

STANDARD V

FACULTY

Description

Data, Qualifications, and Workload: During the Fall 2002 semester, Western Connecticut State University had 188 full-time teaching and 22 full-time non-teaching faculty (coaches, counselors and librarians). Also on staff were 247 part-time instructional faculty (91.6 FTE faculty) to serve 5,274 undergraduate and 776 graduate students, for a total of 6,050 (4,391 FTE) students. Of the full-time instructional faculty, there were 89 professors, 48 associate professors and 51 assistant professors. Eighty-three percent of the full-time instructional faculty hold doctoral or other approved terminal degrees; 69% are tenured.

All faculty (full- and part-time) work under a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that specifies policies and practices. The current contract between the Connecticut State University (CSU) System and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) covers the period from August 23, 2002 through August 24, 2006.

Professional rights and responsibilities, including academic freedom, tenure, types of appointments, and evaluation, are delineated in Article 4 of the collective bargaining agreement; Article 5 describes participation procedures, including standards for full-time appointment and promotion, ranks, and comparable standards.

The English Department offers the only academic program that employs graduate assistants in classroom instruction, but only as leaders of discussion groups. Graduate students in Mathematics serve as tutors in the Mathematics/Computer Science Clinic. Teaching assistants and tutors are selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated by full-time faculty members.

Full-time faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate courses; 54% of faculty respondents to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff survey said that they have taught courses at the graduate level. Faculty credit load (12 hours, as established by the CBA) is the same for both graduate and undergraduate courses. The CBA provides for extra load credit if enrollment in a class exceeds 40. Although some faculty receive reassigned time for administrative duties or for research during the academic year, the major focus is on teaching. Faculty members actively participate in governance: More than half of faculty respondents said that they spend from one to four hours per week during the academic year on committee and task force work; others spend an additional one to four hours on administrative tasks. More than three-fourths indicated that they used technology to work from home at least once a week.

Almost all full-time faculty respondents indicated that they consider teaching their principal activity (Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey). Some spend as many as eight hours per week advising.

Recruitment and Employment Security: The search for new or replacement faculty is initiated at the department level. The chairperson (or unit head) forwards the request to the appropriate School dean. The dean makes his or her recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The VPAA makes the final decision on authorization in accordance with the academic plan regarding position allocation. If a search is authorized, the University complies with all relevant federal and state requirements.

Appropriate attention is given to the achievement of diversity of race, gender, and ethnic representation in accordance with the goals established in the annual “Affirmative Action Plan.” The CBA specifies that the University President “with the advice and consent of the AAUP Chapter President and consultation with the Director of Affirmative Action shall appoint a Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee,” at least two members of which must be members of minority or other protected groups. The CBA also specifies the funds to be set aside for minority recruitment.

New faculty members are provided with a written contract that defines the nature and terms of the initial appointment as well as any special conditions that apply. (CBA, 127-8, 130-1, 135-6, and 141.) Copies of faculty contracts are kept on file in the Human Resources Office. The faculty are accorded employment security consistent with the CSU-AAUP bargaining agreement. Full-time faculty contracts range from one-year temporary appointments to tenure positions.

The minimum annual faculty salaries for each year of the current collective bargaining agreement for each of the four academic ranks are as follows:

Rank	2002-2003	2003-2004
Professor	\$63,757	\$65,669
Associate Professor	\$53,555	\$55,162
Assistant Professor	\$43,354	\$44,655
Instructor	\$38,254	\$39,402

The collective bargaining agreement recognizes the appropriateness of market pay adjustments “in rare instances for compelling reasons.” Salary may not be increased beyond the maximum for the rank, however.

Librarians, counselors, and coaches are covered by the CSU-AAUP bargaining agreement. Administrative faculty are members of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees-State University Organization of Administrative Faculty (AFSCME-SUOAF). Academic support staff are also covered by collective bargaining agreements (Administrative and Residual Employees Union, e.g.).

The ratio of part-time to full-time faculty load is limited by the collective bargaining agreement to 21% through the 2003-2004 academic year. This restricts the hiring of part-time faculty. Compensation rates for part-time faculty are specified by the CBA on the basis of academic credentials and prior experience in the CSU system.

Evaluation: Information about the processes of review, tenure, and promotion of full-time faculty may be found in the *Faculty Handbook 2001-2005* (189-195) and the CBA, Article 4 (teaching faculty), Article 7.3.1 (counseling faculty), and Article 8.2.1 (library faculty). Full-time faculty are evaluated on the basis of the quality of activity, which includes load credit activity (performance in all workload areas, and for classroom faculty, the use of classroom peer evaluations and student surveys); creative activity appropriate to their fields; productive service to the department and to the University; and professional activity. Years in rank and any special conditions in the faculty member’s letter of appointment are reviewed for compliance.

The procedure is similar for renewal, promotion, tenure, and professional assessment of full-time tenured members. There is also a specific timetable. Evaluations of teaching faculty are conducted by their Department Evaluation Committee (DEC), the chairperson (if he/she is not serving on the DEC), and the School dean. Counselor faculty are evaluated by the director or dean, and library faculty by a library faculty evaluation committee. Renewals and professional assessments are sent to the VPAA.

Promotion and tenure recommendations are sent to the Promotion and Tenure Committee, a standing committee of the University Senate, which recommends to the president.

Materials that may be considered during the evaluation process include:

- Personnel file official documents (application and hiring materials, annual evaluation reports, reappointment letters)
- Peer evaluations
- DEC/library faculty evaluation committee reports
- Dean/Director reports/recommendations
- Items that the faculty member submits or has approved in order to update his/her portfolio
- Student opinion surveys (i.e., course evaluations)

All departments have instruments for student opinion surveys of classroom teaching. These instruments vary considerably, from a few open-ended questions about the course and/or teaching to a highly structured, scaled document covering course objectives and content, teaching skills, and related advisement. The option to design a program-specific student survey instrument (rather than a University-wide survey) was given to departments since the last self-study. Some departments use the basic student survey but have refined the items or added questions specific to their discipline's objectives and evaluation criteria. Faculty may add questions to the course surveys. The procedure for conducting student opinion surveys of teaching faculty is established in the CBA.

DECs conduct classroom evaluations. Guides to peer evaluation vary considerably, and there is a wide range of formats. Some do not specify a standard, others have open-ended, articulated areas for assessment, still others use fully articulated topic areas with scaled responses and overall commentary and/or recommendations.

Faculty members submit documents that provide evidence of performance in the evaluation criteria areas, including the required student opinion surveys, to the DEC, the Director or Dean, or the Library Evaluation Committee, as appropriate. These materials are held during the evaluation process period only. The Promotion and Tenure Committee has specified the contents of the permanent files in the Office of Human Resources.

The VPAA reviews recommendations for faculty being considered for renewal and professional assessment. The Promotion and Tenure Committee reviews all of the recommendations for faculty being considered for promotion and/or tenure. After reviewing all reports, materials, and recommendations, the president submits recommendations to the Board of Trustees, which makes final decisions concerning promotion, tenure, or termination.

Faculty Support and Development: Professional travel, faculty development, research grants, curriculum related activities and retraining funds are described in the collective bargaining agreement. Ninety percent of the funds allocated for travel and faculty development are for use by full-time faculty members, and 10% for part-time faculty. The total amount appropriated for WestConn in 2001-2002 was \$261,390. Small grants are available from the CSU System to help support "Conversations in the Discipline," projects that involve collaboration between two or more System institutions.

WestConn faculty were awarded \$90,037 in CSU/AAUP Research Grants for 2001-2002, an increase of over 32% since 1993. Other CSU/AAUP funding categories that show an increase include awards for curriculum-related summer activities, faculty development grants, research-related reassigned

time, and funds for travel to conferences and workshops, a total of \$156,889 plus reassigned time. Part-time faculty receive 10% of faculty development and travel funds.

At least 10 sabbatic leaves are contractually guaranteed to WestConn faculty each year; the number actually granted over the past five years has ranged from 10 to 14. The application and award process for sabbaticals and other grants available through the contract is described in detail in the CBA.

The Office of Grant Programs is available to help faculty identify possible external funding sources and to assist with proposal preparation, submission, and with the post-award process. (For additional information, please see “Research and Scholarship” in Standard IV.)

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching was established in 2001. The Center coordinates, develops, and sponsors programs and services directed toward enhancing teaching skills. Staffed by a teaching faculty member with reassigned time, the Center organizes faculty forums, sponsors speakers and workshops on teaching, research, and assessment, coordinates the New Faculty Mentoring Program (see below), and collaborates with other divisions on programs of mutual interest.

There are a number of different mentoring initiatives available for faculty. A Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee (see above) assists with minority faculty recruitment and retention and provides direct support to minority faculty who have not yet completed their degree and/or credentialing requirements. Faculty members who serve as a mentor to minority faculty to assist with their academic development may be provided with reassigned time. A New Faculty Mentoring Program, begun in Spring 1995, provides initial orientation and several full group programs during the year, as well as one-on-one mentoring by experienced faculty.

Academic Freedom: The Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System and the Connecticut State University American Association of University Professors, the parties to the collective bargaining agreement, subscribe to the principles of academic freedom for faculty in research and publication, in the classroom, as representatives of their profession, and when faculty speak or write as members of society. The CBA also states clearly that the determination of grades is the responsibility of the instructor of the course.

Ethics: Several mechanisms are in place to ensure that faculty act responsibly and ethically, observe the established conditions of their employment, and otherwise function in a manner consistent with the Mission, Principles, and Values of the institution:

- Annual evaluations of non-tenured faculty
- Periodic professional assessment of tenured faculty
- A CSU statement on ethics (*Faculty Handbook 2001-2005*, 206)
- AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics

Appraisal

Seventy-six percent of full-time faculty respondents to the Fall 2002 Faculty/Staff Survey indicate that they believe that WestConn employs an open and orderly process for recruiting and appointing faculty members.

Faculty numbers, as documented by the Office of Human Resources and by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, are adequate to carry out the Mission, Purposes, and Values of the institution. The AAUP has taken a strong stand in support of additional tenure-track faculty lines. The University, however, has cited state budget cutbacks and hiring freezes as reasons for part-time

and special (temporary) rather than tenure-track appointments. (For additional information on budgets, please see Standard IX.)

As a member institution of the CSU System, the University must maintain the contractual faculty workload level of 12 workload credits per semester. Any reassigned time for administrative or academic purposes, contractual or discretionary, must fit within this limit. In response to enrollment and/or programmatic needs, a faculty member may initiate an overload. However, overloads or underloads of three credits or more must be brought back to the contractual level within three semesters. Fewer than half of full-time faculty responding to the Fall 2000 Faculty/Staff survey indicated that they thought that the contractual workloads allowed them adequate time to continue professional growth, and even fewer indicated that they think workloads allow adequate time to participate in scholarship and research.

Although the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching has been in existence for only a short time and with limited funding, the Center has sponsored or co-sponsored a number of valuable forums and workshops for faculty.

As enrollment has increased, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of advisees. Declared majors are advised by the departments, with the increase in faculty advisee load depending on the increase in numbers within the major. For some departments, the increase has been considerable. (For additional information on advisement issues, please see Standard VI.) Teaching and advising underprepared students are very time intensive tasks and these have also increased demands on faculty. Although an Academic Advisement Center was established in the fall of 1996 to serve the needs of undeclared students, staffing levels have varied.

The fact that almost all of the full-time faculty who responded to the survey indicated that they had recently published or presented scholarly work gives persuasive testimony to their professional commitment despite the heavy teaching, advising, and service loads.

According to the AAUP Annual Survey reported in *Academe* (March-April 2002), WestConn faculty salaries are higher than national averages, and in New England, lead in two out of three categories:

Rank	Nationwide	WestConn	New England
Professor	\$64,508	\$79,400	\$84,660
Associate Professor	\$52,451	\$63,400	\$60,903
Assistant Professor	\$43,789	\$50,200	\$49,602

Salaries are negotiated System-wide, which means that WestConn does not get a cost-of-living adjustment for being in Fairfield County. There is a recruiting challenge related to the fact that the University is located in Fairfield County, adjacent to Westchester County, NY, two of the most expensive areas in the nation.

Part-time faculty members receive no compensation for advisement or other creative or service activities on campus, and most do not have individual offices. Not surprisingly, there is little involvement of part-time faculty in the University community beyond teaching.

The percentage of minorities (Blacks, Hispanics, and others) in faculty positions has increased from 13.9% in 1993 to 15.3% in 2002. Since 1997, the University has hired 84 new faculty members, of whom 17 (20%) were minorities. This improvement has come about through the concerted efforts of

departments and the administration to increase the number of minority faculty through pro-active recruitment and conscientious adherence to Affirmative Action goals and guidelines.

Full-time faculty evaluation procedures are carefully documented and appropriate to the University. Recently, policies have been clarified regarding what materials are kept permanently in Human Resources files. Instruments for course reviews by students and for peer reviews differ widely among departments, since the faculty have chosen to use instruments deemed appropriate to their disciplines rather than a standardized instrument. Moreover, since the criteria for renewal, promotion, and tenure are designed primarily for instructional faculty, there is a need for more appropriate criteria for counselors, librarians, and coaches. There is no University-wide policy or standard practice on evaluation of part-time faculty.

Between 1999-2002, 60% of new faculty (tenure track and one-year appointees) took advantage of the mentoring program, and participants consistently report a high satisfaction rate.

Projection

Faculty and administration will continue to work together through governance to resolve issues of concern in keeping with guidelines agreed upon in the Academic Plan. Progress in many areas will be contingent upon an improved financial climate and the availability of additional resources. Issues covered by the CSU/AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement may be resolved through negotiation. These issues include faculty workload and funding for CSU/AAUP research grants.

The University will need to consider carefully the implications for staffing that accompany an increased emphasis on research, for example reassigned time to develop grant proposals and projects. This need has special significance in degree programs at the graduate level, especially the new doctoral program, the Ed.D. Full-time faculty in this program will have reassigned time to engage in research and scholarship. Of the new full-time faculty recruited to teach in the program, at least two must be able to demonstrate productive research and scholarship in the area of instructional leadership.

The University will continue its efforts to hire and retain faculty members who reflect the diversity of institutional enrollment and the state's population.

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching will continue to provide programs directed toward enhancing faculty skills and effectiveness in the classroom.