TYCA Working Paper #9: Contingent Labor and Workload in Two-Year College English

Two-Year College English Association
Workload Issues Committee
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Abstract
In Fall 2019, the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) Workload Task Force distributed a survey and received 1,062 responses to questions about workload in the areas of teaching, service, and professional development. The responses offered insights into the experiences and working conditions of contingent faculty in two-year college English programs. This working paper synthesizes the findings from several survey questions to draw conclusions about the experiences and workload challenges of non-tenure track English instructors at two-year colleges.

Contingent Labor and Teaching College English

Two-year college faculty have varied types of contracts, positions, and statuses within their institutions, which shape their workloads, teaching, contractual responsibilities, compensation, and engagement in the profession. Differences in employment status for contingent faculty compared to tenure-line faculty have a significant impact on the experiences of a large percentage of two-year college English teachers, their labor conditions, and their ability (or inability) to flourish in their working environment. Contingent faculty typically include a) part-time instructors, and b) full-time employees who work without permanent or renewable multi-year contracts or expectations for continued employment (in other words, they work off the tenure track). Some institutions use the term *adjunct* to classify the employment status of part-time instructors in contrast to full-time faculty, but the term describes any instructor with a limited-term contract who is ineligible to progress toward tenure.

For over forty years, English studies as a profession has noted the disproportionate increase in the number of contingent faculty and the working conditions they encounter. This increase in the adjunct ranks affects our profession in two major ways. First, contingent labor is a social justice issue. In 1986, the "Wyoming Resolution" called for improved working conditions of writing teachers. As Trimbur and Cambridge recount, subsequent organizational efforts to address what they describe as "persistent job insecurities and marginalized status of writing teachers" (15). The Modern Language Association (MLA), in its 1994 statement, writes, "Often [adjunct faculty] are hired quickly, as last-minute replacements. They receive little recognition or respect for their contributions to their departments; almost always they are paid inequitably and receive no fringe benefits." The Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in its 2016 "Statement on Working Conditions for Non-Tenure-Track Writing Faculty" calls for fair hiring, equitable compensation, and recognition. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) touches upon many of the same themes in its 2010 "Statement on the Status and Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty." Most of our major national organizations (those mentioned above as well as others) have issued statements on the fair treatment of and equitable working conditions for contingent faculty.

In those statements, a second theme emerges: the heavy reliance on contingent labor deprofessionalizes English studies, especially writing studies. In an attempt to counter deprofessionalization exacerbated by inequitable working conditions, the statements call for improvements in the working conditions for contingent faculty. These conditions include equal compensation, access to benefits, access to professional development opportunities, and an elevation of status; contingent faculty "should be viewed and treated as a valued and integral part of the academic faculty" (NCTE).

Subsequently, numerous initiatives and faculty-promoting groups have taken up the cause of contingent faculty. "The New Faculty Majority" was founded in 2009 with its mission of "improving the quality of higher education by advancing professional equity and securing academic freedom for all adjunct and contingent faculty." The "Indianapolis Resolution," adopted by the CCCC in 2016, after much heated debate, calls upon the professional organizations to create an inter-organizational board to focus on labor issues, though no such board has ever been formed. The key concern of these initiatives and organizations is quality education. As the New Faculty Majority says, "Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions," a statement echoed by many of the adjunct faculty who responded to our survey. However, despite repeated calls to improve the working conditions and employment stability of contingent faculty, the situation remains unchanged at most institutions.

Research Methods

In Fall of 2019, the Two-Year College English Association distributed a 39-question survey about workload to two-year college English faculty through professional listservs, regional distribution lists, and social media platforms. We received 1,062 responses to questions about workload in the areas of teaching, service, and professional development (see Suh et al.). The survey included six demographic questions, 28 closed-ended items which asked respondents to select from a list of possible responses, and five open-ended items. The TYCA Workload Task Force (now a formal committee) applied iterative thematic analyses of open-ended responses to survey questions using Dedoose (a web-based platform for analyzing qualitative and mixed methods research) to code each response.

We identified and analyzed all responses that referred to adjunct instructors, contingent labor, and limited-term teaching contracts in an open-ended question, "What aspects of the workload realities of two-year college English teachers are not sufficiently visible to others?" We also examined open-ended responses that mentioned contingent labor from additional questions about teaching, service, and professional development. Responses included contingent faculty describing their own workload and working conditions, along with statements that tenure-line faculty made about contingent labor in their programs. This working paper provides an overview of a qualitative analysis of the themes that emerged from participant comments about contingent labor rather than providing a statistical analysis or summary of quantitative findings.

Key Findings

We address findings in several areas as they intersect specifically with employment conditions for contingent faculty: types and levels of employment, working conditions, status, compensation, employment instability, and non-teaching responsibilities like service and professional development. We also discuss comments about how contingent labor affects workload for tenure-line faculty.

Employment Types and Levels

A majority of respondents (56%) to the survey work off the tenure track, suggesting that the survey respondent pool reflects that the majority of instructors at the college-level are non-tenure track. However, the proportion responding to the survey is lower than the established national level. The Coalition of the Academic Workforce reports that "more than 1.3 million (75.5%) were employed in contingent positions off the tenure track" (Coalition). Respondents to the TYCA survey reported that they have the following types of employment contracts:

- 44% hold tenure track or tenured positions
- 20% have a stable position with a renewable annual contract
- 14% have a permanent or multi-year contract
- 19% have a short-term limited contract (unstable or nonrenewable position)
- 3% reported another type of contract

Examples of employment through other types of contracts included administrative positions (sometimes combined with adjunct teaching), hybrid positions with contracts split between adjunct teaching and a different functional area of a campus, employment with a school district, and positions that don't have contracts.

Full-time but non-tenure line faculty include a) full-time contingent faculty at institutions that also offer tenure lines and b) full-time faculty at institutions that do not offer *any* instructors tenure. Instead of tenure, these institutions staff their programs with full-time positions that are similar to tenure-line positions in terms of work responsibilities and the role of faculty in an institution without offering the employment protections of tenure.

More than half of survey respondents (54%) indicated that their colleges offer full-time, benefited non-tenure-line positions. However, 30% of respondents reported that their colleges do not offer full-time employment for instructors off the tenure track, and the remaining respondents were unsure. Though 56% of respondents indicated that they work off the tenure-track, a majority of respondents (79%) reported having full-time employment, which may indicate a full-time position at a single institution or a combination of part-time positions. An additional 12% reported that they work part-time without benefits, and another 3% reported having part-time positions with benefits. These results are an indicator that most survey respondents were engaged in the profession through full-time employment when they completed the survey (which was several months before the COVID-19 pandemic affected higher education). However, the survey likely does not reflect the reality that many two-year college writing instructors work off the tenure track in part-time positions without benefits (see the United State GAO's 2017 "Contingent Workforce" report, which indicates that "relatively few" part-time faculty receive benefits [39]).

Respondents also reported on contractual teaching loads for full-time, non-tenure-line instructors:

- 36 or more annual credit hours (14%)
- 28 to 35 annual credit hours (32%)
- 19 to 27 annual credit hours (6%)
- 13 to 18 annual credit hours (12%)
- 12 or fewer credit hours (6% reported)
- Unsure (30%)

These results indicate how institutions define full-time labor, but they do not show how many instructors at respondents' institutions were actually able to secure a full-time teaching position. Moreover, they do not indicate any contractual obligations that may impact faculty teaching at multiple institutions.

Working Conditions

Working conditions for contingent instructors include their *local work environment, their employment responsibilities,* and *access to material resources*. One key survey finding is that work environments are varied, but the vast majority of two-year college English instructors who work off the tenure track without a guarantee of continued employment face challenging working conditions. In open-ended survey questions coded under “working conditions,” a few respondents described a supportive working environment, including open and understanding communication between faculty and administration, acceptable load calculations for courses with intense writing requirements, and access to benefits and other financial support (for example, “insurance program for students and adjuncts, and… some travel and conference reimbursements").

However, most responses that mentioned contingent labor conditions described a difficult working environment, including local conditions that affect work life balance and the quality of their professional lives. Examples include job insecurity, differential treatment from chairs and deans, limited autonomy, lack of respect for their expertise from administrators or full-time faculty, employment at multiple institutions, a lack of resources required for doing their jobs, and a lack of opportunity or time to pursue professional development and research in the field. Respondents also expressed concern about their mental health, their students' mental health, and the emotional labor required for supporting students with life challenges. Contingent English instructors primarily teach gateway writing and developmental education courses, which have a high assessment and student support workload. For instance, one participant wrote: “Adjuncts are untrained social workers trying to get support for students the best we can.” Some respondents indicated that they were looking for employment outside of higher education because of unsustainable working conditions.

One respondent explained how teaching responsibilities for adjunct instructors can create a different and more labor-intensive teaching workload compared to tenure-line faculty:

> “The total labor of adjunct faculty, especially in two-year institutions, often exceeds that of tenure-track faculty, particularly in regard to teaching in spaces where the most important learning happens. The disciplinary education system is built upon tenured laborers, but both the liberal education and social justice in education systems are built upon workers without tenure. Disproportionately, adjuncts teach gateway and other introductory courses, as well as developmental courses. . . . It is in those classes that fundamental critical thinking and study skills are attained or not; where disadvantaged populations are most likely to either receive support and succeed or fall through the cracks; where learners are set upon educational, professional, civic, and social pathways that determine a whole host of important outcomes in their lifelong placement in communities.”

This comment highlights how contingent faculty make significant contributions to the open-access and social justice missions of two-year colleges through their labor-intensive work with students in writing, developmental English, and ESL programs. Their contributions to an institution frequently don’t match the compensation and access to resources that their institutions provide in relation to the value of their work.

Second, limited access to material and financial resources is another factor that creates challenging working conditions for contingent English faculty at two-year colleges. Respondents identified a lack of resources for teaching, including access to private office space or any office at all, computers, printers, copiers, and funding for professional development or research. Other respondents described how working conditions affected their access to material resources in their personal lives—for example, low compensation affects the quality of their lives; they don’t have access to healthcare; or they have long, expensive commutes between campuses. One participant stated that “The stress of this work life impacts my health, yet I have no health care.” A few respondents explained that they had to provide basic resources required for teaching that weren’t provided by their institutions, including purchasing computers and other technology, paying for copies, and using their own vehicles as offices.

Our survey data show that 12% of respondents work in a context in which they are unionized and required to join (closed shop); another 39% of respondents work in a unionized environment where individuals opt to join (open shop); an additional 42% do not work in a union context (for example, they are in a right-to-work state) or indicated another type of structure (like faculty association). Of those who reported working at a campus that is unionized, 21% indicated that only full-time faculty are represented while 59% stated the same union represents full-time, contingent, and part-time faculty. Likewise, 19% indicated that instructors belong to different unions based on their employment status.

A few respondents directly addressed unions in their open-ended comments about workload realities. For example, one respondent connected the lack of a union to workload: “In a right-to-work state, we have no real job security, no ability to unionize, and almost zero impact on nonadministrative decisions that affect everyone.” Another compared the experience at a nonunion campus with one that has a union: “Interestingly enough, I feel like I have more choice at the college that is not unionized. At the college that is not unionized, I am given a list of classes available and I choose which classes I want to teach and how many (up to three classes per semester)." The benefits of a union to contingent faculty depend heavily on whether the union influences institutional practices and advocates for instructors who work off the tenure track in limited-term appointments.

Professional Status

Survey respondents pointed to the lack of status conferred to adjunct faculty as unethical, untenable, or as one respondent noted, “a national disgrace.” Adjunct and tenured faculty alike noted that the morale of all faculty at their institutions is negatively affected by the lack of status afforded to many part-time and annual contract faculty who teach English at two-year colleges. Here are some representative examples of how respondents described the professional status of contingent instructors:

- “Adjunct faculty are the working poor.”
- “We are basically untouchables; our work is never acknowledged or celebrated, we have no benefits or job security, and we make a fraction of the money that tenured colleagues make (we make around $30K or less; they start at $80K, but rarely have superior qualifications or experience).”
- “Contingent faculty face crippling insecurity regarding job security and income security. This affects our sense of worth and our relationship with our institutions of higher learning.”
- “Few people outside of this profession really understand just how poorly adjuncts are treated.”
- “The stigma of a full-time v. part-time faculty has got to end. Either [hire] everyone part-time and become an Uber economy (not my recommendation) or [hire] more full-time and implement a pathway to full-time to ensure quality.”
- “This is a DEAD END JOB. The hours are long, the pay is low, and only a few are selected to be considered for better levels. We are GRUNTS. I would never recommend anyone ever get an English degree or consider college teaching. There are too many of us and not enough demand (especially after California's AB705). Worst of all, we are treated like fourth-class citizens. There is an immutable hierarchy here and full-scale snobbery.”

Some respondents identified a gap between how institutions treat them and the expectations that those institutions have about the quality of labor that instructors should provide. For example, one respondent described this treatment as “What it's like to be asked to act like a professional while not being treated like one.” Another participant wrote:

> “The daily horror of realizing that the institution you work for not only doesn't appear to value the work you do, but also doesn't value learning as much as ‘success.’ Part-time

> faculty are invisible, and the institution likes it that way. This is demoralizing and a stark contrast to the care we are expected to offer students -- often without compensation."

Open-ended survey comments suggest that problems with working conditions for contingent faculty extend beyond compensation and employment stability (i.e., the labor issues typically addressed in disciplinary statements) to how they are treated, valued, and included (or more typically excluded) within the culture and structures of their institutions. One respondent observed the dissonance between the public association of the title of "professor," with the implication of cultural capital, with the reality of adjunct employment status: "Typically the first question someone asks you (in, say, the workroom or coffee room) when you are newly meeting is, 'are you adjunct or full-time?' We are being measured and marked for status before we have the opportunity to engage in any meaningful interactions with our colleagues." These findings support the contention that contingent faculty in two-year college English programs face inequities and discrimination based on their employment status in contrast to faculty with more stable employment who enjoy more privileges based on their employment status.

Inequitable Compensation

Low compensation in relation to a high workload is another factor shaping the working conditions of two-year college English faculty. The survey did not directly ask respondents about the compensation they receive per course, semester, or annually. However, comments in response to some open-ended questions suggest that low-compensation as well as the unequal compensation between tenure-line and contingent faculty is a significant concern for the profession. The sentiment is well expressed by the respondent who wrote:

> "I know of no other educational situation where teachers are paid so little, receive no sick days, and are not compensated for the 20 hours preparation time prior to the start of a semester [or for] for the many hours I spend grading essays or conferencing with students. It is rather shameful for the community college system to have such an inequitable hierarchy of salaries. The salary gap between adjunct and full time instructors cannot be justified, particularly when adjunct instructors teach approximately 3/4 of the English classes on most community college campuses. The only reason I have been able to teach at the community college is because my husband made a good salary in the corporate world. I accepted the low wages & lack of benefits because of my love of teaching and my love of my students."

Another respondent recalls: "It's hard to think about how I made more money, had more benefits, and had more free time…while I was working as an office manager at a dental office. Actually, it's humiliating. I love the work that I do as a teacher, but I understand why so many, especially those with a minority status (which does not apply to me), do not enter (or leave prematurely) this field due to the high barriers for stable employment." However, survey responses about low compensation were not limited to contingent faculty, and many respondents commented on low pay for tenure-line faculty in relation to workload, especially service responsibilities, grading, and student-intensive teaching responsibilities that require more time compared to two-year college faculty in other disciplines or English studies faculty at four-year institutions.

Responses to open-ended survey questions suggest that contingent two-year college English faculty face varying standards for what constitutes full-time employment and compensated labor at their institutions, along with varying levels of inequities in their compensation. For example, some two-year college English faculty work at institutions with no tenure lines but have contractual responsibilities, compensation, and employment stability that are similar to tenure lines but that lack the promise of tenure. Other respondents reported having minimally adequate compensation while also suggesting that their pay was inadequate in relation to workload. For example, one respondent stated: "While our contract provides a higher wage and better health insurance benefits than many in the state, it does not compensate

PT/adjunct teachers appropriately for their labor." At the opposite end of employment compensation and stability, some instructors reported that they are paid at an hourly rate and only compensated for teaching. One respondent wrote: "The fact that we are paid for in class hours only! We are not paid for prep nor for grading. As adjunct we still have to do this, but we are not compensated for it!" Another stated that "We are never really fully compensated for grading or prep." Other participants identified a gap between their pay and the time required for teaching. For example, one respondent reported, "I get paid for five hours of work per week, but I actually work at least three times that much."

Employment Instability

Many survey respondents commented on employment instability. This includes measurable types of instability—for example, having a temporary or limited term contract, working in a program funded entirely through varying tuition revenue instead of an institution's base budget, teaching courses that depend entirely on sufficient enrollment, not receiving a contract until a few weeks before a semester begins, and not having advanced course assignments that appear in an institution's schedule. This type of instability is a defining characteristic of contingent labor, which by definition means that an instructor's position is contingent upon available work. At two-year colleges, available teaching assignments are tied to variable factors, including student enrollment, tuition revenue, and state funding changes.

Contingent faculty also experience a less measurable form of employment instability, which comes from the constant threat of potentially losing courses to tenure-line or full-time contractual faculty and with it income and sufficient employment. One survey respondent offered this view: "The inconsistency of getting courses to teach and having courses taken away from you at the last minute and then you have no income coming in for months because you are unable to find other employment." This suggests that contingent faculty experience stress and dissatisfaction with their working conditions even when they maintain employment since their expectations for continued employment are not consistent and stable.

Open-ended survey comments suggest that employment instability and the inability to teach full-time at a single institution lead many contingent faculty to create their own piecemeal workload by teaching English (typically writing) at multiple institutions. Some respondents reported that "part-time" work requires teaching six to eight sections per term at multiple campuses in order to earn a sufficient living wage. As one respondent remarked, this type of employment necessitates "driving all over the place, juggling multiple preps and curriculums." Another reported driving five hours daily total between three colleges to teach five classes. Or as one respondent succinctly stated: "I live in a car. Adjunct life is awful."

Representative comments illustrating the challenges of teaching for more than one institution include:

- "The workload of the part time professor is often double that of a full time professor because the part time professor teaches at multiple colleges/universities. The reality that is the most invisible is the pay disparity. Eg, I have taught 6 classes for ~36k, while a coworker at each school (either a 30 cr. load/year or 18 cr. load plus service/year) would make 50-60k."
- "All the other adjuncts I know, including myself, wish we could stay on one campus to teach a full load."
- "Traveling between campuses, traffic, and making sure you have all the materials needed from one location to another. Days that have multiple locations are not uncommon."
- "The workload reality of PART-TIME college English teachers often requires teaching a part-time load at 2-4 institutions during any given semester in order to make a decent living, at least it does in California. Yes, I am a "part-time" college instructor teaching 6 classes, at 3 different colleges, in 3 different towns, in 2 different counties. Only 1 of the

colleges offers AFFORDABLE partial benefits to part-timers (dental and vision). I am currently in the process of creating an online "school" of nutrition classes to supplement my income further."

- "It should be obvious to others that when a part time instructor is teaching 6-8 classes at 3-4 schools in order to make a decent living, there is something wrong. However, this is visible to the full time instructors, the administration, and the state. The faculty at California colleges is supposed to be comprised of 75% full time and 25% part time instructors, yet those figures have literally switched. By allowing part time instructors to teach only a couple of classes in one district, the state has effectively mandated that we must teach at multiple schools. The part time instructors suffer, and our students suffer. Yet, all of this is sufficiently visible to others. I can only surmise that they simply do not care."

What emerges across these responses is a picture of (a) the hardships associated with teaching a course load at multiple campuses which may exceed the load that a full-time faculty member would teach at a single institution, (b) the inability of many college writing teachers to become fully engaged members of a department or program (if they are even invited to do so), and (c) the uncertainty and stress of an adjunct appointment in which instructors are treated as "buffers" against the enrollment fluctuation that is typical of open-access two-year colleges that enroll students up through the first week class and where enrollment, retention, and persistence vary at a greater level than the typical university.

Adjunct Faculty, Service, and Professional Development

Though many if not most contingent faculty (whether part-time or full-time) are not required to participate in service or professional development work, the survey responses suggest that the institutional expectations for this work varied depending on, especially, whether contingent faculty were compensated for such work. For example, one respondent indicated that they "voluntarily take on service and professional development opportunities, which are widely available to adjunct faculty at my institution and for which I am compensated"; however, this was an exceptional experience.

Others revealed the intersections between service and the survey code "status" in comments like "In the past I did try to serve on some committees, but as a part-timer my opinion was not valued." In other words, depending on their context, adjunct faculty may (a) be invited to serve on committees and (b) be compensated for this work, or (c) have unstated expectations around non-teaching labor. One respondent summarized service expectations for contingent faculty this way: "Service workload is very murky and as non-tenured faculty (all of us) discerning how much to do is tricky and risky."

Some institutions pay contingent faculty for service activities beyond their contractual teaching obligations, but some survey respondents stated that contingent faculty at their institutions, including part-time adjuncts, are expected to do uncompensated service work. In answering a closed-ended question about service, 18% of respondents (including both tenure-line and contingent faculty) indicated that they participate in uncompensated service with 5% doing non-contractual service for additional compensation.

The limited support respondents described by full-time or tenured faculty for professional development seemed even more out of reach for contingent faculty, who largely reported not being supported or expected to engage in professional development. As one respondent noted, "Like many adjuncts, I do far more professional activities than my tenured colleagues (though I intend no disrespect) and receive NO acknowledgement whatsoever." This limited institutional investment in contingent faculty was echoed in statements about lack of institutional support for scholarship and other forms of professional engagement. One respondent stated (echoing the view of many tenure-line faculty), "I do it [participate in professional opportunities] because it's fun. It'd be great if adjuncts were given course reductions for research but HA. I repeat sarcastically and sadly, HA!" Not all respondents who identified as adjuncts described environments which devalued their professionalism. One respondent explained, "I feel that, as a part-time adjunct, I have the opportunity to participate in professional development and receive compensation for it." However, this perspective vastly contradicted the experiences reported by the majority of respondents who noted a lack of support for professional development while discussing the work realities of contingent positions (see Suh, Tinoco, and Toth).

Workload Issues for Full-Time Faculty Connected to Adjunct Labor

Another related issue that emerged from survey responses was not just the working conditions for contingent instructors but the additional workload that an institution's heavy reliance on contingent labor creates for the smaller group of full-time often tenure-line faculty. Some survey responses suggest that training, mentoring, hiring, and supporting contingent faculty (and repeatedly doing that work over time because of the staffing instability that comes with temporary labor) creates a challenging workload for tenure-line faculty. For example, one respondent pointed to "all the extra administrative duties I do such as running a budget, hiring, training, approving part-time employee hours." Another respondent listed first-year writing program management responsibilities that include "placing all incoming freshman, assessment, mentor/train all adjunct/DE instructors, chair the WAC committee and serve on two others--all while teaching a 15/15 [credit] load."

The similarities between the teaching work but the invisibility of service and professional development also were noted:

> "People are unaware of the time we spend doing service and administrative work. Even the part-time faculty at my college refuse to recognize that we are doing far more than just teaching; they see us as adjuncts with more classes, forgetting that we are responsible for designing, revising, assessing, and supervising curricula; serving on department, division, and governance committees; advising students, and doing countless other kinds of work outside of the classroom."

This was echoed by another respondent who made the transition from adjunct faculty to a full time position, observing that they "way underestimated the institutional obligations to committee work and professional development. These commitments have been the most challenging adjustment to my workload as a full-time faculty member."

Instructors with different types of employment positions share similar responsibilities for teaching, but the workloads of full-time tenure-line faculty is heavily impacted by the out-of-classroom work that is required to manage a program or department, which is exacerbated by the reliance upon a high proportion of contingent faculty.

Conclusions and Implications

Responses to the fall 2019 TYCA Workload Task Force survey show that contingent faculty positions (non-tenure track) are widely varied, from part-time "freeway flyer" instructors to faculty with long-term full-time employment and a degree of stability that is close to that of tenured faculty. Many contingent faculty express dissatisfaction with their working conditions, especially with the instability and unpredictability of their level of employment from term to term. Other key stressors include the generally poor and inequitable compensation contingent faculty receive for their work, the sense of invisibility, and lack of being acknowledged and valued as professionals, and the poor material conditions under which contingent faculty work. Moreover, as the ratio of tenure-line to contingent faculty continues to decrease, with fewer tenure-line positions being offered or maintained, the unsatisfactory working conditions of contingent faculty are expanded and the workload on the remaining tenure-line faculty is increased, continuing a trend that has persisted for a half-century (Nardo).

We see important questions emerging from these survey results about the profession of teaching English in the two-year college. First, the results support the claim that the labor issue is systemic. Contingent faculty have inequitable working conditions, and tenure-line faculty are put in a position of hiring and staffing at the whim of enrollment and within contractual obligations that disempower contingent faculty and create employment instability. The results show that the problem of contingency is chronic, and as national reports on academic employment show, worsening (Barnes). This raises issues about what can be changed to shift the trend, especially since the promise of initiatives such as the Indianapolis Resolution have not been realized.

The results gesture toward the emotional and identity questions that surface around contingency and workload. Though we often refer to the "profession" of teaching college English, contingent faculty responding to the survey report workload and working conditions incompatible with professional standards. The work of teaching college English requires a credential comparable with many professional positions, but that credential requirement and the highly skilled work that contingent faculty do are at odds with the material conditions reported by respondents in status, compensation, and workload stability. Certainly the survey data raise questions about the ethics and integrity of the field of college English teaching when so many instructors labor in conditions that are not aligned with the work they are expected to do.

Finally, the results suggest that advocacy strategies for labor equity require more from professional organizations than the past strategies, which have included position statements and resolutions, such as the CCCC and MLA documents that address professional issues. These statements, while no doubt valuable symbolically, seem not to have had a material effect on working conditions. What is suggested by the survey is that two-year college English faculty require more than statements and need more substantial resources, including advocacy toolkits, strategies for effecting change, and resources that can be used to support improved working conditions.

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For More Information

For more information about the TYCA workload project and additional reports, see https://ncte.org/groups/tyca/tyca-position-statements/.