

Questions about the Mission of CALS

1. Would it be possible to review faculty salaries based on years at UA, gender, other factors that affect salary and make adjustments from his office vs. individualized adjustments from us "based on our worth" or from competing offers? I would like to also specifically mention race and/or ethnicity as one of the factors that is a critical factor when considering reviews of salary equity across units, the University, and in comparison to equivalent workplaces.

Shane Burgess

Thanks for sending the question again as I didn't understand it the first time. I'll start with the following and you can send me a clarifying question if you want to at any time.

Equity: as I have discussed at many semi-annual reviews and discussed in public other times, at unit meetings at FC meetings and written about very many times I proactively instituted CALS and CES faculty salary equity reviews 7 (I think) years ago covering all federally protected classes for discrimination; as I have discussed also many times now, the UA in CY2019 disallowed me from doing this in future as it will be done centrally. I am checking to see that it is actually being done and if not I will request of the provost I be allowed to do it again this year. I am the only dean ever to have done this here at the UA and we're the model for the UA. We can demonstrate that there is no gender, or any other, discrimination in faculty pay in CALS and CES.

Other factors: all reviews include merit pay adjustments, retention agreements and any other personnel records that we have. Otherwise can you please detail what other factors you are concerned about?

Years at UA: I think you are referring to the nationwide public university faculty salary issue commonly known as "faculty salary compression". I take this issue very seriously, and I raised it many times and whenever I could in any UA strategic plan meeting I have been in since being here. I have asked UA Faculty senators to raise it to make it a strategic plan priority in every strategic plan I have been here for. When I ask the academic unit heads to rank it amongst all our competing priorities, they do not rank it as a highly as I do (we will rank again at the May Budget and Planning meeting). Regardless, my concern over faculty salary compression (since before I came here) is one of the reasons I implemented the CALS and CES merit faculty salary raise process immediately when I arrived. I have prioritized the process every year since (again discussed many times). The year's meritorious faculty (~20% across CALS and CES annually) are chosen by the unit heads, these are reviewed for equity and fairness by the ADs. I have overall oversight.

Mitigating faculty salary compression is also why I indexed all promotion raises to the CPI (again discussed many times). But I have no *direct* mechanism to deal with it. Again, I am the only dean ever to have done this here at the UA.

2. I know there are current efforts to begin to address the issue, but can you provide your view of broad differences across units and positions in teaching loads? Is there a way forward to make these more equal?

Shane Burgess

Firstly, I am extremely glad that you know of the current efforts (I have been working on this for over half a decade also); I hope all faculty in an units do.

I believe teaching loads should be equitable across the UA, not just in the CALS. It's also very important for this personnel issue to note the *difference between equal and equitable in workload assignments*, and also fairness. I have attached a document I find useful in this respect.

I cannot do anything about the UA directly. But I am very cognizant about this issue in CALS. When I arrived here I saw clear inequities and unfairness in teaching loads. Everyone should be aware by now that CALS has SHARED governance workload guidelines for teaching, research and CE.

Separately Mike Staten audits all TT and Non-TT teaching loads and contacts unit heads when he identifies discrepancies.

Regardless I cannot do anything about something that I don't know about so:

1. IF YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE BEING TREATED INEQUITABLY IN YOUR UNIT BASED ON TEACHING ASSIGNMENT CONTACT MIKE STATEN AND JEANNIE MCLAIN IMMEDIATELY. You will hear back from Jeannie immediately.
2. IF YOU BELIEVE SOMEONE ELSE IS BEING TREATED INEQUITABLY IN YOUR UNIT BASED ON TEACHING ASSIGNMENT CONTACT MIKE STATEN AND JEANNIE MCLAIN IMMEDIATELY. You will hear back from Jeannie immediately.
2. IF YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE, OR SOMEONE ELSE IS BEING TREATED **DISCRIMINATORILY** IN YOUR UNIT BASED ON TEACHING ASSIGNMENT, THEN YOU **MUST** CONTACT ME IMMEDIATELY. You can do this by email or phone and you can request a confidential in-person meeting or call with me.

Jean McLain

As you may be aware, an email came from Vice Provost Andrea Romero's office on Monday (12/2) announcing the formation of a salary taskforce – if you did not receive this email, please let me know and I will forward it to you. Since salary equity analyses are now moving out of CALS and to the University level, I will be signing on to this taskforce to give CALS a voice in this taskforce and to keep faculty apprised on what is going on. I encourage one or more of the Faculty Council to also sign on – this is voluntary but – as you state above, this is a truly important question, and the more input we can have, the better.

Please note that ALL SPECIFIC PERSONNEL COMMUNICATIONS ARE CONFIDENTIAL.

Mike Staten

First, we must remember that faculty are assigned a Teaching/Research/Service split in FTE each year (for many, the split remains unchanged for many years). So, an observation that some faculty, regardless of rank, teach more than others does not necessarily signal inequity in

workload. FTEs are not readily visible and a heavy or light load in a given semester or year may easily be explained by FTE, buyouts, work-ahead for sabbatical leaves, etc. Second, unit heads are empowered to make instructional workload adjustments based on a host of course considerations, including class size, graduate vs. undergraduate course, lab vs. lecture course, in-person vs. online sections, # of grad students being mentored during a year, etc. The CALS policy is that unit heads be transparent with their faculty in how these adjustments are made, and consistent in their application across faculty. Third, the CALS standard is still 1.0 instructional FTE = 6 three-credit course sections per contract year. We should not have units within CALS that expect more or fewer than 6 sections on a regular basis. Lastly, I completely agree with the three steps that Shane has outlined above if someone feels that there is inequitable treatment within their unit.

3. Laboratory courses are critical for the education mission across some units, but they are effectively discouraged by RCM because they often have relatively low enrollment. Is there a way at the level of CALS to promote, encourage and reward lab courses that overcomes this inherent RCM bias?

Shane Burgess

That is a good question and one I have never heard voiced before. It's one for Mike Staten. But before Mike does answer, I am not sure how, exactly, RCM biases against laboratory courses. Can you please contact Mike and work with him on this issue?

Mike Staten

I'm also not sure what the question has in mind. But I can offer the following general observations: 1) Lab courses are almost always fundamental courses within specific majors, or serve as such for majors in other units or colleges. These need to be offered as part of the respective degrees' core requirements. As such, there is no RCM bias against them as RCM rewards units for increasing their number of majors. Some degrees may be more expensive to offer than others (in part because of the lab requirements) but RCM doesn't inherently disadvantage those majors relative to others. And differential tuition and/or program fees are always available tools to help recover some of those higher costs outside of RCM; 2) CALS specifically incentivizes the offering of two kinds of lab courses by covering the cost of 1/4 time TA slots for the lab sections of Microbiology (MIC) and also by covering lab sections of courses that have a "service" component to other units within and outside of CALS (e.g., MCB 181).

4. Much recent research has shown that students learn and retain more when instructors take the effort and initiative to "modernize" their teaching by having more interactive discussions or activities (etc.) Is there a way that CALS can promote such efforts given that they may actually make TCE scores and student evaluations worse?

Shane Burgess

Another great question with two issues.

The first, “how” to teach is a FACULTY Governance issue and as such in CALS, it’s one for the Cardon Academy for Teaching Excellence (with FC oversight). I have cc’d current CATE Chair.

Matt Mars

CATE is actively exploring new opportunities to further promote and support instructional excellence and innovation across all CALS departments and at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Our immediate aim is to further introduce faculty to leading edge approaches, models, and skills and supporting their adoption of said innovations. This assessment of student learning via such innovation is a vital element of such professional development efforts. This does not directly account for the TCE issue Dave raises and which Jeannie addresses below. However, it is consistent with CATE’s commitment to excellence in teaching. In short, yes. CATE is committed to and active in promoting instructional innovation (i.e. ”modernization”) across the college. Dave, the invitation I sent to you on November 9th to attend an upcoming CATE meeting remains open.

Shane Burgess

The second is about TCE. There is a surfeit of research on how bad TCEs are and how they are even outright discriminatory. From where I sit, I have seen TCEs provide useful insight ONCE ever in 17 years in US higher education and even then, there was much other data showing a problem, the issues were extreme and it was too little too late.

Jean McLain

I have been appointed to a taskforce that will examine the use of TCEs at the U of Arizona – and to develop more relevant TCEs. Universities all over the country, recognizing that TCEs are biased and not meaningful, are moving away from the “checkbox” TCEs that we use now and more towards learning-based TCEs – meaning, were the course objectives realized? Did the students actually achieve the learning outcomes? As you can imagine, this is a complex process, but other Universities are developing rubrics that are being put into place. I am heading this taskforce with another professor from the Office of Instructional Assessment – we are assembling a committee with teaching representatives from all Colleges. I will provide Shane with updates for his State of the College Presentations in 2020. This process will take some time – the issues with TCEs have been long-recognized and it will take some time to develop something meaningful. But we ARE working on it!