



1995

## 1995 Chancellor's Response to CFW Concerns on Part-Time Issues in the Status of Women at UTK Report, March 1994

Office of the Chancellor

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### Recommended Citation

University of Tennessee Commission for Women. 1995. "Chancellor's Response to CFW Concerns on Part-Time Issues in the Status of Women at UTK Report, March 1994."

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Office of the Chancellor  
527 Andy Holt Tower  
Knoxville 37996-0150  
(615) 974-3288  
FAX (615) 974-3536

February 1, 1995

Dr. Norma Cook  
Chair, Commission for Women  
101 McClung Tower  
CAMPUS

Dear Norma:

Enclosed is the response to part-time issues raised by the Commission. These concerns are complex, particularly since part-time employment can take many forms (e.g., faculty, staff, exempt, non-exempt, regular, and term). Each group may have different interests and is governed by slightly different policies. Also, in some cases, UTK is constrained by state legislation in how we can respond to part-time concerns.

The approach my staff and I have taken to this issue is one of raising awareness. First, discussions of part-time issues among the Chancellor's Staff has created an atmosphere where we are now more sensitive to the role of part-time employees at UTK. I have encouraged my staff to pay special attention in their areas to the application of current policies regarding part-time employees, particularly in the areas of professional development and inclusion in departmental activities.

Second, there are many opportunities currently available to part-time faculty and staff at UTK, which some employees may not realize. We would like this response to begin the process of educating part-time employees about these opportunities.

Part-time employees are a vital part of the university and make many worthwhile contributions. As we continue to look for ways to operate more efficiently, their role will become increasingly important in the future. Raising awareness of part-time issues at UTK has been an important contribution of the Commission's work.

I hope you will accept this response as one step toward making the campus a place where all people are recognized and valued.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill".

William T. Snyder  
Chancellor

c: Chancellor's Staff

Enclosure



**RESPONSE TO PART TIME ISSUES  
RAISED BY THE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN  
JANUARY, 1995**

Introduction

Part-time staff and faculty make valuable contributions to UTK every day and are a vital part of the university community. The Commission for Women has raised several important, and difficult, issues related to the role of part-time staff and faculty at UTK, and this response seeks to address each of them.

Part-time employment is an area where UTK is able to offer many benefits, including flexibility in work place and work hours. It is also an area where UTK can continue to improve, particularly in raising the awareness of part-time staff and faculty about opportunities already available to them.

One way that the university formally recognizes the importance of part-time staff is by including their voice as part of the Employee Relations Council. Part-time non-exempt staff have an elected representative on the Employee Relations Council. This position is especially important because it provides a forum for issues affecting part-time employees to be considered on a regular basis. Carolyn Alfrey is the current Part-Time Representative to the Employee Relations Council and has been active in lobbying the Tennessee legislature for changes in the statutes regarding longevity. If there are part-time employees who would like to raise additional career development or compensation issues, Carolyn is an excellent resource.

**19. Take steps to bring compensation, including longevity, of part-time employees up to the level of full-time employees performing identical functions.**

Part-time faculty and staff at UTK are currently compensated at the same rate as full-time employees with similar job titles doing identical tasks. The rate of compensation is the same; differences in total compensation are due to percent of effort (i.e., 50% time, 75% time, 100% time). Any questions concerning equal pay for equal tasks should be addressed to the Office of Human Resources Management at 974-5151.

Longevity is an issue closely controlled by the state legislature. Legislation affecting longevity applies to all state employees, including civil service employees. UTK is required to operate in accordance with these regulations. In the past this has prevented UTK from granting longevity to part-time employees.

The state legislature has recently approved a change in legislation, however, that makes some part-time employees eligible for longevity. The new legislation

makes any employee who works 82.05% time or more and who has worked for 36 months or more eligible for longevity. This change in the legislative statute was effective January 1, 1995.

Regular part-time employees may currently elect to participate in benefits available to full-time employees on a pro-rated basis, based on percent of time worked. One exception is UT's insurance program -- this is available only to part-time employees who are appointed 75% time or more.

Part-time employees are eligible to participate fully in Operation Health Check, Prostrate Health Screening, Mobile Mammography, Life Planning Seminars, Eldercare Seminars, and the Service Awards Program. All training programs offered by the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) are open to part-time employees. Part-time employees are encouraged to use OHRM's Career Development Series, Career Resources Center, and Transfer Application Process. Flex-year positions can be arranged for part-time positions, just as they are for full-time staff. The normal flex-year schedule begins August 15 and continues through May 14.

Many pieces of legislation related to workplace terms and conditions apply equally to regular part-time and full-time employees. These include the Family Medical Leave Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In all instances, UTK complies with applicable federal and state legislation regarding employment compensation and benefits. Any questions about these policies should be addressed to the Office of Human Resources Management at 974-5151.

**20. Encourage part-time employees who are interested in promotion to learn new skills. Provide support for professional training and development.**

Every UTK employee is encouraged to participate in programs that support his or her professional development. Part-time employees are welcome to participate in all training programs offered by OHRM. In addition, OHRM supports the needs of part-time employees in the following ways.

- OHRM sponsors a regular brown bag lunch session for part-time employees. For the Spring 1995 semester, this session will be offered on March 14, from noon-1:00 p.m. in the Arena. Please call OHRM - Training at 974-6657 to make reservations.
- OHRM has opened a Career Resources Center in Aconda Court and is offering a Career Development Series that provides testing, guidance on career selections, and methods for better preparing oneself for job growth. Part time employees are encouraged to use the Career Resources Center

and participate in the Career Development Series.

- Effective July 1, 1994, OHRM implemented a computerized Applicant Tracking System that enables quick retrieval of applicant information, facilitates referral of diverse pools of individuals who have skills matching campus needs, and includes applications from campus staff members who wish to transfer to or be promoted to other positions. This system includes both full and part time positions and should facilitate career development opportunities for both.
- The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) is working on ways to facilitate cross-training and a lattice approach to career development, as compared to traditional ladders. This will benefit part time employees by offering additional training opportunities to them.

**21. Enhance efforts to include part-time employees in departmental meetings and activities.**

Part-time employees are an important UTK resource, and departments and units are encouraged to include their participation in departmental meetings and activities. The College of Education has taken a leadership role in making sure part-time employees are included in all unit meetings and activities.

The Faculty Handbook specifically addresses the need for part-time faculty to be involved at the departmental and university-wide level. It states:

"Part-time faculty should be knowledgeable about the mission and objectives of the department in its relations to the institution ... Toward this end it is important, wherever possible, for part-time faculty to receive appropriate departmental and University communications, to attend departmental meetings, as well as appropriate public events, seminars, and symposia, and thus share something of the life and ethos of the University...."

The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs fully supports this policy.

In addition, most university-wide employee activities, such as the annual Staff and Faculty Picnic, invite the participation of part-time employees.