

Senate Personnel Committee Report
Meeting, Friday, October 31, 2014

In its Spring 2014 report, the Senate Personnel Committee unanimously supported the “Understanding the Value of Non-Tenure Track Faculty and Improving NTTF Retention Through Increased Multi-Year and Rolling Contracts” recommendations that the Provost and the Deans increase the number of multi-year contracts awarded to qualified faculty, and that the Senate support ASU’s efforts to request a waiver of the cap on the number of multi-year contracts. The committee also unanimously supported the “Professional Development of NTTF and Professional Leaves” report’s recommendations that information be collected from ASU units and faculty concerning current practices and recent experiences, and that the information be reviewed with a goal of developing a university-wide policy for professional development for NTT faculty.

At our first meeting of the Fall 2014 semester, the committee was disappointed to discover that rather than the above recommendations moving forward, the positions of NTTF, particularly those of Lecturers, is being further eroded. Vice Provost Barry Ritchie’s proposed policy changes of February 2014 (per an email to Deans in February, 2014) regarding the contracts for, and promotion of, Lecturers, make it impossible for those Lecturers who once had MY contracts to apply for promotion (without rising to the top of a national search) and cripple the career paths of Lecturers at ASU who are on one-year contracts.

It is important to note that some of these faculty have previously been promoted to Senior Lecturer but are no longer eligible to apply for promotion to Principle Lecturer because their MY contracts were reduced to one-year contracts during the recession. Further it is important to note that many on one-year contracts hold Senior and Principal Lecturer positions.

The committee asserts that Lecturers at ASU provide vital and essential services to the university. They hold annual, multi-year, and rolling multi-year appointments depending on the needs of their units and the reliability of their salary funding. They hold ranks of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Principal Lecturer as they progress through their careers and earn promotions. Historically, Lecturers have been able to request promotions and transitions from annual to multi-year, or multi-year to rolling multi-year appointments by filing a Request for Academic Personnel Action (<https://provost.asu.edu/sites/default/files/shared/forms/APA.pdf>) and providing the necessary supporting documentation. Multiple stages of review from the Unit Committee, through the University Provost reviewed the applications and judged the merits of each to determine approval or denial. Nothing in the ACD or ABOR policy denies the right of any Lecturers to submit such requests and expect a thorough review. In fact, portions of the ACD explicitly give Lecturers the right to make such requests.

Vice Provost's Ritchie's proposed policy changes stating that only lecturers on multi-year appointments are eligible for promotion are a direct contradiction of ACD 506-05. The second change Vice Provost Ritchie proposed is that Lecturers on annual appointments could only transition to multi-year appointments by applying for such positions in open competitive searches.

It is essential to note that prior to the recession in 2009, many NTT faculty members had multi-year contracts. The reasons for giving multi-year contracts are spelled out in ACD 507-04. They are:

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.

Further the use of lecturers and clinical professors can generate greater student credit hours (SCH's) since NTT faculty tend to teach sections with larger enrollments than the T/TT faculty who have the burden of carrying a scholarship and research agenda that delivers measureable research revenues and reputation for the institution.

ACD 507-04 goes on to state "The improved stability of employment offered by a multiple-year appointment provides an incentive commensurate with the level of expertise and enhances the university's ability to compete in the marketplace. Multiple-year appointments may be for a fixed period or may be for a rolling appointment period." The rolling contract is a feature awarded to a multi-year NTTF that demonstrates high performance on the annual faculty review process and effectively keeps the faculty member at the frontend on the multi-year sequence if funding remains available.

Economic exigencies created by the Great Recession, however, led to a reduction in the number of multi-year contracts given to NTE faculty. As chronicled in **The Contract Faculty (aka Non-Tenure Track) Task Force Report:**

In the wake of the economic crisis and subsequent budget cuts by the Arizona Legislature that began in Spring 2009, Multi-Year contracts with NTE 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 NTE 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.

Although Senate Motion 2009-04 encouraged the re-establishment of multiple-year contracts for NTT faculty members, it did nothing to address the cap on multiple-year contracts imposed by ABOR Policy 6-201-E-11: "At each university, the total number of multiple-year appointments as lecturers, senior lecturers, principal lecturer, professors of practice, research professors and clinical professors may not exceed fifteen percent (15%) of the number of tenure track faculty, both tenured and tenure eligible." Arizona State University, in AY 2013-2014 was at 10.5% well below the ABOR percentage.ⁱ Thus, it was the position of the NTTF Committee, through the University Senate Personnel Committee, to recommend that the Provost's office work with the Deans to award more multi-year contracts to the dedicated lecturers, clinical professors, and professors of practice that have seniority in rank and are delivering quality instruction as determined through course evaluations and the annual faculty evaluation.

The Personnel Committee recommends the following

1. An audit to determine the following
 - a. the number of Lecturers on MY contracts
 - b. the number of Lecturers who lost their MY contracts during the recession
 - c. the number of those Lecturers who lost their MY contract during the recession who have been promoted to, or hold the title Senior or Principal Lecturer
2. A pathway for those Lecturers who lost their MY contract during the recessions to regain those MY contract without engaging in a nationally competitive search.

Finally, we would like to note that many lecturers are demoralized by these proposed policy changes, and ASU could experience a "brain drain" as NTTF seek more secure options elsewhere.

ⁱ For 2013-14 academic year, there were 1313 tenured professors, 452 non-tenured but tenure track professors, and 185 NTE faculty that have multiyear status. Thus the number of NTE faculty members with multiyear contracts (185) amounts to only 10.5% of the T/TT faculty members (1765). Under the current ABOR policy, .15 * 1765 or 265 NTE faculty members could be awarded multiyear contracts. The University Non-Tenure Track Faculty (NTTF) committee recommends university

administrators inform department chairs and deans that they have the ability to increase the number of multiyear contracts awarded to NTE faculty members.