



TO: Deans and Regional Campus Presidents

FROM: Ann E. Cudd *Ann E. Cudd*

DATE: May 21, 2020

SUBJECT: New nomenclature for appointment-stream faculty

As a University community, we are fully committed not only to academic excellence but to an environment that is inclusive and respectful of the talents and knowledge every person contributes to it—students, faculty, and staff. When I arrived at Pitt in 2018 to assume my new role as Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, many themes and ideas were called to my attention. One thing that struck me was the use of the term “non-tenure stream faculty.” The term, from my perspective, described what certain valued faculty members are not—rather than what they are—thus minimizing their valuable contributions. Over the course of many conversations, I learned that the idea of changing that label had been under consideration for years by a number of groups, including the University Senate.

At our retreat last summer, a part of our agenda was a discussion of this very topic—and the topic of faculty titles in general. Numerous important observations emerged from that conversation. In the meeting, I suggested that we replace the term “non-tenure stream faculty” with “appointment stream faculty.”

Then, on October 8, 2019, I attended the Senate’s Faculty Affairs Committee meeting, where I shared thoughts about formal changes to the language used for “non-tenure stream faculty.” The committee ultimately discussed these proposals and agreed with the recommendation to use the phrase “appointment stream faculty.”

Following the October committee meeting, the Faculty Assembly met on November 5, 2019, and passed a resolution from the Faculty Affairs Committee recommending the renaming of “non-tenure stream” faculty as “appointment stream.” I spoke about this proposed change with the Chancellor and other senior administrators, who expressed their support.

I now ask that, effective immediately, faculty outside the tenure stream be referred to as appointment stream faculty. I request that each school or unit work to update their websites, forms, and other communications materials and resources to reflect the change from “non-tenure stream faculty” to “appointment stream faculty.” You will see this change in all Office of the Provost communications as well.

Moving forward, we will also be working to update titles for appointment stream faculty, adding professorial titles. To implement title changes, however, will require a revision of the University bylaws.

To this end, at the February 27, 2020, meeting of the Board of Trustee's Academic Affairs and Libraries Committee, I presented the idea of such a bylaw revision. I expect that the committee will vote on a revision in June. The full Board of Trustees would then vote on this matter at its September meeting. Once adjusted titles are approved by the Board of Trustees, we will work collaboratively with the Council of Deans and the University Senate to determine the best way to move forward with changes in appointment stream faculty titles.

I look forward to our continued collaboration as we address this and other topics vital to the advancement of our academic mission.