1980 Recommended Policies Regarding Regular Part-Time Faculty

Commission for Women

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INTRODUCTION

Policies regarding part-time faculty vary greatly within the University. Departments need to examine their policies in an effort to standardize policies regarding part-time faculty. The Faculty Senate has recently approved a resolution from the Senate Faculty Affairs Committee which is directed toward improving the status of part-time employees.

The purpose of the Federal Employees Part-Time Career Employment Act which became public law on October 10, 1978, is to encourage availability of part-time employment for those who desire it. It distinguishes permanent from non-career or temporary employees. These permanent employees are termed by the University as "regular part-time" employees. The major objective of the following recommendations is to improve the status of regular part-time faculty who are on a career ladder, plan to remain active in their profession, and who have a commitment to the University. Faculty members who hold joint positions between departments and other agencies or departments are generally granted full faculty privileges; therefore, it is inconsistent to withhold privileges to regular part-time faculty who have the same or a greater commitment to the department.

POLICIES FOR REGULAR (PERMANENT) PART-TIME FACULTY

1. The following procedures should be the same for regular part-time and full-time faculty. Credentials should be evaluated with consideration of accomplishments based on percentage of past employment.
   a. Interviewing and hiring procedures
   b. Application for tenure (UTK has 4 faculty with tenure who are classified as either temporary or part-time)
   c. Application for promotion
   d. Application to direct doctoral research and teach 6000-level courses

2. The following should be adhered to, both qualitatively and quantitatively, on a basis equivalent to the percentage of employment:
   a. Secretarial and other types of faculty assistance
   b. Office space
   c. Fringe benefits, i.e. insurance, retirement
   d. Teaching load
   e. Research load and expectations for publications
3. Regular part-time faculty should be allowed the following:
   a. Voting privileges at least commensurate with the percentage employment
   b. To teach upper division and graduate courses
   c. Eligibility for research funds
   d. To serve on graduate committees and direct graduate research, both master's level and doctoral (with approval as addressed earlier)

CONCLUSION

According to the UTK EEO-6 Report for Fall 1979, 15% of the faculty are employed on a part-time basis. Part-time faculty consist of 40% female and 60% male. If the current trend toward scarce University resources continues, it is conceivable that the rate of part-time employment may increase. The above policies would help to assure continued quality of programs and also improve the morale and retention of part-time faculty.
RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

On page 17 of the Faculty Handbook, there are listed six classifications of faculty appointment. There purport to be both regular and temporary designations for both full and part-time faculty. It would appear therefore that the institution does recognize the existence of a serious commitment to the academic life on the part of one who holds a regular but part-time appointment. In reality there is no such status. The fact of the matter is that all other important distinctions concerning the employment and retention of faculty are keyed to and depend upon the full-time appointment. It is clearly in the interest of this University to bring categories 2 and 4 (p. 17) to life and to give them some meaning. There are residing in this area numerous individuals with both the qualifications for and a serious commitment to the academic endeavor. Recruitment of people to this campus and some measure of budgetary flexibility may as well be achieved by serious definition and utilization of these categories.

The Federal Government has recently taken such an "institutional" step with the passage of the Federal Employees Part-Time Career Employment Act of 1978. The essence of the legislation lies in recognition of regular part-time status as a legitimate career basis within the government service. Government managers are encouraged to assess both their own departmental needs and the desires of otherwise qualified individuals and to accommodate these by using part-time regular positions. There are both similarities and differences between the situations in government service and the university, but this legislation at least indicates that the university should in good faith seek to implement the idea.

The Commission for Women recommends that the institution recognize and make into a reality categories 2 and 4 of faculty appointment. There will be different situations among colleges and departments, but a number of essential matters are common to such an enterprise. The essence of the status is a two-way commitment. The prospective faculty member offers and is judged by the normal criteria for appointment. If because of personal or other professional commitments, the individual cannot do justice to the full load then an appropriate percentage of such load should be agreed upon. Compensation and time periods for probation (promotion) should be arranged accordingly and reviewed as necessary. At present, part-time compensation is based almost solely on classroom exposure. It is contemplated here that there will be significant research and institutional service commitments as part of the package and they must be given consideration. To the extent that University budgeting procedures presently frustrate such arrangements, they should be altered by the administration. Other important aspects of the faculty relationship which will be affected by truly regular part-time status include access to teaching at the graduate level and the vote within faculties. Facility support (office secretarial, etc.) and fringe benefits must be reasonably adjusted. Review of the faculty handbook will indicate the areas for study. Eligibility for faculty development and similar support from University or individual college funds should not be denied such regular faculty simply because they lack full-time status.

Although this is a situation which seriously limits the ability of women to undertake academic careers, there are undoubtedly men who for personal or public service reasons may take advantage of true regular part-time status if it were available. There should be such flexibility within the entire institution.
SPECIFIC AREAS WHICH SHOULD BE EXAMINED IN THE FACULTY HANDBOOK TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF REGULAR PART-TIME FACULTY

Review of the 1978 faculty handbook indicates a number of areas in which application of regular part-time status must be worked out in detail. Although a "percentage of effort/percentage of benefit" principle will in some cases be helpful, it need not be followed in doctrinaire fashion. The list which follows is meant to be comprehensive, but is not exhaustive.

Many items occur in Chapter 3 which relate to part-time faculty status. Page 15 describes the ideal appointment process. What is needed here is to utilize this same process for any appointment to regular faculty status be it part or full time. In theory this might also extend to appointment of temporary faculty, but the practice at present is markedly different. The faculty Senate resolution of February, 1980 seems to have covered this situation adequately.

On page 17 the distinction between regular and temporary faculty status needs to be properly defined. The idea that both part-time and temporary appointments are made to meet only short-range needs should be modified to eliminate the idea that part-time status is by definition not to be considered among the serious academic faculty appointments.

Pages 18 and 19 consider the nature of probation and tenure. The six criteria for the award of tenure on page 19 can be applied to part-time as well as full-time regular faculty within appropriate time frames. This is an area which will have to be fully thought through. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are used in judging various candidacies. A proportional stretching out of time-frames seems more appropriate for quantitative matters. Reasonable demonstrations and evaluations of quality might not require full extensions. These are matters for further thoughtful study and discussion.

Chapters 5 and 6 contain a number of benefit items which will require attention. There appear no reasons why faculty development grants should be absolutely denied regular part-time faculty. Again the eligibility should be keyed to regular rather than temporary status. The same applies to faculty on academic year appointment with regard to sick leave, vacations and holidays. In the area of fringe benefits there are a number of discrete problems. The TIAA type retirement system is keyed to a percentage of salary and should be no problem. The basic group insurance (health) plan seems keyed to working 75% or 30 hours a week. It may be that this line would preclude participation by regular faculty members who carried less of a load. A similar situation may exist in the group disability program. Social Security eligibility has its own rules. Fee waivers are presently limited to full time faculty. It may be that the University would wish to extend that benefit to all regular members.

Chapter 7 describes the research mission of the University. It is essential that regular part-time faculty members both be required to engage in this mission and be compensated and supported in their efforts. The University budgeting process should operate flexibly so as to be divided into other than full-time person units for this purpose. This area represents both an obligation and an opportunity for part-time faculty who desire realistic regular status.
MEMORANDUM
July 2, 1980

TO: Commission for Women
FROM: Jack E. Reese
RE: Policies Regarding Part-time Faculty

Thank you for your recent statement concerning policies for regular part-time faculty. As you indicate in the first paragraph, the Faculty Senate recently approved a series of recommendations directed to the same topic.

We hope to respond to these recommendations in several ways:

(1) Where the recommendations involve University-wide personnel policies, to explore the issues with appropriate University-wide officers, with the aim of arriving at an improved set of definitions and policies;

(2) Where the recommendations involve only campus policy or practice, to draft new statements for the Handbook and for general guidelines to deans, department heads, and others responsible for academic employment procedures;

(3) Toward the purposes of (1) and (2) above, to undertake a careful series of interviews with our part-time faculty, to determine the extent to which they are or might be affected by suggestions made in the CFW report. The interviews will be carried on over the next several months.

Both the CFW and the Faculty Senate have identified a number of important questions that deserve to be addressed thoroughly and sensitively. You can be sure that we will make every effort to give these questions the kind of prompt and systematic attention they deserve and to keep you advised as we do so.

cc: Professor Carl Pierce
   Professor Pauline Bayne
   Professor Kenneth Kenney
   Vice Chancellor Luke Ebersole
   Vice Chancellor Walter Herndon
   Associate Vice Chancellor Ralph Norman