**Non-stick. Non-entity. Non-tenure track faculty.**

**Vivian Shyu**

Non-stick.

A pan where food doesn't stick is a non-stick pan.

Non-entity.

A thing that does not hold importance is a non-entity.

Non-Tenure Track Faculty.

A Faculty that is not Tenure Track is a Non-tenure track Faculty.

But, wait. We are still, primarily, active members of the faculty, are we not? How can the definition of what we are be only what we are not? Why are we labeled as that which we're not, when what we are is an essential part of higher education, and of our institution?

I mean, we DO stick. Many of us have been here for our whole careers, some for 20+ years. The median longevity of our NTTF sisters and brothers, in a survey we ran last semester, was about 7 years for rostered NTTF, and 3 years for our Lecturers.

And, we ARE important. On our campus, in 2016, there were 744 of us. We make up 67% of the overall Instructional Faculty.

And really, we DO so much more than just "not-get-tenure." So, let's take this moment together and turn the tables. Let's spend some time thinking about what we DO.

First, we teach, a lot.

As a group, in 2016, we NTTF delivered 71% of all student credit hours. Our visionary leader, Chancellor Horrel, told us recently that 80% of our current campus revenue comes from student tuition and fees. Consider these facts together, and you see that the NTTF are earning a very large portion of the university’s revenue. If you look even closer, though, say at those first two years of students' courses (the ones that seem to make-or-break too many of our students), well, then our presence goes up to 86%. One small step closer still, and we see that 40% of the lower division courses are delivered by our Lecturers. This largest single faction of our overall Instructional Faculty is not only non-tenure, but also part-time. And for some reason, they are too often left to feel they are not important players on our team, on Milo's team. But how can that be, when these NTTF are teaching so many of our pivotal courses? And working so hard, for so little, to teach those courses well?

If we NTTF primarily teach, and we teach as much as we do, perhaps a title like "Primary Teaching Track Faculty" is more informative? PTTF. I like that. I could live with that.

But wait, let's not get ahead of ourselves. I'm not done yet with the "let's talk about what we DO" discussion.

We also serve, enthusiastically.

Thankfully, our university has opened over the past decade or so, to the involvement of NTTF at all levels of governance. Just 5 years ago, in CLAS - the largest college on campus, the default FTE contracted load for an NTTF position was changed from 100% teaching to 90 teaching/10 service. This positive change was instituted to more accurately reflect the substantial and indispensable service the NTTF were already providing. Mind you, before that change, we did not serve because our service was rewarded, or even recognized, but because so many of us are active, engaged, and dedicated citizens of the community, and we are ready and willing to work for positive change.

And, we even act as scholars.

Seven years ago, in recognition of the scholarship, and yes, even sometimes, research, that we NTTF conduct, our campus administration made available a promotional line within the non-tenure track. This doesn't mean we are all are hoping our train will hop the track over to the Tenure Track side. Most of us actually like our Clinical Teaching Track train right where it is. I, for one, like working from a place of Tenure-Freedom. I have the freedom to tailor the research and scholarly activities I conduct to further inform my teaching, and hopefully that of others. But as an NTTF, I don't do all that I do to get Tenure. I do it to continue my development as a professional and to round myself out as an Educator. A Whole Package, with high value, in its own right.

Hmmm? How's that for a title? "Educator Track Faculty." I like this one, too.

Anyway, wrapping up. If we, as a group of talented, committed, hard-working CU Denver Educators, do ALL that we DO, while being less compensated for our indispensable role on the team, shouldn't we at least get a name that imparts some level of unique identity and pride and worth? Shouldn't we carry a title that actually represents something we ARE, as opposed to being defined by that which we are not?

....

Nonsense.

If something does not make sense, it is nonsense. This outdated title - "Non-Tenure Track Faculty," no longer makes, any, sense.