**Note: currently at 4 ½ pages, page goal is 2 to 3**

**Standard Six – Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship**

**Faculty and Academic Staff**

6.1) Well-qualified instructional faculty (Faculty) and administrative faculty are the core of student success at CCSU. They are provided with ample support, governing structures, and processes to carry out the University’s mission through teaching, student support, and professional development. CCSU’s full-time, tenured/tenure track Faculty structure includes ranks of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor as defined by [CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement](https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/2021-2025%20AAUP%20Contract.pdf) (CBA). The CBA also covers part-time Faculty, librarians, counselors, athletic trainers, and coaches, and outlines the shared governance agreement between the Connecticut State Universities and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Full-time, tenured/tenure-track Faculty carry 12 load credits per semester. Instruction is also supplemented with part-time Faculty who teach on a course-by-course basis or with full-time special appointment.

6.1) Faculty are assigned to a specific academic department within each college/school of the University. All courses are taught by full- or part-time Faculty members. Academic deans and the Provost, together with the Office of Equity and Inclusion, monitor and evaluate the composition of the faculty, especially during the search process. New Faculty lines are awarded using criteria that align with the SP2030, student demand, and instructional needs; any new hiring priorities are presented to the UPBC during the budget cycle.

6.2) CCSU has an appropriate number of Faculty (392 full-time and 438 part-time) and administrative faculty who provide academic support to the student population. CCSU has maintained a student to Faculty ratio of 14:1 since Fall 2019 and prioritize personalized outreach to support our students. To support Faculty success, the University has recently combined several instructional resource centers into the [Center for Teaching and Innovation](https://www.ccsu.edu/cti/) (CTI) which is staffed with full-time professionals dedicated to providing professional development and instructional support. In addition, TLC, and advising centers support and supplement Faculty efforts to educate Central’s student body. To further support students, Faculty are required to have regularly scheduled office hours. In addition, faculty receive constructive feedback on their teaching, creative activity, and service through a formal review process every year prior to tenure and every 6th year afterward. (Articles 4.11 and 4.12.)

(6.3) Faculty and administrative faculty assignments are commensurate with educational level, experience and degree of scholarly activity. For appointment to a tenured/tenure-track position, Faculty members must hold terminal degrees, evidence of scholarship, teaching experience, and creative activity as outlined in the CBA. As of Fall 2022, 86 percent of full-time Faculty, including temporary hires, hold a terminal degree. Part-time Faculty have similar standards, with exceptions made for individuals with significant professional experience and expertise. In those cases, an additional review is conducted.

(6.4 and 6.5) The recruiting and hiring processes operate according to [established procedures](https://www.ccsu.edu/hr/hiringProcess.html) and are a collaborative effort among Human Resources (HR), Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI), the hiring department, and appropriate personnel to ensure an open and equitable process. While deans make job offers, the Faculty in each department comprise the search committees for open Faculty lines. This standardization assures that Faculty recruitment is consistent with all legal requirements and provides appropriate equal employment opportunities. Potential candidates are vetted by HR to ensure that candidates have the appropriate qualifications for their positions. In addition, academic departments, deans, and OEI collectively ensure that objective measures are used to identify qualified candidates. Once selected, HR provides each hire with a detailed letter outlining the full scope and duration of the appointment, including any conditions for renewal.

Central is committed to ensuring equal employment opportunity through SP2030 and its annual [Affirmative Action Plan](https://www.ccsu.edu/diversity/affirmativeAction.html) (AAP), which is pursuant to section 46a-68 of the Connecticut General Statutes and the corresponding Affirmative Action Regulations for State Agencies. Progress toward meeting AAP goals is monitored annually by the University and the State Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO). Progress toward SP2030 diversity goals is monitored in Goal 1, Metric 1. Improving the diversity of the student body has proven to be easier (up four percent since Fall 2018) than diversifying Faculty and staff (up 2.9 and 1.2 percent, respectively) over the same time.

Faculty salaries and benefits are competitive and are collectively bargained by the AAUP while the administrative faculty salaries and benefits are negotiated by the [State University Organization of Administrative Faculty](https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/SUOAF-2021-2025.pdf) (SUOAF) union. Fall 2021 data provided by the College and University Professional Association (CUPA) for OIRA’s [annual benchmarking study](http://web.ccsu.edu/oira2/Faculty/Faculty_Salary_Benchmarking_Report.pdf) shows that CCSU’s full-time average Faculty salary of $99,306 exceeds the average salary of $92,479 at Carnegie Master’s level institutions in the New England and Mid-Atlantic region. As part of the AAUP and SUOAF agreements, funds are made available for professional development including travel to workshops and conferences. There are also training opportunities through the internal grants process and the CTI.

(6.7) The CBA, along with academic department by-laws and guidelines, address faculty recruitment, appointment, retention, mentoring, renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment Departmental documents are approved by the academic dean, the Provost, the AAUP and are filed with the [Faculty Senate](https://web.ccsu.edu/facultysenate/promoandtenure.asp) (Senate). The CBA provides guidance for teaching loads, other responsibilities, and grievance procedures to collectively ensure work is aligned with the University needs and Mission.

6.9) Article 4.1.1.1 of the CBA contains a Statement of Professional Ethics outlining the obligations of faculty to act responsibly and ethically. The processes related to observing the conditions of employment and functioning in a manner consistent with the mission and purposes of the university are outlined in the Faculty evaluation portions of the CBA, Articles 4.11 and Articles 6-8, and employment related policies are posted on the [HR website](https://www.ccsu.edu/hr/policies.html). In addition, all employees are expected to complete Ethics 101, annual training required by the State of Connecticut.

6.10) The evaluation process for renewal, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure professional assessment (CBA 4.11) ensures that each member of the Faculty is effective in the responsibilities for load credit (primarily teaching), creative activity, and service (ranked in order of importance). Articles 6-8 outline the processes for librarians, counselors, athletic trainers, and coaches (6.10b).  A similar evaluation process for administrative faculty is clearly outlined in the [SUOAF contract](https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/SUOAF-2021-2025.pdf), Article 19.

6.11) The scholarly expectations for Faculty at each academic rank are defined for each academic department on the [Faculty Senate website](https://web.ccsu.edu/facultysenate/promoandtenure.asp). These guidelines have been approved by the department, academic dean, the Provost, the AAUP and are periodically updated as needed. The need for all Faculty to remain current in their discipline (6.11) is clearly spelled out in the CBA (Article 4.11.9), and as reflected in the Departmental guidelines noted above. As per the CBA, nearly $2.8M in funding for FY2023 was available to faculty for professional development, research grants, curriculum-related activities, and retraining (Article 12.10.1). Additionally, tenured Faculty are eligible to apply to take sabbatical leave for educational purposes (Article 13.7).

6.12) The CBA (Article 4.2) defines and guarantees academic freedom to all faculty, regardless of academic rank or status. The Committee on Academic Freedom, a standing committee of the Senate, provides advice and consultation to faculty and the administration for alleged violations of academic freedom.

6.13) CCSU students are taught and supported by appropriately credentialed faculty and staff. Article 5.3 of the CBA stipulates the minimum credentials needed for instructors, librarians, and counselors are an earned master’s degree in an appropriate field from an accredited institution. Higher ranks, beginning at the assistant professor level, librarian, or counselor must have an earned doctorate or a terminal degree in an appropriate discipline or meet minimum educational, licensure, and experience levels. Content support offered by the Learning Center is provided by tutors who participated in a tutor training program certified by the College Reading and Learning Association. In addition, the OIRA routinely collects data related to student success, such as student surveys, GPA analyses, and assessment of student learning (see Standard Eight), to ensure effective processes are in place and the information is disseminated to appropriate audiences or posted on the OIRA website as in the case of survey and assessment results.

6.14) As part of the annual university budget and planning process, departments and schools evaluate their current levels of resources in relation to their mission within the university and make requests for additional resources (base budget increases, one-time expenses, positions, and equipment), in alignment with SP2030. All academic programs undergo an external peer review on a regular cycle, be it from a discipline specific national accrediting body or through the Program Review process (Standard Two). In all cases, the accompanied self-study and recommendation of the reviewer(s) speak directly to the program’s success with student learning, as well as current and anticipated future needs.

### **Teaching and Learning**

6.15) All programs have developed learning outcomes for their students as part of university-wide assessment activities. These outcomes, and the annual assessment reports that include outcome-specific data gathered on student achievement, are reviewed on a regular cycle by the [AAC](https://web.ccsu.edu/facultysenate/scccsuf_aac.asp) (see Standard 8). Peer-review of instruction methods and materials is an expected part of the renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment process, as laid out in the CBA, Article 4.11.7 and the [departmental guidelines](https://web.ccsu.edu/facultysenate/promoandtenure.asp) for evaluation. Several [standing committees](https://web.ccsu.edu/facultysenate/scccsuf.asp) of the faculty are directly tasked with educational improvement, including Academic Advising, Academic Standards, Curriculum, Excellence in Teaching, and Online Learning. Prior to the pandemic, the Instructional Design and Technology resource Center and Center for Teaching and Faculty Development (which now form the CTI), were tasked with helping faculty enhance their teaching and pedagogy skills, as well as adopt technological tools to improve their online and hybrid instruction.

6.16) Central has been able to provide a variety of new instructional methodologies, including remote learning options, in the wake of the COVID-19 disruption. Decisions about course delivery were made with the input of faculty and department chairs to ensure that the learning goals of programs and courses were met. Student support for the new modes of delivery came through CTI and Information Technology. Analyses of courses taught between Fall 2017 and Spring 2021 revealed that there was no discernable difference between the average grades earned in a course (course GPA) or the rate at which students earned a D, F or withdrew from a course, when the data were grouped by semesters leading up to the pandemic, or after it started.

6.17) Enhancing the quality of teaching and learning is a mission of every member of the Division of Academic Affairs. The university provides extensive programs and full-time support through the CTI whose mission, includes providing Faculty the opportunity to engage with new and novel pedagogies with the highest level of instructional design technological support needed to stay on the cutting-edge of pedagogical development. Our new XR lab (Virtual Reality, Mixed Reality, and Augmented Reality) is first in Connecticut and is pushing faculty to explore new ways of delivering course content to the next generation of students. Additionally, Faculty can experiment with new pedagogies through internal grants, such as the Curriculum Development, Professional Development, and NextGen grants. Instructional effectiveness is continuously monitored through a variety of data collection mechanisms, such as course evaluations, peer reviews, and department assessment reports. The evaluation of load credit activity is the first and most important element in renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment review processes.

6.18) The number of Faculty is sufficient to ensure that students do not take a majority of their courses with a single instructor and are exposed to diverse Faculty with various teaching styles and viewpoints. When feasible, multiple sections of the same course are distributed amongst different faculty; however, where specialization is important, one faculty member may teach multiple sections. Departments, as part of the outside review process and at other times, review the major learning outcomes of courses offered in multiple sections, but allow for faculty to use their academic freedom to structure instruction according to their own professional standards.

6.19) As mentioned in the 2018 self-study, CCSU continues to monitor its progress with advising. In August 2019, Central hosted a Retention Summit with nearly 50 attendees from across the University, 14 of which were either advisors or served on the Committee for Academic Advising. One of the outcomes of this retreat was to create a workgroup to review the current advising model and explore dual advising models. The Workgroup recommended a dual advising model where undergraduate students are assigned both a professional and faculty advisor upon entrance to the University. Central is currently implementing a model that recognizes that student needs change as they progress. Therefore, the initial primary advisor for a student is a 12-month full-time professional advisor who can advise and/or direct students to needed resources and the secondary advisor is a faculty member. As students advance in their degree program, the professional advisor transitions to the secondary and the faculty becomes the primary advisor who can better serve them in upper-level major courses and prepare them to be career ready. To ensure continuity and quality, communication is encouraged between professional advisors and faculty advisors, trainings on advising and registration tools are offered by the Registrar’s office, and all have access to professional development.

Central is making progress on advising. The results from the 2017 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Advising Module indicated that freshmen at CCSU were significantly much less engaged with advisors than students from other public 4-year institutions ([10 of 11 questions](https://docs.ccsu.edu/oira/assessment/surveys/NSSE/NSSE_Special_2017_Topical_Module_Academic_Advising.pdf), 91 percent). While the [2021 NSSE Advising Module](https://docs.ccsu.edu/oira/assessment/surveys/NSSE/NSSE_Frequencies_and_Statistical_Comparisons_2021.pdf) has been expanded, eliminating direct comparisons of questions, the themes are consistent with prior years. The results indicate that CCSU freshmen are as engaged, if not more engaged in 13 of 31 questions. Seniors have a similar trend. Questions that rose to significance were engagement with academic coaches (freshmen) and use of online systems to monitor progress towards a degree (seniors). Assuring quality advising will continue to be a priority at Central and as such, it is incorporated into five different Objectives supporting Goals 1, 2, and 3 and is assessed in Metric 5 of Goal 1 in the SP2030.

6.20) Central supports Faculty as they engage in scholarship, research, and creative activities. Faculty can apply for a variety of internal grants including, AAUP Research, Faculty-Student Research, Faculty Development, and Research Reassigned Time. Since 2021, the President has provided additional funds to support the Next Generation Student Success, Diversity, Innovation, and Community Engagement to support new pedagogical approaches and initiatives aligned with SP2030. Faculty research/creative activity is the second most weighted category in renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment review processes. Policies governing research on [humans](https://www.ccsu.edu/irb/) and [animals](https://www.ccsu.edu/iacuc/) are communicated through Academic Affairs and are available on the website. Faculty engage students in research both in and [outside](https://www.ccsu.edu/urcad/urcad.html) the classroom. While requirements vary in scope by major, many degree programs require a level of student research. The University Research and Creative Achievement Program celebrates undergraduate and graduate student research across all disciplines.