



Digest

CONSULTATION

Date: November 12, 2008

Title: Faculty Obligation Number

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Issue

This digest reports to the Consultation Council regarding recent actions by the Board of Governor's related to the Faculty Obligation Number (FON). In particular, it brings to the Council's attention the desire of the Board to establish a working group to review how the FON is calculated and whether it is serving its intended purpose.

Background

The California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 51025 requires community college districts to increase their base number of full-time faculty over the prior year in proportion to the amount of growth in credit funded full-time equivalent students (FTES) if the Board of Governors determines that adequate funds have been provided to support implementation of adjustments to full-time faculty hiring obligations.

At its November 3, 2008 meeting, the Board of Governors determined that funds provided in the *2008-09 Budget Act* were inadequate to implement the growth increment of full-time faculty obligation for Fall 2009. Therefore, in accordance with Title 5, section 51025 (c)(7), the Fall 2008 final obligation will continue as the obligation for Fall 2009.

During its deliberations over whether an increase in the FON for fall 2009 was adequately funded in the State Budget, numerous issues and concerns were raised. Issues and questions raised included:

- 1) Why is the FON process not leading to progress toward the 75 percent goal?
- 2) What does recent research tell us about the optimal balance of full-time and part-time faculty?
- 3) Does the current calculation appropriately measure all funding sources?
- 4) How should FTES growth that is funded at a reduced rate be treated in FON calculations?
- 5) Is there a better way to implement this requirement?
- 6) Should calculations be modified for small districts or other districts with unique characteristics?
- 7) What would be the systemwide cost of meeting the 75 percent goal?

Following these deliberations, the Board asked staff to develop a proposal that would define the scope and process for such a working group. The Board asked to see such a proposal at its next Board meeting.