

Faculty Senate Resolution: A Response to the Pause

Whereas, on April 13, 2022, the Faculty Senate voted in approval of the Faculty Workload Task Force Recommendations of a 6-credit reduction in teaching load per year for full time faculty, enabling for a deeper, sustainable engagement with pedagogy, high-impact and student-centered practices, new and innovative curriculum, and activities that would positively impact recruitment and retention; and

Whereas, faculty with underrepresented identities, including BIPOC, API, LGBTQIA, and women faculty members, do additional under-recognized work, resulting in a disproportionate impact upon the workloads of these faculty members; and

Whereas, the reduction in teaching load could result in a need to hire additional faculty across campus, creating an exceptional opportunity to hire faculty with underrepresented identities and lead our faculty population closer to the demographic makeup of our student body; and

Whereas, the Faculty Senate passed the Workload Reduction Implementation Plans Resolution in response to the concerns of varying levels of invitation for engagement in the development of implementation plans, concerns about equity across departments and across colleges, the need for transparency in process, and the potential use of mechanisms such as increased class sizes, increased use of adjunct faculty, and reduction in reassigned time in order to offset the fiscal costs of implementing a reduction in teaching load; and

Whereas, the implementation of a teaching load reduction will affect teaching and learning across campus and therefore faculty need data related to proposed implementation- such as adjustments to course enrollment caps and increased proportions of sections taught by adjunct faculty- to safeguard the quality of the campus learning environment; and

Whereas, the Faculty Senate officially represents faculty members in all matters of interest and concern; therefore

Be it *Resolved*,

That as increasing additional teaching responsibilities and informal service have made it more difficult to meet students where they are in their “zig-zaggy lives” while providing student-centered, high-quality academic experiences, and that this difficulty is most likely to impact students from diverse backgrounds, the faculty have repeatedly voiced their desire for an adjustment to their workload and urge the Board of Trustees to seriously consider the Faculty Workload Taskforce Recommendations after due fiduciary diligence in alignment with Pillar II of the MSU Denver 2030 Strategic Plan to “empower our faculty to support our diverse students.”

That as articulated in the Faculty Workload Taskforce Recommendations, a reduction in teaching load should not be accompanied by a mandated increase in scholarship or service, so that faculty

have the time and energy to ensure a rigorous and enriching education through innovative pedagogy, distinct academic experiences, and student support through a reduction in teaching load as part of an overall reduction in workload.

That in addition to providing time to develop and oversee High Impact Practices such as internships, directing student research, independent studies, etc. in accordance with Goal 1 of Pillar I of the MSU Denver 2030 Strategic Plan, it is essential that faculty be compensated for over-load teaching and that compensation should be equitable and sustainable for all faculty.

That the analysis of the budgetary impacts of potential changes to faculty teaching load must be transparent and available to all stakeholders, especially as it relates to teaching and learning on campus such as enrollment caps and the proportion of sections taught by adjunct faculty.

That any decision to change the faculty teaching load must coincide with a detailed and comprehensive implementation plan which must be developed with faculty perspective and feedback, especially including viewpoints from faculty with underrepresented identities to address historic inequities in faculty workload.

That the development of any implementation plan that includes an increase in the number of full-time faculty be coordinated to support the increased diversity of faculty more in line with the demographics of our student population and in accordance with Goal 1 of Pillar IV of the MSU Denver 2030 Strategic Plan.

That the Faculty Senate should be regularly updated on the continuing discussion and that implementation plans addressing faculty workload should be presented to that body for a vote of affirmation or disconfirmation.

That to mitigate future breakdowns in the ideals of shared governance, changes must be made to high-level university structures to better include faculty in the decision-making process and improve communication between faculty, administrative units, and university Senior Leaders.

¹The Faculty Senate Executive Committee can act in the place of the Faculty Senate when not in session. Like the Teaching Load Proposal developed by the Faculty Welfare Committee in the Spring of 2020, the Faculty Senate Leadership can conduct a straw poll of the faculty senators to accurately represent faculty sentiment during the summer months.