



UNIVERSITY SENATE Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee

Report and Recommendation on Contingent Faculty Proposal - Part 2

1. THE CHARGE

S-0705-2 Full-time Tenure- and Non-tenure-track Appointments: Consider and make recommendations regarding the feasibility of implementing the "[Teaching at Rutgers: A Proposal to Convert Part-time to Full-time Appointments and Instructional Full-time Non-tenure-track Appointments to Tenure-track Appointments](#)" received from Zoran Gajic, Karen Thompson, and Richard Moser. For this second part of the charge, consider those sections of the report that address the conversion of instructional full-time non-tenure-track appointments to tenure-track appointments. Include considerations on implementation timelines and related issues. Report to Senate Executive Committee by February 2009.

The proposal (Appendix I) can be downloaded from:

http://senate.rutgers.edu/ContingentFacultyProposal_KThompson090507.pdf

2. SUMMARY

The Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee (FPAC) was asked to review the desirability and feasibility of implementing the proposal to convert *Part-time to Full-time Appointments and Instructional Full-time Non-tenure-track Appointments to Tenure-track Appointments*, and to submit appropriate recommendations for the consideration and approval of the Senate. During the December 7, 2007 FPAC meeting, the committee decided, by majority vote, to separate the two issues and report on them separately. The first part of the charge, which pertains to the conversion of some part-time to full-time appointments, was submitted for action by the University Senate at the November 9, 2007 Senate meeting. A response to the second part of the charge, conversion of instructional full-time non-tenure-track appointments to tenure-track appointments, is reported here. After careful deliberation, the FPAC, by majority vote, does not recommend the creation of a "teaching-with-tenure" line. Opinions of the committee majority, as well as those in the minority who support the proposed charge, are included in this response.

3. REPORT

The FPAC met and discussed the charge in eight sessions, namely on 09/28/07, 10/19/07, 11/09/07, 12/07/07, 9/14/08, 10/24/08, 11/21/08, and 1/23/09. During these meetings, the committee heard from authors of the proposal (Karen Thompson, who represents PTLs on the Senate, and AAUP staffer Rich Moser) as well as Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVPAA) Phil Furmanski, all of whom graciously agreed to testify, provide data, and answer questions. In addition, FPAC co-chair Panayotatos had several informal discussions with another co-author, Zoran Gajic, and co-chair Gould interviewed the chair of the New Brunswick Department of English as well as faculty who administer the "Basic Skills" precalculus program. The FPAC draft report submitted to the Senate Executive Committee was the result of interim deliberations and votes.

3.I. Background

The original proposal is an effort to focus on education and teaching as a whole; the changes proposed in this document have the potential to provide needed stability and monetary advantages to the affected faculty, and to enhance the reputation of Rutgers University.

Excerpted from the proposal:

“...the Rutgers’ faculty has been fundamentally transformed in ways that fragment the university community, disrupting learning and research. Contingent appointments now outnumber tenure track appointments at Rutgers and a majority of all new full-time hires are off the tenure track. The percentage of tenured faculty at Rutgers has steadily decreased 1% per year (from 67% to 59%) over the past nine years.

“...Successful efforts to address this problem have typically taken a dual approach. The first is to improve working conditions for contingent faculty (including longer terms of appointment, due process, and better compensation)...The second is to increase the ratio of full-time and/or tenured appointments. This proposal suggests that initial efforts to rebalance the proportion of full and tenure bearing appointments should focus on a) converting part-time appointments to full-time appointments and b) *converting contingent full-time appointments to tenure-track appointments.*”

The proposal states that such full-time teaching-with-tenure appointments “could be created by converting excellent and experienced instructors and lecturers currently serving in contingent positions into tenure eligible faculty members and by recruiting faculty with proven and promising teaching abilities.” Criteria for such positions include:

- Workload would be determined by the unit in accordance with collective bargaining;
- Such faculty would be reviewed and considered for promotion using a process parallel to that for research-tenure-track faculty;
- Criteria for promotion would be specific to these appointments, emphasizing the quality of teaching, as well as service and scholarship on curricular methods, development, and practice.

3.II. Discussion

Of continual concern during FPAC discussions was the perceived erosion of tenure-eligible lines at Rutgers. In addition to data provided by the authors of the proposal, Panayotatos reported that the number of part-time faculty on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus has varied during the period of 1998 to 2006, at one point exceeding that of employees in the professor ranks.¹ During this period, the number of non-tenure-track instructors/assistant instructors increased from 6% to a total of 17%, at the expense of associate professors (-6 percentage points) and assistant professors (-4 percentage points). As a consequence, 84 tenure eligible lines have been lost on this campus since 1988.²

Both support and criticism of the proposed change were expressed by the individuals interviewed by members of the FPAC. Richard Moser of the AAUP stated that the number of tenure-eligible positions at the University will likely erode as the number of contingent faculty positions increases. Moser continued that a multi-tiered faculty

¹ PTLs account for 81 to 86% of all part-time faculty.

² *New Brunswick Faculty Council Personnel Policy Committee report on New Brunswick Campus statistics and trends related to the numbers of tenured and tenure-track faculty, PTLs, and TA/GA's. March 2007.*

already exists at Rutgers, and this is unlikely to change. Recognizing this, the proposal aims to improve the overall quality of teaching at Rutgers by replacing disincentives for contingent faculty with some rewards. Moser further stated that such teaching-with-tenure positions would provide Rutgers with the 1) distinction of innovation -- drawing the best and most ambitious competition for our positions; and 2) community, academic freedom, quality control that tenure provides.

Richard Miller, chair of the Department of English, stated that teaching-with-tenure positions might not be a feasible option for this department unless the unit is able to recruit teachers with stellar records, and some additional scholarship and service would be expected. Competition for graduate students and other resources between teaching-only and regular tenure-track members of the Department might strain relationships between the two groups.

Faculty associated with the Basic Skills program in the Math Department saw no need for these teaching-with-tenure lines at the present time, but asked if, for example, someone teaches for 30 to 40 years, why they shouldn't be granted tenure. It was discussed whether such faculty would stay refreshed and motivated, and then retire at an appropriate time.

EVPA Furmanski remarked to the committee that Rutgers is the state's leading public research university. The basic premise of the University's educational value is that students are taught by faculty who engage in research and are at the forefront of their field. As an alternative, the Rutgers Non-tenure Track Faculty Task Force is currently charged to examine whether a better and regular career path for non-tenure-track faculty is possible.

Within the committee, support for the teaching-with-tenure lines was expressed as a way to empower, and provide a stable and professional career path for, those who contribute vastly to the educational mission of the University. Currently, some 30% of undergraduate courses are taught by contingent faculty who do not enjoy the same protection of academic freedom as do tenured faculty, and who are neither free to innovate nor take risks in the classroom. Although creation of these teaching-with-tenure lines would require a culture change which would be difficult to achieve, some members of the FPAC agreed that it is a desirable goal. Other comments in support of the proposal included:

- Criteria for excellence in teaching at promotion time exist in many very fine liberal arts institutions throughout the country, so a peer group exists from whom outside letters can be solicited for these teaching-with-tenure lines.
- The promotion packet would be similar to that of a teaching portfolio.
- Faculty focused on teaching can bring the same energy to their positions as research faculty do, developing pedagogical methods as scholarship.

Concerns for establishing a teaching-with-tenure class of faculty, however, included:

- Whether such lines would be siphoned from the regular research/teaching pool.
- Funding issues, including fringe benefits.
- The hiring process: whether 1) these positions would remain highly competitive, 2) searches would be conducted in such a way as to attract nationally recognized candidates, and 3) there would be any presumption on the part of longstanding contingent faculty of that they would be eligible for these positions.
- Criteria for promotion: a parallel process based on techniques for evaluating teaching would be needed. Issues with this include: 1) candidates for tenure evaluated solely on teaching criteria are not likely to have the national or international reputation required for promotion; 2) different units have different criteria for teaching, creating inequity; 3) those who evaluate these individuals are less likely to be aware of teaching methods, thus innovations would not be appreciated; 4) external letters are significant in the promotion process – the teaching-with-tenure culture does not exist nationally, so as vanguard, Rutgers would have difficulty soliciting the appropriate external letters at promotion time.

- Whether such lines may be used to retain faculty who could not make it through the regular tenure system. Would some be forced into such lines, only to be denied tenure and dismissed later?
- The creation of a two-class tenure system, and whether Rutgers, as the flagship research institution of New Jersey, would want, and could function in, a dual-tenure system, and whether the culture change needed to institute this system would be even possible.
- Only recently has Rutgers changed its focus from that of teaching college to public research university, becoming a member of the AAU in 1989. Would this compromise our mission as a research university?
- Why “tenure”? Would long-term contracts be more satisfactory?

3.III. Recommendation

No recommendation for policy change is made in this report or by the Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee on this matter at this time, and no action by the University Senate is required.

Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee 2008-09

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