

Arizona State University

The Contract Faculty (aka Non-Tenure Track) Task Force Report

To the Personnel Committee of the University Senate

Fall 2011

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I. Introduction

Charge and Composition of Task Force

The Contract Faculty Task Force, in which we refer to full-time non-tenure track (NTT) faculty, was formed in the Spring of 2010, as an ad hoc subcommittee of the University Senate Personnel standing committee by Dr. Rojann Alpers, the University Senate and UAC chair/president. Our charge from the Faculty Senate was:

- To provide a mechanism whereby the contract faculty can self-identify and advocate for issues that specifically impact this group of colleagues.
- To identify any issues (past or future) that need to be addressed, and then,
- Using a sound methodology, to collect the essential information to formulate a position, draft appropriate resolutions with supporting documentation, and
- To provide a final report of all activities to the UAC for presentation to the ASU Senate at one of its spring 2011 meetings.

The task force is comprised of 12 NTT members that have served in the ASU Senate, who were appointed for service on this committee by Dr. Alpers. We acknowledge the following task force members and thank them for their service:

Jay Abramson, Denise Bodman, Sherry Cisler, Cristi Coursen, Barbara Fargotstein, David Forsyth, Mirna Lattouf, JoAnn Mulvihill, Ann Sebren, Jeffrey Thomas, and Jacqueline Wheeler.

The task force Chair is Holly Huffman.

The task force has held numerous study sessions and meetings and conducted three rounds of campus meetings, which have been open to all faculty, with the specific aim of acquiring input from NTT faculty and about NTT faculty's concerns and issues. These meetings were conducted during Spring 2010, Fall 2010, and Spring 2011. We have conducted a survey of the ASU NTT faculty and reviewed national literature relevant to the NTT faculty segment at peer institutions. At the end of the academic year for 2010-2011, the Committee presented an interim report to the Senate and asked for and was granted additional time to finalize its work for presentation in Fall of 2011-2012.

II. Objectives

In light of the national scope of the crisis regarding faculty service in universities, ASU stands in a unique position. It is poised within the philosophies of the New American University to serve as an exemplar in the establishment of new paradigms for educational quality by ensuring that all faculty, research-intensive and teaching-intensive, have (1) clear understandings of the expectations of their colleges and units regarding the qualification for hire into the various faculty ranks; (2) clear knowledge of requirements for promotion; and (3) a sense of security of employment, encouraging and enabling them to become highly committed to the missions of their institution and invested in improving the programs and educational outcomes of the students they serve.

III. Background

In the United States, the professorate was historically created based upon the European tradition of scholarship. This tradition included professional values, standards, and responsibilities that gave rise to a platform of academic freedom and security of employment that we associate with the concept of tenure. Over the past few decades, reliance solely on the tenure system is facing major challenges, and some would say it is eroding and has all but collapsed (AAUP (2010)).

Currently at ASU, 37.3% of the full time faculty are in non-tenure track (NTT) ranks (University Office of Institutional Analysis, 2011). Faculty who hold the ranks of *Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor* are usually either tenured or tenure-eligible (ACD 505–02, 2011). Non-Tenure track positions or a fixed-term appointment is for a specified period of time and will not lead to consideration for tenure. All faculty titles of visiting, clinical, research, professor of practice, instructor, lecturer, faculty research associate and faculty associate will be in this appointment category (ACD 505-02, 2011).

NTT Ranks:

Non-Tenure track faculty include those holding the positions of *Research Professor, Research Associate Professor, Research Assistant Professor, Research Scholar, Clinical Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, Clinical Assistant Professor, Professor of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice, Assistant Professor of Practice, Principal Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Lecturer* (ACD 505-02, 2011)

Academic Professional positions include: *Administrative Professionals, Archivist, Clinical Professional, Fine Arts Specialist, Instructional Professional, Learning Resources Specialist, Museum Professional, Research Administrator, Research Engineer, Research Scientist, Research Professional, Research Technologist, Biodesign Researcher/Senior Biodesign Researcher and Academic Associates* (ACD 505-03, 2011).

Other ranks and positions are acknowledged within the University but are not generally members of the Academic Assembly and are intended to have limited term or annual appointments only (ACD 505-02, 2011 and ACD 506-03, 2011).

Prior to the economic climate of the last few years (2009 to present), multi-year contracts served as a vehicle to indicate an intent for continued employment of proven NTT faculty (ACD 507-04, 2011). In the wake of the economic crisis and subsequent budget cuts by the Arizona Legislature that began in Spring 2009, Multi-Year contracts with NTT faculty were generally converted to non-continuing contracts (one year only or allowed to step down to one year only) as a means of providing for the financial exigency if faced with additional severe budget cuts that could result in the need to reduce the number of full-time faculty. This, understandably, sent a surge of serious concern and insecurity throughout the ASU NTT populace, which was recognized by many faculty senate representatives. This circumstance was addressed in the faculty Senate at a special meeting held February 23, 2009, in which Senate Motion #IV was issued stating, "Because non-tenure track faculty and non-continuing appointment academic professionals are crucial to the success of ASU, as soon as possible, the university should reestablish the system of multiple-year contracts for these faculty members." This Motion passed the senate with a vote of Yes=75, No=3, Abstain=0.

IV. Recognition of Issues

The task force has accumulated information regarding local (ASU) and national NTT faculty service demographics. It is clear that throughout the nation's universities a major shift occurred in faculty employment trends over the past 40 years resulting in a growing proportion of NTT faculty.

Prior to the 1970s, the normative full-time faculty appointments were teaching-intensive and were on the tenure track. Tenure track faculty bore the whole spectrum of academic life and its responsibilities, including teaching, research, shared governance, and curricular content. By 2007, almost 70% of faculty members were employed off the tenure track, including NTT faculty and part time, associate, and adjunct faculty (Institute of Education Sciences, 2010) and only 27% of all new faculty hires were tenure track (Gappa, Austin and Trice, 2007). In subsequent years, what has emerged is a more bifurcated faculty composition - those whose mission focus is teaching-intensive and those that are research-intensive (AAUP, 2010). An unfortunate side effect is that NTT faculty have been shunted outside of the tenure system (CAW, 2010). This has resulted in inequities for both faculty groups in the following ways:

- 1) Although fully academically qualified, with many holding terminal degrees, NTT faculty generally have less security of employment, feel less invested, draw significantly lower salaries, are not always incorporated into all aspects of university life or the full range of faculty rights and responsibilities, and may not be encouraged or rewarded for their scholarly efforts (Williams, Poole and McCready, 2009); and
- 2) The research-intensive faculty, generally tenure track, bear a heavy load in soliciting grant funding and research productivity in the form of publications and are disproportionately tasked with university service that requires tenure status, i.e. committee service, departmental/university administration (Gappa, et.al, 2007).

Neither the University nor its students are well served when their faculty suffer from the above issues. To meet their mission, universities clearly need faculty that are all invested in their institutions, fairly rewarded, challenged to serve the students' instructional needs, and appropriately supported in pursuing their professional growth and scholarly activities, including research and publication.

The NTT faculty at ASU are largely long term employees and are invested in their departments and the University. Our research indicates clearly that:

1. Many NTT faculty are career, professional ASU faculty members. Data from our survey respondents reveal that 44% of the NTT faculty have served at ASU for six or more years and 21% have served 10 or more years. Also, NTT faculty tend to have increased teaching loads and often have larger class sizes, the result of which places the full-time NTT faculty member in a crucial role in the mission at ASU by significantly impacting both retention and over all student success at ASU.
2. NTT Faculty provide more than instruction as part of their positions at ASU. They support every aspect of the University's missions, teaching not only undergraduates, including honors students, but graduate students as well. Further, many NTT faculty are actively engaged in

research and other scholarly activities. NTTs also are part of unit administration in many schools and are representatives of their faculty and campus faculty in University governance. Despite this, it is interesting to note that some NTT faculty are denied participation in their own unit governance.

3. NTT Faculty are engaged in professional organizations, do research, write and/or edit journal articles and books in their fields, and serve on journal review committees. In addition, some are required to research and publish as part of their professional credentials.
4. NTTs often are unclear about hiring and advancement guidelines. Units have generally not made these standards for NTTs clear. NTT faculty are also very concerned about the commitment of ASU to their careers and desire a more clear path to promotion and reasonable sense of security about their employment.

Another concern expressed to the committee is the fact that some units have hired numerous individuals under the title of *Instructor*. Instructor, ABD appears to be defined as a temporary position for newly hired individuals who, upon completion of their dissertations or other final terminal degree requirements, will be ranked as assistant professors. However, the qualifications for the position of Instructor are not defined either in the ACD Manual (Arizona State University, 2011) or in the Board of Regents Policy Manual (ABOR, 2011), and this committee has found no information regarding the possibility or conditions for advancement from that position to one of Lecturer, Professor of Practice, Clinical Professor, or Research Professor tracks, nor to a defined position in the academic professional ranks.

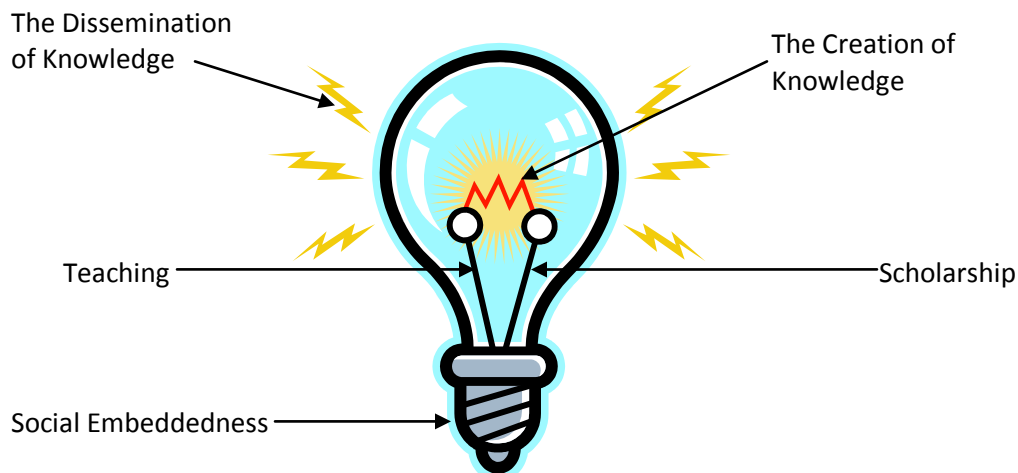
V. Discussion

National studies suggest that there is the need for both teaching-intensive and research-intensive faculty in our universities (AAUP, 2010). It behooves both that their roles should have some degree of distinction and some degree of similarity to fulfill their mutual goals. This balance is envisioned using the "light-bulb" model found below. In this model, both faculty groups serve one goal that is the overall mission of the University to generate and communicate knowledge. ASU President Michael Crow (2010, p. 489) describes the University's commitment to academic excellence in his *BioScience* Viewpoint article as "...organizing research and teaching efforts to seek solutions to the grand challenges". Clearly, the importance of research and its contribution to new knowledge must not be understated, and one of the cornerstones of the University is the transmission of that knowledge. Supporting this idea, our data has revealed a high level of both research and teaching activity among current NTT faculty at ASU.

In the light-bulb model, you will notice that the light is a metaphorical representation of knowledge flowing out to society. The two contact wires represent the teaching and the scholarship contributions of the faculty. The filament between the two represents the creation of knowledge, as the students come to see the light. The base of the bulb represents social embeddedness, the pathway through which ASU connects to the community both socially and professionally. This connection often comes in the form of faculty service to the community. The light bulb model defies traditional trends observed

nationally, where many universities have moved towards a bifurcation of faculty. At the New American University, we see a connected faculty, whose role as the primary purveyors of knowledge resonates across the student body and into the community, state, nation and beyond. The intended implication is that scholarship, teaching and service go hand in hand to accomplish the overall purpose. Since all faculty, tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track, play a role in all three areas, it is clear that NTT faculty make valuable contributions to the success of the university.

NTT Goal Diagram



- All faculty in the light bulb are career faculty and all are teacher-scholars.
- Faculty focused on teaching and faculty focused on scholarship are similarly committed and both need similar career development requirements and opportunities to ensure the **quality** of the institution's graduates.
- Teaching and research are the two main missions and revenue generators of the university. NTT faculty who are edifying the teaching mission are critical. They are teacher scholars. Their conditions of service include all attributes of the traditional tenure track career path, with a lesser requirement of research goals and higher component of service and/or instructional development or administration.

Currently, the largest revenue stream for the University is tuition, and two major metrics of student success are course completion and degree completion. Quality instruction is at the core of student retention, thus keeping the University robust. Recognition of the embeddedness and professional achievements of NTT faculty is critical to the achievement of these metrics.

The continuing uncertainty and concern of nearly a third of the University faculty over whether or not they will be employed after each spring graduation is a most serious issue. Following the announcement regarding the elimination of multi-year contracts, it was discovered that this policy was not

implemented consistently across the University. Some NTT faculty have reported receiving multi-year contracts during the last two academic years, while others have not.

The task force reviewed the Arizona Board of Regents Policy Manual (ABOR, 2011) regarding conditions of faculty service, the ASU ACD Manual (Arizona State University, 2011), and a sampling of the multi-year contracts offered before the current state budget crisis. In all contracts, in the ABOR manual, and in the ACD manual, it is clear that, even when granted a multi-year contract, NTT faculty may be terminated or non-renewed based on financial issues of the unit, College, or University. However, the recognition of the value of multi-year contracts to both the administration and faculty is clear in the ACD Manual (ACD 507-04, 2011):

Multiple-year appointments are generally made for one or more of the following reasons:

1. to provide appropriate expertise and unit support that is needed for more than one year;
2. to provide appropriate expertise for a grant/contract funded project;
3. to provide the unit with flexibility;
4. to enable the unit to respond to market forces; or
5. to enhance national recruitment efforts.

The improved stability of employment offered by a multiple-year appointment provides an incentive commensurate with the level of expertise and proven performance that enhances the university's ability to compete in the marketplace.

This issue is not unique to Arizona State University. Other universities in our nation are taking steps to address the issue of securing the NTT segment of their faculty, these efforts include:

1. Offering a line that mirrors the tenure track, as seen in the Lecturer with Security of Employment Track offered by the University of California (UC Office of the President, 1995).
2. Allowing the conversion of NTT to tenure track at the level of both lines and of individuals, example institutions are: Pennsylvania State University System, St. John's University (NYC), Santa Clara University and Western Michigan University (AAUP, 2010).
3. Collective bargaining agreements have been implemented by many institutions including; the California State System and City University of New York (AAUP, 2010).
4. Two-tiered faculty systems with a 'teaching tenure track' as proposed at Rutgers University (AAUP, 2010).

VI. Recommendations to the Personnel Committee for Action by the University Senate.

Based upon the meetings, survey, and research undertaken by this subcommittee, after consideration and much discussion, the members of the NTT Faculty Task Force respectfully request that the Personnel Committee accept this report and consider making the following recommendations to the University Senate for appropriate action as motions from the Personnel Committee:

Whereas, full-time non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty constitute an estimated one-third of the ASU faculty, and

Whereas, full-time NTT faculty contribute significantly to every aspect of the university's mission, to include teaching, scholarship, embedded service to ASU, and community and global embeddedness, the role of NTT faculty is *mission critical* to the success of ASU (the New American University) and the State of Arizona, and

Whereas many full-time NTT faculty are career professionals who have made vested long term commitments to the university, 44% being employed six or more years, 21% being employed 10 or more years at ASU, and

Whereas the American Association of University Professors and the Coalition on the Academic Workforce have performed significant research and have recently recommended improving the status of full-time, non-tenure track faculty nationwide,

Therefore, the University Senate Task Force on Full-Time, Non-Tenure Track Faculty recommends the following resolutions be submitted to the University Faculty Senate for consideration on behalf of all full-time NTT faculty at ASU:

1. In keeping with the approved Senate Motion #IV (February 23, 2009), that the administration of ASU reinstate the practice of multiyear appointments and rolling multiyear appointments.
2. In keeping with ACD 111-02, that the administration actively require each unit to establish in their bylaws a clear path for review and promotion of NTT faculty, to include defined dates for contract renewals or terminations.
3. In keeping with ABOR's policy, that full-time NTT faculty have the right to apply or negotiate for a Multi-Year appointment, for those faculty members who have demonstrated excellence in their field. It is this committee's recommendation that the University provide a sense of security of employment for qualified NTT faculty. The security of employment could be established through the use of rolling multi-year contracts. Exceptional faculty who qualify would be provided with a fair and ethical sense of job security.
4. That the University Senate request consultation with the Administration to define, for purposes of the ACD Manual, the requirements, responsibilities, and promotional pathway (if any) for the position of Instructor.
5. That the University and units provide full-time NTT faculty professional development opportunities to include travel, recognition, awards, paid professional leave, and emeritus status.

6. **That units allow participation of full-time NTT faculty in faculty governance decisions, especially in matters that affect them.**
7. **That the NTT Task Force be established as a permanent standing committee of the University Senate.**
8. **That any NTT faculty policies and procedures implemented as a result of this report be reviewed three years after implementation.**

Respectfully submitted this 10 day of November, 2011

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Appendix A

Summary Results of ASU NTT Faculty Task Force Survey as Presented at the Campus Forums

(Spring 2011)

Link to Power Point Document:

<http://usenate.asu.edu/NTE>