

**Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty
Annual Report to the Faculty Council
February 14, 2020**

Appointed Members

Name	Unit	Track	Term expires
Spencer Barnes	Journalism	TT	2022
David Berkoff	Medicine: Orthopedics	FT	2022
<i>Nancy Fisher*</i>	Medicine: Microbiology	FT	2021
Louise Fleming	Nursing	FT	2021
<i>Susan Irons*</i>	A&S: English & Comparative Lit	FT	2021
Sherry Salyer	A&S: Exercise Science	FT	2020
Anna Schenck	Public Health	FT	2022
Tonya Van Deinse	Social Work	FT	2022
Nadia Yaqub	A&S: Asian Studies	TT	2020

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

*Fall 2019 Chair: Susan Irons. Spring 2020 Chair: Nancy Fisher

Non-voting Consultants

Lloyd Kramer	History	Professor/Chair of the Faculty
Lachonya Williams	Office of the Provost	Interim Asst. Provost for Academic Personnel
Clare Counihan	Carolina Women's Center	Prog. Coordinator for Faculty & Staff
Jim Peacock	A&S: Anthropology	Liaison, Retired Faculty Association
Erin Malloy	Center for Faculty Excellence	Director

Committee Charge: <https://facultygov.unc.edu/faculty-code/article-4/#4-14>

(a) The Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty consists of nine members of the voting faculty, appointed by the chair of the faculty. Seven of the members are fixed-term, and two are tenured faculty.

(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 2018-2019

- **Expanded Committee.** As a result of the requested Faculty Code Change, the Committee began the year with a newly-expanded committee (from six to nine members) that reflects a broader representation of groups across campus.
- **Conducted Survey.** The Committee collaborated with the OIRA to survey campus Fixed-Term Faculty on satisfaction, concerns and awareness of resources. See Appendix A below.

- **Advocated for contract length and non-renewal policies.** Continued to address issues of contract length and non-renewal policies. Members of the Committee met with both Provost Blouin and Executive Vice Provost Strauss to discuss the high importance of extended contracts (contracts more than one year) and clear, timely non-renewal policies. Both the Provost and Associate Provost expressed their support of the priority and said they shared it.
- **Explored ways to educate fixed-term faculty about opportunities and policies.** Began to explore ways to use the Orientation system as a channel for educating fixed-term faculty about opportunities and policies associated with their rank at the University, such as through department new faculty orientations. Committee members applauded the work the CFE is already doing to make information and opportunities available to fixed-term faculty. The Institute for the Arts and Humanities reached out to the Committee for suggestions as it develops more support for fixed-term faculty also.
- **Considered part-time, fixed-term faculty issues.** Attempted to examine the practices associated with part-time, fixed-term faculty. However, the Committee found that updated information about the numbers in each population is not available. The Committee plans to revisit the issue when the information becomes available.
- **Encouraged posting of policies.** Encouraged the Provost's Office to require schools and departments to post written policies concerning fixed-term faculty. However, the Provost's Office reported that it does not currently have the resources to monitor such a requirement.
- **Continued to promote Best Practices.** (as adopted in May 2018)
<https://facultygov.unc.edu/committees/appointed-committees/fixed-term-faculty-committee/committees-recommended-best-practices-related-to-fixed-term-faculty/>
- **Served as an information resource for departments, schools, and organizations.** Continued to serve as a resource to departments and schools with questions about fixed-term faculty issues as well as a resource for any groups addressing fixed-term faculty issues.
- **Requested taskforce on teaching evaluations.** In fall 2019, the Committee recommended to the Executive Vice Provost that he appoint a taskforce to assess the use of teaching evaluations and to recommend revisions to the assessment instruments used. The committee supplied a literature review supporting our concerns and need for it. The Committee on the Status of Women seconded our request. The Provost has not yet formed such a committee; the request is still under consideration.
- **Responded to the Provost's Promotion and Tenure Taskforce report.** The Committee advocated for extending the non-renewal policy to reflect six- months of notice before terminating the contract of a Fixed-Term Faculty member.

Adopted goals for 2019-2020

- Continue to address issues of contract length and non-renewal policies
- Continue to promote and refine the use of the Best Practices across campus
- Support the taskforce on teaching evaluations. Consult with CFE as it develops an external peer teaching evaluation system for CAS
- Conduct a survey of fixed-term faculty (The Committee last conducted a survey in 2014.)
- Invite Executive Vice Provost Ron Strauss to share the most recent COACHE results re: fixed-term faculty

Appendix A

Report on the 2019 Fixed-Term Faculty Survey results

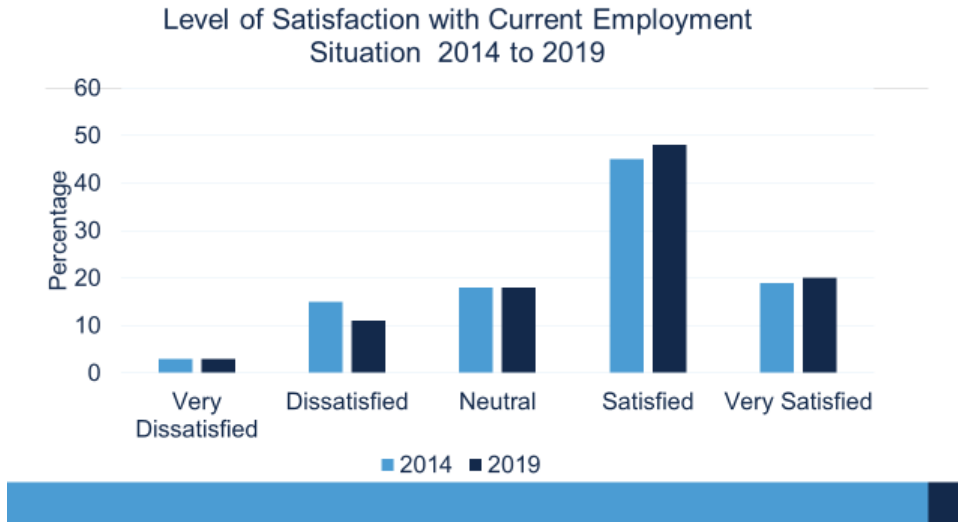
- **Purpose:** To identify the most critical issues for fixed-term faculty members and to use their feedback to develop effective ways that the Committee on Fixed Term Faculty can advocate for fixed-term faculty. Also, the purpose was to compare results with the 2014 survey to assess progress.
- **Survey instrument:** Created by the Committee on Fixed-Term Faculty as a follow-up to a similar survey administered in 2014. Administered by Institutional Research and Assessment
- **Launch:** Survey invitation emailed to all 2,138 permanent full- and part-time fixed-term faculty on September 13. Four reminders sent to non-respondents.
- **Responses:** 1,201 (56.2%)
- **Preliminary analysis:** Institutional Research & Assessment staff.
- When comparing survey participants to the UNC-CH fixed-term population, survey participants closely match the population in rank and highest degree awarded.
- The School of Medicine was slightly underrepresented and the College of Arts and Sciences slightly overrepresented when comparing survey participants to the entire population of fixed-term faculty.

Rank order of priority of issues to be addressed:

1. Competitive salary and other compensation
2. Job security/length of contracts
3. Clarity of performance evaluations (recognition for teaching, service, scholarship)
4. Availability of faculty development or mentoring opportunities*
5. Ability to apply for competitive internal grants, leaves or awards
6. Participation in faculty governance at the department or school level (participation in faculty meetings, input on curricular decisions or teaching assignments)

Note: *Mentoring moved up a step from 2014

Level of satisfaction is roughly equivalent between 2014 and 2019, with 68% and 64% satisfied or very satisfied, respectively.



By rank:

Full Professors were most likely to report that they were satisfied or very satisfied (77%), followed by **Instructors** (71%) and **Assistant Professors** (69%). Associate Professors (63%) and Lecturers (59%) were somewhat less satisfied.

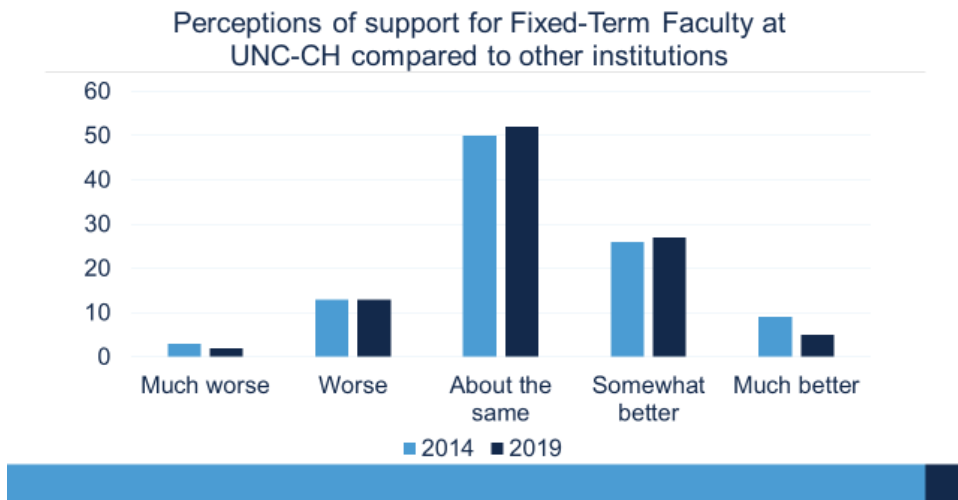
By contract length:

Fixed-term faculty with contracts for **four or more years** and **two years** reported the highest levels of satisfaction (**72%**); however, those with contract lengths of one or three years were only slightly less likely to report being satisfied.

Those with **no contract** (**57%**) reported the lowest levels of satisfaction compared to all others.

By school:

Those fixed-term faculty who work in Academic Affairs Professional Schools (**73%**) and the School of Medicine (**72%**) reported greater levels of satisfaction compared to College of Arts and Sciences (**64%**) and Other Health Affairs Schools (**60%**)



Perceptions of Support for Fixed Term Faculty at UNC-Chapel Hill Compared to Other Institutions:

By Rank

Lecturers were most likely (43%) to report that fixed term faculty support at UNC-Chapel Hill seemed to be better or much better than at other institutions, followed by **Full Professors** (36%).

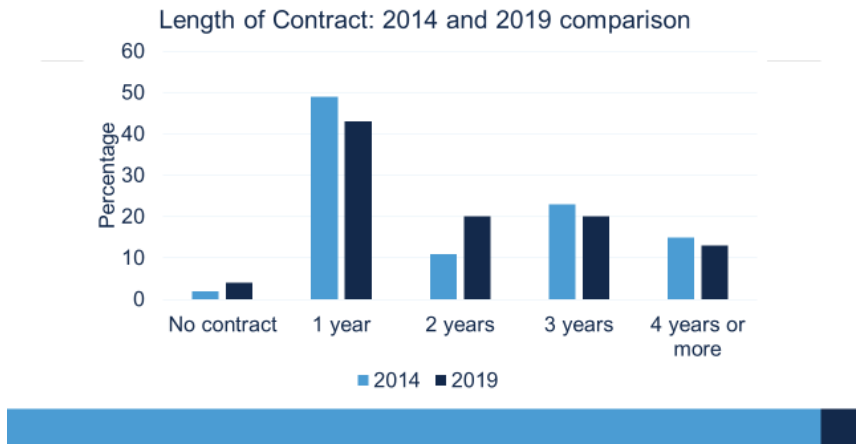
By Contract Length:

Respondents with contracts for **four or more years** (52%) reported that fixed faculty support at UNC-Chapel Hill seemed to be better or much better than at other institutions. Those with shorter contract lengths were considerably less likely to perceive that fixed term faculty support was better or much better than elsewhere.

By School:

Respondents from the College of Arts and Sciences (**44%**) and Academic Affairs Professional Schools (**42%**) were more likely than those from the School of Medicine (**30%**) and Other Health Affairs schools (**23%**) to perceive that faculty support at UNC-Chapel Hill was better or much better than at other institutions.

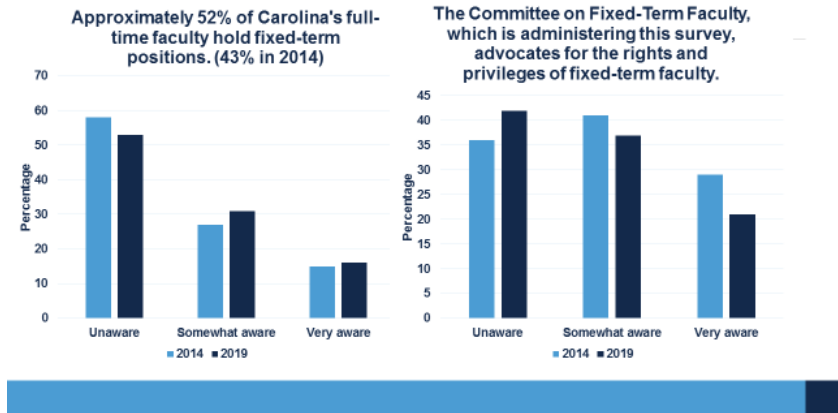
Contract Length. Faculty were asked to report the length of their contract. Although the committee advocated strongly to deans and department chairs, only a modest improvement was measured.



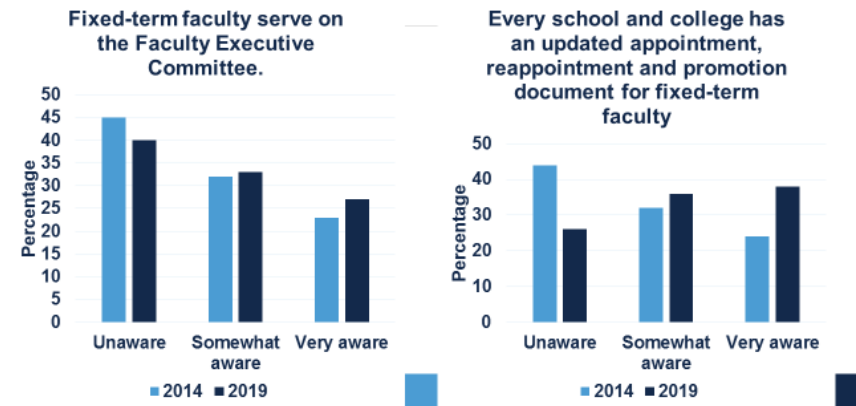
INSERT: Length of contract by unit, by rank, by title (Teaching, Research, Clinical)

The committee asked respondents about their awareness of Fixed-Term Faculty on campus and the resources available then compared the results to the 2014 survey.

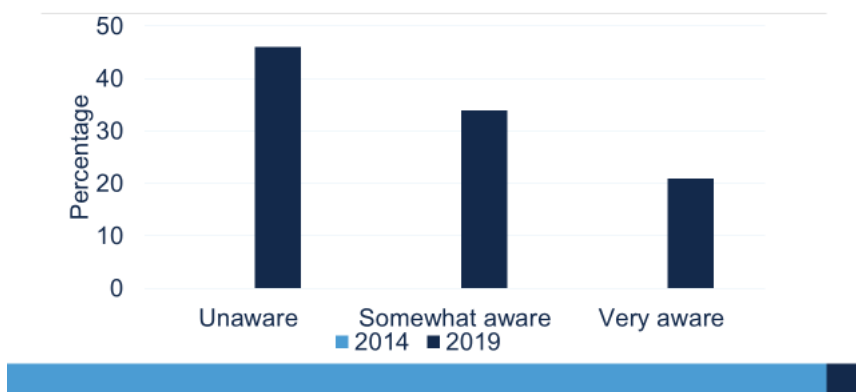
How aware are you of the following:



How aware are you of the following:



The Center for Faculty Excellence can help fixed-term faculty find mentors.



Respondent Suggestions for the Committee on Fixed Term Faculty's Advocacy Efforts

A preliminary analysis of these comments revealed the following top five themes.

1. Improve financial compensation
2. Increase contract lengths and sense of job security
3. Provide more research/professional development opportunities
4. Provide more formal mentoring programs
5. Create a systematic, transparent, university-wide process for evaluating fix-term faculty

Other themes that emerged in the analysis of the comments included:

1. Respect for fixed term faculty and the work they do – Departmental practices that exclude fixed term faculty (meetings, events, etc.), general lack of appreciation of their teaching roles, not being qualified for awards, being treated like post-docs
2. Lack of resources to do their work – start-up funds, equipment, work space, funding to attend conferences
3. Workload – Ever-increasing workloads without additional compensation, especially service assignments.

Major Themes for 2019-2020 Fixed-Term Faculty Committee

- Improve compensation
- Continue to push on extending contracts and non-renewal notice criteria
- Work with Provost's office to assure clarity of performance evaluation (recognition for teaching, service, scholarship)
- Work with CFE to promote mentoring opportunities