

Part-Time Faculty Affairs Committee

Year End Report, 2020-2021

Note on Term Usage

Part-time faculty is an umbrella term for three groups of faculty. Part-time faculty includes predominately adjunct faculty and part-time lecturers, but it also includes part-time faculty with non-teaching assignments:

- The term adjunct faculty refers to those who teach one or two classes a year with full-time jobs outside of USC (or sometimes have full-time staff positions at USC).
- Part-time lecturers refer to those who teach courses at USC but do not have a full-time job elsewhere.
- The committee would like to note the potential existence of part-time research, practice, or clinical faculty (who aren't adjunct but are also not categorized as lecturer). Despite the contradiction, we are assuming they would fall under the category of “part-time lecturer” for the purposes of this report.

Unless stated otherwise, the term “part-time faculty” includes all of these groups. Although the Part-Time Faculty Affairs Committee sees this separation of part-time faculty into distinct groups (predominantly adjunct and part-time lecturer) as unnecessary, the distinction is made in some places in this report to illustrate concerns with inequity.

Committee Charge

The Committee on Part-Time Faculty Affairs monitors and evaluates the working environment, terms and conditions of employment, job security, compensation, benefits eligibility, opportunities for participation in governance, opportunities for professional advancement, and participation in the academic life of the university provided for part-time faculty. It monitors compliance with the Faculty Handbook and with stated school policies of the schools or units as they relate to part-time faculty. It makes recommendations to relevant Senate and University committees, and to the Academic Senate, concerning any policy issues that have an impact on part-time faculty.

Specific Charge for 2020-2021 Academic Year:

1. Monitor and assess the extent to which schools are complying with the wage and hour rules articulated last year.
2. Monitor and assess the effects of the COVID crisis on part-time faculty working conditions.

Committee Meetings and Senate Participation

The Committee held regular monthly meetings for two hours, alternating days of the week so that all members would have an opportunity to participate. By consensus of the committee members, we held all meetings on the Zoom video conferencing platform. This arrangement allowed us to work without disruption while the campus was closed for regular activity.

Committee co-chairs Julianna Kirschner and P.T. McNiff attended the Fall Senate Retreat. Julianna Kirschner attended the Spring Senate Retreat.

Julianna Kirschner and P.T. McNiff attended a joint meeting with co-chairs of the T/TT Faculty Affairs Committee and the RTPC Faculty Affairs Committee. During this meeting, we discussed the work of our committees and opportunities for collaboration. We find that cross-pollination between committees increases institutional knowledge, awareness of the common goals across faculty groups, and the effectiveness of shared governance.

Wage and Hour Rules

The committee discussed the continued challenges with compliance of the wage and hour rules. With the exception of the Architecture School, most part-time faculty do not complete their own time sheets. A representative of their school completes the hourly time sheet on their behalf, and faculty are not given the option to complete it themselves (again, with the exception of Architecture). The committee is concerned that part-time faculty hours may exceed those recorded by school representatives. With the passing of California Assembly Bill 736 and USC's central response, we expect wage and hour rules to change. The committee is concerned about the possible outcomes of implementing policies related to AB 736:

- The committee is concerned about the potential for schools to shift toward hiring true adjunct faculty (those with full-time jobs outside USC) due to cost savings. This may mean part-time lecturers (those who teach at USC without a full-time job elsewhere) may be hesitant to define themselves as such. A

penalty should be put into place to discourage schools from this inequitable practice.

- Attestation of adjunct or part-time lecturer status is complicated. The committee considers this division between adjunct and part-time lecturer unnecessary, and additional complications could arise for schools as a result.
- The committee strongly advocates for all part-time faculty to be exempt as outlined under AB 736, regardless of their work outside of USC. This would result in equal pay for equal work.
- The committee disagrees with policies that treat groups of part-time faculty differently from each other.

The committee will continue to monitor and assess these new policies as they are developed, and encourages university leadership to consider the recommendations above.

COVID-19 Issues Related to the Part-Time Faculty

Last year, the committee sent a memo to the Academic Senate Executive Board about part-time faculty working conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to suggestions to improve part-time faculty working conditions, the Senate supported the committee's suggestion to pay part-time faculty for the extra work they did to transition face-to-face classes to virtual instruction. This year, the committee monitored the school-level response to these Senate-backed proposals. The adherence to the proposals was varied. Some schools followed through on the proposals, others did so on a partial basis, and the remainder did not adhere to the proposals. The committee will continue to work with faculty councils at all academic units, especially those with partial or a lack of adherence to the proposed strategies for improving part-time working conditions during the pandemic.

Precairety is a significant concern for part-time faculty. Many part-time faculty feel vulnerable to advocate for themselves against returning to in-person teaching before safety measures are put in place. The committee urges university leadership to consider this as reopening plans are developed.

Liaising with the Provost's Office

Co-chairs Julianna Kirschner and P.T. McNiff and EB Liaison Elisa Warford had several meetings with university leadership to discuss part-time working conditions.

On November 12, 2020, Julianna Kirschner, P.T. McNiff, Elisa Warford, and Academic President Paul Adler met with EVP Elizabeth Graddy. Part-time faculty composition was discussed, particularly the way USC defines two groups of part-time faculty. Specifically, USC considers the part-time track as representative of two distinct groups: adjuncts (those with full-time employment outside USC and who are limited to teaching one to two classes per academic year) and part-time lecturers (those that teach only at USC and do not have a full-time job elsewhere). EVP Graddy invited the committee to meet with Ginger Clark to continue cross-pollination.

On February 19, 2021, Julianna Kirschner, P.T. McNiff, and Elisa Warford met with Ginger Clark and Debora Chan-Southwell to discuss the progress report survey on part-time faculty composition the Provost's Office will send to academic units in the summer. The process of part-time faculty attesting to their outside employment and the logistics of attestation on Workday were discussed (Recommendations were noted above in the Wage and Hour Rules section).

On April 2, 2021, Julianna Kirschner, P.T. McNiff, and Elisa Warford met with Ginger Clark about USC's response to California Assembly Bill 736. Ginger Clark discussed the new baseline salaries for part-time lecturers. However, adjunct faculty were not considered for exempt status, which will increase the importance of the attestation process.

During the last PTFAC meeting of the academic year on April 23, 2021, Ginger Clark joined the committee to answer questions about USC's response to AB 736.

Liaising with School-Level Representatives and Committees

The committee spent time gathering information about school-level part-time committees and representatives. Committee members began reaching out to school-level chairs and representatives to discuss common concerns and opportunities to partner with them.

The committee also began collecting data about school-level compliance with Senate Resolution 15/16-04. However, the data was partial due to issues with access, particularly for schools without representation on our committee. We plan to continue this work in the future.

Recommendations for Future Work

The past year has been a pivot point in many ways for the part-time faculty of USC. The continuing COVID crisis has underscored how crucial teaching is to both the university's mission and annual bottom line -- as has been repeated to faculty by the administration, the institution would cease to function without the work of part-time, in-class instructors. The Provost Office plans to seek progress reports this summer on individual schools' part-time policies and procedures to comply with Senate Resolution 15/16-04, and reiterates the commitment of central administration to pursue fair and equal treatment of part-time and adjunct faculty members; ensuring that treatment happens as a result of official policies is crucial to the success of both these faculty and the university as a whole.

The committee proposes the following as goals for future members:

- Continue working with Ginger Clark and the Provost's office to review and give feedback on the results of the office's summer progress reports from each school on part-time faculty policies and procedures.
 - To that end, the committee should organize and implement a survey of part-time faculty members to determine the information that has reached and affected faculty "on the ground" to both track the progress in the five years since Senate Resolution 15/16-04 and to see how well the reality of part-time faculty experience aligns with the stated policies of the school administrations in the progress reports.
- Follow up with the Provost's office and HR on ensuring that all part-time faculty understand the internal university/HR job codes denoting adjunct faculty and part-time lecturer status so all faculty are classified and compensated appropriately. See the note at the beginning of this document and the recommendations in the Wage and Hour Rules section for more details.
- It is also recommended to continue the push for a comprehensive online repository of information relevant to part-time faculty work, collecting easily accessible links to both university- and school-level policies.
- Assess new policies resulting from AB 736 and its impact on part-time faculty to ensure that policies are fair and applied consistently and equitably across all schools and ranks. This will include a particular focus on concerns related

to how schools implement and prioritize the attestation process for part-time faculty.

- Strengthen and grow permanent liaison relationships between the committee and the part-time representatives and/or bodies on Faculty Councils and/or relevant Council sub-committees.

- As mentioned above, continue to regularly meet with the co-chairs of the RTPC and Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty Affairs Committees.
 - Along with that work, the committee should join with others to continue pushing for the Academic Senate to conduct a university-wide holistic assessment of faculty composition issues. The concerns raised by TT and RTPC faculty in the debate around the Senate resolution updating the constitution to be more inclusive of part-time faculty speaks to how widespread these concerns are.

Conclusion

Not to be redundant, but the past year felt like a turning point for part-time faculty. The needs and status of this segment of the faculty were addressed by governance bodies from the Academic Senate to the California State Legislature. The actions of the Provost's office have reiterated the administration's recognition of the need for more consistent policies to protect and support these faculty members. The work of the Academic Senate also speaks to the need to properly and thoroughly assess how part-time members fit in the ecosystem of the university and the faculty body.

While the issues facing part-time faculty are far from resolved, we remain encouraged by the steps the University has taken in regards to part-time faculty, and the Committee looks forward to continuing to monitor and assess part-time faculty affairs and to recommend policy to the Senate that will better allow these faculty to benefit the University and the constituents it serves.

In closing, we would like to recognize and thank the committee members for their dedicated and faithful service to the university, shared governance, and their colleagues. The progress seen this year in relation to the needs and concerns of part-time faculty would not be possible without the continued work of these faculty members.

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