

# Senior Appointments with Reduced Loads

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*The statement that follows was approved by the Association's Committee on Women in the Academic Profession in April 1987 and by the Association's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure in June 1987.*

In its 1980 report on the *Status of Part-Time Faculty*, Committee A noted that the 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* "refers, with respect to tenure, only to those appointed to full-time service." The concept of tenure rested on a view of part-time service as occasional, adjunct, and cost-effective in terms of flexibility; it assumed no ongoing institutional commitment; and it assumed that part-time faculty members were properly relieved of responsibility for the institution's academic program.

Committee A's 1980 report reflected a significant change in perceptions of the nature of part-time service. Citing the 1973 recommendation of the Commission on Academic Tenure in Higher Education, the report agreed that institutions should "consider modifying their tenure arrangements in order to permit part-time faculty service under appropriate conditions to be credited toward the award of tenure, and to permit tenured positions to be held by faculty members who for family or other appropriate reasons cannot serve on a full-time basis." While Committee A recognized that many part-time faculty members are not potential candidates for tenure, it recommended that colleges and universities "consider creating a class of regular part-time faculty members, consisting of individuals who, as their professional career, share the teaching, research, and administrative duties customary for faculty at their institution, but who for whatever reason do so less than full time." This class of part-time faculty, the report concluded, "should have the opportunity to achieve tenure and the rights it confers."

Additional benefit would be derived from policies and practices that open senior academic appointments to persons with reduced loads and salaries without loss of status.

In the light of Committee A's recommendation, a senior appointee might choose, for whatever reason, to reduce proportionately his or her overall duties at the institution. If the faculty member were tenured, there would be no loss of the protections of due process and the other entitlements that accrue with tenure;<sup>1</sup> if the faculty member were nontenured, the policy might permit continuance with an "opportunity to achieve tenure and the rights it confers."

These appointments would not normally be made available if the individual were seeking reduction of the academic commitment in order to accept a teaching position elsewhere. Criteria for professional advancement, including promotion in rank, should be the same for all faculty appointees, whether they serve full time or with reduced loads. Where there is mutual agreement among the faculty member, the department, and the college or university administration, opportunity should exist for a faculty member to move from a full to a reduced load and back to full-time status, depending on the needs of the individual and the institution.

These modified appointments would help meet the special needs of individual faculty members, especially those with child-rearing and other personal responsibilities, as well as those seeking a reduced workload as a step toward retirement. A more flexible policy for senior appointments (whether tenured or nontenured) would increase the opportunities available both to individuals and to institutions with respect to faculty appointments.

## Note

1. Where the action to reduce a full-time tenured faculty member to part-time status is mandated by a declared financial exigency or discontinuance of program, AAUP policy calls for the preservation of the protections of tenure and for continuance of salary on a pro-rata basis. (See Committee A report on "Academic Freedom and Tenure: Eastern Oregon State College," *Academe: Bulletin of the AAUP* 68 [May-June 1982]: 1a-8a, for further discussion of this issue.)