

The Path to Change

How Campus Communities Worked to Change Non-Tenure-Track Policies and Practices

In these documents, we hope to assist change agents in creating positive changes for non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) by highlighting examples of how different change agents and levers have been used to advance change on actual college campuses. Changes can originate with the efforts of many different actors at different levels. Too often, we have heard change agents voice frustration that there was no shared vision about the need for change. These cases show how changes can emerge from one part of an institution and eventually spread, leading to much broader institution wide changes. We have observed these four processes as being the most common:

Union-led

Senate-led

Joint Faculty and Administrative Task Force-led

State- or System-led

Change processes can also be led by departments, although we find this less frequently.

There are also many different levers used along each path to change, including data collection, relationship building, strategic planning, accreditation, institutional values and mission, open forums, and creating key documents. Each case demonstrates the ways that certain change agents orchestrate and use levers at their disposal in their particular context to create change. Yet, as you will see, there are many common levers that can be used across different campuses.

University of Southern California

In this document, we highlight the path and change agents involved in helping to facilitate positive change for non-tenure-track faculty.

This is an example of a **Senate-Led** path to change.

University of Southern California's (USC) path to change demonstrates a process where a Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Senate committee created a way for NTTFs to collect data and produce key documents to move their agenda forward with a decentralized administration. First, we highlight the re-organizing of the NTTF senate committee. Then, we discuss the inventory process and the creation of a White Paper. Lastly, we cover the peer benchmark study process and the resulting memorandum.

Underlined headings indicate the main levers used in this change process.

The main change agents involved are: ***NTTF Committee, Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs, and Academic Senate.***

Reorganization of NTTF Senate Committee

Support from Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs and Academic Senate – In 1995, a non-tenure-track faculty committee was formed as an Academic Senate subcommittee. The early history of the committee is not well documented, but there was little activity and a small membership. The committee's original purpose only included discussing issues such as training and career development. In 2008, the committee decided that it needed to be more involved in addressing policies affecting NTTFs and took the step of changing their name and purpose. With the support of the Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs and the Academic Senate, the NTTF committee became the Academic Senate Committee on NTTF Affairs (CNTTFA), a name better reflecting its new focus on major policy issues such as merit review, promotion, and contract terms. In addition to focusing on a broader set of policy issues, the committee assumed the responsibility of monitoring NTTF conditions across the campus.

For more information about the committee, visit:

<http://www.usc.edu/academe/acsen/AboutUs/FacultyCommittees/NonTenureTrackFaculty.htm>.

Data Collection and a White Paper

CNTTFA – As part of its monitoring function, the CNTTFA conducted a comprehensive inventory of all academic units at USC to assess their policies and practices relating to NTTFs. USC has a decentralized administrative culture where deans possess the decision-making and budgetary authority for their respective schools, the rationale being that each school knows best what its needs are and how to manage operations. So, there is great variability among schools with regard to NTTF policies and practices. In order to better understand these different practices, the committee decided to collect data. They started with a short survey and internal focus groups to identify the items to be inventoried, which were included in eight categories: 1) titling language and categories, 2) workload profile, 3) involvement in governance, 4) contract renewal and duration, 5) merit review process, 6) promotion policy, 7) professional development, and 8) availability of paid professional leave. Next, the committee developed a standardized questionnaire about these issues and distributed copies to each academic unit. As the committee became more active, more NTTFs got involved. They eventually had a membership of more than 30 faculty, including NTTF from each academic unit. This committee and its new role helped to create renewed dialog among deans and NTTFs throughout USC.

CNTTFA with support from Central Administration and the Senate's Executive Committee – In May 2009, after the data collection had been completed, the committee decided to produce a white paper with support from central administration and the senate's executive committee. The white paper presented a thorough analysis of the data, compared NTTF policies to those of other schools, and developed a set of five criteria for exemplary practices, policies, and procedures. As the white paper circulated among faculty, deans, and other stakeholders at USC, some academic units began to review their own NTTF policies and make changes. For example, one school implemented a new promotion policy. The sharing of best practices facilitated action among the academic units at USC. Two years later, the committee reevaluated USC's NTTF policies with a follow-up inventory and focus groups involving NTTFs from each academic unit. Creating opportunities for ongoing data collection can help to ensure change continues to occur.

To review white paper or the qualitative questionnaire used in this case, see Appendix A and B in Adrianna Kezar's (2012) book, *Embracing Non-Tenure Track Faculty: Changing Campuses for the New Faculty Majority*.

Peer Benchmark Study and Memorandum

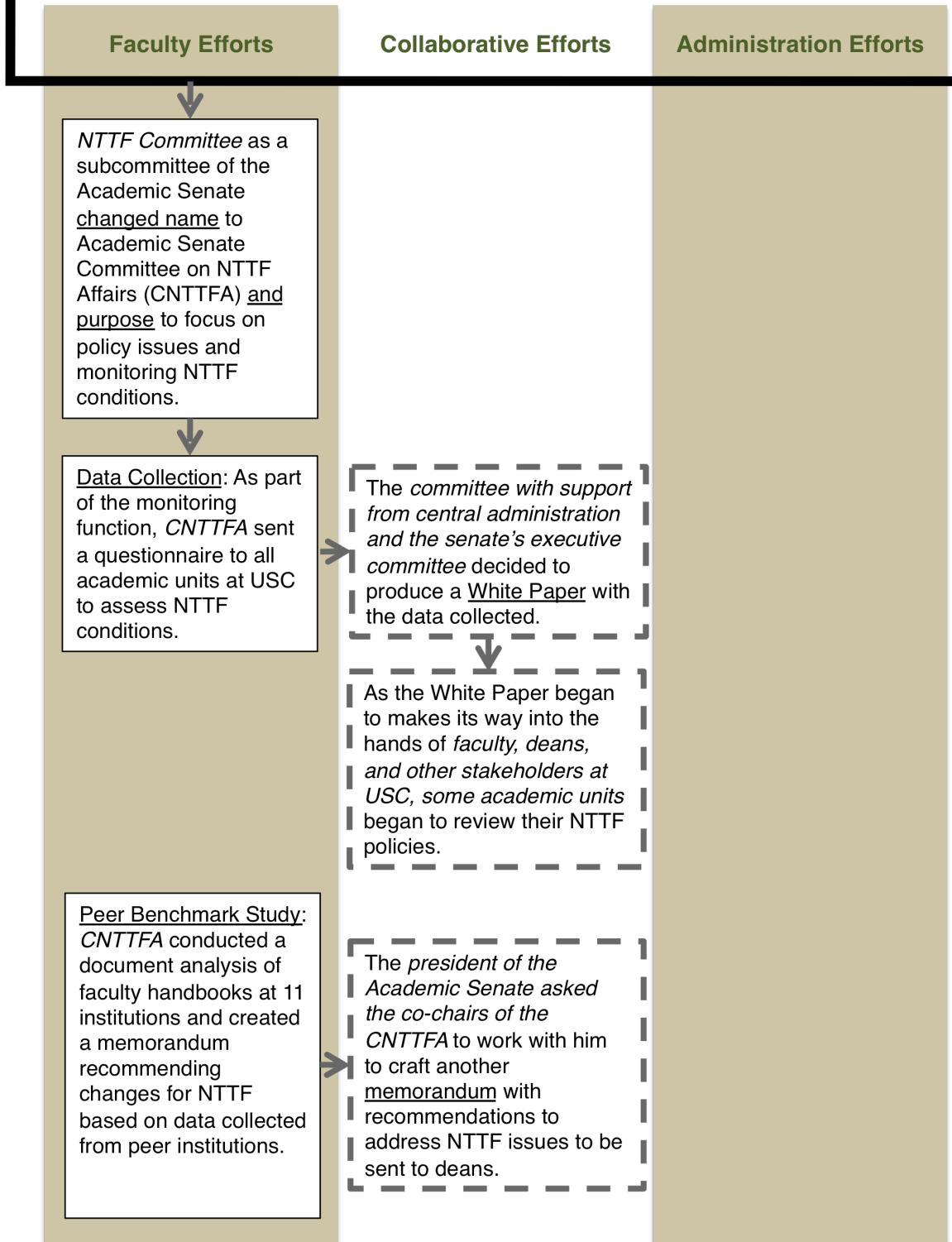
The Academic Senate – The senate asked the CNTTFA to produce a memorandum proposing changes to NTTF policy for deans. However, CNTTFA realized that they needed to bolster their peer benchmarking data. So, they conducted a document analysis of the faculty handbooks of 11 peer institutions. A memorandum was compiled that addressed recommended changes based on the data they collected in this review. The data was presented to the senate with sources cited; the raw data demonstrating the differences among how NTTFs were treated was hard to ignore. Comparative data was critical for grounding the committee's recommendations in data and practices utilized by other elite universities. Although the senate did not make changes to USC's faculty handbook, members of the senate were open to working with deans to clarify NTTF guidelines across campus based on the comparative data that had been presented.

Academic Senate President and CNTTFA Co-Chairs – As a result of the memorandum and presentation of data, the president of the Academic Senate asked the co-chairs of the CNTTFA to work with him to craft another memorandum detailing recommendations for addressing NTTF issues. The memorandum was sent to deans with the endorsement of the Provost's office and was intended to help sustain conversations about supporting NTTFs and familiarize USC stakeholders with exemplary practices in use at other institutions, creating some additional rationale for changes among individual schools.

The information from this document was excerpted from Ginger Clark and Jerry Swerling's chapter in Kezar, A. (Ed.), *Embracing Non-Tenure Track Faculty: Changing Campuses for the New Faculty Majority*. See Chapter 9 for additional details on USC's path to creating change in a decentralized university environment.

Mapping the Path to Change

USC is an example of a **Senate-Led** path to change. Here we highlight the levers used (underlined) and change agents (italicized) involved to create change.



Example Practices

From the University of Southern California's Path to Change

Some example practices from the **University of Southern California (USC)** case include promotion policy, governance, professional leave, workload assignment, and multi-year contracts in some academic units at USC.



For additional resources, please visit The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success Resources and Tool Kits website, which contains information and tools for examining non-tenure track faculty (NTTF) conditions on your campus. For example, ***Non-Tenure-Track Faculty on Our Campus: A Guide for Campus Task Forces to Better Understand Faculty Working Conditions and Necessity of Change*** is designed for use by task forces, committees, or groups who would like to examine non-tenure-track faculty practices and issues at the campus level. Its question sections, discussion questions, and concluding questions guide practitioners through the process of examining non-tenure-track faculty issues on campus and help them to better understand challenges associated with current practices and begin to build the rationale for change.

<http://resources.thechangingfaculty.org>

Below we highlight the levers (underlined) under which the change (**bolded**) took place and provide detail on the policy or practice.

Through data collection and the White Paper the following example practices were implemented:

Promotion Policy and Governance – Some academic units began to conduct their own reviews of NTTF policies. Others have already begun to consider how to deal with issues such as faculty workload imbalance, so NTTFs will not be unfairly burdened with teaching and administrative responsibilities. One school developed a promotion policy, allowing for advancement in rank, title, and salary, in addition to multi-year contracts. Another school changed its governance practices to include NTTF in the leadership structure and decision-making process. These changes did not occur through changes in policy at the university level, but by sharing best practices across the decentralized network of schools at USC.

Through a peer benchmark study and memorandum, some of following example practices were implemented and some are beginning to be considered:

Sabbaticals/Professional Leave – Although the USC faculty handbook guarantees full-time NTTFs the same rights as tenure-track faculty, there is no support for NTTF sabbaticals at the university level. Offering this benefit campus-wide would increase the number of sabbaticals, which would be costly. Through discussion, the administration eventually encouraged school-funded sabbatical programs or professional leave. One school created a pilot program and is currently considering applications for NTTF professional leave.

Workload Assignment – Each school differs as to whether or how it provides release time for NTTFs holding certain time-intensive leadership or service roles. But, some are taking these matters into consideration.

Multi-year Contracts – After learning that 10 of the 11 peer institutions reviewed had multi-year contracts in place, the administration voiced support for multi-year contracts for those schools interested in making this change. This was an important development, as the earlier impression had been that the administration would only allow rolling contracts to exist on campus.

Governance – Discussions also led to the administration to support including NTTFs in governance, as well as expressing concern when some schools were not allowing NTTFs to participate. Article A, Section 2 of the academic senate's constitution states that all faculty are eligible to participate in faculty governance, including the academic senate and faculty committees. Many schools have NTTF representatives in the senate, chairing faculty councils, and serving in other senior leadership positions. And, some schools even include NTTFs in merit and promotion review committees for tenure-track faculty.

The constitution can be found online at: <http://www.usc.edu/academe/acsen/AboutUs/constitution.htm>

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Project Description

The nature of the American academic workforce has fundamentally shifted over the past several decades. Whereas full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty were once the norm, more than two-thirds of the professoriate in non-profit postsecondary education is now comprised of non-tenure-track faculty. New hires across all institutional types are now largely contingent and this number will continue to grow unless trends change. The purpose of this project is to examine and develop solutions to change the nature of the professoriate, the causes of the rise of non-tenure-track faculty, and the impact of this change on the teaching and learning environment.

In partnership with the Association of American College and Universities

AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises more than 1,250 member institutions - including accredited public and private colleges, community colleges, and universities of every type and size.

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