



**University Senate
Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee (FPAC)**

Response to Charge S-1212 Definition of "Faculty" in University Policies

A. Charge

S-1212 Definition of "Faculty" in University Policies: Investigate whether there is a need for a definition of "faculty" to be used in University Policies. If so, develop a definition of "faculty" to be incorporated into those policies. Respond to the Senate Executive Committee by April 2014.

B. Summary

The FPAC was asked to consider if a definition for the term "faculty" as it is used in the Rutgers University Policy Library is needed, and if so, what this definition might be and how it might be used. The FPAC met and discussed the charge in six sessions, namely in 2013 January, February, March, May, and October and in 2014 March. During the course of its investigation, the committee surveyed the Rutgers policy library for the term and its definitions and usage. The committee also examined the websites of external sources, such as AAUP-AFT contract language and several AAU aspirants, for definitions of the term.

Rutgers University Policy Library

In the Rutgers policy statements¹ (as of March 2013), the term "faculty" (as in singular or plural usage) was mentioned 739 times (Table 1). Most often (488 instances), the term referred to individuals: "faculty members" who are responsible for work, subject to rules, with rights and privileges (Table 2). The term was also used to refer to a "body" responsible for work, subject to rules, with right and privileges, as "the faculty" (136 instances). "Faculty" was used less often to refer to academic units (as in the "Faculty of Arts and Sciences") or as in administrative titles (45 and 70 instances, respectively). Within the policy library, other terms that likely refer to "faculty" include "part-time lecturer," "fellow," "teacher," "instructor," and those "employed by the university to teach." In addition, employees who receive notices from the administration addressed to "faculty" are considered to be "faculty."

Although extensively used, the term is rarely defined. Rutgers policy statements where the term was specifically defined were:

¹ <http://policies.rutgers.edu/>

- 10.2.11 *Student Academic Regulations & Policies, Code of Student Conduct* section II.H: “Faculty” means any person who holds a current academic appointment within the University”;
- 10.2.13 *Student Academic Regulations & Policies, Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy* section I footnote 2: “For purposes of the Academic Integrity Policy, the term faculty member includes not only tenured, tenure-track, and non tenure-track faculty members, but also part-time lecturers, coadjutants, TAs, staff members, and administrators who are serving as the instructor of record in a course; i.e., the instructor responsible for assigning final course grades”; and
- 50.2.1 *University Senate Membership* sections A.1 and A.2, where the term is defined for purposes of eligibility and entitlements.

Table 1. References to the word “faculty” (singular or plural) in 187 separate Rutgers University Policy Library statements

Number of references	Policy section	Number of policies	Number of policies with reference to “faculty”
116	Section 10: Academic	38	24
20	Section 20: Administrative	17	7
4	Section 30: Environmental Health, Safety, and Parking	6	2
25	Section 40: Fiscal Management	19	9
160	Section 50: Governance and Legal Matters	29	16
396	Section 60: Human Resources	71	46
3	Section 70: Information Technology	1	1
15	Section 80: University Relations	6	2
739		187	107

Table 2. References to the word “faculty” in the Rutgers policy library by category

Number of references	Category	Definition
136	body	a body responsible for work, subject to rules, with rights, with privileges: “the faculty”
488	individual	as faculty members responsible for work, subject to rules, with rights, with privileges
45	unit	specific, as in Faculty of Arts and Sciences Camden or Faculty of Arts and Sciences Newark; or general as in the “Faculty” included with schools or colleges
70	title	as for an individual (as in Vice President for Faculty and Staff Resources Affairs); or as in the name of a committee, board, panel, or document
739		

Other sources

In 2007-2011 contract language, the Rutgers AAUP-AFT states²:

² Section III.2 *in*: http://rutgersaaup.org/sites/default/files/images/documents/FT_Agreement_2007-2011.pdf

“The terms “faculty member” and “faculty members” shall include all of the following academic personnel currently employed or to be employed by Rutgers to discharge at least one-half (50%) of a full-time academic job assignment:

- (a) All faculty members with the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, assistant instructor, lecturer, research associate and adjunct faculty who are engaged in instruction, research, or other academic service; and
- (b) Members of the research, library, general extension, and cooperative extension staffs and those others, who, by virtue of University regulations hold equivalent rank to the faculty categories enumerated in (a) above.
- (c) Faculty members who are engaged in instruction and/or research for fifty percent or more of their time during the academic year and who hold the title of associate dean, assistant dean, assistant to dean or academic director.”

In a report posted in 2012 entitled “The Inclusion in Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent Appointments,”³ the AAUP states that “Defining “faculty” is no simple task, given variations in job duties and overlap between academic and administrative duties” but that the term should be used “inclusively rather than exclusively; faculty status should not be limited to those holding tenured or tenure-track appointments.” The report recommends that “institutional policies should define as “faculty” and include in governance bodies at all levels individuals whose appointments consist primarily of teaching or research activities conducted at a professional level.”

The definition and use of the term “faculty” by several AAU (Association of American Universities) aspirants varies, but commonly “the faculty” includes professorial and clinical titles. For example, the University of Wisconsin-Madison⁴ refers to the “faculty” as “all persons who hold the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor with at least a one-half time appointment in UW-Madison, or with a full-time appointment jointly between UW-Madison and UW-Extension.” The university further defines “academic staff” as “professional and administrative personnel, other than university faculty, who have duties and types of appointments that are primarily associated with higher education institutions or their administration.” The academic staff includes individuals with instructional, research, outreach, or administrative responsibilities. Those with research, teaching, and outreach positions may hold positions and/or have working titles that include the term “professor.”

At the University of Washington-Seattle,⁵ “Faculty members are persons paid for instructional, research, and service activities.” The University of Illinois⁶ describes several categories of academic appointees: faculty and other academic ranks, academic professionals, and graduate assistants. Included within the faculty are those in the tenured/tenure-track professorial ranks. Other academic ranks recognized within the academic staff are lecturer, instructor, and teaching, research, and clinical associate.

³ Page 10 *in*: The Inclusion in Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent Appointments, prepared by a joint subcommittee of the AAUP Committee on Contingency and the Profession and the Committee on College and University Governance. 2012. http://www.rit.edu/~w-aaup/documents_not_rit/AAUP_ContingentFacultyAndGovernance.pdf

⁴ Sections 1.02.A and 1.03.A *in*: http://www.secfac.wisc.edu/governance/fpp/Chapter_1.htm#120

⁵ “Faculty Definitions”: <https://www.washington.edu/uwit/im/dmc/institutional/definitions.html>

⁶ Chapter 3 *in*: Academic Staff Handbook. <http://www.ahr.illinois.edu/ahrhandbook/chap3/index.html>

The University of Michigan Faculty Handbook⁷ classifies “instructional faculty” as tenure-track or clinical faculty, lecturers, adjuncts, and visiting instructional faculty. The faculty are further referred to as “regular instructional faculty” (tenure-track and clinical faculty and lecturers) and “supplemental instructional faculty” (adjuncts, adjunct clinical, and visiting instructional faculty). The University of North Carolina’s definition⁸ is more expansive: the “General Faculty consists of the President of The University of North Carolina, the Chancellor of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; all persons holding faculty appointments to the ranks of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, or any of the formally authorized lecturer-equivalent ranks; librarians holding the ranks of librarian, associate librarian, assistant librarian, and general librarian under procedures approved by the chancellor; the registrar; the director of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions; the director of the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid; and such other officers of administration having responsibility for educational policy as may be approved for ex officio non-voting membership by the Faculty Council.” The difference between faculty and administrative personnel at the University of Virginia⁹ is distinct; the “Board of Visitors has exclusive authority to confer faculty status” and “does so by “electing” an individual to the faculty in a formal resolution;” “appointments” are actions reported by the President.

C. Conclusion

It is clear that the term “faculty” means different things, depending on the context; the most appropriate response to an inquiry about the meaning of “faculty” is to reply with a question: the meaning of “faculty” in what context or for what purpose? Indeed, the word “faculty” means whatever the authorizing agent (Senate, administration, etc.) intended it to mean. If we were drafting a new comprehensive set of regulations for the Senate, or a new complex statute for the legislature, conventionally we would begin with a section covering definitions of key terms used in the proposed document. Doing so would assure (or at least increase the likelihood) that we would use these key terms consistently and achieve maximum clarity. However, we are asked to work backwards and define a key term from its various appearances in a complex series of documents that have grown over the years and where precise use of the term has not occurred. Although ambiguous use of “faculty” has left contingent faculty unsure if they are covered by certain institutional rights and privileges, the FPAC feels it is best to face these policy issues on their merits and not to assume that a firm definition of the word “faculty” would be sufficient.

As such, the FPAC sees no need to concretely define the term and makes no recommendation that the word “faculty” be defined in University policy at this time.

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⁷ <http://www.provost.umich.edu/faculty/handbook/5/5.C.html>

⁸ Faculty Code and Policies, Article 1: The General Faculty. <http://faccoun.unc.edu/faculty-code-and-policies/faculty-code/article-1/>

⁹ Chapter 2.3 *in*: Faculty Handbook. <http://www.virginia.edu/provost/facultyhandbook/faculty.html>

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