

Temple's Self-Study for the Middle-States Accreditation: Response of the Adjuncts Organizing Committee

Temple's Middle-States Accreditation self-study mentions Adjunct faculty several times and stresses "the growing role of adjuncts in the delivery of academic programs." (p. 180) But when it comes to detailed information about the treatment of adjuncts at Temple, the draft lacks specifics.

Early on, the draft states that "the University has focused heavily on tenure-track faculty hiring." While it is true that in 2008, tenure-track faculty numbers took a significant jump (after three years of decline from 2005 through 2007), the net gain has been about 2.2 per cent. In the same period, 2005-2008) non-tenure-track faculty increased by over 17 per-cent and adjuncts by 6.2 percent (p. 178). Overall the faculty has grown by about 7.5 per cent, but the student body has increased at a faster rate, often resulting in larger class size.

Furthermore, contrary to the claim that "the University has published and implemented standards and procedures for all faculty and other professionals for promotion, tenure, grievance, discipline, and dismissal," (p.14), no such standards and procedures for adjuncts are available. Again, the document speaks of "university-wide policy on adjunct appointments, as well as individual school and college appointment guidelines," (p. 174) but we know of no such university-wide policy, nor of the guidelines for individual schools and colleges.

Finally, we are told that "the the policy on adjunct faculty defines their role in the university, titles, and compensation/salary minima. . . .The policy also standardized, and in most places, increased the salaries allocated to adjunct faculty." (p. 179) However, no criteria are established for moving from one step to the next on the salary scale (which itself has now been removed from the website where it was published in 2005), and many adjuncts have experienced no salary increases in the past two years. We should note that adjuncts at Temple are covered by no collective bargaining agreement, unlike all the other professional employees of Temple.

In many ways Temple expresses sensitivity to the plight of adjuncts, many of whom are young, dependent on more than one adjunct position, and vulnerable to exploitation. But the University has not provided hard information, statistics, salary data, etc., which would allow adjuncts to evaluate their situation relative to other professionals here at Temple.