

Resolution on Voting Rights for Faculty on Contingent Appointments
March 25, 2025

Whereas “the participation of all faculty in shared governance strengthens the faculty’s voice”ⁱ; and

Whereas “curricular and other academic decisions benefit from the participation of all faculty, including those who teach core courses”ⁱⁱ; and

Whereas “a college or university in which all the components are aware of their interdependence, of the usefulness of communication among themselves, and of the force of joint action will enjoy increased capacity to solve educational problems”ⁱⁱⁱ; and

Whereas “if the voices of faculty on contingent appointments are left out of the governance process, then so are the needs of the students they serve”^{iv}; and

Whereas the right to vote is a crucial form of recognition and respect, affirming the value of the faculty member and constituting the faculty as a deliberate and purposeful community^v; and

Whereas contingent faculty without voting rights may feel excluded, marginalized, and disrespected^{vi}; and

Whereas “the faculty of SUNY Cortland,” as described in Chapter 150.01 of the *SUNY Cortland Handbook*, comprises “the SUNY Chancellor, the SUNY Cortland President, campus officers defined by Article X of the SUNY Board of Trustees’ Policies to include Management/Confidential employees, all members of the academic staff with academic and qualified academic rank, and members of the professional faculty occupying unclassified service positions as defined by the Board of Trustees”^{vii}; and

Whereas the *SUNY Board of Trustees Policies* describes the voting faculty at each college as

- a) The Chancellor and the chief administrative officer of the college; and
- b) Members of the academic staff of the college having academic rank and term or continuing appointments; and
- c) Such other officers of administration and staff members as may be specified by the faculty bylaws of the college^{viii};

and

Whereas, in keeping with this provision, SUNY Cortland has amended its bylaws to extend voting rights to all professional faculty, both part- and full-time; and

Whereas SUNY Cortland is permitted under the *SUNY Board of Trustees Policies* to extend voting rights to academic faculty on contingent appointments as well; and

Whereas SUNY Cortland is one of only two SUNY University Centers that have not extended voting rights to academic faculty on contingent appointments^{ix}; and

Whereas many faculty who hold contingent appointments at SUNY Cortland, either part- or full-time, work at other SUNY campuses as well and are profoundly experienced as teachers and career academics; and

Whereas contingent faculty have a fundamental interest in all the academic and professional matters about which Faculty Senate is charged to advise the institutional leadership, including curriculum, program development, grading policies, course-teacher evaluations, student-learning outcomes, and campus climate^x; and

Whereas contingent faculty who are fully integrated into the University will be better able to connect students with other faculty and with the full array of campus programs and services; and

Whereas service within departments is currently a component in some contingent appointments and, more broadly and as AAUP recommends, the absence of compensation “should not be used to exclude faculty on contingent appointments from voluntarily serving in governance”^{xi};

Be it resolved that all full-time faculty of qualified academic rank and part-time faculty on term appointments be eligible to serve in Faculty Senate and to vote in University-wide elections and referenda; and

Be it further resolved that Chapter 150.04 Article III of the *SUNY Cortland Handbook*, under the heading “Membership: The Composition of the SUNY Cortland Faculty,” be amended such that the current definition of the voting faculty,

The voting faculty of the university shall be defined as the individuals listed in Chapter 150.01 excluding those with qualified academic rank,

is revised to the following effect:

The voting faculty of the university shall be defined as the individuals listed in Chapter 150.01, including full-time faculty of qualified academic rank and part-time faculty on term appointments;

and

Be it further resolved that academic departments and the library be encouraged at their discretion to confer voting rights on contingent faculty.

ⁱ AAUP. [“One Hundred Years. One Faculty.”](#)

ⁱⁱ AAUP. [“One Hundred Years. One Faculty.”](#)

-
- iii AAUP, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. [“Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.”](#) 1966.
- iv AAUP. [“One Hundred Years. One Faculty.”](#)
- v Gappa, Judith M., Ann E. Austin, and Andrea G. Trice. *Rethinking Faculty Work: Higher Education's Strategic Imperative*. Jossey-Bass, 2007, p. 139.
- vi Kezar, Adrianna and Cecile Sam. [“Governance as a Catalyst for Policy Change: Creating a Contingent Faculty Friendly Academy.”](#) *Educational Policy* 28(3), 2014, pp. 425-462.
- vii *SUNY Cortland Handbook*, [Chapter 150.01](#).
- viii *SUNY Board of Trustees Policies*, [Article X §2](#), p. 20.
- ix Birren, Genevieve. “Faculty Voting Rights by Campus.” Feb. 2025.
- x Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. [“AGB Board Of Directors’ Statement on Shared Governance.”](#) 2017.
- xi AAUP. [The Inclusion in Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent Appointments](#), p. 12.