

# COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

## MU faculty members voice approval for non-tenure-track voting

By [Katie Yaeger](#)

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MU faculty members gathered Tuesday in Memorial Student Union for a forum to discuss whether non-tenure-track faculty should have the right to vote on campus matter. The panelists included Nicole Monnier, associate teaching professor in the Department of German and Russian Studies; Clyde Bentley, associate professor at the School of Journalism; Ken Dean, MU deputy provost; and Stephen Montgomery-Smith, chair of faculty affairs and professor of mathematics. ; [Showkat Nanda](#)

*\*CORRECTION: An earlier version of this article misstated the purpose of the forum and \*\* the nature of 11 votes held since 2000.*

COLUMBIA — It's been about 15 years since the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources gave non-tenure-track faculty departmental voting rights, said Tom Payne, vice chancellor and dean of the school.

The difference between non-tenure-track and tenure-track has diminished at the school during

Payne's time at MU. He can no longer distinguish between tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty in the college, he told the audience at an MU Faculty Council forum Tuesday.

\*The forum was held to allow for questions and answers before voting begins March 4 on whether to change the definition of "faculty" in the Collected Rules and Regulations to include all ranked members.

Only tenure-track and tenured faculty can vote. If it passes, it will go to the University of Missouri System's Board of Curators for final approval.

Nearly all faculty members who spoke at the roughly hour-long forum supported giving non-tenure-track faculty voting rights.

Non-tenure-track faculty members are hired under one-year and three-year contracts and do not have the potential to receive tenure. If passed, the proposal to widen the definition of faculty would give non-tenure-track faculty members the right to vote on all campus-wide issues except those exclusively concerning tenure-track faculty, [according to a previous Missourian report](#). "I cannot vote on those policies I help my committee shape," said Nicole Monnier, a non-tenure-track Faculty Council member and chairwoman of the academic affairs committee.

Of the 36 Faculty Council members, four are non-tenure-track faculty. Each category of non-tenure-track faculty has its own representative on the council, but clinical and professional faculty share a representative.

The University of Missouri-Kansas City is the only university in the University of Missouri System that has given non-tenure-track faculty voting rights, deputy provost Ken Dean said. All MU schools and colleges have given non-tenure-track faculty voting rights for intradisciplinary matters except for the College of Arts and Science and the College of Engineering, Monnier said. The College of Arts and Science is working to revise its bylaws to allow for such voting, Monnier said.

\*\*Since 2000, there have been 11 campus-wide votes, and only a few of them have concerned exclusively tenured and tenure-track faculty, Monnier said. Non-tenure-track faculty have been unable to vote on changes to general education requirements, capstone requirements and diversity requirements, among other matters.

"I'm happy to serve the campus, but it gets tiresome to have responsibility and not have a vote on that," Monnier said.

Some faculty members have concerns, including a belief that non-tenure-track faculty are less

committed to MU because their contracts require them to fulfill only two of three areas expected of tenured and tenure-track faculty: academia, research and service.

"By doing what (non-tenure-track faculty) do best, we bring good things to the university," School of Medicine research associate professor Jeannette Jackson-Thompson said in response to that concern. "We are recognized by what we contribute."

There are more than 700 non-tenure-track faculty members who make up about 36 percent of ranked faculty, meaning they hold the title of assistant, associate or full professor. That figure excludes adjunct and visiting professors.

Since 2002, [the percentage of non-tenure-track faculty](#) at MU has continued to grow. Most teaching editors at the Columbia Missourian are non-tenure-track faculty. Missourian public safety editor [Katherine Reed](#) represents clinical and professional practice non-tenure-track faculty on the council.

Tenured and tenure-track faculty will vote on the matters in an email vote to take place March 4 to 8. A forum for faculty to discuss the proposals is available on Blackboard.

If it passes, the change would go to the University of Missouri System's Board of Curators for final approval.

*Supervising editor is [Elizabeth Brixey](#).*