Procedures for Appointing Non-instructional Specialty Faculty

The FSU policy on Tenure and Promotion designates a category of faculty members who are considered Specialty Faculty. The category of Specialty Faculty includes adjunct lecturers, part-time faculty, Artist in Residence, and Writer in Residence, all of whom provide instruction.

This proposal is to establish a procedure by which individuals may be appointed with the title of “Specialty Faculty”, whether paid or unpaid, for the purposes of working as a member of the faculty on special research projects, grant-funded projects, program development or evaluation, or other similar projects. “Specialty faculty” would not be considered as instructional faculty. Individuals who are appointed to such non-instructional positions would have “specialty” included as a part of their title. This would make it clear that the individual is not eligible to provide instruction that results in academic credit. If a department seeks to have a specialty faculty member provide instruction for credit, then the process for hiring instructional faculty must be followed. Individuals may be appointed as Specialty (non-instructional) Faculty, whether paid or unpaid, by the following procedure. This procedure may never substitute for appointment of instructional faculty.

1. Appropriate use of this type of appointment – Appointment of specialty faculty will not be assigned for routine activities or short-term projects, but will be reserved for individuals whose experience and accomplishments make them uniquely qualified to assist with special projects of at least one semester in duration and whose reputation and stature will enhance the university chances of success with the specific project to which they are assigned. Individuals currently employed at FSU are not eligible for appointment as “Specialty Faculty.”

2. Initiating a recommendation:
   a. A recommendation for appointing an unpaid specialty faculty may be initiated by a faculty member, department chair, dean, or the administrator in which the appointment of such faculty is needed and appropriate.
   b. If the individual is to be paid the recommendation must include proposed payment and source of funding.
   c. The recommendation should be submitted in the form of a letter.
   d. The recommendation must be approved by the appropriate department chair, dean, and provost.

3. Title: The title assigned to specialty faculty will normally be “Adjunct Specialty Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor (depending upon qualifications)” Other titles may be proposed based on the specific needs of the unit making the recommendation, but the term “Specialty” must be included in the title to make it clear that the individual will not provide instruction for academic credit.

4. Specialty Faculty Member’s Responsibilities:
   a. The recommendation must specify the nature of the work to be done.
   b. While unpaid specialty faculty may provide lectures, seminars, workshops for faculty and students as part of their responsibilities, specialty faculty are not eligible to be assigned to teach classes. Any individual recommended for instruction must be appointed through the process for hiring teaching faculty.
5. Qualifications: The recommendation must
   a. Explain how the individual’s education, experience, and accomplishments make him/her uniquely qualified to carry out the proposed responsibilities;
   b. Explain how the individual’s reputation and stature will enhance the chances of success of the project.
   c. Include supporting documentation, such as a resume and other evidence to document expertise.
   d. If the individual is to be paid, the qualifications must be commensurate with the proposed payment.

6. University’s Responsibilities: The recommendation will identify any resources that FSU will make available to the Specialty Faculty Member, i.e., office space, telephone, computer, access to computer network, laboratory equipment, and others.

7. Term of Appointment: The letter of recommendation must specify the proposed duration of the appointment. If the individual is to be paid, the term of appointment may not be more than one semester. If the individual is to be unpaid, the term of appointment must be at least one semester and up to three years. Appointments may be renewed.

8. Background Check: A background check must be completed for all individuals recommended for appointment as specialty faculty.

9. Contract: After the background check is completed, specialty faculty will receive a letter of appointment that will specify title, duration of the on contract, specific duties, and payment (if any). Specialty faculty will be considered an at-will appointment that can be terminated at any time.

10. Listing of Specialty Faculty in University Publications – For the duration of the appointment, specialty faculty may be listed on the unit’s website and in publications as a member of the faculty. His/her status as specialty faculty will always be indicated to avoid any confusion about his/her status.