

Question Time

New summer pay policy unveiled for Summer 2020 creates a faculty-specific minimum enrollment and requires that for a class to not be cancelled, it has to make 200% of the faculty member's salary. There are (at least) two general concerns:

--why is the university willing to turn down an opportunity to generate thousands of dollars in revenue (for the hypothetical cases where the class would make between 125-199%, that's still potentially thousands of dollars of revenue). For f2f classes, these are buildings that are already being air-conditioned and provided with lights, whether or not classes are taught there. For online classes, IT support would continue to be paid over the summer and fees to Blackboard would continue to be paid. Can you explain the logic of this?

--It's clear that the goal of the policy is to discourage the higher-paid (tenured or tenure-track) faculty teaching summer classes, while having lower paid contingent faculty offer them instead. Has any thought been given to the impact that this policy is going to have on students? So much has been made about cutting back on course releases and making sure that full time faculty teach more, so we as an institution do not rely on LTLs. But we want LTLs to teach in the summer? What about students who need to take summer classes? Why don't they deserve the opportunity to take classes from full time faculty? And since not all classes can be covered by LTLs, this policy will either result in a reduction of the diversity of courses being offered OR proliferation of exceptions being made. (The latter would lead to greater faculty wage inequity.) Focusing on student impact, there are categories of students who rely on summer classes. For example, 21st century scholars (i.e. a subset of first gen students) need to complete 30 credits each academic year. So if they can only handle 12 credits a semester, they will need summer classes. Reduction of options for summer classes unfairly disadvantages this category of students, and possibly others as well.

Can we have an explanation of why the university is moving forward with a policy that will have such detrimental consequences for students?

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