

***Instructor and Clinical Faculty
Question and Answer Document
Office of the Provost
May 18, 2006***

The policies that govern instructors and clinical faculty members appear in the *Faculty Manual, Section V. Policies and Procedures for Temporary Faculty*. The answers below elaborate, rather than repeat or supplant, those policies. If information below contradicts the *Faculty Manual*, the information in the *Faculty Manual* prevails.

Defining the Instructor and Clinical Faculty Positions

What's the difference between the clinical faculty and instructor positions and tenure-track faculty positions?

Tenure-track faculty members accept a heavy commitment to scholarship and research. The clinical faculty and instructor positions are usually more appropriate for faculty members who have a strong commitment to teaching and/or service. A tenure-track faculty member must progress towards, and achieve, tenure to retain his/her position within the tenure track. Once tenure is earned, however, a tenured faculty member's appointment has no end date. In contrast, clinical and instructor appointments are granted for a limited term. The appointments may be renewed indefinitely, but this renewal does not produce tenure no matter how often it is repeated. Tenure-track faculty members are eligible for some benefits (e.g., professional leave) that are not available to instructors and clinical track faculty members. Many other federal and state benefits or entitlements (e.g., family medical leave) are available to faculty members, regardless of track, as long as the faculty member meets the other requirements of the benefit or entitlement.

What's the difference between the instructor positions and the clinical faculty track?

Instructor titles are most appropriate for faculty members who teach specific undergraduate courses, often at the introductory level. Clinical faculty positions may carry a wider range of responsibilities. For example, a clinical faculty member might teach some courses, but also coordinate a unit's undergraduate or other program. The title of clinical faculty is broadly interpreted. It includes faculty members whose primary responsibilities are clinical supervision and/or clinical instruction. It also includes a broad range of faculty members who have teaching

responsibilities that go beyond those of instructor, but who do not have the scholarship requirements of the tenured faculty.

Can tenure-track faculty positions be changed to instructor or clinical faculty positions?

The best practice is to assign appropriate titles and responsibilities to faculty members when they are hired. However, under unusual circumstances, tenure-track positions may be “converted” to clinical faculty or to instructor positions with the agreement of the person in the position, the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost. Technically, the “conversion” is achieved through a resignation from the tenure-track position, followed by a new appointment to a clinical faculty position. Tenure-track faculty positions should be changed to instructor or clinical faculty positions if the duties of the position are not those of a tenure-track faculty member. The change should be made as soon as misclassification of the position is identified. A change to a temporary faculty position should not be made solely because a particular faculty member fails to meet the requirements for tenure.

Can clinical faculty positions be changed to tenure-track faculty positions?

Although there are exceptions, tenure-track faculty positions usually require a national search. Many clinical positions are filled without such a search. Therefore, except in unusual circumstances, the change of a clinical faculty position to a tenure-track position requires a national search. Before this search can be conducted, the change of position must be approved by the person in the position, the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost. Again, the change in position actually requires a resignation from the clinical faculty position and a new appointment to a tenure-track faculty position.

Can instructor positions be converted to clinical track?

The instructor and clinical track positions are not intended to be part of the same promotional ladder. That is, under most circumstances, a person who is a senior instructor will not usually be “promoted” to the clinical track. If it becomes apparent that an instructor should be a clinical track faculty member, a request for a change of position can be made through the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost. The request should be based on the duties attached to the position, rather than on the performance of the individual occupying the position. The position should also be instituted at the appropriate level. That is, a senior instructor may become a clinical associate or clinical professor rather than a clinical assistant professor.

What is the minimum appointment for an instructor or clinical faculty member?

Faculty members at WSU, including instructors and clinical track faculty members, must receive an appointment of at least 50% Full Time Equivalency (FTE) in an academic unit.

Evaluating Instructors and Clinical Faculty

How should annual reviews be conducted for instructors and clinical faculty?

The Department Chair or Director of the appointing academic unit conducts the annual review for instructors and clinical faculty members who are continuing as members of the faculty. The Department Chair should perform the review in the same manner as for tenure-track faculty members. However, the candidate will be reviewed according to how well (s)he performed the tasks listed in his/her job description, rather than according to the tenure-track faculty expectations of teaching, scholarship, and service. For this reason, the job descriptions of those in the instructor and clinical faculty ranks must accurately describe their performance expectations.

What are the proper standards for promotion?

An instructor may be promoted to senior instructor. A clinical assistant professor may be promoted to clinical associate professor and then to clinical professor. Colleges should specify their standards for promotion. The standards must be consistent with the *Faculty Manual* and they must be submitted to the Provost for approval. In most cases, promotion will not be considered unless the candidate has spent 6 years in his/her current rank. Permission must be obtained from the Provost if a candidate is to be brought forward for promotion before this time. Even after six years, time in rank alone is not enough to warrant promotion. Instead, the candidate must have performed in an exceptional way that can be documented in the promotional file. The exact nature of this exceptional performance will vary according to the candidate's position description. For those with heavy teaching responsibilities, signs of exceptional teaching may include student evaluations, peer evaluations, internal and external teaching awards, publications in journals about teaching, invitations to present at professional meetings about teaching, etc. Internal signs of distinction are acceptable for promotion to senior instructor and clinical associate professor. However, some external recognition of distinction is usually necessary for promotion to clinical professor.

How are instructors and clinical faculty members promoted?

The department and college conduct a comprehensive tenure-style review. A notebook is submitted according to the normal promotional processes as outlined in the guidelines released by the Office of the Provost. The notebook contains the same information as the promotional file for a tenure-track or tenured faculty member except that external letters are optional, rather than required. All other elements of a tenure-track tenure and promotion file should be presented, including: Chair's summary, Dean's summary, Chancellor's summary when appropriate, faculty ballots, the candidate's curriculum vitae, the candidate's past annual reviews, and supplemental material to support the case. The following members of the faculty vote on promotion to senior instructor: senior instructors, clinical associate professors, clinical professors, associate professors, and professors. The following faculty members vote on promotion from clinical assistant professor to clinical associate professor: clinical associate professors, clinical professors, associate professors, professors, and regents professors. The following faculty members vote on promotion to clinical professor: clinical professors, professors, and regents professors.

Is there a third-year review for instructors or clinical faculty members?

A third-year review is not required for instructors and clinical faculty members. The third-year review is also known as the Intensive Pre-tenure Review and instructors and clinical faculty members do not stand for tenure. Nevertheless, units may conduct third-year reviews if the information provided by such a review would be valuable to improving the performance of the candidate.

Should the annual progress-towards-tenure review be conducted for instructors or clinical faculty members?

No. Instructors and clinical faculty members do not stand for tenure. The annual progress-towards-tenure review is not needed, but an annual review is required.

Should instructors and clinical faculty members have mentors?

Yes, in most cases, instructors and clinical faculty members can benefit from assistance in doing their jobs and in preparing for promotion. Mentors or a mentoring committee should be appointed according to the same process, and they should have the same duties, as mentors appointed for tenure-track faculty members. Mentors need not be appointed when the employment of an instructor or clinical faculty member is so temporary that promotion will not be an issue and where no guidance is needed in the performance of the job.

Rights and Responsibilities of Instructors and Clinical Faculty

Can instructors and clinical faculty members participate in departmental meetings?

Yes, instructors and clinical faculty members are entitled to the same rights, privileges, and opportunities to participate in faculty meetings as tenure-track faculty members.

Can instructors and clinical faculty members vote for Department Chair or Director?

Clinical faculty members can vote for Department Chair. Instructors and senior instructors are not included in the voting process for Chairs.

Are instructors and clinical faculty members eligible to serve as Department Chair or Director?

The Faculty Manual states, "Service as a Department Chair or School Director is limited to Professors and Associate Professors in Departments in which three or more persons have such rank. If there are fewer than three, Assistant Professors are also eligible." Under unusual circumstances *and with the permission of the Dean and Provost*, this wording may be broadly interpreted to allow clinical faculty members to serve as Chair. The wording does not allow instructors or senior instructors to serve.

The appointment of a Department Chair from among the clinical ranks will create special challenges. For example, clinical faculty members cannot ballot for tenure and promotion for tenure-track faculty. Therefore, a Department Chair with a clinical faculty appointment cannot write the Chair's summary in a case of tenure and/or promotion for a tenure-track faculty member. A member of the tenure-track faculty must be appointed to perform this task. In addition, clinical faculty members may be accepted as Department Chair more readily in some units than in others. For example, clinical faculty members may make appropriate Chairs in departments with strong professional orientations. They may make less appropriate Chairs in departments with strong research orientations.

Can instructors and clinical faculty members serve in the Faculty Senate?

Yes. Instructors and clinical faculty members can fill seats in the Faculty Senate that are designated for temporary faculty. Instructors and clinical faculty members are also encouraged to serve on Faculty Senate committees.

Are instructors and clinical faculty members eligible for professional or retraining leaves?

No. Only permanent faculty members are eligible for professional or retraining leaves. Instructors and clinical faculty members are temporary faculty. Eligibility for professional leave is one of the more important differences between permanent and temporary faculty. However, time spent in a temporary position may be credited towards professional or retraining leave if the employee obtains a permanent position.

Are instructors and clinical faculty members eligible to consult?

Yes. Temporary faculty members who are employed full-time are entitled to spend the equivalent of one day per week in outside work for each week worked with the approval of the department chair. All outside work must be disclosed promptly and reported annually by the faculty member to the department Chair or comparable unit administrator.

In what sense are instructors and clinical faculty members considered to be “temporary”?

In the case of instructors and clinical faculty, the term “temporary” usually means “appointed for a limited or fixed term” rather than for an unlimited term. Instructors and clinical assistant professors may be appointed for terms of one to three years; senior instructors for terms of one to five years. Clinical associate professors and clinical professors may be given one- to three-year fixed appointments or three-year rolling horizon appointments. Temporary appointments may be renewed indefinitely at the discretion of the University. Therefore, the University may employ instructors and clinical faculty members for many years. Despite longevity, however, instructors and clinical faculty have no expectation of continuing employment and do not achieve *de facto* tenure.

May instructors and clinical faculty vote on tenure for tenure-track faculty members?

No. Only the tenured faculty members vote on tenure.

May instructors and clinical faculty vote on promotion?

Senior instructors may vote on promotion from instructor to senior instructor. Clinical professors and associate professors may vote on promotion to their ranks and on promotion to senior instructor. Only tenured faculty members vote on promotion to their own tenured ranks.

Procedures Governing Instructors and Clinical Faculty Members

How are instructors and clinical faculty given raises?

Instructors and clinical faculty members receive raises according to the same process as the tenure-track faculty. They are entitled to the same promotional salary increase as tenure-track promotions and the raises are funded in the same manner.

How are instructors and clinical faculty members appointed or reappointed?

At the time of appointment the instructors and clinical faculty members are given a letter of appointment. Additionally, the department administrator completes a Personnel Action Form (PAF). If the appointment is renewed, an updated PAF must be processed. It is recommended that an updated reappointment letter be issued too. Appointment and reappointment letters should be forwarded to Human Resource Services with the PAF. Sample letters of appointment are available from HRS (see link below).

What needs to be done if an instructor or clinical faculty member will not be reappointed?

The University is required to notify the temporary faculty member of non-reappointment in accordance with the *Faculty Manual*. The amount of time by which the notification must precede the non-reappointment depends on the candidate's years of service. If the candidate has served in his/her present position for one to four years, the University must notify him/her in writing at least sixty days prior to the end of the current appointment. If the employee has been in the same temporary position continuously for five years or more, (s)he must be given a written reminder of non-reappointment six months before the end of the current appointment. Human Resource Services (see link below) can provide sample letters of non-reappointment.

Can instructors and clinical faculty be discharged before the end of their appointments?

Instructors and clinical faculty members may be given a one-year terminal appointment prior to the completion of their term if their performance is unsatisfactory as measured by the annual review. In addition, instructors and clinical faculty members can be separated from the University in accordance with the provisions of the *Faculty Manual*. These provisions include financial exigency, discontinuation of a program or department, or termination for cause (disciplinary action based on misconduct under the *Faculty Manual* or based on physical or mental conditions precluding the employee from fulfilling the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation). The matter should be discussed with the Provost's Office if non-reappointment is contemplated.

Additional Resources

Office of the Provost
509-335-5581
<http://www.wsu.edu/provost/>

Faculty Manual (See the section on Temporary Faculty)
http://facsen.wsu.edu/facsen.wsu.edu_non_ssl/faculty_manual/manual

Human Resource Services
509-335-4521
<http://www.hrs.wsu.edu/>