

February 18, 2021

President Thomas Newsom,

*Southeastern Oklahoma State University has developed a well-earned reputation as Oklahoma's premiere regional university in the way it supports and pays its faculty and staff.*

This declaration has been promoted by the President as a worthy goal for our University. We agree.

In pursuit of this “worthy goal,” and in the spirit of a collaborative and intentional partnership to build a realistic budget, the Faculty Senate requests that the following expectations be established as axiomatic for all future budgets:

1. That the University “pay itself first.” By this, we mean that it should be an assumption of every annual budget that faculty & staff salaries, including step increases and any future cost of living adjustments, be treated like mandatory costs – something to be paid first, not paid out of any funds left over at the end of the process.
2. That the goal of improving faculty & staff salaries to match a regional metric, to be agreed upon by the administration and the Faculty Senate, be established and published.
3. That during every budget year, if these salary metrics cannot be met, the administration explain why they could not be met.
4. That faculty be actively included in the annual budgetary process.
5. That the administration makes all relevant budgetary documents easily available to the faculty & staff at large.

As a first step, and as a show of good faith in this collaborative and intentional partnership, we also request that the administration build into

the next budget, at a minimum, the three years of skipped step increases totaling \$1,638 (as proposed by the Senate in December).

We look forward to working with the administration on future budgets for the benefit of our university and our students.

Respectfully submitted,

Fendrich R. Clark  
Chair, Faculty Senate