

University Senate

Proposed: February 5, 2016

Adopted: February 5, 2016
by voice vote with no dissent

**RESOLUTION TO STRENGTHEN APPOINTMENTS
FOR NON-TENURE-TRACK FACULTY ON THE MORNINGSIDE CAMPUS**

WHEREAS a large and growing fraction of Columbia's full-time faculty have served the university long and well as officers of instruction with no prospect of tenure, earning renewable appointments beyond the up-or-out barrier; and

WHEREAS many of these faculty devote their careers to the University, making contributions to the long-term teaching and research missions of their department or school that are comparable to—sometimes indistinguishable from—those of their tenured colleagues; but

WHEREAS, unlike their tenured colleagues, Non-Tenure-Track faculty, regardless of their years of service, work under terms of employment that are sometimes described as multiyear appointments, but are fundamentally one-year contracts;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate call upon the administration to strengthen its commitment to this loyal cohort of Morningside faculty by extending the period of notice of any decision not to renew their appointments, according to the schedule laid out in the attached proposal; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Senate Faculty Affairs Committee, within a year of the adoption of this resolution, prepare a separate proposal to strengthen the commitment to the Non-Tenure-Track faculty of the Columbia University Medical Center, accounting for differences in budgetary conditions on the two campuses.

PROPONENT: Faculty Affairs Committee

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, AND TENURE:

A Proposal to Strengthen the Appointments of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Abstract

The Faculty Affairs Committee recommends that in order to attract, retain, and protect the many nontenured faculty members on whom the University depends, it must strengthen its commitment to long-serving members of this group by providing longer notice periods for any decisions not to renew their appointments.

Our proposal applies to all full-time nontenured faculty members on all Columbia campuses except CUMC (which will be reviewed at a future date) and is designed particularly for those whose appointments have been extended or renewed beyond the eight-year time limit set by the tenure clock. These faculty members hold titles including:

Lecturer in Discipline, Senior Lecturer in Discipline
Lecturer in Language, Senior Lecturer in Language
Assistant Clinical Professor of Law, Associate Clinical Professor of Law and Clinical Professor of Law
Assistant Professor of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice, Professor of Practice

We refer to this group throughout as Non-Tenure-Track (NTT) faculty.

The Prevalence of NTT Faculty at Columbia

The roles, titles and responsibilities of NTT faculty vary throughout the University; however, in every school they play vital roles. In some schools, their roles are mostly indistinguishable from those of their tenured colleagues. NTT faculty conduct a significant portion of the teaching and mentoring of students, serve on committees, carry out professional activities, take on administrative roles and in some instances do research. They comprise a significant portion of full-time faculty on the Morningside campus.

The number and proportion of NTT faculty have been steadily increasing in the past decade across both the Morningside and CUMC campuses.

- On Morningside, NTT faculty increased from 219 in 2004 to 397 in 2014, from 18 percent to 26 percent of total faculty.
- At CUMC, NTT faculty increased from 1,414 in 2004 to 1,720 in 2014: from 68 percent to 75 percent of total faculty.

Appointments, Renewals, and Termination

The Faculty Handbook states the following policy guidelines for termination of non-tenured faculty members: “Full-time officers of instruction, with the exceptions noted below, must be given notice no later than March 1 of the first academic year; no later than December 15 of the second; and at least 12 months prior to the end of the stated term of appointment in all subsequent years, except in the case of those in their seventh year of counted service, who must receive notice by May 31.” These are the same guidelines that apply to nontenured faculty on the tenure track.

Again, CUMC faculty are not included in the present proposal, but it is worth pausing to consider the non-renewal notice provisions for them in the Faculty Handbook: “Full-time officers of instruction in the Faculties of Dental Medicine, Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health who hold clinical appointments or titles indicating appointments in an affiliated hospital or institute are entitled to six months’ notice after completing two years of full-time service, except when nonrenewal results from the termination or modification of an affiliation agreement between the University and another institution, the closing of an affiliated institution, or significant curtailment of its operations.” There is no provision for nontenured CUMC faculty ever to receive more than six months’ notice, regardless of length of service to the University. This restriction also applies to the new CUMC titles approved by the Senate in 2012, which dispense with the word “clinical” and add the phrase “at CUMC.” Thus, all full-time nontenured faculty in the schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Public Health now hold the titles Assistant Professor at CUMC, Associate Professor at CUMC, or Professor at CUMC.

Like tenured faculty, NTT faculty make invaluable contributions to the scholarship of our students and most make lifelong commitments to this institution. Having a faculty committed long term to the University is critical for its educational mission. Therefore, it is imperative that NTT faculty with long service at Columbia University have a stronger commitment from the institution. To earn such a commitment, faculty members must demonstrate their value to the University through excellence in teaching, mentoring, administrative roles, academic and professional service, as well as research where appropriate, in accordance with expectations for all full-time faculty members.

A long-term commitment to NTT faculty is premised on two assumptions:

1. Faculty will maintain their current level of commitment to teaching, research and service.
2. The financial environment of the School/Department/program is not expected to suffer drastic changes over the course of the commitment (e.g., a steep decline in student enrollment).

Proposed notice provisions for non-renewal of NTT faculty

For the first seven years of service, the Faculty Affairs Committee recommends following the guidelines stated in the Faculty Handbook. In their first year, faculty should be apprised of their review schedule. After a review, faculty who are not meeting expectations for their position must be given notice of nonrenewal no later than

March 1 of the first academic year; no later than December 15 of the second; and at least 12 months prior to the end of the stated term of appointment in subsequent years, except in the case of those entering their seventh year of counted service, who must receive notice by May 31 in year six. The intervals between reviews will vary from one to five years, depending on current practice.

After seven years of service, after each satisfactory review, appointments will be renewed until the next review. For faculty with the titles of Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor of Professional Practice, Associate Clinical Professor, Professor of Professional Practice or Clinical Professor, appointments are renewed for two to five years, depending on the current practice in the school or department.

Faculty with multiyear contracts with **seven to 12 years of service** must receive a notice of nonrenewal 18 months prior to the stated term of their appointment. Faculty with **seven to 12 years of service** whose reviews are unsatisfactory must receive at least an 18-month notice of nonrenewal.

Faculty with multiyear contracts with **12 or more years of service** must receive a notice of nonrenewal 24 months prior to the stated term of their appointment. Faculty with **12 or more years of service** whose reviews are unsatisfactory must receive at least a 24-month notice of nonrenewal.

Finally, we recognize that these reforms will only sharpen the disparity with the provision of six months' notice for all NTT faculty at CUMC, regardless of length of service. This inequity must be addressed in the near future.