

Academic Specialists [advising, teaching] within Lyman Briggs College
E.H. Simmons, LBC Dean, 2016-12-27

The LBC community has long included continuing-system academic specialists as highly-valued colleagues who are recruited through national searches. Originally, LBC specialists served primarily as academic advisors and administrators, who might occasionally take on teaching roles. Briggs now also employs continuing system specialist-teachers so the college will have a sufficient cohort of dedicated and experienced educators to serve our larger student body, sustain continuity when colleagues are on research or personal leave, and better provide for the service and governance needs of the college.

Here are examples of actions LBC has taken to recognize specialists as valued members of the college community:

- Modified the bylaws to
 - Create seats for academic specialists on the Briggs Advisory Council
 - Clarify where and how specialists may serve on college standing committees
 - Reference the evaluation criteria/procedures for specialists
 - Enable specialists of appropriate rank/status to vote on searches for specialists and on reappointment / promotion of specialists
- Invited specialists to take leadership, service, and governance roles in the college
 - Through the above-mentioned seat on BAC
 - As members of the standing committees (Awards, Inclusion, Educational Policy)
 - As members of search committees for specialists and staff
 - As directors of college curricular and academic affairs programs
 - As formal mentors to more junior members of the college
- Revised the annual and promotion review procedures for specialists to
 - Clarify their structure, timing, and expectations
 - Include regular interaction with the LBC Faculty Excellence Advocate
 - Reside on a dedicated web page for easy reference
- Created standard written search procedures for specialist [teaching] and specialist [advising] positions that provide clarity about timing, process, and expectations
- Encouraged specialists to grow professionally
 - Helped specialists successfully apply for the Adams Academy and AAU STEM Gateway Fellowships
 - Successfully nominated specialists for college and university awards
 - Offered specialists key roles in summer AOP, summer bridge programs, study abroad/away programs, and development of online/hybrid courses
 - Provided specialists with travel funds to attend conferences and access to grant pre-award services
 - Established a biennial group meeting between the Dean, the FEA, and newer continuing status specialists to discuss long-term career planning, including eventual promotion to Senior status. This will augment the existing individual annual evaluation meetings where career planning is also discussed.

- Found a senior specialist from outside LBC to mentor each continuing-status specialist, with an eye toward eventual application for promotion
- Informed them about opportunities available through the MSU Academic Advancement Network and the MSU Academic Specialists Association