Rutgers-New Brunswick Non-Tenure Track Faculty Professional and Leadership Development Benchmarking

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Abstract:
With approximately 50% of students at Rutgers University-NB being educated by full-time faculty on the non-tenure track (NTT), part-time lecturers (PTL), and adjuncts (this **Group**), in any given semester, it is imperative that we provide professional resources to ensure high quality education of our students and retention of our faculty. Continued professional development and mentoring is critical for teaching faculty both to stay current with teaching trends and to create/maintain professional networks. To understand the scope of professional development offered by peer institutions, two teams engaged in primary and secondary research to examine faculty development at institutions of higher education for this **Group**. The first team conducted an extensive literature review of the current research on professional and leadership development for this **Group**. The literature review team examined national discourse from the last 10 years and identified and reviewed approximately 175 to 200 articles. The second team investigated the availability of professional development and training for NTT and PTLs at Rutgers University's peers (i.e., other large research focused universities) in the Northeast. The peer review team identified appropriate peer institutions, developed a set of interview questions, and conducted interviews with key faculty development personnel at three peer institutions of higher education.

Primary Stakeholders:
- Office of Faculty Advancement & Faculty Affairs
- Deans and Vice Deans of Faculty Affairs/Development of the Schools on the New Brunswick Campus
- Non-tenure track, part-time lecturers (PTLs), and part-time adjunct faculty
- Faculty mentors

Key Steps/Activities:

Literature Review:
- Working with the Rutgers librarians, educational databases and our own research, reviewed the national discourse over the last 10 years (2011-2021) resulting in an examination of over 175 articles
- The literature review focused on 25 key resources

Peer Review of Institutions:
- Identify appropriate peer institutions and personnel
- Develop, refine, and finalize specific interview questions and conduct interviews
- Review appropriate secondary research sources on peer institutions such as websites

Literature Review-Main Findings:
- Professional development on syllabus creation, course management software, pedagogical practices, campus resources, adjuncts' rights and responsibilities, instruction, and assessment, and promotion strategies was found to be beneficial to this **Group**.
- Mentoring systems (peer to peer or full-time faculty to peer) were created to help integrate adjunct faculty into the college culture and offer support.
- Funding provided for appropriate conferences and training.
- Workshops were offered to fit an adjunct's schedule.
- This **Group** were invited to all development opportunities offered to full-time faculty, such as lunch & learn seminars.

Peer Institutions-Main Findings:
- This **Group** takes on the majority of teaching responsibilities at the Peer Institutions.
- Access & incentives to participate in professional development programs varies by institution, ranging from none to certificates, digital badges, and funding.
- Leadership programs are for full-time faculty/staff only and most require nomination (i.e., similar to RLA).
- There are no institution-sponsored mentoring & networking opportunities for this **Group**.
- There is recognition that cultivating the professional & leadership skills of this **Group** is critical for their retention; One peer institution is initiating an onboarding effort for full-time non-tenure track faculty to ensure that they "do not feel like second class citizens".

Faculty Development at RU:
There are various professional development and mentoring programs within Rutgers that are positioned university-wide, campus or unit specific. Some of these are available to all instructors while others are tailored to a particular rank.

Recommendations:
- Flexible scheduling of the professional development opportunities to accommodate varied teaching schedules.
- Create comprehensive communication plan to ensure that all faculty can access the opportunities.
- Provide funding for professional development opportunities beyond those available at Rutgers.
- Consider incentives for this Group, such as tenure-equivalent status.

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