

## **ADJUNCT FACULTY TASK FORCE FINAL REPORT**

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Neil George, formed the Adjunct Faculty Task Force (AFTF) in spring of 2006 in response to issues and concerns related to adjunct faculty at Webster University. Those concerns and issues include:

- Differential/reduced compensation due to low enrollments
- Salary & Fringe Benefit Committee consideration of adjunct compensation
- Management of scheduling to reduce low enrollment classes and improve average class sizes
- Tiers of compensation and/or rank for years of service
- Adjunct Faculty Development Needs

The task force membership consisted of:

Faculty: Dottie Marshall Englis (Chair), Theatre and Dance  
Michael Hulsizer, Behavioral and Social Sciences  
Anne Schappe, Nursing  
Jim Brasfield, Management, President of the Faculty Senate

Administration: Hoot Gibson, Director, Pope Air Force Base  
Benjamin Akande, Dean, School of Business and Technology  
David Carl Wilson, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences  
Debra Carpenter, Dean, School of Communications  
Jim Staley, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Resource members: Dan Hitchell, Associate Vice President for Resource Planning & Budget  
Rita Kosemund, Director, Academic Resources & Planning  
Dan Viele, Assoc. Vice President & Director of Metropolitan Campuses

The Task Force met for an initial organizing session in the late spring of 2006 and requested data related to a variety of questions. This information was gathered over the summer and given to the AFTF in early fall, 2006. The Task Force has subsequently held several bi-weekly meetings to discuss the central issues. Attached is the final set of recommendations of the Task Force.

## **Adjunct Faculty Task Force (AFTF) Recommendations**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** The task force examined a wide variety of data, questions, concerns and issues impacting adjunct faculty and full-time faculty overloads. The task force recommends several initiatives, including:

### ***Beginning in Fall 2008:***

- Class sizes that range between 10 and 25 students should be the norm and will be paid at 100% compensation.
- Low enrolled classes that range between 5 and 9 students will be paid at 100% compensation. However, Academic Affairs will only authorize these low enrolled classes when there is a strong academic rationale.
- Compensation for low enrolled classes with less than five students will be paid on a per student basis (currently \$120 per credit hour, with a maximum of \$360 per student). Other than a very selective group of classes, those courses that have less than five students, especially elective courses, should be cancelled.
- Instructors will be informed as to how much they will be paid for a specific course prior to the first meeting of the class. If enrollments decline during the drop/add period, this will not decrease compensation. However, an increase in students may result in increased compensation.
- The implementation of improved faculty development opportunities and support for adjunct faculty.
- The implementation of management and budgeting initiatives to severely reduce the number and frequency of low-enrolled classes and the immediate implementation of steps to improve average class size ratios in all departments and at all campuses.

### ***Beginning in FY 2008-2009:***

- The AFTF recommends to the Salary and Fringe Benefit Committee that compensation be adjusted annually.

### ***Beginning FY 2010-2011 (if specific class size benchmarks are met):***

- A revision in the salary schedule tables for adjunct and full-time faculty overloads that reduces the number of step levels from the current 4 tiers to 3 tiers and includes the use of titles/rank for adjuncts.

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND FINDINGS:**

The following report outlines these recommendations and findings, and provides comment on several related issues. Following these recommendations, the task force has attached descriptive data about adjunct faculty profiles, average class sizes, and other descriptive materials.

**I. Compensation Rates for Adjunct Faculty / Full-Time Faculty Overloads (Fall 2008)**

- A. Class sizes that range between 10 and 25 students should be the norm and will be paid at 100% compensation. Classes of this size are less fiscally challenging and may be more pedagogically sound. Consequently, departments and extended campuses are strongly encouraged to schedule classes that will result in class sizes between 10 and 25 students.
- B. Low enrolled classes that range between 5 and 9 students will be paid at 100% compensation. However, Academic Affairs will only authorize these low enrolled classes when there is a strong academic rationale. Academic Affairs will determine the specific approval process for low enrolled classes.

All academic units are urged to restrict low enrolled classes, especially elective courses, or defer the offering to a later term when adequate enrollments could be secured. Where online course options are available, academic units should be encouraged to utilize those options instead of running low enrolled classes. AFTF encourages chairs, directors and administrators to utilize only the official enrollment data (CARS) to determine if a course will run or be cancelled.

- C. Compensation for low enrolled classes with less than five students will be paid on a per student basis (currently \$120 per credit hour, with a maximum of \$360 per student).

These courses include directed studies, independent studies, internships, and exceptional academic situations where this type of low enrolled course will be allowed. Other types of classes, especially elective courses, should be cancelled or deferred to a later term. There should be no exceptions to this compensation practice. No adjustments should be made for years of service with this per-student scale. Where online course options are available, academic units should be encouraged to utilize those options instead of running low enrolled classes or directed studies. This policy does not apply to Applied Music Lessons.

- D. Instructors will be informed as to how much they will be paid for a specific course prior to the first meeting of the class. If enrollments decline during the drop/add period, this will not decrease compensation. If additional students register for the course during the add/drop period, the compensation appointment may be increased.
- E. An additional stipend of up to \$500 (maximum amount per course) for a 3 credit hour course should be retained for adjunct faculty who are assigned 16-week courses (\$333 for a 2 credit course and \$167 for a 1 credit course). If the course has four students or less (i.e., reduced compensation), the additional stipend will not apply. This additional stipend is not applicable to full-time faculty teaching an overload.

- F. An additional stipend of up to \$500 (maximum amount per course) for a 3 credit hour course should be retained for adjunct faculty who are assigned an approved course taught completely on-line and developed through the Academic Distance Learning Center, not Web-enhanced (\$333 for a 2 credit course and \$167 for a 1 credit course). If the course has four students or less (i.e., per student compensation), the additional stipend will not apply.
- G. In summary, the AFTF wishes to emphasize the goal of scheduling classes that are above 10 students. This reflects both good economics and good pedagogy. The AFTF encourages the judicious restriction of low enrolled classes, and the utilization of online course options, course deferment to a later term, etc.

The following table defines the 2007-2008 compensation for adjunct faculty (and full-time faculty overloads).

8-9 Week and Weekend Schedule

Service	1 credit	2 credits	3 credits	4 credits	5 credits	6 credits
1st year	734	1467	2200	2934	3667	4400
2-3 years	792	1584	2375	3167	3959	4750
4-7 years	884	1767	2650	3534	4417	5300
8+ years	925	1850	2775	3700	4625	5550

16 Week Schedule

Service	1 credit	2 credits	3 credits	4 credits	5 credits	6 credits
1st year	900	1800	2700	3434	4167	4900
2-3 years	959	1917	2875	3667	4459	5250
4-7 years	1050	2100	3150	4034	4917	5800
8+ years	1092	2184	3275	4200	5125	6050

*Class sizes between 10 – 25 students are less fiscally challenging and may be more pedagogically sound. Consequently, departments are strongly encouraged to be mindful of potential class sizes when scheduling classes. Academic Affairs will only authorize low enrolled classes when there is a strong academic rationale.*

## II. Tiers of compensation and/or rank for years of service for Adjunct / Full-Time Faculty Overloads (Implementation FY 2010-2011\*)

- A. The task force recommends that the number of tiers used to identify years of service be reduced from four to three. The AFTF also recommends that rank (assistant, associate and full professor) be applied to these tiers based on years of service. This change will effectively raise the initial compensation level(s) for new faculty. Although the new tier structure will apply to full-time faculty overloads, decisions about rank will occur as per the University Handbook.

\* This adjustment is recommended for implementation for the FY 2010-2011 (Summer 2010), dependent upon successful system wide reduction of low enrolled classes.

- B. The instructional savings from a successful system wide reduction of low enrolled classes will be used to fund the adjustments shown in the compensation table below (the collapse of 4 tiers into 3). Specifically, the task force recommends that classes of 5 - 7 students make up no more than 15% of all classes, excluding those in the 1 - 4 student range from the calculation.
- C. Compensation will be based on tiers that are derived from years of service. Titles will also be applied as per the table below:

#### 8-9 Week and Weekend Schedule

Service	Adjunct Title	1 credit	2 credits	3 credits
1-3 years	Adjunct Assistant Professor	792	1584	2375
4-7 years	Adjunct Associate Professor	884	1767	2650
8+ years	Adjunct Full Professor	925	1850	2775

#### 16 Week Schedule

Service		1 credit	2 credits	3 credits
1-3 years	Adjunct Assistant Professor	959	1917	2875
4-7 years	Adjunct Associate Professor	1050	2100	3150
8+ years	Adjunct Full Professor	1092	2184	3275

*Class sizes between 10 – 25 students are less fiscally challenging and may be more pedagogically sound. Consequently, departments are strongly encouraged to be mindful of potential class sizes when scheduling classes. Academic Affairs will only authorize low enrolled classes when there is a strong academic rationale.*

*Note: Actual FY 2010-2011 compensation rates will be determined through the annual Salary and Fringe Benefits negotiations.*

### III. Annual Consideration of Adjunct / Full-Time Faculty Overload Compensation

- A. The AFTF recommends to the Salary and Fringe Benefit Committee that compensation be adjusted annually, beginning in FY 2008-2009.
- B. The AFTF recommends that salary increases be a percent amount on the base rather than a flat amount increase. Thus would be expressed as a percentage increase rather than the former practice of a flat jump raise (e.g., \$150), beginning in FY 2008-2009.

### IV. Other Issues and Benefits - Adjunct Faculty

- A. The task force did not review questions of additional benefits (health insurance) for part-time employees, including adjuncts. These issues may be reviewed, as appropriate and at a later time by the proper administrative or governance group (i.e., Insurance Committee).

- B. **Professional Development:** The task force recommends that professional development activities and resources be made increasingly available (accessible) to adjunct faculty. Examples of these activities and resources may include: local and regional faculty meetings; orientation of new adjunct faculty; support for curriculum development and instructional design; academic assessment of student learning; support for teaching excellence; library services; support with academic technology including course tools for web enhancement of courses; etc. In addition, the programs and activities of the Faculty Development Center (FDC) should increasingly be directed to the needs of adjunct faculty. Given the nature of our multi-campus University, the task force encourages the use of web-based delivery of training and resources when available.

**V. Implementation (See attached tables for additional information)**

- A. The AFTF recognizes that academic administration at the departmental, college and campus level will need to adopt new planning and management strategies in order to implement the recommendations of this task force, especially in regards to the improvement of average class sizes, instructional efficiencies, etc. The task force advises the Executive Vice President that some future management review focused on progress may be advantageous.
- B. The AFTF recommends that the University adopt a system-wide goal of reducing the aggregate number of classes in the 5-9 range from 39% to 30% by 2008-2009. This number is calculated after the exclusion of all classes with enrollments of 1-4. The number of courses offered on a per student basis (1-4) should decrease from 23% of offerings to a target of approximately 18% or lower. As a result, the aggregate number of classes with enrollments of 10-25 should increase from 60% to more than 65%. The goals and projected outcomes should be periodically reviewed.
- C. In establishing a macro goal of reducing the number of classes in the range of 5 to 9 from the current 39% to 30% in the 2008-2009 academic year the Task Force recognizes that the projected 900 yearly course reductions will not be distributed evenly among the scheduling units. When "soft budget" goals are developed for each scheduling unit, it is recognized that Academic Affairs must take into account factors such as the overall size of the student population served and the physical space limitations that exist at some locations.
- D. To assist implementation of the above, the AFTF recommends to Academic Affairs that there be ongoing, easily understood data systems / information available and distributed to all scheduling units (departments, colleges, and campuses) which profiles sections, enrollments, summaries of revenues, etc. on a yearly basis. Academic Affairs should distribute this material to schools, colleges, and extended campuses on an annual basis (e.g., prior to the Fall Semester) preceding their actual course scheduling work.
- E. This August 2008, each scheduling unit should be provided with historic data about class size and number of sections in a common format for use in constructing the Spring 2009 schedule. Based on an analysis of recent enrollment trends, each scheduling unit shall be given a "soft target" budget for the number of sections to be scheduled in Spring 2009.

- F. These targets shall have the intent of reducing the total number of sections offered, and to achieve a system wide goal of reducing the number of sections with low enrollments (i.e., 5-9 = 30%). This comes to one or two sections per term, per scheduling unit. One outcome of this reduction will be an increase in the number of classes with average class sizes of 10-25.

### **Appendix—Note on Proposed Soft Target Budget**

The Task Force attempted to find a way to balance the need for fair compensation for adjunct faculty who are teaching small classes through no fault of their own with the reality of limited University budgets.

The single most important problem is the excessive number of low enrollment classes offered both at the main campus and at extended campuses. This is both a financial and educational issue. Classes in the range of 1 to 4 students are probably mostly independent studies, including directed studies at the graduate level. There has been consensus that compensation for such classes should be on a per student basis. There is also the recognition that directed studies are often not the preferred educational method of delivery and that these individualized experiences should be limited (especially as online course options become available).

However, classes in the 5 to 9 range reflect scheduling problems. According to the statistics provided to the Task Force, 31% of 3 credit hour classes taught by adjuncts in St. Louis were in the range of 5 to 9 students. Extended campuses had 42% of their aggregate classes at this low 5-9 ratio. This is calculated after the removal from the base of the classes in the 1 to 4 range.

The Task Force has concluded that the low enrollments in these regularly scheduled classes is not the consequence of action by the adjunct faculty instructor, but the excessive number of them is the consequence of scheduling policy and practices. Therefore, we don't believe it is appropriate to significantly reduce the salary of the faculty who are assigned to teach these low enrolled (excessively scheduled) classes. This is the reason that the task force has focused not on reduced compensation policies, but on improved efficiency and proper management of our instructional resources.

In 2005-06 (the year for which we have complete data) there were 2,723 3 credit hour classes taught by adjuncts with 5 to 9 students. This was 39%. If there was a reduction in the percentage of classes in the 5 to 9 range from 39% to 30%, this would be a reduction of approximately 900 classes over our whole system or 1.5 classes per unit per term. If those classes were distributed among the categories of pay for instructors in the same proportion, it would save approximately \$1.9 million dollars. This should be more than enough to fund the elimination of reduced compensation practices, and for the reorganization of the compensations (to three tier levels).

Since it is not possible to precisely identify which scheduled classes would end up with low enrollments, we are suggesting the implementation of a "soft target" budget system with the goal of reducing 900 low enrolled sections system wide in the 2008-2009 academic year. The soft target budget system could work as follows:

- A. Academic Affairs provides each scheduling unit with historic data about sections and enrollment for their unit for 2005-06 and 2006-07 (the base years) in a common format that is easy to use and understand.
- B. Each unit would be given a low enrollment analysis that showed the aggregate number of low enrollment classes over the two base years broken down by program category and term. A calculation would be provided that showed the percent of low enrollment classes as a share of total classes (with those in the 1 to 4 range excluded from calculations).
- C. Each scheduling unit would thus know how their percent of low enrollment classes compared to the system wide average of 39% in 2005-06. (Note; similar calculation would be done for 2006-07, but it would probably be in the same range.)
- D. For example, the goal for each scheduling unit could be to have no more than 30% of classes in the 5 to 9 range. It might be asked why not reduce the number to zero? Some classes are needed for graduation, and scheduling is often more of an art than a science. It would be unrealistic to expect reduction to zero.
- E. Academic Affairs would calculate the number of sections needed to be eliminated from each scheduling unit to reach the goal of 900 less sections system wide than the base year of 2005-06. If there are about 100 scheduling units, this comes to 1 or 2 sections per term, per scheduling unit.
- F. Each scheduling unit would be given a soft target of number of sections to be reduced. (Note: it is understood that by the time this process begins the Summer/Fall 2008 schedule will be in place. It may be hard to achieve a 900 section reduction without taking the Summer/Fall schedule into account.)
- G. This proposal represents a trade-off. Slightly fewer sections will be scheduled than the historic average and average class sizes will increase. This will represent an institutional savings because there will be no salary associated with these sections. These savings, in part, will fund the elimination of the previous "low enrollment" reductions.
- H. It is presumed this will contribute to an overall higher average enrollment per section. But, this plan still envisions the cancellation of classes in the 5 to 9 range when feasible. The 30% standard is an accommodation, not a best practice. The task force also encourages the reduction of individualized offerings (1-4 students), especially directed studies.
- I. This proposal seeks to address the problem of low enrollment classes by changing the culture, not just relying on post-hoc closing of classes when feasible. The goal with the culture change is to provide an incentive and a soft target for those responsible for scheduling to offer courses only when there seems to be good reason to believe the enrollments will exceed 9 students.