

1 | Recommendations for PPC Lecturer Study Committee

To: Dan O' Flaherty, Chair, Policy and Planning Committee of the Arts and Sciences

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Subject: Recommendations for the 2017-2018 Lecturer Study Committee

The Lecturer Preliminary Planning Committee met twice during the Spring of 2017 to produce a set of recommendations to guide the PPC's 2017-2018 study of the contributions and status of lecturers in the Arts and Sciences. We begin the report by setting the study in context. We then outline the principal questions that we believe should guide the Lecturer Study Committee's work and provide suggestions for how to go about answering those questions. Finally, we offer recommendations about the composition of the Lecturer Study committee.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING THE WORK AND STATUS OF LECTURERS IN ARTS AND SCIENCES

July 2017 will mark thirty years since the University Senate and Board of Trustees approved the creation of a professional career track for full time associates and lecturers. In the spring of 2017, the PPC of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) completed a review of the FAS bylaws in order to identify discrepancies and resolve ambiguities concerning the status of Arts and Sciences lecturers-in-discipline. The EPPC asked the faculty of Arts and sciences to vote on changing the bylaws to affirm lecturers-in-discipline as full members of the FAS, which they did unanimously. This vote precipitated conversations across departments and divisions about the current status, rights, roles and working conditions for our full-time, non-tenure-eligible (NTE) faculty.

These developments have created an opportune moment to identify the policies and procedures by which the Faculty of Arts and Sciences can more fully align the treatment of NTE faculty with its core values. Non-tenure-eligible faculty serve in crucial roles in the Arts and Sciences, including instruction, research, graduate training, supervision, curriculum development and administration. They also constitute a substantial percentage of the faculty members in Arts and Sciences. Thus it is essential that we develop a plan that treats our non-tenure-eligible faculty as fully valued professional academics, who have chosen an institutionally critical career path.

The new Lecturer Study Committee, a Subcommittee of the PPC, should be charged with investigating the important questions that arise in two main domains.

- A. Policies and procedures that best affirm the value of the contributions of lecturers in discipline.
- B. Policies and procedures regarding lecturers that best promote the core academic values of our departments, and the institution generally

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The next section provides more concrete discussion of the kinds of questions that the Lecturer Study Committee should investigate within each domain. We also recommend that the PPC plan for the Lecturer Study Committee to carry out its work over the course of the full 2017-2018 academic year.

II. QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Policies and procedures to affirm the value of the contributions of lecturers-in-discipline:

- *On Governance:* What does the resolution making lecturers-in-discipline faculty in A&S really mean for lecturer participation in A&S governance? What should it mean for participation of lecturers in departmental governance?
- *On Hiring, Retention and Compensation:* Should we explore the question of lecturer access to Columbia housing? Can lecturers be eligible for some subset of the “retention” spots held open in the School at Columbia? Should there be an effort to encourage adoption of a standard scale for lecturer salaries during the regular academic year? Should we rethink summer compensation for lecturers who teach during Summer Session? How does the use of adjuncts in relevant departments affect compensation for lecturers in those departments?
- *On Responsibilities:* What is the range of responsibilities, and what are the workloads, for lecturers across departments and within the schools in Arts and Sciences? When it comes to teaching loads, should we try to attain something closer to “parity” for teaching staff within departments, and among lecturers across departments?
- *On Titles:* Should the University retain the Lecturer/Senior Lecturer titles? What can we learn from the national debate about creating a category of long-term NTT faculty “Teaching Professor” titles with additional pathways to promotion? If we retain the Lecturer/Senior Lecturer titles should there be an effort to standardize the use of these titles across departments? What, for instance, is the significance of the qualifier “in discipline”? Should we consider the “Professor of Practice” proposal? Might we learn more about the best nomenclature by reviewing decisions made on other campuses?

B. Policies and procedures regarding lecturers that will best promote our core academic values:

- *On Reviews and Promotions:* What can we learn from the work of the Subcommittee of the Senate’s Faculty Affairs Committee charged with examining the varied review processes for lecturers’ reviews (both for retention and promotion)? Should A & S consider standardizing the criteria for review and promotion of lectures? Is the current lecturer review process in need of revision? Is there a need for a fifth year review of lecturers-in -discipline? Should lecturers be reviewed (again) after the eighth year? In what committee (SCLL or PTC) should the reviews take place?

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- *On Research and Publication:* Are those departments in which lecturers are expected to maintain an active scholarly agenda doing a good job of making this clear to the lecturers, and offering support for their scholarly activities? Should Columbia re-examine policies governing the availability of sabbaticals and research leaves for lecturers?
- *On Course Evaluations:* Do quantitative metrics make sense as a method for evaluating the sometimes “performative” quality of the work that many lecturers do? What are the implications for lecturers (especially in review and promotion processes) of studies questioning whether course evaluation data accurately reflect faculty efficacy in the classroom?

III. SUGGESTIONS FOR GATHERING RELEVANT INFORMATION

We offer four recommendations to shape the process of gathering information for the study, and urge that you make every effort to address these recommendations early in the Fall 2017 semester:

1. Consider conducting a survey of departmental practices (in hiring, retention, reviews, and promotions) regarding Arts and Sciences lecturers. That survey should also seek information about how the increased reliance on lecturers in some departments has affected the IBS process.
2. Gather data about the length of service of our lecturers, the gender make-up and the distribution across departments, disciplines and sub-fields within the disciplines,
3. Seek salary data, workload data, standards for research and publication, and information about titles and participation in faculty governance from our peer institutions.
4. Consider consulting with experts from professional organizations such as the MLA, and national associations such as the AAUP, about what might constitute “best practices” with regard to lecturers.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

We recommend four guidelines for constituting the committee

1. Include senior ladder-rank faculty as well as senior lecturers.
2. Include at least one senior lecturer from each of the three divisions: the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences.
3. Seek senior lecturers who perform a variety of functions, including administrative, within their home departments.
4. Consider creating Committee Co-Chairs, inviting one senior ladder-rank faculty member and one senior lecturer to chair the Lecturer Study Committee together.