

**Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty
Annual Report to the Faculty Council
April 2015**

Members

Deb Aikat	Journalism	Associate Professor (tt)
Nancy Fisher (Chair)	Medicine	Research Professor (ft)
Susan Irons	English and Comparative Literature	Senior Lecturer (ft)
Chris McLaughlin	Government	Associate Professor (tt)
Tara Moon	Clinical Laboratory Science	Clinical Assistant Professor (ft)
Adam Persky	Pharmacy	Clinical Associate Professor (ft)
Bruce Cairns	Surgery	Professor/Chair of the Faculty

ft = fixed-term; tt = tenure track/tenured

Meetings: June 2, September 15, October 31, November 17, December 12, 2014 and January 23, Feb 27, March 20, April 24, 2015.

Committee Charge

Resolution 2005-9. On Establishing the Council Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty

The Faculty Council resolves:

Section 1. Pursuant to Section 2-8(b)(1) of the Faculty Code of University Government, the Council Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty is created. The Committee has six members, appointed by the Chair of the Faculty from among sitting members of the Faculty Council at the September meeting of the Council each year. Four of the members are Fixed-Term Faculty members, and two are Tenure-Track faculty members. The Chair of the Faculty designates the chair of the committee. Members are eligible for reappointment.

Sec. 2. The committee addresses working conditions and the status of full-time and part-time fixed-term faculty members. In this regard it monitors implementation of policies and recommendations concerning fixed-term faculty; reviews school, college, and departmental policies governing such faculty members; and formulates and proposes new policies and procedures for consideration by the Faculty Council. The committee reports to the Council as appropriate to its agenda, but at least annually.

Sec. 3. This resolution is effective upon adoption.

As of July 1, 2015*:

Resolution 2015-2. On Amending the Faculty Code of University Government to Establish the Committee on Fixed Term Faculty.

Section 1. Faculty Council resolution 2005-9, which chartered the Council Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty, is rescinded.

Section 2. The General Faculty enacts that § 4-14 is added to the Faculty Code of University Government:

§ 4-14. Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty

(a) The Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty consists of six members of the voting faculty, appointed by the Chair of the Faculty. Four of the members are fixed-term, and two are tenure-track.

(b) The committee addresses concerns and makes policy recommendations on matters specific to fixed-term faculty members, including, but not limited to, working conditions, status, and professional advancement.

Section 3. This resolution is effective on July 1, 2015. The Chair of the Faculty shall stagger the terms of the initial members in a manner consistent with § 4-1(a)(2).

*Passed vote of the Faculty Council on February 27 and March 20, 2015.

Quick View of Activities of the Committee 2014-2015

1. The committee developed a survey for all UNC Fixed-Term Faculty. The survey assessed their knowledge of representation in faculty governance and asked what pressing issues face them professionally.
 2. The survey was sent in July 2014. We received 888 responses out of 1400 Fixed-Term Faculty.
 3. A list of short and long term goals for the committee was set.
 4. Survey data analysis proceeded over the year, including both quantitative and qualitative analysis.
 5. A list of Best Practices for ensuring the professional success of Fixed Term Faculty was formed (listed below).
 6. A webpage was created as a resource for Fixed-Term Faculty on campus.
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Summary of Activities of the Committee 2014-15

Committee goals:

1. Survey Fixed-Term Faculty on awareness of representation, job satisfaction and top concerns
2. Recommend longer contracts for Fixed-Term Faculty campus-wide
3. Get the word out that Fixed-Term Faculty have representation in FC
4. Develop a list of Best Practices to ensure the success of Fixed-Term Faculty professionally at UNC
5. Continue moving forward with renaming “Lecturers” to professional titles.

2014/15 Mission Statement developed:

To raise awareness of how the University, Schools and Departments can support Fixed-Term Faculty by providing

- Job security
- Career path development
- Professional opportunities and resources
- Departmental inclusion
- Appropriate professional titles

Benefit to the University: Increase faculty retention to retain talent and reduce turn-over resulting in costly loss of service and necessity of searches. Improving these areas for Fixed-Term Faculty will also improve a sense of community on campus.

Additional activities:

- Worked with Paul Mihas, Asst. Dir. Ed. & Qualitative Research at H W Odum Inst. and Sarah Birken, Research Assistant Professor, Health Policy and Management for data analysis
- Reported to UNC-CH delegation of Faculty Assembly on January 8
- Met with several department chairs to discuss best practices

- Collaborated with other committees: Community and Diversity, Status of Women, APT, Faculty Welfare

Survey Results: Two levels of data analysis were performed. First, quantitative data was analyzed from the survey reporting awareness of representation in faculty governance and general satisfaction. A second level of qualitative analysis was performed on a subset of respondents to capture the comments provided by the respondents. This second analysis is ongoing. The quantitative analysis documents the following:

- Fixed-Term Faculty members are largely unaware of their own numbers, representation of Faculty Council or the informational resources available regarding appointment policy.
- 63% of Fixed-Term Faculty members are Satisfied or Very Satisfied with their positions at UNC.
- Fixed-Term Faculty members are most concerned with salary equity, length of contracts, evaluation process, promotion criteria, retention and growth opportunities.
- The majority of Fixed-Term Faculty members have only one-year contracts, even those who have served at the University for over 10 years.
- Some Fixed-Term Faculty members are not well supported by their departments, resulting in a feeling of lowered valuation.

Best Practices to Ensure the Professional Success of Fixed Term Faculty at UNC

The Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty recommends the following “best practices” for the employment and professional support of full-time Fixed-Term Faculty at UNC-Chapel Hill. These recommendations come from an extensive survey of UNC Fixed-Term Faculty as well as practices from other universities.

1. **LENGTH OF CONTRACT** When an appointment with fixed-term fills an ongoing role in the appointing unit’s academic program, employment contracts should be longer than one year. Thus, except in unusual circumstances, the following guidelines should be observed.

Years of Service to the University	Contract Length
< 1 year	1 year
1 – 5 years or Associate Professor level	3 years
> 5 years or Professor level	5 years

2. **NON-RENEWAL NOTICE** Decisions not to renew the appointments of full-time Fixed-Term Faculty should be made with adequate notice, at least six months prior to the end of the first year’s appointment. Except in cases of urgent financial contingency, notice in advance of nonrenewal should progressively increase to twelve months. Individuals with appointments that fill an ongoing role in the unit whose contracts are not to be renewed should have access to an expedited process of review, so that a final decision can be made in a timely and responsible manner.
3. **CLEAR PROFESSIONAL PROGRESSION** Academic units should have a clear career ladder system for full-time (>75% FTE) fixed-term positions, and appointments should be made with predictable ranks and titles. This document should be updated and revised every five years. Criteria should include responsibilities for teaching, service and scholarship (e.g., scholarship of education, scholarship of application, scholarship of discovery).
4. **COMMUNICATION** Standards and criteria for reappointment and progression in rank should be written and widely distributed to both full-time Fixed-Term Faculty and those who perform the evaluations and make recommendations and decisions. The process of reappointment should be communicated to individuals who are offered a fixed-term appointment. At the point of inception, it should be made clear if a career ladder system is in place in the unit and whether or not its benefits might extend to the position. Individuals under consideration for reappointment should be given an opportunity to prepare evaluation dossiers and make a case for their continued participation in the appointing unit’s academic program.
5. **CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES** Fixed-Term Faculty members should be mentored and should receive regular feedback (at minimum yearly) on their performance, as well as the support necessary to advance their careers. They should be supported, including access to training, competitive leaves, internal grants and awards, and travel funds.

6. **INCLUSION** When they have met the criteria for faculty voting rights as specified in the *Faculty Code of University Government*, Fixed-Term Faculty should be fully integrated into their departments. This includes incorporating them into departmental governance by allowing them to participate in departmental faculty meetings and advancing appropriate voting privileges. It also includes listing their names in university academic catalogs, faculty building directories, and departmental websites, and including them in all routine departmental and university mailings. Teaching faculty should be included in curriculum discussions.