

**STANDARDS
OF GOOD PRACTICE
IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF
FULL-TIME NONTENURE-
TRACK FACULTY**

**PROFESSIONALS
& COLLEAGUES**



A Union of Professionals

AFT Higher Education

AFT HIGHER EDUCATION

A Division of the American Federation of Teachers

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The American Federation of Teachers

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Summary of Standards of Good Practice

STANDARDS FOR COMPENSATION

1. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be paid salaries and benefits commensurate with their professional qualifications and duties and comparable with full-time tenured faculty in their institution with the same credentials and workload. Starting salaries should, in most cases, be equivalent to that of newly hired tenure-track faculty.
2. Access to all manner of regular salary increases that are available to tenure-track faculty, including across-the-board raises, merit raises, bonuses, and marketplace and equity adjustments, should be standard for full-time nontenure-track faculty.
3. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should receive benefits commensurate with those received by full-time tenure-track faculty, full-time administrators and other full-time staff in the institution including health and dental insurance; sick leave; pregnancy and family leave; disability coverage; life insurance; leaves of absence; pension; tuition remission for themselves and family members; and other benefits that are provided to other full-time employees.
4. Colleges and universities should make a commitment to provide benefit coverage for full-time nontenure-track faculty for the entire calendar year.
5. Pension benefits, such as employer contributions to a retirement plan, should be extended to all full-time nontenure-track faculty.

STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL CONDITIONS AND VOICE

1. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be directly and appropriately involved, together with all types of faculty, in determining the content of the curriculum, requirements for degrees and certificates, standards of instruction, student achievement standards, grading, and all matters relating to student progress in academic standards. They should have an important role in interviewing and recommending candidates within their own ranks for academic appointment, for reappointment, and for promotion.
2. Full-time nontenure-track faculty members, like all categories of faculty, should be appropriately involved in faculty personnel decisions including academic appointment, performance evaluation, the granting of research support, sabbaticals, incentives, merit pay, and other measurements of academic quality.
3. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should play a direct role, together with tenure-track faculty and other staff, in developing and advising on institutional budgets, as well as working on institutional committees, task forces and decision-making bodies.
4. Appropriate means should be developed to include full-time nontenure-track faculty into shared governance roles, including changes in institutional governance structures as well as in changes to their own normal workloads.
5. Evaluations of job performance should be part of an integrated system of evaluation involving both tenure-track and full-time nontenure-track faculty. Evaluations of full-time nontenure-track faculty need to be conducted by individuals who understand the particular duties and assignments being performed. Evaluations must be discipline specific and collaborative in nature. Performance evaluations should be primarily constructive, to improve performance, not punitive.

Negative evaluations should be subject to appeal to impartial and neutral parties.

6. Policies and procedures relevant to appointment, reappointment, and promotion in rank should be standard for full-time nontenure-track faculty and should correspond to those used for tenure-track faculty.
7. Full-time nontenure-track faculty who aspire to tenure-track positions should receive encouragement and support in this aspiration. That is, they should be given sufficient time and resources to enable them to qualify in research/scholarship/creative activity so as to be competitive in this quest.

STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUPPORT

1. Institutions should provide adequate time and information to orient full-time nontenure-track faculty to the college's or university's administrative processes, support services, benefits plans, and other policies and procedures.
2. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be provided with adequate advance notice of employment; for instance, by the end of the spring term for assignments beginning in the fall term, and time to prepare for work assignments.
3. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be provided with suitable office space and equipment to fulfill the requirements of their duties.
4. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be given equal access to resources in support of teaching and professional development activities, such as administrative support; training to improve research and teaching; sabbatical leaves; release time from teaching to work on related study projects; access to internal and external grant support; professional travel funds; and professional association funds.

5. Workloads for full-time nontenure-track faculty should be reasonable, ideally equivalent to the workloads of tenure-track faculty; i.e., a combination of teaching, research, and service activities, perhaps emphasizing one activity above the others, but not exclusively one.

ENSURING FULL RIGHTS FOR FULL-TIME NONTENURE-TRACK FACULTY IN THEIR UNIONS

1. National and state union organizations should make a commitment to vigorous organizing of full-time nontenure-track faculty, ideally together with tenure-track faculty and all other participants in the academic workforce.
2. When they are represented by the same union as tenure-track faculty, full-time nontenure-track faculty should receive full rights, privileges, and representation.
3. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should receive the same consideration and due process in filing complaints, appeals, and grievances as do tenure-track faculty.
4. Faculty and other higher education professional unions on campuses where full-time nontenure-track faculty are unorganized should encourage unionization and assist efforts in that direction.
5. When not in the same union together, regular communication between full-time nontenure-track faculty and tenure-track faculty should be established.
6. National, state, and local higher education unions should advocate for the implementation of the standards outlined herein.

Introduction

The Academic Staffing Crisis

America's colleges and universities are confronted with wrenching change in the staffing of academic jobs, particularly faculty positions. The mounting trend toward replacing full-time tenure-track faculty with other categories of employees threatens to transform radically our higher education institutions for the worse. For the past century, college faculty in the United States have fought to establish and maintain the tenure system because of its great benefits for the free development and dissemination of knowledge through independent research, teaching, and scholarship. Millions of students and American society at large have gained incalculable value from higher education's deep respect for wide-ranging inquiry and diverse perspectives, reflecting our fundamental democratic values.

The nature of this staffing crisis involves the decomposition of the tenure system through the replacement of tenure-track faculty with legions of perpetually precarious faculty jobs lacking the protections of tenure—full-time nontenure-track faculty, part-time/adjunct faculty, graduate employees, and new categories of academic professional staff specialists. Is the tenure track in fact headed toward oblivion? In 1998, when the American Federation of Teachers published *The Vanishing Professor*, we identified a “silent crisis in the making.” This predicament, the erosion of permanent full-time tenured faculty positions and replacement by a mix of part-time and full-time/limited-term faculty not eligible for tenure, has continued to evolve. The overuse and exploitation of part-time/adjunct faculty and of graduate employees continues to gather steam, as analyzed in recent AFT reports. In *Fairness & Equity: Standards of Good Practice in the Employment of Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty*¹ and in *Recognition & Respect: Standards of Good Practice in the Employment of Graduate Employees*,² the AFT examined the conditions of these academic employees and established standards to improve employment conditions that promote academic integrity and educational quality. Forthcoming will be a simi-

lar statement on academic professional staff.

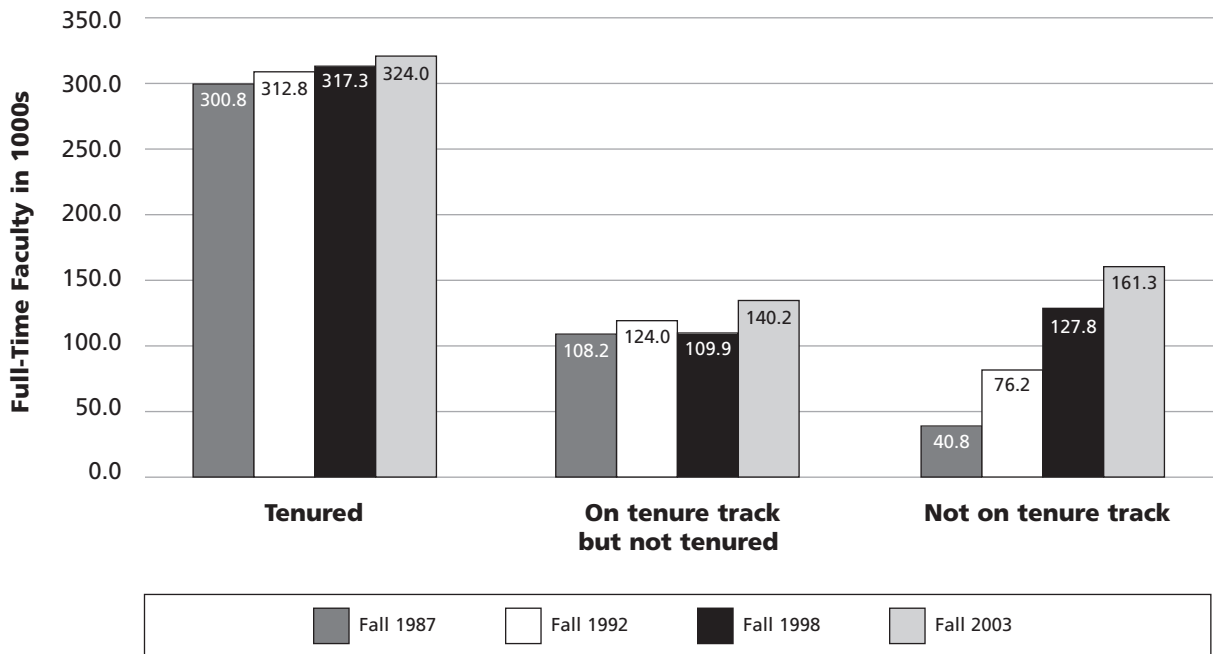
In this publication, we concentrate our attention on a less publicly recognized but equally important and fast-growing group, the increasing contingent of full-time nontenure-track faculty—faculty members who work full time but are on one-year or multiyear contracts without the protection of job security or the professional control that characterizes tenured positions. This publication examines the circumstances of these faculty members and offers recommendations to improve the ability of these individuals to make their fullest contribution to their colleges and universities. Unlike part-time adjunct faculty and graduate employees who often face blatantly exploitive working conditions, the contrast in status and conditions between full-time nontenure-track faculty and their tenure-track colleagues is often not as obvious to outside observers. Nevertheless, the real differences deserve attention equal to that given to part-time/adjunct, graduate employee, and professional staff issues. The burgeoning reliance and misuse on full-time nontenure-track faculty contributes deeply to corrosion of the preeminence of our higher education system.

Explosive Growth Off the Tenure Track

Nationwide, from 1987 and 2003, the number of full-time faculty in institutions with tenure systems grew by 39 percent – from 449,900 to 624,400.^{3,4} Remarkably, more than 120,500 (68.7 percent) of this 174,500 increase in the number of full-time faculty was in full-time nontenure-track positions (Figure 1).

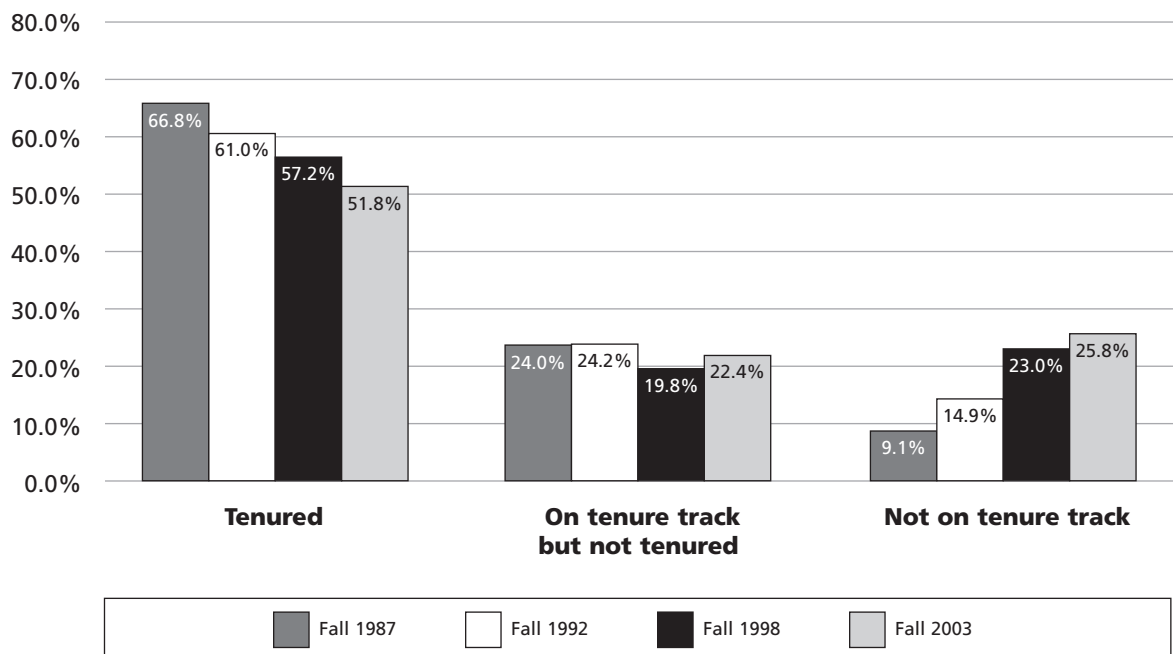
Full-time nontenure-track positions rose almost threefold from 40,800 to 161,300. These full-time nontenure-track faculty now represent 25.8 percent of all full-time faculty at institutions with tenure systems, up from 9.1 percent in 1987. By contrast, the full-time tenure-track faculty⁵ has *declined* as a percent of all full-timers, from 90.8 percent in 1987 to 74.1 percent in 2003 (Figure 2), even as their numbers have grown from 408,900 to 464,100.

Figure 1: Full-Time Faculty by Tenure Status, 1987-2003



Source: NCES, National Study of Postsecondary Faculty: 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004

Figure 2: Percentage Share by Tenure Status Full-Time Faculty, 1987-2003



Source: National Study of Postsecondary Faculty: 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004

Women are more likely to be off the tenure track.

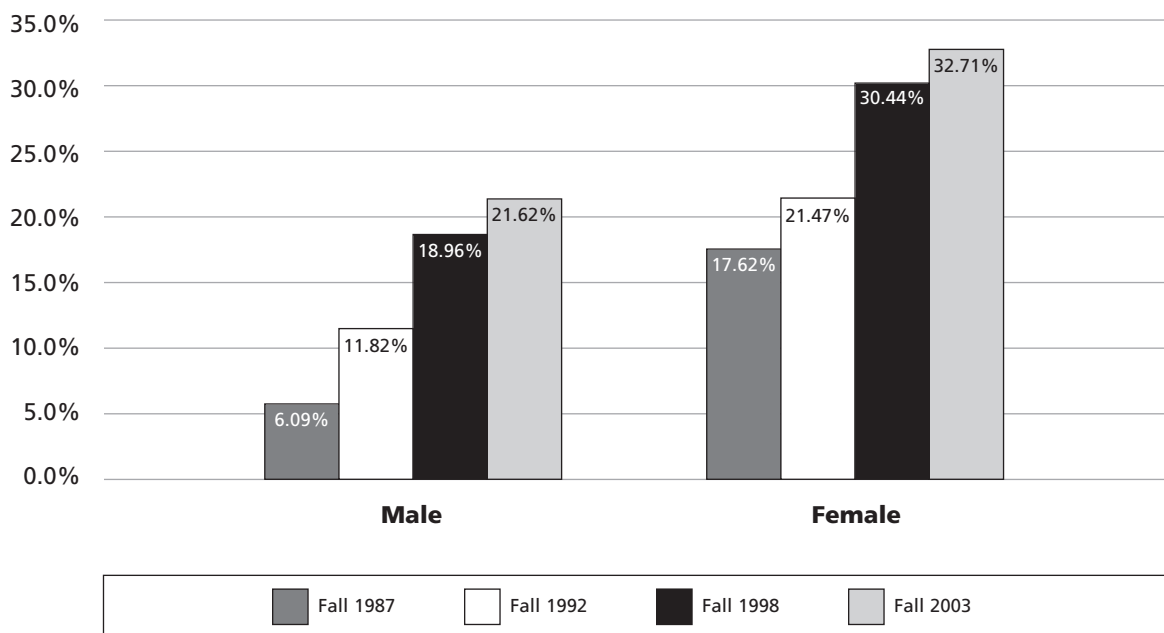
These trends have not affected all types of higher education institutions or all types of faculty members equally. For example, part-time/

adjunct faculty are much more prevalent at public two-year colleges, but full-time nontenure-track faculty are in greater proportions at public four-year (26.8 percent of all full-time faculty in 2003) and private two- and four-year institutions (29.7 percent). Women are more likely to be off the tenure track when employed full time, which is a growing trend (Figures 3 and 4). The proportions of blacks, Hispanics, Asians and multi-racial full-time nontenure-track faculty, however, are comparable to whites. Nevertheless, whites are more likely to be tenured (54.0 percent in 2003) than are blacks (44.4 percent), Hispanics (43.7 percent), Asians

(41.0 percent) or multi-racial individuals (46.7 percent). Not surprisingly, full-time nontenure-track faculty members are more likely than their tenure-track counterparts to be clustered at the lower academic ranks, such as assistant professor, instructor, or lecturer.⁶

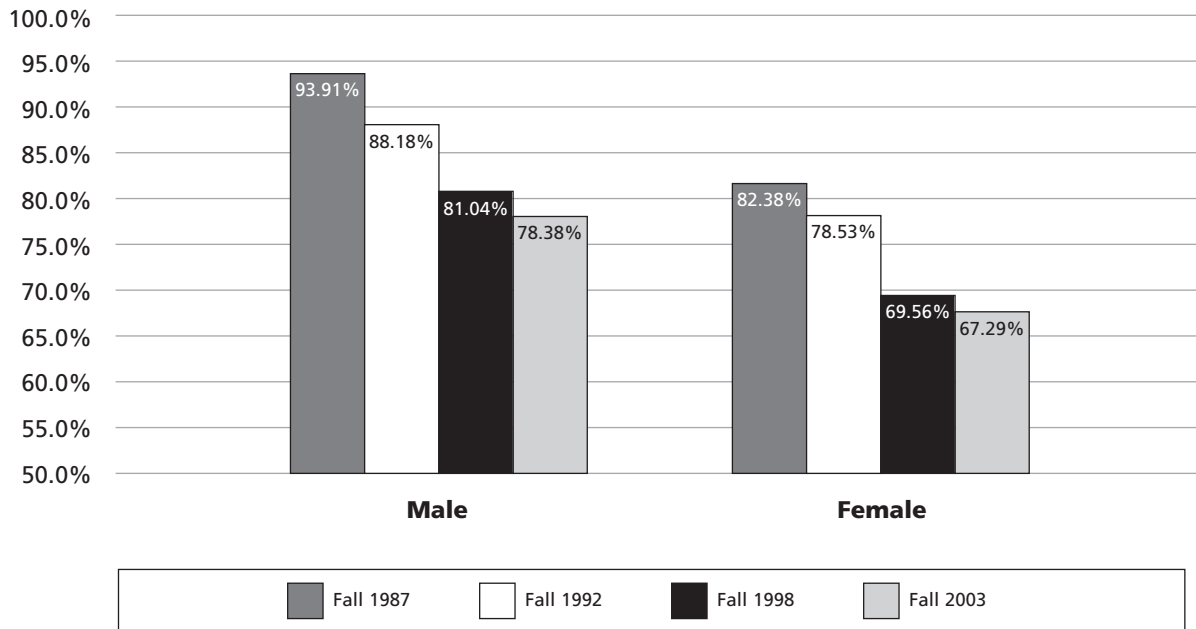
The increased reliance on full-time nontenure-track faculty positions is not only reflected in these snapshots of the faculty workforce. Indeed, a look at hiring patterns demonstrates that in fall 2003 hires off the tenure track made up 58.6 percent of all new full-time faculty, going as high as 92.7 percent at private for-profit institutions (Figure 5).⁷ The greater emphasis on hiring of full-time nontenure-track faculty is an ongoing trend (as evidenced in Figure 6). It appears that at least since 1995⁸ **more than half** of all new full-time faculty hires are off the tenure track. As the proportion of hires off the tenure track rises, the proportion of faculty hired onto the tenure-track, i.e., into probationary, pretenure positions has shrunk. This shrinkage is a clear signpost of where the tenure track is headed: As fewer faculty attain tenure and fewer faculty enter the tenure-eligibility stream, the stream is either being

Figure 3: Male and Female Full-Time Faculty in Nontenure-Track Positions in Institutions with Tenure Systems, 1987-2003



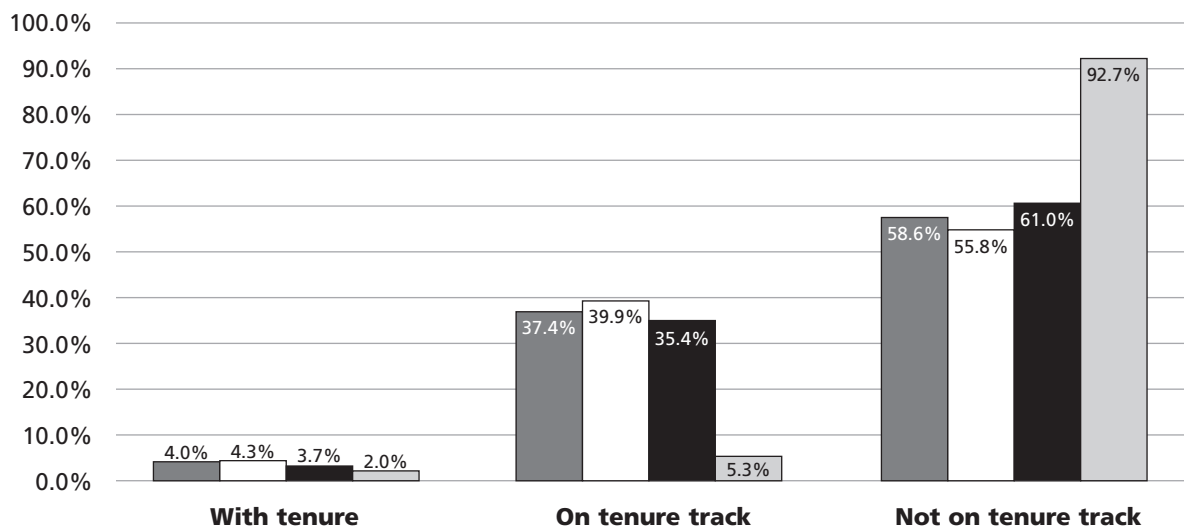
Source: NCES, National Study of Postsecondary Faculty: 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004

Figure 4: Males and Females in Full-Time Tenured and Tenure-Track Positions, 1987-2003



Source: NCES, National Study of Postsecondary Faculty: 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004

Figure 5: New Full-Time Faculty Hires by Tenure Status and Institutional Control, Fall 2003

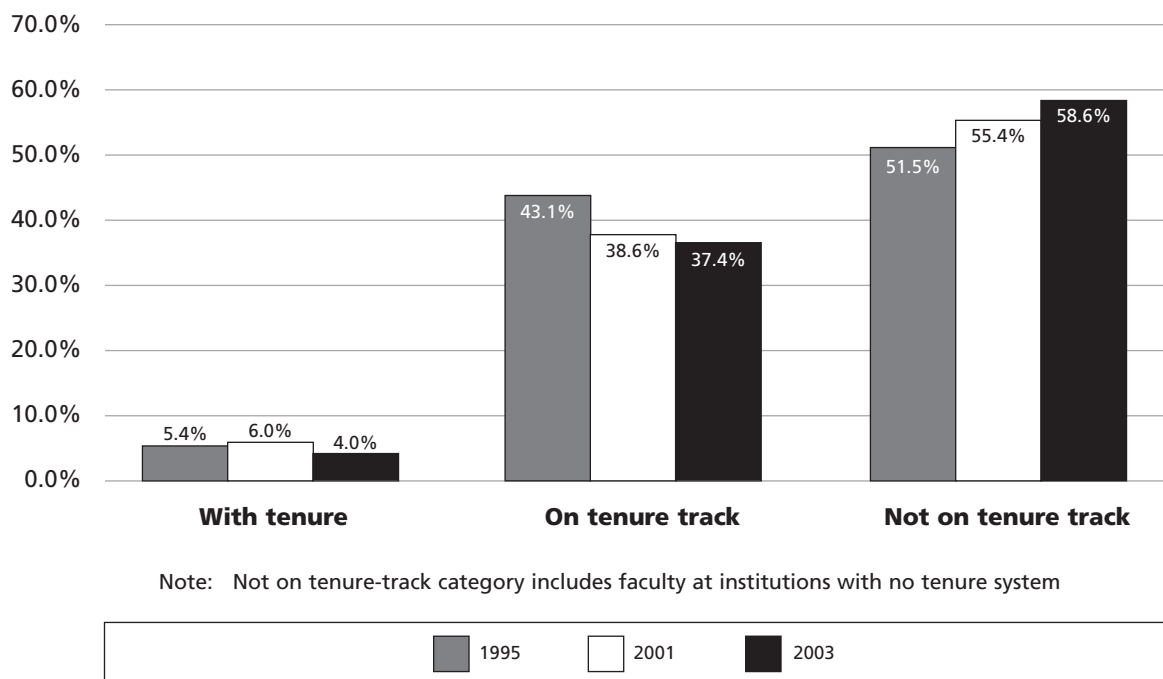


Note: Not on tenure-track category includes faculty at institutions that do not have a tenure system. New hires include persons who were hired for full-time permanent employment for the first time or after a break in service.



Source: NCES, Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2003

Figure 6: Full-Time Faculty New Hires by Tenure Status, 1995-2003



Source: NCES, Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2003

dammed up or is drying up. Looking again at the data shown in Figure 1, we see that the ratio of full-time tenure-track (i.e., tenured plus tenure-eligible) faculty to full-time nontenure-track faculty has decreased from about 10:1 to less than 3:1. Is the day far off when the ratio will be 1:1 or when the numbers of full-time nontenure-track faculty will exceed those of tenure-track faculty?

Causes of the Rise in Full-time Nontenure-track Positions

Historically, full-time faculty ineligible for tenure consideration have always been a part of the academic staff. Full-time replacements for faculty on leave or on sabbatical; faculty with limited visiting appointments; faculty hired for short periods because of temporary increases in enrollments; faculty with specific expertise not requiring a terminal degree: These are many of the traditional reasons for the employment of nontenure-track full-time faculty.

Increasingly, nontenured positions are becoming a more permanent part of the higher education staffing structure. Why this shift in hiring practices? Not surprisingly, many of the same reasons used to justify the increased use of part-time/adjunct faculty and graduate employees are used to rationalize the use of full-time nontenure-track faculty. The usual rationales given by higher education administrators involve cost, flexibility, professional expertise, specialization and managerial prerogative.

Cost

Cost is often cited as a critical factor driving colleges and universities away from making tenure-track hires. The increasing pressures on college budgets from reduced growth in government funding and support for institutions, the outcry over rapid inflation in college tuitions, and increased expenditures on such items as health benefits and technology have led many higher education administrators to look for cheaper ways to deliver educational services. Over the past 30 years, this effort to cut costs fueled the

explosive growth of part-time adjunct faculty. More recently, the cost advantage of hiring full-time nontenure-track faculty has become more apparent to cost-conscious administrators. One might think that as the demand for and use of full-time nontenure-track faculty increases, so too would their pay. The evidence shows the opposite to be true: full-time nontenure-track faculty salaries are moving *farther* from parity with full-time tenure-track faculty because their pay is stagnating while that of tenure-track faculty is increasing (Figure 7). In addition, full-time nontenure-track faculty typically receive fewer benefits than their tenure-track colleagues.

Flexibility

The second rationale for hiring full-time nontenure-track faculty is flexibility. Full-time nontenure-track faculty can be added or released when enrollments change, when demands for particular content areas wax or wane, or when research grants are gained or lost. Qualified faculty who are seeking full-time positions can be deployed to fill valuable functions without

administrators having to take the risks associated with the long-term commitment and investment required to make a tenure-track hire. Indeed, even as the numbers of full-time nontenure-track faculty grew

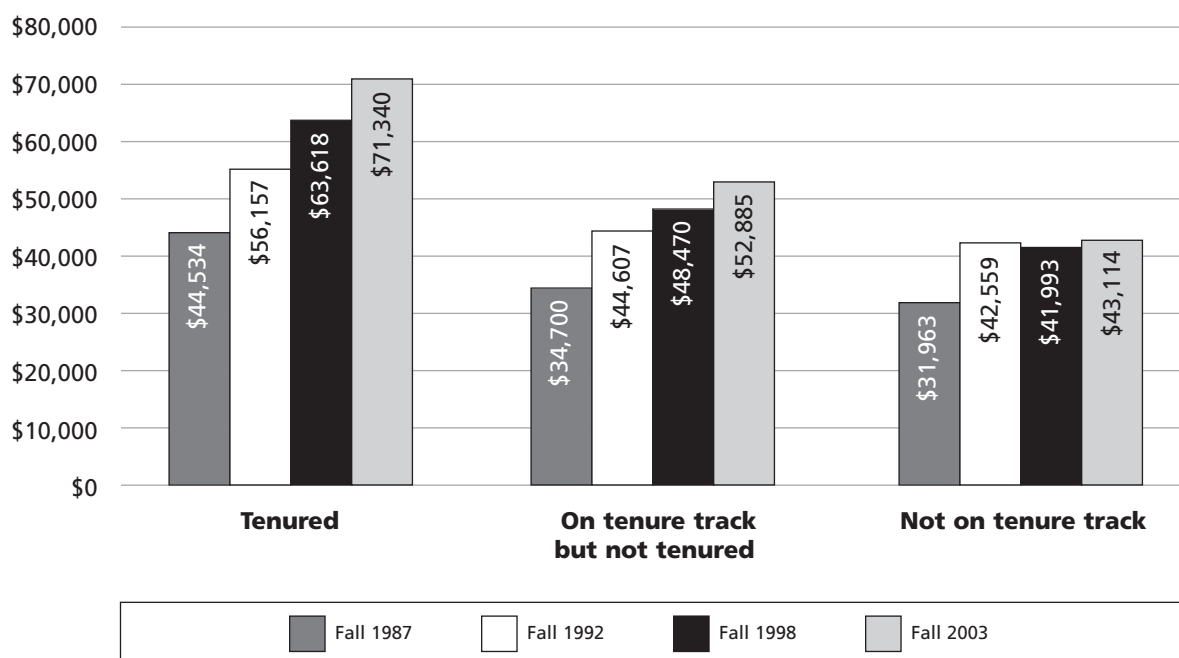
from 14.9 percent of all full-time faculty to 23.0 percent between 1992 and 1998, their average length of service remained at about six years.⁹

Specialization

The hiring of full-time nontenure-track faculty is further justified by arguing the supposed benefits of specialization. The rationalization is that

Full-time nontenure-track faculty salaries are moving *farther* from parity with full-time tenure-track faculty because their pay is stagnating.

Figure 7: Salaries of Full-Time Faculty (all ranks) by Tenure Status, 1987-2003



Source: NCES, National Study of Postsecondary Faculty: 1988, 1993, 1999, 2004

Students are being subjected to overly large classes taught by underpaid, overworked and under-supported academic workers.

the teaching, research and service missions of colleges and universities can more effectively and efficiently be implemented by having faculty members whose roles are more narrowly defined. In this model, positions are

dedicated primarily to one portion of the traditional faculty role. Whereas full-time faculty are traditionally hired for and tenured on their performance in the normal triad of teaching, scholarship, and service to the institution and the wider community, these new positions are for full-time “specialists.” Some are hired just to work on research (especially on projects bringing outside funding to the institution), others to supervise/instruct students in clinical settings, and still others to concentrate on community service activities. In some cases, extension faculty are treated as nontenure-track faculty, and some institutions also hire librarians who are faculty but do not have access to the tenure track. The great mass of full-time nontenure-track faculty, however, are hired solely to teach students. Usually, they are neither required nor encouraged to participate in university or community service. Usually, they are neither required nor encouraged to conduct scholarly research, which is considered the *sine qua non* for gaining tenure status in four-year colleges and universities.

Corporate-style Management

Higher education institutions have always been businesses, traditionally nonprofit ones, but have had to balance their books like any other enterprise. Given the bottom-line orientation in the external environment, increasingly college and university boards and administrators have adopted a more corporate, command-and-control style of management. Impatient with the traditional, deliberative decision-making

processes in faculty committees and mechanisms of shared governance, many administrators have moved aggressively to restructure. A key element of this restructuring involves “redirecting the teaching of courses from full-time dedicated professionals to exploited part-time and temporary faculty, graduate teaching and research assistants, with low pay, little security, and no academic freedom.”¹⁰ Full-time nontenure-track positions provide academic management with greater control over staffing and decision making, while taking advantage of a growing group of dedicated professionals who do not share in the traditional rights, responsibilities, and prerogatives of full-time tenure-track faculty.

The Consequences of the Rise of Full-time Nontenure-track Faculty

While the institutional drive to cut costs may be seen as admirable in light of rising tuition and tight budgets, there is nevertheless a considerable cost to be paid in terms of educational quality. As a result of today’s budget and staffing practices, students are being subjected to overly large classes taught by underpaid, overworked and under-supported academic workers, such as full-time nontenure-track faculty, part-time/adjunct faculty, and graduate employees. There are other significant, albeit harder to quantify, consequences for the educational quality and overall mission of colleges and universities. We will turn to these now.

Segmentation

The segmentation of the traditional faculty role under the guise of “specialization” hardly allows the educational mission to be conducted more effectively. On the contrary, what may appear more advantageous to the academic administrator—greater control of costs and of activities through specialization—can actually impair the long-run accomplishment of the mission, diminish the ability of colleges and universities to renew themselves, and disconnect the cross-fertilization among research, teaching, and practice. Traditionally, both administrators and faculty have been strongly dedicated to the proposition that scholarship, teaching, and service are intimately intertwined. Scholarship

invigorates teaching by bringing the teacher to the cutting edge of knowledge creation and by allowing, even requiring, the researcher to bring enthusiasm, innovation, and new insights to students. Service often involves practical applications of knowledge gained through teaching and scholarship and provides real-world grounding for conceptual problems.

Such scholar/teacher/practitioners support students in the examination of key controversies in their fields of study. They inspire students as personal and professional role models of the life of the mind. Students become active seekers of knowledge through engagement with such professors rather than remaining passive consumers of data and information. Students need the critical thinking skills that the well-rounded scholar brings to teaching. Some students are inspired to emulate their academic role models to enroll in and complete graduate studies, becoming the next generation of faculty members. The severing of the connections among the traditional tripartite roles that faculty perform impoverishes not only the professional fulfillment of the highly trained academic but also drains away a key catalytic element to student learning.

Indeed, most full-time nontenure-track faculty have teaching loads that limit time or resources they can devote to conduct independent scholarship adequately. These faculty members would find it almost impossible to do what is necessary to earn tenure and could not be reasonably expected to do so. While they bring their own knowledge, enthusiasm, and professionalism to the classroom, their students may see them primarily as instructors.

Loss of Voice

The narrowed job categories that full-time nontenure-track faculty fill not only works against their ability to conduct research and stay active in the community of scholars, it often also takes them out of the process of decision making at their own institution; that is, they lose their voice in the traditional shared governance process.

Shared governance in colleges and universities consists of a set of practices through which faculty and staff participate in significant decisions. Shared governance is needed to ensure that academic decision making is insulated from short-term managerial and political ends.

These practices have been crafted in acknowledgment that faculty and staff are in the best position to shape policy regarding academic priorities and that their perspective is invaluable for many other aspects of the management of the academy. In its

statement on *Shared Governance in Colleges and Universities* (2002), AFT enunciated a set of basic principles. Among these are that faculty should set academic standards and curriculum and should have primacy in decisions on academic personnel matters, that mechanisms of participation in shared governance should be expanded to all groups of faculty and staff. Unfortunately, full-time nontenure-track faculty are most often excluded from participation in shared governance. Although their duties, whether they specialize in teaching—mostly of undergraduate students—or research or instruction in clinical practice are vital to the core mission of their institutions, they are usually barred from helping to shape the agendas and policies affecting curriculum, research, knowledge-generation and clinical training.

Arbitrary Treatment

The most obvious difference between these new full-time nontenure-track positions and those on the tenure track is the lack of tenure and the eligibility even to be considered for it. Tenure is not simply a job guarantee. Primarily, tenure provides academic freedom by requiring due process for faculty members facing termination **prior to** any action being taken against them. This practice ensures that arbitrary or politically motivated firings cannot be used, even as potential threats, to keep tenured faculty from speaking and writing based on professional integrity and conscience. The development of

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knowledge, the ability to critique without fear the ideas of others, the courage to set educational standards based on the search for truth rather than political or organizational expediency—all are crippled when academic freedom is lacking.

Full-time nontenure-track faculty, indeed all of the rapidly growing workforce of those being hired to supplant and replace tenure-track faculty, lack the basic academic freedom that tenured faculty claim. Their lack of tenure keeps them dependent on short-term employment contracts, often of no more than a year's duration, for a vestige of employment security. Whereas tenured faculty have protections against arbitrary dismissal, full-time nontenure-track faculty can have their contracts terminated with little recourse, unless they have the protection of a union collective bargaining agreement. This lack of security makes them overly dependent on student evaluations, their department chairs, deans, and academic management for whatever longevity they have. In this respect, these full-timers have hardly more security, participation, or academic freedom than part-time/adjunct faculty and graduate employees.

Loss of Community

Ultimately, by disaggregating the many integral roles of the traditional faculty, institutional managers gain more control over the educational process. With fewer and fewer faculty having an overall perspective on the institution, the faculty as a whole is disempowered, i.e., faculty are becoming more like individual, narrowly focused cogs in the machine, rather than innovative and influential partners in a community of scholars. This community of professors, like those of other professions, is vital to the preservation of the fundamental values of academe, values that give our higher education institutions legitimacy and worth in the eyes of the students and the general public. It is this professional community that distinguishes our colleges and universities from proprietary training institutes. Removing or barring categories of instructors, like full-time nontenure-track faculty, from this community is steering these institutions away from their educational and social purposes toward commoditization of education, leading to intellectual and organizational stagnation.

Clearly, the traditional role of tenure in academic staffing is undergoing systemic change. The AFT believes that the trend toward increased use of full-time nontenure-track faculty is a significant component of the staffing crisis. These positions, by virtue of being full-time, have many attributes in common with tenure-track positions, but the overuse and exploitation of nontenure track faculty raises substantial questions about the changing character of our higher education institutions. Unless these trends are reversed, which seems unlikely to happen, or unless the character and conditions of these positions are improved, as we advocate here, the higher educational enterprise and the benefits it provides to students and society is imperiled.

AFT's Response to the Growth of Full-time Nontenure-track Faculty

Over the past several years, since before the publication of *The Vanishing Professor*, the AFT has been working to expose the academic staffing crisis. In 1997, our *First Principles: A Commonsense Campaign for Opportunity, Quality and Accountability in Higher Education*, expressed the principle that

[e]very student has a right to expect high-quality teaching by well-educated and prepared faculty in every course. We repeat: *A quality college must have a corps of full-time, permanent, tenured faculty in charge of the academic curriculum and teaching most of it. Courses should be taught only by highly qualified people—whether full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary—who are paid a professional salary and included in academic processes.*

We have not only expressed our concern for the links among tenure, educational quality, shared governance, and professional working conditions, we have set standards and have organized, lobbied, and bargained for protection of what works and for expansion of good practices. With this publication, we extend our development of employment standards from part-time/adjunct faculty and graduate employees to the fast-growing segment of full-time faculty off the tenure track. What follows are those

standards, culled from the best practices in institutions where full-time nontenure-track faculty have organized and fought for professional dignity and collegiality.

These standards are divided into two sections:

1. Promoting Professionalism and Inclusion
 - Setting Standards of Compensation
 - Establishing Professional Conditions of Work and Incorporating the Voice of Full-time Nontenure-track Faculty in Institutional Decision Making
 - Instituting Standards of Professional Responsibility and Support

2. Ensuring Full Rights for Full-time Nontenure-track Faculty in Their Unions

At the core, these standards befit the needs of our students and our society to ensure the vigor and integrity of our higher education institutions. Treating full-time nontenure-track faculty members as full colleagues, given professional rights and responsibilities, will not only ensure fairness for them but will also extend the fundamental democratic value of academic freedom so necessary to free inquiry and true learning. The standards provide concrete criteria and actions to turn these ideals into reality.

SECTION ONE

Promoting Professionalism and Inclusion

Setting Standards For Compensation

1. **Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be paid salaries and benefits commensurate with their professional qualifications and duties and comparable to full-time tenured faculty in their institution with the same credentials and workload.** Starting salaries should, in most cases, be equivalent to that of newly hired tenure-track faculty. Full-time nontenure-track faculty members often have the same terminal degrees as tenure-track faculty and the same credentials. The only reason many of them are not tenured is because management has reduced the numbers of tenure-track positions and substituted nontenure-track ones. Unfortunately, full-time nontenure-track faculty members are often treated as second class, although their qualifications and work are first class. They are professionals, hired to perform professional jobs and their work should not be devalued.
2. **Access to all manner of regular salary increases that are available to tenure-track**

faculty, including across-the-board raises, merit raises, bonuses, and marketplace and equity adjustments, should be standard for full-time nontenure-track faculty. The stagnation that has been taking place in the average pay of full-time nontenure-track faculty has to be addressed through a fair system of compensation increases. Such a system rewards effort and commitment by taking into account the important contributions to the institution's mission that full-time nontenure-track faculty make. Owing to their temporary (or purportedly temporary) status, full-time nontenure-track faculty are often overlooked when pay decisions are made. Pay increases made on a regular, predictable basis can redress wage stagnation and keep pay at least even with the cost of living. A second element of a fair compensation system could also include annual performance evaluations tied to raises. A third element would include periodic re-evaluation of pay levels to ensure that the salaries of full-time

nontenure-track faculty have not fallen behind comparably qualified faculty and staff at the same institution.

- 3. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should receive benefits that are commensurate with those received by full-time tenure-track faculty, full-time administrators, and other full-time staff in the institution** including health and dental insurance; sick leave; pregnancy and family leave; disability coverage; life insurance; leaves of absence; pension; tuition remission for themselves and family members; and other benefits that are provided to other full-time employees. Although full-time nontenure-track faculty are often considered temporary, they tend to have an average longevity in their positions of about six years. Thus, not only are they not so temporary, many accumulate a considerable number of years of service to their institutions, and all of them contribute to the institution's educational mission in significant ways. There should be no discrimination against any group of full-time faculty in consideration for full benefits.
- 4. Colleges and universities should make a commitment to provide benefit coverage for full-time nontenure-track faculty for the entire calendar year.** The typical academic year is nine to 10 months long. Granting that the teaching assignment of a faculty member with a limited-term appointment is completed at the end of the spring term, there is typically a few months before the beginning of the next academic year. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should remain eligible for benefit coverage over the summer

because the next available opportunity for them to be appointed for a similar position would be at the beginning of the fall term. They should be treated as the committed professionals they are, not as if they were just dropping in and out again as short-term fill-ins, which is a misperception given that they average six years of longevity. Other full-time employees have benefit coverage for the whole year, including full-time tenure-track faculty. Fairness requires the recognition that the lives and needs of full-time nontenure-track faculty do not come to a halt when the spring term ends only to pick up again when the fall term commences.

- 5. Pension benefits, such as employer contributions to a retirement plan, should be extended to all full-time nontenure-track faculty.** Such benefits are a vital and integral component of a fair package of compensation and should not be withheld from this group of faculty on the grounds that they are only temporarily in the institution. Colleges and universities increasingly rely on full-time nontenure-track faculty. Their work is important to the institution, and it would simply be just and equitable for the institution to grant them the recognition of their importance and of their commitment to fulfilling the institution's central mission. To deny pension and retirement benefits to full-time nontenure-track faculty not only dishonors them, it also lowers the cost of hiring them and makes the continued proliferation of full-time nontenure-track positions all too attractive for administrators more concerned about the bottom line than institutional integrity.

Establishing Professional Conditions of Work and Incorporating the Voice of Full-time Nontenure-track Faculty in Institutional Decision Making

Full-time nontenure-track faculty must be able to exercise independent judgment in the conduct of their teaching, research, service, and practice. The following standards go a great distance to making it possible for full-time nontenure-track faculty to contribute to departmen-

tal and institutional decision making, serve the students and the institution's central mission, and to perform their duties using professional discretion, without fear of retaliation and capricious judgments.

1. **Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be directly and appropriately involved, together with all types of faculty, in determining the content of the curriculum, requirements for degrees and certificates, standards of instruction, student achievement standards, grading, and all matters relating to student progress in academic standards. They should have an important role in interviewing and recommending candidates within their own ranks for academic appointment, for reappointment, and for promotion.** Considering that full-time nontenure-track faculty are scholars who play a vital role in educating students, their perspectives should be valued. They also know best what it takes to fill these roles and what is needed to perform with distinction.
2. **Full-time nontenure-track faculty members, like all categories of faculty, should be appropriately involved in faculty personnel decisions including academic appointment, performance evaluation, the granting of research support, sabbaticals, incentives, merit pay, and other measurements of academic quality.** Full-time nontenure-track faculty are valuable colleagues who are part of the fabric of a department or program. Their views and insights can be valuable. Their inclusion in these processes tends to integrate them more fully into the overall academic program and its goals.
3. **Full-time nontenure-track faculty should play a direct role, together with tenure-track faculty and other staff, in developing and advising on institutional budgets, as well as working on institutional committees, task forces, and decision-making bodies.** All members of the academic staff should have suitable mechanisms for their voices to be heard and given proper weight in decisions affecting the institution's mission and operations.
4. **Appropriate means should be developed to include full-time nontenure-track faculty into shared governance roles, including changes in institutional governance structures as well as in changes to their own normal workloads.** The forms of shared governance will vary according to the particular institutional arrangements in place, but the voices of full-time nontenure-track faculty need to be included. Moreover, full-time nontenure-track faculty should be granted sufficient time within their normal workloads to perform governance duties. Governance participation should be seen as integral to the functioning of the institution as well as being bound up in the essence of the faculty role in shaping academic policies, standards and practices, curriculum, and the like. Barring them from governance tends to perpetuate the view of full-time nontenure-track faculty as tools to be used, rather than as colleagues in the professoriate.
5. **Evaluations of job performance should be part of an integrated system of evaluation involving both tenure-track and full-time nontenure-track faculty.**
 - a. **Who should conduct the evaluations?** Evaluations of full-time nontenure-track faculty need to be conducted by individuals who understand the particular duties and assignments being performed. Faculty whose duties involve primarily research, clinical training, or other activities should be given comprehensive, peer-driven evaluations based on the duties they were hired to perform. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be involved in the selection of reviewers, whether by their direct peers or by others, so that abuses of power by supervisors can be avoided.
 - b. **How should the evaluations be conducted?** They must be discipline specific. Evaluation should be a collaborative process between the reviewer(s) and the faculty member, focusing on goals, philosophy and improvement, not just on finding problems. Multiple evaluative measures should be used and may draw upon student evaluations of teaching, but this should not be the dominant factor. Such means can also include peer and supervisor classroom visitations, documentation of teaching materials and innovations, self-evaluations, and letters of assessment by experts in the field, among other measures.
 - c. **How should completed evaluations be handled?** Performance evaluations should be primarily constructive, to improve performance, not punitive.

Negative evaluations should be appealable to impartial and neutral parties.

6. Policies and procedures relevant to appointment, reappointment, and promotion in rank should be standard for full-time nontenure-track faculty and should correspond to those used for tenure-track faculty.

- a. In standards of initial appointment, full-time nontenure-track faculty should have comparable qualifications to tenure-track faculty. However, allowance should be made for the specific emphases of the duties of their prospective position, so that industry expertise and past experience may take on greater importance. This is done best by an enforceable union contract that protects full-time nontenure-track faculty from arbitrary dismissal and non-reappointment, especially by providing certain rights of seniority.
- b. While the period of initial appointment should typically be one year, subsequent appointments should be of longer duration. Full-time nontenure-track faculty whose third-year evaluations confirm the level of quality required for subsequent reappointment should be considered to have proven themselves and should be given multi-year contracts for up to five years. Further re-evaluations for reappointment should stress a presumption of contract renewal with no arbitrary number of years that a faculty member can serve in a nontenure-track position.
- c. The process of reappointment should involve standard methods of performance evaluation, with significant involvement by peers and supervisors. Individuals under consideration for reappointment should be given full opportunity and sufficient time to prepare their evaluation dossiers, to personally appear before the evaluating committees and authorities, to receive formal and written feedback with regard to the progress and substance of their evaluation, and to offer rebuttal of negative evaluations to the next highest level of evaluators.
- d. Colleges and universities should have a clear career ladder system for full-time nontenure-track positions. Therefore,

appointments should be made with ranks and titles, such as lecturer and senior lecturer or instructor, assistant professor, associate professor and professor.

Institutions should have a systematic way to encourage full-time nontenure-track faculty to apply for promotion from one rank to the next in accordance with the requisite qualifications and procedures. They also should provide the support needed to help full-time nontenure-track faculty succeed in their efforts to move up the ladder.

- e. Standards and criteria for reappointment and promotion in rank should be written and widely distributed to both full-time nontenure-track faculty and those who perform the evaluations and who make recommendations and decisions.
 - f. Decisions not to renew the appointments of full-time nontenure-track faculty should be made only after engaging in an established due process procedure and should be based on financial exigency, enrollments, significant changes in the academic program, just cause and an evaluation of individuals' performance. Such due process procedures are equally important when downsizing decisions are made. Non-renewal decisions should be made with adequate notice, typically at least three months prior to the end of the first year's appointment, progressively increasing to at least twelve months for individuals with greater seniority in their positions. Those whose appointments are not renewed should have access to an expedited process of appeal, so that a final decision can be made in a timely and responsible manner.
- 7. Full-time nontenure-track faculty who aspire to tenure-track positions should receive encouragement and support in this aspiration.** That is, they should be given sufficient time and resources to enable them to qualify in research/scholarship/creative activity so as to be competitive in this quest. Within their own institutions, full-time nontenure-track faculty should be included into the pool of job candidates being considered for tenure-track positions and those with

appropriate qualifications should be given preference in the selection process. In any case, individuals should be given ample help in moving into tenure-track positions elsewhere, if desired. There should not, however, be an expectation that all full-time non-

tenure-track faculty members must strive for tenure-track jobs. Many full-time non-tenure-track faculty members are secure in their professional calling and should be encouraged to maintain and improve their skills in performing their assigned duties.

Instituting Standards of Professional Responsibility and Support

1. **Institutions should provide adequate time and information to orient full-time nontenure-track faculty to the college's or university's administrative processes, support services, benefits plans, and other policies and procedures.** Within the academic department or program, the supervisor or chair should provide personalized orientation to the discipline, the curriculum, work assignments, and other expectations.
2. **Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be provided with adequate advance notice of employment, for instance, by the end of the spring term for assignments beginning in the fall term, and time to prepare for work assignments.** Adequate time to prepare is needed to encourage and support good teaching, to develop course materials, to ensure that books and other materials are ordered in time, and to schedule space for offices, labs, and other teaching needs.
3. **Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be provided with suitable office space and equipment to fulfill the requirements of their duties.** Faculty need adequate space and privacy to meet with students and to discuss student concerns in confidence. Thus, while space limitations may necessitate that full-time nontenure-track faculty have to share offices with colleagues, every effort should be made to prevent overcrowding and inconvenience. Telephones, voice mail, desks, and files should be considered standard equipment. Computers and Internet access should be provided as needed for the requirements of faculty duties. Space for full-time nontenure-track faculty should be provided on terms commensurate with provision of these resources to tenure-track faculty.
4. **Full-time nontenure-track faculty should be given equal access to resources in support of teaching and professional development activities, such as:**
 - a. Administrative support adequate to the effective performance of their educational and research duties. Typically, the work assignments of full-time nontenure-track faculty involve heavy teaching loads; administrative support serves an important role in helping faculty provide the best educational environment possible for students;
 - b. Training to improve research and teaching, including free tuition to take courses needed for maintaining and enhancing professional skills;
 - c. Sabbatical leaves for enhancement of professional skills, for research and scholarship, and for projects involving professional practice;
 - d. Release time from teaching to work on study projects related to subjects of teaching, research, and/or practice;
 - e. Access to internal and external grant support to cover expenses for professional study projects;
 - f. Professional travel funds, for attending and making presentation at professional conferences; and
 - g. Professional association funds, enabling membership and subscription to professional journals and newsletters.
5. **Workloads for full-time nontenure-track faculty should be reasonable, ideally equivalent to the workloads of tenure-track faculty; i.e., a combination of teaching, research, and service activities, perhaps emphasizing one**

activity about the others, but not exclusively one. Providing opportunities for a more fully-rounded set of roles and activities serves the education of students and the advancement of knowledge. Involvement in research and service enhances teaching (and vice versa), so that students, the institution and the wider community can benefit from the professor's intellectual and practical engagement. There is, of course, room for

diverse faculty roles, rather than a one-size-fits-all model. Nevertheless, segmenting activities rather than allowing combinations of them stunts the innovation and initiative of the faculty. Faculty need to be allowed and encouraged to develop their professional abilities and to make unique contributions to knowledge without artificial, bureaucratically imposed constraints.

SECTION TWO

Ensuring Full Rights for Full-time Nontenure-track Faculty in Their Unions

AFT believes that collective bargaining is the surest route to promoting high employment standards for full-time nontenure-track faculty. As the nation's leading higher education union, AFT for many years has been fighting for these rights through organizing and collective bargaining. In some cases, full-time nontenure-track faculty have been organized into locals based on a community of interest with part-time/adjunct or other contingent faculty who also are off the tenure track. Examples of such AFT locals include:

- University Council-AFT at the University of California
- Lecturers' Employee Organization at the University of Michigan
- Northern Illinois University Chapter of the University Professionals of Illinois

In most cases, full-time nontenure-track faculty are organized as part of a combined unit with the full-time tenure-track faculty or all other faculty and professional staff. Examples of such AFT locals include:

- United University Professions at State University of New York
- United Academics at the University of Vermont

- Temple Association of University Professionals at Temple University

As the full-time nontenure-track faculty ranks expand, so will AFT expand its efforts to organize these professionals and fight for them to be recognized as valued colleagues at their institutions. It is equally important to ensure that full-time nontenure-track faculty receive fair and equitable treatment within the union as well within their institution. To that end, we offer up the following standards for the union's treatment of full-time nontenure-track faculty.

1. **National and state union organizations should make a commitment to vigorous organizing of full-time nontenure-track faculty, ideally together with tenure-track faculty and all other participants in the academic workforce.** It may not be easy to organize in conjunction with tenure-track faculty, however. In some circumstances, tenure-track faculty do not see a community of interest between themselves and the nontenure track. As a rule, the AFT advocates that all academic workers at an institution should be organized. And we advocate that workers should be in the same unit wherever possible. Whether the entire faculty wants to organize

or full-time nontenure-track faculty are the only ones who seek union representation, national unions and their state-level affiliates should invest the time and resources to support a successful campaign from first contact through the first contract. Full-time nontenure-track faculty have the right to know the degree of commitment to organizing that they can count on from the national unions.

- 2. When they are represented by the same union as tenure-track faculty, full-time nontenure-track faculty should receive full rights, privileges, and representation.** They should have equal voting rights on all union matters, including election of officers and the ratification of contracts. Full-time nontenure-track faculty, though often excluded from full participation in the shared governance of the institutions in which they work, should never be excluded from full participation in their union. There should be no barriers to representation in local leadership. Indeed, some full-time nontenure-track faculty have served with distinction in high leadership positions representing not only colleagues like themselves but tenure-track faculty as well. Locals may consider reserving seats on their executive bodies for full-time nontenure-track faculty.

Full-time nontenure-track faculty members have the right to expect that their concerns will be a central, not peripheral, part of the union's priorities in dealing with management. Full-time nontenure-track faculty also have a right to expect that their issues will receive priority attention in legislative advocacy from their state affiliate organization, if there is one, as part of an overall strategy to stop the erosion of tenure and reliance on contingent labor in our colleges and universities.

- 3. Full-time nontenure-track faculty should receive the same consideration and due process in filing complaints, appeals, and grievances as do tenure-track faculty.** Although non-renewal of their contracts may be difficult to overturn and timelines for effective appeals may be short, locals should pursue these cases through the available avenues and make inquiries with expedition and care.

- 4. Faculty and other higher education professional unions on campuses where full-time nontenure-track faculty are unorganized should encourage unionization and assist efforts in that direction.** Organized groups are often in the best position to understand how their institutions work and can provide valuable advice, resources, and connections for full-time nontenure-track faculty who want to organize. Unions provide a forum for working through myths and stereotypes and developing mutual respect and trust.
- 5. When not in the same union together, regular communication between full-time nontenure-track faculty and tenure-track faculty should be established.** Rather than permitting management to play one group off against the other, it is critical for the two to talk over potential differences over issues of employment, compensation, and professional rights and responsibilities.
- 6. National, state, and local higher education unions should advocate for the implementation of the standards outlined herein.** Establishing such standards are an important first step, but they must be publicized, bargained for and generally insisted upon. Unions should work to educate their institutions and their communities about the need to protect the tenure system; the role of full-time nontenure-track faculty in providing education, expanding knowledge and training practitioners; the necessity of ensuring their treatment as valued professionals; and the essential need to include their voices in the shared governance of our higher education institutions.

Endnotes

1. AFT, Washington, DC: 2002
2. AFT, Washington, DC: 2004
3. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. [E. D. Tabs] *National Study of Postsecondary Faculty*, 2004. *Report on Faculty and Instructional Staff in Fall 2003*, NCES 2005-172, by Emily Forrest Cataldi et al. Washington, DC: 2005. Also NCES, *National Study of Postsecondary Faculty*: 1988, 1993, and 1999.
4. Some full-time faculty are employed in colleges and universities that do not have tenure systems, although their numbers and proportion of the whole are declining (from 65,000 in 1987 to 56,000 in 2003). Overall institutions with tenure systems or without, the growth was from 515,000 to almost 682,000, i.e., 32.4 percent.
5. By using “tenure track” we refer to the combination of full-time tenured faculty and full-time faculty who are on the tenure track but not yet tenured, i.e., who are eligible for tenure.
6. All statistics cited in this paragraph come from NCES *National Study of Postsecondary Faculty*, 2004.
7. The data portrayed in Figures 5 and 6 are not directly comparable to those shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3 in that they are from a different source of data, i.e., a different survey done by NCES. The data in Figures 1, 2, and 3 come from the periodic publications named *National Study of Postsecondary Faculty*, which rely on a representative national sample of faculty members themselves. The data in Figures 5 and 6 come from annual reports provided to NCES by thousands of higher education institutions.
8. 1995 is the earliest year for which a *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions* report is available on the NCES Web site.
9. AFT Higher Education, *The Growth of Full-time Nontenure-Track Faculty*, 2003.
10. Ibid, p. 5

For more information about the American Federation of Teachers’ work on full-time nontenure-track faculty issues, visit the AFT Higher Education Web site at www.aft.org/higher_ed.





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