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Interview by Marc Bousquet with Kevin Mahoney

MB: Tell me about APSCUF contract provisions 11.G and 11.H.

KM: Article 11.G speaks to the conversion of a full-time faculty member into a tenure-track faculty member, while Article 11.H is geared toward the conversion of an FTE temporary faculty line into a tenure-track line. The former places the emphasis on the individual faculty member, the latter seeks to prevent systemic staffing of particular areas of the curriculum by temporary faculty members.

MB: How do they work in practice?

KM: In a nutshell, Article 11.G states that "a full-time, temporary *faculty member*, who has worked at a University for five (5) full, consecutive academic years in the same department, shall be placed in tenure-track status, if recommended by the majority of the regular department *faculty*." So, if a temporary faculty members is in her or his fifth year of employment in the same department, the department holds a vote to recommend/not recommend that faculty member for a tenure-track position.

MB: The other provision is with respect to converting lines, or bundling part-time work into full-time tenurable work?

KM: Yes, article 11.H is a little more complicated. It states, "each fall semester thereafter, each department shall survey its use of temporary *faculty members* retroactive for three (3) years, in addition to the current year, and shall identify the courses and responsibilities within a disciplinary specialization which have been performed by temporary *faculty members*. The department shall determine whether any group of such courses or responsibilities within a disciplinary specialization has constituted a full-time *faculty* position(s) over the eight (8) semesters and, if so, shall forward a recommendation to the President to create a regular position(s)." According to the article, two things need to happen. First, each department must identify "courses and responsibilities within a disciplinary specialization" that are taught by temporary faculty members and then translate that into FTE positions.

So, in the 11.H world, there might be four different faculty members who have part of their load devoted to teaching a specific disciplinary specialization. For example, it is common within the English department (my department) that part of every faculty members load, including temporary faculty members, is teaching first-year composition. If I add up the composition courses taught by temporary faculty members over eight (8) semesters, I can construct FTE lines that meet the criteria of the article. (I did just this as the coordinator of composition and was able to show that we could hire up to five (5) new tenure-track faculty members in composition without having any impact on any other programs in our department). As you can see, this article focuses on the nature of the lines, not the individual faculty members. It is a means of addressing, structurally, the over use of temporary faculty.

MB: Ultimately it's a matter of department initiative?

KM: I would argue that it is a contractual obligation of each department. However, that contractual obligation has not always been followed...especially when it comes to Article 11.H. Part of the reason that each department has *not* reported the # of sections of courses taught by temporary faculty, has to do with another part of the article. Once a department has forwarded a recommendation for conversion to tenure-track lines, the "The President shall then decide whether to convert the position(s) into a regular full-time position(s)." If the President denies the conversion of the position(s), then the "courses and responsibilities of the position(s) as determined by the department...shall not be taught by temporary *faculty member(s)* for two (2) years."

Some years ago a department at KU followed this article to the letter and the then Provost and President denied the conversions. The result was that the courses taught by temporary faculty members now had to be taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty on overload for two-years. When I first came to KU the story of 11.H was that departments have decided to NOT forward recommendations for fear of being forced to teach overload. However, other universities in the State System, West Chester in particular, have been able to gain many new positions through this article. The difference? For years APSCUF-KU's leadership backed an interpretation of Article 11.H that defined "shall" as elective. That is, our local leadership read "shall" as meaning it was the purview of the department as to whether or not they "shall determine whether any group of such courses or responsibilities within a disciplinary specialization has constituted a full-time *faculty* position(s) over the eight (8) semesters and, if so, shall forward a recommendation to the President to create a regular position(s)." Frankly, I find that interpretation to reflect an unwillingness to fight for the conversion and grieve.

MB: Has your department used the provisions to convert people or positions?

KM: Yes and no. Several years ago, because our department did not do what Article 11.H required, there was a group of temporary faculty members in our department who had been teaching at KU for over 8 years (a couple much longer). Someone finally pushed the issue and all of those faculty members were converted to tenure-track lines. That happened a while before my time. Since then, I would say our department has remained reluctant to push the issue too far. However, two things have happened. First, attention has been paid to job descriptions in the hiring of temporary faculty members so that if the person hired stays for five years and does a good job, then we can convert them under Article 11.G. Our current chair has been proactive on this score and has worked with the Deans and Provost to ensure lines are available for conversion. We've been able to convert a couple of people this way.

I wish I could say the same for Article 11.H. I have been successful in making the argument within our department and, with the help of our chair, to the administration for new tenure-track lines in composition based up on the logic of 11.H. Since I've been the coordinator of composition, we have hired three new tenure-track faculty based upon this logic (another conversion under 11.G) we will hire one more tenure-track faculty member in composition this year for a fall 2010 start date.

MB: How has it worked out? Are there benefits or drawbacks to converting the appointments of faculty already serving contingently?

KM: Most of the temporary faculty members we hire could just as easily be hired tenure-track if the positions were available. I would argue that every faculty member in our department converted under 11.G has been excellent. In many cases, they have become leading members of the department.

The major benefit of conversion is that these faculty already have experience teaching KU students in our curriculum. At the point of conversion, they are seasoned KU teachers and, in many cases, have already established themselves in the department. One major drawback for the faculty member being converted is that it basically takes a 5 year tenure process and stretches it up to 10 years.

Frankly, I can't think of any drawbacks of converting temporary faculty to tenure-track. They are, after all, already our colleagues and in most cases, fellow union members.

MB: There appears to be some potential tension between the provision converting persons and the provision for converting positions. How have you handled that tension? What have you learned?

KM: Yes. The tension is that under Article 11.G you are dealing with people first. Article 11.H deals with FTE positions first. So, under article 11.H it could be the case that a successful argument for, say, three conversion positions, could mean the elimination of three temporary lines...meaning, three temporary faculty members. You could effectively address inequities in the system by putting three people out of a job.

That means a couple of things. First, departments have to be absolutely clear about the nature of the temporary faculty positions. I don't know of a specific case in our department in which this has happened. Most of this has to do with a certain degree of turn over in the temporary faculty positions...sometimes because of non-renewal (based upon evaluations) other times because temporary faculty members have landed other jobs.

One thing that mitigates our situation a bit is that we do not rely upon part-time, temporary

