



Dear Faculty and Staff,

As the fall semester nears its end, many of you are grading final exams and papers. As I was heading back to my office one evening, I passed an instructor walking with a gaggle of students. “No, I didn’t give an F,” explained the faculty member, “because giving an F is like punching someone in the gut.” He aptly summarized what many of us already know, that giving a grade is never a simple summary of a student’s coursework. It holds meaning far beyond the letter, and how grades land should not be taken lightly. Faculty with this kind of knowing is what makes this campus so special. Realizing the power and purpose of grades as not just an evaluation of work done, but also as an impetus to inspire students in future work, can be a challenging balancing act. I say all this to underscore the importance of creating an environment that advances student success even as we evaluate whether students have succeeded in our courses. On this eve of winter break, I additionally remind all of us to rest and rejuvenate in the coming weeks so we can greet students in the spring with our best selves. I realize we have endured a succession of trying semesters. Yet, I have more powerfully witnessed a resilient campus community that has come together to overcome tremendous challenges.

This past week was particularly difficult with news we shared at [University Budget Committee](#). With significantly fewer students, we now face the challenge of having a tenure density well above the CSU average of 54%, which makes the cost of instruction financially unsustainable. Our university this past fall sat at 70% tenure density with some individual departments having 100% tenure density. Thus, we have initiated VSIP to encourage faculty to voluntarily separate in departments with more than 65% tenure density in hopes of minimizing any future layoffs. As we roll out an ambitious [Voluntary Separation Incentive Program](#), let us remember that we must simultaneously redesign our university. This includes 1) building relevant curriculum that responds to workforce need and 2) remaking ourselves within a financially sustainable workload. Departments must work hard to create curriculum that can be taught with available faculty as funding for lecturer-faculty will remain limited and be allocated based on significant demand.

With the decrease in tenure density, we will continue to engage in shared governance as we rebalance work assignments by transitioning to a 12 WTU (typically 4-4) teaching load for tenured faculty by Spring 2027. Assigned time for research and creative activity will still be available pending the budget. We will be working with Senate to study sibling campuses and determine what the award process for assigned time for RSCA might look like. As unsettling as this may sound, I assure you that many faculty at other CSU campuses have long been engaging in this process and are still engaged in robust research and creative activity. In fact, San Diego State University which many of us may have assumed was on an automatic 9-unit teaching load evaluates RSCA activity of faculty before granting release from a class. I have attached a document that outlines the evolving nature of work in the coming semesters for our campus.

We are at a pivotal moment in higher education and at SFSU. We need to revise and reimagine all we do in ways that will help us recruit, retain, and graduate students. We will remain an engine of educational equity and upward mobility by working together to create the change necessary to ensure our sustainability.

In community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Sueyoshi', written in a cursive style.

Amy Sueyoshi  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



**SAN FRANCISCO  
STATE UNIVERSITY**