CHAPTER 7

CONTINGENT FACULTY AND OWI

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At a time when university budgets are being cut and faculty appointments increasingly are contingent (i.e., off the tenure track), WPAs must find ways to provide OWI-centered training, professional development opportunities, and mentoring to prepare contingent faculty to teach effectively online. Contingent faculty have limited contact with the university and often are classified as a money-saving solution to staffing online courses, especially writing courses in which contingent faculty are ubiquitous. As off-the-tenure-track faculty struggle to earn fair compensation, retain reasonable control over course content, and gain access to institutional technology, collaboration between WPAs and instructors regarding OWI concerns is essential.

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"Just get one of the adjuncts to teach it." How many times has an instructor heard an administrator casually solve a scheduling problem with these words and a wave of the hand? Contemporary adjuncts—the contingent faculty who teach on semester-to-semester contracts—often are used as "fillers" for undesirable courses such as FYW. They are the faceless many who teach (often) full-time loads for part-time pay, commuter professors who juggle course loads among multiple campuses,[1] and the default faculty to which the administration goes at the eleventh hour to complete department schedules.

According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) (2013), "by 2009—the latest year for which national data are available—75.6 percent of US faculty appointments were off the tenure track and 60.5 percent of US faculty appointments were part-time appointments off the tenure track, including graduate-student-employee appointments" (p. 1). The reality is that the majority of higher education faculty are contingent, and writing studies professionals are among these. "Adjunct"—once colloquially defined as "part-time"—has become an antiquated designation. In modern academia, distinctions have developed among the stratifications of contingent faculty:

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1. Full-time, non-tenure-track lecturers (FTNTT) with renewable contracts
2. Visiting assistant professors (VAP), who have a one-year, full-time, non-continuing contract
3. Graduate teaching assistants (TA), who are on annual contracts presumably until they achieve their graduate degrees
4. Part-time faculty/adjuncts, who are term faculty with one-semester contracts
5. Post-doctoral fellows, who typically are limited to two-to-three years on contract

To further confound the contingent ranks, adjuncts can be (1) terminal (Ph.D. or MFA) or non-terminal (MA) regarding degrees, (2) legacy adjuncts (adjuncts who earned the BA and/or MA from the institution at which they currently teach), (3) retired teachers or professors who want to remain in education but have no desire to re-enter the full-time workforce, and/or (4) instructors who are seeking a full-time position and who teach part-time as a place-holder.

Contingent faculty often are the first line of defense at a university or college in that they are the faculty members who teach the introductory courses and the teachers new students meet first or most often. The majority of students take some form of FYW during their first or second year of postsecondary studies, and they are likely to be taking these courses from contingent faculty. The experiences and interactions these new students have with faculty often determine their success, dropout rates, and transfer decisions. Marina Micari and Pilar Pazos posit that "the relationship between college students and their teachers has been shown repeatedly to have an impact on the quality of students' experiences and learning" (2012, p. 41). However, despite their importance to new students, contingent faculty often are marginalized as lesser—not worth the resources of an already stretched departmental budget, the time of the tenure-line faculty, or professional development opportunities afforded to tenure-line faculty who instruct the same courses.

CONTINGENT FACULTY AND THE OWI COURSES

The contingent faculty pool at the typical higher education institution is open continually to new applicants; institutions add new adjunct faculty every semester as they experience attrition from previous adjuncts or dissatisfaction with those who are somehow underprepared or judged as low performing. The level of teaching preparedness among adjuncts varies significantly. There is an old joke, which is more real than funny, that at the beginning of a semester, anyone who meets minimal requirements and has a pulse will be hired to teach a writing class. Providing preparation for those newly hired faculty may not be

a priority. Even when institutions hold an adjunct faculty orientation in the fall, those that are hired for spring semester often are left to fend for themselves. Knowing the name of the Administrative Assistant who processes payroll, learning how and where to make copies, gaining access to a university email address and LMS, figuring out where to park, *and* finding a desk and/or a phone onsite all are important for the new hire. An adjunct not familiar with institutional policies and procedures easily can be overwhelmed with must-do administrative checklists: The *teaching* becomes secondary. Indeed, a faculty orientation—however necessary—does not begin to meet the needs for a writing program orientation or a workshop on teaching writing for that particular institution. Adjuncts' needs are multi-faceted; meeting and creating professional relationships with colleagues, learning how to use the institution's LMS, determining grading polices, discovering where to send students for tutoring, and writing syllabi are competencies which are developed continually and not simply in a one-day faculty orientation.

OWI is one of the instructional areas for which contingent faculty are used in English and Writing departments. Although training contingent faculty both as the institution's writing teacher *and* as an online writing instructor is necessary to meet the needs of OWI students, one might wonder why an English or Writing Department—stamped by the institution as being a non-income generating member of the Humanities—would spend money on OWI-centered training and professional development for a group of contingent faculty who may or may not be teaching at the institution the following semester. Placing an adjunct into an OWC a few days before the semester begins is more common than the academy would care to admit; additional research might help to identify more precisely the frequency and resulting challenges for online writing students. For example, in discussions with the CCCC OWI Committee, OWI Expert/stakeholder panelists pointed to the number of adjuncts their institutions used for OWI as, in one case, a way to keep full-time faculty available for onsite courses (CCCC OWI Committee Stakeholders' Meeting 3, 2012b).

The majority of this chapter will illustrate that how writing programs often interact with contingent faculty raises concerns about inclusivity and accessibility, as addressed in OWI Principle 1 of *A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for OWI* (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013). Anecdotally speaking, contingent faculty rarely are included in departments' and writing programs' culture; as a result, many are systematically disempowered. Moreover, for many reasons—ranging from poor pay to an absence of office space to limited time on a single campus—adjuncts rarely have access to institutional resources necessary both for teaching and for their ongoing employment. The working conditions obviously hamstring the ways that contingent OWI instructors teach

their courses. Their limited inclusion and access also affect how they work with their students. Assuming that a campus has resources to prepare instructors to work effectively with writers with physical and learning challenges, multilingual writers, or students affected socioeconomically by the "digital divide," contingent faculty rarely have the opportunities to access these resources and, therefore, often do not know what to do when confronted by these issues in their classes.

One of the issues connected to this limited access is contingent faculty's generally abysmal pay. Contingent faculty often are paid on a per-course/per-semester basis. According to the OWI Expert/stakeholders' panel, such pay tends to range from a low of about $1,200 to a high of $3,500 per course (CCCC OWI Committee Stakeholders' Meeting 3, 2012b). The Adjunct Project stated, "Adjuncts who teach English ... reported earning an average of $2,727 per course" (June & Newman, 2013, para. 14). Such low compensation for adjuncts results in an economic need for many to seek out and to teach more writing courses, many of which also have exceptionally high literacy loads. Logistically, teaching online is attractive to an adjunct who financially may need to teach at three different institutions yet cannot physically commute to three schools in a single work day. Even so-called "beltway fliers" have their limits, and online courses are a feasible solution to the location problem but not to the workload problem that accompanies most writing courses. Indeed, because OWCs particularly have high literacy loads, as discussed in Chapter 6, the adjunct's heavy teaching burden creates an untenable teaching situation and may lead to suboptimal learning conditions.

As this book has posited, while we still are teaching rhetoric and composition, OWI necessitates specialized knowledge of, and strategies for, using digital technology in writing instruction. To this end, the CCCC OWI Committee's research indicated that the level of training and mentoring that contingent faculty members receive often is insufficient to prepare them for teaching in an OWC. OWI Principle 7 stated, "Writing Program Administrators (WPAs) for OWI programs and their online writing teachers should receive appropriate OWI-focused training, professional development, and assessment for evaluation and promotion purposes" (p. 17). This principle was written to indicate the importance of such preparation for OWI—preparation that contingent faculty especially need. In the rationale for OWI Principle 7, the CCCC OWI Committee recommended that "teachers—especially novice teachers (e.g., graduate student teachers) and contingent faculty—should not be placed into OWCs until they have received appropriate training *by their WPAs and institution*" (p. 17; italics added). Training was listed as including peer-mentoring, assistance in syllabus development, tips regarding electronic asynchronous communication, and workshops to teach an instructor the technical aspects of the LMS or online

classroom environment.

In Thomas J. Kramer's (2010) "The Impact of Economics and Technology on Changing Faculty Roles," the author analyzed the economic necessity of hiring contingent faculty for online courses for both financial and competitive reasons. As more and more tenure-track positions are replaced by instructors with non-tenure-track contracts, faculty responsibilities are shifting:

> One way to develop and staff online programs is to use contract and/or part time faculty, both to create the online courses and then deliver them. This also presents the opportunity to hire contract or part-time faculty who have particular content and technical expertise for such courses. At the same time, having full-time tenure-track faculty develop and deliver such courses and programs is also effective. However, it requires the willingness, motivation, and professional development support to do this effectively. If universities are not willing to provide incentives and professional development support, they will be more likely to turn to contract and part-time faculty. (p. 255)

Tenure-line faculty—concerned with research and publication requirements for tenure, promotion, and merit—may not be willing to learn such teaching tricks as developing an online course. Hence, ensuring that adjuncts have access to university resources and software for the OWCs they may be offered is imperative to the writing program's functioning and reputation. Too often, contingent faculty "tend to get compensated the least for their work, wield the least amount of institutional power, and can sometimes be the least prepared for their online work" (DePew, Fishman, Romberger, & Ruetenik, 2006, p. 59). OWI Expert/stakeholder panelists expressed similar experiences (CCCC OWI Committee Stakeholders' Meeting 3, 2012). Because of the important contact that contingent faculty have with writing students and for their own professional development, WPAs need to accept responsibility for the training and professional development of OWI teachers.

To this end, *A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for OWI's* (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013) Effective Practice 7.6 suggested that prospective OWI teachers should receive OWI-specific training including assistance in mastering both asynchronous and synchronous technological elements of the course, advice regarding accessibility, and training with media (pp. 18-19). Effective Practice 7.8 recommended that WPAs "should help teachers to progress into fully online teaching" through mentors and with initial experience in hybrid courses (p. 19). These suggested practices indicate that instructors

cannot merely be shoehorned into OWCs with little or no training; as Chapters 1 and 4 reveal, there are new theories and skills necessary for OWI, and while it can work well to migrate and adapt some theories originally developed for face-to-face instruction, others are particular to OWI and its attendant environments (see OWI Principles 3 and 4). Just because instructors can teach an onsite course successfully does not mean they possess the skills to translate the course to an online venue. Technological skills aside, teachers of OWCs require knowledge of written communication skills and tone given the primarily text-based online teaching environment currently used in higher education. They require, as well, knowledge of how to engage the student in a Web-based classroom—as described in Chapter 4 particularly. As Deborah Minter indicates in Chapter 6, WPAs should argue for the necessary financial support to develop and field this specific kind of training, which goes beyond training for onsite instruction. It is unlikely that most adjunct instructors have had access to OWI training or professional development—of any kind—as a part-time faculty member; indeed, many full-time faculty anecdotally report having little-to-no OWI-specific training and professional development (CCCC OWI Committee, 2011c). Even with prior OWI training, contingent faculty members will benefit from additional access to professional development particular to each institution for which they work.

For the best results, the institution should ensure that all OWI faculty receive technical training and hands-on practice with both course content (in other words, with teaching *writing* online using the institution's preferred approaches) and the LMS itself at least one semester *prior* to teaching a writing course online. Kaye Shelton and George Saltsman (2006) stated that, "The level and quality of the training faculty receive to enrich technical and instructional skills are also directly tied to the success of the faculty members' efforts in teaching online." To this end, faculty training for OWI should include both technical computer skills and classroom instructional skills. If a WPA asks a new adjunct, "Can you teach online?" the adjunct may answer, "Sure ... I have a laptop" without realizing that teaching online requires (among many other things) familiarity with the institution's LMS. (In fact, some contingent faculty may be so economically disadvantaged from low pay that they do not own sufficiently sophisticated technology to teach the course fluidly, potentially disenfranchising them from this professional teaching environment [CCCC OWI Committee Stakeholders' Meeting 3, 2012b]).

Funding these professional development opportunities is challenging in a climate of budget cuts, hiring freezes, and course cap increases. However, the importance of OWI-focused training strengthens a writing program in the long term. To have trained, competent, and experienced online faculty presupposes

that they will become better instructors over time, thus improving the learning experience for students, increasing job satisfaction for the teacher, and solidifying a quality teaching pool for the writing program.

OWI-focused professional development does not always mean providing travel to a national conference with paid lodging and food although that certainly is a valid professional development opportunity. Rather, professional development can be a local opportunity with a mentoring program where a group of adjuncts observe a more experienced faculty member upload a course to a blank LMS or observe another online instructor teaching an asynchronous class. As Effective Practice 7.7 noted, mentorship and ongoing observation are important strategies for assisting teachers with a transition to OWI. They are useful, as well, for scalable training that develops an association among teachers, giving OWI teachers colleagues to whom they can turn for help. The WPA also can create opportunities for interaction through asynchronous discussions about the pedagogy of online teaching. The LMS is a perfect venue for this type of interaction as it facilitates the kinds of discussion that teachers will then expect of students in most OWCs. They can learn from each other and experience the valuable immersion that comes from being in the environment for real communicative purposes.

Adjuncts, especially those who teach FYW online, change—and *purposefully can change*—the dynamic of the writing program. However, they often are ignored by tenure-track faculty. Anecdotally, a sense that contingent faculty are a bother rather than a help can prevail. The fully employed faculty may think there are too many adjuncts to keep track of; tenure-line faculty often object to tenure-track lines being replaced with contingent lines; tenure-line faculty can resent having to mentor or perform classroom observations for adjuncts; and since adjuncts earn such a small amount, administering them may seem to be a waste of resources. In a way, contingent faculty who teach online courses are like commuter students while the tenure-line faculty are like on-campus, dormitory-residing students; institutions spend more time, resources, and attention in focusing on resident students (tenure-tracks) than it does on commuter students (adjuncts). Tenure-line faculty are positioned to secure a more valuable status at research universities because most are required to possess advanced terminal degrees, which often grants them access to resources that aid their ability to publish. On the other hand, contingent faculty who teach online, even those with terminal degrees, are "off-campus" in their relative geographical position even more so than the face-to-face adjunct—further marginalizing the online adjunct.

Adjunct faculty who teach hybrid OWCs spend at least partial time on campus while those who teach fully online OWCs have limited contact with the uni-

versity because the physical need to be on campus is lessened by the nature of the online teaching venue. In some cases, contingent OWC instructors do not even reside in or near the states of the institutions for which they are teaching fully online courses. Holding writing courses online—particularly asynchronously—naturally means greater flexibility for both student and instructor. Similarly, online training, while not only recommended by OWI Principle 7, provides that appropriate connective forum for OWI teachers, contingent or full-time. While synchronous online training sessions certainly can be developed and should be used in cases where immediacy of communication is necessary (see Chapter 3), it is challenging to schedule synchronous workshops that can be well attended by busy contingent faculty. Synchronizing the availability of adjuncts who teach at multiple institutions is almost impossible. WPAs must be inclusive and creative when extending mentoring and professional development opportunities to contingent faculty, making asynchronous training an especially useful venue.

Although their time on campus may be limited, OWI teachers need to know their supervisors. WPAs—and other administrators who hire faculty—should want to *meet* faculty who teach OWCs. WPAs should *know* and be able to speak to the teaching skills and personalities of their online faculty. Regina L. Garza Mitchell (2009) stated, "To avoid online education's being relegated to a lower tier, trust must be established regarding the quality and importance of this type of education. A lack of trust places faculty members who teach online at a disadvantage and may also affect teaching and learning in this setting." Undoubtedly, adjunct faculty who teach online should not be faceless members of the department, yet it is likely that they are in most cases. While meeting them may be a logistical challenge, it seems reasonable that unless the adjunct is geographically distributed in another area of the country, a one-time per semester meeting for all OWI teachers should be organized. My experience has been that contingent faculty members are hungry for face time with their WPAs and peers, even if that face time occurs synchronously online.

Assigning the Right Teachers to OWI

Having the right match of teacher to teaching environment is a key to effective OWI. In terms of hiring contingent faculty, especially last-minute hires, it may be difficult to see evidence of effective OWI teachers who are new to the institution; yet, finding such evidence is crucial particularly when appropriate orientation or training has not been or will not be provided. Evidence of ability to teach writing online helps to determine whether the online environment is a good fit for a prospective writing teacher. Adjunct teachers are judged swiftly on their course effectiveness and may lose their jobs from poor student evaluations

while full-time tenured or tenure-line teachers may be given both more support and time to become fluent in online instruction. Effective Practice 7.4 stated that teachers "who would do better in traditional settings should be identified and assigned to such settings." Further, if "personality ... indicates a poor match for OWI," then other classroom arrangements can be made to maximize the success of the course and the learning experience of the students (p. 18). With little time to spare, it benefits both teachers and WPAs to understand the nature of good fit for OWI.

Determining effectiveness and fit prior to hiring a new adjunct for the OWI portion of the writing program may involve asking key questions about one's comfort level with online technology and digital teaching, in addition to questions about the instructor's philosophies and practices for the teaching of writing. Such questions can help both the adjunct teaching applicant and the WPA to discuss an apt fit with concrete terms:

- Have you taught writing online before? Where? How often? Which courses?
- What types of formal preparation have you received for OWI in the past? What types of ongoing professional development have you received from an institution or provided for yourself through other opportunities?
- What experience do you have teaching students with disabilities and multilingual speakers?
- Do you prefer teaching asynchronously or synchronously? Why?
- What LMSs have you used in the past? Which ones have worked best for you? Why?
- If you are given a pre-developed course to teach, what challenges do you anticipate? What kinds of help would you like from the WPA to this end?
- What is your favorite theory, book, or article regarding OWI?
- What do you like best about teaching writing online? How does this preference differ for you regarding teaching writing in a traditional, on-site setting?
- If you have not taught writing online before, what draws you to this choice now?
- What kinds of assistance to you anticipate needing as you move into an OWC for this institution?

Evaluating adjunct faculty once a year is central to the long-term success of a healthy writing program. Jill M. Langen, in her study on evaluation of faculty, maintained:

> With the dramatic increase in the use of adjunct faculty in higher education classrooms, it is critical that we understand

> how these faculty are being evaluated, and how these evaluation results are utili[z]ed. Without a clear and consistent process available to measure performance, it becomes increasingly difficult for administrators to ensure that quality learning opportunities are available in the classroom. (p. 185)

Assessment in online settings is both challenging and crucial. First, as Chapters 4 and 6 indicate, evaluation of any OWI teacher has not yet been standardized in any manner. Assessment for adjuncts is especially tenuous as it affects these teachers in significant financial ways; yet these effects are no more crucial than how contingent OWI faculty's teaching influences students and the writing program overall. Second, only through regular evaluation—but not more or less rigorous assessment than is conducted for onsite writing teachers, according to OWI Principle 7—can the WPA understand the potential for student writing development, particular teachers' ongoing professional development, and the writing program's health. To this end, on the most basic level, if department administrators and tenure-line faculty do not know their adjuncts, then how do contingent faculty establish professional contacts for their ongoing development as OWI teachers in the workplace?

Effective Practice 7.11 recommended that the evaluation of online writing teachers should be done by a "peer or supervisor who has similar training and equal or superior ... experience in ... OWI" (p. 19). WPAs should ensure that the mentors/evaluators of contingent online faculty possess experience in online pedagogy and are familiar with OWI principles. Many senior faculty who are respected for their teaching may have never taught online, let alone writing online. The CCCC OWI Committee believes that an instructor who has never taught online should not evaluate how another instructor teaches an OWC. That reasonable stance can be problematic for the adjunct who is seeking a full-time position, however. For contingent faculty, having a letter in their files that was written by a tenure-line faculty member—or even better, the WPA or department chair—may indeed assist them in a full-time job search. Yet, given that many online faculty *are* contingent, a letter written *by* a contingent faculty member *for* a contingent faculty member can be perceived as insignificant or inconsequential. Such recommendations can be dismissed by questions: Were the instructors friends? Couldn't the instructor get a tenure-line professor to observe the class? Is the part-timer not liked by the WPA? WPAs need to create standards for evaluating online adjunct faculty to ensure that knowledgeable peer-observers are applying online pedagogical principles to these courses and to the instructors. Assigning a tenure-line professor of Shakespeare to observe and evaluate an online FYW course is similar to asking an expert on Schubert to

attend and evaluate a Lady Gaga concert. Indeed, tenure-line faculty may resent losing time they are asked to give to mentor or evaluate part-time faculty. Providing reasonable standards for assessment and adequate compensation—such as course releases—to those who do the evaluation may be helpful.

Engaging adjunct instructors on the campus and within the university community is focal to retaining quality contingent faculty. Kinga N. Jacobson (2013) stated, "Inviting adjunct faculty to instructional team meetings and college wide committees can build strong inter- and intradepartmental networks. These meetings develop mutually beneficial, peer-working relationships that lead to long-term retention of adjunct instructors." University service becomes problematic for many adjuncts due to their multiple-institution teaching schedules. Even if adjunct faculty are invited to serve, the tenure-line faculty have to be prepared to take the opinions of the adjuncts seriously despite their limited stake in the institution's mission. Even when "service" is not connected to the institution, however, it can be challenging for contingent faculty members to experience themselves as having a voice. One example emerged from the CCCC OWI Committee Fully-Online and Hybrid surveys (CCCC OWI Committee, 2011a & 2011b). As described in *The State of the Art of OWI*, (CCCC OWI Committee, 2011c), only 18% of the fully-online participants (p. 71) and 12% of the hybrid participants (p. 94) self-identified as adjunct faculty. This dearth of contingent voices in these two surveys indicates that the deeper understanding that adjuncts—who indeed may comprise the vast majority of OWI teachers—could provide is missing. While finding a universal solution that solves all contingent faculty needs may not be feasible due to the diversity of instructors in the adjunct pool, something must be done.

WPAs can begin by educating themselves about the adjuncts who teach in their programs. Such actions as maintaining open lines of communication and welcoming questions and conversations with contingent faculty address Effective Practice 12.3: "Individuals teachers should have adequate opportunity to discuss with the WPA how any changes relative to OWI may affect their careers" (p. 25). Online adjunct faculty should have the ability to speak to a reliable "go-to" regarding teaching-related concerns, and they should be able to do so without undue concern for their job security.

LOCATION, NEED, AND EXPERTISE

Part-time faculty often have different needs from full-time faculty, and it is the responsibility of WPAs to understand those needs. Some contingent faculty are part of a two-parent family, while others are single parents; some can only teach at night, while others can only teach on weekends; some have full-time

employment elsewhere and are teaching to supplement income, and others cobble together part-time teaching positions as a "full-time" job, struggling to earn a living wage among several institutions. The culture of the campus is central in understanding—and working—the politics of a department: Are students predominantly commuters? Do they live in an on-campus dorm? Is the institution a community college? Is the institution a regional campus of a four-year university? Are the faculty subject to a collective bargaining agreement?

WPAs should recognize the special needs of managing contingent online faculty, especially regarding support and training for their futures as online writing teachers. The classification of contingent faculty member plus the type of institution combine to form the dynamic of how the instructor and university interact. For example, there are instructors who may teach more than six courses at multiple institutions to earn what-comes-close-to a living wage. Personal funds to attend conferences are non-existent; time to read current pedagogical journal articles is limited. Do adjuncts have time to send out applications for full-time positions? Do they have access and a password to the MLA's *Job Information List*?

Failure to provide online adjunct faculty with office space is an oversight that, while possibly understandable given the online nature of the teaching assignment, is significant for the faculty involved. The prevailing belief may be that the instructor is not on campus for class although this assumption would be wrong for hybrid course instructors. Therefore, some might believe that the adjunct would have no other reason to be present on campus. Yet, lack of an office is indicative of the bigger problem—a lack of resources that falls to the adjunct to replace. For example, without office space, the adjunct does not have an office phone; all phone calls to students will be placed on a personally owned device for which the adjunct pays the bill or uses personal, counted minutes. An absent-from-campus online adjunct will not have regular contact with fellow faculty and will not establish relationships with administrators. With provided office space, some OWC adjuncts may come to campus to make use of these resources and connect with others.

Indeed, online contingent faculty are fragmented. They exist on the periphery of the campus community, they often do not know each other personally, and they are competing with each other for courses (and income). Developing a community—even a virtual community—will promote collegiality and a sense of being *part* of the department. OWI Principle 11 speaks to the importance of student motivation which is driven by a "sense of interpersonal connectedness to others within a course" (p. 23). Contingent online faculty also will benefit from this sense of community and connection with other instructors; teacher satisfaction improves when faculty have a sense of contributing to the department. WPAs should want to protect the integrity of the adjunct pool while

simultaneously promoting each instructor within the adjunct setting. Doing so can only be good for the students they teach. Furthermore, it is well known that part-time faculty make less money. They are the nomads of faculty—traveling to where they can make a living. They vary in skill and experience. However, WPAs should devote time and resources to the ethics of treating adjunct instructors appropriately, particularly in OWI, which is a new project for many institutions and for which fewer resources may be allotted.

To what degree do WPAs become involved with adjunct faculty? Do administrators ask an adjunct upon hiring or even in casual conversation, "Where else are you teaching?" or "How many courses total will you be teaching this term?" WPAs may not ask such questions because they do not want to know. Adjuncts' answers ("I teach nine online courses at three different institutions") may cause WPAs to question the quality of instruction within that university's online program, and *not asking* adjuncts direct questions regarding teaching load is promoting a culture of *not knowing*, thereby keeping the unattractive truths of the adjunct online writing instructor's professional life a secret. As one respondent to an OWI survey stated, "Often times, adjunct faculty teach the online courses, and while I am sure they are qualified and dedicated teachers, I know they have had the most minimal of training and many are teaching sections for a variety of campuses, so they have to keep things as simple as possible to manage the awful workload they carry" (CCCC OWI Committee, 2011c, p. 64). Such an "awful workload" may be difficult to minimize because of the sheer economics of many adjuncts' lives. As the section below on compensation reveals, low pay necessitates teaching multiple courses to survive. Even if an institution adopts OWI Principle 9's recommendation that "OWCs ... should be capped responsibly at 20 students per course," adjunct instructors who are teaching multiple online courses at multiple institutions—meaning multiple preparations, as indicated in Chapter 2—will not have a manageable literacy load.

The institutional structure has shifted with the addition of online courses. These have materialized rapidly as a way to balance the budget, to offer greater accessibility to college education, and to solve classroom space concerns. Now, departments are faced with the questions: How do we administrate these courses? How do we train and develop qualified faculty to teach them? How do we engage online faculty as part of the university community? Online education is the victim of its own success; it is the situation where a municipality builds a huge shopping mall, and then *after* the grand opening, the city sends in a construction crew to widen the road that leads to the mall. Online courses are here; now how do we ensure their success? It is crucial to prepare adjunct faculty to instruct FYW and other writing-intensive courses they may teach by adopting OWI Principle 7 and offering "OWI-focused training, professional development, and

assessment" (p. 17). Additionally, adjunct faculty deserve active support from instructional designers and WPAs to make their courses accessible to students with disabilities. Building accessibility into online courses requires significant time and labor, and instructors should be appropriately compensated for fulfilling this legal and ethical obligation on behalf of the institution. When WPAs are familiar with OWI and its strategies, they are in the leadership position necessary to share—and encourage—effective practices with their community of instructors.

COMPENSATION

"Contingent faculty are underpaid" has become a mantra for the adjunct. According to The Coalition on the Academic Workforce (2012), "Looking at all courses part-time faculty respondents reported on, the median pay per course, standardized to a three-credit course, is $2,700." More disheartening is that "respondents teaching on-site courses reported median pay per course of $2,850, those teaching courses online reported $2,250" (Coalition, 2012, p. 12). Although these comparisons may not have been generated by examining the same types of institutions, the numbers are revealing. Members of the university administration may justify this disparity with the rationale that online adjuncts do not "have" to come to campus to teach, and therefore, they "save" on gas, parking costs, and even clothing. Yet, do students pay fewer tuition dollars for an online course than they do for a face-to-face class at the same university? No, they do not. Ethically, we know that the instructor should not be paid a reduced salary for an online course that appears on the student's academic transcript as "credit"—identical to the way a face-to-face class with the same course number would appear—just because the course was taught online. The salary disparity signifies that in some cases higher education *does* downgrade online adjunct instructors to an even more greatly reduced faculty status.

OWI Principle 8 stated, "Online writing teachers should receive fair and equitable compensation for their work." WPAs should uphold the value of OWCs—and those faculty who teach them—to the English or Writing Department as a whole. Once those adjunct faculty have been appropriately trained for their OWCs, it is only reasonable to want to keep them working. Fair compensation will help to ensure retention of capable, skilled, and trained online adjuncts who are committed to student success.

WPAs must understand the complexity of online instruction and argue for fair compensation. According to *A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for OWI*, "Altering course materials [to meet online students' needs] ... requires time and energy as well as thoughtful literacy approaches" (p.

19). Indeed, according to OWI expert/stakeholders, even pre-developed courses take additional time for adjunct faculty to manage. In one meeting, Jason Snart stated:

> I would like to see a dedicated paid-time offer for adjuncts who need to spend considerable time prepping what should be a pre-made course, in terms of fixing mistakes, changing names where their name has to be theirs instead of someone else's. Making sure page numbers are correct, just sort of an upkeep prior to a semester starting. So like a 2 hour paid—you can even call it a prep workshop time—something to that effect, because I think there is a lot of prep time that really goes uncompensated for adjuncts that are teaching these ready-made or pre made courses. (CCCC OWI Committee Stakeholders' Meeting 3, 2012b)

Compensation may include "pay adjustments, course load modifications, and technology purchases" (p. 20). To adjuncts being paid $2,250 a course, any compensation would be welcomed in recognition of their efforts.

The data tell a sad story, and in the never-enough university-budget-speak, it is unlikely that raising contingent faculty salaries is a priority. However, "fair and equitable compensation" goes beyond payment-per-course. Adjuncts often have to provide their own computers, laptops, and software when they teach OWCs. Even if a department is unwilling or unable to give adjuncts laptops, WPAs should implement a system where online adjuncts can sign-out laptops—with the necessary software installed—on a semester-long basis. Software is expensive for adjuncts who are teaching for $2,250 per course with no access to IT support. Such a measure speaks to issues of access and inclusivity as indicated in OWI Principle 1 (p. 7), and it addresses the concerns of OWI Expert/stakeholder Steven Corbett, who pointed out the inequities of impoverished adjunct faculty who do not own state-of-the-art computer technologies that would enable them to teach writing well online (CCCC OWI Committee Stakeholders' Meeting 3, 2012b).

Finally, compensation may include other "luxuries," as well. In the third meeting of the OWI Expert/stakeholders, Heidi Harris said:

> I know a lot of instructors who are teaching online are adjuncts and they get into that loop of not being able to really get really any publications because the traditional publishing cycle is really intensive. They might have real expertise that they would like to share and that we can get quickly, through

> yes like an online journal for implementing processes like OWI that really talks about pedagogy, theory, research, connecting those points. I think we come up with a lot of best practices, but I don't see a lot of publications that can keep up with publishing current ideas that show how those practices are implemented. (CCCC OWI Committee Stakeholders' Meeting 3, 2012b)

In response to this suggestion, the CCCC OWI Committee has developed a peer-reviewed Online Resource (http://www.ncte.org/cccc/committees/owi) that enables the actual OWI practitioners—adjuncts in particular—to publish their OWI effective strategies. Adjunct faculty often teach with a great deal of passion and thoughtfulness; they, too, need publication opportunities that match their desire to communicate what they know to the disciplinary field.

CONTENT AND TEACHING STYLE

A first-time onsite writing instructor certainly will spend time developing a syllabus, selecting relevant texts, and writing exams and essay assignments. However, when that instructor walks into a classroom, little knowledge of technology is required in order to stand in front of a group of students and teach—even when the classroom is equipped with a computer-based projector.

Diametric to the traditional classroom approach, in order to successfully create a new online course, a collective effort is required. Rosemary Talab (2007) indicated that:

> Distance learning courses very often require teamwork, which "muddies" traditional definitions of intellectual property and course ownership. A faculty member developing a distance course might use a graphic artist, instructional designer, and a technical specialist for Web support, as well as institutional online course management tools. These are considerable expenses for an institution. Faculty control of content is of paramount importance. (p. 11)

As a result of such collaborative teamwork, the components of an online course are "divided and distributed to different administrative bodies—each with its own perception of what will be best for the students ... and what will be best for the university" (DePew et al., 2006).

Using Educational Technologists (ETs) 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 tapping into univer-

sity resources means the university has rights to the class. Full-time teachers may find themselves in a similar situation, which potentially makes sense—but remains debatable—given their fuller admission into the institutional community. However, adjunct faculty also may need to develop materials for their OWCs, materials that they cannot create collaboratively given their singularly migrant status. In such cases, if contingent faculty cannot transport an online class—or even small pieces of one developed to support an established or pre-made OWC—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 an OWC?

OWI Principle 5 stated, "Online writing teachers should retain reasonable control over their own content and/or techniques for conveying, teaching, and assessing their students' writing in their OWCs" (p. 15). However, ownership of online course materials depends upon the policies at the institution. Most online adjuncts 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 IT department technological assistance. Even though the adjunct may be the content expert for the subject matter, the technology team may "tell [the instructor] what academic content will be. They tell you how your courses will operate, and so it becomes more of an execution" (Kelly, 2005). Online courses—unlike most traditional onsite classes—require the collegial collaboration of the instructor with out-of-department specialists.

Adjunct 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. According to Douglas A. Kranch (2008), "Even with a contract that allots copyright to the faculty who produce a course, it may not be at all certain that those faculty also have the rights to ... transport it to another institution" (p. 354). Moreover, once the course or materials are in the LMS, practically speaking, they are archived and available to the institution for review, revision, or continued use.

It is the contingent faculty members' responsibility to familiarize themselves with institutional policies at every university where they are employed. It is the responsibility of administrators to direct adjuncts to policies related to intellectual property rights and copyright of online course materials. In a study of public and private Carnegie Doctoral Research-Extensive Universities (2007), "half of the universities gave control of syllabi, tests, and notes to faculty, only 31% of these institutions also included materials posted to the Web, and 36% of the universities claimed ownership of courseware and distance learning mate-

rials" (Loggie, et al.). Awareness and knowledge of institutional policies is fundamental to online adjunct faculty: Instructors must understand how to protect themselves and to identify what is theirs and what is owned by the university.

Shell (pre-fabricated or pre-made) courses are—and should be—troubling to contingent faculty. These courses have been pre-designed and, depending on institutional policy, may or may not be adapted to suit the instructor's individual teaching strengths. Adjuncts who teach writing online should be concerned with being able to engage their own teaching styles and the manners in which online course material is distributed. Helena Worthen (2013) posited, "Whether [an instructor] ... is allowed to change the class" is crucial regarding instructor autonomy (p. 30). The rationale for OWI Principle 5 explained:

> the pressures of ... large programs lead to unified (and often restrictive) course templates and core syllabi and sometimes even more restrictive course shells. These features often are the result of programs that rely heavily on contingent faculty; indeed, institutions may turn to uniformity of method and materials in lieu of hiring, training, and retaining expert, full-time writing teachers. (CCCC OWI Committee, 2013, p. 15)

WPAs who employ large numbers of adjuncts may find it easier to administrate and validate the program if online shell courses are standardized. However, this system of teaching removes control of content *and* style from instructors and forces them to "fit" into a microwaveable writing course which the instructor did not design. Instead of teaching, Bob Barber (2011) argued, "full-time faculty members are becoming managers in the framework of designing curriculum and then [are] handing [the course] off to part-timers to teach." Under this model of course design and dissemination, university models of education are transforming into corporate models of business industry where managers (i.e., tenured or tenure-track instructors) are delegating tasks to assembly line workers (adjuncts) to balance the need for administrative oversight.

JOB MARKET AND PROFESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS

There are job market implications associated with part-time education employment. If an instructor is an adjunct for too many years, then the items in one's vita start to blend together, giving the appearance of sameness with too many other contingent applicants; for example, it would seem that all writing adjuncts teach some version of FYW, and they do so in a repeated cycle. Adjuncts should strive to distinguish themselves so that they do not become "just one of the adjuncts" at an institution, and volunteering to teach OWCs can

make an instructor stand out to writing programs that are establishing OWCs and are looking for full-time instructors to head the design or implementation of this new initiative. However, as indicated earlier, it may be challenging to find OWI-qualified and willing tenure-line faculty to observe the teaching of, or to mentor, an adjunct. Certainly, being recognized as a good teacher is positive. Being known as punctual and responsible is favorable to an adjunct's reputation. Having letters of reference from members of the profession who have observed one's teaching is crucial to the success of an application for a full-time position. Yet, how do adjuncts procure such helpful letters from tenure-line faculty?

Gaining one-on-one time with the WPA so that the adjunct is known not only will provide the opportunity to communicate about one's students and courses, but also will add a contact to one's professional references on the vita. Meeting colleagues and establishing face-to-face contacts is an issue of timing. Onsite or hybrid-based adjunct faculty may be forced to leave campus immediately after one class ends in order to drive to a second institution to teach another class. The multiple-location problem additionally affects service to the institution: Standing committees meet at certain times, and an adjunct teaching three courses at Institution #1 and two courses at Institution #2 may not be on the appropriate campus at the appropriate time to serve on the appropriate (high profile) committee in order to meet and to establish working relationships with tenure-line colleagues who may sit on future departmental hiring committees.

A common myth is that most adjuncts do not want a full-time position. Citing the 2004 *National Study of Postsecondary Faculty*, sponsored by the Department of Education and its National Center for Education Statistics, James Monks reported, "When part-time faculty were asked whether they would have preferred a full-time position at their current institution ... 35 percent reported that they would have preferred such a position" (2009, para. 9). Although, according to these data, *most* adjuncts are not seeking full-time employment, one-third of adjunct instructors—not a negligible number—desire to be hired full time. Additionally, since "many universities are averse to promoting their own adjunct faculty into tenure-track positions," internal adjunct faculty may have limited opportunities at the institutions most familiar with their teaching abilities (Fruscione, 2014, para. 2). A second myth is that most adjuncts do not possess the terminal degree. Again, the Coalition on the Academic Workforce offered an explanation: "At four-year institutions ... slightly more than half (54.2%) of respondents hold a doctoral or other terminal degree that would be considered the common qualification for tenure-track positions" (p. 8). Many adjuncts do possess the requisite educational pedigrees to be considered for tenure-line positions; however, due to inadequate mentoring or lack of resources, adjunct faculty may become discouraged or overwhelmed by the considerable

effort and intricate process—letters of recommendation, teaching evaluations, publications, the ability to access and use the MLA *Job Information List*—required to apply for full-time lines.

There are rules. Larger economic forces are at work. Online courses are money-saving, paperless and classroom-less environments, and adjuncts are inexpensive labor. Adopting the mentality that "if I work here long enough, they will hire me" is not the way a part-time instructor can become qualified for a full-time position. Instead, learning more about one's writing program itself and meeting and conversing with the WPA may be the best places to start. However, while the academy is changing, moving into digital settings for instruction, teaching evaluations, service commitments, and research publications still count for full-time faculty hires. To this end, contingent faculty may find themselves in a never-ending adjunct loop unless they can develop full-time qualifications in these areas on a part-time salary and course overload scenario.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Typically, adjuncts teach because they enjoy teaching. Many would like admission to the full-time ranks of their (otherwise) peers; many will try and most will not succeed. In class, an instructor may be thinking, "my job is great"—what is not to like about interacting with students, sustaining conversations about readings, and engaging eager minds in college-level topics? It is fulfilling work. However, out of class, an instructor may ask, "What happens next? How many classes will I get next semester? Can I make it another semester without health insurance? Will I get hired the next time there is a full-time position?" On the one hand, the teaching that contingent faculty do is satisfying, rewarding, and impacts the next generation. This mindset—albeit noble—diverts attention from the economic downside of the adjunct lifestyle. In the OWI setting, contingent faculty may be even more at a disadvantage. The following recommendations may help:

Online contingent faculty should:

- Implement Effective Practice 7.6 by knowing the WPA and finding time to communicate with the administration.
- Adopt OWI Principle 5 by becoming familiar with institutional policies regarding ownership of course materials.
- Stand for election and serve on committees.
- Use all technical support available to faculty and participate in training specific to online teaching as described in Effective Practice 7.5.
- Diversify the vita by gaining online teaching experience at two- and four-

year institutions.
- Research and publish in appropriate venues—collaboratively or individually—about OWI practices and principles.

Administrators of OWI courses should:

- Be responsible and conscientious in providing online contingent faculty training and access to professional development as recommended by OWI Principle 7.
- Understand the various stratifications among contingent faculty in order to be prepared to advise adjuncts based upon their individual needs as online instructors.
- Follow Effective Practice 7.7 by assigning appropriate OWI mentors to adjunct faculty.
- Advocate for "fair and equitable compensation" for OWI teachers as defined in OWI Principle 8.
- Support the individual teaching styles of online adjunct faculty by encouraging flexibility in OWCs as endorsed by OWI Principle 5.

Both WPAs and contingent faculty are accountable for teaching writing in an online setting. WPAs have a special responsibility to adjuncts because of the unique circumstances—in rank, departmental economics, university politics, and intellectual property rights—associated with this group of instructors. Using the OWI principles as a guide will assist both administrators and contingent faculty in teaching writing online effectively.

NOTES

1. With some states' (e.g., Alabama, Virginia, New Hampshire, Maryland) interpretation of the Affordable Care Act (aka "Obamacare"), adjunct faculty are limited to 29 hours (i.e., the maximum to remain part-time labor) at all state public institutions; this rule allows the state to avoid the responsibility of paying them benefits. Additionally, these hours must be at a single institution. As a result, many adjunct instructors in these states cannot be "commuter professors"; consequently, however, neither can they make a living teaching as an adjunct for just one institution.

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