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Contingent Faculty In Higher Education

April 6 – 8, 2014

Ken Hawkinson
Provost and Academic Vice President
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Profile of Western Illinois University

- Established in 1899 as a teachers college – currently a comprehensive university with 66 undergraduate programs, 44 graduate programs, and 3 doctoral programs
- Approximately 12,000 total students with 10,000 located in Macomb, Illinois (a rural community of 20,000) and 2,000 on a second campus in Moline, IL (part of the “quad cities” with 350,000 residents)



Union History

- Established in 1976 under the University Professionals of Illinois/IFT/AFT agreement with the Board of Governors—five universities in Illinois.
- Board of Governors disbanded in 1996 and the agreement was transferred to a new board established solely for Western Illinois University.
- A new contract was negotiated in 1996 using interest-based negotiations.
- Major contracts, using interest-based negotiations, were agreed to in 2000 and 2007 with a number of extensions.
- The full contract was up for negotiation this year but the union agreed to another extension of two years.
- The Western Illinois University administration and union have a decades long history of cooperation and good relations. >

Union Membership

- Approximately 720 faculty and staff are represented by the UPI:
 - 500 tenure/tenure-track faculty
 - 120 associate faculty or non-tenure track instructors
 - 100 staff to include advisors, recruiters, and library personnel
- 82% of bargaining union members have actually joined the union – the remainder pay fair-share (which is 100%).



Contractual Language for Non-Tenured/Tenured Track Faculty

Definitions:

- Adjuncts – Instructors who teach under 50% (not members of bargaining unit).
- Temporary Instructors – 50% or more employees in their first year of employment. Often hired to fill in for sabbaticals or to fill open positions while a search is being conducted (not members of the bargaining unit).
- Associate Faculty – non-tenured/tenured track faculty (members of the bargaining unit). Also called “instructors.”



Appointments

- Enter bargaining unit after one year if full time or two years if 50% or more.
- In first 5 years of employment, employee must notify chair if interested in re-appointment and if evaluated satisfactory or highly effective. After 5 years the re-appointment is automatic.
- A seniority list exists in all departments listing Associate Faculty/Instructors in order of their date of hire. Any reduction of personnel will be based on the list with the most senior personnel having the greatest job security.



Salary and Promotion

Minima: based on rank (M.A; M.A. plus 30 or Senior Associate Faculty member status; Terminal Degree/Assistant Professor). Range from a low of \$33,633 to a high of \$57,339 (9 months).

Promotion To Senior Associate Faculty Member: after 8 years instructors/associate faculty can be promoted to “senior associate faculty” which includes an \$800 increase to base and evaluation occurring every 3 years rather than every year.



Salary and Promotion

Continued...

Promotion to Assistant Professor: can occur at any time. Must have terminal degree and meet all requirements in teaching, research, and service, expected of a new tenure-track hirer in a department.

Merit: may earn \$900 a year to base in a point-based merit system.

Adjunct rate: Employees under 50% earn somewhere in an adjunct range of \$3,700 to \$5,000 per 3-hour class, depending on degree, experience, and discipline.



Workload

- 18-24 Academic Credit Units – normally 7-8 courses per academic year (or equivalent assignments)
- Same overload payment as tenured faculty (\$1,000 per credit hour)
- Same preparation compensation as tenured faculty (if at full load, each prep over five compensated at \$1,000)
- Allowed full consultation rights on courses and other workload assigned



Benefits

- Sick Leave – 1.5 days per month (up to 360 days)
- Parental Leave – 4 weeks paid leave (not subtracted from sick leave)
- Family Leave – 20 cumulative days may be used
- End of Life Care – 10 days (not subtracted from sick leave)
- Bereavement Leave – 5-10 days
- Personal Leave – 5 days (taken from sick leave)



Benefits

Continued...

- Annual Leave – 10-12 month employees (2 days a month)
- Educational Benefits – 2 courses per semester
- Administrative Leave
- Retraining Leave
- Grant Writing – work reduction
- Grievance System



Other Areas of the Contract

Sanction, Termination, Transfer, Staff Reduction, and other articles, all parallel Tenure/Tenure-track language.



Advantages

- Stable and reliable workforce
- Morale is high
- Greater teaching productivity
- Lower cost
- Flexibility
- Spousal/Partner support
- Fairness



Disadvantages

- Resentment of some Tenure-Tenure/track faculty to merit and pay increases
- Department/faculty objection to non-tenure track positions
- Seniority lists (should be based performance, not on years served)
- Difficulty in transferring from occupied non-tenure track positions to tenure-track positions



Recommendations

For reasons stated above, non-tenure track faculty should have job security, reasonable salary, ability to be promoted and receive merit pay, as well as many other benefits.

Greater flexibility should be allowed in the system to contract or expand non-tenure track faculty based on the needs of the department.

Seniority lists should be based on performance, not on the number of years served.

It is my belief that the more flexibility employers have, the more likely they will provide reasonable salary and benefits to employees when actually working for the institution. >

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