

## **Report of the Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee on Charge S-1806**

*Review and revisit Senate response to Charge S-0705, Contingent Faculty Proposal, part I, in light of changes at Rutgers the last decade and, if appropriate, make further recommendations. Respond to Executive Committee February 2019.*

### **Background**

Almost 12 years have passed since charge S-0705 came to the Senate Faculty and Personnel Committee (FPAC) asking for a serious consideration of “Teaching at Rutgers: A Proposal to Convert Part-time to Full-time Appointments and Instructional Full-time Non-tenure-track Appointments to Tenure-track Appointments.” At that time, the Committee decided to report separately on the issue relating to part-time (PT) faculty - that is, the conversion of some PT appointments to full-time (FT) appointments. The FPAC reported and the Senate recommended

that the EVPAA inform unit heads that there are academic benefits to merging some PTL lines into full time appointments, and encourage them to do so, possibly with multi-year contracts; that candidates for these positions should be identified consistent with departmental needs and practices that may include a national search or, at the very least, be comprised of the unit's best PTL's based on the quality of their teaching as well as length of service; that a systematic way of evaluating teaching by contingent faculty should be in place before any full-time offers are made; and that nurturing of these positions with incentives for motivation and innovation should also be a concern. (p. 7)

Since that time, some departments have in fact converted some PT appointments to FT appointments and some departments already have systems of teaching evaluation in place (beyond SIRS). From a student perspective, the number of PT employed at RU, the percentage of PT within the faculty, and the percentage of courses taught by PT have each significantly increased. The situation for PT faculty themselves, including semester-to-semester appointments, low salaries, no health care benefits, and little academic support, has more or less remained stagnant.

### **Considerations**

While the 2007 Proposal was noting a ten-year decline in Tenure Track (TT) faculty from approximately 70% to 60%, the percentage dropped to 30% in the ensuing decade. With a percentage of 70% contingent (PT, TA, and NTT) and 30% TT, the numbers have reversed in the past 20 years at RU. It has been difficult to get concrete numbers from the administration because each unit has their own hiring practices and determines the teaching practices of their TT, NTT and PT faculty. This FPAC report asks the Senate to recommend to the university administration to provide to the Senate current data (numbers and percentages of faculty in each category by unit and campus, along with the numbers / percentages of students / courses taught by each category) on an annual or biennial basis. Looking at examples in the 2007 Report, (on p. 2) PTLs in the NB English department numbered 50 - today that figure is more like 100. PTLs in NB Math were counted at 34 back then while today's number is 56. This enormous growth in the use of PTLs is despite

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substantial conversion of PTL's to NTT's. Included in the “contingent” percentage are PTL's, NTT's, and TA's. Numbers of TA's have declined as well as TT.

The report on charge S-0705 discusses the “disconnect between the number of state lines and the amount of money for these lines. Authorization for lines is not the same as the number of lines that can be filled.” (p. 2) The explanation of line determination and budgeting in the footnotes can be confusing and more clarity is needed.

The Report on S-0705 notes that the number of contingent faculty had grown to “teach more than half of all undergraduate classes” (p. 3). The Report details “the most pernicious effects of contingency” which are listed from the 2007 Proposal:

- Uncertainty acts as a powerful disincentive inhibiting the full commitment of time, energy and expertise to the educational mission.
- Excellence in the classroom has been strongly linked to systems of shared governance. Because contingency discourages involvement in governance, Rutgers forfeits an important source of knowledge and creativity.
- Contingency limits faculty involvement in non-class related activities, such as student life organizations or orientation for new students.
- Contingency results in divided loyalty and time because other jobs often become necessary.
- The resulting lack of familiarity with departmental culture and policy inhibits the advisory and mentoring capacity of contingent faculty.
- As the end of contracts approach, it is reasonable to assume that contingent faculty members will experience increased stress as more time and attention is diverted away from teaching and research to securing a future position.
- Growing contingency and part-time work means that a significant proportion of Rutgers’ faculty do not have health care insurance.
- The overuse of contingent appointments inhibits collegial interaction at the departmental level. Similarly, the physical and social dislocation created by contingency makes mentoring by senior colleagues the exception rather than the rule. (p. 4)

The Report notes that the FPAC “expressed agreement and sympathy with these effects which remain relevant and even more pressing today.” The Report cites the 2007 Proposal as suggesting “a cause-effect association between low contingency and large endowments. Members of the [2007] FPAC committee suggested that this relationship may simply mean that institutions with bigger endowments can afford to keep numbers of contingent faculty lower” but it's notable that Rutgers has the lowest endowment in the Big Ten and employs the most PTL's / adjuncts.

The following year (2008), the RU Foundation pointed to the importance of faculty / student relationships:

The life-changing power of the relationship between students and professors is what compelled John “Jack” Byrne RC'54 to give the university \$3 million to underwrite a **revolution** of sorts in undergraduate education.

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Note that as a result of the transience and employment conditions of the PT population several undesirable issues may arise:

PTLs are unable to develop the sort of relationships that might lead to alums donating later.

PTLs themselves (a growing chunk of the faculty, teaching a growing chunk of students) do not earn enough to donate to the university even if they so desired.

As TT faculty, who are around to develop relationships with students, do less and less of the teaching (because PTLs, NTTs, and TAs do more), they won't be developing as many relationships.

Dissatisfied employees in general are unlikely to encourage contributions.

Student faculty relationships increasingly revolve around pressing the administration to change its priorities (rather than around how much to give back.)

Some departments abuse PTL flexibility by assigning FT teaching loads at PTL pay rates.

Some PTL's, without job security and in the face of SIRS as emphasized evaluation criteria, may feel the need to inflate grades.

The "Teaching at Rutgers" Proposal was forwarded to NJ State Assemblyman Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. in October of 2007. He read the Proposal, labelled it "excellent," and offered to provide input. Although it's not clear what input he could provide, he remains in office as our Assemblyman. More recently, members of the NJ Higher Education met with NJ Secretary of Higher Education, Dr. Zakiya Smith Ellis. During the Q&A, contingent faculty issues were addressed frequently and Dr. Smith Ellis certainly got the message.

The extent to which contingent faculty numbers have grown with PTL numbers comprising the larger portion of that growth, and given the "pernicious effects" noted above, the FPAC reiterates its endorsement of its 2007 recommendation strengthening the urgency to convert PTL appointments to FT NTT appointments and to enhance the compensation of remaining PTLs. The latter is crucial not simply for professional and ethical treatment but as a disincentive to the continuing replacement of TT faculty with contingent faculty.



**Be it Resolved that the Rutgers University Senate urges the administration:**

1. to provide data on an annual basis on the number of TT faculty, NTT faculty, PTL's, and TA's by unit and campus, on the percentage of each category in each unit /campus, on the percentage of courses taught by each category, and on the number of students taught by each category
2. to instruct departments whose faculty consist of a sizeable number of PTLs to convert those willing and eligible to FT NTT's immediately based on teaching evaluation and length of service.
3. to provide adequate compensation and benefits so to remove the incentive to replace TT faculty with PTL's as well as ensure professional treatment.

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## **Appendix A: Data Supplied by Senior VP Barbara Lee**

All Instructional Faculty			
Qtr End Date	IPEDS Campus	Headcount	Sum of Salary
2018-11-01	Camden	683	\$39,214,855
2018-11-01	New Brunswick	3,580	\$242,290,391
2018-11-01	Newark	1,025	\$83,403,093
2018-11-01	Universitywide	5,288	\$364,908,339

PTL only			
Qtr End Date	IPEDS Campus	Headcount	Sum of Salary
2018-11-01	Camden	344	\$2,710,195
2018-11-01	New Brunswick	1,246	\$9,830,235
2018-11-01	Newark	431	\$3,825,736
2018-11-01	Universitywide	2,021	\$16,366,165

Percentage of PTL salaries: 4.5%

