Supporting Non-Tenure-Track Faculty:
Considerations for Departments & Programs

The following questions are intended to help university decision-makers at all levels consider actions they might take to improve the working lives of non-tenure-track faculty at Miami. More than half of Miami faculty are non-tenure-track. Support of NTT faculty needs will strengthen departmental community and raise morale, benefiting all faculty; it will also benefit our students by enabling NTT faculty to serve them better.

The questions were developed by Miami's AAUP Advocacy Chapter through interviews, meetings with and surveys of non-tenure-track faculty (TCPL, VAP, Instructor, and per-credit-hour). Not all of the questions will apply to all departments, programs, ranks, or cohorts; however, many will apply to tenure-line faculty, too, especially those newly arrived.

Employment Security and Academic Freedom
All non-tenure-line faculty are on short-term (one-year or per-credit-hour) contracts, and as Miami policy allows for non-tenure-line faculty members to be terminated without cause, their due-process rights are constrained, if not effectively nonexistent—meaning that NTT faculty have neither economic security nor the protections that underpin academic freedom.
- To promote transparency and reduce anxiety, are NTT faculty in your department fully informed about the nature of their contracts? Do they know when they can expect to hear about being renewed? Are they aware of their rights should they be dismissed or not renewed?
- For TCPL, MUPIM 7.11.C suggests that some form of due process in cases of non-renewal may be established at department level. Does your department have such a process, and if not, could one be established? For VAPs, could departmental administrators and senators advocate for issuing contracts earlier?
- Could departmental administrators/senators advocate for increased security and promotion opportunities for NTT faculty?
- Could departmental administrators/senators advocate for the establishment of appropriate employment security and due process procedures for NTT ranks?

Access to information
Faculty new to campus (and even experienced faculty, if they are not regularly included in curricular discussions) can feel they are teaching "in the dark," not having been informed about learning outcomes for the major or sequence in which they are teaching, not knowing what the usual syllabus for the course looks like, and not knowing how the course fits into the curriculum. Faculty may feel deterred from asking questions by a desire not to appear ignorant or ill-equipped.
- Does your department have a project site on Canvas where important curricular and other information can be shared? Posted material might include:

- ○ learning outcomes, roadmaps, and sample syllabuses for courses often taught by non-tenure-line and junior faculty
  - ○ where and how to make copies, where computers and other technology may be used or borrowed
- Are NTT faculty aware of the university-wide Canvas project site for TCPL? Similar sites could be created for VAPs/Instructors and Per-Credit-Hour Faculty.
- Do NTT faculty know to whom to direct questions? Could a mentorship or buddy system be established?

Inclusion and Community

NTT faculty have fewer opportunities to join the department community and can feel isolated; meanwhile, tenure-line faculty miss out on potentially valuable friends and interlocutors.

- To what degree are NTT faculty included in the social and intellectual life of the department, invited to attend events, and included on the announcement listserv? Are there occasions at which faculty can be introduced across ranks?
- Can any or all NTT faculty receive or apply for professional development funding at departmental, divisional or university level, where appropriate? If the department offers awards or prizes to faculty, are NTT faculty eligible?
- Are NTT faculty with research profiles invited to share their research or to participate in formal or informal research groups?
- Has your department discussed best practices for hiring NTT? Do these appear in governance? In what ways is the faculty community formally or informally involved in NTT faculty hiring?
- Are NTT faculty invited to meet with prospective faculty during interviews, where appropriate (e.g., job talks, lunches) or to meet with prospective students during open house events?

Participation and Enfranchisement

Curricular and other academic decisions benefit from the participation of all faculty, including those teaching core and entry-level courses. If the voices of faculty on NTT appointments go unheard, then so do the needs of the students they serve.

- To what degree are NTT faculty included in curricular discussions as well as discussions about student needs and desirable learning outcomes?
- To what degree are NTT faculty permitted or encouraged to attend meetings and to participate appropriately in departmental governance?
- Could departmental administrators/senators advocate for representation for VAPs, Instructors and/or part-time faculty on University Senate?
- Are NTT faculty equitably compensated for the service they do? How might this be made possible in your department?

September 28, 2018
Miami AAUP Advocacy Chapter