

## Request to Revise University Senate By-laws to Permit Senate Representation of Units by Full-time, Non Tenure-track Faculty

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### **Background:**

Current senate regulations define several levels of Senate membership. These include students, administrators, and faculty. In terms of faculty membership, there are two classifications: full time, tenure-eligible faculty and contingent (full-time non tenure-track [FT NTT] and part-time lecturer [PTL]) faculty. Contingent faculty are elected to the Senate to represent all contingent faculty members on each campus. Full time, tenure-eligible faculty are elected to represent their school within the University.<sup>1</sup>

Over the years there has been a gradual increase in contingent faculty, with a corresponding decrease in tenure-track faculty. This reflects a national trend. As a result, and partly due to the ongoing limitations of a reduced budget, contingent appointments now outnumber tenure-track appointments at Rutgers. At this point, a combination of FT NTT faculty and PTLs teach more than half of all undergraduate classes. As a result, contingent faculty are volunteering for or being drafted for various committee and university assignments. Among these assignments is the possible election to the University Senate as a representative of a school.

### **Proposal:**

Amend the Senate by-laws to allow each University school to elect the most qualified faculty member without regard to tenure-eligible status. The criteria for selection would be defined by each school, but would be contingent on the selected faculty member holding the rank of full-time Instructor or higher (including the rank of Clinical faculty) and has a reasonable expectation of continued employment at Rutgers.

### **Possible Senate by-law language change:**

The term "faculty members" as used in paragraphs B(1), B(3), B(4), B(5), and B(6) with respect to eligibility to vote for a representative and/or to be elected to the Senate shall refer to full-time faculty; *tenure and tenure track as well as contingent* members of the University holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, or the equivalent academic ranks as defined in Section 60.5.2 (formerly Book 3.3.2) A and B of the University Regulations. *Such selection and election shall be left to each academic entity.*

### **Rationale:**

The recent elimination of the four-year rule allows multi-year ongoing contracts for FT NTT contingent faculty. Further, the creation of Clinical faculty further expands the

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<sup>1</sup> Current Senate by-laws are not that clear: "(1) The term "faculty members" as used in paragraphs B(1), B(3), B(4), B(5), and B(6) with respect to eligibility to vote for a representative and/or to be elected to the Senate shall refer to full-time faculty members of the University holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, or the equivalent academic ranks as defined in Section 60.5.2 (formerly Book 3.3.2) A and B of the University Regulations."

number and diversity of non tenure-track faculty. Given that approximately 41% of all university faculty are not tenure eligible, that the various schools are relying more and more on FT NTT faculty, and that there is desire by these FT NTT faculty members to serve the University, amending the current Senate by-laws to give each school more flexibility in selecting faculty to represent them in the Senate is appropriate.

**Final Comment:**

The intent of this proposal is to allow each school to nominate the most appropriate and qualified candidate to represent their interests in the University Senate. Limiting such selection to tenure-eligible faculty when current hiring rates and national trends denote expanded use of contingent faculty limits the ability of each school to nominate the best candidate. Further, as each school defines how they will include FT NTT faculty as school representatives in the Senate, those faculty members will move into a sense of community and dedication to Rutgers. Our goal should be to increase rather than limit FT NTT faculty in non-class related activities.