



A Changing Faculty: Contingency and its Consequences for Higher Education

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Academic Freedom for a Free Society

Changing Expectations

- Higher education's successes. . .
 - Innovation
 - Access
- . . . lead to changing expectations
 - “Return On Investment”
 - Social objectives (equity, diversity, economic development)

Changing Institutional Context

- Decreasing public funding
 - Decreases in direct support of institutions
 - Indirectly through financial aid
- Increased calls for accountability
 - Student skills (“outcomes”)
 - Equity and diversity
 - Conservative political backlash
- The pursuit of money and prestige

Institutional Impact

- Impact varies by type of institution
 - Research U's and Elite Liberal Arts Colleges: More (marketable) research
 - CCs: “Higher ed for all” but at reduced cost; Bachelor's degrees; economic development
 - Smaller LACs: Seeking their “market niche”; Adult degree completion; shift toward business and professional training
 - Public Comprehensives (broadly defined): *All of the above!* Adding research to teaching

And now...

- Hiring freezes
- Salary freezes
- Cuts in travel funding and support for research

Quite literally, *doing more with less!*

Consequences for Faculty

- Employment status
 - Increasing use of contingent faculty (Figure 1)
- Workload
 - More teaching
 - Increased expectations for working with students
 - Institutional prestige = (marketable) research and outside funding

Inequities

- Impact on individual faculty members is inequitable
 - Teaching/Research/Service – shifting expectations for institutions, departments, and individuals
 - Negotiating individual deals
- Women faculty are more likely to be in part-time positions (Figure 2)
- Among full-time faculty, women are more likely to be in non-tenure-track positions (Figure 3)

Contingent Faculty Status

- Defined by the relationship between a faculty member and an institution
- Although individual situations vary, the structural impact is enormous
- The underlying issue is insufficient funding, but . . .
- The “F-Word”

Contingent Faculty Status

- Part-time faculty (adjunct)
 - By course, by term
 - No security, low wages, no benefits
 - Insufficient support (office, technology, professional development)
 - Not involved in curriculum or pedagogy discussions
 - “Real World Experience”?

Contingent Faculty Status

- Full-time non-tenure-track faculty
 - Just visiting?
 - “Teaching only”
 - Salary, benefits—but still contingent
- Graduate student employees
 - Students or employees?
 - TAs or instructors?
- Postdoctoral fellows
 - More disciplines, longer time, more teaching?

Contingency and its Consequences

- For faculty
- For institutions
- For students
- For higher education
- (All of these have reciprocal effects.)

Consequences for Faculty

- For contingent faculty
 - Inability to achieve an academic career
 - Vulnerability to limited evaluations (student or administrator)
 - Constraint on academic freedom
- For tenure-line faculty
 - Increased service role
 - What happens to your graduate students?

Consequences for Institutions

- If faculty are the heart of the institution, what happens when you don't invest in faculty?
- Lack of faculty involvement in curriculum and institutional development
- Lack of faculty commitment to the institution
- Research and scholarship?
- The University of Phoenix model (“unbundling”)

Consequences for Students

- Faculty who are not accessible (short- or long-term, for academics and activities)
- Lack of academic advising
- Faculty who are not supported for excellent instruction
- Faculty who are not involved in ongoing scholarship
- Faculty without academic freedom = students who are not challenged

Consequences for Higher Education

- Lack of innovation (research/scholarship, pedagogy, and curriculum)
- What is the incentive to pursue an academic career?
- Lack of connection to community
- Fundamental shift: focus on private benefit (faculty, students, institutions, society)

What to do?

- Tenure-line faculty
 - Holistic faculty work
 - Monitor hiring trends
 - Support contingent faculty colleagues
 - Work through associations
- Higher Education Institutions
 - Provide support, fair compensation, and security for contingent faculty
 - Long-term planning for tenure-line faculty positions

What to do?

- **Government**
 - Invest in higher education as a social good (both directly and indirectly)
 - Take a longer-term perspective (e.g., education vs. prison)
- **Employers**
 - Invest in education for employees (current and potential), not just training

What to do?

- AAUP Policy Statements

- Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession (2003)

<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/conting-stmt.htm>

- Planning for transition
 - Conversion of non-tenure-track to tenure-track
 - New tenure-track hiring: consideration for contingent faculty members; attrition
 - Multi-year process

What to do?

- AAUP Policy Statements
 - Recommended Institutional Regulations (RIR) #13 Part-Time Faculty Appointments (2006)
 - Formalized terms and conditions, due process
 - Notice of reappointment/non-reappointment
 - Continuing appointments

Challenges for Department Chairs

(Variations by type of institution and urban/rural location)

- Replacements for departing tenured faculty
- Last-minute staffing
- Part-time faculty qualifications
- Graduate-student instructors
- Integrating contingent faculty members into the work of the department



Questions? Comments?

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AAUP Contingent Faculty Index 2006

<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/research/conind2006.htm>

Resources on contingent faculty

<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/issues/contingent/>