



Ask Your Union – Available Work

October 2014

Work is available in my department. Who gets that work?

It depends on your department's list of "current" faculty members.

Who is considered a "current" faculty member?

This relates to seniority and/or internal status.

- Each department should maintain a list of faculty who have taught in the department within the previous two years + one day. These faculty members are all internal to the department (unless they already "own" full time work in other departments). (Exception – see next bullet.)
- Faculty who taught only once and who were hired on an emergency contract do not have seniority and therefore should not be included on the list. (Note - An individual can be hired on an emergency contract only once. If that person is subsequently re-hired – even if the second situation is an emergency – then that person earns seniority retroactively and is no longer considered an "emergency hire". Therefore such re-hired faculty should be included on the list.)
- Upon retirement or resignation, faculty lose their seniority; however if re-hired then their seniority starts to accumulate from zero, just like any other new hire.

Now, considering only those on the "current-faculty" list, who gets the work?

It depends on contract type and qualifications:

- First consideration goes to faculty working part-time in your department on a regular or reg-in-temp contract. The Chair/Selection Committee will offer the work to the person best qualified for it; seniority (see Q5 below) is used to break any tie of qualifications.
- After all regularized part-timers have as much additional work (up to full time) as they want and are deemed qualified for, then the Chair/Selection Committee will offer work to the best-qualified term faculty in the department. Again, seniority will be used to break a tie.
- If work is still available after considering all faculty internal to the department, then the Chair will post an internal posting to invite faculty from other departments to apply. Any faculty from other departments who apply will be interviewed to see if they are qualified for the work.
- If the candidate from the other department is deemed qualified, then the two departments will do their best to schedule the work in such a way to avoid time conflicts.
- If work is still available after considering all internal faculty from other departments, then the Chair will solicit external applicants, by posting or by otherwise contacting prospective faculty.

(Note – strictly speaking the College, not the Chair or Selection Committee, offers work. The Chair/Selection Committee identifies the preferred candidate, and contacts the candidate re interest and availability, but the official letter of offer comes from the College.)



Do we use the word “internal” in more than one way?

Yes, internal to the department, and internal to the College: to clarify the response to the previous question above:

- When considering work assignments, we distinguish between faculty internal to the department, and faculty internal to the Langara College Faculty bargaining unit.
- We do not “post” work if we have faculty internal to the department: the Chair/Selection Committee knows who those people are (“the list”), and considers them immediately. There is no “available work” as long as there are qualified faculty internal to the department who want the work.
- If a department posts work internally to the College, it is inviting faculty from other departments to apply because the department list has been fully exhausted.

Three courses are available – X, Y and Z. All regular faculty have full time work. One of the term faculty is best qualified for courses X and Y, but cannot teach Z. Can the department say that this person is not qualified for the available “package” of work, and post/recruit for the package?

No, we don’t “package” work.

- The term faculty member should be offered whatever work the department considers him/her to be best-qualified for. If there is still work available then the department can proceed as described above.

The department has two faculty members on term contract. Both have been teaching ½-time for one year in the department, and in addition one of them has been teaching part time in another department. The department considers them to be equally qualified for some work. How do we break the tie?

When faculty are tied in qualifications, then we consider seniority, which is College-wide, so the person who taught in the other department has accumulated more seniority.

- Qualifications include education, related experience, and previous evaluations. A faculty member is considered to be better qualified if his/her qualifications are substantially better; otherwise the two faculty members are relatively equally qualified.

Same question as the previous one, but neither has taught in another department so they have identical seniority. What do we do?

Check the start dates of the two faculty members – an earlier start date may translate to higher seniority. Otherwise, the selection committee must choose which person is better qualified for the available work. This is a difficult situation but the Committee needs to carefully review the qualifications, and the needs of the department, and make a choice that they can support if challenged.



My department chair is working on the schedule for next fall, and told me that the most senior member of my department always gets first choice of courses and schedules. Is this correct?

The LFA does not support the use of seniority for scheduling, nor is there anything in the Collective Agreement that supports this practice. If I was hired in 2000, and you were hired in 2001, should you always get second choice of courses? Each department must engage in a fair and reasonable process.

What else can you tell me about seniority?

Seniority is described in Article 12.5 of the Collective Agreement, with further detail in a Letter of Understanding at the back of the Collective Agreement.

- Seniority is not department-specific, so a person with work in two departments earns seniority that is the total from those two departments.
- Human Resources' seniority lists are updated once a year, so the department chair may need to update the list manually. Note that the LFA cannot check everyone's seniority, and the HR list traditionally is error-ridden, so it's worth checking carefully.
- The Collective Agreement defines how seniority is calculated. In particular, no one can earn more than one year of seniority in any May 1-April 30 time period. So a term instructor who teaches full time for 12 months in a row May 1 – April 30 (so teaches 12 sections) will earn only 8 sections (ie 1 year) of seniority. However a term instructor who teaches full time for 12 months in a row January 1-December 31 will earn 4 sections (=1/2 year) for January-April, and then an additional 8 sections (=1 year) for May-December.
- To view the seniority list, go to the College website, find the HR department web page and the seniority lists. The password is faculty