

## **Working With Staff at Simpson College (6/16/2015)**

### **Introduction**

Every employee of Simpson College deserves respect for what she or he contributes to the mission of the institution. We work as members of a team. At the same time, not all jobs are the same and not all jobs come with the same set of expectations. This document is to help new faculty employees better understand the role staff members play at Simpson College.

### **Types of Jobs at Simpson College**

Jobs at Simpson College are classified in one of three categories: exempt, non-exempt and faculty.

#### Non-faculty Employees

*Exempt employees* are those on annual contracts. They are not paid by the hour, but rather paid with a fixed salary. Although they are required to keep a time card, exempt employees are *exempt* from being paid over time. They tend to work until the job is done rather than on a fixed schedule. For many, this means evenings and weekends.

*Non-exempt employees* are those on hourly contracts. They are paid by the hour for their work. If a non-exempt employee works more than their regularly scheduled hours, she or he will likely be paid for the extra hours (if approved by their supervisor). They keep a timecard of their hours.

Both exempt employees and non-exempt employees working full-time accrue vacation time, sick leave and receive benefits. Part-time exempt employees and part-time non-exempt employees do not accrue vacation time or sick leave. Each position is assigned a grade level from 1 to 11. Grade levels can be found in the *Employee Handbook* (Appendix F) at: <http://simpson.edu/human-resources/employee-handbook/appendices/>. Compensation for exempt and non-exempt employees is set by the local conditions.

Both exempt and non-exempt employees are to receive annual performance reviews. Performance reviews are conducted by the employee's direct supervisor.

#### Faculty Employees

Employees considered faculty may be either part time or full time. Anyone who teaches class for Simpson is considered a faculty member. Each faculty member is given an academic "rank" depending on her or his education level and experience. Full-time faculty members receive annual contracts that run from late August through the end of May. They also have time off that runs concurrently with the breaks given to students. Faculty members do not accrue sick leave or vacation time. Full-time faculty members are scheduled to teach six or seven, four-credit courses each academic year. Except in a few cases, faculty members do not have prescribed institutional duties during the summer or when the college is on recess. The salary for full-time faculty members is determined individually in negotiations with the college at the time of hire. Each faculty member has a salary target that is pegged to the salaries of other faculty in the region.

After six years of full-time service, most faculty members are eligible and receive "tenure" through a system of peer review. Tenure and peer review are traditions in education, particularly higher education. Tenure guarantees freedom of speech and inquiry for faculty members within their expertise. While in their six-year probationary period, tenure-track faculty members receive annual reviews. A faculty member who receives tenure will have performance reviews every five years after being tenured. Faculty members who do not receive tenure are provided a one-year advance notice of termination.

It should be noted that some exempt employees are at times considered to be “faculty” members. The president of the college and the academic dean are exempt employees, but by tradition, they are also considered to be faculty members. Other exempt employees (Assistant Dean for Student Academic Achievement, Vice-President for Student Development, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, etc.) are given faculty title as adjuncts and academic rank when she or he teaches class, but they are not given a vote in meetings. There are also employees who are categorized as “Teaching Specialist” faculty members who serve in a teaching function but do not normally teach formal classes. Librarians, the college’s assistant technical director in the theatre department and our athletic trainers, among others, fit into this category.

### **Common Questions and Answers About Staff**

Q: How are staff members hired?

A: Each time a vacancy occurs, the divisional vice president responsible for the position requests from the president of the college authorization to refill the position. It is that person’s responsibility to determine how the search will take place, where the position will be advertised, and who will be involved in the search. Typically, staff positions are advertised in the Des Moines Register Career Builder. National searches are often done for the senior most positions of the administration. The final decision is made by the vice president and the president of the college.

Q: How is the performance of staff members reviewed?

A: Staff performance reviews are to be performed annually by the individual’s direct supervisor. The method of review changes from time-to-time. In the summer of 2014, a new review process was created by the Employee Advisory Council for use with all staff employees.

Q: Can staff members be fired?

A: Yes, all members of the staff may be fired with appropriate notice. The notice provisions are included in the contract letter provided to exempt staff members. Non-exempt staff members may be fired with appropriate notice.

Q: Are there unions at Simpson College?

A: Yes and no. Staff members at Simpson are not unionized. Some Sodexo employees are unionized.

Q: Are members of plant services, the college bookstore, and the dining service employees of Simpson College?

A: No. Simpson contracts with Sodexo Corporation for plant services. People who work on building maintenance, grounds, building cleaning, etc. are Sodexo. People who work in the bookstore are employees of Follett Corporation, and our dining services are employees of Chartwells. These three corporations are under contract to Simpson College. The contracts are reviewed on a regular basis. Sometimes when a contract is coming to an end, the college uses a bidding process to get multiple proposals.

Q: How many hours do staff employees work each week?

A: The normal work week is 38.75 hours. Exempt employees put in as many hours as necessary to get the job done. Non-exempt staff members are normally paid overtime should she or he put in more than 38.75 hours a week (straight time) and over 40 hours a week (time and a half).

Q: Do full-time staff employees work year-round?

A: Yes, and no. Most full-time staff employees have twelve month contracts and accrue vacation time for each day they work. Some staff employees have nine or ten month contracts, but are considered full-time for benefits purposes. These employees do not accrue vacation time.

Q: Do staff members get Fall Break and Spring Break free like faculty members do? Are there dates when the staff members have free but the faculty don’t?

A: No to both questions; however, staff typically get the week off between Christmas and New Year’s and Friday half days in the summer (both with pay).

- Q: If I have a concern, complaint or compliment about the conduct of a staff member, whom should I contact?
- A: Contact their direct supervisor or Cabinet member over that department (link to Simpson's organizational chart: <http://simpson.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/2014-Organizational-Chart.pdf>).
- Q: How do I know who the staff member's supervisor is?
- A: Go to the home page for Simpson.edu and type in the person's name in the Search feature. Once you click on their name for the directory, there is a link for MEMBER DEPARTMENT for most employees. This will take you to the department list for that employee.
- Q: What if I have a problem with the supervisor?
- A: Contact the Cabinet member to whom the supervisor reports.
- Q: Is this the same for Chartwell's and Sodexo?
- A: Contact the Vice President for Business and Finance.
- Q: Who takes over a staff member's responsibilities when that staff member is sick or on vacation?
- A: Each department is different. Check with the supervisor for that department.
- Q: What is the Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) and what does it do? Who is elected to it?
- A: EAC is comprised of eight representatives, four non-exempt and four exempt employees. Each member holds their appointment for a two year period. Terms begin in the January after elections are held. Members will be limited to serving one two-year term and then they must take a year off before being eligible for re-election. EAC can always call upon a past committee member or other willing employee for consultation or completion of a large project.  
Web page: <http://simpson.edu/human-resources/special-programs/employee-advisory-committee/> )
- Q: What is the Employee Council?
- A: Employee Council is the monthly meeting for staff. Dates are on the web site: <http://simpson.edu/human-resources/employee-council-dates/>  
Minutes are on the web site: <http://simpson.edu/human-resources/special-programs/employee-council-minutes/>