

UNTF
Union of Nontenure-Track Faculty
at Michigan State University
Local 1855 AFT, AFL-CIO

Current AY Appointments

Deadline for Offers for Next Year

The MSU/UNTF contract requires departments to make new appointment offers no later than 1 month before the end of the appointment. This means fixed term teaching faculty and academic staff with an AY appointment should get fall appointment offers no later than July 15th.

So far, the UNTF has been notified that about 10% of AY appointments have been reissued.

If the department does not intend to offer a fall appointment, it must give the employee notice and a reason (non-renewal notice).

Designation B Extensions

Employees with Designation B are guaranteed a 3-year rolling appointment. If their current appointment ends in 2019, Designation B employees should have a year added and given a new appointment end date of 2020.

Unemployment

Any UNTF member receiving a non-renewal notice is likely eligible for unemployment insurance this summer. If you need help applying or if you would be interested in attending an in-service on unemployment, please let us know.

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AUG to MAY APPOINTMENTS = AY

The UNTF has advocated that teaching faculty and academic staff should not be given repetitive semester to semester appointments. They should be offered greater job security without an annual termination. In the 2016/2017 academic year, there were more than 70 faculty and academic staff who taught both semesters but were not given AY status. The University has agreed this is bad practice and recently the Provost's office issued the following memo:

April 18, 2017

TO: Deans

FROM: Theodore H. Curry II, Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Academic Human Resources

SUBJECT: Hiring Fixed Term Faculty and Academic Staff on Annual Year (AN) Appointments versus Academic Year (AY) Appointments

All fixed term faculty and academic staff are appointed on either an academic year (AY) or annual year (AN) basis. An academic year appointment covers a full twelve month period (August 16 through August 15) with a nine-month assignment of duties and responsibilities (August 16 through May 15), including related departmental meetings before registration in the fall and commencement and grade-reporting in the spring.

An annual appointment is generally for a full-year assignment of duties and responsibilities including a period of annual vacation leave; occasionally an annual appointment may be less than a year in length (e.g., one semester).

Over time, more fixed term teaching appointments with a nine-month assignment (August 16 through May 15) have been offered as AN appointments rather than AY appointments. The faculty member is often rehired for an additional nine-month assignment (August 16 through May 15) the following academic year. In doing this, the faculty member may be adversely impacted by losing benefit coverage during the summer. In addition, the individual's employment date and retirement eligibility date is reset due to the break in service during the time period of May 16 through August 15.

Consistent with our discussion at a previous Council of Deans meeting, it is the expectation that all fixed term appointments that span the time period of August 16 through May 15, especially those positions where the responsibilities include teaching, are to be appointed on an AY appointment basis (with the appointment dates of August 16 through August 15).

Fixed term faculty and academic staff are critical to the success of the university. By hiring fixed term faculty and academic staff on an AY appointment, MSU is ensuring a continued commitment to their valuable contributions to the university.

Please share this memorandum with your Chairpersons, School Directors and other staff as appropriate.

This directive should lead to more AY appointments. These appointments allow for greater job security and benefits in the summer. If you have questions about your appointment, contact the UNTF office.

NEGOTIATING TEAM

The contract between UNTF and MSU expires in May 2018. Negotiations on a new agreement will start in early 2018. A committee of UNTF members will start preparing for those negotiations soon.

If you have an interest in serving on the negotiating team, e mail the UNTF office, office@untf.org. No prior experience is required but you must be a full member of UNTF in good standing.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

UNTF wants to start spotlighting some of members in our social media. If you are interested in sharing some of your experiences with other fixed term faculty and academic staff, contact UNTF Communications Committee Chair Kate Birdsall at kate.birdsall@gmail.com.

PROMOTION OF FIXED TERM FACULTY

The UNTF represents 307 ranked faculty at MSU. The majority are Assistant Professors but there are 26 fixed term teaching Associate Professors and 27 fixed term teaching Professors. MSU has a policy on the promotion of fixed term faculty from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor or from Associate Professor to Professor. <https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/4Section-HR-Policies.html>

The policy requires each department to develop promotion procedures and to apply them consistently. The procedures must incorporate certain principles:

1. Rank must be based on standards and should reflect the same standards required for tenure system faculty for that duty (e.g. teaching).
2. Procedures for the faculty review committee and for input by the candidate seeking promotion.
3. Allow external letters of reference.

Recently some departments have encouraged fixed term faculty to apply for promotion. If you need more information or have experiences with this process that you can share, please let us know.

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Time Off and Leave Programs for Fixed Term

UNTF's contract with MSU has a provision (Article 33) that ensures Fixed Term teaching faculty and academic staff are entitled to the same time off and leave programs as other faculty. Many fixed term faculty and academic staff do not consider themselves eligible for these types of leaves but you may be. Possible leaves include:

- Family and Medical Leave (up to 12 weeks)
- Short term disability Leave (up to 6 months)
- Long term disability Leave
- Bereavement Leave (3 days)
- Parental Leave (up to 6 weeks)
- Military Leave (up to 15 days)
- Leave without Pay (up to 1 year)

Fixed term faculty and academic staff are not eligible for sabbatical leave.

Fixed term faculty and academic staff with a 12 month AN appointment are eligible for up to 1 month (22 working days) paid vacation.

There are eligibility requirements for these leaves. If you have questions, contact the UNTF office.