The following statement was endorsed by the Executive Council of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) at its meeting of October 6, 2010.

The increasing use of part-time and temporary teachers in language programs threatens the integrity of the profession and instructional programs. The practice of hiring numerous adjunct teachers/faculty year after year to teach large numbers of students undermines professional and educational standards and also impacts academic freedom. While part-time and temporary appointments may provide some curricular benefits and while some individuals may prefer to accept such appointments, these teaching positions are seldom established based on sound educational needs. In reality, the primary motivation for such hiring practices is to reduce the costs of instruction.

These appointments fall into two groups: part-time teachers/faculty and non-tenure-track full-time teachers/instructors. The first group includes both instructors who are clearly temporary members of a department and instructors who teach from year to year and become virtually permanent. Those in the second group usually have full course loads but, as non-tenure-track teachers/faculty members, they lack the institutional commitment given to their tenure-track colleagues. (Graduate students are distinct from both groups.)

Part-time teachers and non-tenure track faculty members are usually hired under conditions that describe them as non-professionals. In many cases they are hired at the last minute. Such teachers receive little or no acknowledgement, recognition or respect for their contributions to their language programs/departments. The majority earns inequitable salaries and may receive no fringe benefits whatsoever.

The dependence on part-time and non-tenure track teachers/faculty can damage individual faculty members, students, institutions, and the profession. For the sake of an institution’s economic welfare, adjunct faculty members are often denied the security that adequate salary, health insurance, and professional status can provide. The institution, in turn, suffers through the creation of a two-tiered system in which faculty members have different responsibilities and expectations.

Because of these concerns, AATSP urges schools, colleges and universities to decrease, limit or even eliminate the use of part-time and non-tenure track appointments. We encourage administrators to improve employment conditions for essential part-time and non-tenure track teachers and faculty members, to ensure their professional recognition and to recognize their important contributions both in and outside the classroom.

In view of this situation, AATSP endorses the following guidelines based on those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) for the employment of adjunct/part-time faculty members.
Guidelines for the Employment of Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty Members

1. Each program, school or department should establish an appropriate limit on the number of part-time teachers and adjunct faculty members in relation to the number of tenured or tenure-track teachers and faculty members (and of graduate students serving as apprentice teachers.) The norm in language programs at all levels should be full-time, tenure-able positions. As tenured teachers and faculty members retire, they should be replaced by tenure-track teachers/faculty members. Programs and departments that routinely assign a large part of undergraduate instruction to part-time and adjunct teachers/faculty members should reconsider their staffing practices.

2. All part-time teachers and adjunct faculty members should be treated as professionals. Each program or department should develop a set of guidelines for such employees. These guidelines may vary from institution to institution but should address the following concerns:
   a. Part-time teachers and adjunct faculty members should be hired, reviewed, and given teaching assignments according to processes comparable to those established for full-time, tenure-line faculty members.
   b. They should be given mailboxes, office space, and clerical support.
   c. They should receive adequate introduction to their teaching assignments, programs and institutions.
   d. They should be paid equitable prorated salaries and should receive basic benefits such as health insurance.
   e. They should be eligible for incentives including financial support for professional development, merit pay/raises, and funding for professionally related travel and research.
   f. As appropriate, they should participate in determining departmental and institutional policies.