

College of Professional Studies  
Pacific Lutheran University  
Statement of Principles and Best Practices Related to Contingent Faculty  
September 2, 2015  
Revised: July 14, 2022

**Rationale**

The College of Professional Studies houses the School of Business, Department of Communication, Media & Design Arts, Department of Education, Department of Music, Department of Theatre & Dance, Innovation Studies program, and Center for Media Studies. The College combines the best practices of liberal arts education along with the exploration of the values and benefits applied to professional study.

The College is a dynamic community of educators, artists, and practitioners in professional programs reaching across a wide breadth of disciplines. The College fosters an inclusive culture of collaboration, connecting directly with our community and region, as well as with national and international organizations, engagements, and partnerships.

The College enlists a wide array of experts as contingent faculty to augment our academic instruction. These professionals in art, business, communication, education, music, and theatre & dance are indispensable to the professional nature of our disciplines. The College generates visibility, revenue, and recruitment for the University, and contingent faculty are an integral part of this activity.

This document, initially prepared under the prior School of Arts and Communication, addresses the recommendations presented in the Ad Hoc Task Force on Contingent Faculty memo (May 31, 2013) whereby “Each School and Division (was asked) to consider adopting a statement of principles and best practices that is appropriate to its own Unit structure and culture” (p.2). These recommendations were echoed in a statement by President Krise in March 2015.

**Toward this goal, this document seeks to clarify the professional relationships, rights, and responsibilities of contingent faculty specifically within the units that prepared and initially voted on this statement—those previously housed under the former School of Arts and Communication: the Departments of Communication, Media & Design Arts; Music; and Theatre & Dance.**

**Further revisions/updates to this document will follow during AY22-23.**

This document addresses:

- I. Circumstances
- II. Best Practices Related to Contingent Faculty
  - A. Hiring and Staffing of Contingent Faculty
  - B. Contingent Faculty Members Remuneration
  - C. Contingent Faculty Members Expectations for Scholarship and Service
  - D. Contingent Faculty Members Voice and Vote
  - E. Evaluation Processes Regarding Contingent Faculty Members
  - F. Process Whereby Contingent Faculty Members Address Concerns
  - G. Reporting Schedule for Data Related to Contingent Faculty
- III. Action Items

These recommendations are subject to the governing principles, policies, and regulations of the *Faculty Handbook*, which take precedence in all matters.

### **I. Circumstances**

As defined in Section II of the *Faculty Handbook*, contingent faculty are essential to Pacific Lutheran University's ability to function and thrive as an institution of higher education. These faculty members serve a primary and vital role in teaching students across the academic sector. They also assist in maintaining our curriculum and faculty governance system by filling vacancies created by sabbatical leaves and course releases. Further, these faculty members broaden the University's depth and breadth of scholarly experiences and enable growth in curricular development and change.

This essential nature of contingent faculty members is especially evident in our disciplines. Our disciplines have historically relied on its contingent faculty to address a variety of valuable teaching needs, some of which are unique to our unit, for example by:

- teaching highly specialized courses such as private music lessons and music ensemble classes
- working as artists in roles such as music performance, theatrical design and implementation, and studio art
- traveling with students on international trips, tournaments, music tours, and similar projects
- preparing students for Keystone and Capstone presentations
- providing traditional classroom instruction

Contingent faculty are also a crucial force in the recruitment of students who wish to participate in our programs. In addition to making contact with individual prospective students, our contingent faculty maintain professional profiles on both regional and national levels which raise the visibility of our university.

The numbers of contingent faculty members who served our students across the former School of Arts and Communication (SOAC) during the 2014-15 school year included: 40 in Music, 5 in Art and Design and 8 in Communication and Theatre. These contingent faculty members represented roughly 60 percent of the total faculty members.

As evidenced by these broad University functions and discipline-specific roles, and the numbers of contingent faculty members, it is clear that contingent faculty are neither ancillary nor isolated, because they are essential to the teaching that takes place in our unit.

It was determined by the task force preparing this report that an assessment of the conditions facing contingent faculty members in the former School of Arts and Communication would help determine our best practices. In May 2015 we surveyed our contingent faculty. With 25 faculty members responding (a 47.1% response rate), we found that, cutting across both the quantitative and qualitative data, those faculty express concerns surrounding payment, assessment, and promotion. Although many faculty are pleased with their colleagues and the students, they often feel inadequately compensated for their work.

## **II. Best Practices Related to Contingent Faculty**

All contingent faculty members should naturally be afforded academic freedom and due-process rights, as stipulated in the *Faculty Handbook*. Contingent faculty members also should be given due consideration along with tenure-line faculty with regard to scheduling, teaching load, and funding for professional development, as well as work space, office space, and teaching materials. The following areas require additional specific consideration:

### **A. Hiring and Staffing of Contingent Faculty**

Given its particular circumstances, the staffing of our disciplines is especially complex. This complexity requires a special attention to the use and designation, both short- and long-term, of contingent faculty positions. The following are representative concerns that require attention.

1. If a contingent faculty member's load consistently exceeds the definitions and expectations for that position as laid out in the Faculty Handbook (Section II. Part 1. Section II. C. 2.), it should be the responsibility of the Division and Department to consider re-evaluating the position and perhaps advocate for it to be converted into a more appropriate position. Interdisciplinary and co-curricular commitments should be part of this consideration, and should be factored into deliberations about ongoing staffing needs. In the event that requests for a tenure-track line are repeatedly denied, the College should conduct a serious review of its curriculum and staffing to ascertain the long-term viability of its various curricular commitments within and outside of its own programs.

2. The configuration of any tenure-track line is determined by curricular and administrative needs: The conversion of a multi-year Visiting Position or Lecturer into 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 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 faculty member has been providing. The College affirms the right and responsibility of departments to seek and hire the most qualified candidates for tenure-track or Resident Lecturer positions. However, the service and performance of a multi-year Visitor, while not giving that Visitor any entitlement to a tenure-track hire, nonetheless should be given due weight in a departmental search process.
3. Each contingent faculty member should be given clear, direct and frank information regarding the likelihood of tenure-line openings for which the contingent faculty member might apply.
4. In cases in which the College and a school/department advocate for a tenure-track search or Resident Faculty appointment, but these requests are not approved by the Administration, the respective program administrator should discuss in a transparent and frank manner with the current contingent faculty member the realistic prospects of that position.
5. Wherever possible, contingent faculty members should be given priority for summer teaching.

## **B. Contingent Faculty Members Remuneration**

All contingent faculty members should be accorded fair remuneration. The Faculty Affairs Committee, along with the Administration, has developed a salary and wage schedule for contingent faculty, which was provided with 2015 - 2016 contracts. However, due to the vast array of duties and responsibilities of contingent faculty members, it is suggested that the College develops a supplemental salary and wage schedule that addresses its specific needs. When possible, the University should clarify its policy with regard to all contingent faculty benefits so that programs can be consistent with this Human Resource Office policy.

## **C. Contingent Faculty Members Expectations for Scholarship and Service**

Accurately defined expectations are critical to contingent faculty and their professional security; clearly communicating expectations is a central aspect of department and school support of contingent faculty members. In order to provide this support, the administration must first recognize the diversity of contingent faculty classifications, as expectations will vary within that range of classifications. Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Visiting Faculty, Clinical Faculty, Resident Faculty, and Faculty Fellows all are subject to differing expectations according to their positions. Even amongst faculty who share a classification, expectations may be different across different units.

There are several areas where clear expectations are particularly important:

1. **Opportunities for advancement:** Most contingent faculty are looking for advancement, a more secure position, full time vs. part time, receiving benefits, etc. During annual and third year reviews, the Department Chair should discuss in a transparent and frank manner with each contingent faculty their potential for advancement within the university.
2. **Teaching:** Contingent faculty are selected because of expertise that will enhance the teaching and educational needs of the university. Expectations around teaching and substantive feedback should be a regular process of contingent faculty evaluation.
3. **Scholarship and Service:** Because of differing expectations for different types of positions, these areas can seem the most vague. Current policy in the Faculty Handbook (p 32) states that “Full-time contingent faculty are not eligible to serve on standing faculty committees, but may serve on university or ad hoc committees as their interest or expertise warrants. Contingent faculty who are contracted on a part-time basis are expected to bear none of the responsibilities of regular faculty outside of their teaching duties.”

These distinctions can be blurred in practice, where they are not well recognized. This results in a concern that, for example, a non-full-time contingent faculty member may be penalized for not maintaining a level of service or scholarship comparable to his or her full-time and tenure-track colleagues if an advancement opportunity becomes available.

Expectations around service and scholarship for full-time and tenure-track faculty are better understood; through promotion, their service and scholarship are also compensated with increased remuneration. For contingent faculty similar involvement is voluntary but uncompensated.

Most importantly, there currently is no direct language in contracts related to expectations around scholarship and service for contingent faculty. The wording of the Faculty Handbook for each contingent faculty classification should be made available as part of service agreement and contracts.

#### **D. Contingent Faculty Members Voice and Vote**

According to the Faculty Handbook, all full-time contingent faculty members have voting rights on the Faculty Assembly, as well as at College and School/Department meetings during the academic year in which they hold an appointment. Part-time contingent faculty have the right of voice but not vote on the Faculty Assembly. In addition, the Faculty Handbook states 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” (p.33).

Every effort must be made to ensure that contingent faculty members are heard within their programs and within the College. The College should codify the extent to which contingent faculty of all designations are to be included in the governance of the College. However, because the Faculty Handbook states that contingent faculty shall not vote on matters of personnel (in contrast to previous practice within the former SOAC, which routinely included contingent faculty on search committees), future inclusions of contingent faculty members in such functions should be voluntary, with interested parties nominating themselves to serve, and the College should clarify that these are advisory roles, rather than voting roles.

### **E. Evaluation Processes Regarding Contingent Faculty Members**

The Faculty Handbook (p. 90) states that department chairs are responsible for completing the annual, 3-year, and 5-year reviews for contingent faculty members. Other evaluations of professional presentations and scholarship should also be included in the contingent faculty members' assessment to ensure the contingent faculty member would be considered a strong candidate for possible tenure-track positions.

### **F. Process Whereby Contingent Faculty Members Address Concerns**

According to the Faculty Handbook (Bylaws to the Faculty Constitution Article VI, Section 7), "The faculty member who feels that he or she has cause for grievance should first seek a remedy through normal administrative channels." Thus a Contingent Faculty member with, for example, concerns relating to his or her position, pay, conditions of his or her employment, or the facilities in which he or she works would follow the processes laid out in the Handbook.

Because many concerns a contingent faculty member may have are generally less serious than the grievance procedure set forth by the university permits, a procedure by which these concerns can be voiced and addressed without escalation and in an equitable manner should be established and clearly outlined.

## **III. Action Items**

Based on the data collected in the May 2015 survey of the prior SOAC contingent faculty, the SOAC Contingent Faculty Task Force developed the following action items, to be implemented.

- A. The most significant concerns noted in the survey data above address remuneration. The College should advocate strongly for equitable pay for all its contingent faculty, and should use whatever metric it deems appropriate in order to determine appropriate pay (for example, Provost's Floor Model Scale from April 1, 2015 memo, data from peer institutions, the market standard, etc). Further,
  - It is recommended that special attention be given to pay for applied instructors, until that category has been integrated into the scale articulated in the Provost's memo.

- Contingent faculty members should also be given high priority when opportunities for extra income arise, such as teaching summer courses.
  - Finally, contingent faculty members' contracts should reflect their cumulative teaching hours, which currently may exceed the amount described in their contracts or may be obscured by multiple contracts. Employee benefits should then be extended to part-time contingent faculty members when they consistently teach more than 0.5 FTE (this could be determined by analyzing one's average teaching load after being employed for multiple semesters).
- B. In the survey, the issue of clear expectations regarding teaching, scholarship, service, and advancement was noted to be of concern for contingent faculty. It is recommended that each unit, in consultation with the contingent faculty, create a clear outline of expectations across these four areas, as well as a list of rights and responsibilities of all contingent faculty members and the responsibilities of their Chairs. This document should be distributed with contingent faculty contracts.
- C. Our survey made clear that, on occasion, contingent faculty feel less inclined to voice their personal, departmental, and university concerns due to the nature of their employment. To address this issue, it is recommended that a tenured faculty member (as part of his or her service to the university), be nominated and elected by the contingent faculty members to serve as an ombudsperson, available to consult with contingent faculty and voice their concerns. Bringing a tenured faculty member into this position is intended to alleviate concerns about the vulnerability of the ombudsperson.

This position will help ensure that such concerns can be addressed confidentially and without repercussion. The position will include the following responsibilities:

- Conduct meetings with contingent faculty members who have concerns they would like brought to either their Chair or to the Dean. Individual meetings should be consistent with existing structures for conflict resolution within PLU, with an initial meeting between the faculty member and the ombudsperson and a second meeting between the ombudsperson and the relevant Chair and/or the Dean;
  - Meet annually with contingent faculty as a group;
  - Conduct an annual survey of the College's contingent faculty to gauge general perceptions of the climate of their work environment and issue an annual report based on the results. The report addresses the annual reporting of institutional data to the Provost's Office.
- D. All current contingent faculty positions should be evaluated immediately to address whether the scope of work of these faculty positions justifies a reevaluation and perhaps the implementation of a tenure-line position (see point II.A.2 above). This staffing review and evaluation should be conducted annually by the department chairs and dean. When multi-year positions are appropriate (e.g., until a tenure-track line can be secured, or in

cases where a short-term need exceeds two years), the College should advocate for multi-year appointments that provide stability for both faculty and programs.

- E. The survey indicated that some contingent faculty may feel powerless to affect institutional outcomes. The issue of voice and vote for contingent faculty is vital for a group of faculty members who are so important to the quality of teaching we can offer our students. The voting rights outlined in the faculty handbook designate each unit to determine its own policy on voting rights and voice. Thus, it is recommended that the College review and codify the voting rights for contingent faculty within our school.
- F. The review process for contingent faculty is delineated in the Faculty Handbook (p 90). To ensure equitable treatment of contingent faculty members, departments must make use of this process, including soliciting a yearly activity report from contingent faculty, conducting an annual review of the faculty member, and conducting third and fifth year reviews.

This *Statement of Principles and Best Practices Related to Contingent Faculty* document endorsed by the School of Arts and Communication Faculty on September 3, 2015; Revised July 14, 2022 to reflect the academic restructuring to the College of Professional Studies.

## Appendix 1: Provost's Memo, April 1, 2015

April 1, 2015

To: All Benefits-Eligible Faculty

From: Steven P. Starkovich, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Re: Faculty Salaries for 2015-16

This annual "Faculty Salary Memo" is customarily distributed with contracts on April 1 to all benefits-eligible faculty, and historically this memo's narrative has been aimed primarily at tenure-line faculty. As shown below, we are making significant improvements to tenure-line salaries for FY16 and we are improving the tenure-line "floor models" in substantive ways.

This year's memo, however, includes information on two important new initiatives: (1) a salary floor model for contingent faculty in benefits-eligible positions, and (2) increases in salaries for hourly and course-by-course instruction by persons in contingent positions that do not carry benefits. As in previous years, the contracts for benefits-eligible contingent faculty are being distributed today; the part-time teaching agreements for non-benefits eligible contingent faculty will be distributed in May.

### Overview

Each year as we endeavor to improve faculty compensation we are guided by the Philosophy of Faculty Compensation as stated in the Faculty Handbook. In addition, the May 2013 Board of Regents resolution ("The Box" resolution) provides specific targets which we endeavor to attain. That Board resolution flowed directly from the work of the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) and has shaped most of the planning and budgeting conversation within the administration during the past two years. This year, as is its custom, FAC submitted its annual recommendation to the administration regarding faculty compensation for the upcoming year, and their recommendation was consistent with the goals of "The Box" resolution and the Philosophy of Faculty Compensation.

In 2008, the administration adopted "floor models" for tenure-line faculty salaries in all three ranks. These "floors" do not constitute a "salary schedule" but are meant to establish minimum salaries based on years in rank. In short, the "floors" provide a kind of "safety net" on salaries. The floors among the three ranks (assistant, associate and full professor) are linked together by our promotion increases. This year, for the first time, we are establishing a floor model based on "Years at PLU" for our benefits-eligible contingent faculty. Some areas for further improvement and anticipated next steps are identified below.

### Tenure-Line Faculty

A 2.5% across-the-board salary increase for all tenure-line faculty will take effect September 1, 2015. In addition, we have increased the floor increment for “Year in Rank” from \$600 to \$715 for all three ranks. The “Year 1” floor salaries for associate professor and full professor have been adjusted upward so as to accommodate these “steeper floors” in the lower ranks. Again, the floor model is not a salary schedule but provides baselines that specify minimum salaries for each year in rank for our tenure-line faculty. The tenure-line floor models for all three ranks are shown in Table 1.

Promotion increases are \$6,000 for promotion from Assistant to Associate, and \$8,000 for promotion from Associate to Full Professor. These promotion rewards are the highest among New American Colleges and Universities (NAC&U) institutions. In implementing these floors, we are cognizant of possible “leapfrogging” effects in going from one rank to the next (particularly upon promotion from the Assistant to the Associate rank), and we have mitigated those effects where they have occurred.

As in the past, we have granted all sabbatical requests, and we have worked closely with each dean to allocate sufficient resources to cover the associated costs necessary to provide the curriculum in the context of our expected enrollment for next year.

### Contingent Faculty

A 2.5% across-the-board salary and wage increase for all benefits-eligible contingent faculty will take effect September 1, 2015. This includes those faculty whose compensation is based on an hourly rate. In addition, we will be increasing the course-by-course and hourly instructional rates for non- benefits-eligible faculty by 2.5%, and these new rates will be reflected in the part-time teaching agreements that are to be distributed in late May. Applying the across-the-board increase to course- by-course rates is new this year.

Most significantly, however, we are instituting a new “floor model” system for benefits-eligible contingent faculty based on “Years at PLU.” This is a substantive change in compensation that, by law, was not possible while the union petition was pending. Given the late date (mid-January) when the union withdrew its petition and the difficult fiscal environment in which we find ourselves this spring, full implementation of this new contingent faculty floor model system could not be done in one step but will be phased in over two years.

At this time the contingent faculty floor model does not distinguish among ranks, but we hope to sort that out in Part 2 of the implementation. The situation is further complicated by the fact that not all contingent faculty have a terminal degree in their field, and for now we have integrated our current practice into the floor model. The floor model for benefits-eligible contingent faculty is shown in Table 2. This new contingent system is anchored to the tenure-line system in that the “Year 1” full- time minimum of \$46,800 is 90% of the “Year 1” tenure-line Assistant Professor minimum.

Unique among all compensation systems at PLU is the system used for our contingent Music faculty. Presently, contingent Music faculty compensation is a combination of hourly rates, course-by-course instruction, performance, and (often) extra compensation for travel to and from campus to teach lessons, in addition to other unique features. Parts (but not all) of this current system can be translated onto the new floor system. The Dean of the School of Arts and Communication, the chair of the Music department and I will be sorting through all these pieces and exploring how to translate Music's current system onto this new floor system – a top priority for Part 2 of the implementation. In the meantime, all contingent Music faculty are receiving the 2.5% increase on hourly and course- by-course work.

Please be assured that the administration is looking for ways to meet our compensation goals as described in the Philosophy of Faculty Compensation and “The Box” resolution. Both the Faculty Affairs Committee and I welcome your comments and questions.

**Table 1 - Tenure-Line Faculty Floor Models for 2015-16**

2015-16 Years in Rank	Assistant	Associate	Full
1	52,000	61,350	74,000
2	52,715	62,065	74,715
3	53,430	62,780	75,430
4	54,145	63,495	76,145
5	54,860	64,210	76,860
6	55,575	64,925	77,575
7	56,290	65,640	78,290
8	57,005	66,355	79,005
9	57,720	67,070	79,720
10	58,435	67,785	80,435
11	59,150	68,500	81,150
12	No Change	69,215	81,865
13	From Here	69,930	82,580
14		70,645	83,295
15		71,360	84,010
16		72,075	84,725
17		No Change	85,440
18		From Here	86,155
19			86,870
20			87,585
21			88,300
22			89,015
23			89,730
24			90,445
25			91,160
26			91,875
27			92,590
28			93,305
29			94,020
30			94,735

These salaries do not represent a salary schedule but are minimum 1.0 FTE base salaries for the corresponding years in rank. Please see the accompanying "Faculty Salary Memo" for further details.

**Table 2 – Benefits-Eligible Contingent Faculty Floor Models for 2015-16**

Years at PLU	Doctorate Degree	Master's Degree	Bachelor's Degree
1	46,800	45,800	44,800
2	47,300	46,300	45,300
3	47,800	46,800	45,800
4	48,300	47,300	46,300
5	48,800	47,800	46,800
6	49,300	48,300	47,300
7	49,800	48,800	47,800
8	50,300	49,300	48,300
9	50,800	49,800	48,800
10	51,300	50,300	49,300
11	51,800	50,800	49,800
12	52,300	51,300	50,300
13	52,800	51,800	50,800
14	53,300	52,300	51,300
15	53,800	52,800	51,800
16	No Change	No Change	No Change
17	From Here	From Here	From Here

These salaries do not represent a salary schedule but are minimum 1.0 FTE base salaries for the corresponding years at PLU for benefits-eligible contingent faculty. In cases where the Master's degree is the terminal degree, apply the "Doctorate" floor. **This floor model represents Part 1 of a two-part implementation of a new floor model system for benefits-eligible contingent faculty. Please see the accompanying "Faculty Salary Memo" for the anticipated next steps in Part 2 of the implementation.**