

Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

In July of 1998, Vice President David Groth convened an ad hoc system-wide committee of faculty and administrators to examine the condition of the non-tenure track faculty (NTTF) i.e., senior instructors, instructors and honoraria, to identify issues, and make recommendations for improvement. The faculty on the committee included tenured faculty and non-tenured instructors and honoraria. The committee has developed a series of recommendations concerning the conditions of employment for NTTF to be considered by the faculty and administration of the four campuses and by the President and the Board of Regents.

Summary of Committee Recommendations

- The title “Lecturer” replace the title “Honorarium”
- The existing titles “Instructor,” “Senior Instructor,” and “Lecturer” be redefined
- After five years, an instructor be eligible to apply for promotion to Senior Instructor
- Each campus address deficiencies in the working conditions of NTTF
- NTTF be subject to a systematic evaluation process
- Each school and college establish a grievance process and procedures for NTTF
- NTTF continue to be represented on Faculty Council, that each Faculty Assembly determine what role Lecturers will play in Faculty Assembly; and that departments clarify the roles of Instructors and Senior Instructors in departmental governance, consistent with the rules and policies of the Regents
- Staff be trained to assign titles and determine workloads consistently, in accord with university policy
- Each primary unit determine what a full-time workload is for its NTTF, and that 50% workload be understood to be half of that departmentally-determined full-time load
- University acknowledges and addresses the inadequate compensation of some NTTF
- Campus chancellors phase in appropriate salaries over a reasonable number of years
- President and Board of Regents immediately begin to allocate from new state funding or existing TLE funding to assist in these campus efforts to remedy inadequate salaries for NTTF

Introduction

Today, 43 percent of all faculty are found in part-time or full-time non-tenure track positions; in 1970, only 22 percent were. (Sources: American Historical Association, “Statement from the Conference on the Growing Use of Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty, September 26-28, 1997” page 2; American Association of University Professors Homepage, “Part-Time and Non-Tenure Track Faculty.”) CU is not alone in examining the situation of its NTTF and the implications of the emergence of this semi-permanent work force. Expansion of public colleges and universities to meet student demand, limited funding from public sources, and the availability of trained, able professionals willing to teach on a part-time basis, have combined to expand the proportion of NTTF. Universities are realizing that the NTTF are not ephemeral additions to the teaching force. As an exceptional resource for professional and pedagogical expertise, NTTF represent a valuable asset to the educational experience, especially in times of both shrinking budgets and public pressure for smaller classes and more personal attention to students.

At the same time, their increasing role has led to fears of exploitation of NTTF on the one hand and of a threat to certain valued aspects of the research university on the other. Some NTTF teach year after year, even for decades, with little access to promotion or regular merit raises. Meanwhile, both tenure-track faculty and national accrediting agencies are concerned that an increasing proportion of NTTF will lead to a lack of emphasis on research and to an attack on the professional status, economic situation and employment security of ranked faculty.

NTTF play a large role at the University of Colorado. At UCCS, they teach 51% the total undergraduate credit hours on the campus; in the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, they teach nearly 58% of lower division credit hours and 37% of upper division credit hours. (Information provided by the UCCS Office

of Institutional Research.) In 1998, UCCS had 190 tenure and tenure-track faculty and 246 non-tenure track faculty: 55 instructors and 191 honoraria. The vast majority of instructors at UCCS are paid an annual salary of \$20,000 to teach eight courses. According to Academe (March-April, 1997, pp.38-79), they are the lowest paid university instructors in the nation.

At the University of Colorado at Denver, NTTF taught almost 46% of the total student credit hours during the 1997-1998 academic year. That year, NTTF taught over 42% of the total student credit hours in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and almost 46% in the College of Arts and Media. In 1997-1998, UCD had 329 tenured/tenure-track faculty and 434 non-tenure-track faculty. (All above figures from the UCD Office of Institutional Research, 6/30/99.) In CLAS, instructors are currently paid an annual salary of \$28,000 to teach eight courses, while the majority of part-time faculty received \$2,347 per course for the 1998-1999 academic year, with no benefits.

At Boulder, NTTF are responsible for 49% of total student credit hours: 59% of lower division student credit hours, 42% of upper division, and 19% of graduate and professional level. In fall 1998 Boulder's instructional staff included 1,040 tenured and tenure-track faculty, 271 instructors and senior instructors, and 703 other NTTF, including adjunct, adjoint, and visiting professors, and lecturers. The 103 full-time instructors and senior instructors with long-term appointments received annual salaries averaging \$38,810; 20% earned under \$30,000. These full-time instructors generally teach 6 courses per year. Many have departmental and even campus service duties as well.

At the Health Sciences Center, the situation of the NTTF is somewhat different. Clinical track designations are frequently used. Benefits are consistently provided to individuals employed at 50% or more. Salaries for NTTF are not at the same levels as for NTTF at the three general campuses. Thus the NTTF committee and its recommendations focused more on the issues and problems found at the Boulder, Denver, and Colorado Springs campuses rather than at the Health Sciences Center campus.

With the realization that a large proportion of faculty are and will continue to be NTT, CU needs to consider the appropriate treatment of its NTTF and ways to achieve the best mix of TT and NTT faculty.

Examination of Issues

The committee agreed to address the following issues:

- titles
- working conditions and resources
- evaluation processes
- promotion possibilities and processes
- representation and participation in departmental and faculty governance
- benefits
- compensation
- equity within and across campuses in work and compensation
- appropriate mix of NTTF and TTF

The committee agreed that, for each issue examined, it should determine whether it was appropriate to have a system-wide solution or policy or to have campus-specific solutions or policies. The committee further agreed that the underlying goals of its process of review and recommendation included: maintaining academic standards and quality; allowing campus/unit flexibility; and improving the situation of NTTF.

Throughout this report, the Committee recommendations are printed in boldface type.

I. Titles

Current Board policy defines university titles across the system, and campuses are expected to conform to this nomenclature. The committee agrees that system-wide conformity is appropriate and useful for titles.

NTTF object to the current title “honorarium” for those who are hired to teach on a course-by-course basis. This is a non-standard title within the academy. The title does not accurately convey the role these part-time faculty play. **The committee recommends the term “lecturer,”** which is currently an approved University title, but not widely used across the system, be substituted for “honorarium.”

Based upon the current Faculty Handbook definition, **the following revised definition for a lecturer is proposed:**

The title “lecturer” is granted to a scholar hired by the University to teach on a course-by course basis and/or perform other teaching duties. Lecturers normally should possess the same minimum qualifications as ranked faculty.* The title “lecturer” may also be granted to a person of high repute in a field of endeavor related to an academic discipline or to a person with significant professional experience relevant to the academic discipline. “Lecturer” is a non-tenured position, and years as a lecturer may not be counted toward any other position.

A lecturer may apply for a ranked faculty position for which he/she is qualified and will be evaluated in the same way as all other applicants for the position. While not members of the Faculty Senate, lecturers are represented on the system-wide Faculty Council and, at the discretion of individual campus Faculty Assemblies, may be represented on those Faculty Assemblies.

*The term “ranked faculty” refers to the following: instructor, senior instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor, and at the Health Sciences Center’s Schools of Dentistry, Nursing, and Pharmacy, clinical teaching track faculty with these titles.

The laws regarding retirement and health benefits have changed considerably since the publication of the 1988 Faculty Handbook. Those who work half-time or more are entitled to health and life insurance benefits. In the case of lecturers who simultaneously teach multiple courses in a unit, or in more than one unit on a campus, or on more than one campus in the CU system, there arises a question of eligibility for benefits. Lecturers who teach one-half or more the customary teaching assignment given to instructors in the unit (or combination of units) will be considered half-time employees and will thus be eligible for the benefits that half-time employees receive.

The NTTF committee also recommends changes in the definitions of Instructor and Senior Instructor.

Instructor

Instructors shall have the master’s degree or its equivalent and should be otherwise well-qualified to teach at the undergraduate ~~primarily lower division~~ level.

(This recommended change reflects the current practice in many units of having instructors teach both upper and lower division courses. Strikeouts reflect deletions from existing policy.)

Senior Instructor

THIS RANK PROVIDES ~~gives~~ higher recognition and *salary (Handbook says, but state law no longer permits: **and longer periods of appointment**)* than that of instructor. SENIOR INSTRUCTORS NORMALLY HOLD THE TERMINAL DEGREE IN THEIR FIELDS.

PROMOTION

AFTER FIVE YEARS OF MERITORIOUS PERFORMANCE--OR OTHER APPROPRIATE LENGTH OF TIME AS ESTABLISHED BY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES--, AN INSTRUCTOR MAY BE PROMOTED TO the rank of senior instructor. ~~—It is normally awarded to faculty members who do not have the prerequisites for promotion to the rank of assistant professor but who have special abilities, usually in teaching.~~ *(This sentence was struck because it is no longer an accurate description of the qualifications of instructors.)*

(This recommendation reflects the NTTF committee’s sense that some avenues for promotions should

be available to NTTF, given their more permanent presence in the University. Campus or college policy should determine the process and standards for promotion to senior instructor.)

II. Working Conditions

The committee believes that many NTTF are teaching under substandard conditions and that this situation should be remedied to the extent possible on each campus. **The committee recommends that each campus examine the working conditions of its NTTF and address any deficiencies.** Some deficiencies will require the budgeting of resources; others will not.

Among the important resources for teaching that should be available to NTTF are:

- office space (shared, if necessary, with other NTT) or, if such space cannot be found, a secure locker for NTTF to store their belongings while on campus and space for holding office hours
- University Library card and ID card
- a campus mail box
- access to a telephone on campus. Voice mail for taking student calls is also important. Telephone numbers and office locations for NTTF should be available at the department office and the main switchboard to facilitate student-faculty contact.
- access to a computer and e-mail for teaching purposes. If training programs for developing web pages and other uses of technology, such as graphics facilities and slide and overhead production, are available on a campus, they should also be made available to instructors and, if possible, to other NTTF.
- access to copying--either through the department or by reimbursement for commercial copying.
- a handbook or guide to campus policies affecting NTTF, containing practical information to assist the NTTF to negotiate the campus and to comply with university policies regarding such things as grading, syllabi, etc. The handbook should also describe grievance procedures available to NTTF.
- access to campus grievance procedures
- teaching awards for NTTF (either through the creation of separate NTTF awards, or through eligibility for same awards at TTF)

III. Evaluation Processes

The committee recommends that NTTF be subject to a systematic evaluation process. Instructors should be evaluated as are other faculty in their unit. In the area of teaching performance, this would include multiple means of teaching evaluation. The responsibilities of the instructor and senior instructor are different from those of tenure-track faculty; tenure-track faculty normally have responsibilities in and are evaluated on their research/creative work and service accomplishments, in addition to their teaching record. Instructors and senior instructors, in many cases, have limited or no assignments in research/creative work or in service as part of their contract or job description.

In the case of lecturers whose assignment is teaching only, FCQs are necessary, but not entirely sufficient measures of teaching performance. Recognizing that visiting the classroom of every lecturer every semester could be a major burden for a department, the committee recommends that campuses (or their schools/colleges) **establish reasonable guidelines for periodic evaluation of the teaching of lecturers.**

The results of these evaluations, of course, affect whether NTTF are rehired in future semesters. In addition, **merit increases, when available, should be based on an established evaluation processes.**

IV. Promotion Possibilities and Process

The committee discussed the value of promotions within the ranks of the NTTF. There **was support for instructor-to-senior instructor promotions**; there was less commitment to creating promotional tracks within the lecturer rank. NTTF groups have suggested a promotion from lecturer to instructor after a probationary period, where possible. UCB has established a promotion from lecturer to instructor after a 3-year probationary period of teaching at 50% or more (of the established instructor teaching load) While many on the committee like this idea, the committee as a whole could not agree whether this was feasible or wise. (See recommended revisions in Section I." Titles" for recommendations on promotion from instructor to senior instructor.)

V. Grievance Procedures

The right to grieve is fundamental to university employees. **The committee recommends that every campus or its schools and colleges establish grievance processes and procedures for NTTF.**

There was disagreement on the committee about whether a lecturer should be able to grieve not being hired in a subsequent semester. The temporary nature of the commitment to the job is a basic component of lectureships. Should the need for a second section of a required course not recur; the department must be free not to rehire the lecturer who taught the second section. On the other hand, there was some sympathy for an appeal should a NTTF not be rehired for reasons of bias by the hiring authority (usually the chair). One way to reduce the possibility or appearance of personal whim or bias in these hiring decisions would be to have lecturers hired by a committee of faculty. The dean should be the final arbiter of grievances in most cases. However, in situations where the campus has a grievance or arbitration process that goes beyond the dean, as in sexual harassment grievances, that grievance shall go to the level prescribed in policy.

VI. Representation and Participation in Departmental Governance and Faculty Governance

Currently some departments include instructors and senior instructors in their meetings; others do not. Lecturers are generally not included in departmental governance. **The committee believes these decisions should be made by each unit and written into departmental guidelines, though a college or campus policy for consistency's sake would also be acceptable.**

According to University policy, instructors, after two years in rank, become members of the Faculty Senate. The role of other NTTF in faculty governance is not clear. **The committee endorses the recommendations of the Faculty Council that: (1) NTTF be represented on Faculty Council and (2) that each Faculty Assembly should decide what role, if any, NTTF will play in its organization.**

VII. Benefits

Benefits are regulated by federal policy, as well as by University policy. Federal policy mandates that consistent benefits be offered to all full time employees. This policy shaped the committee's consideration of benefits issues.

The University has determined that employees who work 50% or more will be eligible for health, retirement, and certain other benefits. Currently, employees who work less than 50% are not eligible for these benefits. In addition, the University's existing Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), filed with, and

approved by, the IRS, does not allow honoraria to be eligible for benefits. Thus, by definition, honoraria are currently not eligible for ORP benefits.

Members of the committee raised concerns about the uneven application of the guidelines for determining the benefits of part-time faculty. Existing rules are not being implemented consistently. In many cases, staff in departments, colleges, and schools are responsible for making the determination of what title (and corresponding benefits) to assign NTTF. These staff are not trained and not given guidelines for making proper and consistent determinations. As a result, NTTF in different departments--carrying the same teaching load--are sometimes categorized differently and are thus differentially eligible for benefits. For example, a person hired to teach two courses in one unit might be classified as honoraria (not eligible for benefits), while another person hired to teach two courses in another unit might be classified as a half time instructor (eligible for benefits). **Proper training for staff and a handbook of instructions or set of guidelines are strongly recommended.**

Before guidelines can be written, there must be an agreed-upon definition of what constitutes a 50% appointment. **The committee recommends that the three general campuses define a half time (50%) workload as half of the usual full-time contractual work load of instructors in each unit in order to be consistent in the determination of who is eligible for benefits. The Health Sciences Center should also address this issue for its part-time NTTF. (Any necessary changes in the Optional Retirement Plan should then be negotiated with the IRS.)**

If this recommendation is adopted, there is the possibility that some departments will avoid hiring lecturers at a level that makes them "half-time" because of the financial burden of having to pay benefits. As a result, the committee discussed the idea of having health and retirement benefits paid out of a campus pool, so that departments were not paying benefits directly out of their budgets. Such a policy would free departments to do more hiring of 50% lecturers; however, the costs to the campus as a whole could easily rise if no academic unit were directly responsible for setting limits. The committee does not have a specific recommendation on this issue. The committee also recognizes the problem of NTTF who teach on more than one campus. A NTTF whose total work for the University of Colorado (combined campuses) equals half-time or more should be eligible for the appropriate benefits. This situation will require campuses to share the costs of benefits for such half-time NTTF.

VIII. Compensation

The committee discussed the low pay scales of NTTF at great length. This was the issue that produced the most discussion and debate. After lengthy and thorough consideration, the committee members could not come to total agreement on all aspects of this complex and difficult issue. However, the committee makes the following recommendations:

- that the University acknowledges and addresses the inadequate minimum salaries paid to some instructors/senior instructors and lecturers (honoraria)
- that compensation issues, if they are to be remedied effectively, must be addressed at the system, campus, college, and departmental levels
- that each campus and its schools and colleges adopt a method for calculating an appropriate minimum salary, perhaps based upon a method outlined in this report
- that campus Chancellors (aided by campus budget committees) phase in appropriate salaries over a reasonable number of years, e.g., 3 to 5 years, depending upon the fiscal situation of the campus and the size of the problem
- recognizing the difficulty of identifying the funds needed to accomplish these salary adjustments, the committee further recommends that the President and the Board of Regents consider allocating from new state funding or from existing TLE funds in the

President's Office to assist the campuses in reaching appropriate salary scales

- **given the very serious compensation problems that exist in some schools and colleges, particularly CLAS on the Denver and Colorado Springs campuses, the committee recommends that the President and the Board of Regents take immediate action regarding compensation of NTTF**

These recommendations derived from a discussion of many issues, some of which are summarized below.

The NTTF actively seek increases in their salaries. Current proposals for lecturers' pay include a plan being implemented in the Arts and Sciences College of the Boulder campus that sets the minimum for a 3-credit course at \$4000, a salary that is about twice what many lectures at other CU campuses are currently paid. For NTT instructors and senior instructors, the A&S plan at Boulder calls for minimum base pay of \$30,000 for instructors and \$33,000 for senior instructors.

Most members of the committee believe that there should be a system-wide solution to the compensation problem of NTTF and believe that adequate funding must be budgeted at the system level to allow campuses to make the necessary salary adjustments. Some suggest a formula that guarantees an equitable minimum salary for NTTF while allowing for differences among units. Others suggest a flat rate across the CU system. While the committee does not endorse any single option, among the possible approaches it identified are:

For Instructors:

Option A: Instructors be paid a minimum starting salary equal to 80% of the average starting salary for assistant professors in the college/school or appropriate sub-unit. (For example, if the starting salary of an assistant professor in a unit is \$40,000, the starting salary for an instructor in the same unit would be \$32,000).

Option B: Instructors be paid a minimum starting salary of \$30,000

For Senior Instructors:

Promotions to senior instructor be accompanied by a raise comparable to the raise given with promotion from assistant professor to associate professor within the unit.

For Lecturers:

Option A: The minimum lecturer salaries be set at twelve-and-a-half percent (one-eighth) of starting full time instructor salary within the same unit. (For example, if the starting instructor salary within the unit is \$30,000, the lecturer's salary within that unit would be one-eighth of \$30,000, or \$3,750 per course.)

Option B: Lecturers be paid a minimum salary of \$3,500 per course.

The committee urges that these options be given serious consideration. However, it recognizes that the issue of compensation is too complex to be addressed by a single formula, given the differences in need among campuses and among departments within campuses.

The committee recognizes that the various options mentioned above would require a significant increase in permanent funding allocations to NTTF, if the same numbers of NTTF courses are to continue to be offered annually. For example, at UCCS, the committee estimates that adopting a \$4000 minimum per 3 credit course would require about \$440,000 added annually to the campus's budget. And, in order to increase instructor salaries to the Boulder scale of a minimum of \$30,000 for instructors and \$33,000 for

senior instructors, the UCCS campus would need an additional \$300,000 or more in continuing base funding.

The committee does not have a specific suggestion for how such funds should be developed. Some combination of reallocation and new permanent monies, spread over three to five years, seems the most feasible approach. Many on the committee think that the recommended minimum base salary increases for instructors and lecturers are sufficiently pressing that they should become a high priority in budget setting and resource allocation.

IX. Equity Within and Across Campuses

As the committee began its work, it was surprised and dismayed to discover the disparities in pay and workloads that exists among instructors and the disparities in pay for lecturers within and between the various campuses. The committee recognizes that Business instructors earn more than Humanities and Social Science instructors; the same is true for TTF. These differences reflect market pressures. But, some disparities seem excessive. For example, at UCCS, Arts and Sciences (LAS) instructors are paid \$20,000 per year and carry an 8 course load. At UCB, Arts and Sciences (A&S) instructors are paid between \$25,000 and \$40,000 and carry a 6 course load. The Boulder A&S College has developed and adopted a plan to raise the salaries of its instructors and its lecturers to a reasonable level using funds derived from campus and college reallocations. The committee applauds this very significant achievement. At UCCS and UCD, current financial realities do not allow for such reallocation. Some members of the committee argued that instructors and lecturers essentially serve the same function on all three campuses and should be paid at the same rate. Others insisted that different markets should prevail on the three general campuses, for NTTF as well as TTF.

After consideration, the committee acknowledges the power of the market to create differentials in salaries for both TTF and NTTF. However, the committee recommends that excessive disparities in pay and workload be reduced.

X. Appropriate Mix of NTTF and TTF

The fact that NTTF are a great source of professional and specialized expertise who enrich students' educational experiences is an excellent pedagogical reason for having NTTF in the University. But other factors contribute to campuses' decisions to hire NTTF. Currently, the mix of TTF and NTTF is often more a function of departmental budgets and the availability of NTTF or graduate students to teach, than of pedagogical decisions about the best balance between TTF and NTTF. Accrediting boards also play a role in determining the mix. They criticize programs that are heavily dependent upon NTTF (as they should). Thus, accrediting standards serve to slow the slide toward the low-cost community college model of education, with a few TTF and an army of NTTF in each academic unit. When a department becomes too dependent upon NTTF, it can have difficulty sustaining a consistent philosophy and standards for its program and may lack the critical mass of faculty to sustain its scholarly and pedagogical functions, including advising.

The University must strive to make sure that pedagogical concerns, not just financial concerns, shape the mix of TTF and NTTF. **The EPUS Committee of the Faculty Senate has already recommended that the mix of TTF and NTTF be examined as part of program review. This committee endorses the EPUS recommendation.**

Recognizing that NTTF have become an enduring part of the faculty at CU and most other universities, the University needs to commit to protecting the academic freedom of its NTTF employees, to providing reasonable work conditions and remuneration--in short, to respect the contributions of the NTTF and treat them as well as TTF. The committee believes its recommendations concerning working conditions and remuneration, if adopted, will adequately address the needs of NTTF and will help to safeguard and advance the total learning environment goals of the University of Colorado.

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Final Comment

Questions about how NTTF should be treated and what role they should play in universities are being asked across the nation, not just at CU. For example, two professors of higher education, Jay L. Chronister and Roger G. Baldwin, have recently conducted a comprehensive study of NTTF (to be published by Johns Hopkins University Press) and have developed recommendations for changing the employment conditions of NTTF. Their major recommendations, as reported in the Chronicle of Higher Education, are for equitable pay, more support for professional development, and a system of faculty ranks for NTTF that would recognize good performance and long-term service. (Chronicle of Higher Education, April 9, 1999, pp A14-A16). The recommendations of the NTTF committee are quite similar to this national study's recommendations, although the particular situation of NTTF at CU, shaped by history, politics, and local conditions, leads to somewhat different set of priorities.

Submitted to Vice President Groth on behalf of the NTTF Committee by Co-chairs Judith Igoe and Michel Dahlin, July 21, 1999