

Office of the Faculty Senate (OAA)
 Portland State University
 P.O. Box 751
 Portland, OR 97207-0751



To: Susan Jeffords, Provost
 From: Richard Beyler, Secretary to the Faculty
 Date: 24 January 2023
 Re: Question to Administrators

Faculty Senator Ruth and Ex-Officio Member Chivers have submitted the following question to the Provost as a Question to Administrators for the next Faculty Senate meeting on February 6th:

Question to Provost Susan Jeffords

Contact time between faculty and students is an empirical way in which to measure the effectiveness of our teaching and instruction. Research shows that contact time is a significant predictor of retention and graduation. In the department of urban studies and planning there are 15 full-time faculty and 45 part-time faculty. Part-time faculty members are not able to work more than .5 FTE and do not have access to health care or other benefits. Last senate, we learned about a program based on the importance of faculty-student contact that requires volunteer labor to succeed. A question about labor was referred to people above the paygrade of the speaker, presumably then to Provost Jeffords. Provost Jeffords, is it the expectation of administration that full-time faculty in this unit will mentor black, indigenous, and other students of color for free in order to meet the Provost / OAA's retention goals? Indeed, as of the latest data (Fall 2021) for PSU as a whole, there were 843 full-time faculty and 785 part-time faculty without healthcare or other benefits. As the university has grown its reliance on part-time faculty over the years, the service work for full-time faculty has grown proportionally, do you believe it is fair to ask for volunteer labor and to pin the success of an important mentorship program to retain students from marginalized communities to volunteer labor under these circumstances?

Per the Senate Bylaws, this will appear on the agenda for the February 6th meeting in section F. Please let the Presiding Officer or me know if you have any questions.