MEMORANDUM
5/31/22

TO: Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
    Tom Gutierrez, Chair, Academic Senate
    Rachel Fernflores, Director, Semester Conversion

FROM: Academic Senate ad hoc Quarter to Semester Conversion Committee

COPIES: Cheryl May, Special Advisor to the Provost and EVP for Academic Affairs
        Sarah Best, Academic Support Coordinator, Academic Senate

SUBJECT: Recommendations for Strengthening the Teacher-Scholar Model at Cal Poly

When the Academic Senate ad hoc Quarter to Semester Conversion Committee was formed, it was charged with two secondary priorities: 1. Expected faculty workload in semesters and 2. Options for improved implementation of Teacher-Scholar Model in semesters. Since faculty workload is governed by the current Collective Bargaining Agreement and applies to both semester and quarter faculty assignments, the conversion from quarters to semesters will not result in a change in the bargained workload for Unit 3 faculty members. Yet the potential increase in the number of course preparations class enrollments would have a detrimental impact to Cal Poly’s commitment to the Teacher-Scholar Model.

Across the Cal State University system, different campuses have instituted programs to develop the Teacher-Scholar Model through direct support of faculty research. These include San Diego State University and San José State University, both of which have instituted workloads where faculty members receive three weighted teaching units (WTUs) for scholarship. This workload model of 9 WTUs for teaching, 3 WTUs for research, and 3 WTUs for service is being phased in at San José State University. According to San José State University’s “Faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA) Assigned Time Program,” once the program is fully implemented, “all probationary faculty will … have a maximum teaching load of 18 WTU per year” and “all RSCA productive faculty are at a maximum teaching load of 18 WTU per year.”

The committee recommends that Cal Poly adopt a similar model to ensure the ongoing development of the Teacher-Scholar Model. In particular, the committee recommends the following:

1. While maintaining or increasing tenure density, the establishment of a phased-in assigned time program in which all tenure-line faculty members receive, on an opt-in basis, 3 WTUs of support

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2 See “Resolution on Defining and Adopting the Teacher Scholar Model” (AS-725-11); available at https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1725&context=senateresolutions.
for research per academic term and maximum teaching load of 18 WTUs per academic year for five-year periods that can be renewed;

2. The establishment of reasonable college-specific methodologies for assessing research, scholarship, and creative activity (RSCA) proposals and deliverables;

3. That the RSCA assigned time program equitably include each of the academic colleges; and

4. That the RSCA assigned time be available for lecturer faculty members with active RSCA agendas.

As Cal Poly has repeatedly affirmed, faculty success is a necessary but not sufficient condition for student success. Maintaining an active scholarly agenda enriches the student learning experience in the classroom and throughout Cal Poly’s philosophy of Learn By Doing. As stated in Cal Poly’s “Resolution on Defining and Adopting the Teacher Scholar Model,” “Continued intellectual and professional growth of faculty, such as through RSCA, is central to providing a vibrant learning environment for students.” The Teacher-Scholar model enhances the preparation of our students to be leaders in advancing science, innovation, and discovery. Cal Poly’s ongoing commitment supporting faculty excellence in teaching and scholarship allows students to truly engage in Learn By Doing activities and enables them to be Ready Day One.

ATTACHMENT:
San José State University Research Plan
Resolution on Defining and Adopting the Teacher Scholar Model (AS-725-11)