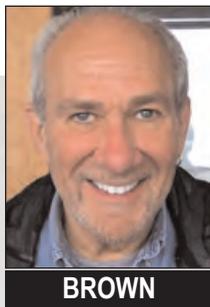




**United University Professions**

Forum on  
Contingent Faculty  
at SUNY New Paltz:  
**Where Are We Now?**

Endorsed by the Academic and  
Professional Faculty at SUNY New Paltz  
October 30, 2013



**BROWN**

## Introduction

This publication is a record of an unusual event that took place October 30, 2013, on the SUNY New Paltz campus. Organized by the New Paltz chapter of United University Professions (UUP), this three-hour extended discussion of academic contingency took place during Campus Equity week and was called *Forum on Contingent Faculty at SUNY New Paltz: Where Are We Now?*

The disparate voices represented at this rare Forum include those of contingent faculty members—part-time adjuncts and full-time lecturers—as well as tenure-track faculty members, including a number of program directors and heads of academic departments. The College administration was represented by President Donald P. Christian and Provost Phillip Mauceri, who were unable to attend but submitted a joint statement that was distributed to attendees.

There was a similar event that I organized in May 2005 as chair of the Budget, Goals & Plans Committee at SUNY New Paltz. Faculty Governance was the sponsor of that Forum and UUP was not involved at all. It too was recorded and transcribed. It is still accessible on the Faculty Governance website under Archives: *Forum on the Future of Adjunct and Contingent Faculty at SUNY New Paltz* ([www.newpaltz.edu/governance](http://www.newpaltz.edu/governance)).

Participants were well aware that this 2013 Forum was being recorded, that it would be transcribed and archived for future readers. The current publication has been lightly edited to delete informal chitchat between speakers and to improve overall readability. The verbatim transcript is posted on the New Paltz UUP chapter website, along with the original audio files: <http://www.uuphost.org/newpaltzwp/adjuncts/forum-on-contingent-faculty-103013>.

We don't do this very often. One of the largest gatherings of adjuncts and other contingents in the 186-year history of SUNY New Paltz occurred ten years ago. In October 2004, some 35 out of a total of over 300 contingent faculty members got together and formed the Adjunct Faculty Association. AFA existed for a few years and then faded away when its most active members were elected officers of the UUP chapter. Beth Wilson, Yvonne Aspengren and a handful of other people were involved in that, and some of them are still active in UUP.

There are several recurring themes that clearly emerge from what our colleagues are telling us:

- almost universally, contingent faculty members love teaching and working with our fine students at SUNY New Paltz;
- the pay for adjunct faculty, including Teaching

Assistants, is “insultingly” low and needs to be significantly increased;

- New Paltz's singularly high teaching load for lecturers of five courses per semester is excessive, lacking any academic justification and clearly harmful to students;
- the decision several years ago to drastically cut the number of adjunct-taught courses severely hurt departments, programs and students, as well as the adjunct faculty;
- students and faculty, both tenure-track and contingent, would benefit from longer-term institutional planning, as well as from longer-term contracts to provide greater stability for the workforce and predictability for students;
- department chairs would benefit from having greater flexibility in determining course loads for adjuncts, instead of being constrained by the current default limit of two per semester;
- in the long run it would help departments, programs and students to replace more lecturers with tenure-track faculty.

Suzanne Kelly talks about love and fear. We often hear how important the love of teaching is, but this love is being systematically taken advantage of. All of us deeply resent it whenever our love is being taken advantage of.

We also need to address the climate of fear here. A significant number of people told me they were afraid to come to this Forum and that they are generally afraid to speak out for fear of losing their jobs. This climate of fear keeps adjuncts largely invisible and unheard.

Douglas Maynard talks about the need to make a greater effort to reach out to our contingent colleagues and make sure that they are welcome in their departments and in the overall faculty structure. To SUNY New Paltz's credit, all lecturers in their second year and all adjuncts in their third year are voting members of the College Faculty and in their respective departments. In practice, that is not always the case. We tend to ignore the psychological aspect of contingency: the toll it takes on our teachers and the negative impacts it has on our students.

For the vitality of our faculty, for the educational quality provided to our students and the health of the institution, it is important that we create opportunities to discuss contingency and other important academic issues—*more than once a decade*. It is equally important that we all make the effort to carefully listen and try to understand what others have to tell us.

**Peter D.G. Brown**  
**Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus**  
**UUP Chapter President**  
**June 2014**

## Beth Wilson—Lecturer, Art History



WILSON

I'm the Vice President for Contingents for the chapter. I'm also elected to the statewide Executive Board of our union, and a couple of years ago I served on a Task Force for Contingent Faculty through the union, in which we really came to grips with this definition of what's a contingent and using

this word "contingent." Because there are just all kinds of terms: people talk about adjuncts, they talk about lecturers, they talk about visiting professors. There are all these different kinds of terminology that float around, and we wanted to help clarify that and make very clear the situation of people who are not on the tenure track, professionals who do not have access to permanent appointment in our union.

As of the latest figures that came out of our statewide Membership Development Office, currently in our United University Professions (UUP) union, something like 44% of our membership is classified as "contingent." That's a lot of people! We're trying to gain greater recognition of this. One of our big desires was to change the language of the Constitution of UUP statewide to recognize this category of employment, and we accomplished that last year.

Our next step is to get the State to recognize this. In President Christian's statement it seems that he says: "Well, we don't have this word. The State doesn't recognize this kind of employment." But they love to use the word flexibility. And flexibility means: "You're a contingent. We don't have to hire you back if we don't feel like it, and we don't have to say a whole lot about that."

I have a statement here that I'm going to read into the record, that comes not from me, so I'm going to be ventriloquizing a little bit: the words of Suzanne Kelly, who was a long-time adjunct and a lecturer on this campus in Women's Studies. Last May, when we launched our May-day \$5K Campaign, she made this statement at the rally, which I found incredibly moving. I immediately asked her if she could give me a copy of this to use it for other things, because it's really powerful. It speaks a lot to the condition of contingents of all stripes, whether you are part-time or full-time in these lecturer positions that have been set up now. This is her farewell to New Paltz, because she is not here anymore. She couldn't deal with the contingency anymore, which makes it very sad for me, because she was really great. Suzanne Kelly was a part-time lecturer in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at New Paltz. This is a talk that she originally gave on May Day 2013.



KELLY

## Suzanne Kelly—Lecturer, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

Very spiritual teachings tell us that there are two and only two fundamental human emotions, love and fear. Not love and hate, but love and fear. While I know that at least some of my words will resonate with other contingents on this campus, I only speak for myself

when I say that my relationship to this institution has bred both of these emotions in me in fierce and troubling ways. Like many contingents, I carry a torch for the work I do, and do my best to move through my teaching and other responsibilities to the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies program, in which I have taught for the last ten-plus years, with both care and love.

Love of the classroom has kept me coming back for more of ideas moving in that physical space, of minds unlocked and set ablaze, of the pure love of the power of the liberal arts education, and of the possibilities of feminist inquiry as a path to change.

And yet, fear runs through my everyday work-life like an untamed fire. A fire that all the love in the world cannot seem to put out. Fear of whether there will be a classroom to return to. Of whether I'll have health insurance in the upcoming months, of whether I've planned well enough via my other cobbled-together incomes for the upcoming term. We contingents know all too well that we cannot do the work we love without being tied to the institution. But in doing the work we so love, the cost is great, for we must do it in a climate of fear.

Of course, feminist thinking is to credit with teaching us that healthy relationships can only exist in the *absence* of fear. That the party that breeds fear is always to blame for the instability and violence in any relationship, that it's their wielding of power that needs to be checked. And also, that no amount of love could possibly come to change what they will do to us. For it is not the excellence of our work that will come to turn job insecurity into job security, to turn pay inequity into pay equity, for we contingents have been working hard and well for decades.

True change will only come by demanding more from this institution: by demanding that it recognize the egregious disparity in pay for the equal work that contingents

do; by demanding, more than tacitly accepting, that because such discrimination is happening everywhere, that we're okay with it happening here; by demanding recognition that this institution offers education to paying students off the backs of a two-class system of workers.

If there is a relationship between what professors get paid for the work they do and the value of education, then I hear loud and clear what this institution really thinks about education. Can we honestly say we value the classroom, when we pay so many of our working faculty subpar wages?

Yes, my relationship to this institution is anything but healthy. I stand with you today in order to acknowledge that fact and the fear that has made it so. But while fear has walked with me for all these years, it is in the *absence* of fear that I make my remarks today. We contingents are worth our weight in gold. And we demand more than pats on the back for a job well done. For we cannot do our jobs well, in other words, teach our classes, without also publishing in our field, staying on top of program activities, attending faculty meetings, contributing to the program's curriculum development, working with students outside of contracted hours, and participating in numerous program events.

We demand more, because while many of us do some of these things, and some of us do all or more of these things, *none* of it adds to our contracts to making more money or even to the satisfaction of knowing we'll have jobs in the future.

It's really quite simple: you dignify people's work by paying them what it is worth, and by affording them at least some measure of security. You don't threaten the loss of promised contracts of courses slated to be taught. You don't nickel and dime your faculty for what really, in the end, amounts to the cost of paperclips. And you don't overwork them simply because you can. You don't do these things because it's inhumane to workers, to real people's lives.

Indeed, it's cruel how contingents are treated here at SUNY New Paltz and beyond: a cruelty that all of us should care about, contingent or not. Because, in the end, how we are treated marks all of us, it is an injustice to all of us and a fundamental affront to what true education really stands for.



MA

## William Ma—Adjunct, Electrical and Computer Engineering

I understand there are three concerns: the salary, the workloads and the support. Let's just start with the salary. I think it's great that the UUP is working on and trying to get a \$5K per course for adjuncts. However, I think it is unrealistic for a number of reasons. First of all, there is the budgetary constraint.

The budgets are developed, reviewed and approved many months ahead of time. There's no new money up in the mint.

In the January issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, they published an article on adjunct salary. From that we know, our adjunct pay is comparable to all the other higher learning institutions. Also, we are doing better than the other colleges in the Mid-Hudson area. On top of that, this is really a buyer's market. It's not a seller's market. If you don't want to do it, the administration will simply find somebody else who will do it.

Now, more importantly, I think, are the contractual constraints. We are in the SUNY institution system. There are many colleges. The contract states how much increase you're going to get. That is my limited knowledge. I am not a contract expert. I didn't go through all the details. I don't think the union will really support that there's a lot of deviation from the contract that they spend so much effort and time to negotiate.

Even if President Christian is able and willing to give us more money: since we're already in the SUNY system, I believe he will also have to consider his action and its impact on other SUNY institutions. Because that's a very strong constraint, in my view the \$5K is not going to happen.

I also want to mention the workloads. I think to ask the lecturers to teach five courses is a bit too much. Not because of teaching itself, but rather because the review and grading of paperwork. That really poses a great challenge. This is especially true for lower-level courses, where students need a lot of extra guidance to help them to

succeed in their college careers. In terms of adjunct workloads, I don't think there's a whole lot you can do about it. If you don't want to do it, they'll simply hire somebody else who is willing to do it.

The thing is, what can we or New Paltz UUP do for us? In the short term, we can focus on the things that we *can* do. For example, adjunct teacher support: such as providing office space, office support, computers, printers, scanners, and copiers, that sort of thing, and office supplies, paper, pencils and stuff. I think the administration can and is able to do this. As a matter of fact, I think we ought to make it clear to them that they need to help us, so that we can help their paying customers. The students in this institution are paying customers for the management.

The other thing we could possibly do is reduce the lecture class size and workload. If a five-course requirement for lecturers is fixed, then the administration can certainly reduce the class size. This is because when students are doing well, especially at the beginning of their college careers, it will help retention and also improve students' self-confidence to face their college challenges. Also, it should improve graduation rates.

I believe it's important for students to have a very good beginning and end up graduating with good grades, rather than struggle along and barely make it through the end, because they have nowhere else to go.

A long-term goal is to keep more flexibility for the administration to administer salaries, instead of giving everybody a fixed raise, we could allow the administration to provide a variable rate, say, between zero and four percent, so they have the ability to give somebody zero percent and give somebody four percent. We may not be able to give everybody \$5K, but over time somebody will make that \$5K mark.

To sum up, I think we really should focus and spend our energy on things we can possibly accomplish, rather than spend a lot of energy on things that are probably never going to happen.

## Douglas Maynard—Professor, Psychology



MAYNARD

My area in psychology is industrial organizational psychology. I've actually done research for a lot of my time here at New Paltz on over-qualification and underemployment—not specifically to faculty, although I do have one study to share just a little bit of research. I want to talk and give you an academic

perspective on the idea of contingent work. A couple of my final points will be maybe slightly different than some of the other perspectives.

I also wanted to say that “contingent workers” is a term in industrial psychology organizational research. That's a legitimate term for referring to anybody who has a non-permanent and non-continuous position. So, in response to the comments in the statement from President Christian and Provost Mauceri: in the *academic* literature “contingent workers” is a term that has been established for some time.

One of the things that both research that I've done and research that other folks have done on part-time faculty has suggested that it's not a uniform experience, even within a given institution. And people come to those positions for many different reasons. As a result, they have many different potential reactions, even if they're getting the same salary and the same deal on paper. One of the themes that I want to suggest is that the experiences are not homogeneous. I'd rather that we not necessarily treat the group of contingent faculty, or even just part-time faculty, as a uniform group with a uniform expectations and uniform desires, and so forth.

Maybe surprising to some: people who teach part-time are not uniformly less satisfied with their work than people who teach full-time. In some cases we've found that their satisfaction levels are actually higher than full-time faculty. It depends on what you're asking them about. Of course, if you ask them about things like security and compensation and benefits, then of course their reactions are more negative than full-time faculty. That aligns with just the reality of the situation.

Two things that seem to influence what people's reactions in terms of their satisfaction and also their emotional attachment to the organization are, is their career stage. We've found, and other people have found, that adjuncts or part-time faculty who are in the later stages of their career seem to exhibit more positive satisfaction than people who are younger. Also important is whether or not they would prefer that position to be full-time. Those who are doing part-time work as a result of having no other options are by far the least satisfied group. Whereas, in a lot of ways, people who chose a position that is contingent in some way, because it fits their other life experiences, we find that their satisfaction levels are just as high as full-time faculty.

The “voluntary” part-time faculty members are just as satisfied as those who are full-time faculty in most areas. Actu-

ally, they exhibit more effective commitment. In other words, their bond with the organization is actually, we've found, somewhat stronger than the full-time faculty, but only if that's the kind of position that they want to be in. It might be because, if they choose it, then the very low salary, the low benefits, may not be as crucial an issue for those individuals.

I don't mean to suggest that the pay is adequate or that the salary or benefits are adequate, just that that might not bleed into this satisfaction in other areas of their work. They seem to have high satisfaction in terms of scheduling, in terms of their coworkers. They like: the people that they work with; obviously, in terms of their students, the autonomy that they get, although it's less than full-time faculty. They don't feel any more overqualified. If you feel overqualified in any kind of teaching position, you just have lost your spunk for the job.

About 40% of the of the part-time faculty that we surveyed here a number of years ago said that they wanted it to be in a part-time position, whereas 60% said they would prefer it to become a full-time position. It's useful to have that number in mind, in terms of what we are talking about. We weren't really looking at lecturers. We were talking about part-time faculty.

It's not as if we are paying adjuncts less than other institutions in the area, but *all* part-time faculty are not getting what we would consider a living wage. I would encourage everybody in this situation to work towards higher pay and better benefits. It's at the micro-level within the departments, between colleagues, that there are lots of things that affect the experience of contingent faculty that we can more easily change, and that we should be focusing on, in addition to these other things: reaching out to make sure that those people know that they're welcome at department meetings and social gatherings, making sure that knowledge distribution isn't limited to the core of full-time faculty. We should consider that: “Oh, this would be useful information for these other individuals, as well, even if they're not present here at our meeting. Can somebody take it upon themselves to make sure that they have access to that information?”

Make sure contingents are invited to honor society induction ceremonies and other things that the students are actually doing. They're just as interested in the great things that our students do as full-time faculty are. My interest is in inclusion, instead of marginalization, in a social organizational sense. Those are things that, while we're hammering away at trying to improve the salaries and the pay and the benefits of part-time faculty, those are the things that we can do right now to make a difference, to bring them in, to give them more of a voice in the work that we do on committees, and so forth.

It's also important just to listen to contingents. What issues are important to them? We probably have a sense that we know, but sometimes I think that we should just step back and hear what they have to say. I'm glad that we have this Forum today, potentially to do some of that.



NOEL

## Andrea Noel—Associate Professor & Chair, Elementary Education

Thanks for this opportunity to share one department's perspective on contingent faculty—and also the plight, I have to add, of new faculty.

The Department of Elementary Education is the largest department in the School of Education. We serve

approximately 450 undergraduate majors. As they're working on their undergraduate degree, they take 27 credits in our department—and that doesn't even include student teaching. We also serve 250 graduate students.

We have 9.5 full-time faculty members, only two of whom are tenured, three full-time lecturers and many adjunct faculty members. These adjunct faculty teach and supervise large numbers of student teachers completing their practica in local schools. For example, in the coming spring semester we'll have approximately 100 student teachers out in the field. About 60 will be supervised by adjunct faculty and 30 by lecturers.

Today I feel compelled to speak on behalf of all the faculty in my department, but especially the junior faculty, our lecturers and adjunct faculty. Many of these colleagues are finding it difficult to meet their financial obligations. It would be absolutely impossible for the Department of Elementary Education to fulfill its mission without our part-time faculty and lecturers. We're currently taking advantage of our human resources to a degree that will eventually have serious disadvantages for our students, and I believe for our institution. This is an issue that we must speak out about. I don't feel that sitting back and talking amongst ourselves about how awful it is, is an option any longer, even if we do empathize with the financial difficulties that our campus faces.

It is ethically correct and morally necessary to support fair pay for all of our colleagues. We know that the rate of pay for adjunct faculty has not kept up with inflation. It has always been difficult to survive on an adjunct's salary, but it is even more difficult now. We have also known about this problem for a long time, and we have just ignored it, and I include myself in the list of ignorers.

However, I was especially struck by this when I attended

the memorial service last year for a long-time SUNY part-timer, not in the Department of Elementary Education, but in TSOL and Languages, Norbert Hellman. According to the students and the faculty who spoke out at Professor Hellman's service, he was as dedicated and passionate an instructor as New Paltz ever had. His impact was huge. Yet he was never paid a salary commensurate with his service. An increase from the low \$3,000 range to the \$5,000 range per course would have made Norbert's life more comfortable. I did not know him well. But after his death, I have to share with you that I felt just awful about ignoring his plight.

I also want to share with you the difficulties of our full-time faculty, especially the lecturers and junior faculty. As I stated, the vast majority of faculty members in my department are not tenured. Since they have joined, they have had few raises and, in spite of their committed service, no DSI in the last two years. Their wages have stagnated and in real dollars have actually declined, especially since the increases in health insurance and the recent furlough. It's difficult to pay off student loans, live in a decent apartment in the New Paltz area, and pay all your bills for one person—let alone if you are supporting a family—on what we pay a junior faculty member. Junior colleagues and lecturers will endure this for only a limited amount of time, if other possibilities are available to them.

When we have a search, we do not receive hundreds of applications. Most people can earn more teaching at a public school than as a professor or lecturer in education. Thus, when we hire new faculty in education, we have to pay attention to what keeps them here. This is what I am most worried about. We need to find some way to pay DSI so that these faculty members feel that their work is valued. And by the way, an increase to \$5,000 per course would also be of great value to these colleagues, because almost all the junior faculty in my department consistently teach overload just out of financial necessity.

I speak for all of the members of my department when I say that we are not doing what we do only for the money. We love our profession. We love New Paltz. But all employees, including part- and full-time teaching faculty, must feel valued and be fairly compensated, lest we suffer the consequences. And I believe we ignore this fact at our peril.



**CAPOWSKI**

## **William Capowski—NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist**

I work for New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), which is the statewide affiliate of your union, United University Professions (UUP).

My wife Lisa and I live in Rockland County. Lisa has worked as an adjunct at a half-dozen or so colleges, including: SUNY Farmingdale, SUNY Suffolk Community College, SUNY Westchester Community College, Rhode Island College, and University of Rhode Island. In Rhode Island her compensation was usually less than \$3000 per course. Westchester Community College, south of New Paltz in our Mid Hudson area, provided Lisa with about \$3350 per course as a new adjunct teaching Liberal Arts courses.

In the last two weeks, both SUNY Cobleskill, and SUNY Delhi administration, coming out of dialogue at labor-management meetings, decided to provide adjuncts with salary increases beyond those required by *the Agreement*

*between NYS & UUP, 2011-2016.* SUNY New Paltz could do this too, if they wanted to, and if they chose to. There is nothing illegitimate or inappropriate about doing so. A campus may be in their right to say either yes or no to increases for salary augmentation for adjuncts beyond that required by *the Agreement*.

Even if New Paltz had salaries for adjuncts that were beyond all other colleges in the Mid-Hudson Valley (which I am not sure is actually the case), there's still the question of—materially, for the people who are doing the work—should it be augmented or not? I think it's a fair question. I am moved by this UUP chapter at New Paltz and all the other UUP chapters around the system that are arguing for workers who are so poorly compensated.

In closing, I really applaud what Beth, Peter, Yvonne and the entire Contingent Concerns Committee at this UUP chapter have done. I see it also going on at other chapters around the SUNY system. I want to say: bravo!



PARAMESWARAN

## Gowri Parameswaran—Professor & Chair, Educational Studies

I'm chair of Educational Studies and, like Andrea in Elementary Education, we have a large number of supervisors and part-time faculty who teach in our department. I've been chair for eight years, so I've got to see them work, and I've grown to

appreciate their dedication.

I remember last winter, one of our adjuncts was driving from Albany to teach her class during a snow storm. Her car slid off the highway, and she did not have a way to inform her students about her class cancellation. A few students complained, and she had to face the kind of questions that full-time faculty do not get asked. At that point, I really got to appreciate the precarious situation that many of our adjunct faculty work under. This is the life of an adjunct.

Over the years, I have got to appreciate the dedication that part-time faculty demonstrate towards their students and be deeply humbled by their hard work for so little pay. In fact, some of our part-time faculty have gone on to become full-time members of our department, because they were just so wonderful, we couldn't let them go. And when there was an opportunity, we hired them. Those are the rare instances. I do know so many more of them deserve to be full-time faculty members here. This was, hence, my decision to speak on their behalf.

We've had several speakers here talk about better wages and benefits for adjunct faculty. I, and my department, support all of those, and we've talked about it many, many times at department meetings and have wanted to support this. Most of them are not here because they are busy. This is a very busy time of the year, they are all grading, but I can tell you I speak on their behalf and say we all support that move.

I would also like, in addition, to speak to other concerns that we need to be addressing, as well. In our department, because of several contractual obligations, we often wait until the last moment to hire adjuncts, because we do not want to deprive full-time faculty members of classes that they may need to fulfil their work obligations. Often part-

time faculty contracts are renewed every semester, and they are added to the payroll at the very last moment. This not only creates enormous bottlenecks for the Payroll Department, but it also creates serious issues for adjuncts.

Part-time faculty often do not receive their paychecks until halfway through the semester. If you are a chair and you are sitting here, you probably recognize all those desperate calls that part-time faculty members make, not having received their paycheck and not knowing how to support themselves. It is hard to visualize how they are living as they wait and push for their paychecks to be delivered to them. Many have confessed that they live off friends and relatives and sometimes even have to move in with other people. When they do get their paychecks, it is delivered as a bulk amount. Therefore, as a consequence of that, they lose all kinds of means-based resources, because of the bump in their salary. That's another unforeseen consequence of all of the contractual decisions that we make here at the University.

With all of the increasing assessments, many of our part-time faculty members have to engage in invisible work, for which they are not compensated. In my School of Education, we are going through an accreditation process. Part-time members are an integral and vital part of the process. They are required to submit their General Education assessment plans, their edTPA assessments, accreditation assessment plans and coordinate with full-time faculty members in order to make sure our students are fulfilling their assessment requirements.

This requires them to attend meetings and use all of their creative energies. Many of them will never see the result of their efforts in the form of increased paycheck, salary increases, etc., or even recognition of their efforts. This is another real vacuum in a sort of professional fulfillment for part-time faculty members. Hence, I would like to join the chorus of other voices here to reiterate that part-time faculty members need a living wage if our universities are to survive and do their jobs effectively. It is time for us to correct our past injustices and attempt to create a campus climate that is inclusive of all workers who work within its walls.



## Donna Flayhan—Associate Professor, Communication and Media

I want to address two major issues, the first one related to part-time employment. I absolutely agree with all the salary discussions, the \$5K. I don't want to address that front, but rather the timing and the last minute canceling of classes. That really hurts our

ability to let students know what classes actually exist and don't exist. From the College's administration perspective, it would take a very small amount of money to make sure that we retain excellent part-time faculty, and also that students get their classes in time to graduate.

The Communication and Media Department has about 500 majors within the different areas in the department. I teach specifically in the Public Relations concentration. We have between 80 and 90 majors just within that concentration. We have a high number of students. In the PR area we have one full-time faculty: that would be me. And then it's part-time and lecturers, and then also faculty who teach required classes in our department, but specifically in other areas.

I want to address that part-time issue from the part-timer's perspective, the professionalism perspective and the student graduation perspective. I also want to address an issue that's hardly unique to our department, and it may be widespread, that pertains to our full-time lecturers with a 5-5 or a 4-5 lecture load. The way it actually plays out is very gendered in our department. Male full-time lecturers are able to achieve course reductions, so that they're teaching sometimes a 2-2, sometimes a 1—with some other program responsibility, or managing equipment or things like that. There's a real gender inequity in how the heavy teaching load plays out, and also the stipends and the course reductions.

Another part-time issue: we've all known and seen courses cancelled at the very last minute for low enrollment. With low enrollment, say only 9 students, that part-timer's class is taken away, even a week before classes begin. That happened just this semester in our department. That's a course which those students need to graduate; a course which those students registered for, which they are entering fall 2013 thinking they've got this schedule lined up. This happens over and over. Some of them thought they were graduating in December, some in May, but they needed that course. And suddenly it disappears.

Our part-timer who teaches that particular course, she's an excellent professional in the field of Journalism and Social Media and PR. She also teaches all the InDesign,

Photoshop, Adobe Photoshop. So how do you create your slick online newsletters? How do you create your nice slideshows? How do you put up a blog? You know the Little Rebellion? How do you get good content on your blog? How do you search engine optimize your blog? It's not just creating a blog: doing it well, doing it professionally, using slideshows that are seamless for people, whether they are on a phone or on another device, pad or a laptop.

These are essential courses for students in the department. This is an essential part-time faculty member. She lost her salary, but the College also lost a lot. The program lost and she is teaching another course and will be teaching again. Thankfully, we didn't lose that great part-timer; but she lost income, and the students lost a course for which they were already registered. That's a real issue of this last-minute policy: "We're not going to add a class until there's overload demand," or take away a class. That affects graduation rates.

If the administration wants to look at it—not from treating the part-timer humanely—if you look at graduation rates: it's going to hurt your graduation rates, it's going to make students very angry at the College, and rightly so. They registered for a class and suddenly it disappears. It also doesn't account for those transfer students and those students who are coming in at the last minute, who are saying, "I need that class." And all of a sudden, the eight or nine students go up to fifteen very quickly. That it's an ill thought-out policy from start to finish, as far as the way we treat our part-time faculty and the truly contingent employment of those living with the constant fear that this week their courses might be canceled.

The other issue I want to address very quickly is the lecturer inequality. This isn't just specific to lecturers, but the workload inequality has a gendered nature in our department. Female lecturers tend to teach a 5-5 or a 5-4, with those teaching 5-4 taking on advising. Male lecturers tend to teach a 2-2 or a 3-3 and take on some other administrative responsibility and are able to get those course reductions. The females also take on those administrative responsibilities, but they don't get the course reductions or the overload pay. So there's a *real* issue. Another colleague in our department has crunched the numbers. The College should be worried as far as affirmative action lawsuits, because it's a pattern that's been in place since at least the late 1990's. It's gotten worse, not better, and it's in the College's own data system. Gender inequity and the heavy load for all lecturers—5-5 is just too heavy a load—both need to be addressed.



ASPENGRN

## Yvonne Aspengren – Adjunct, Languages, Literatures & Cultures

I was a lecturer for two years, and I've been an adjuncting for about 12 years now in the Languages department.

I had told Peter I wasn't sure if I should speak, because I'm too happy. I have too many good things to say.

I'm one of those people that Doug Maynard was talking about: what I'm doing here at the College fits what I want to be doing. I would like to make more money doing it, but I'm privileged. I don't have to support myself. I have a partner who makes a lot more money than I make. I have not been the major breadwinner in my family since I was 27 years old, and I just turned 60. I'm doing this partly because I'm privileged, which I think is a really important thing to recognize. Not everyone, not many people *can* afford to work in this kind of position that I do.

Over the last 12 years, I have found ways for it to work for me, in spite of the system. I make about three times as much now as I did when I started. I always would take out my pencil and paper and figure out: OK, this week how much am I making per hour, because I spin it. The more work I do, the less I make. The way to make more money in this job is to do less. Right? So, is that the right way?

I don't tell my students that. I have eliminated two exams that I used to give, because they were really time-consuming. As a lecturer, it's impossible to teach five courses. Each course has at least—in our department—at least 27 students. So 27 times five, do the math: there is homework every single day, you need to prepare for every single class, grade and give back student work. Later on they want letters of evaluation or letters of recommendation. It's just the more students you have, the work just multiplies.

As an adjunct teaching two courses, keeping it down to the same schedule every semester, I have total freedom in my department. I'm really lucky that my colleagues and my chair are so supportive. I feel like I have a fully stocked basement and there's a tornado. I don't want to tell you, but I have my own office. If there was administration here, I probably wouldn't reveal that. And my chair has also warned: "Keep quiet about how good you have it!"

I've milked my benefits. I've taken care of my four-person family, now down to two people, because my kids are grown, with my benefits. I've just had a series of this, that and the other thing. I have new contacts, I have a little carpal tunnel, I have a little heart murmur. I mean it's all taken care of. I pay my co-pay, but I feel so privileged in this position.

But I could lose it in a second, right? That's the thing for me: the contingency of it. Now that I'm 60, and now that I'm taken care of really by my partner, I could lose it and I'd be okay. I don't know what I'd do exactly. I would miss it. I want to keep it, but there's no guarantee. In August, when I was in Payroll signing my contract, I was thinking: "This can't be! I've been here 12 years. Why do I have to wait until August to sign my contract? I kind of know that I'm going to be teaching— but no, I don't know that I'm going to be teaching anytime, any year. I have a year's contract. So, from semester to semester I know, but not over the summer.

I've been able to get unemployment insurance two out of three times I've applied, which is fantastic. But why don't we have a position that recognizes that we're going to be teaching German in the future? I've done it for 12 years. I'm probably good enough to keep doing it. Why can't I have a three-year contract or something that reflects and values what I do?—That's it.

## Vincent Martucci—Lecturer, Music



MARTUCCI

First of all I want to thank you, Peter. It's wonderful to have the opportunity to discuss and look at issues that are truly ongoing, and have been going on for a long, a long, long time! I think I'll limit my comments to just three specific

areas and just give you a little background.

I've been an adjunct here, an adjunct and lecturer now for 23 years. I have a long-term perspective of it. And the other thing is being in the Music Department. I just want to relay to everyone here that the Music Department has a type of degree program that is very heavily dependent on adjuncts.

You just can't count on full-time faculty to be able to teach piccolo, flute, trombone, tuba, piano, guitar, ukulele, banjo, what have you. There are people that play all those instruments but, they are very rare. (My daughter is one of them.) We need people to teach a wide variety of instruments.

For a department to be viable, you have to have that flexibility in order to attract a quality student body. No matter what happens in the future, no matter what administration's decisions are decided or how the department proceeds in the future, one thing that will be front and center in the functioning of the department: we will be relying on adjuncts. Lecturers—that can be a different story, depending on how things go.

So, first I'd like to comment about my 23-year status. To my point of view, this is a systemic problem that is just about impossible for the administration, and the system, and the country's education system at large, to try and wean itself from. It's just a capitalist point of view: if you can get something done for less, then do it. It's just the bottom line. It's the way things work. We have to understand that. From an administrative point of view, that can be considered a successful negotiation, or a successful way of dealing with things, even though there may be fallout from it.

That also presents an opportunity. Nobody, or very few people that are here in any positions at all—particularly if you think about the President and the Provost—none of these people in these positions now were in these positions 23 years ago. We have to look at this as an institutional outcome over a process that unfolds over time. I spent 13 years as an adjunct with the pay scale during the 1990's, and then came on as a full-time lecturer in 2005. By comparison, what you end up with over 23 years is a final salary that is at a *great* disparity over the course of time when compared to a tenured person. It's like watching a geometric vs. an arithmetic curve. And that's what you end up with.

The second point I'd like to make as an individual. Up until this last year, I've always felt that there was plenty of

opportunity. Although I'm questioning that a little bit right now, because I have sort of a perfect storm—all of us did—occur in the sense that DSI was discontinued. If it's reinstated, it's not going to be added to base. Plus, the increase in health insurance and the furlough, and in my particular case, I end up now, I'm earning a significantly less amount than I was earning last year at this time.

This is a significant change. I don't mean to say *disincentive*, because it isn't. I'm going to work as hard as I did anyway, because I just can't do a bad job. The idea here is that as an adjunct and as a lecturer, up until this year, I felt I could do whatever was necessary for my students and for my family, and gradually build my salary up over time. Now, I just don't know if that's going to happen.

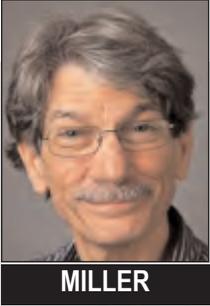
The most important thing, for me, in terms of what needs to be done, is the adjunct situation. Adjuncts really, really have a difficult situation. It's almost like a migrant worker thing, where you find out if you have a job the week before you're starting. It's impossible to plan your life doing that, and I hope that this issue is front and center and addressed foremost before all others. But concurrent among these things is the systemic fact that as you go through the career path, coming up as a non-tenured person, it just basically stays that way. It's a wonderful job, I love my department. I wouldn't exchange it for anything. I really love my work and I put in ten times as much time and hours as is required by the job. I certainly wouldn't have it any other way.

However, every year in the past I could file for DSI and the quality of the work was almost always rewarded. I pretty much earned DSI's all the time and they were added to base. So I significantly improved my salary status from 2005 to just the past couple of years.

As an adjunct, if you're teaching one or two courses, you're not involved enough in the department to really be aware of what's needed. A lot of people have tremendous amounts of skills, but they can't bring them to their department, because they're running to Vassar, or they're running to Williams or they're running to Albany. They come in and they do their thing.

In our department, I don't know that a lot of adjuncts actually do file for DSI. I know that I didn't, because I just wasn't aware. When I came on full-time, I really was brought in full. I got on the department's curriculum committee and I was in thick with the development of new programs. All of a sudden I saw the bigger picture of what was going on, and it matched my skill set, and then it was possible. For adjuncts that really is a significant difference. We have people with major talent, but we're not drawing on it because they're not here, they're not involved enough. In a way they probably shouldn't be, because they're not being paid for it. You have to think twice about that one.

## Robert Miller—Lecturer, Communication and Media



MILLER

I'm with the Communication and Media Department. I'm currently on a phase-out appointment and was supposed to be retiring by the end of this year, but I applied for an extension of that for one more year, and it was granted. I'll be here for another year and a half. I just didn't feel it was time to retire for me personally.

I want to talk a little bit today about my path to becoming a full-time lecturer here at New Paltz in the Communication and Media Department, which is not the department that I was trained to be in. I was a theater major as both an undergraduate and a graduate. When I got out of graduate school at the University of Iowa, I took a job working in colleges in theater departments. So I taught theater classes. When I was 30 years old, I got a divorce. It was a very friendly divorce: very amicable, no children or alimony. I decided at that time I was going to go back into the theater, since I was debt-free and fancy free and still pretty young. So I went into theater and made my living in theater for about 20 years.

Then, as luck would have it, I got married again. This time to a woman who had a couple of children and we had a child, so I suddenly had this family. We were living in Florida. I was working at a theater down there, and we decided that we wanted our children to be raised in the Northeast. Our children had the feeling that when you got old, your hair turned blue naturally, and ice came from a box in the kitchen, and that just wasn't right. So we moved to the Northeast, based on a job that she got with the American Craft Council.

I came up here without a job and needed to get something. Since there was not a lot of professional theater going on in this area, I started doing what other people in my situation were doing. I started calling all the local colleges looking for adjunct work. The first adjunct job I got was at Mount St. Mary's. I went down there for an interview. I talked about the theater department and how I wanted to teach acting and dramatic literature. A couple of weeks before the semester started, I got a call from the head of the department saying that the nun who taught the Media and Society course had been transferred by the bishop. When you're a nun and the bishop says: "Go over there," you go, right? You don't say: "Well, I can't." They had nobody to teach this, they asked me if I could teach this, and being raised in the theater, I said: "Of course, I can do that! No problem."

I had no more business teaching a Media and Society course than to fly to the moon, but being in the position of needing a job, and this being a job that was being offered

to me, I took it. That's the first problem that you encounter as an adjunct: you may want to teach in a certain area, or you may have expertise in certain courses, but those might not be the ones that are offered to you. So what do you do? Say, "Oh no. I can't! That's not really...I can't do that"? No, you do it. So I taught Media and Society in freefall for a couple semesters, until I kind of got that under my belt. That ended up being one of the courses that I taught here for many years, with a lot of help and support from people here. And what happened was that I gradually started getting calls from other colleges. I ended up teaching at Ulster, Mount St. Mary's, Marist, Dutchess Community College and certainly here at New Paltz. I'm sure many of you have had that experience.

You take whatever jobs are being offered to you, and so you end up running about to these different schools. You have your books for Ulster in one bag, and your books for SUNY in another bag, and your books for Marist in another bag—and God help you if you get to the college with the wrong bag! You open it up, and then you're in trouble.

Nobody wants to teach a 5-5 here in one institution, but sometimes you end up teaching a 5-5 in three or four institutions, because that's what's offered. So, you're not so much interested in the *quality* of what you're doing. The focus becomes on the quantity. How many jobs can I get, and how many can I squeeze into a 40-hour day? Because that's what it sometimes seems like.

I taught three back-to-back public speaking courses at Ulster for a number of years. They were just like an hour and a half, a ten minute break, an hour and a half, ten minute break. Along about the middle of the third class, I didn't care what anybody said. You know, there comes a point—but you don't have any choice. If you don't want to do it, somebody else will do it.

That brings up the third dilemma I faced as an adjunct. I'm sure it's your experience too: there you are, teaching a 5-5 or a 4-5, running around different campuses, and you get a call from yet another college, asking if you can teach. So, the dilemma is: do I really overload myself, because I need the money?

The other dilemma is: if I don't take this job, they're going to call somebody else. I'm now at the top of their list for calling, but if I don't take that job, someone else is going to pop into my place. And the next time they might call that other person. They might like that other person better than me.

You have this kind of insidious thing going on, where you're focused on quantity of things you can teach, as opposed to quality. You're engaged in a competitive game with your colleagues: actually thinking of preventing somebody from getting a job, to protect that area for

yourself, which is not a very collegial thing to do, and sometimes teaching things that you're not quite qualified to teach, because someone offers you that position.

Eventually, of course, I ended up here at New Paltz being offered a full-time lectureship, illustrating Woody Allen's point that 80% of success is simply showing up. I kept showing up here at New Paltz, and finally they had to offer me a full-time teaching job, where I've been quite happy.

Like the happy adjunct who spoke before, I've liked working in the Communication Department. I felt very supported there. The various chairs I've worked for have supported me in those positions. But still, you look at the pay discrepancy between what I'm doing and what some other people are doing, and it seems unfair. I will say, though, in closing: the one very positive aspect of being an adjunct is that you don't have to go to faculty meetings.



RIGOLINO

## Rachel Rigolino—Lecturer, English

Dorothy Day has a lot to say as a Catholic worker. She's always inspired me, because I'm really not very much of a radical, but I do admire her. I know that she definitely would be on our side. Whether she would say we're among the poor, her definition of poor, I'm not sure. But if you wanted to substitute "poor" with "adjunct," I think you would get the point.

Dorothy Day, if you don't know who she is or was, she is actually a lay Catholic, who is on the road for canonization. She was very, very radical in terms of her politics and economic policies. She says, "Yes, the poor we are always going to have," and we can substitute "adjuncts." Let's hope not, but anyway: "Our Lord told us that. And there will always be a need for our sharing, for stripping ourselves to help others. It will always be a lifetime job. But I am sure God did not intend that there be so many. The class structure is of *our* making and our consent."

So I began thinking about the consent that we all give to this structure, and I'm part of this. I'm part of part of the Happy Adjuncts-Lecturers Club. I have an office. It has no windows. I always make a big deal. And you don't want to draw attention to yourself. I'll say "Oh it's a terrible office! It's awful! I have no win-

dows!"—because I don't want it taken away.

Like Yvonne, I'm in a more privileged place. I have a husband. He just retired, so we're a little different in terms of income. When I said I was coming over here, he said, "You know, if you screw this up, we're moving to Delaware, because I can't afford to live in this state." He's definitely not a radical, though he's suffered at the hands of The Man, IBM. But who are we to consent to this? Oftentimes we are in places of privilege. We can say: "Alright, I'll teach a couple of classes." Or: "I can do this." But many people aren't in places of privilege.

I work with people who are struggling, just struggling to get by and working the 5, 6 jobs. And then I wonder: my department is wonderful, but why aren't there more faculty here at the Forum? Because they have families; they're worried about their employment. They don't want to be seen as causing trouble. Getting back to that idea of systemic problems: I'm not sure what the answer will be.

We need to frame it in some way, to be as wise as the serpent, in a win-win situation somehow. Not always to be negative or putting people up against the wall, and putting them in a corner. But say: how can we work together to make this a win-win situation? Can we bring in quantitative data that shows that if you work less, the students benefit? And that students benefit from adjuncts who are fairly paid!

## Clinton Bennett—Adjunct, Philosophy



BENNETT

Nationally, the number of tenured faculty is being reduced. Although the rhetoric is to use fewer contingent faculty, in most colleges up to 75% of the teaching is by contingent, non-tenure-line faculty. Many colleges state that the policy is to employ fewer contingent faculty. That is the stated policy here at New Paltz.

On the other hand, President Christian writes, “Furthermore, part-time adjuncts are often hired to teach in specialty areas not represented among tenure-track faculty, and often because they bring unique professional expertise and experience to the campus.” He says also “that no university can deliver without employing contingent faculty.” We heard from our earlier speaker from the Music Department, that in that department it’s essential to use adjuncts because no single professor can play all of the instruments. It would be financially impossible to employ enough full-time, tenure-line faculty to deliver the curriculum.

However, there is a culture of denial, not only here on our campus, but nationally within the academy. On the one hand, adjuncts bring essential expertise, often expertise and continuing professional activity within their disciplines that is indeed unique. And that is, almost by definition, what a full-time faculty member, or at least tenure-line faculty

members who practiced the discipline 15 years ago or 20 years ago, before they became a professor, *cannot* bring to their teaching.

There is this unique quality, *expertise*, ongoing professional practice. And, although as adjuncts we’re employed primarily to teach, often there is also substantial scholarly activity. The Philosophy Department, of which I am a member, had an external review. The reviewers commented that “incredibly, Doctor Bennett is an adjunct, but he’s published 12 books.” That apparently is incredible. It was, however, a positive statement underlining the scholarship that I bring to my position.

We need systemic change. As Rachel suggested, we need to take a look at: what is the added value? What is the *added* value that adjuncts bring to their teaching, so that this can be appreciated? And being an adjunct should not be seen as less than the best, but as a career option that some people *choose* to pursue, so that they can combine their professional practice, their scholarly activity, their involvement in community service with pedagogy and teaching and bringing on to the campus that unique blend of experience that the campus and the academy require. The academy would be poorer were it to lose the richness of that experience. But I’m not aware of solid qualitative and quantitative research that supports that proposition.



NYSTROM

## Stephanie Nystrom—Adjunct, Anthropology

I'm in the Anthropology Department, currently unemployed, although I do have one course in the spring, so that's fairly exciting. I've been adjuncting there since 2007. This is the third institution that I have adjuncted in.

Similarly to Yvonne, I am lucky in the sense that I do this job to basically pay for groceries. We have two small children, and I am mostly taking care of them. It was a very nice job, because it was so flexible. My husband is in the Anthropology Department, as well. We could coordinate childcare without having to pay for childcare. Because once you factor in paying for child care, working as an adjunct doesn't really make much sense. You wind up paying almost your entire salary to childcare, and that doesn't make much sense. I am fortunate, although not *that* fortunate, because my husband works *here*. So it's not like he's bringing in any substantial salary.

I think that the crummy pay for adjuncts is kind of indicative of the crummy pay across the entire campus. When we first moved here, we lived in a small one-bedroom apartment until our first child was two years old. Then we were

finally able to purchase a house, but we had to buy a house in Kingston, because we just could not afford to buy a house in New Paltz with the extremely high prices and high taxes. I think it's very indicative and very telling that two employees of the University cannot afford to buy a home in the town where the University is located.

That aside, my biggest problem is the contingent nature of this job. When I first started doing this, it was all under the auspices of the Anthropology Department. They could hire me every semester if they wanted to. But then, two years ago, they threatened to get rid of all of the adjuncts, which they did for that semester. Then they hired them back, but placed limits for each department on how many adjuncts they could hire.

You're faced with this situation where one semester you may have a job, but then you may not have a job for a couple of semesters. And then maybe you'll have one later on. So it makes it very difficult to try and find some other way to make up that income that you've lost.

Just as a funny little anecdote from my experience: I recently took a job delivering doughnuts and bread for a local bakery. I make as much money delivering doughnuts as I do teaching college. I think that's pretty sad.



MILLHAM

## Rosemary Millham—Assistant Professor, Secondary Education

I'm from the Secondary Education Department. I am the Director of the Master Teacher Program, but I was hired—and in my tenure year—to be Coordinator of the Secondary Education Science and study programs for undergraduate through graduate.

I'm looking at this from a totally different perspective. We have adjuncts. I have an adjunct now teaching my graduate level inquiry course, because I'm overloaded with everything else and still have extra service in my department. But the adjuncts that I think are sometimes missing in that whole framework are the adjuncts that we hire to actually supervise our student teachers. These people get around \$640 per student and go to visit these students a minimum of six times over the semester, and they travel as far as 45 miles from here. That's 90 miles roundtrip for each visit. Now they do get mileage, but they're not getting paid for the time that they're traveling

to and from these schools.

They're in the school sometimes from two to four hours observing students, talking to the cooperating teachers and the student teachers. If you take a look at even a minimum of six visits per semester: an adjunct, being paid \$643 per student, is now making—depending on how many hours it takes to go to and from these schools—between \$21 and \$32 an hour for their actual work. That doesn't seem fair to me at all.

Even if adjuncts were paid the proposed \$5,000 per course, that would still only be \$40,000 a year in Ulster County, in New Paltz. I have a part-time job that I used to do full-time for a federal agency down in Washington, D.C. I got a cost of living allowance (COLA), because I lived in the Washington D.C. area. So every pay check I got X number of dollars to help pay for the taxes and whatever it cost to live in that high-cost area. The least they should do is give a COLA for New Paltz, even if they can't get up to \$5,000 per course.

## Dennis Doherty—Lecturer, English



DOHERTY

I've been working in the English Department for 26 years, starting as a graduate Teaching Assistant. Then I was an adjunct for nine years, teaching two classes on top of a full-time job, in sole support of a family of five. I've been a lecturer here for 14 years.

I have a friend who just completed 20 years of service for a company. They gave him a gold watch and a plaque. For my 21<sup>st</sup> year, I was running the Creative Writing Program, teaching three courses and directing the Poetry Board—and they gave me two more classes!

Most of my classes are creative writing, which means evaluating portfolio upon portfolio, reading poem after poem after poem, and dealing with the personal travails and soulful struggles of all my students: their gut-wrenching demons, their traumas and so forth. This takes a lot of time. You don't buzz through a pile of 120 poems, that's how many I've critiqued this semester. You go one at a time, dealing with the personal problems that are being involved and dealing with the life struggles involved. That's just the surface, because you're also trying to teach a highly complex art form, and how to do it.

If I were only teaching three creative writing courses, I'd be overloaded. We had external people come and review us a couple of years ago, when I was the director of the Creative Writing Program. They asked: what are our courses capped at? I said 20, and both of their jaws dropped. They said— and this is when I was teaching three classes—they said “Do your colleagues know how much work you're doing?” And then the College gave me two more classes.

The other classes I teach are writing-intensive literature courses and four-credit American literature surveys. I'm also supposed to be a writer, because: who's a creative writing teacher who is not a writer? We've raised that question: “How are we supposed to write? When would we be doing any writing?”

I can tell you, this semester, I'm contracted to write a book. I couldn't get it done last year, so I started in the summer and I'm writing it right now. My schedule, daily schedule, is I come in everyday, all day here, and teach my classes and grade as much as I can in between classes. I go home at night. Because I arrive earlier than my wife, I clean the house. I cook dinner. After we eat, I go in the basement and I've been writing 1,000 words a night. Then I get up in the morning and do it again.

I've also published three collections of novels. After three collections of novels and 26 years of teaching, I am led to feel that I don't have credentials, which is why I'm in the position I'm in. My response is: what the hell? What would you *possibly* want? What more is there to give?

I just now went through the hell of reappointment. The other thing about reappointments is its humiliating. I don't feel at this point in my career, with 26 years of really fantastic student evaluations, that I have to justify what I have done lately. It's tortuous, and then there's that long, long wait. This year—they've never done this before—this year on a Saturday I received a certified letter from the College. My wife and I both assumed: that's it. It was on the weekend, so we had to wait out the whole weekend to actually pick up the letter. I didn't know this, but my wife was in tears. She had been hiding it from me. I have to say, I really resent that whole process.



PAMPINELLA

## Stephen Pampinella—Lecturer, Political Science

I'm very happy that this event is happening. I think we need more events like this, just to raise awareness amongst ourselves about the issues that we all face.

As academics—Peter has said this in the meetings I've had with him—we are kind of trained and expected to not question the overall structure of the work environment that we're in, and the University as a whole; but I think it is very important to question that. Events like this are essential. I just want to talk about my own personal experience, and how I feel about adjuncting now, and where I feel the academic field is in general, and where our place is here.

I have been adjuncting for about three and a half years. I just finished my PhD, and I am going on the job market now. I am in the process of sending out job applications to many different employers, of course pursuing that brass ring of a tenure-track position. I was always a little nervous about going on the job market. I didn't know what it was like. Now I'm in the midst of it. It's kind of like an exclusive club, where you can get in and then you have the opportunity for a tenure-track position and some sense of job security.

On the outside of that club is everyone else who is an adjunct or some kind of contingent laborer who is non-tenure track. It's very puzzling to me how to get into this club. I still don't think I've figured it out. That's a real struggle, because I look around, and I think of other people in my position. We're lucky, I guess, because we're a little younger and we've just begun this.

It's hard to see how it works. I don't see where, in fact, all the new PhD's like myself are coming out, how we're going to get hired and how we're going to get some kind of job which will provide us with some kind of real security, which we're all entitled to—and every human being is entitled to, as well. There are simply far too many new PhD's and graduate students who are going to become adjuncts, compared to the actual number of tenure-track positions. The numbers aren't feasible where we're all going to get academic jobs.

It's very likely that many of us will stay adjuncts forever, if we ever want to continue working in academia. That means we'll have to endure low pay, poverty wages, which we have here in SUNY, and endure a complete lack of job security, as well. That was what I was thinking about as I was coming here. I was thinking: how can I present this in such a way and say anything that won't get me fired? That is a difficult line to walk.

I've come to the realization that, in fact, there are many of us who simply aren't going to get academic jobs. There are many of us who are going to be on the outside forever, and for that group of people that may mean—once you make the realization that an academic job isn't coming—what do you do? You're still going to have to survive in one way or another. At some point, many of us will have to exit academia and do something else.

I'm still trying to figure out my own place in that. I'm not sure really what I intend to do. I've realized, if that's the case, then it suggests that we really can't be quite as passive anymore. We really should stand up and demand what's rightfully ours. Which is really a living wage, a job with dignity and respect, which the current system does not provide to any of us, especially given the vast disparity in terms of administrative salaries compared to adjuncts, especially in terms of the way that the State of New York treats adjunct faculty, as well as graduate labor.

I find more and more today, as someone who follows politics, that SUNY really functions as an arm of economic development to get the Governor reelected. And nothing really more, right? You may have heard of something called Start Up New York or Tax Free New York. The Governor is using SUNY campuses to bring businesses to New York State. They can push economic development, create jobs without paying taxes, and ultimately that means less money that's going to go into SUNY's budget from State funds. This sounds like more whining, but really no one gives a damn. No one's really interested in actually funding our institution to ensure that we can live and survive, which is something I think that we deserve.

Given that logic, at some point there has to be some mode of resistance. There has to be some kind of attempt to push back against the system. I'm trying to figure out how one can do that without potentially sacrificing that future job opportunity. It may mean that we should just do it, because not everyone is going to have that opportunity anyway. That's a possibility and that's something that I'm wrestling with. I don't want to commit to that yet, because I do still hold out hope for possibly some sort of tenure-track position.

As you engage in the job market, one is tempted to think about jumping ship, so to speak. That's where I am in all that. I'm interested in trying to figure out how to build awareness with other adjuncts and contingent labor. Try and build some capacity, try and think about what actions we can take to begin to demand what's really ours, which is simply dignity and respect! I don't think that's extravagant in any way.

## Victor deMunck—Professor, Anthropology



deMUNCK

I have a few things to say, I hope they're somewhat useful. One of them is this: an axiom of American culture is that with a PhD or a Master's degree, or even a BA, you should have a middle-class income. People who are teaching courses, full-time, part-time, they're all doing exactly the

same job when they're teaching. They're all expected to be professionals and be experts in their field. A tremendous amount of investment has gone into the individuals who teach courses. It doesn't matter who they are. Certainly the distribution of good teachers to bad teachers is probably the same, whether they're full-time, tenured professors or part-time. There's no distinction there, because all people who are professors are people who are experts in their field and should have enough competency to teach a course well.

Given those conditions, and given the assumption that if you have that kind of expertise, you should be in the middle class. Reading about Mary Margret Vojtko and seeing what the salaries here are, this is outrageous and it's unethical. It's immoral. It's all the things that we all think it is. It shouldn't be allowed: the idea of being fired for asking for respect, even that there's fear which is spreading to full-time professors too. I wake up frequently thinking, "Well, if I say this at a faculty meeting, I'll get fired." Which I probably won't, but still there's that fear that seems to be like a weed spreading, a mental weed that grows in our minds with some ease and sort of takes over.

One thing we need to do is eradicate or minimize that feeling of fear. Speaking out is one of those things. I think the other thing that needs to be done is this. I was a part-timer for a long time. So I'm saying: don't give up, it can

happen. I was lucky to get the job I got here. I had been a part-timer for a long time.

I was at the University of New Hampshire and the teachers were on strike, but they were still getting their salaries. I *wasn't* getting my salary. Should I cross that picket line, or not? Nobody was supporting me, I wasn't in the union. I was told clearly by my chair, "You can't go to work—or you'll get fired!" So that's one condition.

All of us, all adjuncts are put in some positions that are just ridiculous and that full-time professors can't see. As soon as I became a full-time professor, it became hard for me to feel and relate to stories about adjuncts, because those are experiences you want to put away, frankly. That economic insecurity and instability and the kind of psychic cost on your brain is overwhelming. When it's over, and you get a living wage, you kind of don't want to recall that.

This was the point I wanted to make: we need to overcome the division between full-time professors and part-time, we need to act as a collectivity. We need to work together. There needs to be some kind of bond between those two cohorts. We can't say, "Well, full-timers are getting all these benefits, we're not." And full-timers can't just say, "Well, forget about those part-timers." If we stand up for them, what will the cost be? There have to be bridges built between those two groups. That strengthens both groups, because we're all teachers.

We should all be getting a living wage. There's the privileged tenure track, but certainly we have to work together. This kind of whining, as full-timers and part-timers do by ourselves, doesn't get us anywhere except a psychic exhaust. Somehow, we have to figure out ways to connect where we're working together. That's the main point I wanted to make.

## Lucy Barbera—Adjunct, Educational Studies



BARBERA

I have been an adjunct for 17 years in the Humanistic/Multicultural Education Program. It's part of the Educational Studies Program here on campus. That shocks me and amazes me. I'm a graduate of the Program.

I was delighted when the director asked me to write a course for the

Program. Subsequently, I've written three courses for that Program and have worked as an adjunct for Elementary Education, Special Education, and Sociology now is paying for one of my courses because of popular demand. It's Expressive Arts. It's an extremely active course. I have a very hard time finding space for the course, because it doesn't fit into the traditional classroom.

My Program has been very supportive to me. I really, really appreciate every member of that department. I feel that my biggest shock came when I substituted for maternity leave for one of the staff. When I got my paycheck, I—booked a trip to Aruba. I was so shocked by the disparity! Maybe that was naiveté on my part, maybe it was just stupidity. I don't know, but that really hit home to me: the disparity.

Since then, my biggest concern has been having my courses canceled on me for lack of registration. Those are summer courses. During the year, we have a maximum 30 in the class, and I don't have that problem. I have students emailing me, calling me, making circles around the building trying to get into the class. Other sections were added two years ago, when the push was to eliminate adjuncts. We had two sections of two courses in Expressive Arts, a level one and a level two. They were, for three years in a

row, booked to 30-capacity each. The second section was cancelled due to "lack of funds for adjuncts." The logic completely defied sanity. It was a real hardship, because I love to teach. I do a great job teaching, judging from my evaluations. I felt the College was losing money on the deal. It wasn't just me losing money in terms of salary. I felt that the College was making a kind of crazy decision, based on business practice.

Why not have contracts for us? In terms of the practice in the field and coming to the classroom with understanding and practice: I spent a year last year on a research grant at SUNY Upstate in Syracuse, at the hospital there. I'm an art therapist and I actually got to teach residents and nurses at the hospital. I was able to come to my class this semester and show, on a screen that large, the artwork of the patients, of the children that I worked with. The students connect what is happening in this class to what happens in the real world in terms of changing people's lives and contributing to the healing of so, so many. That cannot be underestimated.

It's hard to put a dollar figure on that kind of education. Where students would, at the end of class and in subsequent journals, say it changed their lives to see something so profound, as the work that these kids were doing and the work that art therapy did to help them heal. It's those kinds of moments where we are affecting so many students in terms of putting them on the path to working for change and good in the world. We need to gather together as a community and work together as a community, full-time, part-time, adjunct and staff, to say: "We're all together on this. We really need to come together on this and we really need to make it fair and equal!"

## Glenn Geher—Professor & Chair, Psychology



GEHER

I appreciate the effort that Peter and other folks have put into this. You have been an advocate of faculty in general, adjunct faculty in particular, for a long time.

There was a conscious choice years ago for the UUP on campus to pay attention to, and to care about, issues of adjunct faculty. When I was here early on—I came here in 2000—this was not on the radar, in particular. It didn't seem it was on the radar much from the administration's perspective. It didn't seem it was on the radar much from the perspective of the faculty, as well. To have faculty more broadly defined and more accurately defined, and to have union issues addressed that aren't just about full-time faculty, but that look at the larger picture, has been an admirable thing that's been added to what we've done. I think that the Forum in 2005 was largely designed to address that.

The Psychology Department is very big. I believe the best I can do to add to the conversation would be address issues of faculty from different statuses within the Department of Psychology. Our department has grown quite a bit. I've been chair for five years now. The enrollments have increased at the undergraduate and graduate levels 30-35% within that particular time period. This has put an awful lot of pressure on our seats. Our undergraduate numbers have gone from 300-something to over 500-something in the major, and there's been a lot of very idiosyncratic historical things that have happened in that same time period.

One of the things Lucy mentioned also impacted our department in an adverse way. There was a point two or three years ago at which there was a budget crisis or a serious budget problem. The response of the administration to this budget crisis was to get rid of adjunct classes and to reduce these sections.

Our department, for better or worse, will offer anywhere between maybe 10 and 20 or sometimes more than 20 sections of adjunct classes in a particular semester. So it hit our department particularly hard. As Lucy was saying, it was hard to understand. Anyone who has maybe eighth grade math or more can look at this and say: it's *cheaper* to have sections taught by adjunct faculty. So it was very confusing to people. For adjunct faculty with very strong reputations, to have their full sections canceled, it was just weird. So as Lucy was saying, it was weird in other departments on campus, and it was weird in the Department of Psychology. The fiscal rationale was somewhat convoluted, and from an absolute eighth grade math sense, it simply didn't really make sense. It only made sense in a very idiosyncratic kind of way.

The situation has gotten better, at least from our department's perspective, in terms of hiring adjuncts. About three years ago, the word was we were going to get rid of adjuncts. This made headlines in the papers, and this was of concern. One thing that I told people at the time, and this has remained accurate: it actually didn't happen, it wasn't really going to happen. In a department like ours, we *always*, will *always* have a need for many sections that are taught by adjunct faculty. It varies from semester to semester, and sometimes it's complicated.

Unfortunately, unpredictable for the faculty at times, but there will *always* be a need for courses taught by adjuncts, particularly for specialized courses such as Crisis Intervention, a course about psychological crisis. It's an applied kind of course. Right now, we have Wendy Bower, who is a social worker, who does exactly that work in Dutchess County. She teaches that for us on an adjunct basis. She teaches it in a unique way. She's uniquely situated to teach that particular course. We have several courses that are essentially *best* taught by adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are at the very *core* of the academic mission and goals of our department.

Our department has seen some other historical things that I know Peter and some others have raised, that I want to address. If we think about faculty as fitting into the category of adjunct versus lecturer versus full-time academic faculty, we have definitely seen an increase in lecturers in about that same time period. It's a very mixed blessing.

We had zero in the past, and now suddenly we have 3.5 lecturers this academic year. I'll tell you about the adverse outcomes associated with that. Our department has huge enrollment groups. The immediate effect is that we can now better cover those classes and can hire fewer adjuncts. That, I think, is the reasoning of the administration. We initially thought this was going to be some sort of stop-gap measure regarding enrollment groups. I think it still remains to be determined. In our department, in addition to teaching the courses—I know this is true in a lot of other departments—we have significant advising loads, with people generally advising between 40 and 50 students a semester. That has increased with the loss of some full-time faculty, because lecturers don't do the advising.

Our department has a very big focus on student collaborative research activities. The faculty are expected to work with students. When students come, we tell them about how great the research opportunities are. "You're going to work closely with faculty. This is going to be an awesome experience for you! We have faculty with research expertise in X, Y and Z. You'll get to work with them on these projects. We go to conferences. We present articles. This is

the ethos of our department.” For full-time faculty, that’s part of their job. For full-time lecturers, that is not part of their job.

Replacing a full-time faculty member with a full-time lecturer immediately reduces our capacity to provide the individualized research, collaboration kind of attention, which is exactly what we’re promising to the students and exactly how we advertise ourselves. We lost a full-time faculty member last year. We have a retirement forthcoming. We have an increase in lecturers and we’ve had a 40% increase in our majors. What we’re having is a lot more students who are expecting this kind of experience. Our faculty is essentially being reconfigured top-down, so that we are definitely not as well able to address those goals that we have for our students.

From the Psychology Department’s perspective: we have adjuncts, we continue to have them, we continue to support them as best we can. They are *integral* to what we’re doing. From our department perspective, the big concern these days seems to be the shift towards lectureships, which we need to think about carefully. On the one hand, creating a lectureship can be a great opportunity for someone who is a great teacher, for an individual who has worked in an adjunct capacity. From a broader perspective, it has the effect of not providing the same kind of curricular opportunities that you tend to see when we’re more fully staffed with full-time faculty.

Some of our lecturers are among our most active scholars—by choice. Some of them are on Master’s thesis committees—by choice. Some of them are doing,

initiating research projects totally by choice. As a senior faculty member, we want to cultivate that. We want to see that happen for the development of the individual, and it’s better for the community in general.

Were adjuncts considered when the lecturers were hired? It was done case by case. In one case we had someone who was teaching, has a PhD, a very strong research background, and had been teaching piecemeal adjunct courses that were really specialized, the kind of thing that a local clinical psychologist couldn’t teach, e.g., physiological psychology, perception psychology. This person applied for a lectureship that matched those courses and got it. That was the situation where I’d say that it was really good for this particular individual. Another person was teaching as an adjunct and she’s now on a lecturer line. It seems to be very good for her.

One final point: the 5-5 course load for lecturers is *outlandish*. It is *unacceptable*. 5-5 is what you have at a *bad* community college. 5-5 is what you have if you expect people to get little out of the teaching. Even if they’re incredibly good, somebody who is teaching five classes a semester can’t possibly do as good a job at providing the education as they would if they were teaching three or four.

It’s surprising to me that an institution that places such explicit emphasis on teaching would have a 5-5 course load. It seems that there are a lot of people pushing to change this: *5-5 is unacceptable. 5-4 is unacceptable, to be honest*. So I think that this is something that we together as a group ought to underscore. We need that to be supported.

## Monazir Khan—Graduate Student Employees Union



KAHN

I am Business Agent at Large, Graduate Student Employees Union, CWA Local 1104. GSEU represents close to 5,000 Teaching Assistants and Graduate Assistants in the SUNY system, spread over four SUNY center campuses, two medical universities, two doctoral institutions in Syracuse and

New York City, and 12 comprehensive college campuses like New Paltz.

I am here today to highlight one thing: that New Paltz is a costly area to live, as compared to any other comprehensive college campus. I thank Peter that he, on his own behalf, invited me to speak, even though perhaps TAs and GAs might not be considered as part of the new faculty majority. I was flipping through President Christian's remarks here: I don't see anywhere mention of Teaching Assistants or Graduate Assistants. Maybe he doesn't even consider them to be employees, but merely students.

This is their story: New Paltz is the second largest campus in terms of the GSEU membership among the 12 comprehensive college campuses. The only campus that exceeds it in numbers is SUNY Oswego. On this campus we have 80 Teaching Assistants and Graduate Assistants. A good many of them are in the English Department, which I believe is the next biggest after the four university center campuses' English Departments. Another campus that may come close to it, to what the English Department TA's do, would be SUNY Fredonia.

Nowhere else are TAs' and GAs' paid as low as on the SUNY New Paltz campus—among the 12 college campuses. Even SUNY Fredonia, SUNY Brockport, SUNY Geneseo pay far higher than the salary of Teaching Assistants and Graduate Assistants on this campus. At New Paltz, they pay Teaching Assistants \$2,500 per course, which is \$5,000 for the academic year. Geneseo pays close to \$9,000, Brockport \$7,000+, SUNY Fredonia \$7,000+. One English TA once remarked that you can rent a palace for a few hundred bucks in Geneseo or in Brockport or even in SUNY Fredonia.

We have noticed that this situation exists not just today, but for the last five years. I have been Business Agent at Large, representing this campus, and the situation is like this: when the union initially negotiated the collective bargaining agreement way back in 1992, the union unfortunately did not negotiate a contractual minimum

salary for non-university-center campuses. SUNY New Paltz and medical universities, etc., other than Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo and Stony Brook, are considered as non-university-center campuses.

Therefore, there is no minimum salary written in the contract for them. It was left to the goodwill and good conscience of campus administrators: presidents, provosts, deans, etc. And you know what? These administrators' social concerns vary. On the one hand, I unfortunately have a paradoxical situation whereby I represent members who are paid the lowest in the entire unit, as well I represent the members who are paid the highest in the entire unit. The two medical universities are not among the few campuses which pay the highest salaries among all TAs and GAs. The union could not manage to negotiate a minimum salary, even though wages and hours of work are mandatory subjects of bargaining. We have tried since then, but the State has not budged.

We know from the UUP contract that the salary of faculty, the differential between the faculty of university centers and comprehensive college campuses, are in the ratio of 80%. Let us say, if \$60,000 is paid to an assistant professor on a university center campus, on a college campus they would be paid \$45,000. That ratio doesn't exist in terms of the members of the Graduate Student Employees Union.

Our members are also hired on a very transient basis on this campus, at most for one academic year. I think the English Department is the only exception, where a TA may continue for more than one academic year. No sooner do I come to know of them and sign them as members than they are about to leave. Therefore, it is very hard to organize them. I think I am damn good at rallying up people when they have to be mindful of better compensation for their work. But it's hard to find them, bring them together, and they don't have enough time to stay here, so that they can do something good about it.

The contract also has something called locality pay. Ulster County, where New Paltz is, borders on the downstate location area. Therefore, what more money we have in the contract for downstate locations, members here don't qualify for it. One last thing I will say: that our members work for 20 hours per week, 44 weeks per academic year. If SUNY New Paltz and the State of New York were not a public employer, if they were a private employer, they would have been sued for not paying the state minimum hourly wages to our members.

## James Dearce—Adjunct, Sociology



DEARCE

I started teaching here in 2000. I came when Glenn came. I earned my Master's degree here. As soon as I was ready to graduate and take my oral exams, my professors offered me a job teaching Introduction to Sociology. As soon as you pass, you can start teaching. I did that and I've been here pretty

much ever since. I took a slight break when I was working on a PhD, but I soon realized that writing isn't really my thing. In a publish-or-perish environment, I wasn't going to make it. So here at New Paltz I was able to develop my skills as a teacher, and I continue doing that.

I have had mostly very good experiences here at New Paltz. I'd say the main complaint I have as an adjunct is that the pay is so ridiculously low. It's embarrassingly low! I don't have to tell you all that. I've had some great opportunities here. I'm so grateful for the UUP, for looking out for the adjuncts and getting us that small bump in pay in 2005. It was probably \$1,000, which is about 50% more than I was making at the time. I have taught at SUNY Ulster, SUNY Orange. Those adjuncts are still making the same amounts pretty much that they were making 14, 15 years ago. I'm very grateful that so many people here have been working to help us out.

I've had a lot of great opportunities working in the Sociology Department. I think it's because we have people there who really care and take care of us. I've had opportunities to develop new classes, develop online classes. I'm really grateful for that. I hope that other departments are giving their adjuncts the opportunity to do that.

Another thing about being an adjunct that is troubling is the amount of additional work that you have to do, in addition to teaching classes. You can't just walk in and teach classes, that takes time and preparation, and then there are after-class things. You're working with students, you want to develop them. As a teacher of introductory sociology, pretty often I'm also trying to recruit students into our department. I've had many students tell me that they're in our department because of the experiences they've had with me in my classes, so I'm really grateful about that too.

Then there's the extra stuff that comes along with it, when you teach an introductory class. I have 35 students in

each class, and then I have to do midterm evaluations, which is essentially doing all the grading that you would do at the end of the semester—in the middle of the semester. So that is hours and hours of work uncompensated. Next semester I've been notified that there's a chance I may again have to do a GE evaluation, which is hours and hours of work, also uncompensated, but you have to do it.

As a teacher of sociology, one of the topics I teach about is exploitation. I teach about social change. I really can't do that with a lot of conviction. I'm an exploited person. We have these amazing people here, and we can't get any change here in the University. We try and we try, and it's not happening. It's very hard for me to teach these subjects with any kind of conviction.

I'm on the Board of Trustees at Ulster County Community College, because I'm also a student. I can't live on my adjunct salary, so I'm going back to school for nursing. I'm doing that right now. We had a conference about two weeks ago, which had college presidents and former college presidents there. Jerry Benjamin was the moderator. I stood up and I asked the question: "What can we do to get the adjuncts more money?" For the first time—they were there for two hours talking—for the first time there was dead silence. Nobody had anything to say, nothing. One guy eventually said: "Well, smarter people than I have tried to figure this out, and no one has done anything about it. No one has been able to figure out how to get adjuncts more money." That was the end of the conversation. Jerry, as a good moderator, promptly changed the subject. So we never got anywhere with that.

One of the speakers was saying that the colleges can exist the way they do because of the false economy that they have: by being able to pay adjuncts very little money. Why would the administration change things? Why would they sacrifice anything when they know they have us? They got us. We need to keep doing this. A lot of us need this work. There is this myth that a lot of adjuncts do it for fun, or because it's an extra thing to do; it's some pocket change for them. I don't know any adjuncts like that. I really don't. I haven't met any. So why should they change? I think the administration should recognize the value that we bring to the College. They should recognize, they should have some compassion and some respect for us and give us a decent wage. There's no reason not to.

## Daniel Brenner '13—Student



**BRENNER**

I just wanted to give a student voice, which I think is important, and emphasize the point that you're probably all well aware of: that the issue of adjunct faculty and contingent faculty is something that affects students very strongly. As Professor Doherty and

Professor Geher mentioned, for lecturers who teach five classes a semester, there's absolutely no way that they can provide the same amount of education to each one of their students, on top of meeting with students outside of classes, grading all those papers and possibly doing their own research. It's a ridiculous amount of work.

I'm in my seventh semester here at New Paltz, a senior graduating in December. About half of my professors have been either lecturers or adjuncts throughout my entire time here. Most of them have been highly qualified teachers, just as qualified as the tenured professors. These are people who obviously are very good at their jobs and deserve far more than the poverty wages they are being given.

I just wanted to emphasize the point that this is something that students are affected by. That's why I think the internship program that Peter has set up is so good. It's really good for students to get involved with this issue and to be aware of how the low pay for adjuncts and lecturers and other issues on campus affect them directly.

# Additionally Submitted Written Materials

## Elizabeth Brotherton—Professor & Chair, Art History



BROTHERTON

**Reasons why the policy limiting adjuncts to only two courses per semester is damaging and counterproductive:**

**1) From students' point of view:**

Limited to two courses, adjunct instructors are more likely to find teaching jobs elsewhere to augment their salary. Staying on campus only as long as it takes to teach their courses, adjuncts thus deprive students of the contact time that they would be more able and likely to give them were they teaching all their courses at New Paltz.

**2) From Department Chairs' point of view:** Forced to hire a different adjunct for every two adjunct-taught courses, Chairs expend a great deal of added time and energy that could be more productively used. This is especially harmful in departments such as Languages and Math, which are dependent on a large number of adjuncts.

**3) From adjuncts' point of view:** Unable to teach more than two courses on campus, and thus forced to take multiple teaching jobs on different campuses, adjunct instructors will often create for themselves hectic schedules involving huge amounts of time, money, and energy given over to transportation and logistics.

**4) From the College's point of view:** Unwilling to offer its adjunct instructors more than two courses per semester, the College squanders an opportunity to cultivate talented

and loyal adjunct instructors who, feeling that they have some small stake in New Paltz, would then be more likely to see themselves as members of the campus community and act accordingly.

**5) From the full-time faculty's point of view:** The alleged reason for the two-course policy, that an adjunct instructor teaching a three- or four-course load is teaching a full schedule and is therefore entitled to the same remuneration as is full-time faculty, is offensive to full-time faculty members, whose job descriptions are far from exhausted by a three- or four-course load. Adjuncts normally do not advise students or do transfer advising; they rarely attend Department meetings; they do not serve on Department, School or College committees; and their research and publications do not play defining roles in their positions here. They do not have to be Department Chairs or take on other administrative duties and miscellaneous obligations regularly demanded of full-time faculty members. However many courses adjunct instructors might teach in one semester, their jobs could not be likened to those of the full-time, tenure-track faculty.

The ultimate objective, to lessen the number of courses taught by adjuncts, is admirable; but the present policy increases the number of adjuncts on campus while diminishing their potential effectiveness as College instructors and employees. As long as we hire adjuncts, we need to treat them well and cultivate their value to the College.

## Amy Cheng—Professor, Art



CHENG

I am one of three full-time faculty members in the Art Department's Painting/Drawing Program, and every semester we employ two or three adjunct faculty to teach five or six courses. We value our adjuncts and see them as artist-professors whom we hire because they bring fresh blood to our Program. They

offer different and complementary strengths to the full-time faculty, and help bring depth and breadth to our Program.

For example, we have periodically used an adjunct faculty to teach our Graduate Painting classes. We respect them so much we feel it benefits our MFA students to be exposed to their teaching. Being located so close to NYC, we have access to a tremendous pool of possible adjuncts. All of them have MFAs, the terminal degree in studio art. Regrettably, when we try to recruit certain artists to teach for us

part-time, we are unable to do so because of the low pay.

When Francois Deschamps was Department Chair, he asked each of the Programs what he could do to help us. We asked for an adjunct position that would allow us to bring three artists from New York City, each coming twice a semester to conduct studio critiques with our graduates. This was structured as a 3-credit course. It was a tremendous success, and we were able to do this for two semesters.

If we offered better pay to adjunct faculty, people of this level of reputation and caliber could be hired on a regular basis; that is, they would be willing to come up and teach a regularly structured class of 6-hours a week. The point I am making is that, at least in the School of Fine and Performing Arts, contingent faculty could be turned into excellent, even prestigious assets, if we only offered better pay.

## Donald Christian, President Phillip Mauceri, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs



CHRISTIAN



MAUCERI

UUP Chapter President Peter Brown invited each of us to serve as featured speakers at today's forum, which we are unable to do because we are attending a SUNY system conference on "Building a Smarter University." He accepted our offer to provide a written statement of some of our views and perspectives on the topic of contingent faculty.

**Terminology and Context.** The term "contingent faculty" is standardly interpreted as faculty not on the tenure track, even though this term is not recognized by the State of New York as a distinct employee category in any of its negotiations with the UUP. It is perhaps useful to revisit a first principle that under current and foreseeable funding models, colleges and universities must maintain a degree of flexibility to respond to fiscal and budgetary changes and shifts in program demand, avoiding the terrible disruption of eliminating tenured faculty positions. For this reason, it is virtually without question that no university could operate with the long-term commitment to having all faculty on the tenure track. Furthermore, part-time adjuncts are often hired to teach in specialty areas not represented among tenure-track faculty, and often because they bring unique professional expertise and experience to the campus. Positions such as lecturers do not have the scholarly and research responsibilities of tenured and tenure-track faculty, hence typically contribute a higher proportion of their effort to teaching. Institutions employ lecturers along with tenure-line faculty to achieve a different mix of teaching and scholarship in fulfilling their mission.

New Paltz hires part-time adjunct faculty and full-time lecturers for these reasons. However, a long-term institutional goal, begun by our predecessors and continued by us, is to reduce our reliance on part-time faculty—in direct opposition to national trends. A dozen years ago, New Paltz was soundly criticized by our regional accrediting body for having half or more of our courses taught by adjuncts. While we do not have final figures for this semester, in fall 2012 only about 25% of our courses were taught by part-time adjuncts. In some instances, we have shifted teaching responsibilities to a richer mix of full-time lecturers, either as one-year or multi-year appointments. At the same time, the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty at New Paltz in fall 2012 was 268, higher than before the

great recession (e.g., 255 in fall 2007). Thus, we have pursued three concurrent strategies: reduce reliance on part-time adjunct faculty, and increase the number of both lecturer and tenured/tenure-track faculty positions. This is what we mean by "*Recast the Faculty Staffing Table*," to borrow language of a recent book referred to in the President's September report to the faculty.

**Appointment Types.** At New Paltz, the appointments and work expectations of part-time adjunct faculty and full-time lecturers are different. Adjuncts are hired with contract language such as "teach one or two courses." Adjunct compensation is defined on a per course basis. Lecturers are not simply adjuncts with more courses to teach. Lecturer appointments have a firm base in the SUNY language: *lecturers fulfill basic curricular needs but may not be assigned the full range of duties normally associated with academic rank appointees, particularly with regard to scholarship*. There is little logic to comparing adjunct and lecturer compensation on a per course basis, because lecturers are salaried employees, in contrast to part-time adjuncts. Our lecturers are involved in a fabric of teaching-related and primarily student-centered activities, but we don't ask them to do scholarship; many are involved at the departmental level in some ways.

As you engage in discussions at the forum about "contingent faculty" at New Paltz, we encourage you to keep such distinctions in mind.

**Lecturer Workload.** Full-time lecturers fill an important role in focusing on teaching. They fill basic curricular needs but are not expected to have the full range of duties of those in tenure-line positions. While the baseline obligation of full-time lecturers is to teach 30 credit hours of coursework or its equivalent during the academic year, and engage in continuing professional development related to their teaching assignment, departmental need determines the configuration of lecturer work. Based upon these needs, with approval from the dean and provost, lecturers engage in teaching and overseeing a range of courses. Although the nominal workload is 15 credit hours, 70 percent of our lecturers during 2012-13 taught fewer than that. Those who taught at the prescribed credit limit taught primarily seminars, independent studies or practicums with smaller number of students. The balance between course types, levels and enrollments in the courses lecturers teach make it impossible to generalize to a "typical" configuration, and each lecturer must be considered within his/her departmental context.

We are sensitive to maintaining a clear distinction between the teaching loads of lecturers and those of tenure-

line faculty of whom we expect research and scholarship and greater contributions than lecturers in service, departmental and institutional leadership. We do not believe that even a 3-6 credit differential between teaching loads of lecturers and those of tenure line faculty fully captures the greater expectations and different investment that the institution makes in the careers of faculty on the tenure track. For this reason, tenure-line faculty earn higher salaries than lecturers, in addition to having lower teaching loads.

**Adjunct Compensation.** Despite evidence that the administration has shared in the past, the impression continues to be fed that adjunct compensation at New Paltz is unsystematically low. In the most recent figures available from SUNY administration, minimum compensation for adjuncts at New Paltz (\$3001 per 3-credit course) is the **highest among state-operated campuses in the entire SUNY system**, among the 24 campuses for which data are available. Admittedly, New Paltz is joined by two other campuses (Potsdam, Stony Brook) with base compensation rates at or above \$3,000 per 3-credit course (compensation at Empire State is \$3,000 for a 4-credit course, \$2,250 for a 3-credit course). Only six (6) other campuses have rates above \$2,500, while fifteen (15) offer minimum rates of \$2,500 or below.

Adjuncts teaching at all nearby community colleges are compensated at lower rates than at New Paltz, although adjuncts with 7 or more semesters of teaching experience at one community college are compensated at a rate only slightly less than the current starting rate at New Paltz. New Paltz compensates adjuncts teaching science laboratory courses at rates 40-50% higher than community colleges.

The irony does not escape us that our campus is the focus of a campaign to increase adjunct salaries, when we clearly already are a leader in adjunct compensation in the Hudson Valley and throughout SUNY. We understand the desire of adjuncts and of advocates for higher compensation. At the same time, we understand that increasing adjunct salaries to levels virtually unheard of among public institutions in the State would be an irresponsible use of tuition revenue and taxpayer support and would put us in untenable positions with state and system leaders.

Thus, the target of an argument that adjunct compensation is inadequate should be regional, statewide, and national, and not specific to New Paltz. In SUNY, advocacy for adjunct faculty salaries should be channeled through statewide contract negotiations, conducted through the Governor's office and not by individual campuses.

**Adjustments to Adjunct Compensation.** Assertions that adjunct salaries at New Paltz have not increased in

many years are patently incorrect. In 2005, campus administration made a voluntary, local decision in response to an analysis of market rates to increase adjunct compensation by over 23%, to \$822. Since then adjunct salaries have increased by the negotiated salary increases in the UUP collective bargaining agreement. As a result, the per credit base rate for adjuncts has increased from \$822 in 2005-06 to \$1,000.44 in 2010-1, an increase of more than 21 during that time period. Negotiated increases in the new contract will increase these rates even more.

In addition, adjunct faculty are eligible for discretionary salary increases, based on documented quality of teaching and related contributions. In recent years, virtually every adjunct faculty member whose request for a discretionary salary increase was supported by their department chair and dean has been awarded such an increase by the provost and president. These salary increases are carried over into the per-credit compensation rate applied in the following year(s) for adjuncts who are rehired. As a result, some New Paltz adjuncts are compensated at levels exceeding \$3,400 per 3-credit course.

We are committed to recognizing and rewarding high-quality contributions by adjunct faculty by awarding discretionary salary increases per terms of the contract. The current UUP contract designates for the first time a portion of the discretionary increase pool for part-time adjunct faculty and professionals. During the current year, the calculated DSI pool for New Paltz is \$69,296 for part-time UUP members and \$143,515 for full time academic and professional UUP members. New Paltz administration does not have discretion in determining those pools, or in awarding them respectively to part- and full-time members.

In the most recent round, only six (6) adjunct faculty applied for discretionary salary increases. Limiting the distribution of the discretionary pool to these six faculty would clearly distort salaries (albeit on a one-time-only basis in the current contract year). However, the one-time increases for the adjuncts who applied for DSI will be higher than for others because they followed the process. We remain committed to the principle that these increases are discretionary, to recognize exceptional contributions, and to avoiding having part-time DSI become across-the-board salary adjustments.

**Health-Care Benefits.** It is frequently noted in the higher-education press that adjunct faculty nationwide typically work without health-care benefits. In addition to being compensated at higher rates than most national and regional standards, adjunct faculty at New Paltz who teach two or more courses qualify for health insurance benefits,

beginning with their first semester of teaching and continuing through all subsequent semesters teaching at that level. The state pays 88% of the costs of the premium for employee coverage and 73% of the premium for dependent coverage. During the current year, state contributions **per biweekly payroll** are about \$246 for the individual plan and \$536 for the family plan- a large investment of state funding in the compensation package of New Paltz adjunct faculty.

By comparison, no benefits are available to adjunct faculty at two nearby private colleges; at another, they qualify for health insurance benefits only if employed halftime or more. At our regional community colleges, adjunct faculty are either not eligible for benefits at all, or if eligible the employee pays the full cost with no institutional or state subsidy. In one instance, employees become eligible only after teaching four consecutive semesters.

Given the costs of health care and of health insurance coverage if purchased independently, the far more ready

availability of health insurance coverage for adjuncts at New Paltz and the employer subsidy of that coverage must be regarded as a significant part of adjunct compensation.

**Conclusion.** The administration is committed to continuing our participation in monthly labor management meetings, where we discuss with union leaders matters of interest raised by either the administration or the local UUP chapter including those matters necessary for local implementation and administration of the bargaining agreement. The president fulfills his contractual obligation to participate in at least one labor-management meeting each semester. We also participate in exclusively part-time labor-management meetings, as specified in the contract. In both of these meetings, we consider and adopt approaches to address concerns when feasible and consistent with sustaining and enhancing our core educational mission, with responsible shepherding of institutional resources, and with terms of the bargaining agreement.

### Vincent Martucci—Lecturer, Music

I would like to add one clarification to my comments today when I addressed the group. I brought up the point that the issues in pay and advancement for adjuncts and contingents is a systemic, long-term issue and that very few of the key players in this discussion were here at New Paltz 20-25 years ago as these disparities have unfolded.

What I wanted to add is that this situation presents a unique opportunity for an open and frank discussion with

the administration because people like our current president and provost were not the architects of these policies, but rather the inheritors of them. In my mind this is an important distinction that should be kept in mind and through dialogue presents an opportunity for a new administration to evaluate past practices and decide whether they want to continue down this same path—which I do believe can be shown to not be the most effective policy even though it may be the most expedient.

## Douglas Maynard—Professor, Psychology

### Research Findings on the Experiences of Adjunct Faculty

#### Feldman & Turnley (2001)

- Not universally dissatisfied with their jobs
  - highest for scheduling flexibility, coworkers, autonomy, and work challenge
  - lowest for pay, benefits, advancement opportunities, and supervision
    - many felt like second-class citizens or that they were marginalized
    - Older adjuncts (50+) were more satisfied and more professionally committed, felt less relative deprivation, and were engaging in less job search, and reported more organizational citizenship behaviors than younger part-time faculty. Seems that some do this as a kind of bridge retirement

#### Maynard & Joseph (2008)

- “Involuntary part-time” – would prefer their position to be full-time
  - This group had lower satisfaction with advancement, compensation, and security than full-time and voluntary part-time faculty (even though they had the same “deal” in terms of salary etc. as voluntary part-timers)
  - They didn’t feel more overqualified than either other group

- Part-time faculty (both IV-PT and V-PT together) actually reported *higher* emotional attachment to the organization than full-time faculty did

### Lessons from Contingent Work Literature

- Supports notion that “voluntary contingent” workers are more satisfied and committed.
- About 40% of contingent workers are estimated to prefer that situation, and this is exactly the rate that we found in the Maynard & Joseph sample.
- “Social or physical barriers” between contingent workers and permanent employees can cause problems: lack of development opportunities and knowledge sharing, exclusion from social gatherings. This makes it harder for them to perform well, and the isolation may impact levels of commitment.

### Final Thoughts

- Contingent faculty’s experiences are not uniform, even if their salary and obligations are. How they feel about their jobs and the institution has as much or more to do with the reason *why* they have the position they do, how it relates to their career stage and their other life activities and how they are integrated or marginalized with respect to the department and college community.
- Look beyond pay and benefits as outcomes to focus on. I would particularly encourage efforts to improve inclusion in decision-making, communication, knowledge-sharing, and social gatherings, especially since we may have more room to impact these things.



## Notes



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