

# Adjunct Advocate

March/April 2007



## Oh, Canada

North of the border, the numbers of sessional faculty explode. **Can CAUT cope?**

# Letters to the editor

## Thank You!

To the Editor:

This is a rather random e-mail, but I felt compelled to send it tonight after discovering AdjunctNation.com after a search of Google using such search terms as “Adjunct Disasters” and the like. I’m four weeks into my adjunct teaching and although I’ve been re-hired to teach Elementary Arabic in the Fall, they are dragging their feet in terms of my Islam course and/or letting me teach in my area of specialisation. I was told, verbally of course, that, “Oh yes, adjuncts get two courses every semester and then usually go to three after the second semester.” Right.

My kids are bright (sometimes) and sometimes I feel as though I am teaching a row of shoe boxes, filled to the brim with hair. A colleague and friend, who is a full professor of history (my former adviser) is coming to teach them and I told him that he may perhaps need to utilise hand puppets. No one has asked me about my Islam class, although they are inspired by the fact that they may be able to save some money by letting me teach my area of expertise: Women and Islam, together and not just on Islam.

This is all despite the fact that there will be a feature on me and my students in the York Sunday paper’s religion section.

I have two Master’s degrees, one summa cum laude, and I’m doing this to save money for my Ph.D. and pay off some debts. Sometimes after class I sit and think, “Am I naive or stupid or both?”

So anyway, I just wanted to thank you for publishing the *Adjunct Advocate*! I’m really looking forward to reading and getting some much needed assurance that I am not totally crackers. Thank you so much again,

*Alix Jerome*

*Instructor of Islamic Studies/Gender*

*York College of Pennsylvania*

## Equal Rights Legislation for Adjunct Professors

To the Editor:

Responding to Keith Hoeller’s timely piece, I want to let readers know that I wrote a strong letter—as national president of the American Association of University Professors—supporting all the Washington State legislation on behalf of part-time faculty when it was first introduced. The letters went out to the legislators on the relevant committees. These provisions need to be part of state law. All unions should support them.

Community college part-time faculty should also have guaranteed priority for full-time jobs. When that is not possible, conversion should match (and not exceed) the rate of part-time faculty attrition.

The AAUP has recently issued a historic set of recommended regulations calling for the fair expectation of continued employment for part-time faculty, for termination for cause only, for timely notification of reappointment, and for full teaching evaluations.

*Cary Nelson*

*AAUP President*

## Failing Student Athletes

To the Editor:

While some top-seeded colleges in the NCAA men’s basketball tournament received well-deserved criticism last week for their low graduation rates for African-American athletes, the critics neglected an even more alarming issue in our nation’s colleges and universities: college success rates for ALL African-American students.

The University of Memphis, The Uni-



*“It’s payday!”*

versity of Nevada – Las Vegas, The University of Kansas, and the University of Oregon may all have made it to the Sweet Sixteen, but the futures of their African-American students look far less than sweet. While these schools are near the front of the pack in basketball, they're near the bottom of the barrel in terms of African-American graduation rates.

Using its online data tool, [www.collegeresults.org](http://www.collegeresults.org), the Education Trust conducted an analysis of 6-year graduation rates for all African-American students at each of the Sweet Sixteen schools and found four major offenders with rates well below the already too-low national average of 41.2 percent for African-American students.

The University of Memphis – 25.7%  
The University of Nevada – Las Vegas – 28.6%  
University of Kansas – 34.2%  
University of Oregon – 34.8%

The latter two schools, Kansas and Oregon, are also offenders when it comes to graduation rate gaps; African-American students at these schools only graduate at about half the rate of white students. Moreover, some of these schools don't do well by their white students, either. Both the University of Nevada – Las Vegas and the University of Memphis only graduate approximately four in 10 of their white students within six years.

By the way, the four-year graduation rates for African-American students at these schools are even more abysmal.

Why does this matter? Schools that win major athletic championships expect to see and have seen increases in student application, fundraising and donation dollars, and revenue from merchandise sales. The “Cinderella story” of last year's tournament and unexpected Final Four team, George Mason University, experienced a 20 percent increase in student applications over one year.

African-American students attracted to these “failing four” schools may get to wear the colors of winners, but they will more than likely lose in their efforts to win a college degree, and all that comes with it.

After the celebrations are over, prospective students and parents would be wise to check out College Results Online, to see their odds for academic success at their schools of choice. College Results is the only web-based tool that allows users to compare graduation rates by student group at similar schools.

Administrators at the “failing four” can also use the data tool to see which schools in their bracket are successfully graduating more African-American students. For example, administrators at the University of Kansas would find that their fellow Sweet Sixteen team the University of Tennessee is getting the job done on *and* off the court with far higher graduation rates for African-American students, and a nearly nonexistent graduation rate gap. Then they might take a road trip to Tennessee find out what works.

*Claire Campbell*  
*Communications Coordinator*  
*The Education Trust*

## Send Us Your Letters

The *Adjunct Advocate* publishes letters from readers in each issue of the magazine. Letters should be no longer than 200 words, and long letters may be edited. Shorter letters are more likely to be published due to space considerations.

Mail letters to: Editor, *Adjunct Advocate*, P.O. Box 130117, Ann Arbor, MI 48113-0117.

Letters may be e-mailed to: [letters@adjunctadvocate.com](mailto:letters@adjunctadvocate.com).

All letters should include the writer's name, address and phone number. Unsigned letters will be printed at the discretion of the publisher. Please indicate whether or not we may publish your name along with the contents of your letter.

## Up or OUT

To the Editor:

I read with much interest David Murray's essay in the Jan/Feb 2007 issue. It is always difficult to manage one's career, but particularly so for part-time faculty. On the one hand, it's possible to teach for, literally, years at the same institution. On the other, we can be fired for no cause at a moment's notice. Under such abysmal circumstances, actually guiding one's teaching career can become the impossible dream. But is the answer up or out? Certainly, sitting around and simply waiting to either be fired or to be taken advantage of is just silly. Mr. Murray believes it is somewhat more than silly, however. He believes teaching part-time for an extended period will actually damage one's career.

I have been teaching for three years now. I have applied for openings throughout the country, as well as at the institution where I am currently employed. No bites yet. Should I give it another year and then GET OUT? If I do, I will be leaving a job I love. If I don't I may never have the opportunity to find a full-time position simply because my institution was happy to employ me part-time over an extended period. Thanks for this thoughtful and thought-provoking piece!

*Joseph R. Moran*  
*Salt Lake City, UT*



# From the Editor

I have been reading a book about the history of conversation on and off for the past few weeks. I may as well tell you that I always have a stack of books on my night stand. The height of that stack can some-

times be terrifying. I pick and choose from among the books each night. I think college ruined me reading non-fiction books cover-to-cover. I don't have to now, and so I usually don't. I get them all read, but go back and forth between them. Anyway, I have found the history of conversation to be one of the most compelling books I have read in a long time. In essence, the author argues that the art of conversation is a complex and exacting one. One of the most compelling ideas from the book is that one enters into a conversation with no preconceived conclusions. It is getting to the conclusion that provides the entertainment. Conversation is all about the importance of *listening*.

To talk with someone, to try to persuade that person of the correctness of your opinions, is debate not conversation. I have for a long time now thought that our country is chock-a-block full of people ready to debate. People will debate anything, but when it comes to conversing, I think we Americans have lost our way, sadly. We are a nation of chatterers, not a nation of listeners. Furthermore, because conversation has been replaced by debate, this has resulted in the polarization of our society. Either you're with me, or you're against me. There is no in between where we converse about the ideas behind our differences.

We took our kids to a rally against the War in Iraq a few weeks ago. I live in a college town, a bubble of liberalism in a solidly Midwestern state. As a result, I met friends and acquaintances at the rally, the usual suspects who show up at such events. Part of the rally was a march to the local Federal Building, where the names of all of the soldiers killed in the war were being displayed. We walked and chatted with friends about everything except politics. We caught up on gossip and enjoyed a beautiful sunny day. While walking down Main Street, a young man on the sidewalk looked on in disgust. Then, he started screaming: "Go Bush. Go Bush. Fuck you. Fuck all of you. Go home." My eldest son looked on in shock. Wasn't everyone against war?

I explained that the man had just as much right to express his opinions as we who were marching did. That was democracy. I had a fleeting thought as I watched that man yell. That thought was to walk over and invite him to join our march, but to express his own opinion. I thought about offering to walk next to him while he did so. Perhaps if I had not been with my kids I would have done so. Perhaps not. However, I remember feeling sad that screaming profanities was what the debate had boiled down to.

Recently, in Idaho, an adjunct faculty member who made what were described as "inflammatory" remarks about Republicans in her English class has been the target of right-wing bloggers

and has received death threats. As ridiculous as it sounds, she is being persecuted for having voiced an opinion. The faculty member allegedly said, according to a short piece published in *The Chronicle*, she favored the "death penalty for Republicans, and that people who voted for Bush could not read." Can anyone tell me how this is more threatening than declaring, in the age of kings, that "all men were created equal...." I used to tell my composition students to just imagine George III laughing, guffawing, slapping his knee and, maybe, telling the guy reading the Declaration of Independence to him to stop joking and just read what was written.... All men were created equal, indeed. People who voted for Bush could not read, indeed.

Frankly, I am sure some of the people who voted for George Bush, as well as some who voted for John Kerry were not the brightest stars in the heavens. Intelligence is not a prerequisite for voting (driving *or* having children) in our country. Citizens who register may vote. Semantics and motor-voter laws aside, my point is this: the faculty member referred to above has said she was trying to stimulate discussion, spark conversation in her class. She was not doing this; she was trying to get her students to debate, not to converse or discuss with each other. If this slide into political polarization and reliance on debate in the place of conversation is ever to be reversed, it will have to begin within higher education. It is clear, however, that with faculty members like this one roaming the classrooms, we all may have to wait quite a while for conversation to make a comeback.

In this issue of the magazine, I hope you will find among the pieces something to spark a hearty conversation with a colleague. **Matthew Henry Hall's** wonderful cartoon, which lampoons the "reasons" administrators use to terminate adjunct faculty, is a great jumping off point for conversations. Matt is hard at work on another batch of cartoons for the next issue of the magazine, including "Super Adjunct" panels.

I found **Jason Heath** while blog hopping. I regularly do Google searches for blogs written by part-time faculty, as well as blogs which mention part-time faculty. Jason, a musician, was writing about his new job as a part-time faculty member. The math he does will be familiar to many. His frankness about what that math augurs for part-time faculty, is welcome and refreshing.

**Laura Yeager's** piece has an interesting genesis. She emailed me one day asking if I would be interested in reading an essay she wanted to write about getting let go from her part-time teaching job. Very soon thereafter, the essay you will read in this issue of the magazine popped into my email inbox.

Finally, you will find a piece in this issue by **Shari Dinkins**. Shari has been writing for *Adjunct Advocate* for several years, since she was a part-timer teaching at a college in the San Francisco Bay Area. She has a full-time teaching job now. It was wonderful to watch her succeed in that arduous process. It's better still to print her work.

Please enjoy this issue of *Adjunct Advocate*. The work of many bright and talented people went into the production of the magazine. I hope you'll share it with your colleagues.—**P.D. Lesko**

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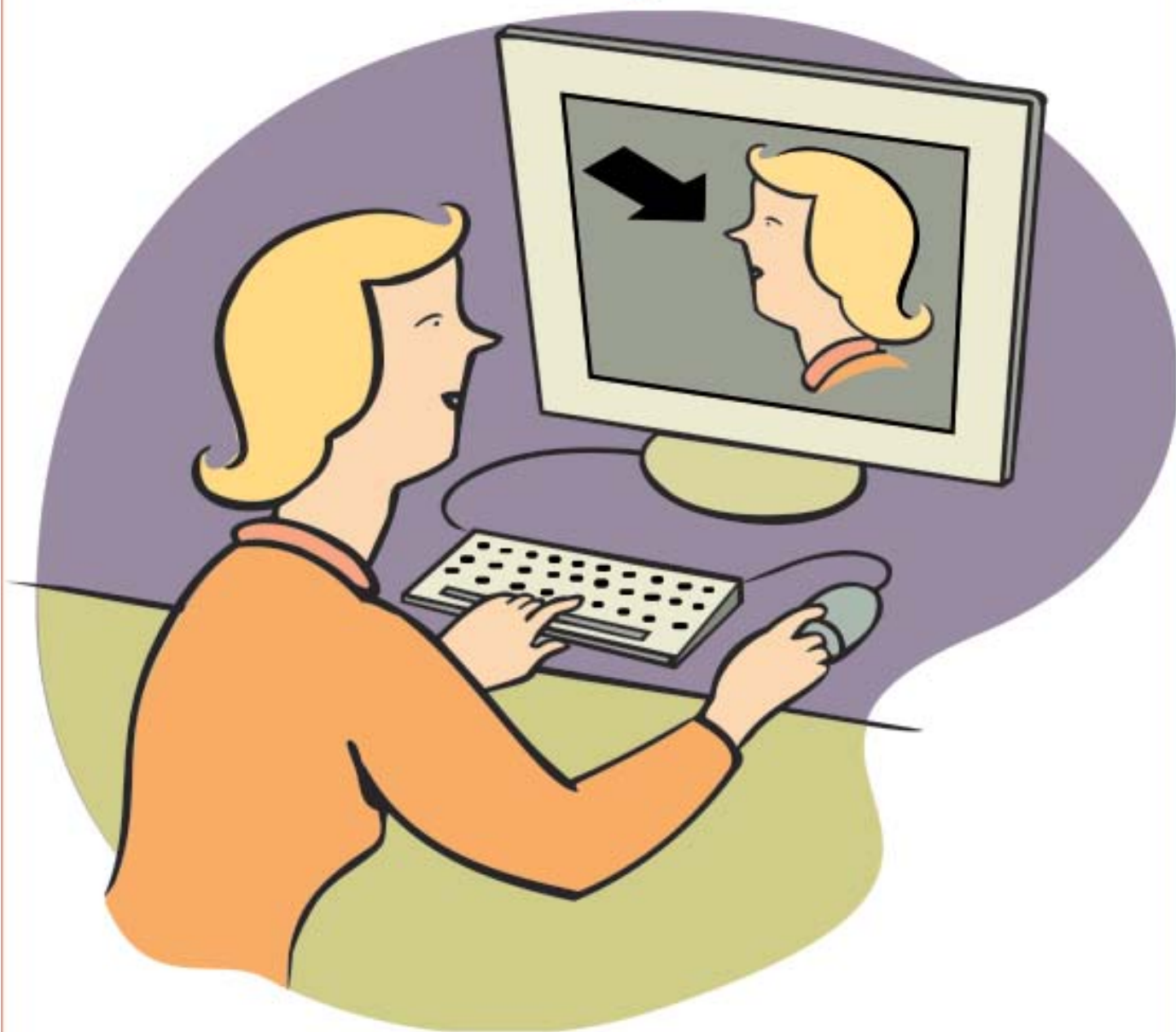
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*Going the Distance: A Handbook for Part-Time & Adjunct Faculty Who Teach Online* by Evelyn Beck and Dr. Donald Greive. The Part-Time Press, 2005. Price: \$13.00. 96 pages. Paperback. ISBN: 0-940017-92-4

This is an unique resource to help adjuncts tackle the day-to-day challenges associated with teaching online courses. From technological preparation to course design to planning and virtual classroom techniques, this

book offers model materials, practical suggestions and successful strategies. *Going the Distance: A Handbook for Part-Time & Adjunct Faculty Who Teach Online* provides adjuncts who teach in distance education programs with the contents of a first-rate teaching workshop for a fraction of the price. A wonderful companion text to *A Handbook for Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty and Teachers of Adults*.



*A Handbook for Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty and Teachers of Adults*, Fifth Edition, by Donald Greive, Ed.D. The Part-Time Press, 2003, Fifth edition. Price \$16.00. 128 pages. Paperback. ISBN: 0-940017-28-8

This is more than just a teacher's manual! This little powerhouse helps adjuncts tackle the day-to-day problems associated with teaching part-time. From course planning to teaching adult students, this book offers practical suggestions,

strategies and advice. With over 170,000 copies sold, *A Handbook* provides adjuncts with the contents of a first-rate teaching workshop for a fraction of the price. Order for orientations today.



*Handbook II: Advanced Teaching Strategies for Adjunct and Part-Time Faculty*, by Donald E. Greive, Editor. The Part-Time Press, 2002, Second edition. Price \$17.00. 153 pages. Paperback. ISBN: 0-940017-26-1

Higher education expert Donald Greive takes experienced and long-term adjunct faculty beyond his best selling *Handbook for Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty and Teachers of Adults* to *Handbook II: Advanced Teaching Strategies for*

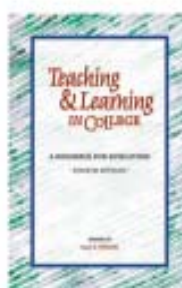
*Adjunct and Part-Time Faculty*. In this book, adjuncts and their managers offer their own insights into a variety of topics, like... The Syllabus and the Lesson Plan, 101 different strategies and tips to use the first week of class, Preparing for a Distance Education Assignment, What is Critical Thinking? Large class teaching tips, Testing and Grading. A wonderful companion text to *A Handbook for Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty and Teachers of Adults*.



*Teaching Strategies & Techniques for Adjunct Faculty*, Fourth Edition, by Dr. Donald Greive. The Part-Time Press, 2002. Price: \$9.95. 43 pages. Paperback. ISBN: 0-940017-30-X

In its 4th Edition! This is an intentionally brief and to the point book for busy part-time faculty. It is a quick and straightforward teaching reference full of tips, strategies and proven techniques that address teaching in the con-

temporary classroom. If you are new to adjunct teaching, returning to the profession or have been teaching for several years, *Teaching Strategies* will help make your teaching experience more productive and enjoyable. Economically priced for workshops and orientations.



*Teaching and Learning in College--A Resource for Educators*, Fourth Edition, edited by Gary Wheeler, Ed.D. Part-Time Press, 2002. Price: \$39.95. 231 pages. Paperback. ISBN: 0-940017-31-8

Higher education scholar Dr. Gary Wheeler of Miami University asked six leading educators to present what amounts to a master class in teaching aimed at graduate students and rela-

tively new higher education faculty. Each contributor offers valuable insight into the state of teaching and learning. These are authors who can speak authoritatively on the subject of education, but who have taken the time to personalize the information. This book will help any educator come to terms with the day-to-day issues involved in becoming an effective teacher in today's diverse higher education environment. Great for TA training!



*Managing Adjunct & Part-Time Faculty for the New Millenium*, by Donald E. Greive & Catherine Worden, Editors. The Part-Time Press, 2000. Softcover \$24.95, Hardcover \$34.95. 286 pages. ISBN: Softcover 0-940017024-5/ Hardcover 0-940017-25-5

Faculty managers will experience increased challenges due to the continuing growth in numbers of adjunct and part-time faculty. In addition, the increase in activity of non-traditional educational delivery systems and enti-

ties will play a greater role in higher education. These factors will not only impact the training and utilization of adjunct faculty and their managers, they will also lead to such related issues as legal issues, ethical concerns and intellectual property rights. This book address these and related issues. The text, written by practitioners, offers the very best in proven management ideas and shares examples of successful and exemplary programs.



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## 2 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## 4 LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The art of conversation has been replaced with a penchant for debate in our society. If conversation is ever to make a comeback, it will have to begin on college campuses. Unfortunately, we may have to wait while faculty members get a handle on what it means to listen.



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The Part-Timers' union at College of the Canyons has reached a contract agreement. Finally. At Concordia University, sessional faculty are protesting a \$35K stipend paid to a part-timer. Part-time faculty at Wayne State University are closer to unionizing. At Palomar College, an administrator is being investigated for changing the grades given by a part-time faculty member.

### 14 IN THE CLASSROOM

Call me Ismael. What your students call you can have a huge impact on the overall quality of the learning environment.

### 16 GOING THE DISTANCE

What do online learners value most in their distance education courses? Here are some actual student comments compiled from evals. Read 'em and pay close attention.

### 18 SHOPTALK

Roger Couvrette is shaking things up in Ontario. Specifically, he is demanding the repeal of a law which forbids part-time and sessional faculty in the province from organizing.

### 20 ANALYSIS

Jason Heath plays the double bass. He recently began teaching music part-time, as well. He does some math and plays the blues.

## The Neighbors

### "Oh, Canada"

22 North of the border, over the past two decades there has been a dramatic increase in the use of sessionals. On the up side, in Canada, roughly 85 percent of the country's non-tenure track faculty are unionized. On the down side, life as a sessional is *still* a hard row to hoe.

## The Job Market

### "The Ph.D. Glut Revisted"

26 The glut in Ph.D.s persists despite the fact that college and university administrators are well aware of the problem. Perhaps it's time for *faculty* to sit down with their undergraduate students and tell them the honest truth about the job market in higher education.

## The Afterlife

### "Top Ten Non-Academic Jobs for Ph.D.s"

30 If you have a Ph.D. or Master's degree but have *not* landed a full-time teaching job despite your best efforts, consider life after Academe. For some, it's downright heavenly.

### 34 PAGES

*The Academic's Handbook*. Reviewer Mark J. Drozdowski tells you whether it's a must have handbook for part-timers.

### 36 PAGES

We've rounded-up the best teaching handbooks. Check them out!


### 38 FIRST PERSON

Can getting the sack actually be good for you? Well, essayist Laura Yeager seems to think so. She writes about the joys of being let go.



# DESK DRAWER

## Faculty, College of the Canyons Reach Deal



After a nearly six-month negotiation process which was delayed by an impasse, College of the Canyons and the union representing all part-time and adjunct faculty at the college –AFT Local 6262–have reached a new two-year contract agreement.

Included in the new deal will be a 5.5 percent compensation increase for all COC part-time and adjunct faculty—retroactive July 1, 2006—the establishment of a third step on the part-time/adjunct pay scale and a total compensation increase of a cost-of-living adjustment plus .75 percent for the 2007-08 fiscal year. Additionally the contract will create a new timetable for department chairs to schedule and distribute teaching assignments, establish regular meeting periods between union and college officials.

Although parameters for the new contract were agreed upon in December, union officials had to wait until after the holidays to receive member ratification. COC board members then offi-

cially approved the agreement at their February meeting.

“I think both groups are pleased with the outcome of the negotiation,” said Diane Fiero, vice president of human resources at COC. “We were able to hammer out some tough issues and come to a consensus.”

With the creation of the third step on the pay scale, part-time and adjunct faculty members who have been teaching at the college for more than 12 semesters will receive a total pay increase of roughly 8.5 percent.

“It’s a well-deserved raise and an obvious recognition of their service. It recognizes the value of people’s long terms of service to the district,” said AFT Local 6262 union President Michael Ward, referring to the creation of the third pay step. “We came up with a pretty good increase that I thought was fair. With everything going on around the state concerning teaching, it’s pretty much on par with other areas.”

Another major issue of concern for union officials was the inability for its members to file a grievance for any problems that may arise in the assignment and scheduling process for part-time and adjunct employees.

In the months leading up to the agreement, Ward said the lack of a grievance process left such employees with “little or no job security.”

However, under the new contract, COC department heads must send the list of “known, available course sections or other work assignments” to employees no later than November 1st for the following winter session and spring semester, and no later than April 15 for the following summer session and fall semester.

Additionally a representative of the State Mediation and Conciliation Service will attend joint meetings between COC officials and AFT on or about May 1, 2007, and on or about November 15, 2007, to review and mediate any unresolved issues between the two parties.

“So within the two years, if there are issues that come up, we can sit down and talk about them without actually re-negotiating,” Fiero said.

Though not the official grievance process that AFT officials had originally sought, Ward seemed to be satisfied with the new procedures.

“I like the idea that someone from the state will be taking a look at that, so that’s a good positive step,” Ward said. “Because there are consistently problems that come up; having some kind of third party positive oversight is definitely a good thing, so we’re happy with it from that perspective.”





Only a fraction of the \$35,000 Concordia University will pay former premier Bernard Landry this semester is for teaching, with the rest covering "other tasks," like networking and forging links with business leaders and government, Concordia officials said last night.

Part-time faculty at Concordia filed a grievance last week protesting against the university's decision to pay Landry \$25,000 - five times the going rate for a lecturer - and to kick in an extra \$10,000 to pay a teaching assistant.

But university officials are blaming a "clerical error" for the misunderstanding with the teachers union.

**C**hristine Mota, director of communications at Concordia, said Landry's teaching salary is exactly the same as what the university pays any other part-time profes-

sor. The additional money Landry will receive is for non-teaching duties, which include external relations and what Mota described as "friend-raising."

Landry, who turns 70 next month, was hired last fall to teach a three-credit course called International Economy at the John Molson School of Business. The course is an English version of the international trade class he teaches at the Universite du Quebec a Montreal, where he is a tenured professor.

In a November 27th letter confirming the offer, Concordia provost Martin Singer said Landry would receive "a stipend of \$25,000 for the period of January 1, 2007, to May 31, 2007." The money would allow Landry "to conduct a graduate course and to consult with faculty and students who have interests in international trade."

Singer said the university would also provide "up to \$10,000 for teaching assistance."

The decision infuriated Maria Peluso, president of the 1,200-member Concordia University Part-time Faculty Association, which has been without a contract since 2002. Part-time lecturers like Peluso, who has been at Concordia for 27 years, receive \$5,500 for a three-credit course. Teaching assistants are paid about \$500 per course.

"You don't bring your own hairdresser," Peluso said, steamed by what she sees as preferential treatment for the ex-premier.

She noted that 13 years ago, when Premier Jean Charest was briefly ousted from Brian Mulroney's Conservative federal cabinet, he taught political science at Concordia, receiving the same salary as other part-timers.

"Why are they creating this inequity? A course is a course is a course. Who gives a course does not alter the value of what is being taught," Peluso said.

In the grievance filed last week, the faculty association

says the adjunct appointment of Landry in the MBA program contravenes at least

seven articles in the collective agreement. The key complaint hinges on contract language that stipulates "all part-

## *Concordia University Union Protests Against \$35,000 Stipend*

time faculty members who receive a teaching contract ... shall be remunerated at the same rate." As compensation, it demanded the university pay CUPFA \$35,000.

University president Claude Lajeunesse said he did not know what Landry was being paid. But he defended the decision to bring him on board, saying "any time an ex-premier or prime minister wants to teach at Concordia," he or she will be welcome.

Lajeunesse said students are bound to be stimulated by exposure to politicians who have tackled the complex issues that confront a government.

"We are really, really pleased to have him at Concordia."

Announcing the appointment last month, a university publication noted Concordia received a \$97-million capital grant while Landry was premier. Associate dean Michel Magnan said he was enthusiastic that Landry "is willing to share his extensive and long experience with our MBA students so they can better appreciate the risks, challenges and opportunities of doing business in a globalized economy."

Mota said whoever prepared the November 27th letter appears to have confused the "global amount" Landry had been offered with the smaller portion he would be paid for teaching. The union would be contacted to explain the mix-up, she said. The letter from Singer makes no mention of duties other than teaching.

"There's always a mistake, there's always confusion," Peluso said when told of the university's explanation. "What's 'friend-raising'? Are you saying he's being paid \$19,000 for networking?"

When he retired from politics in 2005, Landry was hired by UQAM's Ecole des sciences de la gestion, where he is paid as a full-time tenured professor.

Landry taught at UQAM from 1986 to 1994. ✍

# DESK DRAWER



“Many freshman- and sophomore-level courses are being taught by part-time faculty, whose ability to be fully engaged in the academic lives of their students, and in the broader mission of the university, are undermined by poor pay and the lack of health-care benefits,” committee member and part-time faculty member Thomas Trimble said.

## *Wayne State Part-Time Faculty Closer to Unionizing*

The Wayne State University part-time faculty union organizing committee announced this week that more than 75 percent of the faculty members they’ve approached have signed membership cards — which is the first step towards becoming a recognized union.

In an e-mail announcement, the committee urged faculty members to attend a meeting this to voice their opinions and sign a union membership card.

The e-mail identified pay, healthcare and a voice in university policy as potential union platforms.

Part-time faculty members at WSU have never unionized. Full-time faculty is represented by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) unions. Part-time faculty members teach over 1,000 undergraduate classes at WSU, according to Alita Droba, WSU part-time philosophy professor and member of the part-time faculty union organizing committee.

“Many freshman- and sophomore-level courses are being taught by part-time faculty, whose ability to be fully engaged in the academic lives of their students, and in the broader mission of the university, are undermined by poor pay and the lack of health-care benefits,” committee member and part-time faculty member Thomas Trimble said.

According to Trimble, the committee has received enough membership cards to file a petition with the state of Michigan to recognize the union. He said they plan to file the petition in the next two weeks.

The next step of the process is to hold a consent meeting — a meeting between the union organizers and WSU to decide who is eligible to become a member of the union. This meeting is facilitated by the Michigan Employee Relations Commission Bureau of Employee Relations (MERC-BER).

MERC-BER, which handles labor disputes for the state, will conduct an election to determine whether members want to form the union. The MERC-BER will send ballots to those who are named in the consent meeting as future union members.

That ballot will be the final deciding factor in whether or not the union will be formed. All prospective members will be able to vote, said Trimble.

Once the union is officially recognized, it can hold election for offices within itself, and then negotiations with the university can begin. WSU officials were unavailable for comment.✍

# Palomar Launching “Grade Change” Probe

Palomar College will immediately launch an investigation into allegations that an administrator illegally changed the grades of five students in a foreign language class last summer, President Bob Deegan said. Deegan’s announcement came in response to demands for such an investigation from the faculty senate and the faculty labor union at the two-year community college. Leaders of both faculty groups said that the grades were improved without the authorization or knowledge of the professor who taught the class, which they allege is a violation of Palomar’s grading policies and the state education code. The faculty leaders said they have copies of grade change documents that do not include a required signature from the professor, and instead include the signature of student activities director Bruce Bishop, the administrator accused of improperly changing the grades.

Bishop said that he supports a thorough investigation because such a probe will vindicate him.

“I did change the grades, but I did so with the full authorization of the professor,” said Bishop. “I have e-mails from her that say with no ambiguity that she requested and authorized me to change the grades.”

But professor Julie Ivey, a member of the faculty senate and co-president of the faculty labor union, painted a different picture at the recent faculty senate meeting when she spoke on behalf of the part-time professor who taught the language class.

Ivey said she has seen “clear and compelling” evidence from the professor indicating she sent e-mails to Bishop demanding that he stop harassing her about the grades. Ivey said the professor also sent Bishop an e-mail threatening to take him to court if he changed the grades.

Bishop said the professor, whose name has been withheld by college officials, never complained to him that she was being harassed. He agreed that the idea of going to court was discussed, but he said the statement has been taken out of context.

“That is a terrible mischaracterization of the e-mail that mentioned going to court,” said Bishop. “The faculty has been making comments with no context whatsoever.”

Bishop speculated that the professor had a change of heart some time after the grades were officially changed in September. Bishop, who has been a college employee since 1977, said a group of students approached him in July 2006 complaining about the way their final grades had been calculated. After contacting the professor, Bishop said he consulted a Palomar statistics expert. The expert concluded that the professor’s calculation method was unfair to the students. Bishop said he then discussed the matter with Katheryn Garlow, dean of languages and literature, and Carlos Gomez, the foreign languages department chair. Subsequently, all three administrators encouraged the professor to change the grades, said Bishop. She eventually agreed to make the changes, but she was reluctant to complete the documents herself, said Bishop. Bishop said he then offered to change the grades as long as the professor gave him thorough written authorization that he could present to Herman Lee, the director of enrollment services and the administrator who handles grading records.

At the recent Faculty Senate meeting, professors said the grade change was an unacceptable violation of trust and that the roles of all four administrators should be investigated.

“This is not a small issue,” said economics professor Teresa Laughlin. “This really strikes at the heart of our academic integrity.”

Bishop said regulations requiring professor signatures on grade change forms are outdated, explaining that state education code has failed to keep up with technological advances.

“Professors routinely change grades on computers without any signatures,” said Bishop. “We have developed, over the years, a less formal process.”

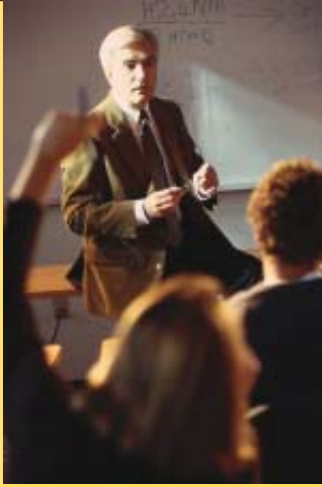
Some professors suggested that Bishop, and possibly the other administrators, should be placed on paid leave during the investigation. But a resolution in support of such action was defeated 11-6. Deegan, the college president, said he has not seen any evidence that would warrant placing anyone on paid leave during the investigation. He said he will appoint a campus official with a reputation for integrity to handle the investigation, but no one has been chosen at this time.

“There’s a lot of rumor, so you don’t want to rush to judgment on someone,” said Deegan. “We need to get all the people who were involved in the same room so this can be discussed.”

Regardless of the investigation’s outcome, Deegan said he plans to “tighten up” Palomar’s grade grievance process and make it an absolute requirement that grade changes occur only with a professor’s signature.

**Bishop speculated that the professor had a change of heart some time after the grades were officially changed in September. Bishop, who has been a college employee since 1977, said a group of students approached him in July 2006 complaining about the way their final grades had been calculated.**

# IN THE CLASSROOM



## Setting the Tone for Successful Learning

by Shari Dinkins

Years ago, I adopted a dog from a local humane society. At twelve pounds, he was not threatening—yet he barked at other dogs, pulled on the leash, and rushed visitors at my door. After investigating several options, I hired a reputable dog trainer to come to my home. I was naïve about the training process. I imagined that this professional would simply step into my living room, sit my dog down and have a very serious talk with him. Then he would start acting differently.

How wrong I was.

This trainer knew what most dog trainers do—that dog training is mostly about retraining the owner. Within a few hours, I had learned techniques to set boundaries and limit behavior, be assertive or even dominant, reward desired behavior, and exert the right kind of energy as a loving “pack leader.” In return, my dog became more relaxed; he settled into “beta dog” position comfortably. Although I expected him to be depressed and withdrawn with his new position in my household, he wasn’t. In fact, he actually seemed grateful to be relieved of the job of managing me, my house, any visitors, and all that surrounded us when we walked. I was happier, too. With the help of a professional trainer, we had settled into a proper relationship—that of leader and follower.

I am convinced that this event has taught me more about managing classrooms than many teaching workshops I’ve attended. Although it’s true that this metaphor is limited—students certainly are not like dogs to be trained—the idea of exerting the correct energy is one that has governed classrooms for years. This explains why inexperienced graduate students and teachers’ assistants often have trouble controlling students, and why certain instructors’ personalities are more effective than others at enforcing policies intended to encourage particular behaviors and learning.

I was lucky to come to teaching as a third career. After ten years in Silicon Valley, managing product and people, I had very

little difficulty realizing my place in the classroom. With another decade in advertising, managing creative teams and creating campaigns, I realized that the effort I put into teaching and the way I managed students greatly influenced the outcome—in this case, a graduating class that would contribute to society. Yet, the corporate world did not prepare me for the degrees of formality that can exist in classrooms; those degrees vary with the course curriculum, the level of learning, the age of the student and instructor, the type of campus, and even the time and location of the class itself.

My first part-time teaching position was with a local for-profit business college. My dean helped delineate my role by assigning me a textbook, giving me sample syllabi, and going over the student handbook that defined proper behavior on the campus. She also instructed me to have the students call me “Miss or Ms. Dinkins.” At first, I found this odd. I had worked in many industries and become comfortable with first names. Who was this Ms. Dinkins? I almost expected my mother to answer when a student piped up with, “Ms. Dinkins, what do we need to read for tomorrow?” Although I became used to this form of address, I was often tempted to ask students to call me “Shari.” Yet I did not give in. Knowing that the students were paying good money for classes helped keep me in check. I wanted them to feel as if they were getting their money’s worth. I wanted to develop the confidence in my teaching that I did not yet have, and maintaining a certain distance between student and teacher seemed important at this stage in my career.

When I landed the chance to teach a one-day workshop through a state university’s extended education program, I realized that I was working under different circumstances. This was a short course in a technical subject open to anyone in the community, and was therefore very different from teaching undergraduate students who were required to study core courses to achieve a long-term goal. Many of the students attending this one-day

workshop already had a college degree; many had professional jobs; most were older than typical college students. They would be more like peers than students. I instinctively knew to develop materials for an audience that already understood how to perform certain duties. The result was a wonderfully informal level of communication with a structured, yet flexible, curriculum. We were on a first-name basis, which, because of the age and expertise of the students, didn't undermine my authority. I'm sure it helped that I was published in the field and had a decade of experience in that area. And, of course, the students wanted to be there; they had paid their fees and brought supplies. It was a successful day that resulted in positive reviews and an invitation to return to teach the next semester.

The next year, I answered an advertisement in the local newspaper to teach creative writing. My new boss, the director of senior classes at a junior college, hired me to teach at several senior centers and retirement homes. I would need to approach the directors at those institutions and convince them that the residents would greatly benefit from journaling, writing poetry, and creating their own autobiographies. After setting up regular times and locations, I would then develop some "soft" materials to help shape their writing—all the while keeping in mind that these were older adults with vast life experiences. I was not to criticize their work, but instead encourage them to write, write, write. My role was that of a witness, or at best, a very kind guide. I insisted that these older student writers call me "Shari." In contrast, I called them by the formal Mr., Mrs., or Ms., only reverting to first names after specific residents repeatedly insisted on it. Although I found this kind of teaching valuable in a way that no other assignment ever had been, I also realized that my job as a cheerleader and coach seemed to dictate a kind of respect while I witnessed these students' writing.

I relocated to the San Francisco Bay Area to teach a three-quarter load at a very large, urban community college. My experience here further shaped me as an instructor, but also presented challenges. Suddenly, I was responsible for a semester's worth of learning. I had to choose texts, write curricula, and develop original materials for students in developmental-level

Today I work at a university in the Midwest. I've noticed a **greater level of formality** with undergraduate students—especially with daytime classes, in which "Professor So-and-So," or "Dr. So-and-So" prevails. Night classes may be more relaxed, but not necessarily. Many professors encourage graduate students to address them by first name. A professor I know in the sciences confessed that he really sees his graduate students as budding colleagues.

English courses. The student population was tremendously diverse in ability; some came from local high schools and were hopelessly underprepared; others were returning students from blue-collar professions. We also had a large number of international students, which resulted in a split in the level of formality in classrooms. Many international students would address me as "Ms. Dinkins" or "Professor Dinkins." At the same time, young students from urban centers might address me as "Ms. D.," or, worse yet, "Shari." I had to draw boundaries. This was difficult, because I did not want to alienate students. Retention was of the utmost importance, and this was a core class required for transfer. I finally stopped telling my first name to day students and simply outlined the course name, "S. Dinkins," and the day's activities on the board. Most fell to calling me "Ms. Dinkins" or "Ms. D." Night classes at this cam-

pus seemed to cull an older crowd with more professional experience. In fact, some students were my age! It seemed awkward to ask them to address me formally. Depending on the nature of the night class, I sometimes asked students to call me "Shari." Rather than undermine my authority, the informality reflected a closer relationship that encouraged these professionals to do the required work.

Today I work at a university in the Midwest. I've noticed a greater level of formality with undergraduate students—especially with daytime classes, in which "Professor So-and-So," or "Dr. So-and-So" prevails. Night classes may be more relaxed, but not necessarily. Many professors encourage graduate students to address them by first name. A professor I know in the sciences confessed that he really sees his graduate students as budding colleagues. They share resources and sometimes publish together; therefore, addressing one another with first names seems appropriate. I tend to prefer "Ms. Dinkins" during the day, and encourage night school students to use my first name when I decide it's appropriate.

Good instructors set a level of formality with students inside and outside the classroom. Confidence in discipline, teaching skills, and oneself sets the tone for a course. Regular misbehavior does not occur in classrooms where the instructor is in control. Drawing boundaries, setting limits, and rewarding positive behavior are important tools for the part- or full-time instructor. ✍

# GOING THE DISTANCE

## What Online Students Say About... Assessment

by Diane J. Goldsmith, Ph.D.

### Feedback. Feedback. Feedback

- Feedback needs to be timely: “Personal communication and prompt feedback on assignments are essential for any course to be a success.”
- Feedback should include grades: “Feedback in the form of grades is essential, and it should come to students frequently!”
- Feedback needs to be helpful: “Instead of just marking answers wrong, she would also give a brief explanation as to what the correct answer was and why.”
- Feedback needs to be personal: “I would personally like to see teachers send a one or two line email to students each week about their work-be it their writing or quality of comments.”
- Good feedback is motivating: “Whether I posted an assignment at one o’clock AM or PM, I received grades, answers to questions, and responses to my work within twelve hours at the very most. This is extremely gratifying and motivating.”
- Good feedback inspires more learning: “I would challenge him with a question and a half hour later be able to sign on to my computer and not only would the question be answered, but he would challenge me to a question.”
- Feedback can come from classmates: “One of the things that helped me the most is the fact that I received feedback from all my classmates not only the teacher.”

### Clarity

- Students want to know up front what is required of them, what deadlines they must meet, and how they will be graded. “She set expectations right up front so there was no question about when something was due or what I was supposed to do next.”
- Students want assignments to be clear, “The professors should write more extensive, detailed instructions when they give assignments simply because of the awkwardness of the online environment.”
- Instructors should be willing to clarify assignments: “It should be easy to correct and rewrite instructions for the benefit of the students.”

### Assignments

- Students prefer a variety of smaller assignments, “Have smaller and more assignments on which to base the course grade. Only 3 assignments and a final exam aren’t fair.”
- Students want an acknowledgement that their assignment has been received.

**Students want assignments to be clear**, “The professors should write more extensive, detailed instructions when they give assignments simply because of the awkwardness of the online environment.”

## Threaded Discussion


- Deadlines are important, “Professors must post deadlines for threaded discussion...Once a deadline is established the professor must follow it also i.e. if the deadlines for TD are weekly or biweekly, the professor must post grades after the deadline.”
- Faculty need to be present in the threaded discussion, “He was always there in the threaded discussion.”
- Students appreciate well thought-out discussion assignments, “I truly enjoyed the conference forum. We really have to think about our responses before we post them.”

## Testing

- Students find timed testing difficult, “Timed testing is very difficult. I would much prefer testing that is not timed.”
- Students with disabilities who are accommodated on campus with more time for testing want the same accommodations in an online class.
- Students don’t just want their grade, they want feedback: “I would have liked to have seen the correct answers to the questions I got wrong.”
- Students want to be asked to think: “The grading structure and format is set up so that all he wants is you to regurgitate information from the text. There is no higher thinking involved.”
- Testing for online classes should be online: “I feel that comprehension of the material can be assessed through the virtual classroom and do not see the need for a proctored exam.”

## Group Projects


- Many students find group projects difficult, “People don’t follow through with their commitments and you’re left hanging.”
- Others enjoy them: “I didn’t think I would like working in teams, but I enjoyed it very much.”
- How group projects are graded may present difficulties for some students: “I thought it was unfair to ask students to complete a project with other students and get one grade for it. Other students were in a hurry to get it done and didn’t want to do specifics.”
- Coordination can be a problem for some students: “Teamwork was difficult to complete. Everybody had different schedules, and it was difficult to ‘chat.’” ✍️



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## Canadian Part-Timers Seek Union Rights

by Pauline Tam

An English teacher at Algonquin College is leading Ontario's 17,000 part-time and temporary college workers in a fight to win the same rights as their full-time unionized colleagues.

Roger Couvrette is expected to meet with Universities and Colleges Minister Chris Bentley next week to demand the Ontario government repeal a law that excludes part-time college teachers and support staff from collective bargaining.

Mr. Couvrette is president of the newly formed Organization of Part-time and Sessional Employees of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, which is organizing the largest union membership drive ever seen at the province's 24 community colleges.

The organization is challenging a law that, it says, has paved the way for the massive use of cheap labor to subsidize Ontario colleges. Since the law was enacted in the 1970s, during the government of Conservative premier Bill Davis, the number of part-time college teachers and staff has soared to where they outnumber full-time unionized employees.

No government since the Davis era has been willing to repeal the law. Mr. Couvrette said part-time employees are paid low wages, receive no benefits and have no job security.

Ontario is the only province to deny part-time college workers union rights.

"It's so blatantly unfair that we don't think it's tenable any longer," said Mr. Couvrette, a part-time teacher at Algonquin for the past four years.

"I have no beef with the colleges ultimately. I have a beef with the government."

The organization has the backing of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, which represents 15,000 full-time teachers and support staff.

The union has filed a complaint highlighting the plight of their part-time colleagues to the International Labor Organization, a Geneva-based United Nations agency.

The organization has also attracted the support of NDP education critic Rosario Marchese, who has introduced a private member's bill to change the law. Mr. Marchese, who feels the real problem is chronic under funding for education, said giving part-time workers the right to bargain collectively would cost the government more than the \$6.2 billion over five years it has earmarked for post-secondary education.

Mr. Bentley said he's studying the issue, but refused to speculate on what would come out of his next meeting with Mr. Couvrette. He also took aim at Mr. Marchese's private member's bill, saying the NDP, under premier Bob Rae, took steps to repeal the law, but backed down.

The heart of the problem from the part-time employees' point of view, is that they are paid only for classroom time. As a result, their earnings are diluted by hours of unpaid work outside the classroom preparing lessons, marking assignments and meeting students.

By contrast, full-time faculty members are paid for those duties and are eligible to file for overtime. They also receive benefits and seniority.

At Algonquin, which has about 900 unionized full-time faculty and support staff and between 1,000 and 1,200 non-unionized part-time employees, Mr. Couvrette said his typical \$30 per hour salary can amount to as little as \$10 hourly when preparation and student evaluation time are taken into account.

Provincewide, part-time salaries range from an hourly wage of between \$30 to \$45.

What's more, part-time teachers are deprived of office space on campuses to meet students. As a result of such difficult working conditions, said Mr. Couvrette, the college system suffers from a constant turnover of demoralized employees.

"It's a rights issue but it's also a quality of education issue," he said. "You can't run colleges properly and deliver quality education with a staff that is essentially disposable." ✍

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## Double Bass Blues: *A musician-adjunct tackles math*

by Jason Heath

One would have to be crazy to go into music for the money. Dozens of career paths spring to mind (medicine, law, web development, programming, engineering, etc.) that have great salaries and benefits and ample opportunities for employment. Music careers by and large lack these great benefits. Cream-of-the-crop jobs in the world of music (outside of international soloists) pay what would be considered a fairly pedestrian wage in many other fields.

This basic assumption underlies everything else I discuss here. I know that we musicians did not go into this profession for the money, and the purpose of this series is not to carp about how little we all make. My concern is that we musicians are compensated fairly for our work and allowed to earn a living doing what we do. My experience, unfortunately, has been that the hidden costs of the freelance life quickly erode any seeming profit from far too many gigs. Since teaching is a component of nearly every freelance musician's employment palette, I will analyze a university teaching position I held for the first installment in this series.

In my previous adjunct university position I was compensated at a rate of \$35 an hour for each student I taught. This rate is comparable to many other public universities in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana and is somewhat lower than schools in other regions according to my research. Since this figure is a common hourly rate for universities in the Midwest it will serve as an illustrative example for this article.

In addition to the \$35 per hour, I was paid a \$635 retainer fee each semester for recruiting and other activities. This list of activities included doing seminar classes (requiring an extra trip), recruiting in local schools, attending juries, audition days, open houses, and the like. For the purposes of this trip I will assume that two additional days per month were needed to be devoted to these activities, although in reality the number of days was probably higher than that.

The resulting compensation varied from term to term depending on my student load. My student load vacillated between four and ten students during my employment in this position. The resulting compensation (including retainer fee) ranged from \$625 to \$1050 per month.

Before I go on I would like to note that both the hourly rate and retainer fee never increased during my five years of employment. Tenure track faculty members and lecturers at universities receive yearly cost of living salary increases. Adjunct faculty members do not typically receive any compensation increase. The lack of cost of living increases means that adjunct faculty members actually get paid less each year regardless of their job performance. The only way to increase compensation is to hustle for more students. For more on this ethically dicey subject, please check out my pay-per-student post.

I will use a figure of \$900 a month in compensation for hourly lessons plus the retainer fee. This is on the upper end of what I was paid monthly for this university position. If I were to make one trip per week to teach this would break down to \$225 per day of teaching—not bad. This boils down to about 6.5 hours of teaching if I could line up the students back to back. In reality,

*When I applied for this position I had two music performance degrees from Northwestern University and had taken nearly \$40,000 in loans (not counting what my parents had to pay) which I was just staring to pay back.*

however, it was impossible to get all of those students lined up one after another, so my time spent on the job was closer to 8.5 hours, lowering my average hourly compensation to \$26.50.

Now comes the kicker—mileage. I lived 93 miles from this particular institution, making my round trip daily commute 186 miles. Much of this was on two lane highway, putting my commute time at a minimum of two hours on each leg of the trip (four hours total per day).

Adding those four additional commute hours put my weekly commitment at 12.5 hours, thus lowering my hourly compensation to \$18 per hour. Considerably lower than the original \$35 per hour figure (which is a fairly low compensation figure to begin with).

Figuring in my mileage...oh wait, I got no mileage! 44.5 cents per mile must therefore be taken off of that \$900 monthly compensation figure. Years of brake jobs, oil changes, blown tires, cracked windshields and the like has taught me that the federal mileage rate really is what it costs you in the long run to drive to gigs.

$$186 \text{ miles/trip} \times .445 = \$82.77 \text{ mileage/trip}$$

$$\$82.77 \text{ mileage/trip} \times 4 \text{ trips/month} = \$331.08 \text{ mileage/month}$$

$$\$900 - \$331.08 \text{ mileage/month} = \$568.92 \text{ monthly compensation after mileage}$$

Ouch! Mileage takes quite a bite out of your earnings, doesn't it? Driving is what really destroys the earnings of freelancers. I have driven 40,000-50,000 miles per year for the past seven years working sometimes in six states each year to earn a living. My pre-expenses income has been pretty handsome some years, but when actual costs are figured the earnings always plummet to coffee shop employee levels (if not worse).

Let's break it down a little further:

If I were to travel only once a week (four trips per month):

$$\$568.92 \text{ divided by } 4 = \$142.23 \text{ per day}$$

$$\$142.23 \text{ divided by } 12.5 \text{ hours} = \$11.38 \text{ per hour}$$

Note that this does not include those extra trips to fulfill the requirements of the adjunct retainer fee. If I did only one extra trip per month:

$$\$568.92 \text{ divided by } 5 = \$113.78 \text{ per day}$$

$$\$113.78 \text{ divided by } 12.5 \text{ hours} = \$9.10 \text{ per hour}$$

If I made two extra trips per month (a more realistic assessment of the requirements of teaching, seminars, juries, audition days, and recruiting activities):

$$\$568.92 \text{ divided by } 6 = \$94.82 \text{ per day}$$

$$\$94.82 \text{ divided by } 12.5 \text{ hours} = \$7.59 \text{ per hour}$$

These figures do not count any preparation hours and are also a low estimate of what it took to technically fulfill the adjunct retainer fee. Making \$8-10 an hour (with no benefits, no raises...ever) is a lowly income for anybody in any field. I made more than this doing paperwork in a law office in 1994.

Remember, this is pre-tax and has no pension contribution or any other benefit. Also, this figure assumes that I earned \$900 monthly from this job. I frequently earned less, but my commuting costs remained the same. This is another unfair drawback to pay-per-student teaching—when a student quits (or fails), your hourly wage drops a dollar or two, putting pressure on the pay-per-student adjunct teacher to lower their standards and pass unqualified students to keep the wage from dropping from coffee shop worker scale to dishwasher scale.

This low figure is more disturbing given the required advanced degrees an applicant is expected to have just to get an interview for an adjunct teaching position. When I applied for this position I had two music performance degrees from Northwestern University and had taken nearly \$40,000 in loans (not counting what my parents had to pay) which I was just staring to pay back.

The sad reality of the state of this profession is even more telling when looking at the highly qualified pool of applicants interesting in filling my previous position. I was told by my colleagues at the university that this particular adjunct teaching position had received the most number of applicants for any adjunct position in this institution's history. People with doctoral degrees and people with significant ISCOM orchestra experience were among the applicants.

One may criticize my decision for accepting employment at an institution that was so far from my home. It is true that the compensation increases if I lived closer to this institution. It is, however, the only significant double bass university teaching position to open over the past seven years in this area, and I consider myself lucky to have gotten the job. Also, my mileage was actually less than some other faculty members from this institution, and my student load (and thus my compensation) was higher than most adjunct faculty members. Driving 50-80 miles one way for a job like this is very common here in the metropolitan Chicago area, and my cost/benefit breakdown thus serves as a representative model of the true cost of this kind of employment.✍️

# “Oh, Canada”



*Canadian colleges rely increasingly on...*

by Sandy Farran

## The Sessional Nation

Allison Dube is the kind of professor who greets students by name even though his classes often have more than 100 people. He regularly extends his office hours and provides his home number so students can reach him at any time, and he uses words like “magical,” “joy”, “adventure” and even “love” when describing the “amazing journey” he takes with each new class. By his own admission he “sounds like a Hallmark card.” It would be easy to dismiss it as rhetoric if it weren’t for the fact that his students express similar sentiments when describing Dube in course evaluations: “I would take a course from Dr. Dube even if I was assured a failing grade,” says one student. “My vocabulary does not contain adjectives positive enough to describe Dr. Dube’s teaching,” says another. The 55-year-old University of Calgary political science lecturer has won three student-nominated Excellence in Teaching Awards.

And yet Dube doesn’t have a full-time faculty position at Calgary, known as tenure or tenure-track status. He probably never will, although he would desperately love this appointment. He is a part-time instructor—also known as a sessional lecturer, contingent faculty or contract academic staff—who is paid on a per-course basis. His pay is low: \$6,150 per three-credit or half course. Last year, he made just over \$26,000, about a quarter of what a professor his age at Calgary makes. He also has no job

security, no pension and few benefits. He is part of a large and growing group of academics who refer to themselves as “the invisible faculty.”

Over the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in the use of contract academic staff at Canadian universities. Critics argue that university administrators are doing it primarily for one reason: it’s cheap. “They don’t pay them equivalently, they often don’t get benefits, they don’t have the same access to offices and other kinds of things,” says Jim Turk, executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). Turk calls it “a response in large part to inadequate funding from the federal and provincial governments.”

Anecdotal evidence from Canada’s campuses suggests that the percentage of classes taught by sessional faculty is high and growing. At the University of Saskatchewan, 320 sessionals teach roughly a third of the undergraduate classes, according to the union representing part-time workers at the university. At Carleton University, there are almost as many part-time sessional lecturers as full-time academic staff, according to the most recent figures available for the fall of 2005. In an interview with *Maclean’s*, the president of the University of Toronto, David Naylor, said about 22 percent of his university’s courses in the humanities, social sciences and sciences are taught by sessionals.

*University of  
Calgary political  
scientist and  
sessional lecturer  
Allison Dube.*



National numbers don't exist, because each university measures its sessionals in different ways. Some include graduate students and research assistants; some don't report figures at all. The most recent StatsCan numbers available show that there were 28,200 part-time faculty hired by universities in 1997-1998, a growth of nearly 10 per cent since 1990. During the same period the number of full-time faculty hired by universities decreased about eight per cent. StatsCan stopped collecting this data years ago, because "part-time faculty" was defined differently by each university, making national numbers arguably meaningless. "It's almost embarrassing when people ask, 'What do you mean you don't know how many faculty [you have]?' " says Bob Truman, director of institutional analysis and planning at the University of Waterloo.

For the bigger picture, experts in Canada look south of the border. According to the American Association of University Professors, since the 1970s, the proportion of tenured and tenure-track faculty members at U.S. universities has dwindled from about 57 per cent to 35 per cent, while the proportion of those not on the tenure track has grown from 35 per cent to 65 per cent during the same period. In Canada, too, there has been an increase in the use of sessionals.

For the past four years, George Williamson has been a part-time philosophy instructor at the University of Saskatchewan. The most he has earned in a year is about \$15,000 teaching two three-credit courses in the fall and one course in the summer. To help pay the bills, some sessionals teach courses at more than one university. Williamson doesn't have that option. Instead, he works part-time at a call centre in Saskatoon taking reservations for Marriott Hotels.

"Ideally I'd like to settle at some university and get research done and teach at a reasonable level of pay," says Williamson, 44, who did his first two degrees at Saskatchewan and a Ph.D. at the University of Warwick in England.

In March, members of CUPE 3287, the part-time union that Williamson belongs to, voted 78 per cent to go on strike if their employer does not table a better offer, particularly on wages. Saskatchewan sessionals earn between \$8,616 and \$9,276 for a six-credit or full-year course.

Sessional pay at all universities is considerably below the

salaries of full-time faculty, ranging from \$6,000 to over \$13,000 for a full-year course, depending on the university. In addition to wages, part-timers have significantly different working conditions than regular faculty. Amenities such as office space, a telephone, mailbox, library privileges, photocopying and a computer are not necessarily available to contract academics.

Williamson chuckles when describing a construction trailer that for three years he used as an office, until the university finally upgraded him last fall.

"Occasionally the heater broke down, and at the far end they had a hole in the roof that was fixed." In

an effort to help students find him during office hours, Williamson posted a map of the campus on the website with a big red arrow pointing to the trailer. He used a computer that a friend had lent him and he shared a phone. He now shares an office in a building.

This year, professor Brent Wood is teaching two full-year English courses, one at Trent University in Peterborough, Ont., and another at the University of Toronto at Mississauga (UTM). He is part of a large group of academics who jokingly refer to themselves as "road scholars" or "gypsy scholars." Every Monday morning Wood teaches a 9 a.m. class at Trent and then hits the road for a more than two-hour drive to UTM in the afternoon. He has a similar schedule on Tuesday. He's taken on fewer courses this year because he's doing research on his own time, in an attempt to produce published work that will get him off the sessional treadmill. When he's at Trent, Wood generally holds office hours at the Seasoned Spoon Café, because the office he shares with several colleagues isn't ideal for private discussions.

"It's really not so hot for creature comforts," Wood says of his

continued on the next page

**And yet Dube doesn't have a full-time faculty position at Calgary, known as tenure or tenure-track status. He probably never will, although he would desperately love this appointment. He is a part-time instructor—also known as a sessional lecturer, contingent faculty or contract academic staff—who is paid on a per-course basis. His pay is low: \$6,150 per three-credit or half course."**



*University of Trent  
English sessional  
lecturer Brent  
Wood.*

working conditions at Trent.

What bothers Wood more than office space or commuting is not knowing until the last minute if he has a course to teach.

“If they get a last minute surge of people enrolling at the end of August then the call goes out,” says Wood. “You don’t want the students to know that you just hired a prof. a week before the course started.”

Does any of this affect students? Most students might find it difficult to distinguish between part-time and tenured faculty. The difference in the classroom is not always apparent. But when asked, academics identify three broad areas where not only students but all faculty lose. Arguably the biggest issue is the hallmark of the university: academic freedom.

“If you’re on a fixed term, limited-course contract and somebody powerful doesn’t like what you are doing, they don’t have to fire you, they don’t have to discipline you, they just don’t renew your contract,” says Turk. “Once you have a significant proportion on contract you change the whole character of the institution.”

Like in the U.S., the shift toward non-tenured academics and its impact on academic freedom has been one of the most worrisome trends in higher education north of the border.

Another area of concern is the pay. Sessionals either have to find other jobs or teach more than a full-time load at more than one university in order to make a living that’s a fraction of what a regular faculty member makes. As a result, part-timers are often so harried that it is sometimes hard for them to prepare for class or meet with students.

Finally, part-timers aren’t given funding to keep on top of their field, publish and research. That may be bad for students; it’s certainly bad for sessionals. When a tenure-track job opens up, they can’t compete because they have no publications and no research, and faculty are hired overwhelmingly on research, and their potential to do more research. Once someone gets on the sessional treadmill, it’s hard to get off. Says Turk: “After four or five years you get locked into a job ghetto that you can’t get out of.”

Allison Dube at Calgary is a victim of the sessional trap. Last year he applied for a tenure-track position in political science and he was shocked to learn that he hadn’t even made the short list.

“I put a lot of hope into getting that job,” says Dube, who admits that he has done little research since graduating from the London School of Economics in 1989.

Given that Dube earned \$26,652 last year, a higher salary would have made a big difference. A bigger disappointment was not getting an upper-year course he “literally begged” the department for that would have reunited many students—some who wrote letters asking for the course with Dube as the instructor—he taught in three previous courses.

It was especially grating when, at the Teaching Excellence Award ceremony where Dube was honored, the vice-president academic talked about the university’s plan to inject millions into teaching.

“If the kids are asking for the course, and they are really serious about lecturing, why not say, ‘give the poor sap \$6,000 to teach the course,’ ” says Dube.

No one argues that per-course instructors have no place at the university, particularly in programs where a certain level of practical expertise is necessary, such as journalism or business. And there are many sessionals who are happy to remain teaching on a per-course basis. University of Toronto president David Naylor says that concerns about sessional lecturers are related mostly to undergraduate programs in the humanities, social sciences and sciences, where they tend to be most heavily employed. He would like to see a reduced reliance on sessionals, but believes they still have an important role to play.

“Provided that there is careful mentorship to ensure that they are effective teachers, this is a win-win situation,” says Naylor. “It brings enthusiastic young instructors into the classroom, while letting universities be more responsive to students’ shifting interests.”

That said, Naylor recognizes that some individuals return to sessional lectureships over and over again as they look for more permanent positions. To that end, the university has developed two categories identified as Sessional Lecturers 1 and Sessional Lecturers 2. Approximately 20 per cent of these teachers have been promoted to the second level based on classroom visits by the department chair as well as student feedback. As a result, Naylor predicts that the number of sessionals will likely fall as these people fill vacancies that come up in the tenure stream.

Despite low wages and poor working conditions, many part-timers are optimistic that things will improve. The reason: roughly 85 percent of sessionals are now organized: “We are increasingly making these issues a priority,” says Turk. “I think we can arrest this development in the name of protecting the integrity of the university and our students.”

*Originally published in McClean’s, March 2007. Reprinted here with permission.*

**Goose-Egg University**  
**Dean of Humanities**



Memorandum from the Office of the Dean

TO : All Department Chairs

SUBJECT : Reasons for Terminating Contracts with Adjunct Instructors

DATE : September 15, 2006

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Below you will find a checklist of possible reasons for firing adjunct instructors:

- Appeared On Fox News
- Appeared Nude On Fox News
- Appeared On Fox News With Ward Churchill
- Appeared On Fox News With Ward Churchill Nude
- Stored Lunch In Full-Time Faculty's Fridge One Too Many Times
- Parked In My Reserved Spot
- Got A Little Too Friendly With My Wife
- Dated Student (I Was Interested In)
- Lousy Taste In Clothes
- Taste In Clothes Too Refined
- Too Friendly (i.e., Sex Addict)
- Not Friendly Enough (i.e., Responded Poorly To My Hot-Tubbing Offer)
- Thinks Michael Jackson's "Misunderstood"
- Did Not Bring Dish To End-Of-The-Year Department Potluck
- Wrote Blog Titled, "So What If I'm Anti-Semitic?"
- Wrote Blog Titled, "The Dean Of Humanities Is A Butt-Kissing Lame-o Administrator"
- Wrote Blog I Disagreed With

*Clyde*

Clyde T. Perfidousness  
Dean of Humanities

*Matthew Henry Hall*  
MATTHEWHENRYHALL.COM



# The Ph.D. Glut Revisited

*by Gary North*

**T**he economist rarely uses the words “glut” and “shortage” without adding: at some price. Other scholars are not equally wise. A free market theory of pricing rests on the supposition that gluts and shortages are temporary phenomena. Prices adjust so as to clear a market. If this does not take place, the free market economist goes looking for evidence of state intervention. Consider the problem of excess inventory. It is better to get something for unused and unwanted inventory than to pay for storage. So, selling prices adjust downward. This eventually eliminates the glut. The unpleasant experience also warns the producer not to do this again.

Why does a glut exist? Because of an error in prior forecasting. Suppliers believed that there would be buyers at a specific price. It turned out that there was an insufficient number of buyers at that expected price.

Then why does a glut persist? One answer: ignorance on the part of suppliers. But why should this ignorance persist? Why don't suppliers get the picture?

Experienced sellers do get the picture. The problem is a continuing supply of new sellers who are unfamiliar with the market and ignorant of the past supply-demand conditions. Or, as has been said so often, there's a sucker born every minute. There is no evidence that P. T. Barnum ever said this, but it is nonetheless true.

In the worldwide suckers' market, gamblers are the only people who are slower to learn than young adults with masters' degrees. Bright graduate students possess a pair of non-marketable skills: the ability to write term papers and the ability to take academic exams. They are also economic illiterates and incurably naïve. So, they become the trusting victims of the professorial class.

## **THE ECONOMICS OF THE PROFESSORATE**

No one ever sits down and tells a newly minted college graduate about the economics of the professorate. No one tells the student about the crucial and neglected work of the person who first blew the whistle on the economics of the

Ph.D., David W. Breneman. He is the Dean of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. He wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on the economics of the Ph.D. It was accepted in 1970 by the University of California, Berkeley. It was based on research completed in 1968, the year prior to the beginning of the Ph.D. glut. Its title: "The Ph.D. Production Process: A Study of Departmental Behavior." Of all Ph.D. dissertations ever written, this is the only one that one that should be read by every college student who is contemplating graduate school. Of course, no one tells him. Few people have ever heard of it.

I read it in 1970. I do not recall how I came across it. I was completing my Ph.D., so I was facing the Ph.D. glut personally, which had begun in the fall of 1969. It had been predicted for the sciences by Allan Cartter of New York University in 1964. Sometime around 1966, Clark Kerr, President of the University of California, had mentioned this looming problem to a group of us in an elite student organization called the California Club. But I was naïve. I figured, "It won't happen to me." Ha!

As they say in those late-night Ronco ads, "Here's how it works!" Academic departments grow in terms of the number of students enrolled. We know from Parkinson's Law that growth is an institutional imperative. Administrators advance their careers by expanding the number of subordinates in their department. So, every academic department wants more students – students of a special kind.

Students are not of equal value to a department. The lower-division student (freshman or sophomore) does not rate highly in the currency of academic resource allocation: the full-time enrollment, or FTE. The FTE figure is what justifies the hiring of a full-time faculty member. The lower the ratio, the better. It may take 15 lower-division students to generate one FTE. It may take only eight Ph.D.-level graduate students to generate an FTE.

The more Ph.D. students a department can attract, the faster the growth of that department. This is the iron law of academia. All other economic laws are sacrificed for it, as the economist says, other things being equal.

This fact of academic economic life creates an incentive for departments to enroll lots of graduate students. It also rewards those departments that persuade M.A. students to go into the Ph.D. program.

Also, the brightest graduate students may be asked to do unpaid or grant-paid research for senior professors. The professors then publish the results of this research under their own names, thereby advancing their careers. It's the division of labor at work.

## **"GLUT? WHAT GLUT?"**

The Ph.D. glut has existed ever since the fall of 1969. The number of entry-level full-time professorial positions has remained stagnant. Few new universities have been constructed. Legislatures have resisted additional funding.

This has led to a reduction of the number of tenure-level positions. Universities and community colleges have been able to

staff their entry-level positions with inexpensive instructors.

Those few Ph.D.s who receive a full-time position at a university find that they are paid much less than tenured members of the department. They are assigned the lower-division classes, which are large – sometimes 200 to 1,000 students. These mega-classes require lecturing skills that most professors do not possess. Those untenured faculty members who perform well in mega-classes are kept on until the day of reckoning: the decision to grant them tenure, usually eight years after they go on the payroll. They are usually not re-hired unless they have published narrowly focused articles in professional journals. But mega-class professors do not have much time to do the required research.

The assistant professor is now 35 years old or older. He has not made the cut. He is now relegated to the academic underworld: the community colleges. But here there is fierce competition. Community colleges hire part-time instructors at \$10 to \$15 an hour. These people seek a full-time position at the community college. They need that initial foot in the door: night school courses for worn-out adults who are trying to earn an A.A. degree. Their natural enemies are the newly dismissed assistant professors from universities.

Who gets an entry-level position at Boonsdocksville State University, which in 1960 was a public schools teacher training college? New graduates with Ph.D.s from the two-dozen major universities.

Then what happens to graduates with Ph.D.s issued by Boonsdocksville State? They go straight into the community college circuit.

This has been going on ever since the fall of 1969. It is great for community college administrators, who have a never-ending supply of optimistic Ph.D.-holding graduates of all but the top two-dozen universities, plus a never-ending supply of burned-out, terrified assistant professors from top universities who did not receive tenure.

If you want to understand this process, watch *Ghostbusters*: the scene after the parapsychology team has been dismissed from the university. Dan Ackroyd speaks for tens of thousands of Ph.D.-holding rejects who did not make the cut.

For over three decades, all it has taken to generate 1,000 applicants was this ad in a professional journal in the humanities:

Tenure-track position

Ph.D. required

Teach 12 hours of the freshman course

The salary has been almost irrelevant: not more than the average salary of the average American worker with a high school diploma.

If the ad said "Ph.D. or ABD required," it would generate 2,000 applicants. ABD stands for "all but dissertation."

Graduate students do not learn about supply and demand, and it does not pay senior professors to teach them. Here is evidence.

*continued on the next page*

In response to the ever-growing glut of Ph.D.'s, the American university system turned out about 30,000 Ph.D. graduates per year, 1969 to about 1975. Since then, it has increased the output. In 1980, it was 33,615. In 1990, it was 38,371. In 2000, it was 44,808. In 2003, it was 46,024. (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2006, Table 290.)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics currently predicts that the job outlook for postsecondary teachers (a job commonly sought by Ph.D. graduates) should be much brighter than it has been in recent years. Employment in that area is expected to grow by almost 40 percent by 2012, whereas overall employment is expected to grow by only 15 percent! So, if you're just starting down the track to a Ph.D. and hope to take root in the world of academia, your timing may be just right!

There's one born every minute . . . and two who will relieve him of his funds.

## STATE SUBSIDIES

Most degree-granting universities are funded by taxpayers. A university used to be an institution of higher learning that was authorized by a college-accrediting agency to grant the Ph.D. Employees of all but the most prestigious four-year colleges want to be called a university. So, title inflation has matched degree inflation and grade inflation over the last 35 years.

The supply of college graduates with ever-lower academic abilities is funded by money coerced from taxpayers. The American higher education system is structured by the professorate to reward those professors who teach small classes of graduate students. So, year after year, decade after decade, the supply of Ph.D.-holding students increases, despite an academic market that does not hire most of them, and hires a minority at wages that do not compensate them for the money and time invested in earning their degrees.

They cannot teach at the high school level because their advanced degrees force the school districts to pay them too much. A teacher with a B.A. is paid a fraction of what a Ph.D. or Ed.D. is paid. The teacher unions have negotiated payment so that existing employees who attend night school and summer school at Boonsdocksville State can work their way up within the system. Being tenured, they cannot be fired. Earning a graduate degree is a guaranteed way to earn a larger salary. But no district goes looking for Ph.D.s to hire. That financial affliction is entirely generated from inside the union-dominated, tax-funded public schools.

## HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

Ph.D. students are a lot like gamblers. They expect to beat the odds. The gambler personifies odds-beating as Lady Luck. The Ph.D. student instead looks within. "I am really smart. These other people in the program aren't as smart as I am. I will get that tenure-track job. I will make the cut. I will be a beneficiary of the system."

If wishes were horses, beggars would ride. Also, if ego were marketable, all Ph.D. graduates would get tenure.

Why does any Ph.D. student at any but the top graduate schools believe that he will get tenure at any university? The odds are so far against him, and have been for a generation, than he ought to realize that he is about to waste his most precious resource – time – on a long-shot. Investing five or more years beyond the B.A. degree, except in a field where industry hires people with advanced degrees, is economic stupidity that boggles the imagination. Yet at least 200,000 graduate students are doing this at any time. Of the 46,000 who earned a Ph.D. in 2003, at least 50 percent got to ABD status and quit. Probably more than half of the others quit before they got to ABD status.

At \$20,000 or more per year in tuition and living expenses, plus the \$35,000+ not earned in the job market, trying to earn a Ph.D. is a losing proposition.

In some departments, the years invested are horrendous. Breneman's dissertation went into the grim details, department by department. Anyone seeking a degree in philosophy was almost doomed to failure, yet the Ph.D. degree took on average over a decade beyond the B.A. to earn. There were almost no college teaching jobs when they finished. That was before the glut.

## CONCLUSION

Earning a Ph.D. may pay off if your goal is status, although I don't understand why anyone regards a Ph.D. as a status symbol that is worth giving up five to ten years of your earning power in your youth, when every dime saved can multiply because of compounding. If the public understood the economics of earning a Ph.D., people would think "naïve economic loser" whenever they hear "Ph.D."

A word to the wise is sufficient.✍

**Why does any Ph.D. student at any but the top graduate schools believe that he will get tenure at any university? The odds are so far against him, and have been for a generation, than he ought to realize that he is about to waste his most precious resource – time – on a long-shot. Investing five or more years beyond the B.A. degree, except in a field where industry hires people with advanced degrees, is economic stupidity that boggles the imagination.**

Instructor Matt Hall Date May Course English

**PLEASE USE THIS SHEET FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS  
CONCERNING THIS COURSE AND ITS INSTRUCTOR**

Comments will be returned to the instructor AFTER final grades have been posted.

1. What aspects of the teaching and/or the content of this course do you feel were especially beneficial?

getting high with Professor  
Hall before class. kidding.  
Matt Hall's a ritgejuss dood  
funsy and all that ~~sto~~ stuff.  
Serious he taught me right  
better.  
year.

2. What changes could be made to improve this course?

Nada Bakery!  
this guy rocks!  
give 'em a raise!

Matt  
MATTHEWHENRYHALL.COM

**The Joys and Sorrows of Illiterate, Quite  
Possibly Drug-inspired, Student Evaluations**

# Top 10 Non-Acader

by Kevin Tankersley

**W**hen Melissa Epstein was working on her Ph.D. in linguistics at the University of California, Los Angeles, she fostered aspirations of being a Congressional Fellow or working as a policy maker. Those plans “didn’t work out,” she said, and Ms. Epstein now works on the institutional review board at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. She’s in charge of overseeing the “protection of human subjects,” the “lab rats” who volunteer to take part in medical testing.

Ms. Epstein earned a master’s degree in Jewish studies from Oxford and her bachelor’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania is in linguistics and Japanese studies. She also conducted post-doctoral work at the University of Maryland Dental School. At UCLA, Ms. Epstein completed half of her doctoral research in head and neck surgery.

How does all this tie in to her current position at Mount Sinai? “It doesn’t,” she said. “I had to sell myself as somebody new. I had to be somebody different.”

But that normally isn’t a problem for one who possesses a doctorate.

“Someone with a Ph.D. has mastered many skills,” said Dr. Randall S. Hansen, marketing professor at Stetson University in DeLand, Fla. “Ph.D.s develop and enhance numerous transferable skills: analytical thinking, reasoning, communications, organizational and time management ...so it is a matter of cataloging these skills and seeing the jobs for which they can be used.”

The bad news is that not every newly-minted Ph.D. recipient ends up with a teaching position, either by choice or by circumstance. The good news is that there are many opportunities available outside the classroom. Career counselors interviewed for this piece pointed out that Ph.D. holders looking for work outside of academe have a leg up on the competition: their critical thinking skills—the very skills they used to earn those doctorates—will impress an employer, especially one outside of academia.

## Finding Your Passion

“What drove you in this direction? What’s the passion that kept you on the track to an advanced degree?” are two questions Ph.D.s should ask of themselves, suggested Dr. Woody Catoe, who works with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences



as the assistant director of the University Career Center at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina. “They can often play off that in their options.”

Dr. Hansen echoed that sentiment: “I think the best bets for Ph.D.s looking for work outside the academy is to first discover what they are passionate about, the reasons why they went into a Ph.D. program,” said Hansen, who also publishes the career guidance website [www.quintcareers.com](http://www.quintcareers.com) and works with Beyond.com, a network of more than 11,000 websites related to numerous employment, networking, recruitment, certification, and training and issues.

But apart from zeroing in on your passion, what are some of the non-teaching jobs that are out there for a humanities Ph.D.?

“There’s a wide, wide range,” explained Ms. Louma Ghandour, associate director for Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Services at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

# Academic Jobs for Ph.D.s



This range includes jobs in government—local, state, and federal.

Mr. Ghandour pointed out that the city of Houston, Texas, for example, employs workers with doctorates in history and law, while the federal government's Central Intelligence Agency regularly hires people with Ph.D.s in linguistics.

Government at all levels "is looking for people who can think analytically but qualitatively and critically," Ghandour said. "Those are skills students in the humanities have."

Dr. Woody Catoe of the University Career Center at North Carolina State University recommended Ph.D.s in the humanities conduct job searches that include various government agencies. Positions might include responsibilities such as, "...research or policy-making or doing policy analysis or impact studies."

These types of government jobs are perfect for those with a terminal degree in the social sciences, such as sociology or psy-

chology. Said Catoe: "I've seen a lot of positions for policy analysts working for a government entity of some sort. These people come in and examine proposals and legislation, and consult on city operations."

Dr. Catoe also said those who hold a Ph.D. in history and political science are candidates for government jobs as well including, but not limited by any means to, the state department, embassies, the United Nations, and international relief agencies.

A Ph.D. was a requirement for Alexandra Lord when she was named acting historian at the United States Public Health Service. A trained medical historian, Dr. Lord wrote her dissertation on medical understanding of the female body during the 18<sup>th</sup> century to complete her doctoral work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"Everyone in our office has an advanced degree," Dr. Lord said. "Our program assistant is the only one without a doctorate. She has a master's."

The U.S. Public Health Service — which consists of many different agencies including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration, and Indian Health Service — works with the Office of the Surgeon General to provide background information on the history of public health, Dr. Lord said.

"Our office not only provides background information [such as] what happened in the U.S. during the influenza epidemic of 1918-19, but also the context for this information, why the epidemic was so severe, how medical science understood influenza in 1918 and what this meant for the spread of the pandemic etc," Dr. Lord said. "All of this means that I could not do my job without a basic understanding of the development of bacteriology, the medical profession etc., all of which was a key component of my graduate training."

Dr. Lord completed obtained her bachelor's degree from Vassar College; a master's from the College of William and Mary; and held a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco.

Also, "international relief education for a non-profit [agency] is a wonderful outlet for a Ph.D. in political science," Dr. Catoe said. "A lot of people think non-profit equals low salary, and that's not always true. There's a whole world of non-profits that do good work and pay very good salaries."

At the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, for example, a recent employment posting for the

*continued on the next page*

position of program specialist in UNESCO's Ghana office required a doctorate and offered a salary of just over \$91,000. And the Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N. had an opening in its Rome, Italy, office for an interpretation group chief. The qualified candidate needed "excellent knowledge" of at least two languages and a working knowledge of a third. The starting pay for that position was \$108,165.

## Ph.D.s & Non-Government Jobs

Museums and libraries also hire people with Ph.D.s all the time, pointed out Louma Ghandour, associate director for Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Services at Rice University. "Lots of academic libraries within universities are very complex organizations in and of themselves," she said. "Often, [for university librarians] a Ph.D. is required.

Library and museum work has become very, very sophisticated. Ms. Ghandour explained: "It's not just cataloging. There is a lot more research-related work, and [that's why] a Ph.D. is required for the job."

And if cataloging books isn't your passion, how about creating them? Both Dr. Hansen and Ms. Ghandour pointed out that there are many jobs available for people with doctorates in the humanities in the world of publishing. From Pearson Education to Houghton Mifflin, a Ph.D. in the humanities can help you land high-level editing (especially if you have prior book editing experience) positions.

"There is textbook editing, writing one's own work or being a ghostwriter," Ms. Ghandour said. "A lot [of Ph.D. holders] have a passion for writing. That's what motivates them, and there are a lot of openings."

Suzanne Cloud Tapper is a part-time editor at Plexus Publishing in Medford, New Jersey, and has also written four non-fiction books aimed at young adults. Her career in the publishing business began after eight years of adjunct teaching and an unsuccessful search for a fulltime position in academia.

Ms. Tapper secured "a few" interviews after finishing her doctorate in American civilization at the University of Pennsylvania, "but I never got a job."

She partly attributes her fruitless pursuit to ageism – "I was 50 when I got my Ph.D.," she said – and partly to her areas of research interest: African-American history.

University administrators "assumed a black woman was coming for an interview," Ms. Tapper said. "A lot of people don't want white people teaching African-American history."

Besides her literary work, Ms. Tapper, who is also a jazz singer, is the president and a founder of the Jazz Bridge Project, a non-profit foundation dedicated to providing emergency assistance to fellow musicians, their families, and, often, their survivors. "Sixty percent of jazz musicians make less than \$7,000 a year, and with no Social Security, you have major stars being penniless," Tapper said.



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*The most challenging aspect of finding employment is the selling of oneself and one's skills, especially if that self possesses a Ph.D., and is not applying for jobs within higher education. The job search may be more challenging for those who hold a Ph.D. in the humanities rather than in academic disciplines such as engineering, technology, or business.*

## The Hardest Sell

The most challenging aspect of finding employment is the selling of oneself and one's skills, especially if that self possesses a Ph.D., and is not applying for jobs within higher education. The job search may be more challenging for those who hold a Ph.D. in the humanities rather than in academic disciplines such as engineering, technology, or business.

"...Someone with a Ph.D. has mastered many skills. It's more the type of job they would find fulfilling and that an employer would be willing to hire," said Dr. Hansen.

Dr. Catoe of North Carolina State: "They [Ph.D. holders] must sell their value to a potential employer. I encourage them not to just focus on their graduate degrees. Bring out the undergrad degree. It will complement what was done in graduate work, and employers will look at the whole package....That's very valuable to a potential employer."

Rice's Ghandour said the biggest struggle she often faces is having potential employers acknowledge that what a Ph.D. learned in graduate school can translate to jobs outside of higher education. "The biggest struggle is not having them recognize the degrees are in critical thinking," she said. Ph.D.s "have a set of skills and they need to recognize what those skills are and be able to speak about those skills outside of academia."

Human resource directors need to be willing to consider Ph.D.s for jobs outside their primary source of study, said Dr. Robert Weisbuch, president of Drew University and former president

of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation.

Many jobs "you never would have thought of as available to a humanities doctoral student," he said. During Dr. Weisbuch's eight years at the foundation, he recalled an anthropology Ph.D. from the University of Texas who gained employment at a home for delinquent girls who had been sexually abused.

"She used writing and storytelling to improve the girls' self-esteem," he said.

Others Dr. Weisbuch worked with during his time at the foundation include a Ph.D. from Columbia University who writes pamphlets on anti-hate literature for a law group in Washington; a history graduate student from the University of North Carolina who writes biographies of astronauts for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and a historian at Stanford University who worked with a large group of Filipino immigrants to save a housing project and "created a lasting community" of Filipinos.

While there are non-teaching jobs out there, they can often be difficult to locate. Traditional job search Web sites such as Monster.com and CareerBuilder.com contain thousands upon thousands of job postings, but there are other sites that are more specialized.

The Web site of the National Coalition of Independent Scholars – [www.ncis.org](http://www.ncis.org) – contains career advice and links to numerous job-search sites.

*The Chronicle of Higher Education* – [www.chronicle.com](http://www.chronicle.com) – contains job listings for positions both within and outside of academia.

Numerous sites offer job listings for positions within non-profit organizations. Among those:

The Chronicle of Philanthropy – [www.philanthropy.com](http://www.philanthropy.com)

The Council of Foundations – [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org)

The Foundation Center – [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org)

The Federal government's job site – [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov) – allows job seekers to search for positions by location or within any number of federal agencies.

Jobs in linguistics can be found at the Linguist List – [www.linguistlist.org](http://www.linguistlist.org) – which is maintained by linguistic faculty and graduate students at Eastern Michigan University and Wayne State University.

The Sellout Web site – [www.ironstring.com/sellout/](http://www.ironstring.com/sellout/) – describes itself as a "resource for Ph.D.s considering careers beyond the university and is operated by Mark Johnson. He holds a doctorate in English literature and works in the software industry.

So while there are always positions in academia for those holding Ph.D.s, there are also numerous opportunities for those who seek employment outside the hallowed ivory towers of education. It often involves being creative in the job search, but the work is there to be had. ✍

# PAGES



## *The Academic's Handbook*

A. Leigh Deneef, Editor

Crauford D. Goodwin, Editor

Duke University Press, 2007, 416 pages. \$24.95

reviewed by Mark Drozdowski

When I finished graduate school six years ago, I wasn't eyeing a traditional career as a faculty member. Had I been, I would have found *The Academic's Handbook* quite valuable.

This rather meaty volume, now in its third printing (the first edition debuted about 20 years ago), considers everything a budding academic should know about professorial life. It's aimed primarily at newly-minted Ph.D.s who've just landed on the shores of academe, but it also speaks to graduate students ready to shove off. In this sense, it's both a primer and a warning shot across the bow. Over the course of its some 400 pages, the book presents a collection of essays from experienced faculty and administrators, along with others who managed to escape. Most of the contributors, including the two editors, hail from Duke, which published the volume. More on that later.

Let's first dig into the book's guts. Most new faculty, claims the preface, "emerge from the nation's premier graduate schools with very little specific knowledge about how colleges and universities really operate or about what academic life in such institutions is all about." I suppose that's true, though it's hard to believe that someone who has spent, oh, let's say, 12 years in higher education knows next to nothing about the enterprise. But we'll agree with the book's assertion for the sake of argument and move along.

It begins with a taxonomy of the higher education system. We see there are research universities, from which readers have likely hailed, and an array of other four-year institutions and community colleges. Here again, I'll forgive the "Higher Ed 101" approach; some readers may be international students, and therefore relatively uninitiated. The editors don't waste much ink on this anyway.

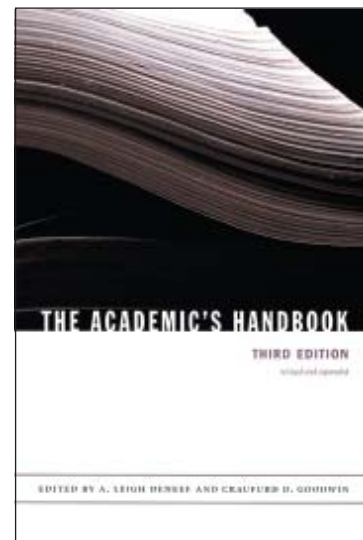
Instead, they focus on the challenges facing new faculty and faculty wannabes. The first matter of business is landing a job. Enter the initial warning shot. One author tells us that Ph.D. students should continually question their career goals given that not all will transition to teaching. The terminal degree, we are reminded, "should never be viewed as a career answer, but rather as an opening of career options."

The book assumes most readers will covet a faculty position, however, so most of the content relates to that desire. Some chap-

ters cover the nuts and bolts of this pursuit—writing cover letters, fashioning CVs, matters of sartorial choice, asking the right questions, giving sample lectures, conversational etiquette, and so forth. That much could be reviewed in a one-hour primer offered by career services. But it's a proper reminder of some of the more mundane issues that fall off radar screens.

Other chapters wax philosophical about subjects such as tenure, academic freedom, grantsmanship, institutional politics and culture, research and publication, and the lot of women and minority faculty. Tenure, we're reminded, does not guarantee lifetime employment and surely does not "insulate the tenured from any and all forms of subsequent evaluation." Yet it remains a worthy goal, especially if speaking your mind without fear of recrimination figures in your long-term plans.

New faculty are encouraged to become involved in the life their institutions, from academic advising to mentoring graduate students to serving on committees. The latter satisfies the academy's thirst for participatory governance, though newbies should heed yet another warning: "Young professors who participate in governance extensively may do so at their peril," claims one author. Why? Opportunity cost, for one. Says the author: "[E]very minute diverted from research is time not devoted to achievement of the primary requirement for advancement." What's more, we're told that such service is "given little weight in assessing a junior colleague's worth or promise." But feel free to volunteer.



And what of that other pesky duty getting in the way of research? You know, that teaching thing. Most authors recognize the importance of good teaching, and a couple of chapters offer tips on delivering lectures and leading class discussions. Also covered are topics such as grading and dealing with plagiarism. Underlying these chapters is the sense that teaching remains a second-class citizen in the quest for tenure, and that pedagogical habits aren't instilled during graduate school. All too true, I suppose. That's a clue to my primary misgiving with this book. Guess it yet? Here's another hint: The author of the chapter on teaching in "small colleges" writes that it's "not unrealistic to envision early career years in a small college setting as a preface to appointment at a research university..., [but] it is not wise to make very public proclamations of such intentions."

You know where I'm headed. The book assumes readers 1) are products of research university graduate programs; 2) teach at one or aspire to; 3) are tenure track; and 4) value the primacy of research over teaching and service. In other words, the book speaks to a fraction of new faculty and all but ignores those who'll spend their careers comfortably ensconced in community colleges, state colleges, small private colleges and universities whose mission exhorts teaching over research. A good portion of the book addresses refereed journals, the scientific community, grant-funded research and academic book publishing. Again, think *Duke*; 23 of the 33 contributors are or have been affiliated with that university, either as faculty or administrators or both. Doesn't that betray the book's orientation?

As such, adjuncts aren't given much thought. One author calls them "a cohort of insecure and poorly paid jobbers." How flattering. Another author claims that "[t]emporary positions involving teaching of even a single course a semester are likely to stall your research progress." And therefore thwart tenure, naturally. Yet another chapter posits that "The image of hordes of aca-

demics desperately accepting multiple poorly paid part-time positions as their only source of employment is certainly overdrawn, but we have no data sufficient to clarify the extent of the phenomenon." Oh, it's extensive. Trust me.

To be fair, those same authors present a useful chapter on "off-track vetting," as they call it. That is, teaching careers off the tenure track. Using Duke as an example, they describe "recent moves to professionalize the non-tenure-track positions at a number of distinguished research universities." For about a decade, Duke has featured "professors of practice (POPs)," scholars off the tenure track who focus on teaching excellence. Duke's psychology department, in fact, counts several POP psychologists among its faculty. (OK, so I embellish....) Similar arrangements, we learn, exist at Northwestern, Michigan and Berkeley. "General interest in part-time positions appears to be growing nationally," say these authors, who call such positions "commonplace and desirable." They conclude that "the frequent public criticisms of non-tenure-track positions as 'second class' at the individual level and 'points of erosion in the overall system of tenure' at the macro-level amount to little more than rear-guard objections to inevitable social change." Let's be clear: they're not discussing adjunct positions but full-time, quasi-permanent, "teaching-focused" appointments at research universities. One more exception to the rule.

So if you're eyeing a tenure-track faculty position in a research university or are newly in one, here's your Bible. If you're not, or you're realistic about your chances of landing one of those (read: slim), digest the book with these constrictions in mind. You'll certainly find valuable information about academic culture, governance and departmental politics, and you'll be reminded that development officers like me control the grants process (thanks, guys). Most readers of *Adjunct Advocate*, I suspect, will feel as though the book relates to a different audience.✍

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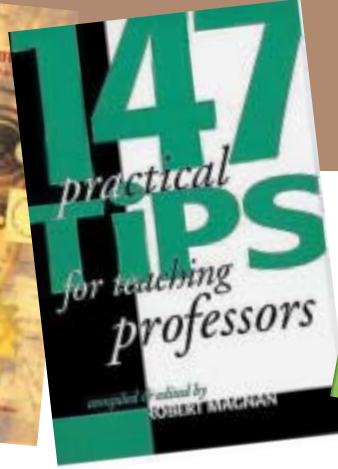
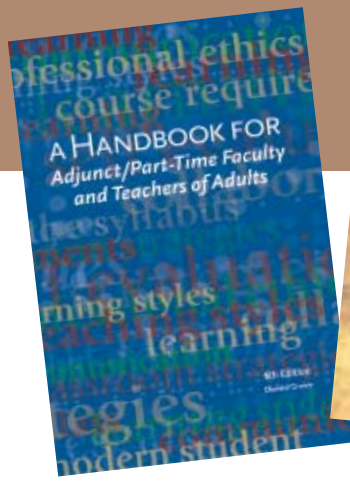
# PAGES

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by P.D. Lesko

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Charles Bonwell, James A. Eison

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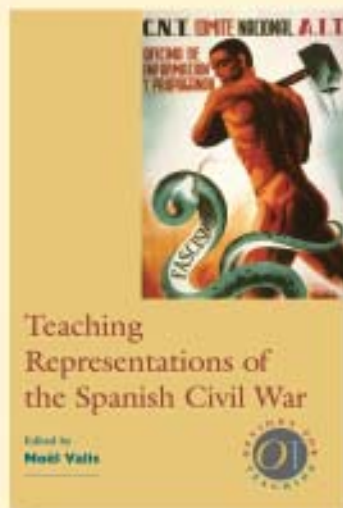
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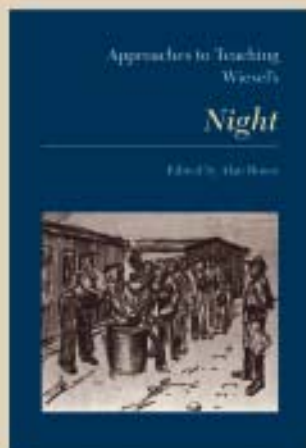
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