



October 22, 2020

To: Jason Stajich, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Katherine Kinney, Chair 
Committee on Planning and Budget

RE: Proposed Curtailment Program

The Committee on Planning and Budget discussed President Drake's Proposed Curtailment program at our regular meeting on October 20.

The Committee agrees with President Drake that the "scope and scale" of the financial challenges makes short-term reduction in payroll costs a potentially useful and perhaps necessary response, especially if it relieves pressure to reduce faculty and staff lines through attrition and layoffs.

The time period for review did not allow us to come to consensus on all issues, so we offer the following questions and concerns:

- 1) Is an actual curtailment being proposed, or is this a furlough by another name? If so, why? According to the proposal, curtailment refers to a period of leave without pay in which operations and thus work are greatly reduced. We ask for clarification on the degree to which work as well as pay will be curtailed.
- 2) We suggest the proposal include metrics be put into place to track the losses incurred as a result of curtailment. For faculty this could include: diminished research and publication productivity, decreased contact and instructional time for students, diminished university and professional service, loss of time for writing grant proposals, etc.

- 3) The question of applying curtailment to instructional days is a complex one, which elicited different responses from the members of the committee. One group believes that there needs to be realistic commitment to applying curtailment to instructional days if, as seems very likely, the workload of teaching faculty, especially lecturers and adjunct faculty, will almost certainly increase. Cancelling even one day of instruction would be a recognition of the seriousness of this step. More importantly, a reduction of instructional days is not the only negative impact, nor necessarily the most serious one, students will experience. Other members see instruction as the faculty's primary responsibility, which should be protected as long as possible. There is also the danger that applying curtailment to instruction days would start a downward spiral: students may request refunds on tuition; Sacramento would have to cut budgets even deeper, and so on.
- 4) The majority of the committee supports the proposal's tiered approach. A minority expressed the concern that a tiered approach could be misused to open a pathway for targeting faculty selectively based on other metrics and other measures. From this perspective, it is suggested that curtailment should be applied equally across the board so that no one or no group can be selectively targeted. Other members believed that the tiered approach should be strengthened. Faculty do not accrue vacation time and so cannot use it to mitigate impact at any salary range. Therefore, should junior faculty be exempt, or placed in a separate "tier" given their greater vulnerability to an interruption of their career trajectory? How will lecturers and adjunct faculty be affected?
- 5) The proposal emphasizes flexibility, requiring every campus to institute five additional curtailment days with the option of designating more. Policy guidance on how and when curtailment days will be created will guarantee employees and units can prepare for the reductions. We are most concerned that no endpoint for the program is defined in the proposal. Flexibility is one thing, but an open-ended ability to increase the number of curtailment days is difficult to support. We recommend including a sunset date for the program that would require new action to extend curtailment beyond a specific point in time.