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Outline, Description and Objectives

In an effort to address the lack of data on contingent faculty members and their working conditions, the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW) fielded an ambitious survey in fall 2010, seeking information about the courses these faculty members were teaching that term, where they were teaching them, and for what pay and benefits. The survey received close to 30,000 responses, with just over 20,000 coming from individuals who identified themselves as working in a contingent position at an institution or institutions of higher education in fall 2010.

The survey was open to any faculty member or instructor who wished to complete a questionnaire; respondents therefore do not constitute a strictly representative sample of faculty members working in contingent positions. Nevertheless, the response provides the basis for a more detailed portrait of the work patterns, remuneration, and employment conditions for what has long been the fastest growing and is now the largest part of the academic workforce.

The CAW survey was designed with a particular focus on faculty members teaching part-time at United States institutions of higher education. Numbering more than 700,000, this population represents more than 70% of the contingent academic workforce and almost half the entire higher education faculty in the United States. Faculty members in part-time positions were also by far the largest group of respondents to the CAW survey, providing 10,331 of the 19,850 valid

responses from contingent faculty members and instructors who were teaching at least one course in fall 2010. Of these part-time faculty respondents, 9,238 provided data on a total of 19,615 courses they were teaching.

The report provided initial findings from the survey, looking specifically at the part-time faculty respondents and the data they provided at the course level. The report also raises a series of questions that other researchers might pursue to develop an even richer understanding of part-time faculty in higher education and topics for future reports looking at the other groups of respondents.

Survey responses of 20,000 adjunct and part-time faculty across the United States were surveyed to understand the perceptions of adjunct and part-time faculty teaching at universities across the US. The perception of value, employment opportunities, job stability and status were studied among the respondents. **Approximately 700 historian** respondents were included in this survey. OAH was one of the 26 societies who participated in this survey. In all, social science, humanities and related societies were invited to participate.

NOTE: there is a small discrepancy between the 682 reported part-time faculty and the data counts of 731 respondents. As noted, the variance of 49 respondents has been investigated. Through discussion with John Curtis, it was confirmed that “business rules” that selected/deselected Historian respondents were not included in the data set. Therefore, we included 49 post-doctoral fellows and teaching assistants who completed the survey and whose responses were calculated in the data set. Because it appeared that the 681 total was excluding them from the count (but not from the captured responses), we elected to include them.

As a confirmation of the outcome, we redid the analysis on the data set in selected tables without the 49 respondents and did not find any material differences or variances to the results. In fact, since their data was included in the data set provided, the 49 respondents were likely to be an appropriate inclusion into the analysis, despite the immeasurable impact of such inclusion.

[NB: There a number of factors that are relevant in why we used all 731 respondents. Firstly, the data as received by the CAW was incomplete and the information was separated into five different excel spreadsheets. Without clearly defined headings, many of the spreadsheets were almost useless. We defined the criteria of this study as an examination of how part-time (adjunct) history professors were treated in the workplace and to compare their benefits against the CAW study. The information provided suggested that there were approximately 681

historians in the database. Without the rules to go by, we set out to isolate the historians. The best way to do this was to look at the courses database (we were isolating those teaching historians). We were able to identify 731 working/adjunct historians in the data set.

Please keep in mind that the number 681 was only one piece of this puzzle. By examining the respondent database, I was able to establish how Mr. Curtis came to his conclusion. When all but the historians are filtered out, the number of historians is reflected as 1379. When the information is cross-tabulated with "working teaching at least one class", the 681 total appears. That number did not take in to account grad students teaching and post-doctorate fellows who were invited to the survey and responded. When we looked at the course database, we defined our respondents as historians who teach at least one class. Once they were identified, we took records of historians and compared them with the 'benefits' database. Our number of 731 historians is more reflective of the respondents who are Historians.

Project Outline

Part-time faculty members represent the largest and fastest-growing segment of the postsecondary instructional workforce in the United States; not surprisingly, the 10,331 individuals who identified themselves as teaching part-time in at least one institution were the largest group of respondents to the CAW survey. Respondents in this category were directed to a survey path that invited them to provide information about up to six credit-bearing courses they were teaching in the fall 2010 term—the subject area, curricular level, and delivery mode (face-to-face, online, or hybrid) of the course; the institution offering it; and the salary and benefits received. Part-time faculty respondents reported at least some information for a total of 19,615 courses. Other sections of the survey asked respondents to provide basic demographic information. As a result, some findings presented in this report reflect general information about the respondents (race, gender, educational attainment, area of specialization), while others reflect the conditions associated with teaching a specific course at a particular institution as a part-time faculty member (pay per course, pay as a function of discipline, level of course).

This exercise was to isolate and study the responses of Historians among the respondent pool and extol their responses for review by the Organization of American Historians. Particular attention was paid to:

- 1) Historian respondent data extraction
- 2) Historian responses

3) Analysis of the responses of the Historians

When asked about their principal field of academic specialization, respondents covered all disciplinary category options in the questionnaire, although the participation from some disciplines amounted to less than 1% of the overall respondents. Part-time faculty members in the humanities represented the largest set of respondents, accounting for 42.3%. Part-time faculty respondents from English language and literature alone made up 16.4% in the overall survey. All historian respondents completed their surveys.

The distribution of respondents by discipline is also reflected in the disciplinary distribution of the 19,615 courses part-time faculty respondents reported on (table 8):

- 8,593 courses (44.0%) were taught in the humanities
- 4,011 courses (20.5%) were taught in professional fields
- 2,758 courses (14.1%) were taught in the sciences
- 2,686 courses (13.8%) were taught in the social sciences
- 279 courses (1.4%) were taught in occupationally specific programs
- All other programs accounted for 1,205 courses (6.2%)

Project Summary:

731 historian (OAH members) responses were isolated:

1. About the Historians in this survey
 - a. 92% work in higher education
 - b. Of the 80% who consider teaching their primary occupation, 31% are grad students
 - c. 45% state that a Masters Degree was their highest level of education, and 31% hold a PhD
 - d. 54% are under the age of 35
 - e. 75% consider income from contingent instruction either essential or very important

- f. 52% report earning less than \$35,000 annually
- g. 8% earn over \$75,000 annually
- h. .015% over \$95,000

Summary: it appears that of the CAW respondents, (the historians) represented a small pool who are generally younger and more recent to the academic "market" and still working on their PhDs. This is similar to the overall pool of respondents, which indicates that the overall contingent staff are younger and more recent to the teaching population, indicating a recent trend greater use of adjunct teachers.

- a. An understanding of the employment status of the respondents was determined to better understand their setting. For the historian respondent pool:
- b. 55% were teaching at least 3 to 4 classes per semester
- c. 52% were relatively new to teaching 0 to 5 years, 33% up to 10 years and only 12% over 20 years
- d. 53% consider adjunct teaching will lead toward full-time employment
- e. 99% had at least 2 classes per term, 55% had 3 to 4, 28% taught 5 to 6, 15% taught 7 to 8, 7% taught 9 to 10 classes.
- f. Average pay for:
 - 1st class \$3,616
 - 10th class \$2,427

Summary: Many of the historian adjuncts were carrying heavy teaching workloads to generate sufficient income, with many new teachers using adjunct status and heavy teaching schedules to build experience that will (hopefully) lead to full time employment. Many admit to small compensation and a portion of the historians teach at multiple institutions to generate sufficient income, which is consistent with the overall respondent pool.

2. Seeking tenure

- a. Less than 1% of the Historians had the opportunity of tenure offered for consideration

Tenure is a highly desirable benefit of full time employment, which many aspire to achieve as they pursue full time employment. Consistent with the feedback from the overall pool of respondents, historians report a preference to achieve tenure.

3. Benefits:

- a. Nearly all the historian respondents were seeking benefits such as:
 - i. Health insurance - 19% have fully funded health insurance, 40% share in health insurance cost, 5% are self-insured and 10% are uninsured
 - ii. Pension - only 28% have employer supplemented retirement plans
 - iii. Child care - 1.5% have access to child care
 - iv. Life insurance - 17% have employer funded life insurance
 - v. Unemployment benefits - only 10% are eligible to collect unemployment insurance when not teaching

Benefits are a highly desirable goal for all adjunct faculty whether teaching in the history or other disciplines. All respondents indicate the desire to receive benefits which is generally only available to full time faculty. Health insurance is more important to the respondents and this includes pension and life insurance. Benefits are admittedly elusive to the respondents since most adjunct staff do not have access to benefits based on their status. Most historian adjunct faculty depend on active teaching loads "to make ends meet" and only a small portion have access to health and life insurance.

Length of Service and Desire for Full-Time Work

The survey results also support the anecdotal evidence that part-time faculty positions are typically temporary only as a matter of how a position is defined, not how long a person occupies a position. These figures suggest that most respondents to the survey see teaching as a long-term, professional commitment rather than as something “adjunct” to another career. In fact, approximately 72% of the historians (as compared to 73% of the overall CAW respondents) indicated that they considered teaching in higher education their primary employment. Further, when respondents were asked about courses they were teaching, more than three-fourths reported they were currently teaching at least one course for the third time or more at the same institution; more than half were teaching at least one course for the sixth time or more.

These findings do not imply that most respondents prefer teaching off the tenure track or part-time. When asked if they were seeking a full-time tenure-track position, only a quarter responded that they preferred a part-time non-tenure-track position over a full-time tenure-track position, suggesting they have other full-time employment. These responses suggest a significant desire on the part of part-time faculty respondents to move into full-time tenure-track positions.

4. Only about 11% of the historian respondents are represented by a union.

This coincides with the lack of benefits and consistent with the full respondent pool. It appears that those historian adjunct faculty represented by a union have greater access to benefits than those who are not represented.

5. Working conditions among the historians:
 - a. Office space - 87% had office space; the majority 65% shared space
 - b. Office hours - 76% held office hours but only 4% were paid for their time.
 - c. Campus email – 85% had email
 - d. Administrative or support function – 81% photocopying, 34% secretarial assistance, 64% phone

- e. Campus resources – 80% had library privileges,
- f. Career development – 28% had access to department arranged workshops for professional development

Working conditions for the adjunct historians appears to be significantly below that of the full-time faculty. Office space is limited, and while many have access to shared space, office space is generally available for mainly meeting students but this time is non-compensatory. Many historian adjunct faculty feel that their working conditions are generally below those of their full-time colleagues – a response consistent with the CAW respondent pool.

- 6. Desire for full-time employment for adjunct historians:
 - a. Respondents indicate a desire for full-time employment, with a preference toward tenure, 53% consider themselves full-time without tenure
 - b. A small portion would accept full-time without the commitment of tenure

Adjunct historians would like to teach full time. Jobs are scarce and opportunities limited and competitive. Even those with heavy teaching loads who teach nearly full time hours are still without the benefits of “official” full time staff and aspire to “full time” status. Asked if they would accept a full-time tenure-track position at the institution where they were currently teaching, 51.9% said they definitely would, and another 21.8% said they probably would which is universally consistent with the CAW respondents.

- 7. Research opportunities - 12% of the historian are primarily researchers, 25% of historian respondents have the ability to submit research grants with intuitional support.

Research opportunities are limited because their status as adjuncts do not allow for access to school resources, office space or support to apply for and earn research grant awards. Many faculty see this as the major divide between adjuncts and full-time faculty as grant awards demonstrate thought leadership which is typically not trickling down to adjuncts. This response was consistent between the historians and the CAW respondents.

Part-time historian faculty members' responses to the CAW survey confirm much of what has been reported anecdotally. Part-time faculty members demonstrate a level of commitment to teaching and to the institutions that employ them, but this commitment is not reciprocated by those institutions in terms of compensation or other types of professional support. Pay per course is disappointingly low, especially in the light of the professional credentials and length of service of many of these faculty members. It is therefore not surprising that more than half of part-time historian faculty respondents reported an annual personal income of less than \$35,000, and two-thirds reported an annual income of less than \$45,000, which is consistent with the income reported by the total CAW respondents.

The income distribution reported by CAW survey respondents (and which the historian segment has been extracted) suggest that most part-time historian faculty members regard income from their academic employment as a non-essential subsidy to their household income. In contrast, most respondents—particularly those who had household incomes under \$65,000—reported that the pay received for part-time teaching was essential to their total income. And regardless of the significance of such income to the employee, the low compensation levels and absence of professional support stand in stark contradiction to higher education's claims about the value—including the economic value—accruing to both individuals and the wider society from more advanced educational attainment. Rather, the levels of compensation and support reflect current employment practices in a labor market where colleges and universities are able to find qualified professionals and pay them significantly lower wages than their credentials and training warrant due to the proliferation of usage of adjuncts.

That course of action may make sense for institutions as a short-term economic calculation; it allows states to continue cutting support for public higher education and institutions to continue making undergraduate instruction a low priority. As a coalition, however, CAW does not believe current institutional practice for the employment of part-time faculty members represents good education policy. In summary, the historians who responded in this survey

reflect consistent responses to the overall pool of respondents.

Part-Time Faculty Respondents, by Age – CAW in total

	Number	%
25 or under	82	1%
25 to 35	1,649	19%
36–45	1,854	22%
46–55	1,992	23%
56–65	2,205	26%
66–75	676	8%
76 and over	<u>102</u>	<u>1%</u>
	8,560	

Total missing 1,771

Total respondents 10,331

About Edward Reiner

Mr. Reiner has been an (adjunct) associate professor for the Graduate School at New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies for over 12 years. He is a CPA in New York State and teaches graduate level finance and accounting in media and publishing as well as a section on scholarly and STM publishing. His career spans nearly 30 years in academic, professional and scholarly publishing, predominately with McGraw-Hill, Prentice-Hall and Elsevier. At Elsevier, he was the Vice President of Business Development and Strategy (Global) for nearly ten years, working with leading academic societies.

He is currently a director of data services and analytics for General Electric where he provides market analytic services to the healthcare industry. He is a financial and marketing advisor/consultant to the Humanities eBook program at the American Council of Learned Societies. He is also the National Treasurer for USA Boxing (Amateur Boxing and US Olympic Committee) and a frequent speaker on publishing and media.

Catherine Lee Walton: Ms. Walton is an experienced market researcher with a track record in market development. She is also a trained project manager with a track record of success in working with clients in consultative and custom projects.

Ms. Walton has conducted numerous research projects and is working on her degree in market research and behavior psychology. Ms. Walton's career includes management positions in both Dictograph Marketing Company and the Sweet P Corporation. She has in-depth knowledge of small business and entrepreneurial start-ups.

About the Organization of American Historians

The Organization of American Historians (<http://www.oah.org/>) promotes excellence in the scholarship, teaching, and presentation of American history, and encourages wide discussion of historical questions and equitable treatment of all practitioners of history. The Organization of American Historians, founded in 1907 as the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, serves individual college and university professors, high school teachers, students, archivists, public historians, and others who value the study of the American past. Membership in the OAH is open to anyone interested in the investigation, study, and teaching of American history.

About the Coalition on the Academic Workforce

Organized in 1997, the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (<http://www.academicworkforce.org/>) is a group of higher education associations, disciplinary associations, and faculty organizations committed to addressing issues associated with deteriorating faculty working conditions and their effect on college and university students in the United States. CAW collects and disseminates information on the use and treatment of full- and part-time faculty members serving off the tenure track and the implications for students, parents, other faculty members, and institutions; articulates and clarifies differences in the extent and consequences of changes in the faculty within and among the various academic disciplines and fields of study; evaluates the short-term and long-term consequences of changes in the academic workforce for society and the public good; identifies and promotes strategies for solving the problems created by inappropriate use and exploitation of part-time,

adjunct, and similar faculty appointments; and promotes conditions by which all faculty members, including full- and part-time non-tenure-track faculty members, can strengthen their teaching and scholarship, better serve their students, and advance their professional careers.