

Departmental Cultures and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

A Self-Assessment Tool for Departments

A tool from The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success and the
University of Southern California Earl and Pauline Pullias Center for Higher Education

Departmental Cultures and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

A Self-Assessment Tool for Departments

This self-assessment is designed to be used by several different audiences, but administered only to non-tenure track faculty (both full-time and part-time)

Some guidance on administering this instrument:

- 1) To ensure honest responses and to protect faculty from any backlash, this survey should be administered anonymously.
- 2) Responses should be aggregated and only shared with departments in ways that individuals could not be identified.

Groups that might use the survey:

- 1) A provost or administrator can use this tool to understand departmental climates on campus. Too often administrators do not realize the tremendous variation in departmental climates based on local conditions and policy implementation or development.
- 2) Department chairs may also administer this survey to understand departmental climate. Even in departments with already good environments, there is still much that can be learned in already positive climates for further improvement.
- 3) Non-tenure track faculty might distribute this survey among their colleagues and send results to a provost or administrator to make them aware of the climate of individual departments.
- 4) Unions might also administer this survey in an effort to explain why better working conditions may be needed and to reinforce some collective bargaining positions.

Directions: For each question, please circle one answer that best describes your experiences and perceptions of working as a non-tenure-track faculty member in this department.

Section 1: Demographics

1) I work as a:

- Full-time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Member
- Part-time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Member

2) I teach courses:

- Primarily on campus
- Primarily online
- Approximately equally on campus and online

3) I have been employed at this institution for:

- 2 years or less
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

Section 2: Departmental Culture

4) Tenure track faculty colleagues in the department treat me:

- a. disrespectfully
- b. like I am invisible
- c. respectfully and inclusively
- d. as if I am valuable to the overall learning environment

5) In terms of participation in faculty meetings, I am:

- a. prohibited from attending faculty meetings
- b. allowed to attend faculty meetings
- c. invited to attend faculty meetings
- d. encouraged to attend meetings *and* asked for input on departmental matters

6) I am considered by my colleagues as:

- a. a hired hand to teach
- b. a nobody; I am ignored or I go unnoticed
- c. a professional, but largely in another profession or job (for example, law, engineering)
- d. an academic professional with educational expertise

7) My salary and pay are:

- a. grossly inequitable compared to tenure track faculty
- b. inequitable compared to tenure track faculty
- c. marginally inequitable compared to tenure track faculty
- d. close to equitable or attempts are made to make it equitable

8) Adjunct faculty hiring practices in this department are:

- a. haphazard and random
- b. occasionally intentional but also often random
- c. mostly intentional and organized
- d. always conducted with care in order to identify the best fit for departmental needs around academic issues

9) During my time in this department, my hiring or contract renewal occurs:

- a. always at the last minute
- b. sometimes at the last minute
- c. typically before courses begin
- d. well before courses begin and I am consulted about my teaching preferences and teaching schedules at other institutions (if applicable)

10) In terms of professional development, I am:

- a. purposefully excluded from professional development opportunities
- b. not made aware of professional development opportunities
- c. made aware of professional development opportunities
- d. encouraged to grow and opportunities are made available with non-tenure track schedule in mind

11) In terms of resources to do my work, I:

- a. lack basic office supplies and equipment
- b. have some basic office supplies and equipment
- c. have basic office supplies and equipment
- d. am encouraged to seek all the resources I need to make the best learning environment

12) In terms of mentoring, I:

- a. am provided no guidance by any colleagues
- b. am informally provided advice on occasion
- c. regularly receive guidance from other faculty (but not in a formal mentoring program)
- d. am formally part of a mentoring program

13) In terms of office space, I have:

- a. none, and no opportunities for space in the future
- b. none, but there have been occasional discussions of the need for space
- c. shared space with colleagues in a different department or field
- d. shared space with or near colleagues in a similar department field or my own office

14) In terms of orientation to the campus, I was:

- a. provided no orientation informally or formally
- b. provided informal orientation from a colleague, department staff or department chair
- c. provided with a formal orientation
- d. provided with a formal orientation and provided informal support by colleagues

15) In terms of input on curriculum, I am:

- a. never allowed to give input on course design (syllabus), textbooks or assignments
- b. occasionally allowed to give input on course design (syllabus), textbooks or assignments
- c. typically allowed to give input on course design (syllabus), textbooks or assignments
- d. always allowed to give input on course design (syllabus), textbooks or assignments

16) In terms of the learning goals/curriculum for my program, I:

- a. never have input into development of learning goals or curriculum
- b. occasionally have input into development of learning goals or curriculum
- c. typically have input into development of learning goals or curriculum
- d. always have input into development of learning goals or curriculum and am seen as a central player with valued expertise

17) In terms of evaluation, I am:

- a. never evaluated or provided feedback
- b. occasionally provided informal evaluation or provided feedback
- c. typically provided formal evaluation through student evaluations
- d. always provided multiple forms of evaluation and feedback such as peer evaluation ,student evaluations, or portfolio review

18) The chair schedules me to teach courses and:

- a. never asks for my input or about my schedule
- b. occasionally asks about my schedule and tries to accommodate
- c. typically asks about my schedule and accommodates whenever possible
- d. always checks in with me before scheduling and accommodates my schedule

19) In terms of information and campus resources (e.g. information about tutoring, support services, campus policies related to plagiarism, etc.) I am:

- a. never provided information and resources
- b. occasionally provided information and resources
- c. typically provided information and resources
- d. always provided information and updates about information and resources

20) In terms of advising, I:

- a. am not given enough information to adequately advise students
- b. am occasionally provided basic information related to advising students
- c. am typically provided basic information related to advising students
- d. am always provided basic information related to advising students

21) My tenure track colleagues communicate with me about teaching:

- a. never
- b. rarely
- c. sometimes, but generally around things like scheduling or basic course information
- d. regularly and in supportive ways that enhance my teaching and learning

22) When I need support from departmental staff for teaching (e.g., getting Blackboard site activated):

- a. my requests are ignored
- b. occasionally my requests are met
- c. typically my requests are met
- d. my requests are always met

23) I am scheduled to teach courses that:

- a. often are not closely aligned with my expertise
- b. sometimes are not closely aligned with my expertise
- c. typically are closely aligned with my expertise
- d. always are closely aligned with my expertise

24) My department encourages communication and interaction with other colleagues in my department:

- a. I am actively discouraged from connecting with other colleagues
- b. not at all; I have never met or interacted with any of my colleagues in this department
- c. informally, such as through invitations to meetings or at orientation
- d. formally and intentionally; I have some sort of regular interaction with my colleagues

Section 3: Experiences of Online Faculty

Please answer Questions 25-26 only if you *primarily* teach online courses

25) There are options for meetings and service requirements that are virtual (such as through Skype or conference call):

- a. never
- b. rarely
- c. sometimes
- d. always

26) There is support for on-line teaching if issues emerge with the technology or curriculum:

- a. never
- b. rarely
- c. sometimes
- d. always

Results

In studies of non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF), four cultures have been identified within departments. Each of these cultures shapes a very different learning environment for students. These four cultures impact NTTFs' willingness to perform at a high level, their capacity, and their opportunities to create a quality teaching and learning environment. Based on the answers you selected in this survey, you can identify which culture is likely shaping NTTF experiences within your department. See the following page for a table with a brief review of each culture. A more detailed table on pages 12-16 describes the characteristics of each departmental culture and its relationship to student learning.

If you selected mostly **A's**, your department may have a *destructive culture* for NTTFs.

If you selected mostly **B's**, your department may have a *neutral or invisible culture* for NTTFs.

If you selected mostly **C's**, your department may have an *inclusive culture* for NTTFs.

If you selected mostly **D's**, your department may have a *learning culture* for NTTFs.

Profiles of Four Departmental Cultures

Destructive Culture

In the destructive culture, non-tenure-track faculty perceive disrespect and hostility from their tenure-track colleagues. They are actively excluded from professional development activities and departmental meetings, and their role is not perceived as a professional one. Hiring of NTTF in the destructive culture is haphazard, random, and last-minute, with little attention given to matching faculty with courses in their area of expertise or to managing their schedules if they also teach at other institutions. Once hired, NTTF salary and benefits are grossly inequitably. They are not given the resources they need to succeed, such as an orientation to campus, mentoring from other faculty, office space or supplies, advance access to syllabi, curricula, or learning goals, or information to correctly advise students.

Neutral or Invisible Culture

In the neutral/invisible culture, NTTF perceive no respect or inclusion from their departmental colleagues; while there is no active disrespect, NTTF are typically ignored or treated as temporary teachers or mechanisms for content delivery. NTTF in the neutral/invisible culture are typically not included in faculty meetings or professional development. Hiring is generally random and last-minute, though occasionally some intentionality may occur around hiring someone with specific subject matter expertise. Pay is generally inequitable and NTTF preferences are typically not taken into account when scheduling courses. NTTF faculty in the neutral/invisible culture may have some basic office supplies and equipment and access to some type of office space that allows them to perform their basic teaching function; however, it is unlikely that they receive orientation to campus policies, mentoring from other faculty, formal evaluations, or significant input into course syllabi, textbooks, or curricula.

Inclusive Culture

In the inclusive culture, NTTF perceive that they are respected and included by their departmental colleagues. They are typically invited to attend faculty meetings and events and are included in on-campus professional development activities. NTTF in the inclusive culture are acknowledged as professionals, though often in another profession or job (i.e. lawyer, businessperson, etc.). Attempts are made in the inclusive culture to approach equity in the salaries of tenure-track and NTT faculty. Hiring typically occurs intentionally to select people with the best expertise for a particular course; scheduling of courses occurs in advance of the beginning of the semester and typically includes NTTF input. NTTF in the inclusive culture typically have shared office space on campus and basic materials and equipment to do their jobs. They generally have a formal or informal orientation to campus policies and are sometimes given input into their course syllabi or textbooks. Yet, the policies and practice are not created in ways that reflect NTTF's contribution to the learning environment. There is no formal link or understanding of how certain practices negatively impact (or could positively impact) student learning.

Learning Culture

In the learning culture, NTTF perceive a positive atmosphere of respect and inclusion; they are treated as professional equals by their tenure-track colleagues. In the learning culture, policies and practices are developed for the purpose of supporting NTTF's role in creating a positive and effective learning environment. They are invited and encouraged to attend faculty meetings and events, and they are given opportunities to participate in on-campus and off-campus professional development activities. Department chairs in the learning culture actively work to promote equity in salary and benefits for NTTF. Hiring is thoughtful and intentional to select faculty with teaching and professional expertise. Hiring occurs well in advance of the beginning of the semester and happens rarely as turnover is low in the learning culture. Scheduling is done collaboratively to ensure that NTTF are well-prepared to teach their courses and to minimize any scheduling conflicts. NTTF in the learning culture share office space with other colleagues who teach similar courses, allowing for collaboration and discussion around teaching and learning. They receive a formal orientation to campus, as well as formal or informal mentoring, evaluations, and feedback. Supplies are proactively acquired by the department chair, and NTTF are always given input into syllabi, textbooks, and curricula. NTTF in the learning culture are often asked to participate in campus governance or play a departmental leadership role.

The following charts provide more details about research on the four cultures around three constructs – willingness to perform, capacity to perform, and opportunity to perform. *Willingness to perform* includes such issues as employment equity, respect, collegiality, and flexibility. *Capacity to perform* relates to professional growth, and *opportunity to perform* is related to notions of academic freedom, autonomy, and equity. In the organizational literature, these are key areas in terms of the way working conditions shape worker performance. As each element is jeopardized, employees are unable to perform their work effectively. In higher education, as these elements are jeopardized faculty performance is negatively impacted, as is resultant student learning. This research is drawn from:

Kezar, A. (2013). Four cultures of the new academy: Support for non-tenure track faculty. *Journal of Higher Education*, 84(2), 153-158.

	Destructive Culture	Neutral or Invisible Culture	Inclusive Culture	Learning Culture
<i>Willingness to perform</i>				
<i>Respect, collegiality, employment equity, and flexibility</i>	Perceived disrespect (shut out of and intimidated if he/she attends a meeting, event, or governance); faculty and staff are hostile to NTTs; not listed in departmental faculty listings; role is not considered a professional one; salary and benefits grossly inequitable; do not follow any existing institutional practices that might be positive for NTTs (from union contract or faculty handbook).	No perceived respect and inclusion (not invited to meetings, events, or governance); no relationship with tenure track faculty and staff – just ignored; not listed in departmental faculty listings; role is seen as temporary teacher; salary and benefits inequitable; chair may not be familiar with campus policies or union contract.	Perceived respect and inclusion (invited to meetings, events, or governance); positive and equal relationship with tenure track faculty and staff; importance acknowledged; listed in departmental faculty listings; role is considered a profession/career; attempts to make salary and benefits closer to equitable; chair aware of campus policies or union contract.	Perceived respect and inclusion (invited to meetings, events, or governance); positive and equal relationship with tenure track faculty and staff; importance acknowledged; listed in departmental faculty listings; role is considered a profession/career; attempts to make salary and benefits closer to equitable; chair aware of and enhancing campus policies or union contract.

<i>Relationship to learning</i>	Unwilling to advise; unwilling to conduct office hours unless paid; unwilling to build connections and networks to support teaching and advising; unable to talk to colleagues about teaching, so negatively impacts efficacy.	Unwilling to advise; unwilling to conduct office hours unless paid; unwilling to build connections and networks to support teaching and advising; unable to talk to colleagues about teaching, so negatively impacts efficacy.	Willing to advise; willing to conduct some unpaid office hours; willing to build connections and networks to support teaching and advising; able to talk to colleagues about teaching, so positively impacts efficacy.	Willing to advise; willing to conduct some unpaid office hours; willing to build connections and networks to support teaching and advising; able to talk to colleagues about teaching, so positively impacts efficacy.
<i>Capacity to perform</i>				
<i>Hiring practices and capabilities; professional development and knowledge</i>	Hiring practices are illegal and unprincipled; constantly hiring as environment is so bad; no professional development; no knowledge to support advising role.	Hiring practices are sometimes intentional and other times not; lots of turnover -- on-going hiring mode; usually no professional development opportunities; no knowledge to support advising role.	Intentional hiring practices; less turnover and minimal hiring; professional development often limited to on-campus opportunities; no knowledge to support advising role.	Intentional hiring practices; less turnover and minimal hiring; professional development not limited to on-campus opportunities; knowledge to support advising.
<i>Relationship to learning</i>	May hire people without best expertise; lack needed professional development; lack information and knowledge to be successful.	May hire people without best expertise; lack needed professional development; lack information and knowledge to be successful.	Hire people with best expertise; have teaching oriented professional development; sometimes key info about advising to support students.	Hire people with best expertise; have both teaching expertise and connection to professional association, so keep up with advances in field and key advising info to support students

Opportunity to perform

<p><i>Equipment, materials, policies, leader behavior, academic freedom and autonomy, etc.</i></p>	<p>Lack basic office, supplies, and equipment; no orientation; no mentoring; chair/staff does not respond to requests; no materials available – sample syllabi; no input into curriculum; cannot choose textbooks; chair schedules courses within days or weeks routinely; schedules courses without thought of faculty and other obligations; attempt to schedule as few classes as possible, so not able to get benefits; provide no evaluation; excluded from any leadership</p>	<p>Have basic office, supplies, and equipment; no orientation; no mentoring; chair and staff sometimes responds to requests; some materials available – sample syllabi; sometimes allowed input into curriculum; sometimes can choose textbooks; chair schedules courses within weeks or months routinely; schedules courses without thought of faculty and other obligations; provides no eval or there is an eval. but it is not taken seriously; leadership not encouraged.</p>	<p>Have basic office, supplies, and equipment; no orientation and mentoring; chair and staff responds to requests; some materials available – sample syllabi; sometimes allowed input into curriculum; sometimes can choose textbooks; chair schedules courses a semester or more in advance; consolidate PT to full-time, so can teach at as few places as possible and collaboratively schedule; provides no eval or there is an eval. but it is not taken seriously; leadership not encouraged.</p>	<p>Office designed to pair with faculty who teach same courses; proactively acquire supplies and equipment; orientation and mentoring provided (paired with faculty members who teach same courses); chair and staff responds to requests; all materials available – sample syllabi; always allowed input into curriculum; always can choose textbooks; chair schedules courses a semester or more in advance; consolidate PT to full-time, so can teach at as few places as possible and collaboratively schedule; provided evaluation and feedback; asked to play a leadership role on campus committees and in curriculum.</p>
<p><i>Relationship to learning</i></p>	<p>Lack office, basic supplies, and equipment to perform; misinformation to set up courses and advise; lack of orientation leads to wasted</p>	<p>Office space, materials and equipment allows for basic teaching functions; lack of orientation leads to wasted time away from</p>	<p>Office space, materials and equipment allows for basic teaching functions; scheduling allows for course preparation and</p>	<p>Office space allows for discussions of teaching to enhance courses and allows advising of each other’s students; orientation and</p>

	<p>time away from teaching to do logistics; lack of mentoring leads to often poorly run courses that do not cover learning goals and are not aligned with curriculum; last minute scheduling leads to no or poor preparation; no input on curriculum and textbooks leads to classes that do not draw on NTTF expertise or strengths, which leads to a lack of alignment with learning goals; lack of sample materials leads to poorly prepared courses or ones that may not meet departmental goals; without collaborative scheduling commuting with little time between courses; lack of peer feedback leads to on-going poor student evaluations; lack of leadership means NTTF expertise, particularly related to practice, are excluded from curriculum.</p>	<p>teaching to do logistics; lack of mentoring leads to often poorly run courses that do not cover learning goals and are not aligned with curriculum; last minute scheduling leads to no or poor preparation; minimal input on curriculum and textbooks leads to classes that do not draw on NTTF expertise or strengths; lack of sample syllabi results in lack of alignment with learning goals; without collaborative scheduling commuting with little time between courses – late and have to cancel class or are poorly prepared; lack of peer feedback leads to on-going poor student evaluations; lack of leadership means NTTF expertise, particular related to the field and practice, are excluded from curriculum.</p>	<p>quality; when offered input into curriculum, textbooks and sample syllabi, it leads to drawing on NTTF expertise or strengths and is of alignment with learning goals; collaboratively scheduling leads to no tight commutes and faculty are well prepared and have time to advise students after course; lack of peer feedback leads to on-going poor student evaluations; lack of leadership means NTTF expertise, particular related to the field and practice, are excluded from curriculum.</p>	<p>mentoring enhances their first few courses and allows them to align with learning goals and curriculum; scheduling allows for course preparation and quality; input into curriculum, textbooks, and sample syllabi leads to drawing on NTTF expertise or strengths and is of alignment with learning goals; collaboratively scheduling leads to no tight commutes and faculty are well prepared and have time to advice students after course; consolidation of teaching to one campus means NTTF is less exhausted and has more time for preparation and students; peer evaluation leads to more immediate and strong courses, and positive student evaluations.</p>
--	--	--	---	--