

DISCUSSION DRAFT

Guidelines for the Appointment of Part-Time Academic Faculty Members

Introduction

Concerted efforts are being made to address the professional needs and interests of contingent academic faculty (full and part-time lecturers, visiting assistant professors) in recognition of their importance to the academic program and to the vitality of the University as an intellectual community. In addition to improving the material rewards for their service (i.e., compensation, benefits, job security), these efforts seek to support the professional development of contingent academic faculty and to increase their integration as respected and active participants in the operation and governance of the institution. Part-time academic faculty (i.e., employees appointed to instructional titles with anything less than a full-time obligation) constitute the largest single component of the contingent academic faculty and are essential for the delivery of the academic program. These guidelines are designed in response to their particular circumstances and are intended to provide direction for both University officers and part-time faculty members regarding applicable policies and practices in the critical areas of recruitment, selection, appointment, compensation and benefits, professional support, and supervision and evaluation. The guidelines are based on provisions in the [Policies](#) of the Trustees of the State University of New York and on the current [Agreement](#) between The State of New York and United University Professions.

This is a working document. Compiled and promulgated by the Office of the Provost, we expect these guidelines to be reviewed and revised periodically to improve their usefulness to the constituencies they are intended to serve. Toward that end, comments and suggestions are welcome, and may be directed to the Provost's Office, University Hall 308.

Role(s) and Responsibilities of Part-time Academic Faculty

Part-time academic faculty serve in a wide variety of important capacities at the University at Albany. A substantial number of the University's courses in any given semester are taught by part-time faculty members. They often teach lower-division introductory and general education courses, and they also augment a department's ability to offer courses in specialized areas. In some programs, part-time faculty perform a critical role in teaching or supervising a required student practicum experience, in directing independent studies or research, or in serving on appropriate departmental committees. As members of the faculty, part-time instructors are expected to maintain the institution's high standards for professional conduct and to adhere to all of the University's academic policies. [provide further guidance about where to find codes of conduct and academic policies]

Recruitment

Responsibility for recruiting, selecting, appointing, and supervising part-time academic faculty is assigned to the university officer (a program director, department chair, or dean) of the unit to which the faculty member is appointed. Individuals who are interested in part-time service should contact the chair or dean of the department or school in which they would like to teach. In some cases, a chair or dean may decide that it is in a program's interest to advertise part-time employment opportunities, either within the University or more broadly in regional media. Such postings should include a brief description of the nature of the opportunity (e.g., the types of courses to be taught, the semesters or quarters in which service is possible), the minimum qualifications to be considered, and a point of contact and address for submitting application materials.

Selection

Where selections must be made, it is expected that a department chair or dean will make reasonable judgments, taking into primary account the academic program's needs and the quality and experience of the candidates under consideration. University policy stipulates that the employment of part-time lecturers engaged to teach at the graduate level who do not hold the terminal professional degree must be approved by the Graduate Academic Council. [insert guidance here about where to apply for approval] Available resources and market conditions, which vary by field and discipline, are also factors that may weigh in ultimate decisions. Chairs and deans are expected to confer with others in a department or school regarding the specific criteria to be used and to make hiring decisions in consultation with a representative group of faculty. Emergency situations that preclude consultation should be documented and reported to the faculty. The obligation is to conduct a selection process that is open and fair, and to avoid decisions that appear arbitrary or capricious. Timely communication regarding the status of candidates and appointees is also a priority, as it is for all University faculty and staff.

Appointment

Appointment of part-time faculty members is governed by the Trustees' [Policies](#) and applicable provisions in the [Agreement](#). Virtually all such appointments are to the rank of part-time lecturer, a non-tenure track title. Two types of appointment are possible. Initial appointments are made on a *temporary* basis. Temporary employees may be non-renewed without notice. Individuals who serve for four consecutive semesters (excluding summers) on a temporary basis are entitled to and must be given a part-time *term* appointment. If employment is interrupted at any point during the four semesters, then the eligibility period for a term appointment begins anew. Individuals with a term appointment must be given at least 45 days notice of non-renewal.

Part-time lecturers normally have a semester or an academic year obligation. Whenever possible, the University encourages departments to appoint part-time faculty for a full academic year or longer rather than semester by semester. Individuals on term appointments may be renewed for terms of one to three years.

Appointments are initiated by a department or school, using an initial appointment form for first-time faculty members, or a change of status form for individuals who are being renewed. Appointment forms and packets are available on the website for the Office of Human Resources

Management [insert link here]. The specific course assignment for each part-time instructor must be specified in the remarks section of the form. Completed forms must be endorsed by the department chair (and/or where applicable the dean) and the Office of Financial Management and Budget before transmittal to the Office of Human Resources Management. Staff in the Office of Human Resources Management are responsible for executing the appointment and for preparing a letter confirming the appointment, which is typically signed by the Provost.

Compensation

Part-time academic faculty members are typically paid a salary on a per course basis. In some cases, depending on the nature of the assignment, another basis may be used (e.g., on a per student basis for teaching practicum supervisors). The range in compensation is wide, referenced to market factors that operate within each discipline or field. Compensation for faculty in subjects where there is a substantial supply of qualified instructors is comparatively low; rates are comparatively high for faculty in highly technical subjects or where a program must compete for expertise with other private-sector options. The campus minimum per course stipend is \$3,600. More specific information regarding starting salaries is available from each department chair or from a designated assistant dean or professional staff assistant in each school or college.

Stipends for service in the summer and winter sessions are governed by a campus-wide framework promulgated each year by the Office of Summer Sessions. The framework establishes a standard salary based on the rank of the instructor (e.g., professor, associate, assistant, lecturer, graduate student). The minimum per course stipend for teaching in these sessions is also \$3,600.

Part-time faculty are members of the professional services negotiating unit represented by United University Professions (UUP) and as such may be eligible for cost-of-living adjustments and discretionary awards as authorized under the applicable [Agreement](#).

All New York State employees are paid on a two-week lag basis. Under this system, new employees must wait four weeks for their first paycheck. Most new fall academic employees will receive their first paycheck during the third week of September. All employees separating from the State payroll receive their final paycheck two weeks after their appointments end, at the salary rate at the time of separation. University employees may elect to have their paychecks automatically deposited via electronic funds transfer with any financial institution that is a member of the American Automated Clearing House.

All employees in the UUP bargaining unit are required to pay union dues or an agency shop fee. The fee is paid through payroll deduction, whether or not the employee elects to be a member of the union. The fee is a percentage of the faculty member's salary.

Benefits

Health Insurance – The University at Albany participates in NYSHIP (New York State Health Insurance Program), which offers a variety of medical insurance options to suit employees’

needs. Faculty members teaching 2 courses during a semester may receive approximately 6 months of coverage for each eligible semester. Spring eligibility includes summer coverage.

The health insurance carriers servicing the Capital Region are The Empire Plan, CDPHP, Empire Blue Cross/Blue Shield, HIP and MVP. To review plan details:

albany.edu/hr/assets/CHOICES.pdf. For current rates: albany.edu/hr/assets/choices-user-guide.pdf.

Employees eligible for health insurance who have other group health insurance may elect to Opt-Out of health insurance in exchange for a financial incentive of \$1,000 (individual) or \$3,000 (family) annually. Opt-Out Program eligibility requirements apply.

NYSHIP offers retiree health insurance to employees with 10 years of benefit-eligible service who meet the age requirements for retirement based on the retirement system and tier they are in. Other eligibility requirements apply.

Dental and Vision Insurance – Individual or family coverage is provided at no cost through the UUP Benefit Trust Fund. Union membership is not required. There is an option of two dental plans available through Delta Dental: a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) or Premier Plan. Davis Vision provides one free examination and one free pair of glasses every 12 months. Must be eligible for health insurance to participate. For more information, see http://www.albany.edu/hr/dental_vision.php.

Retirement Plans – All employees in teaching titles are eligible to elect to participate in the Employees’ Retirement System (ERS) or Teachers’ Retirement System (TRS), which are defined benefit plans. Part-time academic employees with TERM employment status may choose from ERS, TRS and the Optional Retirement Program (ORP), which is a defined contribution plan. Retirement system participation is optional for part-time employees, unless they have an active membership from previous employment. For more information, see <http://www.albany.edu/hr/retire.php>.

Voluntary Savings Program - Employees have the option to save additional money for retirement with two types of tax-deferred savings plans - 403(b) and 457(b). Employee contributions can be made to either or both types of accounts within IRS limits. For more information and forms, see <http://www.albany.edu/hr/retire.php#vsp>.

Dependent Care Advantage Account (DCAA)– Flexible Spending - Allows employees to pay for dependent care expenses on a pre-tax basis (limit determined by the IRS on an annual basis). Qualified dependents include children under the age of 13, disabled children of any age, and relatives residing in the employee’s home who are incapable of caring for themselves. To participate, employees must be receiving regular, bi-weekly paychecks. For more information and to enroll, see <http://www.albany.edu/hr/flex.php>.

Healthcare Spending Account (HCSA) – Flexible Spending – Allows employees to set aside a portion of salary (limit determined by the IRS on an annual basis) on a pre-tax basis to pay for health-related expenses that are not reimbursed by insurance. Medically necessary medical, dental, prescription, vision and hearing expenses for enrollees and their eligible dependents may be reimbursed. Must be eligible for health insurance to participate. For more information and to enroll, see <http://www.albany.edu/hr/flex.php>.

Tuition Benefits – The UUP Waiver program provides one free course per semester on a space-available basis. In addition, the State University Employee (SUE) Tuition Program covers up to 50% of up to 6 credits per semester at a SUNY school for part-time employees. For more information and application forms, see <http://www.albany.edu/hr/tuition.php>.

Long-Term Disability Coverage – No cost, monthly income benefit equal to 60% of covered monthly salary, not to exceed \$7,500 a month after a 6-month elimination period has elapsed. This benefit also provides a monthly annuity premium benefit by contributing to a retirement account. Must be eligible for health insurance to be covered. Coverage becomes effective on the first of the month following 1 year anniversary. For more information and forms, see <http://www.albany.edu/hr/disability.php>.

Life Insurance – All UUP-represented employees are eligible for a free \$6,000 life insurance policy. See http://www.albany.edu/hr/death_benefits.php.

Long-Term Care Insurance - The New York State Public Employee and Retiree Long-Term Care Insurance Plan (NYPERL) allows purchase of a long-term care insurance policy by employees and retirees who are eligible for enrollment in the NYS Health Insurance Program. This coverage applies to care in a nursing home, assisted living facility or at home. Must be eligible for health insurance to elect this coverage. For more information, see http://www.albany.edu/hr/long-term_care.php.

Sick Leave - Part-Time Academic employees accrue sick leave based on course load. Employees may accrue a maximum of 200 sick days, which may be used to offset the cost of health insurance at the time of retirement.

Number of Courses	Days Earned
1	1/4 day per month
2	1/2 day per month
3	1 day per month

For more details, see http://www.albany.edu/hr/prof_leave.php.

Holidays – Up to 12 holidays per year, if they fall on a regularly scheduled work day during which class is not in session. For more information and the holiday schedule, see

http://www.albany.edu/hr/prof_leave.php.

Access to University Facilities – UAlbany offers its employees access to University [athletic facilities](#), [Libraries](#), [Performing Arts Center](#), [Art Museum](#) and other employee programs, resources, and services.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – EAP is a confidential referral service for personal and/or workplace issues. The goals of EAP are to offer support to University employees and promote a healthy state of mind and wellbeing, both in and out of the workplace. The EAP coordinator is available to all employees, retirees and their family members to discuss the types of services readily available within our community. For more information, see <http://www.albany.edu/eap/>

NYS 529 Plan – The best line of defense against the rising cost of higher education is to start saving early. The 529 College Savings Program helps you do just that. Part savings program, part investment program, earnings on your contributions grow tax free and withdrawals are not taxed if used for qualified educational expenses. To enroll, see <https://www.nysaves.org/home/open-ny-529-account.html>.

University ID – SUNYCard – Faculty/Staff ID cards are issued through the SUNYCard Office. Your SUNYCard may be required to access certain services. For hours of operation see albany.edu/uas/sunycard.php.

Employee Discounts - Members of the SUNY family may be eligible for group discounts and offers from a variety of vendors, merchants and providers. Discount categories include cellular phone service, travel, retail and dining and UAlbany events. For more information, see <http://www.suny.edu/benefits/discounts/>.

Bus Services – University employees can ride all Albany Mass Transit bus services, including UAlbany bus routes and all CDTA bus routes using their SUNYCard. Faculty/Staff parking is available for vehicles registered through Parking & Mass Transit Services albany.edu/pmts/.

Information Technology Service (ITS) – ITS will assign you a university email (@albany.edu). Important information is communicated via campus email. ITS also offers a variety of workshops and training sessions for using popular software programs and various IT services. Blackboard Teaching with Technology workshops are available to faculty across a wide range of topics, and are offered in face-to-face, online and webinar formats. Computer Applications Workshops are offered for numerous Microsoft products, Adobe Photoshop and Dreamweaver, and several campus IT services. For a list of current training programs, see http://www.albany.edu/its/svc_training.php.

The Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership (ITLAL) – This institute is a resource for those faculty who are looking to sharpen their professional practice, but don't have

time to spend years conducting formal research before moving to action. Sometimes it's enough to find an idea that already has a proven track record and just run with it. ITLAL's function is to play this role of faculty teaching resource and "personal coach" in ways that work for a range of disciplines, instructional needs and even personalities. ITLAL holds general events and workshops, provides instructional leadership academies and performs one-on-one consultations, in addition to providing other resources. For more information, see <http://www.itlal.org/>.

Orientation

Normally the orientation of new part-time academic faculty will include a meeting with the Department Chair or designee to insure that they have an overall understanding of program goals, texts and materials, academic procedures and policies, including evaluation policies, criteria and procedures. [we might add a sentence to the standard appointment letter that includes links to these documents]It is expected that part-time faculty will have course outlines for all courses taught on file in the Department Office, and that the Department Chair or designee will review these documents to insure conformity with Departmental goals and standards in conjunction with evaluating the faculty member's performance and professional contribution. The Provost's Office and Office of Human Resources Management will also collaborate in offering an orientation program to introduce part-time faculty to the rights, benefits, and obligations of their appointments. To the extent possible, departments and schools will act on opportunities to integrate part-time faculty into appropriate activities and the academic culture of the unit – e.g., notices of events, celebration of honors and awards, invitations to meetings as appropriate.

Professional Support

The University has a responsibility to insure that all faculty members, including part-time academic faculty have access to the tools and resources required to perform their function. Accordingly, part-time lecturers have faculty borrowing privileges with the University Libraries as well as access to other campus facilities (e.g., recreation facilities, technical support services, computing, e-mail, web-support, parking). Part-time faculty may receive mail at their departmental address and must have access to duplication services, supplies, and equipment required to perform their assigned duties and obligations. The University encourages, indeed expects, contact with students outside the traditional classroom in person, via the internet or by phone. The norms and standards may vary depending on the course and the format for delivery (e.g., traditional, on-line, blended). Within a department/school's policies on resources, priority should be given, where applicable, to the need for private space for part-time faculty to meet with students during regularly scheduled office hours or on an arranged basis.

The University sponsors a variety of programs and services to encourage and assist the professional development of all faculty, including part-time academic faculty. Part-time faculty are encouraged to take advantage of the professional development opportunities, workshops, seminars, and other programs offered through the Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership (ITLAL), Academic Computing, the University Libraries, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Title IX, the Employee Assistance Program,, and other units. In addition, part-time faculty are eligible to be considered for small grants and other forms of support for professional

development authorized by the [Agreement](#) administered through the State-wide Labor-Management Committees. These include the Individual Development Award Program, which offers up to \$1,000 in response to applications seeking support for conference attendance or participation, workshops, research, curriculum development, and creative or other professional development activities (for guidelines and application instructions see <http://www.uup.lmc.state.ny.us./development/individual.html>). There are also Excellence in Teaching Awards for which part-time academic faculty are eligible. Information about nominations is e-mailed to faculty early in the fall semester.

Supervision and Evaluation

Conscientiously done, supervision and evaluation can be tremendously effective in building community and advancing the institution's goal for increased integration of part-time academic faculty. The supervisor of record for part-time faculty members is normally a dean, department chair, or program director. Supervisors are expected to exercise reasonable oversight over each instructor's performance to insure that it meets the high standards expected for all members of the faculty. The University requires all academic units to establish procedures for the evaluation of teaching faculty. Insofar as possible, the procedures should be consistent with those used for full-time faculty members. A good evaluation would consist of an examination of the course syllabi and sample course materials, a review of the student course evaluations and commentary, a review of the grade distributions, and class observation reports where available. The faculty member may report on other contributions to the academic program and on honors or awards received during the period of employment. There should be a discussion of the evidence with the faculty member in order to obtain his/her reflection on the experience and to discuss issues and opportunities for professional development. A brief written summary of the evaluation should be provided to the faculty member and placed in his/her departmental personnel file along with the faculty member's response, if any. Such documentation is highly useful for the professional development of the part-time faculty member and is also helpful in making renewal, advancement and compensation decisions, including consideration for discretionary salary awards authorized in the UUP Agreement.

Renewal/Non-renewal

Decisions regarding the renewal or non-renewal of part-time faculty members will be made by chairs/deans in consultation with other faculty based on the needs of the academic program, the performance of the appointee as determined by the departmental review process, and available resources. Where non-renewal is required solely due to lack of resources, decisions will be made on the basis of multiple factors, including subject expertise, experience and performance, affirmative action, and other factors that are relevant to the quality and integrity of the academic program. Temporary employees are not entitled to prior written notice of non-renewal. Term employees are entitled to forty-five (45) calendar days written notice of non-renewal. The University's Office of Human Resources normally prompts supervisors of these deadlines prior to each part-time faculty member's anticipated termination date. While the University encourages department chairs and deans to make timely renewal decisions, it is sometimes necessary to non-renew a part-time faculty member to meet the required notification provisions in the Agreement. This does not preclude, however, the reappointment of the employee at a later time.

Grievances/Discipline

The University's policy is to adjudicate disagreements and differences beginning at the lowest institutional levels. Part-time faculty members are invited, indeed strongly encouraged, to address concerns directly and informally to their supervisor, department chair, or dean. The campus UUP representative is also available to facilitate communication. Should it be necessary, more formal negotiated procedures exist for pursuing grievances or discipline. These are published in both the Trustees' [Policies](#) and the applicable Agreement [Agreement](#) (Article 7, Article 19).

Revised: Spring 2017

References and Related Resources

[Trustees' Policies](#)

[UUP Agreement](#)

Links to applicable policies