

Note from Secretary: At the February 6th meeting there was a Question to Administrators, including follow-up questions, to which the Provost responded verbally. This written response was, additionally, received after the meeting.


Office of Academic Affairs

Post Office Box 751 503-725-3422 tel
Portland, Oregon 97207-0751 503-725-5262 fax



Date: February 14, 2023

To: Richard Beyler, Secretary to the Faculty

From: Susan Jeffords, Provost and VP of Academic Affairs 

Subject: Question to Administrators - Provost Response

Thank you for this question. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify the request sent to PSU faculty and staff from Global Diversity and Inclusion regarding the employee mentor program for BIPOC students. As we seek to increase student persistence and graduation, we want to ensure that we consider multiple avenues to support students.

First, let me clarify a few points.

- This invitation was shared with PSU faculty AND staff in order to expand opportunities for students—particularly BIPOC students—to become more engaged with PSU and for them to benefit from the experiences of PSU staff and faculty through mentoring opportunities.
- This invitation was just that—a request—and not a requirement. Many staff, in particular, have expressed a desire to have opportunities to engage with students in supporting student learning journeys. To date, several dozen people have signed up for this program, reflecting an interest by members of the PSU community.
- We recognize that many do not have the time to participate. This is ok. No one should feel pressured to participate.
- We will seek ongoing feedback from participants—both mentors and mentees—so that we can assess the impact of these efforts.

The question also asked whether those teaching part- me would be expected to serve as mentors. The intention of this program is to allow PSU employees, either as part of their service commitments or with the approval of their supervisors, to include this in their effort. We acknowledge the concerns regarding part- me faculty expressed in the question. Broader conversations relating to contingent faculty would require a more comprehensive discussion at the institutional level among stakeholders. We look forward to having these conversations.

CC: Rowanna Carpenter, Faculty Senate Presiding Officer