

## **SECOND REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS FACULTY SENATE MEMBERSHIP AND FACULTY VOTING RIGHTS ON MATTERS REQUIRING FACULTY SENATE APPROVAL**

### **1. Preamble**

The Ad-hoc Committee has been given three tasks: First, to make recommendations concerning departmental and college voting rights of full-time non-tenure track faculty members; second, to review the meaning and intent of “continuing” as applied to faculty members in the University Manual and, if necessary, recommend changes for clarity and consistency; third, to consider whether making full-time non-tenure track faculty members eligible for Faculty Senate membership should be recommended.

The first task is completed. The Faculty Senate voted, at its 2/19/15 meeting, to give full-time non-tenure track faculty members voting privileges in department and college meetings, beginning with the start of their second year of appointment. This report concerns the remaining two tasks.

### **2. Remaining task # 1: “Continuing—non-continuing” as applied to faculty members**

#### **a. History lesson**

To those with institutional memory of sufficient length “continuing faculty” refers to those occupying tenure-track positions, while “non-continuing faculty” refers to faculty occupying positions that are not tenure-track. Apart from institutional memory, two instances of Faculty Senate legislation are important in this context:

One is the 12-8-1988 legislation “Ad Hoc Committee on Part-Time and Non-Continuing Faculty: Establishment of University Policy for Non-Continuing Faculty Members,” accessible at

[http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2200&context=facsen\\_bills](http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2200&context=facsen_bills)

This Senate legislation is the only document we could find containing a definition of non-continuing faculty. The definition is meant to apply equally to part-time and full-time non-continuing faculty members; at the time it was proposed, full-time non-continuing persons probably were for the most part what are today Appendix H people. Most of the provisions of that Senate bill, passed prior to non-continuing faculty being represented by a collective bargaining unit, are superseded today by Appendices H and F of the AAUP contract. The Senate bill is important, though, because it gives some clues with regard to how “continuing” and “non-continuing” are understood in Faculty Senate legislation and the University Manual. Of particular importance are item # 4 and item # 7 of the 11 so-called “conditions”: Item 4 clearly implies that non-continuing faculty members may be full-time. Item 7 states, “Whenever possible non-continuing faculty members shall be given multi-year contracts.” This applies equally to full-time and part-time non-continuing faculty members. Thus, according to this Senate legislation, being full-time and having a multi-year contract does not make one into a continuing faculty member, indicating that continuing faculty members are only those occupying what are called today tenure-track or tenure-stream positions.

Second, there is the 9-14-1978 Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Voting Rights, accessible at

[http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1595&context=facsen\\_bills](http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1595&context=facsen_bills)

Apart from establishing the two University Manual passages which were amended at the 2/19/15 Faculty Senate meeting (the ones restricting voting privileges of non-continuing faculty to matters not needing Faculty Senate approval, a restriction removed at the 2/19/15 Senate meeting), this Faculty Senate legislation also proposed that, to be a member of the General Faculty or University Faculty, one needs to be “continuing” (this word was inserted, on the basis of this legislation, into Manual Section 4.11.10). At the time that addition was approved, it was meant to confirm that non-continuing faculty members are excluded from Faculty Senate membership, as only members of the General Faculty qualify as members of the Faculty Senate, the General Faculty’s representative body.

**b. Conclusion and recommendation**

Based on the analysis presented in 2/a, it is the judgment of the Ad-hoc Committee that wherever the University Manual speaks of “non-continuing faculty members,” non-tenure track persons are referred to, and wherever the Manual speaks of “continuing faculty members,” persons occupying tenure track or tenure stream positions are referred to.

Given the confusion about the meaning of these terms that has arisen over the past years, the Ad-hoc committee recommends:

*That in the University Manual and other official documents, the expression “non-continuing” as applied to full-time faculty members be replaced by “non-tenure track,” and that the expression “continuing” as applied to faculty members be replaced by “tenure-track.”*

**3. Remaining task # 2: Faculty Senate membership of full-time non-tenure track faculty members**

**a. Basic recommendations**

**It is recommended**

*(1) That full-time non-tenure track faculty members shall be eligible for election to the Faculty Senate after they have served for one academic year in their position;*

*(2) That the ratio of faculty members of an academic unit (such as a college) to senators representing that unit be changed from the current “ten to one” to “twelve to one”;*

*(3) That, upon approval of (1) and (2), the necessary steps be taken to implement these recommendations.*

Rationale:

(1) Full-time non-tenure track faculty members contribute in important ways to the work of the university, and have a significant stake in the organization of the university. Many of them serve for a great number of years. It seems fair to make them eligible for participation in the governance of the University.

(2) Changing the ratio as proposed would mean that making full-time non-tenure track faculty members eligible for Faculty Senate service would increase the total Senate membership only by about 6 members, from the current membership of 54 to about 59. (Leaving the ratio as it is would increase the Senate membership to about 71.)

(3) Implementing (1) and (2) requires significant changes of the Senate Constitution and the Senate By-laws. The two provisions can become effective only after these changes have been made; but it seems to make sense to assess the Senate’s sentiment prior to beginning work on these changes. If the Senate disapproves of (1) and/or (2), the work would be a waste of time. If the Senate approves, there is, of course, still the possibility that the necessary approval of the constitutional changes will not happen, as for this, a referendum of the general faculty is required, a two-thirds majority needs to vote in favor of the changes, and the By-law changes must be approved by a two-thirds

majority of the Faculty Senate.

Comment: If everything proceeds as planned/hoped by the committee, full-time non-tenure track faculty members will start to be eligible for Faculty Senate membership at the time of the elections taking place during the 2016 Spring Semester.

b. Supplemental recommendation

The Committee also recommends that the Senate approve the following resolution:

*That, upon implementation of (1), above, the wording of letters to full-time non-continuing faculty members offering and renewing appointments be adjusted appropriately such that service contributions be taken into consideration in specifying work expectations.*

Comment: If everything goes as planned/hoped by the Committee, these modified letters would have to be sent out for the first time for appointments/reappointments for the 2016/17 Academic Year.

For us, that's it, dear Senate folks.  
What is still missing here of strokes—  
Amending our Constitution  
And By-laws segments substitution—  
Is the CBUMmers' boring task.  
That they look into it we ask.

Committee Membership

Fritz Wenisch, Professor of Philosophy, Ad Hoc Committee Chair  
Laura Beauvais, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs  
Ruitang Deng, Senator and Associate Professor of Biomedical & Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Debra Erickson-Owens, Senator and Assistant Professor of Nursing  
W. Michael Sullivan, Senator and Professor of Plant Sciences