



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

College of Agriculture
& Life Sciences

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Dear Joel and Scott,

I am writing to you, with respect to your representative leadership roles in CALS, about a teaching issue that has been concerning me for some time and has come up on at least five different occasions in the last week alone.

Under RCM, college operational base budgets (OBB) are highly influenced by SCH and not number of courses taught by a college *per se*. Within the college, where RCM is not applied directly, the academic unit OBB are nevertheless highly influenced by SCH; this is made transparent via the *Documentation for CALS RCM Tool* to which everyone has access. (Again this does not recognize the number of courses taught *per se*.) In CALS, because we report to the feds we use an FTE distribution model of faculty workload assignment and this makes the first step of quantifying equity of contribution easier to measure and recognize than using other systems. I am worried, however, that we are both disincentivizing faculty and creating an inequitable situation that will lead to even more inequities. I am also concerned that it could collapse our budget model—unless we implement subsidies, which will appear superficially to be arbitrary. This last issue is not consistent with our goal of transparency. Instead of fixing the issue we will simply put a metaphorical accounting Band-Aid on it.

The problem I see is that currently every credit hour taught is equivalent to 5% teaching FTE but this doesn't take into account class size, which is also a proportional contribution to the college and unit OBBs. It also means that if we are paying a temporary person, say, \$5,000 per class it doesn't matter if that class has 10 students in it or 1,000. Is it equitable that we pay people the same amount regardless of class size?

It isn't just a case of numbers but one of different methodology. We may have a similar issue for summer/winter teaching and I think we will see the same issue, perhaps even magnified exponentially, for online courses and/or degrees. Certainly the *Documentation for CALS RCM Tool* absolutely accounts for SCH contribution at the academic unit level and provides a transparent mechanism to move money equitably to the units. The problem is at the faculty and unit level and this should be resolved by both the unit heads, within their delegated authority, and the faculty, with their shared governance obligations.

I'd like to ask you both, working together, to first let me know by email if you believe this a real issue today or will be in the future. If it is a real issue, then I request that within your respective groups you advise me, the AD CAS and the AD Finance and Administration on what the optimal solutions could be for unit heads and for faculty. If your two groups come to a consensus, I am happy to receive a single document from you both together. Everyone is extremely busy, so it may be much easier for you to provide us with separate documents (cc'd to each other). I would like to have your final input to me by COB December 15 please so that we can implement budget changes next semester.

Best regards, 

CC. Joy Winzerling, Mike Staten, Jeffrey Ratje