

**Division of Humanities Statement of Principles and  
Best Practices Relating to Contingent Faculty**  
*Originally Adopted in March 2013; Revised in November 2020*

**Preamble**

Contingent faculty (as defined in Section II of the *Faculty Handbook*) are essential to Pacific Lutheran University's ability to function and thrive. They teach students across the academic sector, develop programs and curricula, generate and participate in new initiatives, mentor and support students, organize and participate in university events, and take part in certain areas of faculty governance. They also broaden the University's pool of scholarly expertise beyond the borders of current tenure-track lines. Directly and indirectly, contingent faculty staff a considerable amount of our interdisciplinary program needs. In short, contingent faculty substantially contribute to the University's ability to operate and thrive. Their roles are neither ancillary nor isolated: they fulfil structural needs of the University.

Integrating contingent faculty into the University community in ways that support their academic freedom, professional standing, and ethical treatment strengthens our academic program and hence benefits us all--students, faculty, and the University. Further, it is mandated by P.L.U.'s mission, particularly its charge to combine thoughtful inquiry, leadership, and service with the care for others and our communities. It is with this goal in mind that the Division of Humanities, through this document, seeks to clarify the professional relationships, rights, and responsibilities of contingent faculty within the Division and its Departments, and to set recommendations for best practices by Departments, Chairs, and the Dean in addressing issues of rights; remuneration; faculty culture; hiring and staffing; and evaluation. The recommendations offered herein are subject to the governing principles, policies, and regulations of the *Faculty Handbook*, which take precedence in all matters.

**I. Rights, Status, and Process:**

- A. Contingent faculty should be accorded academic freedom and due-process rights, as stipulated in the *Faculty Handbook*.
- B. Contingent faculty enjoy voice and voting privileges as specified in the *Faculty Handbook*. In accord with the stipulation that a division "may confer voting privileges within its own academic unit on some or all of its contingent faculty, except that contingent faculty shall not vote on matters of personnel," the Division of Humanities extends voting privileges to contingent faculty during the academic year in which they hold an appointment. Contingent faculty shall not vote on matters of personnel (such as hiring decisions or Dean elections).
- C. The Division should advocate for effective and direct means by which Contingent Faculty may be represented in our faculty governance system. (See also III.a.2).
- D. Contingent faculty need to be provided with orientation, mentoring, and professional development opportunities. They are entitled to substantive review of their professional performance, as provided for in the processes of annual, 3-year, and 5-year reviews stipulated by the *Faculty Handbook*.

After a successful 3-year review their title should be changed from Visiting to Resident.

- E. In order to guarantee effective orientation and communication at the time of hire, the Division should provide this document to all contingent faculty and put new contingent faculty members into contact with the current chair of the contingent faculty caucus. This document should be the basis for a meeting between Department Chair and contingent faculty member upon hire.
- F. Contingent faculty deserve clear, transparent, and frank information concerning the likelihood of a tenure-line opening for which they might apply, and concerning how they might make themselves competitive for any such opportunities.
- G. Contingent faculty should be given due consideration along with tenure-line faculty with regard to scheduling, difficulty of teaching loads, office space, etc.
- H. Contingent faculty deserve work-loads and responsibilities that are consistent with their level of compensation and job security. For example, they deserve clear, fair, and transparent expectations of service responsibilities, consistent with the *Faculty Handbook*.

## II. Remuneration:

- A. Contingent faculty should be accorded fair remuneration. The Faculty Affairs Committee should work with the Administration to establish a salary and wage schedule for contingent faculty. The schedule should take into account teaching load and appointment seniority.
- B. In cases where a Resident Faculty line or status is appropriate, Resident Faculty should be afforded opportunities for substantial review, seniority in pay, promotion in rank, and job security (e.g., multi-year appointments). Where the *Faculty Handbook* does not allow for such measures, the Division should advocate for appropriate changes through the Faculty Governance system.
- C. When possible, the Division should advocate for Visiting or Resident positions that are benefits-eligible.
- D. Contingent faculty should be eligible for professional support and development opportunities, including campus grants and fellowships, and professional travel allowances.

## III. Other Best Practices for Departments, Chairs and Deans:

- A. **Faculty Culture:** In order to integrate contingent faculty into the culture of our academic community, Departments, Chairs, and Deans should:
  - 1. Understand, affirm, and treat contingent faculty as valuable teachers and scholars within the University community.
  - 2. Give contingent faculty opportunities to participate in Departmental and Divisional meetings, initiatives, and events. Contingent faculty deserve opportunities for service and involvement that will afford

them opportunities for professional development and meaningful participation.

3. Normally, a contingent faculty member and their chair will determine appropriate service requirements. Should contingent faculty feel that they are being given insufficient or excessive service expectations by their chair, they should consult with the Contingent Faculty Caucus, who can appeal to the dean.
4. Acknowledge the scholarly accomplishments of contingent faculty and invite them to participate in the forums, working groups, and lecture series in which tenure-line faculty present their scholarship and research.
5. Due to the particular challenges to academic freedom facing colleagues in contingent positions, the Division must vigorously defend their academic freedom and due-process rights.

**B. Participation in Departmental meetings and discussions:** Contingent faculty should be included in Department meetings and discussions, except for staffing and personnel matters.

**C. Hiring and Staffing:**

1. The configuration of any tenure-track line is determined by curricular and administrative needs: the creation of a tenure-track line to fill a structural need previously staffed by a contingent line does *not* imply an obligation on the part of a Department or the University to hire into that position a Visiting or Resident Faculty member who has been filling that need; nor will a tenure-track line necessarily replicate the same scholarly specialization or course-load that a Visiting or Resident faculty member has been providing. The Division affirms the right and responsibility of Departments to seek and hire the most qualified candidates for tenure-track positions. However, the service and performance of a multi-year Visitor or Resident, while not giving that Visitor or Resident any entitlement to a tenure-track hire, nonetheless should be given due weight in a Departmental search process.
2. In cases when the Division and Department advocate for a tenure-track search or Resident Faculty appointment, but these requests are not approved by the Administration, the Department Chair should discuss in a transparent and frank manner with the current contingent faculty member. When multi-year Visiting or Resident positions fulfill ongoing structural needs, the Division should advocate for multi-year appointments that provide stability for both faculty and programs (as recommended in II.b).
3. Departments should, within budgetary constraints, conduct rigorous searches for Visiting faculty that will help ensure that Visiting faculty have the qualifications to make them competitive candidates for tenure-track consideration. Departments should,

within curricular/programmatic constraints, offer Visiting and Resident faculty a range of teaching opportunities that will help prepare them as candidates for a possible tenure-track search.

4. If contingent faculty are forced to leave the University for staffing or budgetary reasons, rather than for reasons having to do with their performance, they should receive due consideration for being rehired when those staffing or budgetary conditions change. If a contingent faculty member has already passed particular grades of the review and promotion process for resident faculty, he/she/they should be rehired at that level.
5. Upon the hire of a contingent faculty member, the Department Chair should hold a meeting with that faculty member to discuss job responsibilities and expectations, the terms and length of employment, processes of evaluation and review, and prospects for more permanent employment. As specified in I.e. above, the Division should draft a list of rights and responsibilities for all contingent faculty that would be distributed and discussed during this meeting between the Chair and contingent faculty member.

**D. Evaluation and Peer Review:**

1. Department Chairs are responsible for completing the annual, 3-year, and 5-year reviews for Contingent Faculty stipulated by the *Faculty Handbook*. Annual reviews for multi-year visiting positions should include substantive feedback on scholarship and other areas of professional development.