

Governance and Personnel Policy Committee of Faculty Senate
Tuesday, March 27, 2018
Faculty Collaborative Conference Room, D.H. Hill

Attendees: Ron Sederhoff, Kerry Havner, Alton Banks, Paul Huffman, Donna Carver, Marina Bykova, Doug Pearce, Phil Sannes

Guests: Dr. Katharine Stewart, Professor & Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, and Roy Baroff, Faculty and Staff Ombuds Office

Discussion: Non-tenure Track (NTT) and part-time (PT) Faculty: Issues and Concerns

- The current issues are typically departmental and/or college specific, and rooted in the course itself (number of students, student demand/department needs). Contracts generally run 1-2 years, and the timing of renewal can make planning difficult if not perilous. This can be exacerbated by the uncertainty/predictability and stability of funding/support. This raises the serious question of how to retain the best teaching faculty.
- On the compensation side, on a yearly rated basis, NTT and PT are paid less than postdoctoral fellows. Notably, there are 7 full time faculty and 50 lecturers paid less than postdocs on an equal time basis. The variability within the University is considerable, depending upon the discipline, and tends to be market driven. HR and Faculty Development are working to address these irregularities. But the solutions are complicated by the difficulty in even comparing position titles and the lack of clarity and variance in job expectations and compensation among departments and colleges. This seems to happen simply because it can.
- Importantly, the teaching load involved translates into a large portion of total student credit hours, including many “gateway” courses. The FTE head count of the collective PT and NTT faculty who teach these courses account for 36% of the total faculty. This is of concern as it is anticipated there will be replacement retirement/separation of significant numbers of TT faculty over the next 5 years.
- But even deeper issues pervade this problem which are cultural in nature. Equal pay for equal work should apply, but does not. This also involves gender issues, as there are more NTT women than TT women. The non-monetary treatment of faculty influences their voice and vote in departmental governance. This translates into lack of respect and poor definition of promotion standards. Seeking and having a seat at the table and decision-making is essential for the function of the University. This is a big problem in some departments, and clearly effects decision-making.
- The bottom line is that this is a very large issue for NTT. How can mutual respect among faculty and the value of teaching be recaptured? The measurements are more difficult than evaluating research. Senate needs to engage in the solutions to this challenge. How do we bring together the lecturer, teacher, and researcher cultures? It will require a coordinated effort by HR, administration, and faculty.