

*Draft Faculty Senate Resolution*

WHEREAS Educational Policy Committee, in its memorandum to Steering Committee dated April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, outlines Faculty concerns about the impact of potential budget cuts on academic programs and on the quality of education that we offer our students,

be it RESOLVED that Faculty Senate, as stated in this memorandum:

- 1) Calls on OAA to proactively communicate to all Portland State faculty, before spring term ends and nine-month faculty go off contract, how it intends to make programmatic restructuring decisions;
- 2) Expects that the principles proposed there will govern decision making around educational policy at PSU;
- 3) Maintains that making decisions affecting programs over the summer would violate PSU's shared governance values and is not reflective of PSU's stated mission.

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**To: Faculty Senate Steering Committee**

From: Education Policy Committee

Date: April 16, 2020 [submitted May 14, 2020]

**RE: Budget Cuts and Education Policy**

Faculty are deeply concerned not only about the impact of budget cuts on programs and on the quality of education that we offer our students and on how these decisions are being made. Budget decisions are education policy decisions – they cannot be made independently of considerations about our ability to deliver high quality programs. Faculty need to be actively involved in all stages of the decision-making process.

While much of the current fiscal uncertainty results from factors beyond anyone's control, we have a choice as an institution as to how we will respond to it. The lack of transparency and dialogue regarding the steps and procedures that the administration is using for decision-making is an additional, avoidable source of anxiety. For this reason, we ask OAA to proactively communicate to all Portland State faculty, before spring term ends and nine-month faculty go off contract, how it intends to make programmatic restructuring decisions.

This includes scenarios for both reorganization and for possible cuts.

Art. 22 Section 3(e) of the contract states:

In reaching a decision whether to declare a condition of financial exigency or a condition requiring departmental reduction or elimination, the President will consider, among other matters, institutional guidelines concerning the mission and educational development of the institution; departmental effectiveness and productivity; enrollment historical, current and projected; the state of development of departments; the balance between academic

personnel and other elements of the budget; the dependence of other departments in the University on the department proposed for reduction or elimination; and the availability of similar programs and services elsewhere in the community.

The EPC also proposes the following principles to guide decision making surrounding Education Policy at Portland State:

- 1) Faculty want to be actively involved in shaping the future of PSU. Decisions to eliminate or to alter units or programs must be made according to principles of shared governance, with the understanding that faculty are often best positioned to understand our programs and the needs of our students.
- 2) Decisions responding to short-term needs should not be allowed to undermine the long-term viability of our institution. In particular, not hiring faculty to vacated positions is not a strategy for balancing budgets, but rather a choice to not make decisions strategically.
- 3) Diversity and inclusion are at the core of Portland State University's Mission and Values. We cannot allow decisions – or the failure to make decisions – to undermine our ability to exemplify these values through our programs, teaching, and research.
- 4) We need to recognize how not providing resources to retain people, fund graduate student, maintain library materials and databases, support labs, etc., often results in not being able to effectively achieve our academic mission as a University.
- 5) Decisions should be made in accordance with Faculty Senate Budget Committee [FY 18 Budget Principles](#).

Finally, we ask that the administration engage faculty proactively and in a timely manner during spring term in decisions affecting programs so that shared governance principles are honored. Making decisions affecting programs over the summer would violate PSU's shared governance values and is not reflective of PSU's stated mission.