
CHANCELLORS STANDING COMMITTEE ON RANKED NON-TENURE TRACK (NTT) FACULTY



CHAIR: KATHERINE REED

SUMMARY REPORT

June 27, 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between 2006 and 2014, the number of tenured and tenure-track (TT) faculty at MU remained relatively flat. From 2014 until the present, the number of tenured and TT **has declined 9 percent**. Meanwhile, **the number of non-tenure track faculty (NTT) has increased 61.3 percent since 2006**. The number has risen steadily — 4-7 percent a year — since 2010.

Until this year, with the formation of the Chancellor’s Committee on NTT Faculty, ranked NTT faculty from various academic units across campus have had historically few opportunities to meet and “compare notes” on their experience. In the monthly meetings of this committee, a great deal of the discussion in this first year has ensued on how ranked NTT faculty are hired, titled, reappointed or renewed, and promoted; discussion that could be characterized as a process of discovery and, at times, surprise.

Several themes emerged about the experience of being an “NTT” at MU — some positive and some negative. Not all of these observations fit neatly into the spreadsheet the committee created but are significant and important to consider as we go forward with suggested recommendations for best practices. These include:

- Some NTT faculty live with a constant sense of job insecurity because they work under one-year contracts that aren’t renewed until “weeks” before the beginning of a new school year.
- Some NTT faculty work within academic units that do not permit them to vote on matters affecting *all* faculty.
- Some NTT faculty are reviewed for retention/renewal and/or promotion by committees that do not include a ranked NTT faculty member.
- NTT faculty report varying levels of separateness from the tenured or tenure-track faculty within their academic unit, and higher degrees of separateness sometimes result in a lack of collegiality that is not conducive to collaboration in teaching and research.
- NTT faculty sometimes say that their tenured and tenure-track colleagues “don’t really know what I do,” although their work is often quite similar to that of their T/TT colleagues.
- NTT faculty feel governed more by the culture and traditions of their academic unit than by the Collected Rules and Regulations pertaining to them.

The issue of representation on promotion committees is a good example. Section CRR 310.035 requires that the promotion process involve at least one faculty committee with NTT representation. “Because NTT promotion cases are not reviewed by the Campus P&T committee, it is required that such representation be at the department and/or school level,” according to the Provost’s office.

Evaluation of the candidate’s application for promotion should focus on the specific area of appointment – teaching, research, clinical/professional practice, extension or library – as well as service and professional activities related to that primary responsibility.

In promotion considerations, the total contribution of the faculty member to the mission of the school, college or academic unit over a sustained period of time should be taken into consideration. This includes comprehensive documentation of the position, including a letter of appointment identifying home department or unit and the initial position description, communications detailing changes in position responsibilities, and any other statements regarding expected performance.

Each campus shall adopt a promotion process that involves at least one faculty committee composed of one or more NTT faculty, at the promotable rank or above, and one or more tenured faculty, if such NTT faculty and tenured faculty exist. The committee or committees shall make recommendations to the Chancellor or designee who shall make the final decision.

When NTT faculty confront a departure from the collected rules and regulations within their academic unit, they may not know how best to address the problem. There seems to be a degree of informality in how faculty deal with inconsistencies and uncertainties in their contracts, renewals/reappointments and promotions, among other issues.

The overall picture is one of a patchwork of policies and procedures that at times leave NTT faculty with a sense of being most vulnerable to shifts in the campus' needs and the least understood in terms of contributions in every area: teaching, research and service.

The following recommendations would begin to address and ameliorate some of those concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The scope of this committee's study of campus policies and procedures governing the employment, retention and promotion of ranked NTT faculty was necessarily limited by the committee's representation and members' time. A more thorough study of the policies and procedures would certainly produce a more complete picture, and the committee urges the Provost's office to consider the feasibility of such a study.

However, in the absence of such a study, the committee has identified several, relatively simple steps that would help improve compliance with the collected rules and regulations and improve the morale of NTT faculty.

The steps include:

- **Incentivizing** compliance with the Collected Rules and Regulations within every academic unit.
- **Encouraging** academic units to be as specific as possible in the written job description for a faculty member's initial appointment, including expectations for teaching, service, or other obligations.
- **Specifying** the contract length and frequency of renewal in the initial letter of appointment.
- **Eliminating** one-year contracts for faculty members who have completed five academic years with positive evaluations from their academic unit, extending such contracts to two years (rolling) with a minimum one-year notice of non-renewal.
- **Including** the faculty member's title in the appointment letter.
- **Specifying** what the review process will be for the faculty member, including that the review should be annual, written and by a department chair.
- **Providing** faculty within every academic unit guidelines for seeking reappointment and promotion, including defining what the procedures are (in compliance with the collected rules and regulations), at whose behest and after what time period.
- **Raising** faculty awareness of campus mediation services for resolving conflicts related to contracts, re-appointment and other matters.

The accomplishments of NTT faculty on our campus are manifold and increasingly important to the functioning of the university. The policies and procedures affecting the employment and promotion of NTT faculty at the level of the academic unit have not kept pace with the growth of this key sector of the faculty, though the CRR do offer guidance. The Provost's office, Faculty Council and the representatives of this committee can play a key role in communicating the importance of those policies and procedures as a reflection of an appreciation of the contributions of NTT faculty.

CHARGE OF THE COMMITTEE AND METHODOLOGY

The Chancellors Standing Committee on Ranked Non-Tenure Track (NTT) Faculty was formed in Fall 2015 “to assess and make recommendations to the Provost and the Faculty Council regarding new and revised policies and practices affecting ranked NTT faculty holding a professorial title.” (R. Bowen Loftin, Letter to MU Faculty Council on University Policy, dated December 2014).

Composition of the Committee: As outlined in the Chancellors letters to the MU Faculty Council, the composition of the committee was to be composed of the following:

- One ranked NTT representative holding professorial title from each of the MU schools and colleges who report to a Dean and one from MU Extension.
- All professorial titles should be represented to include Teaching, Research, Clinical, Professional Practice, Extension, Clinical Department (Medicine).
- One member should be an official representative of the Faculty Council
- A Provost designee(s) would serve as a non-voting, *ex officio* member (s) of this committee.

Membership of the Committee: The following faculty make up the current membership of this Committee.

| College/Division | Name | Title | Department |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| CAFNR | Gretchen Hagen | Research Professor | Ag. Biochemistry |
| A&S | | Teaching Professor | Political Science |
| Education | Leigh Neier | Asst. Teaching Professor | Elementary Education |
| Engineering | Robert Druce | Research Professor | Elect./Computer Engineering |
| School of Health Professions | Kathy Moss | Assoc. Clinical Professor | |
| HES | Leigh Tenkku Lepper | Assoc. Research Professor | School of Social Work |
| School of Journalism | Katherine Reed (CHAIR) | Assoc. Professor (Professional Practice) | |
| School of Law | Anne Alexander | Assoc. Teaching Professor | |
| School of Medicine | Michael Gardner | Assoc. Clinical Professor | Endocrinology |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| School of Nursing | Jan Sherman | Assoc. Teaching Professor | |
| Vet. Medicine | Maxie Krueger | Asst. Teaching Professor | |
| School of Business | Kristen Hockman | Asst. Teaching Professor | |
| School of Business Affairs | Angela Hull | Asst. Teaching Professor | |
| Extension | John Lory | Professor, | Extension-Plant Sciences |
| Faculty Council NTT Representative | Nicole Monnier | Assoc. Teaching Professor | German & Russian Studies |
| Provost Office Designee | Pat Okker | Sr. Associate Provost | |

The initial environmental scan was conducted between the period of October 2015 and March 2016. We endeavored to identify what is known about the promotion policy documents that are currently in place within colleges/divisions and to identify the gaps and recommendations for addressing the future needs of the NTT.

The environmental scan process was based upon the November 2006 new executive guideline for non-tenure track faculty as approved and included in Section 310.035 of the *University of Missouri Collected Rules and Regulations*. The review process included the following:

- collection of promotion policy documents from all Colleges and Divisions as represented by the faculty members of the committee
- each faculty member reviewed their set of promotion documents and entered either a yes or no as having met or not met the review criteria, or included comments regarding the particular criteria
- report back to the Committee results of the review as presented in an excel spreadsheet (excel spreadsheet attached), and
- committee discussion of the results

The eight review criteria were designed to address specific elements as outlined in the new executive guideline and were agreed upon by the Committee. The executive guideline element (**Bolded**) and the review criteria question are provided below.

- **Initial Appointment:** Are there specific guidelines for what must be included in the written job description for the initial appointment?

- **Contract:** Are specific expectations for teaching, service, or other obligations specified in the letter (contract?)
- **Contract Length:** Is the contract length and frequency of renewal of contract specified?
- **Title:** Is the title included in the appointment letter?
- **Hiring:** Does the academic unit have a written policy on how it will undertake searches and what scope they ought to have (National? International?)
- **Review Process:** What is the unit policy on the review process for faculty members? Does it spell out that each faculty member should have an annual, written review by a department chair?
- **Reappointment:** Does the academic unit provide its faculty with guidelines for seeking reappointment?
- **Promotion Procedures:** Are promotion procedures defined? At whose behest? And after what time period?

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Results of the Environmental Scan

Participants: There were a total of 14 colleges/divisions who completed the NTT review spreadsheet.

Data Analysis: The data from the NTT review spreadsheet (attached) were examined in three ways:

1. Across college/division analysis of data
2. Within college/division analysis of data
3. Theme analysis within both quantitative and qualitative data

1. Across college/division analysis of data: Quantitative data analysis was conducted across all colleges/divisions (N=14) completing the NTT review spreadsheet included number of YES responses, number of NO responses, number of MISSING data.

Table 1: Across college/division quantitative analysis, N=14

| Non-Tenure Track Review Sheet | 14 colleges/division represented | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|
| | | | |

| Review Criteria | YES | NO | Missing |
|---|-----------|----------|---------|
| Are there specific guidelines for what must be included in the written job description for the initial appointment ? | 9 (64.3) | 4 (28.6) | 1 |
| Are specific expectations for teaching, service or other obligations specified in the letter (contract)? | 8 (57.1) | 4 (28.6) | 1 |
| Is the contract length and frequency of renewal of contract specified? | 7 (50.0) | 5 (35.7) | 1 |
| Is the title included in the appointment letter? | 8 (57.1) | 6 (42.9) | 0 |
| Hiring: Does the academic unit have a written policy on how it will undertake searches and what scope they ought to have (National? International?) | 5 (35.7) | 8 (57.1) | 1 |
| What is the unit policy on the review process for faculty members? Does it spell out that each faculty member should have an annual, written review by a department chair? | 13 (92.9) | 1 (7.1) | 0 |
| Does the academic unit provide its faculty with guidelines for seeking reappointment ? | 7 (50.0) | 7 (50.0) | 0 |
| Are promotion procedures defined? At whose behest? And after what time period? | 11 (78.9) | 3 (21.4) | 0 |

2. Within college/division analysis of data

Quantitative data analysis was conducted within all colleges/divisions (N=14) completing the NTT review spreadsheet included number of YES responses, number of NO responses, and number of MISSING data. It also included a summary of how each college/division fared in terms of the review. Did the college/division meet the review criteria? Did the college/division not meet the review criteria?

Table 2: Within college/division quantitative analysis, N=14

| |
|---------------------|
| BY College/Division |
|---------------------|

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|------|-----------|
| ENG | Yes=5 | No=3 | |
| Elect. & Computer ENG | Yes=1 | No=7 | |
| Nutrition | Yes=2 | No=6 | |
| SSW | Yes=4 | No=4 | |
| Arch. Studies | Yes=5 | No=3 | |
| LAW | Yes=6 | No=1 | |
| Health Professions | Yes=4 | No=4 | |
| Nursing | Yes=5 | No=3 | |
| Truman | Yes=3 | No=3 | Missing=2 |
| CAFNR | Yes=8 | No=0 | |
| JSchool | Yes=6 | No=2 | |
| Education | Yes=6 | No=1 | |
| Vet Med | Yes=6 | No=1 | |

3. Theme analysis within qualitative data

Table 3: Convergence/Divergence Thematic Analysis Across College/Division, N varies with each criteria depending upon inclusion of comments

| Review Criteria | Convergence | Divergence |
|---|--|--|
| Are there specific guidelines for what must be included in the written job description for the initial appointment ? | No real convergence on initial appointment across college/division. | Significant differences on initial appointment across college/division ranging from “follows collected rules” to “broad/vague” to “nothing stated regarding initial appointment”. |
| Are specific expectations for teaching, service or other obligations specified in the letter (contract)? | Significant convergence on specific expectations across college/division as indicated by 8/10 comments as indicated by: “outlined by rank” “clearly outlined on the table of ranks” “This information is included as a separate paragraph in the letter” “Letter of appointment states that faculty member will be required to teach classes at discretion of department chair” “clearly stated” | Two college/divisions indicated significant divergence: “NTT do not have documented teaching load” “Broad/vague” |
| Is the contract length and frequency of renewal of contract specified? | No real convergence on contract length across college/division. | Significant differences on contract length across the college /division as evidenced by: “range of times” “no language on contract length” “not specified” |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | | <p>“very clearly stated”</p> <p>“only listed yearly with the contract”</p> <p>“one to three years at discretion of department chair”</p> <p>“anecdotal evidence reveals that one year contracts are the norm”</p> <p>“documentation states two one-year contracts followed by 3 year contracts; not clear whether 3 yr contracts are serial, rolling, or presumptively renewable”</p> |
| Is the title included in the appointment letter? | No real convergence on the title . | <p>Some degree of divergence on title as evidenced by:</p> <p>“nothing stated” 3/5 comments</p> <p>“clearly listed in the table of ranks”</p> <p>“documentation states criteria for asst/assoc/full”</p> |
| Hiring: Does the academic unit have a written policy on how it will undertake searches and what scope they ought to have (National? International?) | <p>Significant convergence on the hiring as evidenced by 7/10 comments stating none:</p> <p>“nothing specified” 3/7 comments</p> <p>“no documented hiring process”</p> <p>“not documented though national search is the norm”</p> <p>“not that I could find”</p> <p>“Could not find specific instructions”</p> | <p>Some degree of divergence on hiring:</p> <p>“On a yearly basis”</p> <p>“as found in the Biochemistry ByLaws”</p> <p>“SHP Faculty Policy Manual, Article 4 B”</p> |
| What is the unit policy on the review process for faculty members? Does it spell out that each faculty member should have an annual, written review by a department chair? | <p>Significant convergence on review process.</p> <p>“stated, but not as clearly as it could be”</p> <p>“clearly stated”</p> <p>“Yes-annual by program/department chair: No-written”</p> <p>“On a yearly basis with specific criteria to be submitted to Assoc. Dean of SON”</p> <p>“Annually within department: every three years at School level unless there’s a problem”</p> <p>“annual review with department chair”</p> | No divergence on review process . |
| Does the academic unit provide its faculty with guidelines for seeking reappointment ? | No convergence on reappointment . | <p>Significant divergence on reappointment.</p> <p>“nothing stated” 2 comments</p> <p>“clearly stated”</p> <p>“enumerated list of criteria: same</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | | <p>for reappointment and promotion”</p> <p>“reappointments based in part on performance expectations communicated at time of appointment”</p> <p>“taken from a (redacted) recent letter of appointment for a teaching position, “This appointment is renewable on a year-to-year basis at the discretion of the University. Circumstances affecting continued employment include, but are not limited to, work performance, fund availability and educational priorities”</p> <p>“varied: from my experience, faculty who seek this information are common”</p> |
| <p>Are promotion procedures defined? At whose behest? And after what time period?</p> | <p>No convergence on promotion procedures.</p> | <p>Significant divergence on promotion procedures.</p> <p>“time frames given”</p> <p>“nothing stated”</p> <p>“promotional procedures provided” 2 comments</p> <p>“documentation give year that promotion is “ordinarily” considered”</p> <p>“typically for FT faculty”</p> <p>“not clearly detailed specifically for SON”</p> <p>“promotions are based on annual evaluations and recommendations made by the Departmental P&T committee and Chair”</p> <p>“some department seem to have a more defined procedures than others”</p> <p>“guidelines for promotion are defined. No time period specified”</p> |

WHAT ARE THE GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE?

Overall from this environmental scan, we found significant variance across colleges and divisions with regard to the eight review criteria identified as the areas that represent the promotion policy documents for non-tenure track (NTT) faculty. Across all college/divisions who participated in this review process, the majority of the promotion documents outlined promotion procedures and guidelines that were in line with the Collected Rules, but the degree to which these were met included significant differences. For example, while the majority of promotion documents met the criteria for review process in place (92.9%), only 35.7% met the criteria for having a clear hiring process in place, and a 50/50 split is reported for whether there was a reappointment process in place.

Yet another view of the promotion policy documents is exhibited within the college/division represented. In this case, eight out of the 14 college/divisions had a majority of the eight review criteria in place and meeting the criteria question (Engineering, Architectural Studies, Law School, School of Nursing, CAFNR, J School, Education, and Veterinary Medicine). However, two departments (Electrical & Computer Engineering, and Nutrition) had only one or two of the criteria in place for promotional review and procedures. Finally, three Schools were split with half of the review criteria in place and half of the criteria indicated as not being met (School of Social Work, School of Health Professions, Truman School).

Finally, in the review of the qualitative comments provided by some but not all of the participants, additional information is gleaned from the point of view of whether there was a convergence or divergence of meeting the review criteria among the college/division. In this analysis, there was a significant convergence on three of the eight review criteria:

- Specific expectations
- Hiring
- Review process

Conversely, there was significant divergence on five of the eight review criteria:

- Initial appointment
- Contract length
- Title
- Reappointment
- Promotion procedures

References

R. Bowen Loftin, Letter to MU Faculty Council on University Policy, dated December 2014

New executive guideline for non-tenure track faculty as approved and included in Section 310.035 of the *University of Missouri Collected Rules and Regulations*, November 2006.