

2015-16 SURVEY OF NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY

Commissioned by WSU Faculty Senate Chair, Rich Zack

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2015-16 NON-TENURE TRACK TASK FORCE SURVEY OF NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY

Nationally, the working conditions of non-tenure track faculty (NTTF) at colleges and universities have gained much attention in major news outlets as well as at the institutions themselves. During the fall 2015 semester, Chair of the Senate, Rich Zack, appointed a NTTF Task Force to look into the conditions of NTTF at WSU and to make recommendations based on their findings.

The task force was comprised of Sheila Converse, Lydia Gerber, Paul Krouss, Judi McDonald, Leslie Jo Sena, Kurt Wilkie, and Faculty Senate Chair Elect AG Rud who will make these issues a focus next year.

THE NEW MAJORITY:

“Non-tenure track” is a term that encompasses so much of the faculty of the university that the institution did not have a good idea about just how many non-tenure track faculty there were. From the first group supplied by HR, 550 faculty were contacted, but we heard that many were missed, so a new list with wider parameters generated an addition 1100 recipients. In fact, HRS estimates that about 55% of all WSU faculty are NTTF. According to national expert on change and leadership in higher education Adrianna Kezar of the University of Southern California, that number is about 70% nationally.

The survey was devised to give NTTF a chance to anonymously voice their concerns about a number of issues. There was some concern within the task force that if the survey asked about too many aspects of NTTF experience, participants might be reluctant to answer based on fear of identifying themselves.

However, there was robust response to the survey, with faculty reaching out when they had problems with the system or seeking the link for participation. Over a third of identified NTTF, 631 faculty, participated and most respondents also took the time to write substantive, thoughtful and personal comments at the end of the survey, sharing more information than the task force would have dared to ask for.

NTTF responses came from all ranks of NTTF, all colleges and urban campuses as well as many other associated locations throughout the state. The average years of service to WSU for those who responded to the survey was 6.5 and almost 75% indicated that they plan to stay at the institution “for the long haul.” Less than half of NTTF find out about contract renewal *more* than 30 days **before the end** of their current contract. About a third of respondents said that they did not have benefits at half time appointment in their department.

Some problems that came about with the survey highlight some of the problems at the institution. Trying to answer the basic question “who are the non-tenure track faculty?” proved

difficult to answer. Additionally, many Extension faculty pointed out that the survey did not address their situations and showed a basic lack of understanding about Extension itself.

The task force members were aware that their knowledge of extension was limited, but did not realize just how much they did not know. The task force should have asked someone from Extension to be on the committee, and means to follow up with Extension as well as some issues that were raised in Medical Sciences.

Comments show that the NTT Faculty of WSU is a collection of individuals who are essential to carrying out the mission of the university. These faculty members try to bring professionalism and excellence to their positions. There is, however, a feeling that the university does not reciprocate this effort around developing their careers and managing this segment of the workforce. From promotion opportunities and annual reviews to contracts and compensation, WSU does not provide clearly observed guidelines upon which an individual can rely.

POSITIVE COMMENTS

Despite the limitations and frustrations reported by many NTTF, the survey comments reflected some positives. Many NTTF expressed their “love” for the institution, enjoy the work that they do, and feel that their work is meaningful. Many do feel valued in their particular departments, and supported by their colleagues. Several felt that, aside from salaries, conditions were better than at other institutions where they had taught. NTTF were most appreciative of feeling strongly supported by chairs, directors, or their departments, and being treated in most ways like the tenure track faculty in their units. This is not to say that those who expressed appreciation did not also voice strong concerns and criticisms of parts of the institution. One commenter pointed out that “It’s a testament to people’s dedication to the mission that they stay.” Many NTTF, even those who voiced the greatest frustrations, expressed gratitude for the task force, survey, and having the opportunity to voice their concerns, and felt that the survey signaled that “WSU is trying to make the necessary changes.”

PROMOTION AND ANNUAL REVIEW

In summary, the comments reflect a frustration with unclear processes for annual review and promotion. Even when the responder felt a documented process was clear for his or her situation, it was also easily ignored or disregarded. This lack of clarity extended to those with a mix of research and instructional duties. Other comments indicated the NTTF career potential was limited at Washington State University, regardless of job performance.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The working conditions of NTTF at WSU are best characterized by lack or loss for many. NTTF cite a lack of voting rights, even if they have been teaching in the department for years. There is also a lack of opportunities to advance, and a career path is often not made clear to them by their supervisors. NTTF note a lack of sufficient orientation to the university and its policies and procedures. Those that do note these procedures state they are sometimes unrealistic, such as asking NTTF to publish in order to advance, when they have been hired on teaching-intensive contracts. NTTF are also left out of opportunities such as grants and university initiatives such as the “grand challenges.” Many less than full-time NTTF work many more hours than their FTE designation would indicate. Finally, some NTTF note conditions such as the pay gap between TTF and NTTF, incivility and cyberbullying by students against instructors on social media, and anxiety over course evaluations due to lack of tenure or even a contract beyond a year.

RECOGNITION, RESPECT AND COMPENSATION

In general, there is a strong feeling of loyalty to WSU and its mission to educate the citizens of the state. However, the comments reflect a feeling of frustration for heavy workloads with added requirements. There is a concern that there is no pathway to advancement and if there is, it is not uniform. There is a sense that NTTF contribution is not generally appreciated or respected, and many NTTF are discouraged by the situation. There is a general concern the word ‘temporary’ used to describe NTTF has a negative connotation on more than one level. There are “temporary” employees who have worked at WSU for more than two decades. So are they really temporary? Compensation is also a major issue. The increase in the teaching load mandated by the legislature to NTTF became a 25% pay cut to many. There were several comments that although they [NTTF faculty] like teaching they cannot afford to teach at WSU because of low wages.

CONTRACTS

Short Length of Contract, Uncertainty about Contract Renewal, and Shifts in FTE
Non-tenure track faculty members continue to experience great uncertainty in their employment here at WSU. In fact, many faculty members with a decade or more of employment at WSU and promotion to advanced ranks see a decrease, rather than an increase in the lengths of their contracts, in spite of their strong performance according to the various measurements of success at WSU (including grants, awards, successful teaching

and so forth). There is, indeed, no correlation between the quality of a faculty member's contributions to the success of WSU and the likelihood of either renewal of contract, or an extended length of contract. Factors such as budget cuts, dramatic shifts in enrollment, a position needed for a spousal accommodation, or the whims of an immediate superior (chair) can lead to drastic alterations in workload or the termination even of a highly valued faculty member. There is, in such cases, no opportunity for recourse.

There is a lack of direct and timely communication about contracts by the WSU administration. Several faculty members report receiving no contracts at all, some receive contracts for the length of only one term, frequently after they have started teaching (even after having served the institution for many years). Others were offered two-year contracts only to discover that this offer was meant as "one-year renewable." Many more senior faculty members report receiving shorter contracts now than they did years ago and receiving these contracts less than 60 days before the end of their previous contract. **This lack of predictability causes extreme stress not just to the faculty members themselves, but also to their families.** NTT faculty members have found it difficult to get loans and mortgages, since even longer-term positions are labeled "temporary" at WSU. Faculty members who are not American citizens have encountered significant challenges to get their visas renewed due to short-term contracts.

CONCERNS ABOUT CLARITY OF CONTRACT, WORKLOAD, EXPECTATIONS, AND FAIRNESS

NTT faculty members report that contracts lack clarity and that expectations communicated by supervisors can shift, expecting NTT faculty to contribute in ways that go beyond their contractual roles. Others experience that they are expected to equal TT faculty in terms of grant and research requirements while offered limited resources and higher teaching loads. Others have experienced that new administrators did not honor informal agreements (such as a move into a TT position). Others report that the FTE associated with their contract does not reflect the magnitude of their actual workload. Others report that workloads are very unevenly distributed among faculty, since FTEs do not reflect class size. A key concern is, that NTT faculty are often uncomfortable raising these issues, since their continued employment often depends on the person who is at the heart of their complaint. A lack of a formal or informal process to safely (without impact on one's continued employment) communicate concerns makes it unlikely that any such issues receive notice, let alone get addressed. This adds significantly to the stress and frustration experienced by NTT faculty members.

EXTENSION

Since this is a land-grant institution, we need to recognize Extension. In some sense, the faculty in county based extension programs have different needs from the teaching faculty at the campuses. In other ways, their issues are the same.

- Not feeling valued by the institution
- Lack of clarity and equity in contracts and benefits –particularly those who have joint teaching/extension appointments
- Lack of clarity in requirements for promotion that maintain a difference for NTT and

TT

OTHER ISSUES RAISED IN THE NTTF SURVEY

One important issue of concern is the rate at which tenure track positions are being replaced by non-tenure track positions. Having the job security to speak out, vote confidently, and do what is right is the essence of tenure. This is important for ALL faculty, not just those who are currently in tenure tracks. NTTF faculty have responsibilities that range from 100% teaching to 100% research appointments and many do not feel they can speak out on issues of concern.

Another issue expressed is that not enough value is placed on teaching, teaching faculty, or undergraduate education, and the erosion of undergraduate education will lead to deterioration in graduate education and training of researchers.

There is much confusion about how to title NTTF. The various titles that have been used or proposed, fail to capture the importance and contributions of this group of faculty. The departments where clinical track faculty actually work in the clinical environment may be adversely affected by the use of the clinical title to refer to faculty who only teach. Non-Tenure Track is an inadequate title for what is now the majority of faculty.

Funding opportunities for faculty not on the tenure track are limited. More thought needs to be given as to whether or not tenure is needed to compete for funding and other opportunities – especially when these are internal to WSU. Better bridges between the university and industry, with facilitation given to NTTF participation, would help both NTTF and the university.

An issue at WSU is that there is no formal way for faculty to move from one track to another track that better fits the job they are actually doing. A process for faculty to move between tracks, as job performance and duties warrant, is needed.

A concern was raised about significant issues in the differences in the way men and women are treated occurring in the NTTF ranks (and who ends up in NTT vs TT ranks).

For some urban campus faculty, a relationship with the main campus department is very difficult to develop since most of their work is focused locally.








APPENDIX A: NTTF TASK FORCE SURVEY RESULTS

- “Other” comments listed in Appendix B

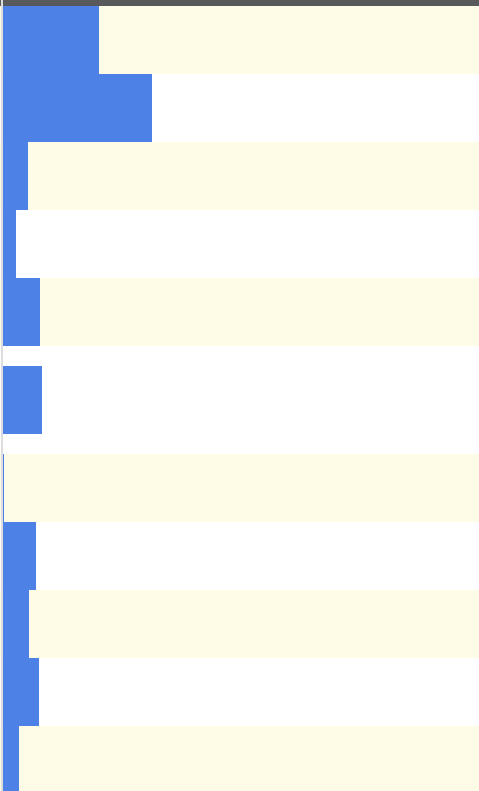
PART 1: APPOINTMENTS

Last Modified: 05/04/2016

*1. What is the rank of your current position at WSU?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Adjunct		87	14%
2	Instructor		119	19%
3	Senior Instructor		15	2%
4	Assistant Clinical Professor		144	23%
5	Associate Clinical Professor		55	9%
6	Research Associate		86	14%
7	Other: Please Specify		118	19%
	Total		624	100%

2. My primary appointment is in:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	CAHNRS		118	20%
2	Arts and Sciences		183	31%
3	Business		32	5%
4	Communication		17	3%
5	Education		46	8%
6	Engineering and Architecture		48	8%
7	Honors		2	0%
8	Nursing		41	7%
9	Pharmacy		33	6%
10	Vet Med		45	8%
11	Medical Sciences		20	3%
	Total		585	100%

***Q3. At which campus is your primary appointment?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Extension Location		36	6%
2	Pullman		311	50%
3	Spokane		85	14%
4	Tri-Cities		54	9%
5	Vancouver		86	14%
6	Other (please specify)		48	8%
	Total		620	100%

***Q4. My appointment is primarily centered on:**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Teaching		340	55%
2	Research		139	22%
3	Equal mix of teaching and research		24	4%
4	Other (please explain)		117	19%
	Total		620	100%

Q5. What is the length of your appointment?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Semester to semester		99	16%
2	1 year		269	44%
3	2 years		58	10%
4	3 years or longer		184	30%
	Total		610	100%

Q6. The term of my appointment is:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	1 semester		90	15%
2	9 month		224	36%
3	10 month		31	5%
4	12 month		269	44%
	Total		614	100%

Q7. What is your current level of employment at WSU?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Full time / 1.00		456	74%
2	.75 FTE		39	6%
3	.5 FTE		58	9%
4	.25 or below		64	10%
	Total		617	100%

Q8. Is this your desired level of employment?

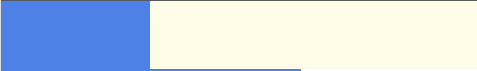


#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		445	75%
2	No, I would prefer to be employed MORE at WSU		142	24%
3	No, I would prefer to be employed LESS at WSU		4	1%
	Total		591	100%

Q9. How many years have you been faculty at WSU? Average 6.5

Average of 6.5		
Please enter a whole number		
12	10	15
4	8	16
1	2	8
6	16	1
15	12	19
6	10	4
10	10	7
7	16	18
15	9	3
9	2	16
9	8	25
16	19	23
19	5	10
10	13 years	9
7	6	12
8	15	42
9	14	9
9	9	30
6	15	8
14	19 years	8
7	2	9

13	6	3
23	21	1
15	20	17
16	16	15
9	15	19
14	5	12
7	16	9
7	13	9
13	1996	2
8	8	1
2	16	5
30	33	8

***Q10. Highest degree awarded:**

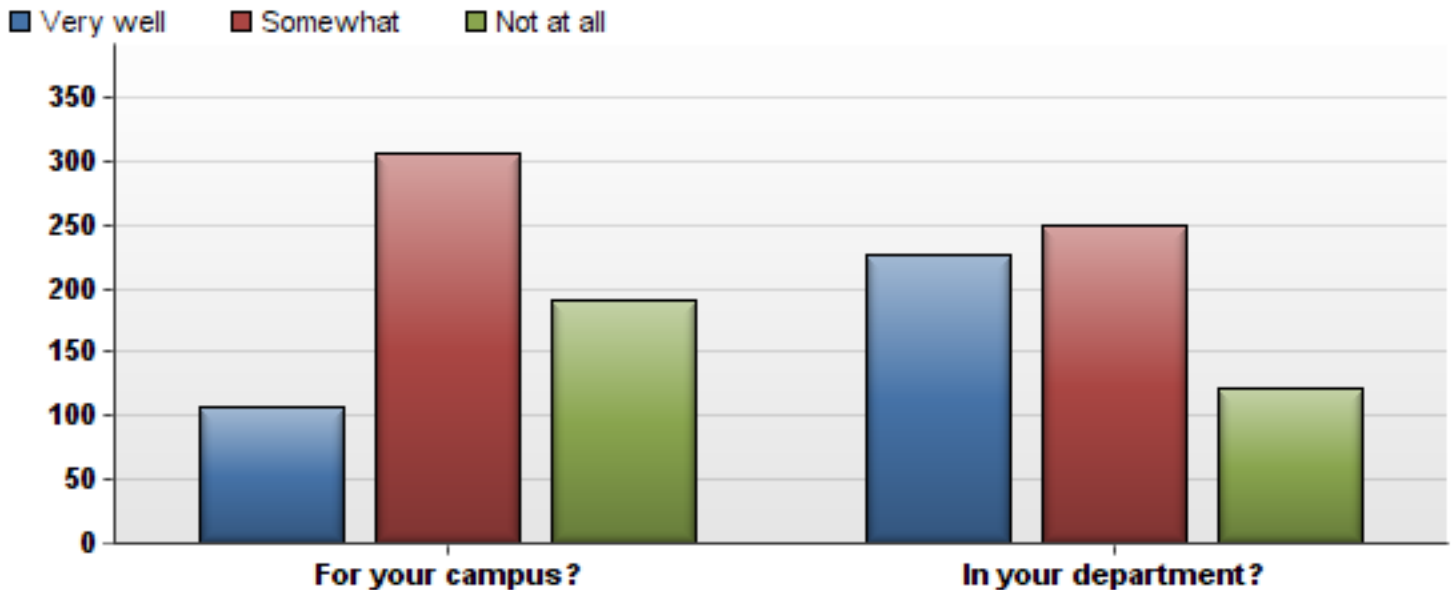
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Masters		194	31%
2	Doctorate		388	63%
3	Other (please specify)		37	6%
	Total		619	100%

PART 2: PROMOTION AND ANNUAL REVIEW

Q11. I understand the process and performance criteria for promotion for my rank in my department

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Strongly Agree	64	11%
2	Agree	201	33%
3	Partially	160	27%
4	Disagree	104	17%
5	Strongly Disagree	74	12%
	Total	603	100%

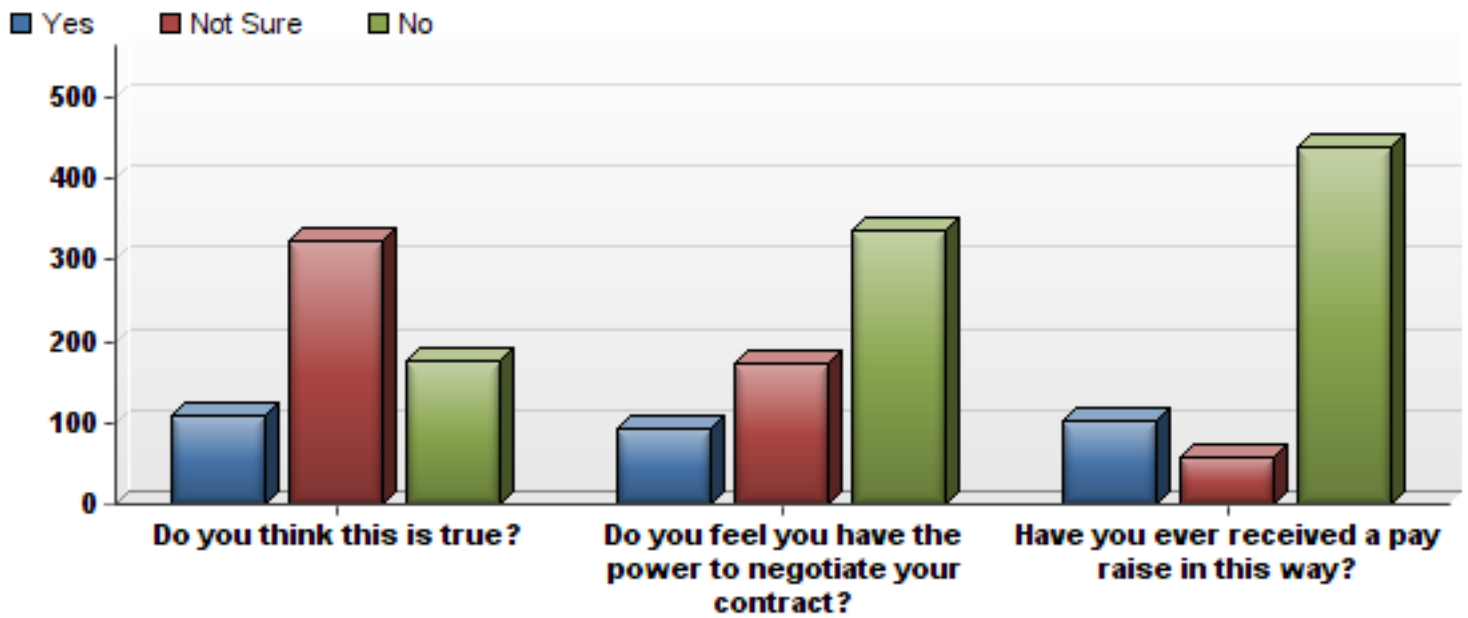
Q12. How well do you understand the annual review process?:



Q13. A job description/set of guidelines for my duties in my unit has been clearly explained to me.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Strongly Agree	119	20%
2	Agree	273	45%
3	Partially	117	19%
4	Disagree	65	11%
5	Strongly Disagree	34	6%
	Total	608	100%

Q14. The faculty manual states that temporary faculty have the opportunity for pay raises each time their contract is negotiated.

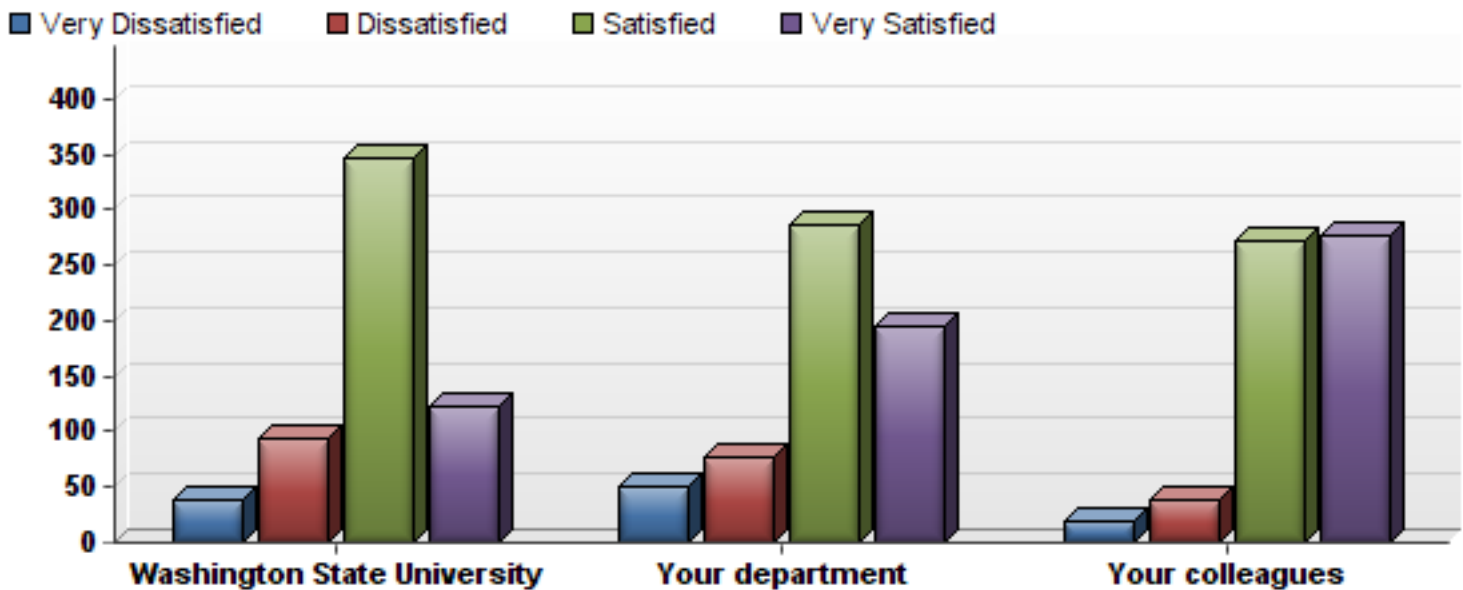


Q16. How important do you think it is that merit based pay raises be available to non-tenure track faculty?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Very important		478	78%
2	Somewhat important		100	16%
3	Not sure		25	4%
4	Somewhat unimportant		3	0%
5	Not at all important		4	1%

PART 3: CAMPUS CLIMATE AND CONTRACTS

Q15. How satisfied are you with your working relationship with:



Q17. In your opinion, how does WSU rank in its treatment of non-tenure track faculty with other institutions?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Better than average	85	14%
2	Average	179	29%
3	Worse than average	117	19%
4	I have no idea	230	38%
	Total	611	100%





Q18. Under the new faculty manual (section V K. Termination page 100) would you receive a non-reappointment notification?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		132	22%
2	No		70	12%
3	I have no idea		399	66%
	Total		601	100%




Q19. Would you prefer some type of notification prior to the end of your contract?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	No, it is not necessary		93	16%
2	Yes, at least 30 days before it ends		82	14%
3	Yes, at least 60 days before it ends		181	31%
4	Yes, at least 6 months before it ends		229	39%
	Total		585	100%

Q20. When do you usually find out that your contract is renewed?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	More than 30 days before the end of my contract		218	44%
2	Less than 30 days before the end of my contract		112	22%
3	During the summer before classes start		127	25%
4	After classes start (I'm already teaching!)		43	9%
	Total		500	100%

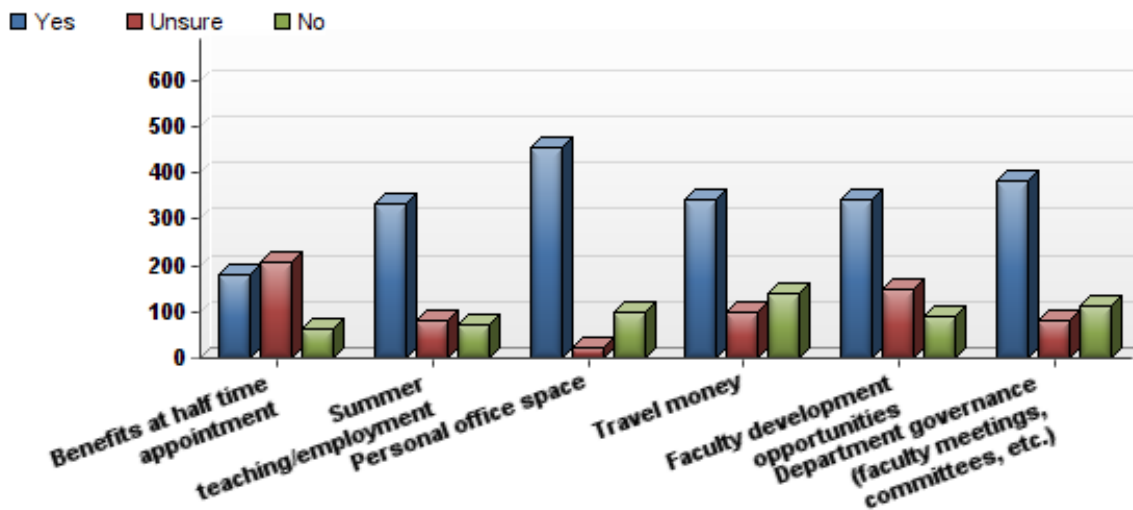
***Q21. (Optional) What is the best description of your relationship to your WSU employment?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	I hope to be here for the foreseeable future		434	74%
2	Temporary: I am seeking employment elsewhere		70	12%
3	Other		84	14%
	Total		588	100%

Q22. During your WSU employment, have you regularly taught for more than one institution during the academic year? *YES answers in Part 4

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	73	12%
2	No	531	88%
	Total	604	100%

Q27. In your department at WSU do you have the access to:

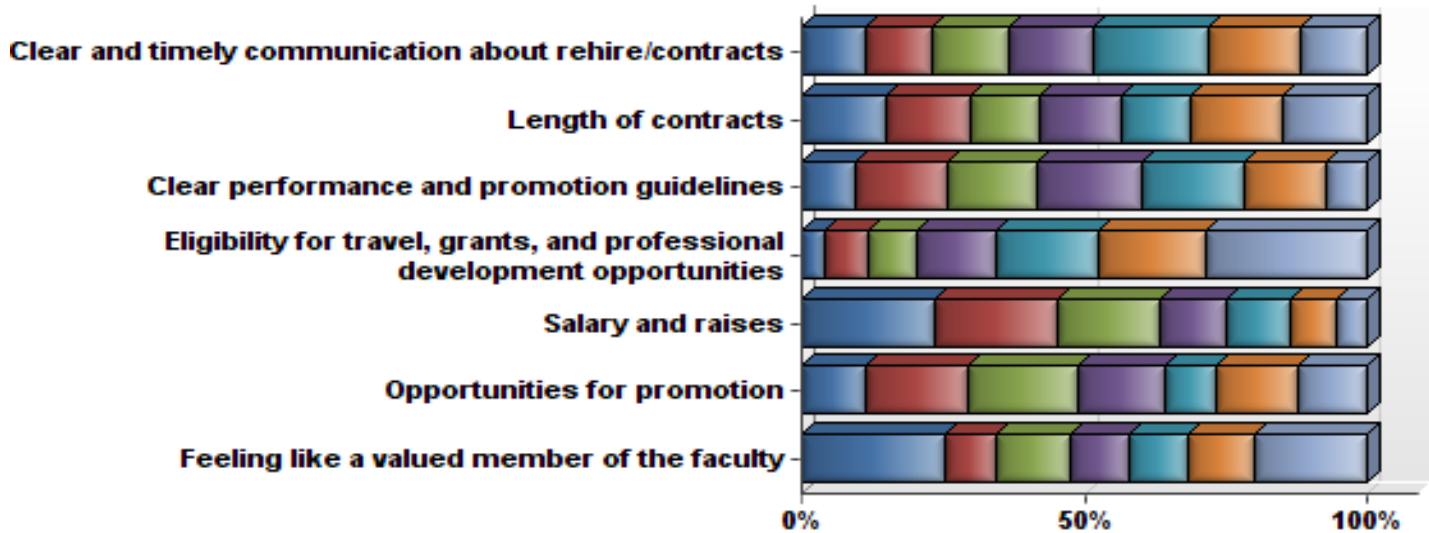


Statistic	Benefits at half time appointment	Summer teaching/employment	Personal office space	Travel money	Faculty development opportunities	Department governance (faculty meetings, committees, etc.)
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	3	3	3	3	3	3
Mean	1.75	1.46	1.38	1.65	1.57	1.53
Variance	0.48	0.54	0.57	0.71	0.56	0.64
Standard Deviation	0.69	0.73	0.76	0.84	0.75	0.80
Total Responses	452	486	578	578	580	576

Q23. Please rank your concerns as a non-tenure track faculty member at WSU (drag to top for first choice, for example)

Statistic	Clear and timely communication about rehire/contracts	Length of contracts	Clear performance and promotion guidelines	Eligibility for travel, grants, and professional development opportunities	Salary and raises	Opportunities for promotion	Feeling like a valued member of the faculty
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Mean	4.17	4.02	3.92	5.05	3.12	3.85	3.87
Variance	3.51	4.20	3.07	3.17	3.33	3.68	5.13
Standard Deviation	1.87	2.05	1.75	1.78	1.82	1.92	2.27
Total Responses	573	573	573	573	573	573	573

Q23. Please rank your concerns as a non-tenure track faculty member at WSU (drag to top for first choice, for example)



Explanation for question 23: In the matrix above the 7 colors from left to right indicate the relative number of NTT faculty which chose that statement as their first concern and continuing to the right their 2nd concern and so on until the 7th box is the least important concern. Each question is similarly arrange. This matrix shows that the two main concerns ranked most important were 1) feeling like a valued member of the faculty and 2) salary and raises issues. The least important concern was eligibility for travel, grants, and professional development opportunities.

PART 4: NTTF TEACHING AT MULTIPLE INSTITUTIONS (BRANCHED QUESTIONS)

Q24. When you taught at other institutions while employed at WSU, what was your PRIMARY motivation for doing so?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Financial	40	58%
2	Choice of classes to teach	1	1%
3	Prior institutional affiliation	7	10%
4	Personal Interest	12	17%
5	Other (please specify)	9	13%
	Total	69	100%

“Other” Responses

To maintain the teaching leg of the Teach, Research and Service.

financial, prior institutional affiliation, personal interest, job security (since no one institution is willing to commit)

lack of job security at WSU; without a contract or extended contract or waiting on evaluations to determine whether I would be renewed, working elsewhere (where I have prior institutional affiliation and am able to gain financially) is just to safeguard against being unemployed

more supportive environment (but longer commute)

When you're contingent, you can't say no.

Long-term career options.

Helped a colleague who had breast cancer with her workload

I taught adjunct for WSU and was half time employed at UI for 7 years

Helping out in a bind on short notice

Q25. What is the highest number of classes that you have taught during an academic year (sum of teaching at all institutions during the year)? Please enter a number – (Average of 9)

Q26. What was the credit hour total for the highest load of courses you have taught (sum of all institutions) in an academic year? (Average 20.6)

APPENDIX B: “OTHER” SURVEY RESPONSES BY QUESTION

QUESTION 1: CURRENT RANK “OTHER” RESPONSES

Post Doctoral Research Associate	Clinical Professor
Research faculty (postdoc)	Assistant Research Professor
Assistant Research Professor	Assistant Research Professor
Associate Research Professor	Senior Scientist and Associate Director
Assistant Research Professor	E-4 (Professor)
Assistant Research Professor	Instructor, permanent contract
Associate Professor - Extension	Associate professor
Assistant Professor/County Extension Director	Post-doc
Associate in Research	Clinical Professor
Clinical Professor	Assistant Professor
Clinical Professor	Clinical Professor
Professor	Administrative Faculty, OUE

Extension Administrator	Postdoctoral Scholar
Research Associate Professor	Professional Worker
Assistant professor	Non-Tenure Faculty
Associate Professor	Clinical Professor
Clinical Professor (Full)	Research Faculty
Adjunct Professor	Postdoctoral research fellow
Assistant Research Professor	Research Assistant Professor
Staff Scientist	Assistant Research Professor
Assistant Research Professor	Regional Extension Specialist
Assistant Professor	Clinical instructor
Assistant Research Professor	Postdoc
Teaching Postdoctoral Fellow	Research professor
Visiting Assistant Professor	Associate in Research
Assistant Professor	Clinical professor
Research (Full) Professor	Research Assistant Professor
None of the above	Postdoctoral research associate
Administrator	Postdoctoral Researcher
Lecturer	Assistant Professor
Assistant Professor	Staff scientist
Clinical professor	Post-doctoral fellow
Administrative, non-tenure faculty	Project Associate
ext	Research Assistant
Assistant Research Professor	Assistant Research Professor
Associate Research Professor	Assistant Research Professor
Extension Faculty	Assistant Professor
Assistant Faculty	Assistant research professor
Assistant Professor	Assistant Professor
Associate in Research	Associate in Research

Postdoctoral Fellow

Associate Professor

Assistant research professor

Lead Psychologist

Associate in Research

Director Academic Administration

Clinical Professor

Post-doc

Visiting Scholar

Assistant professor

Clinical professor

Assistant Research Professor

Assistant Research Professor

Associate Research Professor

Clinical Assistant Professor & Research Associate

Faculty

Psychologist

Research Professor

Assistant Research Professor

Post doc

Assistant Professor