A Summary and Update on Senate Recommendations for NTS Faculty
Compiled by the Office of the Provost
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In 2013, the University Senate created an ad hoc committee to focus on issues related to non-tenure stream (NTS) faculty. The committee, chaired by Irene Frieze and with representatives from across the University, issued two thoughtful and useful reports. Contained in the two reports are numerous recommendations. In this document, the reports are summarized; they are available in full on the Senate's website. In addition, this document summarizes progress related to the recommendations.

It is important to point out that, while every recommendation may not be addressed in this report or fully implemented across the University, there has been considerable progress made in strengthening the work environment for faculty outside the tenure stream. This ongoing effort to strengthen the work environment at Pitt for all faculty – tenured, tenure stream, non-tenure stream, full-time and part-time – continues today, and is an example of the effective collaboration between the Senate and the Office of the Provost.

I. Full-Time Non-Tenure Stream Faculty

The ad hoc committee's first report, issued in 2015, focused on the work environment of full-time non-tenure stream faculty. In their report, the committee noted that NTS faculty perform essential tasks with varying duties. The committee also noted that decision-making related to NTS faculty can vary widely across academic units, leading to considerable variation in practices. The 2015 report made several recommendations, giving particular emphasis to (a) academic units having clearly explained and accessible policies related to NTS faculty; (b) processes and practices related to annual reviews, incentive structures and career tracks; and (c) the locus of decision-making as it relates to NTS faculty, that is, whether some decisions made at the academic unit level should be made at a University level to ensure more consistency across units.

Progress made since the 2015 report was issued includes the following:

(1) Non-tenure stream faculty are now eligible for emeritus status. This action was recommended and approved by the Council of Deans (9-3-15), Faculty Assembly (10-6-15), and Senate Council (10-14-15). It was also endorsed by then Provost Beeson and Chancellor Gallagher. To become policy, the change also required approval by the University's Board of Trustees, along with changes to the University by-laws. This has all been done, and the change has been communicated to the faculty as well as to deans and campus presidents. Since the University's by-laws were changed in 2016, non-tenure stream faculty have been eligible for – and received – emeritus status. Moreover, we have seen a rise in the percentage of NTS faculty retirees granted emeritus status – from 19% in 2016 to 70% in 2018. As a point of comparison, in 2018, 74% of tenured faculty retirees were granted emeritus status.

(2) The Office of the Provost has worked with the schools and regional campuses to ensure that each academic unit has established promotion guidelines and career pathways for faculty outside the tenure stream. In addition, the Office of the Provost reviewed the guidelines and

maintains copies on file. Other than the new School of Computing and Information, whose Faculty Affairs Committee is actively working on this activity, all units have drafted such guidelines and most have posted them to their website or a secure intranet. See attached table for additional information.

(3) The Office of the Provost has also been working with the schools and regional campuses to ensure guidelines for governance and decision-making are appropriate, with a particular focus on voting rights. Many units had already established governance guidelines, including the voting rights of faculty for a range of decisions. Some units have recently updated their guidelines to clarify voting rights of NTS faculty. The Office of the Provost maintains copies of the units' guidelines on file.

(4) Two specific actions focus on strengthening the annual review process.
   a. Each year, the Office of the Provost ensures that all academic units complete the annual review process for all full-time faculty (tenured, tenure stream and non-tenure stream) across the University. In addition, the Office of the Provost reviews a random sample of 10% of the annual review letters written to faculty in the Provost-area schools to ensure that the letters are consistent with the annual review framework developed jointly by the Senate Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee (TAFC) and the Council of Deans, and documented in a 1999 memo by then Provost Jim Maher. The sample includes annual review letters written by chairs and deans to full-time non-tenure stream faculty. Feedback about the quality of the review is provided to the deans and campus presidents. Given the ad hoc committee report, there has been a concerted effort to comment on – and provide actionable advice related to – the clarity of job duties and expectations conveyed to non-tenure stream faculty in their annual review letters, as well as the clarity of guidance related to possible promotion, where appropriate.

   b. The Office of the Provost is working to provide more guidance to department chairs and associate deans on effective annual reviews. To that end, in 2018 a module was introduced into the orientation for new chairs and associate deans, explaining the annual performance review process and comparing effective and ineffective annual reviews. We expect to strengthen this training and continue to offer it.

(5) The Office of the Provost recently confirmed that all academic units have a salary reconsideration process in place, and that the process is available and accessible. Moreover, following a Senate resolution and ad hoc committee reports, then Provost Beeson issued guidelines related to annual performance reviews and associated salary decisions, establishing criteria for unit-level actions related to possible salary reductions.   The Provost issued her original memo in November 2016, and, in response to suggestions made by TAFC, a revised version in May 2018. Any potential school or regional campus salary reduction process must be approved by the Office of the Provost before it can be implemented. The Beeson memos are posted on the Office of the Provost website.

(6) The faculty pages on the Office of the Provost website have been significantly changed. Much more content has been added, information has been updated, and new pages have been developed. For example:

    a. New pages related to the many professional and career development opportunities for all faculty have been added, including information about the opportunity faculty have to join the *National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity* (NCFDD), the "First Tuesday of the Month" workshops for faculty, the Teaching Center's workshops and events offered to all faculty, the *ACC Academic Leader Network* program, and the *IMPACT* mentoring and networking program for faculty of color.
    b. The eligibility of non-tenure stream faculty for emeritus status has been clarified;
    c. The results of the 2016 COACHE survey of all full-time faculty (tenured, tenure stream, and non-tenure stream) and summaries of steps taken in response to the survey have been added;
    d. New content related to the phased retirement process has been added, based on recommendations from the Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee;
    e. … and much more!

II. Part-Time Faculty

In 2017, the Senate ad hoc committee issued a second report, this one focused on the work environment of part-time faculty. The committee's report includes a large number of recommendations in three broad categories: transparency, performance and seniority, and compensation and benefits. Below are general updates in each of these three categories and comments on specific recommendations as appropriate.

Transparency

The ad hoc committee noted the need for greater transparency in general, including the need for more information about current and best practices. As noted above, the Office of the Provost (OTP) invested significant effort in redesigning the "faculty" pages on the www.provost.pitt.edu website. Much more content was added, and the pages were redesigned for easier searching. Also, a website devoted to the 2016 COACHE survey of full-time faculty – including the survey, results, infographics, and steps taken in response to the survey – was developed and is accessible from the OTP site.

In addition to the website changes, the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Development, and Diversity now sends an e-newsletter to all faculty twice a term; these e-newsletters are also posted on the OTP website.

(1) Among the specific recommendations made by the Senate ad hoc committee is the recommendation that all part-time faculty should be fully oriented. The Office of the Provost has reviewed the part-time faculty orientation practices of all schools and campuses. Many have formal orientations, while others rely on more informal means to orient their part-time faulty. The Office of the Provost continues to work with the academic units to ensure all part-time faculty are appropriately oriented. To assist schools and campuses, the Office of the Provost worked with the

ad hoc committee to create a *Teaching Resource Guide for Faculty*, which has been distributed and is available on the OTP website. This guide provides an overview of teaching resources – including information about rosters and grades, classroom management, Teaching Center workshops and other resources available to all faculty (including part-time faculty) who teach.

(2) The ad hoc committee also recommended that practices for hiring part-time faculty should be standardized. The Office of the Provost is currently reviewing practices and offer letters across the University, and will work with the units to ensure letters are appropriate.

(3) The Offices of the Provost, Faculty Records, Human Resources, and others continually work with the academic units to ensure part-time faculty have timely access to IDs and other resources. Currently:

    a. **Newly hired** part-time faculty can get their ID cards, and have access to email, Blackboard, the Library, etc., within 24 to 48 hours of their appointments being entered into the system. Part-time faculty who are **rehired** can get their ID cards and have access up to 45 days before their appointments begin. If a **reappointed** faculty member's ID expires, the faculty member must renew it. Otherwise, for reappointed faculty, there is no interruption in access to email, Blackboard, the Library, etc.

    b. ID cards expire 30 days <u>after</u> the last day of a contract. Panther Central notifies a faculty member 90 days prior to the expiration date, so that the faculty member can renew an ID, as appropriate.

    c. All faculty have 155 days of access to email, Blackboard, online Library resources, etc., <u>after their contract expires</u>. This change was made several years ago. Prior to the change, access to these resources was denied when contracts expired.

One of the current challenges is getting newly hired part-time faculty timely access to needed resources. Access to email, Blackboard, the Library, etc., is dependent on their appointment information being entered into PRISM (and the faculty member getting their ID from Panther Central). As the University migrates to Oracle Cloud, this process has been "flagged" for improvement. When Oracle Cloud is live, delays in getting new part-time faculty access to these resources should be minimized. Note that the new faculty member will still be required to go to Panther Central for an ID but internal processing of the appointment should be greatly improved.

(4) The Office of the Provost has been reviewing with the academic units the impact of course cancellations on part-time faculty appointments to determine how prevalent course cancellations are and to better understand potential issues and challenges surrounding course cancellations.

In conjunction with this review, we have been exploring with the academic units the feasibility of compensation on a sliding scale, as recommended by the ad hoc committee, for part-time faculty in the event of a course cancellation. There is progress here as well, as some schools have begun implementing this recommendation.

<u>Performance and Seniority</u>

In this part of their report, the Senate ad hoc committee makes 3 specific recommendations related to compensation adjustments, course schedule and topic flexibility, and extended contracts. Progress is noted below.

(5) The report recommends that compensation for part-time faculty should be adjusted according to performance levels and seniority. The Office of the Provost has begun a regular process of reviewing the compensation of part-time faculty, and taking steps to make adjustments as appropriate. For example, as a result of the most recent review, it became clear that there was a need to adjust the compensation of part-time faculty at the regional campuses. Accordingly, the Provost provided funding to the regionals to begin to address the issue.

It can be noted that the Office of the Provost regularly reviews the salaries of full-time faculty as well, sharing information about these reviews with the Senate Budget Policies Committee. The administration's goal is to be at or above the median of the appropriate benchmark group, controlling for discipline and rank. In the latest review, we identified a few instances where that wasn't the case for certain pockets of NTS faculty and we worked directly with the deans or campus presidents to address the issues.

(6) The ad hoc committee report recommends the use of contracts that are longer in length than one-term. This recommendation has sparked discussions about the feasibility of longer-term contracts, where it makes sense, for part-time faculty. Some units already utilize extended contracts, and others are exploring and/or piloting the use of longer-term contracts.

<u>Compensation and Benefits</u>

The ad hoc committee report includes 4 recommendations related to health care benefits, access to professional development opportunities, compensation levels, and expanded benefits for part-time faculty.

(7) The report recommends that consideration be given to expanding health care access to all part-time faculty. Currently part-time faculty with a "regular" appointment (versus "temporary" appointment) have health care coverage. In many schools, the majority of part-time faculty have "regular" appointments and thus access to health care. In some professional schools, the majority of part-time faculty have part-time "temporary" appointments, perhaps reflecting the fact that many of their part-time faculty have other, outside employment. The Office of the Provost is reviewing the use of "regular" and "temporary" appointments with the academic units to ensure appropriate use of these categories.

(8) The ad hoc committee report recommends that part-time faculty should have access to opportunities to improve their skills. Much progress has been made in this area. In the past few years, there have been expanded opportunities made available to all faculty, including part-time faculty. Examples include:

a. The Teaching Center offers workshops, events, book and film discussions, etc., to all faculty. These include workshops on a wide range of topics, including pedagogy, teaching large lecture classes, handling controversial topics in the classroom, using educational technologies, and teaching online. Much of the Teaching Center programming is live-streamed for remote access. Some workshops are offered during evening hours, so that part-time faculty may more easily participate.

b. The *Innovation in Education Awards* program, which provides grants to fund teaching innovation, is open to all faculty including part-time faculty.

c. The annual *Provost's Diversity Institute for Faculty Development*, which strives to increase faculty awareness of diversity and develop skills to teach in a diverse, multi-cultural environment, is open to all faculty, including part-time faculty.

d. The University of Pittsburgh is an institutional member of the *National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity* (NCFDD), which is an organization focused on helping faculty be successful in academe. All faculty across all Pitt campuses can claim their free membership and take advantage of the wealth of resources offered online through the NCFDD.

e. The Office of the Provost offers "First Tuesday of the Month" career and professional development opportunities for all faculty over lunch. These workshops are also live-streamed and videos are posted on the OTP website for remote and on-demand access.

(9) The ad hoc committee recommends that the University should move toward making the minimum compensation for a 3-credit course be $4000. As noted above, there is now a regular review of the compensation of part-time faculty and recently additional funding was provided to the regionals to begin to adjust the compensation of the part-time faculty there. Some schools already meet the $4000 minimum compensation, and others have taken steps to make adjustments. The Office of the Provost will continue to monitor and review compensation overall, and to work with the schools and campuses to make adjustments where they are warranted.

(10) The report also recommends that the University investigate the cost and feasibility of providing other benefits to part-time faculty. The Offices of the Provost and Human Resources have begun to investigate this recommendation, beginning a process of benchmarking and data collecting to ascertain benefits offered at other institutions.