

The Delphi Project Database of

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Example Practices

Updated 05/06/14

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Employment Guidelines for Specialized Faculty Holding Non-Tenure System Positions

Institution and Program Websites: <http://www.illinois.edu>
http://provost.illinois.edu/communication/25/ProvostCommNo25_SpecializedFaculty.pdf

- ✓ Hiring
- ✓ Grievances
- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ Multi-Year Contracts
- ✓ Orientation
- ✓ Evaluations
- ✓ Involvement in Governance and Unit

The Provost's Office at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign recently created a new policy and employment guidelines for non-tenure system faculty, a critically important group of educators and researchers who make substantial contributions to the mission of the institution. The culture at the University of Illinois is one that is built on strong shared faculty governance, and this policy was the result of a process that involved administrators and faculty senators working together and gathering input from focus groups, one-on-one consultations, discussions with and approval by several Senate sub-committees, and a survey of all individuals in the affected positions. In total, over 400 people were consulted and over 800 people were surveyed and provided input into the creation of these new employment guidelines.

The new "Provost's Communication" provides guidelines and policies for the colleges and departments to best support and promote this group of faculty. The institution adopted the umbrella term "Specialized Faculty" to refer to faculty who are not within the tenure system, as a more celebratory term that recognizes that many of these people are focusing (or specializing) in one of the mission critical areas of teaching or research.

The Provost's Office utilized resources created by the Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success to inform discussions about non-tenure-track faculty and decision making about the new policies.

Guiding Principles

Every department and college is directed to examine its employment practices to ensure that policies and procedures are in place that reflect seven guiding principles:

1. Specialized faculty members are important members of our campus community who collectively make significant contributions to the teaching, research, and service missions of their individual units and to the campus.

2. The academic community flourishes when the best specialized faculty members are recruited, evaluated, and retained using fair employment practices and procedures. In conducting searches and hiring, departments shall adhere to the campus guiding principles relative to equal employment, affirmative action, diversity and inclusivity.
3. Departments shall identify the responsibilities and privileges that are appropriate to extend to specialized faculty within their units, given that specialized faculty do not receive the full panoply of statutory rights and privileges afforded to tenure system faculty.
4. Departments shall have bylaws that clearly identify the roles, responsibilities, and privileges of specialized faculty.
5. To optimize performance and to meet objectives, hiring units must inform specialized faculty what the job duties and performance expectations are for their positions.
6. Specialized faculty shall have access to department, school, college and campus grievance procedures.
7. Identifying promotional paths creates opportunities for specialized faculty to invest in long-term careers at Illinois, thereby providing needed stability for these employees and ensuring the high level of excellence required in these positions.

Hiring

The policy and guidelines from the Provost's office on specialized faculty establishes standards on hiring procedures. In addition, it asks departments to use strategic and long-term planning to identify departmental needs and to consider what role specialized faculty will play to help the department meet its goals . An important outcome of these efforts is to reduce the occurrence of last minute, unanticipated hiring of part-time faculty, which limits the time available to faculty to prepare for instruction and offer the best educational experience for students.

In addition, the document provides guidance about offer letters, multi-year contracts, annual evaluations, and resolution of grievances.

Orientation, Involvement, and Governance

The Provost's guidelines also promote the involvement of specialized faculty in the life of the department and the campus from the moment they are hired, beginning with orientation. Under these guidelines, all new faculty members should receive an appropriate orientation to department and institutional policies, procedures, curricular objectives and standards, and other relevant practices and terms of employment. Involvement is encouraged to continue through appropriate inclusion in the academic life of the department. Departments, through consideration and a vote of the tenure-track faculty, should decide how to involve specialized

faculty in department activities, such as meetings, service, and curricular discussions and decision making.

Professional Development

Departments are encouraged to consider ways to provide mentoring and funding for professional development activities for specialized faculty, as well as allowing them to participate in training workshops and teaching academies. Besides departmental professional development activities, the guidelines also encourage the departments to promote, and in turn the specialized faculty to use, the services of the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning and campus funds for professional development.

Citation:

Maxey, D. & Kezar, A. (2013). *The Delphi Project database of non-tenure-track faculty example practices: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign employment guidelines for specialized faculty holding non-tenure system positions*. Los Angeles, CA: Pullias Center for Higher Education.