

USA Part-Time Faculty Policies and Procedures

Effective Date: 8/10

Revised: 2/13

The University recognizes that part-time faculty are an essential component of the University's instructional workforce. Part-time faculty bring to the classroom and laboratories professional experience, disciplinary expertise, and provide an important enrichment to student learning. The University also recognizes its responsibility to maintain an appropriate balance of part-time and full-time faculty and will carry out this responsibility in a manner that does not jeopardize academic standards as determined by individual departments. Given below are policy and procedures regarding part-time faculty.

1. Part-time faculty are temporary employees who are appointed "as needed" on a semester-by-semester basis. Appointment procedures are as follows:

A. **Search Process:** National searches are not conducted for part-time faculty. Although search committees are not normally used for part-time faculty, the chair will appropriately consult with departmental faculty in their selection and appointment. Advertisement in a local newspaper will be done only when deemed necessary by the dean and the chair. In those cases where local advertisement is necessary, the *Mobile Press Register* will be used.

B. **Documentation of Credentials:** Required documentation for a part-time faculty appointment is identical to that of a full-time faculty appointment as given below:

- Official transcripts (cannot be "issued to student")
- Curriculum Vita
- Biographical Data Form
- USA Faculty Consent Form
- 3 signed original professional letters of recommendation
- A letter of recommendation from the departmental chair with the approval signature of the dean.
- Completed Part-Time Faculty Appointment Form

All of the above information is forwarded to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Vice President for Health Sciences. Upon approval for addition to the Part-Time Faculty Roster, a copy of the approved part-time faculty appointment form is kept in Academic Affairs/Health Sciences and the complete file is returned to the College Dean.

Part-time faculty will not be able to teach until a completed, approved part-time file has been returned to the college.

C. **Part-Time Faculty Roster:** A roster of approved part-time faculty is maintained in the offices of the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs/Vice President for Health Sciences and the College Dean. Once approved for addition to the Part-Time Faculty Roster, the individual is eligible to teach on an "as needed" semester-by-semester basis. The Department Chair is responsible for initiating a written notice to the Dean and the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs/Vice President for Health Sciences to withdraw an individual from the Part-Time Roster.

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- D. **Appointment Letter (Contract):** A contract letter, using the approved standard form, will be issued to all part-time faculty appointees for each semester employed.
- Time Frame:* The Dean's office will call for recommendations from the Department. The letter will be issued by the Dean at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester immediately preceding the semester in which the individual will teach. Exceptions to the time-line will be made only in critical situations when the file is complete and the individual has been duly interviewed, recommended and approved at all levels.

A teaching assignment may not be made in the absence of a written contract.

- E. Official files for part-time faculty are maintained in the Dean's Office.

2. **Academic Credentials:**

- A. Part-time faculty members teaching credit courses leading toward the baccalaureate degree must have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline and hold at least a master's degree, or hold the minimum of a master's degree with a major in the teaching discipline. In exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the teaching discipline may be presented in lieu of formal academic preparation. Such cases must be justified by the Department on an individual basis using the standard "Exception for Faculty Academic and Professional Preparation" form.
- B. Part-time faculty teaching courses at the master's and specialist degree level must hold the terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate, in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. In some instances, the master's degree in the discipline may be considered the terminal degree, such as the M.F.A., the M.S.W., and the M.L.S.; in others, a master's degree in the discipline coupled with a doctoral degree in a related discipline is considered appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Department to justify the master's degree, or masters in the teaching discipline coupled with a related doctorate, as the terminal degree for faculty members teaching in those disciplines. All faculty members teaching courses at the doctoral degree level must hold the earned doctorate in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.
- C. The University recognizes that in unusual cases it may be appropriate to include those graduate faculty members who have demonstrated exceptional scholarly or creative activity, or professional experience, but who may not possess the required academic credentials. There also may be an occasion when a new graduate discipline is in its formative stage in higher education and there are no faculty members available with academic credentials in the discipline. In either case, when a department presents evidence of competence or academic credentials other than the doctorate in the discipline for its graduate faculty, the Department must justify the employment of such faculty.

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3. **Tenure Eligibility:** Part-time faculty are not eligible for tenure and thus are non-tenure accruing.
4. **Scheduling and staffing of all classes is tentative** until registration is complete; therefore, course assignments and employment of part-time faculty may change with little notice. Part-time faculty will be notified of such changes as soon as possible.
5. **Pay rates** for part-time faculty will be reviewed periodically by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Vice President for Health Sciences and their respective Council of Deans to determine if remuneration should and can be adjusted.
6. **Pay Dates:**
 - Fall Semester – First normal working day in October, November, December, and January.
 - Spring Semester – First normal working day in February, March, April and May.
 - Summer Semester – First normal working day in July, August and September.
7. **Duties:** In general, the duties of part-time faculty are limited to teaching and should not include research or service.
8. **Participation in Departmental Faculty Meetings:** Although regular attendance at Departmental, College, or University faculty meetings is not required, part-time faculty should be encouraged to attend those meetings directly dealing with their teaching responsibilities. Supervisors will keep part-time faculty informed about meetings relevant to part-time faculty or about the information disseminated at such meetings.
9. **Teaching Load:** Part-time faculty should teach no more than 6 credit hours per semester for fall and spring terms, and no more than 4 credit hours in summer, except in unusual cases in which special permission is given by the appropriate dean, and approved in advance by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Vice President for Health Sciences.
10. **Orientation and Teacher Development:** *Orientation* refers to providing information on mission statements, policies, logistics, facilities, and pedagogical advice that assist faculty in performing their duties and becoming integrated into the University community. *Teacher development* refers to initiatives by the University to promote effective teaching and to promote their professional development as educators.
 - A. Part-time faculty will be encouraged to participate in University-sponsored teacher development and orientation activities (e.g., “Orientation for New Faculty Program,” workshops and meetings).
 - B. In addition to institutional-level orientation opportunities for part-time faculty, each department will also provide orientation for its new part-time faculty. Such orientation can be in the form of, e.g., printed material, oral communication, or audiovisual technology. Orientation also can be one-on-one or in groups. Each department chair will provide new part-time faculty with the institution’s “New Faculty Orientation Handbook,” which can be

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supplemented with information specific to the department. Departmental orientation should especially focus on matters that apply to the department and to the part-time instructor's particular role.

- C. Department chairs are encouraged to appoint a faculty mentor to each new part-time teacher for at least the first semester of employment at the University.
- D. Although not prohibited by policy, the University usually does not fund individual requests for professional development of part-time faculty (e.g., funding for presentations at conferences).

11. Supervision and Evaluation: *Supervision* refers to a means by which the faculty member's teaching performance is monitored and by which individual guidance on meeting teaching responsibilities is received. *Evaluation* refers to a means by which teaching performance is formally assessed.

- A. Part-time faculty will be supervised and evaluated by the department chairperson or designee.
- B. In every course taught by a part-time faculty member, the department chairperson or designated tenured faculty member will visit the class at least one time.
- C. Each semester, the department chair or designee will review and approve the syllabus, schedule of lectures or topical outline, objectives, and textbook(s) for all courses taught by part-time instructors, and will discuss with the part-time instructor the department's expectations for the course as well as the part-time instructor's teaching plan for the course.
- D. Part-time faculty will be evaluated in accordance with the same policy and procedures as those employed for the evaluation of teaching for full-time faculty. However, part-time instructors will be evaluated by students in every course. Part-time faculty should be informed of the procedures for the evaluation of teaching during their orientation.
- E. Each department will demonstrate that it uses the results of student and other evaluations of the courses in decisions regarding rehiring part-time instructors and in improvement of teaching and student learning.

12. Student Access: *Student access* refers to the means by which students can communicate with their instructors in a regular, effective, and timely fashion.

- A. On the first day of classes of the semester, part-time instructors will provide students with information indicating how and when students can access them for out-of-class assistance.
- B. To facilitate student access, the department will, to the extent possible, provide part-time teachers with reasonable access to appropriate support services (e.g., office space, office telephone, faculty parking, mailbox, mail services)