

CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
CONTINGENT WRITING FACULTY

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	ii
List of Figures.....	v
Abstract.....	vi
Chapter One.....	1
Chapter Two	42
Chapter Three	113
Chapter Four	167
Bibliography or References	226
Appendices	239
VITA	

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter One

Figure 1.1.....	32
-----------------	----

Chapter Two

Figure 2.1.....	48
-----------------	----

Figure 2.2.....	49
-----------------	----

Figure 2.3.....	53
-----------------	----

Figure 2.4.....	57
-----------------	----

Figure 2.5.....	60
-----------------	----

Figure 2.6.....	61
-----------------	----

Figure 2.7.....	63
-----------------	----

Figure 2.8.....	65
-----------------	----

Figure 2.9.....	72
-----------------	----

Figure 2.10.....	74
------------------	----

Figure 2.11.....	80
------------------	----

Figure 2.12.....	81
------------------	----

ABSTRACT

CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CONTINGENT WRITING FACULTY

by

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Half of adjuncts, according to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce's (CAW) 2012 report, "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members," make less than \$35,000 a year. Two-thirds of adjuncts make less than \$45,000 (14). As scholars like the contributors to the book of *Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies and Higher Education* (2001) describe, the roles contingent faculty play in higher education often fluctuate on a semester-to-semester basis for their employment often with few or no health benefits. While higher pay and access to healthcare are arguably the most impactful ways to stop exploitation, writing studies and other disciplines are not making much headway and must seek ways to work with contingent faculty to better contingent faculty's working conditions.

Writing studies must find a way to create conditions that include contingent faculty—conditions that work to help them advance their career interests—and professional development is one way we can become more inclusive. From there, we can work our way up to the most important, yet most difficult issues like those of pay and healthcare. Cox et al. in "The Indianapolis Resolution" call for professional development for all faculty and because professional development is often readily available for non-contingent faculty, this dissertation identifies, through a survey and interviews, concrete interventions and activism, including professional development, that can improve the working conditions of contingent faculty. My research asks contingent faculty what they identify as valuable opportunities for professional development to provide suggestions for better inclusion of contingent faculty in their teaching departments and teaching institutions.

CHAPTER ONE

Making the Case: Understanding Higher Education's Exploitation of Contingent Faculty

In early-June 2010 I found myself in a predicament. I was newly graduated with my master's degree and living in a new state, having moved from Michigan down to Texas. My then fiancé, now husband, Craig, had accepted a job at a hospital in the middle of nowhere and I had no idea what I wanted to do for a job, much my less career. I was exhausted from my master's program (a good experience, but intense) and from having worked as a server/bartender since my undergraduate days just to make ends meet. One day, I decided to apply to four different adjunct positions: one at a local community (5 miles away), one at a community college further away with two campuses that I applied to (30+ miles away and 40+ miles away), and a university in Oklahoma (30+ miles away). I was not expecting to receive a call for an interview from any of the schools; however, all four schools responded to my applications.

The interview process for all four positions were vastly different. One department chair told me I was "overqualified" to be an adjunct and that he hoped I would consider completing a PhD in the future. Another barely spoke me after, I assume, she saw I was a living human, and I did not talk to her again until I was hired full-time at her campus. The third, Martha, spent over an hour talking with me and was enthusiastic about my experience in graduate school and we began a mentorship and friendship that continues today. The fourth department chair was much like the second—she hardly spoke with me after seeing I was a breathing human. I was offered the position of adjunct professor at all four institutions, and eager for money to start paying on impending student loans (and naïve at what would ensue), I accepted. The pay varied widely per institution: \$1000/class (1 class), \$1600/class (2 classes), and \$2000/class (2 classes). That semester included weekly drives of 300+ miles for a meager \$8,200 over four months. Looking

back, I do not know how I did it. And fortunately, I did not do it long; however, that is not the experience for many contingent writing faculty¹.

The following semester Martha took me under her wing and hired me as a temporary full-time professor while a full-time professor went on maternity leave. While I did not receive health insurance, I did make just over \$14,000 that semester—a livable and seemingly luxurious wage compared to the \$8,200 I had made the previous semester. That summer I was lucky enough to get hired as a permanent full-time professor for the following school year, and a year after that, I was hired as a department chair, all at the same community college, but at a different campus than where I had grown to know Martha. My time as an adjunct was short in 2010. But when I left my secure full-time department chair position in 2014 to pursue my doctorate degree, my different adjuncting experiences stayed in the back of my mind as I returned to the status of graduate student again and an adjunct again. I stayed an adjunct from 2015-2019 while working on my doctorate degree and later, while beginning to write this dissertation.

In 2015, I was working at four different institutions as a graduate student and adjunct professor while I worked on my doctorate degree. I turned thirty in that year and my husband and I decided we wanted a family. While the timing was not ideal, we began trying to get pregnant. I suffered three devastating (early) miscarriages. Eventually, after medical intervention, I gave birth to two children, one in late-2016 right before I finished coursework, and the other in early-2018, not too long after defending my prospectus. My children, Orion and Celeste, are 19.5 months apart in age. My pregnancies were complicated, high risk, and thus, expensive. I took out

¹ The documentary *Con Job* (2014), directed and produced by Megan Fulwiler and Jennifer Marlow, provides contingent voices who are “often invisible in and marginalized by the institutions where they teach.” This documentary appeals to viewers about the pervasive “lived material conditions” contingent faculty endure in higher education and is an excellent view into the realities many contingent faculty live, which is often vastly different from my own experience.

student loans just to cover our increased living expenses while we paid on our massive medical bills, and we still have one medical bill not yet paid as of March 2021.

When my son, Orion, was born in late-2016, I did not want to have to take unpaid time away from my doctoral program because there was no maternity leave policy for graduate students. So, to continue my doctoral coursework my program “allowed” me to attend meetings online when my son was just a few days old. While I am thankful that I was able to continue paid work while my son was a newborn, but the stress of that time is harrowing to look back on. Craig had very little time off (one week), so he was at work while my friend Annette came over to take care of my dogs. I sat in front of the computer at the kitchen table and tried to pay attention with Orion in his Rock n Play between feedings. Though a difficult time for me personally, faculty were supportive of my situation and one professor allowed me to skip teacher trainings that did not apply to me since I was not new to teaching like many other graduate students in my program. It still bothers me that I later returned to classes and teaching when my son was just six weeks old—the earliest we could get his vaccinations and enroll him in daycare.

Through the rest of 2016 and part of 2017, I suffered with post-partum anxiety and depression, but we needed money and my husband’s job did not provide him with much time off. I was able to pass-off my issues and few knew the deep internal struggle that ensued. Other graduate students would often, meaning well, tell me they “Didn’t know how I did it all!” But what they did not know was that I was not doing “it all.” Some weekends, when I had the luxury of rest, I would lay in bed and pretend I was sleeping so my husband would take care of our son and I could fall back asleep and hide from the misery and work overload. Spring semester of 2017 I taught six classes and I hardly remember it.

In early 2017, after an unintentional pregnancy and unfortunate miscarriage, we decided we wanted to try for another child. We wanted a sibling for my son, and we wanted them to be close in age, not to mention we were both over thirty and with my losses we did not know how long it would take to get successfully pregnant again. We got lucky (thanks to my excellent doctor and progesterone) and after the miscarriage I became pregnant with my daughter, Celeste, early that summer.

Unfortunately, I had the same high-risk issues with my daughter's pregnancy and had even more doctor's appointments filled with ultrasounds and NST tests this time around. Luckily, when Celeste was born all was well, initially. I was even able to successfully breastfeed her, something I was unable to do with my son. However, a few days after leaving the hospital, she developed jaundice at numbers that were frightening enough that we had to choose between the NICU and home health, which were both incredibly expensive. This time, at least, I knew how I would likely react post-partum and because I was done with coursework, I was able to take more time off at home by frontloading my teaching schedule the previous fall. My mother and stepfather also flew down to help which meant, unlike like last time, we had consistent hot meals and plenty of time to rest. Craig also had an additional week off and all things considered, it felt like luxury compared to the first time we brought home a newborn. Despite taking out student loans to cover basic living expenses, once summer passed, I found myself in the same situation: daycare was expensive and our medical bills were exorbitant, so I still ended up driving many more miles, teaching not only because I loved it, but because I needed money for my family. That semester I taught six classes again. Looking back, I do not know how we did it and I feel lucky my relationship with my husband Craig survived those years.

These experiences far exceed the space I have to tell them (and I do tell more details about my experiences as an adjunct throughout the dissertation)—but I tell my short history as an adjunct because it led me to this subject of contingent employment. *No matter how stressful and emotional my experience sounds, it is not unique.* Through these experiences it became clear to me that I wanted to research how to help contingent writing faculty in concrete ways that could make a difference in their professional lives because I believe my success is largely thanks to my access to professional development and through my early mentorship and friendship with Martha. My hope is that this dissertation accomplishes a lofty goal—to help our field create change that we so desperately need.

Today, in 2021, as I revise and ready myself to finish my dissertation, I am back as a full-time professor at the community college I left to pursue my doctorate. I returned because I found myself seeing the difference I could (and do) make there and because I was valued at the community college both as an adjunct and as a full-time employee and professor. Yet, I am distinctly and uncomfortably aware of just how lucky I am to have secure employment, health benefits, the ability to afford childcare, money to buy a house, and so on. Many contingent writing faculty are not as lucky, and many are not afforded the professional development opportunities I received as an adjunct. And, of course, as I wrote much of this dissertation COVID-19 was and is ravaging the world, hitting the state of Texas, where I live and work, quite hard. The future is unclear for many professions, including our own, yet regardless of how we are teaching this next fall, or five years from now, professional development is likely to continue as a main expectation for college professors. My goal is to provide concrete ways contingent writing faculty can be included in professional development opportunities that are meaningful for them, and in ways that increase our teaching excellence into the future.

This dissertation seeks to connect existing scholarship with a survey and interviews I conducted between 2016-2018 to understand how contingent faculty experience, or expect to experience, professional development. I argue that by providing meaningful professional development opportunities to contingent writing faculty we can further connect contingent writing faculty with each other, with non-contingent faculty, and with their departments. Through these increased opportunities for interactions between contingent writing faculty and also with non-contingent writing faculty, we can take action to better the working conditions contingent writing faculty experience not only in our departments, but also in our institutions.

This chapter begins by providing a short background on contingent employment in higher education and how neoliberalism has become a common description for higher education's exploitation of contingent writing faculty. Next, I describe how writing studies and the humanities have sought better working conditions for contingent faculty over the past few decades and why we have often failed, and specifically how neoliberalism has impacted the working conditions of contingent writing faculty.

The second chapter discusses in-depth how I created the survey, my distribution list, and provides data analysis from the responses. The third chapter explores follow-up interviews with many of the willing respondents from the survey. As a discipline, we know change is needed to protect contingent faculty and we know that we need to take action; however, there have been many attempts with little reported success, and ultimately, in the conclusion of this dissertation, I provide actionable ideas for writing departments and institutions to enact both immediately and in the future.

I. Contingent Employment in Higher Education

Contingent appointments in higher education have been a growing problem since at least the 1990s. According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), “Trends in Faculty Employment Status” (2011), 51% of faculty were part-time while 19% were non-tenure track full-time faculty. That means about 70% of teachers in higher education in 2011 were considered contingent faculty. In 1993 the AAUP found that 40% of faculty were part-time and 17% were non-tenure track full-time faculty. While certainly an increasing issue, higher education’s employment of contingent faculty is nothing new and continues to grow today.

Many scholars argue that one issue contributing to the exploitation of contingent faculty since the 1990s is growing neoliberalism. Neoliberalism, which claims to favor free-market capitalism, seemingly infiltrated and caused catastrophic change to higher education not too long ago—some might even think it began as late as the mid-2000s with the economic crisis. However, according to Andrew Seal in his essay from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, “How the University Became Neoliberal,” in 1837 Ralph Waldo Emerson, “warned that, in colleges, ‘young men of the fairest promise are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust—some of them suicides’” (Seal). The term “neoliberal” (which Ralph Waldo Emerson described without naming), and other words that have been used to describe free-market capitalistic action in higher education, e.g., academic capitalism and corporate university, was not well-known until the economic crisis of the mid-2000s. Seal warns we must use the term neoliberalism, even if it is overused, with many different definitions, because the label allows academics to “[...] understand what’s happening to higher education and [...] that the university is a critical vantage point for grasping larger global transformations” (Seal). Further, Seal emphasizes that the

university is an “indispensable node” of neoliberalism that describes “external changes” that worked

their way into the ivory tower like an infection [...] [B]usiness values were seeping in to seminars. Students were learning to evaluate their course schedule like a bond trader looking over a portfolio, and they were being taught to do so not by their professors but by an exterior culture that sang the hymns of return on investment. (Seal)

During the mid-2000s economic crisis, contingent faculty and students, Seal writes, “loaded down with debt began to see themselves not as unique failures of a functioning system but as utterly typical of an economic order devouring itself from within.” Thus, he argues, the university must be “rebuilt, not merely rebooted.” In order to enact change away from neoliberalism’s perpetration of capitalism in the classroom, the exploitation of contingent faculty must change. Contingent labor practices follow capitalistic business practices outside of higher education (e.g., hiring cheap labor to cut costs rather than paying a livable wage) and cause the exploitation of a massive number of people.

Writing studies, English, and more generally, the humanities, employ the largest numbers of contingent faculty, and therefore are the largest exploiters of contingent faculty. We have much work to enact change, and perhaps that is why it seems like little has changed over the past ten, twenty, or thirty years as contingent employment in higher education has risen. According to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW) “A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members” (2012), 44% of humanities classes are taught by non-tenure track faculty (8). The CAW further reports that half of adjuncts make less than \$35,000 a year. Two-thirds of adjuncts make less than \$45,000 (14). At a smaller percentage, 22.6% of adjuncts indicated they had access to “health benefits through their academic employer,” with 4.3% indicating their college/university

paid for those benefits; 14.6% share cost for the benefits with their employer, and 3.6% indicated that they paid for health benefits completely without support from their college/university employer (46).

A smaller, but more recent study from the National Census of Writing (2017), found that per class, most adjuncts who work at two-year institutions tend to make between \$1501-2500 per course. Thirty-one percent of writing adjuncts made between \$1501-2000 per class, 21% made between \$2001-2500 per class, with an equal 14% making \$3001-3500 or \$1001-1500 per class. Ten percent of adjuncts reported earning \$2501-3000 per course. The same study from 2017 found that the majority of four-year college writing adjuncts made between \$2001-3000 at 38%. Twenty percent of writing adjuncts indicated they earned between \$2501-3000 per class, 18% earned \$2001-2500 per class, an equal 15% earned \$3001-3500 or \$5000+. It is important to note that in the National Census for Writing far fewer two-year college respondents participated in the question (only 29 versus 307 participants to the question from four-year colleges). Only 10% (3) of two-year college adjunct respondents indicated they receive health benefits while 20% (62) adjuncts at four-year colleges responded that they received health benefits. Despite the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and its attempts at gaining healthcare that employees can afford and that employers can fund, few adjuncts, regardless of whether they teach writing at four-year or two-year institutions, have access to health resources through their higher education employer.

Neoliberalism plays a significant part in all of these troubling exploitations of contingent faculty. Rather than supply health insurance to adjuncts, colleges and universities often choose instead to cut the number of classes adjuncts teach to avoid going over the work hours that mandated they pay contingent faculty health care. In “Towards a New Genealogy of

Neoliberalism,” Carl Raschke describes how neoliberalism became entangled and attractive in the politics of higher education,

As various writers have emphasi[z]ed in recent months, the promise of neoliberalism was always that worker sacrifices, including the break-up of unions, longer working hours, deferred employment through a commitment to higher education would ‘lift all boats,’ as the saying went, and usher in a new era of productivity and prosperity. While productivity has increased, prosperity has not to any significant degree [...]. (Part 2)

Despite college enrollment numbers increasing, little has changed to help resolve the exploitation neoliberalism has had on contingent faculty. Further, the problems are not just in higher education’s treatment of contingent faculty: the lack of secure employment, fair pay, and access to health care. When over 10,000 part-time faculty respondents were asked in the CAW survey about their primary academic specialization, 16.1% (1,678 respondents) indicated “English language and literature”—the largest group of specialization in the report. The next largest group was “History,” at 6.6% (682 respondents). Median pay, according to the 2012 CAW report, for English language and literature professors is \$2,500 per course for adjunct professors. In the state of Texas most contingent faculty are limited to about three classes a semester. The maximum amount a contingent writing faculty member could make, according to the 2012 numbers (assuming they do not teach summer, which is hard to come by), is about \$15,000 per year if they only make \$2,500 a class².

Research continues to suggest that the rise in contingent appointments and progression away from tenure-track positions is due to economic pressures and short-term solutions. Roger

² Unfortunately, I was unable to find more recent numbers parsed by discipline.

G. Baldwin and Jay L. Chronister in *Teaching Without Tenure* (2002) argue that costs of new technology have challenged budgets and by relying on cheaper full-time, non-tenure-track hires schools have been able to build infrastructure using the latest state-of-the-art technology and attract students. Baldwin and Chronister identify legislation from the 1970s and 1980s that led to increased hiring of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty throughout the 1980s and 1990s: “The Employees Retirement Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and the 1978 amendments to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) raised questions about the management of faculty resources.” Further, they write, “These changes stimulated the development of incentive-based early retirement programs to encourage faculty to retire at or before the ‘normal’ retirement age (65).” (18). In 1986, amendments were made to ADEA that

abolished mandatory retirement and raised questions on a large number of campuses about the potential effects on institutional finance, program quality, and faculty vitality of having large cohorts of tenured faculty continuing employment beyond age 70. (19)

In other words, universities and colleges who had always used the age-70 mandate to plan for faculty turnover and to recruit new faculty as others entered retirement was eliminated.

Additionally, the new technology required campus technical staff and instructional design, support, and additional spending for integration of that technology into the classroom. New technology costs, along with an aging professoriate and less money from state and federal sources, Baldwin and Chronister observe, has led to a rise in non-tenure-track or contingent hiring practices.

Graduate programs and graduate students are often seen as contributors to an increased reliance on full-time non-tenure track faculty and contingent faculty. Producing more PhDs in writing and English while the numbers of higher education teaching jobs decrease, creates an

environment that encourages dependence on contingent faculty with a surplus of possible instructors. Baldwin and Chronister write that,

[W]e often heard that hiring faculty off the tenure track was a function of the academic labor market—that the surplus of PhD’s and other qualified candidates in many academic fields has made it possible for colleges and universities to fill academic positions off the tenure track with relative ease. (29)

However, they write, “We view this labor market condition as an internal issue, since universities control the majority of the flow of new talent through graduate study enrollment” (29). Their research found that the surplus of PhDs will continue the cycle of hiring full-time, non-tenure-track faculty (30). Some institutions Baldwin and Chronister spoke with cited the need for flexible staffing appointments due to enrollment numbers that fluctuate from semester to semester (35). Several institutions, the authors write, also cited “budgetary efficiency” for hiring full-time contingent faculty because “they often teach at least one more course per term than their tenure-eligible colleagues.” Further, “The faculty hired at the majority of campuses to teach first-year writing courses and lower-level language courses were prime examples” of this practice (35). Baldwin and Chronister note that many baccalaureate programs hire full-time, non-tenure-track faculty as instructors and program coordinators, for example, “teacher and coordinator of a writing program or language laboratory” (34). The reason full-time, non-tenure-track faculty are often assigned lower-level writing courses is

generally perceived as freeing tenure-track faculty for upper-division and graduate teaching and for research...[and] also included relieving tenured faculty of such responsibilities as training and supervising graduate teaching assistants [...] In addition, full-time term-appointment faculty often meet highly specialized institutional needs that

tenured faculty do not want to assume or that are viewed as an uneconomical use of tenured faculty resources. (123)

Baldwin and Chronister explore what it means for universities and colleges to employ large numbers of contingent, yet full-time, faculty, but much of this argument also applies to that of part-time contingent faculty. Institutions hire part-time contingent faculty because they can pay less and provide fewer benefits to contingent faculty, unlike what tenure-track jobs often offer, thus saving the institution money.

Others, like Marc Bousquet, see the issue of contingent employment differently—as an underproducing of jobs and not an overproducing of PhDs. Bousquet writes in *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation* (2008),

There is plenty of work in higher education for everyone who wants to do it. The problem is that this enormous quantity of work no longer comes in the bundle of tenure, dignity, scholarship, and a living wage that we call ‘a job.’ The concrete aura of the claim that degree holders are overproduced conceals the necessary understanding that, in fact, there is a huge shortage of degree holders. If degree holders were doing the teaching, there would be far too few of them. (40-1)

Bousquet continues by explaining that the vast majority of degree holders are not teaching—rather—graduate employees, who are paid very little, do the vast majority of teaching:

The cheapness of their labor holds down salaries in the ladder ranks [...] The cheapness and disorganization of flexible labor supports speedup throughout the system: assistant and associate professors teach more, serve more, and publish more in return for lower compensation than any previous generation of faculty.

Regardless of what is causing the problem of exploitation of contingent faculty, like low pay for contingent faculty, it continues. Seth Kahn, in “We Value Teaching Too Much to Keep Devaluing It” (2020), writes that “People who teach more generally get paid less. And people whose job descriptions emphasize teaching over research get paid less than those whose job descriptions emphasize the opposite” (597). Further, contingent employment can more easily be added or removed due to any changes with dropping or increasing enrollment. Finally, healthcare is an expensive provision that contingent employment rarely provides, thus saving institutions further expenses. The continued de-valuing of contingent labor allows for continued subversion neoliberalism causes higher education. As Kahn writes, “When you denigrate teaching labor, you may not feel like you’re bashing teachers, but the effect is still the same: You make it easier for people who want to de-professionalize us to do it.” (609). Higher education has only increased the exploitation of contingent faculty as time has gone on.

Contingent faculty hiring is often last-minute and near the beginning of a semester or schoolyear. The Center for the Future of Higher Education published the article “Who is Professor ‘Staff’ And how can this person teach so many classes?” in 2012. The authors, Steve Street et al. write that “Two particular aspects of the working conditions of contingent faculty emerged as particularly significant: ‘just-in-time’ hiring practices and limited access to pedagogical resources” (“Executive Summary”). They articulate the flurry of activity a contingent faculty member might experience,

Contingent faculty can be hired at a moment’s notice, with no review process, and their appointments can be ‘non-renewed’ with little or no justification, regardless of their performance. Nearly half of all contingent faculty work part-time jobs, many working in

multiple such positions at a time. Large numbers are invisible, even to students, generically designated in class schedules as Professor “Staff.” (1)

The problems contingent faculty face have not been ignored until now, at least in higher education scholarship. Much research, including many of the examples that follow throughout this chapter, has indicated the need for change away from exploitation of contingent faculty—yet little has visibly changed the material working conditions for contingent faculty in higher education, or the humanities more specifically.

Despite the lack of tangible change, those of us who work in the humanities have not given up. Recently, the Delphi Project, by the Pullias Center for Higher Education at University of Southern California, has been working to “enhance[e] awareness about the changing faculty trends using research and data to better support faculty off the tenure track and to help create new faculty models to support higher education institutions in the future” (About). The Project is supported by a number of organizations, including the American Association of Community Colleges, Modern Language Association, American Association of University Professors, American Historical Association, New Faculty Majority, a number of colleges and universities, and individuals like Sue Doe and Doug Hesse, both of whom work on contingent labor in writing studies (“Participant List”). The Delphi Project is just one example of groups who have been working to support contingent faculty.

As scholars like the contributors³ to the book of *Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies and Higher Education* (2001) describe, the

³ See Helen O’Grady, “Trafficking in Freeway Flyers: (Re)Viewing Literacy, Working Conditions, and Quality Instruction,” Chris M. Anson and Richard Jewell, “Shadows of the Mountain,” Eva Baumberger, “The Best of Times, The Worst of Times: One Version of the ‘Humane’ Lectureship,” and many more contributions in the edited collection.

roles contingent faculty play in higher education fluctuate on a semester-to-semester basis in a worst-case semester scenario, and the best-case scenario for their employment is often year-to-year contracts, though both types of employment usually provide few or no health benefits.

These concerns have the markings of at least some influence of neoliberalism and the idea that a surplus of faculty allows for the cheaper pay and higher job expectations like excellent student evaluations for job retention that can disappear at any time.

II. Writing Studies and Contingent Employment, A (Very) Brief History

The humanities have produced much important research regarding contingent faculty, but few answers or suggestions for improvement have amounted to real change. Over the last nearly thirty years, writing studies has called for solutions to help remedy the humanities' exploitation of contingent writing faculty—yet as CAW's 2012 report indicates, 44% of lower-level humanities courses are taught by contingent faculty (8). A significant amount of the research comes from well-respected scholars like James Sledd, Eileen Schell, Mike Palmquist, and many others, have called for an increase in pay and access to healthcare, among other necessities for contingent writing faculty. However, the continued economic rise of neoliberalism and technocratization⁴ has further negated the discipline's ability to rectify our exploitation of writing teachers, especially contingent writing teachers. While higher pay and access to healthcare, basic elements of many tenure-track positions in our discipline, are arguably immediate ways to stop exploitation, we are not making much headway and must seek ways to work with contingent faculty to better their working conditions.

⁴ Technocratization, in this case, refers to the preference and prestige associated with STEM disciplines whose expertise are in the sciences and technology.

Despite the numerous publications and guidelines published, the exploitation of contingent writing faculty has continued. The Executive Committee of the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) voted unanimously in 1988 to pass “The Wyoming Conference Resolution,” with the aim of improving the working conditions of all writing faculty, including contingent faculty. The Wyoming Resolution originated from the Wyoming Conference on Writing in the summer of 1986. Linda R. Robertson, Sharon Crowley, and Frank Lentricchia write in “Opinion: The Wyoming Conference Resolution Opposing Unfair Salaries and Working Conditions for Post-Secondary Teachers” (1987) that the resolution came about after James Moffett made an argument that teachers should help students to “discover the freedom of self-expression.” Robertson et al. further emphasize that, “Some of us were struck with the irony that those of us charged with this significant responsibility often feel unable to speak freely about the fundamentally unfair conditions under which we labor” (274). This situation brought forth more stories, including stories about

repression and exploitation [...], graduate students told of feeling coerced to teach courses without pay, teachers at community colleges told of heavy, unreasonable course loads, part-time and adjunct instructors [...] told of the demeaning status and inequitable salaries they were forced to accept as positions of employment,” and more unease set in. (275)

James Slevin, they write, “hammered home to us just how endemic are the local conditions we described” (275). Disenfranchisement, Slevin argued, ran through the veins of writing teachers. Sledd, the authors wrote, “heightened our awareness of the polarity between the freedom we are asked to promote in the classroom and the threats to academic freedom and absence of job security faced by many teachers of writing” (276). Robertson et al. note that bitterness and

frustration about the lack of status adjunct and non-tenure-track faculty experience was surprising to some attendees who were tenured and

[e]njoy this privileged status. English professors are unused to thinking of themselves as privileged in any sense. Some genuinely believed that such conditions were not prevalent or at least did not prevail at their home institutions.

Perhaps most disturbingly, “Others honestly expressed their fear that if the conditions for teachers of writing were improved, tenured faculty members would have to carry a heavier burden in teaching composition” (276). Sledd, amid the observation that polarity was pulling the conference apart, managed to unite the conference in the need for change. At the end of the day conference attendees were able to write comments reflecting on their conversations. An observation Robertson et al. make is one that reflects the English and writing studies' exploitation quite succinctly:

... We don't want to face *our own roles* in the problem, and how we—as people, as teachers, as ‘professionals’—are implicated in the very problems we're trying to solve. Perhaps there is no solution. Perhaps nothing we can do as individuals, or even as a group, can do anything to mitigate the frightening direction that some of us see us going. But to ignore it—no. Not if we take ourselves seriously when we speak so glibly about making things better. (277)

During the conference, a draft of what became the Wyoming Resolution was circulated for comments and the next afternoon a discussion about it took place in a dormitory lounge. The final version of the resolution was presented during the final session of the conference the next morning. Because so many signatures were gathered, the resolution could be presented to the

Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) and conference attendees were encouraged to garner support back at their home institutions going forward.

Some of the provisions the Wyoming Resolution argued against were large class sizes, excessive teaching loads, salary inequity, inadequate access to health benefits, lack of professional status, and inability to advance professionally. The Wyoming Resolution implored the Executive Committee of CCCC to create and follow standards for salary and the working conditions of college writing teachers, as well as a procedure for writing teachers to file grievances against institutions who did not comply with the standards laid out in the resolution (Trimbur and Cambridge 13). The resolution included:

- 1) To formulate, after appropriate consultations with post-secondary teachers of writing, professional standards and expectations for salary levels and working conditions of post-secondary teachers of writing.
- 2) To establish a procedure for hearing grievances brought by post-secondary teachers of writing—either singly or collectively—against apparent institutional non-compliance with these standards and expectations.
- 3) To establish procedure for acting upon a finding of non-compliance; specifically, to issue a letter of censure to an individual institution’s administration, Board of Regents or Trustees, State legislators (where pertinent) and to publicize the findings to the public-at-large, the educational community in general, and to our membership. (18)

Despite its language and strong demands for writing teachers, the Wyoming Resolution ultimately lacked clear boundaries and reparations as well as consequences for institutions who failed to heed the demands after lawyers said censure was not a viable response and its language was changed as a result.

In turn, the boundaries and reparations that the Wyoming Resolution lacked caused the Executive Committee of CCCC to avoid formally enacting change, and instead in 1989 they drafted the “Statement of Principles and Standards for the Teaching of Post-Secondary Writing” effectively taking away any potential impact from the Wyoming Resolution. The Executive Committee statement was much more focused on arguing for overall better treatment of writing instructors in higher education, but it also allowed the more strongly worded Wyoming Resolution to be ignored. The standards of the statement that the Executive Committee of CCCC wrote includes two parts: “Part One: Professional Standards That Promote Quality Education,” and “Part Two: Teaching Conditions Necessary for Quality Education.” Part One includes a section on Tenure-Line Faculty that says, “B) Whenever possible, faculty professionally committed to rhetoric and composition should coordinate and supervise composition programs [...]” and

C) Research in rhetoric and composition is a legitimate field of scholarship with standards comparable to other academic fields. In salary, tenure, and promotion considerations, research and publication in rhetoric and composition should be treated on a par with all other areas of research in English departments [...]. (331)

The next section labeled “Graduate Students,” says for instance, “A) Graduate students’ teaching experience should be understood as an essential part of their training for future professional responsibilities [...]” and

D) Nearly all graduate students teaching writing in English departments are fully in charge of their classes. Because the university entrusts to them such serious responsibility, their special status among graduate students should be recognized and

their compensation, benefits, class size, and course load should be adjusted accordingly (332).

Lastly, in section one are “Part-Time Faculty” and “Full-Time Temporary Faculty.” The “Part-Time Faculty” includes “C) *Recommendations for part-time faculty*,”: “1) Expectations for part-time instructors’ teaching, service, and research should be made clear, in writing, at the time of hiring, and these instructors should be evaluated according to those written expectations” and “6) They should be given a voice in the formulation of department policy regarding courses and programs in which they teach (for example, by voting at department meetings and by serving on curriculum and hiring committees).” Section D in “Part-Time Faculty” is particularly interesting,

[...] we recognize that some institutions have responded innovatively to requests for tenure-line part-time positions. Where such positions are entirely the equal of full-time positions in terms of eligibility for tenure, prorated salary, fringe benefits, merit raises, support for research, participation in governance, and so on, we find this practice agreeable. *But such positions are and should be exceptions. The quality, integrity, and continuity of instruction and the principle of academic freedom are best ensured by a full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty.*⁵ (334)

Another section, labeled “Full-Time Temporary Faculty,” includes two guidelines: they should only be used to “fill non-recurring instructional needs” and “the rights and privileges afforded to individuals with full-time temporary appointments ought to be congruent with the policies of the AAUP [...]” (335). None of these recommendations, however, include consequences if the recommendations are ignored. Further, the language present lacks motivation for universities and

⁵ Emphasis is mine.

departments to change their behavior in exploiting writing faculty. As a result of the lack of consequences for ignoring the recommendations, seemingly nothing changed.

Yet, according to John Trimbur and Barbara Cambridge, authors of “The Wyoming Conference: A Beginning” (1988), the point of the Wyoming Resolution was not to end to the problems writing studies faced, but rather to “initiate” change for writing teachers:

If the Wyoming Resolution begins with the felt needs of writing teachers, the anecdotal accounts and individual testimonies we have all heard about injustice and exploitation, it goes on to link these felt needs, the points at which the personal becomes political in the lives of writing teachers, to the need for wider and more sweeping changes in the role of English Studies and the priorities of higher education. (17)

Critics, like James Sledd in his article “Why the Wyoming Resolution Had to Be Emasculated,” published in *Journal of Advanced Composition* (1991) asked, why, after five years, the Wyoming Resolution and the “Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing” had made little impact on changing the exploitation of writing teachers. He argued that writing teachers themselves needed to come together to create reform (a wonderful idea, but with what time and what resources?) and that writing teachers needed to study writing programs’ treatment of contingent faculty to do so (269). Sledd also discussed the exploitation of graduate students and contingent faculty who teach the vast majority of writing courses, arguing that English departments used them for “primary functions of survival and reproduction” (273). He argued that contingent faculty, being hired “three-times as fast” in contingent positions as the number of non-contingent faculty were hired, were often more qualified than those being hired in the full-time positions. He continued, saying that contingent faculty, “as a group, are better educated and more experienced writers and teachers of writing than most teaching assistants and

some professors; yet part-timers and temporaries are exploited even more viciously than the teaching assistants” (274). Much of his frustration with the Wyoming Resolution’s failure to correct the exploitation of contingent faculty was his view that the teaching of composition is treated as “women’s work”:

If these mature but unrewarded professionals could make common cause with their male colleagues and with exploited graduate students, and if the two groups chose to risk really militant actions, they might together do what generations of professors have failed to do. Should the example of their action prove contagious, the abuse of contingent labor in other academic departments might also be checked, and our universities might improve—far more so than by the mutterings of businessmen and bureaucrats. (280-1)

Sledd made many astute observations about the failures of the Wyoming Resolution: 1) writing teachers, especially contingent writing teachers, need the resources to build a community in order to enact change, 2) the stories and experiences of writing teachers are needed to make personal experiences into political action, and 3) the feminization of writing studies as “women’s work” allowed it to be seen as lesser in importance to other disciplines, including English literature teaching and research. Despite these (and other) important observations from Sledd, once again, little has changed. Time and again, writing studies and other disciplines, professional organizations, and contingent faculty themselves have attempted to create this needed change with only limited success.

Ten years after Sledd's scathing article, Eileen Schell and Patricia Stock published the collection *Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies* (2001). The collection argues that writing studies must make changes to stop exploiting contingent faculty. One of the most effective ways the collection makes this argument is through

the inclusion of contingent voices—the editors worked to make the personal political through storytelling from contingent writing faculty. This inclusion was an important consideration that appears to heed Sledd's call for the exploited majority to work together toward fixing their marginalization.

Rather than relying on data surrounding contingent employment in English and writing studies, the contributors to the collection describe the realities they experienced within specific departments. Barry M. Maid, author of “Non-Tenure Track Instructors at UALR: Breaking Rules, Splitting Departments,” described his time as an administrator at University of Arkansas at Little Rock during the transition from writing and rhetoric as situated within the English Department to becoming its own department. He cites multiple incidents that were difficult to navigate, including the department refusing to hire “anyone with administrative potential since those candidates interested in administration were thought to be ‘less serious’ about their scholarly work” (84). This refusal to seek candidates with administrative interests caused Maid to, despite not wanting to seek re-election as chair, accept that he would be re-elected. One week before the election, two tenured faculty entered his office, and he writes, “They wanted to make sure that full-time instructors⁶ would not be allowed to vote in the upcoming chair election... [T]here was an undercurrent of fear among some literature faculty that the instructors might dominate departmental decisions” (84). The situation became heated when Maid contacted the University System Attorney and found that the department “could not limit which faculty were allowed to vote and which could not,” ultimately leading to literature faculty arguing the full-

⁶ The full-time instructors the department had newly hired were to teach writing courses, teach a 4/4 of freshman writing courses, paid \$24,000 a year (the entry rate, he writes, roughly around what teachers with an MA would start at in the local school district), receive full benefits, and be expected to perform departmental and university service, and participate in professional activities.

time instructors were hired ‘illegally’” (85). At a later department meeting despite everyone acting in a “cordial” manner,

condescending comments emerged, this time about the instructors *and all* of the writing faculty... [T]he literature faculty simply viewed the writing faculty (especially the non-tenure track faculty) as an inferior professional group not worthy of voting rights granted by the system and departmental policy. (85)

A few weeks later, Maid writes that his dean drafted a memo to create the Department of Rhetoric and Writing as a result of the issue: “Once a group sets itself up as being inherently superior to another group—whether that second group is defined by academic degree, gender, or race—the first group cannot value or respect the different skills of the second group” (86). While we might be quick to vilify this example as only one that argues for the separation of English departments and writing departments, it does illustrate the condescending way non-contingent faculty viewed contingent faculty. Lower-level humanities courses are largely taught by contingent faculty while higher-level courses are taught more by non-contingent faculty—demonstrating a view that contingent faculty are only worthy of teaching lower-level courses and in this case, they were even unworthy of voting rights despite their identity as a part of the department and institution.

Writing studies has accomplished little observable change to make material working conditions better for contingent faculty. However, this is not to say that scholarship has neglected contingent labor issues. In fact, many books and articles (see Enos *Gender Roles*; Eble and Gaillet; Guglielmo and Gaillet; Palmquist et al.; Schell *Gypsy Academics*) have sought to propose ways to solve the discipline’s exploitative practices. These solutions (some of which I talk about in later chapters) have included proposals like healthcare access, opportunities for

publishing, lessening the feminization and gendering of teaching writing, higher pay, and more recognition for contingent faculty work. However, much as Sledd warned in his 1991 response to the Wyoming Resolution, without clear consequences for continued exploitation of contingent labor, not much has changed and not much will change.

More recently, however, strides are being taken to create consequences for this lack of change and continued exploitation. In September of 2016, the *CCC* journal published a special issue, *The Political Economies of Composition Studies*, discussing, among other topics, composition's practices that include contingent labor, along with a new resolution aimed at resolving some of the issues contingent writing faculty face. The Indianapolis Resolution was motivated by frustration with the CCCC's 2015 revision of their "Statement of Principles and Standards for the Teaching of Post-Secondary Writing," which failed to discuss contingent labor and removed any mention of class size and workload recommendations. Anicca Cox, Timothy R. Dougherty, Seth Kahn, Michelle LaFrance, and Amy Lynch-Binieck, authors of the resolution,⁷ argue the only inclusion of work conditions existed "ambiguously" at the "end of the statement" though they note that their resolution does not immediately change working conditions (38). All the same, the Indianapolis Resolution works to create clear exigency to the problems we have with contingent labor today, to yield more robust suggestions for how to respond to the problem at the institutional level as well, and to provide clear evidence that exploitation of contingent faculty in writing studies continues. Cox et al. argue that composition as a discipline is much more stable than when the Wyoming Resolution was originally drafted and now, we must

⁷ It is important to also note that while these authors are the ones given attribution for the resolution, many contingent and non-contingent voices helped to draft the resolution.

Draw explicit attention to the reality that material conditions are teaching and learning conditions—that current labor conditions undervalue the intellectual demand of teaching, restrict resources such as technology and space to contract faculty, withhold conditions for shared and fair governance, and perpetuate unethical hiring practices—as the central pedagogical labor issues of our times. (40)

To begin the work of establishing consequences for continued exploitation of contingent labor in the humanities, we must expose the working conditions of contingent writing faculty. To do that, we need to create a more inclusive environment that allows their voices to be heard and their issues raised.

The unethical hiring practices in the humanities, and in higher education in general, and the lack of professional development opportunities for contingent faculty have led me to believe that future research needs to ask how we as a discipline claim to value⁸ writing without addressing the problem of exploitative labor practices. To begin this work, my dissertation does the following: a) explore professional development that already exists, and that contingent faculty are participating in, b) examine what professional development opportunities exist that contingent faculty are not participating in, c) consider the kinds of professional development

⁸ It is essential to note that when I write “valuing,” I am emphasizing moving away from valuing that allows continued exploitation of contingent writing teachers. Seth Kahn explains this well:

We also almost always frame value in terms of how frequently and diligently we practice, study, and theorize good pedagogy, teacher preparation, and faculty development. That is, we obviously care about teaching because we talk about and do so much to improve it. I don’t mean to say that we shouldn’t talk pedagogy or professional development; I do mean that using the verb “value” to capture what we’re doing when we talk about those practices overrides other forms of valuing, particularly the most concrete one: compensation. At the risk of sounding a bit snarky, catered monthly lunches to talk about responding to student writing don’t pay the rent, but they do allow management to proclaim that they “value teaching.” (593)

contingent faculty say they need or want and why, and d) propose what we as a discipline can do to help meet their needs and wants in professional development.

Further, I believe that scholarship like the Indianapolis Resolution makes invaluable arguments regarding labor in writing studies; however, we must continue to *ask contingent faculty in writing studies what they want and need to feel valued and connected with the departments and institutions who employ them*. I argue that we need to create a culture of inclusion for contingent writing faculty by treating them as members of the teaching community, which results in opportunities for professional development open to them as well. Contingent faculty would, of course, appreciate better pay and access to healthcare, which they deserve, and we will continue to fight for it and for other changes, but we also need to work on creating partnerships between contingent and non-contingent faculty that are valuable for all of us who are responsible for teaching writing. We need to research what contingent writing faculty want and need that we can provide to them now.

Contingent employment, which in my work refers specifically to the employment of adjunct faculty and otherwise non-tenure track (NTT) faculty, including fixed-term instructors and non-renewing contracts, is continuing to rise in higher education. Contingent faculty also can refer to graduate students; however, my research does not include that population because much research exists concerning graduate students and their career development needs and wants for professionalization into the field. In English Studies, the 2007 Association of English Departments, Writing Programs, and Divisions of Humanities (ADE) Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing “found that almost 70 percent of composition courses housed within English departments are taught by contingent faculty” (qtd. in Cox et al. 41). Meanwhile, leaders in Writing Studies research and practice face challenges—and responsibilities—associated with the

rising number of contingent colleagues who share our teaching responsibilities but not our job stability. Writing studies must consider ways to include contingent writing faculty in our discipline and offering professional development to contingent writing faculty is one way we can become more inclusive as a discipline. We can invite contingent faculty into opportunities to work more closely with the institutions who employ them—not to further exploit them— but rather, to help them gain access to professionalization opportunities they desire.

My dissertation focuses primarily on professional development for contingent writing faculty because WPAs, department heads, and department members can influence change in professional development more rapidly and easily than others like higher pay and healthcare, which are certainly more important, but less easy to accomplish. Further, department administrators should be (and often are) invested in the hiring and the support of their contingent faculty. By talking to and working with contingent faculty on professional development, department administrators can create a more inclusive teaching and working environment. More importantly, this strategy also allows WPAs to make a stronger case for contingent faculty's improved working conditions as a result. Finally, by treating contingent faculty more like tenure-track faculty, for instance, who want and need to continue to develop as scholars and teachers, we might convince institutional administrators outside of our departments to treat contingent faculty more as professionals themselves and use that momentum to make the argument that contingent faculty should be provided with labor conditions that align with tenured or tenure-track faculty.

Some scholars (who are often not contingent themselves) have spoken to contingent faculty to understand their current working conditions and have found instances where their exploitation limits access to necessary teaching resources that many non-contingent faculty

likely use. Steve Street et al. in “Who is Professor ‘Staff?’” (2012) conducted a survey of about 500 contingent faculty and found that contingent faculty’s ability to access teaching resources, even the most basic information for copiers and library privileges, are dreadful:

Respondents reported the following conditions:

- 47% received copying services less than two weeks before classes started.
- 45% gained library privileges less than two weeks before classes started.
- 38% received access to office space less than two weeks before classes started.
- 34% did not receive sample syllabi until two weeks before classes started.
- 32% received curriculum guidelines less than two weeks before classes started.
- 21% never received curriculum guidelines.
- 21% never obtained access to office space. (10)

Even in the likely event that contingent faculty will not have access to necessary resources and support at their teaching institutions, respondents to the survey told stories of how they work to shield students from knowing the “realities” of contingent employment. One respondent said, “I try not to let the lack of resources/material support affect my students. It does definitely have an impact on my bank account though! I often incur the cost of printing and copying syllabi, handouts, and other materials needed” (14). Another wrote, “I want to engage my students with state-of-the-art knowledge and teaching techniques, but it is mighty hard to do that without support or time-off to cultivate the scholarly depth” (15). The authors say that despite the argument of economics influencing exploitative hiring practices and conditions of contingent faculty, these issues could,

be rectified at little monetary expense to the institution. It would not cost money, for instance, to ensure early access to library borrowing privileges and reserves. It would not cost money to reduce the digital divide between tenure-stream and contingent faculty and to provide the latter with better access to course management systems and software.

And, they add,

The cost of offering orientation to new faculty, of providing access to copying/printing and to departmental computers, would be similarly minimal [...] In short, many of the current structural conditions that define contingent faculty work could be changed with no or with minimal fiscal impact. (16)

While the economic realities schools face may differ (for instance, a private university may not have the same monetary limitations to resources as a public university), the authors make a strong case that economic difficulties are not a convincing argument for failure to provide access to resources for contingent faculty, regardless of institution type.

What can we, educators within writing studies, accomplish to better the working conditions of contingent writing faculty and lessen neoliberalism's ability to exploit contingent faculty? Professional development is an immediate avenue where we can enact change by offering contingent writing faculty more access to professional connections with other contingent and non-contingent faculty. Additionally, we need to change our thinking about professional development for contingent faculty by considering what contingent faculty want. Rather than presuming a once-a-year or semester orientation is the only professional development contingent faculty want or need, we must have conversations with contingent writing faculty to understand their needs and interests in professional development.

III. Professional Development: In Writing and English Studies and Other Disciplines

Professional development is seen as an essential aspect to being an effective educator for many institutions and is often a requirement for full-time professors. Many of us, myself included, are required to submit a portfolio documenting all of our contributions and participations in professional development each year or so. And while some institutions expect (and sometimes even pay for) professional development of adjunct faculty, it was challenging to find sufficient data on contingent faculty and professional development. Colleen Flaherty in her 2015 article from *Inside Higher Ed*, “Developing Adjuncts,” says that adjunct teachers as a population are hard to study because they are “diverse and decentralized.” Despite this difficulty, the University of Louisville conducted a survey into if and how teaching and learning centers (who often provide professional development opportunities) in colleges and universities support adjunct faculty. Fewer than fifty respondents answered, but those who responded indicated that generally, adjunct and contingent faculty need professional development opportunities offered “in the evening or on weekends” because they were less likely to be teaching at those times and days. However, one professional development opportunity is often offered. According to the respondents to the survey, new faculty orientation is consistently offered, though the content varies from “basic introductions to the campus [...] others involve teaching and counseling skills, such as how to respond to students in crisis.” Yet, other opportunities for professional development “vary widely.” According to some adjuncts who responded, some are paid for attending multiple meetings. The study also suggested that community colleges tend to offer more “non-tenure track-specific development” than other institutions. The survey also revealed that, “non-tenure track faculty members tend to appreciate adjunct specific professional development because many are ‘starved for community’” (Flaherty). I experienced this feeling as

an adjunct at multiple universities and community colleges where I felt isolated from other teachers and would have appreciated some opportunities for connection with them—and professional development may have been a useful way to work to connect contingent faculty like me more to the school community. Only two institutions I adjuncted for included pay for and the expectation (and inclusion) of professional development opportunities. Multiple scholars cited in Flaherty’s essay say that because of contingent faculty’s diversity and professional experience they should be the ones to determine what professional development they need. I find myself agreeing—while we (full-time professors) certainly can and should attempt to connect with contingent faculty, I believe it is essential to ask them specifically what they would appreciate for professional development and create opportunities that allow contingent faculty to interact with other contingent faculty.

Professional academic organizations have taken up the issue of higher education’s exploitation of contingent labor, some attempting to find out from contingent faculty’s experiences themselves, too. One writer discussed her research into professional development for contingent faculty. Via a crowd-sourced conversation, Mary Churchill, a writer, activist, educator and administrator, sought to find out professional development wants and needs from part-time instructors before she designed opportunities for instructors. Some respondents said they would appreciate food and pay during professional development activities and one person linked Churchill to Rutgers where part-time lecturers had access to a professional development fund. Many said that they would appreciate information about other jobs that might be open to adjuncts both within and outside of academia, though they often noted how controversial that would be for an institution to offer. Webinars came up numerous times as people discussed how they could attend virtually or would appreciate the opportunity to attend virtually because of

their busy schedules. This information indicates at least some interest in professional development from contingent faculty, though it is important that any opportunities provided need to be meaningful for contingent faculty as well.

When offering professional development, it is vital for institutions to make sure they do not continue to exploit contingent faculty in unpaid labor. In “Part Time Faculty Issues” published in Stanford’s “Tomorrow’s Professor Postings”⁹ eNewsletter, Karen Thompson notes the difficulty in managing work conditions for adjuncts at Rutgers, and the lack of available professional development available. She writes, “Support for professional development should be available to anyone in front of a college classroom,” rather than reserved only for full-time faculty. However, she argues this with the caveat that college involvement, as well intentioned as it may appear, “may be just another occasion to collect unpaid service from those already exploited, but it may also be another step toward revealing the invisible faculty” (Thompson). Careful attention must be paid to avoid further exploitation as well.

An essential aspect of considering what higher education can take action on to better the working conditions of contingent faculty is to listen to their contingent faculty’s wants and needs. Adjunct teachers themselves are also speaking out about their exploitation in higher education and activism by contingent faculty must be considered. The website “The New Faculty Majority” began in 2009 after extended conversations between “seasoned and novice contingent faculty activists on the national listserv adj-l” led to the formation of “a new, national organization to advocate for contingent faculty” (“About Us”). In the group’s mission statement,

⁹ The “eNewsletter seeks to foster a diverse, world-wide teaching and learning ecology among its over 60,000 subscribers at over 950 institutions and organizations in over 100 countries around the world. To date there have been over 1475 postings under the following categories: Tomorrow's Academy, Tomorrow's Graduate Students and Postdocs, Tomorrow's Academic Careers, Tomorrow's Teaching and Learning, Tomorrow's Research.” (Reis)

they write, “NFM is committed to creating stable, equitable, sustainable, non-exploitative academic environments that promote more effective teaching, learning and research” (“Mission Statement”). In the “Goals” section, they list seven objectives for New Faculty Majority: compensation, job security, academic freedom, faculty governance, professional advancement, benefits, and unemployment insurance.

NFM is not the only organization that exists to pursue the end of exploitation of contingent faculty. There are several other national and international organizations that have advocated for contingent labor rights. According to the Organization of American Historians

<p>Tuition assistance: <u>Associate’s</u> degree awarding intuitions (20.6), Doctoral and Research institutions (16.7), Master’s institutions (16.9) Baccalaureate institutions (14.0), Specialized and Tribal institutions (17.0), Unknown type institution (4.0), and All responses (16.0);</p> <p>Teacher development workshops: <u>Associate’s</u> degree awarding intuitions (37.6), Doctoral and Research institutions (24.3), Master’s institutors (27.1) Baccalaureate institutions (19.3), Specialized and Tribal institutions (23.5), Unknown type institution (10.3), and All responses (26.7);</p>	<p>Professional travel support: <u>Associate’s</u> degree awarding intuitions (15.0), Doctoral and Research institutions (11.9), Master’s institutions (12.4) Baccalaureate institutions (17.7), Specialized and Tribal institutions (10.8), Unknown type institution (5.5), and All responses (26.7);</p> <p>Institutional Research Grants <u>Associate’s</u> degree awarding intuitions (9.0), Doctoral and Research institutions (14.5), Master’s institutions (13.7) Baccalaureate institutions (11.8), Specialized and Tribal institutions (14.3), Unknown type institution (4.4), and All responses (10.7). (CAW)</p>
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Figure 1.1: CAW 2012 results

(OAH) blog these labor rights groups include The Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL International),¹⁰ the United Workers Congress, the adj-l listserv, and several unions. Studies have also been conducted by the University of Southern California (2012) to understand the causes and impact of increasing contingent faculty employment, and the Coalition on the

¹⁰ Though, their website has not been updated since 2014.

Academic Workforce (CAW) created a “statistical analysis of part-time faculty,” one of the first to emerge, called “A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty” (OAH Blog). Per CAW’s 2012 report, found in Figure 1.1, specific professional development opportunities were available to contingent faculty using the Carnegie Institutional Type. The study collected a total of 12,612 responses and shows that many institutions offer teacher development workshops to contingent faculty. However, other professional development opportunities like travel support for conferences, tuition reimbursement, and research grants were often not identified as open to contingent faculty. This trend is troublesome because for many contingent faculty whose pay is severely below living conditions, some monetary support would go a long way in giving them the opportunity to contribute their worthy knowledge and experiences to their departments, their institutions, and to higher education in general.

Similar to CCC’s “Statement of Principles and Standards for the Teaching of Post-Secondary Writing,” History’s OAH has published a statement of “Standards for Part-time, Adjunct and Contingent Faculty.”¹¹ OAH’s statement was approved in 2011 and revised in 2014 to organize discipline-wide expectations regarding contingent labor in the discipline. These best practices include “seniority for hiring and pay raises [...],” “access to basic benefits such as health and life insurance, sick leave and retirement plans and unemployment compensation,” and “support for teaching faculty’s professional development regarding teaching, creative activities and scholarship, and support for non-teaching faculty in regard to creative activities and scholarship, both on the same basis as TTT faculty...” (1). It also calls for the “integration of NTT faculty into governance systems” (2). Finally, it

¹¹ The American Historical Association (AHA) links to resources for contingent faculty which includes a link to a joint statement from 2011 with OAH with much of the same information. The page for contingent faculty and part-time faculty resources does not appear regularly updated.

urges all college accrediting organizations and journals and media that list colleges and university by various criteria to include the following in their reports: a) The number and percentage of contingent, full-time temporary, and part-time adjunct faculty members, both in teaching and non-teaching positions; and b) The number and percentage of courses taught by contingent, full-time temporary, and part-time adjunct faculty members. (3)

The OAH appears to continue to work in advocacy for their contingent and part-time instructors and in 2016 released a statement calling for collective bargaining for part-time teachers. With the mountains of information on contingent employment that shows contingent faculty's desire for professional development, why has writing studies not followed OAH, for instance, to enact protections and to work for the betterment of contingent labor in our discipline? If other disciplines can show the importance professional development has for their contingent faculty, and we know it would be beneficial to contingent writing faculty as well as non-contingent faculty, I argue we must push for it.

IV. Neoliberalism, Corporate Education, Contingent Faculty, and Writing Studies

We must find a way to create change in the working conditions for contingent faculty—conditions that help them advance their career interests—and professional development is one way we can become more inclusive. From there, we can increase our efforts to the most important, yet most difficult issues like those of pay and healthcare. Since Cox et al. in the Indianapolis Resolution call for professional development for all faculty, and professional development opportunities are often readily available for non-contingent writing faculty, we can demonstrate the need for professional development to be offered to contingent writing faculty. We can begin this work by asking if access to professional development is something contingent

writing faculty want and if they believe they would benefit from it. Further, departments and institutions would benefit from professionalizing contingent writing faculty, so it makes sense to begin our efforts there. While professional development opportunities do have cost both in terms of time and materials for contingent faculty, WPAs, and writing programs, I was curious to see if this is an immediate way we can combat exploitation of contingent writing faculty and show its benefits at all levels.

Neoliberalism, technocratization¹², and marketization¹³ all influence how higher education institutions operate, from class size growth, additional reliance on student evaluations, to higher rates of contingent employment opportunities and fewer non-contingent employment opportunities. Tony Scott, in his 2016 article, “Subverting Crisis in the Political Economy of Composition,” argues that the exploitative practices of contingent writing faculty aligns with the increase in neoliberal economics and its emphasis of private market interventions (he lists mandated textbooks and assessments as a couple of examples) into higher education. These interventions demonstrate how

technocratization and marketization go hand in hand. Because composition is largely taught by an institutionally contingent labor force without professional status and protections, composition work is particularly vulnerable to technocratization, and the sheer number of courses and students involved makes it attractive to private industry as a market. (14)

¹² Technocratization refers to the belief that public policy like education should be based on scientific “logical” approaches.

¹³ Marketization, in this case, refers to the impact competition and market-based practices have on higher education.

Scott indicts the unwillingness of the discipline to combat Sidney Dobrin's 2011 argument in *Postcomposition*. Dobrin argues that writing studies scholars must “[eschew] the responsibility for teaching of writing altogether and [focus] more narrowly on developing the study of writing as an academic specialization not bound to pedagogy” (qtd. in Scott 15). This, Dobrin observes, would permit writing as a discipline to ““remove itself from questions of contingent labor, questions that have relegated composition studies' primary identity and most of its anxieties to questions of labor and labor management”” (qtd. in Scott 24). The choice to avoid seeing labor issues would not suddenly make writing studies' tangled economy that exploits and marginalizes contingent faculty disappear. Moreover, Scott observes, the political and economic field (including its exploitative practices against contingent faculty) is what allows books like Dobrin's *Postcomposition* (and Scott admits, his article) to be written. Further, Scott says, the exploitation of contingent faculty frees non-contingent faculty from teaching and opens time for research (for books and article publication, for instance). As a discipline, we must find ways to become activists, not only for our own teaching and writing, but also for other teachers across hierarchical levels. We should not abandon these issues to become more theoretical, as Dobrin often seems to argue; rather, we should create “intervention at the level of practice” (33). These interventions should change the working conditions of contingent writing faculty. I agree with Scott that while theory of composition is important, it is not important enough to abandon the “work in composition that both imagines new pedagogies and also explores and actively pursues the creation of the just, ethical work and learning environments that would need to be in place for them to be realized,” especially when continual abandonment will leave contingent writing faculty behind (a problem we already have) as we try to build our discipline's theory (33).

This dissertation aims to identify concrete interventions and activism that will improve the working conditions of contingent faculty by focusing on the real professional development needs and wants of contingent faculty. We need to establish a baseline understanding of what contingent faculty want in order to feel included as part of the teaching community, in addition to their contractual commitments to teaching—and not just assume they want. My research asks contingent faculty what they identify as opportunities they seek or would seek for professional development and how well those opportunities match up with what WPAAs identify as professional development already offered at institutions and available to them, or what WPAAs imagine they could provide. My research explores potential professional development both inside and outside of writing studies to make a case for those opportunities that would best serve contingent faculty’s needs and wants. Finally, I describe examples of professional development opportunities and other ideas for increased inclusion of contingent writing faculty tailored for our discipline to meet contingent faculty needs and interests.

Research Questions

1. What are contingent writing faculty’s professional aspirations, and would professional development opportunities be something contingent writing faculty want and need to achieve these aspirations?
2. What would constitute a culture of inclusion for contingent writing teachers?
3. Can professional development foster a culture of inclusion for contingent writing teachers? And if so, how?

V. Creating the Survey and Interview Questions

Because of the continued exploitation of contingent faculty in higher education, especially in writing studies, and the call for solutions, I study the various kinds of professional

development activities already present in writing departments. I asked contingent faculty what they want and need in professional development opportunities. To perform this research, I collected a list of 28 public and private colleges and universities, and 74 community colleges¹⁴ in the state of Texas who I then contacted through e-mail with a survey tailored to contingent faculty, non-contingent faculty, and WPAs. Next, I posted the survey to the TYCA (Two Year College Association) and WPA (Writing Profession Administrator) listservs to compare how members see professional development for contingent faculty with WPAs/chairs and contingent faculty in Texas responses. While the purpose of the survey is to describe the current state of professional development, I also compare the groups' responses to create themes for change and to understand gaps that may exist. After the survey, I contacted those who indicated that they were willing to be interviewed to find out more information about their experiences and perceptions about contingent faculty and also about professional development. It was essential to not only collect data about contingency, but also to seek out stories from contingent faculty themselves to illustrate the varied lived realities of contingent writing faculty. Through my survey responses and interviews I found that contingent faculty desire meaningful professional connections with other contingent faculty, with non-contingent faculty, and department administrators. Further, I found that each person I spoke with possesses unique experiences that impacted their feelings of connection with their departments and teaching institutions. To help provide departments and institutions with actionable change, my conclusion lists some ideas for more meaningful support and connection for and with contingent faculty.

¹⁴ Some community colleges have multiple campuses with different chairs or WPAs. For the different campuses that appear to have distinct WPAs or chairpersons, I have numbered them separately.

CHAPTER TWO

“Basically, [contingent faculty] are treated the same, except for pay and expectations for tenure, as any tenure track faculty”: The Perceptions and Misconceptions of Professional Development for Contingent and Non-Contingent Writing Faculty

In fall 2017, I sent a survey to the WPA listserv, the TYCA listserv, and e-mailed my survey to English and writing department chairs and heads throughout the state of Texas. I focused on Texas as a local area of research to consider how people in the state where I reside, and where I have done my own adjuncting, experience and/or perceive contingent labor, specifically regarding professional development. My survey aimed to explore how contingent writing faculty, non-contingent writing faculty, and WPAs experience and observe professional development (or do not experience it and observe it). My ultimate goal was to learn what opportunities contingent writing faculty have or do not have with professional development in their departments and to understand what contingent writing faculty want or do not want in professional development opportunities. This chapter synthesizes the responses from the survey alongside prior research to illustrate what contingent faculty have experienced in regard to professional development in writing studies. I begin by reviewing literature from writing studies that explore issues in contingent employment. I provide specific examples of professional development research that has been conducted by other disciplines regarding contingent employment, as well. Finally, I provide specific responses from contingent writing faculty and non-contingent writing faculty, as well as make conclusions about these survey responses and what they mean for writing studies and professional development for contingent writing faculty.

The Indianapolis Resolution by Anicca Cox et al. (2016) not only renewed the call for better pay and access to healthcare for contingent writing faculty, but also called for professional

development to be accessible and available to all current faculty (38). Cox et al. situate the need for higher pay and access to necessities like healthcare as being partially located in response to the issues of neoliberalism,¹⁵ but also in response to specific examples like at Arizona State University (ASU) in December 2014.

In 2014, after many years of full-time non-tenure-track English instructors following an 80-percent workload teaching four classes a semester, and a 20-percent workload of service and professional development, ASU made a significant change. That December of 2014, full-time instructors' positions became 100-percent teaching (five classes a semester) with a "individually negotiated" allowance for professional development and service (55). Soon after the change in course workloads, outrage and activism caused ASU administration to somewhat improve "its workload and salary offer in response to the initial outcry but didn't restore access to service or professional development as part of the base workload" (56). This exemplifies how infectious outrage and anger over working conditions can make some change—and relatively quickly, too. Far earlier than the ASU example, in 1987, a conference attendee at the Wyoming Conference observed, "It is not a revolution we need. It is a resolution of conflict within the existing structures" (Robertson et al. 277). While the resulting Wyoming Resolution may have ultimately failed in its original form to change material realities for contingent writing faculty, it succeeded in encouraging scholarship in writing studies that considers contingent labor issues. In fact, much scholarship has argued for better material conditions for contingent faculty over the years, but problems continue.

¹⁵ Tony Scott writes, "The neoliberalization of composition does not happen through explicit arguments that are more persuasive than their counterarguments; it happens operationally through the transformation of learning environments and the terms of labor of the people who work within them" (33, "Subverting Crisis in the Political Economy of Composition").

Prior research¹⁶ indicates that contingent faculty do not always have access to professional development at their teaching institutions. Professional development usually includes teacher training, workshops, and other opportunities that allow teachers to hone their skills in instruction and even participate in scholarly endeavors. Professional development might include one-on-one evaluation or mentoring, or it might be any number of professional teachers getting together to learn more about the profession. In my research, I found a lack of access to professional development for contingent faculty. The lack of research and discussion regarding professional development for contingent writing faculty was puzzling to me because scholarship about contingent writing faculty often demonstrates that department administrators appreciate and need adjunct labor. Yet, there was little research I found that discussed whether contingent writing faculty were included in opportunities like department meetings, committee work, and workshops. It is not that workshops, department meetings, and committee work aren't happening—for some reason it just isn't recorded where we can access information about it.

Adjunct organizations¹⁷ and other academic disciplines like history have already acknowledged the need and want for professional development for contingent faculty. What is the English discipline or writing studies doing to understand professional development and

¹⁶ See: “Statement of Professional Guidance for New Faculty Members” (1989, revised in 2015), “Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing” (1989, revised in 2013 and revised in 2015), *Gypsy Academics and Mother-teachers: Gender, Contingent Labor and Writing Studies* (1998), *Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies and Higher Education* (2001), “Working Group on the Status and Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty” (2011), and the “Indianapolis Resolution” (2016).

¹⁷ For example, the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW), which serves adjuncts through policy reform and research. Professional and Organizational Development Network (POD) and the New Faculty Majority are two other examples that serve large groups. Organization for American Historians (OAH) and Modern Language Association (MLA) and National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) are examples of organizational members that belong to organizations like CAW. For specific professional development examples see CAW, “A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members,” OAH, “Standards for Part-Time, Adjunct and Contingent Faculty,” AAUP, Cary Nelson, “I Want to Be a Member of a Graduate Student Employee Union Because...,” COCAL International, “About COCAL.”

contingent writing faculty wants and needs? That question grew in me throughout my doctoral education. There are many important arguments made about the betterment of contingent writing faculty's working conditions, yet what has changed for the better since 1987? The answer is not has happened toward changing contingent writing faculty's working conditions—at least that we have recorded. Still, English and writing studies' dependency on contingent writing faculty has continued to grow.

I. Attend and Participate vs. You Don't Exist: Two Vastly Different Experiences I Had with Professional Development

In my introduction, I spoke about how my mentoring relationship with Martha made a great difference in my success as an educator. There, I also mentioned a couple of examples where I felt ignored as a contingent writing faculty member. I want to provide a few examples of how I experienced (and did not experience) professional development as an adjunct because it helps to understand what contingent faculty's experiences are, both present and past. Before I was hired as a full-time professor at the end of the 2010-2011 school year, Martha, who was my supervisor, and I met informally in her office multiple times. Often, we talked about my experiences in my graduate program in the Midwest and she would talk to me about the vastly different requirements in Texas. Our conversations were engaging and interesting, and I found my teaching connected with students more and more as I learned from her. Conversely, Martha would often tell me how much she appreciated my knowledge, since it was also much different from what she had learned years before in her graduate program.

Over time, Martha and I developed a friendship and at the end of the 2010 semester she told me that she might be able to offer me a temporary full-time position for part of spring 2011 while another professor took maternity leave. I was later offered that temporary full-time

position which allowed me an office (with a window!) and much higher pay. I also started attending professional development opportunities and became involved in a dual-credit committee tasked with meeting high school teachers to learn about their unique challenges teaching English literature and writing. The connection and professional relationship I developed with Martha, and my access to professional development at that campus, allowed me the opportunity to move from contingent writing faculty to a temporary full-time position the following school year.

Conversely, at the three other places I was employed: a state university, a different campus of that community college, and a different community college, my experience with professional development was nil. I was never invited to professional development and I never met with my supervisors outside of my teaching evaluations. I felt disconnected from the schools, my supervisors, and my colleagues, and it discouraged me from teaching at those schools the following semester. My professional relationship with Martha and our informal meetings in her office allowed me to grow as a teacher and to become more involved in the college than I would have otherwise.

II. The Question of Professional Development and Contingent Faculty Wants and Needs

We as a field certainly need to find ways to be more inclusive *with* contingent writing faculty—including conditions that work to help them to further their own professional interests—and professional development is a way we can make a difference. The word “with” is an essential qualifier in this endeavor. Much scholarship in writing studies about contingent faculty argues for better working conditions, but when I began this project, I wanted to also know contingent writing faculty’s wants and needs in professional development. Respectfully

and ethically approaching contingent faculty was an essential aspect to this project. While at the time of distributing my survey and conducting interviews I was a graduate student and adjunct, I knew that as a former department chair and full-time professor I needed to keep contingent issues in the forefront of my mind. Seth Kahn writes in “The Problem of Speaking for Adjuncts” from the book *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition* (2017)

A healthy balance between conciliation and candor can be hard to find, but the important principle is to make sure that claims of solidarity are grounded in actual issues on which solidarity is reasonable. Over-claiming solidarity risks the solidarity you’re claiming, and as a result can undercut possibilities for meaningful work. (263-4)

To maintain an ethical and respectful manner, especially with contingent faculty, it is important to hear their voice whenever possible.

Keeping contingent faculty in the front of my mind throughout this process, I also needed to think about how contingent employment is seen by WPAs/department heads/administration at the college or university level. Professional development opportunities do have cost for contingent faculty, WPAs, and writing programs, both in terms of time and materials, but I was curious to see if professional development is an immediate way writing studies can combat exploitation of contingent writing faculty and show its benefits at all levels. If contingent writing faculty identify interest in professional development, we could then demonstrate to our institutions and our discipline why and how professional development is essential for both contingent and non-contingent writing faculty. Furthermore, we could argue that because contingent writing faculty often teach foundational courses to many, if not most, of a college or

university's student population, they should also have access to opportunities to improve their teaching.

Additionally, though arguable, we might be able to work our way up to the most important, yet most difficult, issues like those of pay¹⁸ and healthcare, as we make leeway through professional development to the betterment of contingent writing faculty working conditions. Since the 2016 Indianapolis Resolution calls for professional development for all writing faculty, perhaps we can demonstrate the need for professional development *if* contingent faculty want it by *asking* contingent writing faculty what kinds of professional development they have access to, if any, and if not, if they would appreciate the opportunity to become more involved in professional development. As teachers, one of the goals we have for our students is to conduct relevant, recent, and ethical research; and if we want to remain effective in our roles as professors, we need to value the importance of professional development to stay timely and to best serve our students. Thus, professional development opportunities might be something contingent writing faculty value. Similarly, professional development can add to the knowledgebase of the contingent writing faculty member's institution. Investment in each contingent writing faculty member's access to professional development is also investment in the institution. Lastly, if contingent writing faculty do have access to professional development already, does it make a positive impact on them? Or is professional development just another

¹⁸ According to Samuels, in the footnotes of his book *The Politics of Writing Studies*, that the pay within the University of California system for 3000+ NTT faculty was about \$62,000. He says that the per course pay would be about \$10,000. But the national average, he says, is around \$3,000 a class (155). In my experience in the state of Texas, \$3,000 is on the high side. I have been paid anywhere from \$1,200-\$3,000 per course since 2010. The amount I have been paid is not dependent solely on region: in the DFW area I experienced pay from \$1,800-\$3,000 per course.

expectation adding onto the burden of contingent labor? Each of these ideas and questions have followed me throughout my research for this dissertation.

Contingent faculty must be consulted in decisions regarding professional development. Colleen Flaherty, in her 2015 article for *Inside Higher Ed*, “Developing Adjuncts,” cites Maria Maisto, president of the New Faculty Majority, and Gary Rhoades, professor and director of the Center for the Study of Higher Education. Maisto and Rhoades argue that because of contingent faculty’s diversity and professional experience, contingent faculty should be the ones to determine their professional development needs. I argue that considering the diversity of contingent writing faculty and their professional experiences should guide any department or institution’s opportunities. Considering the diversity and wealth of experience contingent faculty have should be an imperative point to any argument involving remedies aimed at lessening their exploitation. To investigate these ideas and answer the above questions, I set out to conduct a survey and follow-up interviews by asking writing department administrators, contingent writing faculty, and non-contingent writing faculty about their experiences with professional development, what they need and want in professional development, and other questions about teaching loads and obligations. Ultimately, I wanted to know: do contingent writing faculty want professional development opportunities, and would departments and institutions benefit from professionalizing contingent writing faculty? Part of the problem with initiating change is encouraging buy-in from departments and institutions, so if contingent writing faculty want and need professional development, we need to thoughtfully and carefully make the case for support toward offering professional development.

III. Creating and Distributing the Survey

My university required Internal Review Board (IRB) approval for my survey and interviews (see Appendix C). After approval, I sought responses from 74 community colleges and 28 universities and 4-year colleges across the state of Texas. I aimed to survey contingent writing faculty, non-contingent writing faculty, and administrators of writing departments or English departments. Originally, I wanted to target my analysis to specific sites and programs in Texas to see how professional development is seen and experienced at my local level. I researched contact information for community colleges, private universities and colleges, and public universities and colleges. Finding department administrator contacts at each of these institutions took significant time and yielded varying results in participation— for example, one school requested I submit to their IRB and upon doing so I never heard back from the school or the department. Further, I was reliant upon department administrators to forward my survey request to their contingent writing faculty. Most administrators did not complete the survey; however, some forwarded the survey to their faculty. I wanted to gain a picture of how contingent writing faculty in Texas, where I have had many experiences teaching and that has a wide range of different private and public colleges and universities as well as community colleges, view professional development. I also wanted to compare Texas contingent writing faculty responses about professional development with a broader look at national views regarding contingent labor and professional development.

When creating the survey questions, I provided many opportunities for respondents, especially contingent faculty respondents, to expand or explain their answers, or to provide answers in their own words. Kahn continues in the chapter, “The Problem of Speaking for Adjuncts” by discussing the importance in listening: “Another way of putting this lesson, I realize, is to recognize that almost anything we [non-contingent faculty] say is likely an

overgeneralization, or a misrepresentation of at least some of the contingent faculty population” (268). Thus, I was careful to provide “other” options in my survey questions to allow respondents to provide their own input, and not always require them to choose from multiple choices that I provided them. Kahn provides two other key points: “One of the hardest lessons I’ve learned over the years as an activist is not to lose hope and faith when efforts don’t pan out quickly[...].” and “We have to earn *trust* (maybe the most important concept in my entire argument[...]) from the members of communities in which we organize/advocate [...]” (268-9). In order to make suggestions about how to better the professional opportunities available to contingent faculty, it was imperative to gain their trust when asking them to reveal details about their experiences, and I tried to accomplish this by offering places for contingent faculty to describe their own experiences and by listening to them and hearing them speaking for them.

Next, I wanted to understand how WPAs, contingent writing faculty, and non-contingent writing faculty who participated in the WPA-listserv¹⁹ and TYCA-listserv saw and experienced professional development. My goal in soliciting responses from participants in the WPA-listserv and TYCA-listserv was to see if there were any clear threads of agreement or disagreement about professional development and contingent employment from those who had some involvement in these discussions (whether actively participating in the listservs or not). The national view allows me to understand a larger scope of how participants see our discipline and professional development while the more focused scope on Texas allows me to understand a specific area that I have also experienced as a (former) contingent writing faculty member, (current) non-contingent writing faculty member, and (former) department administrator myself.

¹⁹ The survey was distributed in fall 2017 before racist comments on the listserv caused many to unsubscribe in early 2019.

In the first part of my survey, respondents were asked to identify themselves as contingent faculty, non-contingent faculty, WPAs, or graduate students. After their self-identification, each group were given a separate set of questions: contingent faculty a set of questions, non-contingent faculty a separate set of questions, and WPAs a different set of questions. Those who identified as graduate students were exited from the survey. While graduate students are technically part of contingent faculty, they are often studied as a distinct group and I aimed to focus on contingent writing faculty who are under-studied. All contingent writing faculty, non-contingent writing faculty, and WPAs were given the option to provide their contact information so I could follow-up with them in an interview (via e-mail, phone, Skype, Google Hangouts, or Zoom).

Carrie Leverenz, my dissertation director, posted the survey to the WPA (Writing Profession Administrator) Listserv on my behalf and I posted it to the TYCA (Two-Year College Association) Listserv. The survey was open from early October 2017 to early February 2018. For the duration, 141 people completed some of the survey. Upon analysis, two of the people who answered the survey were trolling (providing outlandish/fake answers) and are not included in any of the following analysis. Out of 141 survey responses, 29.1% (41) came from contingent faculty, non-contingent faculty, and WPAs in Texas. The rest of the participants in the survey were from the United States.

IV. Demographic Findings of Contingent Faculty and Non-Contingent Faculty: My Survey and Others

Participants in the survey were often white, female, highly educated, held different

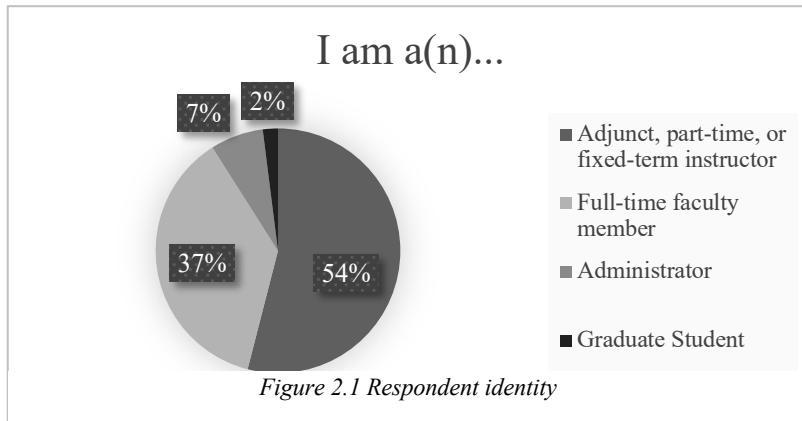


Figure 2.1 Respondent identity

specializations, and skewed toward middle age. Further, most participants identified as contingent faculty. Out of 100 people who answered the question (I am a[n]: full-time

faculty member—either tenured or un-tenured; adjunct, part-time, or fixed-term instructor; administrator; or graduate student), 54% (54) participants identified as “adjunct, part-time, or fixed-term,” 37% (37) participants identified as a “full-time faculty member—either tenured or un-tenured,” 7% (7) participants identified as “administrator,” and 2% (2) identified as “graduate student” (see Figure 2.1). Most of the participants in the survey were contingent writing faculty, followed by non-contingent faculty. I was excited about the greater number of contingent respondents, with the second-highest number being non-contingent because I most wanted to see how contingent writing faculty responded to the survey and how their responses were similar to or different than non-contingent faculty responses. I was disappointed that only 7% of my

responses were from WPAs, though I wonder if some identify first as non-contingent faculty and second as WPAs and I required respondents to choose only one category describing their status.

Research into the national demographics of contingent faculty differed from my survey

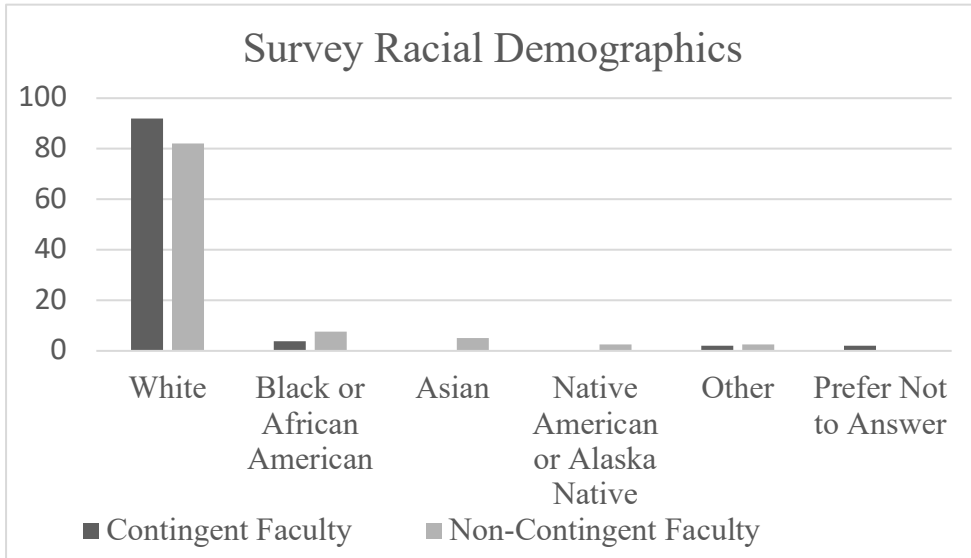


Figure 2.2 Survey Racial Demographics

findings. Ninety-two percent (48) of contingent writing faculty respondents to my survey identified as White, 3.85% (2) contingent faculty as Black or African American, 1.92% (1) faculty as

“Other, (please explain)” and wrote that they identify as White and Cherokee, and 1.92% (1) contingent preferred not to answer. Also, from my survey, 82.05% (32) non-contingent writing faculty identified as White, 7.69% (3) non-contingent as Black or African American, 5.13% (2) non-contingent faculty as Asian, 2.56% (1) non-contingent faculty as American Indian or Alaska Native, and one non-contingent faculty as “Other” and identified as German (see Figure 2.2). According to the AAUP’s report published in 2014, “The Employment Status of Instructional Staff Members in Higher Education, Fall 2011,” “53.9% of part-time faculty are black or African American, 43.6% are White, 45.4% are Hispanic or Latino/a, 25.5% are Asian, and 30.1% identify as other (‘American Indian, Hawaiian Native or Other Pacific Islander, Two or More Races, Unknown, Nonresident Alien’)” (27). Despite the AAUP’s broader (including all disciplines) findings regarding race, my survey found that most respondents were white, which may lead to differences when compared to many of the AAUP’s findings from 2014. That is not

to say that there is necessarily a discrepancy here—I was just unable to find demographic data about writing and English studies alone. De Mueller and Ruiz (2017) conducted a study into perceptions and experiences of 59 respondents made up of WPAs, writing instructors, and graduate students regarding race and their departments/institutions. They write that, “The continued silencing of POC [people of color] scholars and lack of commitment to recruit and keep racially diverse faculty impacts students of color” (35). Perception from white or Caucasian respondents to their survey “were that faculty diversity was not an issue” (35). It is essential to note the makeup of contingent writing faculty responses to my survey in contrast to the AAUP’s more broad findings that suggest more diversity, because the responses from my survey are largely the responses of a white population and does not include a diverse response.

Many contingent and non-contingent writing faculty respondents were 55 and older—both amounting to about a third of the respondents: 34.6-percent (18) of contingent respondents were 55+ while 30.5% (11) of non-contingent respondents were 55+. According to *Science*, a publication by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, some adjuncts have produced legal arguments about age-discrimination after having trouble finding full-time higher education teaching jobs that favored younger applications (Benderly). From the responses to my survey, faculty under the age 55, both contingent and non-contingent, were also similar in age. Twenty-one percent (11) of contingent faculty and 11% (4) non-contingent faculty were age 25-34; 23% (12) contingent faculty and 36% (13) non-contingent faculty were age 35-44; 21% (11) contingent faculty were 45-54 and 22% (8) non-contingent faculty were age 45-54.

According to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW) 2012 report, more than 75% of part-time contingent faculty were between 36-65 years old and more than 70% hold either a master's degree (40.2%) or a doctorate degree (30.4%). Contingent respondents to my

survey indicated that 45.1% (23) hold a master's degree and 21.57% (11) hold 30+ hours beyond a Master's, 23.53% (12) hold a doctorate degree, and 1.96% (1) said they have a bachelor's degree. While my survey did not ask about salary, in many fields experience and education play a large role in salary determination, but CAW found few instances where institutions paid contingent faculty relative to their expertise and education. Further, considering both the CAW data and my survey data, contingent faculty certainly have similar degree credentials to non-contingent faculty, yet there is little difference in compensation for advanced degree-holding contingent faculty (8). This information indicates that, at least for those responding to this particular survey, most contingent writing faculty self-identified as having earned master's degrees and not doctorate degrees and they also have additional specialized training—from MFAs, coursework toward a doctorate or other degree, or are ABD—indicating perhaps some belief in possible upward mobility in terminal degrees, or at least interest in potential educational opportunities.

V. A Word About Community Colleges and Multi-Year Contracts: Why I Do Not Consider Them Contingent

A repeated confusion regarding who is designated contingent writing faculty and who is not was worth considering for my study. I wanted to know contingent writing faculty job titles, for instance, “adjunct professor” is a common job title; however, different schools I have worked at used different titles for contingent faculty and sometimes that had an effect on how I viewed myself. For instance, the community college where I moved from adjunct to temporary full-time, to full-time, to department chair and back to adjunct while I worked on my doctorate degree

called adjunct professors “associate faculty”²⁰ and full-time professors “professors.” Just starting out in my career teaching I enjoyed being labeled “associate faculty” because it made me feel like I was a member of the faculty and included in the college. Most of the other places I have adjuncted simply labeled me as an “instructor” or an “adjunct” and perhaps because that is what I expected, it did little for helping me to feel connected and included. Further, these titles might reinforce how separate contingent faculty are not a part of “regular” faculty. From my survey responses, there were quite a few different responses from contingent writing faculty in regard to their job titles. These responses ranged from adjunct, to lecturer, to assistant professor, to affiliate faculty. Understandably, most respondents, 68.2% (30 out of 44 responses), used “adjunct” in their job title. The second highest title description was “instructor” at 29.5% (13), next, “lecturer” at 27.3% (12), followed by “associate professor” at 6.8% (3) and finally “affiliate faculty” at 4.5% (2). For the purposes of this dissertation, I have considered the following contingent faculty: adjuncts, lecturers, instructors, and affiliate faculty. If a faculty member identified themselves as contingent faculty and associate professor, I also considered them as contingent faculty. But because the title of “associate professor” is also associated with non-contingent faculty, any respondent who indicated that title and also selected non-contingent I categorized as non-contingent faculty.

VI. How Do Contingent Writing Faculty and Non-Contingent Writing Faculty

Experience Teaching at Their Institution(s)?

Higher education often exploits contingent employment, a fact supported by numerous studies over a number of years (ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing [2007]; AAUP [2018];

²⁰ This has now changed—they have begun calling associate (adjunct) faculty adjunct faculty to be more consistent with job advertisements.

MLA [2018]), though of course it is possible to be contingent and not exploited. Community colleges often employ especially large numbers of contingent faculty. Kathryn T. Thirolf and Rebekah S. Woods (2017) write that “nearly 70% of faculty at community colleges teach part-time” (55). Further, it is not just community colleges who are responsible for the rise in contingent positions. Mike Palmquist and Sue Doe write,

Within English studies, faculty teaching courses in composition have been affected most by this growing reliance on a contingent faculty. Nearly 70 percent of all composition courses and roughly 40 percent of all lower-division literature courses are now taught by faculty in contingent positions. (“Contingent Faculty: Introduction” 353-4)

It is vital to know where contingent faculty teach to understand their day-to-day teaching obligations. Responses to my survey mirror Thirolf and Woods’ and Palmquist and Doe’s findings: most contingent faculty teach lower-level composition courses. Contingent writing

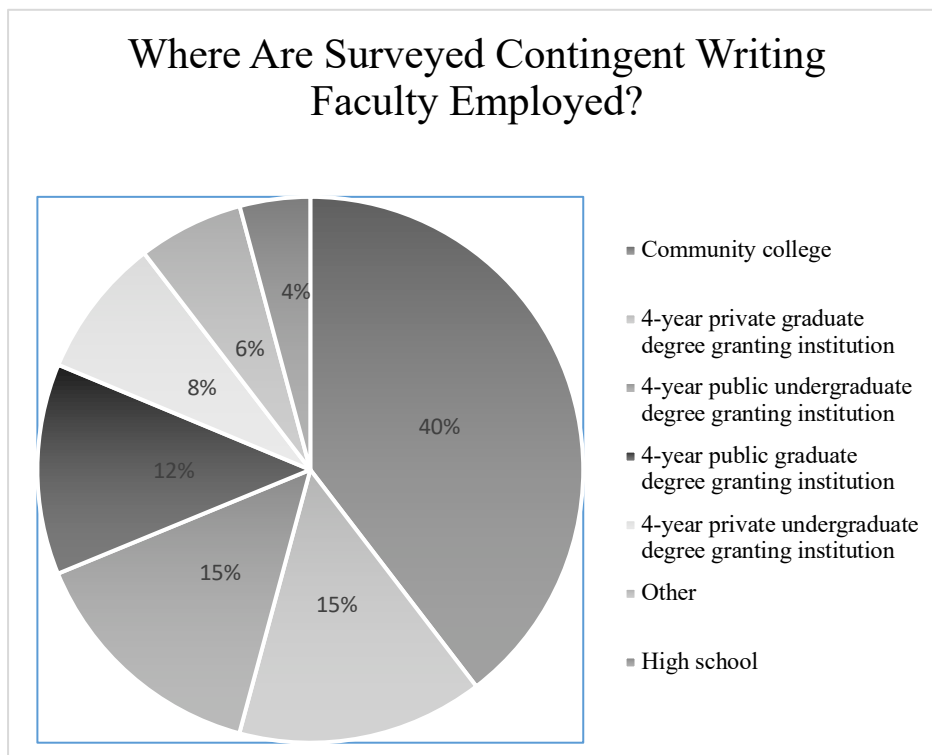


Figure 2.3 Contingent survey respondents’ current employment

faculty who responded to my survey are most often employed at community colleges. Contingent faculty responses to my survey indicated that 39.6% (19) are employed at community colleges;

14.6% (7) respondents at 4-year private graduate degree granting institution and 14.6% (7) at 4-year public undergraduate degree granting institution; 12.5% (6) at 4-year public graduate degree granting institution; 8.3% (4) at 4-year private undergraduate degree granting institution; 6.25% (3) at “other”; and 4.17% (2) at high schools (See Figure 2.3). Most contingent writing faculty selected that they worked at one school when asked how many schools they taught at; however, one interesting difference emerged. Three respondents who teach at 4-year private graduate degree-granting institutions also indicated they teach at three total schools, another at two, and a third person indicated they teach at an MA and a PhD degree granting institution. Finally, one respondent noted that they teach at a community college and two 4-year public undergraduate institutions. While these numbers are too few to more broadly generalize about where contingent faculty work, these numbers suggest that community colleges continue to employ large numbers of contingent faculty. Taken as a whole, 22.9% of respondents to my survey teach at private higher education institutions, and 27.1% of respondents to my survey teach at public higher education institutions. I suggest that any issues contingent writing faculty face are not just a community college problem; rather, it should be a common concern for all in our discipline.

Further, it is essential to understand how contingent writing faculty see themselves as professionals. For instance, Amy Lynch-Binieck (2017) studied the kinds of textbook and writing assignments three contingent and three non-contingent faculty make as insight into their perceptions of “both their freedom to choose materials for their courses and their inclusion in the departmental community” (18). Lynch-Binieck found that

Exclusion from the departmental community may result in faculty being less likely to exercise academic freedoms and participate in professional development. This exclusion need not take the form of open animosity, as this case study demonstrates (27).

This example, from Lynch-Binieck's research, is important because it shows how exclusion, or feeling of exclusion, can impact things like textbook choice. Therefore, I wanted to know what are contingent writing faculty opinions regarding their special skills as teachers and scholars? How does that answer compare and relate to how non-contingent writing teachers and scholars view their specializations? The next survey question asked for detail regarding "additional degrees earned, academic specializations, teacher training, or other relevant information not accounted for in the highest degree or education level achieved questions above." I found that outside of degrees earned, contingent writing faculty also consider themselves specialized—more contingent writing faculty than non-contingent writing faculty described themselves in terms of their academic specializations, teacher trainings, and other skills outside of a traditional terminal degree. A larger percentage, 59.4% (22) of contingent writing faculty responses to the question, gave a description of a specialization (often publishing or teaching certificates)—indicating for respondents to my survey, over half have some qualifications they believe make them specialized beyond terminal degrees. A similarly large number of non-contingent writing faculty, 55% (10) of responses to the question indicated a specialization (these often-included description of doctorate in progress). It is important to note that only 10 non-contingent respondents out of 18 listed a specialization yet more than 18 non-contingent writing faculty responded to the survey. If we look at total respondents for both groups, 42.3% of contingent writing faculty indicated a specialization while 27.8% of non-contingent writing faculty indicated a specialization. Fewer non-contingent writing faculty listed specializations than contingent writing faculty. One would likely believe that the more specializations a scholar has the more likely they would be to find gainful and fair employment, yet it appears that contingent writing faculty are more likely to list specializations, and of course non-contingent writing

faculty, as we know, are more likely to remain gainfully employed in many cases than contingent writing faculty.

Few non-contingent writing faculty provided additional specializations and the descriptions of specializations between the two groups were rather different, though it was not unsurprising that a contingent writing faculty member would believe that publishing a book sets them apart from other contingent writing faculty, while it might be a reasonable expectation for a non-contingent writing faculty member to publish a book as part of tenure-review. Thus, a contingent writing faculty member would list the book as a specialization and a non-contingent writing faculty member would not. However, perhaps this difference also speaks to the kinds of professionalization and professional development requirements for the two different groups: contingent writing faculty find that professionalization and professional development are outside of their usual requirements while non-contingent writing faculty feel that it is a regular expectation of their job requirements and thus do not feel descriptions of teaching trainings they have completed or books they have published are specializations. Brad Hammer, writing for *FORUM*, a special section in *CCC* (2011) that explores issues faced by adjuncts and features research written by adjuncts, says that “Put simply, our professional discourse has moved away from pedagogy to embrace the work, theory, and writings of the minority elite within composition,” away from those “who teach first-year writing and whose disproportionately contingent lives are spent engaged almost wholly in matters of pedagogy” (A2). The move away from professional discourse in pedagogy to production of theory and writing leads to more economic rationale for contingent labor and thus more reliance on specialization in professionalization for adjuncts and contingent faculty.

In the same issue of *FORUM* (2011), Chelsea Redeker argues that we should conduct research into “links between working conditions and the quality of writing instruction using what she calls ‘economic epideictic appeal’” (A15). She writes,

An economic epideictic appeal uses economic terminology and analogies to argue for value based on perceived costs and benefits for a particular goal. Whereas the appeal to utility valued functionality, the economic epideictic argument goes a step further to value both functionality *and* efficiency. (A12).

By arguing for both functionality and efficiency through economic epideictic appeal, we can engage and challenge “the economic rationale used to justify the increase in contingency; however, there are some potential concerns about this epideictic appeal which can be addressed through additional evidence and supplemental arguments” (A13). This research, as mentioned above, would involve linking working conditions of contingent faculty with the quality of writing instruction they provide. I would add to that: we also need to explore the perceptions about the differences between expectations for contingent and non-contingent employment at both local and national levels. This assessment in trends regarding economic epideictic appeal can work as a means of change for the working conditions of contingent writing faculty.

Regarding years of service in teaching, it might be easy to assume that non-contingent writing faculty would likely have taught for longer than contingent writing faculty. After all, many in the general public assume adjunct employment, a main thread in contingent employment, is only for the newly minted graduate-degree-holder before they move into a higher-paying non-contingent position. A recent Facebook post with many comments discussed adjunct pay where I am finishing my doctorate degree. In the comments, many parents (and even some staff at the institution itself) illustrated that common stereotype: adjunct faculty choose to

be adjunct therefore they choose to not make enough money to live in Fort Worth comfortably,

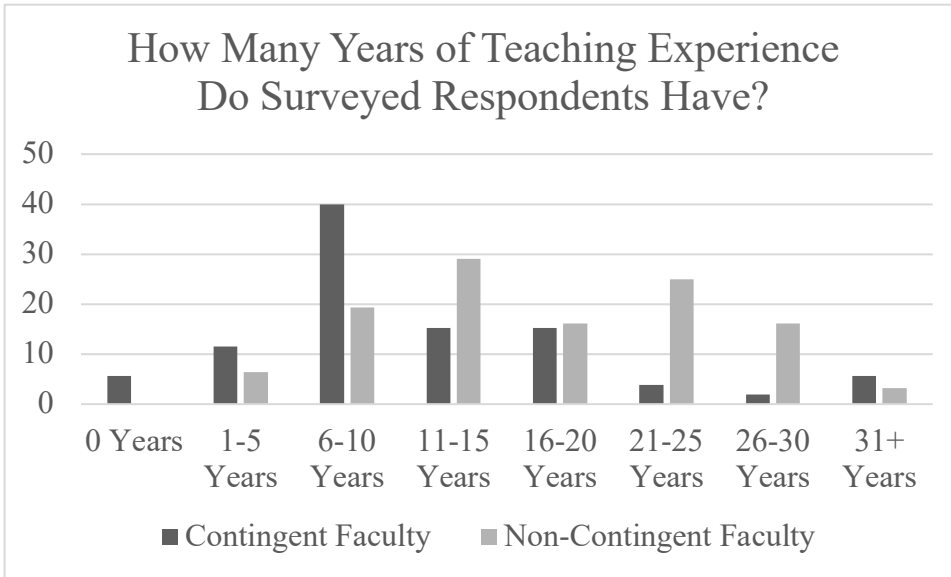


Figure 2.4 Survey respondents' teaching experience

or that adjunct faculty are not worthy of full-time teaching employment therefore somehow deserve below poverty wages. However, as my survey found, most

contingent writing faculty

are not new teachers. Over 40% (21) of contingent writing faculty respondents to my survey have been teaching for 5-10 years, 15.3% (8) have been teaching for 11-15 years, another 15.3% (8) have been teaching for 16-20 years, 11.5% (6) have been teaching for 1-5 years, 5.7% (3) have been teaching for 31+ years, another 5.7% (3) have been teaching for 0 years, 3.8% (2) have been teaching for 21-25 years, and 1.9% (1) have been teaching for 26-30 years. Non-contingent writing faculty followed a more evenly dispersed range of years taught with 29% (10) having taught for 11-15 years as the highest percentage, 25% (9) have taught for 21-25 years, 19.3% (7) have taught for 6-10 years, 16.1% (5) have been teaching for 16-20 years, another 16.1% (5) have been teaching for 26-30 years, 6.4% (2) have been teaching for 1-5 years and 3.2% (1) have been teaching for over 31 years (see Figure 2.4). The 2012 CAW survey found that over 80% of adjuncts had taught for at least 3 years, 55% for six+ years, and 30% for ten+ years. They write that, “These figures suggest that most respondents to the survey see teaching as a long-term, professional commitment rather than something ‘adjunct’ to another career” (9).

Respondents to my survey indicated that more contingent writing faculty appear to be at the front-end of their teaching writing careers, meaning fewer years of teaching experience; however, only 11.5% have been teaching fewer than five years. Since 1986's Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) was implemented in 1994, making it illegal for schools to mandate retirement on tenured faculty, many retirement-age faculty (65+)²¹ remained as faculty. In 1990, 75% of retirement-aged faculty retired from their institutions, however 10 years later in 2000 the number dropped to 30% of retirement-aged faculty (Ashenfelter and Card 958). It was not particularly surprising that so many of those who responded to my survey who are contingent writing faculty have generally been teaching writing for fewer years than non-contingent writing faculty, since there is no mandated retirement age now and the age of non-contingent writing faculty might skew older for that reason. Another important idea here is that while a large number of contingent writing faculty have been teaching for a long time, they also are unlikely to move into tenure-track positions anytime soon.

The next section of the survey examined teaching loads for contingent writing faculty and non-contingent writing faculty respondents because I wanted to understand not only the kinds of institutions that contingent writing faculty respondents to my survey were employed in, but also their teaching loads. Common lore is that contingent faculty are "freeway flyers," or people who travel great distances for their different teaching gigs (e.g., teaching at a community college and a public university), or traveling between teaching appointments within the same college (e.g., teaching dual credit at a local high school and then coming back to the college to teach). I was curious about the differences and commonalities between contingent and non-contingent faculty teaching loads and if only contingent faculty are teaching at multiple institutions. Questions for

²¹ ADEA makes it illegal to discriminate against persons age 40 and over but speaks specifically about those 65+.

both groups (contingent and non-contingent) included how long they had been teaching, the highest number of institutions they had taught at one time, and how many schools they teach at currently.

I was surprised to find that just over half of contingent respondents teach at one institution, according to responses to my survey. Contingent and non-contingent faculty were

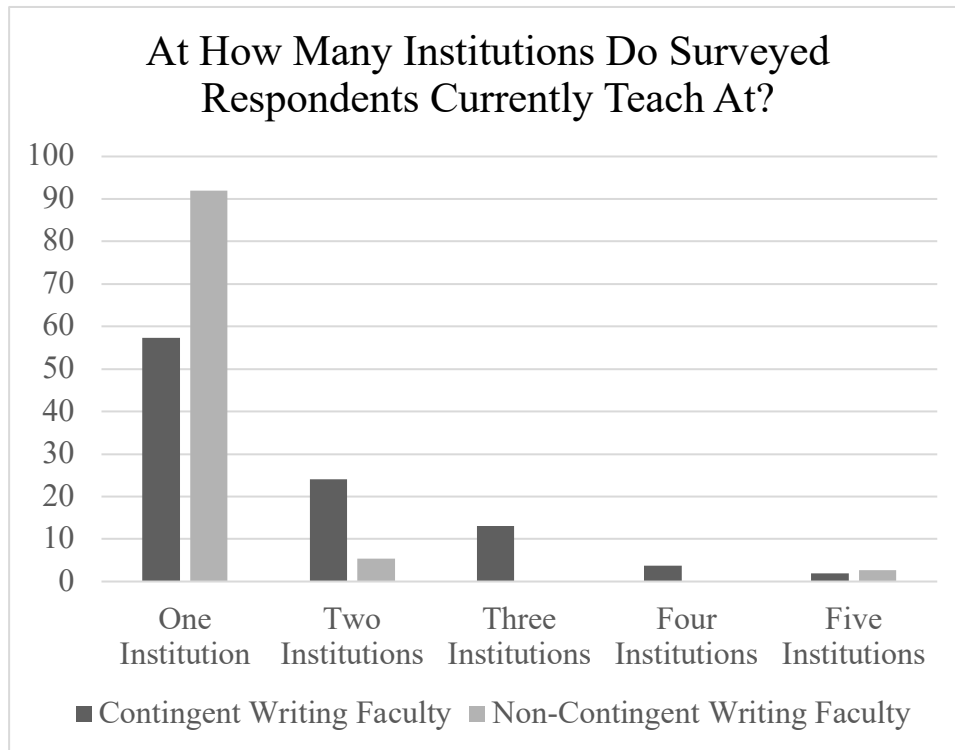


Figure 2.5 Survey respondents' teaching load

asked how many institutions they were currently teaching at: 57.4% (31) of this survey's contingent faculty teach at one institution, 24.1% (13) teach at two, 13% (7) teach at three schools,

3.7% (2) teach at four schools and 1.9% (1) teach at five. These numbers are drastically different from non-contingent faculty, though perhaps this is what one would expect: 91.9% (34) indicated they teach at one school, 5.4% (2) teach at two schools, and 2.7% (1) teach at five schools²² (see Figure 2.5). The 2012 CAW survey data showed that 78% of contingent faculty²³ teach at one

²² A possible explanation for a non-contingent faculty member teaching at five institutions would be someone hired to teach only dual credit courses and teaching at area high schools. At least one local community college employs full-time faculty who do this.

²³ CAW considered "part-and full-time faculty members employed off the tenure track, graduate student teaching assistants, and postdoctoral researchers and teachers" as contingent faculty for the purposes of their study (5).

institution and 22% reported teaching at multiple institutions (9). My survey somewhat relates with the 2012 CAW survey findings—though a higher number of contingent faculty from my survey reported teaching at multiple institutions. Most faculty, regardless of their status as contingent or non-contingent faculty, both in my survey and the CAW survey, teach at one institution but my survey found that higher numbers of contingent writing faculty teach at multiple institutions. However, as CAW points out, these numbers can be fluid because the number of courses a contingent faculty is assigned can change semester-to-semester. Further, regarding CAW's numbers, their survey was conducted during the economic recession crisis (during 2010) and, according to them, that included large numbers of lay-offs for contingent faculty at some institutions while other institutions hired higher numbers of contingent faculty during that time, which could account for the elevated number of contingent faculty who reported teaching at one teaching institution for their survey. Recently, in *The Gig Academy* (2019) by Adrianna J Kezar et al., found that 20 years ago just a fraction of higher education teaching jobs were contingent but that today contingent teaching in higher education accounts for more than 70% of the non-tenure-track part-time and full-time work available (43).

To investigate the question of teaching loads on a more local level I further broke down the results to only look at Texas contingent and non-contingent writing faculty. My initial thought

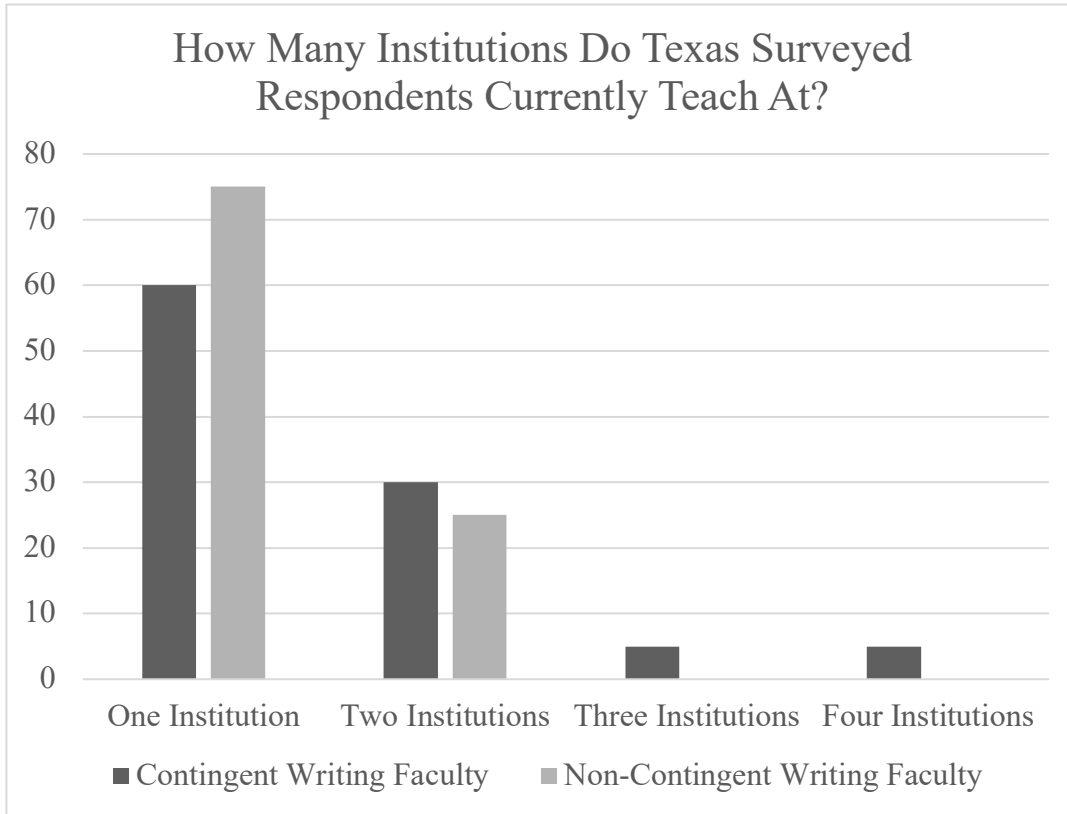


Figure 2.6 Texas respondents teaching institution numbers

was that Texas contingent writing faculty would report teaching at higher numbers of institutions because that has been my experience and the lore that I have heard throughout my career in the state. As an adjunct I made anywhere from \$1000-3000 a class and

often needed to work at multiple institutions. I was stunned to learn that the percentage aligned with the CAW survey findings for contingent faculty: 60% (12) of contingent faculty respondents who live in Texas teach at one school, 30% (6) at two schools, 5% (1) at three schools, and 5% (1) at four schools. 75% (6) of non-contingent Texas writing faculty teach at one school and 25% (2) teach at two schools (see Figure 2.6). Despite far lower responses than the CAW survey, 21 Texas contingent responses, the respondents to my survey at a local level shows that in my state-wide survey response pool, contingent writing faculty do mostly teach at one institution. It is worth noting that a problem the CAW survey encountered regarding questions about the number of institutions contingent faculty taught at and their teaching load

involved their suspicion that many respondents (more than 1,000) exited the survey before they could report on both questions. This is an important finding because much of my understanding about contingent employment in English and writing studies was that they generally work at multiple institutions (which was also my experience, both as a newly graduated MA relocating to Texas and later as a doctoral student supplementing my income). Because contingent faculty largely indicate they work at one or two institutions, they might be more likely to find value in the community and contribution of professional development within their institutions. For instance, it is far easier to attend a professional development opportunity at one school than it is three or four schools. When I was a former contingent faculty member at multiple institutions during one semester, I was invited to multiple professional development opportunities by my supervisor, while at another I hardly received any institutional emails, and no emails at all from my direct supervisor. So, any possible events that I might have wanted to attend at the second institution, I did not feel welcome (and I also did not feel allowed) so I did not bother to ask whether I could attend or not.

Next, I wanted to understand the highest number of teaching institutions contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty have worked at in a single semester. Contingent faculty more often than not are, at some point, employed at multiple institutions: 34.8% (16) of contingent faculty indicated the highest number of schools they had taught at were two schools, 30.4% (14)

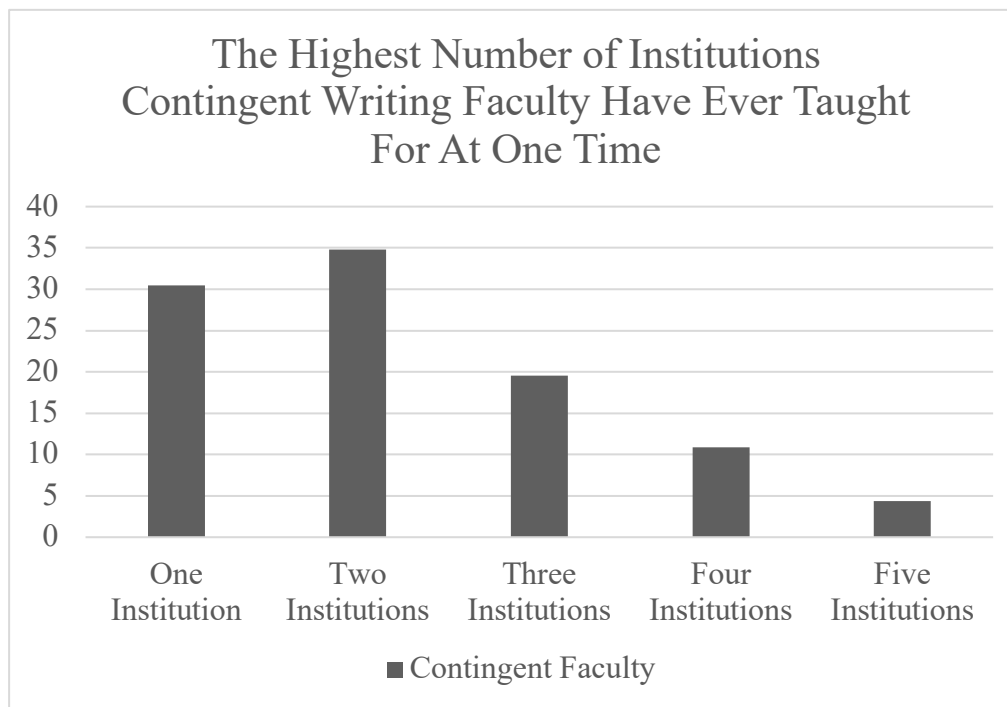


Figure 2.7 Contingent survey respondents' highest number of institutions they have taught for at one time

had taught at one, 19.6% (9) had taught at three, 10.9% (5) had taught at four, and 4.3% (2) had taught at five (see Figure 2.7). As the survey already indicated, contingent

faculty are often “freeway flyers,” referring to the need to teach at multiple institutions to carve out any sort of (often dismal) living wage, and that characterization is accurate even if contingent faculty may not continue to teach at multiple institutions (or, even the same ones) at a time.

Some additional questions arise: what happened between the time respondents taught at multiple institutions? Were they graduate students teaching at their degree-granting institution while also teaching elsewhere to supplement their income? Could they have just graduated, and it has taken time for them to find a higher paying teaching job or a full-time teaching job, so they needed to

find employment at other institutions in the meantime? And what about the 26.6% still teaching at multiple institutions, from the previous question? Or what about the respondents teaching at more than four institutions? Jenny Ortiz in “Post-Modern Superhero: The Freeway Flyer,” writes that

We change classes, campuses, departments, and jobs with the speed and grace of Captain America and Wonder Woman. In our hyper-connected fast-paced world, the Freeway Flyer is a post-modern figure recreating, redirecting, recreating, and redistributing himself or herself to adapt to the given context throughout the day, week, month, and year. (Ortiz)

Indeed, it appears that respondents to my survey are experienced in this post-modern crisis— independent of current status as contingent or non-contingent faculty. Much like in *Moving a Mountain* (2001), where many contingent faculty possess stories about their freeway flying, it appears many faculty in general have these stories.

At one point in my own adjuncting, in 2010, I was teaching two courses for one school (making about \$1800 a class), two on-campus courses for another (making about \$1600 a class), and one at a third school (making \$1200 for the class) all with different requirements and textbooks, just to make ends meet financially when we first moved down to Texas and I was freshly graduated with my master's degree. That \$8,200 seemed like a lot of money to a newly graduated professor, but after necessities like rent, my car payment, and student loans, not to mention the massive amounts of gas I went through driving between far north Texas, Plano, McKinney, and southern Oklahoma (in excess of 364 miles a week), there was little money left. Unsurprisingly, that teaching schedule was hardly feasible by the end of the four months (not to mention driving in not one but two tropical storms that semester). I was burned out from

teaching five courses and all the driving I did so I took a severe cut in pay to adjunct just at one school (though my story became far luckier than many contingent writing faculty’s stories when I was hired to help a professor on maternity leave). Yet, surprisingly, most respondents to my survey also experienced teaching at multiple institutions at some point in their career.

Paid employment outside of teaching is far more likely for contingent writing faculty

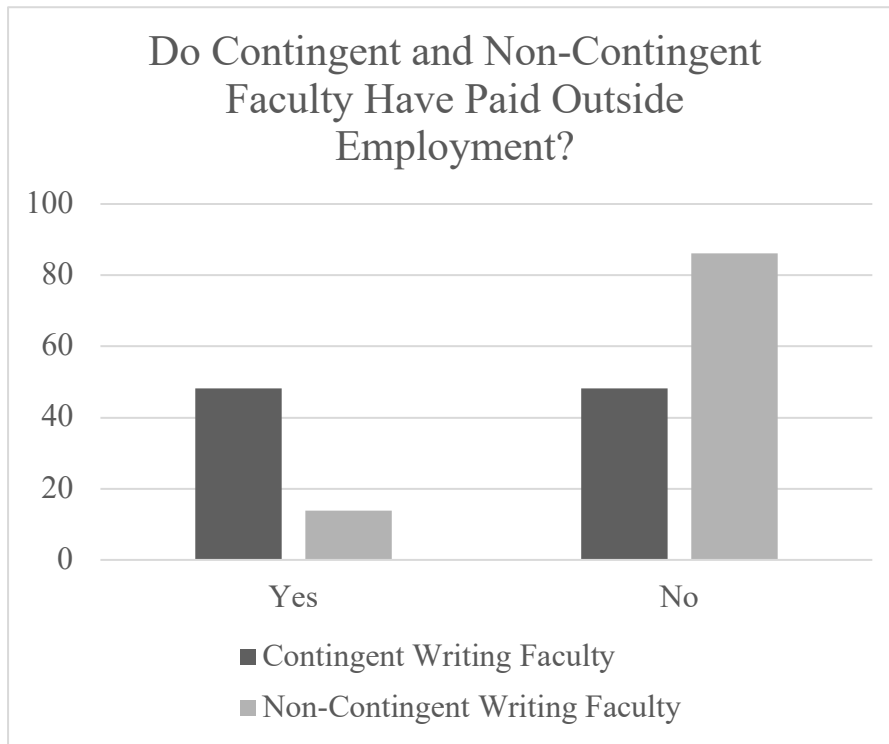


Figure 2.8 Survey respondents' employment outside of teaching

than non-contingent writing faculty. The next question my survey asked if respondents had paid employment outside of teaching. An equal 48.1% (25) of contingent writing faculty answered “yes” that they do have outside paid employment and 48.1% (25) of

contingent faculty answered “no” that they do not have outside paid employment. Most of those contingent writing faculty who explained their pay outside of teaching indicated things like technical writing, tutoring, and freelance work. Contingent respondents also indicated outside jobs that did not involve teaching or writing like cutting lawns in the summer, director at a summer camp, farming, retirement, a government job, and a “full-time job M-F.” Conversely, 86.1% (31) of non-contingent writing faculty indicated they do not have paid employment outside of teaching and 13.9% (5) indicated they do have paid employment outside of teaching

(see Figure 2.8). There were far fewer examples given for those who have outside employment for non-contingent writing faculty, but those who answered gave examples of general freelancing, other teaching, and tutoring. Non-contingent faculty listed no other outside employment than freelancing, other teaching, and tutoring. The difference between outside employment between contingent and non-contingent writing faculty here is perhaps unsurprising—but it begs an important consideration: is paid employment outside of teaching for needed money or other personal fulfillment? One assumes monetary compensation is a likely motivation. Regardless, however, this indicates that Ortiz’s argument about the need for contingent faculty to constantly practice: “recreating, redirecting, recreating, and redistributing himself or herself to adapt to the given context throughout the day, week, month, and year” is accurate with half of contingent faculty, in this survey group, working for pay outside of teaching (Ortiz).

VII. How Do Contingent and Non-Contingent Writing Faculty Experience or Perceive Professional Development?

In the next section of my survey, I asked respondents about how they, whether contingent or non-contingent writing faculty, understand or experience contingent employment both in a broad, general sense, and also how they observe or experience contingent employment specifically at their teaching institutions. To follow up, I asked both contingent and non-contingent faculty about how they experience and observe professional development in their current teaching institutions. I found that there were similarities in how contingent and non-contingent faculty understand professional development in a broad sense, but that difference occurs in actual exposure to and experience with professional development at specific institutions. My first question asked how respondents would define professional development

specifically for contingent writing faculty. Forty-six contingent faculty and 34 non-contingent faculty responded to this question. Most contingent writing faculty answered this question about their own institution rather than defining it generally and while a few non-contingent writing faculty did the same, I observed this pattern in 37% (17) of contingent writing faculty responses compared with only 14.7% (5) non-contingent writing faculty responses. One contingent writing faculty respondent wrote,

In my experience most of the formal, recursive professional development opportunities made available through my department (e.g., teaching observations) have not included situated learning about writing instruction specifically, focusing instead on good "general" classroom teaching practice. However, this is changing following the recent hire of a tenure-track WPA who has begun to establish a collaborative observation pool (that includes only FYC instructors) as well as voluntary bi-monthly teaching workshops focused on assignment design and classroom strategies organized around our newly revised learning outcomes.

This particular response was insightful because the respondent discussed how they view professional development in a general way but also how it applies to their experience in a writing program as a current first-year writing instructor. It also gave me an idea of how that experience has changed over time, for that instructor, from general advice regarding classroom management and teaching to something the respondent sees as more beneficial to their interests with possibilities that might not overwhelm the contingent writing faculty to participate in because the meetings are both voluntary and bi-monthly. This was an important example of a faculty member who sees their contributions as valued and not over-obligated to attend professional development, but yet were welcome to participate.

Another contingent writing faculty member saw professional development as “obvious” but also sometimes “disrespectful”. In their response they wrote,

Concern for the need for professional development is obvious, but the approaches taken can be overwhelming and even disrespectful. For example: no pay for added meetings or programs with required attendance; over-observed, frequently reviewed and even "graded"; and restrictive (no choice or input regarding textbooks, processes, etc.).

This response was important for a couple of reasons: first, the respondent believes professional development is needed—so needed that they write that need is “obvious” and then gives a couple of examples of the ways they feel it has been handled in an “overwhelming” and “even disrespectful” manner. Is the need for professional development obvious though? If so, what about it is obvious? Professional development is an investment for a department and institution, so we might consider the case for opportunities that include contingent writing faculty because, if nothing else, they teach a large number of students at many institutions. Investment in professional development for contingent writing faculty is an investment in student success, for instance. I am curious to know how textbook choice is related to professional development. While I agree that being told which book any professor *must* use is a problem for academic freedom, and also an indication that faculty are not *trusted* to make professional decisions in their classroom, this sounds more like attempting to police and standardize classroom content rather than offer professional development to contingent writing faculty. However, this respondent is absolutely correct in identifying the disrespect we show contingent writing faculty when we require meetings or programs with no additional pay that are not explicitly stated in an employment contract. Finally, I am curious to know what rationale a college or university would have for grading a contingent faculty member on his or her teaching and how that is

accomplished. Grading contingent faculty for their teaching could be considered a reinforcement in hierarchical status and as a devaluing of the professional and treating them more as a learner than as an expert qualified to teach others.

Non-contingent faculty responses that speak specifically about their departments regarding professional development varied slightly from their contingent counterparts. The question I asked them was the same as contingent faculty: “How would you define professional development for contingent writing faculty?” Most non-contingent respondents gave a positive assessment of how they see professional development for contingent faculty—perhaps an overly rosy picture of what non-contingent faculty think and say rather than how they (as non-contingent faculty) behave or how they think about contingent faculty. For instance, one non-contingent faculty member wrote, “Our FYW Program offers three staff development sessions each semester that are open to part time faculty but are not required. Our Teaching and Learning Center also offers lots of programming to all faculty.” While not quite specific, this response sounds like the department and institution provides a number of opportunities for contingent faculty if they voluntarily want to participate. Another response from a non-contingent writing faculty member answering how they observe professional development for contingent writing faculty in their department stated, “This would involve faculty making an effort to stay current in their disciplines or continuing additional education to refresh credentials.” While I cannot assume to know exactly what the non-contingent writing faculty meant in their response, their answer reads as a critique on contingent writing faculty potentially not keeping current in the field and it being their obligation to do so. I am unsure how else I might read “this would involve faculty making an effort,” but perhaps the respondent meant it as an act already in motion. Regardless, it became clear to me that those contingent and non-contingent writing faculty who

responded to this question see professional development for contingent writing faculty quite differently—and part of this likely stems from hierarchical role differences in their departments.

Next, I wanted to understand what, if any, professional development is available for contingent and non-contingent faculty. When asked to describe if any professional development is open to both contingent and non-contingent faculty, the contingent responses and non-contingent responses were varied in descriptive language to the question about what kinds of professional development are offered to contingent writing faculty (if it is offered to them): most respondents who answered the question indicated they are offered conferences (8 contingent, 11 non-contingent), teaching related activities (8 contingent, 5 non-contingent), workshops (9 contingent, 8 non-contingent), and meetings (5 contingent, 2 non-contingent). A few contingent faculty (4) also evaluated these professional development as “almost non-existent,” “minimal,” “pathetic,” and “terrible” with very little detail to learn more about these beliefs regarding professional development. For instance, one contingent faculty member wrote, “Pathetic; nonexistent on any level of meaningfulness.” From my own experience I can give some insight regarding minimal or no professional development. One school, a private university, for whom I adjuncted a few semesters, never once observed my teaching or offered a semester or yearly department orientation. Students filled out evaluations, but I was never given access to them. I like to review evaluations each semester to improve my teaching for the following semester and as a result I had a difficult time discerning what to cut, improve, or add for each semester. This lack of connection with the department left me feeling unvalued as a part of the department.

The next questions in the survey were meant to investigate professional development as faculty experience at their current institutions. I found that most contingent and non-contingent writing faculty have a general understanding of professional development regardless of their

participation. I began by asking respondents what kinds of offered professional development, for both contingent and non-contingent writing faculty, they had participated in sometime over the past five years at their institutions. Respondents were able to choose multiple options for this question. Most contingent writing faculty answered that they participated in workshops (38), teaching observations (formal and informal) (37), semester/school-year orientations (34), voluntary committees (23), special speakers (21), and brown bags (18). Non-contingent writing faculty answered in a similar manner with workshops (30), voluntary committees (29), teaching observations (formal and informal) (29), semester/school-year orientations (24), special speakers (20), and brown bags (18). Contingent faculty and non-contingent writing faculty answered, too, regarding the kinds of professional development they have participated in over the past five years at their current teaching institution(s) with differences about committee work, which was fourth for contingent writing faculty and second for non-contingent writing faculty. This particular difference is likely due to things like contract obligations and tenure-review for non-contingent faculty.

Next, I asked respondents to identify opportunities of professional development that are available at their institutions, but in which they do not participate. This question had fewer responses, which may indicate that people typically believe they participate in what they are offered, if they are offered professional development, or they might not be aware of professional development offered to them. Contingent faculty answered the highest on not attending workshops (5), and brown bags (2), along with special speakers (2). Non-contingent writing faculty answered highest on not attending brown bags (3), voluntary committees (3), and webinars, semester/school-year orientations, teaching institutes, 1-to-1 consultations, teaching observations (formal/informal), and workshops (2 each). The few responses I received about

professional development that faculty, but especially contingent writing faculty, chose not to participate in might be an example of Lauren Berlant's *cruel optimism*,²⁴ which she says is "the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object," in this case, at least, perhaps the promise of fulfillment and professionalization into a secured employment position or the continuation of that employment position (94). In her book, *Cruel Optimism* (2011), Berlant expands upon how "optimistic" relations become cruel: "They become cruel only when the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially" (1). For instance, participating in professional development is not itself cruel optimism but participating in professional development hoping to eventually become employed full-time as a result demonstrates cruel optimism because it is unlikely. Further, another possible explanation for this lack of response is because faculty may find the topics uninteresting, or perhaps not truly accessible. I also found the unpopularity of brown bags rather surprising because they seemed to proliferate my inbox (prior to the pandemic). According to my survey, maybe lunchtime professional development (which are often called brown bags because people bring their own lunch to the meeting) is not the best time to offer professional development. Or maybe departments can consider offering lunch rather than expecting people to bring their lunch to professional development if it is offered during lunch time.

²⁴ "'Cruel optimism' names a relation of attachment to compromised conditions of possibility whose realization is discovered either to be impossible, sheer fantasy, or too possible, and toxic." (94).

Generally, contingent and non-contingent writing faculty seem to have access to some type of professional development at their teaching institution(s), but I was curious to know what specific kinds of professional development contingent and non-contingent writing faculty can access currently at their institutions. I asked, “What other kinds of professional development are available to you at the institution(s) you teach at? Check all that apply.” For the most part, contingent and non-contingent faculty provided similar answers. Travel support to conferences was the highest selections for both groups—33.9% (19) for contingent faculty and 39% (32) for non-contingent faculty. However, the second highest for contingent faculty differed from non-contingent faculty: 23.2% (13) contingent faculty indicated tuition reimbursement while 17% (14) non-contingent faculty indicated tuition reimbursement, making tuition reimbursement more likely for contingent faculty than non-contingent faculty. The next highest response from contingent faculty was “other” at 17.9% (10). When contingent faculty elaborated on what they

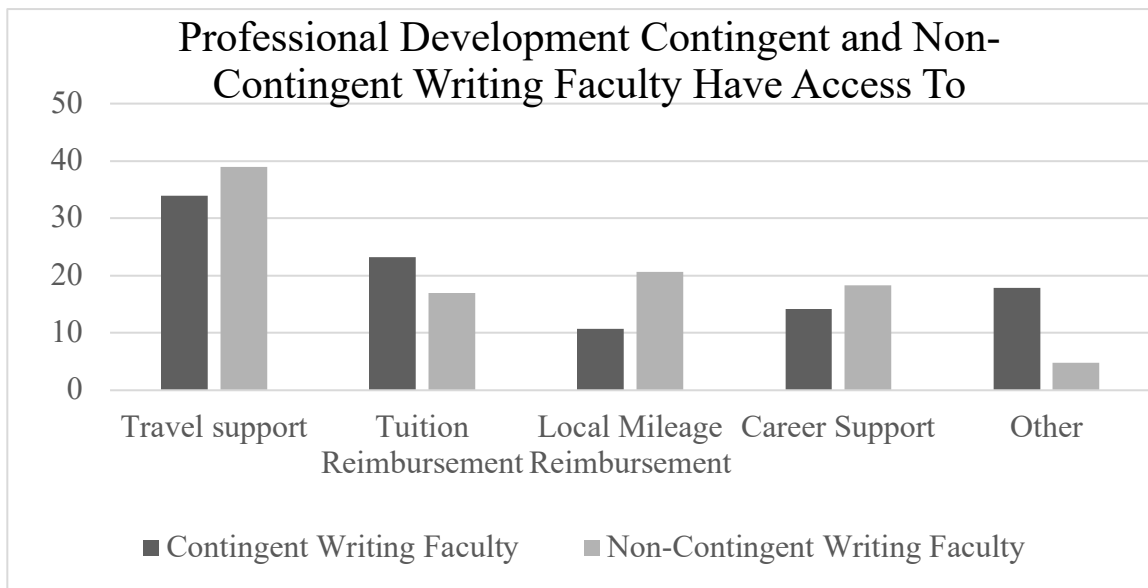


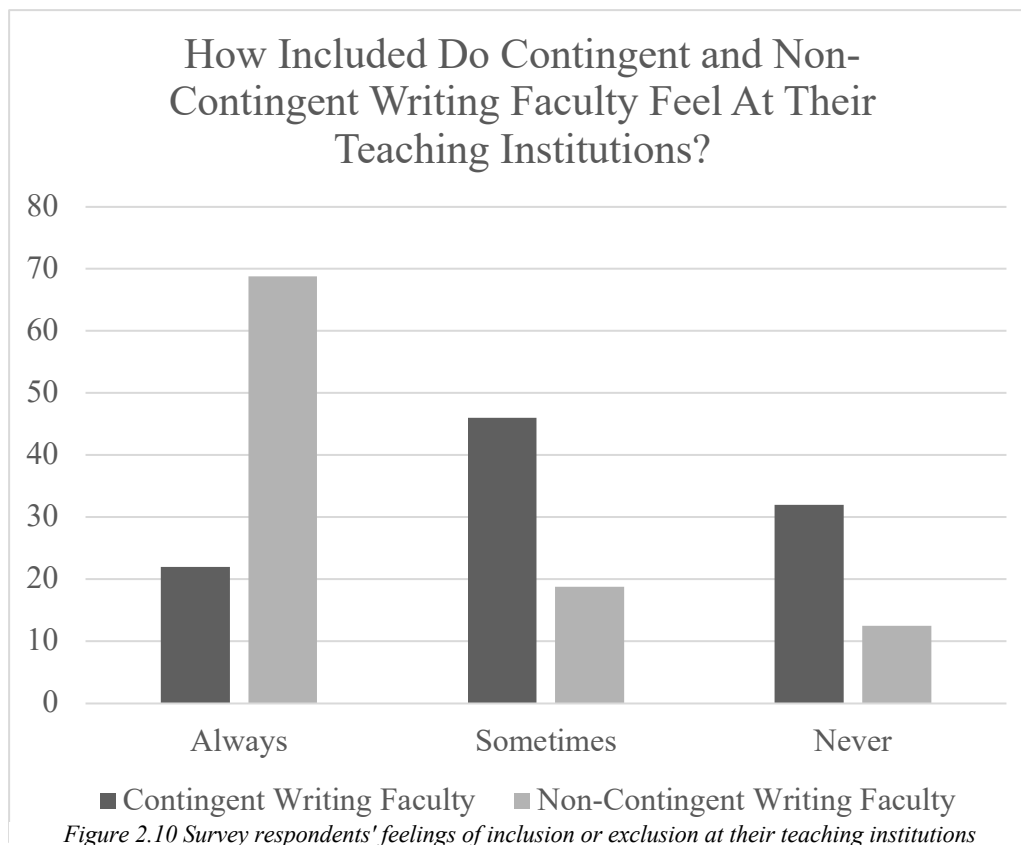
Figure 2.9 Survey respondents' access to professional development

meant by “other” in regard to professional development available to them, one wrote they had access to

health care (though this is not professional development), free courses at the college (1), and grants for research (1); and some answered that they had no professional development available

to them (5). Non-contingent faculty who answered “other” were quite fewer, only 4.8% (4) of non-contingent faculty gave examples of professional memberships or sabbatical opportunities. Only 10.7% (6) of contingent respondents indicated they get local mileage reimbursement while 20.7% (17) of non-contingent writing faculty have access to local mileage reimbursement. Despite that contingent faculty from my survey are generally freeway flyers, few contingent respondents have mileage reimbursement compared with non-contingent faculty. Finally, in my response group, 14.2% (8) of contingent faculty have access to career support (creating and revising professional documents) while 18.3% (15) of non-contingent faculty surveyed have access to career support (see Figure 2.9). It seems few contingent and non-contingent faculty have access to career support at their institutions—perhaps because we assume that teaching and research are supported in other ways, like through other professionalization—brown bags, workshops, for instance.

I also wanted to know to what extent respondents felt included as a member of the teaching community at their teaching institution(s). Whether contingent writing faculty feel included as a member of their teaching institution may be linked with participation in professional development. After all, if someone does not feel included they might not feel welcome to attend, and if they do attend, they might not feel welcome to participate. At least for my experience as a contingent writing faculty member, I did not attempt to participate in professional development opportunities if I did not feel like I was a member of the community. A larger percentage, 46% (23) of contingent writing faculty felt some variation of “sometimes” included at their teaching institution(s), 32% (16) felt not included at all, and 22% (11) felt “always” included. Conversely, 68.8% (22) of surveyed non-contingent writing faculty felt “always” included as a member of the teaching community, 18.8% (6) felt “sometimes”



included, and 12.5% (4) felt excluded (see Figure 2.10). These numbers are not surprising, and the ways contingent writing faculty and non-contingent

writing faculty described their feelings of inclusion/exclusion were different. One contingent writing faculty member wrote,

I've been at this college for about 24 years and have won two teaching awards. I am held in high regard by my colleagues and students, but the university itself does not recognize nor appreciate my contributions. I feel more like a temporary worker - I have no job security and live semester to semester.

Another wrote,

Like Bob Seger says, "I feel like a number." I know I'm essential to the department as a writing instructor, but I do not feel my knowledge and expertise is valued by administrators outside of the English department. I am one of about 70 adjuncts on both campuses where I teach.

Yet another contingent writing faculty respondent wrote, “I feel like the ‘new guy,’ somewhat left out or misunderstood.” One last contingent respondent said, “I am certainly on the periphery, but I do feel as if I am included where I can be. For the most part, the labor structures are economic, not social or intellectual.” A much larger percentage of non-contingent writing faculty feel included in their institutions than contingent writing faculty. Each of these contingent individuals who responded in detail referred to feeling like an outsider in some way.

Non-contingent writing faculty had a different rationale on their inclusion, often using their hierarchical status as a descriptor for their inclusion. For example, “I’m a full-time faculty member with tenure and I feel fully included.” Another, “Very much so, but I’m a WPA.” Finally, “I’m TT, so I feel very included as a part of the teaching community.” Returning to Berlant’s argument about cruel optimism, I think cruel optimism is evident in non-contingent writing faculty who answered they feel included based on their status within their department or institution and they listed no other reasons for those feelings—that because the respondents belong to non-contingent faculty as a group, they are automatically included, and that non-contingent faculty who do not, and who do not feel they belong, have not completed the requirements to become part of their status. The view of inclusion based solely on their status as tenure-track or as a WPA, as these non-contingent respondents indicate, relies on justification of their inclusion on title. For non-contingent writing faculty, their experience demonstrates cruel optimism in that they might participate in professional development believing that it can gain them entrance into non-contingent faculty. This is problematic because it allows non-contingent faculty to essentially blame contingent faculty for being part-time and it perpetuates the myth that if contingent faculty just “do more” they can themselves become non-contingent. The issue of cruel optimism in hierarchical status suggests that it is important to consider inclusion along

with all faculty statuses. For contingent writing faculty, this also demonstrates why they might not feel included.

Regardless of whether contingent writing faculty respondents indicated they felt included or excluded, they pointed to specific reasons rather than titles and positions they hold. Berlant continues later in her essay, “Optimism, even under the racial mediations of experiencing entrenched capitalist inequalities in the United States, involves thinking that in exchange [for hard, and perhaps debilitating, harmful, exhausting, work] one can achieve recognition” (111). But she asks, what is that recognition? That is an important question to ask here as well. For non-contingent writing faculty is that recognition gained in their success in having moved up the ranks to tenure-track or to multi-year contracts (if they want it)? Certainly, just by being non-contingent writing faculty they are receiving a recognition that they should not be contingent. For contingent faculty is recognition as Berlant discusses more in a general sense of inclusion in the department? I believe that cruel optimism is a vital consideration for changing contingent and non-contingent status and feelings of inclusion and recognition. Professional development could allow contingent faculty to believe that their participation is valued, their voice heard, their contributions accepted, and not just left wondering “Why am I here?” or that their only significance or purpose is to contribute to teaching and nothing else. Any professional development opportunities offered to contingent faculty must not perpetuate cruel optimism nor should it solely link professional development and contingent faculty with economic outcomes.

VIII. Professional Development and Contingent Faculty

The final set of questions for both contingent writing faculty and non-contingent writing faculty sought out answers about professional development that respondents, both contingent and non-contingent, thought could be offered to contingent writing faculty and the circumstances

those offerings would need to include to be feasible for contingent writing faculty participation. Both contingent writing faculty and non-contingent writing faculty anticipated similar conditions that are necessary for offering professional development to contingent writing faculty. The survey asked, “In your view, what conditions would need to be in place for [professional development] opportunities to be offered to contingent faculty? Check all that apply.” Percentages are reported below along with the number of times contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty selected the responses.

Compensation for attending professional development

Contingent faculty 24.2% (31)

Non-contingent faculty 22.6% (24)

Higher salary

Contingent faculty 19.5% (25)

Non-contingent faculty 21.7% (23)

A time/place that would work for contingent faculty

Contingent faculty 17.2% (22)

Non-contingent faculty 16% (17)

Access to campus support services like a writing center, health center, free parking, etc.

Contingent faculty 10.2% (13)

Non-contingent faculty 4.7% (5)

Technology available (like Word Suite, Adobe Products, etc.)

Contingent faculty 7.8% (10)

Non-contingent faculty 4.7% (5)

Contingent faculty are already included in all professional development

Contingent faculty 7% (9)

Non-contingent faculty 8.5% (9)

Building space that is not necessarily available

Contingent faculty 7% (9)

Non-contingent faculty 4.7% (5)

Other

Contingent faculty 4.7% (6)

Non-contingent faculty 6.6% (7)

Food

Contingent faculty 2.3% (3)

Non-contingent faculty 10.4% (11)

Non-contingent writing faculty answered this question similar to contingent writing faculty—but the largest discrepancy was about food. Only 2.3% (3 respondents) from among surveyed contingent faculty said food was needed while 10.4% (11) of non-contingent faculty said food was needed for contingent faculty to participate. While I cannot draw conclusions about food because I did not anticipate this discrepancy, I wonder if a) food is already offered at meetings

and thus irrelevant, b) contingent faculty are unaware that food is sometimes served at some college/university meetings, or what I expect is probably more likely—that c) food just is not a motivating factor when it comes to professional development *for contingent faculty*. I have certainly heard my fair-share of full-time faculty lamenting the lack of snacks and coffee at meetings and professional development, but perhaps this is not a necessity for contingent writing faculty (and it is probably not a high-list priority, either). Why do non-contingent writing faculty think that food is an important factor for encouraging contingent writing faculty attendance in professional development opportunities? Do they perhaps underestimate the other reasons contingent writing faculty might want or need to participate in professional development? According to Maria Maisto, in “Developing Adjuncts” (2015),

“unless there is a union or professional association that is actively working to identify what is most needed and working to get the appropriate funding, most institutions give lip services to professional development or provide programs into which contingent faculty themselves have little input” (qtd. in Flaherty).

Rather than giving lip-service, conversations with contingent faculty about professional development is important and the responses to this question demonstrate one reason why. In the next chapter I discuss interviews with contingent writing faculty members to find out more detail about their experiences with professional development.

Contingent faculty are interested in professional development that works for their needs

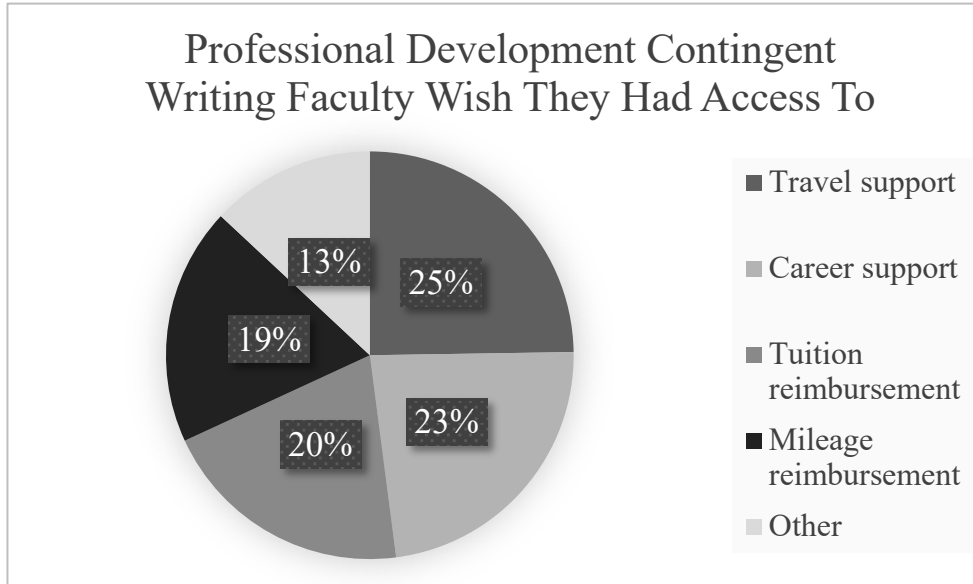


Figure 2.11 Contingent survey respondents' wishes for professional development

and wants—and this should not prove hard to provide in some cases. Along the same lines, the following two questions asked what respondents wish were available to

them and what would need to be in place for contingent faculty to be included. The first question asked, “What other kinds of professional support do you wish were available to you at the institution(s) you teach at? Check all that apply.” Contingent faculty ranked travel support to conferences and professional meetings the highest—22.2% (25), followed by career support at 20.8% (16), then tuition reimbursement assistance at 18.1% (14), mileage reimbursement at 16.9% (13), and other (health insurance, incentives to publish were a couple of examples given) at 11.7% (9) (see Figure 2.11). In the comments, one contingent writing faculty wrote, “I have lots of wishes. Needs more important” under “other” which was a fair observation—but not particularly useful for understanding what contingent writing faculty would like for professional support in an ideal situation. What needs does this respondent have? How can we meet those needs? Without knowing the respondent’s needs, there is no way to fully understand their experiences or perceptions. Regardless, these are questions that departments and institutions need to ask to learn more about how to better serve their contingent faculty.

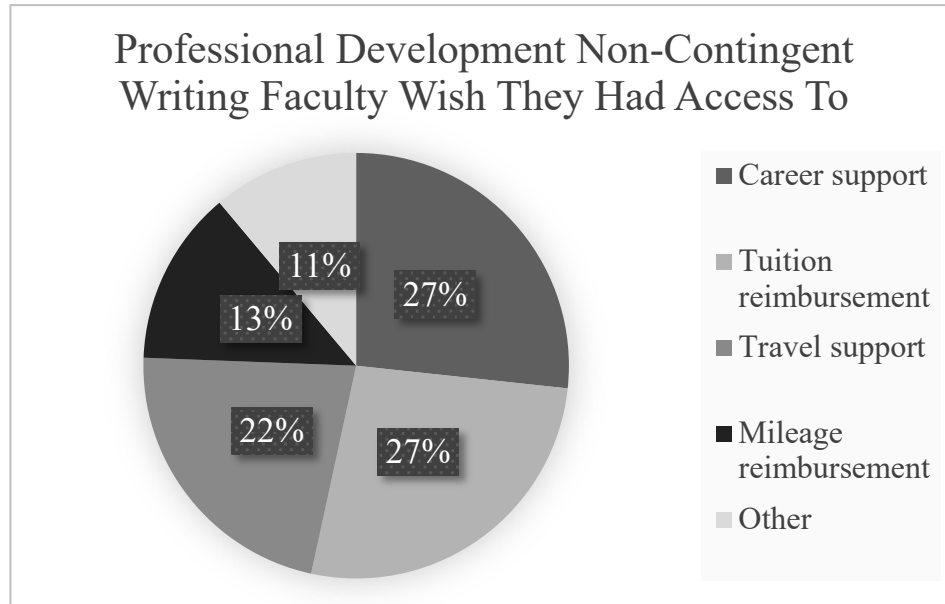


Figure 2.12 Non-contingent survey respondents' wishes for professional development

Non-contingent writing faculty respondents ranked career support and tuition reimbursement equally first at 26.7% each (12 responses each), followed by travel support to conferences/professional meetings at 22.2% (10), mileage reimbursement at 13.3% (6), and other (free parking,²⁵ release time to write grants and conduct research, and book funds were a few examples given) at 11.1% (5) responses (see Figure 2.12). There was not much of a difference between what contingent and non-contingent writing faculty wished they had for professional support—they all selected travel support to conferences/professional meetings, tuition reimbursement, and career support in the top three wishes—just in a different order. This similarity in wants for professional development might make it simpler to include contingent writing faculty in opportunities that already exist for non-contingent writing faculty.

²⁵ I am not sure that free parking qualifies as professional development in any way; however, this is an example of why providing “other” as an option for response was important for my research. Allowing “other” provides respondents the opportunities to interpret questions as they see them and also allows me to understand ideas that would not have occurred otherwise.

The following question was similar to the question above about conditions for professional development that could be offered to contingent writing faculty; however, I also wondered if there would be a difference in what contingent faculty surveyed *perceived* they would need to have access for their *wishes* in professional development offerings. I wanted to compare their responses with how non-contingent faculty respondents perceived what contingent writing faculty needed to have access to professional development *wishes*—the conditions that might not be available and that faculty do not think are possible at this time. I asked, “In your opinion, what conditions would need to be in place for these [professional development wishes] to be offered to contingent writing faculty? Check all that apply.”

Compensation for attending professional development

Contingent faculty 26.1% (18)

Non-contingent faculty 18.7% (14)

Higher salary

Contingent faculty 20.3% (14)

Non-contingent faculty 20% (15)

A time/place that would work for contingent faculty

Contingent faculty 16% (11)

Non-contingent faculty 17.3% (13)

Access to campus support services like a writing center, health center, free parking, etc.

Contingent faculty 8.7% (6)

Non-contingent faculty 5.4% (4)

Technology available (like Word Suite, Adobe Products, etc.)

Contingent faculty 5.8% (4)

Non-contingent faculty 5.3% (4)

Contingent faculty are already included in all professional development

Contingent faculty 5.8% (4)

Non-contingent faculty 5.3% (4)

Building space that is not necessarily available

Contingent faculty 7.3% (5)

Non-contingent faculty 8% (6)

Other

Contingent faculty 8.7% (6)

Non-contingent faculty 10.7% (8)

Food

Contingent faculty 1.5% (1)

Non-contingent faculty 9.3% (7)

The option “other” was selected by 8.7% (6) respondents and they answered, “willingness to support contingent staff fully,” “budget,” “the person in charge needs to remember to do these things,” and “I don’t understand the question—what needs to be in place is for the school to

recognize our value.” The option “other” was selected by 10.7% (8) of non-contingent respondents, with answers like, “more money devoted to faculty and faculty needs,” “again, bigger department budget to fund these items,” and “administrators caring about contingent faculty.” It appears, based on responses to the “other” option that contingent faculty do have conditions that are important to meet, but that respect and recognition are among those that are necessary for them to participate more in professional development.

Revisiting the food issue, again, there is a disconnect regarding professional development and contingent writing faculty with only 1.5% of contingent writing faculty selecting food as a necessary condition for them to participate. Yet, almost 10% of non-contingent writing faculty selecting it as a necessity for contingent faculty to participate in professional development. The other significant disconnect between contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty was compensation as part of professional development offerings for contingent writing faculty. Contingent faculty selected compensation almost 10% more often than non-contingent writing faculty. It appears that contingent writing faculty would prefer some compensation to attend professional development and that may not be too much of a stretch. One state-school I have adjuncted for in the past offered three professional development opportunities a semester and required adjuncts to attend at least two. If I attended two opportunities each semester (for a total of four), I received a small stipend (\$100) from the school’s Teaching and Learning Center. This small stipend encouraged me to attend once a semester despite the long drive in. A community college I also adjuncted for offered a \$300 stipend for the year if we participated in a certain number of professional development hours. The stipend was paid in May—a smart move since adjuncts often have a hard time finding summer employment and any little bit is helpful. These

compensations, although rather small, could perhaps help to encourage contingent faculty to attend professional development as the promise of a small stipend did for me.

The last question of this survey section asked how departments can reach contingent faculty regarding professional development. While most respondents answered e-mail or offering compensation as part of the invitation were the best ways to invite contingent faculty into professional development, a couple of contingent writing faculty observed their exclusion from contributing which is an important aspect for departments to consider. I asked, “In your opinion, what is the best way to reach out to adjunct faculty about professional development opportunities?” Most contingent writing faculty, 66.7%, wrote that e-mail was the best way to reach out to them—with 28 responses mentioning e-mail in some form out of 42 responses. For non-contingent writing faculty, 56.5%, also answered e-mail as the best way to reach contingent writing faculty—with 13 responses out of 32 total responses. The next highest response was again to provide some form of compensation—higher pay, a stipend, etc. for both contingent and non-contingent respondents, with 23.8% of contingent writing faculty (10) indicating compensation and 25% (8) non-contingent faculty indicated compensation be offered for contingent faculty. Other responses included ideas such as talking with contingent faculty, reaching out through word-of-mouth, listservs, text messages, and creating websites.

However, the responses I found most valuable for understanding how we talk to contingent writing faculty suggested not just inviting contingent writing faculty to attend—but rather—to allow them to lead. One contingent writing faculty member wrote, “[I]nvite adjunct faculty to participate in campus culture so they see a reason for developing themselves professionally.” I was surprised by how few respondents (both contingent and non-contingent) mentioned allowing contingent writing faculty to contribute to professional development because

at community colleges where I have taught as both an adjunct and a full-time professor we encouraged (and were encouraged when I adjuncted) contingent faculty to participate and lead in professional development opportunities. At the community college where I was a co-chair and full-time professor, we even created a conference²⁶ for composition faculty with that goal in mind: encourage contingent writing faculty to participate in knowledge-building within the department across college campuses to create a more cohesive community. Another contingent writing faculty member wrote that first departments need

To treat us like faculty within each dep[artment]—It’s a false notion that there is a ‘group’ called ‘contingent faculty’—We are not connected in any [way] because we work in such different departments. We are isolated from each other, and we are isolated in our department, so most of us work all by ourselves.

That isolation is, as many of us have experienced, sometimes mentally debilitating and socially stigmatizing. Only one non-contingent writing faculty member observed these same issues, and they wrote, “Don’t make it ‘top down’ or hierarchical. Include contingent faculty as agents, not merely receivers, of professional development.” So, while traditional methods of inviting contingent faculty into professional development opportunities is important, considering ways of allowing contingent writing faculty to not only attend but to lead is essential.

IX. Professional Development Offered to Contingent Faculty? Wants, Needs, Hopes, Dreams

²⁶ The conference has continued for a few years now with moderate success. A few other faculty members and I created the conference as a way for faculty who did not meet current SACS requirements to teach composition 1 and 2, to gain the necessary professional development that made them eligible to teach these courses for us. This was important because a high number of full-time and contingent faculty had degrees from an area university that did not have specific coursework for the teaching of writing.

The next section of the survey asked contingent writing faculty only about their experiences. I wanted to have a section that focused on their experiences and perceptions. In the 2013 September issue of *CCC*, titled “Occupy Writing Studies: Rethinking College,” Holly Hassel and Joanne Baird Giordano argue that faculty at two-year colleges (both contingent and non-contingent) should participate more in “writing studies knowledge making to create a broader and more accurate base from which to make curricular and instructional decisions and, ultimately, to reshape the profession” (118). This is an admirable call to action; however, how much change is possible and how much would it take to reshape the profession? What would that change entail?

First, a reminder about contingent versus non-contingent categories is imperative. Issues with how to distinguish contingent faculty from non-contingent faculty made it difficult to classify one from the other when it comes to community college teachers. According to the Texas Community College Association in the blog post, “Tenure is ‘Already Dead’” from 2018, most community colleges in the state of Texas do not award tenure. Many full-time professors at community colleges in Texas are offered multi-year contracts in lieu of tenure. Some full-time community college professors view multi-year contracts similar to tenure and thus do not view themselves as contingent faculty—which is how I chose to define multi-year contracts. It appears to me that the profession has already been reshaped in ways that are hard to unravel or revise. For the purposes of this survey, I asked full-time faculty teaching in community colleges on multi-year contracts to consider themselves non-contingent faculty. I argue the place we must start to create change is by actually *asking* contingent faculty what they want. But due to the differences between tenure, tenure-track and multi-year (and one-year) contracts, it is important for me to address the variations here, again, and that despite different arguments that have been

made (and are still being made), I considered community college teachers on multi-year contracts as non-contingent faculty.

I wanted to return to a question I asked all faculty respondents (including contingent faculty) earlier in the survey. I had asked what kinds of professional development they had participated in over the past five years. In that earlier question I had given a set of responses to choose from: webinars, brown bags, semester/school-year orientation, etc. Now I asked contingent writing faculty that same question but also asked them to provide open answers to see if there were professional development opportunities I was not aware of from my research and also to allow them to provide thoughts they might have that relate to the topic. I asked, “As contingent faculty, what professional development has been available to you at the institutions where you teach over the past five years?” Most contingent writing faculty followed with examples like workshops (17), orientations (9), observations (3), retreats and conferences (3). Ten people skipped the question;²⁷ however, some of the other responses were webinars (3) and non-specific answers like “a lot” and “nothing.” One contingent writing faculty respondent wrote, “Only what I have sought myself,” which was an invaluable answer but with no detail there is little I can draw from that—did they seek out development at their school and the department created opportunities? Did they find conferences to attend on their own with no monetary support from their college or university?

The next question garnered even more interesting responses that revealed how contingent writing faculty view professional development. I asked “Would you [as a contingent writing faculty member] be interested in professional development for contingent writing faculty? Why

²⁷ Since I asked the question differently earlier in the survey and because this was an open-ended question, I expected a range of responses; however, I think the ten people who skipped answering the question likely did so because they assumed they had already answered that question.

or why not?” I also invited respondents to elaborate on their ideas. Respondents were mostly interested in professional development—29 out of 35 (82%) respondents indicated that yes, they were interested. Three respondents said they were uninterested and three said they were maybe interested in professional development. Some of the respondents who indicated that they were interested in professional development said they wanted to participate because they want to be considered for full-time positions, to improve upon teaching, to contribute to the campus, discipline, and community, again demonstrating cruel optimism—linking the idea that participating in professional development is a way to become non-contingent. A few respondents mentioned compensation as necessary, but most who were interested or were maybe interested in professional development mentioned their schedules as a major consideration in whether or not they would consider participating in professional development. It appears that contingent writing faculty in this survey are interested in professional development, and fewer are concerned with compensation for it. Instead, most respondents (14) who indicated they were interested in professional development also wrote that were interested in it to become more connected with their community in higher education (whether department, campus, or discipline).²⁸ Those who were reluctant or answered no (4) usually indicated it was due to a packed schedule (jobs, children, transportation, for example). One interesting observation a respondent made was that contingent writing faculty respondents did not want to be offered professional development that was separate from that offered to tenure-track faculty because, “Our development often becomes ‘training’ rather than a shared exchange of scholarly and creative activities.” Editors Roy Fuller, Marie Kendall Brown, and Kimberly Smith found this to be true in their collection of essays in the book *Adjunct Faculty Voices, Cultivating Professional Development and Community* (2017).

²⁸ Some respondents simply answered along the lines of “yes” (6) or “maybe” (1) without elaborating.

Adrianna Kezar, author of the Foreword to the book, writes, “The very notion of being professional is challenged, if not undone, by contingent faculty roles.” The series foreword continues:

By denying basic professional working conditions and opportunities for professional growth to faculty members without whom, ironically, higher education could not function, college and university leaders harm students and undermine the common good. Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions, so when faculty are not supported—not provided basic supports from offices to access to professional development—students are not supported. (“Foreword”)

As Kezar and the contingent respondent to my survey above further point out, offering professional development that isolates adjunct faculty from full-time faculty can turn into training instead of development—and another job expectation that may not include fair compensation. It becomes imperative, then, that when professional development is encouraged for contingent faculty that it also is beneficial for them, not just for the program or department’s benefit.

The editors of *Adjunct Faculty Voices* (2017) make a salient argument that “Schedule-inducing isolation not only affects the ability of adjunct faculty to connect with other faculty but also can limit the ability of faculty developers to connect this population with professional development opportunities” (“Introduction”). In the next chapter I share specific stories and examples from current contingent writing faculty who feel this isolation and disconnection despite perhaps having access to professional development.

Another important finding from my survey was that contingent writing faculty overwhelmingly want to feel included professionally with 87.5% of respondents at least believing it is moderately important to feel professionally included at the schools where they teach. Forty contingent writing faculty responded to this question with 57.5% (23) indicating it was “very important,” 20% (8) “important,” 10% (4) “moderately important,” another 10% (4) “slightly important,” and 2.5% (1) as “not important.” For contingent writing faculty, feeling professionally connected to their teaching institutions is a repeated theme that arose from the survey. Again, professional development is important for contingent writing faculty because it not only connects them back to their teaching community, but also because contingent writing faculty *want* it. We just need to remember to create or invite them into opportunities that are beneficial *for them* and not just the department or institution.

Next, I moved back to ideal professional development opportunities, not necessarily those that contingent writing faculty feel are possible now, but those they might *wish* were available, to understand in an ideal situation what contingent writing faculty want. According to my survey, many contingent writing faculty have excellent, explicit, and detailed professional development in mind. I asked survey respondents,

If you're interested in professional development, what professional development opportunity(ies) do you wish were offered by the writing program(s), department(s), or institution(s) you work in? If these opportunities were available to you, would you be likely to take advantage of them? Why or why not?

Specific opportunities contingent writing faculty wished were available included colloquiums, conferences, coffee chats, distance opportunities (like webinars), workshops, and course development. One respondent wrote,

I would like to see writing workshops encouraged and FREE to writing instructors. I would take advantage of these. They have been made available at one college where I worked in the past, but they had the cost of tuition. Even though the cost was reduced tuition, it was still too much given the low amount of salary. I appreciate conferences, webinars, and speakers as well, and I try to take advantage of all of these. It would be nice if I could collectively report the time I spend on professional development and so be compensated in some way.

The feedback provided by this respondent suggests to administrators at least some contingent writing faculty *are* interested in professional development—so long as it is meaningful for them and their interests as professionals—and offered when they can attend—and even contingent faculty wishes for professional development are not so spectacular that they are unattainable. Another respondent wrote about professional development they have found especially helpful in their teaching: “...some of the best workshops were discussions on a topic like peer reviews, classroom discipline issues, etc. I learn a lot from my colleagues of varying levels of experience and find those useful.” Another provided some examples as well, “assessment, assignment creation, best practices. I would likely take advantage...” Some said they would appreciate online opportunities, perhaps a Zoom meeting for those who cannot attend in person, because they feel disconnected from their colleagues as online teachers. These examples are opportunities that likely already exist on most college and university campuses, and very likely also already exist within the departments they serve. Extending an invitation might be all that is necessary to encourage contingent writing faculty that their contribution is valued within the department and the college community.

Those who gave examples of professional development they would be interested in but could not necessarily participate often had important reasons they would miss them—beyond what we might expect. One respondent wrote, “They have been offered; I have been unable to attend because of conflicting schedules or a sick family member.” Another person wrote, “...I teach only online and find that most professional development opportunities are f2f.” Finally, one contingent writing faculty respondent wrote, “What they have now is excellent—and I do take part in them if I can get away from the day job!!” Contingent faculty want professional development, have ideas for what would best benefit them and generally would attend unless they have schedule conflicts—but even that can be overcome with programs like Zoom that allow an audience to stream meetings or presenters can record their presentations for an audience to access later.

Most contingent writing faculty involved in this survey have professional development available to them, though the percentage is lower than one might expect. Sixty percent of respondents indicated that as contingent faculty they had some professional development available to them. I inquired if professional development is open to contingent faculty at the institutions where they teach. Out of the 23 who responded to the question an equal 39.1% selected that zero professional development was open to contingent faculty (nine respondents) and another 39.1% reported that workshops and other specific examples, or just that yes, professional development opportunities were available (nine respondents). Next, 21.7% (5) of respondents did not give specific examples or a simple yes that it was available, and instead said occasional professional development is available. If about 40% of contingent faculty have no professional development available to them, why? And what impact does that have on student success if their teachers are unable to connect with other teachers to at least discuss their

pedagogy and learn new concepts or ways of teaching? It is clear from the answers above that contingent faculty have specific interest and ideas for professional development so engaging them in participation seems vital.

Turnover is high for adjunct faculty and it does not lead to cost savings to constantly hire new faculty. According to the AAUP “Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession” (2014), “only a quarter of all part-time faculty appointments extend beyond two terms” (172). Administrators, if for no other reason, should consider adding in professional development for contingent faculty because it can increase contingent faculty retention which will in turn provide actual cost savings. Hassel and Giordano liken a decline in student success with the “inequitable working conditions” of contingent faculty and add that,

contingent status often equals exclusion from an institution’s professional resources that help instructors develop as teachers (for example involvement in workshops, support for professional memberships, funding to attend conferences, and financial support for disciplinary scholarship or research on student learning). (125).

To investigate the perceptions and experiences of respondents to this question I needed understand any barriers contingent writing faculty respondents face when participating in professional development. Eighty percent (25 out of 31) wrote that time was a barrier to participating in professional development (time of day, other commitments like jobs and family, for instance). Distance was also another major barrier with 25.8% of respondents (8) and money was the last most common barrier indicated at 16.1% (5). Knowing that full-time faculty also juggle other expectations outside of teaching, I wonder if institutions might consider more asynchronous opportunities for professional development when possible? Nathan Palmer et al. (2017) investigated whether Open Educational Resources (OERs) that “freely distribute

pedagogical resources and provide a platform for educators to form collegial relationships,” like webinars accessible for a period of time after a training happened, help contingent faculty in sociology to form online communities for teaching (119). The authors noted that little is known about actual users of OERs, despite the number of “scholars [who] champion the potential for OERs to aid educators” (121). While the researchers focused on sociology instructors, the lack of information about users of OERs is worth considering for higher education writing teachers and administrators. If we consider asynchronous opportunities for professional development, we likely want some way to measure who in an institution would use it and how could community be established inside (or outside) of that institution? Further, is it important to create opportunities within specific institution? Within types of institutions, e.g., public community colleges in Texas? For specific interests, e.g., publishing research on teaching or presenting at a two-year teaching conference? These are questions that only an institution can answer for themselves, but important to consider, nonetheless.

I was also interested in learning if professional development is encouraged for contingent faculty, and how/if departments and institutions counted it where contingent faculty worked. I asked, “How is professional development encouraged, or discouraged by the schools you work at? Please answer with as much detail as you can.” Many respondents wrote N/A (7), or that it is encouraged or discouraged, and a few elaborated on those ideas. One of the few respondents who elaborated on their views wrote,

Most instructors I know don't value these opportunities too highly. They are seen as a waste of precious time, but that's just my opinion from commentaries I hear. What is offered doesn't count towards anything professionally, other than our own personal development. They are not strongly encouraged. They are advertised via one email to

announce and then another right before the event. Not a lot of coaxing from the higher ups to attend.

Based on this respondent's answer, it appears that contingent faculty are able to attend at least some professional development opportunities, but at least this respondent does not feel positively about the opportunities available to them. It also appears that the opportunities are not well publicized for contingent faculty. Another respondent wrote,

The schools I work at can sometimes OVER encourage professional development to the point where it becomes frustrating. As an instructor, I know that there are admin employees (making MUCH MUCH more money than me) who are constantly encouraging me to attend PD events and courses and who spend their time considering ways in which I and my fellow adjunct instructors need to IMPROVE our skills and know-how whereas an increase in PAY and RESPECT (such as provided office space or a sense of steady pay and job security per term) is never a consideration.²⁹

This respondent's answer to the question demonstrates an awareness of cruel optimism. They are being encouraged to participate in professional development (even so far as to enroll in courses) yet they know that their status (materially and hierarchically) will not change. Additionally, this respondent's comparison with professional development opportunities for contingent faculty linked to administrators making more money is interesting and a possible place for more research in the future about developing meaningful professional development. Yet another respondent wrote,

²⁹ Emphasis not mine.

Our Writing Program Director encourages professional growth and collaboration. She also recognizes the lack of compensation adjuncts receive and tries to accommodate for this by offering other incentives - food, a day off from teaching in return for time spent at workshops. While these may hurt both budget and current students, long-term rewards seem worth the expense. What feels most lacking at my institution is support from higher up in the administration - both financial and in terms of growth, stability, appreciation.

The observations these three respondents to my survey make regarding lack of respect, pay, time away from the classroom, and so on are examples where schools are promoting a disconnect between professional development offered and how it can benefit contingent writing faculty. As the questions about what contingent writing faculty anticipate needing in order to attend professional development indicates, things like pay for professional development *are* important to consider but not the only way to engage contingent writing faculty. Most contingent writing faculty have an interest in professional development, but they need opportunities that benefit them and not just the department or school.

As an adjunct who worked at many different kinds of institutions, sometimes I never met anyone beyond the WPA or department administrator. Sometimes my only other interaction was with HR or an administrative assistant. The severe isolation I felt at times was discouraging and kept me from feeling valued as an academic and teacher. I wondered if other adjuncts had the same experience? I asked, “Have you met anyone else other than the administrator (WPA, chair, associate dean) who directly supervises you in the department?” While not half, a larger percentage, 39% (14) answered that “no” they had not met anyone other than the WPA or department administrator. 61% (22) answered “yes” they had met other people in the department other than the WPA or department administrator—though two noted their contact had been

limited to office staff and one said they had only met other people “virtually.” Troublingly, it appears that many contingent writing faculty who responded to my survey do not have contact with anyone outside of the administrator who supervises them. A common place for contingent faculty to meet others are orientations, beginning-of-semester meetings, and other professional development opportunities. These places allow contingent faculty to feel more connected, established, and valued in their department. According to the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), “Addressing the Silent Majority: Part-time Faculty Issues” (2016),

Just like students, part-time faculty need to know that they made the right choice in teaching for the college. We are all more likely to stay somewhere where we feel valued. The common misconception that part-time faculty are always on the run and are not invested in any one college stems from the fact that they often drive from one college to another just to survive. If we are truly student-centered institutions, we need to develop the programs and dedicate the resources to train, value and retain high quality part-time faculty.

Beyond arguing that we should value contingent writing faculty because it will provide returns for students, we should support contingent faculty because it is the ethical choice. We must support the work that promotes inclusivity toward contingent faculty, and part of that entails creating opportunities that offer engagement for teachers outside of the classroom.

Another way for contingent writing faculty to feel more connected to their teaching institution is through a mentor. Sometimes these mentors can be formal (often assigned) or informal (meet by chance or develop a professional relationship based on interest/teaching/etc.). I have been lucky enough to develop informal mentoring relationships but have not personally

experienced much formal mentorship as a contingent faculty member. To learn if contingent respondents have had access to mentors I asked, “Do you have access to a formal or informal mentor?” Twenty-point-five percent (7) of respondents answered that no, they had no access to mentors. 73.5% (25) of respondents answered that they had access to either formal, informal, or both formal and informal mentors. 5.8% (2) of respondents answered that they were unsure if they had access to formal or informal mentors at their teaching institutions. Because this was an open-ended question it also allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. A few who elaborated said their supervisor was their mentor, others wrote that they have had to seek out their mentors, and another respondent observed that, “No... [I don’t have mentors] but I have mentors from my graduate program,” indicating that perhaps those with ties to their prior graduate programs may find their mentorship there instead of within the institutions who employ them. Heidi Kristine Batiste in her dissertation writes that, “Proper organizational socialization of employees through avenues such as mentoring can result in greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment.” Further, she writes, “According to Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2006), an organization’s failure to socialize new employees will result in unmet expectations of the employee, which in turn will induce poor attitudes and negative organizational outcomes such as turnover” (36). While my writing studies-specific survey found that most contingent writing faculty who responded to my survey perceive access to a mentor, Batiste in her multiple-discipline survey found that most contingent faculty do not have access to a mentor—68.1% (143) versus the 31% (65) who do³⁰ (101). Mentorship, whether formal or informal, is also tied

³⁰ Her survey was distributed to about 1,500 COCAL listserv subscribers—receiving 3 responses. From there she e-mailed 2,105 individuals and yielded 286 responses, 221 had been completed fully (66).

with retention rates of contingent faculty (see Jaeger and Eagan, 2010) so this is another avenue for change for the betterment of contingent faculty's working conditions.

Having worked at universities and community colleges where I was observed every semester and also schools where I was never evaluated, I was curious how contingent writing faculty were evaluated at their institutions. Most indicated they were reviewed through multiple avenues: student evaluations, self-evaluations, teaching materials, and classroom observations. Some unfortunately indicated they were evaluated on nothing or just based on student evaluations. While my survey does not delve into specifics of evaluations, research calls into question whether teaching evaluations and student evaluations are suggestive of teaching effectiveness. In fact, student evaluations are viewed as so unreliable (low completion rate, small classes lead to greater reliance on "outliers, luck, and error," gender bias, racial bias, age bias, and physical appearance bias, to name a few) that the Teaching and Learning Center at the University of California, Berkeley have concluded that,

The common practice of relying on averages of student teaching evaluation scores as the primary measure of teaching effectiveness for promotion and tenure decisions should be abandoned for substantive and statistical reasons: There is strong evidence that student responses to questions of 'effectiveness' do not measure teaching effectiveness.

(Lawrence)

We risk further marginalizing contingent writing faculty if we evaluate them based on student evaluations if they do not truly measure teaching effectiveness, along with grade inflation and lack of diversity in teaching staff.

Additionally, teaching evaluations conducted by faculty or administrators can be difficult and sometimes unproductive; for example, the chair who evaluated me as an adjunct circling 3s out of 5 for everything and saying to me that, “You’ll earn higher numbers the longer you teach here.” We might ignore that she was also a foreign language professor evaluating an English literature course; however, her view is problematic because it does not deal with potential real issues that could be present in my teaching (for instance, perhaps I did not answer a student’s question or I ignored a student distracting other students during class) as well as ignores positive reinforcement for things I did well in the classroom (like knowing students’ names and maintaining a positive atmosphere despite discussing difficult issues). Instead, we might link professional development and evaluation; perhaps by offering non-contingent faculty and contingent faculty to collaborate and observe one-another in a low-stakes way that encourages learning how to employ new teaching practices and bettering other already existing teaching practices.

X. Conclusions and Areas for Future Research

At the beginning of this chapter, I argued that we must ask contingent writing faculty what *they want* and what *they need* along with considerations for how to make the case for changes like addition or revision of professional development to be more inclusive. My data from this survey joins other research in indicating that most contingent writing faculty are interested in professional development, whether they currently have access or not. How can we convince our administrations and institutions to work toward more professional development geared toward contingent faculty? One argument for doing so is in retention and job satisfaction. M. Kevin Eagan Jr., Audrey J. Jaeger, and Ashley Grantham write in “Supporting the Academic Majority: Policies and Practices Related to Part-Time Faculty’s Job Satisfaction” (2015) that

many contingent faculty are interested in full-time positions, and while that problem is not one I can solve, it is worth exploring job satisfaction and how it relates to contingent faculty.

“Previous research suggests that there is a correlation between a supportive institutional environment that provides resources and rewards and faculty satisfaction and productivity.”

Further, the study indicates that “faculty’s job satisfaction represents one of the strongest predictions regarding their intention to leave the institution or leave academe as a whole (Daly & Dee, 2006; Gardner, 2012; Xu, 2008).” The study also cites Lawrence, Ott, & Bell, 2012, indicating that job satisfaction regarding “opportunities for advancement, departmental leadership, and procedural justice significantly improved faculty’s odds of expressing organizational commitment.” Finally, the authors write,

Given the costs of faculty turnover and reduced organizational commitment [...], understanding ways in which institutions can improve faculty satisfaction can thereby indirectly curb faculty’s intent to leave and can provide cost savings to campuses while simultaneously improving faculty morale. (452)

When making the case for creating and/or revising professional development toward inclusivity with contingent writing faculty, we need to not only find ways to invite contingent writing faculty into the department, we also need to make a case for professional development funding and increasing retention and perceptions of job satisfaction are one way we can do so. As evident in the survey analysis throughout this chapter, and as affirmed in others’ related research cited here, contingent faculty are interested in professional development and possess varied topic interests and clear ideas about their needs and wants in professional development. Departments and institutions need to a) invite them in and create a space for them that takes their wants and

needs into consideration and b) encourage some funding for this—whether in the form of stipends or just the technology that allow asynchronous attendance.

Another important observation Eagan Jr., Jaeger, and Grantham make is that despite growing reliance on contingent faculty in higher education, there are few studies that explore job satisfaction and part-time faculty—a place we might explore more deeply in our own discipline. We might also consider underemployment theory (Maynard & Joseph 2008) as a construct for theory in this area,

a person is considered underemployed when his or her job is inferior to a given standard. Underemployment is typically defined using an employee's perception of his or her fit with a particular position and can lead to feelings of disillusionment, frustration, and underutilization (Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006). Underemployment has been shown to have a significant, negative impact on individuals by fostering poor job satisfaction, decreasing organizational commitment and citizenship, and having negative ramifications on mental and physical healthy (Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006; McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005). (455)

One important aspect to consider regarding underemployment theory is that a faculty member can only be considered underemployed if they want or need full-time employment, so contingent writing faculty who make a conscious decision to remain part-time are not able to be considered underemployed, though they are likely undercompensated. Further, contingent faculty who want to be contingent should not be regarded as lesser than their colleagues who yearn for non-contingent employment, but their wants and needs for professional development might be different. Similarly, in their study, Eagan Jr., Jaeger, and Grantham found that part-time faculty identified more workplace satisfaction when they had access to a private office, or even shared

office space, and also when they had a “good working relationship” with their administrators (470). Finally, they write that,

Part-time faculty—particularly those with desires for full-time academic positions—may embrace voluntary opportunities to participate in departmental and institutional decision-making, allowing them to make use of their extensive training and socialization in academia writ large and their respective disciplines (Rhoades, 1998)...Having greater visibility and recognition for part-time faculty within the department and institution may foster a stronger sense of respect among faculty of all appointment types, which has the potential to increase part-timers’ workplace satisfaction (474-5).

While their study does not specifically explore professional development, since respondents to my survey indicated interest in professional development, in future research, we should consider what positive benefit that professional development would have on job satisfaction in our discipline and how this data could convince college administration to provide some additional funding towards it. As this chapter has established, significant numbers of contingent writing faculty are largely interested in professional development and have specific interests in opportunities that allow them to develop their teaching. Further, when compared with how non-contingent writing faculty perceive contingent writing faculty interests, some surprising inconsistencies arose. Institutions, but more realistically, individual writing departments, should ask their contingent writing faculty if they are interested in professional development and what would encourage them to attend opportunities if so. Once writing departments take this step, creating ways in that encourage contingent faculty to contribute and attend professional development might create substantial and lasting positive change within the department—both for students, teachers, and administrators. Just this small move toward professionalizing

contingent faculty in specific writing departments could increase satisfaction and job retention and, in turn, student retention.

In the following chapter, I provide follow-up interviews from respondents to my survey to expand upon individuals' experiences, ideas, opinions, and perceptions about professional development and to identify themes of change for the conclusion of this dissertation.

CHAPTER THREE

“You just have to be disciplined, and schedule everything, but still be flexible:” The Complexities, Contradictions, Victories, and Failings of Professional Development for Contingent and Non-Contingent Faculty

In this chapter I provide follow-up interviews with willing participants from those who completed my survey. The interview participants were contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty, including a WPA and one former WPA. From the interviews, I have identified several themes for collective action regarding professional development and other significant changes we as a discipline can take to better meet the needs and wants of contingent faculty. The themes that emerged include: 1) building community among contingent faculty, 2) creating opportunities for inclusivity between non-contingent faculty and contingent faculty, 3) increased professional development flexibility for contingent faculty, 4) offering virtual professional development opportunities, 5) moving beyond the practice of student evaluations as the only professional development some contingent faculty receive. In this chapter, I examine the interviews through the lens of Robert Samuels’ ideas of social hierarchies, social power (collective action) and Daniel B. Davis’ frameworks of how contingent faculty are perceived (for instance, contingent faculty often have insecure employment) in conjunction with interviewees’ answers to my questions. Additionally, I borrow Wendy S. Hesford’s use of storytelling as a legitimate and valid form of scholarship. Blending these ideas further allows me to provide a framework for change in the last chapter.

Finally, this chapter works to answer my research question, “What are contingent writing faculty’s professional aspirations, and would professional development opportunities be something contingent writing faculty want and need to achieve these aspirations?” Sometimes

the interviewees' stories intertwine with data and observations from writing studies and higher education. At other times, this chapter may not have scholarly backing for what interviewees disclosed. But these stories are so important that I argue they can stand on their own as the interviewee's truth and therefore worthy of consideration and action. These stories are situated in a much larger context—that these interviewees' stories also illuminate pieces of our stories as writing faculty, too. We might relate to aspects of some stories while not realizing others, but they help to further develop our understanding of what it means to be a writing studies professor, whether contingent or non-contingent. I end this chapter with a discussion of the ways we can consider our contingent faculty's needs; however, the concluding chapter of this dissertation discusses ways of moving forward through collective action.

Social hierarchies are both created and reinforced by social, economic, and political environments; but higher education itself is also responsible for these reinforced hierarchical relationships. For instance, Robert Samuels, in the chapter “Contingent Labor, Writing Studies, and Writing About Writing,” from his book *The Politics of Writing Studies: Reinventing Our Universities from Below* (2017), discusses the hierarchies created by higher education. He writes that our current proliferation of neoliberalism drives institutions to ignore how power structures subvert groups like contingent faculty. He writes,

It is my contention that the social hierarchies placing research over teaching, the sciences over the humanities, theory over practice, and graduates over undergraduates are not rational or ethical structures; rather, they are irrational power structures rationalized after the fact in order to maintain a system of prestige and privilege. (13)

As a student, I certainly viewed the classroom as a place of prestige, and one only needs to ask their students what they think our lives are like as academics to see that this overtly hierarchical,

masculine view of commanding the classroom, knowing all, and making a high salary is untrue on many levels. Asking students about their misconceptions about who academics are allows us to discuss the reality that many of us experience vastly different working conditions, for instance. Of course, some students are aware of the actual lives we lead, that the luxury of time and money is certainly not the experience of many writing teachers. Still, this complex structure of hierarchy that Samuels argues exists, permeates, and dominates how many see higher education, and contingent writing faculty often exist at the bottom of the hierarchy. Thus, it makes sense that contingent faculty are all but invisible outside of the college and university walls, which allows them to be largely ignored by the institutions that employ them in large numbers.

Many female-identifying people employed in higher education are also seen as mothers or expected to practice mothering, even if they are not mothers themselves. The expectation of women to practice mothering is problematic because it tends to subvert women-academic's hierarchical status. For instance, some mother-academics, including myself, have found themselves in uncharted territory since the beginning of 2020 when most colleges and universities throughout the US shut down over COVID-19. I found myself acting as a counselor for my students, while I was nearly solo parenting as my husband's job was essential and he was unable to work from home. I also played a daycare teacher, tried to continue my role as a dissertating student, and of course, I was still a college professor. Most of these roles were not completely new—I have always made sure my students know how to seek help or how I could help them if trouble arises in their lives, whatever the trouble. But now I found myself on high alert, paying close attention to students' words online without their facial expressions and discovered a student was feeling depressed after their friend completed suicide. I made sure they

were given resources to help themselves and the student wrote this in their student evaluation of me:

When I was dealing some difficult events, she would listen to what I had to say and paid attention to what I was going through from the things I wrote about in my essays which even I didn't notice had more implications than I was willing to admit. There was consolation in knowing that someone was there to recommend me to seek profession help. I'm doing much better now due to Professor Robinson and I thank her for taking time out of her busy life, especially during these times, to be a professor.

During a normal semester I would have been able to see on this student's face the pain they were experiencing, and I'm lucky that I spotted it in their online work. This act of mothering, of worrying about our students, is of course, nothing new, and it affects both contingent and non-contingent women. Though I am no longer a contingent faculty member (though I am on a year-to-year contract for now) with a world-wide pandemic, I was also taking care of my three-year old and two-year old all day and trying to teach my five classes and one overload class. The overwhelming sense of doom around the corner echoed some of my time as a contingent faculty member driving between schools and teaching six classes or more. In *Women's Ways of Knowing It in Rhetoric and Composition* (2008), Lynn Worsham writes, "Balance is an ongoing process; sometimes you have more and sometimes you have less. It is important to know what is necessary to your well-being and to your sense of yourself, what your limits are, and how to say no" (317). Worsham, of course, could not anticipate something like the pandemic we are experiencing, but finding balance during this period has, frankly, been impossible. While expectations that female-identifying teachers will practice mothering is not a new expectation, I imagine that the pressure contingent faculty have faced during a pandemic, including trying to

teach their students, thinking about their students' needs, and responding to their own changed personal circumstances—all while not knowing what the next semester would look like or mean for their employment—is much larger.

The expectations of mothering in higher education, more specifically in writing studies, has continued to grow in my experience since I began teaching in 2008. I am unsure if the expectations of mothering have grown because I have aged and actually become a mother; regardless, these expectations have caused personal difficulties for me. The act of mothering itself has little social hierarchical positioning, yet women-academics are expected to take care of our students' needs. For me, the balance Worsham discusses would mean I could have turned off work, ignored my anxiety that led to an added medication this past summer. It would mean that I could have entertained my kids and felt no frustration at my children while I tried to grade or record a tutorial for my students and bring my husband home from work earlier than 6:30 p.m. Balance seems like a faraway place I will never reach, and I suspect this feeling is true for many female-identifying contingent writing faculty. We need to consider the reality that what contingent faculty have experienced during the pandemic has likely also made attaining balance especially unattainable for them.

I. Autoethnography and the Importance of Stories in Interviews

My interviews were conducted in early 2018, while I was still pregnant with Celeste, and while long before today's COVID-changed world, I suspect many of my interviewees would have stories like my own, and that many, women especially, would disclose their exhaustion and their worry, both for their students, themselves, and their families. The lack of social standing for mothers, and the contradictory expectation for mothering (especially that of expecting mother-professors to put their kids into daycare or for their children to have to tend to themselves to get

to school as a result of COVID-19) continues, despite our years of academic work to change it. Wendy S. Hesford, in her article “Storytelling and the Dynamics of Feminist Teaching,” writes about her anger when she was told, time and again, that writing about personal experiences was not academic:

The more I read, the angrier I grew. Angry that the voices of women and minorities had been silenced, ignored, forgotten, and suppressed by the academy. [...] Not only did I seek to legitimate and validate the personal experiences and voices of women and minorities by introducing their life-stories into the curriculum, and by encouraging my students to write about their own lives, but I also adopted a style of teaching which was personal, reflective, dialogic, and collaborative: a pedagogy which counteracts the misleading tendency in academe to abandon ourselves as subjects. (21)

While Hesford’s article was written in 1990, much like changing the working conditions for contingent faculty, not much has changed for the better. Throughout my master’s courses and my doctorate courses I wondered what was wrong with me—why wasn’t there more discussion about personal experience? Few classes legitimized personal experience as a scholarly form of research. I imagine few scholars would argue that contingent faculty have desirable working conditions, yet the only way we really could know their experiences is by asking them and allowing them to tell us. Storytelling is an essential aspect of many forms of knowing, for instance in indigenous scholarship, feminist scholarship, and queer scholarship. Malea Powell, in her 2012 CCCC Chair’s address argues:

When I say “story” I mean ‘theory’ in the way that Lee Maracle tells it. “Among European scholars there is an alienated notion which maintains that theory is separate from story, and thus a different set of words are required to ‘prove’ an idea rather than to

‘show’ one. We [indigenous people] believe the proof of a thing or idea is in the doing. [...]” (384).

Powell continues, speaking of where the conference took place and the importance of remembering space as stories constellate, “By ‘space’ I mean a place that has been practiced into being through the acts of storied making, where the past is brought into conscious conversation with the present and where—through those practices of making—a future can be imagined” (388). Similarly, the interviews I conducted constellated into this chapter, making it clear that we can imagine a future that begins to actually change the working conditions for contingent writing faculty through conversation and listening. Further, we need to create and maintain space for contingent writing faculty stories to constellate and influence the future of our discipline to change toward better treatment of contingent writing faculty. The interviews presented within this chapter are meant to provide examples of the real lived experiences of writing faculty—especially those who are contingent. I chose the eight interviews out of fifteen total interviews I conducted. That is not to say that seven were unworthy of discussion. In fact, I believe all stories are important in this project. The eight interviews I chose for this dissertation were because they illuminated some key aspect or aspects of lived experiences in contingency or detailed experiences in how they understand and see contingency, if the interviewee were not contingent themselves.

We can continue to work to change the dominant narrative of who contingent writing faculty are as a means of changing the actual material status of contingent college teachers by telling stories to ourselves, our students (and graduate students), administration, and others. Similar to Hesford’s argument, I tell stories about my children and my life to my students. Some students might roll their eyes, but most of my students are interested to hear more about my life

as an academic, mother, and partner. When I tell stories about my experiences to my students, it is to encourage them to understand me as a human, not just an intelligent being directing them in learning. I want them to understand and see that the process of learning is important to continue—and I demonstrate that by listening to them and learning from them as well.

Similarly, we need to make sure our students hear about contingent faculty. When a student, for instance, complains to me about another professor I ask them questions like, “What do you know about your chemistry/history/English/Spanish/nutrition professor?” “Have you asked why they took three weeks to grade your essay? Maybe they had something come up?” “Have you asked them why they aren’t on the schedule next semester?” By asking students these questions I am encouraging them to learn and seek out answers to why these problems exist—whether that problem is why they did not get their paper back for three weeks or why an adjunct is suddenly no longer teaching, despite the student finding value in taking that professor’s class.

Occasionally, students initially perceive these questions as me dismissing their problems or concerns and responding that the professor “only” teaches two classes or that the paper was “only” three pages long, and so on. In response, we talk about how many classes professors teach, how many students I personally have, what my personal obligations are like outside of the classroom, what an average adjunct faculty compensation looks like, and so on. Often, the conversation becomes an illuminating one for my students (and it always reinvigorates me to have these conversations and ask these questions) because I am reframing what they thought they knew, or assumed they knew, about who professors are—whether they are contingent or not. My goal in these conversations, as I said before, is to encourage students to seek out answers to the problems they identify, and it allows other teachers to talk about their experiences as professors to help shape some students' understanding of what it means to teach higher education.

Departments and institutions need to have conversations with contingent faculty and listen to contingent faculty because it is an essential act in changing the working conditions for contingent writing faculty. Departments and institutions cannot assume what contingent writing faculty want—they need to ask.³¹

It is also important to remember that change is possible through storytelling. According to Samuels, power and social hierarchy in higher education can enact change, though he argues that we should not just make these arguments for change through the rhetorical appeals of pathos, ethos, and logos. He writes,

Moreover, these power structures can only be countered by organized collective action, and they will not be transformed by merely rational and ethical appeals. That does not mean we should stop making rational and ethical arguments, but we must understand that these rhetorical devices will not be enough. We should add to pathos, logos, and ethos a fourth category of social power. (13-14).

Ethos, pathos, and logos are essential to rhetorical appeal. But adding social power works not just through logic, emotion, and authority, it also includes action itself. Samuels' suggestions for social power include increased unionization, but I do not focus on this aspect of his argument since that is unlikely in many areas of the United States currently (including in Texas, where I am located and focus much of my argument). This chapter examines Samuels' suggestion of social power, or as he later describes it, collective action, by providing and examining interviews I conducted with contingent faculty, non-contingent faculty, and WPAs to understand how they have experienced teaching expectations along with others like professional development at their

³¹ I expand upon this in the next chapter.

colleges and universities (and other obligations). Through the words of my interviewees, I work to add to Samuels' call for our discipline's collective action toward better working conditions for contingent faculty (like meaningful professional development opportunities and how we invite contingent faculty to participate in those opportunities).

Stories are an essential part of encouraging collective action and change because those stories allow us to understand more of the human experience. These stories work to interrupt the dominant assumptions of what it means to be a professor (e.g., make a high salary, tenure is an inevitable step in our careers, and so on, despite these being inaccurate for many of us). I cannot accurately count how many students have disclosed to me how much they appreciate knowing about my life-experiences, including, for example, the fact that I have social anxiety, because it helps them to realize we are not just professors, we are not just academics, but we are humans as well, just like them. Hesford writes that

If we are serious about raising critical consciousness, about enabling students to respond and question their context, to be open to revision, to avoid preconceived notions, to reject the passive position and to enter into dialogue, then we have to be willing to decenter our authority. (14)

While Hesford's focus is on decentering our authority as teachers, it is important to consider the importance of decentering our authority as non-contingent writing faculty, too. Part of that decentering is to enable contingent writing faculty a voice and open us to change, to avoid assumptions about contingent writing faculty, to engage in conversations, and to, frankly, get uncomfortable to make necessary changes. This chapter attempts to decenter my authority and allow contingent faculty, especially, voices in this argument.

It is also important to contextualize that my status as faculty was much different when I was conducting the interviews. I was a heavily pregnant (and high risk) contingent faculty member at several institutions with a one-year-old at home. My main goal was to listen to those I interviewed, but I also openly and honestly answered questions my interviewees posed to me, both about this research and about my own experiences. Further, I tell the stories of these interviewees to attempt movement toward increased collective action—to continue a long-fraught conversation and movement to gain better treatment for contingent faculty, like more fair pay, access to healthcare that does not rob our paychecks, and fair work-loads—and finally to encourage social power (collective action) as a result of these stories.

II. There's No Easy Answer: Contingent Faculty Employment Working Conditions

“A full-time faculty member’s teaching load did not make. So, I had to remove you to help her.”

Those words stared back at me through my e-mail. As a many-time contingent faculty member and former department chair, these words were not surprising to me. I had occasionally dealt with courses not making—both as a department chair and as an adjunct. But this time those words especially stung. I had two kids, one was a newborn, and expensive medical bills from two high-risk pregnancies that were less than 12-months apart and growing student loan debt. I needed to teach this class. However, contingent faculty status means there is not much to protect contingent faculty in a situation like this. Daniel B. Davis, in *Contingent Academic Labor: Evaluating Conditions to Improve Student Outcomes* (2017) writes,

The terms used to define these non-tenure track positions are quite telling. The word *contingent* (2017) means ‘likely but not certain to happen,’ ‘not logically necessary,’

‘subject to chance...unpredictable,’ and ‘dependent on or conditioned by something else.’

This illustrates the precarious and insecure nature of contingent academic work, subject to last-minute cuts and changes based on fluctuating enrollment numbers and departmental budgets. (7)

The lack of apology from the department chair affected me personally, too, especially because I had helped him by picking up classes for him last minute in previous semesters. But what really stung was the substantial amount of income I was losing: \$3000—with less than a week’s notice. While, at the time, I was receiving a graduate stipend for teaching a 2-2 load, it, and my husband’s modest salary, had never been enough to sustain our financial obligations of a house, two cars, and other living expenses. Add in two kids (one was a newborn with jaundice who needed expensive emergency care), my expensive prenatal care, and our budget quickly became tight in fall of 2018.

However, I do not share that personal and detailed story because I am upset about my treatment—though I am. It is now more two years later, and I am still terribly angry. *I share this story because it is a common contingent faculty experience.* My story is not unique—as outlandish and cruel as it may seem to anyone who has not been a contingent faculty member, or to someone outside of academia. Davis writes about discourses that

discount [...] exploitation [and] assume that contingent faculty members hold primary jobs from which they presumably derive a sense of professional identity, stable wages, and essential benefits; therefore, they should not be reliant on their contingent employment for these professional features. (Loc 363)

These discourses work much like myths, myths that feed into the romantic notion of what academic lives are like. These mythical lives are not the reality of adjuncts (and even some non-contingent faculty) often living paycheck-to-paycheck and likely lacking health insurance. My experience with the private university discussed above, for an outsider falling for the myth of what it means to be a contingent professor, according to Davis in his framework, “Contingency as Voluntary, Flexible, and Empowering,” would appear to fall under, “the graduate student picking up a class to build valuable teaching experience while finishing a degree...” (Loc 366). I do not fall under that mythical description, and my experiences with contingent employment were often not because it was empowering but because it was somewhat flexible, despite the low pay. In most narratives about contingent faculty, I was invisible, as are many contingent faculty. The experiences of contingent faculty are different because they are employed as contingent faculty for different reasons. Further, I have never seen my experiences reflected at me in academic scholarship. I suspect many contingent writing faculty have similar feelings. The pervasive mythical, romanticized notion of contingent employment does exist, though in reality, it might be far more common to hear stories like what I have experienced—dependency on contingent teaching for income—rather than teaching part-time for the love of teaching only.

Others’ contingent teaching experiences might fall under Davis’ second framework: “Contingency as Exploitation.” He writes that,

not only is their job insecure but their entire vocational and professional identity has likewise become contingent. Their income is often close to or below the poverty level, a problem greatly exacerbated if there are dependents in the household. (Loc 366)

My reality is more like this description: I left gainful employment to complete a doctorate degree, had two children along the way, and luckily co-parented with a supportive partner.

Certainly, this experience is similar to what other contingent faculty's experience: some teach at multiple institutions just to cobble together a below-poverty wage, for example.

I am also not an inexperienced teacher, also like many of the respondents to my survey and those who agreed to be interviewed. My teaching portfolio is thick with experience over twelve years of teaching excellence and professional development. Yet, no matter how much prior experience one has, no one who is contingent³² is exempt from losing a course, a teaching load, or rehire. Davis continues, "Insecure employment is wounding to their professional self-esteem and self-confidence, insofar as one's vocation is linked to one's sense of identity. In this frame, contingent teaching is deeply exploitative, materially and psychologically" (Loc 366). He concludes the chapter by discussing how both frames only tell a portion of an individual's story; that contingent faculty exist along a spectrum of these frames. My goal was to find stories that can give us, albeit just a glimpse, into the real lives of contingent faculty with the purpose of understanding their interests and involvement with professional development, as well as their professional identity. I seek to provide narratives from contingent faculty, especially, because their experiences as professors and teachers are diverse and no two are alike.

The interviews in this chapter are so important to this dissertation because they situate each individual's experience (or lack of, in some cases) with professional development and inclusion in their departments and institutions. Everyone had their own observations and ideas about what their institutions and departments could do to better their experiences. Some even provided specific instances where they felt silenced, excluded, or ignored. Malea Powell ended

³² It is also important for me to note that being non-contingent is also not exempt from this—though those in contingent roles usually have less support in these situations.

her 2012 CCCC's chair address by arguing that it is time to change our disciplinary practices to include stories and other discourses:

Let's tell different kinds of stories. Let's do the thing that we do best—research, teach, mentor, administer in all the inventive and visionary ways that we all say we know how to do better than anybody else—but let's do it in the service of a decolonized, multivocal knowledge world. (403)

This chapter, then, works to give space to the unique voices of my interviewees as a way to argue for the importance of localized conversations with contingent writing faculty—not just about contingent writing faculty as so much of our scholarship has done since the inception of our discipline. To truly change the working conditions of contingent writing faculty we have to ask them what they want, we have to hear them, and then we must take collective action to actually produce change.

III. Neoliberalism, Adjuncting, and a Ladder to Nowhere

Contingent writing faculty continue to be employed in large numbers by higher education institutions, despite scholars, administrators, and even contingent faculty themselves arguing why continued exploitation of contingent labor is problematic. A question I have heard (even from well-intentioned family) is why, if it is so bad, do contingent faculty continue to work? Why put up with low wages and no health insurance? Hose and Ford, authors of “Caught in the Adjunct Trap,” are anthropologists who explore the complicated nature of contingent employment. The reason, they write, that contingent faculty continue to teach in the “neoliberal commodification of education” is complicated:

We are tangled in its complicated and self-supporting web because—in simple terms—we need the money. If we can, we must book as many courses as possible, sometimes more than any teacher should reasonably take on. Our contracts make clear that any course for which we are appointed can be cancelled or transferred to tenured faculty before the semester even begins. (48)

Contingent faculty are often seen as disposable and replaceable. Some of the contingent professors I interviewed were teaching at institutions to supplement their full-time income. But most of those whom I interviewed were motivated to teach by other, more problematic reasons. Despite contingent employees often lacking health care through their positions, retirement benefits, or even the promise of the same number of teaching sections the following semester, they are often still driven to teach by their love, and even need, to do it. While it would be impossible to explore the depths of these interviewees' drives to teach,³³ one clear connection I could ask them about was professional development because it is often linked with teaching. How have they experienced professional development? Who can engage in professional development at their teaching institutions? What do they want from professional development?

Many of the interviews I conducted occurred through Zoom, Google Hangouts, Skype, and over the phone. Some professors, particularly contingent faculty, were unable to commit to a phone or video conversation so I allowed those participants to respond in writing to the questions I created via e-mail. After the survey, 49 people were contacted for a follow-up interview. Nineteen respondents wrote back that they were interested and consented to the interview, and fifteen people were interviewed. Through the fifteen interviews I conducted, regardless of

³³ Or, at least this is beyond the scope of this project.

position, I heard related stories of personal interest in professional development, high professional expectations at the department and institutional level, and also many personal obligations. Similar to my survey findings, contingent and non-contingent writing faculty interest in professional development is present; however, what this chapter highlights are the personal stories of complexity and contradictory professional obligations that complicate participation in professional development for some contingent writing faculty.

As co-workers, peers, friends, leaders, mentors, and so on, we owe it to ourselves and our discipline to listen to the unique and all-too-common stories of sacrifices and obligation that lurk beneath the surface of the college writing mirage for contingent faculty. While those reading this dissertation may already be aware of the complexities and realities that both interweave and permeate the lives of teachers and academics, contingent and non-contingent, many others (especially outsiders, including even close family in some instances!) have yet to experience or observe the delicate and impossible balancing act that many of us embark on each and every day. Not all of this is doom-and-gloom—in fact, some of the interviews I conducted have an overtly rosy view of, and experience with, teaching writing and balancing personal life. For instance, I was surprised by a contingent faculty's ability to balance eight classes at multiple institutions and how she described her appreciation for professional development (which was only offered at one of her four institutions).

I suspected that everyone I interviewed would have different experiences and thoughts about professional development at their teaching institutions. For instance, while I was a contingent writing teacher, I experienced professional development at some institutions and not at all at others. Additionally, as a department chair, I knew the contingent writing faculty I worked with also tended to work at other campuses and universities in the area; therefore, I was

curious how or if professional development played a role in how contingent faculty see those experiences (or lack thereof) in their professional identities as writing teachers. I interviewed contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty to understand if these distinct roles perceive professional development similarly or dissimilarly and to use that input to develop ideas for improving professional development for contingent faculty (see Chapter Four for suggestions). It is also important to note that many of the most fruitful conversations that took place in these interviews occurred once I turned the tape recorder off and asked my interviewee if there was anything else they wanted to tell me or if they had any questions for me. I alerted my interviewees at the beginning of our interview that I would not interject or interrupt them, but that I welcomed questions from them and conversation at the end of the interview once the recorder was turned off. This was important for helping contingent faculty to feel safe in our conversation—it can be risky to divulge details to a stranger in a normal situation—however for some of the interviewees, they disclosed things that could be potentially dangerous in their future employment. By allowing them to save that information for later, and by promising to keep that conversation between us, I believe it encouraged them to feel comfortable with me as a researcher.

In the interviews with contingent faculty, I asked them to elaborate on their observations and assumptions regarding themselves and how they have experienced (or not experienced) professional development. I asked non-contingent faculty about observations and assumptions regarding contingent faculty to understand any disconnects that exist among the hierarchical levels (contingent, non-contingent, and administrator) and then to consider opportunities for professional development. Hill et al. in “Professional Development Research: Consensus, Crossroads, and Challenges” (2013) identify that, through four decades of research into

professional development, there is little consensus in data regarding professional development at a district level, referring to secondary and primary education specifically, to demonstrate that professional development improves teaching outcomes (477). While higher education functions differently than primary and secondary education, their argument is that professional development needs to be designed and developed at a local level, something I am careful to caution in the last chapter. Professional development that is created by focusing on the local level is essential because each teaching institution's teachers have diverse needs for support and development. Hill et al. also argue we must carefully think about design of professional development. They propose, "This initial work must also progress with multiple groups of teachers and multiple facilitators, lest idiosyncratic results at one location led developers to incorrect conclusions about program design and promise" (Hill et al. 476). For colleges and universities, it is important to realize that what might work in one department at one institution may not work the same at another.

Likewise, for readers of this chapter it is important to avoid assuming the experiences of the individuals I interviewed are the reality for all contingent faculty—whether at the same school, state, or within the same teaching subject. These interviews are meant to be examples of individual experiences and perceptions. Hill et al. also argue that meta-analysis should inform "open questions" about the studies conducted. The argument Hill et al. make here applies to higher education professional development because we also have the need for conversations and listening with "multiple groups of teachers and multiple facilitators" (477). And as Hill et al. discuss earlier, contextualization of these interviews is important, too. For this reason, I provide a pseudonym, interviewee's contingency status, institution type(s), and region. These interviews try to begin a conversation that will hopefully continue and evolve into social change. Rather

than take these interviews as a Truth in the experiences of all contingent faculty in writing studies, we might ask ourselves local questions about these experiences and perceptions. I argue we must all consider how we can better serve our contingent faculty.

IV. The Interviews: “We’re just the workers who enact all the theories they are researching for their professional development.”

Erica: Contingent Faculty Member at Public University, Western US

When I interviewed her, Erica³⁴ was a contingent faculty member currently teaching at one university with union support that guaranteed four classes a semester. Erica said that she found she had some autonomy in her position because she could both teach and run her school’s writing center. She provided important insight into how contingent faculty can be employed in roles that provide them with a feeling of stability while having little or no say in decisions about their positions. Erica’s normal teaching load would be a 4/4 but because of the literacy center appointment her teaching load was a 2/2. Erica said she was surprised to have been selected to run the writing center because when she applied, she knew of some tenure-track faculty who applied for the position as well, and she assumed they would be hired before her. Despite being so busy, when I asked if there were any ways that her current position advanced or inhibited her professional goals she said, “One of the reasons I love teaching first year composition is the way that it continually and consistently improves my own professional writing that I do outside of the classroom.” She elaborated,

Talking about writing, engaging with other [student] writers, is always helping me in my outside work. What I do in my outside writing better helps me understand what I’m doing

³⁴ Name changed.

in the classroom, so they work really well together, which is why I like to keep doing both of them.

The engagement Erica had with her students allowed her to develop more as a teacher and as a writer—functioning as formal professional development is often designed to. She found positives in her teaching role because it influenced her professional work, and her professional work informed her teaching.

However, her perception of hurdles to professional development relates back to the concept of social status and its complicated and contentious strangle-hold on our identities as writing teachers. When I asked her about obstacles she faced taking part in professional development, she mentioned she felt that she and other adjuncts were not viewed as professionals. She explained,

I don't want to come across too negative, but it's a chronic fight [to be able to participate]. We just finally were given a very, very small kernel of rights and voting because [our university-wide undergraduate classes] are 100% taught by adjuncts and we were never allowed to vote or [be on] any of the committees or anything.

Returning to Samuels' argument for social power as part of the rhetorical appeals along with ethos, pathos, and logos, Erica's conception of social status has encouraged her to become an activist within her university. She continued,

Through the whole process [of gaining voting rights] we discovered that ultimately the reason we were being denied a vote was because they [full-time university faculty] don't see us as professionals. They don't see us as needing to be developed [professionally]

because we're just the workers who enact all the theories that they are researching for their professional development.

Through her activism and others' work toward social power they were able to understand and combat the hierarchical standing, or social status, that kept them from essential voice in the department.

Despite having recently gained voting rights, Erica illuminated a massive problem—without voice or representation it is hard to be physically seen or acknowledged as even existing. Erica elaborated on the conditions of her participation in meetings at her state university: adjunct faculty can also attend department faculty meetings, but they have zero input on their working conditions within the department. I asked her about any professional development that she was excluded from and she replied, “Well, this is an interesting question because I think shared governance is professional development, so we are completely shut out of shared governance. It's written into our constitution and it's disheartening.” According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), “Shared governance responsibilities should be shared among all faculty, including those appointed to part-time positions.” Further, AAUP writes,

Faculty and administrators should determine the appropriate modes and levels of participation in governance for part-time faculty, considering issues such as voting rights, representation, and inclusion in committees and governance bodies.” (“Background Facts”)

Regardless of the clear direction from the AAUP, Erica's university previously did not allow contingent faculty any voice in decisions about their status or their position. In 2013, the AAUP published “The Inclusion in Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent

Appointments,” which called for, as their second recommendation, all faculty, regardless of status, to have the same voting rights and ability to serve in “institutional governance bodies” and that the criteria for eligibility should reflect terms that apply to contingent faculty (e.g., have taught at the institution for two semesters before being able to run) to “accommodate those who teach intermittently.” Recommendation three calls for at least a reservation of several seats for contingent faculty in institutional governance bodies, but ideally the number is not limited. Recommendation four argues that any member of an institution's faculty who are a) faculty and b) meeting required in-service requirements should be able to vote for “institutional governance bodies on the basis of one person, one vote” (85). Further, in 2016, another professional organization, College Composition and Communication (CCC), wrote the “CCCC Statement on Working Conditions for Non-Tenure-Track Writing Faculty.” The CCC statement provides a summary of recommendations for non-tenure-track writing faculty that includes in the first recommendation,

departments, programs, and faculty must work to ensure equity for NTT writing faculty by attending to issues associated with employment: compensation; job security; benefits; access to resources; access to shared governance; and opportunities for social advancement... (“CCCC Statement on Working Conditions”)

Professional organizations can make recommendations as often as they like, and they can make as many as they would like. However, professional organizations have little power to penalize departments and institutions that ignore their recommendations. Further, these professional organizations’ recommendations have existed for quite some time and yet the contingent faculty at Erica’s institution continued to be barred from having a voice in their institution’s constitution. Without *any* governance for contingent faculty, why would there be any equity for NTT for

compensation, benefits, job security, and so on? I argue that to enable those other vital working and teaching conditions, access to participate in faculty governance for contingent faculty is *essential*.³⁵

While Erica is part of the 70% of teachers (adjuncts) at her university, with little shared governance, she perceived her role as having some social status. Part of that perception may come from the fact that she was chosen to build and run her institution's literacy center despite full-time faculty also applying for the position. Regardless of where that perception of social status originates, she demonstrated the complicated and contentious nature of contingent status—one that at her public university disallows contingent faculty from having any voice in something as common as faculty meetings. As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the roles of contingent faculty are complex and contradictory, and Erica's story is no exception. Erica's experience demonstrated some inclusion because of her position running the literacy center, yet that inclusion is limited because she was still contingent and had no access to shared governance in her department. Erica could teach and run her university writing center; however, in terms of actual say on matters involving herself and others, she could only observe but was unable to participate.

Sometimes the old argument of “take what you can get and be happy about it” is enacted throughout our discipline—to an extent that hurts, and is at odds with, the actual ability to take any kind of collaborative social action that so many call for. Contingent faculty might be given three classes (for instance, three classes is the maximum here in Texas to avoid the institution having to pay into healthcare for the individual) and feel they should not complain. In Erica's

³⁵ I expand on this in the following chapter.

instance, she and other adjuncts were not allowed a physical voice, instead having to remain silent observers. Samuels writes,

As president of the contingent faculty union at the University of California, I have seen how an organized group of mostly undergraduate faculty can use their collective resources and power to promote teaching, undergraduate education, and non-tenure-track faculty. (145)

His assertion makes it seem like if enough people band together, change can be made through unionization. The problem, though, is that multiple states in the US have made collective bargaining and unionization illegal, or at the very least, difficult to accomplish. However, his argument is important because of the idea that universities and colleges can perhaps accomplish change, despite the legal lack of unionization and collective bargaining. Samuels continues, “Part of this process has been to use our negotiating rights to bargain over educational issues like student evaluations, professional development, shared governance, class size, merit reviews, and promotion criteria” (145). If colleges and universities acknowledge that their contingent faculty make up at least a portion (if not the majority) of their teachers, WPAs and non-contingent faculty could consider the issues that are important to contingent faculty, through conversations, and work to promote change from inside of their departments.

Large-scale change is difficult, but, for instance, what would it cost Erica’s university to at least give contingent faculty some department-wide shared governance by allowing them to speak? I would venture the monetary cost would be minimal. And, what can non-contingent faculty do to change this? Unfortunately, non-contingent faculty have a history of not taking action on contingent matters, according to Lori Harrison-Kahan in her essay, “Blaming the Victim: Ladder Faculty and the Lack of Adjunct Activism” (2014). Harrison-Kahan argues that

as contingent faculty, some find a collective voice, though non-contingent faculty have been noticeably silent on contingent faculty matters:

Silence is particularly notable given that humanists and social scientists have a long history of speaking up for those who have been denied a voice—advocacy made possible by the protections of tenure. [...] Yet despite this professed commitment to activism, few tenured scholars have taken adequate action against the inequities that form the bedrock of higher education in America. Why do established scholars, who speak openly about other social and economic injustices, refrain from allying themselves with those of us who are denied academic freedom by virtue of our identities as adjuncts. (“Blaming the Victim”)

As we consider how to better serve contingent faculty at our local sites, we need to also consider how to incorporate non-contingent faculty into advocacy toward collective action—both for and with contingent faculty. Without allies like non-contingent faculty, over time it might be difficult to sustain action that actually helps contingent faculty. Non-contingent faculty, therefore, must see their role as allies to contingent faculty as part of their professional responsibility as writing compositionists.

Alice: Non-Contingent Faculty and Former WPA at Public University, Southern US

Another writing professor I interviewed, this time a non-contingent faculty member, was named Alice.³⁶ Alice was also a former WPA and current professor at a different state university than Erica. Alice was an important voice to include in this chapter because she was able to reflect upon some of her time as a WPA and she could consider her current role as a professor. Alice

³⁶ Name changed.

echoed some of the points Erica mentioned in our interview and that are also reflected in the article by Harrison-Kahan. For instance, Alice discussed a lack of thought in required semester orientations for contingent faculty about what contingent writing faculty need to know, or if they even need to have the same reminders semester after semester. She said adjuncts who teach every semester do not need to sit through the same presentations by the same groups and committees each semester because often little has changed from the previous semester. She wondered how to best serve contingent faculty outside of mandated semesterly orientations: “Maybe they need updates. [...] I think we have to start thinking about what the needs of the individuals are we serve and how are we providing service to those individuals.” While continuing to present the same material at orientations is not an overt silencing of contingent faculty like Erica described earlier, it is ignoring or not listening and not asking. By choosing not to change orientation to adapt to the needs and wants of the contingent faculty at this state university, the university and department are ignoring its contingent writing faculty. Instead, the department is just rehashing the same information at a semesterly-required meeting over and over and over, which effectively tells contingent faculty that their importance is not worth the investment of time into changing these orientations (or making them yearly or just introductory or voluntary).

Alice’s frustration is also reflected in Shari Stenberg’s and Debra Minter’s article, “Always Up Against: A Study of Veteran WPAs and Social Resilience.” Stenberg and Minter conducted interviews with WPAs teaching at different four-year universities to understand how they work for change and social justice. One respondent, they say,

explained, “I have tried to enact commitments to social justice in ways that I can see, happening in everything from the teaching load that instructors have, to instructor

pay...Not that I could come in and wave a magic wand.” Indeed, many of our subjects were clear about the fact that WPAs, in making arguments for teacher equity, are up against systems that benefit from an exploitation of labor and a saturated market. (qtd. in 660)

While this WPA, as Stenberg and Minter assert, is in a system that continues to benefit from exploitation of contingent labor, they are also not an isolated case of a WPA trying to elicit change but who is also frustrated by the lack of change they can accomplish. It is concerning that the interviewed WPA equates social justice equity opportunities to make conditions better for contingent faculty with “waving a magic wand.”³⁷ The idea that the issue could be fixed with a magic wand might seem dismissive to the seriousness of these problems. Who would not want to wave a magic wand to fix things? But these are serious problems that will take time to fix. Additionally, there are voices missing from these conversations whether they are easy to change or not—contingent writing faculty need to be asked what they want.

We need to bring contingent faculty voices into the conversation so that we can move toward shared governance and gain social change, and both Erica and Alice are examples of the difficulty yet importance of that collective action. To begin to consider how to accomplish this, we as a discipline might ask: what are some of the ways that contingent faculty identify for *themselves* where non-contingent faculty and administrators can enact change that allows contingent faculty to feel valued in this system of exploitation? Again, these are conversations to have at the local level with contingent faculty through shared governance and voting rights. What are the stakes for keeping contingent faculty from taking part in shared governance? Once

³⁷ It is important not to fault the WPA for this description—I am sure at times the idea of waving a magic wand is attractive, but it *does* undermine the real work that can be and needs to be done to help contingent faculty in our discipline.

contingent faculty are given more shared governance opportunities and voting rights, we can see what they want and need at a local and individual level and begin the work to build those wants and needs and eventually work up to collective bargaining. Without the voices of contingent faculty, we are barely paying lip-service to contingent writing faculty wants and needs because our discipline, our departments, and our institutions have no way of actually knowing their contingent faculty's wants and needs.

Melissa: WPA and Non-Contingent Faculty at Public University, Southern US

A tenure-track WPA I interviewed who was just beginning her career had an optimistic, though arguably still realistic, view of contingent working conditions in her department. Melissa was a newly hired director of the writing program at her state university when she answered my call for interviews. Melissa's perspective provided some insight into how WPAs view their role in supporting contingent writing faculty. She had a 2/2 teaching load while also working with the contingent faculty in her department. Her attitude toward inclusion of contingent faculty in her department was driven by the lack of funding provided to contingent faculty. Professional development offerings in her department were sparse and uncompensated, no matter if faculty were contingent or non-contingent. When I asked about what professional development was available to contingent faculty in her department she wrote,

There is very little. While contingent faculty are technically invited to most things (there is a newsletter from the college once a day listing major activities [...] from the college), on the department level we use a listserv to send email announcements [...] but they are not required to come.

She elaborated, “We do this because we can’t compensate them, and it’s unfair to require unpaid work. But the downside is [...] the culture has evolved to not expect them at things.” Despite this lack of funding and involvement she added, “There are general good feelings, as far as I can tell, across faculty types in my department. But the issue is that contingent faculty rarely get to see full time faculty, naturally leading to a gap.” She described a few professional development opportunities her department held, such as a writing group and workshops for first-year composition teachers, but that few contingent faculty attended them and that although she is working on the issue, there did not seem to be a simple solution to her. One observation that came out of Alice’s and Erica’s interviews is that contingent faculty need to be allowed to advocate for improved working conditions, but non-contingent faculty must also ally themselves with contingent faculty through social power or collective action. Working together with contingent faculty, Melissa’s department might be able to revise their professional development opportunities to appeal to their contingent faculty.

Professional development is an immediately accessible area where contingent writing faculty and non-contingent writing faculty can unite to work together and improve their teaching and build a coalition. If contingent faculty do not feel valued or included in routine department meetings and business, perhaps they are more hesitant to participate in professional development. In “The Inclusion in Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent Appointments” (2013), the AAUP argues that the exclusion of part-time faculty from routine departmental meetings “fosters a sense of inequity,” yet,

on the other side of the divide, the proportion of full-time or tenure-track faculty appointments in some departments and institutions is dwindling, and those who hold such

appointments are overburdened with governance responsibilities as the pool of colleagues eligible to share this work shrinks. (“The Inclusion in Governance”)

Further, they argue, “As the percentage of tenure-track faculty at an institution dwindles, any governance system that relies primarily upon them to represent the faculty’s views becomes less representative, less effective, and more easily bypassed” (79). As the number of tenure-track appointments decreases, not only does the possibility of social power toward bettering the working conditions of non-contingent faculty possibly decrease, but the possibility of social power toward bettering the working conditions of contingent faculty in any given college or university will also decrease, unless changes are made to become more inclusive while not expectant of participation.

Another important observation Melissa made was that any professional development contingent faculty are asked to participate in should be compensated. I asked Melissa what she thought about professional development specifically for contingent faculty members and what conditions she expected them to need to be able to participate. She wrote,

I think that virtually all professional development opportunities should be open to them. The bigger issue [...] is that [there needs] to be fund[ing] to support attending development (related to your position). For contingent faculty in particular, their labor realities make having them come for training (often at multiple institutions) difficult. We should pay them for their time.

Her argument is not a new one—in fact returning to the AAUP—they adopted a statement about the status of non-tenure-track faculty in 1993 when just 32% of the higher-education teachers

were considered part-time. In the “Guidelines for Improvement” section under “Professional Standards,” they write,

Faculty members appointed to teach entry-level courses should have the opportunity to enhance their professional status and rewards based on performance of their defined responsibilities and should not be held to expectations which may prevail for other positions. (“The Status of Non-Tenure Track Faculty” 45)

While as members of higher education we are largely aware of the unethical rise of contingent employment, what is striking about Melissa’s argument is not that she argues for pay; rather, she is aware of the limits within the system for *both* herself as a WPA and a tenure-track professor, *and* for the contingent faculty she leads. Yet, despite the awareness Melissa has about both herself and the contingent writing faculty she manages, it appears the problem is unsolvable at her institution, at least, in its current form. Ultimately, Melissa would like to offer professional development opportunities for contingent faculty—but she also understands the need for pay, and yet at her institution “getting money to pay people for training is like pulling teeth,” she said. For Melissa’s department, it would probably be good to ask contingent faculty what they would need or like for them to participate in professional development and from there, work up to offering pay over time when it is more possible.

Melissa also had an important insight about her own inclusion as a new faculty member in an administrative role and a tenure-track role. I asked her if she felt included in the community at her institution. She responded that in order to find opportunities for her own professional development and “build in some accountability” she joined a women’s research network on her campus. She said,

The particular women in this group are phenomenal teachers [and we] spend a lot of time thinking about teaching as practice and as theory. [...] It has been a great resource for identifying good activities and trainings on campus and for just talking through teaching when I'm trying something new or I've hit a snag.

She also said she had a formal department mentor to help her prepare for annual reports and tenure. Additionally, Melissa said she had a "super supportive Chair, [...] so I feel very comfortable going to her when I'm not sure how we've handled things in the past or when I want to know more history about an issue." Melissa described a supportive network of other faculty and administrators to turn to as she completed her first year. A close friend of mine who is also an administrator created a group at her state university to invite parent-professors into a space where they could

[...] have conversations about trying to be good moms and good academics, and it just exploded from there. There's so much interest and special support groups that are forming from it now, like the one group working with the faculty senate on actually establishing some kind of parental leave.

Having these kinds of safe spaces for faculty, regardless of hierarchy, is essential. For example, how many of us can affect change on our own, no matter our hierarchical status? It is much more difficult to make social change without allies. It is also important for contingent faculty to have mentors and others they can turn to, and for contingent faculty to be able to interact with one another, collaborate with each other, and perhaps even create social change together.

Melissa's comments about joining a women's group on her campus brings the discussion back to the numbers of women working in contingent employment positions. The New Faculty

Majority website has a page dedicated to issues women face in contingent positions, and the difficulties of making those issues heard. The page is the “Women and Contingency Project.” Their project argues that despite women making up 51 to 61% of the adjunct faculty nationwide, women are the most “politically vulnerable and economically precarious.” Further, they argue that women adjuncts are “least educated about the need for organization and reform.” They continue,

Women contingent faculty are often either single heads of households with caregiving responsibilities, which makes them especially precarious. Or they have spouses or partners who subsidize their faculty work, which can insulate them from the realities of contingent employment but negatively affect them if they end up losing support.

It is important to note that there are a myriad of other possibilities that make women particularly vulnerable in contingent employment positions. Mothering is one example that complicates status and teaching, which I shared personally at the beginning of this chapter. However, this project, like others on the New Faculty Majority website have not been updated since about 2014, though they have a moderately active Twitter account. Regardless, these spaces are important to consider for contingent faculty advocacy and network-building and to create social power, and we must realize that women-contingent faculty likely make up the majority of contingent faculty positions at institutions and act on their specific wants and needs.

Beth: Contingent Faculty at Community College with a Full-Time Non-Teaching Position, Southwestern US

Beth, a community college adjunct, had a more distinct perspective in her role as a contingent faculty member than some of my contingent interviewees because she has a full-time

position that pays most of her salary, which is part of a stereotype regarding contingent faculty. Many people outside of academia assume that contingent faculty are otherwise gainfully employed. Beth disclosed that she was “perfectly happy to stay in contingent status. I have a non-teaching job that pays the bills so my contingent status can be considered my hobby with a small stipend.” Though Beth considered her adjunct teaching role to “provide me [with] enough time in the field and institutional affiliation to participate without that participation being necessary,” she said she had very real interests in collaboration and meaningful professional development, though she did not take part in professional development at her institution. Her full-time non-teaching job seemed demanding, yet that is not the only reason she did not participate at her institution. Beth did not participate in professional development at her institution because

... [the opportunities] don’t seem to be composition studies specific and there doesn’t seem to be much on scholarship—like there aren’t any sessions on how to do writing research. But then contingent faculty aren’t expected to do that kind of academic research and I don’t even know if the full-time faculty are supported, even emotionally, on academic research.

Samuels’ concept of social hierarchy is clear here for Beth. Beth saw her teaching and contingent status as secondary to her full-time job outside of higher education, though I wonder how many other adjuncts in her department shared that view, or if they saw their contingent teaching position differently. She saw her position as something to keep her connected with learning and affiliation, yet she did not rely on the pay. Additionally, her full-time position likely played a part in how she viewed her social status. Further, Beth did not see much use in collective action, or social power, because she was content working as an adjunct. While Beth never said anything

negative about those in contingent status without other jobs to pay bills, her description also exemplified one of Davis' framework descriptions of what outsiders assume contingent faculty do—teach on the side.

Beth's description of her happiness working to teach as a hobby is not a common experience according to Darrin S. Murray, author of "Wicked Problems Forum: Contingent Labor in Higher Education" (2019). Murray writes of the "happy adjunct" who, otherwise employed, "teaches a few classes now and then as a supplement to a successful career outside the academy and who sees their work as community service, bringing what some would label 'real world' experience into the classroom" (237). He continues, "These 'happy adjuncts' have few concerns about job security, working conditions, or pay [...], seeing teaching as a hobby that generates some supplemental income." Finally, he says, according to the AAUP, most contingent faculty are teaching not for supplemental income, but as their primary job. He concludes, "Both my experience and research indicate that this 'happy adjunct' is a particularly rarefied creature" (237). While I describe Beth's answers to the interview, it is important to consider Davis' argument, and Samuels' argument, along with Murray's argument about the power Beth had to walk away if she chose, because she had a full-time job that provided a reliable stream of income, enabling her a position with some power. Further, she could choose not to participate in her department's offerings because they did not appeal to her—a choice that does not exist for many contingent faculty.

When asked what kinds of professional development, Beth, an adjunct who saw her teaching as more of a hobby than an everyday-pay-the-bills job, had specific interests. Beth suggested conference panels and funding for conference attendance, what she called "support pods," or groups of contingent faculty meant to provide support to one another, or even a

monthly Sunday brunch meeting for contingent faculty. An important theme from Beth's ideas for professional development is they mostly involved contingent faculty meeting, and working, with other contingent faculty. Returning to Samuels' argument about social hierarchy and social power, departments and institutions would do well to consider Beth's suggestions of contingent faculty working with other contingent faculty. They might also consider the realities of competition that exist across hierarchical groups (e.g., contingent, and non-contingent and administration) based on perceived (and experienced) social power and try to bridge that gap by encouraging contingent faculty to participate in professional development like shared governance, which can also positively impact teaching excellence.

Not only should we create spaces for contingent faculty that include working with non-contingent faculty, but we must also be mindful of potential problems that may arise at any time. WPAs, for instance, can go into creating a space for contingent faculty alongside of non-contingent faculty with the best intentions, but problems may arise like isolation and competition. Eva Brumberger, in the collection *Moving a Mountain* (2001), wrote about her experience as an adjunct before she became a full-time lecturer and the isolation she felt. Brumberger wrote,

I am also painfully aware of the sense of isolation—the lack of ‘colleagues’ and therefore of community—that often accompanies these positions and makes professional development difficult, if not impossible. (92)

That awareness, she wrote, solidified a belief for her that better working conditions for adjunct teachers would lead to better departments and higher student development. Chris Anson, in his reflection “Shadows of the Mountain” from the same edited collection, wrote that for him,

respect and fairness are certainly tenets of a good writing program, but that good writing programs also need to:

create a climate in which people of all ranks and employment categories work together in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration, sensitive to each other's needs and working for each other's good, for the good of the program, and for the good of the students it services. (71)

Thoughtful cooperation and collaboration are essential for any opportunities developed for contingent faculty. Earlier in the essay, Anson observed that:

When competition increases for scarce resources, members of otherwise supportive, networked communities begin to distance themselves from one another. I've seen this happen regularly among the tenured professoriate, who can, in a bad climate, become jealous, competitive, wary, secretive, and calculating even while presumably working for the common good of their own department. (53)

When opportunities decrease, the potential for harmful situations and competition can increase. Departments and institutions need to periodically reevaluate their circumstances to protect contingent faculty. As Beth described her ideas for useful professional development, and as these older, but still poignant narratives also illustrate, collaboration and networking are essential for *all faculty*. Additionally, it would also be beneficial to create a space for contingent faculty to work with other contingent faculty. If we thoughtfully create space for contingent faculty to work with other contingent faculty, we can also create space for contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty to work together, but it needs to be done carefully.

Beth felt she had a supportive work environment at her community college. She wrote, “I feel included because the department does a very good job of making sure I’m on the correct e-mail lists to get notified of things. Also, I have a good relationship with my department chair, but a lot of that is probably because we were in graduate school together.” She continued, “I feel confident in my teaching and my scholarship so being on the edge is a wonderful place for me. I get to participate but there isn’t any pressure to participate.” Beth’s observations about support and connectedness are similar to what other interviewees indicated. Most interviewees agreed that they felt they had supportive direct supervisors and opportunities to participate in the department through professional development.

But one-size-fits-all is not applicable when offering professional development opportunities. Each department must consider its own possibilities and challenges. Toth et al. write that professional development is often considered only as it applies to four-year universities and colleges, and that for two-year colleges, the wants and needs of faculty in professional development are largely unexplored,

“four-year-centric” models of professional participation often fail to recognize the variety and breadth of two-year faculty engagement with professional organizations. [...] Furthermore, some part-time faculty’s limited socialization experiences hinder their developing identities as two-year college professionals. Despite these constraints, however, two-year college English faculty also experience unique opportunities to enact their professional autonomy beyond the classroom, and professional exchange with institutional colleagues. (91)

Beth’s observation that working with other contingent faculty is valuable was one that did not echo across other interviews—but is nevertheless important to consider. Beth, like my next

interviewee, Sarah, seemed to realize that professional development opportunities for contingent faculty must be tailored to what is applicable to the current and localized needs of faculty.

Sarah: Non-Contingent Faculty at Community College, Midwestern US

Sarah, like Beth, taught at a community college, but Sarah was employed in a full-time position for developmental writers. She also coordinated the developmental program she taught within. Because of her position as both non-contingent faculty and somewhat as an administrator who worked closely with other non-contingent faculty and contingent faculty, I found her ideas to align closely with my own experiences in those positions. While she did not identify her coordination work as co-mentorship, her description of working with the developmental faculty, both contingent and non-contingent, was rooted in reciprocal learning. Toward the end of our conversation, I asked her what she thought were the best ways to reach out to contingent faculty about professional development. She answered that there's "no one-size-fits-all [professional development that can be effective] but there must be critical areas [of professional development] to service adjuncts as professionals and members of higher education." Further, she added, administrators need to do more listening to what contingent faculty want and need in order to better serve the 2/3s of the population (adjuncts) who teach at her institution. Her English department only had thirty full-time faculty and "hundreds of adjunct faculty," yet they offered limited professional development opportunities for contingent faculty. Adding to this complicated situation, she also explained that her institution went from having associate deans to department chairs and at the time of our interview there was massive confusion about who was conducting evaluations—an important piece of professional development for many teachers.

Toth et al. describe the very essence of what it means to be a teacher at a two-year college and how it connects with professional identity through several interviews. "Two-year

colleges are, by design, responsive to community needs, particularly local student demographics and regional adaptations to a globalizing economy [...]” (98). They found that “[...] the kinds of pedagogical and administrated knowledge required in the two-year college English profession are often highly situated and context-specific” (98). Their full-time faculty interviewees indicated that participation with professional organizations allowed them, for instance, to make more effective arguments for influence over administrated decisions like “placement procedures, assessment, curriculum, and hiring criteria.” Toth et al. interviewed six adjunct faculty who had been teaching for three years or less because they believed participants would better remember and be able to reflect upon their experiences. They write that “overall, participants described needing more organizational socialization support than they received” (107). The respondents also indicate that “more informal and natural connections with colleagues” were “much more beneficial than the required mentoring program at [the specific college] or the college-wide part-time faculty orientations and handbooks offered by both colleges” (109). Through localized survey and interview work, we might learn more about what supportive writing departments could look like via what contingent faculty have to say—especially because, regardless of whether we work in a 2-year or 4-year institution, the majority of faculty are likely contingent and more likely to be under-represented in governance opportunities.³⁸

We need to consider contingent faculty’s professional identities and how the department and institution affects that perception. We should consider the positive benefits that creating a space for contingent writing faculty to work with other contingent writing faculty within our institutions could have on professional identity. Toth et al. argue that,

³⁸ See “Background Facts on Contingent Faculty Positions,” from AAUP which states that “Non-tenure-track positions of all types now account for over 70 percent of all instructional staff appointments in American higher education.”

if colleges better support their adjunct faculty and ‘invest in their capabilities, instead of treating them like replaceable parts,’ there could be great benefits—for part-time faculty, their colleges, and their students—including improved morale, teaching effectiveness, and student outcomes (106).

Opportunities like “mini-conferences” at the beginning of a school semester which allow faculty to present on any number of topics in English and writing were well-received by one group of respondents at a college that Toth et al. interviewed:

Authentic professional sharing such as the mini-conferences, as well as informal, collegial connections with other faculty in their department—although typically few and far between—was much more affirming of part-time faculty members’ professional identities [...]

with the caveat that all adjunct faculty they interviewed were relatively new in their positions (111). Locally based opportunities and virtual opportunities would likely help contingent faculty to develop their professional identities in ways that are both important to them and their teaching institutions. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic many of us are more familiar and comfortable with platforms like Zoom and Google Meet so it seems more feasible to offer virtual professional development opportunities to contingent faculty.

Robert: Contingent Faculty at Community College and Former Contingent Faculty at Private University, Southwestern US

When I conducted the survey and follow-up interviews, I noted little interest from male-identifying faculty. This was no surprise—likely because “There are nearly 30,000 *more* female part-timers than full-timers, whereas there are 70,000 *fewer* male part-timers than full-timers”

(Hose and Ford 46). I interviewed two male-identifying faculty. The other thirteen respondents were female-identifying. One male respondent was a graduate student with similar interests in bettering contingent writing faculty's working conditions. The other, Robert, was 77 at the time of his e-mail interview. Robert's voice is included here because he showed a fragmented sense of identity due to his experiences as a contingent faculty member. He was an example of contingent faculty who have applied for full time teaching positions and been unsuccessful. Robert wrote about his interests in changing contingent working conditions in higher education to become more supportive in encouraging contingent faculty participation in conference attendance and presentations—though he also argued that community colleges should “never adopt a ‘publish or perish’ philosophy.” Robert's awareness of professionalization and professional development included what he did not think was useful within his local context—including his belief that in his experience and his local context, scholarly contributions are not valued for contingent faculty and therefore should never become a requirement of contingent writing faculty.

Robert seemed to have little agency in his position as a contingent writing faculty member at his institution, as he indicated in both the survey and our interview. What stuck out to me was Robert's response to my follow-up question from his survey response about whether he felt supported in his teaching position. In the survey Robert wrote that “some schools are better than others [at helping contingent faculty feel included as a member of the teaching community], but few really make an adjunct feel like a first-class citizen.” When I asked him to expand upon that thought, he wrote, “In addition to better pay for adjuncts, we need a career path toward full-time status. I started at [community college] in 1984 and I've had one (!) interview for a full-time [teaching] job in all that time.” He illuminates a recurring problem—much conversation around contingent employment is that it is meant to be temporary—yet for him and many others it is not.

While Robert did not disclose how many times he had applied for full-time positions, having only one interview for a full-time teaching position in 34 years is shocking.

Robert, despite the negative experiences he described, also indicated that feeling included was “very important” in his survey response. In the interview questions, I asked him if there are ways WPAs or institutions could reach out and become more inclusive to contingent faculty. He responded that “full-timers should stop being condescending to us adjuncts.” Though he did not elaborate on his experience with this, it is also a necessary aspect to including contingent faculty in meaningful ways for their needs and wants. Finally, when I asked him about department evaluations, he said that department evaluations are important, but added that “good to excellent student evaluations are normally a necessary criterion for contract renewal, but not a sufficient one.” And he elaborated, “As a former administrator at another college once put it, ‘having good evaluations is no guarantee that we’ll rehire you, but receiving bad ones gives us a perfect excuse to fire you.’” I could not help but ponder over Robert’s responses, jarring at times, as he discussed his own fragmented identity that was seemingly reinforced by the places he had taught. His articulation of evaluation experiences was important because they were based in his localized experiences and disheartening conversation. Student evaluations and teaching evaluations should be meaningful toward bettering teaching excellence and not an excuse to terminate someone.

Robert identified little positive reinforcement from mentors (saying that he had no mentor, rather that he has been a mentor to new adjunct faculty), administrators (a seemingly veiled threat for termination), and even students (he wrote that student evaluations were not helpful to him—they often, he wrote, “have more to do with your personality than about your classroom methodology”). The reliance on student evaluations for professionalization that

Robert discusses is troubling, in part because they can be sexist and racist.³⁹ Samuels argues that student evaluations alone create a problematic evaluation system for faculty. Considering Robert's argument that his student evaluations had more to do with his personality than his actual teaching, Samuels argues that by focusing on student evaluations and keeping students happy we enact grade inflation, and it can cause faculty to teach in a "defensive manner" rather than following "many of the goals of a writing studies approach to composition and learning" (147). While Robert likely does not endure the teacher-as-mother identity that so many female faculty tangle with, he does identify a couple of important places where other contingent faculty have trouble: in mentoring and assessment. We will return to this in the next chapter as part of some idea for gaining social power, or activism and creating change within our individual departments.

Annie: Contingent Faculty at Multiple Institutions and Doctoral Student, Southwestern US

Contingent faculty who teach at multiple institutions are often called freeway flyers. Well, there are freeway flyers and then there is Annie. Annie was teaching an 8-course load when we spoke and she is an important example of a person who is tasked with different course preps, as many contingent writing faculty endure if they teach at multiple institutions. She was teaching at four different schools, and for each of those schools she was teaching two sections of writing. Annie's ability to draw comparisons across the different institutions she taught at made her responses particularly important. An interesting observation Annie made at the beginning of our conversation was that all four of her schools expect professional development of their

³⁹ See Jacquelyn Bridgeman's chapter "Still I Rise" in *Presumed Incompetent: Race, Class, Power, and Resistance of Women in Academia* (2020) where she discusses her experiences in the tenure process. Participating as a reviewer allowed her to compare how her student evaluations were viewed and discussed with how white male colleagues' student evaluations were viewed and discussed in a more positive way, illustrating sexism and racism.

contingent faculty, though the specific expectations were not always clear. Annie said only one of the schools facilitated opportunities that explicitly included contingent faculty. She went on to explain that the only institution that invited or allowed contingent faculty to participate in professional development opportunities was the for-profit online college she worked for. So Annie and other contingent faculty at these institutions were often required to have professional development, yet some institutions provided no opportunities for professional development. Yet, what complicated her situation even more was she could not list any of the professional development she participated in at the for-profit university on her CV for fear of stigma when searching for higher education positions at non-profit higher education institutions.

When I asked her what the other institutions she taught for could do to make contingent faculty like her feel welcome to participate in professional development opportunities, since they were required for contingent faculty, she said that first, revamping program decisions would need to happen. She elaborated on one institution specifically who barred contingent faculty from attending department meetings would need to change their policy to allow contingent faculty to attend. That idea is important: contingent faculty might see department meetings as important spaces to gain an understanding of how the department and the institution works and being able to contribute in those spaces might allow contingent faculty more professional connection to the institution. However, for example, non-contingent faculty and administrators might just assume that professional development for contingent faculty should be teaching workshops for (not by) contingent faculty. It is essential for departments and institutions to consider what contingent writing faculty need and want at a localized level.

Next, Annie said it is imperative that departments and institutions consider time commitment. Annie, and many other contingent faculty, often teach at multiple institutions

and/or have other jobs. Thus, it is important to offer a variety of options that are more inclusive of their needs, for instance, offering virtual professional development, providing recordings of available professional development be made available, and distributing copies of agendas and power point presentations. Such professional development would be immensely helpful to contingent faculty. Further, Annie elaborated, sometimes professional development “feels [like] it works to better scholars and sometimes it feels like a power play [move] and [it is] not collaborative.” Social status, according to how Annie observes it at some of her teaching institutions, (and similar to how Robert described it) is used to subvert contingent faculty and keep them in the “lesser” role by requiring professional development yet not supplying it. Chun et al. write in “Higher Education Support for Adjunct Faculty on Institutional Websites” (2019) that little research exists that explores the “flexible and responsive initiatives” adjunct faculty need to “enhance scholarly approaches to teaching and learning practices.” They observed that through website content adjunct faculty could find potential groups and meetings that are open to them. However, they suggest, websites tended to omit information for adjunct faculty and because of the omission, data “suggest that the opposite is the case, and that the website enhances the alienation that many adjunct faculty members experience throughout their careers” (29). They argue that adjuncts at any given institution were unlikely to have dedicated pages and groups on the institution’s website, and thus adjuncts were more likely to feel alienated. In Annie’s experience, professional development was expected by the institutions that employed her, but no options seem explicitly tailored to her status as an adjunct or for other adjunct faculty in her position at the non-profit institutions, which led her to feel like an outsider.

Toward the end of our conversation, Annie also elaborated about why, despite any clear professional development opportunities for herself, and other contingent faculty, she takes part in

a multitude of professional development opportunities when she can. Annie said she likes to participate because it shows that contingent faculty are not invisible. Rather, she said it shows that she also can choose to be as visible or invisible as she wants to be. Mainly Annie said, through participating in professional development she can help to remove the “stigma that we’re lesser.” Annie and others in this chapter have said they feel left out at times. Chun et al. suggest that among other things we need to remember that adjunct faculty’s needs:

ought to be extended beyond hiring and grade submission. Even if adjuncts are not full-time employees, many of them have been long-term members of the institution and in any event ought to be supported as active members of the academic community. (29)

To consider adjunct’s extended and important needs, Chun et al. contend that institutions should employ a dedicated page for adjunct faculty. In Annie’s case, and many others, this might prove to be helpful, but again, each department and institution needs to determine what will work on their local level based on what contingent faculty want and need.

Carlie: Contingent Faculty at Public University and For-Profit Online University and Occasional Contingent Faculty at Public College, Midwestern US

Like Annie, Carlie also taught at an online for-profit institution. However, Carlie was a team-lead at her for-profit institution and provided interesting insight into her experiences as a contingent faculty member who also supervised many faculty. Carlie said that she oversaw 50 adjunct teachers who work for the online university. Previously, Carlie was tenure-track at a public university before she decided to become an adjunct professor.⁴⁰ She said that she enjoyed

⁴⁰ Regrettably, I did not ask Carlie why she decided to become an adjunct.

her status as an adjunct because she could work on a book she is writing, and because she could continue to teach.

Carlie mentioned that to encourage contingent faculty to participate in professional development, she believes it is important to offer online opportunities and to also compensate travel whenever possible. Carlie also said that professional development is important to her because it allows her to feel a part of the department and institution, but that without pay it should never be required of contingent faculty. At her teaching institutions, much like Annie, Carlie said professional development was “expected but not required” and that there was “no professional development penalty [if they didn’t attend occasionally]” but that there would be some kind of negative consequence if contingent faculty at her institutions did not attend professional development at all. While she said that negative consequences are not “spelled out” in any official form, teachers are expected to reflect upon their teaching. Again, Chun et al. address this issue regarding adjunct faculty who teach from a distance, for example online, like Carlie, might find it difficult to know what “resources are available because they do not even experience the face-to-face informal help that can be found on campus” (29). Carlie knew that professional development is expected, but the reasons why and the consequences for not participating were unclear. Having a dedicated online space for teachers like Carlie would help them better understand where to turn for information and help for their specific needs.

Mentors are an often-cited support system for non-contingent faculty. I have been lucky enough to have mentors throughout my career, no matter my contingency status. However, most of the contingent faculty I talked to were never assigned formal mentors though most had many similarities in how their teaching was evaluated from institution from institution—often through student evaluations and sometimes through teaching observations. Carlie, however, had some

interesting insight into how teaching evaluations were conducted at the for-profit online university she taught for. She described weekly evaluations at her for-profit institution where contingent faculty filled out a form that discussed what they were doing in the classroom and how she had to go into the individual faculty course shells to see what was being posted, how the instructor was interacting with students, and to make sure the instructors were present for students. At the end of every term student evaluations were also monitored. The way Carlie oversaw her faculty was regimented and repetitive, and I wonder how useful that kind of feedback is for contingent faculty over time.

Despite her identity as contingent faculty teaching online courses, Carlie does perform as a mentor in some ways for other contingent faculty. Carlie's role as a mentor was based in her filling out online evaluation forms after visiting course shells and in reviewing online student evaluations for professors, instead of being able to physically visit with faculty. However, most of the contingent faculty I talked to were only monitored based on student evaluations, and, as Robert discussed, occasional teaching observations. Teaching evaluations seem to happen much rarer than I expected. Evaluations are important, but they need to be meaningful for not just the institution or department, they need to be helpful for the faculty member as well.

V. Conclusion: "There Must Be Critical Areas to Serve Adjuncts as Professional Members of Higher Education"

Despite the complicated nature of personal and professional obligation, in most of the interviews I conducted, both contingent and non-contingent faculty recognize the importance of professional development for contingent writing faculty. Thus, it is important to offer professional development opportunities to faculty across hierarchical levels or type of teaching institution. After conducting the survey and follow-up interviews it became exceedingly clear to

me that contingent writing faculty want to be included in opportunities in their departments and institutions. Any opportunities that departments and institutions offer to contingent writing faculty must be considered in a local context. To consider the local context, I argue that we must have conversations with contingent faculty at the local level to get an idea if, and what kind of, professionalization they seek and what barriers stand in their way. Additionally, we need to seek to understand what kinds of relationships contingent writing faculty want with other contingent faculty, non-contingent faculty, and administrators. This argument emerged because I spoke with and sought out professors working in different contexts, in different material conditions, and each had commonalities and differences, yet all were interested in professional development in some fashion. No one I interviewed said they found professional development worthless or not worth their time. The final chapter explores ideas and research about contextualizing professional development for and with contingent writing faculty.

It is essential for us to include contingent writing faculty in professional development opportunities because it shows that we value them as faculty and members of our institutions. Further, we need to invite contingent faculty into professional development whenever possible, but we should not force them to participate. Contingent faculty should, ideally, be paid for attending. However, at a minimum, professional development opportunities should benefit contingent faculty, fit into their schedule (or there are multiple opportunities through different methods), and be something contingent faculty would find useful to their teaching and/or scholarly work. One of the biggest takeaways from both the surveys and interviews is that contingent faculty feel largely ignored and under-served and the available scholarship also supports this observation.

At a localized level we need to talk with contingent faculty, but we also need to speak with non-contingent faculty about how they interact with contingent faculty. It is essential to collective action that non-contingent faculty understand that contingent faculty are colleagues and deserve to be treated as such. As some of my interviewees identified, at times contingent faculty have felt ignored and even disrespected by non-contingent faculty. Hesford writes,

It was against the pull of such teaching (teaching which silenced and alienated the personal voices of students) and out of the fear of anonymity that I struggled to understand the split which academe had seeded in me, and to find a writing voice which was both personal and political, passionate and scholarly. (21)

Similarly, as a discipline we need to consider the harm we cause our discipline, and the teachers who make up our discipline, when we disassociate stories and personal experience from being important, scholarly work. Without taking the time to listen to contingent writing faculty, we will never create agency for them and change the very serious, and often difficult, working conditions they endure. Contingent faculty make up the majority of our discipline and we must make their plight a major part of the advocacy work we do. Many non-contingent scholars already do this work, but we need more contingent faculty voices in these spaces.

A major barrier for WPAs and administrators in helping contingent faculty with their wants and needs is often budget constraints. My concluding chapter provides some suggestions for WPAs and administrators about how to incorporate more professional development with careful thought to budget constraints as well as future goals for our discipline to consider how to better meet the demands and wishes of contingent faculty. However, before we move on, it is also imperative to return to the undercurrent of mothering that became clear to me as I drafted this chapter. Research linking writing studies with expectations of female-identifying faculty

acting as mothers toward students is not new (see Baliff, Davis, Mountford, *Women's Ways of Making It in Rhetoric and Composition*). What is most troubling from these interviews is the massive pressure contingent faculty and non-tenure track full-time faculty face regarding teaching load, professional obligations like professional development, and personal obligations that align with problematic cultural thoughts of mothering. Loren Marquez in "Narrating Our Lives: Retelling Mothering and Professional Work in Composition Studies" (2019) writes,

...not only should we focus on women who are professionals in rhetoric and composition at institutions other than Research I schools and women who have already "made it," but we must look at the generation of upcoming teacher-scholars who are in the process of presently "making it"—women, young in their careers trying to obtain tenure, running writing programs, researching, teaching, mentoring, and mothering. (76)

I agree with Loren, but this needs to be expanded further to include contingent faculty who do not have the same job security as tenure-track faculty, and non-tenure-track faculty who are seemingly expected to mother perhaps their own children, yes, but also their students and sometimes their colleagues, while meeting their other professional and personal obligations.

We continue to promote unsustainable expectations that female-identifying faculty, especially, face in writing studies. Additionally, according to many of my interviewees, leaving them out of important conversations not only about their institutions, but also in their role as teachers and fellow faculty in our departments, needs to change. The AAUP argues that,

It is therefore important to note that colleges and universities cannot meet their obligation to provide equal employment opportunity by having a substantial number of their female

appointees on a part-time status that provides them with little or no opportunity for movement to full-time positions. (“Status of Part-Time Faculty”)

The next chapter discusses ways to increase inclusiveness with regard to professional development for contingent faculty, though it is not intended to argue more demands be piled upon contingent faculty. In fact, I would argue quite the opposite. We need to see what contingent faculty want on the local level and we need to provide them with reasonable assistance toward their wants—but we also need to be careful not to mandate participation in these additional opportunities. From there we should consider re-assessing where contingent faculty feel secure, what they no longer need, and what other concerns need to be addressed. While feeling powerless to create large, meaningful change for contingent faculty is certainly a common and valid complaint from WPAs and administrators, who often have no control over budgets, these smaller, more micro-level changes can add up to bigger change over time and allow us to demonstrate just how essential contingent faculty are for student success, and allow us to make larger, more global positive changes in the working conditions for contingent faculty.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion: Enacting Social Power Through Departmental and Institutional Activism

My goal for this dissertation was to answer the following questions through a survey and follow-up interviews with contingent and non-contingent faculty in Texas and nationally:

1. What are contingent writing faculty's professional aspirations, and would professional development opportunities be something contingent writing faculty want and need to achieve these aspirations?
2. What would constitute a culture of inclusion for contingent writing teachers?
3. Can professional development foster a culture of inclusion for contingent writing teachers? And if so, how?

Through the responses to my survey and the follow-up interviews I conducted, it became clear that to develop an inclusive culture which includes contingent faculty departments and institutions should incorporate access to professional development that is thoughtful about local context. An inclusive culture is one that values the contributions of contingent writing faculty and encourages contingent writing faculty to become involved in their teaching institution's networking and learning opportunities if contingent writing faculty want to. An inclusive culture for contingent writing faculty does not mandate contribution or attendance in addition to professional opportunities—it invites contingent writing faculty to become valued members of their departments and institutions. It is also essential that to develop a culture of inclusion for contingent writing faculty, departments and institutions must create opportunities that are meaningful for the contingent writing faculty they are meant to serve. In this chapter, I provide some ideas for writing departments to include contingent faculty in professional development opportunities.

In the previous chapters I discussed survey responses and interview responses from contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty. My biggest finding was that contingent writing faculty are interested in professional development and departments and institutions seem to be unaware of that interest. While some of the discussion in other chapters included WPA responses, this chapter focuses on providing recommendations for professional development opportunities and considerations when developing those opportunities for contingent faculty. At times, I compare these opportunities with some WPA responses to the survey to provide context for meaningful change toward better working conditions for contingent writing faculty. The ideas presented at the latter part of this chapter are both measures that can be enacted immediately and measures that will take longer to accomplish through social power and collective action⁴¹ for contingent writing faculty. Robert Samuels, who discusses social power in his book *The Politics of Writing Studies: Reinventing Our Universities from Below*, is using the term to describe collective action, which often requires union support. However, I see his idea of social power as more broadly encompassing physical movement by a group of people toward changing power structures. For instance, in Texas unions are rare, but there are groups who organize on behalf and with employees. But I also see his idea of social power as being possible in smaller, more informal settings as well. For instance in a committee working to change a departmental policy—any change would require rhetorical appeals of ethos and logos, but without social power, that argument would likely remain on the pages of a proposal, and not acknowledge the physical work of that committee in making their argument in person, or on social media pages like Twitter, or when talking to colleagues and brainstorming ideas. This

⁴¹ Social power and collective action are used interchangeably by Robert Samuels, and is used alongside of the other rhetorical appeals or pathos, ethos, and logos. Social power and collective action create movement and change. I use social power and collective action to call for movement away from the continued exploitation of contingent writing faculty.

physicality is key, I argue, in creating lasting change for the working conditions of contingent writing faculty.

This chapter begins by examining existing research about professional development in higher education and how it compares with what WPAs indicated in their survey responses to help ground the suggestions I provide later for change. Since WPAs (and other administrators like department chairs) are usually the most able to strengthen contingent writing faculty's working conditions, because they are responsible for overseeing their scheduling, evaluations, hiring, and terminating, as well as interacting with contingent writing faculty on a closer basis than others in the department, it is essential to speak directly to their responses in this conclusion. The WPA responses in this chapter come from writing and English professors in Texas, the Midwest, and the east coast. The recommendations I make later in this chapter make use of a framework created by Roger G. Baldwin and Jay L. Chronister from the book *Teaching Without Tenure: Policies and Practices for a New Era* (2002).

While the focus of this dissertation is on contingent faculty and professional development, it is important to examine the perceptions WPAs have about contingent faculty professional development as well, since they are often responsible for creating a culture of inclusion for contingent writing faculty.⁴² Additionally, WPAs are often on the frontlines of hiring contingent faculty, observing contingent faculty, scheduling contingent faculty, and so on. The task of developing interview questions, finding possible interviewees, checking references, creating schedules, completing observations, and repeating the process as needed is a complicated one. With state requirements for public colleges and universities constantly

⁴² Of course, some institutions have contingent writing faculty and no WPA, and instead a department chair who may be in a different discipline as I experienced in one my adjuncting experiences; however, WPAs are an organized group who do oversee a large number of contingent faculty in writing studies, so I appeal to them directly.

changing (e.g., in August 2019, Texas began requiring “Marketable Skills” be listed as outcomes for each college course beginning in January of 2020), it is somewhat common to be hired as an unexperienced WPA and thrust into the fast-changing expectations of the position. However, WPAs are often the localized department decision makers who can make some change for contingent faculty within their department. Thus, WPAs are essential to address regarding any suggestions I make for change in this chapter.

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has a “Statement on the Status and Working conditions of Contingent Faculty”⁴³ that argues for better working conditions for contingent faculty. An important section, titled “Respect and Recognition,” argues for increased explicit valuing of contingent faculty. The three bullet points are important grounding for how to increase inclusivity for contingent faculty:

- 1) Faculty members serving in contingent positions should be viewed and treated as a valued and integral part of the academic community.
- 2) Faculty members serving in contingent positions should have access to most, if not all, of the resources and services that are available to tenure-line faculty, including mentoring programs, support for scholarly work, support for travel, and so on.
- 3) In the event of the conversion of contingent faculty to tenure lines, faculty members in those positions should be afforded the opportunity to participate in professional development activities that will prepare them to compete for the tenure-line positions.

This might include the creation of a probationary period in which the current holder of

⁴³ In earlier chapters I discussed other statements from CCCC; however, this statement from NCTE is more general about their statement on the treatment of English contingent faculty.

the line is allowed to work toward the fulfillment of the requirements of the new tenure-line position. (NCTE, “Statement on the Status”)

The statement is important because it argues for better treatment of contingent faculty; however, the section on respect and recognition is integral to my argument in this chapter. To value contingent faculty is the first step to becoming inclusive of all faculty in a department or institution.

When I became a department chair in the summer of 2012, I had only been employed full-time at a community college for one year. I also became a department chair with just my master's degree. Despite beginning my chair work in the summer, including the tedious and time-consuming process of scheduling and hiring for fall, I was unpaid for the increased workload for three months. However, I was eager to bridge the disconnect between full-time faculty and adjuncts at my community college. As a previous adjunct at the community college, I was aware of helpful things the institution and department had done (e.g., calling us associate faculty⁴⁴ and providing some possibilities for professional development like inviting contingent faculty to brown bags) and I was also aware of less helpful institutional and departmental practices (e.g., a department chair at one campus was all but unreachable⁴⁵ while the other became an important mentor to those she supervised, including me). I was inexperienced and could have done a horrific job, but since I had the goal of bridging professional relationships in the department, I knew that started with conversations and listening to what adjuncts in my department wanted. Jessica Schreyer, in her article “Inviting the ‘Outsiders’ In: Local Efforts to Improve Adjunct

⁴⁴ Unfortunately, the community college recently announced adjunct faculty will no longer be called associate faculty to be more consistent with what other community colleges call adjunct faculty.

⁴⁵ The other department chair had a larger number of contingent faculty she supervised which may be one reason she did not correspond with us much.

Working Conditions” (2012), echoes a similar career and outlook about being a supervisor.

Schreyer began as an adjunct writing teacher and subsequently hired as a WPA. She writes in the article about how she acclimated to her role as a WPA by creating goals for herself. Part of her goals were to find ways to better the conditions of contingent faculty within her writing program, something I believe WPAs often hope to do, and that I tried to do myself. Schreyer writes,

To do this, I started by observing and noting what was currently happening within our department. I then surveyed adjuncts about their experiences and what they would like to see improved. Following initial responses and observations, I implemented a pilot plan to improve relations with the Composition faculty at my university. At the conclusion of the pilot, I did more extensive interviewing of the adjuncts to determine if this local effort improved their experiences [...] (84).

Reflection, discussion, and revision are essential steps to writing that we teach to our students. They are also essential steps in developing meaningful connections with contingent faculty. As Schreyer also notes, writing courses are most often taught by contingent faculty who have

few resources and little voice on curricula. In an era when universities need to enhance retention of all students, [...] it is crucial that programs and supports are provided for composition students and instructors to be successful. (97)

WPAs may have few monetary resources for changing the culture of their department to become more inclusive toward contingent faculty; however, this chapter works to provide ideas for smaller, incremental change that over time may add up to large departmental changes. The changes that I propose can often be enacted for little monetary cost to a department. Further, I hope that this chapter is also helpful to departments where there is more agency for change. No

matter a department or institution's situation, my goal is to provide some ideas for enacting social power. Through social power departments and institutions can work toward creating a more inclusive culture for all writing instructors. Finally, the recommendations I make are important for writing departments because while I am arguing for better treatment for contingent writing faculty, these recommendations would make the working conditions for all writing faculty more inclusive, regardless of status.

Since the days of the Wyoming Resolution (1988) our discipline has realized we have much change to accomplish in improving working conditions for teachers of writing, and that need has only grown as higher education (and writing studies) employs continually growing numbers of contingent faculty. And while I would not argue that any one department or institution should undertake all the changes proposed in this chapter, at least not at once, they might find one or two that can allow them to argue for more changes in the future to benefit the discipline's growing contingent faculty population. As Laura Micciche writes in, "More Than a Feeling: Disappointment and WPA Work" (2002), WPAs are often assumed to be power-holders but, "The truth, however, is that the WPA's authority and power are challenged, belittled, and seriously compromised nearly every step of the way—a fact compounded by the steady number of WPA positions advertised at the assistant professor level" (434). As a former department chair myself, who was un-tenured, my powers were limited⁴⁶ in what I could change for the department; however, I was able to work toward becoming more inclusive of what contingent faculty in my department needed and wanted. My goal is to help other departments or institutions to do the same.

⁴⁶ For instance, I was not able to offer additional monetary compensation to contingent writing faculty and I could not ultimately change the working conditions for contingent writing faculty, since that would require large-scale change at the institutional level.

Further, it is essential to remember that WPAs are not the only people who can or who should take up initial social action toward change for contingent faculty. WPAs are not the only ones responsible for enacting any collective action—we as composition teachers are all responsible to enact change in the working conditions of contingent writing faculty. All members of a department must work with one another, regardless of hierarchical status to create meaningful change. Lastly, this chapter speaks directly to WPAs because they are often the first line of contact with adjunct faculty.

The themes for change that I discussed in my previous chapter are: 1) building community among contingent faculty, 2) creating opportunities for inclusivity between non-contingent faculty and contingent faculty, 3) increased professional development flexibility for contingent faculty, 4) offering virtual professional development opportunities, and 5) moving beyond the practice of student evaluations as the only professional development some contingent faculty receive. These themes are broad, but my intention now is to provide some more concrete ideas for change that departments or institutions can consider. To do that, I use the book *Teaching Without Tenure: Policies and Practices for a New Era* (2002), by Roger G. Baldwin and Jay L. Chronister. In their book, they detail thirteen factors they argue are “key parts of an overall model of good practice” when creating guidelines for employment of NTT full-time faculty (147). While Baldwin and Chronister do not focus on contingent faculty,⁴⁷ many of the thirteen factors are applicable:

- “a defined probationary period” (e.g., if an appointment is short-term it needs to be labeled so),

⁴⁷ While NTT faculty are often contingent, full-time NTT faculty, as Baldwin and Chronister are speaking about, tend to have more stability in yearly contracts or multi-year contracts, while contingent faculty are usually on semester contracts.

- “explicit evaluation criteria,”
- “multi-year contracts following a probationary period,”
- “defined dates for contract renewal or termination,”
- “an equitable salary system,”
- “an equitable fringe benefit system” (e.g., state whether or not faculty all have access to the same benefits like leaves and grant programs),
- “a system of sequential ranks,”
- “support for professional development,”
- “meaningful involvement of governance and curriculum development,”
- “recognition of and reward for the contributions of full-time non-tenure-track faculty,”
- “procedures for protecting academic freedom,”
- “monitoring the use of full-time non-tenure-track faculty,”
- “orientation” (147-65).

Most of these thirteen key factors are discussed later in this chapter as a means of creating more agency for contingent faculty. Some of Chronister and Baldwin’s original factors have been changed to meet the unique needs of contingent faculty. For instance, to build community among contingent faculty (theme #1 that I developed based on previous chapters), a department might choose to add in “meaningful involvement in governance and curriculum development” that includes contingent faculty more clearly, or for the first time (159).

Meeting the larger themes for change that I identified at the beginning of this chapter might be completed over time through smaller changes. Laura Micciche argues that, “For Slow

Agency,” agency⁴⁸ is often not fast, and should sometimes remain still for “regeneration,” and that “Agency operates on a continuum that includes action and change as well as less measurable but no less important forms of action like thinking, being still, and processing” (73). Sometimes change and movement toward collective action might be slow or reflective before action can occur. For instance, the first step in any change should be reflection on the department, what can be done to better contingent writing faculty’s working conditions, and why that action should be done. Finally, some frameworks are more applicable to some departments and institutions than others. The reader is invited to consider what might benefit their circumstances and tailor the frameworks to their needs. The framework and suggestions I make are meant to be a starting point for change.

I. The Survey: WPA Responses and Contingent Faculty Response Comparisons

Six WPAs completed my survey completely, which was a smaller response than I expected. However, as I mentioned in the survey chapter, I only allowed respondents to the survey to select one category from non-contingent faculty, contingent faculty, or WPA. It is possible that some WPAs may fall under contingent or, more likely, non-contingent faculty, as well. An even half (3) of the WPA respondents were women and (3) were men. The age range included 33.33% (2) between ages 25-35, 33.33% (2) between 45-54, and 33.33% (2) older than 55. The six WPAs also indicated they were all white (6) and held doctorates. Half of the WPAs (3) who answered the questions are from Texas. While this is a small sample of responses the

⁴⁸According to Micciche, “WPA action tends to align with what I call ‘big agency’ or actions that intend structural results and effects” (73). Here, I am speaking about agency *other than* big agency, what Micciche calls a “wider spectrum of WPA agencies” (74).

WPAs who responded to my survey provided quality insight through their answers about how they interact with, and think of, contingent writing faculty.

WPAs responded quite differently than contingent faculty when asked about “additional degrees earned, academic specializations, teaching training, or other relevant information not accounted for in the highest degree or education level achieved questions above.” While WPAs listed additional educational endeavors, teaching experience outside of their full-time WPA position (e.g., moonlighting as an adjunct at another university), or teaching obligations at their main institution, their descriptions of their specializations stayed within English or writing studies. For instance, one WPA wrote that they hold a Master of Teaching (MAT) and another wrote that they have an

M.A., English Language & Literature + composition training and 2 years of part-time teaching as a grad student; Ph.D., Applied Linguistics + 4 years of part-time teaching as a grad student, followed by 15 years of full-time university teaching of comp, lit & linguistics.

Contingent writing faculty respondents, on the other hand, indicated specializations that included descriptions of qualifications outside of terminal degrees, English or writing studies, and teaching obligations. Contingent writing faculty gave examples of teaching trainings, personal writing, and publishing, for instance. According to Datray et al. in their article, “Adjunct Faculty in Developmental Education: Best Practices, Challenges, and Recommendations” (2014), some administrators wrongly assume that adjunct faculty lack training and experience that would allow them to be more effective teachers (38). However, contingent faculty respondents to my survey see their trainings and additional professionalization as specializations. Further, according to their research, Datray et al. found that there was no actual difference in student success related to

faculty status. Further, they write, a study found that students who took part-time faculty's classes were as successful at graduating as those who enrolled mostly in full-time faculty's courses (39). Because the WPA respondents to the survey described their specializations as they relate to the discipline (English or writing studies), and contingent writing faculty saw their specializations as not limited to the discipline, there may be a large gap in how WPAs and other department leaders understand the different wealth of experiences that contingent writing faculty have.

Specializations do include things like doctorate degrees, but according to results from the survey, contingent faculty see their specializations as things they participated in *outside* of their teaching obligations. According to the AAUP article, "Who Are Part Time Faculty" by James Monks (2009), there are two factors that "appear to limit" part-time faculty from moving into full-time teaching roles: "First, the availability and willingness" of those who wish to remain contingent, and administrators who are "willing to fill classrooms with part-time appointees," and "Second, most-part time faculty who desire a full-time position...do not hold a doctorate degree or first professional degree [JD or MD, for instance]." While many full-time positions in writing require terminal degrees (like PhDs), perhaps another conflict we need to consider is the assumption that not holding a doctorate degree equals lack of professional training. From my survey, 45.1% (23) of contingent faculty indicated they have a master's degree while 21.57% (11) had 30+ hours beyond a master's degree, and 23.53% (12) have a doctorate degree.

While most contingent writing faculty respondents to my survey, 66.67% (34), do not have a doctorate degree, many still considered themselves as specialized in diverse ways, which is an important consideration for WPAs. David Smit, in his book *The End of Composition Studies* (2004), argues that

Any improvement in the teaching of writing will have to involve specialized training of those who do not have doctoral degrees and those who actually do the teaching of writing, and it will have to involve ways to integrate writing teachers more fully into colleges and universities, with all of the compensation and benefits that entails. As a result, the doctoral degree may have to be reconsidered as a degree conferred only on those who do research and who can apply that research to train others to teach specific kinds of writing in specific contexts. (203)

WPAs might see their own specializations differently from how contingent writing faculty see their specializations, but it is essential for WPAs to recognize *how contingent writing faculty see themselves* may differ from WPAs' perceptions. Not only did contingent writing faculty identify interest in specializations resulting from professional development in the survey and interviews, but it is also an immediate and relatively mild cost change that writing departments could make.

The time that had passed for WPAs who responded to my survey since completing their most recent degrees differed quite a bit. Each WPA had distinct answers ranging from 0 years to 25 years since their last degree was earned. Similarly, when WPAs were asked how many years they had been teaching writing at the college level, the respondents' answers ranged from 8 years to 42 years of teaching. Contingent faculty respondents to my survey often indicated they were at the earlier part of their teaching career; the most, 40% (21) indicated they had been teaching for 5-10 years. Similarly, according to the national survey from CAW "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members," published in 2012, 24.2% (2468) of contingent faculty have taught for 6-10 years, 24.7% (2513) of contingent faculty have taught for 3-5 years, and 7.3% (744) have taught for less than a year. Most contingent faculty responses to my survey indicate they are at the beginning of their careers; however, 21.6% (2198) of respondents to CAW's survey have taught

for 10-20 years and 10.7% (1093) have taught for more than 20 years (25). While WPA respondents to my survey run a diverse range of years of experience, the majority of contingent faculty are at the beginning of their careers, though many have been teaching for a long time as well. Regardless, it is important for departments and institutions to avoid assuming that their contingent writing faculty are early in their career. Part of establishing a culture of inclusion is understanding the experience levels of their contingent writing faculty and considering what kinds of opportunities for teaching workshops, for example, might appeal and be beneficial and to whom.

WPA respondents to the survey all indicated they were currently teaching at one institution while many contingent writing faculty who responded to the survey indicated they taught at multiple:

Contingent faculty currently teach at...

- One institution: 57.4% (31)
- Multiple institutions: 42.6% (23)
 - Three or more institutions: 18.6% (10)

Only two WPAs, or 33.33%, reported teaching at two institutions during their career. Contingent faculty reported a history of often working at multiple institutions: 69.56% (32) have taught at more than one higher education institution in their teaching career. These differences in past experience teaching at one or multiple institutions, and the fluctuation that might occur for faculty who teach at multiple institutions at times and one at others, must be examined by WPAs when considering how to offer professional development for contingent writing faculty. While I am not suggesting WPAs moonlight as adjuncts, I do think they need to keep in mind the large

numbers of contingent faculty who are experiencing multiple sets of expectations from different departments and institutions, different textbooks they have to use, and are traveling various locations, among other things, that most WPAs have not ever experienced themselves. Shirley Rose et al. argue in “Directing First-Year Writing: The New Limits of Authority” (2013), that “The WPA’s work is determined and constrained by exigency and the rhetorical situation of the institution, the programmatic structure, and the position” (50). Contingent writing faculty are inextricably connected with the rhetorical situation of institutions and must be part of WPA’s considerations. Professional development opportunities should, ideally, be applicable to multiple institutions or generalizable for contingent writing faculty to apply to other teaching situations. Further, professional development opportunities that WPAs and departments or institutions create need to be aware of contingent writing faculty’s schedules. It may not be feasible, for instance, to schedule opportunities once a month on Fridays at 1 p.m. Instead, it might be more applicable to offer them at various times/days of the month and also virtually. By diversifying how contingent writing faculty can participate in professional development, WPAs and institutions can continue to create a culture of inclusion for writing faculty.

The next set of questions for WPAs included a narrative style question because as Tom Sura et al. argue, WPAs situate their scholarship and roles through narratives. Without these narratives, complex context may be misunderstood or remain unknown: “It is through narrative that WPAs are best able to share with a larger audience what they do and why and how their work is intellectual” (80). And returning to Rose et al., I also wanted to consider each individual’s institutional rhetorical situation. I wanted both contingent writing faculty and administrators to openly discuss their perceptions and thoughts about professional development. The first question I asked was, “How would you define professional development for contingent

writing faculty?” Five WPAs answered this question and all of them provided different insights. One person, for example, wrote, “Guided support that connects contemporary research, landmark work from Writing Studies/Composition, teaching best practices, and the local context to contingent faculty member's classroom practice and teaching philosophy.” These are all thoughtful possibilities and even includes the essential “local context” that must be considered. Another WPA wrote, “workshops, speakers, digital repositories, listservs, mentoring, peer to peer mentoring,” which was again a detailed list of possibilities though missing any consideration regarding locale. A third WPA respondent wrote much more,

I am not sure what you are asking. But here is a bit of information about [professional development] for contingent faculty at my school. It is highly needed but rarely provided by schools primarily due to budget, logistics, and overall commitment. At my school, we have very few contingent faculty if defined as adjuncts. They are always welcome to participate in on-campus opportunities but because of their low pay and time constraints, I hesitate to even encourage their participation. We do have many faculty who are [NTT] and are on renewable yearly contracts. They sometimes feel as if their status is contingent but other times do not. Basically, they are treated the same, except for pay and expectations for tenure, as any TT faculty.

This response was important because the person clearly considered the local needs and realities experienced by contingent writing faculty; however, the respondent stated that contingent faculty are basically treated “the same except for pay and expectations for tenure, as any TT faculty,” yet the respondent had previously written that they “hesitate to even encourage [contingent faculty’s] participation” in professional development. Yes, tenure-track faculty are expected to participate in professional development but encouraging contingent faculty to participate in professional

development is not the same as expecting it. One essential aspect of providing professional development opportunities to contingent writing faculty is to consider the localized needs and wants of contingent writing faculty.

Contingent faculty, when asked the same question, “How would you define professional development for contingent writing faculty?” often wrote about specific instances where they did not receive professional development that could have been useful to them. One contingent writing respondent wrote about receiving “‘general’ classroom teaching practice” instead of “situated learning about writing instruction specifically,” and that “the approaches taken can be overwhelming and even disrespectful. For example: no pay for added meetings or programs with required attendance[...].” Situating professional development opportunities in relation to the experience and local needs and wants of contingent faculty is an essential aspect of creating inclusive culture. Returning to Schreyer’s article, “Inviting the ‘Outsiders’ In: Local Efforts to Improve Adjunct Working Conditions,” she argues that professional development “reinforced the connection of [her] writing program with current research in composition.” Schreyer focused on developing topics (e.g., “incorporating successful peer-review,” and “finding ways to manage the grading load”) that she believed were relevant to adjuncts in her department and asked them to present on topics they specialized in (93). I share her concern about asking adjunct faculty to endure labor where there is often little or no pay, but she found that inviting contingent faculty to participate more within the department helped them to feel more valued with “89% stating that they would recommend attending the sessions to a colleague” (94-5). WPAs and other departmental leaders must continue to think of what contingent faculty want and need, in addition to anything departments and institutions also need and want. Departments and institutions must never only consider what the institution wants without considering contingent

faculty wants—to do so would continue to marginalize contingent writing faculty and would work against any goal of making contingent writing faculty a part of the teaching community. It is essential for WPAs to consider contingent faculty's needs beyond their employment obligation to their department. To create a culture of inclusion, WPAs should emphasize the autonomy of all faculty, and they should respect and encourage the autonomy of the contingent faculty they supervise.

WPA responses to my survey when compared overall with contingent writing faculty responses indicate that WPAs who responded to my survey are aware of many of the issues that contingent writing faculty experience and what contingent faculty value about teaching and being employed in higher education. However, my survey included a small portion of WPA-specific responses and it is important not to over-generalize based on such a small sample. Yet, as a discipline, we owe ourselves more—no matter our hierarchical level we must work to engage with one another and have discussions to make the working conditions better for contingent faculty. There are three essential issues that WPAs need to consider and attend to: 1) WPAs should understand what kinds of professional development contingent writing faculty at their institution need and want, 2) WPAs need to communicate with contingent writing faculty about what professional development is available to them, and 3) WPAs need to provide professional development that works with their contingent writing faculty's schedule, including the very real possibility that many of their contingent writing faculty may teach at multiple institutions. As I previewed at the beginning of this chapter, the conclusion of this dissertation uses social power as a framework for change that WPAs, departments, and institutions can consider and tailor to work toward better working conditions for contingent writing faculty and

to create a culture of inclusion for contingent writing faculty within their department and institution.

II. The Move to Social Power: A Framework for Change

I have experienced most of the roles discussed in this dissertation, sometimes more than once: I am a former WPA and former adjunct, and I am currently a non-tenure-track, full-time community college professor. Because I identify with these positions and because I also know how crucial it is to identify problems and complexities within the field regarding contingent employment, I also understand how essential it is to provide some avenues for change and future scholarship. My five themes for change: 1) building community among contingent faculty, 2) creating opportunities for inclusivity between non-contingent faculty and contingent faculty, 3) increased professional development flexibility for contingent faculty, 4) offering virtual professional development opportunities, 5) moving beyond the practice of student evaluations being the only professional development some contingent faculty receive, helped me to revise the framework Baldwin and Chronister created. In this chapter, I have thus far examined WPA responses to my survey and compared them with existing research and contingent faculty responses to the survey as a way to continue bridging understanding of how contingent writing faculty perceive and experience their working conditions, especially around professional development. Next, I provide suggestions for the five themes for change that departments and institutions can consider when developing or improving their culture to be more inclusive of contingent writing faculty.

It is essential to address the importance for departments to examine diversity and how to consider race and gender when making programmatic changes. Creating a culture of inclusion means inclusivity is not optional. For *all* the frameworks suggested below race is an essential

consideration. De Mueller and Ruiz, in their article “Race, Silence, and Writing Program Administration” (2017), write that “Race needs to be named, interrogated, discussed, and ‘demetaphored’ in ways that are specific, explicit, and additive” (21). While their focus is on WPAs of color and the need for scholarship that “focuses directly on race in WPA work or support systems for WPAs of color,” we also must consider the demographics of contingent faculty and how to diversify our departments to ultimately better serve our faculty of color and our students of color (23). Ninety-two percent (48) of contingent writing faculty respondents to my survey identified as White, 3.85% (2) contingent faculty as Black or African American, 1.92% (1) faculty selected “Other, (please explain)” and wrote that they identify as White and Cherokee, and 1.92% (1) contingent respondents preferred not to answer. AAUP’s contingent faculty report published in 2014, examined race at different types of institutions. They found that when breaking out specific race and ethnicities at all higher education institutions that:

Asian

- Full-Time Tenured Faculty: 22.1% (24,563)
- Full-Time Tenure-Track Faculty: 12.3% (13,730)
- Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty: 19.2 (21,396)
- **Part-Time Faculty: 25.5% (28,383)**
- Graduate Student Employees: 20.8% (23,135)

Black or African American Faculty

- Full-Time Tenured Faculty: 12.2% (14,457)
- Full-Time Tenure-Track Faculty: 6.9% (8,154)
- Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty: 15.3% (18,070)
- **Part-Time Faculty: 53.9% (63,597)**

- Graduate Student Employees: 11.6% (13,749)

Hispanic or Latino

- Full-Time Tenured Faculty: 17.1% (15,834)
- Full-Time Tenure-Track Faculty: 6.9% (6,404)
- Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty: 14.6% (13,482)
- **Part-Time Faculty: 45.9% (42,529)**
- Graduate Student Employees: 15.5% (14,354)

White

- Full-Time Tenured Faculty: 18.9% (242,214)
- Full-Time Tenure-Track Faculty: 6.7% (85,893)
- Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty: 16.8% (214,740)
- **Part-Time Faculty: 43.6% (558,936)**
- Graduate Student Employees: 14% (179,540)

American Indian or Alaska Native

- Full-Time Tenured Faculty: 15.2% (1,250)
- Full-Time Tenure-Track Faculty: 6.9% (568)
- Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty: 18.9% (1,554)
- **Part-Time Faculty: 44.6% (3,673)**
- Graduate Student Employees: 14.5% (1,195)

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

- Full-Time Tenured Faculty: 14.6% (576)
- Full-Time Tenure-Track Faculty: 9.0% (335)

- Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty: 16.3% (642)
- **Part-Time Faculty: 46.2% (1,823)**
- Graduate Student Employees: 13.9% (549)

Two or More Races

- Full-Time Tenured Faculty: 10.5% (1,432)
- Full-Time Tenure-Track Faculty: 6.5% (890)
- Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty: 12.2% (1,654)
- **Part-Time Faculty: 39.0% (5,307)**
- Graduate Student Employees: 31.8% (4,323). (29-36)

While most of the respondents to my survey who identified as contingent faculty were white, it is essential to note that a larger, nationwide survey of all contingent faculty found contingent faculty make up the largest percentage in every race/ethnicity's overall employment status as part-time faculty. However, if we were able to break this number down further and combine the employment status as contingent or non-contingent faculty, there would likely be a change for some race/ethnicities being categorized more as occupying non-contingent faculty positions. Because there is not enough data, I cannot further parse out the exact positions of non-tenure-track faculty, since my own definition for this project of contingent faculty would not include those on multi-year contracts but would include those on yearly contracts. Further, my own definition does not include graduate students in my study because as a group, graduate students are studied often. Yet, the AAUP does define contingent faculty in the study as "Includes the following categories, as appropriate for the specific table: full-time non-tenure track members, part-time faculty members, and graduate student employees" (61). By combining the full-time tenured faculty and full-time tenure-track faculty to examine non-contingent faculty, and by

combining graduate student employees, part-time faculty, and non-tenure-track faculty to examine contingent faculty, we can see that the percentages change to illustrate a much more drastic difference in contingent versus non-contingent numbers:

Asian (111,207 total)

- Contingent Faculty: 65.5% (72,914)

Black or African American (118,026 total)

- Contingent Faculty: 80.8% (95,415)

Hispanic or Latino (92,603 total)

- Contingent Faculty: 76% (70,365)

White (1,281,323 total)

- Contingent Faculty: 74.4% (953,216)

American Indian or Alaska Native (8,240 total)

- Contingent Faculty: 78% (6,422)

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (3,945 total)

- Contingent Faculty: 76.4% (3,014)

Two or More Races (13,606 total)

- Contingent Faculty: 82.9% (11,284). (29-36)

Institutions and departments, many of whom consist of those who identify as white, according to the AAUP study, need to not only hire more diverse faculty, they need to also recognize professional development needs of writing faculty of color, especially the needs of contingent faculty of color. All colleges and universities have different challenges, but that is not an excuse to ignore race while considering other issues our departments and institutions face. As many of us are aware, teachers of writing interact with most of our institution's student population since

writing is usually a core requirement. If we expect our students to interrogate the complexities of what it means to live and (eventually) work in our culture, it means that as a discipline we also must investigate our own representation, label it, and change it to be more inclusive. Writing studies teachers must work toward more discussions not only with our students, but also within our departments and institutions about race and diversity. This work is essential toward creating better working conditions for contingent writing faculty and to developing a culture of inclusion for all faculty.

It can be difficult to transition into the role of a department chair or leader, and to decide where to begin bettering the working conditions of contingent faculty in a department. As a new WPA, I struggled to know how to begin helping the contingent faculty I supervised, and in many situations, contingent faculty, non-contingent faculty, and administrators lack a starting point (or context for change) toward collective action. As I previewed at the beginning of this chapter, Roger G. Baldwin and Jay L. Chronister detail thirteen factors they argue are “key parts of an overall model of good practice” when creating guidelines for employment of NTT full-time faculty (147). While Baldwin and Chronister studied only full-time faculty, I noticed many of their guidelines are also applicable to contingent writing faculty. Thus, I changed their list of factors for creating a culture of inclusion to specifically include contingent writing faculty. Some of the factors I identify for change will be more applicable to some departments and institutions than others, and I encourage the reader to think about their local context, to talk to contingent faculty in their department, and then use this framework to work towards a more inclusive culture.

For the analysis below, I tailored the factors by Chronister and Baldwin specifically to contingent writing faculty, and as a result some of the key factors they identified have been

necessarily edited or blended. Further, I have also considered community colleges and their large use of contingent faculty in this revision of factors, rather than just relying on the default university considerations that many scholars use. For instance, “multi-year contracts following a probationary period,” “a defined probationary period,” “a system of sequential ranks,” and “defined dates for contract renewal or termination,” are not necessarily wholly applicable to contingent faculty, whether at universities or community colleges, so I have changed those to “Contracts and Contract Renewal.” Others, like “an equitable salary system” and “an equitable fringe benefit system” are again not wholly applicable, but are more relevant when combined, and I have changed them to “Equitable Compensation System.” Finally, some, like “orientation” have been edited to include additional suggestions that apply to contingent faculty, so “orientation” is now “Orientation and Mini-Conferences.”⁴⁹ A few of the original factors are left alone, like “support for professional development,” and “explicit evaluations criteria,” because I believed they apply well to contingent writing faculty as they were originally developed.

The eight frameworks I developed using Baldwin and Chronister for this chapter are discussed in order of what I anticipate as the most accessible change toward inclusion for contingent writing faculty and ending with the most important, yet likely hardest changes to accomplish. The reader is encouraged to use these frameworks as best fits their own department or institution needs. The frameworks discussed are:

- “Support for Professional Development,”
- “Orientation and Mini-Conferences,”
- “Explicit Evaluation Criteria,”

⁴⁹ I paired these together because contingent faculty respondents to my survey tended to pair orientations and mini-conferences together in their responses.

- “Recognition and Reward,”
- “Inclusion in Governance and Curriculum Development and Protecting Academic Freedom,”
- “Contracts and Contract Renewals,”
- “Monitoring Use of Contingent Faculty,” and
- “Equitable Compensation System.”

Whenever possible, it is also important to involve contingent writing faculty voices and feedback if any of these suggestions are implemented, so it is essential that any department or institution who modifies these factors to involve a diverse range of contingent faculty voices.

Support for Professional Development

The focus of this dissertation has been on how professional development for contingent writing faculty could contribute to a culture of inclusion. The importance of professional development for all faculty, especially non-contingent faculty, has been established in existing research; however, attention to what kinds of professional development should be offered and how departments connect with contingent faculty to offer that support is essential to consider as well. My research clearly demonstrates that not enough attention has been paid to providing effective and meaningful professional development for contingent writing faculty.

One way for contingent writing faculty to participate in their institution or department, and which has positive outcomes for their department or institution, is through professional development opportunities. Providing professional development opportunities to contingent writing faculty potentially allows them to consider scholarly work about their teaching, for example. It also allows contingent writing faculty to share scholarship and teaching advice.

Some respondents to my survey and follow-up interviews were specifically interested in professional development because it would allow them to connect more with scholarship.

According to Guglielmo and Gaillet, authors of “Academic Publication and Contingent Faculty” (2013),

For contingent faculty, creating intersections between teaching and scholarly work makes scholarship more feasible, diversifies the perspectives from which we understand teaching and professional work, and allows “knowledge making and professionalization [to] come into better balance.” (Bishop 1993, 210). (qtd. in 214)

The authors go on to discuss the Boyer model as a framework for teaching-focused scholarship, which is a wonderful and important possibility. However, as my research makes clear, contingent writing faculty also have interest in professional development that can be found in conversations and attending presentations, conferences, and workshops, so it is also important to provide professional development opportunities *outside* of producing scholarship. Guglielmo and Gaillet argue for creating a community of scholars, discussing how WPAs, for instance, can ethically encourage contingent faculty to “publicize reflective pedagogical practice” (216). WPAs should be promoters, but the actual professional development opportunities should be led by faculty, Guglielmo and Gaillet say. WPAs should also broaden their definition of professional development’s purpose—for contingent faculty (and non-contingent faculty) it is not just about creating scholarship, it is also about improving teaching and creating community.

Many contingent writing respondents to my survey indicated that they were interested in attending workshops offered by their department. One of the suggestions Guglielmo and Gaillet provide include workshops. Contingent faculty participation in workshops should allow an

opportunity to *play* with the technology, receive hands-on training, and create assignments and class activities for a course. [...] Ideally, this work should be supported by a modest stipend and/or lunch and snacks. (219)

Where available, food is certainly a draw, but as I observed in my survey results, for contingent writing faculty it is certainly not mandatory to supply food to entice them to attend professional development. It is likely that creating community is just as likely a reason to attend workshops for contingent faculty.

Contingent writing faculty respondents to my survey also indicated that they are interested in local conferences. Local conferences usually take place at an institution and may involve multiple departments or just one; regardless, they showcase faculty's scholarship and pedagogy to help professionalize individuals teaching at that institution. Local conferences are a rewarding professional development opportunity for contingent writing faculty because they allow for conversation. Local conferences are also a potential environment for meaningful collaboration and professional connection/networking. Guglielmo and Gaillet argue that local conferences sponsored by colleges and departments, for instance are particularly valuable because they allow "all who teach in the writing program to share their expertise in a formal venue" (221). Some conference themes they suggest include:

research and first-year writing, teaching writing with technology, reading in the writing classroom, strategies for general education literature courses, and other topics that meet the specific needs and showcase the strengths of individual programs and departments. (222)

A final essential note that Guglielmo and Gaillet make is that because these conferences are local, they often “do not require travel funds and faculty simply can attend as audience members, contributing to discussions, benefitting from shared scholarly work, and offering support for their colleagues” (222). One important addition to these suggestions for workshops and conferences includes making sure that contingent faculty know they are welcome not just as audience members, but that they are also encouraged to present and demonstrate if they wish. If contingent writing faculty are included not only as attendees in professional development, but also as presenters of that professional development, departments and institutions will become much more inclusive of their contingent writing faculty.

Orientation (Not Just for New Faculty) and Mini-Conferences

Orientation is usually at the beginning of the year or semester and is sometimes difficult for new faculty who were hired last minute to attend. But, at the same time, orientation is also important for acclimating members to a department and institution while also sharing new policies and procedures with existing members. Another important consideration for orientation is that it is a time for existing faculty and new faculty to meet and talk. Orientations are a good place for new contingent writing faculty to learn about policies and rules for the department, and if they are tailored to each semester or year, they can be beneficial for contingent faculty to attend as a means of creating community for contingent writing faculty. Care should be taken when mandating that contingent faculty must attend orientation, how the orientation is presented, and when the orientation is available. As Toth et. al argue in “Distinct and Significant: Professional Identities of Two-Year English Faculty” (2013), found after interviewing adjuncts, college-wide faculty orientation is not always helpful to returning adjuncts, but more informal connections with colleagues were (109). Departments might consider virtual orientations for

contingent writing faculty that they can view asynchronously, while also taking care that contingent writing faculty know who to contact with questions about the orientation material if they view it asynchronously.

Orientations are a reliable way to acclimate and include contingent faculty, allowing them to create and maintain professional identity. Professional identity, as Toth et al. argues incorporates “four criteria: “a shared vision for norms and goals,” “social recognition between members,” “autonomy to define and measure criteria by which those members should be evaluated,” and “a self-regulating process for socializing new members into the field” (91). While Toth et al. are speaking specifically about two-year colleges and the importance of creating professional identities for English faculty, these four criteria I argue extend to contingent writing faculty of both two-year and four-year higher educational institutions because no matter what teaching institution a writing teacher is employed in, they are likely to create a professional identity. It is essential to not only treat and respect contingent faculty as professionals, but also encourage contingent faculty to *see themselves* as professionals, too. Professional identities allow us to develop and maintain a connection to the places where we teach. Orientations are an important avenue where departments and institutions can thoughtfully create and maintain a culture of inclusion for contingent writing faculty through that connection.

Further, contingent writing faculty should have the opportunity to interact with other contingent faculty, and orientations are an excellent place for that opportunity. WPAs could likely create opportunities for this connection in orientation and it may be an area they overlook. Toth et al. looked at English faculty employed at two-year colleges and how they

attach[ed] to their roles as professionals: how they identif[ied] shared norms and goals, how they recognize[d] one another within a diverse and differentiated community, how

they develop[ed] and enact[ed] the autonomy to define and measure criteria for evaluation within their profession, and how they socialize[d] new members into the professional community (92).

When they examined how part-time composition faculty would describe their own socialization within two-year colleges, they found that orientations and other professional experiences were vital in shaping those contingent faculty members' professional identities. Having conducted research through a survey and interviews, I think no matter the institution type, faculty develop professional identities in part based on their environment, that is, through their local institutional affiliation and through their experiences with others at the institution. For contingent faculty, access to a network of teachers in a similar environment as themselves can help them feel included and a part of the community. Personally, as an adjunct in 2010, I developed a professional identity only at one school because I felt valued as a professional by my supervisor, Martha, and the institution as a whole.

Additionally, the flurry of activity in hiring can cause newly hired contingent writing faculty to have little time to react and reflect upon their new positions. Toth et al. write about the hiring process and how in some positions, like two-year contingent faculty positions, new hires can be rushed through the hiring process days before the semester begins and, "without opportunities for [...] connection and recognition [new faculty's] early organizational socialization experiences constrain[s] their emerging professional identities..." (109). Thus, developing professional identity in a supportive environment can become complicated, especially if there are few opportunities for this development to take place. Departments and institutions should tailor the support contingent faculty want to that which they perceive as helpful and, ideally, positive. This inclusion can help contingent writing faculty to develop and

revise their professional identity and it can help to connect contingent faculty to their teaching community. Finally, orientations are especially important because they can quickly acclimate newly hired contingent writing faculty into the culture of the department.

Contingent faculty believe that connection to colleagues is a beneficial piece of acclimating to a new institution, and orientation is not the only opportunity for this development. Unfortunately, in Toth et al.'s study they found that participants rarely had access to the helpful informal and natural connection building opportunities that the participants in their study longed for. This lack of opportunity may stem from a shortage of office space or access to campus resources and shared spaces. In one instance, Toth et al. found that contingent faculty were required to participate in a formal mentoring program. Contingent faculty reported that "Rather than a source of support, the mentoring program was mostly a source of frustration and had the effect of making the part-time faculty in this study feel patronized" (109). An activity valued by contingent writing faculty that Toth et al. suggests were "mini-conferences." The mini-conferences Toth et al. discuss were held at the beginning of each semester and faculty members could present on topics "ranging from grading rubrics to English skills learning games and other teaching tips." Each faculty member from the community college responded positively to the mini-conferences, "these activities, which brought faculty together as colleagues to share their specialized expertise, seemed to affirm their identities as professionals" (Toth et al. 110). My own community college offers this and calls it a professional development conference.

The college has offered two types of conferences in the past.⁵⁰ One is tailored to full-time faculty (in general, it is not stated as being only for them, but largely that is who attends) and the

⁵⁰ I am not sure how they will run the conference for adjunct faculty this year because of COVID-19.

other is specifically and explicitly a conference for contingent faculty. At the contingent faculty conference, full-time faculty are also encouraged to attend and present, but the focus is on what contingent faculty want or need to know about the college (e.g., a workshop on developing materials to apply for full-time positions, a workshop on how to interview with the college, etc.).

Recently, at the end of November 2020, our (relatively new) Center for Teaching and Learning invited “full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, administrators and staff” to submit proposals about “Teaching and Learning through Change,” which was their theme for the conference. The conference took place “live” in January over the course of three days and included 5-minute poster presentations, 50-minute panels, and a 75-minute plenary address about stress and anxiety. The Faculty Development Conference included sessions from the e-Learning Center about how to use technology, tips from various professors about topics like Quality Matters, how to engage students in service learning, how to encourage students to show up to class (my community college largely had blended courses in fall 2020 and was not fully online like many in our area). While this faculty development conference is usually attended more by full-time faculty, it would be interesting to learn if the virtual conference offering encouraged more adjunct faculty to attend than usual when the conference is held in-person.

The adjunct conference has been an important and valuable opportunity offered by the college because it allows new contingent faculty and seasoned contingent faculty to interact with each other and with full-time faculty, whom they otherwise may not see. The contingent-faculty-specific conference is held on a weekend (usually a Saturday) when contingent faculty are most likely to be able to attend. Meanwhile, the full-time faculty mini conference is usually held during the week before classes when both contingent faculty and non-contingent faculty at my institution are likely prepping for the semester ahead, with some time to spare to attend if they

choose. No one is mandated to attend these conferences, though of course both presenting and attending are both encouraged.

The contingent faculty conference tends to be very well attended and seems to contribute to contingent faculty at the community college feeling included in the college, based on the number of presenters and people who return to the conference each year. Additionally, the contingent faculty conference, now labeled the adjunct faculty conference due to the college's move away from calling part-time faculty associate faculty, is run by both contingent and non-contingent faculty. Each major college campus (last year there were three) has an adjunct faculty representative who helps to plan the adjunct conference. Some of the topics covered at last year's adjunct faculty conference were "maximizing classroom time, adaptative teaching, dealing with distracted learners, and pedagogy," among others. The conference (held before the pandemic) included a breakfast with the deans for networking opportunities, textbook publishers, and lunch with discipline leads. Finally, the conference specifically offered six 45-minute presentations slots available only to adjunct faculty presenters, which encourages adjunct faculty to not only attend the conference, but to also be involved by sending a proposal and abstract, and if chosen, present their own research and pedagogy.

Toth et al. conclude that mini-conferences and more informal connection to other faculty in a department are "[...] affirming of part-time faculty members' professional identities" (111). But they also warn that the contingent faculty from their study were relatively new adjunct teachers who ultimately wanted to become full-time, thus they were likely motivated to create connections with their teaching institutions. They conclude the study by asking how these new contingent faculty identities "might shift or change over time, if they, like so many aspiring full-time two-year college English faculty, find that they have become involuntary permanent part-

timers” (111). Toth et al.’s worry is certainly one worth minding; however, as both my survey and interviews found, some contingent faculty are content in their contingent status—whether they were wanting to only teach part-time, have other full-time positions, or are teaching as part of retirement plans—some contingent faculty, both seasoned and new, want to retain their status as contingent. So, while we work to better the status of contingent writing faculty with the hopes of gaining health insurance, better pay, and better working conditions, we also need to support the professional identities of contingent writing faculty no matter their aspirations. Returning to the findings from my last chapter, it is essential for each institution and department to listen to their contingent faculty in order to support their professional needs and wants. For many contingent faculty, whether they wish to become full-time or remain contingent, becoming more professionally included is one way to reach out to contingent faculty and to work toward social power for them. No matter the status of faculty, contingent or non-contingent, creating a culture of inclusion is beneficial for all.

Explicit Evaluation Criteria

Part of the problem, I argue, with enacting social power toward better working conditions for contingent faculty involves the often broad and unclear job duties and evaluation criteria they agree to as part of their job. It is not just job advertisements and contracts that can be confusing. Even the NCTE “Statement on the Status and Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty” has a final section that is broad and relatively unclear in its argument for more equitable conditions for contingent faculty. They write,

Instructors should be afforded the opportunity to earn tenure or, in the alternative, ‘long-term security of employment’ as teaching specialists. Their position descriptions should recognize the specialized nature of their appointments, and evaluations should be tied to

those position descriptions and conducted at intervals comparable to those of faculty in traditional tenure-line positions. (NCTE, “Statement on the Status”)

Many job descriptions I look at in my immediate employment area do not include much detail regarding the employment expectations outside of requirements like accepting and teaching courses at any time and on any days that will accommodate students and even “external stakeholders.” In fact, most of the job descriptions at colleges and universities in my local area do not list specialized skills expectations of contingent writing faculty. This can lead to evaluation criteria in teaching jobs being confusing and sometimes counter-productive, and little feedback (or none) does not help a teacher to become a more effective educator.

As Robert indicated in his interview responses, evaluation can become a powerful tool in manipulating power over contingent faculty. In my own short experience as an adjunct, I taught at a community college where the chair of the department gave me 3s out of 5s on every single criterion and told me that she would increase the score the longer I worked there because she did not believe new faculty should earn 5 out of 5. While perhaps an extreme example, broad job descriptions for contingent faculty allow for confusing and counter-productive evaluations. Instead of having some idea of what I did well and what I could work on, she gave me no feedback I could use at all. Other times this can mean a lack of evaluation. As I mentioned earlier in the dissertation, I also taught at a school for three years where I was never observed at all. No one reviewed my teaching evaluations (nor did I have any access or invitation to view them) during those three years. In fact, many of the job descriptions I read in my area made no mention whatsoever of teaching evaluation or job evaluation. Instead, if they mentioned it at all, the job description referred only to how the teacher was to provide *student* evaluation—that is, teachers must provide students with feedback on their classwork.

A performance evaluation statement in job advertisements would be helpful for contingent writing faculty about how they will be evaluated, how often they will be evaluated, and what evaluations would mean for their job retention. Indicating the kinds of evaluation the department uses helps to create a culture of inclusion because contingent faculty are visible—they know that they will be included in evaluation in a similar way as non-contingent faculty might be evaluated. At some colleges and universities I have worked at we were evaluated using a self-evaluation that we wrote, in part based on responding to teaching evaluations and a yearly, or bi-yearly, classroom observation that my immediate supervisor would conduct. The most useful teaching observations I had, and the most fruitful conversations I had with my supervisor, were ones where I knew the criteria they were evaluating me on. Often, I was alerted to the criteria through email or with a form that showed me exactly the items that they would be paying attention to during my teaching demonstration. Since contingent writing faculty are tasked with teaching many of most institutions' basic writing courses, we can probably assume that most contingent writing faculty would value feedback on their teaching—both what they are doing effectively and some thing(s) they might work on and why. Further, the absence of feedback can be demoralizing. When a place I taught at never bothered to observe my teaching, I knew I could be replaced with any warm body with enough credentials. Therefore, if writing programs do not already, it would be valuable to include evaluation criteria in job postings so prospective employees can understand how their teaching will be valued in the department and institution. At the very least, institutions and departments can make them available in interviews with prospective faculty. Evaluations can be a useful step toward larger moves toward better working conditions because it can demonstrate to administration how departments invest time and consideration into contingent writing faculty.

Recognition and Reward

Reward and recognition are important aspects of faculty retention. The need for recognition and reward is not new; however, we must remember that recognition and reward are not just important for TT full-time faculty who move up the ranks over time through publishing excellence and teaching excellence. Many people, regardless of status or job title enjoy being recognized and rewarded for a job well done. Recognition and reward tend to be awarded to full-time faculty at most of the institutions where I have taught and include factors like small stipends, certificates, small honorary lunches, and so on. Katina L. Rogers, writes in her chapter “The Academic Workforce: Expectations and Realities” (2020) that faculty members will often talk about how they teach because they “love what they do.” However, the notion of working

“for love” reflects a position of privilege that minimizes the struggle many academics face to support themselves and renders invisible the barriers that exacerbate the challenges for women, people of color, people with disabilities, and others who are not well supported by the structures of academe. (21-2)

She continues,

Scholars who are women, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ+, and members of other underrepresented groups are highly susceptible to this dangerous rhetorical move. For instance, scholars in minority categories often shoulder a heavier burden of service work—serving on diversity committees and providing mentorship and guidance as they work to bring the margins into the center—while also receiving fewer material and prestige-oriented benefits from their labor. In other words, the lack of promotion or other clear and valued recognition may be justified by telling the scholar

that they should be “doing it for love,” placing the burden of repairing the discipline on them without rewarding them in the coin of the realm. (23)

While Rogers is not explicitly speaking about contingent faculty here, she later talks about the realities of contingent faculty sometimes relying on their positions for food, and how the idea of doing it “for love” is not possible. When Rogers discusses recognizing and rewarding faculty, she emphasizes the importance of tenure and promotion. While tenure and promotion are not always applicable to contingent faculty, Rogers’ argument is important to consider because recognition and reward needs to be applicable to the circumstances in which contingent faculty are employed. For instance, a small stipend reward is likely more meaningful to a contingent faculty member than a certificate, but not all institutions or departments have the ability or funds to provide stipends as part of recognizing and rewarding contingent faculty. Yet, a certificate can be meaningful as a line on a person’s CV. Or, perhaps a department-wide e-mail to recognize contingent faculty accomplishments is more feasible. It is essential for WPAs, departments, and institutions to consider their local material conditions when determining how to reward and recognize contingent faculty. *They also need to consider the rhetorical situation of their contingent faculty as well, though.* Because being recognized as an important contributor and member of a community helps an individual feel connected and valued by that community, I argue it would cost very little for departments and institutions to become more inclusive in awarding contingent writing faculty with reward and recognition in sustainable ways for that department or institution.

Recognition and reward do not have to be certificates or large prizes to retain employees. Some professional teaching organizations, like the Organization of American Historians (OAH) include reward and recognition as part of their “Standards for Part-Time, Adjunct, and

Contingent Faculty.” Their statement includes, “[...] The following areas offer a spectrum of good practices that should be considered, depending upon governance structure and particular needs: [...]” “4. recognition of NTT faculty in published or posted rosters of departmental, divisional or institutional members, and in programs rewarding excellence in teaching; [...]” (OAH, “Statement for Part-Time”). Even periodic e-mail recognition can meaningfully acknowledge the professional contributions of contingent faculty. According to Erin Vincente (2018), as part of her analysis, “Higher education institutions that include, reward, and value contingent faculty contribution are more likely to have contingent faculty who will increasingly develop strong emotional ties to the organization” (7). The ties that contingent faculty have to their teaching institutions can ultimately lead to better retention and movement toward collective action for better working conditions and inclusivity. Examples of reward and recognition could include travel stipends to conferences, invitations to speak at meetings about expertise, acknowledgement in e-mails, certificates of accomplishment, and many others.

At my community college we have awards that recognize service and excellence of full-time faculty and part-time faculty. There is an award for adjunct faculty of the year and full-time faculty of the year. There are multiple people nominated for both awards and a video is presented at our annual all college meeting before the award is given to one full-time faculty member and one part-time faculty member. The amount of work and celebration that goes into these awards makes them prestigious and a way to show contingent faculty at the college they are recognized as exemplary teachers, regardless of status. WPAs should look at the kinds of rewards and recognition their department and institution awards to non-contingent or full-time faculty and determine what they might include for rewarding and recognizing contingent writing faculty.

Including contingent writing faculty in recognition and rewards contributes to creating a culture that is inclusive of contingent writing faculty.

Inclusion in Governance and Curriculum Development and Protecting Academic Freedom

An obvious part of collective action involves the unionization of contingent faculty. This action has proven difficult (and seemingly impossible) for some areas of the country (e.g., Texas and other places that employ “at-will” types of employment). Robert Samuels writes in his conclusion to *The Politics of Writing Studies*, that transformation in the role contingent faculty play in higher education can happen “from below.” This transformation can take place if unions

promote a new model of higher education by reclaiming the importance of undergraduate education at research universities, and one reason unions are so essential to this process is that it is necessary to find a collective force that can counter the administrative drive to reinforce structural hierarchies. (145)

He goes on to talk about his experience as the president of the contingent faculty union within the University of California system. The problem, though, is that many places are unable to be unionized in the first place. Contingent faculty, often with piece-meal schedules that change over time, other jobs, familial obligations, and so on, are difficult to collectively gather in person or virtually by the very nature of their employment. Yet WPAs who find unionization impossible should still consider ways to act collectively without unions.

Many higher education institutions could allow contingent faculty to serve on committees both at the department and institutional level as a means of more effectively engaging in collective action, or social power. As contingent writing faculty respondents to my survey indicated, there is interest in professional development, yet only 61% reported that they had

access to professional development at their teaching institution(s). Service on committees and faculty governance are certainly forms of professional development that can be inclusive of contingent faculty. An immediately accessible way departments could better include contingent writing faculty would be to explicitly invite contingent faculty to contribute. My doctoral program, for instance, invites contingent writing faculty and graduate students to serve on their Composition Committee to help make decisions about departmental issues that affect all members of the department (graduate students, contingent faculty, and non-contingent faculty). The opportunity to collaborate and contribute to departmental conversations provides a voice to faculty who might otherwise feel ignored in programmatic changes.

Flexibility is an important requirement for any writing department or institution that includes contingent writing faculty in professional development and governance opportunities. For instance, it is essential that there be no mandatory service requirements for contingent writing faculty, but that it be made clear to contingent faculty that there is a room for them in faculty governance. As one interviewee told me, professional development is important to her because it allows her to be a member of the department. Further, this shared governance must not just pay lip service to contingent faculty inclusion—it must also mean that contingent faculty are allowed to speak (something Erica, a respondent to both my survey and interviews, mentioned to me during her interview that she and other contingent faculty were barred from, though they could attend meetings), are invited to contribute, and can communicate with the committee in a way that is safe for the contingent faculty member(s). Finally, another essential piece of this inclusion is allowing as many contingent faculty to become involved as is feasible. For instance, if an institutional committee allows two people from each department to serve, there needs to be a reasonable guideline for allowing contingent faculty to serve as well (perhaps adding an

additional member from each department who is contingent, making three from each department total). Shared governance must be inclusive in meaningful ways, otherwise it does nothing to further the real concerns contingent faculty have and the working conditions they face while teaching.

Contracts and Contract Renewals

While this section is more applicable to changes only upper administration can enact, WPAs should continue to ask and advocate for these improvements. How can we reward contingent faculty who return each semester to teach? This is of course is no new question and it has no easy answer, and it is important that WPAs do not become complacent in accepting the current situation of contingent faculty and also that WPAs continue their advocacy work for contingent faculty. Departments (and institutions) could reward returning contingent faculty through renewable contracts. Renewable contingent faculty contracts could give adjunct faculty the maximum number of courses allotted per semester as a means of both retaining quality teachers and giving them a line on their CV, should they want to pursue full-time teaching, whether at that institution or another. A counterargument that I have heard regarding renewable contracts is that it is impossible to anticipate need because enrollment changes and fluctuates semester-to-semester and year-to-year. This is true; however, barring catastrophe that no one can anticipate (like COVID-19), enrollment trends tend to be consistent. For instance, fall enrollment is almost always higher than spring enrollment at my community college. It would not make sense to offer extra contracts for spring semester but offering two or three faculty contracts on a yearly basis would make sense.

Additionally, not every contingent faculty member wants to teach the maximum courses allowed; so, this would not be ideal in some cases, thus it might be more complicated than it is

worth for some departments and institutions. Regardless, considering renewable contracts for contingent writing faculty is important because it explicitly signals to contingent writing faculty, and to their departments and institutions, that adjunct or contingent faculty are valued members of the institution and are included in departmental considerations.

In Texas there is little legal agency for at-will employees, including adjuncts, but creating renewable contingent contracts might provide exemplary contingent faculty some expectation of job security. Texas and other states sometimes use multi-year contracts for full-time community college professors while part-time community college professors are handled as “at-will” employees. However, some states have collective bargaining agreements that “provid[e] a degree of job security for two-year college teachers” (TCCTA). Any department or institution who uses semester or yearly contracts for contingent writing faculty should consider including teaching obligations, if there is an expectation for professional development, contract renewal dates, circumstances that might change the terms of the contract (like unexpected enrollment changes), as well as evaluation expectations. Since many institutions already have semester contracts that require many of these agreements, it would often mean just a different kind of contract and a title given to the contingent faculty member; yet it would also give them a title that identifies them as exemplary returning contingent faculty.

When considering who to retain as a teacher for the following semester, at the very least, departments and institutions should review whether they are able to create deadlines for initial offers for continued employment for contingent faculty, no matter their status. These dates would ideally provide contingent faculty with an idea of what their schedules would look like for the following semester, and administrators should make their best effort to consider student enrollment, returning non-contingent faculty appointments, and other obligations, as part of the

deadline for offering contingent faculty classes for the following semester. Again, it should give some idea of what could happen with any additional circumstance, like what happens in the event of a decline in student enrollment, for instance. If departments and institutions already attempt to meet deadlines for their contingent faculty, they should consider an audit to see how well they are meeting the deadline and how that affects returning contingent faculty retention. If they can retain more contingent writing faculty and contingent writing faculty believe this benefits them, it is one way to continue to become more inclusive of considering contingent faculty employment needs and wants rather than departments and institutions leaving contingent faculty unsure of how the following semester might pan out. Instead, contingent faculty might know that by mid-November (or whatever timeframe is reasonable) they will likely have a course load (or not) for the semester that begins in January, for instance. Regardless, most institutions I know of would benefit from improving how they retain contingent writing faculty by securing contingent faculty's future employment as early as possible each semester.

Monitoring Use of Contingent Faculty

One of the arguments I hear made by colleagues is that we need to convert contingent positions entirely for full-time instructor positions. This is a wide-scale, institutional change that WPAs are unable to accomplish alone; however, it is important to acknowledge that many, many contingent adjunct writing faculty do want to be employed full-time by the institution. An important consideration is that some contingent writing faculty, like Beth, an interviewee from previous chapter, are content in their positions as contingent faculty, and that should be respected. WPAs should be thoughtful in their hiring process and ask interviewees about their goals and respect those goals. In Samuels' conclusion he writes that we must move beyond contingent employment:

One of the first things that should happen is that universities and colleges must be forced to give up their dependence on insecure, part-time labor. This goal can be partially achieved by moving to a system of long-term contracts for contingent faculty. Another aspect of this transformation would be to require a limit on the number of student credit hours taught by part-time instructors and graduate students. Contracts that prioritize full-time work can be used to make teaching more stable and professional since many part-time faculty hired at the last minute do not have sufficient time to prepare for their courses. Also, a move to secure positions would put pressure on institutions to hire people in a more thoughtful manner, which could also push departments to only employ people with the requisite expertise and experience. The idea here is that we must move away from the notion that anyone can teach undergraduate courses like first-year composition, and one way to do [that is to] create more stable and full-time positions.

(146)

However, departments and institutions also need to pay close attention to those who choose contingent employment because it fits within their lifestyle and allows them to do something they enjoy. Instead of perhaps assuming all contingent faculty wish for full-time teaching positions, WPA's do need to respect those who choose to adjunct because it works well for their schedules, whatever their reasoning may be, while also considering their department's hiring needs.

Departments also need to look at how many of their classes are taught by contingent faculty versus how many classes non-contingent faculty teach to determine if they are exploiting contingent labor. Samuels' calls for collective action (social power) is essential to not only change how contingent faculty are treated, but also the opportunities they are offered. Yet, it also

requires us to rethink how we approach contingent writing faculty by not imagining what it is they want based on what we think we would want (or did want) when we were (or could have been) contingent.

Monitoring the use of contingent faculty should involve conversations with contingent faculty about their experience in teaching, their interests in teaching, and what their professional goals are. For instance, a local community college aspires less than 50% of contingent faculty to teach its courses. A local private university aspires for 80% of its courses to be taught by non-contingent faculty and only 20% by contingent faculty (though, they also employ graduate students who are also technically contingent). Departments and institutions should examine their budget and strive to offer temporary full-time arrangements when possible, and for those who seek them, while continuing to offer full-time teaching appointments when possible, for those who seek them. WPAs should ask returning contingent faculty what they would like to teach, when they would like to teach it, and how often, and then schedules can be built, akin to conversations that often take place with full-time faculty. This does not mean that contingent faculty suddenly need to take over teaching graduate courses, but we do no justice for and with them by only allowing contingent writing faculty to teach composition one, for instance, when that college also offers composition two, technical writing, and a swath of literature courses. If institutions and departments offer support for professional development for contingent writing faculty, it allows those faculty to develop expertise in other areas of writing and that should in turn allow them to teach other types of courses, not just labor-intensive composition one.⁵¹ By monitoring how a department or institution uses contingent faculty—how many classes they

⁵¹ This is not always possible, of course. At two-year colleges, for instance, the vast majority of courses are composition courses and other classes like literature courses are taught by full-time faculty only because they have first choice on the classes they teach. However, whenever possible, contingent faculty should be given an option to further develop their teaching expertise by being able to teach courses other than composition.

teach and what classes they teach—changes can be made to allow contingent writing faculty more opportunities for teaching.

Equitable Compensation System

Treating contingent faculty as the professionals they are involves paying them a fair wage that values the expertise they bring to the institution. The most important way that departments and institutions should become inclusive of contingent writing faculty is through fair pay. Each of the previous suggestions in this chapter can help build up to changing the massive problem of unequal pay in composition studies. When contingent writing faculty are included in professional development opportunities, when they have access to resources that help them to be successful teachers, when we are able to build community with contingent faculty and for contingent faculty, and when their professionalization is well documented, we are more likely to successfully argue for fair payment for contingent writing faculty. But first, contingent writing faculty must be seen and valued as professionals in our departments. The poor treatment of contingent writing faculty and the devaluing of their expertise is often justified through the lore that they are unqualified and inexperienced, or just sub-par teachers. When we are able to disrupt the lore that devalues contingent writing faculty, we can change the treatment of contingent writing faculty.

When it comes to compensation especially, it is important to repeat that these suggestions will not successfully work for a department or institution without careful consideration. Under no circumstances should compensation be reduced for contingent faculty, no matter their status or how many years they have taught. Instead, contingent writing faculty should be paid according to the amount of intense work they do and professional development they participate in. I argue that contingent faculty should be given merit increases that, for instance, recognize professional

development efforts. Though, I am not suggesting contingent faculty be responsible for logging the hours of prep, teaching, reading, writing, and grading they do. Further, contingent writing faculty should be paid relative to how much full-time faculty at their institution are paid. The work writing teachers do is much higher than the classroom hours and office hours we are prescribed. Additionally, not all disciplines are as labor intensive, as often, as writing studies is. *The Chronicle* has a tool where contingent faculty reported their income, institution type, and discipline through the school year 2017-2018 (<https://data.chronicle.com/>). For instance, I looked at salary reporting on March 9, 2020 and these are the average incomes for adjuncts per course at a 2-year public institution, at 4-year public institution, and a 4-year private institution, regardless of state:

2-Year Public Institutions:

English (455 submissions) \$2,381

Composition, Rhetoric, & Writing (112 submissions) \$2,381

4-Year Public Institutions:

English (502 submissions) \$3,098

Composition, Rhetoric, & Writing (136 submissions) \$3,313

4-Year Private Institutions:

English (374 submissions) \$2,907

Composition, Rhetoric, & Writing (146 submissions) \$3,433

Specifically looking at the averages in the state of Texas and what adjuncts receive is an important piece of the salary story:⁵²

English (57 submissions) \$2,343

Composition, Rhetoric, & Writing (17 submissions) \$3,074

When compared to a community college in Texas, a full-time professor with two years of experience and a master's degree would earn a beginning salary of \$53,581.⁵³ Community colleges in Texas have a course load of 5-5, making each course pay about \$5,358.10 for that level of experience at that specific community college, not including other requirements like professional development, college and community service, as some full-time positions mandate. Full-time faculty also likely receive benefits that contingent faculty do not. The community college pays about \$2,700 per course to adjunct writing faculty members. The way the community college I am using as an example calculates the difference in pay takes other things into account for determining pay for full-time faculty like years of teaching experience and degree type, and recently increased adjunct pay; however, adjunct faculty are still paid almost half of what a person with little experience and only a master's degree would earn as a full-time faculty member at that community college.

Another important aspect to consider here is the recent change in insurance laws that affect how adjunct faculty teaching loads are calculated. While I am not arguing against the Affordable Care Act, it did complicate adjunct faculty course loads because if an adjunct's hours went over a certain threshold, they would need access to insurance at their institution and

⁵² The Chronical tool does not allow further classification of 2-year public, 4-year public, and 4-year private when organizing by state, so this is not an entirely accurate comparison.

⁵³ According to the Salary Scale of the community college for school year 2020-21.

institutions have often been unwilling to provide that (essential) benefit. The way around that requirement for institutions is, of course, to cut down teaching loads to avoid providing insurance, and that has been the choice of most colleges and universities. Large corporations like Wal-Mart have followed this policy for years to evade paying workers more; however, for education the bottom line should not be the only consideration. Regardless, the social power connected with compensation is undeniable and departments might make arguments to their institutions about why contingent writing faculty (and other contingent faculty) deserve equal payment to what full-time faculty make based on class compensation and benefits.

III. Exhaustion and Naysaying: The Importance of Resilience Toward Social Power

Contingent labor problems are a serious and continuing problem for writing studies, though some other scholars have argued otherwise. Sid Dobrin, in *Postcomposition* (2011), argues that the necessity for writing studies to become a serious academic subject and not one constantly fighting for a place separate from literature is the discipline's most pressing matter. To achieve this, Dobrin argues our discipline must focus on theory and not focus on teaching composition courses. This position ignores and subverts how abusive our discipline's use of contingent labor has become. Dobrin argues for a "radical" approach to "what we might call the contingent labor problem" where we no longer attempt institutional change by making arguments to those in power (115). He writes that WPAs do not, in his view, have real power to create change because they are "low-level administrators serving (at) the will of management [...]" (116). Instead, Dobrin argues we must be "ruthless" and, "postcomposition should remove itself from questions of contingent labor, questions that have relegated composition studies' primary identity and most of its anxieties to questions of labor and labor management" (116). Dobrin is right to question the power WPAs possess to enact meaningful change, but he does not seem to

consider the power from a department as a whole, including the non-contingent writing faculty, to change the culture toward becoming more inclusive of all faculty. Instead, Dobrin thinks writing studies has spent too much of its time and energy absorbed by the problem of contingent employment. This move toward inclusiveness would be radical for some departments and institutions; however, it would also be achievable bit-by-bit or piece-by-piece.

Hierarchical standing (e.g., contingent faculty perceived as “lesser” than non-contingent faculty) in writing departments and institutions is pervasive and largely ignored by Dobrin, according to Robert Samuels. Samuels argues that, “Just as research universities often privilege theory over practice and reading and research over teaching, Dobrin tends to replicate the most oppressive hierarchies shaping academic institutions” (119). By choosing to ignore the significant issues of contingent labor in composition studies, Dobrin continues the long history of subverting contingent labor in composition studies and higher education. Samuels is gracious of Dobrin’s brash views and supposes that Dobrin’s positioning of labor issues subservient to theory in the discipline is due to investment in “radical theory” and “deep investment in the fundamental structures of the elite American research university” (119). However, I argue that no matter Dobrin’s intention, it is one that forcefully subverts the significant issues contingent faculty sometimes face: some living paycheck-to-paycheck, some living in their car, some lacking health insurance for themselves and their children, and so on, in the mission to claim more perceived privilege (since we cannot measure privilege) and academic relevance in higher education. When academic departments and disciplines enact hierarchies, they devalue the often-contingent faculty who teach most of the lower-level writing courses at universities and community colleges. Samuels argues that neoliberalism has led to the questioning of experts while non-expert’s views are elevated as more reliable than expert’s views (he mentions news

networks as one example). Samuels says that one “unintended result of this downgrading of expertise is that experts, like professors, are downsized and casualized” (130). Hierarchies are problematic, yet they continue to exist, but we do not need to throw out the whole discipline to change it. Dobrin writes in *Postcomposition*,

While composition studies may be ethically bound to continue seeking solutions for the uncomfortable situation of contingent labor in writing instruction by improving the conditions of those contingent laborers, postcomposition disavows these conversations because they are not beneficial to furthering any understanding of the phenomena of writing or the position of writing studies in the academy. Postcomposition adopts a position that arguments about contingent labor have been influenced by a focus on subjects rather than upon the systems and ecologies of those systems in which subjects believe they require agency. (117)

Not only are the experts (in this case, professors) in general downsized and casualized, as Samuels says, but according to Dobrin, contingent labor should essentially be ignored so the discipline can focus more on theorizing writing and less about other issues like contingent labor exploitation. However, Dobrin is oversimplifying the very real exploitation of contingent labor that continues, and would continue, if writing studies took up his call to ignore contingent labor to focus on writing theory. We cannot separate our discipline from contingent labor practices because we employ such large numbers of contingent faculty, but we can heal the working conditions of contingent writing faculty through collective action. Collective action is not a fast remedy—it is one that requires each WPA, department, and institution to consider their rhetorical situation regarding contingent writing faculty and foster inclusivity and connection over time.

Fatigue when discussing contingent labor exploitation perhaps plagues our ability to enact change. In my own case, for this research, coding the survey responses and interviews was an exhausting project because I took on others' emotions and stories regarding how they view contingent employment. Moreover, fatigue is often exasperating, at least for me, because it allows a sort of fog to settle over me and has often kept me from working on this project, despite its importance to me. Laura Micciche writes in "More than a Feeling: Disappointment and WPA Work" (2011) that "disappointment erects obstacles to the hopefulness I believe is necessary to sustain teachers and learners in this business" (454). She ends her article by saying,

The open question that remains for me as I close this article is whether, en route to hope, we can speak candidly about professional inequities and disappointments without being regarded as doomsayers, as spoilers of the democratic identity that composition studies has constructed of itself. (454-5)

In the movement toward increasing social power for contingent writing faculty we will all endure negative comments and our own emotional responses to labor issues. Shari Stenberg and Debbie Minter, authors of "Always Up Against," conducted interviews with ten WPAs to explore neoliberalism's impact on universities and their article is one that demonstrates, at least to me, WPAs experiencing fatigue as they sometimes battle their departments and institutions and the importance of connection with others. In one interview, a respondent expressed something the authors call "collective imaginary," "which encompasses the overarching stories we tell ourselves about who we are, what we value, and what compromises our distinguishing features" (646). The respondent said, "You're on there every day on the WPA listserv, for example, and you're seeing what people write—seeing what people are concerned about, what they're fighting for, what they really hold as key values" (qtd. in 647). Without knowing the exact context of the

interview, it is impossible to discern whether this could also be a potential example of fatigue, but it appears to. Places like the WPA listserv were (prior to early 2019) excellent for gaining advice, insight, and responses to surveys (like mine), but they also reminded participants and readers daily about the problems our discipline continues to deal with like labor problems.

Faculty of all hierarchical levels need a space to discuss their working realities. Further, as Stenberg and Minter argue,

If resilience is facilitated by, and born from, connection, the deepening wedge faculty feel between themselves and their institutions can have a demoralizing effect. This has made the connection to colleagues in composition and rhetoric across the nation all the more vital. (650)

There are some avenues for contingent faculty to connect with others in the same position, but the physical isolation of adjunct work in the day-to-day makes connection to other contingent faculty more difficult to accomplish. Another WPA Stenberg and Minter interviewed, spoke of creating connections and networks, said,

“If I didn’t have it locally, I was able to create networks nationally of people who valued the same things I did, who were interested in the kind of work that I was interested in, and that certainly has been sustaining.” (qtd. in 650)

Contingent activism⁵⁴ exists on the internet but providing physical and virtual space for contingent writing faculty to interact with one another is one social power move that I argue is essential as a starting place in any department that does not already have that opportunity. We must create space for contingent faculty to connect with non-contingent faculty and WPAs so we

⁵⁴ I discussed this in previous chapters, for instance, the New Faculty Majority, the Delphi Project, etc.

can have not only localized movement toward social power, but also national and worldwide movement toward better working conditions for contingent faculty. Connections between other institutions regionally, nationally, and worldwide can foster greater collective action on a much broader scale, possibly leading to more lasting change in the working conditions of contingent faculty. One of the ways we can connect more is through social media like hashtags on Twitter (which our discipline already does when we attend conferences), to allow some anonymity for participants who may need it. Another, more formal way of connection is through continuing to develop panels at regional and national conferences in writing studies about contingent faculty and with contingent faculty. There are many ways to foster increased connection and activist work toward social power. Some of it has already been developed, it just might be underutilized (for instance, the New Faculty Majority website).

IV. Final Thoughts

I want us to realize the respectability of having fellows like other academic organizations will not save us. I want us to realize that all our citations of high theory will not save us, and neither will trying to show that we are as rigorous and as serious as our literary colleagues save us. And I want us to realize that even the respectability of bigger budgets will not save us. As real as our struggles are, we act like being broke is new. We always been underfunded. We always been figuring it out as we go. We always been dismissed, disregarded, disrespected. But we served anyhow. We took care of our students anyhow. We transformed one discipline and created our own anyhow. And it was women who did that work. It was people of color who did that work. It was queer folk who did that work. It was first-generation students in New York City and across the country demanding open admissions who did that work. It was people of all backgrounds teaching four and five courses a semester, contingent and full-time and sometimes even more time, who did that work for us, building and running programs while they taught and theorized.

Adam Banks, “Funk, Flight, Freedom”—2015 CCCC Chair Address

Adam Banks⁵⁵ noted that it was a challenge to present his text of his 2015 CCCC's chair address when it was meant to be an oral and aural experience. Similarly, it is hard to generate words that do justice for the stories I heard from contingent writing faculty as I drafted this dissertation. Banks says of taking leaps and risks in writing studies:

And on our own campuses we are not free to take flight when the exploitation of highly skilled teachers and scholars labeled as *contingent*, labeled as *adjunct*, minimized with a *part-time* tag is allowed to flourish. It may be that we will never see this society become brave enough to move beyond sexism, homophobia, racism, and economic exploitation (276).

Sometimes I, a person who had a full-time job and was a department chair, later felt trapped in my role as a contingent teacher while I was a graduate student. But today I am also aware that I was able to move out of that role and back into my previous teaching institution as soon as I chose. I am lucky to have had the agency to build professional relationships that allowed me to move in and out of contingency, and at times this has eaten at me—guilt halting my hands on the keyboard. Banks continues, “I’m asking us to think about freedom in this unfree world because the only freedom we will see, the only freedom we will get, is the freedom we take. And the only way we get free is to walk with and learn from those who are out here working to get free” (276). Slowly, I have allowed myself to move away from the guilt and other emotions I feel as a person who has moved in and out of these labels and positions as I want, promising myself to return and hopefully create as much change for others who have not had the same luck and opportunity as me. As Micciche wrote about slow agency and its importance, at times, and for many in our

⁵⁵ From the transcript he published on his website, “Looking for a Digital Funk,” <https://dradambanks.wordpress.com/2015/03/27/more-funk-flight-and-freedom-some-rough-text/>

discipline, even slow agency is not always possible, and the collective imaginary is not always tangible for contingent faculty, yet the only way we can eventually move away from the exploitation of contingent faculty is by *listening* to contingent faculty and making changes in our departments and institutions from there.

The framework for change in this chapter is meant to help begin that process. It is not *the* process, and there are many aspects I cannot even imagine, like that of how COVID-19 will further impact contingent writing faculty, let alone how it will affect any job in the future, including my own. However, I think the collective imaginary can exist in anyone who reads this dissertation and other work that *listens* to contingent faculty and acts based on that, no matter how small or how large, no matter the time, place, or circumstance. Contingent faculty certainly deserve better pay and access to healthcare, among others—but we need an argument, a convincing argument, for those things, toward those things, and they begin in our individual departments and through our connection with each other at conferences and in virtual spaces like social media. Sometimes this work will move so slowly we cannot see the progress, but eventually it might build to a future that values the important work contingent faculty contribute to students, our departments, and our institutions. We owe contingent faculty that movement, that move to social power, no matter how slow.

Through my review of literature, survey results, and interview findings I believe that conversations with contingent faculty—especially the ones that make WPA's and non-contingent writing faculty uncomfortable—are necessary. Theorization alone does not contain the answer. Banks argues that we will never free our discipline, ourselves, or others until we move away from “the same old theory and the same old theorists and the same old scholarship...” (276). It is clear to me that we must disrupt exploitation of contingent writing faculty by taking action and

creating social power, but part of that action is through listening first and acting second. Action and activism can make a difference in the material conditions of contingent writing faculty. No amount of scholarship regarding the realities of neoliberalism, true as they are, will get this physical work accomplished—rather, it takes one minor change on each campus to create opportunities for *and* with contingent faculty, to alter opportunities for *and* with contingent faculty, and to remove exploitive practices from contingent faculty, little by little. The way we begin those changes is through conversation with contingent writing faculty. Yet, we must keep in the forefront that any change WPA's and other writing faculty endeavor to make does not become mandatory as part of the conditions of employment for contingent faculty. Each change that we successfully implement, no matter how small or how large, can create a more inclusive culture for contingent writing faculty.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: Survey Questions

SURVEY QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED VIA QUALTRICS

A Culture of Inclusion: Professional Development for Contingent Writing Faculty

You are invited to take part in a research survey about professional development. Your participation will require approximately 30-45 minutes and is completed online at your computer. There may be slight discomfort in answering some questions. If you are uncomfortable, please feel free to skip the question. The objectives of this study are to identify concrete interventions and activism to help contingent writing faculty. My research explores potential professional development models both inside and outside of writing studies to make a case for those opportunities that would best serve contingent faculty's needs and wants. I hope to show examples of professional development models tailored for our discipline to meet contingent faculty needs and interests. The conclusions presented may be helpful for participants to see how their responses match up with other higher-education schools. It may provide participants with possible ideas for working to become more inclusive toward writing faculty when it comes to professional development opportunities. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with anyone at Texas Christian University or at your place of employment. Your survey responses will be kept strictly confidential, and digital data from surveys will be stored on a password-protected computer in Qualtrics. If you have questions or want a copy or summary of this study's results, you can contact Carrie Leverenz (c.leverenz@tcu.edu) or Natasha Robinson (n.trace.robinson@tcu.edu). If you have questions about your participant rights, please contact Dr. Bonnie Melhart (b.melhart@tcu.edu) or Dr. Tim Barth (t.barth@tcu.edu). Please feel free to print a copy of this consent page to keep for your records. By selecting "I Agree" you indicate that you are 18 years of age or older, and you consent to participate in this survey. If you select "I Disagree" the survey will end and no other questions will be asked. If you wish to discontinue participation during the survey, please feel free to close the browser and no responses will be recorded.

- I Agree (1)
- I Disagree (2)

Q1: What is your gender?

Q2 What is your age range?

- 18-24 (1)
- 25-34 (2)
- 35-44 (3)
- 45-54 (4)
- 55-64 (5)
- 65+ (6)
- Prefer Not to Answer (7)
- Other (please explain) (8)

Q3 Are you of Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish origin?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer Not to Answer (3)

Q4 How would you describe yourself? Choose all that apply.

- American Indian or Alaska Native (1)
- Asian (2)
- Black or African American (3)

- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (4)
- White (5)
- Other (please explain) (6)
- Prefer Not to Answer (7)

Q5 What is your highest degree earned or education level achieved in English/writing/composition/rhetoric or other applicable degree fields related to the teaching of writing? Choose one.

- Bachelor's (1)
- Master's (2)
- 30 hours of coursework completed beyond Master's (3)
- Doctorate (4)
- Other, please explain (5)

Q6 Please describe any other degrees earned, academic specializations, teacher training, or other relevant

Q7 How many years have you been teaching at any level?

Q8 How many years have you been teaching writing at the college level?

Q9 What is the highest number of institutions you have taught at in a single semester?

Q10 How many schools do you teach at currently?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q11 Please answer the following questions based on school **1**. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q12 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 1** is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)

- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)
-

Q13 Please answer the following questions based on school **2**. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q14 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 2** is _____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q15 Please answer the following questions based on school 3. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q16 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other for school 3 is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q17 Please answer the following questions based on school 4. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)

- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q18 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other for school 4 is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q19 Please answer the following questions based on school 5. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q20 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other for school 5 is _____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q21 Do you have other paid employment outside of teaching?

- Yes (please explain). (1)
- No. (2)
- Other (please explain). (3)

Q22 How would you define professional development for contingent writing faculty?

Q23 Of the professional development opportunities available to you over the past five years at the institutions where you teach, what have you participated in? Choose all that apply.

- Webinars. (1)
- Semester/school year-orientation. (2)
- Voluntary committees. (3)
- Involuntary committees. (4)
- Teaching institutes. (5)
- 1-to-1 consultations. (6)
- Teaching observations (formal or informal). (7)
- Preparation of job-market materials (either in higher education or outside of it). (8)
- Special speakers. (9)
- Brown bags. (10)
- Workshops. (11)
- Other, please explain. (12)

Q24 Of the professional development opportunities available to you over the past five years at the institutions where you teach, what have you **not** participated in?

- Webinars. (1)

- Semester/school year-orientation. (2)
- Voluntary committees. (3)
- Involuntary committees. (4)
- Teaching institutes. (5)
- 1-to-1 consultations. (6)
- Teaching observations (formal or informal). (7)
- Preparation of job-market materials (either in higher education or outside of it). (8)
- Special speakers. (9)
- Brown bags. (10)
- Workshops. (11)
- Other, please explain. (12)

Q25 Please consider each higher education teaching institution you are employed at for this question. To what extent do you feel included as a member of the teaching community at your institution(s)?

Q26 What other kinds of professional support are available to you at the institution(s) you teach at? Check all that apply.

- Travel support to conferences/professional meetings. (1)
- Tuition reimbursement assistance. (2)
- Mileage reimbursement. (3)
- Tuition reimbursement assistance. (4)
- Career support. (5)
- Other (please explain). (6)

Q27 1 In your view, what conditions would need to be in place for these opportunities to be offered to contingent faculty? Check all that apply.

- Building space that is not necessarily available. (1)
- A time/place that would work for contingent faculty. (2)
- Food. (3)
- Compensation for attending professional development. (4)
- Higher salary. (5)
- Technology available to me (like Word Suite, Adobe Products, etc.). (6)
- Access to campus support services like a writing center, health center, free parking, etc. (7)

Contingent faculty are already included in all professional support. (8)

Other (please explain). (9)

Q28 What other kinds of professional support do you wish were available to you at the institution(s) you teach at? Check all that apply.

Travel support to conferences/professional meetings. (1)

Tuition reimbursement assistance. (2)

Mileage reimbursement. (3)

Tuition reimbursement assistance. (4)

Career support. (5)

Other (please explain). (6)

Q29 In your opinion, what conditions would need to be in place for these opportunities to be offered to contingent faculty? Check all that apply.

Building space that is not necessarily available. (1)

A time/place that would work for contingent faculty. (2)

Food. (3)

Compensation for attending professional development. (4)

- Higher salary. (5)
- Technology available to me (like Word Suite, Adobe Products, etc.). (6)
- Access to campus support services like a writing center, health center, free parking, etc. (7)
- Contingent faculty are already included in all professional support. (8)
- Other (please explain). (9)

Q30 In your opinion, what is the best way to reach out to adjunct faculty about professional development opportunities?

Q31 Do you have e-mails or flyers from your teaching institution about professional development opportunities? If so, and you are willing to share them, please e-mail them to n.trace.robinson@tcu.edu or you may mail them to me at: Natasha Robinson 2800 S University Dr. 402 Reed Hall Fort Worth, Texas 76129 Any identifying information will be removed from the materials sent. Survey responses will remain confidential and separate from any follow-up materials. Follow-up materials will not be published containing any individual's name or information.

Q32 As part of this research study, I plan to follow up with some faculty based on their responses. Are you willing to be contacted in the future regarding your answers? Please note: you will be given a pseudonym and any identifying information will remain completely anonymous to anyone outside of this research study. The institution(s) where you work will NOT

have access to your responses and we will maintain your anonymity. If so, please write your name and e-mail below

- Name (1)
- E-mail (2)

Q33 I am a(n)...

- full-time faculty member--either tenured or un-tenured. (1)
- adjunct, part-time, or fixed-term instructor. (2)
- administrator. (3)
- graduate student. (4)

Q34 Please answer the following questions based on school 1. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q35 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 1** is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)

- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q36 Please answer the following questions based on school 2. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q37 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 2** is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)

- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q38 Please answer the following questions based on school 3. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q39 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other for school 3 is _____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q40 Please answer the following questions based on school 4. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q41 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other for school 4 is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q42 Please answer the following questions based on school 1. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)

- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q43 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other for school 1 is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q44 Please answer the following questions based on school 2. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q45 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 2** is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q46 Please answer the following questions based on school 3. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q47 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other for school 3 is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)

- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q48 Please answer the following questions based on school **1**. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q49 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 1** is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)

- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9) _

Q50 Please answer the following questions based on school 2. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q51 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 2** is _____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)

- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q52 Please answer the following questions based on school **1**. This school is on what kind of calendar?

- Semesters (1)
- Trimesters (2)
- Quarters (3)
- Other (please explain) (4)

Q53 My average teaching load (or number of classes) over each semester/trimester/quarter/other **for school 1** is ____ over the past two years.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- Other (please explain) (9)

Q54 How many institutions are you currently teaching at?

Q55 Of the institution(s) that you are currently teaching at, what kind of institution(s) are they? Check all that apply and indicate the number of schools for each of the institutions where you are currently teaching. Leave them blank if they do not apply.

- High school, (1)
- 2-year community college, (2)
- Vocational school, (3)
- 4-year public undergraduate degree granting institution, (4)
- 4-year public graduate degree granting institution, (5)
- 4-year private undergraduate degree granting institution, (6)
- 4-year private graduate degree granting institution. (7)
- Other (please explain). (8)

Q56 What title(s) do you hold as an educator (e.g., lecturer, adjunct, administrator, instructor)?

Q57 As a contingent faculty member, what professional development has been available to you at the institutions where you teach over the past five years?

Q58 Would you be interested in professional development for contingent writing faculty? Why or why not?

Q59 How important is it to you to feel professionally included within the institution(s) where you teach?

- Very important (1)
- Important (2)
- Moderately Important (3)

- Slightly Important (4)
- Not Important (5)
- Other (please explain) (6)

Q60 If you're interested in professional development, what professional development opportunity(ies) do you wish were offered by the writing program(s), department(s), or

institution(s) you work in? If these opportunities were available to you, would you be likely to take advantage of them? Why or why not?

Q61 What barriers makes or would make it hard for you to attend professional development opportunities offered by the writing program(s), department(s), or institution(s) where you work?

Q62 What, if any, professional development opportunities are you aware of that are open to contingent writing faculty at your teaching institution(s)? Do you know of any contingent faculty who have participated in these opportunities?

Q63 How is professional development received, counted, encouraged, or discouraged by the schools you work at? Please answer with as much detail as you can. If you do not know, please leave the question blank or write N/A.

Q64 Have you met anyone else other than the administrator (WPA, chair, associate dean) who directly supervises you in the department?

Q65 Do you have access to formal or informal mentors?

Q66 How many institutions are you currently teaching at?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- Other (please explain). (6)

Q67 How are you evaluated in your teaching? Please answer for as many institutions as you are employed at.

Q68 School 1

- Classroom observations. (1)
- Review of student evaluations. (2)
- Review of self-evaluations. (3)
- Review of teaching materials. (4)
- Other (please explain). (5)
-

Q69 School 2

- Classroom observations. (1)
- Review of student evaluations. (2)
- Review of self-evaluations. (3)
- Review of teaching materials. (4)
- Other (please explain). (5)
- Not applicable. (6)
-

Q70 School 3

- Classroom observations. (1)
- Review of student evaluations. (2)

- Review of self-evaluations. (3)
- Review of teaching materials. (4)
- Other (please explain). (5)
- Not applicable. (6)

Q71 School 4

- Classroom observations. (1)
- Review of student evaluations. (2)
- Review of self-evaluations. (3)
- Review of teaching materials. (4)
- Other (please explain). (5)
- Not applicable. (6)

Q72 School 5

- Classroom observations. (1)
- Review of student evaluations. (2)
- Review of self-evaluations. (3)
- Review of teaching materials. (4)
- Other (please explain). (5)
- Not applicable. (6)

Q73 What is your title/job status, e.g., Director of Composition and Associate Professor?

Q74 How many years have you been an administrator (WPA, chair, associate dean, etc.)?

Q75 As an administrator, what is your teaching load? Please include the number of classes on average for a given semester or type "0" if you do not have a teaching load.

Q76 Who teaches the required composition/writing courses at your institution? Check all that apply.

- Contingent faculty. (1)
- Part-time faculty. (2)
- Non-renewing instructorships. (3)
- Renewing instructorships. (4)
- Full-time faculty. (5)
- Non-contingent faculty. (6)
- Administrators. (7)
- Other, please explain. (8)

Q77 In terms of percentages (rough estimate is fine), in a typical semester, what percentage of required composition/writing courses are taught by

Q78 Tenured faculty:

- 0-10% (1)
- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)

- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)

Q79 Full-time, non-tenure-track faculty:

- 0-10% (1)
- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)
- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)

Q80 Part-time, non-tenure track faculty:

- 0-10% (1)

- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)
- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)

Q81 Graduate students:

- 0-10% (1)
- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)
- 70-80% (8)

- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)

Q82 Describe the makeup of your English/writing department in terms of percentages (rough estimate is fine) in a typical semester:

Q83 Tenured faculty:

- 0-10% (1)
- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)
- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)
-

Q84 Tenure-track faculty:

- 0-10% (1)
- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)
- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)
-

Q85 Full-time, non-tenure-track faculty:

- 0-10% (1)
- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)

- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)
-

Q86 Part-time, non-tenure track faculty:

- 0-10% (1)
- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)
- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)
-

Q87 Graduate students:

- 0-10% (1)

- 10-20% (2)
- 20-30% (3)
- 30-40% (4)
- 40-50% (5)
- 50-60% (6)
- 60-70% (7)
- 70-80% (8)
- 80-90% (9)
- 90-100% (10)
- N/A (11)

Q88 How important are each of these qualities and qualifications in a contingent faculty hire?

	Very important. (1)	Important. (2)	Somewhat important. (3)	Not important. (4)	Not applicable. (5)
Teaching experience: (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Past proven effectiveness in the classroom. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High past student evaluations. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good teaching demonstration. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performance in one-on-one interview. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional teaching materials. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Possible contributions to the department (interest in committee participation, brown bags, etc.). (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good professional references related to teaching. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good professional references outside of teaching. (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please explain). (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q89 How are contingent faculty evaluated in your department? Check all that apply.

- Classroom observations. (1)
- Review of student evaluations. (2)
- Review of self-evaluations. (3)
- Review of teaching materials. (4)
- Other (please explain). (5)

Q90 If applicable, how many full-time writing faculty are you responsible for?

Q91 If applicable, how many part-time writing faculty are you responsible for?

Q92 What is the longest (that you're aware of) that a contingent writing faculty member has taught in your department?

Q93 What kinds of professional development opportunities are offered by your **institution** for writing faculty? Who is included in these professional development opportunities?

Q94 What kinds of professional development opportunities are offered by the **writing department** at your institution? Who is included in these professional development opportunities?

Q95 What, if any, professional development opportunities are you aware of that are open to contingent writing faculty at your institution?

Q96 What additional professional opportunities would you ideally like to offer to contingent faculty? Check all that apply.

- Travel support to conferences/professional meetings. (1)
- Tuition reimbursement assistance. (2)
- Mileage reimbursement. (3)
- Tuition reimbursement assistance. (4)
- Career support. (5)
- Other (please explain). (6)

Q97 What conditions would need to be in place for these opportunities to be offered to contingent faculty? Check all that apply.

- Building space that is not necessarily available. (1)
- A time/place that would work for contingent faculty. (2)
- Food. (3)
- Compensation for attending professional development. (4)
- Higher salary. (5)
- Technology available to me (like Word Suite, Adobe Products, etc.). (6)
- Access to campus support services like a writing center, health center, free parking, etc. (7)
- Contingent faculty are already included in all professional support. (8)
- Other (please explain). (9)

APPENDIX B: Interview Questions

Q1: Describe your current position—where do you teach, what do you teach, and how many courses?

Q2: What are your professional goals?

Q3: How does your current position advance or inhibit your professional goals?

Q4: What is the biggest hurdle to participating in professional development at your institution? Why do you think that is the biggest hurdle for you?

Q5: How do you improve upon your teaching?

Q6: Do you have an informal or formal mentor who helps you develop professionally or improve upon teaching?

Q7: What professional development opportunities are open to contingent faculty at your institution? How do contingent faculty know they are invited to participate?

Q8: What professional development opportunities are open to contingent faculty at your institution? What conditions would need to exist to provide those opportunities?

Q9: What do you think is the greatest barrier to providing professional development for contingent faculty?

Q10: What do you think is the simplest condition that could be provided to allow contingent faculty to participate in professional development at your institution?

Q11: Can you tell me more about how you are evaluated at your teaching institution? You wrote _____. Have you ever had another faculty member or administrator evaluate you?

Q12-15: [Quote of interest from their survey response and follow-up question specifically related to that response.]

Q16: Lastly, is there anything else you would like to share in this interview? Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX C:

IRB Approval

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

PROTOCOL REVIEW REQUEST



The TCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) is responsible for protecting the welfare and rights of the individuals who are participants of any research conducted by faculty, staff, or students at TCU. Approval by the IRB must be obtained prior to initiation of a project, whether conducted on-campus or off-campus. While student research is encouraged at both the undergraduate and graduate level, only TCU faculty or staff may serve as Principal Investigator and submit a protocol for review.

Please submit this protocol electronically to [IRB Faculty Submit](#) (pdf preferred). Include the Protocol Approval Form as a word document with highlighted sections filled in. Also submit a consent document, HIPAA form if applicable, Protecting Human Research Participants Training certificates, recruitment materials, and any questionnaires or other documents to be utilized in data collection. A template for the consent document and HIPAA form, instructions on how to complete the consent, and a web link for the Protecting Human Research Participants Training are available on the TCU IRB webpage at www.research.tcu.edu. Submission deadline for protocols is the 15th of the month prior to the IRB Committee meeting.

1. **Date:** 09/06/2017

Study Title: A Culture of Inclusion: Professional Development for Contingent Writing Faculty

2. **Principal Investigator (must be a TCU faculty or staff):** Dr. Carrie Leverenz, Professor of English

3. **Department:** English

4. **OTHER INVESTIGATORS: LIST ALL FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS CONDUCTING THE STUDY INCLUDING THOSE NOT AFFILIATED WITH TCU.**

Natasha Trace Robinson, Doctoral Student, English Department

5. **Project Period:** September 2017-August 2019

6. **If you have external funding for this project –**

Funding Agency: NA **Project#:** NA

Date for Funding: NA

7. If you intend to seek/are seeking external funding for this project–
Funding Agency: NA Amount Requested From Funding Agency: NA Due
Date for Funding Proposal: NA

8. PURPOSE: DESCRIBE THE OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY AND WHAT YOU EXPECT TO LEARN OR DEMONSTRATE:

Contingent employment, which in my work refers specifically to the employment of adjunct faculty and otherwise non-tenure track (NTT) faculty, including fixed-term instructors and non-renewing contracts, is on the rise in higher education. According to the 2013 published report from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), today more than 50-percent of all faculty appointments are part-time. Non-tenure track appointments, more generally, account for more than 70-percent of teaching positions in higher education (AAUP). In English Studies, the 2007 ADE (Association of English Departments, Writing Programs, and Divisions of Humanities) Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing “found that almost 70 percent of composition courses housed within English departments are taught by contingent faculty” (qtd. in Cox et al. 41).

One of the reasons contingent employment has grown is because part-time teaching appointments often come without any benefits and are poorly paid—thus costing institutions far less than tenure-track or continuing appointments. Although advocates for contingent faculty emphasize the need for increased pay and benefits, institutions are unlikely to increase pay while there is a surplus of willing teachers. Despite this, the working conditions for contingent faculty should be improved upon because their contributions to higher education are necessary. While pay is unlikely to be increased in the near future, we can offer professional development opportunities to contingent faculty to allow them more exposure within their institutions and departments while also offering them growth opportunities already open to tenure-track (or renewable-contract) writing teachers. By offering professional development opportunities that contingent faculty desire, we can strengthen relationships within the department and institution.

My research aims to identify concrete interventions and activism to help contingent writing faculty. We need to establish a baseline understanding of what professional development writing faculty want in addition to their contractual commitments to teaching—and not just what we think they want. My research will ask contingent faculty what they identify as opportunities they seek or would seek for professional development and how well those opportunities match up with what professional development is already offered at their institutions. My research will also explore potential professional development models both inside and outside of writing studies to make a case for those opportunities that would best serve contingent faculty’s needs and wants. Finally, I hope to show examples of professional development models tailored for our discipline to meet contingent faculty needs and interests.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What would constitute a culture of inclusion for contingent writing teachers? What barriers to inclusion exist for contingent faculty?
2. Can professional development help foster a culture of inclusion for contingent writing teachers?
3. What professional development opportunities do contingent faculty most want/need? To what extent are those opportunities available?

9. BACKGROUND: DESCRIBE THE THEORY OR DATA SUPPORTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND INCLUDE A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF KEY REFERENCES AS APPLICABLE.

In 1988, The Executive Committee of the Council of Writing Program Administrators voted unanimously to pass the “The Wyoming Conference Resolution,” with the aim of improving the working conditions of all writing faculty, including contingent faculty. The Wyoming Conference Resolution ultimately lacked clear consequences for institutions who failed to heed the demands. In turn, in 1989 CCCC drafted the “Statement of Principles and Standards for the Teaching of Post-Secondary Writing” effectively taking away any impact the resolution could have had. However, the point of the Wyoming Resolution was not to end to the problems of high class sizes and low pay, but rather to “initiate” change for writing teachers.

Critics, like James Sledd in his article “Why the Wyoming Resolution Had to Be Emasculated” (1991), asked, why, after five years, had the Wyoming Resolution made little impact on changing the exploitation of writing teachers? Little had happened, he says, because none of the proposed solutions had any “teeth” to them—there were no consequences for institutions who continued to exploit writing teachers. He argued that to create the needed change, writing teachers themselves needed to come together to create reform and that we needed to study writing programs’ treatment of contingent faculty to do so (269).

Ten years after Sledd's article, Eileen Schell and Patricia Stock published the collection *Moving a Mountain: Transforming the Role of Contingent Faculty in Composition Studies* (2001). The collection argues that writing studies must make changes to stop exploiting contingent faculty by hearing their wants and needs. One of the most effective ways the collection argues this is through the inclusion of contingent voices. This inclusion was an important consideration that appears to heed Sledd's call for the exploited majority to work together toward fixing their marginalization.

Unfortunately, overtime, writing studies has accomplished little to make working conditions better for contingent faculty. However, this is not to say that scholarship has neglected contingent labor issues. In fact, many books and articles (see Enos Gender Roles; Eble and Gaillet; Guglielmo and Gaillet; Palmquist et al.; Schell Gypsy Academics) have been published seeking to propose ways into solving the discipline’s exploitative practices. These solutions have included considerate proposals like healthcare access, opportunities for publishing, less gendered and feminization of teaching writing, higher pay, and more recognition for contingent faculty work. However, much as Sledd warned in 1991, without clear consequences for institutions who engage in exploitative labor practices, not much will change.

In September of 2016, the CCC¹ journal (the journal of CCCC²) published a special issue discussing composition’s practices and the influence of current economics on the discipline that include contingent labor, along with a new resolution. Anicca Cox, Timothy R. Dougherty, Seth

¹ *College Composition and Communication*

² Conference on College Composition and Communication

Kahn, Michelle LaFrance, and Amy Lynch-Binieck, authors of the resolution, argue the only inclusion of work conditions in the previous resolution set forth by CCCC existed “ambiguously” at the “end of the statement” (38). Thus, the Indianapolis Resolution works to create clear exigency to the problems we have with contingent labor today, and to provide more robust suggestions for how to respond to the problem at the institutional level as well. The resolution is vital to my research because it acts as a current call to action for research and initiative to create meaningful and real change for the discipline and its treatment of contingent writing teachers.

The unethical hiring practice and lack of professional development opportunities for contingent faculty have led me to believe that research needs to ask how we as a discipline claim to value writing without addressing the problem of exploitative labor practices? How can we foster a culture of inclusion that takes contingent writing faculty’s professional needs/wants seriously?

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10. SUBJECT POPULATION: DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANT POPULATION INCLUDING THE INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA AND THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS YOU PLAN TO RECRUIT:

I plan to survey and interview a few groups in English to conduct this research: Writing Program Administrators (WPAs), contingent faculty at Texas colleges and universities, the Two-Year College Association Listserv, and the WPA Listserv. I will seek survey responses from contingent faculty at the 74 community colleges and 28 universities and colleges to research the current state of professional development opportunities for contingent faculty across the state of Texas. I will also survey TYCA (Two-Year College Association) to describe how members identify professional development opportunities and whether they match with what contingent faculty in Texas identify. Further, I will survey WPAs/chairs at Texas two-year and four-year institutions, both public and private, and the WPA listserv to see how they identify professional development opportunities that already exist for contingent faculty. By surveying these different groups (Texas universities/colleges/community colleges, the TYCA, and WPAs) I hope to gain a detailed local-state view of issues surrounding contingent faculty interests and needs.

Participants within colleges/universities will either be identified by me to receive the survey (WPAs) or will be sent the survey by departments I email (contingent faculty). I will note in my e-mail soliciting responses to the survey (see appendix) that participation in the survey is voluntary and department chairs are not mandating that faculty respond. Participants from TYCA and WPA will self-select via my post in listservs seeking those with first-hand knowledge about professional development in their English, C&R, or Writing department; post in the TYCA listserv; and emails to WPAs and contingent faculty in the state of Texas. I expect that these participants will range from contingent faculty, full-time faculty, to WPAs.

Next, to understand the writing program context in which contingent faculty work, I will conduct interviews with up to 50 respondents who indicate willingness to be interviewed. I have included a question in Qualtrics asking if respondents are willing to follow-up with me. I am planning to follow up with those who are willing and may include contingent faculty, WPAs/chairs, TYCA members, and WPA listserv members after conducting the survey.

My purpose in surveying and interviewing such a wide range of participants is to gather enough data to make some generalizable recommendations, and to give quantitative data as well. Survey data collection will stop at 500 participants. I am to conduct interviews with a maximum of 50 persons.

11. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE: DESCRIBE YOUR RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES INCLUDING HOW THE POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS WILL BE APPROACHED AND PRECAUTIONS THAT WILL BE TAKEN TO MINIMIZE THE POSSIBILITY OF UNDUE INFLUENCE OR COERCION. INCLUDE COPIES OF THE RECRUITMENT LETTERS, LEAFLETS, ETC. IN YOUR SUBMISSION.

I will create electronic surveys through Qualtrics and solicitation of participation will be sent through campus e-mails. Department chairs will be asked to forward my recruitment e-mail to contingent faculty at their college/university. All listserv members will be recruited through the TYCA listserv and WPA listserv. Interviews will be conducted in person, through e-mail, over the phone, or Skype/Google Hangouts. The only question that will ask for personal information will ask if the participant is willing to answer additional follow-up questions in the future. If they

answer yes, they will be asked to provide their contact information (name, phone, e-mail, school). **My recruitment email is below.**

“Dear WPA Listserv Member/TYCA Listserv Member/WPA/Contingent Faculty Member,

I am a graduate student at Texas Christian University working with Dr. Carrie Leverenz on research for my dissertation. My research focuses on professional development for contingent writing instructors.

I am seeking WPAs/contingent faculty/non-contingent faculty to respond to a short survey. This survey is completely voluntary and no administrator, department, discipline, or college/university is mandating that you respond nor will they know whether or not you responded. The survey includes both open-ended and closed-ended questions. It should take between 30-45 minutes to complete.

At the end of the survey there is the option to leave your personal information so I may follow-up with you if you are willing to participate in an interview. Interviews will last no longer than 30 minutes. Follow-up interviews will be kept confidential and use pseudonyms.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have. I appreciate any insight you are willing to provide toward this project!

If you have questions about your participant rights, please contact Dr. Bonnie Melhart (b.melhart@tcu.edu) or Dr. Tim Barth (t.barth@tcu.edu).

The survey can be accessed through this [link](#) or URL: [insert URL to Qualtrics survey].

Thank you,
Natasha Trace Robinson
Graduate Student, English Department Texas
Christian University
n.trace.robinson@tcu.edu
(734)776-9854 (cell phone)”

Note: The full consent document will appear at the bottom of the email.

12. CONSENTING PROCEDURE: DESCRIBE THE CONSENTING PROCEDURE, WHETHER PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY, WHETHER THE PARTICIPANTS CAN WITHDRAW AT ANY TIME WITHOUT PENALTY, THE PROCEDURES FOR WITHDRAWING, AND WHETHER AN INCENTIVE (DESCRIBE IT) WILL BE OFFERED FOR PARTICIPATION. IF STUDENTS ARE USED AS PARTICIPANTS, INDICATE AN ALTERNATIVE IN LIEU OF PARTICIPATION IF COURSE CREDIT IS PROVIDED FOR PARTICIPATION. IF A VULNERABLE POPULATION IS RECRUITED, DESCRIBE THE MEASURES THAT WILL BE TAKEN TO OBTAIN SURROGATE CONSENT (E.G., COGNITIVELY IMPAIRED PARTICIPANTS) OR ASSENT FROM MINORS AND PERMISSION FROM PARENTS OF MINORS.

Participation in the survey and interviews is completely voluntary and all participants will be notified of the objectives at the beginning of the survey, which will be accessed through a link on a listserv or through e-mail. Participants will provide informed consent prior to participating. Those who do not elect to be contacted for a follow-up interview will maintain their anonymity through their survey responses. Those who elect to be contacted for follow-up interviews will not be anonymous to the researchers in either the survey or interview, but their identity will remain confidential. Participants may withdraw at any time without any penalty during the survey or interview periods. Those who wish to withdraw during the survey may just close the browser and no responses will be recorded. Those who wish to withdraw from the interview may inform Natasha Robinson that they no longer wish to continue or may refuse to answer questions. Respondents are also welcome to e-mail either Natasha Robinson (n.trace.robinson@tcu.edu) or Carrie Leverenz (c.leverenz@tcu.edu) to withdraw if they wish.

13. STUDY PROCEDURES: PROVIDE A CHRONOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURES, TESTS, AND INTERVENTIONS THAT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED DURING THE COURSE OF THE STUDY. INDICATE THE NUMBER OF VISITS, LENGTH OF EACH VISIT, AND THE TIME IT WOULD TAKE TO UNDERGO THE VARIOUS TESTS, PROCEDURES, AND INTERVENTIONS. IF BLOOD OR TISSUE IS TO BE COLLECTED, INDICATE EXACTLY HOW MUCH IN SIMPLE TERMS. FLOW DIAGRAMS MAY BE USED TO CLARIFY COMPLEX PROJECTS.

Survey

I will post a message on the WPA Listserv, TYCA Listserv, through e-mails to WPAs, and e-mails to contingent faculty forwarded by WPAs/department chairs, soliciting my research project following formal IRB approval. It is clear in my recruitment e-mails that despite WPAs/department chairs forwarding my survey request that participation is not required by any administrator, department, college or university. The message will contain a brief description of my research project with a link to the survey. The survey will be conducted using TCU's access to Qualtrics. The first page of the survey screen will be a consent form which the respondent will agree to the conditions of participation or decline. If they decline, the survey will end. If they consent at the beginning of the survey, they will then be given the research questions which have been written in both closed-ended and open-ended format. At the end of the survey WPAs/chairs, listserv members, and contingent faculty may elect to be contacted for a follow-up interview. I will re-post the message and link to the survey a total of three times to the listservs (a couple of weeks into fall, middle, and toward the end of fall semester) to try to garner the widest range of respondents, and will follow-up with WPAs/chairs regarding their participation and their forwarding of my survey to contingent faculty in their departments. The survey should take 30-45 minutes to complete. **Survey Questions are in an appendix.**

Interviews

Those WPAs, non-contingent faculty, and contingent faculty who agree to be contacted in the future for a follow-up interview will be interviewed. Those who elect to participate in the interview will be e-mailed an electronic consent form along with the interview questions I will ask. If they consent, they will be interviewed (up to 50 respondents). If they decline, they will not be asked any further questions. I will interview via Skype, Google Hangouts, over the telephone, in person, and through e-mail. I will transcribe the interviews and my coding scheme

will evolve as I identify patterns in the interviews that work to answer my research questions. From WPAs/chairs I hope to learn of existing professional development opportunities for contingent faculty. From contingent faculty, I hope to learn what they seek in professional development and what they professional development opportunities they see as open to them. Finally, from WPA and TYCA members I hope to learn more about how they see professional development in our discipline more largely. I hope to be able to suggest possible models for professional development that we as a discipline might consider as fostering a culture of inclusion, via their own descriptions of needs/wants, to give them access to scholarly collaboration and professional development that may not have existed in some institutions prior to the study. The interviews should take no longer than 30 minutes.

Optional Additional Follow-Up Interviews: At the culmination of the initial interview, I will invite participants to be contacted in the future with additional questions if they are willing. Any additional follow-up interview requests will be made in advance and interviewees will have the option to opt out. These additional follow-up interviews should take no longer than 30 minutes.

14. DATA ANALYSES: DESCRIBE HOW YOU WILL ANALYZE YOUR DATA TO ANSWER THE STUDY QUESTION.

I plan to use a qualitative method of analysis for the survey and interview results. For example, to understand if institution type (private/public, university/community college) is related to professional development opportunities offered, I will code for patterns in response to questions related to institution type and professional development opportunities offered. The purpose of the survey is description. I want to compare the state of Texas with national data along with the perspective of contingent faculty with those who supervise them.

I also plan to use an interview research method to discuss information collected during the interview portions of this study. The interviews will give me a more detailed perspective of the experiences of individuals and programs in order to better understand and identify models of inclusion and barriers to inclusion of contingent writing faculty. Further, it allows contingent faculty to have their voice accurately represented.

Finally, I'll analyze relevant professional development materials such as flyers, websites, and invitations for faculty to account for how these opportunities are marketed.

15. POTENTIAL RISKS AND PRECAUTIONS TO REDUCE RISK: INDICATE ANY PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL, OR PRIVACY RISK WHICH THE SUBJECT MAY INCUR. RISK(S) MUST BE SPECIFIED. ALSO DESCRIBE WHAT MEASURES HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE TAKEN TO PREVENT AND MINIMIZE EACH OF THE RISKS IDENTIFIED. IF ANY DECEPTION IS TO BE USED, DESCRIBE IT IN DETAIL AND THE PLANS FOR DEBRIEFING.

There are minimal risks to participants. Each participant, regardless of level of participation, will remain confidential. Any identifying information beyond type of institution (e.g., name will be a pseudonym but I would identify the institution as a two-year community college in central Texas instead of naming the community college) will be changed to protect any confidential information interviewees choose to disclose.

The risk of coercion exists in asking WPAs/department chairs to forward my survey request to contingent faculty members. This risk is minimized by explicitly stating in my recruitment e-mail that no one is required by any department, administrator, or college or university to respond.

There may be some slight discomfort in answering questions, though interviewees may choose to skip or not answer questions as they choose. To help protect participants, they will be reminded of their risk. They will also have access to interview questions in advance so they do not feel bombarded with any questions that may make them uncomfortable in the moment. All participants will be notified that they will be given a pseudonym first name and no last name will be presented. Questions are based on the interviewee's perceptions and there is no expectation of right or wrong answers. Finally, participants will also be told of the possible rewards for participating in this study as we work toward bettering the English discipline.

16. PROCEDURES TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY: DESCRIBE HOW THE DATA WILL BE COLLECTED, DE-IDENTIFIED, STORED, USED, AND DISPOSED TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY. IF PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION IS TO BE RE-IDENTIFIED AT A LATER DATE, DESCRIBE THE PROCEDURE FOR DOING SO. ALL SIGNED CONSENTS AND HARD DATA MUST BE STORED FOR A MINIMUM OF 3 YEARS IN A LOCKED FILING CABINET (AND LOCKED ROOM) IN THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S OFFICE, LAB, OR STORAGE CLOSET AT TCU. YOUR PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY MAY RECOMMEND KEEPING THE MATERIALS FOR A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME.

Data gathered through the initial survey will be downloaded and stored into a password-protected computer in Qualtrics which is also password-protected and that is only accessible to the researchers. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed and both materials will be kept in a locked file cabinet in Carrie Leverenz's office. Only the principal investigators will have access to the data.

All participants who are interviewed will be given a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality. All markers of identity within reason will be removed, including detailed description of institution and location—however more broad descriptions like mid-sized four-year public university, private liberal arts college, or large-sized community college, and geographical location like mid-west, east-coast may be used. But no further detail will be used to identify institution or person.

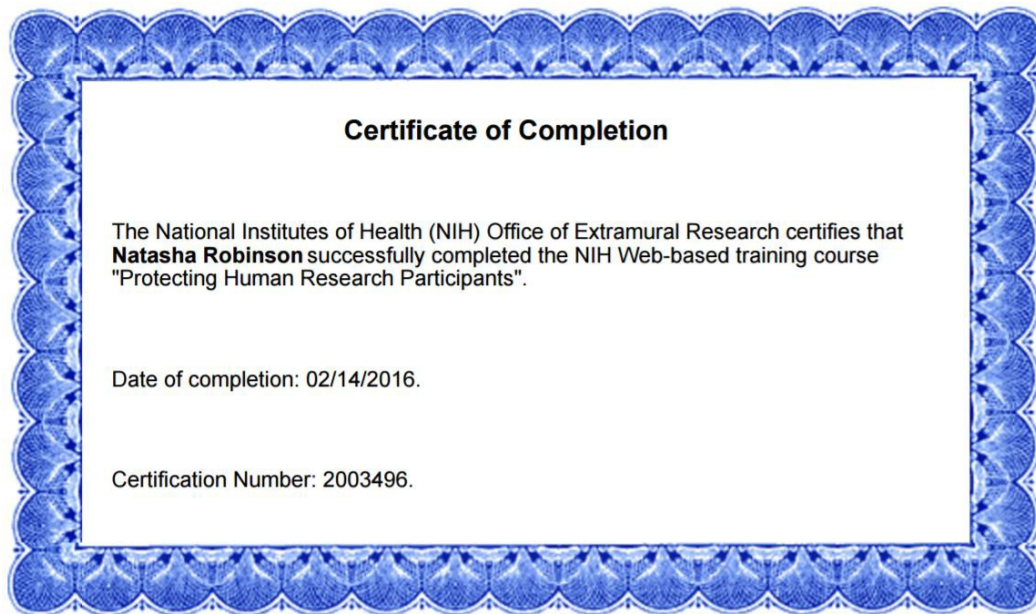
Informed consent forms are solicited through Qualtrics at the beginning of the survey and email consent forms will serve to document any additional consent for interviews. Participants can withdraw at any time by closing their web browser and/or e-mailing me or Carrie Leverenz.

Participants will be given Dr. Bonnie Melhart and Dr. Tim Barth's contact information if they have questions about their participant rights.

17. POTENTIAL BENEFITS: DESCRIBE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH TO THE PARTICIPANTS, TO OTHERS WITH SIMILAR PROBLEMS, AND TO SOCIETY.

At the culmination of this study, the researchers will know about professional development opportunities at other institutions, hopefully spanning universities, colleges, and community colleges. Participants in the interview will be e-mailed a link to my dissertation. The conclusions presented may be helpful for participants to see how their responses match up with other higher-education schools and provide them with possible ideas for working to become more inclusive toward contingent faculty when it comes to professional development opportunities. For those outside of the academy, it could provide insight into how WPAs and others who work in English departments see contingent employment. It can also provide insight into how society in general might further learn about and hopefully value part-time workers in higher education. Finally, at the culmination of this study, I hope to encourage others to theorize and advocate for contingent faculty not just in English departments or in four-year universities, but also in other departments across the span of higher-education institutions. This could lead to a larger understanding and sharing of knowledge about the importance toward working and advocating for other marginalized populations inside and outside of higher education.

18. TRAINING FOR PROTECTING HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: SUBMIT TRAINING CERTIFICATES FOR ALL THE STUDY INVESTIGATORS. THE TRAINING LINK IS AVAILABLE ON THE TCU IRB WEBPAGE AT WWW.RESEARCH.TCU.EDU.





19. Check List for the Items That Need to be Submitted: Please combine all the files into one pdf document before submitting the materials electronically to the IRB. To prevent any delay in the approval of your protocol, use the most recent template for the protocol, consent document, and HIPAA form by downloading them from www.research.tcu.edu each time you prepare your materials.

- | | |
|--|----|
| a. Protocol | x |
| b. Consent document | x |
| c. HIPAA form if applicable | NA |
| d. Protecting Human Research Participants Training certificate for each investigator | x |
| e. Recruitment fliers, letters, ads, etc. | x |
| f. Questionnaires or other documents utilized in screening and data collection | x |

CONSENT DOCUMENT

(will appear on the title screen of Qualtrics survey)

SURVEY CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research survey about professional development. Your participation will require approximately 30-45 minutes and is completed online at your computer.

There may be slight discomfort in answering some questions. If you are uncomfortable, please feel free to skip the question.

The objectives of this study are to identify concrete interventions and activism to help contingent writing faculty. My research explores potential professional development models both inside and outside of writing studies to make a case for those opportunities that would best serve contingent faculty's needs and wants. I hope to show examples of professional development models tailored for our discipline to meet contingent faculty needs and interests.

The conclusions presented may be helpful for participants to see how their responses match up with other higher-education schools. It may provide participants with possible ideas for working to become more inclusive toward writing faculty when it comes to professional development opportunities.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with anyone at Texas Christian University or at your place of employment. Your survey responses will be kept strictly confidential, and digital data from surveys will be stored on a password-protected computer in Qualtrics.

If you have questions or want a copy or summary of this study's results, you can contact Carrie Leverenz (c.leverenz@tcu.edu) or Natasha Robinson (n.trace.robinson@tcu.edu). If you have questions about your participant rights, please contact Dr. Bonnie Melhart (b.melhart@tcu.edu) or Dr. Tim Barth (t.barth@tcu.edu). Please feel free to print a copy of this consent page to keep for your records.

By selecting "I Agree", you indicate that you are 18 years of age or older, and you consent to participate in this survey. If you select "I Disagree" the survey will end and no other questions will be asked. If you wish to discontinue participation during the survey, please feel free to close the browser and no responses will be recorded.

Interview Consent Form

Dear [Insert Participant's Name],

You indicated interest in a follow-up interview after completing the survey "A Culture of Inclusion: Professional Development for Contingent Writing Faculty." Your participation will require approximately 30 minutes and will be completed over the phone, in person, over Google Hangouts, Skype, or e-mail. You may choose how you would like to participate. At the end of our interview, I may follow-up with a request for an additional interview if necessary. You may decline to participate in the second interview yet participate in this interview. There may be slight discomfort in answering some questions during the interview(s). If you are uncomfortable you may choose not to answer a question or question(s). You are also able to end the interview at any time if you wish. The interview will be recorded and then transcribed. Both the recorded interview and transcribed interview.

The objectives of this study are to follow-up on responses you made in the survey. The interview questions are attached to this e-mail. My research explores potential professional development

models both inside and outside of writing studies to make a case for those opportunities that would best serve contingent faculty's needs and wants. I hope to show

examples of professional development models tailored for our discipline to meet contingent faculty needs and interests.

The conclusions presented may be helpful for participants to see how their responses match up with other higher-education schools. It may provide participants with possible ideas for working to become more inclusive toward writing faculty when it comes to professional development opportunities.

Taking part in this interview is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in the study you can withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with anyone at Texas Christian University or your place of employment. Your interview responses will be kept strictly confidential. Any report of this research that is made available to the public will use pseudonyms.

If you have questions or want a copy or summary of this study's results, you can contact Carrie Leverenz (c.leverenz@tcu.edu) or Natasha Robinson (n.trace.robinson@tcu.edu). If you have questions about your participant rights, please contact Dr. Bonnie Melhart (b.melhart@tcu.edu) or Dr. Tim Barth (t.barth@tcu.edu). Please feel free to print a copy of this consent page to keep for your records.

By selecting "I Agree", you indicate that you are 18 years of age or older, and you consent to participate in this survey. If you select "I Disagree" the interview will not take place. If you wish to discontinue participation during the survey, please feel free to close the browser and no responses will be recorded.

Thank you,

Natasha Trace Robinson
Texas Christian
University English
Department

VITA

Natasha Trace Robinson (Natasha Louise Trace) was born on December 1, 1985, in Richmond, Indiana. She is the daughter of Mary Louise Zebrowski and Donald Eugene Trace. Natasha moved to Canton, Michigan in 1994 and graduated from Salem High School in 2004. Natasha earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2008 from Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. She earned a Master of Arts degree in 2010 from Michigan State University.

After earning her master's degree, Natasha moved to Texas and began teaching as an adjunct at community colleges and a state university. From there she became a full-time professor at Collin College in Plano, Texas in 2011. A year later, she became a department chair at Collin College in Plano, Texas. In 2014, she left her full-time job as a department chair to attend Texas Christian University. At Texas Christian University, Natasha was a Radford Fellow from 2014-2015. The following year she was Dr. Richard Leo Enos' graduate research fellow from 2015-2016. From 2016-2018 Natasha was graduate student instructor for the English Department. Natasha was a doctoral lecturer from 2018-2019. She has a graduate certificate in Women and Gender studies from Texas Christian University. At the end of 2019, Natasha accepted a full-time teaching position back at Collin College in Plano, Texas. Natasha graduated from Texas Christian University in spring of 2021.

Natasha is married to Craig Andrew Robinson of Algonac, Michigan. They have two children, Orion Andrew Robinson, and Celeste Louise Robinson, and reside in Dallas-Fort Worth.