

**Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty  
Annual Report to the Faculty Council  
April 2017**

**Members**

Spencer Barnes	Journalism	TT
Nancy Fisher (Chair)	Medicine	FT
Susan Irons	English and Comparative Literature	FT
Michael Milano	Dentistry	FT
Sherry Salyer	Exercise Science	FT
Brett Whalen	History	TT
Bruce Cairns	Surgery	Professor/Chair of the Faculty

FT = fixed-term; TT = tenure track/tenured

**Committee Charge:** <http://faccoun.unc.edu/faculty-code-and-policies/faculty-code/article-4/#4-14>

(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.

**Activities of the Committee 2016-2017**

- Advocated successfully to amend Section 2.b.5 of the *Trustee Policies and Procedures Governing Academic Tenure in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill* by adding the titles *Teaching Assistant Professor* and *Teaching Associate Professor* for Fixed-Term Faculty whose primary work is teaching and student learning
  - Resolution 2017-3 was passed unanimously by the Faculty Council on February 24, 2017
  - The Resolution was approved by the Board or Trustees on March 21, 2017
- Advocated for extended contracts for long serving Fixed-Term Faculty campus-wide.
  - This resulted in new policies in several schools and departments across campus.
  - Several schools and departments have clarified the contract length and renewal process for their FTF. Some Schools had incorporated contract length and renewal guidelines into their policies. Other schools have been slower to provide guidelines while internal departments have provided great detail and recommendations.
  - The committee attempted to collect data on faculty contract length by school. This task was challenging as many schools would or could not provide data, thus the extent of integration was not measurable. There is anecdotal evidence that some faculty were receiving longer contracts.

- An impediment to follow up on advancing contract length was the availability of data. The Committee on the Status of Women, the Community and Diversity Committee and the Faculty Welfare Committee requested help in mining and analysis of such data.
- Continued to disseminate and fine tune the list of Best Practices related to Fixed-Term Faculty (<http://faccoun.unc.edu/committees-2/appointed-committees/fixed-term-faculty-committee/committees-recommended-best-practices-related-to-fixed-term-faculty/> HYPERLINK "http://faccoun.unc.edu/committees-2/appointed-committees/fixed-term-faculty-committee/committees-recommended-best-practices-related-to-fixed-term-faculty/") ). These recommendations were passed to the Chair of the Faculty for potential policy consideration. The updated list is appended below.

Collectively, these activities are leading to increased awareness of the professional status of FTF university-wide.

The committee would like to acknowledge the support of the Chair of the Faculty, Bruce Cairns and the Dean of the College of Arts and Science, Kevin Guskiewicz.

## 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	3 years
> 5 years or Associate/Full Professor level	5 years

2. **NON-RENEWAL NOTICE** Decisions not to renew the appointments of 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.
7. **SALARY** Weigh compensation with duties and develop policies for regular salary increases.