

Royal Roads University Policy

First implemented:

May 5, 2016

Amended:

May 2, 2018

Approved By:

Academic Council

Office of Oversight:

VP Academic

Policy and Purpose Statement

Royal Roads University recognizes that its teaching and research programs benefit immeasurably from the expertise of associate faculty who bring their professional or practical experience, knowledge and skills to the University. The University strongly affirms the scholar-practitioner model and the relevance of pedagogy informed by concurrent practice.

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the important role(s) that associate faculty play in the University's Learning and Teaching Model, and provide general administrative guidance in their selection, engagement, orientation, evaluation and potential for renewal. It also sets out the nature of the independent contractual relationship between the University and its associate faculty contractors.

Overall, the associate faculty model is intended to 1) support the optimal engagement of associate faculty to increase the diversity of current professional expertise in the University's instructional pool, 2) ensure the University maintains its commitment to teaching, learning and research excellence, and 3) provide a consistently positive experience for associate faculty engagement across the institution.

1. Definition and Services

1.1 Associate faculty are practitioners who are involved in professional, business, or other academic or non-academic activities outside the University, and who have achieved distinction or particular success and/or bring special experience, knowledge or skills to the University. Associate faculty are engaged as independent contractors, to provide specific services to the University in academic units (i.e., schools, centres, and other units such as Professional & Continuing Studies) or programs. Associate faculty may or may not be granted Adjunct Professor status, as defined and outlined in the *Policy on Adjunct Professor Appointments*. As independent contractors, associate faculty are not employees of the University.

1.2 Examples of services associate faculty may be engaged to provide to the University include

the following:

- course instruction,
- curriculum or course development,
- supervision and assessment of theses, dissertations, major papers, internships, projects, and other student activities,
- applied research,
- academic administrative services,
- program planning assistance, and/or
- other specified activities or special projects (e.g., marketing of a professional course).

2. Selection

2.1 Associate faculty opportunities will normally be posted on the RRU website.

2.2 In addition, candidates for associate faculty contracts may be identified using methods such as the following:

- utilizing the University-wide Associate Faculty Database developed and maintained by the Office of Vice-President Academic and Provost,
- solicitations and external postings for eligible candidates,
- unsolicited applications from qualified individuals to an academic unit or HR,
- associations with professional organizations from the programming area,
- unsuccessful but otherwise strong candidates from core faculty competitions provided, by candidate permission, through human resources, and
- existing faculty and professional networks, including associations with professional organizations from the programming area (including academic unit-held databases).

2.3 The identification of associate faculty candidates should follow an open and transparent process that provides a broad opportunity for qualified professionals or practitioners to apply. In addition to requesting a current curriculum vitae and application letter, a statement of each candidate's teaching and learning philosophy, and teaching evaluations (where appropriate) should be included as part of the process.

2.4 Potential candidates for supervision and assessment of theses, dissertations, major papers, internships, projects, and other student activities may be identified by the student(s) to the program/school office, which will verify that appropriate experience and qualifications/credentials exist to provide such services. Academic units and/or programs may also maintain their own lists or databases of approved potential supervisors for student activities, in addition to sharing this information with the Associate Faculty Database. For theses and dissertations, processes put in place for supervision and assessment by the Vice-Provost Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies will be followed.

2.5 Associate faculty selection should follow a robust, timely, and fair process which can include,

as practical and required, the following:

- initiating the process in an appropriate timeframe to ensure that successful candidates will be in a position to meet contractual deadlines;
- establishing a representative selection panel to review and screen candidates based on predetermined criteria for eligibility;
- developing a long-list (as necessary) of candidates meeting the eligibility requirements;
- holding brief screening interviews of eligible candidates by the selection panel (as necessary) to establish a short-list of candidates whose experience and qualifications are most closely aligned with the services required by the University;
- notifying and holding detailed interviews with short-listed candidates (in person or virtually) to review professional or practical experience, and assess qualifications and skills to provide the required services; and
- following up on references provided by the candidate(s) and verifying credentials.

In the case of supervision of theses and dissertations, the processes overseen by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies must be followed.

Administrative mechanisms shall be put in place by program staff and overseen by deans, directors, or their academic designates, to ensure that all selection processes run smoothly and efficiently for the panel, as well as potential candidates.

2.6 Upon selection, reference verification, and an accepted contract for services, unsuccessful short-listed candidates (where applicable) should be notified by the program office or department, and an offer extended for their information to be added to, or updated in, the Associate Faculty Database, under the auspices of the Vice-President Academic & Provost, for suitable opportunities that may arise in future at the University.

2.7 Deans and directors are expected to ensure that a range of different associate faculty skills and expertise are deployed across different programs and courses (where possible), to maximize the learning experience of students benefitting from exposure to a diversity of (inter-) disciplinary perspectives, practical and professional experiences, and scholarly discourse.

3. Contract for Services

3.1 Associate faculty shall be engaged by the University pursuant to a written contract for services. The contract must be signed by the associate faculty contractor and by an authorized representative of the University before the commencement of the term of the contract.

3.2 Contracts for services for associate faculty shall follow standard RRU protocols and guidelines that include appropriate signing authorities, fees and payment terms, service deliverables, reporting and assessment mechanisms, termination provisions, etc.

3.3 Associate faculty are obligated to meet all deliverables, terms, and conditions specified in their

contracts for services.

3.4 The University expects associate faculty to bring any challenges or issues affecting the delivery of their services to the attention of the unit or program in which they are engaged.

4. Orientation

4.1 Newly engaged associate faculty should be properly oriented to the University, its learning and teaching model (as applicable), and the unit(s) in which the contracted services will be delivered.

The orientation process should include the following elements (as applicable):

- welcome email or letter from the program or school/department office,
- review of contract for services and deliverables (addressing any questions),
- RRU Computer Services including accounts and access,
- RRU Learning and Teaching Model,
- Centre for Teaching and Educational Technologies (CTET) and services offered, including: CTET New Faculty Orientation, Teaching & Course Design @RRU, and Studio,
- CTET professional development: Instructional Skills Workshop, Facilitating Learning Online training (for associate faculty new to the instructional role), as well as other specialized training, e.g., intercultural communication, classroom management, approaches to course development and design, etc.,
- CTET technical training opportunities (Moodle, etc.),
- RRU Library and services offered,
- orientation to the University community (e.g., where to obtain assistance and other services),
- introduction to other faculty in the program or academic unit,
- program overview and context of individual course(s) being taught,
- review of school guidelines and applicable University policies and regulations,
- involvement in program planning/debriefing sessions (e.g., residencies), and
- for supervision role, thesis coordinators and the program head of doctoral programs carry responsibility for orienting supervisors to the university's thesis and dissertation regulations and processes.

Administrative set-ups, support, and initial orientation for the associate faculty contractor should be provided by the academic unit staff. Specific academic and scholarly support should be addressed by the dean/director or their academic designate. It is also important that a proper line of communication and authority be in place and clearly identified within programs and/or academic units to support the effective orientation and engagement of associate faculty.

4.2 Shadowing in face-to-face and/or online classroom environments, course observation and/or mentoring with seasoned instructors may be used for orientation of new associate faculty who have been engaged to provide instructional services.

4.3 Regular communication with associate faculty contractors is essential to help facilitate their

success in providing the services required by the University. Communication and engagement activities may include, among others, the following (as appropriate):

- information on changes/events within the program, school/department, and/or University,
- invitations to open faculty academic unit/program meetings and other events (e.g., meet and greets, faculty alignment days, academic planning days, etc.),
- periodic check-ins by designated program or academic unit to monitor progress and to discuss any issues and solutions,
- reminders about key resources, e.g., CTET's Teaching & Course Design @RRU and Studio,
- sharing of, and dialogue on, student course evaluations,
- invitation to participation in panel interviews as part of program external reviews,
- invitations to 'Campus Conversations' events,
- invitation to attend professional (instructional) development (e.g., allotted time during program retreats, invitations to instructional workshops, etc.), and/or
- thank you email/letter upon completion of contract for services.

5. Evaluation

5.1 The services provided by associate faculty contractors should be evaluated to ensure that the deliverables specified in their service contracts have been met. Such evaluation should use transparent, fair, consistent, and evidenced-based approaches, including a combination of the following elements (as appropriate):

- periodic check-ins by designated program or unit leader to monitor progress,
- review of marking grids (i.e., grades) submitted by instructor,
- "self-evaluation" of course completed by the instructor (i.e., what worked and did not, and areas for improvement, etc.),
- standard student course evaluations or feedback forms administered and compiled by the program office at course completion (and, ideally, mid-term),
- course feedback gathered and provided by student cohort reps,
- comments on student course evaluations,
- examination of trends for student enrolment and participation in recurrent applied and professional course offerings delivered by the instructor,
- dialogue and discussion between the program or unit leader and associate faculty contractor regarding services provided, measured against contract deliverables,
- identification of any deficiencies, and agreement on an action plan for correction,
- acknowledgment of successful contract conclusion.

5.2 Administrative set-ups to support associate faculty evaluations should be provided by the academic unit staff, and overseen by deans, directors, or their academic designate. All evaluations administered and compiled by the program office or department should be shared directly with the associate faculty by the director. An opportunity should be provided for an associate faculty instructor to respond or provide comments and discuss the results with the dean, director, or their

academic designate; this includes the latter noting areas well done by the instructor, as well as any areas for improvement.

6. Renewal or Termination of Contract

6.1 An associate faculty contract for services shall terminate on the expiry date of the contract.

6.2 An associate faculty contractor has access to the RRU Library collections and services for the duration of their contract in support of their RRU contract deliverables exclusively. Access to the Library collections and services ends on the contract expiry date, unless another contract for services is set to begin within 60 days of the expiring contract.

6.3 Decisions on the possible renewal (by mutual agreement) or non-renewal of associate faculty service contracts shall be made by the applicable director or designate. Renewal decisions shall use a transparent and evidenced-based approach, including such factors as an evaluation of the services provided by the associate faculty contractor, existing program needs, and other relevant criteria as established by the applicable director or designate.

6.4 A contract for associate faculty services may be terminated before the expiry date of the contract, by written notice to the associate faculty contractor. Among other reasons, a contract may be terminated if there is demonstrated failure, despite reasonable attempts to support the contractor's success, to comply with the terms and/or effectively meet the deliverables specified in the contract. Complete information on Termination can be found under "Terms and Conditions" in Part Two of the Professional Services Contract.

6.5 The unit or program may elect to arrange an exit meeting with a departing associate faculty contractor.

Source URL (modified on 2018-12-04 09:58): <https://policies.royalroads.ca/policies/associate-faculty-contract-services-policy>