

University Faculty Senate
Governance Committee
176th Plenary
SUNY Canton
April 22, 2017

Resolution Regarding Contingent Faculty Involvement in Shared Governance

Whereas colleges and universities continue to move to a model where many classes are taught by contingent faculty¹, such that the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) reported that, as of 2015, 65% of all faculty positions are contingent and 36% of full-time faculty are contingent, up from 43% and 18% respectively in 1975²; and

Whereas the percentage of contingent faculty at SUNY has increased from 39.6% in 1995-96 to 61.3% in 2015-16³; and

Whereas, at our Health Science Centers a large majority of faculty, estimated at 70%, hold the clinical faculty title which requires service, teaching and research but is classified as contingent; and

Whereas the AAUP recommends that contingent faculty must be engaged with shared governance and protected by academic freedom in order to maintain, “Quality of Student Learning”, “Equity Between Academic Colleagues”, “Integrity of Faculty Work” and “the Protection of Academic Freedom”⁴; and

Whereas only half of all SUNY State-operated institutions allow contingent faculty to be members, either voting or not, in their governance bodies; and

Whereas many contingent faculty who are generally paid “by the course” are not engaged with campus governance because there is no service expectation with their appointment; and

Whereas campus governing bodies and departments might benefit from hearing other points of view from contingent faculty; and

Whereas many contingent faculty are given syllabi with no opportunity for input or allowance for their own creativity with respect to helping their students meet learning objectives; and

Whereas few campus academic freedom statements provide adequate protection to contingent faculty, forcing contingent faculty to be less engaged with teaching sensitive subjects; therefore

¹ Contingent faculty are defined broadly as faculty members holding rank, or a position, that is not eligible for continuing appointment. Faculty holding these positions may be full or part time.

² AAUP, Visualizing Change; the annual report on the economic status of the profession, 2016-17; *Academe*, March-April 2017: https://www.aaup.org/file/FCS_2016-17_nc.pdf

³ Report on the Gender and Ethnic Composition of State University of New York Faculty 1995-2015, prepared by Thomas Sinclair and Aylone Katzin for the University Faculty Senate Operations Committee, April 2017.

⁴ Costs of Increased Contingency: in the 2014 AAUP Report.
<https://www.aaup.org/file/Contingent%20Appointment.pdf>

Be It Resolved that the University Faculty Senate strongly recommends that campus governance bodies engage contingent faculty with campus governance; and

Be It Further Resolved that the University Faculty Senate requests that campus governance bodies recommend that campus administration provide, where governance or curriculum development is not an expected part of the workload of contingent faculty and thus deemed extra service, a stipend to appropriately compensate contingent faculty for their time and service on campuses; and

Be It Further Resolved that the University Faculty Senate urges academic departments to provide opportunities for contingent faculty to participate in programmatic decisions and the development of curriculum materials; and

Be It Further Resolved that the University Faculty Senate urges local campus governance bodies to allow for the definition of faculty to include at least those holding full time to one-half time qualified rank, according to the SUNY Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures,⁵ to be members (voting or non-voting) of the campus governance body; and

Be It Further Resolved that the University Faculty Senate recommends that all campuses review and amend their academic freedom statements such that they encompass all members of its community, particularly contingent faculty.

176-02-1

**Resolution Regarding Contingent Faculty Involvement in Shared Governance
Passed**

⁵ Policies of the Board of Trustees, <http://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY-BOT-Policies-June2014.pdf>

BACKGROUND

The UFS Governance Committee surveyed the campus governance leaders of the 33 state operated campuses within SUNY concerning the voting rights of contingent faculty. Of the 33 campuses, 18 responded. The questions concerned the voting rights of contingent faculty as well as students and professionals, only data pertaining to faculty are reported here as that is all that is pertinent to this resolution.

Question #1: Please indicate which of the following are eligible to serve on the college senate (or the equivalent campus governing body).

100% of campuses report that all full-time academics who are eligible for or currently have continuing appointment may serve

50% of campuses report that full-time academics on contingent appointments may serve

39% of campuses report that part-time academics on contingent appointments may serve

Question #2: With respect to senate (or the equivalent governance body) elections and college-wide referenda, please indicate which of the following have voting rights.

100% of campuses report that all full-time academics who are eligible for or currently have continuing appointment may vote

50% of campuses report that full-time academics on contingent appointments may vote

39% of campuses report that part-time academics on contingent appointments may vote

The following questions were only directed to the 50% of campuses reporting that contingent faculty have a role in the campus governance body.

Question #3: Where contingent faculty are eligible to serve on faculty senate (or the equivalent campus governance body):

27% report that a set number of seats are reserved for contingent faculty

73% report that contingent faculty serve in the same positions as faculty with or eligible for continuing appointment

Question #4: Where contingent faculty have voting rights on the faculty senate (or the equivalent governance body), is there an FTE requirement?

27% report that they do have FTE requirements – >50%; >75% or full time)

73% have no FTE requirement

Question #5: Where contingent faculty have voting rights on the faculty senate (or the equivalent governance body) is there a time-in-service requirement?

18% reported that same as other senators which was after the first year of appointment

82% reported no requirement

Question #6: Are there departments or other units where contingent faculty have voting rights?

50% said yes

14% said no

36% said they weren't sure