

Academic Labor: Research and Artistry

*Volume 4 A National Snapshot of the Material
Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty in
Composition and Technical and Professional
Communication*

2020

Special Issue: Volume 4, Issue 1

Lisa Melonçon
University of South Florida

Mahli Xuan Mechenbier
Kent State University - Geauga Campus

Laura Wilson
University of Cincinnati



Academic Labor: *Research & Artistry*

From the Editors

This special issue of *Academic Labor: Research & Artistry* features the research of **Lisa Melonçon**, **Mahli Mechenbier**, and **Laura Wilson** on the material conditions of contingent faculty in writing and communication programs across the United States. In the articles that follow, the contributors provide the largest data set specific to contingent writing faculty to date, and, from this, offer a detailed analysis “of what it really means to work off the tenure track.” The research, both quantitative and qualitative, offers new data and perspective for considering the material working conditions of contingency.

The focus on composition and technical and professional communication (TPC) faculty is opportune and appropriate, especially as the American Association of University Professors AAUP points out that “contingent appointments are often clustered in programs with very high levels of predictability—such as freshman writing courses” (“Background Facts”). However, contingency is a factor facing nearly every academic department and no conversation on academic labor is complete without acknowledging contingent conditions.

Given that there may be widespread understanding of what qualifies as material conditions, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson quickly point readers to the designation of “the day-to-day working conditions of faculty, such as teaching loads and institutional support” (Melonçon, England & Ilyasova 2019).

Acknowledging the fraught definitions surrounding contingency, including criticism of the term itself, the authors rely largely on the AAUP classifications along with definitions provided by Mechenbier’s 2015 chapter “Contingent Faculty and OWI” and include full-time non-tenure-track faculty, visiting assistant professors, part-time faculty (also known by the term adjunct), and post-doctoral fellows.

The contributors divide their work into six articles. The first, “Introduction to a National Snapshot of the Material Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty in Composition and Technical Professional Communication” presents context and background for the study. Outlining the need for data and contingent voices to be heard, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson point readers to the lack of data-driven discussions on material environments and situations involving contingency in writing fields (a clear impetus for their research). The data gathered not only provides Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson evidence for their own analysis, but offers raw data for future inquiry. The introduction also outlines a key aspect of the research, which is that composition and TPC need to listen to contingent faculty and these faculty need to feel safe in speaking up about the material realities without fearing for their jobs or other workplace retribution. The researchers emphasize that contingent faculty should not be objects of study, but voices with

agency. To have agency, voices must be listened to and respected; hence, the call for attention to “the precarity of contingency.”

“Results and Findings from the Survey” presents data gathered from 313 participant responses to a 41-question survey. Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson examine factors ranging across demographics (including gender, race, institution type, and education levels), material work conditions (such as number of courses, support, and designated office space), compensation, training, professional development, reappointment, and job satisfaction. What sets this section apart is that in addition to quantitative data, the researchers add detailed respondent quotations. Acknowledging the number of quotes is atypical for academic articles, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson remind us that their work involves “narratives in context,” and adding the voices of respondents gives them agency that might otherwise be lost in the translation of data.

Presenting a discussion of potential action points presented by the data, as well as a continuation of direct quotes from respondents, “Data Takeaways” examines some of the materiality faced by contingent faculty. Included are four comprehensive sections on teaching load, significance and application of titles, professional development opportunities, and qualified and quality (or the expertise of contingent faculty and how qualified faculty affect the quality of instruction) since many have argued, starting with the California Faculty Association in the 1970s, that material conditions are teaching and learning conditions. In this article, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson work to create a more holistic perspective on conditions of contingency by offering detailed actions that can be taken by faculty and administrators in composition and TPC programs. A must read for anyone in these programs as the suggested actions not only point to solutions to each of the article’s four dedicated topics (teaching load, titles, professional development, and qualified and quality), but emphasize awareness of academic labor conditions.

“Affective Investment” explores the complexities of emotional labor facing contingent faculty. The authors “provide an extended definition of affective investment and then move to discussions from the data and interviews that reflect the material dimensions of how affective investment impacts contingent faculty in three critical areas: salary and contract; workload and autonomy; and value.” Pulling from influential scholarship in composition, the researchers outline affective investment as going beyond emotion to include an aspect of embodiment and to elicit the personal involvement, or investment, required of teaching. Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson theory build by weaving together data analysis, traditional theory, and primary respondent quotations. The article also focuses on the important contradiction that emerged from the survey results: “While the majority of contingent faculty reported feeling highly satisfied in their jobs, they also expressed a sense of unevenness and frustration with unfair working conditions.”

The article “Politics of Service” dives into the precarity of contingency as it relates to service, but not only the work done by serving on a committee. Instead, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson explain service as “to do work” and includes labor related to all aspects of teaching such as advising, mentoring, and, yes, committee work. One theme the researchers found across multiple types of service is the expectation of self-sacrifice placed on contingent faculty for the perceived common good of the program, department, or institution. The article highlights service to the institution as something contingent faculty seem apt to provide because of the immediate benefit to students. Another focus is on the pressure that student end of term evaluations (SETs) place on the pedagogical decisions made by contingent faculty. Among the pedagogical implications of SETs are those that derive from students whose material circumstances demand that they work but whose expectation is then that courses will be made less rigorous to accommodate their complex lives. Finally, the authors address the sense of contingency as it relates to ownership of intellectual property. Specifically, the work of online course design which is so often fulfilled by contingent faculty in composition and TPC programs. The politics of service are complex, and Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson offer up key insights, driven by data, for our consideration.

In “Looking Forward: Considering the Next Steps for Contingent Labor Material Work Conditions,” the contributors call for the academy to move beyond the proverbial handwringing. They offer new ways of addressing contingency through incremental and intentional steps: starting with acknowledging that the de-professionalization of college-level teaching has directly resulted in an entrenching of the hierarchies within higher education. To help counter this, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson offer a change management approach, essentially a kind of curriculum development for re-envisioning structures involved in faculty operations and founded in ideas presented in Donna Strickland’s *Managerial Unconscious*. Don’t let the authors’ idea of “incremental steps” deceive you as simplistic. Their first proposal is the elimination of first-year composition (FYC) as a general education requirement, which they acknowledge as being a seismic shift for institutions. Of course, this is not a new idea, but it is newly made in this context. Second, they suggest shifting the TPC service course model. Third, they look at the “cost ingredients” that go into adjunct hires as a way to argue against the notion that temporary faculty save money. Finally, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson remind readers that individuals in departments have agency in making transformations, and the implementation of change management techniques will allow systemic changes to occur at a moment when action to address the material concerns of contingency is imperative. “By not taking action,” they argue, “we are no longer innocent bystanders. We are guilty of the burden of precarity that contingent faculty deal with on a daily basis.”

The collective scholarship in this special issue makes the invisible visible and provides a much-needed foundation on which to rethink approaches to contingency in higher education, improve the material conditions of contingent writing faculty, and extrapolate data for further research. As, Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson point out, contingent faculty are not “a problem to be solved,” but “a structural issue” in need of further understanding in order to work toward improving working conditions. This improvement must be done via the material—provided in this special issue through data and evidence.

ALRA Editors

Sue Doe
Colorado State University

Sarah Austin
Air Force Academy Preparatory School

Mary Hickey
Colorado State University

Catherine Ratliff
Colorado State University

Works Cited

“Background Facts on Contingent Faculty Positions.” American Association of University Professors, https://www.aaup.org/issues/contingency/background-facts_. Accessed 15 June 2020.



Introduction to “A National Snapshot of the Material Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty in Composition and Technical and Professional Communication”

Lisa Melonçon
University of South Florida

Mahli Mechenbier
Kent State University: Geauga

Laura Wilson
University of Cincinnati

Lisa Melonçon is a professor of technical communication at the University of South Florida. Her teaching and research focuses on the programmatic and professionalization dimensions of technical and professional communication, research methodologies, and the rhetoric of health and medicine.

Mahli Mechenbier teaches Technical Writing, Professional Writing, and College Writing at Kent State University: Geauga as a three-year-renewable Senior Lecturer. She was a member of NCTE's Committee for Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction and was an editor for the OWI's Open Resource (2013 – 2016). Her research focuses on how academic administrations manage distance learning and the intellectual property rights of contingent faculty.

Laura Wilson has an MA in English with a concentration in Scientific and Technical Communication from Bowling Green State University. She has worked as a technical writer and editor and has taught technical, professional, and business writing at the University of Cincinnati since 2005, where she is an Associate Professor Educator. Laura is passionate about her work and her students; beyond technical writing, she enjoys teaching courses on social media, rhetoric, and web authoring.

“I love my job, but...”
Study Participant

Labor conditions in higher education continue to receive an enormous amount of attention because of the shifting nature of faculty jobs. Based on the most recent aggregated data from 2016, the U.S. academic labor force breaks down faculty by category as follows:

- 29% tenured or tenure track;
- 17% full-time, non-tenure-track (FT NTT);
- 40% part time; and
- 14% graduate students (AAUP “Data”).

In this special issue, we offer data and analysis from a national survey of contingent faculty specific to faculty who teach in different types of writing programs. To our knowledge, we have collected the largest set of data that is specific to (and confined to) contingent faculty who teach in first-year composition (FYC) programs and technical and professional communication (TPC) degree programs. This important point (that we expound on below) cannot be underscored enough. National surveys (see, for example, Coalition on the Academic Workforce; the Delphi Project; and the New Faculty Majority) have provided important information about contingent faculty, as have the statements prepared and distributed by national academic organizations (e.g., Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC); Modern Language Association; National Council for the Teachers of English; Rhetoric Society of America). However, position statements only show part of the picture. Sue Doe and Mike Palmquist point out that position statements are paradoxical in nature because they show that the overarching problems have yet to be solved (24). The number of statements and their recency indicate an awareness from national organizations that contingency needs to be addressed, but while these generalized statements can show support for contingent faculty, they often provide suggestions that are unattainable (e.g., the MLA recommendation for \$7000 per course), which limits their application in localized arguments to improve work conditions. The generalized nature also undermines specific arguments made by fields such as composition and TPC who rely heavily on contingent labor. That is, both national reports and organizational statements lack specificity about writing faculty, and, more importantly, they lack specificity about the material work lives of those same faculty.

Our primary question that drove this research project was: what are the material work conditions of contingent faculty in *writing*? We define material work conditions as “the day-to-day working conditions of

faculty, such as teaching loads and institutional support” (Melonçon, England & Ilyasova 209). Our aim with this special issue is to provide the methodology, results, and findings of the study to shed important light on the material realities; to provide focus for future research; and, most importantly, to move toward improving these work conditions.

In this introduction to the special issue, we set the groundwork with some important terminology distinctions and definitions, and then we discuss in more detail the two primary exigencies for this research project: the need for data and the need to listen to contingent faculty. We close the introduction with a detailed description of the methodology of the overall study and brief overviews of the articles in the issue.

Terminology and Definitions

A primary tenet of TPC is definitional to make sure that all audiences start in the same place. To help readers navigate this special issue, it is crucial to define terms and orientations so there is no confusion. While composition scholars (e.g., Cox et al.; Bousquet et al.; Kahn et al.; McClure et al.; Scott) have been discussing issues of faculty labor for some time, TPC has only recently begun to examine these same issues (Melonçon & England; Melonçon; Melonçon et al.). A project that started out with only an orientation to TPC (see methodology below) ended up being a project that included contingent faculty from two distinct areas within the larger umbrella of writing studies: composition and TPC. Composition and TPC have distinct and separate identities, from journals and conferences to the material realities of administrative work. Therefore, we offer the following definitions and justifications:

- **Composition:** We acknowledge there are many competing names that are often conflated—rhetoric and composition, composition, composition studies, writing studies (to name a few)—for the field/discipline that administers first-year writing. We have settled on composition for ease of reading and to keep the focus on the administration and management of these programs as they are tied to labor.
- **Technical and professional communication (TPC):** The area of writing that focuses on workplace and organizational communication and writing.
- **First-year composition (FYC):** The designation for a course or a two-course sequence often required as a general education component for incoming freshmen.
- **Writing program administrator (WPA):** The accepted abbreviation, long used in composition, for those who administer an FYC program.
- **Technical and professional communication program administrator (TPC PA):** The abbreviation commonly used in TPC to identify program administrators and one that was

purposely created to distinguish the administrator of a TPC program from a WPA. While there is something of an equivalent to the first-year writing course within TPC, the field has, from its earliest days, also administered full degree programs, which makes their program administration unlike that of a WPA since they often tackle the administration of two distinct, but related, entities.

The most important, and likely the most contentious, term is **contingent faculty**. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) defines contingent faculty as including part-time faculty, full-time faculty outside tenure lines, and graduate student employees (Curtis and Jacobe 6). We have settled on following the AAUP and using the term contingent with an understanding that we are aware of the criticism of the term (see e.g., Bartholomae). Even participants in the research study let us know what they thought of the term, with one saying, “*I really hate the term ‘contingent’ [because it] makes me sound like I am a migrant worker.*” This participant was not the only one who expressed this type of concern with “contingent.” It is important to note, that in the one meeting where all three authors were together before starting this project, this was a main point of discussion. How faculty who work off the tenure-track are described and what they are called is important, as important as actual titles, because different terms are associated with many different connotations faculty cannot change. After a long discussion among ourselves, we chose to use contingent. However, it is vitally important to know that the final decision on this terminology was made by the two authors of this study, Laura and Mahli, who are contingent faculty. Mainly, this was because there are so many types of contingent faculty (as defined below) and identifying each in turn throughout the articles would weigh down the point of this research: that all faculty off the tenure-track have a story about how their material work life is affected by their contingency. Further, part of this decision to use contingent was to align this conversation with ongoing conversations in FYC and TPC, as well as with ongoing national conversations about labor conditions in higher education. Throughout, we do often use and conflate contingent faculty with faculty. If we are referring to faculty who are not contingent, that distinction is made clear in the language used.

Since language is an important implication of this project, we want to bring a carefulness and attention to definitions and terminology. Too often in trade publications (such as *Inside Higher Ed* or the *Chronicle of Higher Education*), in national social media (such as Twitter), on disciplinary listservs, and even in published scholarship, the nuances of labor and contingency are conflated where contingent and/or adjunct are a stand-in for all types of faculty not on the tenure track. However, as Mahli Mechenbier notes, “distinctions have developed among the stratifications

of contingent faculty.” We have slightly modified Mechenbier’s original definitions for the purposes of this project:

- **Full-time, non-tenure-track (FT NTT)** faculty with renewable contracts (that have few long-term restrictions—meaning there’s no limit on how many times their contract can be renewed) and often with benefits and some sense of job security;
- **Visiting assistant professors (VAP)/Visiting instructors (VIs)**, who have full-time contracts usually for one year but sometimes renewable for up to three years;
- **Part-time faculty/adjuncts**, who are term faculty with one-semester contracts and rarely have few long-term restrictions; and
- **Post-doctoral fellows**, who typically are limited to two or three years on contract (less common in writing) (226-227).

There are distinct differences between types of appointments, and all of writing would be well served to discuss, and even to highlight, these important differences. For example, Casie Fedukovich, Susan Miller-Cochran, Brent Simoneaux, and Robin Snead write: “Certainly there is a vast difference between full-time, renewable, benefits-bearing, contract positions and part-time, semester-by-semester, contract positions” (127). The differences in types of positions also amplify deeply embedded feelings about the entire labor system of hiring education. Christine Cucciarre explains:

I was persuaded to take the job because my university offers continuing non-tenure-track (CNTT) faculty the same benefits, salary, sabbatical opportunities, travel funds, voting rights, promotion possibilities, and other amenities that the tenured and tenure-track faculty enjoy. Yet, in spite of these generous perquisites, I know that in accepting the position I was doing a disservice to my field, and to college teachers. I am not innocent in the hypocrisy. And I am continually confronted by the implications of my decision. (58)

The type of FT NTT job that Cucciarre describes aligns in some ways with Laura and Mahli’s jobs in continuing positions. Cucciarre also captures the complicated feelings and complex systems associated with contingency that we will talk about through this issue.

Seeking more clarity about material conditions of contingency is a large part of the impetus for this project, that is, to encourage a more nuanced understanding of what it really means to work off the tenure track

in FYC and TPC. In addition, this project was designed to begin to understand the differences in types and kinds of contingent positions, and how those positions and differences affect the lives of faculty. Though the sensational scenarios (e.g., faculty who have been reduced to sleeping in their cars or teaching six different courses at three different institutions in the same semester) are often the most visible and thus discussed in national venues, the fact remains that many contingent faculty working in FYC and TPC programs are hard-working professionals who make valuable, meaningful contributions at their institutions with appointments that promise longevity and security. Both ends of the spectrum need to be highlighted so that a more nuanced and accurate picture of the material work lives of contingent faculty who teach in FYC or TPC programs can emerge. Ideally, we aim to show the gap between the two ends of the spectrum and hope this project illuminates the ways institutions influence this gap, and how we might start to bridge it.

Finally, we want to mention a stylistic, and political, note about writing. Composition scholarship often uses “we” as a stand in for both authors and the field. Like Marc Bousquet, however, we find this use of “we” too ambiguous. As Bousquet points out:

Who is the ‘we’ indexed by composition scholars? Who is meant by the term compositionist? Sometimes it means “those who teach composition”; sometimes it means “those of us who theorize and supervise the teaching of composition.” The movement between these meanings always has a pronounced tendency to obscure the interests and voices of those who teach composition... it imbues the ambition of the professional or managerial compositionist for respect and validity with the same urgency as the struggle of composition labor for wages, health care, and office space. (499)

Because of Bousquet’s excellent point, we follow the stylistic convention of only using “we/our” to indicate the authors of this work. In all other cases, the language will make clear whom the subject is.

The Need for Data

One will notice throughout the special issue that there is not an overabundance of scholarship cited. We deliberately confined our evidence and support to research by scholars in the field. Here we use “field” to mean scholars working in composition studies; writing studies; composition and rhetoric; rhetoric; and technical and professional communication. When we limited our research by this parameter, we were surprised at the paucity of research, which is the reason for the lack of citations throughout this special issue. We wanted to simultaneously bring contingent faculty material work conditions into the open, while also highlighting the lack of sustained, data-driven work across all of writing.

One can look at the topics graduate students and early-career faculty are researching as one marker of the scholarly interests of a field. In composition, for example, one place to find this sort of data is by looking at the proposals for the research network forum (RNF), which is an annual event held at the CCCCs where works-in-progress are discussed. Since many of the participants in the RNF are graduate students or early-career faculty, an analysis of that data is an important marker of trends and interest in research topics. Risa Gorelick, citing the work of Mark Sutton, noted “the presence of labor practices and working conditions in the research presentations” was 2.95% of proposals, which was only 20 proposals out of 677 studied (117). It seems that not much is changing in composition outside of the limited number of scholars who are the only consistent voices publishing on these issues. The problem is much worse in TPC, where no one outside of Lisa has picked up the call to learn more about contingent faculty and to advocate for better working conditions. Noting this deficiency in research data further supports our claim that composition and TPC need more research about material work conditions.

This need for data intersects with recent conversations in composition. For example, Randall McClure, Dayna Goldstein, and Michael Pemberton (“Strengthening”) attempt to provide a data-driven update to the CCCCs Statement of Principles and Standards for Postsecondary Teaching, but their use of “data” is problematic because their update relies on so little *about* contingent faculty *in writing*. The disappointment in labor issues becoming a subsidiary point in a national organization’s statement is also intensified when composition and TPC lack the necessary data specific to faculty teaching composition and TPC courses. It is true that organizational statements can help administrators to make local arguments, but what helps more than that is hard data (Doe and Palmquist 28). Composition and TPC cannot continue to make claims or advocate for change based on nationally-generated data about material working conditions because it obscures the differences in material realities.

We follow calls like those by Cox et al. that have argued for more data collection, and, more specifically, the calls by those like Brad Hammer, who advocate for research *by* contingent faculty, not just *about* contingent faculty. Much like Seth Kahn’s claim that “the ecological frame also helps to make concrete the interconnections that we otherwise often simply assume or assert,” a key part of that ecology has to be actual data (“Towards” 117). WPAs and TPC PAs need to know what the actual working conditions are, specifically for contingent faculty teaching writing. Without a level of detail specific to writing, we are left without a clear picture of what’s happening to contingent faculty in our writing fields. To help attain that clarity, we took myriad steps to ensure that our data was focused on including a range of contingent faculty (see definitions above); that our data come from a range of institutions; and that our data was from the voices of contingent faculty only in composition and

TPC. After defining those criteria, this study then explored material work conditions beyond just teaching load, salary, and benefits. The quality and quantity of this tailored, specific data, coupled with the voices and experiences of contingent faculty making up those “numbers,” gives much-needed insight into the lives and work of contingent faculty in composition and TPC that has never been published before.

Practically, we hope this data helps WPAs and TPC PAs with making local arguments. Ideally, we hope that it encourages conversations of more precision about contingent working conditions. Understanding the complexities of the issues, and the fact that sometimes the worst-case scenarios make the best “news,” our data paint a more nuanced picture of contingent faculty work conditions overall.

The Need to Listen to Contingent Faculty

The most recent publications in composition focus on “institutional realities and cases” (Kahn et al.). While these individual cases are valuable, they can easily be dismissed because they make it easy for administrators and tenure-track faculty to adopt the “that could never happen at my institution” mentality. Much like Melonçon’s (“Critical”) call that field-wide data and perspectives are needed to make strong arguments for local initiatives or changes in TPC programs, the same argument is true for data about labor and working conditions. Along with the data, however, is the need for composition and TPC to listen to contingent faculty. By “listen” we mean to allow contingent faculty the space to speak up about what they want and need without fearing for their jobs. The precarity of contingency is an issue we explore at length in this special issue; it is our hope that the “listening” starts with this work. As Seth Kahn correctly states, there is a “problem of speaking for adjuncts.” Thus, in a deliberate turn to listening, the articles in this issue have a large number of quotes directly from participants in this research. By deliberately including more quotes than may be usual for academic articles, we hope to illustrate that composition and TPC need a multi-pronged approach where data is supported by narratives in context, while also spotlighting the thoughts and experiences of contingent faculty.

We approached this research project by listening to contingent faculty as carefully and thoughtfully as we could, and we encourage others doing this research to follow in this vein. Thus, this work aims to provide recommendations for implementing consistent programmatic assessments across the nation that allow contingent faculty to talk and administrators to listen, all without fear or defensiveness. We cannot enact true change while so many contingent faculty report feeling less than. As one participant stated, *“the instructor is the Bic lighter of teachers. Use it up and throw it away. If I quit my job tomorrow, they would be able to pick and choose for my job. I don’t think instructors are particularly valued.”*

By moving past the impetus to only gather individual case studies in hopes of trying to make more generalizable arguments, the purpose of our project was twofold. First, we wanted to ensure that we were gathering data, including stories, from non-tenure-track faculty (NTT). Outside of the “conjob” project (<http://ccdigitalpress.org/ebooks-and-projects/conjob>), most of the work in composition has been written by tenure-line faculty in composition. On the other hand, in TPC, scholarship has predominately consisted of data-driven inquiries with limited narratives to help provide a fuller and richer context (see Melonçon “Contingent”). Thus, while many tenure-track faculty are passionate allies and advocates for improving labor conditions, there remains a noticeable absence of listening to what contingent faculty say in the broader field. (See “Data Takeaways” in this issue for additional information on professional development for WPAs and TPC PAs.)

Amy Lynch-Binieck and Holly Hassel’s recent issue of *Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TETYC)* on contingent labor and academic freedom points to an increasing need to examine contingency from a diverse number of perspectives. Their emphasis on agency and materiality are echoed throughout this special issue because it was these two terms that were the guiding and grounding factors for this project on contingent labor. Thus, we tried to avoid contingent faculty as objects of study and instead position this as a project where we’re aware of wanting to and needing to listen to contingent faculty. To that end, however, parts may feel disconnected as we try to relay what they said to us through both the quantitative survey results and qualitative interviews and comments in the survey. While we are advocating for their voices, there is no way to present all the data/voices and still protect their anonymity. Because of the way scholarship must be written, we feel that aside from just listing quote after quote in a list, we may lose the nuance of the actual people. So bear with us as we try to give agency to the faculty who generously and graciously participated in this project, while grappling with the limitations of academic writing.

Methodology, Methods, and Practices

In this section, we provide a detailed account of the methodology, methods, and practices of this research project. These three terms are often conflated into either methodology or simply methods without a full explication of what they actually mean. As composition has started to publish more empirical research (e.g., Eodice et al; Jamieson) and data-driven research (e.g., Isaacs; Melzer), and TPC has called for more precision in research study design (Melonçon “Critical”; St.Amant & Graham) and terminology associated with research study design (Melonçon & St.Amant; St.Amant & Melonçon), we feel this attention warrants a detailed and descriptive overview of how we approached this research study. Here we take methodology to mean the disciplinary and ideological orientation to research; methods to mean the approaches to

gathering data; and practices to mean the work that took place, including the problems and pitfalls, while the study was ongoing (Melonçon & St.Amant). We offer many of the details that we encountered and the decisions that were made throughout the project as a way to provide insights into the promise and peril of messy research. This project was approved by the University of Cincinnati's (UC) Institutional Review Board # 2013-2133.

Methodologically, we approached the project from both a humanistic and social science orientation. Humanistic in the sense, as we wrote above, that we wanted to hear from actual contingent faculty about their material work conditions. Thus, the emphasis on experiences of the participants was a key concern. We also understood that methodologically our primary concern was contextual, that is, to understand those experiences from the different types of material work conditions and what that meant for contingent faculty. The method, or approach we took to data collection, can potentially make some of the claims generalizable—in a scientific sense—but many of the findings and narratives from participants instead underscore the impact of the material environment on the lives of faculty. While there is a level of objectivity in the data, we want readers to remember that each data point is directly connected to a particular individual with particular experiences. Even though experiences may share similarities, we include many direct quotes to ensure that individual differences are also highlighted. In sum, the methodological orientation we took provided a strong research study design that can be replicated and can be measured by levels of trustworthiness, but it also provided a way to highlight the participants and their experiences.

As we explain below, we had wanted to do interviews, but the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at UC originally deemed contingent faculty a “vulnerable population.” By strict definition, children, pregnant women and fetuses, and prisoners are deemed vulnerable populations for research. However, the UC IRB felt that contingent faculty also merited “special consideration” because of their precarious employment situation. This distinction was significant, considering the point we’re trying to make with this research. Thus, the original pilot study (Melonçon, England, & Ilyasova) and follow-up studies (including this one) had to be done using an anonymous survey to protect the identities of participants and to ensure that there was no coercion or potential of repercussions.

A survey is traditionally a quantitative research method to gain large data sets from a sample of participants that can generate generalizable conclusions. However, in composition and in TPC, the survey is actually used more like a questionnaire (seeking more qualitative answers) that is delivered electronically because most data sets rarely generate large quantitative samples. While the survey was not the best method for the type of data we wanted to gather, it did provide the anonymity that was required by the IRB, and, in the end, the descriptive nature of the questions and responses provided important and revelatory

data. During the process of the research study, we continued conversations with the IRB, and we were allowed to add an “if you are willing to be interviewed” question, which did generate a number of interviews that added an additional layer of richness to the data set. And in the end, as described further in our discussion of practices, the survey data provides important information about the material work lives of contingent faculty, and, when paired with the interviews, we contend that we provide an accurate representation of the material work lives of contingent faculty at a field-wide level (both composition and TPC, together and separately).

This project initially started ca. 2008-2009 and directly came out of Lisa’s co-authored project with Peter England (Melonçon & England). That project gave TPC the first insights into the number of contingent faculty teaching the service course, which is a “course for non-TPC majors delivered primarily as a service to other departments or programs on campus” (Melonçon & England 398). This is TPC’s somewhat analogous course to FYC, most commonly titled technical writing, professional writing, or business writing. One of the outcomes of Melonçon and England’s study was a series of questions for TPC to consider and answer regarding contingent labor:

- What kinds of professional development (if any) are made available to contingent TPC faculty?
- How are these faculty supported in their efforts to stay current with pedagogical trends?
- What are the credentials of those teaching the TPC service course? More specifically, have those faculty taken a pedagogy course?
- What are the conditions of renewal for FT NTT faculty?
- Do FT NTT faculty have industry experience? If so, of what kind and duration?
- What aspects of their work are contingent faculty satisfied and unsatisfied with? (406).

These questions then formed the basis of a pilot study. Because of the lack of knowledge around contingent faculty’s work lives, we settled on a pilot study. Since TPC had no understanding of the material work conditions of contingent faculty, the study was designed to provide rich and detailed information about this issue. In other words, we wanted depth rather than breadth. While somewhat rare in composition and TPC, pilot studies are a useful and common part of the research process in the sciences and in some of the social sciences. van Teijlgen and Hundley confirm that pilot studies are often used to test the feasibility of a full-scale study and to develop and test the adequacy of research instruments (34), while Polit, Beck, and Hungler argue the pilot study affords researchers the opportunity to conduct a “small scale version, or trial run, done in preparation for the major study” (467). We felt we needed the pilot study to test the feasibility of a larger national study. The pilot study also allowed

us to craft a solid survey instrument and refine questions that were initially confusing. We started with the questions posed by Melonçon and England (noted above) and then compared those to other national surveys on contingent faculty (see Melonçon, England, & Ilyasova 209-210 for full details). The results became the original survey questions we piloted. The recruitment process for the pilot was cumbersome because of IRB stipulations, which meant we could not contact contingent faculty directly. The limitations of and arguments against national and organizational listservs as a recruiting mechanism (Melonçon “Critical”) proved to be true in the pilot, but it gave us useful information to craft better arguments for an amendment to the IRB application. This allowed us to contact contingent faculty directly and add a question that asked for those interested in being interviewed to contact us. The difference in the pilot study survey and the one included as Appendix A is the shifting in wording of several questions and the addition of a series of five questions related to online writing instruction. The final survey had 41 questions, including 11 open-ended questions. The italicized quotes contained throughout this special issue are from these open-ended questions or from the interviews we conducted.

With lessons learned around clarity of questions from the pilot study and an amended IRB that allowed us to contact contingent faculty directly, we had to make decisions about our sampling method for participants and recruitment approaches. As Daniel J. Murphy so aptly puts it: “To have confidence in your inference, it is important to ensure as much as possible that you have used a representative sample for findings to be reliable and valid with respect to the ‘true’ nature of the population” (98).

The survey was distributed to a stratified sample of faculty who work at institutions with TPC programs (from minors to PhDs). Institutions were drawn from the program list found in *TechComm Programmatic Central*, which is a database being created to house comprehensive information related to programs in TPC. For each institutional category (R1, R2, etc., see <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/> for additional information), 25% of programs were proportionally selected to represent all types of institutions where TPC programs are housed. This percentage seemed reasonable in that it would allow for generalizable data across the field, and/or it would indicate what differences there may be based on institutional type.

The selection of the specific school (within the 25%) to locate contingent faculty is not as easily explained. We knew recruitment was going to be a problem, since other studies (such as Coalition on the Academic Workforce) have discussed how difficult it is to contact participants. Our primary approach was to use publicly available data, such as faculty listings on departmental websites and schedules of courses found most often through the registrar’s office. Collecting information became a torturous and difficult task because of the lack of consistency

across institutions' websites and more so because of the poor user interfaces. Thus, in some cases the programs and faculty were chosen simply because the institutional website was easy to navigate, and contingent faculty were actually visible, that is, listed clearly on the website with contact information. Sometimes we abandoned a school simply because the task became too onerous to try and figure out who was contingent and then how to contact them. Once contact information from the "easy" schools was collected, we then just went down the list of institutions to locate as many contingent faculty as we could. This process was necessary because of our intention to contact faculty directly.

In the "difficult" cases, it meant comparing faculty lists (from department websites) to the institution's official schedule of classes to cross-check and verify who was teaching TPC related courses and not on the tenure track. To ensure we were actually contacting active contingent faculty, we looked at the schedule of classes and looked for courses that contingent faculty usually teach (such as the "service course" or lower level undergraduate courses). Scrolling through the schedule, we made notations of faculty and compared it to faculty lists on department websites. In other cases, we called or emailed the TPC PA to determine who was a contingent faculty member. In many cases, names may have been listed or identified, but then there was another step of locating contact information, which often meant using the institution's main directory and searching by faculty name or, when all else failed, using a general web search of the person's name to locate an email address.

The work doubled when we began collecting the same data for composition faculty. Since the initial findings from the TPC pilot study (Melonçon, England, & Ilyasova) suggested that material work conditions may be different between TPC and composition, Lisa enlisted Mahli and Laura's skills to not only complete the TPC study but also complete a similar study with composition instructors. This process of simply finding the appropriate "recruitment" sample took upward of 200 hours. And we do not claim that the created list is 100% accurate of all contingent faculty at the schools chosen. In fact, we feel confident that it is not because contingent faculty are often invisible in public-facing information that would be available to those looking for information (including students). This issue of visibility is more acute for adjunct faculty (those teaching on term-to-term contracts) than it is for FT NTT faculty. So at the very start of our research, we knew that simply being "invisible" at their institution would be a main factor affecting contingent faculty work conditions. As one survey participant wrote, *"I enjoy teaching very much, but as I imagine most part time and adjunct faculty do, I have a number of issues. For example, my name and contact info doesn't appear on the department website, they took my office computer to give it to a lecturer without telling me, and the pay is absolutely abysmal for the effort I put in and the feedback and respect I get from students."* This fact only underscored the necessity of the project and emboldened us to move forward.

In the fall and spring of academic year 2016-2017, we sent the survey link to 653 TPC faculty and 467 composition faculty. The response rate was 26%. This rate, while lower than we had hoped, is within the standard ranges of external, email response rates (Fryrear). Several factors probably contributed to the response rate. First, the IRB limited the number of follow-ups or reminders that could be sent, which also impacts response rates. After each reminder, there was a large number of responses received, but the IRB allowed only two follow-ups. (The reasons for this are myriad and outside of the scope of this essay, but the overriding concern was coercion.) Second, research suggests long surveys may be abandoned by respondents (Chudoba), and this survey was long, taking around 15-20 minutes (longer if participants answered the open-ended questions). One potential respondent emailed to say, *“I apologize for not participating in the survey, but I can't squeeze a half hour out of my schedule. Ordinarily I'd be happy to, but teaching technical and business writing is only one of several jobs I put together to make a living. I won't have even a little breather until the semester ends... your research sounds fascinating.”* Third, response rates are typically higher for populations in which there is a relationship. Many contingent faculty are not actively engaged outside of their departments or institutions because they simply do not have time, which may have made them reluctant to participate because they had no idea who we were. Finally, participants could simply be afraid—no matter how clear it is that the information is anonymous. For those of us on the tenure track, this concept of fear, concern, or hesitation may not be easy to understand, but what we have learned during this project is that fear is real, and it has to be respected; this reality became clearer through the survey responses and even by one person who contacted us to ask whether their department would find out if they completed the survey and whether the data would be used to make arguments for universities to *“fire teachers.”*

We set a survey response rate target of 25%, and we agreed that the moment we went over this number we would stop the study. This was for practical reasons more than anything else such as time involved, other work commitments, and simply having a set benchmark for an end to data gathering.

The last survey question asked participants if they would be willing to consent to a follow-up interview. We conducted a total of 20 interviews over the academic year 2016-2017 and during the summer and fall of 2017. We did not reach interview data saturation with the interviews because each was a unique story based on individual histories and priorities. However, there were common themes among all interviewees around the overarching concerns, problems, and even joys of working off the tenure track, which led us to a quasi-saturation point. Here we use quasi-saturation to mean the point in qualitative data analysis where there is data saturation around key themes or concepts even if one is still gaining unique information based on participants' experiences. Because we

reached this quasi-saturation point that aligns with the quantitative data, we feel that some generalizable conclusions can be drawn from the data. (See “Results and Findings from the Survey” and “Data Takeaways” in this special issue for more information on the data.) To ensure the protection of interviewees, we refer to them—as well as to the qualitative responses from the survey—simply as participants or faculty. We chose to approach their inclusion in this way to ensure their anonymity. All quotes used by those interviewed have been reviewed by participants, and all quotes from the qualitative, open-ended survey responses are included as they were written.

Limitations of Methodology

Survey creation is a rhetorical act that must consider and balance the research questions with the audience and the selected research method (Rife). This important aspect of survey development is both a strength and limitation. Thus, no survey will provide comprehensive data on any subject. The contingent survey was no different.

One limitation of surveys is that they contain self-reported data, which can be incomplete and unreliable (Paulhus & Vazier). Those who complete surveys tend to self-select into a study for a variety of reasons that may bias their responses. Even with the potential self-reporting dilemma, surveys remain a valuable method for acquiring responses from wide, diverse populations (Murphy).

The data in this survey was limited because it was garnered primarily from faculty at four-year institutions and are more representative of FT NTT faculty than term-to-term adjuncts. The latter is likely due to our sampling method and the inability to locate names and contact information of more part-time/adjunct faculty.

The final limitation is that we purposefully did not include graduate students in the study even though, per the AAUP, they are considered contingent faculty. In large part, that decision was made because graduate students exist in a liminal space that is distinctly different from other types of faculty. Graduate students are a unique teaching population due to their dual roles as teachers and students, and we think they deserve their own study in regard to issues of material work, and how the material work of teaching (and administration) may or may not align with their own intellectual work as scholar-students. The recent report released by the Writing Program Administration Graduate Organization outlines data regarding this important group.

Overview of Articles in this Issue

The contents of this special issue include five articles that can be read as individual entities or as a coherent whole. They are:

- Results and Findings from the Survey
- Data Takeaways

- Affective Investment
- Politics of Service
- Looking Forward

Results and Findings from the Survey

Since the survey (Appendix A) was quite lengthy and included a number of qualitative questions, this article focuses primarily on the quantitative questions. Through a series of visualizations, we explain what the data is and why it is important. This article and the corresponding data (Appendix B – TPC Data; Appendix C – Composition Data) can help TPC PAs and WPAs make data-driven arguments locally. We present the data as a stand-alone piece without an in-depth analysis of it because of its length. We presumed readers could make more use of the summary data points in this format.

Data Takeaways

Here we provide more an analysis of the data around a set of key issues specific to the material work lives of contingent faculty, issues that were revealed as being some of the most important to contingent faculty in how they experienced their jobs both materially and affectively. In this essay, we discuss:

- heavy teaching load;
- significance of titles (instructor vs. lecturer vs. professor);
- importance of professional development;
- questions of quality and qualified.

Affective Investment

In this article, we introduce a theoretical framework, affective investment, as a way to understand an important contradiction expressed by contingent faculty. We wanted to understand how to make sense of the fact that contingent faculty expressed satisfaction in their jobs but still carried a weight of negative emotions. The concept of affective investment is defined and then discussed in light of the material dimensions of how affective investment impacts contingent faculty in three critical areas: salary and contract; workload and autonomy; and value.

Politics of Service

Closely related to the idea of affective investment is a concept we call politics of service. This is another extended definition that we created to help understand the conflicting nature of the data. While affective investment is more centered on the faculty themselves, politics of service provides insights into the complex relationship between faculty and the departments and institutions in which they work. After defining politics of service, we discuss it in light of the material dimensions of service to the institution, evaluations, and intellectual property.

Looking Forward

In the final essay, we “look forward” by providing some practical, achievable suggestions on how to address some of the issues and concerns brought up by the data. We frame these suggestions through the conceptual framework of change management and institutional infrastructures, which flips existing scholarship on the “managerial unconscious” (Strickland) and managerial discourse into more positive and productive alternatives.

We do not see contingent faculty as a problem to be solved. Rather, contingency is a structural issue beyond the control of most departments, and it is a material reality for *all* faculty in composition and TPC. Our approach to this project has been one of gaining an understanding of material work lives of contingent faculty. We share that now so that, collectively, faculty and program administrators can work toward improving those work lives, while simultaneously working toward changing institutional infrastructures armed with data and evidence.

Acknowledgments

We want to thank Sue Doe and the entire team of *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry* for believing in this project and giving us a creative, welcoming space for what we feel is important work for all of us who teach writing in higher education. Lisa needs to thank Samantha McGilvray, who diligently helped with organizing the data and provided much support with her thoughtful questions and positive, encouraging attitude. Mahli would like to thank her student research assistants, Mary E. Elliott and Marcy Irene Bodnar, who collated data and categorized survey questions. But our biggest debt of gratitude is to each of our participants. This project would not have been possible without your generous gifts of time, honesty, and commitment. We dedicate this work to you and to all contingent faculty in writing.

Works Cited

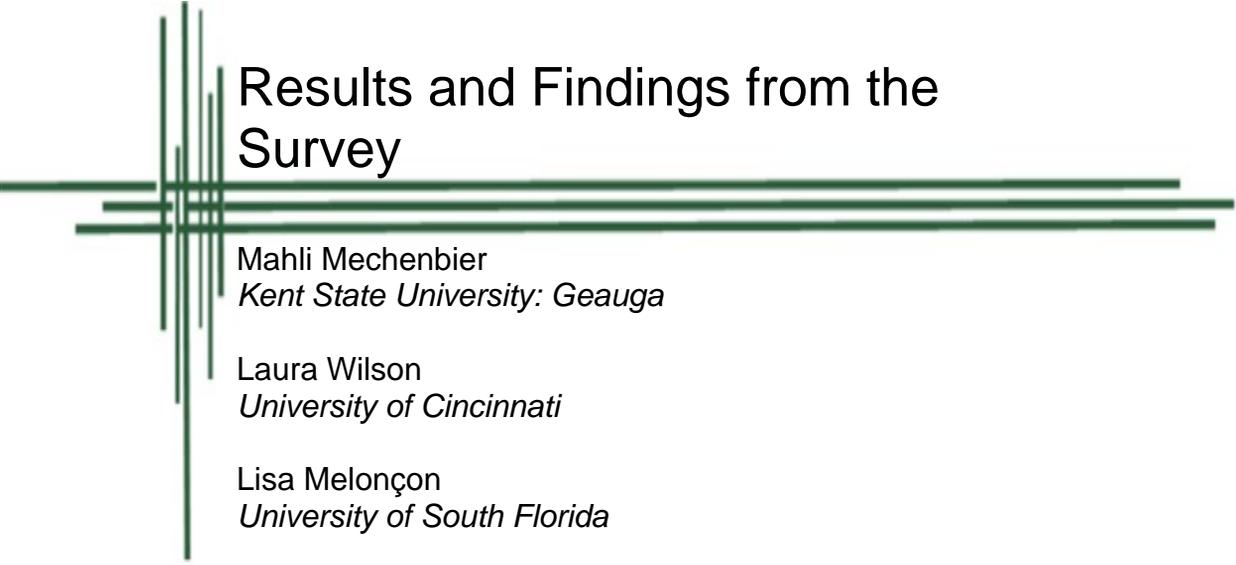
- Ad Hoc Committee on Contingent Faculty. “RSA Statement on Contingent Faculty.” *Rhetoric Society of America*, 2018, https://rhetoricsociety.org/aws/RSA/pt/sd/news_article/179482/PARENT/layout_details/false.
- American Association of University Professors. “Data Snapshot: Contingent Faculty in US Higher Ed.” *AAUP*, 2018, <https://www.aaup.org/news/data-snapshot-contingent-faculty-us-higher-ed#.XLzEeKYpBTZ>.
- Bartholomae, D. “Teaching On and Off the Tenure Track: Highlights from the Ade Survey of Staffing Patterns in English.” *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition, and Culture*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2010, pp. 7-32.

- Bousquet, Marc. "Composition as Management Science: Toward a University without a WPA." *JAC*, vol. 22, no. 3, 2002, pp. 493-526. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20866508>.
- Bousquet, Marc et al., editors. *Tenured Bosses and Disposable Teachers*. Southern Illinois University Press, 2004.
- Chudoba, Brett. "How Much Time Are Respondents Willing to Spend on Your Survey?" *Curiosity at Work*, n.d., https://www.surveymonkey.com/curiosity/survey_completion_times/.
- Coalition of the Academic Workforce. "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members: A Summary of Findings on Part-Time Faculty Respondents to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce Survey of Contingent Faculty Members and Instructors." *Coalition of the Academic Workforce*, 2012, http://www.academicworkforce.org/Research_reports.html.
- Committee on Contingent Labor. "Professional Employment Practices for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members: Recommendations and Evaluative Questions." *Modern Language Association*, 2011, http://www.mla.org/pdf/clip_stmt_final_may11.pdf.
- Conference on College Composition and Communication. "CCCC Statement on Working Conditions for Non-Tenure-Track Writing Faculty." *CCCC/NCTE*, 2016, <https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/working-conditions-ntt>.
- Cox, Anicca. "Collaboration and Resistance: Academic Freedom and Non-Tenured Labor." *Forum: Issues about Part-Time and Contingent Faculty*, vol. 22, 2018, pp. A4-A13.
- Cox, Anicca et al. "The Indianapolis Resolution: Responding to Twenty-First-Century Exigencies/Political Economies of Composition Labor." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 68, no. 1, 2016, pp. 38-67.
- Cucciarrre, Christine et al. "Symposium: Off Track and On: Valuing the Intellectual Work of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty." *College English*, vol. 77, no. 1, 2014, pp. 55-72.
- Curtis, John and Monica F. Jacobs. "Consequences: An Increasingly Contingent Faculty." *American Association of University Professors*, 2006.
- Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success. "Non-Tenure-Track Faculty on Our Campus: A Guide for Campus Task Forces to Better Understand Faculty Working Conditions and the Necessity of Change." *Pullias Center for Higher Education, USC Rossier School of Education*, 2012.
- Doe, Sue. "Opportunity and Respect: Keys to Contingent Faculty Success." *Rewriting Success in Rhetoric and Composition Careers*, edited by Amy Goodburn et al., Parlor Press, 2012, pp. 51-68.

- Doe, Sue et al. "Discourse of the Fire Tenders: Considering Contingent Faculty through the Lens of Activity Theory." *College English*, vol. 73, no. 4, 2011, pp. 428-449.
- Doe, Sue and Mike Palmquist. "Evolving Uses of Position Statements." *ADE Bulletin*, vol. 153, 2013, pp. 23-34.
- Eodice, Michelle et al. *The Meaningful Writing Project: Learning, Teaching, and Writing in Higher Education*. Utah State University Press, 2016.
- Fedukovich, Casie et al. "A State of Permanent Contingency: Writing Programs, Hiring Practices, and a Persistent Breach of Ethics." *Labored: The State(Ment) and Future of Work in Composition*, edited by Randall McClure et al., Parlor Press, 2017, pp. 130-151.
- Fryrear, Andrea. "Survey Response Rates." *Survey Gizmo*, 2015, <https://www.surveygizmo.com/resources/blog/survey-response-rates/>.
- Gorelick, Risa. "The Missing Piece: Where Is the Labor Related Research at the Research Network Forum?" *Labored: The State(Ment) and Future of Work in Composition*, edited by Randall McClure et al., 2017, pp. 115-125.
- Isaacs, Emily. *Writing at the State U: Instruction and Administration at 106 Comprehensive Universities*. Utah State University Press, 2018.
- Jamieson, Sandra. "The Evolution of the Citation Project: Developing a Pilot Study from Local to Translocal." *Points of Departure: Rethinking Student Source Use and Writing Studies Research Methods*, edited by Tricia Serviss and Sandra Jamieson, Utah State University Press, 2018.
- Kahn, Seth. "Towards an Ecology of Sustainable Labor in Writing Programs (and Other Places)." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2015, pp. 109-121.
- Kahn, Seth et al., editors. *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition*. The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado, 2017.
- Lynch-Binieck, Amy and Holly Hassel. "Col(Labor)ation: Academic Freedom, Working Conditions, and the Teaching of College English [Special Issue]." *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, vol. 45, no. 4, 2018, pp. 333-337.
- McClure, Randall et al., editors. *Labored: The State(Ment) and Future of Work in Composition*. Parlor Press, 2017.
- . "Strengthening the Statement: Data on Working Conditions in College Composition." *Labored: The State(Ment) and Future of Work in Composition*, edited by Randall McClure et al., Parlor Press, 2017, pp. 268-284.

- Mechenbier, Mahli. "Contingent Faculty and OWI." *Foundational Practices of Online Writing Instruction*, edited by Beth L. Hewett and Kevin DePew, WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press, 2015, pp. 226-250.
- . "Putting the 'Temp' in Template: Molding Contingent Faculty into Uniform Online Course Shells." *Conference on College Composition and Communication, NCTE*, 2015.
- Melonçon, Lisa. "Contingent Faculty, Online Writing Instruction, and Professional Development in Technical and Professional Communication." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2017, pp. 256-272.
- . "Critical Postscript: On the Future of the Service Course in Technical and Professional Communication." *Programmatic Perspectives*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2018, pp. 202-230.
- Melonçon, Lisa and Peter England. "The Current Status of Contingent Faculty in Technical and Professional Communication." *College English*, vol. 73, no. 4, 2011, pp. 396-408.
- Melonçon, Lisa et al. "A Portrait of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty in Technical and Professional Communication." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2016, pp. 206-235.
- Melonçon, Lisa and Kirk St. Amant. "Empirical Research in Technical and Professional Communication: A Five-Year Examination of Research Methods and a Call for Research Sustainability." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2019, pp. 128-155.
- Melzer, Dan. *Assignments across the Curriculum*. Utah State University Press, 2014.
- Murphy, Daniel J. "Surveys and Questionnaires. Research Methods in Technical Communication." *Research in Technical Communication*, edited by Mary M. Lay and Laura Gurak, Praeger, 2002, pp. 93-110.
- NCTE College Section Steering Committee. "Position Statement on the Status and Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty." *National Council of Teachers of English*, 2010.
- New Faculty Majority. "Back to School Survey 2011-12." *New Faculty Majority Foundation*, 2012, <http://www.nfmfoundation.org/ProfStaffFinal.pdf>.
- Paulhus, Delroy and Simine Vazier. "The Self-Report Method." *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality*, edited by Richard W. Robins et al., Guilford Press, 2007, pp. 224-239.
- Polit, D. F. et al. *Essentials of Nursing Research: Methods, Appraisal, and Utilization*. 5th ed., Lippincott, Williams, & Wilkins, 2001.
- Rife, Martine Courant. *Invention, Copyright, and Digital Writing*. Southern Illinois University Press, 2013.

- St.Amant, Kirk and S. Scott Graham. "Research That Resonates: A Perspective on Durable and Portable Approaches to Scholarship in Technical Communication and Rhetoric of Science." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2019, pp. 99-111.
- St.Amant, Kirk and Lisa Melonçon. "Addressing the Incommensurable: A Research-Based Perspective for Considering Issues of Power and Legitimacy in the Field." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, vol. 46, no. 3, 2016, pp. 267-283.
- Strickland, Donna. "The Managerial Unconscious in the History of Composition Studies." *Conference on College Composition and Communication of the National Council of Teachers of English*, 2011.
- van Teijlgen, Edwin and Vanora Hundley. "The Importance of Pilot Studies." *Nursing Standards*, vol. 16, no. 40, 2002, pp. 33-36.
- Writing Program Administration Graduate Organization. "Graduate Student Instructor Labor Conditions in Writing Programs." *Council for Writing Program Administration*.



Results and Findings from the Survey

Mahli Mechenbier
Kent State University: Geauga

Laura Wilson
University of Cincinnati

Lisa Melonçon
University of South Florida

Mahli Mechenbier teaches Technical Writing, Professional Writing, and College Writing at Kent State University: Geauga as a three-year-renewable Senior Lecturer. She was a member of NCTE's Committee for Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction and was an editor for the OWI's Open Resource (2013 – 2016). Her research focuses on how academic administrations manage distance learning and the intellectual property rights of contingent faculty.

Laura Wilson has an MA in English with a concentration in Scientific and Technical Communication from Bowling Green State University. She has worked as a technical writer and editor and has taught technical, professional, and business writing at the University of Cincinnati since 2005, where she is an Associate Professor Educator. Laura is passionate about her work and her students; beyond technical writing, she enjoys teaching courses on social media, rhetoric, and web authoring.

Lisa Melonçon is a professor of technical communication at the University of South Florida. Her teaching and research focuses on the programmatic and professionalization dimensions of technical and professional communication, research methodologies, and the rhetoric of health and medicine.

*“I consider myself to be a writer and a teacher and a researcher.
On a good day they all work together.”*
Study Participant

In what follows, we provide a descriptive overview of the results from a U.S. survey of contingent faculty in first-year composition (FYC) and technical and professional communication (TPC). The overview of the data contains basic descriptive statistics to provide information on the bulk of the survey data. The survey had 41 questions, and the majority of those questions’ responses will be presented in this section.

We present the data in ways that we hope will allow readers to understand the material work lives of respondents; resultantly, we are grouping questions differently than the way they appeared in the survey. We do include the question number and question to place the data into its appropriate context; readers can refer to the survey instrument and the raw data that is included in the Appendix. The final survey included $N = 313$ participants, and the responses from the two faculty groups are fairly similar with an $n = 168$ for TPC faculty and an $n = 145$ for FYC faculty. Not all faculty completed all questions (which is not unusual for a survey of this length), so the N varies for each question and will be specified within the caption to the visual or the accompanying text. The question number refers to the question in the survey. We have also rounded up numbers to a whole percentage. We present the data in the following sections:

- Basic Demographics
- Current Position
- Material Work Conditions
- Compensation
- Teacher Training
- Professional Development
- Reappointment
- Satisfaction

Basic Demographics

Demographic data provides insights into the backgrounds of those contingent faculty who completed the survey. The information in this section is broken down into sub-sections on:

- Gender, Race, and Ethnicity
- Participant’s Institution Type
- Departments in Which Contingent Faculty Work
- Education

Gender, Race, and Ethnicity

The basic demographics of this study’s respondents are important to start a critical discussion about the representation of contingent faculty. Question 32 asked, “Please indicate your gender,” and Question 33 asked, “Please indicate your race/ethnicity.” Table 1 summarizes those results.

Table 1: Gender ($n = 294$), Race, and Ethnicity ($n = 288$)

Gender	% of participants ($n = 294$)
Male	27% ($n = 78$)
Female	70% ($n = 206$)
Other	1% ($n = 2$)
I would rather not say	3% ($n = 8$)
Race and Ethnicity	% of participants ($n = 288$)
American Indian	0
Asian	1% ($n = 3$)
Black/African American	1% ($n = 3$)
Caucasian/White	93% ($n = 268$)
Hispanic or Latinx	2% ($n = 7$)
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0
Multiracial	2% ($n = 7$)

The gender findings from our survey correspond to existing national research that indicates “women have become the new majority among non-tenure-track full-time employees” (Finkelstein, Conley, & Schuster 5). We do acknowledge that in future research more precision needs to be made with the gender categories for selection since the categories at the time of this survey did not take into account more recent moves in survey research to ask more inclusive questions regarding gender.

Additionally, 93% of respondents identify as Caucasian. There is little data in FYC and TPC that provide accurate, field-wide information on racial and ethnic backgrounds of faculty, and, more specifically, of contingent faculty. However, data from TPC (Melonçon “Administrators”) show TPC PAs are primarily women, at 55%, and overwhelmingly white, at 93%. The most recent national study about faculty diversity identified that “among full-time non-tenure-track appointments, the substantial ratio of whites to URMs [underrepresented minorities] persists—initially 10.2:1 in 1993 and more recently 6.8:1 in

2013” (Finkelstein, Conley, & Schuster 5). Thus, our data reflect a greater number of white faculty than national trends. We also recognize that Question 33 was poorly configured and worded, and we encourage others to be more mindful of a better construction.

Participant’s Institution Type

Question 34 asked, “In which type of institution, i.e., Carnegie classification, do you teach?” See <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/> for more information; this standard classification identifies types of institutions and is also used by institutions themselves to help benchmark peer and aspirational institutions. (The data are based on the 2016 classifications. The latest update was released in early 2019, which reflects changes to some institutions’ status that may not be reflected here.) Figure 1 represents institutional classifications.

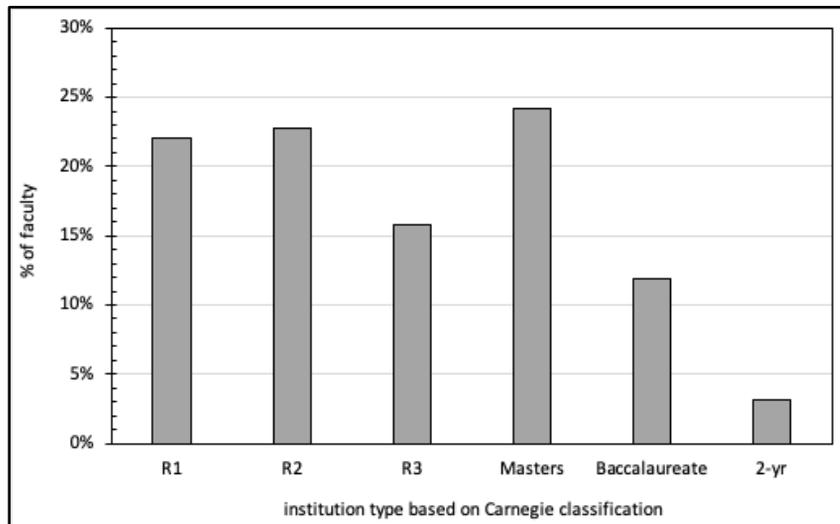


Figure 1: Type of Institution Where Contingent Faculty Work ($n = 285$)

As explained in the methodology, methods, and practices, the sampling of faculty was designed to get a generalizable snapshot based on the proportion of locations where TPC programs are housed. While not wholly generalizable to composition, this sampling method did ensure that faculty from a wide variety of institutions were represented. As seen in Figure 1, participants are closely distributed across R1 (22% $n = 63$), R2 (23% $n = 65$), and master’s (24% $n = 69$) institutions, as well as a close alignment in R3 (16% $n = 45$), and baccalaureate (12% $n = 34$). In this case, we were quite happy with the distribution across institution types, except with community college representation. However, data indicate that two-year colleges employ high percentages of part-time faculty, and since only 3% ($n = 9$) of our respondents identify as two-year college faculty, it is

difficult to draw any sort of conclusions outside of the fact that more research is needed—and greater attention to innovative recruitment methods is additionally necessary—to find and contact faculty at community colleges. The need for more innovative recruitment methods is also necessary to encourage more adjuncts to participate in this type of research.

While not wholly comparable because of the way our data was gathered, it is beneficial to benchmark data specific to composition and to TPC when examining larger national trends such as data from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) (<https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/10112018%20Data%20Snapshot%20Tenure.pdf>) or the American Federation of Teachers (<https://www.aft.org/highered/resources/army-temp>). Understanding that the material work lives of faculty varies little across institutions is a valuable data point because it underscores that the majority of contingent faculty are hired to take on substantial teaching no matter the institution type.

Departments in Which Contingent Faculty Work

In both composition (see e.g., O’Neill, Crow, & Burton; Mallonee) and in TPC (see e.g., Melonçon “Curricular”; Yeats & Thompson), an interest remains in the departmental or administrative structure that houses TPC and FYC programs. In question 35, we asked, “What is the name of the department?” Table 2 displays those results.

Table 2: Department in Which Contingent Faculty Work ($n = 279$)

Name of Department	% of faculty
Communication + some other term (e.g., Communication and Mass Media)	4% ($n = 11$)
English	60% ($n = 167$)
English + some other term (e.g., English and Comparative Literature)	15% ($n = 41$)
Writing Department	15% ($n = 43$)
Humanities	3% ($n = 8$)
Engineering	3% ($n = 9$)

It is not surprising that most of the respondents (75%, $n = 208$) report that they work in English departments. Research has shown that TPC degree programs are not predominantly housed in English departments (Melonçon and Henschel), yet other types of degree programs such as emphasis degrees, minors, and certificate programs are still primarily found in English departments (Melonçon “Curricular”). The writing department (15%, $n = 43$) is the category for what composition scholars have called independent writing departments (see e.g., Everett and

Hanganu-Bresch) and is still a small but not insubstantial marker for where writing programs are housed.

Education

Question 36 asked, “Please select the highest degree YOU have obtained.” Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3: Highest Degree Obtained by Contingent Faculty ($n = 224$)

Type of Degree	% of faculty ($n = 224$)
MA: English	49% ($n = 109$)
MA/MS: English with a specialization in TPC	10% ($n = 23$)
MA: Rhetoric & Composition	8% ($n = 19$)
MA/MS: TPC	5% ($n = 11$)
PhD: English	15% ($n = 34$)
PhD: TPC	3% ($n = 6$)
PhD: Rhetoric & Composition	5% ($n = 12$)
PhD: Rhetoric & Composition with a specialization in TPC	4% ($n = 10$)

Our data show that only 27% ($n = 62$) of respondents have the terminal degree, which by that fact alone would limit the other 73% ($n = 162$) from ever obtaining a tenure-track line. Even though the master’s degree does qualify contingent faculty to teach, the lack of a terminal degree is a significant hurdle to achieving respect and community for some respondents. For example, “*It was made clear to me when I went up for promotion that several faculty members voted against me because I did not have my PhD, even though our RPT document does not require a terminal degree for promotion at the contingent level. So even though there are documents in place to ‘protect’ contingent faculty from this kind of bias, it certainly still exists.*”

The data also show that most adjuncts have earned the MA in English, which is a generalized English degree with a literature focus. Few respondents possess specializations in TPC, yet most are teaching TPC courses (see below). This situation reflects departments’ dismissiveness regarding contingent faculty qualifications in teaching TPC—as long as there is an MA-possessing body instructing the course, the specificity of the degree is negligible. This point was underscored by several interviewees not only in their conversations, but also when they openly stated they had to learn what they know about teaching FYC and TPC through trial and error since the degree they hold is not related (for more information, including quotations from respondents, see “Data Takeaways” article in this special issue).

Current Position

One of the goals of this project is to provide more precision to conversations about contingency. Rather than general statements that cross disciplines and often conflate terms and terminology, we wanted to learn more about specifics of contingent faculty's material work conditions. In an effort to gain more insight into current FYC and TPC positions, we asked three questions related to the following categories:

- Type of Current Contract
- Length of Current Contract
- Length of Employment at Current Position

Type of Current Contract

Our research questions were only focused on contingent faculty, that is, we excluded tenure-track faculty and graduate students. Question 1 asked, "What is your current position?" Respondents had three choices to designate their current type of contract: full-time non-tenure track, part-time contract with an option for renewal, and adjunct, which was defined as per course, per term. Although we did offer an open-ended option if respondents wanted to provide additional information, the information that was provided confirmed that these three options captured the main categories of employment for those working off the tenure-track. See Figure 2.

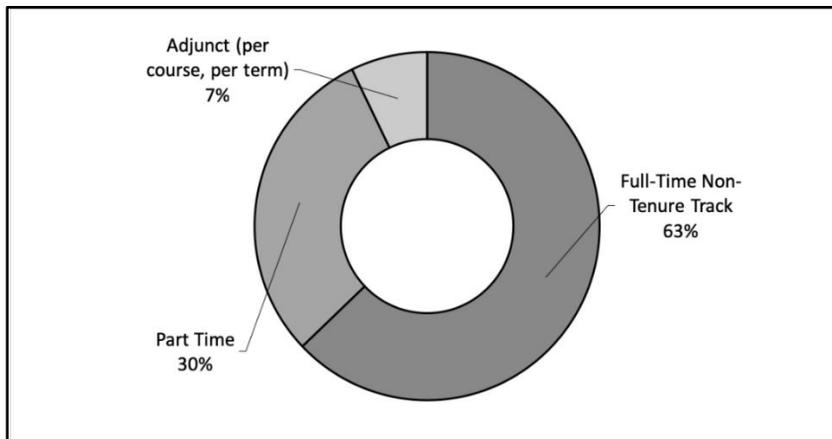


Figure 2: Current Position ($N = 307$; FT NTT, $n = 193$; Part time, $n = 22$; Adjunct, $n = 92$)

Most of our respondents are FT NTT faculty, and although these faculty members are still contingent, our data is reflective of respondents who may benefit from full-time privileges which are not afforded to part-time faculty.

Length of Current Contract

Uncertainty regarding renewal or limited renewal terms is a major concern for contingent faculty, who predominantly teach on annual contracts. Question 17 was asked to get a better sense of the length of contractual appointments: “What is the average term of your contractual appointment?” See Figure 3.

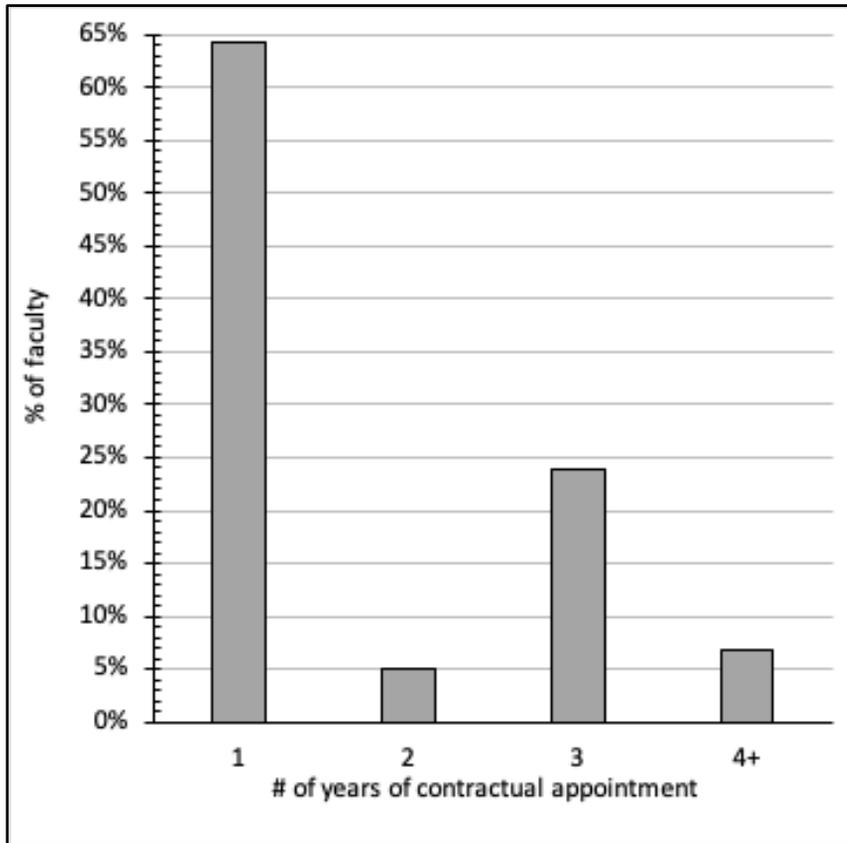


Figure 3: Average Term of the Contractual Appointment ($N = 218$)

The data in Figure 3 align with the findings of the AAUP at the national level. That is, the vast majority of FT NTT faculty are given annual contracts or multi-year contracts that are renewable indefinitely. The terms of renewal vary based on institutional context, but we can generalize from the data and interviews to say that annual renewals are most often based on a combination of a short self-evaluation and student end-of-term evaluations. The process of renewal is no more or less cumbersome, from a paperwork perspective, than the annual review process for tenure-line faculty. At some locations, the renewal process may move to longer terms (e.g., from one year to three), and the renewals can run indefinitely. From the qualitative responses, we learned there are

many nuances in the type of contracts and renewals (which varied from semester to semester): rolling contracts, contracts with limits (not renewable after five years, for instance), and relatively permanent (no limitations to contract renewal).

The data indicate that the predominant number of contracts are one year. Even though some FT NTTs do benefit from health insurance, support resources from the university, and professional development opportunities and funding, the one-year contract is very unstable. If full-time contingent faculty are required to apply for renewal, this process may be viewed as an added burden not only to the applicants, but to the tenure-track faculty or program administrator who reviews these applications. Living year to year with hopes of renewal can undeniably result in emotional stress and pressure on contingent faculty who desire security within their positions. This instability also affects the quality of teaching in that contingent faculty on one-year contracts are “teaching for the evaluations,” which can be detrimental to both the students and the university. If universities allowed for longer contracts, contingent faculty would be able to focus their energy on quality instruction and service versus pleasing students to ensure positive student evaluations (which is often one of the deciding factors for reappointment).

Length of Employment at Current Position

Question 2 asked, “How long have you held this position?” Figure 4 illustrates the responses.



Figure 4: Length of Time in Position (N = 313)

We note that both part-time faculty and adjuncts are long-term instructors at institutions. As seen in Figure 4, the data show that the respondents who have been teaching for 1-3 years and those with 10+ years are closely equivalent. The majority of faculty, 67%, report being employed at the

same location for four or more years, with 44% being employed at the same location seven or more years. The data reflect that contingent faculty are, in effect, permanent faculty who are committed to the institution and who have invested energy and resources into departmental programs. *“As a contingent faculty in my 13th year of full-time employment at the same institution, I don’t always feel contingent. My contracts have gotten longer over the years, at this point only requiring reappointment every five years.”* This response shares characteristics with what we heard from a number of our interviewees and in the qualitative comments interspersed throughout the survey. Many contingent faculty do not feel different than their tenure-line colleagues, especially when viewed in light of their commitment to teaching and their place within their departments. As John Warner argued, contingent faculty are “still working in the majors.” Warner’s use of a baseball analogy emphasizes the qualifications and commitments of contingent faculty, and the fact that they are doing the same job as tenure line faculty.

What is obviously frustrating is the lack of consistency in contract lengths, and our data clearly exposes that it is an institution-by-institution scenario. This variation in contingent contracts is problematic for a myriad of reasons. Most importantly, contractual lengths and the variations within them undermine the importance of contingent faculty in the teaching mission of programs, departments, and institutions. There should not be such variation when someone with the same teaching responsibilities, expertise, and success in the classroom can be treated so differently—dependent only upon which institution the instructor is working for. What we can tentatively conclude is that contract lengths are something that can more easily be changed and should faculty (both tenure-line and contingent) work toward effecting this type of change, it would bring meaningful stability in both material and affective ways to contingent faculty. Universities and departments should address this precarious concern more forcefully through an increase in contract lengths, and, more importantly, through the implementation of a promotional ladder that contains clear requirements and assessment mechanisms. These changes can help to alleviate a core issue of contingency: doubt and uncertainty around employment length and possibilities. For instance, according to one survey respondent:

At my university, certain departments fought several years ago for a promotional ladder for instructors: instructor, advanced instructor, senior instructor. Each advancement came with a small salary boost and a longer contract. Although this program was lauded and written about, in recent years, the university has hired more truly contingent faculty members, and our dean refuses to allow advancement at all for the last four instructors hired, all of whom have been here multiple years now and are integral to our core programs. They are all on one-year contracts.

Last year and this year, we hired five more, all of whom are on one-year contracts.

The fact that the structure for contingent faculty can change each time there is a change in leadership is a facet of precarity no one is talking about—and one that is unacceptable.

Material Work Conditions

While all of the data collectively provides a comprehensive view of the material work conditions of contingent faculty, this section highlights the labor of teaching and the support faculty receive. We focus on four areas:

- Number of Courses Typically Taught in an Academic Year
- Designated Office Space with Computer
- Office Support
- Parking

Number of Courses Typically Taught in an Academic Year

Question 2 (composition) and Question 3 (TPC) asked, “How many courses do you typically teach in a term? We recognize that some locations have complex configurations of load based on credit hours and work hours. Pick the one that is closest to your situation and explain if necessary.” Figure 5 shows a comparison between the number of courses taught and the type of contract. This was one of the few questions where the differences in the type of writing became important to show more specifically. Thus, we felt we needed to split this data to give a more accurate representation of the teaching loads based on contract type.

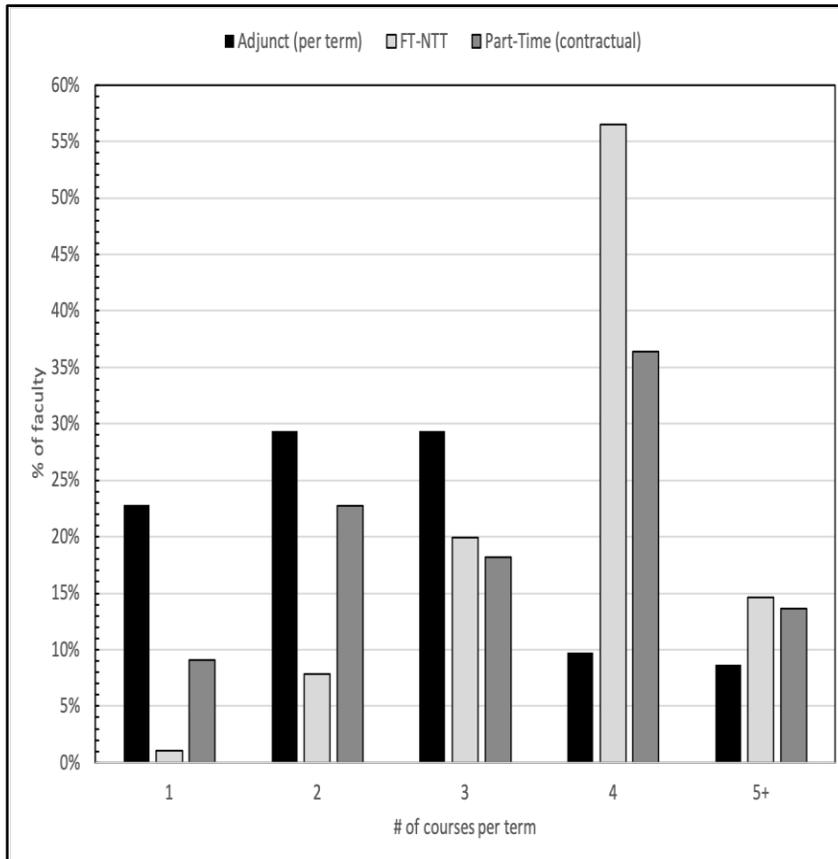


Figure 5: Courses Taught per Term by Contract Type
($N = 305$; FT NTT, $n = 191$; Part time, $n = 22$; Adjunct, $n = 92$)

Most of these respondents carry a 4/4 load. Even though a 4/4 course load—especially with a high volume of lower-division students—is a heavy grading load, most contingent faculty will willingly welcome a 4/4 load (with insurance benefits) because the alternative, too often, is to be employed as an adjunct. As one survey respondent noted, “*Two [courses] at *this*school--three more elsewhere--would rather have them all in the same place, of course.*” As Figure 5 shows, adjuncts typically carry 1-3 courses per term, but what they responded qualitatively is that this is per institution, with many of them teaching at multiple institutions at the same time to make ends meet. “*I typically teach at more than one school during a term. Usually I have between 6 -10 courses a term.*” This is not a struggle felt only by term adjuncts either. Even when employed “full-time,” many contingent faculty feel exploited based on their load. According to one respondent:

Three years ago, lecturers' 4/4 load was adjusted to a 5/5 load with no increase in salary. (This amounts to a 25% reduction in

pay.) The ‘gentleman’s agreement’ when they told us the news was that we would only have 2-3 preps. and no committee work. They reneged on the committee promise within the first month. Since then I have had either 3 or 4 preps. (some of which = upper level, all of which = “writing intensive”) every semester. For comparison, the T/TT people are teaching a 3/4 load.

Therefore, while the precarity of job security may be “missing” for FT NTT contingent faculty, they then suffer because of the instability of their load or responsibilities. The precarity and exploitation is then materialized when their loads and responsibilities can—and do—change with no notice, accommodation, or increase in salary.

Designated Office Space with Computer

An important aspect of being an employee in any organization is having a designated office space and materials, such as a computer, to do the work that is expected. Question 15 was included to accurately understand the availability of materials to contingent faculty to do their work. It asked, “Do you have a designated office space with a computer in that space?” Respondents had several options, which are represented in Figure 6.

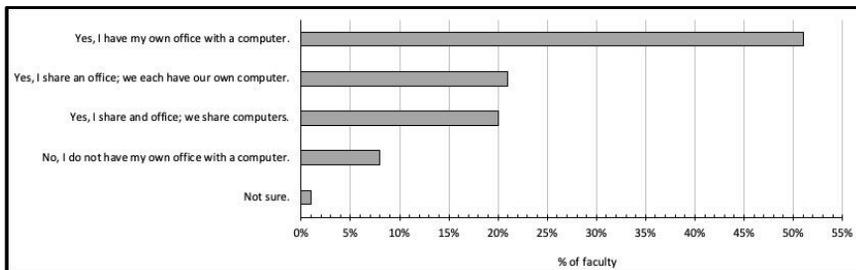


Figure 6: Availability of Designated Office and Computer Access (n = 298, *rounding up made the total 101%)

The literature and long-time stories about contingency typically focus on adjunct labor and the “freeway flyers” who work from their car and talk to students in hallways because they have no office. Data show that 92% (n = 278) of respondents have a designated office space and access to a computer, and just over half of respondents, 51% (n = 152), have their own office and computer.

While 51% of respondents have their own computer—although positive—49% of respondents share or do not have access to a work computer. This workplace situation is problematic for multiple reasons, one being that those with the shared space have to attempt to stagger their schedules so they are not in the office/in need of the computer at the same time. Said one participant:

When my colleague and I shared an office and computer, we would try to plan our coming semester so that she taught MWF and I taught T/TH and vice versa. It's hard to have student conferences/grade papers/even check your email when you are in a shared space. It was just one more thing I had to think about.

Even if the 20% ($n = 60$) of respondents who share a computer purchase and maintain their own laptops, which they carry with them into the shared office space, this issue raises concerns such as security, printing (hooking personal devices into a central department printer), and expenses related to software (especially for those faculty who teach courses online).

Office Support

Class preparation often includes time and labor spent on “housekeeping” duties such as copying and collating, as well as an actual cost investment of classroom supplies such as pens, paperclips, and staples. To uncover the material work conditions of office support, Question 13 asked, “Do you have access to office support staff for forms, copies, office supplies, and general assistance?” See Figure 7.

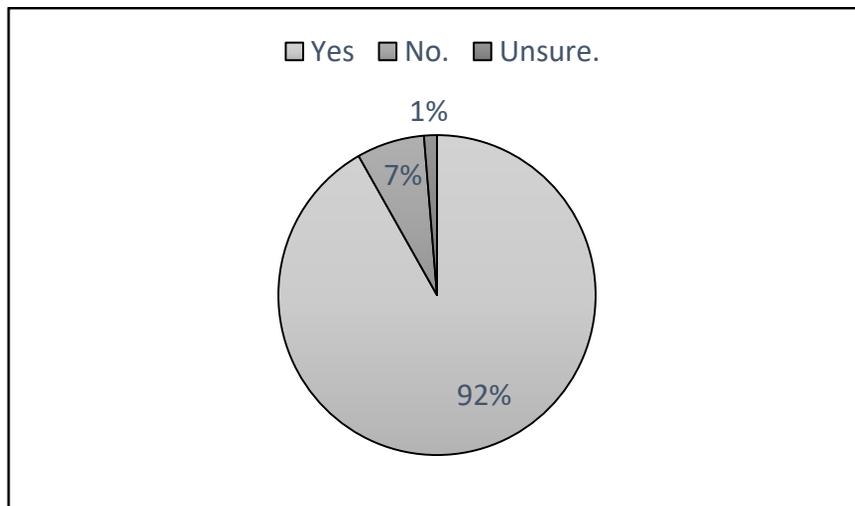


Figure 7: Access to Office Support Staff for Forms, Copies, Office Supplies, and General Assistance ($N = 304$)

A majority of respondents have access to support. However, even though 7% ($n = 21$) is a low percentage, that number is not negligible. If 7% of the respondents to this survey are paying out-of-pocket to purchase standard supplies such as binder-clips, pens, folders, or dry-erase markers, when considering the already low salary of many contingent faculty, these supply costs are significant in relation to total income.

Parking

Parking is a common complaint of all faculty because of its expense and limited availability. While this question was not included in the original pilot study, it was added because parking can impact contingent faculty in more material ways. Question 14 asked, “What best describes how you park (for when you teach face-to-face)?” Figure 8 shows the results.

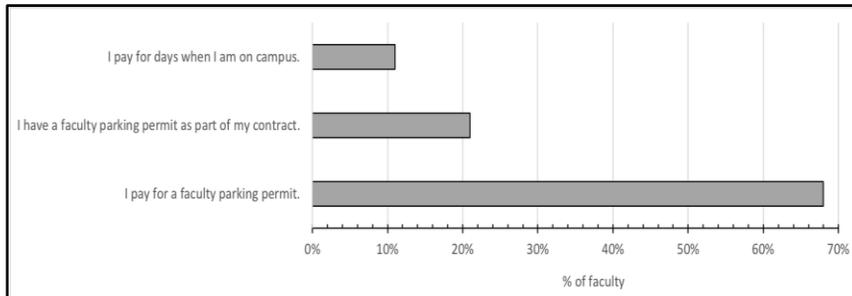


Figure 8: Parking ($N = 269$)

We asked this question because we wanted to understand the costs and whether or not this was a cost to employment or a benefit. The data reflect that 68% ($n = 183$) of respondents pay for parking. At universities—especially ones located in major cities—parking is often expensive. Although paying for parking is a standard practice both in and outside of academia, these additional costs add up for contingent faculty who may be employed at more than one university or are usually paid on a lower pay scale than tenure-line faculty.

Compensation

Without doubt one of the most pressing concerns about contingent labor is compensation. Here we asked questions about:

- Salary
- Benefits
- Union Representation

We take compensation to include both salary and benefits. We also include a question in this section we asked about union representation since it typically has a direct effect on compensation.

Salary

Question 16 asked, “What is your salary range?” Because of the differences in FT NTT and adjunct salary, we present the data for these two groups separately. Figure 9 and Table 4 illustrate FT NTT salary.

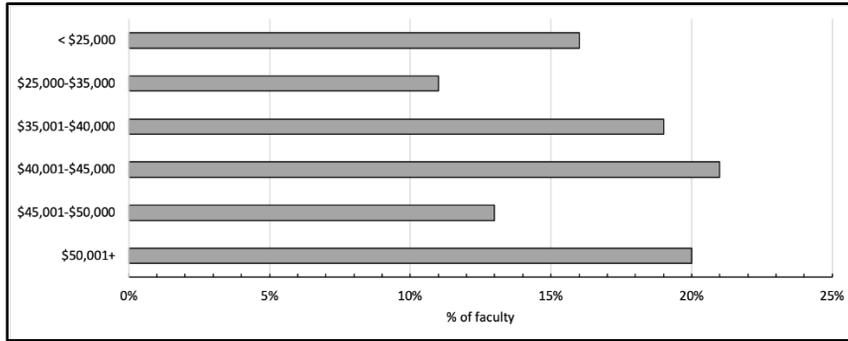


Figure 9: Salary Range for FT NTT (N = 255)

Figure 9 provides a look at annual salary ranges for FT NTT. The respondents are split fairly evenly across salary ranges with 32% ($n = 84$) reporting an annual salary of \$45,001 and over, but an almost equal number 28% ($n = 74$) report a salary of less than \$35,000. The most common salary range, \$40,001-\$45000, was reported by 21% ($n = 54$). What is missing from Figure 9 is the additional context of the annual salary in relation to the cost of living in certain locations. That additional data could help with understanding these numbers, but the fact that so many FT NTT faculty make less than \$40,000 a year paints a discouraging picture. Since so much national data often reports on contingent faculty earnings as per course, Table 4 examines annual salary in relation to courses taught per term.

Table 4: FT NTT Faculty Salary Range with Courses Taught per Term (N = 254)

less than \$25,000	42
1 course per term	10
2 courses per term	16
3 courses per term	10
4 courses per term	3
4+ courses a term	3
\$25,000-\$35,000	28
2 courses per term	1
3 courses per term	9
4 courses per term	17
4+ courses a term	1
\$35,001-\$40,000	49
2 courses per term	2
3 courses per term	5

4 courses per term	34
4+ courses a term	8
\$40,001-\$45,000	54
1 course per term	1
2 courses per term	1
3 courses per term	6
4 courses per term	38
4+ courses a term	8
\$45,001-\$50,000	32
2 courses per term	2
3 courses per term	7
4 courses per term	19
4+ courses a term	4
\$50,000+	49
1 course per term	2
2 courses per term	11
3 courses per term	13
4 courses per term	14
4+ courses a term	9

The average pay per course for FT NTTs ranges from \$3,125 to \$6,250, while the mode—the categories with the highest cluster of respondents—is \$4,687 to \$5,312 per course. The rare faculty who teach one or two courses per semester may be classified as research NTT faculty.

Adjuncts

Compensation for adjunct instructors (term-to-term) often determines how many courses instructors seek and how many institutions an instructor commutes between in order to earn a living wage. Question 19 asked, “What are you paid per course?” See Figure 10 and Table 5, which are two ways to view the data based on per course compensation.

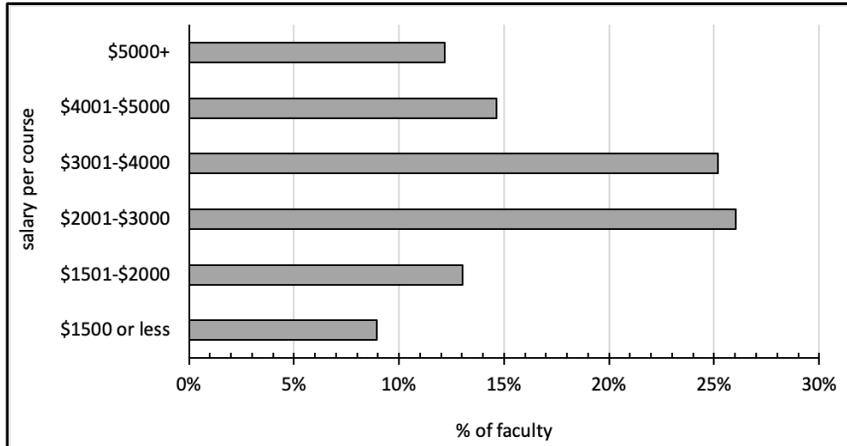


Figure 10: Adjunct Compensation per Course (N = 123)

Right at half of the adjuncts (51%, $n = 64$) report earning between \$2,001 and \$4,000, with 26%, ($n = 32$) reporting \$2,001-\$3,000, and 25% ($n = 31$) reporting \$3,001-\$4,000 per course. Table 5 illustrates the data with a comparison between salary per course and how many courses respondents were teaching.

Table 5: Adjunct Pay per Course with Courses per Term. (N = 85)

\$1,500 or less	8
1 course per term	2
2 courses per term	2
3 courses per term	3
more than 4 courses a term	1
\$1,501-\$2,000	14
1 course per term	2
2 courses per term	3
3 courses per term	5
4 courses per term	1
more than 4 courses a term	3
\$2,001-\$3,000	25
1 course per term	6
2 courses per term	8
3 courses per term	7
4 courses per term	2

more than 4 courses a term	2
\$3,001-\$4,000	23
1 course per term	7
2 courses per term	7
3 courses per term	5
4 courses per term	4
\$4,001-\$5,000	10
1 course per term	2
2 courses per term	5
3 courses per term	1
4 courses per term	1
more than 4 courses a term	1
\$5,000+	5
1 course per term	1
3 courses per term	3
4 courses per term	1

The two questions on salary do not align identically to the types-of-contract question, which means our question was not as clear as we had hoped. “What is your salary range” was meant to be for all faculty on any sort of contract (but we did not make that clear), while the “what are you paid per course” was intended for term-to-term adjuncts. Even with the confusion around the question, the data is valuable because respondents do provide insights into how contingent faculty describe their salary. The fact that 9% of respondents make \$1,500 or less per course directly correlates to the precarity of their positions. With another 26% earning \$2,000 or less per course, almost a quarter of the contingent faculty who responded, even with a 4/4 load teaching load, would make less than \$16,000 annually—which requires them to either teach at other institutions simultaneously, seek outside work, or live just above the poverty line (assuming, of course, that they live alone and have no family <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>). Although the higher end of adjunct per-course salary is within the low-end average for NTTs, many adjunct faculty lack health insurance and comparable retirement plans.

Benefits

A notable difference between FT NTTs and adjuncts is the possibility of benefits. Question 20, depicted in Figure 11, asked, “Are benefits included in your compensation package?”

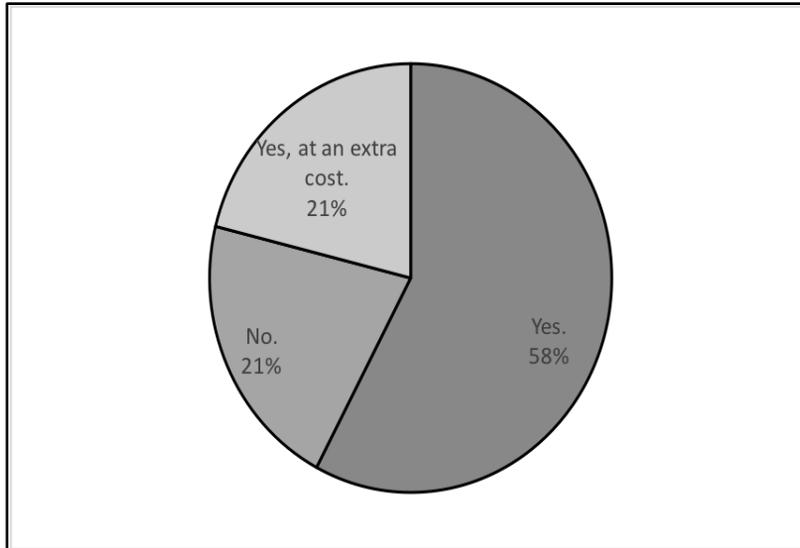


Figure 11: Inclusion of Benefits in the Compensation Package ($N = 302$)

Based on the information for salary discussed above, the fact that 42% ($n = 127$) of respondents either do not receive benefits (such as healthcare and life insurance) or have to pay extra for it emphasizes the poor state of contingent faculty in our nation. Since 63% ($n = 193$) of our respondents identified as FT NTTs, and the data from this question indicates 58% ($n = 175$) have benefits, we conclude that not all FT NTTs have benefits. Forty percent of respondents are part-time/adjuncts, which aligns with this question's result that 42% ($n = 127$) of our respondents are uninsured.

Our qualitative responses reflected that the availability of benefits is entirely dependent on the institution and the policies in place at that institution. One respondent, who identified as an adjunct working part-time at two universities, noted that they received benefits at one institution but not the other. Another respondent commented on the limitations in place that preclude some contingent faculty from securing benefits: *"You have to teach ten credits which is impossible with either a 3 or 4 credit backbone. There are strict rules that no one can teach over ten credits so [it's] impossible to get benefits."* At institutions where adjuncts can qualify for benefits, some respondents noted the teaching load would be astronomical to qualify: *"Adjuncts who teach 6 or more units qualify for dental and vision, but I teach only 3–4 units per term."* Sadly, even at institutions where contingent faculty could opt into benefits out of their own pocket, they shared the injustice that *"I can access health care coverage but would pay much more than full-time."*

Union Representation

Faculty unions have historically represented tenure-track faculty. A growing number of universities have union representation for FT NTTs, and a small number of locations offer union representation for adjuncts. Question 39 asked, “Are you represented by a faculty union?” See Figure 12.

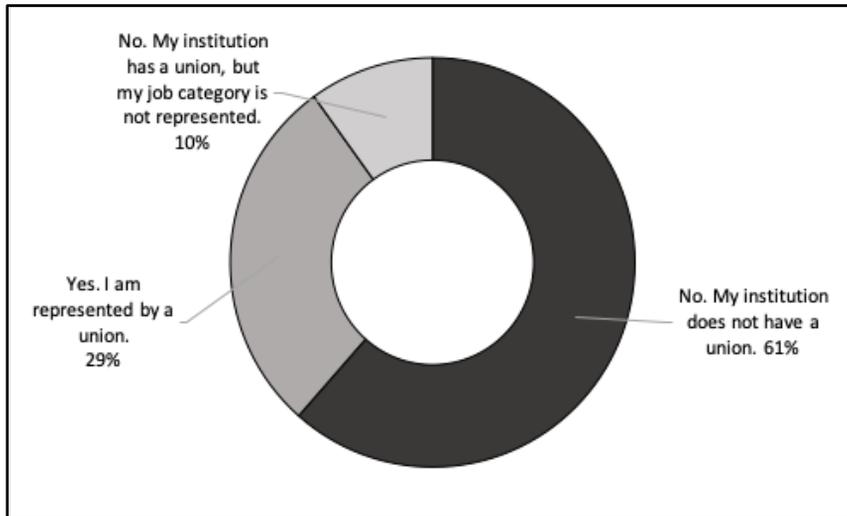


Figure 12: Faculty Union Representation ($n = 291$)

Only 29% ($n = 84$) of respondents work at institutions where they have union representation. Another 10% ($n = 29$) worked at locations where there was a union, but their job category was not represented. However, unions are often separate for NTT and tenure-track units—which is necessary to protect the interests of each unit—but causes conflict in different ways when the tenure-track unit bargains to “stay ahead” of the NTT unit, especially regarding summer teaching, merit pay, constitution of committees, and priority of teaching assignments. Even in situations where contingent faculty have union representation, disparity still exists among faculty units. As Samuels and others have noted, union representation is one way to ensure better working conditions, but our data point to a greater need of increasing union representation—especially for those off the tenure track—on college campuses.

Having union representation is one way the voices of contingent faculty can be heard, and action can be taken to protect them. Many of the interviews following the survey suggested respondents were nervous to “overshare” because of the precarity of their positions. During one interview, a respondent was talking about a meeting they had attended for part-time faculty to share their views:

I went to a meeting for [adjuncts]. We were supposed to be able to share our feelings, so I did. I had the feeling that I had stepped on lots of people's toes. I felt ostracized right away. Two people in charge of the session basically told me I shouldn't feel that way. I don't like being a 'non-essential' and that's how I refer to myself! At 4C's I attended a session for union-going to attempt to start a union. Have to tread carefully, because I'd still like to be employed, if you know what I mean.

The desire to have a union to protect your employment conditions should not be one that is associated with the potential to lose the position. Some contingent faculty who do voice that desire are met with backlash: *"When I was PT, I was 'noisy' –trying to start a union, etc., and when I got made FT, someone said to me: 'They just hired you full-time just to shut you up' and 'they're appeasing you.' Very hurtful. Patronizing. Some tenure-track and many administrators, they talk about 'how much they value PT faculty for their value to the university' and it just feels patronizing."* Having a union to back these precarious roles would allow NTT faculty to voice their concerns, demand better material work conditions, and not fear repercussions. One respondent, who is represented by a union, shows just how much pressure is taken off of contingent faculty with this representation: *"Because we're unionized, the pay and benefits are good, my workload has been constant despite the University System's attempts to increase temps' course load, and I'm represented in the event of a conflict with administration."*

Teacher Training

Since contingent faculty are generally hired into teaching positions, we wanted to know what formal training they had in learning how to teach. Question 21 asked, "Have you ever taken a formal course on teaching? Please select the answer that best fits your background." See Figure 13 for the results, which specifically asked respondents to identify whether they had taken a practicum, a course in teaching composition, a course in teaching TPC, both, another kind of teaching course, or none.

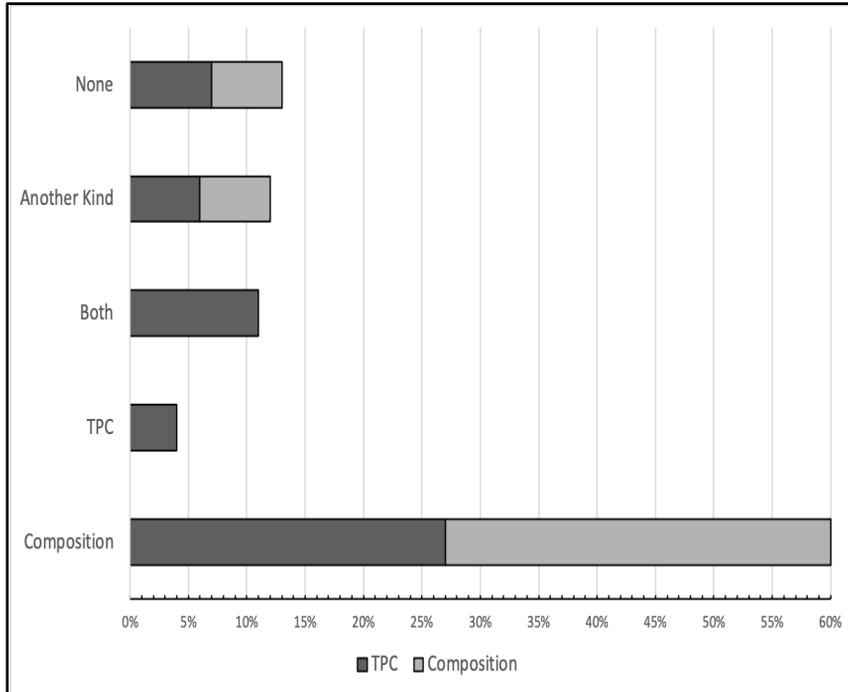


Figure 13: Completion of and Type of Formal Teaching Practicum Course ($n = 294$)

The good news is that the majority of contingent faculty who participated in the survey, 76% ($n = 223$), have taken at least one course on how to teach. The majority selected that they had taken a course on composition as the most common form of training. For TPC contingent faculty, 12% ($n = 29$) have taken both a practicum or teaching course in TPC and in composition. As far back as 2009, Lisa Melonçon (“Masters”) questioned whether a teaching composition course was adequate for teaching TPC. In addition, the teaching assignment and subsequent “how to teach” course were based around composition. Instructors may have had training as a technical writer or worked as a technical writer, but they were never formally trained to teach technical writing.

With the growth of online courses and programs (see Martinez, Mechenbier, Hewett, Melonçon, & Harris), we also asked in Question 22, “Have you ever taken a formal course on teaching online? Select the answer that best fits your situation.” Figure 14 illustrates the results of online teacher training.

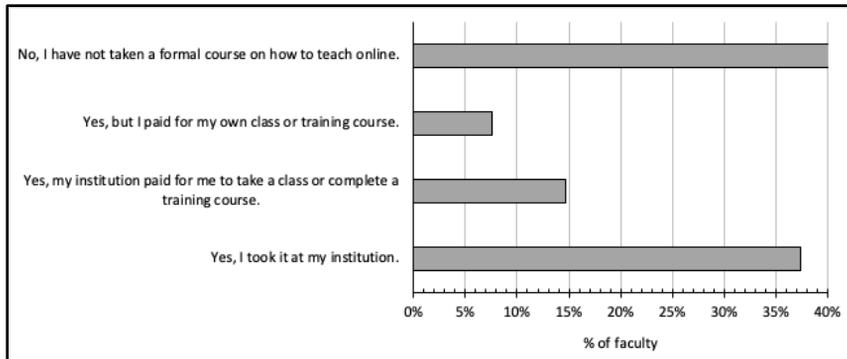


Figure 14: Online Teacher Training ($N = 238$)

The answers here may correlate with the fact that respondents are contingent faculty (and are more likely to teach online than tenure-track faculty). Additionally, depending on the year the respondent's master's degree was conferred, universities may not have offered training to teach online as part of the degree program.

For contingent faculty, online teacher training is sparse, and even though this number, 60% ($n = 143$), is somewhat encouraging, it does not take into account how training courses offered at many institutions are focused on teaching online using the institution's learning management system and are not actually about *teaching* online. Current research (Harris et al.) highlights the lack of training in teaching online and adds to a slim body of existing research focused on the necessity for training faculty in online pedagogical practices (Cargile, Cook, & Grant-Davie; Hewett). If you teach the course face-to-face, "*there is an assumption that you can teach online... [I had to] [figure out on the fly how to teach,*" which is a representative view of many contingent faculty in our study who teach online (see also Melonçon "Contingent").

Professional Development

The options respondents could select for professional development were determined by the pilot study (Melonçon, England, & Ilyasova), additional information from the participants of the pilot study, and an understanding of what types of opportunities are available at most locations. We asked three questions about professional development. The first question was specific to professional development within the institution where there is no cost to attend. Question 25 asked, "What professional development opportunities are available to you? Check all that apply." See Figure 15.

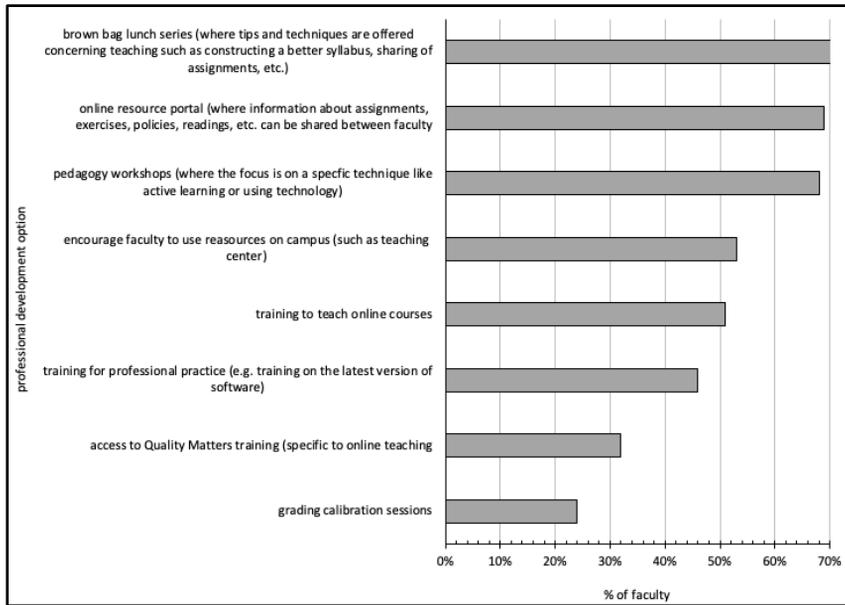


Figure 15: Professional Development Opportunities
($N = 285$; average 4.2 responses)

The most commonly offered professional development opportunities are brown bag lunch series, online resource portals, and pedagogy workshops—all of which are low cost to the institution. Quality Matters is a membership based company that provides professional development opportunities for faculty, and as become something of the de facto “standard” for minimum online course development. (See <https://www.qualitymatters.org/> for more information.) Thus, Quality Matters training falls on the low end of opportunities/access because of the cost of training/certification. (A university may hesitate to invest \$250 to certify an instructor to teach online if the faculty member is not permanent and can use those skills at another institution.)

Cost analysis needs to be considered when thinking through these sorts of opportunities. That is, the cheaper training is in terms of time and labor and supplies, the more often participation is available and encouraged. What the data does not tell us, however, is how often contingent faculty take advantage of professional development opportunities. One respondent disclosed that when they were a novice online instructor, no professional development opportunities were available to them. However, currently, as an experienced instructor, they feel constrained because they are required to teach online using a pre-designed course. It is important to note that numerous respondents shared that while professional development opportunities were available, they simply lacked the time or desire (seeing no point, as they were not permanent faculty) to participate. Also, there were no specific comments either in the qualitative survey responses or the interviews that indicated

faculty were paid for their professional development time, or that paying contingent faculty to participate in professional development would increase their participation. This data suggests further research is needed to examine methods which will prioritize professional development for contingent faculty and make the investment of professional development worthwhile for FT NTTs and adjuncts.

The second question about professional development was one focused on monetary resources available to contingent faculty. Question 26 asked, “Do you have regular access to money for professional development? Please select the answer that best applies to your situation.” See Figure 16.

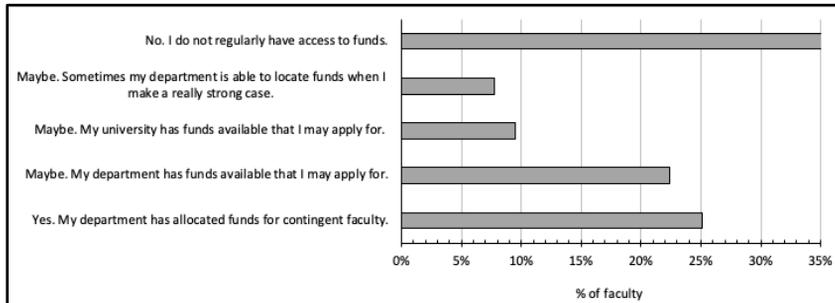


Figure 16: Access to Funding for Professional Development (N = 295)

The goal of professional development is to ensure faculty have access to current trends and techniques in teaching and to reinvigorate instructors, allowing them opportunities to interact and share ideas. With 35% ($n = 103$) responding that they have no access to funding for professional development, and only 25% ($n = 74$) having secure funding specifically for contingent faculty, professional development opportunities are largely inadequate.

The final professional development question was specific to financial forms of professional development where the institution paid or reimbursed faculty members for participating. Question 27 asked, “If you do have access to financial forms for faculty development, what are they? Check all that apply.” See Figure 17.

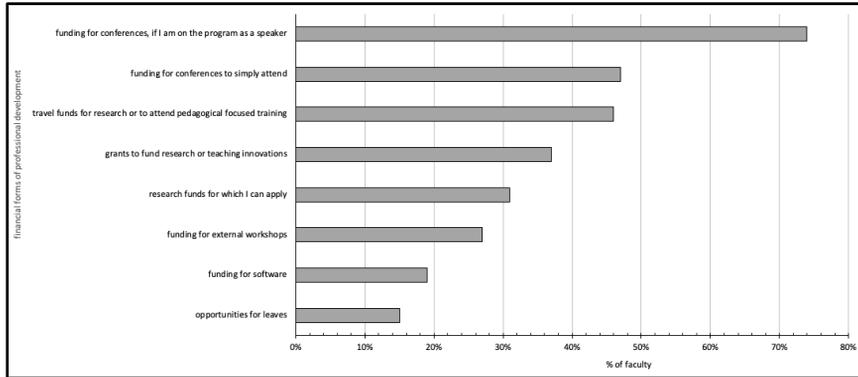


Figure 17: Faculty Development Opportunities ($N = 200$; average 2.9 responses)

Our results find that under 50% ($n = 100$) of faculty have access to funding for most activities, which leaves the other half of faculty without resources for professional development. In times of financial distress or tightened budgets such as seen in higher education in recent years, funding for both faculty travel to conferences and professional development have been significantly cut or frozen (Mrig et al.) Most FT NTTs and adjuncts lack resources to attend conferences and access professional development on their own. “While . . . senior faculty members . . . can afford to personally cover what they are not reimbursed for or be without funds while awaiting reimbursement, . . . [spending personal funds is] not [an option] for newer, lower-paid professors and adjuncts” (Flaherty). Concerns with funding contingent faculty include: a department could fund an adjunct for a conference, but the adjunct may not teach for that department the following semester, and the limited money available is reserved for tenure-track positions.

Reappointment

Since reappointment is so important for contingent faculty, who are unsure of continuing contracts, we wanted to highlight this information. Reappointment was one part of Question 29 where we asked respondents to rank their satisfaction with certain aspects of their jobs. See Figure 18.

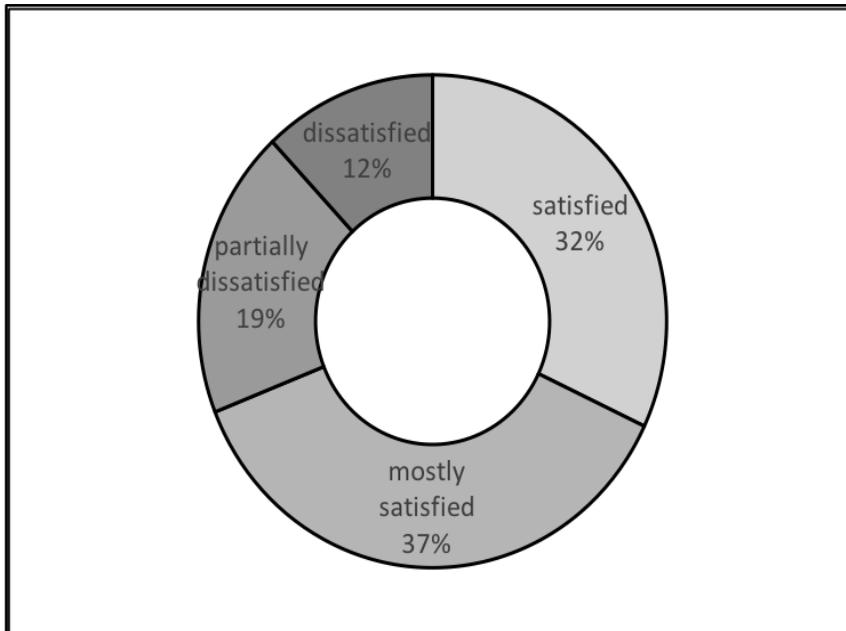


Figure 18: Satisfaction with Reappointment Process ($N = 298$)

Approximately one-third of respondents (31%, $n = 92$) expressed dissatisfaction with the reappointment process. Factors which affect the answers to this question may include inflexible one-year contracts versus the opportunity for multi-year reappointments and the extensiveness of the review process (electronic files, the manner in which student evaluations are used, peer review requirements, etc.). Moreover, the inability to be promoted in rank (with a salary increment) and therefore earn seniority may result in dissatisfaction regarding reappointment.

Many NTTs (69%, $n = 203$) may be satisfied or mostly satisfied because they realize that at least they have the opportunity to be reappointed. FT NTTs who responded may have answered that their full-time, non-permanent status provides more benefits than an adjunct status, which makes FT NTTs “satisfied.” Jordan Schneider encourages universities to:

[c]reate a new faculty tier of “super adjuncts” who would teach three classes a semester and be paid around \$20,000 to \$25,000 for the term—more than what adjuncts now make, but still less than a full-timer. Give “super adjuncts” a vote in departmental and faculty matters, require them to be involved in some modest sway [sic] in the academic life of the department (through mentoring, scholarship, research, or faculty development), and make sure they have some measure of real, contractual job security.

Although this proposal establishes yet another category of non-permanent, term-contract faculty, these super adjuncts would have more opportunities to be involved in the department which may increase overall satisfaction among adjunct faculty.

Criteria for reappointment

Figure 19 and Tables 6-7 are the visual representations to Question 18: “Estimate the weight of importance given to the following when it comes time for reappointment or contract renewal. Use a number that represents a percent of total effort. All your answers should add up to 100%.”

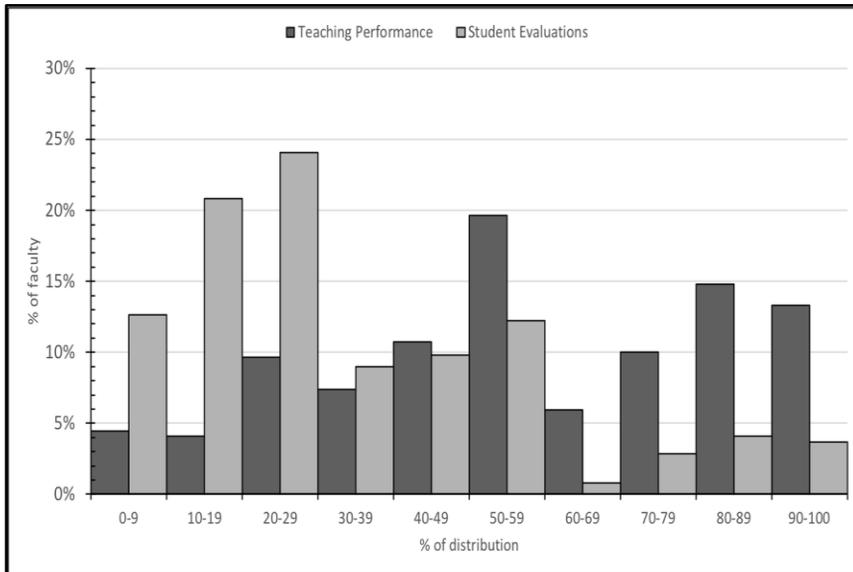


Figure 19: The Weight of Teaching Performance and Student Evaluation in the Reappointment Process (n = 270 performance; n = 245 student evaluations)

Admittedly, in hindsight, we would definitely ask this question a different way. Unfortunately, the question did not ask for an explanation of “other.” (Should someone replicate or expand this work, we hope they would gather more details.)

The most common responses (and therefore the most weighted) point to teaching performance and student evaluations as indicators of reappointment. Even though the responses provide important insights into how contingent faculty are perceived to be assessed, additional factors that impact reappointment should be considered, but we did not include those in this question.

Many contingent faculty—because they are teaching faculty—fear student evaluations because they are the primary factor in reappointment. “Much of the debate on student evaluations is . . . whether

the current instruments are reliable and valid, and whether they should be used in high-stake decisions” (Kogan, Schoenfeld-Tacher, and Hellyer 624). As all instructors are aware, comments on student evaluations often correlate to student satisfaction with their grades. Moreover, tenure-line faculty often do not take the time to know the department’s contingent faculty (or lack opportunities—or desire—to socialize with them), so the blind sense of evaluation does become dependent on student perceptions (see “Politics of Service” article in this special issue for additional analysis regarding evaluations).

Table 6: Weight of Importance Given to Publications and Conference Presentations at Reappointment or Contract Renewal

% of job	Publications, Peer Review	Publications, Other	Conference Presentations	Other
	<i>n</i> = 133	<i>n</i> = 130	<i>n</i> = 145	<i>n</i> = 140
0-9	120	123	117	102
10-19	10	6	26	9
20-29	2	1	2	12
30-39	0	0	0	2
40-49	1	0	0	1
50-59	0	0	0	3
60-69	0	0	0	0
70-79	0	0	0	1
80-89	0	0	0	1
90-100	0	0	0	8

As seen in Table 6, the majority of contingent faculty feel publications and conferences comprise 0 – 9% of their jobs, yet in interviews with us, respondents express an awareness that publications and conference participation are often what separate tenure-track faculty from contingent faculty. These contradictions underlie the lines of demarcation which outline the boundaries between contingent faculty and tenure-track faculty. However, “efforts to improve... [FT NTT work conditions] may be impeded by divergent interests, a lack of cooperation, or a multiplicity of views” among faculty groups and administrators (Maxey and Kezar 579). Table 7 continues the answer to Question 18 about what role certain job functions play in reappointment.

Table 7: Weight of Importance Given to Service Obligations at Reappointment or Contract Renewal

% of job	Advising	Department	University	Profession
	<i>n</i> = 154	<i>n</i> = 181	<i>n</i> = 196	<i>n</i> = 131
0-9	129	96	101	122
10-19	16	55	62	9
20-29	7	26	25	0
30-39	1	3	3	0
40-49	1	0	1	0
50-59	0	0	2	0
60-69	0	0	0	0
70-79	0	1	1	0
80-89	0	0	0	0
90-100	0	0	1	0

Again, the majority of respondents noted their job functions that include service at the student (advising), departmental, university, and professional levels bear little importance on their reappointment, and, yet, contingent faculty are overwhelmingly stepping up in these critical areas of service (see “Politics of Service” article in this special issue for additional analysis regarding service).

Satisfaction

This section presents questions that asked about contingent faculty’s satisfaction with their jobs. Here we take satisfaction to mean that respondents are generally happy in their decision to take a contingent faculty job or to stay employed as contingent faculty. We presented a Likert scale question that rated a number of factors that have appeared in previous studies and/or in the literature related to job satisfaction (see “Introduction” to special issue for additional information). The satisfaction question was then followed by questions related to preference to be working on the tenure track. Question 29 asked, “Thinking of your current position, please rate your satisfaction with the [following].” See Figure 20.

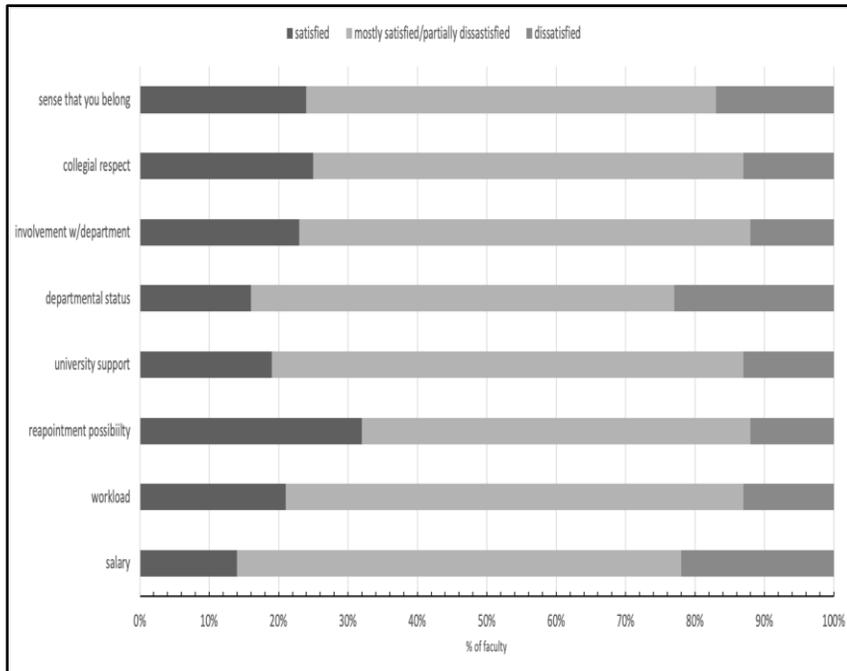


Figure 20: Satisfaction with Current Aspects of Their Job (salary, $n = 297$; workload, $n = 296$; reappointment, $n = 298$; university support, $n = 298$; departmental status, $n = 297$; involvement with department, $n = 298$; collegial respect, $n = 297$)

In Figure 20 we merged together the two middle Likert responses—mostly satisfied and partially dissatisfied. When we were discussing the data, we could not adequately create definitions that seemed to capture what was meant by the responses mostly satisfied and partially dissatisfied. In our discussions, we realized that the two responses meant basically the same thing, but respondents likely answered one or the other based on their own sense of being more positive or more negative about their job. Combining the data makes an important visual point that illustrates the majority of contingent faculty fall into the middle when discussing how satisfied they are with their jobs. By shifting the visual representation, we more adequately represent the large number of faculty who express some satisfaction with their job. Much like the opening epigram from the special issue introduction, “I love my job, but . . .,” shifting this visual representation powerfully illustrates that most contingent faculty are satisfied but perceive both positive and negative issues related to their positions.

Two categories with the largest dissatisfaction numbers are salary (22%, $n = 66$) and departmental status (23%, $n = 69$). Often, FT NTTs feel dismissed when tenure-track faculty fail to acknowledge their teaching—and often service and research—impact on the department. A respondent in a study by Alleman and Haviland stressed that FT NTTs “should be

valued for their contributions . . . [and] that they also should be *recognized* for their contributions” (Alleman 535). Recognition relates to rank and visibility, and the following quote from a faculty participant provides insights into many of the items listed in Figure 20 as they relate to the material work conditions of contingent faculty:

My salary and office aren't my issues—I know I have it better than many people in those regards. It's the intangibles...the feeling that I've been in our department for 7 years and although I recognize all the tenured faculty, most of them don't know my name. I don't get asked to participate in some department activities that I would actually be willing to do. I don't feel like my administrators or most of my colleagues really know much about me or would particularly miss me if I left. I've never had a job like that—all my previous employers and coworkers had relationships with me and I consistently felt valued. I know in my current job, even though it's the job I've held the longest, I am replaceable and viewed as such.

Even when contingent faculty are included, many still do not feel welcomed. Even if the structure changed, and contingent faculty were made “equals” across every institution, in a tenure-normative environment, inclusion remains a behavioral issue which is up to each department to enact. As one participant recounts: *“It is not the most uplifting experience. Faculty meetings may be attended, but one is looked at like a strange disease.”* In situations where contingent faculty feel they have status, their “work and contributions were valued not for the expertise they brought to the table, but for freeing up . . . [tenured-track faculty] to do other work (Haviland, Alleman, and Allen 517). See “Affective Investment” and “Politics of Service” articles in this special issue for more information. Question 30 asks, “Are you happy working as a contingent faculty member?” See Figure 21.

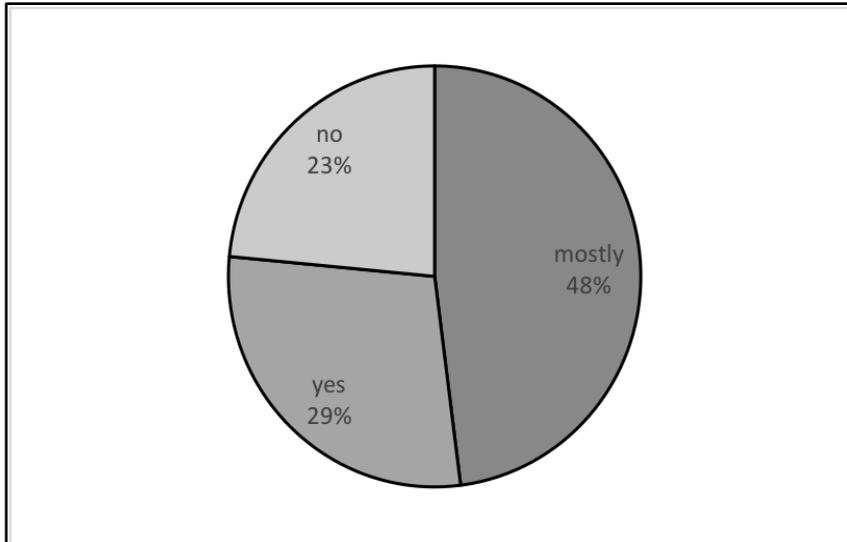


Figure 21: Happiness in Position (N = 298)

Figure 21 aligns with Figure 20 on satisfaction in that that almost half of the respondents (48%, n = 143) are mostly happy. Regarding career goals, “many . . . [FT NTTs] are invigorated by teaching and believe that their profession ‘fits’ what they want from their professional lives” (Waltman et al. 418). However, even though working with students is rewarding, structural politics within the university affect contentment with contingent teaching positions.

Satisfaction is discussed in more detail in the “Affective Investment” article in this special issue. Yet the issue of satisfaction and happiness on the job comes down to what many of our respondents echoed: someone has to do this work. Tenure lines are being continually cut, and the number of underemployed PhDs in English is growing. The result is an influx and continued rise in contingent faculty. We must share their stories so we can enact true change.

After breaking down contingent life into many separate components, our study sought to collect an overall sense of satisfaction with respondents. In this section, we provide the results to the question: “Would you rather be working on the tenure track?” Figure 22 represents how many would prefer to be on the tenure track.

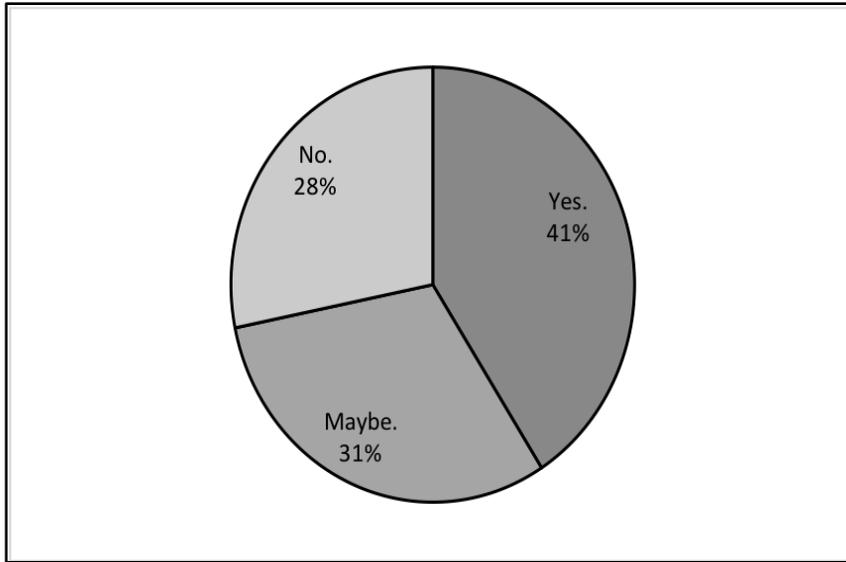


Figure 22: Would You Prefer to be on the Tenure Track? (N = 298)

Many believe that people “settle” for contingent positions when tenure-line positions are unavailable, but that is not always the case. *“We have people who will choose a contingent job over a tenure job if only their salary was more competitive.”* Many reasons exist to choose contingent, the foremost being that some academics describe that they love being in the classroom. They enjoy devoting their lives to the pedagogy and the students. However, devoting your life to something when it will not allow you to pay your bills, or go to the doctor, or maintain your life outside of the classroom may not be the most logical decision. According to one survey respondent, *“As it is, I’m keeping an eye out for tenure-track work—not because I care much about tenure, but because I care about paying bills.”* Salary was certainly a top concern as it related to being satisfied as contingent and was also one of the motivators to preferring a tenure-track position (often stated in the same sentence as job security). *“I’m not sure too many people are happy being contingent if they have to work for a living. I also don’t think too many people who are contingent and already making much less than tenure-line faculty are too happy about having to use so much of their limited income to pay for their own professional development.”*

Yet even when contingent faculty are satisfied with their roles, they report being treated differently. *“I didn’t want to go tenure track with all the hassles. I had no part in the creation of my job status, yet it is held against me on a daily basis. Even though I have the experience in teaching and the terminal degree..., I am treated as if I am a second-class citizen because I am not seeking tenure.”* Unfortunately, the descriptions do not end at “second-class citizen.” Another respondent stated: *“I don’t see myself as an academic, and tenure-track really is not the best situation for*

me. However, this seems to make me a different 'species' from my coworkers. While my workload and resources are pretty ideal, conversations and the general atmosphere at work make me feel like Milton from 'Office Space.'"

For many contingent faculty it boils down to two issues: 1) passion (many contingent faculty would rather teach than research/publish): *"Frankly, they just seem to have different issues. Although they do get paid more and are viewed as more 'valuable' or 'integral' in those intangible ways... So I suppose in some ways yes, but in many ways no (because my passion IS teaching, not publishing). If I could be 'tenured' but with a 75%+ teaching-focused workload, then yes";* and 2) value: *"I'm not really interested in TT, but I want to be respected and fairly compensated for the very hard work I do. I also want my time to be valued and protected the way it is for TT faculty. Contingent faculty have to pick up extra work as administrators protect the time of TT faculty."* Respondents who are searching for tenure-track positions do so in order to attain status and respect which implies—even with the popularity of the “students first” mantra of many universities—teaching is secondary. “Common stereotypes that tenure-track faculty have about non-tenure-track faculty—that they are poor scholars who are unable to get a tenure-track job because of inferior credentials or corporate sell-outs in taking a position with no academic freedom—prevent change” (Kezar 11). With the increasing numbers of FT NTT and adjunct positions, we encourage faculty to acknowledge expertise among all ranks so that all faculty feel included and respected as members of the university.

Conclusion

The findings and results of the survey data offer important insights into the material work conditions of contingent faculty in composition and TPC. The data provides WPAs and TPC PAs the opportunity to see how their local situations compare with national trends. To date, this is the largest set of data specific to writing faculty, and the data indicate that contingent faculty and their material work conditions are better than many of the sensational stories of adjuncts. However, the data also highlight that contingent faculty carry high teaching loads with salaries that could be improved. Since contingent faculty are vital to the teaching missions of composition and to the TPC degree programs, WPAs, TPC PAs, and tenure-line faculty should genuinely consider how to leverage this data to make improvements at their institutions. The next article in this issue offers a series of locally-based action items that can be observed and implemented to improve material work conditions for contingent faculty.

Works Cited

- Alleman, Nathan F. and Don Haviland. “‘I Expect to Be Engaged as an Equal’: Collegiality Expectations of Full-Time, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members.” *Higher Education*, vol. 74, no. 3, 2016, pp. 527-542.
- Cook, Kelli Cargile and Keith Grant-Davie, editors. *Online Education 2.0: Evolving, Adapting, and Reinventing Online Technical Communication*. Baywood, 2013.
- Everett, Justin and Cristina Hanganu-Bresch, editors. *A Minefield of Dreams: Triumphs and Travails of Independent Writing Programs*. The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado, 2016.
- Finkelstein, David et al. “Taking the Measure of Faculty Diversity.” 2016. TIAA Institute, <https://www.tiaainstitute.org/publication/taking-measure-faculty-diversity>.
- Flaherty, Colleen. “The Great Conference Con?” *Inside Higher Ed* 25 July 2017.
- Harris, Heidi Skurat et al. “A Call for Purposeful Pedagogy-Driven Course Design in OWI.” *ROLE: Research in Online Literacy Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2019, <http://www.roleolor.org/a-call-for-purposeful-pedagogy-driven-course-design-in-owi.html>.
- Haviland, Don et al. “‘Separate but Not Quite Equal’: Collegiality Experiences of Full-Time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members.” *The Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 88, no. 4, 2017, pp. 505-528.
- Hewett, Beth L. *Reading to Learn and Writing to Teach: Literacy Strategies for Online Writing Instruction*. Bedford/St.Martin's Press, 2015.
- Kezar, Adrianna. “Spanning the Great Divide Between Tenure-Track and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty.” *Change* Nov/Dec2012, Vol. 44, Issue 6, 6 - 13.
- Kogan, Lori R. et al. “Student Evaluations of Teaching: Perceptions of Faculty Based on Gender, Position, and Rank.” *Teaching in Higher Education*, vol. 15, no. 6, 2010, pp. 623-636.
- Mallonee, Barbara. “Reforming and Transforming Writing in the Liberal Arts Context: The Writing Department at Loyola University Maryland.” *Writing Majors: Eighteen Program Profiles*, edited by Greg Giberson et al., Utah State University Press, 2015, pp. 74-61.
- Martinez, Diane et al. “A Report on a U.S.-Based National Survey of Students in Online Writing Courses.” *ROLE: Research in Online Literacy Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2019, <http://www.roleolor.org/a-report-on-a-us-based-national-survey-of-students-in-online-writing-courses.html>.

- Maxey, Daniel and Adrianna Kezar. "Revealing Opportunities and Obstacles for Changing Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Practices: An Examination of Stakeholders' Awareness of Institutional Contradictions." *The Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 86, no. 4, 2015, pp. 565-594.
- Melonçon, Lisa. "Master's Programs in Technical Communication: A Current Overview." *Technical Communication*, vol. 56, no. 2, 2009, pp. 137-148.
- . "Curricular Challenges of Emphasis Degrees in Technical and Professional Communication." *Sharing Our Intellectual Traces: Narrative Reflections from Administrators of Professional, Technical, and Scientific, Communication Program*, edited by Tracy Bridgeford et al., Baywood, 2014, pp. 179-200.
- . "Contingent Faculty, Online Writing Instruction, and Professional Development in Technical and Professional Communication." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2017, pp. 256-272.
- . "Administrators" raw data 2020
- Melonçon, Lisa et al. "A Portrait of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty in Technical and Professional Communication." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2016, pp. 206-235, doi:10.1177/0047281616633601.
- Melonçon, Lisa and Sally Henschel. "Current State of Us Undergraduate Degree Programs in Technical and Professional Communication." *Technical Communication*, vol. 60, no. 1, 2013, pp. 45-64.
- Mrig, Amit et al. "Why Professional Development Is a Strategic Priority During a Time of Rapid Change." *Academic Impressions*, 2020. <https://www.academicimpressions.com/blog/professional-development-in-higher-education-report/>.
- O'Neill, Peggy O. et al., editors. *A Field of Dreams: Independent Writing Programs and the Future of Composition Studies*. Utah State University Press, 2002.
- Schneider, Jordan. "A Letter to Full-Time Faculty Members." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 18 February 2015.
- Waltman, Jean et al. "Factors Contributing to Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction among Non-Tenure-Track Faculty." *The Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 83, no. 3, 2012, pp. 411-434.
- Warner, John. "Contingent faculty aren't working in the minors." *Inside Higher Education*, 2015. <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/just-visiting/contingent-faculty-arent-working-minors>.
- Yeats, Dave and Isabelle Thompson. "Mapping Technical and Professional Communication: A Summary and Survey of Academic Locations for Programs." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2010, p. 225, doi:10.1080/10572252.2010.481538



Data Takeaways

Laura Wilson
University of Cincinnati

Mahli Mechenbier
Kent State University: Geauga

Lisa Melonçon
University of South Florida

Laura Wilson has an MA in English with a concentration in Scientific and Technical Communication from Bowling Green State University. She has worked as a technical writer and editor and has taught technical, professional, and business writing at the University of Cincinnati since 2005, where she is an Associate Professor Educator. Laura is passionate about her work and her students; beyond technical writing, she enjoys teaching courses on social media, rhetoric, and web authoring.

Mahli Mechenbier teaches Technical Writing, Professional Writing, and College Writing at Kent State University: Geauga as a three-year-renewable Senior Lecturer. She was a member of NCTE's Committee for Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction and was an editor for the OWI's Open Resource (2013 – 2016). Her research focuses on how academic administrations manage distance learning and the intellectual property rights of contingent faculty.

Lisa Melonçon is a professor of technical communication at the University of South Florida. Her teaching and research focuses on the programmatic and professionalization dimensions of technical and professional communication, research methodologies, and the rhetoric of health and medicine.

*“Contingent faculty need to be valued more.
We provide so much value and would provide more
if we were acknowledged and credited for it some way.”*
Study Participant

In the “Results and Findings from the Survey” article in this special issue, we presented much of the quantitative data from the survey in the form of descriptive statistics and graphical representation.

However, we knew we needed to add some perspectives to the data by placing the individual data points into a larger context. Particularly, after listening to the voices of contingent faculty across the nation, we are left asking “so what?” Often, other than commiserating and offering support, many writing program administrators (WPAs) and technical and professional communication program administrators (TPC PAs) are unsure how to enact real, meaningful change at their institution. To help address this concern, we offer a discussion of what we think are key takeaways from the data where action can be taken to improve the material work lives of contingent faculty. Again, we define material work conditions as “the day-to-day working conditions of faculty, such as teaching loads and institutional support” (Melonçon, England, & Ilyasova 209). As such, this article will highlight and discuss the following topics:

- Heavy Teaching Load
- Significance of Titles
- Importance of Professional Development
- Questions of Quality and Qualified

Our goal with this discussion is to move beyond straight analysis and into a synthesis and holistic view of the data as a means to provide a deeper understanding of the material work lives of contingent faculty. This deeper understanding is framed by our interpretation of the data using three guiding questions:

- Why is this topic important?
- How does the data support this?
- What action can we take?

This three-part structure allows for synthesis of some of the major points in the data, but, more so, it encourages direct action to improve the material work lives of contingent faculty. Thinking of this article as more-than-an-analysis enables administrators and faculty the opportunity to form their own meaning of the labor realities within their local contexts.

Heavy Teaching Load

Why is this important?

Data show a significant number of adjuncts teach 5+ courses per term, with full-time non-tenure-track (FT NTT) faculty teaching a consistent 3-4 courses per term. The data also provide a noteworthy viewpoint on *what* they are teaching; in TPC, the key role contingent faculty play is in degree programs, while in composition, most faculty are teaching first-year composition (FYC). Our data indicate there is some frustration, not only with the contingent faculty's course load, but also with the courses available for teaching. When contingent faculty are teaching courses in their areas of expertise rather than being used to fill gaps and teach what are perceived as undesirable courses (often without training in that particular subject area), the issue of load becomes less problematic. Yet, overall, these concerns are analogous.

The difference—which is no surprise—is keyed to location. Again and again, our data demonstrate there is no consistency across the nation outside of the common finding that contingent faculty carry a heavy teaching load. Knowing this, the takeaway we may have some immediate control over is that contingent faculty often have several preps, frequently for courses they have no experience in, and in order to be the best teachers they can be (dignity, job security, student expectations, etc.), their scholarly goals and professional development are often sacrificed.

How does the data support this?

In addition to the figures referenced in “Results and Findings,” many participants chose to both select a provided answer and include a written response, especially to the question regarding course load. It is not a simple question to answer for contingent faculty because so much variation exists between institutions and between FT NTT and adjunct contingent faculty. The results included instances of FT NTT faculty who were adjuncting at other institutions, with one participant citing both workload and type of courses taught: *“I teach full time for one college, part time for another. Also, since this is a survey directly related to technical writing, I must add that most of my classes are composition I or II. I do also teach some technical writing (depends on what's needed).”* This situation is most common for TPC contingent faculty; their expertise in TPC is secondary as they are often tasked with teaching composition courses.

Regarding strictly load, though, the answers ranged from consistent 3/3, 4/4, or 5/5 loads for the FT NTT faculty (again, this varied wildly based on institution), and the expected (though no less problematic) responses from adjuncts who carried heavy loads across multiple institutions. One respondent shared, *“I typically teach at more than one school during a term. Usually I have between 6 -10 courses a term.”*

This particular takeaway should impact readers, as the implications of astronomical teaching loads are many and significant. Six to ten courses? Multiple preps? The academy should be concerned about this situation for multiple reasons: 1) the effect of this workload on the faculty member, 2) the impact that this demand must have on faculty performance, and 3) the consequences on student learning. Unfortunately, this set of employment circumstances is not uncommon as explained by one of our participants: “*As an adjunct, I teach at both a university and a community college. At the university, I am assigned 3 courses. At the community college, I am often given a course overload of 4, 5, or 6 courses, depending on enrollment.*” Our data contains countless similar examples, all ending on the same point: teaching loads are wildly out of control, leaving contingent faculty executing ridiculous teaching loads—often without job security, departmental support, or benefits—simply to pay living expenses. Matching many of the trade press narratives about adjunct teaching and “freeway flyers,” many of our study participants reported that they “*teach at 5 different colleges to try to make ends meet.*” As one participant pointed out, the load is draining and affects not only time and mental energy, but pride. Most contingent faculty, we can all agree, stay in these positions because they love teaching (see “Affective Investment” article in this special issue). The catch here is that their love of teaching is pushing them into roles where they must sacrifice the effectiveness of their teaching to make a living, as represented by the following participant. We include their lengthy comment unedited and in full because it offers a glimpse into material work conditions from those experiencing those conditions:

As you know, there is a glut of PhDs in English. Even though my very own were professors, I had to explain to them that I did not do anything wrong in my job search in the 1990s. I applied everywhere. I was not picky. I was on the market for seven years. But I was also adjunct teaching at the same time and thus never got my dissertation turned into a book. By the time I'd taught two or three years, I no longer had a field--all my research time was spent learning new preps in far-flung courses that I'd never taught or sometimes even taken. So I've made my peace with being the best teacher that I can (have taught for 24 years, 11 on contract). I don't mind not being able to keep up with scholarship. I DO mind not being able to be the best teacher that I can because of stumbling blocks provided by the university--low salary, no raises EVER (they are merit based, and most lecturers find little time for scholarship), high student caps, too many preps per semester, too many courses per year, etc. etc.

What action can we take?

We understand we may not have control over bigger-picture changes across the nation, but, ideally, one or more of the following actions would be possible at individual institutions to help with issues of course loads. FT NTTs who reported the highest job satisfaction often cited having access to/benefiting from a number of the opportunities described below.

Pay attention to faculty qualifications and position

Institutions should ensure contingent faculty are qualified to teach the courses they are teaching. Administrators should stop using contingent faculty as fillers and recognize that they have earned specific degrees with areas of specific expertise. Action items include being aware of contingent faculty placement and types of assigned courses; asking faculty for course preferences; and involving faculty in the scheduling process through the creation of open lines of communication. According to one participant: *“I am very frustrated with the fact that I have an MA and PhD in tech comm, yet if a literature professor wants to teach a course I have to step aside. To have someone in medieval lit teaching report writing is a little crazy to me.”* Administrators can and should advocate for contingent faculty who have more qualifications and experiences to teach certain types of courses.

For term adjuncts who lack the job security of FT NTTs, universities should, at the very least, institute annual contracts with a maximum 4/4 load, so faculty know what to prep and how to prepare. The stability of an annual contract without overloads would allow contingent faculty to schedule specific time for scholarship and professional development. The “unknown” of where the next paycheck comes from negatively affects so many aspects of teaching and learning: faculty/student relationships, faculty/colleague/department dynamics, faculty scholarship, faculty performance, faculty development, and quality of instruction (student outcomes). All were consistent themes study participants acknowledged were affected by the precarity of their positions.

Pay attention to preparation and scheduling

Program administrators should minimize course preps and also provide faculty who have innovated or excelled in some way the opportunity to teach a unique course. As the data in “Results and Findings” indicated, many contingent faculty teach the same series of courses, so when administrators pay close attention to scheduling, and open themselves up to conversations about preference, they could create more consistent schedules that inspire the faculty teaching the courses.

For adjuncts, administrators should commit to be flexible with scheduling so that contingent faculty can meet the commitments of their other jobs and, as many others have pointed out, work toward a more humane schedule so that courses are not added and dropped at the last minute. Coordinators can ask tenured faculty to take a turn at the 8:00

MWF classes, for example. Finally, chairs can provide consistent opportunities for support, development, and acknowledgement of teaching contributions (see “Looking Forward” article in this special issue).

Encourage pedagogical innovation

Department leaders can focus professional development on ways to improve and/or shift pedagogical practices that contingent faculty can then use across different types of courses. For example, faculty should be encouraged to establish more innovative ways of grading beyond leaving individual comments. Faculty can incorporate class critique and peer review, which has been confirmed to be helpful and can reduce the amount of faculty-led grading. Faculty should be motivated to incorporate other formative feedback measures. With strong formative and innovative feedback, summative grading can potentially be completed through rubrics and grade sheets that can also save instructor time. Additionally, other forms of “ungrading,” with tasks such as contract grading, should be considered. Pedagogical innovation can also come from creating a more collaborative departmental community. Participants who had access to pedagogy talks, brown bag lunches, and colleague workshops, even when they didn’t attend, reported feeling more valuable and respected, and the autonomy that comes with pedagogical innovation allows faculty to feel more connected with the courses they teach.

Encourage use of institutional support structures

Contingent faculty should be supported to access university resource centers that provide starting places for instructors to add new ideas to their courses without having to develop them individually. Mentors can compile and provide a list of starter ideas for in-class exercises and activities. Faculty can then provide multiple options for assignments and/or allow more autonomy in the creation/design/implementation of assignments and activities. When faculty have access to these resources, everyone wins: the services typically don’t cost money since they’re housed by the university, and the faculty member benefits from pedagogical support. As reported by one participant: *“We do have a good teaching academy, and they collaborate with online course development services to offer a 2x a year faculty conference where we get feedback on teaching methods and new technology. I wish every university had this.”* Either the university does not offer resources like this, or they do, but contingent faculty are not aware these resources exist. Administrators need to ensure that contingent faculty are aware of all professional development opportunities across their institutions.

Integrate feedback loops

Program administrators can discover ways to include contingent faculty in curricula decisions or, at the very least, in a robust feedback loop, which we define as listening channels so contingent faculty can voice concerns

and emphasize what is working in regard to standardized curricula or programmatic goals. Few people understand how well courses and programs are working as well as contingent faculty members, so enabling them a space and an opportunity to offer their experiential knowledge is a rather simple way administrators can help contingent faculty feel more valued while providing important data to improve courses and programs. The range of autonomy for course design varies greatly, as discussed in the “Affective Investment” article, but creating avenues by which faculty can help shape their own autonomy is a feasible step. One respondent explains what that might look like: *“We work as a team to design the curriculum. The learning objectives are set for the course. We agree about major assignments and grading percentages. We have flexibility with regard to the schedule and delivery of lessons.”* We shouldn’t dismiss the importance of contingent faculty having a voice in the material they teach.

Provide recognition

Department leaders should offer recognition and thanks, being certain to acknowledge the heavy course loads. Administrators should compliment faculty when they contribute an insightful idea or teaching strategy. Because of contingent faculty members’ major contribution of teaching, one of the only ways they gain recognition or a sense of accomplishment is through praise of their teaching. This recognition can come in the form of awards, merit pay increase, or a simple email from the department head praising excellent student evaluations. Faculty who are valued for their involvement in this way are more likely to continue making constructive contributions, often going above and beyond what they are contracted to do. Since teaching and service are critical components of contingent faculty jobs, universities should consider creating an annual teaching and/or service award with contingent-only eligibility. Establishing two categories for the award(s)—FT NTT and adjunct—would further acknowledge the value of non-permanent faculty. Without these types of recognition in place, we will continue to hear (when we ask, when we listen) contingent faculty reporting a lack of respect:

The NTT faculty in my department carry the bulk of the teaching load, but we receive the least amount of money and respect. My peers are treated as unwanted faculty, and younger, newly hired TT track faculty treat us without consideration for our contributions, knowledge, experience, and additions to the research and service mission of the university as a whole, and to our department in particular.

Further discussions of lack of respect and recognition can be found in the “Affective Investment” article in this special issue.

Make communication transparent

Administrators should create transparency in communication: disclosure regarding the day-to-day workings of departments, and the institutional initiatives that can affect the lives of contingent faculty, will promote awareness of policies and workplace politics. Although most WPAs and TPC PAs cannot change institutional cultures overnight, administrators can be more transparent about the challenges the program faces, including the fact that contingent faculty teach significant loads. Other examples of transparency include an open acknowledgement of the true role student evaluations play in the evaluation process. For example, at one of the author's institutions, student evaluations are mandated to be included as part of the faculty evaluation process. However, she does not put any emphasis on the scores. She openly acknowledges how she uses evaluations and further explains how they are interpreted and applied in the yearly faculty evaluation committee. Study participants reported a range of emotions when it came to the use of student evaluations, and it was clear that those who saw them as valuable or terrifying didn't hesitate to confirm that their specific program didn't emphasize them when it came time for reappointment. However, many other respondents were unclear how much these evaluations were used in staffing decisions, and often noted how that affected their teaching. *"I have no explicit pressure, but we all know it's a factor (or they wouldn't make us include teaching evaluations in promotion and award portfolios, right?)"* Responses like this were common, and it's clear that many contingent faculty don't know how/if evaluations are being used when it comes to renewing their contracts. Another author reflects on the fact that, while mandated at her institution as well, her department does a good job of offering a wide range of evaluation tools and times to administer them. It's clear that for many respondents, student evaluations are an important part of the evaluation process, but it's often unclear how much weight they carry. It is this clarity that we're calling for.

The Significance of Titles

Why is this important?

We use title here to refer to the institutionally approved and/or mandated term that is associated with one's job description. For tenure-line faculty, the assistant-, associate-, and full-professor ranks are easily identified and provide a visual and prominent marker to someone's identity, and, more importantly, to their place within higher education. The titles of contingent faculty are not as clear, but we want to underscore that titles for contingent faculty are just as important—if not more so—than their tenure-line colleagues.

Even though we failed to include a question in the survey specific to titles (what is your title?), we do know that the title someone holds matters. For example, in follow-up research, including titles found in

several of the survey's qualitative answers (e.g. to Question 1: "What is your current position"), as well as a re-visiting of the websites or contacting administrators of the same schools associated with the original research study design, we found a wide array of titles at the institutions such as:

- Assistant Professor, Educator
- Continuing Lecturer
- Instructor
- Lecturer
- Assistant Professor of Teaching
- Senior Lecturer
- Teaching Assistant

In these institutions, FT NTTs have the opportunity for promotion to a higher rank with a related pay raise. However, the different titles do not carry the same weight because: 1) they are inconsistent across institutions; thus, they lose meaning and significance, and 2) they do not fully represent the authority and expertise that contingent faculty bring to the classroom.

We see these circumstances often with contingent faculty: many are required only to teach and provide minimal service to the department, yet many are observed serving at the college and university levels; researching and publishing; and presenting at national conferences. Establishing job titles which reflect various aspects of this work is critical for to bringing a sense of respect and accomplishment (professor versus instructor or lecturer) to faculty positions—and is tightly bound to a sense of purpose and satisfaction.

How does the data support this?

Some of the takeaways from our data are obvious and involve load, autonomy, and salary. However, even without the inclusion of a specific question regarding titles, many respondents—without prompting—included discussion of how their title (or lack thereof) affected them. It may seem trivial that contingent faculty are affected so much by their title, but this data reveals that title was of vast concern and importance to contingent faculty:

I really hate the term 'contingent' [because it] makes me sound like I am a migrant worker. I have had this position for 31 years though given the economic climate, our new dean, and our new department chair, for the first time ever I am worried about my contract being renewed. I am a Senior Instructor and I cost them money. They could reduce me to part time - without benefits - and hire more part-time people and save themselves money. Very Heavy Sigh. Sometimes it seems to me that education is about

money - not actually about the quality of instruction that students receive.

Having titles that reflect growth and professionalism would give contingent faculty both more self-worth and department value, as evidenced by the following participant:

I love teaching, so I'm happy that my primary work requirement is teaching. However, I am frustrated by the lack of advancement opportunities. I started as an instructor 15 years ago, and I will retire as an instructor--I have no opportunity to become a 'senior lecturer' or something similar. I do receive regular raises, so I am satisfied with my salary. It would be nice to have some means of recognizing my progress professionally.

As we move more and more toward contingent faculty teaching the brunt of courses in higher education, we expect an increase in the contention between tenure track and contingent. Many report heated discussions in faculty meetings as contingent faculty members fight for their rights to vote, enact change, and simply be heard. More and more, the lines of demarcation do not even include a difference in education or experience, as many contingent faculty have PhDs and experience in their fields. The reality is the competition for dwindling tenure-track positions has become fierce, and that puts additional pressure and stress on some contingent faculty. As one participant notes, *"It hurts that you have a lot of education and you are reminded in direct and indirect ways that you aren't a real professor. You're an instructor. I am reminded of that. I can't call myself professor, but I can call myself doctor. That helps, but the chair makes it clear that you're not on the same level as the rest of us."* Logistically, not all qualified academics will secure a tenure-line position, but because of their love of teaching and scholarship, they "settle" for contingent roles where their work is not respected or applauded—and title is a critical part of satisfaction:

In a recent search for a FT NTT faculty member at my institution, out of over 100 applicants, the vast majority had PhDs. So when non tenure-track faculty are made to feel less than, it is offensive. Of course, if universities opened up more TT lines, we wouldn't see this issue as much, but as that doesn't seem to be the case, we need to change the conversation so that non tenure-track don't feel less than. I don't get offended too much because I don't have my PhD and feel that this makes a difference. But for the NTT who do have their PhDs, I can't imagine how that feels. They've got terminal degrees, they're experts in their field, but they can't be called professor. It's degrading.

Titles are also tied to precarity issues, as one respondent explained:

At my university, certain departments fought several years ago for a promotional ladder for instructors: instructor, advanced instructor, senior instructor. Each advancement came with a small salary boost and a longer contract. Although this program was lauded and written about, in recent years, the university has hired more truly contingent faculty members, and our dean refuses to allow advancement at all for the last four instructors hired, all of whom have been here multiple years now and are integral to our core programs. They are all on one-year contracts. Last year and this year, we hired five more, all of whom are on one-year contracts.

What action can we take?

Ideally, we are arguing for consistency across the academy and joining those, such as Adrianna Kezar, who have advocated for a distinct teaching professorship that carries with it the same prestige and professional respect as current tenure-line positions with a research focus. We need to look to model institutions without the existing hierarchies and remove language from titles that mark some faculty as lesser than. For example, Carnegie Mellon, University of Denver, and University of Cincinnati have titles that highlight teaching, but on the same level as tenure-track faculty. For adjuncts, we need a better title than “staff” that appears in course listings and something better than part-time when (if this happens at all) term-to-term faculty are listed in online directories.

We should work toward updating internal documentation where there are not only titles that reflect the intellectual commitment and rigor of the teaching position, but that also come with the opportunity for advancement (see the final piece “Looking Forward” in this special issue for more information on this topic).

Universities can ensure that all contingent faculty—FT NTTs and adjuncts—are listed on the faculty page of the website and are not relegated to a different page or section. While this change is seemingly insignificant, perceptible consequences exist when faculty are listed in different locations, as it reinforces unhealthy and unhelpful hierarchies that do little for morale and subsequently impact student learning. A title brings a sense of respect and accomplishment (such as professor). When a title reflects status and value, contingent faculty may be encouraged to grow in their teaching role and seek opportunities to professionalize as members of the academic community.

The Importance of Professional Development

Why is this important?

Professional development is important because contingent faculty are the faces of most of our classrooms, from service courses that support the entire institution to specialized courses that build student expertise. As discussed earlier, many contingent faculty are teaching heavy course loads, often loads where the course content lies outside of their area of expertise. If we are asking TPC contingent faculty, for instance, to teach composition, they need training and development in that area. Likewise, contingent faculty without a background in TPC are being asked to teach specialized TPC classes with no training or development. Each institution has a duty to ensure that all faculty are adequately trained, developed, and supported to be the most effective faculty they can be. However, meeting these demands can come with challenges in implementation. For instance: What kind of professional development should be offered/encouraged? What is most helpful for the contingent faculty, particular to each institution? Online teaching resources and access/funding to professional organizations, journals, and conferences would be useful to engage adjuncts as part of the larger discipline. Department chairs can consider local professional development in the form of brown-bag seminars, teaching and technology demonstrations, and mentoring. Leaders can survey the faculty to develop an idea of their needs/interests and then offer/fund these opportunities. Issues concerning time, funding, relevance, and worth are critical to decipher. According to some of our participants, even if professional development is offered, it becomes a struggle to find time to attend, or the institution does not make it worth their time/effort to participate in these offerings: *“Some of these programs are offered. But as an adjunct working at 2 or 3 schools, there is no time for professional development. Since these schools also have hiring freezes, there is no real reason to participate.”*

Professional development opportunities are included as part of “politics of service” (see related article in this special issue) because contingent faculty routinely ask for professional development opportunities, as seen from the data in this study and previous research on contingent faculty (Melonçon; Melonçon, England, & Ilyasova). With contingent faculty teaching the majority of FYC courses and TPC service courses, it becomes the university’s job to ensure those faculty are prepared to teach the courses to which they are assigned. Contingent faculty take pride in their jobs (why would so many work for so little if they did not?), so they often sacrifice time and pay out of their own pockets to ensure they stay relevant in their fields, as indicated by the following survey response:

I often wonder what the point of research is if those in the classroom don’t have access to it. With heavier course loads,

lower salaries, and minimal faculty development funds, where are instructors supposed to find the time and financial resources to do research? Many do it, anyway, and it seems unethical to force faculty to fund their own research endeavors and then to do that work on top of their work in the classroom (uncompensated, that is). It seems to me that the expectations for teaching faculty are becoming identical to those for research faculty, but without the stability.

In addition to professional development enhancing the teaching and expertise of the faculty, it also considerably benefits the institution where the contingent faculty work. For some participants, this understanding prompted an ethical question: is it acceptable that the institution does not support the faculty's professional development but benefits from their work (conference presentations, publications)? One respondent reflects:

Even in a position like mine (full-time, contract-based), there is inherently a difference in expectations between people in my position and those who are tenured/tenure track. I think we're expected to do as much work for much less money. The justification provided for this is that we (at my university) are not expected to complete scholarly work. What this means is that we are not paid as much as those who are considered scholars, despite the fact that we often complete scholarly work on our own. Essentially, if we want to complete scholarly work, we can't expect the university we work for to support us financially for it. However, they inherently benefit when we complete scholarly work, and although they're not supposed to consider factors such as publications when we're up for reappointment, we are encouraged to include this information in our portfolios.

These responses beg the question: why should these faculty make the time/effort to develop themselves if the institution fails to value their expertise? Why attend professional development opportunities, on their own dime and at great inconvenience to their already packed schedule, if it does not mean greater respect or job security? The next section works through how the data from the survey shed light on these questions, and the final section provides ways to address these concerns. If universities want to ensure their programs are offering the best instruction, those same programs need to ensure they are providing their instructors with valuable professional development resources and opportunities.

How does the data support this?

In "Faculty Development as Working Condition," Ed Nagelhout contends, "If faculty development affects working conditions, our initial point of

departure is that we can improve working conditions [through faculty development]” (A14–15). Nagelhout’s position that we can improve working conditions through professional development is supported by the survey data insofar as contingent faculty do want to participate in professional development opportunities. However, four issues impede professional development: lack of money, time, value, and opportunity. Many contingent faculty are not funded, others are given partial funding and must pay the rest out of pocket (i.e., many have the conference registration paid for but all travel expenses are not covered), and very few are granted full funding for one conference a year. Even if money were not an issue, many contingent faculty note they do not have the time due to heavy teaching loads and their own life responsibilities. And even if they do attend, what’s the return on investment if the development won’t help ensure their position? Finally, some contingent faculty report that there are few, if any, opportunities for them to partake in professional development. All of these issues combine to limit the sense of community, value, and belonging for contingent faculty. Feeling that your professional presence and instruction matter when there is not time, money, or opportunity to get involved and contribute to your field can be incredibly frustrating in these circumstances. In one interview, the comparison of contingent faculty to office furniture highlighted the severe consequences when contingent faculty did not feel a sense of belonging. As one participant comments, *“The work environment is a sensitive issue for me. I love the teaching part. I don’t like the political environment... this is something that really hurts. There is nothing, no money or support, for those that aren’t TT. Sometimes it’s like I’m looking in the door, and there’s a party going on, and I’m not included. I don’t think I’m alone in this.”* The problem with professional development for contingent faculty is that the opportunities are wide ranging, from “zero opportunities” to full funding for travel and conferences: *“We have excellent departmental support for both attending and presenting at a variety of conferences for teaching and for teaching writing.”* Much of contingent life depends on the university and the value the institution assigns to contingent faculty members. Most agree, however, that time is a factor, even when the opportunities are available and encouraged.

What action can we take?

Harper College in Illinois has recently encouraged adjuncts to observe other faculty—including tenure-track faculty—in the classroom and then apply relevant teaching techniques to their own courses. American University and the University of Colorado at Denver have compensated adjuncts to take professional-development courses. With a focus at most universities on retention, administrators are realizing most first-year courses are taught by adjuncts and recognize that professionalizing these faculty positively affects enrollment and retention. Increasing professional development opportunities and finding ways to compensate adjuncts for

duties outside of their usual job and contracts will allow universities to shift to institutional changes, such as internal grants for course releases and specialized training with compensation or travel funds.

One aspect of professional development that is rarely talked about is encouraging the connection between teaching and research, which has been made most eloquently by Brad Hammer and, more recently, by Richard Colby and Rebekah Shultz Colby. Particularly, Colby and Colby discuss the pros and cons of their jobs, including the fact that they are best positioned to do the type of research necessary to advance writing pedagogy, but they lack the time to do it. Framed as professional development, these associations would also allow contingent faculty to take more ownership and investment in the programs in which they teach and—most likely—improve student learning. For example, one author is encouraged regularly to publish on the pedagogical strategies she employs in her own classroom. This marrying of research with ongoing instruction would allow contingent faculty to showcase what it is they do best. Additionally, when contingent faculty share their research with other contingent faculty, a critical level of professional development can be realized by both the presenter of the research and those reading it. Actual publications aside, especially because time is an issue for many contingent faculty, by setting up a system where contingent faculty can visit their colleagues' classrooms (and invite colleagues into their own), not for the purpose of evaluation or critique but for the purpose of development, we would likely see an increase in community and best teaching practices.

Classroom teachers are not only the best people to do the research but are also in the most need of it as a way to keep connected to current scholarship in the field and see how it relates to current practice. This entire study is a model on how to involve contingent faculty in research as collaborators for pedagogical and programmatic research. Inviting and encouraging research is a form of professional development to improve teaching but also to remain engaged in the larger fields and the research process. Participating in research helps contingent faculty assess how or whether the ideas being put forth in the scholarship can actually function in an applied setting. This recursive process of producing conceptual ideas from localized case studies, to testing them at other locations, and then revising or expanding the ideas, is much needed in both composition and TPC. Contingent faculty are poised to participate in these endeavors as part of their professional development.

To ensure this participation, departments need to control budgets and provide a pool for professional development. Reallocation is possible; however, the sad reality is that when institutions prioritize, doing so is almost always at the expense of contingent faculty, which is significant since they are doing the majority of classroom instruction. Many respondents wrote lengthy replies suggesting strategies to enhance access and funding for professional development opportunities, such as the following:

Academic Labor: Research and Artistry 4.1 (Special Issue 2020)

A dream scenario would allow funding for instructors to attend conferences and outside workshops. Instead of requiring that they present, perhaps require that instructors review sessions attended and report back to their colleagues. A system would be in place for colleagues to share these reviews where they could be easily accessed; colleagues would regularly meet to discuss various issues and to check in with each other on how the semester is going; colleagues would have input into the programs they are teaching instead of others simply telling them what is going to happen (without having any day-to-day experience in the classroom). A dream scenario would provide more opportunities for instructors to do research supported by the department that could actually serve the department's needs.

Professional development and departmental relations are key both to enhancing contingent faculty's sense of belonging to the department and to ensuring their courses and contributions matter. Many are willing to go above and beyond their contractual obligations to obtain this sense of belonging. Belonging is defined here as having a sense that they (contingent faculty) matter, that their work matters, and that they are given adequate support and compensation for the work they do. When contingent faculty have access to money and opportunities—and when their time spent on professional development is recognized and valued—everyone benefits: not just the faculty member, but also the department, the students, the institution, and the greater field of study.

We want to end this section on professional development and its importance to contingent faculty by turning back to WPAs and TPC PAs. Administrators need training too, and they need to actively seek out opportunities to continue to grow, learn, and be challenged to be effective leaders. The first part of this training needs to be continual instruction and reflection on how to be effective listeners. As we highlighted in the introduction to this special issue, too often tenure-line faculty and administrators are not effectively listening to the concerns of contingent faculty. Including professional development for administrators is as important as those same administrators working toward implementing professional development opportunities for contingent faculty.

Questions of Quality and Qualified

Why is this important?

Initiating these discussions is challenging for several reasons. Non-college-educated working citizens may have difficulty comprehending why working adults in possession of a Master's or Doctorate degree are unable to make a living wage. Professors are often characterized in the media as highly compensated, working two days a week with summers off. The existence of adjunct faculty is contrary to the mantra “stay in

school to be successful,” which is instilled in children at a young age. Additionally, engaging contingent faculty in these conversations can become a power struggle in itself: contingent faculty may feel blamed or characterized as contributing to these working conditions. There were several instances where participants described the feeling of having to be “grateful” just to be employed or selfish for wanting more: *“I’d rather be teaching here than at Wal-Mart, of course...”* Quotes such as this pinpoint the precarity many contingent faculty feel when they ask for “more.” As another participant pointed out, *“I had no part in the creation of my job status, yet it is held against me on a daily basis.”* Without union representation, without the department, university, and wider field enacting change, many contingent faculty will continue to feel guilty for the labor they are forced to endure. But what can they do, alone? Moreover, some tenure-track faculty avoid participating in academic labor discussions, dismissing contingent faculty as not as qualified (or worthy of limited department resources) since they are only part time. From the quotes above (and those found in the “Affective Investment” and “Politics of Service” articles), it is clear that even when we invite contingent faculty to the discussion, they are regularly dismissed as “noisy” or “attention seeking.” As one participant noted from a faculty meeting about representation, *“It’s not just hinted at. A colleague actually said ‘I’m tenure track and you’re not. There’s got to be a difference.’”* The division between being on and off the tenure track will be hard to bridge. Many conversations regarding non-tenure-track faculty are politically sensitive and arguably threaten tenured faculty as it relates to salary, rank, sabbatical, and teaching load.

Qualified: we use this term to describe what contingent faculty “bring to the table”—their degrees, their work experience, and their expertise in the field (even narrower is the expertise they bring to each course they teach). Think about this hypothetical: What happens when a contingent faculty member is more qualified for a specific course than a tenure-track professor? In most scenarios, the course goes to the unqualified tenure-track professor, and the contingent faculty is left to work behind the scenes developing the course and materials, and the students’ experience is not maximized (as noted in previous participant quotes, as well as those in the “Affective Investment” article in this special issue).

Quality: we use this term to show how the issue of qualified faculty affects the quality of instruction our students receive. According to one participant, qualified contingent faculty are passed over for the courses they are most qualified to teach, and the less-qualified (but tenured) faculty are assigned courses which they have no expertise in.

We [TPC faculty] can’t just let anyone teach tech comm courses as though it was some simple sort of writing course. It’s a really sad feeling to work your tail off to get a good education and you’re

stuck facing paying back student loans, [and] what I feel the most, is that I have this great education but I don't have any respect in this department. No one else wants to teach it so let's throw it to her. I'm allowed to teach in my field if they let me or allow me to. They hire lit and CW professors but their courses don't fill. But the tech comm courses fill so they [TT CW faculty] get to teach the courses. The American literature professor will be teaching the tech comm because she can't fill her course. When I think of the working conditions, I don't just think of myself or the adjuncts, but I think of what it's doing to the students.

This is just one of the issues raised when looking at the data through questions of quality and qualified. One participant paints another grim scenario: “*I have no clue how to combat the influx of unqualified contingent faculty. The goal, it seems, is ‘butts in seats’ and the knee-jerk reaction to that is ‘adjuncts, adjuncts, adjuncts.’ But then they [adjuncts] are given no guidance or support and . . . [departments are] left with what we have now.*” Program administrators need to move toward a system that ensures departments maintain quality in all faculty; too many contingent faculty are teaching without mentoring and support.

How does the data support this?

Kahn asks for a level of pedagogy that “draw[s] explicit attention to the reality that material conditions are teaching and learning conditions[,]” but there is little understanding in much of the composition scholarship that calls into question issues of quality and qualified (120). Readily accessible scholarship demonstrates not just anyone can teach writing, but yet programs consistently hire faculty who are not qualified to teach composition or TPC. The issue is actually more acute in TPC where the data found that the majority of those teaching in TPC programs do not consider themselves TPC scholars/teachers and underscores a point from Don Cunningham that anyone can teach the TPC service course (see below quotes from contingent faculty). Even though Melonçon and England raised this issue, TPC has not in any way picked up the question, nor focused on the larger problem of contingency within the field, nor addressed the issue raised years ago by Melonçon about TPC’s standards for who they feel are qualified to teach TPC courses.

Then, alternatively, we have qualified contingent faculty who cannot provide the quality instruction we so desperately need because of the limitations of their positions:

*The system is ***extremely*** exploitative. My qualifications and skills are equal to, and maybe even exceed, those of some tenured faculty members. And of course the same goes with my fellow contingent workers. The only reason we're not tenure track is that not everyone who wants to can have that job...it is*

depressing to know that our low salaries and willingness to teach low-level classes enable tenure-track faculty to teach great classes and even enjoy the occasional sabbatical.

Contingent faculty are continuously being held back from providing quality instruction because of their status as “second class” citizens. As one participant noted, “*Expectations are patronizing. Can’t have a PhD student but I have one [a PhD] and am knowledgeable in the area.*” Contingent faculty are qualified mentors, especially as mentorship relates to teaching and classroom procedures. However, as this respondent highlights, PhD students are predominantly assigned to tenure-line faculty for research and mentoring.

Complicating the issue further are two aspects rarely discussed: legacy adjuncts and external pressure on quality instruction. Question 38 asks, “Do you teach at the same institution where you obtained your highest degree?” Mahli Mechenbier defines “legacy” adjuncts as adjuncts who earned their degrees from the same university where they now teach (228). Contingent faculty who remain at the highest-degree-granting institution face additional obstacles such as being viewed by tenure-track faculty as a former student who could not secure outside employment, or as a former student who remains within a known safety zone without seeking other options. Although technically qualified (in possession of the required degree), legacy adjuncts are not necessarily perceived as quality faculty who were hired and selected through a national search process. These internally trained faculty may face challenges regarding their experience, professionalization, and viability in the national job market.

As it relates to quality instruction, Larry Beason argues that fostering a sense of place based on the classroom can enable quality instruction and thus student learning (149). We interpret this “sense of place” to be the identity an instructor builds in their classroom. It comes back to ownership. Is it their classroom? Or someone else’s? The students feel this. Beason makes a persuasive case, but what happens when the sense of place that instructors believe in, that is, their classrooms, are undermined in some ways by policies outside of their control? Take, for example, a scenario of changing budgets as discussed by one of our study’s participants:

The state has gone to a system of reimbursement based not on twelfth-day class rolls but on “pass rates” on the last day. The state does not pay the university for students who have made Ds, Fs, Ws (Withdraws), or I’s (Incompletes). The university message to us is to “get the students up to a C.” This borders on explicit--everyone is always watching our individual “DWFI” rates. I have been called on the carpet on more than one occasion for being too stringent. The university wants my students to be competent. Yet it does not want to allow me to do what I feel I need to do to provide

students w/ tools for this competence. (For example, I am expected to call students who have disappeared and “check on them” to make sure that they do not drop the course. When/If these students return, I am encouraged not to penalize them for any absence...)

The importance of this view is the inherent implicit and explicit pressure felt by faculty who are already hesitant to work toward a model of instruction that may not be quality instruction: rather, instruction based on achieving an institutional funding or enrollment standard and/or a favorable end-of-term student evaluation. Since contingent faculty teach so many of these types of introductory courses, where universities are pressured to retain their freshmen, the pressure on contingent faculty to pass students can be intense. Student preparedness, therefore, may fall on an adjunct who wants to engage her students yet is not a full member of the institution herself. Since student evaluations are such a central component to adjunct faculty renewal, adjuncts feel they must meet the needs of these student-clients in order to maintain their positions: *“Absolutely! One hundred percent! Raising grades, dropping assignments, giving lots of extra credit, ignoring absences, giving extensions for papers that are already late! The list goes on and on. I am at a good institution with decent students, but I always feel pressure to let the student have their way in order to get good evaluations so that I can keep my job.”* How do scenarios where the teacher is not in control, such as this response detailed in the survey, fit into this ideal of a “sense of place?” What can contingent faculty do when they have no power?

What action can we take?

In some ways, action relates directly to professional development. Training is an important means of ensuring our contingent faculty are qualified and the level of instruction they provide is high quality. Instead of responding to the “butts in seats” mentality highlighted above, contingent faculty (including adjuncts) should be selected specifically for the courses they would be teaching, rather than just having a general pool that can “fill in” where needed. If we want to tout our institutions as places of higher learning, then we have to begin by enforcing them as places of higher quality teaching.

Although tenure-track faculty may recoil politically from this topic, academics need to initiate hard disciplinary conversations about standards for qualifications beyond a degree in English. The standards would be different between composition and TPC, and these sorts of conversations should be interdisciplinary and honest, welcoming perspectives from all ranks.

Professional development also includes finding the time and money to assist faculty in more effectively completing their jobs. The issue is particularly acute in TPC because there are more instructors with composition degrees who need a job and find themselves teaching in TPC

programs in some capacity. The concept that any writing degree is satisfactory is no different from the arguments composition faculty have been making that anyone can teach writing. Different kinds of writing do require different specializations (parallel to the uncontested claim that different kinds of literature require different specializations), and as it concerns scheduling lower-division courses with adjuncts, this type of degree qualification is something no one wants to talk about.

Outside of professional development opportunities, we need to work toward systemic change that can shift the perennial cycle of the way we hire. The data shows that composition and TPC have a large number of more stable faculty: that is, FT NTT faculty who have taught at the same place for a number of years. With this sort of foundational stability, more attention can be paid to ensuring those same faculty are prepared to teach the courses they have been assigned and feel comfortable doing so. In addition, programmatic data (e.g., Lang) should be applied to help develop just-in-time teaching practices that can assist administrators in knowing where the weaknesses in the curriculum are from both student and faculty perspectives.

While our classes are taught by an assemblage that changes radically each semester, we cannot pretend to make many claims about the consistency of the quality of our teachers. This is not to say that we do not have wonderful and dedicated teachers; it would seem from all of the available, anecdotal evidence that the contrary is true. The problem here is clear: we can have only anecdotal evidence to rely upon while we depend on a heavily contingent workforce (Ashe 156-57).

What we do know from the data is that many of our instructors would not meet the preferred qualifications for someone to teach writing. They, of course, are dedicated teachers with a desire to teach, but we can no longer continue to turn away from the tricky and awkward conversations about qualified and quality. Compounding this issue is one of professional identity that is so intimately connected to contingency. As Ann Penrose suggests, “we are well aware of the factors that would make it natural for non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty to wonder if they are truly members of the academic community” (109). WPAs and TPC PAs need to look at their own hiring practices and continue to argue for hiring practices that raise the minimum qualification for teaching writing from someone with a PhD in anything and some experience teaching writing to someone with a degree in the field. Should we have continued searches where we do not hire the number of instructors we need because of this shift in minimum qualifications, then we can begin to send a message to administration about the staffing of key courses in the curriculum with instructors who are highly qualified.

Conclusion

Too often, those furthest from positions of power have little incentive to speak up. That is an actionable step we can take—ensuring that our programs are inclusive and open, and that we are creating safe spaces where contingent faculty feel as though they can speak up and voice questions and concerns. Granted, many systemic problems cannot be addressed immediately or overnight, but opening up our programmatic spaces is definitely one that is possible and should be implemented. Is it easy? No, because contingent faculty often feel they have little to nothing to gain if they speak up, and instead of gaining, they may be punished. Yet, we need to hear these voices and begin implementing these takeaways as we move toward true institutional change (see “Looking Forward” article in this special issue). Universities should ensure all faculty have access to professional development opportunities. Departments should make efforts to ensure faculty directories are up-to-date and inclusive of adjunct faculty. Titles should represent the education, expertise, and capability of each faculty member. WPCs should be aware of the number of course preps faculty are responsible for in their teaching duties. Administrators should acknowledge and thank faculty for their contributions to the classroom and the university.

It is clear from the survey responses and interviews that the issues contingent faculty face daily are not individual but collective throughout the disciplines of composition and TPC. Contingent faculty long for what Penrose has defined as being key to professional identities—expertise, autonomy, and community. As the data illustrate, specific steps can be taken to improve the material work conditions of contingent faculty. Questions about autonomy emphasized issues concerning professional development, research, and respect. Questions about research introduced anxieties with time, worth, and value—and it all relates back to precarity. Contingent faculty are clearly not in the profession for a paycheck. They want to make a difference. They are often committed and focused and entrenched in their fields. However, they rarely procure the compensation, respect, and security this commitment requires to be truly successful. The next two articles in this issue—“Affective Investment” and “Politics of Service”—primarily explore the nuances and complexities of contingent faculty’s material work conditions.

Works Cited

- Ashe, Diana. “Fostering Cultures of Great Teaching.” *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2010, pp. 155-161.
- Beason, Larry. “Fostering Quality through Sense of Place.” *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2010, pp. 149-152.

- Colby, Richard and Rebekah Schultz Colby. "Real Faculty but Not: The Full-Time, Non-Tenure-Track Position as Contingent Labor." *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition*, edited by Seth Kahn et al., The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado, pp. 57-70. <https://wac.colostate.edu/books/perspectives/contingency/>.
- Cunningham, Donald H. "The Founding of ATTW and Its Journal." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2004, pp. 121-130.
- Hammer, Brad. "From the Editor: The Need for Research in 'Contingency Studies'." *Forum: Issues about Part-Time and Contingent Faculty*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2010, pp. A1-A3.
- Kahn, Seth. "Towards an Ecology of Sustainable Labor in Writing Programs (and Other Places)." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2015, pp. 109-121.
- Kezar, Adrianna, editor. *Embracing Non-Tenure Track Faculty: Changing Campuses for the New Faculty Majority*. Routledge, 2012.
- Lang, Susan. "Taming Big Data through Agile Approaches to Instructor Training and Assessment: Managing Ongoing Professional Development in Large First-Year Writing Programs." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2016, pp. 81-104.
- Mechenbier, Mahli. "Contingent Faculty and OWI." *Foundational Practices of Online Writing Instruction*, edited by Beth L. Hewett and Kevin DePew, WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press, 2015, pp. 227-250.
- Melonçon, Lisa. "Master's Programs in Technical Communication: A Current Overview." *Technical Communication*, vol. 56, no. 2, 2009, pp. 137-148.
- . "Contingent Faculty, Online Writing Instruction, and Professional Development in Technical and Professional Communication." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2017, pp. 256-272, doi:10.1080/10572252.2017.1339489.
- Melonçon, Lisa and Peter England. "The Current Status of Contingent Faculty in Technical and Professional Communication." *College English*, vol. 73, no. 4, 2011, pp. 396-408.
- Melonçon, Lisa et al. "A Portrait of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty in Technical and Professional Communication." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2016, pp. 206-235, doi:10.1177/0047281616633601.
- Nagelhout, Ed. "Faculty Development as Working Condition." *Forum: Issues about Part-Time and Contingent Faculty*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2007, pp. A14-16.
- Penrose, Ann M. "Professional Identity in a Contingent-Labor Profession: Expertise, Autonomy, Community in Composition Teaching." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2012, pp. 108-126.



Affective Investment

Laura Wilson
University of Cincinnati

Mahli Mechenbier
Kent State University: Geauga

Lisa Melonçon
University of South Florida

Laura Wilson has an MA in English with a concentration in Scientific and Technical Communication from Bowling Green State University. She has worked as a technical writer and editor and has taught technical, professional, and business writing at the University of Cincinnati since 2005, where she is an Associate Professor Educator. Laura is passionate about her work and her students; beyond technical writing, she enjoys teaching courses on social media, rhetoric, and web authoring.

Mahli Mechenbier teaches Technical Writing, Professional Writing, and College Writing at Kent State University: Geauga as a three-year-renewable Senior Lecturer. She was a member of NCTE's Committee for Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction and was an editor for the OWI's Open Resource (2013 – 2016). Her research focuses on how academic administrations manage distance learning and the intellectual property rights of contingent faculty.

Lisa Melonçon is a professor of technical communication at the University of South Florida. Her teaching and research focuses on the programmatic and professionalization dimensions of technical and professional communication, research methodologies, and the rhetoric of health and medicine.

*“When I’m wondering if my contract will be renewed,
when I’m feeling left out and alone in my department,
all I have to do is enter the classroom and interact
with my students, and I forget my frustrations.
Somehow, it’s worth it.”*
(Study Participant)

As the opening epigram laments, teaching writing as a contingent faculty member is rife with contradictions, and this quote encapsulates the experiences and feelings of many participants in the study. While the majority of contingent faculty reported feeling highly satisfied in their jobs, they also expressed a sense of unevenness and frustration with unfair working conditions. When asked, “Are you happy working as a contingent faculty member?” 29% reported “yes,” and 48% reported “mostly” (see “Results and Findings” article in this special issue). Even though 77% of faculty are happy and satisfied for the most part, we could not escape the contradiction, as seen in the opening epigram, nor could it be resolved. We realized we needed to perform theory building work because “without an inventive approach to theory, we lose our ability to notice different things in familiar phenomena and sites, and to make sense of happenings in less familiar sites” (Scott & Melonçon 12). Instead of merely acknowledging this contradiction, we knew we needed a way to understand it.

In this essay, we provide an extended definition of affective investment and then move to discussions from the data and interviews that reflect the material dimensions of how affective investment impacts contingent faculty in three critical areas: salary and contract; workload and autonomy; and value.

Defining Affective Investment

Several scholars in composition have discussed the emotions and emotional labor involved in teaching, administration, and writing (e.g., Jacobs and Micicche; Jackson et al.; Langdon). For instance, the emphasis in the following definition was more on the labor than the types of emotion:

Emotional labor was work our participants had to do—and often wanted to do and enjoyed doing—in order to accomplish (smoothly, swiftly, or at all) the other tasks on their to-do lists. Emotional labor included tasks such as mentoring, advising, making small talk, putting on a friendly face, resolving conflicts, and making connections; it also included delegating tasks and following up on progress, working in teams, disciplining or redirecting employees, gaining trust, and creating a positive workplace (Jackson et al).

Even though this work has been valuable, it has not gone far enough in helping scholars understand the different types of emotion. Miller, Considine, and Garner, organizational communication scholars, provide nuance to the different types of emotion and emotional labors that can be present at any given time by arguing “for five types of organizational emotion: emotional labor (inauthentic emotion in interaction with customers and clients), emotional work (authentic emotion in interaction with customers and clients), emotion with work (emotion stemming from interaction with coworkers), emotion at work (emotion from nonwork sources experienced in the work-place), and emotion toward work (emotions in which work is the target of the feeling)” (Miller et al). This perspective offered us the ability to understand that some of the existing discussions within writing studies are too narrow when considering emotion and emotional labor. Thinking in terms of the many types of emotion that are connected to emotional labor helped us to recognize that while “emotions may be a primary means of collective action as they are always already shaping our allegiances and ways of being,” contingent faculty were experiencing more than emotions and doing more than emotional labor (Doe, Maisto, & Adsit 221). It wasn’t just their emotional work that was being slighted; it was their very presence and participation in departments and in their institutions that took a continual toll on how contingent faculty experienced their material work conditions. However, current definitions in scholarship only ever discussed different forms and definitions of emotional labor. While emotional labor is a useful term, the concept does not fully capture the contradictions we found in the overall high satisfaction level of working as contingent faculty versus the lengthy survey and interview responses that spoke of the toll of precarious work conditions. Therefore, we became focused on how we could capture the full scope of contingent faculty experiences. We needed a new definition that would acknowledge the range of emotions, including emotional labor, and would also include the structural dimensions that create and impact emotional responses.

After talking through a number of terms and possibilities, we settled on the term, “affective investment,” to help us to make sense of how we might adequately theorize the experiences of contingent faculty as they relate to their material work conditions. We define material work conditions as “the day-to-day working conditions of faculty, such as teaching loads and institutional support” (Melonçon, England and Ilyasova 209). This terminology builds on and extends recent work on emotional labor and contingency by Sue Doe, Maria Maisto, and Janelle Adsit.

We chose affective investment because it expands emotional labor in three significant ways. First, “affective” encapsulates more than emotion and has a specific embodied component that we felt was necessary, and “investment” captures the labor and work that is involved,

but, more importantly, includes the personal orientation to what it takes to invest in the work of teaching. Second, although it is true that “emotion is part of what makes ideas adhere,” we wanted to expand our thinking beyond emotion and labor because an expansion allows us to make room for the weight and burden of the multiple aspects of contingent faculty jobs (Micciche 6). This expansion includes the third component of affective investment: the contexts and structures in which the affective investment takes place. Adding an explicit and direct material dimension means that affective investment is tied to, and portable between, a variety of domains such as different types of institutions and locations of work.

We will now turn to defining affective investment in more detail by breaking down the term into its two parts—“affective” and “investment”—and then discussing how affective investment is experienced.

Affect

We use affect as a distinctly human and embodied theoretical orientation. Unlike some theorists who have invoked affect in a more material way that de-humanizes the human, we cannot and will not make that move because the embodied person, full of emotion and agency, cannot be discounted when discussing contingent faculty. Too often contingent faculty are referred to in ways that erase their human-ness or their embodiment. It is easier to make painful decisions about labor and staffing rather than the people attached to those descriptions. Using interviews with contingent faculty members as a method for data collection for this project, we added a layer of meaning that could come only from their specific voices included below while still maintaining the position that “human affect is inextricably linked with meaning-making” (Wetherell 20). The need to listen to contingent voices and understand their material work lives meant that we had to grapple with the people, which is often absent in discussions of contingency because it is often easier to consider sections of courses that need to be staffed than the people behind those sections.

Turning to affect theory allows us to provide a much-needed embodied component to emotion. In the recent “affective turn,” scholars (see e.g., Anderson; Seigworth and Gregg; Leys; Wetherell) have emphasized different affective dimensions as a way to think through the co-creation of meaning that is embodied and material. Affect moves into writing studies from cultural studies, who define affect as something almost mystical such as an intensity (Massumi) or vital force (Seigworth and Gregg). The *movement* of intensity and force, as Katherine Stewart eloquently points out in her work, calls to mind the relational aspect of affect advanced by Ian Burkitt, a professor of social identity, as “a material process of its own kind created by body-selves acting in relational concert” (1). Thinking of affect as an intensity and force that is relational is key when considering the role of affect in the lives of contingent faculty. In other words, if emotion is how we feel, affect is how we’re made to feel.

The term relational is important because it matches Celeste Condit's view that communication (and rhetoric) are relational. She suggests, "Using the term relationality will help remind us that a relationship is not a discrete, state entity but rather a process of the interaction of forces" (Condit 6). Relationships and their interactions are all dependent on social roles and behaviors, and most particularly on how an individual interacts with others. There are a multitude of forces that interact and push against the structures and people in higher education: the relationship with the institution, the students, the work, and other factors specific to each individual instructor. Understanding affective investment as relational is key to taking into account or, at the very least, thinking of all of the different forces that press on and through and with and between the literal bodies and lives of contingent faculty. This relational aspect is crucial in tying together the idea that contingent work lives are both beautiful and brutal, depending entirely on the institution, the leadership, and the community. When trying to justify the high percentages of those contingent faculty who reported overall satisfaction with their positions, while in the same space listing myriad ways they were limited and ignored, we could see from the language they used that they were willing to suffer the brutality because the work brought them a sense of meaningfulness and worth. Consistently, even after lack of support, protection, compensation, and autonomy were detailed, the participants would often mention "*if it weren't for the students...*" "*I know the work I'm doing is valuable...*" "*I'm changing lives....*" These examples of affective investment are echoed time and again through the survey responses and in the interviews. Affective investment is the application of "the ends justify the means" when looking at contingent faculty material work conditions.

Relational also emphasizes the embodied aspect of affective investment and one of the key reasons we moved toward affect and away from emotion. Affect encapsulates the material body in ways that we thought emotion alone did not. "Affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body...in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and world" (Seigworth & Gregg 1). The "intensities that pass body to body" and the "variations between those intensities" emphasize the importance of the relationship between affect, bodies, and the material world; thus, affect takes into account both the material and the forces within the material world that move or impact a person. One of the reasons this project was framed around the material work conditions of faculty is because of the connection between the material (the personal and the embodied), and it also allowed us to bring to the forefront the impact of the relationship between contingent faculty's work lives, their belief and feelings and emotions connected to those lives, and how their institutions impact both.

However, relying on affect alone did not fully answer or explain the contradictions found in the data from contingent faculty. How could we expand affect—the affective—to provide insights into the reasons and

rationale between two areas that don't seem to add up: contingent faculty's material work conditions (often poor) and their own "investment" (often high) within the system that definitely takes advantage of them? Why are contingent faculty working so hard for institutions that don't support them? We argue that the investment precedes the affective stance. Investment requires a conscious decision because it is an "act of devoting time, effort, or energy to a particular undertaking with the expectation of a worthwhile result" ("Investment"). The act is conscious and deliberate. For contingent faculty, there is an investment through the act of accepting the position. Even though scholars and trade publications in higher education have tried to analyze the decision to take a job that is considered exploitive, the decisions to do contingent work are highly personal and highly diverse. However, across the board, both in our quantitative and qualitative data, contingent faculty do expect to make a difference (their worthwhile result) in the lives of their students and, more broadly, to their field of scholarship.

An integral part of "investment" rests on an acceptance—conscious or unconscious—of the precarious nature of contingency. In this case, precarity is both a descriptor and a condition. It describes the feeling of the unknown: will there be a place for them next term? It also describes the condition of this employment that many take because there is literally no other option. In order to do the work they love, contingent faculty knowingly lean into the unknown. And not knowing if you have a job, if you've done enough, if you *are* enough, takes a certain toll on the body. "Precarious employment traumatizes the people who bear it, disrupting their foundational narratives" in an affective way that then unseats the investment (Doe, Maisto, and Adsit 230). Precarity as part of affective investment can play out in unsavory ways: teaching to ensure positive evaluations, becoming complacent in your defense of your own worth, even failing to report grievances because your livelihood is on the line. Without meaning to, perhaps even without realizing it, institutions who refuse to hire contingent faculty on longer contracts (not just annual, but often term to term) are often creating a situation that breeds "us" versus "them" mentalities and silences the voices of those who should be most valuable: the teachers standing at the front of the majority of our nation's classrooms. Thus, affective investment shrouded with precarity is fundamentally political as a descriptor because it highlights a specific type of worker and work and directly connects affective investment with the politics of service (which is discussed in the "Politics of Service" article in this special issue).

Recognizing this seemingly endless circular paradox exposes the power and impact of affect, and the role it plays in the continuing situation of contingent labor. Through this exposition, through the voices and responses from our survey and interviews, we hope to provide insight and strategies to better understand this cycle. Thus, we can come to a definition of affective investment:

A highly contextualized (depending on time and place) personal commitment to and participation in the relational configuration and interaction between material bodies, imbued with various emotions and physical and physiological characteristics; institutional and organizational infrastructures, embedded with their own cultural orientations; and the political and social aspects of decision making.

For contingent faculty, affective investment resonances are not ideological but reactive to the material situations in which they work. What does this reactive stance mean for contingent faculty? The interview data provided the depth of histories of affect and what that means to the labor issues each field faces. But what happens when the voices of those bodies and actors go unheard? The bodies continue moving, continue acting, because they must (investment), but the consequences of their teaching on student learning, and to departmental and institutional community, are impacted (affective). As Wetherell suggests, “Often what is more interesting is the rapid, implicit and explicit, negotiation process through which we jointly begin to figure the affective moment we are in, and what should happen next” (141). The subject of contingent faculty and their worth is not a new problem. But it is a growing problem, one that is not going away. In order to ensure that contingent faculty are a part of their own embodiment, it is our hope that their stories will prompt a much-needed change in the process of how they are hired, treated, promoted, and valued.

In their own voices, as seen in the many quotes throughout this special issue, contingent faculty shed light on this pattern of affective investment. We believe the pattern will continue because contingent faculty *want* to make the investment— that’s a conscious decision on their part. They understand the precarity of the job but will do it anyway because it *makes a difference* not only in their lives but in the lives of their students and their fields. We ask, however: What would the pattern look like if we changed the outcome of this conscious investment? What would our classrooms and departments and field look like if we changed that pattern and improved contingent faculty material work conditions, agency, and embodiment, and thus their physical and emotional contributions? To be able to answer these questions, we must first understand what the actual material dimensions of affective investment look like.

Material Dimensions of Affective Investment

When discussing issues of affective investment, we found specific data points that illustrated what affective investment looks like in practice; that is, how it affects contingent faculty in specific and material ways. In this section we look at several of these dimensions:

- Salary and Contract
- Workload and Autonomy

Salary and Contract

Here we share information about salary and contract/reappointment since these two factors are intimately connected. Figure 1 shows the responses to the “salary” component of the “satisfaction” question, “Thinking of your current position, please rate your satisfaction with the following:” (for more information on salary, see the “Results and Findings from the Survey” article in this special issue).

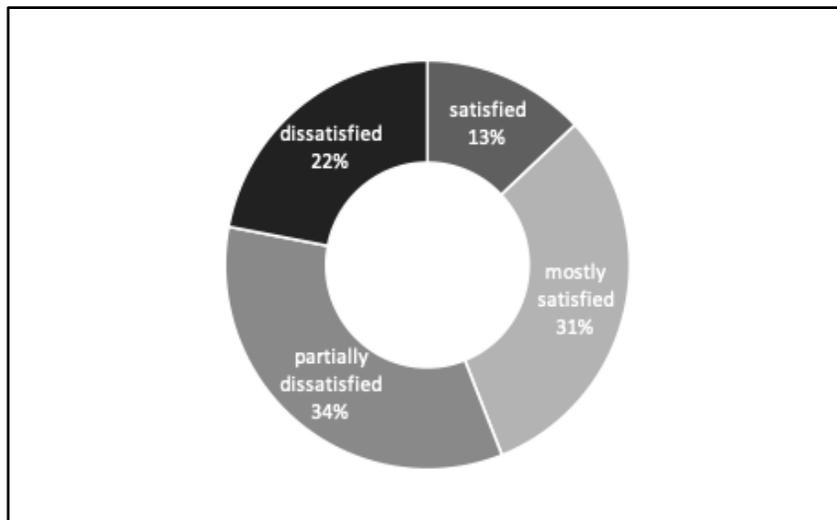


Figure 1: Satisfaction with Current Salary (n = 297)

The qualitative responses support our theory of affective investment, often citing frustration with their compensation or by the precarity of their roles, but they still showed up to the job because of the value it brought, both intrinsic and extrinsic. This is particularly demonstrated in the 65% ($n = 191$) of respondents who selected mostly satisfied or partially dissatisfied. We were somewhat surprised by the dissatisfied response, 22% ($n = 66$) because we had anticipated a larger percentage would select they were unhappy with their salary. However, as noted in the “Introduction” article of this issue, a limitation of this study is that a majority of respondents were FT NTT, which typically receive higher compensation than part-time and term adjuncts.

We share a series of quotes from faculty that express a range of views and provide insights into the contradictions contingent faculty feel about their salary. Many of the responses are what motivated us to think about affective investment to begin with: “If only I made more, I’d be happy” (we’re paraphrasing here) is a common theme from the participants. These responses show that salary is tied up in issues of guilt,

performance, and equality. These emotions all affect the material work lives of contingent faculty.

I am satisfied with my job but frustrated because we don't make enough money. I even feel guilty saying that because I make so much more than I did when I was PT. Disconnect with what we value in this society (football coach vs teacher). No raises – at the whim of the board of trustees (no union). That's why I teach summer, and if those don't make, I will have to find a PT job.

It is important to note the mention of guilt that this participant talks about; what kind of precarity must be weighing on this body to make them feel guilt about wanting to be compensated fairly? Continuously, we see participants justifying themselves, repeating the theme that they're happy, that they're not one to complain, that they value their work, but...but...but... *"The only real issue is salary. I work with a great department and have quite a bit of freedom and support. However, even when teaching full time or overloading, I don't make enough money to really plan for the future. If pay and workload were more fairly balanced, I think I would be fairly happy."* And again and again, people ask "why are they staying in these roles?" And again and again, we are presented with the love they have for their work. *"I love the work but make very little money and have no benefits. I have a PhD and a decade of practitioner background in this area yet feel my salary in no way reflects this."*

In addition to guilt, salary also impacts performance, both from the perspective of working too hard for too little compensation or altering their work, often involuntarily, in response to the precarity of their livelihoods. Many have to compensate for low salaries/contracts by teaching at multiple institutions, which increases course load, and, in turn, decreases the amount of time and energy that can be invested into each course. *"My department chair has continued her predecessor's very hard work to support contingent faculty. Until recently, positions like mine didn't exist--the work was done by adjuncts, not full-time faculty with benefits... If I were paid better, I'd be happy to stay here. I'd also be able to concentrate more effectively on my work."* The idea that one has to limit their ability, their performance, their investment, because they don't make enough to justify the energy (physical and emotional) is played out time and again. *"Ideally, getting paid better and having more time would make me a better teacher, which I want to be. I have to balance my desire against my pay. We can all spend our entire lives working on our classes, but I've forced myself to cut back on how long I work because it just doesn't make sense economically or emotionally."*

Issues of guilt, performance, and equality build a resounding echo as we hear their stories. It is clear contingent faculty are aware of the abuse they are suffering, yet they remain in their roles. As one participant pointed out, there is a stark difference in compensation and workload dependent

on contingent roles. The issue of equality is hard to fight when the precarity of your job precludes you from having a voice. *“I have been in a contingent role for 23 years and been promoted to the rank of Adjunct Associate Professor (this is a full-time, non-tenured position on multi-year contract), but I still make less than new [tenured] faculty teaching half the number of students.”* The difference between contingent and tenured faculty is generally expected (though it shouldn’t be accepted), but another difference is the inequality across institutions. Although some participants have the ability to go up for promotion or have access to consistent raise structures (due mostly in part to union representation), many still report how their salaries are affected when that representation is missing: *“No raises or opportunities for promotion. We very occasionally get across-the-board raises. The last raise I got was several years ago and it was based on the number of courses you teach. Only raise I recall. Ironically, the parking has gone up four times, so it’s like I got a pay decrease.”* This is an accurate representation of the material work conditions, and how they affect the investment of contingent faculty across the nation. If contingent faculty have to continue paying for so much out of their own pockets (parking, healthcare, professional development), we will continue to see undervalued and exhausted faculty members who still show up. For example, *“Part-time employees have to work twice as hard for about half as much money. We do not receive benefits such as health insurance. Consequently, I am employed at 2 different colleges, and I know other adjuncts who are, too. I love teaching, but part-time work does not pay enough.”* We could copy and paste an entire bulleted list where each response is just a shade different from the last, all presenting the same story in the end: *“I’m burned-out for the amount of hours I put in vs. what I get paid.”* Is it enough to have the teachers show up, even when their voices and stories show how clearly they desire to be compensated for the work they love to do? Eventually, we must see how these stories affect the bodies of those speaking and the bodies of our students and institutions where their performance is so negatively affected.

We assumed that satisfaction with salary and satisfaction with reappointment/contract would be similar, but we found that in many of the responses, it was one or the other they weren’t satisfied with. If they made more money, they seemed to better accept the precarity of their job. Contrarily, if they had more stable work, they seemed to worry less about the salary. This part of affective investment shines light on the relational issues with contingent faculty material work lives: it is vastly dependent on the institution and leadership; there is no consistency across the board, which, unfortunately, makes this issue even harder to narrow down and improve. Figure 2 represents the responses to the contract and reappointment component of the “satisfaction” question.

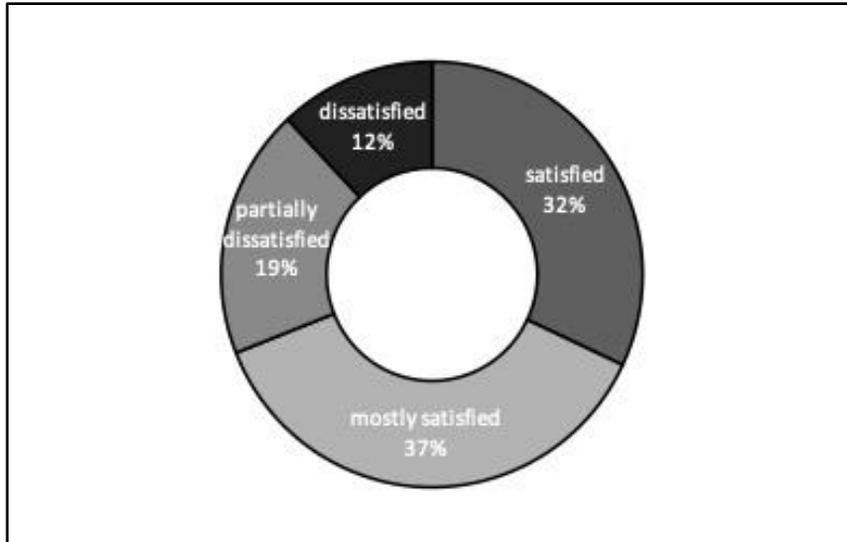


Figure 2: Satisfaction with Current Reappointment (n = 298)

In all of the satisfaction questions, reappointment possibility was the area that contingent faculty responded to with the highest satisfaction numbers (32%, $n = 94$), and when considered alongside the “mostly satisfied” responses (37%, $n = 110$), indicate the majority (69%, $n = 204$) of contingent faculty find reappointment a positive aspect of their job. We’ve already acknowledged how the majority of our respondents were FT NTTs (versus term or annual adjuncts), and we believe these numbers reflect the satisfaction of FT NTT contingent faculty. However, we cannot look at these numbers and be satisfied that a majority have a sense of security. We’d be ignoring the 31% ($n = 94$) who face precarity in their roles, precarity that affects their job performance, value and worth, and overall livelihood. Qualitative responses to this question express a range of views and provide insights into the contradictions contingent faculty feel about their contracts/reappointment opportunities.

“If I had to choose...” is also a common start to many of the qualitative comments. This theme suggests that contingent faculty clearly feel that their happiness comes down to a choice: higher salary or security. Even in their responses, they see the dichotomy. *“I wish I had job security. Even more than a higher salary, this would be most beneficial to me right now.”* This sense of precarity bridges many issues beyond just stability, including value, community, and professional development opportunities.

The worst part is the lack of stability, which forces me to put everyone at arm's length because each year I don't know if my contract is being renewed. It always has been--and will be again--but I have seen the effect on others who weren't so fortunate. Also, there is a five-year limit on visiting positions, with virtually

no possibility of being brought on in a full-time capacity, so my time is up soon. This means I spend about as much time EVERY YEAR thinking about what I'm going to do next if I don't get renewed as I do about the job at hand--except in terms of how what I do might make me employable somewhere else inside or outside academia. It puts a person's life in limbo and is best suited for people with no personal or geographic attachments who can put all their belongings in the trunk of a car or the back of a U-haul. I'm not sure too many people are happy being contingent if they have to work for a living. I also don't think too many people who are contingent and already making much less than tenure-line faculty are too happy about having to use so much of their limited income to pay for their own professional development.

It is a long-held belief that if you work hard enough, you can do anything, change anything. With contingent faculty, this is an unreachable ideal. They can be a fully committed department member, serve their field and community, and provide high-quality instruction, but none of that matters because their job security is not in their control. *“Job security is [a] very difficult thing. I understand there is little chance of full-time renewal after my 3-year contract is up, regardless of service to the department and excellent evaluations.”* Like the discussion with salary above, this precarity starts to affect performance and forces these bodies to alter the way they work: *“Every year I would be worried I wouldn't get another contract. Only year to year, always a worry. You always worry about saying no or willing to be part of the team.”* When reading these responses, it is hard not to recoil at someone stating they feel they cannot say “no.” That they must do whatever is expected of them, because their job is on the line. This kind of exploitation is one we aim to expose and eliminate.

These voices support the concept of affective investment since many of them show the contradiction between the conflicting affectations of salary and contract versus the investment they feel in their jobs and their students.

Workload and Autonomy

Without doubt, this research project has confirmed what we already knew—contingent faculty bear large teaching loads. As seen in Figure 3, 41% ($n = 122$) of our respondents reported 4/4 loads, which require extensive prep time and intensive, heavy grading periods within the term (see “Results and Findings from the Survey” article in this special issue.)

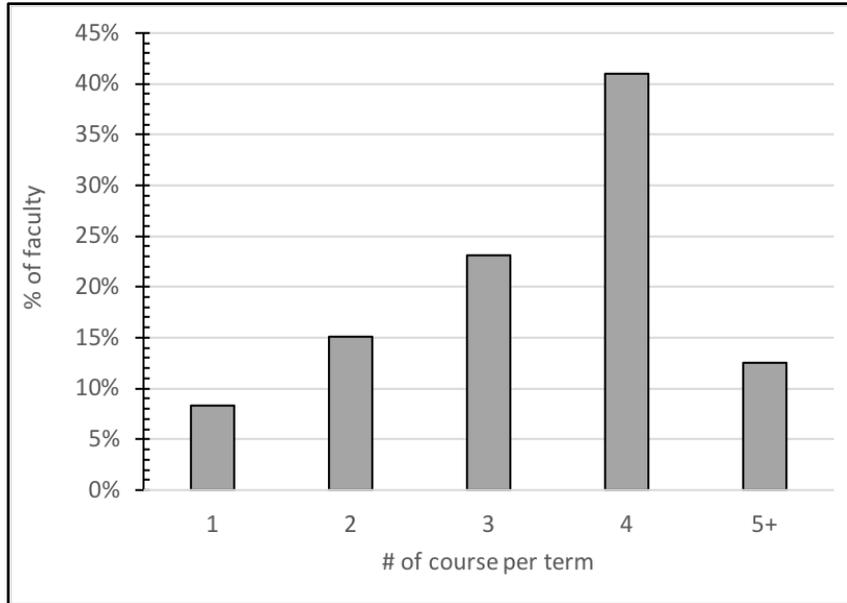


Figure 3: How Many Courses Do You Typically Teach per Term? (n = 312)

However, what we didn't know is how this impacts the day-to-day life of contingent faculty and how they feel about these loads. We have chosen to present the data on satisfaction about workloads alongside information about course autonomy because we feel that the two are inextricably linked. This link was echoed by several participants: the amount of autonomy contingent faculty have over their courses has direct impact on how those same faculty feel about their workloads. Figure 4 represents the answer to the question, "Thinking of your current position, please rate your satisfaction with workload."

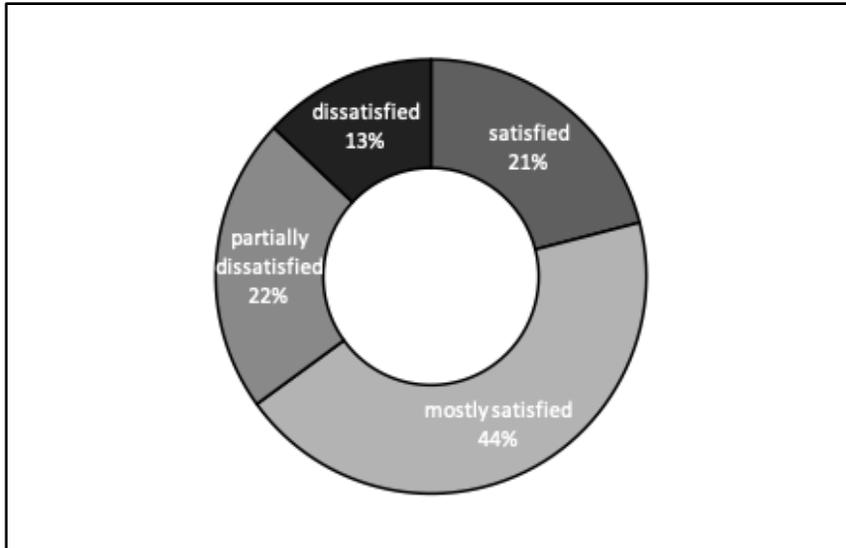


Figure 4: Satisfaction with Current Workload (n = 296)

Again, based on the responses shown in Figure 4, a majority (65%) felt either mostly or totally satisfied by their workload, and yet the qualitative responses paint a different picture. Ideally, this data and discussion are making it clear that all these issues are tied up together. When forced to rate satisfaction piece by piece, contingent faculty seemed satisfied overall. But through written responses, we see that salary, contract, load, value, etc. all tie into a larger issue that speaks more loudly about the overall disparity that contingent faculty feel in their roles and see in their departments.

My only complaint about my job is that I feel overwhelmed by the grading load of teaching four or five writing-intensive courses per semester. I still pursue professional learning when I can, but I would have more time and energy to commit if I didn't have 96-120 students each semester. I need to get all of my grading and planning done during business hours so that I can spend evenings and weekends with my family. It's a constant juggling act.

So many respondents feel lucky to be doing what they love that they also experience guilt or, perhaps, fear to speak ill of their positions. In the same breath, they will proclaim their happiness but end with an outcry of frustration. We believe affective investment explains this conundrum.

I very much enjoy my institution and colleagues. There is a lot of support for contingent faculty here compared to many other institutions, it seems. But it is anxiety-inducing and stressful that my job security hinges almost exclusively on two annual class

observations from faculty members who are often not even in the English department. This type of anxiety, I am finding, is not conducive to comfortable, confident, effective teaching. Nor does my extremely high workload (5-5 teaching load) allow for the energy and time necessary for my own writing, research, and publishing, which I need to pursue so that I can someday compete for a tenure-track job.

For many of our respondents, autonomy was often described in the same sentence as their workload, showing that these two components work together to influence the affective investment of contingent faculty. Autonomy, defined in this instance as having control over syllabi, textbook adoption, and assignments, was a critical factor when weighing affective investment. Further, with such high teaching loads, the issue of autonomy becomes important in framing and understanding how much control they have over their teaching lives. It also became quite clear that autonomy needed to include the ability to request which courses they'd be teaching. When asked the question, "Do you have autonomy to design your own courses?" respondents were split equally with 49% ($n = 154$) saying they had full autonomy and 49% ($n = 154$) saying they had partial autonomy. Only 2% ($n = 6$) responded that they have no autonomy in their course prep.

Furthermore, the vast majority of the respondents' teaching loads are for the most part common types of service courses that contingent faculty teach: first-year composition and TPC service courses (see "Results and Findings from the Survey" article in this special issue, particularly Figure 5). In addition, specifically in TPC degree programs, they also teach introductory TPC courses or other courses in the TPC program.

For many participants, autonomy was intrinsically related to their job security, job satisfaction, and job performance. As stated by one participant:

Don't want to teach 9 classes a year. Don't want to be asked to teach TW [technical writing] (hate that people are asked/sometimes forced to teach outside of their comfort level because of needs). Want more freedom to design assignments that are relevant and important for 21st century (i.e., video essays). No faith in our program for new media. But mostly, money. But if money stayed the same and I had more autonomy, I'd be more satisfied. But not fully satisfied unless more money AND more autonomy.

Other responses echoed this sentiment, further defining autonomy as the ability to teach in your subject area and to teach courses that interest you: "This feeling [being overworked] is exacerbated by the fact that, like most

contingent faculty in TPC and first-year writing, I am a human shield that protects tenured and tenure-line faculty from having to teach courses they don't want to teach."

When instructors had control over their syllabi, textbook adoption, and assignments, there was an increase in job satisfaction. This is linked closely with precarity because when instructors can embody their work, put their name on it and stand behind it, both satisfaction and performance improve. According to one participant, *"It's important to be able to create your own course so that it's yours, and you can teach and interact in the way that you feel comfortable as an instructor. It's stifling to have to use a course that isn't mine."*

Being given standardized syllabi and assignments and having little or no choice in what or how to teach diminishes a contingent faculty member's sense of worth and contribution. Contingent faculty who have educational and professional experience in their field have much to contribute, and not allowing them autonomy to design courses and assignments to reflect these experiences does a great disservice to not only the contingent faculty themselves but to the students. The significance of this is summed up by one respondent: *"I feel that it is extremely important for faculty to create their own courses. Otherwise, university becomes a template factory."*

It is possible to grant autonomy to contingent faculty and still ensure that the students are meeting learning objectives. Participating faculty talked about the use of curriculum meetings, grading norming sessions, and professional development opportunities as ways of guiding contingent faculty to the same end results without stripping them of their classroom autonomy that brings such satisfaction. Also, the term "autonomy" in itself was an issue within the survey, because, as one participant pointed out, *"I would suggest the term might be latitude instead of autonomy. As long as I can justify meeting the course objectives, I feel comfortable in adapting or changing assignments."* This was a common theme with outliers (complete autonomy of designing the course from scratch to complete structure of teaching from a common syllabus with a common textbook and common assignments). The majority of respondents reported the ability to "tweak" common materials, and even that level of autonomy was appreciated. *"We have autonomy over our syllabus and assignments, but they need to fit program learning outcomes."*

Lack of autonomy has further consequences than just the emotional toll on the instructor; it also affects their job performance. According to one respondent, *"The biggest problems on the course evaluations in the PTC courses are course requirements and readings, neither of which I am able to modify."* The fact is, for many contingent faculty their livelihood is dependent on positive student evaluations. Moreover, by stripping them of the autonomy to make choices that affect that livelihood, we are further destabilizing the important role of

contingent faculty. Additionally, while we argue for autonomy in course design, we realize that without simultaneously addressing teaching load and compensation, we find ourselves in a catch 22 where the contingent faculty must develop new materials for 4+ classes each term, perhaps at multiple institutions. The connection between compensation, salary, precarity, and autonomy is strong: one link cannot be fixed, for the chain would still be broken.

The inconsistency between institutions is problematic as well. There is no set approval process for onboarding new contingent faculty. Many are left to figure it out as they go along. Then, when they've been teaching a while and finally feel comfortable in their expertise, they feel stifled by the lack of autonomy. One participant described this common scenario at their institution:

The ironic point is that at a time where this particular instructor needed guidance—as a new instructor—she got none of the professional development opportunities or mentorship that she needed. But now as an experienced instructor, she feels nervous and constrained because she is required to teach using a pre-designed and rigid course. The only aspects of which she can change are her own lectures or additional explanatory materials for the course. Any other changes have to be approved—not by a committee of peers or experts in the area, but by a single instructor who has been self-authorized because no one else was willing (or able) to take the lead on the development of online courses.

Moving from the effect of autonomy to that of titles on contingent faculty, one participant raised a valid concern. “*Since I am only one of two people whose degree is in technical communication and rhetoric, I plan the introductory course and am designing an upper level document design course that I will never be asked to teach.*” It is outrageous that because of their degree, they can design the course, but because of their contingent status, they would be unable to teach it. We expected, going into this project, that salary and workload would be two major factors of contingent faculty’s affective investment, but we also found that value was an equally important factor in contingent faculty’s experiences.

Value

Value, in this sense, is based on the feeling that contingent faculty are considered important and beneficial to the mission and vision of the institution, the department, and the people who work in the department. So many respondents mentioned that what they were looking for above all else was a little bit of credit. “*Contingent faculty need to be valued more. Closer to what really takes place outside of academia, and I see a lot of students and I know more about them. TT faculty won’t see as many*

students. More things could and should count for contingent faculty. More on advising and scholarship and folks would do more of it if it were acknowledged or credited in some way.” So how do we define value? There are many ways contingent faculty talk about value, and we’ve focused our attention on data that illustrate the perceptions of value through satisfaction with:

- Departmental Status and Involvement
- Collegial Respect
- Happiness

Departmental Status and Involvement

Departmental status and involvement are key to how valued contingent faculty feel. Thinking of affective investment, the department is a key location and context within the lives of contingent faculty. Thus, we asked two questions specific to departmental cultures and the integration of contingent faculty. Answering the question, “Thinking of your current position, please rate your satisfaction with the following,” Figure 5 depicts satisfaction with departmental status, and Figure 6 highlights satisfaction with involvement within the department.

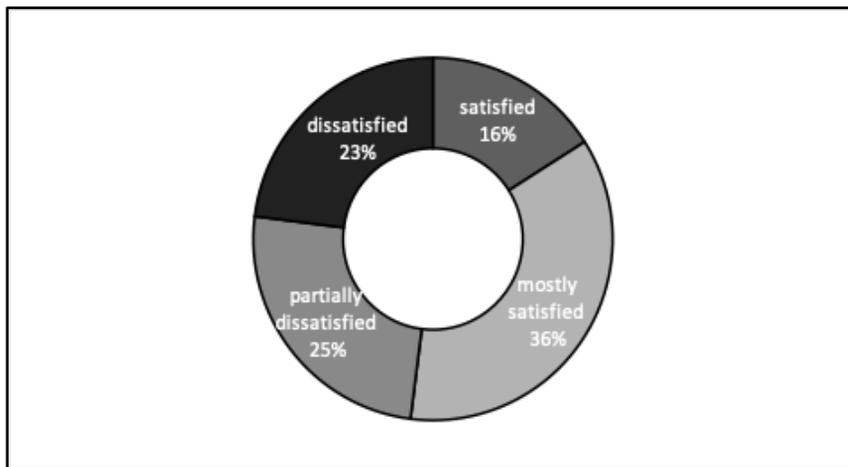


Figure 5: Satisfaction with Departmental Status ($n = 297$)

Departmental status is defined here in two ways: 1) how contingent faculty perceive their status within their department, and 2) how they interpret others’ perceptions of their status. The results from the survey show that almost half of our respondents are partially or totally dissatisfied with their departmental status, with only 16% ($n = 48$) being fully satisfied.

I would prefer to be considered as equal in the department. I believe that many tenure-track or tenured faculty members believe that contingent faculty simply arrive, teach from a syllabus, and

go home. I have spent a significant amount of time on research, writing and submitting articles, attending workshops, creating new coursework, and I find it's always a little like Animal Farm. Some people are always more equal than others.

Many faculty feel “unwanted” and are seen only as their title rather than for what they bring to the department. *“The NTT faculty in my department carry the bulk of the teaching load, but we receive the least amount of money and respect. My peers are treated as unwanted faculty, and younger, newly hired TT track faculty treat us without consideration for our contributions, knowledge, experience, and additions to the research and service mission of the university as a whole, and to our department in particular.”* For many, it really is as simple as being seen and treated as an equal. *“It would be a lot nicer if non-contingent faculty felt that we were professionally on ‘their level.’”*

Even when contingent faculty are granted the status to attend meetings and vote on important issues, the fact remains that not all department members see this as beneficial. *“Our department's climate has taken a hit this semester, as some tenure-track faculty are upset by the number of lecturers in the department and our right to vote.”* Regardless of how other faculty members perceive their status, our research shows that contingent faculty are showing up, when they’re permitted to do so; they’re attending faculty meetings, serving on committees, and striving to have their voices heard. Affective investment plays an important role in involvement because contingent faculty want to participate more. They want to contribute, have a voice, and be heard. Figure 6 represents their satisfaction level with their departmental involvement, but, as has been the case for many of the responses, the qualitative comments differed quite a bit from the quantitative results.

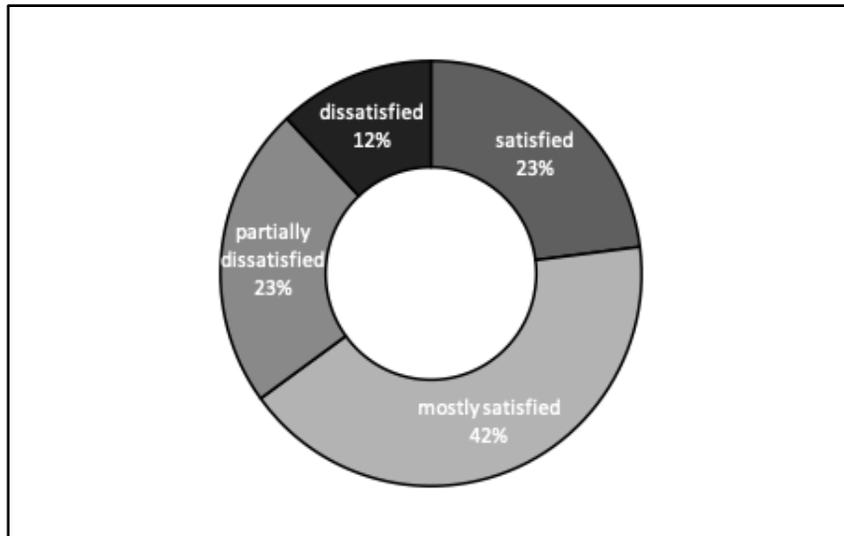


Figure 6: Satisfaction with Involvement within Department ($n = 298$)

While 65% ($n = 194$) were mostly or entirely satisfied with their level of involvement, the comments revealed they wanted more. We define involvement within the department as being included in departmental meetings and decisions. *“I have a terminal degree in my field, and I work full time for the department, teaching many more students per year than my tenure-track colleagues. And yet contingent faculty like me are not allowed to vote in most departmental and university matters. We are also paid around half of what tenure-track faculty are paid in our department.”* And try as we might to separate these issues out, it is clear time and again that value is defined in myriad ways: pay, course load, inclusion, autonomy, respect, and the list goes on. Because of this, many contingent faculty report a sense of “outsideness” when it comes to their positions within their departments. Feeling excluded or invisible is a major point of contention for a majority of our respondents: *“A lack of voice is one of the most disappointing and frustrating issues for me.”*

The sense of distance doesn’t necessarily always come from others in the department either. The precarity of contingent work often affects these faculty members who feel that they do not have a permanent home. *“I try not to think about being contingent. I don't think less of myself for being contingent; it's just that I need to work and this job will end. I just focus on what I need to do each day. I stay positive, but I do maintain an emotional distance.”* It is time we ask ourselves who else is suffering because of this “emotional distance?” And we have to be prepared for the answer: our students are paying the price, and our departments, with their lack of representation, are missing out on an opportunity to give voices to the very people who could enact change at the core of what we do: instruction.

Collegial Respect

One of the biggest challenges in teaching related to material work conditions is respect. Only a quarter of our respondents were satisfied with the amount of collegial respect they feel at their institutions. See Figure 7.

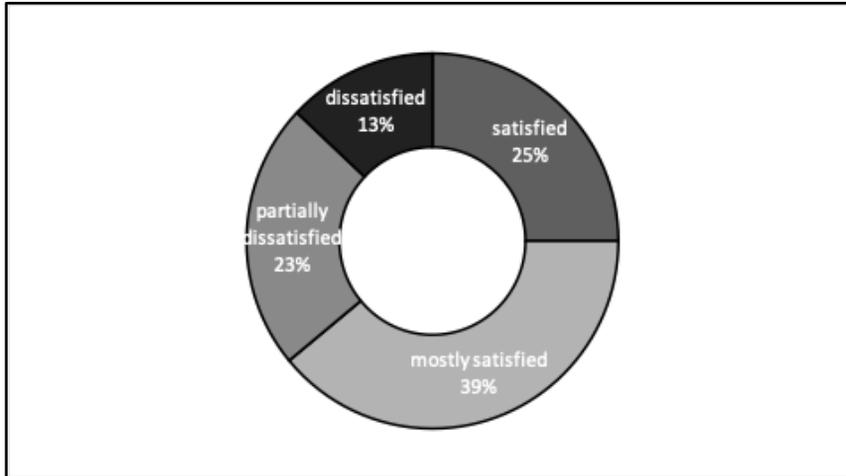


Figure 7: Satisfaction with Collegial Respect (n = 297)

We define collegial respect as being seen as an integral part of the institution, treated the same as any other faculty member. Unfortunately, this is not often the case. *“I am making less and working harder than I ever have before. I’d do it for free, that’s not the point, but what I’m saying is that pool faculty work harder for nothing. Results are important, people are important and that is not reflected in academia. You have to treat people with respect.”* The data shows that contingent faculty do what they do because they LOVE their work. As the above participant stated, many would do it for free. And yet, many of the grievances that contingent faculty report could be fixed for free. Salary and even workload aside, they want to be valued. One important form of value is showing them respect. *“I won a university-wide teaching award this year, the first adjunct ever to do so at this university and got absolutely no change in respect or attitude toward me. If anything, jealousy from my colleagues. I teach for the students, but it would be nice to get respect.”*

No matter how long they’ve held the position, no matter how excellent their student evaluations are, it always comes back to respect from colleagues and from the institution itself. *“It’s frustrating that after 20 years as adjunct I have no more respect or seniority than graduate students.”*

So how do we make this right? Administrators should model institutions who support contingent faculty and value their expertise and autonomy. *“In particular our program has always respected those of us with industry experience and has built a program around our talents. I’ve*

had the opportunity to develop new courses in the program. My work is very fulfilling because I'm doing more than just teach multiple sections of the service course.” This participant discusses her own job satisfaction because her program values her expertise and experiences, and it demonstrates how listening to contingent voices can enhance programs and departments.

Happiness

After breaking down contingent life into many separate issues, it was still important to get a sense of satisfaction overall. In this section, we provide the results to the question: “Are you happy working as a contingent faculty member?” See Figure 8.

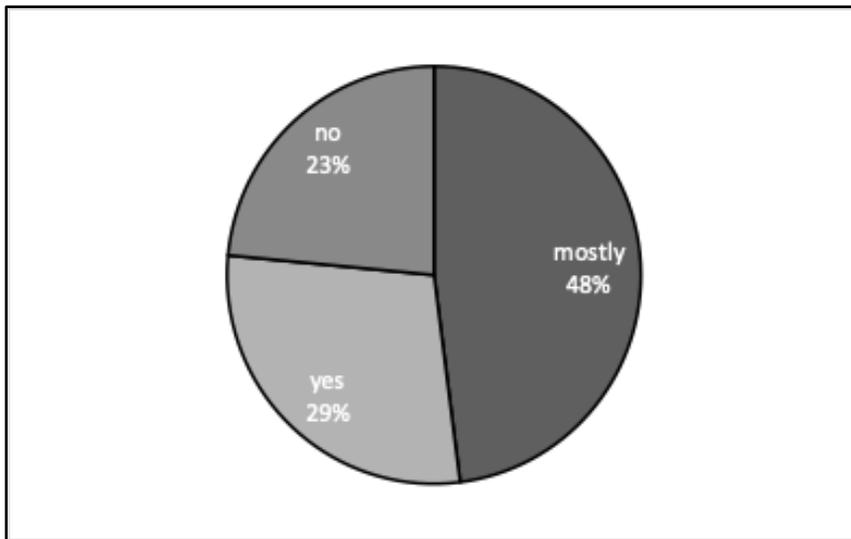


Figure 8: Are You Happy Working as a Contingent Faculty Member? ($n = 298$)

Figure 8 shows that almost half of respondents are mostly happy working as a contingent faculty member and went on to share their many, varied reasons for this. In the end, we understand that if people didn't perceive "contingency" as a bad word, as a disease, and if contingent faculty were afforded the same securities and opportunities as their tenure-track peers, many would be happy to remain in their contingent positions.

I'm not sure how to answer this, to be honest. I came to this university 20 years ago this year ABD. I finished my dissertation, earned my doctorate, and intended to go on the market, but I had already fallen in love with the place, my colleagues, and my students. For many years, I felt very welcome in the department, and I was able to serve in a variety of administrative positions and on many committees. However, in recent years, the attitude

toward instructors on the university level -- but particularly on the college level, where we are now saddled with an ineffective, dictatorial dean who has stated many times that she "hates instructors" -- has changed dramatically. We are now referred to not as "faculty" but as "contingent hires." So much for collegiality. Whereas in the past I've felt committed and dedicated and appreciated, now I'm counting down the years until I can retire -- and I hope to make it that far (12 more years). In the past, I had a vocation; now I have a job.

It is also clear that one can be happy with their role as contingent faculty and still see and voice concerns about the position's overall value within the department.

I am happy working as a contingent faculty member because I enjoy the time teaching and the fact that I am not tied to my office all day every day. I am able to be involved with my family and my community more because I don't have any obligations outside of my teaching. I am not happy with the position of instructor at the university. I would say we are low on the "totem pole" in our departments and have no real voice.

Once again, our call to action can be summarized by a participant who is valued and afforded opportunities as a contingent faculty member: *"I like being able to focus on teaching and my department mostly supports our individual desire to pursue our own research."* Our goal is to create a way to model the institutions who understand the value of affective investment, the value of respect, and the value of contingent faculty.

Conclusion

Our discussion of affective investment continues Wetherell's commitment to "understand the odd, the eerie, and the genuinely weird examples of pulses of affect in concrete terms" (160). Affective investment is our concrete—as much as discussing emotion and human reaction can ever be concrete—example of the practice and circulation of affect and the impact affect has when it is imbued with an investment.

In light of identifying the affective investment of contingent faculty, we must now ask: where do we start in order to help alleviate the chasm between brutality and beauty? This question of *where* to invest is as important as *what* to invest. And a partial answer can be found in the discussion of the material dimensions we found from our participants. The material work conditions, and the material dimensions discussed above, breed a psychological and physiological state that frames and affects other aspects of life. Having a better vocabulary—the affective investment—and data can help program administrators and faculty allies "argue for any and all approaches, including emotional and affective efforts, that define

meaningful work in as capacious a way as possible, rather than singularly in service of market values” (Doe, Maisto, & Adsit 231-232). Since affective investment is connected to the always-in-motion and in-flux human dimensions of embodiment, affect, and people’s reactions to material conditions, we have offered some specific ways that program administrators and tenure-track faculty can help mitigate and improve work conditions.

Works Cited

- Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. Routledge, 2000.
- Anderson, Ben. “Affective Atmospheres.” *Emotion, Space and Society*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2009, pp. 77-81, doi:10.1016/j.emospa.2009.08.005.
- . *Encountering Affect: Capacity, Apparatuses, Conditions*. Routledge, 2014/2016.
- Condit, Celeste. “Communication as Relationality.” *Communication As...Perspectives on Theory*, edited by Gregory J. Shepherd et al., Sage, 2010, pp. 3-12.
- Curtis, John and Monica F. Jacobs. “Consequences: An Increasingly Contingent Faculty.” American Association of University Professors, 2006.
- Doe, Sue et al. “Discourse of the Fire Tenders: Considering Contingent Faculty through the Lens of Activity Theory.” *College English*, vol. 73, no. 4, 2011, pp. 428-449.
- Doe, Sue et al. “What Works and What Counts: Valuing the Affective in Non-Tenure-Track Advocacy.” *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition*, edited by Seth Kahn et al., The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado, 2017, pp. 213-234.
- Gregg, M and G. J. Seigworth, editors. *The Affect Theory Reader*. Duke University Press, 2010.
- “Investment.” English Oxford Living Dictionaries, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/investment>.
- Jackson, Rebecca et al. “Writing Center Administration and/as Emotional Labor.” *Composition Forum*, vol. 34, 2016, <http://compositionforum.com/issue/34/writing-center.php>.
- Jacobs, Dale and Laura Micciche, editors. *A Way to Move: Rhetorics of Emotion and Composition Studies*. Heinemann, 2003.
- Langdon, Lance. “Emotion [Special Issue].” *Composition Forum*, vol. 34, 2016, <http://compositionforum.com/issue/34/>.
- Leys, Ruth. “The Turn to Affect: A Critique.” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 37, 2011, pp. 434-472.
- Massumi, Brian. *Parables of the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Duke University Press, 2002.

- Melonçon, Lisa et al. "A Portrait of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty in Technical and Professional Communication." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2016, pp. 206-235, doi:10.1177/00472816166633601.
- Micciche, Laura. *Doing Emotion: Rhetoric, Writing, Teaching*. Boyton/Cook Publishers, 2007.
- Micciche, Laura R. "More Than a Feeling: Disappointment and Wpa Work." *College English*, vol. 64, no. 4, 2002, pp. 432-458.
- Miller, Katherine I. et al. "'Let Me Tell You About My Job': Exploring the Terrain of Emotion in the Workplace." *Management Communication Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 3, 2007, pp. 231-260.
- Scott, J. Blake and Lisa Melonçon. "Manifesting Methodologies for the Rhetoric and Health and Medicine." *Methodologies for the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine*, edited by Lisa Meloncon and J. Blake Scott, Routledge, 2018, pp. 1-23.
- Seigworth, Gregory J. and Melissa Gregg. "An Inventory of Shimmers." *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, Duke University Press, 2010, pp. 1-25.
- Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary Affects*. Duke University Press, 2007.
- Thrift, Nigel. "Steps to an Ecology of Place." *Human Geography Today*, edited by Doreen Massey et al., Polity Press, 1999, pp. 295-322.
- . *Non-Representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect*. Routledge, 2008.
- Wetherell, M. "Trends in the Turn to Affect: A Social Psychological Critique." *Body & Society*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2014, pp. 139-166, doi:10.1177/1357034x14539020.



Politics of Service

Mahli Mechenbier
Kent State University: Geauga

Laura Wilson
University of Cincinnati

Lisa Melonçon
University of South Florida

Mahli Mechenbier teaches Technical Writing, Professional Writing, and College Writing at Kent State University: Geauga as a three-year-renewable Senior Lecturer. She was a member of NCTE's Committee for Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction and was an editor for the OWI's Open Resource (2013 – 2016). Her research focuses on how academic administrations manage distance learning and the intellectual property rights of contingent faculty.

Laura Wilson has an MA in English with a concentration in Scientific and Technical Communication from Bowling Green State University. She has worked as a technical writer and editor and has taught technical, professional, and business writing at the University of Cincinnati since 2005, where she is an Associate Professor Educator. Laura is passionate about her work and her students; beyond technical writing, she enjoys teaching courses on social media, rhetoric, and web authoring.

Lisa Melonçon is a professor of technical communication at the University of South Florida. Her teaching and research focuses on the programmatic and professionalization dimensions of technical and professional communication, research methodologies, and the rhetoric of health and medicine.

“You always worry about saying no because of your perceived willingness to be part of the team.”
Study Participant

Often, data reveal insights that have not previously been considered or—at the very least—can be used to display information in a new light. The precarity of contingent work is not a new insight, but our data allows us to pinpoint a new light that we call “politics of service.” We are using this phrase to encapsulate several related issues around “service,” the first being in the traditional sense, as one key area of faculty evaluation. However, we are also using service to signify broader concerns about the role of service on the relationship between contingent faculty, departments, and institutions.

We draw on the idea of affective investment (see “Affective Investment” article in this special issue for a full definition), and how it underscores the vulnerability of how contingent faculty serve their institutions and how institutions serve contingent faculty. While affective investment provided us a way to understand, in theoretical terms, the contradictions of the labor involved from the perspective of the personal and affective for contingent faculty, politics of service helps us to understand the complex relationship between faculty and the departments and institutions in which they work.

In this article, we provide an extended definition of politics of service and then move to discussions from data and interviews that reflect the material dimensions of how politics of service impacts contingent faculty in three critical areas:

- Service to the Institution
- Evaluations
- Intellectual Property

Defining Politics of Service

Politics of service contains a number of facets that are incorporated into a more precise definition. Although service is listed as a consideration for reappointment, tenure, and promotion, the physical and emotional factors associated with service vary with rank and gender. When a faculty member commits to service activities, that commitment contributes to student success, the overall balance of responsibilities in the department, and support of university organizations. However, these activities may become a burden on those few faculty—especially contingent faculty—who consistently devote time and energy into this invisible society of servers. Although Jean Filetti rightly points out that service is the most ill-defined of the three categories of academic work (i.e., teaching, research, and service), as we mean it, service includes three interlocking parts which are simultaneously contradictory and complementary.

First, we are using service to mean “to do work.” Even though teaching is often separated from service and research for tenure-line faculty and described differently for full-time non-tenure-track faculty (FT NTT), our idea of service cannot be separated from the act of doing work for someone: in this case, for an organizational entity. Service, in this regard, then encapsulates not only the act of teaching but also the act of serving students through office hours, conferences, advising, and mentoring. As Theresa Evans points out, “What is most discouraging about contingent work is not so much the lesser status or lesser pay of non-tenure-track instructors compared to tenure-line faculty but rather that teaching is often deemed not even worthy of compensation to sustain a minimally comfortable lifestyle” (88). Because teaching itself is “service,” lifelong contingents may make salary concessions because they are participating in the greater good of education. As a key component of the teaching and education mission of institutions, service viewed in this light means that contingent faculty regard their job as both a vocation and a passion, which often puts them in the position to be exploited. “Contingent faculty placate themselves with noble ideals, and institutions gladly accept their willingness to work for so little and to uphold professional values for the sake of students” (Evans 97). However, this mentality oscillates on the border between exploitation and teaching (in all of its positive connotations). Aware that they are educators, contingent faculty focus on the enjoyment they derive from teaching, which makes them more susceptible to saying yes to service—especially when students benefit from service activities. Politics of service draws on and builds on classic work in composition that argues persuasively about gender roles, feminization of composition, and the affective dimensions of service (see e.g., Enos; Schell).

Secondly, outside of the actual job duties defined by contracts, service is bound up in what Evans has called the “the myth of self-sacrifice” for a common good. Evans defines self-sacrifice as “the belief that unpaid or poorly compensated work is acceptable when it serves some greater civic or moral good” (86). In the sense we are using it here, any outside labor or service that is not specifically defined by contracts is deemed self-sacrifice, but self-sacrifice also encompasses taking on additional sections and also supplemental “teaching related” tasks that are often ill-defined and poorly compensated (if at all). For example, FT NTT are on campus for longer periods of time than tenure-line faculty (as a result of the higher teaching load of FT NTTs), and the volume of students taught is higher. Students may have increased opportunities to take more than one course from FT NTTs (versus tenure-line faculty whose teaching presence varies due to sabbatical, research leave, or course equivalency), and that—added to the higher visibility of FT NTTs (physical presence on campus)—results in high numbers of contingent faculty who are invited by students to serve as advisors for internships and undergraduate thesis projects; who are asked to write letters of recommendation for

scholarships, jobs, and graduate school; and who are requested as advisors of student clubs and organizations—all service tasks which are uncompensated. This facet of our definition also includes the constant access that students have to contingent faculty. For example, one participant noted:

Because I offer workshops to the undergraduates in our program, they would have access to me even if they didn't take my classes. They craved the personalized help that I offered them. And maybe it's my fault: maybe I shouldn't have proffered my time up so willingly, but I felt it was my duty to 1) serve the students in any way they needed it and 2) add another line to my CV to make sure I was reappointed. In this sense, service is bittersweet to me. I do it because I want to, but I also do it because I feel I have to.

As we know from our discussion of affective investment, many contingent faculty are in these roles for the students and thus have a difficult time saying no to the countless requests to offer up their time (reviewing resumes, answering emails about networking, offering advice unrelated to the classroom). These examples highlight what we mean by “politics of service” as “self-sacrifice.”

Finally, service is being used in the traditional sense of doing the actual work that is necessary through serving on committees (within the department, university, and even for the field in a national capacity) as well as other short-term or specifically defined roles. Among these are program administration, acting as an assessment portfolio reviewer, serving as writing contest judge, or becoming brand ambassador for a program, as many contingent faculty are asked to promote their classes and their programs, which can be a full-time job within itself. Service, in this respect, is expected and is seen (in its most idealistic form) as a shared endeavor that is based on collegiality and the common good. Yet clearly politics remain at play. Additionally, some have observed that:

Most universities now structure their labor force so that contingent faculty are left out of opportunities for professional development, decisions about curriculum, and discussions about student learning outcomes and program development, etc. This exclusion is deeply gendered, entrenching a largely female workforce in low-status and disempowered positions relative to the work they do. (Adams, Hassel, Rucki, and Yoon 46)

However, if everyone were engaged in the department and service components were clear and regularized along with professionalizing opportunities, the benefits of service would be numerous. As Adler-Kasner and Roen have argued, “Service offers opportunities to make a difference in the lives of many people who are not necessarily affected by

our teaching or our published research.” Even considering the current complications with service, it remains an important and valuable contribution to our institutions, as committee service helps to ensure faculty voice in decisions that affect universities.

Beyond these interlocking parts of service, one cannot forget that first-year composition (FYC) and technical and professional communication (TPC) service courses comprise the majority of the teaching loads of contingent faculty in writing studies (see “Results and Findings from the Survey” article in this special issue). Viewing writing as a service to the university community moves us from service to politics. Brad Hammer crystallizes an argument which has long been made that the actual service of FYC “further reinforces an academic hierarchy that substitutes critical inquiry for standards, reduces pedagogy to a set of skills, and further affirms and thereby privileges a hierarchical model for the modern university” (A5). The system of contingency and who teaches what courses in both composition and TPC highlights the ongoing politics of writing instruction and its place within institutional hierarchies. When viewed in this way as a division between what counts (research) and what does not count (teaching and service), no other term except politics can be used. Even teaching *as* service helped shape our definition, which is an ongoing point of many of those who wrote about labor in higher education, such as Adrianna Kezar and Daniel Maxey.

These considerations led us to view the data through a lens of politics. We opted for the use of “politics” because of the word’s connections to issues of power and control. We do not mean politics in the sense of national politics and funding issues, as those terms are used in much of the literature about higher education. Even though these sorts of politics have critical impacts on contingent faculty, programs, and institutions, we want to focus on the power, control, and structures that are experienced in the everyday material work lives of contingent faculty. Politics is also an apt term because it encompasses the innate differences found on campuses about the roles and responsibilities of contingent faculty and the ongoing struggles or acquiescence of the role of contingent faculty within departments and the impact on missions. This special issue largely discusses, through contingent voices, the wide range of ways that contingent faculty are employed in both work and service and in how they are protected and listened to (or not). In other words, higher education institutions are highly political because of the ongoing negotiation for resources, which directly impacts the material work lives of contingent faculty.

Politics is the use of (and perception of) strategy in gaining a position of power or control. Contingent faculty lack both power and control regarding their contracts, teaching schedules, office locations, and salaries. Politics, as it relates to institutional structures, also directly connect concepts of labor and service. When considering the data and the material work conditions, we must ask to whom does agency and power

belong and when/how is it attained or wielded? That there is little that faculty can actively do about certain aspects of their positions means that contingency itself is fraught with political ramifications, a politics of powerlessness

Thus, we define politics of service as the influence of structural inequities and hierarchical structures to maintain positions of power while simultaneously encouraging contingent faculty to embrace their service role for the good of the students and institution. Politics of service provides a theoretical framework for understanding the ongoing contradictions found in the role of contingent faculty as they relate to institutional infrastructures and practices.

Politics of service is more directly relational than affective investment. In this sense we mean that framing some of the data in terms of politics of service focuses on the relational aspects between contingent faculty and the institutions they serve. Thinking of contingency in terms of a relationship between faculty and the department and the institution: How can program, departmental, and institutional administrators ask contingent faculty to participate in service in the traditional sense (sit on committees, do advising, further their professional careers, appear at events as departmental representatives) when the institution has often not upheld its equitable end of the relationship? Functioning relationships are dependent on a shared equitable structure that is often absent for contingent faculty as a result of systematized politics and a lack of interactive relationships between faculty with disparate ranks.

Material Dimensions of Politics of Service

As previously stated, our data analysis has revealed several dimensions of a politics of service that illustrate what this looks like in practice. In this section, we look at several of these dimensions:

- Service to the Institution
- Evaluations
- Intellectual Property

Service to the Institution

Embedded within the service role to the institution is the need to understand exactly why service oftentimes has ambiguous definitions and why its components are the least understood of any academic's job. For contingent faculty, service becomes a facet that needs to be defined and better understood. Service to the institution not only means dedicating time and energy to a task, project, event, committee, or student club, but also represents commitment, involvement, and a sense of belonging to the department. Often, contingent faculty who serve desire inclusion as members of the faculty.

As the opening epigram illustrates, many contingent faculty simply feel as though they cannot say no. The culture of service (and the

desire for continuing employment) propels contingent faculty into accepting uncompensated service duties, which is justified by the administration as an opportunity for professionalization, a chance to incorporate all faculty perspectives, and a shift toward inclusiveness. Jean Filletti points to the necessity of service to the function of higher education when she writes, “imagine the landscape of the university if service at the department level, at the university level, at the professional organization level and at the community level did not happen” (345). Filletti opens the door for scholars to consider the double bind contingent faculty then find themselves in. That is, someone has to perform key service roles and often those “someones” are contingent faculty because they feel as though they have no other choice. We are not suggesting that we erase the service or remove the service that contingent faculty do because when we picture the above scenario (what service at our institutions would look like without the help of contingent faculty), the situation is bare and bleak. The critical takeaway here is that institutions cannot demand that this service happen (because who else would do it?) and then withhold credit, support, and compensation from the bodies who are performing the service. In the words of one participant:

For committee work in the department, service to the profession nationally, and service to the university, we are given no credit in the annual report scores, yet it is expected that we will participate in these. I personally like to give conference presentations (and very occasionally, when I can find the time, publish articles), but in my position these activities are neither expected nor rewarded.

While service, professional development, and scholarship are each their own unique labor, it’s frustrating for contingent faculty to meet these implicit (and often explicit) expectations of their time with no credit toward reappointment and no compensation for their time.

Service is often a component of earning tenure: “Full-time faculty usually provide office hours, work on curriculum, and serve on search committees. However, many adjuncts wish to perform these duties as a way to feel connected to the institution” (Green 32). When we think about the definition of service, we traditionally imagine service on committees. Committee service is a public interactive activity which—while fraught with its own issues concerning voting, alliances, rank, and backlash—can effectively raise awareness about contingent faculty issues. For contingent faculty, service is not expected and is not a contractual obligation; in some situations, inviting non-term contingent faculty to serve may be considered exploitative of their time in relation to the insufficient income they earn per course section. Let us be clear, however, that our goal is not to recommend less service by contingent faculty; faculty voices in this study show time and again that they want to be involved. They want a seat at the

table. They simply also want to be invited, acknowledged, and credited for their presence.

One participant discussed their commitment to the university in terms of their job. We include their quote here in its entirety, even though it is lengthy, because their words provide an important perspective about the politics of service and the role of contingent faculty in our programs and institutions.:

I do not like that I can do nothing to improve my working situation or be promoted. I can commit an extensive amount of time to research and attempting publication--it is not considered as part of my yearly evaluations. I can commit an extensive amount of time to departmental or university service--as a non-tenure-track faculty member, I am not eligible for many opportunities, and if I am eligible, I often do not find out about those opportunities or am not given the chance to apply. Often, non-tenure-track faculty members are seen as not as invested in a department or university; in fact, I feel as or more invested in my program because I do not have the terminal degree required to apply to a nationwide search and family obligations mean I cannot move. I have fewer career opportunities than they do, therefore the same or more investment in the success of the longevity of our program.

Considering these issues, how do contingent faculty perceive the benefits of college and departmental service? In the pool of part-time faculty who serve, what procedures do these instructors use to gather data and become informed about which committees to serve on and which committees to avoid? More fundamentally, after being elected or appointed to a committee, how do contingent faculty locate and present issues and concerns specific to their jobs to tenure-line colleagues who outrank them? What verbal, non-verbal, behavioral, and diplomatic techniques do part-time faculty adopt when serving?

The reality is that committees are important to professionalization and are pivotal in introducing contingent faculty to the intricacies of department politics. Because “demands for service . . . have swelled because of . . . increased oversight by accrediting and government agencies,” creating elected committee positions for contingent faculty would not only maximize the profile of adjunct instructors, but would also generate opportunities for the exploding community of contingent faculty to be represented (Monaghan A8). Additionally, inclusion of contingent faculty in governance “tends to propel more and broader changes” since these instructors teach primarily freshman-level courses and experience first-hand the changing needs of incoming students (Kezar, “Institutionalizing” 74).

Being afforded a voice on a university-wide or department committee has its challenges. If the contingent faculty member has a vote,

how does the instructor execute this vote? Often, contingent faculty are a noted minority presence on committees, and are present as representatives but are not supposed to truly represent. Citing a 2010 AAUP survey, “contingent faculty are not protected by tenure and so may be particularly vulnerable to retaliation for actions or positions taken in carrying out governance duties; for the same reason, they may be more susceptible to pressure from administrators or other faculty than are tenure-track faculty” (Beaky 79). For example, a non-tenure track faculty member may be on a committee as the sole representative of 50 FT NTTs, and the member must weigh the benefits of being firmly outspoken and remaining in the good graces of ranking TT faculty. An additional consideration is choosing to serve to ensure contingent faculty remain visible in departmental politics yet balancing the desire to be involved with the fact that service—for contingent faculty—is often uncompensated (and therefore amounts to volunteer work).

One concern is that many instructors consider teaching a profession and not a job. Teaching is ongoing, continual, dynamic, and rolling. Therefore, service—especially as it relates to students—is perceived as contributing to teaching. The high number of contingent faculty who participate in service activities such as student clubs, orientation activities, service learning, writing letters of recommendation, mentoring students who are considering graduate school, or enrolling in workshops to learn additional classroom skills do so because these activities—although uncompensated—add to their persona as a teacher. However, this activity must be seen through a political lens because of the power present in this kind of service to the students, department, institution, and field.

Evaluations

Two key components exist in evaluation: peer evaluation (the evaluation of one’s teaching by other teachers) and student end of term (SET) evaluations. The politics of service at play in both forms of evaluation is critical to understanding the slippery slope upon which contingent faculty tread.

Peer evaluation

Classroom observations are a necessary component of reappointment, tenure, and promotion. However, for faculty members who are off the tenure track, classroom observations are too often the sole cause for—to be delicate— “non-renewal of the contract” . . . or to be blunt . . . “being fired” (Mechenbier and Warnock A8). As Mechenbier and Warnock assert from the perspective of contingent faculty, classroom evaluations completed by peers are problematic for several reasons including rank, power disparity, not having a “true” peer relationship with the faculty evaluator—or worse, meeting the assigned faculty evaluator for the first time when the assessor walks into the classroom on the day of the

evaluation, and a possible awkward resentment because a tenure-line faculty member considers the time it takes to observe teaching and then to write a subsequent letter a waste of time for a faculty member of non-tenurable rank. The politics of who gets to evaluate and the power that evaluation has is of critical importance to the politics of service. Since most contingent faculty are reappointed based solely on their teaching merit, evaluations are often the key component to that decision. Before we delve into the multitude of issues this evaluation model raises, first examine Figure 1, which reflects the responses to the survey question that asked: “Do you receive peer observations of your teaching?”

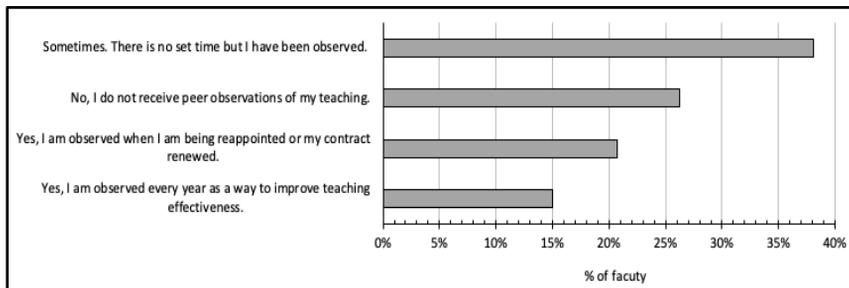


Figure 1: Peer Observations of Teaching ($n = 294$)

The fact that only 15% ($n = 44$) responded that they are observed annually as a way to improve teaching effectiveness is alarming. Contingent faculty, who are primarily teaching faculty, already face numerable obstacles to their classroom success (high teaching loads, low salary, precarity), and this statistic indicates that even less emphasis is placed on improving teaching. While the data provides no way of discovering how long faculty have been employed when they answered “no,” seeing that so many faculty (26%, $n = 77$) receive no peer observations of their teaching is disheartening. Next are the 38% ($n = 112$) who receive peer observations, but they are not regularly scheduled or consistent. For the 21% ($n = 61$) who report that they are observed when they are up for reappointment or contract renewal, sharing some insights as to why this structure might be just as problematic as receiving no observation at all is central to this study.

Peer observation that aims to improve teaching effectiveness—that is, evaluation that is structured, scheduled, and programmatically helpful—can be a valuable tool of support and guidance to all faculty. Samuels claims that contingent faculty should be “empowered to observe and review one another’s courses using established review criteria” (Samuels A3). Unfortunately, when tenured faculty observe contingent faculty, especially when that observation is used in reappointment or renewal, we have to dissect both what it means to evaluate as well as the hierarchical ramifications of being evaluated only for contractual reasons. Samuels posits that “the current reliance on these evaluation

forms functions as a hidden way of controlling what faculty members say while they are teaching” (A23).

Another issue is that often no relationship exists between the observer and the instructor. The observer may have access to a syllabus, schedule, assignments, or even a content course (like Blackboard or Canvas), but what she sees in one class session can hardly be counted on to paint an accurate and complete picture of one’s teaching. Countless other issues abound as well, including, as one participant points out, what happens when the observer does not even stay for the entire teaching period:

When a tenured faculty came to observe my night class, he only stayed for one of the three hours and then proceeded to write a letter that pointed out all of the content I needed to bring into my classroom (which, ironically, was covered in the other two hours of the course that he did not witness). I could not use the letter in my reappointment file because it painted such a misinformed, negative picture of my teaching, and I depend on those letters to get reappointed.

Contingent faculty lack power because of infrastructures that maintain hierarchies. We recognize the constraints in place that do not offer an easy alternative, but by opening up discussion and creating paths to professionalization and development in other ways, some of the politics of service present in peer evaluating can be offset.

Student end-of-term (SET) evaluation

We recognize that just as peer evaluations are meant to improve teaching effectiveness, the ideal behind student evaluations (specifically student end of term [SET] evaluations) is to shed insights into improving course content and delivery. Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world, and contingent faculty in particular are subject to further precarity when students have more power over the course content than their instructors do. A contradiction is extant when instructors are hired as expert teachers (since that is contingent faculty’s primary role) but then the most used form of evaluation (and arguably the one that carries the most weight) is the highly problematic student evaluation. This contradiction affects the overall service to the department and the field. They are a poor measure for many reasons, to be further discussed in this section, and they should not be used in the way they are being applied (delivered at the end—when the instructor has no ability to address issues within the class—and then as a core item in the decision of reappointment or renewal).

One concern—to cite the 2014 AAUP's Committee on Teaching, Research, and Publication survey—regarding student evaluations is that “it is inappropriate to treat all teaching in every field or all students as if they were the same” (Vasey). Yet we do treat classes and teachers all the

same, in the form of student end-of-term evaluations, and the power they have is substantial. “Many [contingent faculty] commented that evaluations are used solely in the context of renewal or nonrenewal of contract” (Vasey). Although research and publication are primary assessments used for tenure and promotion, contingent faculty find that renewal is dependent on numerical data points on student evaluations. As one participant points out: *“It seems as though my experience doesn't much matter at all, and what the students think matters a whole lot. This means that I must tailor my teaching to meet student expectations as opposed to having students meet my expectations. This is a problem.”*

The manner in which the evaluation is distributed will also affect responses. “There are other problems that could arise with the form design, such as length of questionnaire, or with the context of how and when evaluations are administered” (Langen 188). Is the evaluation hard-copy or electronic? Consider this hypothetical: a student is permitted to complete an electronic evaluation at any time where the response boxes have no word limit versus a student who is asked to complete a paper evaluation with a one-inch space per question to write comments. Disgruntled students may choose to type long answers at 2:00 am on a Friday night (which may have been more civilly answered had it been 2:00 pm on a Tuesday in a face-to-face class period).

However, a WPA or TPC PA may have 100+ contingent faculty on staff per semester and use of a fixed quantitative evaluation system can quickly categorize outliers when the WPA or TPC PA is staffing for the next academic year. Yet considerations such as pedagogical approaches of the course, grading curve, level of the course, size of the class, levels and kinds of feedback and insightful teaching strategies are also crucial in assessing teaching and performance. Dependence on student evaluations as gauges for renewal is related to budgetary concerns (reliance on contingent faculty) and workload issues of WPAs in administering programs with large numbers of faculty. Our survey demonstrated that a great deal of thought and concern goes into how student evaluations influence contingent faculty to manipulate the course content, delivery, and grading to ensure that students will provide positive evaluations at the end of the term. Here is how one of participant explained it:

It's a classic “between a rock and a hard place” kind of scenario to please the department (accepting the courses they give me, considering their values regarding student grade averages, knowing they'll look at course evaluations) and trying to please the students (get them to “buy in” to a course they don't want to take, encourage them when their grade isn't what they want, and help them feel positively about the course and me).

We include a detailed, lengthy response in full because of the importance the viewpoint offers regarding evaluations and the role they play in the

material work conditions of contingent faculty. This detailed quote also illustrates the politics of service in a heart-wrenching way:

There is a balancing act here. My department assigns me to teach almost all core required courses. Thus, most of my students would prefer not to take this class.... So I have classes full of students who prefer not to take the course. However, I have a department suggesting my students' average in my courses should be a "C" yet also measuring part of my teaching effectiveness on my students' evaluations of me. ...I do feel like toward the end of the semester, I do tend to scaffold for the students some positive thinking about the course, me, and their writing. This may take the shape of reflection on the positives they've learned/demonstrated, my own praise of strengths/changes I've seen, etc. It's nothing over the top (I don't bake for them or something) but I think there is a part of me that is operating from the fear about their course surveys at the end...as much as I wish it weren't true. They are an evaluation form I have to be mindful of (unfortunately).

If we could sum up how evaluations link into politics of service, it would be this response. When asked, “Do you feel pressure (either explicit or implicit) to modify your teaching practices to ensure positive end of course evaluations?” many participants echoed this sentiment:

Absolutely! One hundred percent! Raising grades, dropping assignments, giving lots of extra credit, ignoring absences, giving extensions for papers that are already late! The list goes on and on. I am at a good institution with decent students, but I always feel pressure to let the students have their way in order to get good evaluations so that I can keep my job.

This reaction demonstrates how SETs degrade classroom pedagogical practices. To have no power over your classroom—over the content area in which you are an expert—because you are so worried about your job (which is tied up so closely with end-of-term student evaluations) that you would rather sacrifice your standards than do what you know is right . . . is disconcerting to faculty of all ranks.

Therefore, how do we balance the requirement of student evaluations with what they actually do (strike fear into the heart of every contingent faculty member and ensure that contingent faculty are catering to student feelings rather than student learning) and what they are supposed to do (encourage thoughtful feedback on course content and teaching effectiveness)? One participant shares thoughts on one such strategy:

I think this is a common feeling among contracted instructors. As performance reviews are part of contract renewal and in the current environment of higher ed reliance on part-time adjuncts, that fear of bad reviews is always present. Personally, I believe surveying students at the end of a term surfaces responses on two ends of the spectrum--either those that know they are receiving As or those that are now frustrated at the end of the term because they've missed deadlines, are struggling with final projects, etc. I think mid-term course review and reviews that ask students to assess matters they have some legitimate authority on (how clear was the content presented, how often did the instructor engage, etc.) are of more value to an instructor and the department.

Many respondents also noted that they were given an opportunity to respond to negative evaluations, which also helps offset the politics of evaluations as they relate to reappointment. *“My teaching effectiveness is partially determined by course evaluations, but it is not considered the whole picture. I am required to respond to negative reviews in my annual report.”*

In the end, it is not the use, but the misuse of peer and student evaluations that result in their inclusion in a politics of service. Peer evaluations and SETs are not professional development. They need to be used as a small component of *establishing* professional development programs based on the students' comments as well as other information. We need better ways to collaborate and have pedagogical professional development conversations and activities rather than convincing ourselves that observing someone teach or looking at the course evaluations is a substitute for true professional development and pedagogical improvement. Although a widespread practice, the issue of SETs and observations evokes surveillance rather than inclusive conversations that enact improved pedagogical practices.

Intellectual Property

Here we use intellectual property as an extended example to underscore contingent faculty's access to—and understanding of—institutional resources to effectively perform the duties of their job. One area where institutional access is most noticeable is in online writing instruction because a large number of contingent faculty teach online. The issue of intellectual property encapsulates and becomes a microcosm of larger structural issues.

Part of the ongoing service of contingent faculty is in course development, but we found that the vast majority of contingent faculty have little understanding of their rights around intellectual property (IP). When considering online teaching, contingent faculty do need to develop materials for their online writing courses, and if contingent faculty cannot transport an online class—or even components of a class—to another

institution because of the originating institution's proprietary interests, why would these instructors want to expend time and energy in developing or improving a shell course they will never own? However, ownership of online course materials depends upon the policies at the institution. This section discusses the issues of IP and contingency as another form of the politics of service.

Question 9 asked, "Do you know who has ownership of your online course?" Figure 2 shows those results.

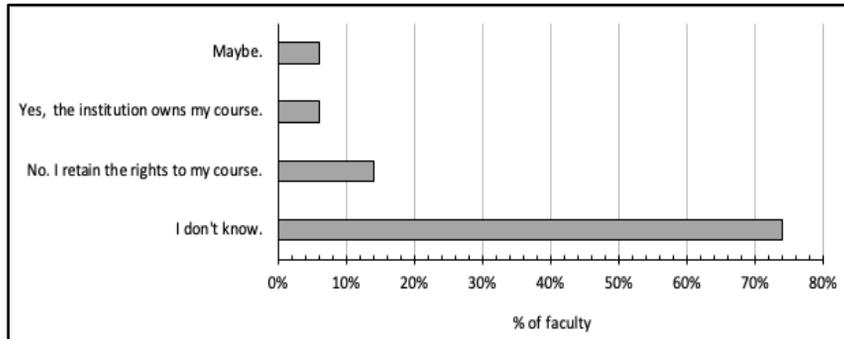


Figure 2: Ownership of Online Course ($n = 257$)

An overwhelming 74% ($n = 188$) of respondents do not know who owns their online courses. One respondent elaborated:

Our department chair believes that anything created for a class (web site, materials, textbooks) belongs to our university. A university lawyer once told me that a book I wrote while working in a center within our department belonged to the university (because I wrote it as part of my job). However, those who work in Digital Humanities in our university library tell us that anything produced by an individual belongs to that individual (intellectual property). I suspect that if a product can be sold, it belongs to the university; if it can't, it belongs to the person. :-\.

Utilizing Educational Technologists (ETs), Accessibility Services for transcription, and Instructional Designers (IDs) often denotes that the university has a proprietary interest in the online course. ETs and IDs are salaried employees of the institution and expending university resources means the university has rights to the class. Not all contingent faculty perceive the situation this way, however. According to one participant: "I don't care about their [the University's] opinion. I retain rights, as far as I am concerned and will act accordingly."

However, ownership of online course materials depends upon the policies at the institution. Most online contingent faculty are accustomed to being independent workers; they may prefer to create their own materials and handouts for the course and to design the course themselves.

The reality is that an online course may require technological assistance from experts in the form of Ed Techs and Instructional Designers. Even though the faculty member may be the *content* expert for the subject matter, the technology team may “tell [the instructor how] the cours[e] will operate” (Kelly 8). Contingent faculty need to be aware of both their rights and of the proprietary rights of the online course’s home institution. If an adjunct teaches at more than one university, online course materials should be kept separate methodically. *“I’ve never considered this question. I would assume that since I have departmental support and use institutional software platforms, then the institution would own the course. I never signed an exclusivity contract about the assignments or syllabus.”* This response echoes back to the definition of politics of service in that ownership is a power issue. Unfortunately, proprietorship is a power issue where many contingent faculty lack awareness. Course resources, accessibility, and ownership are entwined when it comes to the politics of service. Contingent faculty are creating their courses (because they have to) and yet may be unable to use their own intellectual property at other institutions. This quandary brings us back to the issue of “doing something for nothing” other than serving the “greater good.” Of course, the students benefit. Inarguably, the institutions benefit. However, what about the contingent faculty members themselves?

WPAs, TPC PAs, Department Chairs, University Legal, and Distance Learning Coordinators should make the effort to advise and inform online contingent faculty of the layered ownership issues regarding these courses. Alarming, our data suggests course content—developed and tweaked by faculty as service—may revert to institutions for “free.” If faculty “don’t know” where ownership lies, we posit these respondents did not sign any kind of waiver or form agreeing to some kind of compensation for developing course material. Online course material is unique in that it is uploaded to an LMS or other online system under contract with the university. Ownership of these virtual—and therefore reusable, downloadable materials—is more complex than physical handouts or exams which are hard-copy and are disseminated in a face-to-face classroom. However, the idea that course materials developed as part of an instructor’s employment are owned by the university is the same regardless of the delivery method of the course. Online materials are more easily reproducible and are therefore more vulnerable to IP violations, especially when they are the materials of contingent faculty, who are not always classified as full-time (and who may not be aware of where their course materials end up or are transferred as a result of non-permanent employment).

Thus, online writing instruction becomes an important example of much larger issues because online teaching resources, and how they are managed and distributed in regard to contingent faculty, are a key indicator of how material work conditions and politics of service intersect. Since the pedagogy of online instruction is vastly different from traditional face-to-

face instruction, we were curious to see the support contingent faculty had when preparing and teaching these online courses. Many spent their own time and money to seek out training and resources to provide this service to the university. This intersection was the main point of “teaching as service.” So much of the development for contingent faculty instruction comes on their own time and through their own resourcefulness. Instructors should be aware of the policies which govern intellectual property at their institutions so that they are informed and educated about ownership of their teaching materials. These policies are often not part of contingent faculty term contracts, and (lack of) dissemination of this type of information affects material work conditions in the teaching environment.

Conclusion

Although service is often disparaged, positive connotations to service exist. In TPC, for example, the course that is taught as often and in almost the same numbers of FYC is commonly referred to as the “service course” because in its common forms (as professional writing, technical writing, business writing) the class is taught as service to other departments and programs. James Dubinsky argued for making visible the discourses around the service course and “rediscovering the positive meaning of service in the social contexts of literacy” (40). This move opens a space to have meaningful conversations about the work we do and the value we bring to our institutions and to our programs. Composition, in relation, has typically been viewed as a service discipline because of the role of FYC in general education. Tim Peeples and Bill Hart-Davidson go as far as to claim that composition occupies a humanist/service-status orientation. The point here is that service can be—and is—a positive aspect of the role writing programs of all types play in higher education. So much effort is being made to incorporate cross-discipline learning within institutions (between them numerous colleges and the departments within them), and typically the writing programs are in the center of this activity. What does every major, every discipline, have in common? The answer is the need to communicate—to both experts and lay audiences—what that discipline does and why the field is meaningful. The service courses (of TPC and FYC) play a vital role in bridging these disciplines, and we owe much of that interactivity to the role of contingent faculty serving as the instructors in these classrooms. Therefore, the question we asked when considering the role of politics of service upon contingent faculty teaching writing courses is this: If writing is a key service, then the people who teach it should be key as well, right?

As Sara Ahmed has pointed out in regard to diversity work, when things are less valued by an organization, to inhabit and work in those spaces means the employee is less valued by the institution. This belief is (at the core) the reason we need to think through issues of the politics of service. What we have presented through weaving together data from our

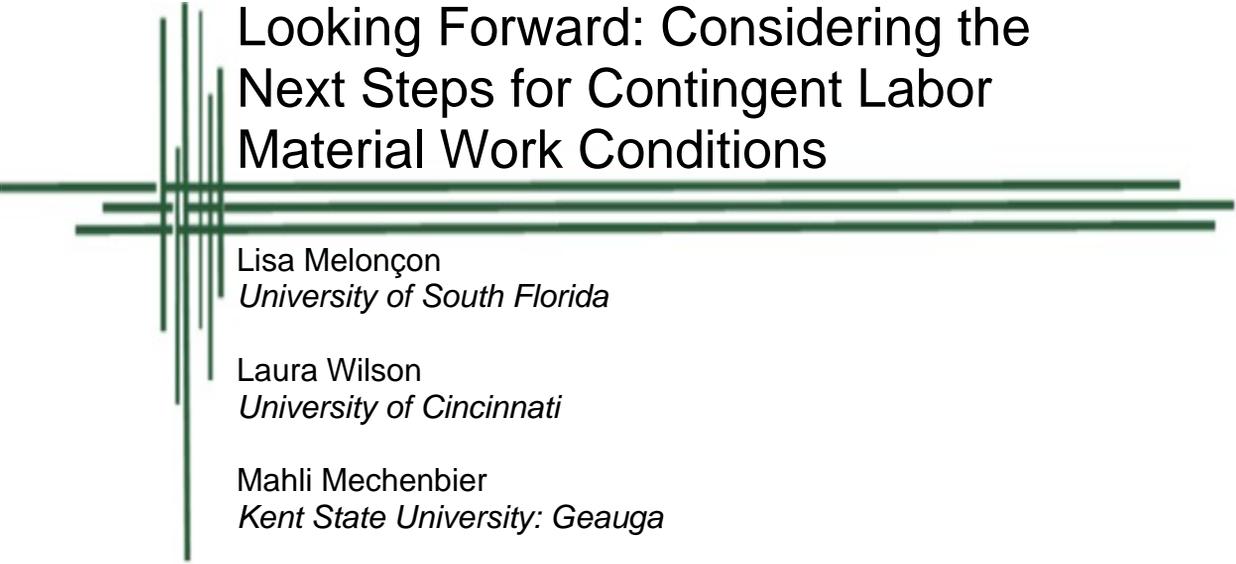
study and present scholarship is that specific ways exist in which politics of service directly—and negatively—impact contingent faculty. As discussed in the “Data Takeaways” and “Looking Forward” articles in this special issue, WPAs and TPC PAs and tenure-line faculty can—and should—take actionable steps to alleviate the negative impacts of the politics of service on contingent faculty.

Even when contingent faculty understand their roles based on contracts or conversations, confusion exists over how they are appointed and the function that service plays. Filetti encourages transparency and clear criteria for evaluating service. Complications in assessing levels of service include how to award credit for one committee over another (time? department level? university level? *ex officio*? elected? standing? *ad hoc*?) or one activity over another, especially as no concrete measure of completion exists (such as a peer-reviewed article or book). Additionally, the use and misuse of peer and student evaluations needs to be addressed so that contingent faculty can claim their positions as experts in their fields and in their classrooms. Finally, intellectual property policies, particularly in online contexts, need to be clarified for contingent faculty prior to their being commissioned to engage in the construction of online courses. Keeping politics of service in mind, program administrators, department chairs, and deans should seek to refine language in contracts, handbooks, and university policies in order to clarify what service involves (and leads to) for contingent faculty.

Works Cited

- Adams, Heather Brook et al. “Service.” *Peitho*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2015, pp. 45-50.
- Adler-Kassner, Linda and Duane Roen. “An Ethic of Service in Composition and Rhetoric: Serving the Profession through Principle Doesn’t Mean Teaching ‘Service Courses.’” 2012, https://www.aaup.org/article/ethic-service-composition-and-rhetoric#.W_mkXCdOmi4.
- Ahmed, Sara. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Duke University Press, 2012.
- Beaky, Lenore A., Mayra Besosa, Joe Berry, Purificacion Martinez, and Gwendolyn Bradley. “The Inclusion of Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent Appointments.” *AAUP Bulletin*, 2013, pp. 77-89, <https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/files/2013%20Bulletin/contingentgovernance.pdf>.
- Dubinsky, James M. “Making the ‘Invisible Discourse’ or Service Visible.” *Council of Programs of Technical and Scientific Communication*, 1998, pp. 40-43.
- Enos, Theresa. *Gender Roles and Faculty Lives in Rhetoric and Composition*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1996.

- Evans, Theresa M. "The Myth of Self Sacrifice for the Good S of Mankind Contingency and Women's Work." *Rhetoric Review*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2017, pp. 86-99, doi:10.1080/07350198.2017.1246020.
- Filetti, Jean S. "Assessing Service in Faculty Reviews: Mentoring Faculty and Developing Transparency." *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, vol. 17, no. 4, 2009, pp. 343-352.
- Green, Donald W. "Adjunct Faculty and the Continuing Quest for Quality." *New Directions for Community Colleges*, Winter 2007, no. 140, 2007, pp. 29-39.
- Hammer, Brad. "The 'Service' of Contingency: Outsiderness and the Commodification of Teaching." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2012, pp. A3-A7.
- Kelly, Rob. "The Benefits of Being an Online Adjunct." *Online Classroom*, Jan. 2005, 8.
- Kezar, Adrianna, and Cecile Sam. "Institutionalizing Equitable Policies and Practices for Contingent Faculty." *Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 84, no. 1, Jan/Feb 2013, pp. 56-87.
- Kezar, Adrianna and Daniel Maxey, editors. *Envisioning the Faculty for the Twenty-First Century: Moving to a Mission-Oriented and Learner-Centered Model*. Rutgers University Press, 2016.
- Langen, Jill M. "Evaluation of Adjunct Faculty in Higher Education Institutions." *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* Vol. 36, No. 2, March 2011, pp. 185–196.
- Mechenbier, Mahli, and Scott Warnock. "A Collaborative Method for Observing/Evaluating Online Writing Courses." *FORUM in College Composition and Communication* vol. 71, no. 1, September 2019, pp. A8-A16.
- Monaghan, Peter. "Making Committee Service Count." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, vol. 63, no. 24, pp. A8-A10.
- Peebles, Tim and Bill Hart-Davidson. "Remapping Professional Writing: Articulating the State of the Art and Composition Studies." *Exploring Composition Studies: Sites, Issues, and Perspectives*, edited by Kelly Ritter and Paul Kei Matsuda, Utah State University Press, 2012, pp. 52-72.
- Samuels, Robert. "Contingent Faculty and Academic Freedom in the Age of Trump: Organizing the Disenfranchised Is the Key to Success." *Forum: Issues about Part-Time and Contingent Faculty*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2018, pp. A21-A24.
- Schell, Eileen. *Gypsy Academics and Mother-Teachers: Gender, Contingent Labor, and Writing Instruction*. Boynton/Cook, 1998.
- Vasey, Craig, and Linda Carroll. "How Do We Evaluate Teaching?" *AAUP: Academe* May – June 2016, <https://www.aaup.org/article/how-do-we-evaluate-teaching#.XQZf9FhYb4g>.



Looking Forward: Considering the Next Steps for Contingent Labor Material Work Conditions

Lisa Melonçon
University of South Florida

Laura Wilson
University of Cincinnati

Mahli Mechenbier
Kent State University: Geauga

Lisa Melonçon is a professor of technical communication at the University of South Florida. Her teaching and research focuses on the programmatic and professionalization dimensions of technical and professional communication, research methodologies, and the rhetoric of health and medicine.

Laura Wilson has an MA in English with a concentration in Scientific and Technical Communication from Bowling Green State University. She has worked as a technical writer and editor and has taught technical, professional, and business writing at the University of Cincinnati since 2005, where she is an Associate Professor Educator. Laura is passionate about her work and her students; beyond technical writing, she enjoys teaching courses on social media, rhetoric, and web authoring.

Mahli Mechenbier teaches Technical Writing, Professional Writing, and College Writing at Kent State University: Geauga as a three-year-renewable Senior Lecturer. She was a member of NCTE's Committee for Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction and was an editor for the OWI's Open Resource (2013 – 2016). Her research focuses on how academic administrations manage distance learning and the intellectual property rights of contingent faculty.

*“It [working as a contingent faculty member] felt like
I was a piece of furniture that was being used.”*

Study Participant

We wanted to be forward thinking and—by using what we learned from the data (see “Results and Findings from the Survey” and “Data Takeaways” articles in this special issue)—to consider new ways of addressing contingency. So much of the existing scholarship critiques from a theoretical or conceptual stance or the solutions offered are too localized to a set of specific conditions: this framework is not conducive to forming strategies that could enact changes more broadly. The fact remains that for over forty years, the writing field—composition in particular—has completely turned a blind eye except for writing and re-writing the same stories accompanied by consistent hand-wringing; this cycle is incredibly dismissive to the people who are impacted by these circumstances.

We wanted to re-think this approach, and rather than considering big and conceptual, we opted to think in smaller, incremental steps that can have broad impacts on the material work conditions of contingent faculty. In part we draw inspiration from the work of Sara Ahmed, who examined racism and diversity in institutional life. One of Ahmed’s main arguments is the idea that when something is named as a commitment within an institution, often then the work for that commitment ceases because it has been named. Ahmed calls this phenomenon the “non-performative” in which the “naming can be a way of not bringing something into effect” (117). We see this as indicative of issues around contingency. That is, by saying contingency is a problem and then believing little can be done since administrators and faculty do not control institutional budgets, we are in fact extending the non-performative by naming contingency as a problem while doing little to change it.

Blaming the “system,” the “administration,” or a variety of other factors (such as the systematic and ongoing defunding of higher education) is easy. Calling for more unions (for example, see Samuels; Tolley) as the solution to the problem is too simple, and while unions are important, these calls underestimate and deflect from the work that faculty need to do every day. The systemic changes that need to happen to improve the working conditions of contingent faculty must be sustainable, and they must be made at every level: from how we treat our colleagues, to how we run our programs, to how we support professional development, and to how we prepare students for an ongoing constricted and challenging job market. This level of involvement is the only way to change a system that is desperately and irrevocably broken—and we have to implement these changes by using what we have in place already: contingent faculty and the programs they help shape and run.

Hundreds of institutions (big and small) have no local activists and likely never will. What they do feature is an unfair and unsustainable hierarchy that consistently wreaks havoc on those who work in the program and those who administer it. What they do have is fear. As Risa Gorelick posits, “perhaps the research question we have been afraid to ask over the past three decades is whether our national organizations...have the authority to really improve our situation” (119). This blame shifting and deflecting then puts the onus on everyone except tenure-line faculty and program administrators because it helps to alleviate our own guilt and complicity. However, the time for nuance has long since passed. We must accept a share of complicity in a failing system—that writing program administrators helped to create—and then move toward real action.

As a WPA, I understand the lure, and sometimes the necessity, of pragmatism. In order to function as a program administrator in most medium to large institutions it is necessarily to sometimes be complicitous with administrative realities that we abhor...: it is essential to continually name the contradictions and inadequacies in our programs, scholarship, and pedagogy—to keep pushing the issues to the forefront and to be willing to make strategic, if controversial, moves to address them. (Scott 186)

With this study, we have strived to highlight these contradictions and to provide strategic (and yes, sometimes controversial) means to break a cycle fraught with bystanders, with hand-wringing and vocalization, and with little—if any—action toward repairing a broken system.

In the introduction to this special issue, we used the epigram “I love my job, but...” and we want to come full circle back to this idea and counter it with the angst and pain from the participant who opens this article. Both quotes represent the material work conditions of contingent faculty as an either/or as well as a both/and. While we have gathered and presented important information from a field-wide perspective, we have come to the conclusion that to improve our situation means we have to rely on local actions and share in more specific ways how those local actions can then impact national conversations. Admittedly, this assessment runs contrary to our own thinking when we started this project. Yet we stand by the need for field-wide data. Much like the collection of stories in Seth Kahn et al., we need to be more aware of how changes are being implemented and how—in specific details—small victories were gained. These sorts of examples, when placed alongside field-wide data and information, can provide powerful exigence to instigate change at all levels and locales.

In this final article, we discuss the implications of the current model of contingency and move toward ways to shift institutional infrastructures by engaging Donna Strickland’s managerial unconscious alongside change management theory. This combining of theoretical

approaches allows us to provide both a conceptual apparatus for thinking through contingency, but, most importantly, offers a practical framework for implementing incremental changes to address the material work conditions of contingent faculty.

Managerial Unconscious and Change Management

The move to contingency and adjunctification has been seen as a marker of the de-professionalization of teaching. As Larry Gerber notes in his book on faculty governance, the move to using business methods to run higher education has resulted in erosion of faculty governance in large part through contingent appointments. This unbundling of teaching from research and service has led to faculty as employees rather than teachers, and further, since the number of faculty eligible to participate in institutional governance dwindles, decisions are made more so by those who are not regularly engaged in teaching.

Gerber's concept of de-professionalization intersects directly with the work of Adrianna Kezar, an education policy scholar at the Delphi Project, to bring contingency into the open and call for changes to a system that recognizes existent hierarchies in higher education will never go away. While we have consciously not brought in a lot of scholarship from outside of TPC and composition, Kezar's work is so important because she has consistently argued for creating teaching jobs that are professionalized and off the tenure track ("Embracing" and with Daniel Maxey, "Envisioning"). This idea of "good jobs" off the tenure track is an important foundation for presenting data and making claims around the politics of service. Composition and TPC have a large number of faculty in "good jobs" that are full-time and fairly compensated: many with possibilities for promotion, longer contracts, and opportunities for faculty development, including funds for travel or research (see "Results and Findings from the Survey" article in this special issue).

However, the problem is not the "good jobs"; the quandary is the de-professionalization of teaching as a key foundation to the mission of higher education. Instead of emphasizing and professionalizing teachers and teaching, institutions of higher education have fetishized the research aspect of the professoriate so that teaching is no longer seen as worthwhile. Part of the move to non-tenure-track and part-time faculty is a transition to de-professionalize the labor of teaching, as seen in the hierarchies found within higher education's labor landscape. When something is no longer recognized as a profession, when it is no longer valued, it becomes much easier to outsource for low cost. This diminishment of value is why we have reflected so much on professional development and the need to continue to provide opportunities for contingent faculty. Teaching is not something to be outsourced; however, the problem continues since administrators and faculty often feel they lack power, and/or they have no idea how to combat the structural inequities. We all know that asking for a series of tenure-track lines is no longer a viable solution.

What is viable is working toward securing meaningful “teaching-track” positions that are essential to the modern university. As Paula Patch argued:

Yet these "teaching-track" lines are critical to the contemporary university, particularly those that find themselves with increasing student enrollments overall.... Some institutions, mine included, need a balance of teaching-track and research-track lines and not only because the "teachers" can staff more classes in a semester: We need folks who can devote a lot of time to being creative, innovative teachers or administrators or leaders in other areas that generally look like service—and we want to give them a secure line that lets them devote as much time as they need to this.

What Patch argues for—and what we are arguing for—is an extension of Kezar’s work specific to composition and TPC and the realities of handling programs. However, we all know this is easier said than done. To re-professionalize teaching necessitates a shift in the structures of our programs, departments, and institutions. In the next section, we propose a way to initiate that.

Considering Managerial Unconscious Through Change Management

One of the first steps in implementing change is to understand the function of organizational structures and to also identify the role of people within those structures. For composition, an important scholarly moment in this understanding was Donna Strickland’s *Managerial Unconscious*. Strickland’s book argues that, “the work of writing program administration is managerial work.... To ask questions about the management of teachers is as much an intellectual activity as is developing a curriculum. In fact, developing a curriculum for others to implement is itself a management activity—it is a putting into place of structures to guide the work of others” (90). This point is vitally important in formulating any approach to getting around the persistent and pervasive managerial unconscious. Beyond that—and arguably more importantly—we have to understand the ground we are building on, so to speak, to ensure we are developing a plan or are being strategic in ways that make true changes with programs that will directly and positively impact faculty. Understanding the “managerial,” as Strickland describes, is key to the framing of this entire project.

The sticking point for many composition scholars, then, seems to be the word “managerial.” Certainly, it has negative connotations for traditional humanist intellectuals, who have tended over the decades to distrust management as, at best, nonintellectual and, at worst, soul-murdering. All the same, it’s really a matter of word choice to prefer “administration” over “management.” Although

management in its current usage is more recent and more aligned with corporate oversight, the function (coordinating the work of other people) is the same. (Strickland 10)

Now is the time to use the managerial and our persuasive capabilities to shift how WPAs and TPC PAs manage programs, particularly considering that many of these programs would cease to function without the labor of contingent faculty. One way to improve the environment is to draw on concepts from management communication by integrating the idea of change management.

Change Management

Corporations undergo change at a high frequency with reorganizations occurring every 2-5 years (Stevens). Because of this rate of rapid change, the field of change management was developed as a way to work through the theory and the actual practice of making changes within large organizational structures. Drawing from management and TPC scholarship, faculty and administrations can learn that “change management in technical communication is about implementing change in organizational processes” and infrastructures (Jansen).

Change management is a management approach that emphasizes changes to the internal structures that impact organizational processes, as well as organizational culture. Effective change management requires a number of other managerial skills and components such as project management, which is focused on the specifics of a defined project or task (e.g., update to curriculum). Although traditional change management is typically focused on a specific business outcome (e.g., moving through a merger successfully), broadening the definition—as we have done here—enables us to show how change management can be implemented to effect structures and cultures. Incremental change is often the most lasting, and a number of incremental changes can create larger changes within organizations.

Change management builds on Strickland by focusing on the positive aspects of management theory that provide a framework for implementing the types of incremental changes necessary to alter systemic cultures around contingency and material work conditions. Following Strickland, we want to offer suggestions that consider not only how to get things done, but, more importantly to “include questions of the ethical and political consequences of doing so” (120). We understand bureaucratic complexities exist when making any change—particularly systemic changes. However, we also know that we have to try. Additionally, we know, based on the data we have collected and the voices we have heard, what it will take to begin this change.

One of us has often said that higher education is simply the most inefficient organization in which she has worked. While spoken in some ways tongue-in-cheek, a kernel of truth is present within the statement.

The rationale for thinking in these terms is that while the mission of higher education should never be tied to corporate objectives, a need exists to improve the infrastructure of higher education and the way that it goes about managing and organizing work. Separating the mission from its structure and then thinking through how to develop a more efficient and inclusive infrastructure is one of the primary goals of change management.

The managerial aspect of programs binds first-year composition (FYC) and TPC together, and, more importantly, brings to the forefront TPC's scholarly history of understanding the managerial role within organizations, including how to leverage that role to effect change and provide value to organizations. In her landmark study of memos and other forms of communication, Joanne Yates describes “[m]anagerial control—over employees (both workers and other managers), processes, and flows of materials— . . . [as] the mechanism through which the operations of an organization are coordinated to achieve desired results” (xvi). By understanding managerial work as simply a key mechanism for the way work gets done rather than some capitalist move to dominate, coerce, and control for nefarious purposes, change management theory opens up the conversation around the material work lives of contingent faculty as a managerial issue that needs to be solved—or rather—as one that can be solved. This concept makes us think of the rhetorical question: “What happens if we invest in developing our people and then they leave us? [Response:] What happens if we don’t, and they stay?” Understanding managerial aspects such as the professional development we push for so much in this study allows us to see that changing the way we manage and develop our faculty can make all the difference. In the oft-cited piece by Porter *et al.* regarding institutional critique, the authors go to great lengths to argue that institutions are rhetorical. That is, institutions can be reformed through rhetorical practices such as changing policies, procedures, and documentation and by transforming our own positionality and actions. Andrea Fraser argues, “It’s not about being against the institution. We are the institution. It’s a question of what kind of institution we are, what kind of values we institutionalize, what forms of practice we reward, and what kind of rewards we aspire to” (282). This attitude connects the articles of this study: the re-professionalization of teaching needs to be a practice we reward, and professional development and job security are the rewards we aspire to.

Thus, it would be more helpful and accurate to say that institutional critique connected to actions can be effectuated. We want to invoke the idea of critical change management as a way to give power and direction to institutional critique. So how do we go about implementing change? John Hayes offers a change process that includes:

- Recognizing the need for change
- Diagnosing what needs to be changed

- Planning how to achieve the desired change
- Implementing plans and reviewing progress
- Sustaining the change (25)

To implement change management, an employee first needs to understand the organization from the perspective of all concerned stakeholders. While Hayes's work in change management is well known, these ideas have not been consistently picked up or adapted across higher education outside of those in educational leadership programs (see for example, Wagner et al.). This is why we offer it here as a tool to think through issues of contingent labor and the role of this labor within the program, department, and institution.

In TPC, scholars have developed a tool to help administrators work through understanding their organizations and where change can be implemented. Joanna Schreiber and Lisa Melonçon turn to continuous improvements models, which are “used in industry to organize several iterative processes and practices in conversation with each other, promoting alignment without sacrificing important deliberation. These models have been used to facilitate communication and work processes across units within companies” (Schreiber and Melonçon 258). They acknowledge that applying a model from industry to higher education would be problematic, so instead Schreiber and Melonçon “use the theoretical rationale of workplace continuous models to design a model that could work within higher education” (260). Their model is based on four steps:

- **Gather:** the process of gathering existing data about the program or exposing the lack of existing programmatic information and data.
- **Read:** the process of reading landscapes to obtain additional information and to better understand the multiple perspectives that programs must consider for sustainability.
- **Analyze:** the process of analyzing together the information from the gather and read steps.
- **Make:** the implementation of changes or making adjustments to documentation or curricula or processes (or the practice of creating these things if forming a new program).

These steps are done in a circular pattern to emphasize the recursive nature of the process of improving programs. Thus, GRAM becomes a key part of the change management process because it gives concrete approaches—designed by those in higher education for those in higher education—to work toward in changing and sustaining programs or processes.

GRAM is a mechanism for gathering information to determine how to align and to negotiate common goals; these goals have to be realistic within the view of the organization. In other words, while many in writing would argue for tenure-track lines across the board, the reality dictates that that eventuality is unlikely to happen. Instead, mechanisms are needed to find ways to secure buy-in and to find common ground and then to align the different goals and processes to improve material working conditions. The key to change management is to think through current issues, consider what the transition will look like, and imagine a different future with the new changes in place. GRAM provides the tools necessary to perform appropriate and detailed analysis of the existing structures and to shed light on where changes can begin.

In the case of WPAs and TPC PAs, this means understanding the number of influences on their programs. As discussed earlier, change can only be successful after a detailed audit of all stakeholders. GRAM is a process model that can help identify and implement changes specific to program administration. Process perspective emphasizes both the what (the problems) and the how (steps and actions). Thus, change management is the big term that spins positive and practical managerial unconscious into ways that we can change institutional infrastructures. Change management includes an emphasis on overcoming barriers and resistance and to help ensure that those affected by the change can make a successful transition.

While understanding and utilizing these processes may feel daunting and may seem to be contrary to the “small, incremental changes” we posit, the time has come for composition and TPC to no longer simply critique the unfair structures. There has to be increased attention on the actions (both strategies and tactics) that can affect incremental—and then eventually more systematic—organizational change. “While it is true that writing program administrators are managers, we think it would be more useful to explore what management as an activity means—and more importantly, what it can mean to do the work of management” (Grabill et al. 226). We want to highlight and extend the focus on the *work* of management in our discussion about contingent labor. What work can administrators do to effect institutional change? We are at a crossroads—appealing to the presidents/deans is not working, nor is appealing to faculty. By using change management, we have identified a way we can convince the “managers” (the administrators) of our writing programs to acknowledge patterns and change the way they manage not just the faculty and the classes, but also the programs, processes, and professional development opportunities. We are not attacking our management; we are offering strategies to lift them up, to help them help us.

Program administrators do have agency, but in the face of institutions viewed as monolithic corporate entities, administrators often forget this simple fact. Invoking administrative agency means finding ways, rhetorically and otherwise, to begin to shift cultures and to change

policies and procedures. “Effective institutional agents know how to work with constraints; a failure to do so will leave us with inadequate characterizations of university organizations and no way to imagine interventions” (Grabill et al. 227). Change management tells us that the most successful of these plans occur incrementally.

Encouraging and building administrative infrastructures without due consideration of the labor—and the multiple costs of that labor—involved has led us into a true catch 22 of iterative cycles of exploitation (which is an argument similar to the one made by Tony Scott in *Dangerous Writing*). We need to talk about money and jobs and labor, and we need to do it as a means to shift the culture. Teaching is a profession, and it deserves more than \$2,000 a course. Moreover, having someone trained and invested with long-term job security in these positions is preferable over the precarious nature that legitimately runs the majority of our programs.

What changes do people undergo in administrative contexts when those same people are no longer referred to as people but rather as labor to staff sections? How often do faculty and administrators in our published scholarship—and more so in our day-to-day interactions—lose the human behind “staff” in our desperation to fill a section at the last minute? How might we approach labor differently, through the lens of inclusion? How can we create room for inclusion of **all faculty** that simultaneously addresses the importance of representation and redistribution of resources?

Small, incremental change can lead—and does lead—to larger, more systemic changes, so not losing sight of the daily small things that can have larger impacts is critical. We need to remember that kindness can be disruptive in its own way because it shifts the power structures and helps to build solidarity and productive relationships—it forces all those involved to listen. Through kindness, we can begin to truly see life through different perspectives, and it allows all stakeholders to understand that kindness must be met with a response. The response itself challenges and changes structures. The response can be disruptive. The following is our response.

Action Items to Change Cultures

First, we respond with kindness and respect. This study is full of strong feelings and heart-breaking stories. It is also full of models and quotes where the participants show time and again their *why* in the face of an often brutal system. We respond with the knowledge that contingency is here to stay, with the knowledge that contingent faculty are invaluable through their work and service, and with the knowledge that we *see* them, we *hear* them, we *are* them. To make sure they are seen, heard, and can exist beyond this study, we provide the following series of actions that WPA and TPC PAs can consider to enact change within their departments, colleges, and institutions.

Elimination of the FYC General Education Requirement

We consider Sharon Crowley's claim that FYC should not be taught because the course exploits instructors, and we want to advocate for consideration of the elimination of FYC as a general education requirement. "When the teaching of writing is devalued as rudimentary work of low status, and when research, theory, and history of the field are overlooked or dismissed, credentials don't matter" (Hesse). Even though it affords departments much needed student credit hour revenue streams, the cost in human capital needs to be placed in relation to it. The majority of contingent faculty in the humanities teach composition. Compounding this issue is the fact that when the majority of our contingent faculty teach at the same institution where they earned their degree, it should cause us to question the purpose of our grad programs: to perpetuate an exploitive model? Our data reports that 41% of contingent faculty teach at the same institution where they obtained their highest degree, which seems like a perpetuation of training students solely to teach in an exploitive system, and the existing hiring practices only mean that students are being trained with few options for full-time, stable employment. Granted, we do understand that in some cases students attend a local institution because they have commitments to the area that prohibit them from being able to leave. We also acknowledge—as this data has displayed—that a large number of stable and secure jobs are available. However, as Melissa Nicolas says so eloquently:

To advocate for better working conditions, to recognize the important, good work that has happened on local and national levels to make things right for all our faculty does not preclude *also* critically examining our foundational assumptions about the pedagogical and institutional imperatives or mandates for the existence of required FYC. We can both fight the good fight and open up critical conversations about whether or not the way required FYC exists in the world is the way we want it to exist.

Change is often controversial and difficult. We recognize that, right out of the gate, we are suggesting a shift that would disrupt countless institutions where FYC is a general education requirement. We hope to start a loud, productive conversation about the material work lives of contingent faculty, and the place to start is with the course that a vast majority of contingent faculty teach. Without the requirement attached to the course, it is possible the WPAs could make different and better arguments in regard to labor and remove the stigma that is often attached to the course now. If FYC were moved to a course that was available but not required, it is likely it would still be needed in large numbers since the class is a first step in writing at the university and because, as is noted in the next section, there is always demand for writing.

Shifting the TPC Service Course Model

TPC is not without blame in this situation, and in some ways even more so. Why? Often, the service course is not a general education requirement but is a requirement for other departments who must meet accreditation requirements, which sets up a distinctive dynamic of being beholden to others. This inter-reliance has caused a different—yet wholly similar—contingent labor problem.

However, often pressure exists to offer more sections of the service course or to develop “specialized versions” (i.e., writing for health science, writing for finance), and TPC PAs get stuck in the middle of arguing for hires who are qualified while being pressured to discover a way to offer the courses because of the need for student credit hours. Recent scholarship by Lora Arduser discussed some of the concerns with specialized courses, and as Lisa Melonçon notes in her critical postscript to the issue, Arduser (as well as other TPC PAs) missed an opportunity when she was approached to offer a specialized course to the psychology department. Rather than ask what the TPC courses could do for their program, her program and department would have been better suited by asking how the current course could support their needs. As Melonçon notes, “the addition of another ‘specialized’ service course simply means hiring another contingent faculty member without due consideration of the perpetuation of the labor problem and simultaneous problem of undermining the field’s own expertise as researchers and teachers” (220).

The conflict creates an untenable situation in many locations where these extra courses are often taught by graduates of the program until instructors realize the cost-benefit of teaching on the side is not worth the trouble. Although being asked to teach a section of a course which is specialized for certain majors may be flattering and exciting for contingent faculty, creating and preparing the (new) course takes time and effort—which is most likely uncompensated since contingent faculty are neither traditionally granted course equivalency nor provided funding for development of new courses. Moreover, these specialized courses may not be run regularly and may become outdated by the next time the course is taught—thus requiring a significant revamp of material and content. Another significant issue with these specialized courses is that once one is successful, more are created.

I was asked, one month before the term started, to teach a specialized technical writing course for an audience I was completely unfamiliar with. I didn’t have the background or training to develop this course, but because it meant butts in seats, it meant we were teaching the courses no matter what. We did what we had to do to make it work, but the extra work wasn’t compensated (though it was certainly appreciated, at least by my immediate colleagues, and that support meant more than they know).

This is just another way that TPC courses can become exploitive of contingent labor. Inserting more control based on disciplinary expertise and limiting the unsavory side of the service course is a necessary first (albeit painful) step in shifting labor conditions.

Show That NTTs May Not Actually be “Cost Saving”

Here we want to focus on the concept of cost-effectiveness. According to Henry Levin (“Cost-Effectiveness”), a leading scholar in educational research:

The purpose of cost-effectiveness analysis in education is to ascertain which program or combination of programs can achieve particular objectives at the lowest cost. The underlying assumption is that different alternatives are associated with different costs and different educational results. By choosing those with the least cost for a given outcome, society can use its resources more effectively. (381)

Unlike cost benefit analyses, cost-effectiveness analyses are applied in educational settings because they take into consideration factors that are not easily measured in pure dollar amounts, such as student learning. Even though cost-effectiveness analyses are rare in higher education, they do have potential to help uncover the hidden costs in higher education. What composition and TPC administrators have not effectively accomplished is to better understand the full cost effectiveness of the current model of contingency—and this is where a cost-effectiveness analysis has potential benefits. While they are most often used to make decisions about programs and policies, cost-effectiveness analysis has potential both in thinking through and in gathering data for arguments about labor conditions in higher education. Currently, WPAs and TPC PAs do not have the data to forcefully counter administrators’ arguments for maintaining the current model that has been consistently touted as money saving (as seen in Table 1). For example, in its simplest form, program administrators manage an adjunct budget and a regular budget for faculty salaries. What the latter looks like varies widely among institutions, but typically a department has a line for salaries that are permanent and a line for those that are variable. Many departments—or at the very least at the college level—have control over how these budgets are allocated. Adjunct budgets are the simplest since instructors are paid per course with no fringe benefits of any kind, so let us use it as an example (see Table 1). On the surface, this budget looks like it is cost effective because departments can teach a large number of students at a reduced rate when compared to FT NTT or TT faculty.

Table 1: Cost per Course Comparison (Based on R1 in the Southeast U.S.)

Faculty	Cost per Course
Assistant professor, tenure-line faculty member making \$75,000 (on a 2-2 load)	\$9,375
Continuing instructor on 12-month contract making \$60,000 (on a 4-4-2 load)	\$6,000
Adjunct	\$3,000

On the surface, and from a cost-benefit analysis, it would seem that an adjunct teaching the course affords the most cost savings or is the most cost effective. In a pure dollar amount, the savings of \$3,000 or \$6,375 in hiring an adjunct to teach in the summer compared to the tenure-line faculty member would seem like the “best” move to make. However, the problem surfaces because no one has paid attention to the hidden costs that would directly impact this same calculation when done from a cost-effectiveness analysis standpoint. In other words, the calculations in Table 1 are only part of the actual costs.

One key aspect of cost-effectiveness analysis is to determine the “cost ingredients.” This is particularly helpful in discussions of contingent labor as it relates to change management. Why? Because thinking through all of the cost factors associated with contingency can assist administrators and faculty in making more effective arguments for what is actually needed to maintain educational standards and curriculum. The current system has not uncovered all the hidden costs in contingency, which when laid out in a cost-effectiveness analysis indicates that the current system may not be cost saving at all. These hidden or unaccounted-for costs are what program administrators must include when discussing the issue of contingent labor at their institutions. Let us take a partial look at ingredient costs for adjunct labor as briefly outlined here. The costs in Table 2 are estimated based on the salaries and time averages from one of the authors at her institution for a single term (which is how the per course rate is determined).

Table 2: Hidden Costs of Adjuncts

Administrative costs in the department to complete term-to-term hiring (support to complete the actual hiring process from a paperwork and systems standpoint)	2 hours @ \$45/per hr. (for every hire throughout the term) = 90×30 (avg. adjunct instructors)	\$2,700
Administrative costs in the college and HR to complete term-to-term hiring (support to complete the actual hiring process from a paperwork and systems standpoint)	1 hour @ \$45/per hr. (for every hire throughout the term) = 45×30 (avg. adjunct instructors)	\$1,350
Administrative costs of onboarding (information on keys, rooms, offices, etc.)	2 hours @ \$35/per hr. (for every hire throughout the term) = 70×30 (avg. adjunct instructors)	\$2,100
Training and professional development (PD) in the subject matter (work with the existing curricula, introduction to assignments and processes, initial orientation, ongoing PD, etc.)	18 hours of scheduled PD that is planned, discussed, and organized by a director \$55.00/per hr., one assistant at \$33/hr., and one grad assistant at \$15/hr. = $990 + 594 + 270$	\$1,854
Ongoing support throughout the term	an average of 1 hour of questions per instructor per term charged to one assistant and one grad student of the program = $30 \times \$24$	\$720
TOTAL “hidden costs” of a single adjunct		\$8,724

When these “ingredient costs” are included in discussions of costs of contingency, one can see how quickly the “cost savings” disappear. The information in Table 2 is a rough sketch that is not as precise as it could be. For example, we are aware that the costs of orientations would be spread across multiple hires, but at the same time, we have not included other “ingredient costs” such as the need for pedagogical and technical support throughout the term for those new to the institution, or the time that the person who schedules courses expends contacting potential adjuncts to fill courses. For the same institution used in the example above, the course scheduler estimates that it takes between 8-10 hours with additional follow-ups (4-6 hours) in contact time alone to manage filling courses with adjuncts. More importantly, the most notable absence from Table 2 involves the “costs” to student learning for instructors who may need even more increased attention because they are hires who are not fully prepared to teach the course for which they are being hired. This practice is common in composition and TPC when many programs hire literature PhDs and creative writing MFAs to teach writing. Additionally, the analysis does not take into account those faculty who are working at a number of institutions to maintain any semblance of a livable wage and are thus likely not at their best because of the workload and precarity of the situation. The point of Table 2 is to initiate a bigger conversation about the true costs of contingency that are often not discussed or considered when making decisions about labor.

None of these actual dollar-based costs are ever figured into the larger conversations of budgets, maintaining flexibility in hiring, and, most importantly, in discussions of student learning. Integrating the costs into discussions about student learning outcomes is also a key part of cost-effectiveness analysis that need more data-driven research within composition and TPC. Ways exist to measure and determine these sorts of cost-effectiveness formulas, but the fields have not undertaken this work, which is vital to the future of writing instruction.

Admittedly, we can see the immediate pushback to this type of work since few faculty and administrators in composition and TPC entered this job because of their interest in finance, assessment, or evaluation. Moreover, as Levin (“Waiting”) argues, “In this respect, cost-effectiveness results may even serve as a threat to decision makers by providing information that is counter to common sense, popular appeal, and support of particular constituencies” (64). However, we are interested in student learning, and without taking the steps to fully understand the true bottom line costs of contingency (in dollars), composition and TPC will make few inroads to challenging the existing systems.

Our goal in doing this work of hidden costs is to provide another way to argue for the addition of more full-time lines while continuing to advocate for and toward changes to structures. The dual focus of consistent arguments from a different perspective and working toward structural

change are both necessary and key aspects of change management. In working toward changes that would include more full-time faculty, the next step is to work on implementing system changes where administrators and faculty can make a difference.

Make System Changes Where You Can

Too often the kneejerk reaction is to throw up our hands and proclaim that those in the department or college can do little to nothing to make meaningful change. The concept that institutions can be changed—or stifled—through policies and documentation is not a new phenomenon (Ahmed; McComiskey; Porter et al; Grabill et al), and program administrations need to be vigilant to make changes when and where they can.

Changing the culture. How big is that? One thing that frustrates me is that there is still a perception that contingent faculty are less able and less qualified, and that is so not true. I hate the hierarchy that still exists. And I'm at an institution where the differences are so minimal. I recognize that the situation at my institution needs to be replicated across the field.

As this respondent points out, shifting cultures can have a big impact. Some specific ways to modify the cultures begins with making documented changes in the larger systems. Following are some examples of actionable considerations program administrators can enact, update, or work toward transforming. These adjustments are based on parts of change management theory that consider the need to recognize self-reinforcing sequences (Hayes). For example, often administrators simply do not believe that change is possible. Approaching change management from the belief that change is indeed feasible and achievable opens up opportunities to recognize areas—even small things—that can be reconditioned to improve the material work lives of contingent faculty (see “Data Takeaways” article in this issue, particularly the discussion of titles and making contingent faculty visible on departmental websites).

Create a Culture of Teaching

Another important takeaway from this study is that beyond the money, the classes, the course loads, and the precarity, the culture matters. If the culture is supportive and inclusive to contingent faculty, everyone benefits. Yet often, many contingent faculty—due to non-permanent office space or scheduling—do not feel integrated into their departments and therefore lack a connection to faculty colleagues. Departments should create opportunities for contingent faculty to interact with each other—both academically and socially—because instructors who value each other as people (and consider their colleagues friends) will be more likely to share strategies in the classroom. Talking anecdotally encourages bonding

and results in cohesion among the faculty. This change can happen in so many ways: regular brown bags on teaching pedagogy, inclusion in curriculum discussion, or increased opportunity for peer observations (both conducting and receiving). These changes do not require institutional upheaval; they often do not require departmental approval. What they do require is time and commitment—and those are two things contingent faculty deserve at the very base level.

Examine Existing Policies

Following Seth Kahn’s position that tenure and tenure-line faculty need to ensure that parts of contingents’ jobs are not damaging theirs (regarding leaves and sabbaticals), often means that FT NTTs pick up more work, or that additional adjuncts are hired. This model does not indicate the academy cares about contingent labor. One way to balance this policy is to provide FT NTT contingent faculty with the opportunity for sabbaticals. Administrators should offer course releases to develop specialized courses, examine the level of autonomy that contingent faculty have and see how that can be increased, and work on eliminating student end-of-term evaluations (SETs)—or at the very least, ensure that jobs are not hanging in the balance as a result of SETs. As discussed in “Politics of Service” in this special issue, faculty should never have to sacrifice their expertise and knowledge for the sake of ensuring positive SETs. Departments should integrate evaluations differently to ensure they are being applied to assess and encourage innovative teaching rather than being used solely in hiring and renewal decisions. Administrators should create support structures to make for better professional development such as a series at the teaching and learning center or additional funding specific to faculty conferences. WPAs should consider developing mentoring programs to ensure contingent faculty are given the resources and support they need to do the job they were hired to do: teach.

Document Roles and Responsibilities

At locations where a faculty union exists, many aspects of the roles and responsibilities of contingent faculty are documented. However, even at locations without unions, documentation regarding expectations both at the program and department level should be clear and accessible. No matter what instance it may be, universities should ensure that roles and responsibilities are codified in all documents, along with specifics about how contingent faculty can participate in curricular decisions and departmental governance. Although we discussed the importance of titles in “Data Takeaways” in this special issue, and gave some specific actionable items, we return to it here because the topic of titles directs us to ideas that we can actually change within our departments, colleges, and institutions. That is, we can work toward expanding official documentation to ensure that FT NTT faculty have opportunities for advancement and also enjoy opportunities to be fully recognized within

departmental structures. Even though titles in name are extremely important, titles in action and in consequence are what is needed. Shifting structures through institutional documentation—although time consuming—is necessary, and in most cases controllable, by administrators and faculty starting at the department level.

Create Promotion Paths

Even if institutions do not have these paths set up, local paths with incentives can start conversations to change institutional policies. Faculty who are acknowledged for their involvement in this way are more likely to continue making valuable contributions, often going above and beyond what they are contracted to do. We witness this often with contingent faculty: many are required only to teach and provide minimal service to the department, yet many are seen serving at the college and university levels, researching and publishing, and presenting at national conferences. Having the opportunity to earn job titles which reflect that work and service in material ways would be rewarding, especially since service can be a key part of promotion and merit decisions (Schnaubelt and Statham). Service—through teaching—should be acknowledged and rewarded as an important form of scholarship.

Within this idea of promotion paths for contingent faculty should be a consideration of virtual tenure (Junn and Blammer). We take this term to mean that contingent faculty, after successful renewals for a continuous number of years, would have the process of renewal becoming *pro forma* as much is the case for tenure-line faculty after tenure. The shift to virtual tenure for FT NTTs can reduce the precarity of these positions. Instead of leaving the language ambiguous, parallel promotion and tenure language can be integrated into contingent contracts and in departmental- and institutional-level documentation. Granted, some have argued the concept of virtual tenure can make contingency worse (Junn and Blammer), but we think that with a conscientious use of data and cogent rhetorical arguments, the option is better than the existing system. Further, data from studies such as this can assist institutions in making better arguments for these changes because one has data in which to argue and confirm the labor and work that is actually involved (see for example, Tower and Honan).

Each of these items suggest systemic changes through the lens of change management. Seeing incremental changes happen, that are both measurable and visible, can result in a tipping point that influences the achievement of further goals and objectives. Incremental and noticeable changes are a key facet of transforming cultures and institutions through change management theory.

More Empirical Research

Finally, both composition and TPC would be better served to have more actual data to assess when making arguments and cases. Seeing the little amount of research available specific to writing was staggering. One

reason for this entire project was to gather actual data about the material work lives of contingent faculty. Data-driven, empirical research is a vital necessity if any hope of actually effecting change exists.

Stories from the field regarding what has worked at different locations are of course important data to have. Even though stories may be one piece of evidence for larger arguments, composition and TPC desperately need more specific research on the material work lives of contingent faculty. Without field specific information, it is more challenging to align with national research to make strong cases for any type of change. The WPA Graduate Organization just completed a study on work conditions of graduate students, and Paula Patch at Elon University is in the beginning stages of a multi-institutional study aimed at building on the information reported here, and to gain an even greater understanding of the types of differences in contingent roles across institutions. Additional information about contingent faculty will provide more depth and urgency into any local request.

Although it may be provocative to mention, composition and TPC need to investigate new and different ways of teaching writing. The evidence-based research available for so many of writing's pedagogical practices are thin and outdated. The research and evidence program administrators may present does not meet the minimum threshold of evidence in most fields outside of writing. Though difficult to ingest, rather than taking a defensive stance that is aimed at defending the field(s), program administrators and faculty may be better served to design empirical research studies that can provide the types and kinds of data that would not only improve pedagogical practice, but can also sway skeptical university administrators.

Combined with continuing research on contingent faculty's work lives, composition and TPC needs research on the impact of contingency on students and degree programs. Research in other fields has been split on the impact—both positive and negative—of contingent faculty on student learning (Bettinger and Long; Jaeger and Eagan; Kezar and Maxey; Mueller, Mandernach, and Sanderson). Currently, we found no research on the effect of contingent faculty on student learning in writing courses or programs. The absence of this information is a vital data point that needs to be examined. There needs to be research that determines the impact of contingent faculty on student learning outcomes: both good and potentially bad. In other words, at this moment, composition and TPC have no actual evidence on contingency's impact on teaching and learning.

Finally, looking at ways to improve our research practice also means we need to actively engage and support contingent faculty in performing this sort of research. If contingent faculty are teaching the most students, then they should be on the front lines of research agendas and priorities. They are front-line teachers who can and should be generating research questions that need to be addressed to improve both teaching practices and material work lives. This sort of support can be

accomplished in most locations through conscious efforts of spending professional development funds differently or asking for a specific request for research dollars to improve pedagogical practice.

Current models that look at labor in higher education take on the management approach that is rooted in rational language and approaches. These rational approaches often focus on data and accountability as a way to argue for balance and fairness that leads to professional codes or an improvement to systems and processes. Rather than rational business models, we want to put forward a model of disruption based on people and relationships, which is what change management and the GRAM continuous improvement model use as their primary focus.

We know this change will not be easy. We know that any change can be hard. One participant describes her contingent journey from part-time to full-time and the constant backlash of speaking up for inclusion and equality:

When I was PT, I was “noisy” – trying to start a union, etc. and when I got made FT, someone said to me: “They hired you full-time just to shut you up” and “they’re appeasing you.” Very hurtful. Patronizing. Some TT and many administrators, they talk about how much they value PT faculty for their value to the university and it just feels patronizing. Equated how TT and administrators treat contingent to how parents treat small children who want to help. Great example. We know they (i.e. contingent faculty, especially PT, and children) don’t have the tools/abilities/resources to do the job but give them a patronizing pat on the back for being a big kid—it’s insulting. Another example, if you say anything about wanting better working conditions: If you don’t like your treatment, just go? Why do you do this if you’re so unhappy – clueless, patronizing the way they talk to and about us. Wish that was different. That there were administrators who would go through contingent faculty sensitivity training. Changing the culture is really hard.

This quote, specifically the part which asserts, “if you don’t like your treatment, just go,” speaks to our earlier point of changing the culture. TT faculty are predominantly oblivious to how they affect contingent faculty and are equally blind to how contingent faculty affect them. Stop for a moment, TT faculty, and picture a department without contingent faculty. What classes would you be teaching? What roles would you be taking on, especially regarding undergraduate students? How would their absence affect your service requirements? Higher education, composition, and TPC could all benefit from a different viewpoint. A move to start each conversation and each interaction by putting ourselves in the place of the other will benefit collegiality. Thinking through the concepts of affective investment (see “Affective Investment” article in this special issue) and

politics of service (see “Politics of Service” article in this special issue) has taught us that leading with kindness means focusing on the relationships and their impacts rather than on the transactions. The focus on relationships means the emphasis is on the reality of people’s lives rather than the data and administrative mandates: lives are local and global, and any change starts with believing that transformation can be accomplished.

Conclusion

What we have offered in this final piece to the special issue is to consider change management theory as a way to approach making structural and systemic changes within programs, departments, colleges, and institutions. There comes a moment that practical action must be taken to address an overwhelming problem. Program administrators and faculty can no longer afford to believe contingency is not a predicament we can address. We unequivocally acknowledge the full range of affective investments, based in large part on politics of service and the actual work conditions of contingent faculty (see “Findings and Results” and “Data Takeaways” articles in this special issue), are different than anything tenure-line faculty experience. The jobs that contingent faculty perform make them invaluable to our programs, to our departments, and to our institutions.

Using change management to contemplate ways to shift the labor burden of the FYC course and the TPC service course are not new, but, hopefully, considering them in different terms and from a distinct theoretical orientation may help program administrators begin to discover a way to confront the problem. Substantial tasks and actions can and should be executed to improve faculty work conditions, all of which emerged in the data in one way or another. Taking the time to uncover the hidden costs of contingency is likely the most provocative—yet strongest—lever program administrators may possess in starting to implement real, institutional change. Finally, focusing on research and gathering more data, both at the field-wide level and locally, will provide the type of evidence base that is necessary to make persuasive arguments. These ideas, combined with some of the suggestions in the “Data Takeaways” article, provide concrete, actionable ways to affect the material work lives of contingent faculty.

WPAs and TPC PAs cannot solve the problem overnight, but universities are overdue on taking action. As composition and TPC have embraced issues of social justice, it has become one of the greatest ironies that contingency and labor issues have not played a larger role in those conversations (Melonçon “Contingent”). Social justice at its core is about equity, and as Keith Hoeller has argued, “the contingent faculty movement is a civil rights and human rights movement” (151). Failure to act and failure to try and change the system means that we consciously or unconsciously decided this system works just fine. Let us be clear—by not taking action, we are no longer innocent bystanders. We are guilty of the

burden of precarity that contingent faculty deal with on a daily basis. This burden does not discriminate. Being “contingent” is not a disease: and it is not always a choice. Many contingent faculty are contingent only because the system in higher education is broken and does not have space to treat all instructors equally. There is no room at the top and no room at the inn for the talent, experience, expertise, and energy that contingent faculty bring to the classroom. If they are willing to put up with the precarity, the hostility, and the invisibility just to do a job they value and that has value, imagine the change we could make if the academy started to acknowledge them and treat them as equals. However, if we have learned nothing else from this project, we have learned this: the issues are stratified. Addressing one concern shakes another: salary affects rank; rank impacts access to courses; access to courses ties into qualifications. Administrators who stand before this web of complications should be encouraged to act. Although multifaceted and complex, solving any issue as problematic as contingency must have a starting point—and we hope that our research provides such a place to start. The last word, so to speak, must belong to one of our participants: “*I am in this role because teaching writing makes me happy. I just wish I didn’t have to sacrifice my material happiness to feed my soul. Something has to give.*”

Works Cited

- Ahmed, Sara. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Duke University Press, 2012.
- Arduser, Lora. “Specialized Technical Writing Service Courses as a Program Sustainability Tool?” *Programmatic Perspectives*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2018, pp. 12-43.
- Bettinger, Eric and Bridget Long. “Does Cheaper Mean Better? The Impact of Using Adjunct Instructors on Student Outcomes.” *Review of Economics and Statistics*, vol. 92, 2010, p. 3.
- “Bystander Effect.” *Psychology Today*, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/bystander-effect>.
- Fraser, Andrea. “From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique.” *Artforum*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2005, pp. 278-286.
- Gerber, Larry G. *The Rise and Decline of Faculty Governance: Professionalization and the Modern American University*. Johns Hopkins University Press 2014.
- Gorelick, Risa. “The Missing Piece: Where Is the Labor Related Research at the Research Network Forum?” *Labored: The State(Ment) and Future of Work in Composition*, edited by Randall McClure et al., 2017, pp. 115-125.
- Grabill, Jeffrey T. et al. “Institutional Critique Revisited.” *Work and Days*, vol. 41/42, no. 1-2, 2003, pp. 219-237.
- Hayes, John. *The Theory and Practice of Change Management*. Fifth edition, Palgrave, 2018.

- Hoeller, Keith, editor. *Equality for Contingent Faculty: Overcoming the Two-Tier System*. Vanderbilt University Press, 2014.
- Jaeger, Audrey J. and M. Kevin Eagan. "Examining Retention and Faculty Use in the State System of Public Higher Education." *Educational Policy*, vol. 20, no. 10, 2010, pp. 1-31.
- Jansen, Christoph. "Management Skills for Technical Writers." *tcworld*, 2016, <http://www.tcworld.info/e-magazine/technical-communication/article/management-skills-for-technical-writers/>.
- Junn, Ellen and Tom Clammer. "The Professoriate: To Be or Not to Be Tenure—That Is the Question." *Senate Forum*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2007, pp. 1-20, http://www.fullerton.edu/senate/publications_policies_resolution/s/senate_forum_newsletters/Volume%2022%20-%20Number%20%20-%20Spring%202007.pdf.
- Kahn, Seth. "Never Take More Than You Need: Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty and Contingent Labor Exploitation." *Forum: Issues about Part-Time and Contingent Faculty*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2013, pp. A12-A16.
- Kahn, Seth et al., editors. *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition*. The WAC Clearinghouse and University Press of Colorado, 2017.
- Kezar, Adrianna, editor. *Embracing Non-Tenure Track Faculty: Changing Campuses for the New Faculty Majority*. Routledge, 2012.
- Kezar, Adrianna and Daniel Maxey, editors. *Envisioning the Faculty for the Twenty-First Century: Moving to a Mission-Oriented and Leaner-Centered Model*. Rutgers University Press, 2016.
- Levin, Henry M. "Cost-Effectiveness Analysis." *International Encyclopedia of Economics of Education*, edited by Martin Carnoy, 2nd edition, Pergamon, 1995, pp. 381-386.
- . "Waiting on Godot: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis in Education." *New Directions for Evaluation*, vol. 90, 2001, pp. 55-68.
- Melonçon, Lisa. "Contingent Faculty, Online Writing Instruction, and Professional Development in Technical and Professional Communication." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2017, pp. 256-272, doi:10.1080/10572252.2017.1339489.
- . "Critical Postscript: On the Future of the Service Course in Technical and Professional Communication." *Programmatic Perspectives*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2018, pp. 202-230.
- Mueller, Briad et al. "Adjunct Versus Full-Time Faculty: Comparison of Student Outcomes in the Online Classroom." *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2013, pp. 341-352.
- Nicolas, Melissa. "A Further Thought on Facing Poverty." Received by the *WPA Listserv*, 3 Oct. 2017.
- Patch, Paula. "Why are all the jobs NTT?" Received by the *WPA Listserv*, 11 April 2018.

- Samuels, Robert. *The Politics of Writing Studies: Reinventing Our Universities from Below*. Utah State University Press; University Press of Colorado, 2017.
- Schreiber, Joanna and Lisa Melonçon. "Creating a Continuous Improvement Model for Sustaining Programs in Technical and Professional Communication." *Journal of Technical Writing & Communication*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2019, pp. 252-278.
- Scott, Tony. *Dangerous Writing: Understanding and Political Economy of Composition*. 2009.
- Stevens, Dawn. "You Are Here: Mapping Technical Communication Trends against Best Practices." *Intercom*, 2019, <https://www.stc.org/intercom/2018/04/you-are-here-mapping-technical-communication-trends-against-best-practices/>.
- Strickland, Donna. *The Managerial Unconscious in the History of Composition Studies*. Conference on College Composition and Communication of the National Council of Teachers of English, 2011.
- Tolley, Kim, editor. *Professors in the Gig Economy: Unionizing Adjunct Faculty in America*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018.
- Trower, Cathy A. and James P. Honan. "How Might Data Be Used?" *The Questions of Tenure*, edited by Richard P. Chait, Harvard University Press, 2002, pp. 273-308.
- Wagner, Tony et al. *Change Leadership: A Practical Guide to Transforming Our Schools*. Josey Bass: A Wiley Imprint, 2006.
- Yates, Joanne. *Control through Communication: The Rise of System in American Management*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.