College of Liberal and Applied Arts  
Policy on Adjunct Faculty

I. Adjunct instructors are an integral part of the faculty in the College of Liberal and Applied Arts. In many departments, they teach a substantial proportion of core curriculum courses and thus have a major impact on student readiness and performance in more advanced classes. It is therefore imperative that department chairs take steps to ensure that adjuncts:

1—are competent teachers with the skills needed to provide quality instruction in the courses for which they are responsible; and

2—have a sense that they are valued colleagues with a stake in the well-being of the university and its students.

II. To meet goal number 1 above, chairs in the College are encouraged to take the following steps:

A. Involve continuing faculty in drawing up departmental guidelines concerning the maximum number of course sections that may be taught by adjuncts in a given semester and the required professional and academic credentials for adjuncts. Chairs might also involve continuing faculty in the hiring process for adjuncts.

B. Pair each adjunct with a continuing faculty member who can serve as a mentor. Mentors might be asked to visit the assigned adjunct’s classroom at least once per semester to provide feedback on the adjunct’s teaching and choice of assignments.

C. Make a point of touching bases with adjuncts and their mentors on a regular basis to see if there are problems of which you should be aware. By soliciting feedback from both adjuncts and mentors throughout the semester, and not just during course evaluation time, difficulties in adjunct courses might be headed off before it is too late to make adjustments. In order to remain in the adjunct pool, adjunct faculty members should be evaluated on an annual basis.

D. Ensure that adjuncts are participating in assessment activities in keeping with SACS and THECB rules.

III. To meet goal number 2, chairs in the College are encouraged to consider the following steps:

A. Give adjuncts the opportunity to meet and become familiar with more accomplished students by asking them to judge student competitions or playing key roles in awards ceremonies. Invite them to departmental gatherings.

B. Invite adjuncts to those faculty meetings relevant to their role in the department.

C. Involve them in the decision-making process where appropriate by, for example, soliciting their input on scheduling matters (what courses they would most like to teach and at what times).

D. If they are interested and willing, involve adjuncts in service activities that are a good fit with their talents. (Make it clear that they are not obligated to perform such service, but give them the opportunity to serve if they so desire.)

E. Make adjuncts visible by letting colleagues and students know who is teaching adjunct sections.

F. Make sure adjuncts know where to get the information they most need to be both successful teachers and content members of the university community. Some of this information is of a very practical nature. Like other new faculty members, adjuncts need to know about payroll and benefits; where to get a faculty ID card; where to get a parking permit; and how to obtain an e-mail account. Adjuncts learn about most of those matters at new employee orientation in the Office of Human Resources. Such information is also available in A Colleague’s Survival Guide: Advice and SFA Faculty Handbook, an on-line resource maintained by the Faculty Senate (http://www.sfasu.edu/facsenate/handbook/index.asp). The Survival Guide also provides valuable information about library facilities at SFA, the AARC, and the Teaching Excellence Center. Like other faculty members, adjuncts should be made aware of this resource’s availability.

Approved by vote of LAA Chair Council, December 8 2008