

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Structure & Governance Committee

Report and Recommendations on the Contingent Faculty Role in Shared Governance

CHARGE

S-0701 *Part-time and Full-time Non-tenure-track Faculty Role in Shared Governance: Examine, with input from the Senate's Faculty Affairs and Personnel Committee, the issue of all part-time, as well as full-time non-tenure-track, faculty and their role in shared governance at all levels throughout Rutgers, particularly as it relates to the increasing academic reliance on those faculty. Research best practices and make recommendations regarding how the role and participation of those faculty in University decision-making can better reflect their teaching/research responsibilities and better inform the educational process.*

SUMMARY

The University Senate's University Structure and Governance Committee (USGC) was asked to review governance issues associated with contingent faculty (part-time and full-time non-tenure track faculty) Having done so, the USGC recommends the following actions:

- The number of senators representing the contingent faculty groups should be increased to better articulate the issues and perspectives of contingent faculty at the University Senate.
- Department or unit by-laws should be revised to reflect a mechanism for ensuring opportunities for participation for contingent faculty.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On April 27, 2007, the University Senate voted unanimously to accept the USGC Report on Charge S-0604 on Shared Governance. In the report, the tenets of shared governance were outlined. Among them:

- A formal relationship should exist between consultative bodies and the central administration regarding decision making.
- Governance should be transparent and include shared decision-making and accountability to the greatest extent practicable.
- All stakeholders impacted by a decision should be involved in discussions of pertinent issues; if appropriate, they participate in decision making, and in all cases they are informed of and given explanations for the outcome of processes.
- The vehicles and processes for shared governance are responsive and respectful of the various cultures that exist at Rutgers (administrative, academic, student), with these processes meeting the unique needs of each group.

In addition, the report ensured that the USG Committee of the University Senate would continue to assess its own operations with regard to the representation of all community members through the Senate, in order to make it a more effective deliberative body for the university community. That report provided a framework for the committee's discussions.

Upon receiving feedback from the Faculty Affairs and Personnel Committee and other interested parties over the spring and fall 2007 semesters, the USGC considered the issue and came to the following recommendations.

I. Senate representation: Currently, contingent faculty (full- and part-time) comprise 51 percent¹ of instructional appointments (not counting teaching assistants and graduate assistants) universitywide. In the Senate, this group is represented by only three senators: one from Camden, one from Newark, and one from New Brunswick. The USGC feels that this number is inadequate to fully represent this population.

Recommendation:

- A. The number of senators representing the contingent faculty groups should be increased to ensure greater equity and opportunity within the Senate and for all constituent voices to be heard. Although 46 percent of the seats in the Senate are currently allotted to faculty; it is believed that by increasing the seats by three to accommodate PTLs is fair. It is recommended that one more representative for each campus (Camden, Newark, New Brunswick) be provided. Revise Senate bylaws accordingly, to read:

50.2.1. Membership and Organization of the Senate

C. Faculty Representation

(1) The University Senate shall have its faculty membership distributed among the units of the University in proportion to the number of faculty members or full-time equivalent students in each unit as provided in C(2) through C(6) below, to be elected in accordance with each unit's bylaws. In addition, each of the three geographic campuses shall be represented by three senators-at-large and **two** senators-at-large representing part-time lecturers and annuals.

- B. In order to make clear the role of non-tenure track faculty, change the current Senate bylaws to read:

50.2.1. Membership and Organization of the Senate

A. Definitions

(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 **tenure track and non-tenure track** 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.

II. Voting rights at the departmental/unit level: Currently, non-tenure track faculty and PTL participation in departmental/unit governance rights varies across the university. At the department or unit level, voting rights for non-tenure-eligible positions within departments are specified in departmental bylaws. It is apparent that voting rights for these faculty differ from unit to unit. As discussed during deliberations on University Senate charge S-0404 on Faculty

¹ Based upon universitywide January, 2008 payroll; 2,811 faculty (2,063 tenure-track, 748 non-tenure track), and October, 2007 payroll 1,253 PTL's and 182 coadjutant/casuals.

Departmental Voting Rights (2004), these individuals contribute greatly to the academic units and should be afforded opportunities to fully participate in departmental governance.

Part-time lecturers comprise 30 percent of academic appointments in the university and provide valuable insight into issues of curricula and advising. PTLs should be involved specifically in discussions related to curriculum and advising within individual units. Given their experience and perspective, their feedback would prove valuable. The issue, however, primarily lies with the voting rights of PTLs within individual units. As stated previously, such issues of governance should lie with the individual schools/departments

Recommendation: Departments are encouraged to revise their departmental bylaws to reflect a mechanism for ensuring voting opportunities for contingent faculty. Departments are also encouraged to develop standards to promote equity and determine participation. In addition, part-time contingent faculty should have an increased “voice,” at the department/unit level on academic issues.

University Structure and Governance Committee, 2007-2008

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