

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSE, CA 95192

SS-S14-1, Sense of the Senate Resolution, Concerning the Need to Continue to Increase the Proportion of Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty at San José State University

Legislative History: At its meeting of February 10, 2014, the Academic Senate approved the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Senator Peter for the Professional Standards Committee.

SENSE OF THE SENATE RESOLUTION
Concerning the Need to Continue to Increase the Proportion of Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty at San José State University

- Resolved: The Academic Senate of SJSU urges that San José State University prioritize the hiring of permanent faculty until the total number of permanent faculty at SJSU returns to the pre-recession level of 650 (currently 596), and that it continue to invest in building our permanent ratio from 52% to more closely approach the current CSU average of 62% and the goal set for us by the Legislature of 75%; be it further
- Resolved: That the effort to increase the proportion of permanent faculty at SJSU be aided by encouraging departments to make more vigorous efforts to include our existing temporary faculty in the applicant pools for tenure-track positions and to give them full and fair consideration when they do apply; be it further
- Resolved: That the Academic Senate of SJSU recommends increasing the proportion of permanent faculty with an understanding and appreciation of budgetary constraints as discussed in the rationale of this document; be it further
- Resolved: The Academic Senate of SJSU strongly endorses the resolution AS-3142-13/FA “Addressing the Urgent Need for New Tenure Line Faculty in the California State University (CSU)” and urges that the Chancellor and the Board take action to assist campuses in our effort to rebuild our faculty after more than a decade of crippling erosion; be it further
- Resolved: That the Academic Senate of SJSU urge that Chancellor White and the Board give particular attention to the problems of hiring and retaining

Rationale:

While all faculty share the responsibility for teaching our students, permanent faculty—as part of their academic assignment--have the responsibility for carrying out most of the other academic functions of a university. These include shared governance, advising, mentoring and student outreach, curricular and pedagogical innovation, accreditation functions, Chairing departments, providing pools of candidates for administrative leadership, and countless other critical functions.

Some temporary faculty also make important contributions in these venues. This is especially true with regard to a small number of long serving full-time temporary faculty, who constitute some two dozen of the 980 temporary faculty by headcount. It is also true with regard to temporary faculty with specialized appointments that include advising responsibilities. But these situations are not typical of the appointments of temporary faculty, and the reliable and effective execution of a university's service functions depends on the stability and institutional memory of a substantial base of permanent faculty.

Unfortunately, the proportion of permanent tenured and tenure-track faculty at SJSU has fallen precipitously over the last ten years, although there was some progress toward recovery in AY 2012.

At SJSU, the percentage of tenured and tenure track FTEF to overall FTEF fell from 62% in AY 2003/04 to 51% in AY 2011/12. [See raw data from Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics at <http://iea.sjsu.edu/Faculty/> .] This decline came on top of an early decline in the 1990s which had already undermined the targeted 80/20 ratio of permanent to temporary faculty. This slide was reversed in 2012 as we climbed back to 55%, but Fall 2013 has seen a significant 3 point decline to lower us again to 52%.

Not all of the decline in permanent faculty at SJSU can be attributed to the recent budgetary downturn. From 2003 to 2008 permanent faculty at SJSU fell from 63% to 55%. Given the turbulent budgetary climate in which the CSU has operated in the last few years, however, a better measure of our faculty hiring woes might be the total headcount of tenure/tenure track faculty. There the numbers did not plummet until AY 2009 and AY 2010, as uncertainty about the budget virtually paralyzed permanent faculty hiring. Unfortunately, these losses have not been replaced despite modest hiring in recent years, and SJSU is still down from 682 to 596.

Today, SJSU lags 6-10 points behind the rest of the campuses of the CSU in the percentage of permanent faculty, depending on the data set. [Provided by the CSU: Faculty Employment Trends (FTEF and Tenure Density), Fall 2007-2012.]

SJSU faces a number of critical challenges in the immediate future, and every one of these challenges will demand a large, committed, energetic core of faculty who will enlist themselves in the effort to create long term solutions.

Student retention and graduation rates have been identified as a major area where SJSU needs to improve. It will be difficult to make progress without a larger pool of permanent faculty to do the work of advising.

Most of the work of curricula revision and critical committee work is born by permanent faculty. A dwindling pool of overworked tenured faculty cannot keep up with the needed changes required to create and revamp our programs to fit new demands.

Newly hired permanent faculty are most apt to invest their efforts in pedagogical innovation. Overworked senior faculty cannot by themselves transform our teaching to keep up with rapidly changing technologies.

Our university needs modernization in many dimensions, but the necessary policy reforms can only take place when we can deploy fully staffed, energetic committees. Without sufficient permanent faculty, reforms will likely languish.

The Academic Senate of SJSU is pleased that our concern over the shrinking proportion of permanent faculty is widely shared by the CSU, CFA, ASCSU, and the Legislature. In September 2001 the Legislature adopted ACR 73 which urged the CSU to "Raise the percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty to at least 75 percent." In response to this resolution, the CSU, CFA, and ASCSU jointly issued a plan in July of 2002 "to increase this proportion to 75 percent over an eight-year period." [Office of the Chancellor, Academic Senate CSU, California Faculty Association, *Response to ACR 73: A Plan to Increase the Percentage of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty in the California State University*, (July 2002.)] Unfortunately, at the end of this 8 year period set by the plan the ratio at SJSU had not improved to 75%, but had deteriorated further to 54%.

We are also pleased that the ASCSU has recently renewed its concern over faculty hiring (AS-3142-13/FA "Addressing the Urgent Need for New Tenure Line Faculty in the California State University (CSU)". We share the concern with the ASCSU that the proportion of permanent faculty has fallen to a system-low of 62%, a level so low that the ASCSU calls the hiring of more permanent faculty an "urgent" need. While 62% may constitute an "urgent" need, here at SJSU we operate a further ten points below that low level.

Hiring additional permanent faculty at SJSU will require that funding be found to enhance the recruitment process. To paraphrase the 2002 report, we must broaden our success at the top of the pool

interact with our students. This requires that we bring excellent candidates to our campus—and few if any of our departments have their own sources of funds to pay for travel for the interview process. SJSU should search for funds to support the expenses of faculty searches.

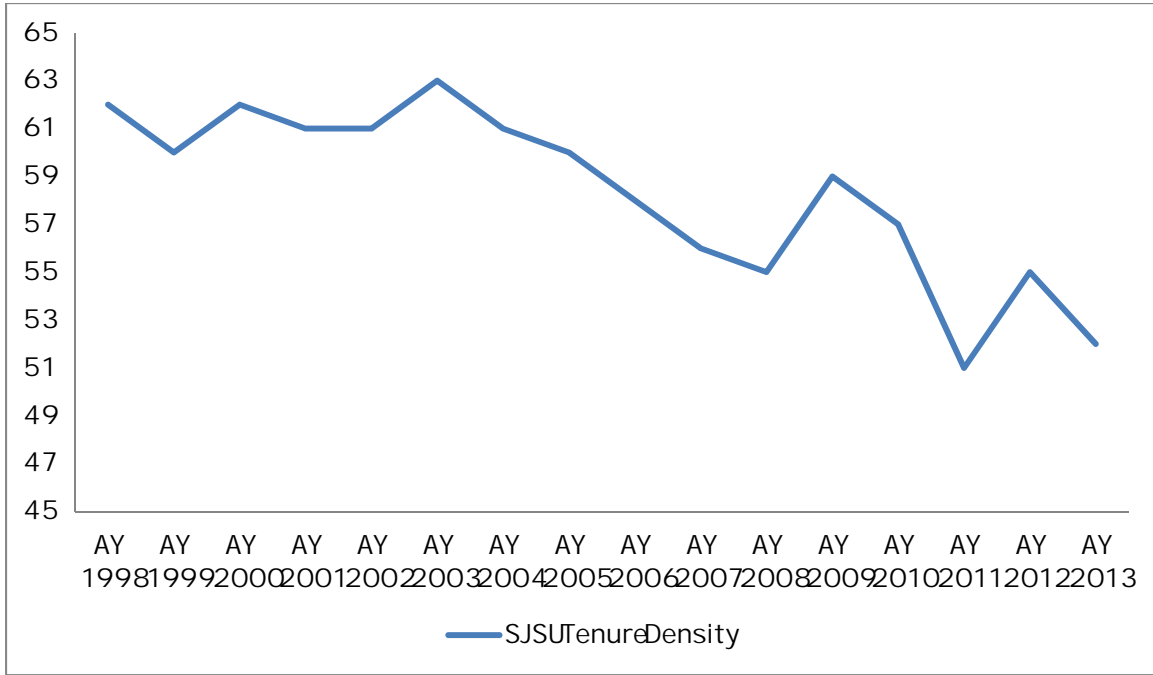
SJSU also faces a very difficult barrier to hiring that some other campuses in the CSU do not face: a disproportionately high regional cost-of-living. In certain disciplines in particular, our beginning salaries are woefully inadequate to attract the top candidates—sometimes falling below the salaries earned by the students graduating from these same programs in their first year out. In some cases our salaries lag those offered by the wealthier local community college districts in the region, and even fall behind some local K-12 salaries. Many disciplines also face intense competition with area business and industry. To make matters worse, high workload and low salaries create an ongoing retention problem in many of our disciplines. If there is one thing worse than not being able to recruit a top faculty member, it is successfully recruiting one only to lose her after investing heavily in her recruitment and development.

To correct the problem of our very high regional cost of living, the CSU needs some way of creating regional cost-of-living adjustments or housing subsidies—particularly targeted toward junior faculty who are starting out at the most expensive campuses. In addition, SJSU should study the methods used by other campuses in the CSU (San Francisco State, San Diego State, etc.) who share these problems to see if any of them have found creative ways of assisting young faculty, through higher salaries or housing subsidies.

As we recommend an increase in the proportion of our permanent faculty at SJSU, we are mindful of the current unsupportive budgetary climate. The serious erosion in state support for the CSU over the last decade forced campuses to choose between ugly alternatives. Some campuses dealt with their resource starvation by inflating class sizes and increasing the Student to Faculty Ratio (SFR). For some years, San José State increased its SFR only modestly and instead chose the alternative of replacing more expensive senior faculty with less expensive temporary faculty. But this trend ended two years ago. Our SFR has increased markedly in the last two years. Overall, in ten years it has soared from 19.7 to 24.0—which represents a 22% increase in the size of classes overall. So at this moment SJSU has achieved the “worst of both worlds,” with an increased SFR and a decreasing proportion of permanent faculty.

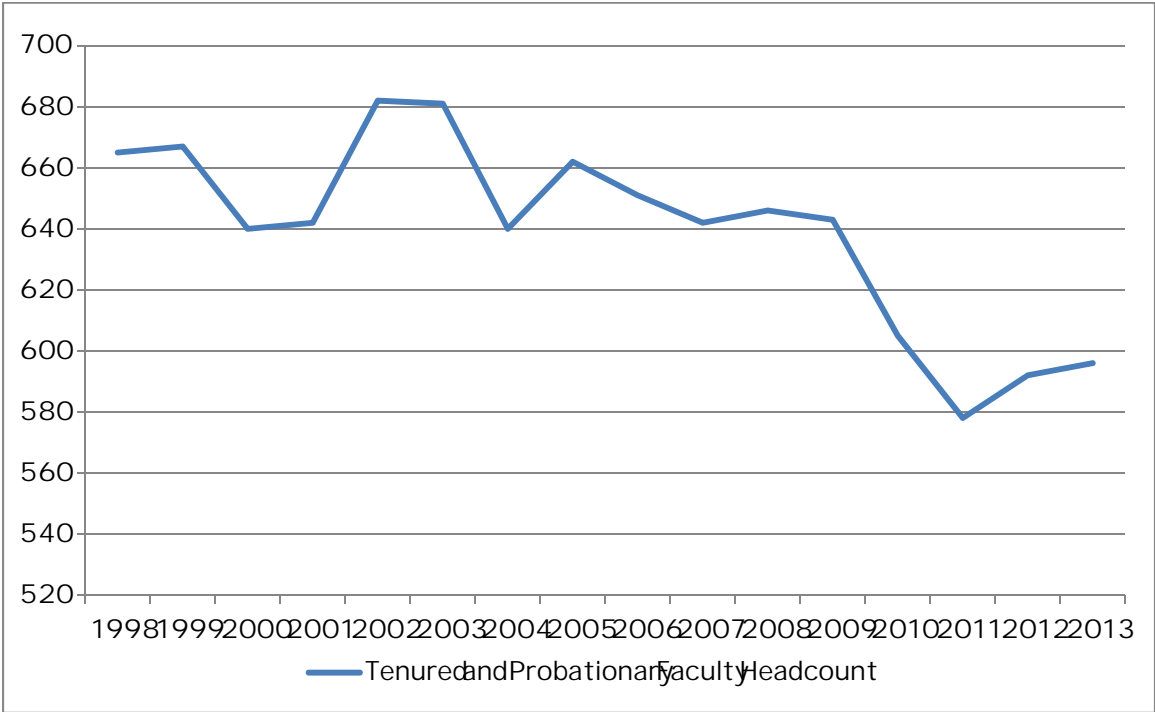
The ideal method to correct the problem would be to apply new resources and realign strategic priorities to hire permanent faculty and lower the student/faculty ratio, and SJSU should certainly do this whenever possible. The University’s highest priority

SJSU “Tenure Density” Over Time²



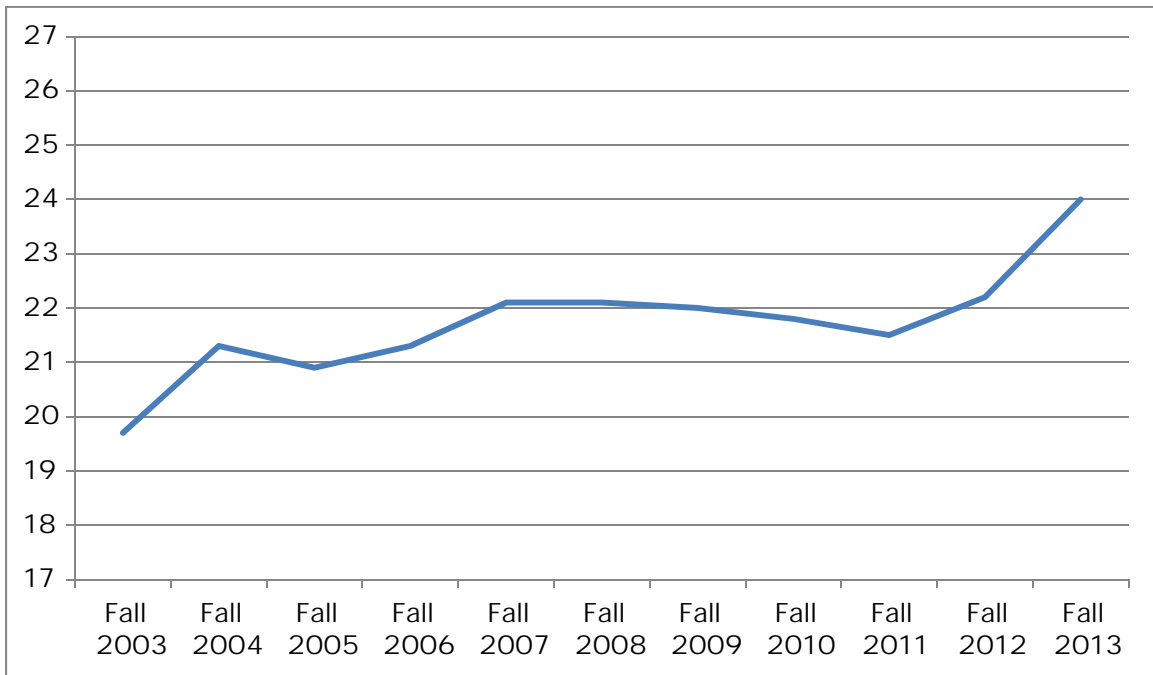
² Raw data from Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics at <http://iea.sjsu.edu/Faculty/> . There are two sets of statistics kept: “All Faculty” and “Instructional Faculty.” Unfortunately, the way the data is collected for “Instructional Faculty” was changed in 2013, rendering comparisons with prior years questionable. The statistics reported for this chart are for “all faculty.” In general, the “Instructional Faculty” ratios are lower than the “All Faculty” numbers. For example, in Fall 2013 47% of our “I

SJSU Permanent Faculty Headcount)⁵



⁵ Raw data from Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics at <http://iea.sjsu.edu/Faculty/> .

SJSU Student/Faculty Ratio (SFR)⁶



⁶ Raw data from Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics at <http://iea.sjsu.edu/Faculty/> .