Selected Statistics for the Academic Faculty

- Over the past five years, the number of full-time non-tenure track academic faculty increased from 73 (12% of the full-time faculty) to 96 (14% of the full-time faculty).

- In this same period, the number of part-time academic faculty increased from 400 (40% of the total academic faculty headcount) to 433 (39% of the total academic faculty headcount).

- Over the past five years, the number of courses taught by contingent academic faculty (full-time and part-time) in the fall semester increased from 888 (46% of all courses) to 1008 (49% of all courses).

- In this same period, the number of seats offered in courses taught by contingent academic faculty (full-time and part-time) in the fall semester increased from 36,532 (54% of all seats offered) to 41,662 (59% of all seats offered).

Blue Ribbon Panel Report


List of all recommendations [including progress to date]:

1. The University should affirm a value for fair and equitable compensation for contingent faculty and staff.

2. The University should affirm that improved compensation is important for recognizing the essential contributions provided by contingent faculty and staff in delivering a quality, student-centered academic program.

3. The University should adopt a goal of raising the minimum per course rate for part-time lecturers to $5,000 over the next two to three years. [The minimum per course stipend was increased in two steps from $2,800 to $3,800 effective September 2017, through a combination of school/college funds and $700,000 in additional campus funds.]

4. The University should establish a policy that encourages deans and department chairs, in assigning courses, to try to insure eligibility for health benefits to part-time lecturers and staff who desire them (e.g. half-time or two courses per term). [The Provost issued a statement to the deans; we are monitoring eligibility on our “dashboard.”]

5. The University should work with UUP and System Administration to improve access to health and retirement benefits for part-time faculty and staff. [We communicated suggested language revisions for the UUP Agreement to the SUNY Associate Vice Chancellor for Employee Relations.]

6. The University should compile and promulgate, in a single place, comprehensive information about eligibility and terms for all benefits available to contingent employees. [A brochure was published in the first year; it will be updated and re-issued as needed.]
7. The University should develop and promulgate policies and practices to encourage increased integration of contingent faculty and professional staff in the programs and cultures of departments, schools, and colleges. [Updated draft guidelines are currently in circulation pending adoption later this spring semester.]

8. The University should promulgate a policy and framework for providing longer-term employment commitments for contingent faculty and professional staff. [A draft document proposing a career pathway for part-time faculty together with a UTRGV document are in circulation for discussion; duration of employment will also be monitored on the "dashboard."]

9. The University should create career ladders and pathways for progression to permanency for contingent faculty and professional staff. [A separate document proposing a teaching intensive title series leading to permanency or longer term employment commitments is being discussed.]

10. The University should establish a set of “best practices” for hiring and supporting contingent faculty and professional staff and should incorporate these practices in a handbook for deans, chairs, directors, and contingent faculty and staff. [Following adoption of the updated guidelines, we will develop a manager’s handbook and offer some workshops on selected topics.]

11. The University should develop and install an effective (i.e., timely, multi-faceted) mechanism for evaluating the performance and contribution of contingent faculty and staff, including both formative and summative components. [A draft protocol developed in consultation with CAS and UUP is almost ready for circulation and discussion.]

12. The University should enhance and increase support for the professional development of contingent faculty and professional staff. [We are hoping for enhanced resources in this area in the next UUP Agreement via the State-wide JLMC for Professional Development.]

13. The University should promote existing opportunities and develop additional mechanisms to recognize and reward exemplars of excellence among the part-time and contingent faculty and professional staff. [We are utilizing the President’s Excellence award process and the SUNY Chancellor’s Excellence award process.]

14. The University should establish a Task Force to continue the work of the Panel primarily by assisting the administration in implementing these recommendations. [This was acted on in the creation of three implementation working groups to focus on Compensation and Benefits (#1-6), the Professional Environment (#7-8, 10-13), and Career Pathways (#9).]

Next Steps

- Report to the University Senate (April 16)
- Discussion meeting with UUP (April 16)
- Follow-up with the Deans
- Approve and issue Guidelines
- Approve and issue teaching evaluation protocol
- Continue work to improve compensation
- Campus fora for career pathway documents?
- Finish the dashboard
- Address remaining issues (e.g., contingent professional faculty)