

Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on CT Searches CT Caucus

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Introduction:

As Continuing Track (CT) faculty open positions become available across the University, faculty members who are on CT search committees have been seeking guidance on how to conduct CT searches. One of the main questions is how to explain what “Continuing Track” means at the University of Delaware. People outside of the university do not understand what continuing track means, and even within UD, faculty do not always know the variations in workload and responsibilities that exist within the continuing track. Explaining clearly what continuing track entails is important in recruiting and hiring the best candidates.

CT faculty who have been on search committees and recent CT hires informally reported variations in the composition of search committees, the language of job ads, the questions asked in phone/Zoom interviews, and the protocols and experiences for in-person interviews. There has been anecdotal evidence of search committees who were not able to fully and accurately describe what it means to be hired as a CT faculty member and of faculty candidates who did not fully understand the nature of the position they applied for. For instance, we found one CT posting on a TT job board, and we have had applicants for searches think they were applying for a post-doc or adjunct opportunity. More than one search committee has found themselves writing a job description “from scratch” to articulate what it means to be CT faculty, while others have passed around and modified language from prior searches in other programs. Further, because CT faculty often serve a different role in a department than TT faculty, it may not be appropriate to use a TT search as a model for how to conduct a CT search.

In Fall 2022, an ad hoc committee was charged by the CT Caucus to develop best practices for future CT searches. Members drew on their experiences interviewing for their own position at UD, as well as participation as members of a search committee for CT candidates. Our recommendations are designed to help search committees find the best candidate for their CT positions. Through implementing the committee’s suggestions, we believe that UD can improve the experiences for both search committees and prospective faculty members in finding the best people to fill CT faculty positions.

The following are recommendations for different stages of a CT faculty search.

I. Establishing the Search Committee

- Consider having at least two CT faculty members on the search committee.
- If the new hire will do something different or unusual in the department, try to find a CT faculty in another department with a parallel workload to serve on the search committee.
- If your unit has no CT faculty, ask CT faculty from other units to serve on the search committee.
- Ask the department chair to clarify the expected workload for the new faculty before the search begins. This should not wait until after the person is hired in case there is a misunderstanding about the expected workload. (This is important since CT faculty have more variation in workload than TT faculty so TT faculty on the committee may not understand that this needs to be articulated before the search begins.)

II. Advertising

- Be mindful of the title of the job advertisement. The term “Continuing Track” is not used at other institutions and could lead applicants to filter out CT positions while searching through job databases. Consider putting the rank of the position first, such as "Assistant Professor in the Department of _____ (Continuing Track)" and then provide details about continuing track in the job description (instead of leading the ad title with Continuing Track such as "Continuing Track Assistant Professor in the Department of _____").
- Include clear language about continuing track in the job description as shown in the examples below.
 - The Continuing Track (CT) is UD’s full-time, continuing faculty line, similar to the tenure track. CT faculty enjoy contracts that increase in length over time and, like tenure-track faculty, receive full and generous benefits, including family-friendly benefits, as part of their compensation package. CT faculty with terminal degrees hold professorial rank and have a path to promotion up to full professor; CT faculty without terminal degrees are at the instructor rank and have a parallel path to promotion. All CT faculty earn sabbaticals, have opportunities to pursue research, participate in shared governance, and hold academic leadership positions.
- Provide a link to the CT Caucus page, [“Why Do You Want to be a CT Faculty at UD?”](#) within the job advertisement.

III. Recruiting Candidates, especially diverse candidates

- Contact chairs of graduate programs at other institutions and share job announcement; In the e-mail communication, emphasize that the committee is particularly interested in candidates from diverse backgrounds or from underrepresented groups
- Contact colleagues who conduct work in target fields – ask for names of graduate students; In e-mail solicitation, emphasize that the committee is particularly interested in

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- Contact UD colleagues in diversity caucuses and organizations such as UDARI asking for the names of contacts in target fields
- Advertise in professional organizations for underrepresented scholars and in organizations whose mission is to foster DEI/multicultural education.

IV. Zoom Interview

- Clearly explain what CT means during the Zoom interview and encourage the candidate to check out CT Caucus website (Put in chat) <https://sites.udel.edu/ctcaucus/>.
- Explain review and renewal process; emphasize contracts are long term and rolling and that CT faculty have full faculty benefits.
- Discuss workloads with chair before Zoom interview since this is usually a question.
- Direct them to Faculty Handbook and Department Documents (which are linked on the CT site ([Why do you want to be CT at UD](#))).
- Sample questions from recent CT interviews are available from this committee upon request.

V. On-Campus Interviews

Job Talk

- Particularly for teaching-focused CT candidates, consider scheduling the job talk during a time when students can attend. Faculty may consider offering extra credit to students for attending the lecture to increase attendance by students.
- Alternately, you may opt to have the candidates lecture in a standing class and teach a topic appropriate to that course.
- If candidate is giving a job talk, get commitments from department members and any outside faculty that they will attend. The candidate needs to know they will be supported by their department and other faculty in the university.
- If the candidate is doing a presentation to the department, make sure the candidate clearly understands what the presentation should include.
- Several recent searches have used the following prompt for their CT searches: Ask the candidate to present an appropriate classroom demonstration lesson as their interview talk. Spend 5 minutes introducing themselves, 40 minutes on the “lecture” and 15 minutes on their research.
- When introducing the candidate to the department/ School, tell your faculty what the teaching demo prompt was. Do this for every candidate, given that not everyone attends every lecture. This is important because prompts for CT candidates are likely to differ from the standard research talk expected of TT candidates.

Meetings with faculty/ students/ others

- If the CT faculty will have a majority teaching appointment, consider planning for the candidate to have lunch with undergraduate or graduate students– whichever group their teaching will focus on.
- To provide the opportunity to learn more about CT faculty at UD, plan for the candidate to meet with other CT faculty from your or other departments. Groups do not have to be large and can be informal such as meeting at Faculty Commons over coffee or during a mealtime. Consider limiting the gathering to only CT faculty, without any TT faculty in attendance. You may consider providing some specific questions to start the conversation:
 - Introduction
 - What roles do you serve on campus?
 - What leadership positions have you had in your department, college, university?
 - If you could go back to your on-campus interview or the days before you were made an offer, what was the question you wished you asked about being CT at UD?
- Consider having the candidate meet with a representative from AAUP. This is standard practice at some institutions.

VI. Hiring

- If your department votes to approve candidates, clarify the role of the new hire (e.g. if the candidate's workload is primarily teaching, emphasize their teaching background so the department does not heavily weigh scholarship).

Submitted 5/5/2023; Revised 7/28/2023