Term Faculty Task Force Recommendations
Fall 2018
TASK FORCE MEMBERS

- Visitor Karen Alcalde, BOV rep
- Laurence Bray, Bioengineering (VSE)
- John Cantiello, Health Administration and Policy (co-chair) (CHHS)
- Kimberly Eby, Faculty Affairs and Development (Provost Office, co-chair)
- Brian Fitzpatrick, English (CHSS)
- Al Fuertes, School of Integrative Studies (CHSS)
- Michelle Lim, HR/Payroll
- Joe Marr, Computational and Data Sciences (COS)
- Cindy Parker, Management (Business)
- Keith Renshaw, Psychology (Faculty Senate chair) (CHSS)
- Larry Rockwood, Biology (department head rep) (COS)
- Ellen Rodgers, College of Education and Human Development (CEHD)
- Girum Urgessa, Civil, Environmental, and Infrastructure Engineering (Faculty Matters Faculty Senate rep, VSE)
OUR CHARGE

The Term Faculty Task Force is charged with

a) Identifying challenges and difficulties, as well as career development opportunities for term faculty, and

b) Generating recommendations to address those challenges and opportunities.

Among the myriad issues related to the well-being of our term faculty, the task force should address such issues as:

- Compensation
- Release time
- Promotion
- Contract lengths
- Responsibilities and expectations
- Performance evaluation
- Others as appropriate
VALUES AND PRINCIPLES GUIDING OUR WORK

• Equity
• Faculty rights
• Respect for all the diverse roles faculty play within the institution
• Desire to recognize the strengths of all contributors
• Vision for faculty well-being
• Unity
• Inclusivity
• Creation of opportunities regardless of background or title
• Transparency
• The spirit of possibility
OUR VISION AND GOAL

• The Term Faculty Task Force aims to improve the status and quality of term faculty experiences through creating new, inclusive frameworks for term faculty, from strengthening meaningful pathways for career progression to heightening recognition of their varied contributions to the University.

• We aim for term faculty positions to be viewed as career opportunities, just as tenure-track positions are.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK FORCE TIMELINE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spring 2017</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Formation of task force &amp; identify goals and priorities</td>
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<td>• Share key national resources &amp; set up Bb</td>
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<td><strong>Summer 2017</strong></td>
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<td>• Interviews with local academic unit heads (n=59)</td>
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<td>• Research promising practices</td>
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<td><strong>Fall 2017</strong></td>
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<td>• Analyze interview data</td>
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<td>• Research promising practices</td>
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<td>• Engage &amp; inform Mason community</td>
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<td>• Provost web presence</td>
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<td>• Develop survey for spring</td>
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<td><strong>Spring 2018</strong></td>
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<td>• Research promising practices</td>
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<td>• Faculty survey (n=748)</td>
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<td><strong>Summer 2018</strong></td>
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<td>• Review open-ended comments</td>
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<td>• Examine term faculty compensation</td>
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<td>• Draft Task Force recommendations</td>
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<td>• Community forum</td>
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<td>• Solicit final feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Present to senior leadership</td>
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<td>• Final Task Force recommendations</td>
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SPRING SURVEY: KEY FINDINGS

• Contract Lengths
  • Initial contract lengths will vary by unit
  • Transition to multi-year contracts is supported (Associate Professor: 5-year; Full Professor: 5-year or 7-year)

• Term faculty promotion should be systematized

• Clearer policies are needed, particularly around:
  • Performance evaluations and contract renewals
  • Processes for promotion
  • Workload specifications, including the roles of advising, mentoring, research, leadership, and service/engagement

• Recognition that term faculty professional development support is important

• Strong support for voting rights (within LAU and College/School) and participation in faculty governance
RECOMMENDATIONS
INITIAL & PRE-PROMOTION CONTRACTS

• LAUs should not use more than three 1-year contracts for any individual term faculty member.

• All academic units should establish pre-promotion contract pathways.
  • Examples of initial and pre-promotion contract lengths for new term faculty hires are as follows:
    • Three 1-year contracts, followed by a 3-year contract
    • 1-year contract, followed by a 2-year contract, then a 3-year contract
    • 2-year contract, followed by a 2-year contract, then another 2-year contract
    • 3-year contract, followed by another 3-year contract
APPOINTMENT TO MULTI-YEAR CONTRACTS

• LAUs should follow the Office of the Provost guidelines for appointment to multi-year contracts, but it is **not** required to establish new levels of review.

• The Office of the Provost should create and communicate guidelines for the recommended procedures for term faculty appointment to multi-year contracts.

• Upon promotion a new contract will be issued and contract lengths for term faculty should increase to at least 5 years (longer contract lengths are acceptable).
PROMOTION

• LAUs are expected to support term faculty members to go up for promotion. For term faculty...
  • With the terminal degree, promotion will be from Assistant Term Professor to Associate Term Professor, to Full Term Professor.
  • Without the terminal degree in the field, promotion will be from Instructor, to Senior Instructor, to Distinguished Instructor.

• The Faculty Handbook should be clarified to make explicit pathways for promotion for all term faculty in Mason’s policy, including general criteria for term faculty promotion.
  • The Faculty Handbook should articulate the process for clinical term faculty promotion (currently absent).

• Each LAU should develop and communicate criteria for term faculty promotion according to disciplinary guidelines and expectations.
PROMOTION

- Promotion casebooks should follow the guidelines from the Office of the Provost.
  - LAUs who require additional documentation should communicate that clearly to their term faculty members.

- While term faculty must be evaluated by their LAU for promotion, it is *not* required for school/college-wide committees to review term faculty dossiers for promotion.

- LAUs should develop and communicate clear expectations around the composition of the review committee.
  - Should include both term and tenured faculty who are at or above the rank to which the candidate is being promoted.
  - In LAUs where there are no other term faculty, then it is appropriate to seek a term faculty member from a different LAU within the college/school.
PROMOTION

• A negative recommendation on a promotion request need not translate into termination of employment. A faculty member may remain at the initial rank as long as their performance warrants continued employment and serves LAU needs.

• The Office of the Provost should additionally:
  • Create guidelines for the recommended procedures for term faculty promotion.
  • Hold term faculty promotion information sessions.
  • Working with Faculty Senate, update the appeals process to be inclusive of term faculty.
COMPENSATION

• University administration should continue to work for salary floor increases, as well as actively explore other salary compensation strategies for term faculty.

• The university should engage in a salary equity study with the goal of reducing gross disparities in wages related to faculty appointment types, gender, race/ethnicity, salary compression issues, etc.

• Schools and colleges should examine salary differentials between term and tenure-line faculty members, report the findings to the Provost, and make efforts to address identified concerns in the context of regional, national, and disciplinary norms.
COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

• Term faculty with significant summer responsibilities should be given additional compensation and/or put on 10- or 12-month contracts.

• The Office of the Provost should work with Human Resources and Payroll to explore possibilities for:
  • Phased retirement options for term faculty
  • Emeritus status and associated benefits for term faculty

• The Office of the Provost and Human Resources and Payroll should review current benefits orientation materials and consultation practices regarding retirement plans for term faculty to ensure maximized personal and financial benefit when choosing a retirement and other benefits plans.
WORKLOAD

• Term faculty should have a voice and engage in departmental, college, and university service.

• Standard nine-month instructional term faculty teaching workloads should be 4:3.
  • Course releases below the standard should be negotiated to account for significant responsibilities, such as student advising, administrative duties and leadership, and legitimate differences across different types of classes.
  • Nine-month term faculty who are asked and choose to teach above the 4:3 course load should be compensated accordingly.
WORKLOAD

• All academic units should examine, revise as necessary, and communicate their workload policies to make explicit expectations regarding (but not limited to):
  • Student advising, student mentoring, faculty mentoring, administrative duties, teaching loads, service and leadership within Mason and external professional communities, research and scholarship, and professional practice.
  • Workload policies should address any increased expectations for service and leadership post-promotion, if applicable.

• All schools/colleges should establish policies to allow course buyouts for term faculty conducting research.

• Term faculty who have the required credentials should be eligible to apply for graduate faculty status.
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

• All academic units are expected to provide constructive feedback to term faculty about progress toward promotion in their annual reviews.

• All academic units are encouraged to provide more comprehensive feedback about progress toward promotion at least years two prior to promotion.

• Evaluation of teaching should not rely exclusively on student course evaluations.
  • Considerations: class make-up; instructional strategies; etc.
  • Additional sources: syllabi/assignment review, evidence of growth and development, support for innovative learning, online and digital learning course development, learning assessment strategies, peer review, etc.
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

• Academic unit leadership should ensure that term faculty evaluations (annual reviews and promotion) are aligned with the existing term faculty contracts and workload responsibilities.

• Term faculty should be evaluated on all aspects of work that they do as a professional on behalf of Mason, such as:
  • Teaching
  • Student learning assessment
  • Student mentoring/advising
  • Course coordination
  • Intern/externship supervision
  • Faculty mentoring
  • Administration
  • Research
  • Dissemination of student learning outcomes
  • Professional service/leadership
  • And more...
Term faculty should have voting rights in their local academic unit and college/school.

Term faculty should be eligible to:

- Participate in performance evaluation processes of other term faculty.
- Serve on LAU, college/school, and university committees as appropriate for their assignments.
- Participate on search committees and in performance evaluation processes of their LAU heads.

Term faculty members should have meaningful engagement in program planning at the LAU level, especially as it relates to aspects of the curriculum for which they bear teaching responsibility.
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

• LAU leadership should engage in conversations with term faculty members about career goals and interests as part of their academic unit management.

• LAU leadership should identify and publicize mentoring and other professional development opportunities for term faculty.

• Term faculty should receive some reimbursement for professional development expenses, including travel for meetings of relevant professional societies, from their LAU or colleges/schools.
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

• Term faculty members whose primary focus is teaching should be eligible for summer grant funding opportunities that supports them in developing, implementing, assessing and disseminating teaching and curricular innovation.

• The Office of the Provost should work with Faculty Senate and deans to develop a policy for term faculty study leave.

• LAU leadership should ensure faculty orientation or other onboarding resources are equally available to all new faculty.
LEADERSHIP FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

• LAU leadership should actively take steps to create an inclusive climate and culture in which all faculty feel welcome, regardless of position responsibilities or part-time or full-time status.
  • Where appropriate, policies for term and tenure-line faculty should not be different; access to professional resources needed for success should be similar.

• “Term” should not be required in institutional materials (e.g., websites, business cards, etc.), but must be noted in BANNER for record-keeping.
IMPLEMENTATION & NEXT STEPS

The Office of the Provost and Faculty Senate should charge a Term Faculty Implementation Team to oversee the implementation of the recommendations, including ongoing reviews of progress towards goals.

Fall 2018
• Engage with Mason community
• Seek your feedback
• Present to senior leadership
• Finalize report and recommendations

Spring 2019
• Create Term Faculty Implementation Team
FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

• Tenure-track for teaching term faculty

• Clearer articulation of policies and practices for research term faculty

• Term faculty leave policy
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Questions and comments?