

UCDALI's AD HOC LECTURERS' COMMITTEE REPORT

April 2020

Executive Summary

UCDALI developed this report to document current working conditions and areas of need for CU Denver Lecturers, who are instructional faculty with < 0.5 FTE. This position does not include health care, insurance, or retirement benefits. These appointments are for only one semester at a time. Our report lays out the result of our investigation and presents a proposal to improve working conditions for this integral component of our faculty. Although Lecturers make up 46% of the overall instructional faculty on our campus and teach a significant majority of our undergraduate students, many continue to experience marginalization, as well as concerns that are both financial and professional. In our survey of CU Denver Lecturers, they called for increased supports to help them to maximize their contributions to the University's overall student retention goals and instruction effectiveness. Four major themes emerged from analyzing these responses.

- **INTEGRATION** – the need to feel valued and included at all levels and to have some voice in faculty governance.
- **ECONOMIC DISPARITIES AND CHALLENGES** – the need for access to a livable wage, professional development support, pay increases, as well as other financial supports to allow them to better support their ability to contribute to their students' success.
- **CAREER/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – the need for increased career opportunities and clearer paths for advancement, increased stability and security, along with more access to professional development support to allow them to develop as teachers, attend conferences, and conduct scholarly work.
- **RESOURCES** – the need for practical supports for their instructional work (e.g. access to teaching technologies, office space, printing, compensation for course preparation, etc.), increased resources for their students (e.g. financial, writing, study skill, career, technology), as well as clearer paths between them, their students, and the advisors.

Our wider investigation of the associated literature regarding adjunct faculty in higher education revealed that the pattern of working conditions and expressed needs from our CU Denver Lecturers was consistent with that of institutions nationwide. Across academia, there are serious costs to a university's mission if it does not make every reasonable effort to welcome, integrate, and support all members of its faculty, including those easiest to neglect. Multiple sources show exponentially increasing administrative costs resulting from an unstable, insecure faculty, and decreasing revenues resulting from reduced student credit hours, retention, and alumni loyalty.

We compiled information from state university systems, 4-year public and private universities, and 2-year colleges, and noted the diverse ways that other institutions have listened and **responded** to their adjunct Lecturers. These practices and the resulting culture shifts were inherently linked to their missions' successes. We focused our search on how other institutions addressed the four main areas of need expressed by our Lecturers, keeping our University's mission and strategic priorities in mind. This work culminated in a list of specific recommendations summarized here:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Provide Administrative Support:**

- a. A 1.0 FTE Admin position at the university-level that is charged with overseeing, managing, and improving the practices and climate regarding **all** Lecturer issues.
- b. Each school or college provides one person (faculty or staff) charged with overseeing, managing, and administration of practices associated with the Lecturer faculty within each school/college.
- c. Each unit with an average of five or more Lecturers per semester designates one person (faculty or staff) charged with overseeing, managing, and administration of practices associated with the Lecturer faculty in their unit.

2. **Build Integration:**

- a. All teaching faculty who are not on the tenure track, including Lecturers, will be referred to in a positive manner, such as “Instructional Faculty,” instead of “non-tenure track faculty.”
- b. New Lecturers are strongly incentivized to attend the University’s New Faculty Orientation, possibly one directed exclusively to them, and are reimbursed accordingly for that time.
- c. The Committee recommends that departments develop bylaws that incorporate Lecturers (at least those at the Senior Lecturer rank) in all matters of faculty governance except those prohibited by Regental rule.

3. **Address Economic Disparities/Challenges:**

- a. Incentives, preferably financial, for participating in professional development activities extending beyond their responsibilities related to classes taught.
- b. Establish and abide by mechanisms for increased pay, standardized procedures at the campus level for minimum raises at the same rate as rostered faculty, with allowance for additional increases at the level of schools/colleges and other programs.

4. **Support Career and Professional Development**

- a. Annual evaluation of Lecturers should be conducted and documented, as it is as essential to all aspects of a well-run institution, including establishing and managing an advancement process for Lecturers, as it is for all faculty.
- b. Career tracks/Advancement avenues to promote within the <0.5 level of employment, such as a new Senior Lecturer title; formation of a task force to determine both a process for this step and a set of requirements and benefits for successful candidates
- c. Longer-term stability for Lecturers with seniority, with or without the title of Senior Lecturer.
- d. If rostered positions open in relevant primary units, compliance with the 1999 Report requires that Lecturers have an equal opportunity to apply and to have their applications considered without prejudice.

5. **Provide Basic Professional Supports and Resources:**

- a. Appointment letters — improved timeliness, including a deadline after which Lecturers would receive compensation if they have prepared a course that is cancelled or taken from them for any reason.
- b. Lecturers must have access to secure office space where they can conduct meetings with students that are conducive to necessary rapport and/or confidentiality, and all faculty must have access to secure storage facilities as appropriate.
- c. Lecturers are provided with access to computers, telephones, and storage options (e.g., lockers), and like all other faculty, are required to hold one hour of office hours each week for each class they teach.
- d. Lecturers are all required to have a University of Colorado Denver identification card.
- e. Transportation — Subsidized parking, especially for special events, such as CFD events or UCDALI meetings, and access to transportation discount programs, such as the EcoPass