Report on Survey of Lecturers at UNT

March 2017

Introduction

As of Fall 2016, UNT had 252 lecturers on the faculty – this represents about 23% of the full-time faculty on the Denton campus. Lecturers are a critical resource, allowing the University to fulfill key parts of its mission. In addition to providing quality instruction for thousands of our students, the work of lecturers frees tenure-system faculty to concentrate of the scholarship and innovation that are the hallmarks of a leading research university. Lecturers also perform a considerable amount of the service (e.g., advising, committee work, student recruiting, etc.) that is necessary. Without the many contributions of lecturers, our university could not have accomplished as much as we have. The continued productivity of our lecturers is as important as that of our tenure-system faculty.

In order to better understand the unique challenges faced by lecturers on our campus, Provost Finley Graves commissioned a survey of lecturers at all ranks at the University of North Texas. The survey was carried out by the Office for Faculty Success in February and March of 2017. This report details the findings of this survey.

Information About the Survey and Respondents

142 lecturers participated in the survey, accounting for 56.3% of all lecturers. Another 3 clinical faculty participated and are included in the analysis. The survey instrument is included in Appendix A.

The respondents are broadly representative of the population of lecturers at UNT, as can be seen from Tables 1-4.

Table 1: Survey Participation by Rank

Rank	Survey Respondents		Population at UNT	
	Number	%	Number	%
Lecturer	70	48.3	126	50.0
Senior Lecturer	49	33.8	41	16.3
Principal Lecturer	20	13.8	85	33.7
Prefer Not to Say	3	2.1	-	-
Clinical Faculty	3	2.1	-	-
TOTAL	145	100.0	252	100.0

Table 2: Survey Participation by Gender

Gender	Survey Respondents		Population at UNT	
	Number	%	Number	%
Male	50	35.2	99	39.3
Female	91	64.1	153	60.7
Transgender	1	0.7	0	0.0
TOTAL	142	100.0	252	100.0

Table 3: Survey Participation by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Survey Respondents		Population at UNT	
	Number	%	Number	%
African American/Black	8	5.8	18	7.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0.0	3	1.2
Asian American/Pacific Islander	8	5.8	25	9.9
European American/White (non-Hispanic)	106	76.8	186	73.8
Hispanic/Latino	8	5.8	15	6.0
Multi-racial or not specified	8	5.8	5	2.0
TOTAL	138	100.0	252	100.0

Table 4: Survey Participation by College

College	Survey Respondents		Population at UNT	
	Number	%	Number	%
CAS	65	44.8%	106	42.1%
COB	11	7.6%	23	9.1%
COE	20	13.8%	25	9.9%
CENG	4	2.8%	13	5.2%
COI	5	3.4%	9	3.6%
CMHT	9	6.2%	13	5.2%
COM	9	6.2%	19	7.5%
CPACS	11	8.3%	21	8.3%
CVAD	3	2.1%	10	4.0%
SOJ	5	3.4%	10	4.0%
OTHER (HONORS, Prefer Not to Say)	2	1.4%	3	1.2%
	145	100.0	252	100.0

How Integrated Do Lecturers Feel?

82 respondents, or 59% reported feeling that they are full members of (fully integrated into) the faculty at UNT. Interestingly, this figure is substantially lower among female respondents – 68.1% of male lecturers feel fully integrated, but only 56.2% of women feel the same way. 70% of non-white faculty feel fully integrated, while 57.8% of whites do. A smaller proportion of lecturers holding terminal degrees in their disciplines feel fully integrated compared to those without terminal degrees (52.0% vs 75%). In terms of rank, similar proportions of lecturers and principal lecturers feel fully integrated (63.2% and 61.1%); only 55.3% of senior lecturers feel this way.

A Gap Analysis

As noted, a considerable proportion of respondents do not feel that they are full members of the faculty at UNT. In order to better understand this issue, survey respondents were asked about the extent to which they believe that they are or could be involved with certain activities, and the degree of importance they attach to such involvement. A similar pair of questions was asked regarding the extent to which they perceive that certain benefits were available to them as lecturers, as compared with the importance they attach to such benefits. The gaps between perceived access and perceived importance may illuminate opportunities for institutional improvement.

The largest gap between possibility for involvement and the importance respondents attach to an activity involves participation in strategic planning (see Table 5). Specifically, while just above one-third of respondents report being involved the average importance score is 4.11 on a 5-point scale (with 5 being "extremely important"). Other types of involvement with large gaps include:

- Promotion process for lecturers
- Graduate curriculum development
- Opportunities to serve in administrative capacities such as program coordinator, program advisor, center director, department chair, etc.
- Graduate instruction
- Hiring of tenure-system faculty

Smaller gaps exist for committee service, for publishing, for student recruitment, for student placement, for development work, and for graduate curriculum development. There is also a relatively small gap in the area of involvement in the hiring of lecturers. These small gaps indicate that more respondents feel that they are able to participate in these activities, that these activities are seen by respondents as comparatively unimportant, or both.

The survey also permits an analysis of the gap between perceived access to certain benefits and the importance respondents place on such access. As Table 6 demonstrates, the largest gap exists between the proportion perceiving eligibility for faculty development leave (36.4%) and its importance in respondents' minds (4.49 on a 5-point scale). Other types of benefits with large gaps include:

- eligibility for awards and grants on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty
- reimbursement for professional or academic association memberships and licensure fees
- research support if requested
- opportunities for a reduced teaching load for research and service
- teaching assistant support on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty
- a multi-year contract

Information from Respondent Comments

Survey respondents were invited to provide written comments to three prompts:

1. The practices that have contributed most to my feeling that I am a full member of the faculty at UNT include the following:

2. The greatest barriers I have encountered to feeling that I am a full member of the faculty at UNT include the following
3. Do you have any additional comments?

The comments provided by respondents corroborate the gap analysis presented above, but also provide additional detail. It should be noted that quite a few respondents indicate general satisfaction with their jobs, and specifically have no complaints at all. Many mentioned appreciating private offices, the opportunity to serve on committees, the benefits package offered by UNT, and involvement in curricular processes. However, the comments indicate that there are a number of serious concerns and that many lecturers on our campus are generally dissatisfied. The following paragraphs summarize the most commonly-cited areas of concern.

- **Lack of Respect**
  Many respondents perceive that they are "second-class citizens." Much of this seems to be the result of interactions with departmental colleagues. Several respondents noted hearing the phrase "faculty and lecturers" uttered by their deans, as well as by senior administrators. This suggests to these individuals that they aren't appreciated as "real" faculty members.
- **Pay Gaps**
  Many respondents mentioned feeling underpaid. In some cases this involved the sense that lecturers in their particular units were paid less than lecturers of equivalent rank in other units. In other cases, respondents pointed to gaps between what lecturers and tenure-system faculty in the same unit are paid.
- **Lack of Job Security**
  Many respondents mentioned the difficulty of working under year-to-year contracts. For many, this seems to be because multi-year contracts are not available in their units (and the fact that some lecturers are eligible for such contracts is perceived as unfair). Others who do have multi-year contracts question whether the arrangement actually provides any job security. Along these lines, several noted the absence of appeals processes in cases in which lecturers are let go.
- **Disenfranchisement**
  Many respondents mentioned being excluded from departmental votes. In some cases this seems to refer to certain matters such as tenure-system faculty hires. In others, respondents believe they are precluded from voting on any departmental matter. Some also mentioned that departmental governing documents (i.e., charter or bylaws) are not clear as to the voting rights of lecturers. The Faculty Senate charter also precludes lecturers on 1-year contracts from serving as senators; this makes half of all lecturers ineligible, although apparently all lecturers can vote. A few respondents expressed a desire for a permanent committee that would represent lecturers (in fact, such a body is in the process of being created).
- **Lack of Credit for Scholarship**
  Several comments noted that scholarship performed by lecturers receives no value in evaluation and promotion processes.
- **Access to Resources and Recognition**
  A few respondents noted that they are ineligible for grants. Others believe (erroneously) that lecturers are not eligible for Faculty Development Leave. Still others expressed disappointment in the exclusion of lecturers from formal mentoring programs (this is not true for those hired at the rank of lecturer beginning Fall 2015 or later). Other respondents mention being ineligible for faculty awards.

- **Lack of Alignment of College or Departmental Procedures with University Procedures.** Some respondents noted that some rules for promotion differ across colleges (as an aside, an example of this would be that CAS requires more time in rank before being eligible for promotion than what is listed in university guidelines). A related concern expressed by some involves university policy governing evaluation and promotion of lecturers. Specifically, some respondents expressed concern that there is no policy (in fact, such a policy is working its way through the system).

Recommendations

Some of the concerns and frustrations expressed by respondents are either being addressed or have been already. Others are the result of misapprehensions on the part of some respondents. This "low-hanging fruit" may best be dealt with by communication. Some specific examples:

- As a matter of university policy, lecturers are in fact eligible for faculty development leave. It is possible that individual chairs will not permit lecturers from accessing this benefit, but in any case their eligibility for FDL should be made clear to lecturers.
- Lecturers are eligible for many faculty awards. For example, of the 9 major awards given at UNT to honor quality instruction, lecturers are ineligible for only two (the President's Council Teaching Award and University Distinguished Teaching Professorships). In 2015 the UNT Foundation inaugurated an Outstanding Lecturer Award. Of the five major awards for service, only the President's Council Service Award is closed to lecturers. Lecturers could usefully be informed or reminded of these facts.
- As of Fall 2015, newly-hired lecturers are part of university-level mentoring programs in exactly the same way as new tenure-system faculty. Given this program's recent birth it is perhaps unsurprising that lecturers with more seniority would be unaware of it. Since its inception in 2012, the mentoring grants program has been available to lecturers as well as tenure-system faculty. As with previous items, it may be possible to take more steps to be sure lecturers know of these facts.
- For the past year plans have been underway to design a lecturers' council of some sort, a fact many lecturers will not yet know. The Faculty Senate thinks it most appropriate that they spearhead this effort.
- The new policy on the reappointment and promotion of non-tenure track faculty (UNT Policy 06.005) has been approved by the Faculty Senate and is currently being vetted by the Office of General Counsel. Once this policy becomes official it may be useful to specifically communicate this to lecturers.

There are other steps that would require more discussion and deliberation. Perhaps chairs and deans could be engaged in a conversation around the results presented in this report. Specifically:

- Is it practicable and advisable to have a university-wide policy or guideline that allows for multiple-year contracts for lecturers with seniority?
- What concrete steps can be made to diminish the feeling many lecturers have that they are second-class citizens? Some possibilities include:
  - There should be a discussion of departmental charters and bylaws. At the very least, there should be clarity in the governing documents regarding the role of lecturers in the department, including the issues on which lecturers are eligible to vote, the committees on which they may serve, and the like.

- o If in a particular department lecturers are precluded from involvement in strategic planning, this should be remedied. It is hard to argue that lecturers have nothing to contribute to such efforts.
- o If in a particular department lecturers are precluded from involvement in promotion processes (especially the promotion of lecturers), this should be justified. Some departments have already created separate committees for this purpose populated by lecturers.
- o If in a particular department lecturers are precluded from involvement in hiring decisions (especially when a new lecturer is hired), this should be justified.
- o Departments should consider involving lecturers to a greater extent in the development of curricula. Lecturers are hired for their expertise in pedagogy, and in many cases they have terminal degrees in their disciplines.
- To what extent can resources be freed up (or new resources identified) to help lecturers become more effective in meeting their workload assignments? Some possibilities include:
  - o the provision of TAs for lecturers teaching large classes
  - o funds for professional development, such as expenses associated with attending teaching conferences
  - o reimbursement for professional or academic association memberships and licensure fees
  - o allowing lecturers to avail themselves of faculty development leave

Table 5: Gap Analysis - Involvement

Type of Involvement	At UNT, I am involved in (or have been involved in, or could be involved in if I chose),… (% answering 'yes')	Involvement possibility score (1 – 5 scale)[1]	How important is involvement is this activity to you (1 – 5 scale, 5 = 'extremely important')?	Gap
Hiring of tenure system faculty	38.9%	1.94	3.37	1.43
Hiring of other lecturers	71.9%	3.60	4.29	0.70
The promotion process for lecturers	50.3%	2.52	4.57	2.05
Undergraduate curriculum development	83.6%	4.18	4.31	0.13
Graduate curriculum development	35.2%	1.76	3.43	1.68
Research workshops	43.8%	2.19	3.13	0.95
Academic (basic or discipline-based) research/publishing in academic journals	63.9%	3.19	3.41	0.22
Practice-oriented research/publishing in practitioner journals	53.8%	2.69	3.30	0.61
Pedagogical research/publishing in pedagogical journals	55.2%	2.76	3.29	0.53
Student recruitment efforts	82.6%	4.13	4.04	-0.09
Placement of interns or graduates	55.6%	2.78	3.74	0.96
Fundraising/development efforts	55.2%	2.76	3.08	0.32
The fostering of alumni or other external relations	64.1%	3.21	3.40	0.19
Student extracurricular activities (student honor societies)	76.6%	3.83	3.41	-0.42
Service on departmental committees	90.4%	4.52	4.23	-0.29
Service on college/university committees, including Faculty Senate	71.1%	3.56	3.94	0.39
Strategic planning on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty	34.3%	1.71	4.11	2.40
Graduate instruction	40.7%	2.03	3.62	1.58
Administration (e.g., program coordinator, program advisor, center director, department chair, etc.)	45.5%	2.27	3.92	1.64

---

[1] This is the proportion that believes that involvement is possible rescaled to a 5-point score.

Table 6: Gap Analysis – Benefits

Type of benefit	At UNT, I enjoy (or could take advantage of),… (% answering 'yes')	Access possibility score (1 – 5 scale)[2]	How important is this benefit to you (1 – 5 scale, 5 meaning 'extremely important')?	Gap
a multi-year contract	73.3%	3.66	4.79	1.13
employee benefits equal to those enjoyed by tenure-system faculty (e.g., health care, retirement benefits, discounted athletics tickets, etc.)	95.2%	4.76	4.91	0.15
new faculty orientation	90.3%	4.52	3.61	-0.91
a formal mentoring program	66.9%	3.34	3.70	0.35
opportunities for promotion (e.g., Lecturer to Senior Lecturer, Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer)	89.7%	4.49	4.75	0.27
opportunities for outside employment (e.g., consulting engagements, serving on corporate boards, expert witness opportunities, etc.)	61.8%	3.09	3.79	0.70
opportunities for a reduced teaching load for research and service	58.3%	2.92	4.50	1.59
eligibility for awards and grants on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty	42.6%	2.13	4.43	2.30
eligibility for faculty development leave on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty	36.4%	1.82	4.49	2.67
reimbursement for professional or academic association memberships and licensure fees (where applicable)	46.9%	2.34	4.58	2.23
reimbursement for participation in professional or academic activities/meetings, including travel	75.0%	3.75	4.72	0.97
teaching assistant support on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty	66.2%	3.31	4.53	1.22
research support if requested	44.8%	2.24	4.20	1.96
a private office	88.4%	4.42	4.73	0.31
telephone, computer, internet, and other technology access on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty	89.0%	4.45	4.83	0.38
clerical support on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty	85.4%	4.27	4.65	0.38

---

[2] This is the proportion that believes that access to each benefit is possible rescaled to a 5-point score.

Appendix A: Survey of Lecturers

Q1 Thank you for participating in this survey. Its purpose is to learn the views of lecturers as a means of guiding and improving university policies and procedures that involve lecturers. The data will only be reported in aggregate, and your anonymity will be protected.

Q2 I feel that I am a full member of (fully integrated into) the faculty at UNT.

❍ True (1)
❍ False (2)

Q3 At UNT, I am involved in (or have been involved in, or could be involved in if I chose) the following activities:

	True (1)	False (2)
hiring tenure-system faculty (1)	○	○
hiring other lecturers (2)	○	○
the promotion process for lecturers (3)	○	○
undergraduate curriculum development True False hiring tenure-system faculty hiring other lecturers the promotion process for lecturers undergraduate curriculum development (4)	○	○
graduate curriculum development (5)	○	○
research workshops (6)	○	○
academic (basic or discipline-based) research/publishing in academic journals (7)	○	○
practice-oriented research/publishing in practitioner journals (8)	○	○
pedagogical research/publishing in pedagogical journals (9)	○	○
student recruitment (10)	○	○
placement of interns or graduates (11)	○	○
fundraising/development efforts (12)	○	○
fostering of alumni or other external relations (13)	○	○
student extracurricular activities (e.g., Beta Alpha Psi) (14)	○	○
departmental committees (15)	○	○
school/college/university committees, including Faculty Senate (16)	○	○
strategic planning on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (17)	○	○
graduate instruction (18)	○	○
administration (e.g., program coordinator, program advisor, center director, department chair, etc.) (19)	○	○

Q4 How important is involvement in each of the following activities to you?

	Extremely important (1)	Very important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Slightly important (4)	Not at all important (5)
hiring tenure-system faculty (1)	○	○	○	○	○
hiring other lecturers (2)	○	○	○	○	○
the promotion process for lecturers (3)	○	○	○	○	○
undergraduate curriculum development (4)	○	○	○	○	○
graduate curriculum development (5)	○	○	○	○	○
research workshops (6)	○	○	○	○	○
academic (basic or discipline-based) research/publishing in academic journals (7)	○	○	○	○	○
practice-oriented research/publishing in practitioner journals (8)	○	○	○	○	○
pedagogical research/publishing in pedagogical journals (9)	○	○	○	○	○
student recruitment (10)	○	○	○	○	○
placement of interns or graduates (11)	○	○	○	○	○
fundraising/development efforts (12)	○	○	○	○	○
fostering of alumni or other external relations (13)	○	○	○	○	○
student extracurricular activities (e.g., Beta Alpha Psi) (14)	○	○	○	○	○
departmental committees (15)	○	○	○	○	○
school/college/university committees, including Faculty Senate (16)	○	○	○	○	○
strategic planning on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (17)	○	○	○	○	○
graduate instruction (18)	○	○	○	○	○
administration (e.g., program coordinator, program advisor, center director, department chair, etc.) (19)	○	○	○	○	○

Q5 At UNT, I enjoy (or could take advantage of) the following benefits at my institution:

	True (1)	False (2)
a multi-year contract (1)	○	○
employee benefits equal to those enjoyed by tenure-system faculty (e.g., health care, retirement benefits, discounted athletics tickets, etc.) (2)	○	○
new faculty orientation (3)	○	○
a formal mentoring program (4)	○	○
opportunities for promotion (e.g., Lecturer to Senior Lecturer, Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer) (5)	○	○
opportunities for outside employment (e.g., consulting engagements, serving on corporate boards, expert witness opportunities, etc.) (6)	○	○
opportunities for a reduced teaching load for research and service (7)	○	○
eligibility for awards and grants on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (8)	○	○
eligibility for faculty development leave on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (9)	○	○
reimbursement for professional or academic association memberships and licensure fees (where applicable) (10)	○	○
reimbursement for participation in professional or academic activities/meetings, including travel (11)	○	○
teaching assistant support on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (12)	○	○
research support if requested (13)	○	○
a private office (14)	○	○
telephone, computer, internet, and other technology access on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (15)	○	○
clerical support on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (16)	○	○

Q6 How important is each of the following benefits to you:

	Extremely important (1)	Very important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Slightly important (4)	Not at all important (5)
a multi-year contract (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
employee benefits equal to those enjoyed by tenure-system faculty (e.g., health care, retirement benefits, discounted athletics tickets, etc.) (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
new faculty orientation (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
a formal mentoring program (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
opportunities for promotion (e.g., Lecturer to Senior Lecturer, Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer) (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
opportunities for outside employment (e.g., consulting engagements, serving on corporate boards, expert witness opportunities, etc.) (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
opportunities for a reduced teaching load for research and service (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
eligibility for awards and grants on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
eligibility for faculty development leave on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
reimbursement for professional or academic association memberships and licensure fees (where applicable) (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
reimbursement for participation in professional or academic activities/meetings, including travel (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
teaching assistant support on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
research support if requested (13)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
a private office (14)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
telephone, computer, internet, and other technology access on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (15)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
clerical support on an equal basis with tenure-system faculty (16)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q7 The practices that have contributed most to my feeling that I am a full member of the faculty at UNT include the following:

Q8 The greatest barriers I have encountered to feeling that I am a full member of the faculty at UNT include the following:

Q9 Do you have any additional comments?

Q10 What is your gender?

○ Female (1)
○ Male (2)
○ Transgender (3)

Q11 What is your ethnicity?

❑ African American/Black (1)
❑ American Indian/Alaskan Native (2)
❑ Asian American/Pacific Islander (3)
❑ European American/White (non-Hispanic) (4)
❑ Hispanic/Latino (5)
❑ Multi-Racial (two or more races) (6)

Q12 In which college do you work?

○ College of Arts and Sciences (1)
○ College of Business (2)
○ College of Education (3)
○ College of Engineering (4)
○ College of Information (5)
○ College of Merchandising, Hospitality, and Tourism (6)
○ College of Music (7)
○ College of Public Affairs and Community Service (8)
○ College of Visual Arts and Design (9)
○ Mayborn School of Journalism (10)
○ UNT Libraries (11)
○ Other (please specify) (15) _____

Q13 What is your current faculty title at UNT?

- ○ Lecturer (1)
- ○ Senior Lecturer (2)
- ○ Principal Lecturer (3)
- ○ Other (please explain) (4) _____

Q14 Do you have a terminal degree in your discipline?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)