

IN SEVERAL STATEMENTS issued since 1979, the AAUP has addressed the problem of "contingent faculty."¹ *Contingent faculty* include "both part- and full-time faculty who are appointed off the tenure track."²

Furman employs three categories of contingent faculty: (1) full-time faculty not on the tenure track; (2) part-time faculty ("lecturers"), who teach at least half time; and (3) adjuncts, who teach less than half time.

AAUP Policy

The AAUP concedes that there are "legitimate uses of part-time appointments, e.g., to meet unexpected increases in enrollment or faculty vacancies, to provide service in a specialized field, or to develop a new academic program." In general, however, AAUP policy regarding contingent faculty is as follows:

The AAUP believes that both the exploitation and the excessive use of part-time and non-tenure-track faculty undermine academic freedom, academic quality and professional standards.

- Institutions exploit faculty members when they appoint numerous part-time faculty in a single department or renew temporary faculty year after year

CONTINGENT FACULTY: AAUP POLICY AND FURMAN PRACTICE

without offering them raises in pay, access to benefits, opportunities for promotion, or eligibility for tenure and the procedural protections essential to academic freedom.

- Institutions that rely heavily on non-tenure-track faculty members to teach undergraduate students diminish

academic freedom, respect for teaching, and public confidence in higher education.³

The AAUP reports that "Through the 1990s, in all types of institutions, three out of four new faculty members were appointed to non-tenure-track positions," so that "Non-regular appointments . . . have become the norm."⁴

"Women are more strongly represented among part-time faculty than among full-time faculty": in 1998, women accounted for 48 percent of all part-time faculty but only 36 percent of all full-time faculty.⁵

At Furman in 2003-04, 50 percent of contingent faculty are women, whereas only 28 percent of full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty are women.⁶

"Costs of Contingency"

The AAUP "Policy Statement on Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession," available at <http://www.aaup.org/statements/SpchState/contingent.htm>, proceeds from "the premise that faculty in higher education must have academic freedom protected by academic due process."

The statement discusses four "costs of increased contingency":⁷

quality of student learning, equity among academic colleagues, integrity of faculty work, and academic freedom.

Contingent faculty at Furman receive some fringe benefits (*Faculty Handbook*, File 157.1). In academic year 2003-2004, all full-time and part-time contingent faculty, and some adjunct faculty,

CONTINGENT FACULTY AT FURMAN: THEN AND NOW

	10 YEARS AGO	NOW
Full-time, on tenure or tenure-track	180	210 ¹
Full-time contingent	4	12 ²
Full-time contingent as % of full-time tenure-line	2.2%	5.7%
Part-time	7	17
Part-time as % of tenure-line	3.9%	8.1%
Adjunct	*	40 ³
Adjunct as % of tenure-line	*	19.0%
TOTAL CONTINGENT FACULTY	*	69
TOTAL FACULTY (contingent + tenure-line)	*	279
%CONTINGENT FACULTY	*	24.7%

*Data not available

¹Excludes Military Science faculty and 7 administrators who do not always teach.

²Excludes post-doctoral positions in the sciences.

³Excludes applied music faculty.

were assigned offices, secretarial support, and computers. Six contingent faculty received support for travel. Contingent faculty at Furman are not excluded from the policy that guarantees academic freedom (*Faculty Handbook*, File 137.8).

The AAUP "Policy Statement" insists that several things are necessary to secure the academic freedom of contingent faculty and of the profession as a whole.

First, "Faculty members appointed and reappointed to contingent positions should receive conscientious and thorough peer reviews in which they can demonstrate their effectiveness."

At Furman, 6 part-time contingent faculty have served for 7 years or more. The procedures of evaluation described in Furman's policy on "Evaluation of Faculty" (*Faculty Handbook*, File 152.2) are not regularly followed for contingent faculty. Furman's policy on "Part-Time Faculty" (File 157.1) specifies that the department chair will evaluate the faculty member.

Second, the AAUP affirms "long-standing Association policy that, with carefully circumscribed exceptions, all full-time appointments are of two kinds: probationary appointments and appointments with continuous tenure."

Probationary Appointment

Furman's *Faculty Handbook* specifies that all full-time faculty members not on tenure are considered to be on probationary appointment (File 158.4, "Tenure"; File 157.4, "Probationary Appointment"). According to Dean Tom Kazee, there are currently 12 full-time contingent faculty at Furman, 7 of whom were reported to the AAUP this year as "continuing faculty." That report, however, Dean Kazee says, was in error, and only 3 of the full-time contingent faculty should have been so reported.

Third, the AAUP recommends that "Part-time and full-time contingent faculty should be provided opportunities to move into tenured positions (part- or full-time), the requirements of which should be defined, as always, by faculty peers."

Furman policies mutually agreed upon by faculty and administration do

not allow for this practice.

The AAUP position on compensation for contingent faculty is that "compensation for part-time appointments . . . should be the applicable fraction of the compensation (including benefits) for a comparable full-time position."

Average total compensation for assistant professors at Furman was \$65,300 in 2003-04,⁸ or \$13,060 per course. Current average compensation per course for part-time contingent faculty at Furman is \$6,226, and for adjunct faculty is \$3,907 per course.

In the 2003 policy statement, the AAUP "affirms its 1980 and 1993 recommendations that no more than 15 percent of the total instruction within an institution, and no more than 25 percent of the total instruction within any department, should be provided by faculty with non-tenure-track appointments."

In 2003-04, contingent faculty have taught 18.4 percent of all Furman classes and 22.8 percent of all GERs. In four departments, contingent faculty have provided more than 25 percent of total instruction. Contingent faculty have provided more than 25 percent of total instruction in GERs in 8 departments.

The accompanying chart compares the employment of contingent faculty at Furman in the current academic year with the employment of contingent faculty 10 years ago.

The Bottom Line

The AAUP believes that "the long-range health of higher education requires" that "institutions greatly reduce their reliance upon non-tenure-track faculty members."⁹

When asked whether the administration has specific plans to reduce Furman's reliance on contingent faculty, Dean Kazee responded, "The current use of contingent faculty seems, in my

judgment, to be appropriate for our educational mission and goals." Kazee observed that "a number of such faculty are sabbatical replacements" and that adjuncts "are almost invariably hired to fill pressing, short term needs."

Kazee mentioned that new tenure lines might be created if the anticipated review of the curriculum should demonstrate a need for new positions "that are a consequence of the GER or new programming." Should existing positions for contingent faculty be converted to tenure lines, Kazee stressed, "we would follow university policy of conducting a national search to fill these positions."

NOTES

[Information concerning the AAUP's position on contingent faculty came from the national organization's Website: <http://www.aaup.org>. Information about Furman was provided by the office of Dean Tom Kazee. The Furman chapter of the AAUP wishes to thank Dr. Kazee for his cooperation, without which the preparation of this report would not have been possible.]

¹Policy Statement: Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession. Addendum: Previous Reports on Contingent Faculty." <<http://www.aaup.org/statements/SpchState/contingent.htm>>.

²Policy Statement."

³Guidelines for Good Practice: Part-Time and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty." <<http://www.aaup.org/Issues/part-time/Ptguide.htm>>.

⁴Policy Statement."

⁵Policy Statement."

⁶As noted above, statistical information for Furman was provided by the office of Dr. Tom Kazee, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean.

⁷Policy Statement."

⁸American Association of University Professors, "The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession: 2003-04," *Academe*, March-April 2004, p. 84.

⁹"Guidelines."

President's Column

Dan Sloughter

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Furman Chapter of the American Association of University Professors. I hope you will find this issue and the ones that follow to be a useful source of information about the activities of the AAUP and about issues facing Furman and the larger academic community.

During the four years I have been an officer, our local chapter of the AAUP has worked on many important issues of faculty welfare and governance. We have held forums on a wide range of issues: tenure and promotion, academic integrity, and the details of the academic calendar.

Some issues come and go quickly, sometimes even before we have had time for sufficient reflection. Others require constant consideration. Of the latter, two have been prominent in recent years: (1) the importance of policies and procedures in sound university governance, and (2) the status and extent of faculty benefits.

Policies and Procedures

Our policies codify what we as an institution have agreed upon as fair and reasonable procedures for carrying out our academic mission. Not everyone would agree with all of the procedures outlined in every policy. Not all policies are perfectly clear—but many of them are, and we have clear procedures for clarifying the ones that are not. When policies are clear, everyone knows exactly how the procedures should be carried out. This expectation that all cases will be treated the same way under a given policy is fundamental to any system of university governance that functions with the full trust of the community.

However, there are some who say we should follow the “spirit,” not necessarily the “letter,” of a policy. Following the “spirit” might seem tempting, and sometimes might seem like just common sense. But the problem is that the “letter” of a policy is available for all to read, whereas the “spirit” is accessible only to those with special insight. Those lacking the special gift of discernment are left in the dark, and possibly they are left suspecting that those who say they do see the light are creating fantasies to further their own purposes.

Most often, the AAUP does not have a position one way or the other on the procedures outlined in a given policy. But we always defend the importance of holding to the rules once they have been agreed upon. Some accuse the AAUP of pushing a hidden agenda when we question practices contrary to policy. But our only agenda in such cases is to encourage sound, thoughtful faculty governance based on accepted policies and procedures. We have never hidden that agenda, nor do we think it has it been hard for unbiased faculty to discern.

Benefits: Tuition and Child Care

There are many ways to look at benefits. Some think of them as little more than an extension of salaries, a pot of money to be shared equally among all employees. This is certainly true for health-care benefits: it is more efficient for the university to enroll

all employees in a single health care plan than it is to increase salaries so that individuals might buy insurance on their own.

However, I see many benefits as enabling: benefits that might not directly affect my fiscal well-being but that are essential to making Furman the type of institution we want it to be. Such benefits include the tuition benefit. We do not all make use of this benefit, but without it Furman would not be nearly so attractive to young faculty who have hopes that one day they, too, will be able to send their children to a selective liberal-arts college. This benefit has been recognized widely by liberal-arts institutions as important to maintaining a highly qualified faculty with a commitment to the liberal arts.

Today, a child-care benefit might be as important as the tuition benefit. Two-income families have become the norm. There are many socio-economic causes for this phenomenon, but one need look no further than housing prices for one reason that many young parents believe they both need to work. High-quality, affordable child care is a must for most young families who aspire to the middle class.

As an institution, we need to have a conversation about how best to provide such a benefit and about what level of support we can afford to provide. To do otherwise is to send a message to many young faculty, both male and female, that they should seek employment elsewhere.

Recruiting and retaining qualified faculty, faculty who appreciate and foster the ideals of the liberal arts, is hard enough as it is. We must ensure that potential new professors do not reject Furman because they worry that they will not find adequate child care or that they will not be able to afford to send their children to the kind of college where they themselves teach.

Chapter Activities, 2003-04

Question and answer forum with Dean Kazee – 21 October

Fall Assembly of the South Carolina Conference of the AAUP –
1 November

Open forum on National Survey of Student Engagement data
and its importance to the strategic planning process – 16 March

Open forum on revisions to policy 121.5 on academic
dishonesty – 6 April

Spring chapter meeting – 20 May

Informal gatherings before every faculty meeting

New Officers for 2004-05

President: Robin Visel

Vice-President: Tim Fehler

Secretary: Denise Crockett

Treasurer: Dennis Haney

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of the furman chapter
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Officers, Furman AAUP

President: Dan Sloughter

Vice-President: Robin Visel

Secretary: Ken Peterson

Treasurer: Scott Henderson

AMPERSAND aims to link Furman to the AAUP by (1) informing the Furman community about issues of concern to the national organization and to the local chapter, and (2) interpreting Furman's policies and practices in the light of AAUP principles.

In this inaugural newsletter, we examine the increasing employment of “contingent faculty” at Furman and elsewhere, and the President's Column addresses issues related to faculty governance and faculty fringe benefits.

The local chapter of AAUP now has more than 50 members, almost one-fourth of the full-time faculty. A chapter constitution has been adopted, which will permit the chapter as a whole to take positions on issues whenever that seems appropriate. Another task for the newsletter, then, will be to articulate the chapter's positions to the Furman community.

The officers of the Furman chapter of AAUP serve as the editorial board of AMPERSAND. The newsletter is distributed to faculty, academic administrators, and trustees.

The editorial board welcomes response, commentary, and suggestions for topics to be explored in future issues.

The American Association of University Professors is one of the most important forces safe-guarding the academic freedom of college and university faculty in the U.S. The guarantees protecting the academic freedom of Furman faculty rest on AAUP principles. Joining the AAUP is one of the most effective ways for individual faculty members to support academic freedom at Furman and elsewhere. Furman faculty can pay national dues through payroll deduction. To join the AAUP or to set up a program of payroll deduction, contact Scott Henderson (Education Department).

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