

Faculty Teaching Less Than Full Time

All those asked to teach less than full-time, whether adjunct, part-time faculty, or volunteers should have such an assignment “because of special expertise” (Handbook 4-B(4)) and provide expertise in an area of specialty that is needed within a program, or bring a unique set of experiences or stature that adds breadth of perspective to the curriculum and student experience.

Exceptions to this policy are: (1) one-time emergency, to meet an unforeseen need, for not more than one year; (2) short-term appointment of a recent USC Ph.D. to provide teaching experience; (3) retired USC faculty recalled to duty; (4) dual career situations, where the appointment aids in the recruitment or retention of a USC full-time faculty member; (5) full-time USC staff employee (who retains staff status but is entered into faculty records with a concurrent academic title, by agreement of the employing unit.)

Faculty teaching less than full time may be categorized as adjunct faculty, part-time faculty, or volunteer faculty as defined below. The individual’s status must be accurately entered in Workday at the time of appointment.

Adjunct Faculty

The “Adjunct Faculty” appointment is reserved for faculty who have “a primary profession, or career elsewhere” (Faculty Handbook 4-B(2)) that amounts to a “full-time position or career” (Faculty Handbook 4-B(4)) with health and other benefits outside the university.

Adjunct faculty typically teach only one course a year in their area of specialty. If it will not interfere with the demands of their outside full-time employment, teaching one course per semester in their area of specialty can be approved by the dean. Teaching by adjuncts beyond one course per semester requires advance provost approval.

Because of the range of experience and stature of Adjunct Faculty and their unique motivations for teaching part time, their compensation may vary based on individual negotiations at the time of appointment. Performance-based merit pay increases should be provided periodically.

Appropriate titles include “Adjunct Lecturer” and “Adjunct Professor of <discipline>”, or “Adjunct Assistant” or “Adjunct Associate” Professor. (Handbook 4-B(2)) Exceptions to titles require Provost approval under Faculty Handbook 4-A.

Part-time Faculty

The “Part-time Faculty” appointment is reserved for those, teaching less than full-time, who do not meet the requirement set out above on having a primary position elsewhere.

Part-time faculty should receive performance-based merit pay increases annually. Each school should have well-defined promotion paths for part-time faculty who demonstrate exemplary performance and high levels of engagement for a substantial length of time.

Part-time faculty who regularly and frequently teach courses for which there is stable demand, and who have shown exemplary performance and professional engagement for a length of time should be considered for annual contracts and multi-year contracts.

The appropriate title is “Lecturer (part-time).” Exceptions to titles require Provost approval under Faculty Handbook 4-A.

Volunteer Faculty

This type of appointment is intended for faculty who volunteer their services. Handbook 4-B(2). They are not to be the instructor of record, but may serve in a training capacity at USC, either co-teaching a course, or serving as a specialist who trains students on a particular area of practice. These positions should only be available to faculty who have well-compensated, full-time employment outside the university.

Volunteer faculty understand that other part-time faculty are typically paid for their service to the university, but see their volunteer service as a contribution to the field provided as part of their ethical, legal, or professional guidelines (e.g., pro bono work). Under the law, they cannot be paid an honorarium or other compensation, as that is inconsistent with volunteer status.

Reporting Requirement

Each dean must:

1. Certify to the Provost in the annual faculty salary proposal that all less than full-time teaching faculty are accurately categorized in Workday according to the definitions in this document.
2. After the 3rd week of each semester, submit to the VPFA office a list of all instructors of record who are less than full-time showing: name, number of semesters teaching at USC, and either a brief explanation of the “special expertise,” or an indication of exception (1) – (5), or a notation SPECIAL NEED. Since these “special need” cases are not in compliance with the Faculty Handbook the dean will be asked to submit a memo to the Provost justifying the need and explaining the plan to phase out all such cases.