

Institution of a Non-Tenure Track (NTT) Faculty Development Mechanism for the School of Social Work

**RLA Capstone Project
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Background and Context

- ◆ Growing role of NTT faculty in social work schools nationwide
 - Accreditation-related drivers in professional social work education
 - Mismatch between doctoral preparation and teaching needs
 - Increased research orientation of R1 schools
- ◆ Rapid faculty composition change in Rutgers SSW
 - Direct outgrowth of tremendous growth in MSW enrollment
 - Hybrid positions with carved-out support functions combined with teaching/instructor workloads
 - Positions were migrated to NTT with the AAUP-AFT MOA
 - Faculty now nearly 50-50 TT and NTT
 - 2/3 are ranked Instructor or Assistant Professor level

Challenges for faculty development

- ◆ Non traditional career paths relative to other SW academics
 - MSW degree, perhaps professional doctorate or postgraduate certification
 - Hired for practice expertise and teaching acumen
 - MSW education provides little socialization to higher education as an occupational sector
- ◆ Growth of NTT presents challenges in higher education as a sector
 - Academic meritocracy – clout is based on intellectual production
 - Culture clash and the problem of second class citizenship

Specific Challenges for Rutgers SSW

- ◆ Preparation for advancement and promotion
 - From resume to CV – nuts and bolts of academic self promotion
 - Identity – “owning” an expertise area
 - Defining a scholarly role for NTTs
- ◆ Preparation for participation in faculty responsibilities and governance
 - Curricular leadership
 - Balance between the autonomy of a faculty appointment with the specific administrative responsibilities that are combined in an NTT job
 - Voting rights – balancing representation with broader threats to academic freedom

Project Objectives

1. Developing a collaborative working relationship with NTT faculty and learning about how they view their development needs
2. Create a supportive structure for annual review and promotion for NTTs
3. Information gathering to benchmark how other SSWs with robust NTT composition are managing similar issues
4. Working with both TT and NTT faculty on negotiation of faculty governance issues
5. Discerning the right model for a faculty development program for RU SSW

Faculty Development Needs of NTT Faculty

- ◆ Information gathering from literature, peer institutions, meetings with SSW Dean, meetings with NTT faculty
- ◆ Assistance with preparing CVs, personal statements, and other documents related to annual review and promotion
- ◆ Preparation for the scholarly role of being faculty: knowledge dissemination. Fears of being asked to perform new roles without preparation.
- ◆ Addressing problems of integration into faculty as a whole
- ◆ Socialization and orientation into faculty governance and the hierarchical dimensions of university life
- ◆ Developing capacity for curricular leadership – lead teacher system

Progress to Date

- ◆ Relationship building through series of meetings with NTT faculty
 - Soliciting ideas for professional development activities
 - Preparing for discussions and deliberations about bylaw changes to modify voting privileges for NTT faculty (from a 4 year waiting period to a rank and seniority based system)

- ◆ Annual review and promotion retreat
 - Clarifying procedures
 - Demystifying the “self-promotion” dimension
 - Creating a shared Sakai site with resources, examples, materials
 - Two promotions completed and two in process

Ongoing activities – for current NTT faculty

- ◆ 1:1 mentoring model deemed the wrong fit for NTTs, and we currently lack capacity to staff such a model because most NTTs are at lower ranks
 - Burden on senior NTTs – annual reviews, promotions, faculty compensation committees

- ◆ Planning for seminars in AY 2017-18
 - NTT faculty development committee
 - Preparation of conference abstracts
 - Syllabus development and role of lead instructor
 - From social work educator to scholar of social work education

Visioning NTT faculty of the future

- ◆ NTT faculty roles: temporary solution to instructional support needs, or career track?
- ◆ Advancing through ranks will require increased focus on scholarship (even if not equivalent in type to TT)
 - DSW programs and some PhD programs as pipelines
- ◆ Refinement of hiring process for NTTs
 - Previously a purely decanal decision (with consultation as necessary)
 - Moving to a process more similar to TT, with search committees and public job talks, faculty vetting
 - Goal is to build capacity for mentoring in the scholarship role
 - And yet – cautious not to undermine teaching mission - role dilution

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