

MEMORANDUM

To: All RIT faculty  
 From: Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
 Subject: Forming and charging an Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of Faculty  
 Date: Fall 2016

**Overview:** Over the years, RIT has made a number of changes to policies that establish faculty rank and titles as well as to policies that affect tenure and promotion. These changes have clarified policies, implemented new processes (e.g., midtenure review) and have made the process for tenure and promotion more transparent.

At the same time, the university has been advancing its research mission with reduced teaching loads of the tenure-track faculty and larger start-up packages. This has led to a greater investment of resources including the hiring of lecturers and this investment is needed and right for the institution. But a consequence is that we have seen a substantial increase in the number of sections and in the number of student credit hours taught by non-tenure track faculty. While our lecturers are outstanding teachers and I feel confident that our students are getting an exceptional educational experience, we now see that a majority of sections and student credit hours are taught by non-tenure track faculty. The data from the annual Instructional Activity Report<sup>1</sup> provides ample evidence:

% of Total SCH Taught			
	AY 2013-2014	AY 2014-2015	AY 2015-2016
Tenure-track faculty	47	45	42
Full-time NTT faculty	31	34	35
Part-time NTT faculty	21	20	22

% of Total Sections Taught			
	AY 2013-2014	AY 2014-2015	AY 2015-2016
Tenure-track faculty	48	46	44
Full-time NTT faculty	29	31	32
Part-time NTT faculty	22	22	23

<sup>1</sup> The annual IAR is available on website of the Division of Academic Affairs

It seems reasonable to predict that in a few years, assuming no changes are made, that full-time NTT faculty will teach more sections and SCH than TT faculty and the gap in these metrics between TT faculty and NTT faculty will continue to widen.

One solution is to simply hire more TT faculty. However, an analysis shows that it would take approximately 117 TT faculty to bring the distribution of these numbers to the “50-25-25” rule<sup>2</sup>. At an average salary of \$141,000 (including benefits) per faculty, the total cost to the institution would exceed \$10M per year.

RIT is not alone with this issue. Virtually every institution is experiencing a decrease in TT faculty and an increase in NTT faculty, usually part-time NTT faculty. Other institutions, however, are addressing the challenge with a variety of approaches that RIT has not investigated or implemented.

**The Challenge:** How is RIT to respond to the declining contribution of tenure track faculty to the delivery of the curriculum while continuing to progress towards our research aspirations? Is the trend a topic that needs to be addressed at RIT? If so, are there fiscally-responsible innovative solutions, such as new faculty titles or categories, that could reverse the trend?

This challenge cannot be ignored and so this charge is a call to action. With this document, I am forming and charging an ad-hoc Committee on the Future of Faculty (CFoF) to respond to this challenge by reviewing faculty titles, learning what other institutions are doing to address this challenge and gather feedback from the RIT community. In the end, I expect a report that will make bold recommendations for our future. The CFoF will not establish policy but its recommendations will inform future policy-making.

**The Committee:** The membership of the CFoF will include the following faculty:

- Kristen Waterstram-Rich, CHST, co-chair;
- Fernando Naveda, Provost delegate, co-chair;
- Elena Sommers, Faculty Associate for NTT faculty;
- Andy Herbert, CLA;
- Michael Kotlarchyk, COS;
- Bob Barbato, Saunders, SCB;
- Brian Landi, KGCOE;
- Glen Hintz, CIAS;
- Naveen Sharma, GCCIS; and
- Tracy Magin, NTID.

**The Charge:** The CFoF will deliver an evidence-based report that shall (i) answer the questions posed in the above challenge; and (ii) provide a set of specific actionable recommendations that will require vetting across the campus.

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<sup>2</sup> The 50-25-25 rule is not a rule but an aspiration – essentially we aspire that 50% of sections and 50% of SCH are taught by TT faculty while the remaining 50% is split between the full-time and part-time NTT faculty.

In doing so, the CFoF should:

1. Review any institutional report that addresses this issue such as policies regarding faculty titles and rank;
2. Identify and review any additional work on this topic that may be relevant;
3. Gather input from members of the RIT faculty;
4. Be guided by the following principles:
  - a. All faculty play a vital role to the educational experience of our students and to the aspirations of the university;
  - b. Student success must guide every recommendation; and
  - c. There are financial parameters to consider – simply put, the teaching loads of our faculty are an important resource as we have sections to teach and research to perform;

**Timeline:** The final report is due May 1, 2017.