

Faculty Senate Follow-up: Scholarly Excellence, Workload, and Budget Constraints

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Dear Colleagues,

I have heard from many of you since my presentation at December's Faculty Senate meeting. As a reminder for all, especially those unable to attend, you may access a copy of my presentation slides [here](#). I appreciate all who have reached out with support for what I proposed. In addition, I also appreciate those who have reached out with concerns, and I am sensitive to the anxieties about changes to the assignment of faculty workload next academic year.

My main purpose for writing this communication is to announce an open forum where I can address faculty questions and concerns. Before getting to the details of the open forum, I want to reiterate a point that I have made to those who have reached out to me on this topic. As I have always done, I will follow the Faculty Manual. Section III.G of the faculty manual notes that teaching assignments are set by the Department Chairperson, subject to review by their Dean. This will, of course, continue to be the case.

The town hall on faculty workload will take place **February 8 from 3:30-5:00 pm**. I only had a limited amount of time at December's Faculty Senate meeting, and I covered multiple topics. Thus, the goal of this open forum will be to focus solely on faculty workload assignment. I will provide a brief summary of the remarks I made in December, and then spend the remainder of the time answering faculty questions and addressing concerns about changes to the faculty workload assignment process.

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee has offered to gather your questions and feedback ahead of the meeting, and organize those so we can make the best use of our time together. You can submit your questions using [this feedback form](#) (you must be signed into your Google account through My SLU to access the form). The feedback form will remain open through end-of-day January 27th. This will give the Faculty Senate Executive Committee time to curate the questions, and me time to provide thoughtful answers (in addition to prepared answers, I intend to take follow-up questions during the town hall). We will answer as many questions as possible. The feedback will be valuable in determining the best path forward. A link to the meeting will be shared closer to February 8th.

I have spoken to the Deans, and each school/college will delay finalizing faculty workload assignments for the next academic year until at least the end of March 2021.

While I cannot thank you and your faculty colleagues enough for all the hard work that made this past semester so successful, I will do what I can to show my appreciation and respect for your commitment to SLU. It is in the spirit of protecting and advancing that shared commitment that I offered my Faculty Senate presentation. I look forward to addressing these challenges -- together -- in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Mike Lewis, Ph.D.
Interim Provost