU system are taught by non-tenure track faculty. As a system, the CSU tenure density was at 55.4% in 2015, falling from 66.1% in 2009 (<https://www.csuchico.edu/ir/docs/pdf/CSU%20System%20Profile.pdf>). On some campuses, the tenure density is below 40%. The number of tenure track faculty (FTE) fell from 10,383.6 to 9952.8 during that time period. At the same time, the number of students (FTE) grew from 358,662 in 2009 to 405,928 in 2015. This means the number of students per tenure-track faculty member rose from 34.5 to 40.7 during that six-year period.

In presenting the argument sought by Chancellor White, the Tenure Density Task Force should articulate that tenure-track faculty are necessary for student learning in a university environment. It is tenure-track faculty that are primarily responsible for developing curricula and classes that incorporate High Impact Practices, such as student research. These practices are shown to improve student retention and learning, and are critical to closing the achievement gap. Tenure-track faculty are the most effective advisors of students, both academically and in terms of giving career advice to help students become successful. The relationship between tenure and academic freedom is well documented and widely accepted (<https://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>). For example, there is a well-

documented gap between the public and scientists' views on certain science topics (<http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/01/29/public-and-scientists-views-on-science-and-society/>). Tenure and the opportunity to pursue tenure allows faculty to discuss these topics freely, and the lack of it threatens our education system and society as a whole.

The importance of tenure-track faculty in the CSU has already been recognized by the California legislature, the CSU Chancellor, the Board of Trustees, and the ASCSU. High Impact Practices, including faculty-student research, faculty-student advising, and course development through redesign and new curricula, are critical to student success. This resolution points to the areas where tenure-track faculty are essential to the capacity of a campus, and offers advice for the Tenure Density Task Force to consider.

Approved Unanimously - January 26-27, 2017