

Contract Faculty, Tenure-Line Faculty, and the Changing University¹

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During the 2008-2009 year, the Joint Administration-Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP) Work-Life Committee carried out a study focused on work-life issues for faculty at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The study included a survey of the faculty, and focus groups with associate professors, assistant professors, and lecturers. In this report, we provide a summary of our central findings regarding contract faculty (also known as “contingent” faculty) and how they compare to tenure-line faculty. As in the rest of the country, the University has increased its reliance on contract faculty as the population of tenure-line faculty has decreased.

However, UMass is one of the few universities with a faculty union, the Massachusetts Society of Professors, and is among a handful of universities that includes (both full-time and part-time) contract faculty in the faculty union, on the grounds that strengthening their working conditions fortifies the professoriate overall (Berry 2005; Clawson 2009). This inclusion gives contract faculty significantly more status, better pay and benefits, improved working conditions, and more job security. As a result, contract faculty are better protected at UMass than at the vast majority of universities and colleges in the United States. Yet, these positions remain, by definition, less stable than tenure-system positions.

In this report, we explore the experiences and concerns of contract faculty at the university, as well as how an increasing number of contingent faculty has changed the university in a variety of ways. This report is meant to help the Work-Life committee, which is jointly composed of administrators and MSP members, to identify the issues most important to contract faculty, or that reflect the changing composition of faculty at UMass, in hopes of ameliorating any problems.

Key findings include these:

- A combination of increasing student enrollment, decreasing numbers of total faculty, and increasing numbers of contract faculty, has led to significant pressures on UMass faculty – both contract and tenure-line.
- UMass contract faculty report working slightly less than sixty hours each week, with significant time spent on teaching, advising, service, and research. Many contract faculty voice that they are generally only recognized for certain elements of their work, though they engage in a wide range of activities.
- Both contract and tenure-line faculty have faced an increased burden of service; some of this is connected to the decrease in tenure-line faculty, and particularly, tenured faculty at the university. In addition, the challenge for contract faculty to engage in governance while also having serious responsibilities elsewhere has substantial impacts on all faculty.
- UMass contract faculty spend somewhat more time than tenure-line faculty on housework and care for children, elders, and others needing long-term care. These

¹ We gratefully acknowledge the helpful comments of Dan Clawson and Karen Cardozo, and the invaluable assistance of Abby Templer, Swati Birla, Lori Reardon and Brian Baldi on this project, which was funded by the Office of Faculty Development's Mellon Mutual Mentoring fund, the UMass Provost's Office, and the Massachusetts Society of Professors.

differences are true for both men and women contract faculty. At the same time, contract faculty are more likely to have young children, while they have less access to work-life benefits, such as paid parental leave.

- UMass contract faculty, due to their short contract periods, feel very vulnerable, despite union protection. They express concern about whether grievance processes can expeditiously allow them to challenge unexpected increases to their workload, and whether they are adequately protect if they complain or file a grievance about their workload.

Literature

Over the last several decades, American universities have increasingly relied on contingent faculty who are not in the tenure-stream. As universities have lost public subsidies, but continued to teach more students and grant more undergraduate and graduate degrees every year, they have sought to create cost-savings and flexibility by hiring contingent faculty, who generally earn less than tenure-stream faculty (Berry 2005; AAUP 2003; Ehrenberg 2006; Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007; Bousquet 2008). These faculty members have substantially less job security than tenure-line, and particularly, tenured faculty. As Curtis and Jacobe (2007, p. 5) argue:

Where formerly most faculty were employed full time and held appointments that either provided the academic freedom and economic security of tenure or would lead to consideration for that status, the most rapid growth in recent years has been in two categories of contingent faculty appointments: part-time positions generally limited to a single course for a single academic term, and full-time fixed-term positions, most often for one to three years of employment that do not lead to consideration for tenure.

Between 1975 and 2003, full-time contract faculty appointments increased from 13 to 19 percent of all faculty, while part-time contract faculty appointments increased from 30 to 46 percent of all faculty (Curtis and Jacobe, 2007, pp. 5-6). *Contingent faculty now compose two-thirds of all faculty appointments* (Clawson 2009). Women compose the majority of contract faculty, but the minority of tenure-line faculty (Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007). In addition, new appointments are more likely to be contingent positions: “through the 1990s, in all types of institutions, three out of four new faculty members were appointed to non-tenure-track positions.” (AAUP 2003, p. 99). In *Restructuring the Academic Work and Careers*, Jack Schuester and Martin Finkelstein (2006) refer to the dramatic increase in contingent faculty as a “seismic shift” in the American academy; they and others explore the implications of these changes in the academic workplace. Bousquet (2008) refers to this restructuring of academia as “managed higher education,” a marketized system that pays faculty as little as possible by shifting work to contingent faculty. Berry (2005, p. 3-4) similarly notes, “Higher education, like much of the rest of American society, has become more market-oriented and corporate in the last thirty years. . . . The casualization of the faculty workforce is the leading edge of this corporatization.”

Contingent faculty are usually less protected, less well paid, and more vulnerable than tenure-line faculty (AAUP 2003; Altbach, Berdahl, and Gumpert 2006). The tenure system provides significant support for faculty, as it establishes a long-term investment of universities in their faculty (and vice versa). For contract faculty, commitments are relatively short-term, and reappointment processes are less bureaucratized (Schuester and Finkelstein 2006; Curtis and Jacobe 2007). Indeed, most contract positions are very brief, lasting for one or two semesters,

with one-year appointments the norm among full-time contract faculty (AAUP 2003). This lower level of commitment comes with the potential for threatening academic freedom, a principle which is crucial to ensuring free inquiry, expression, and the betterment of humankind (AAUP 2003). Yet, academic freedom rests on the principle of peer review; without systems of peer review of academic due process, many contingent faculty do not experience academic freedom.²

Universities often expect full-time contract faculty to teach more courses than tenure-line faculty, giving them less time to focus on their research (which can hamper their mobility), and with fewer expectations for their service to the university. As Bousquet (2008) notes, this is part of the “smoothly functioning new system” of faculty labor in the United States. Other full-time contract faculty may be hired for research-only positions, making them reliant on “soft-money” grants. Part-time contract faculty are often in the most vulnerable positions – lacking office space, access to teaching and research resources, engagement with other faculty about the curriculum or university governance more generally (Berry 2005; Curtis and Jacobe 2007; Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007). Many part-time faculty also teach at multiple institutions, working full-time hours, but categorized as part-time nonetheless; indeed, most part-time faculty rely entirely on their work as faculty for their salaries, rather than having “other” careers (AAUP 2003). These appointments, by hiring faculty for only a piece of their academic expertise, erode the “integrity of the profession, founded on the interaction of research, teaching, and service (AAUP 2003, p. 98). All in all, the increased reliance on contingent faculty has created something of a bifurcated (or perhaps trifurcated) system, with tenure-line faculty, full-time contract, and part-time contract faculty experiencing inequalities in the experience and rewards for their positions, as well as a potential loss of the sense of academic community (Gappa, Austin, and Trice 2007).

With increasing numbers of contingent faculty, there are a variety of potential impacts on the university. While many contingent faculty are excellent scholars and teachers, they are often unable to develop long-term relationships with students. At the same time, if universities do not provide contingent faculty with access to office space, instructional technology, and involvement in decision-making about curricula, effective work with students is hampered (Curtis and Jacobe 2007). Although informal interactions with faculty are critical to student success, contingent faculty are less likely to be able to engage with students informally, because of high turnover, high demands on their time (particularly when piecing together jobs at different institutions), and lack of office space for these interactions. Universities with higher numbers of contingent faculty tend to have lower graduation rates, not necessarily because these faculty are less skilled, but perhaps due to a lack of support and ability to develop lasting relationships with students (Ehrenberg 2006). In addition, because their re-appointments may depend heavily on their student evaluations, contingent faculty may have less autonomy in the classroom to develop critical thinking skills among their students by discussing controversial topics.

In terms of their careers more broadly, contingent faculty are also often less able to move into tenure-line appointments, in part due less support for their research and scholarship (Schuester and Finkelstein 2006). Without opportunities for professional development (for example, support for conference attendance, research time, lab space, presentations, publications), contingent faculty must work overtime in order to ensure high quality and current knowledge of their fields. They also express lower levels of job satisfaction with their work, and frustration at being treated with less respect or as if they are “invisible” (Berry 2005; Schuester and Finkelstein 2006; Curtis

² However, Cardozo (2010) argues that, in some cases, contract faculty may have greater academic freedom, because they are not subject to internal peer review.

and Jacobe 2007; Bosquet 2008). Across a variety of disciplines, newly minted PhDs are increasingly taking contingent faculty positions before attaining tenure-line appointments; yet, unfortunately, a good portion of these faculty – particularly those working as part-time faculty – never do attain tenure-line appointments, leaving them in a catch-22 position (Curtis and Jacobe 2007).

Increasing numbers of contingent faculty also change how universities operate. While tenure-line faculty are expected and compensated for teaching, scholarship, and service, contract faculty rarely are compensated for shared governance, administrative work, or even their scholarly accomplishments (AAUP 2003). Yet, with increasing numbers of contingent faculty, fewer tenure-stream faculty exist to engage in running the university, while faculty become more and more marginalized within university decision-making. The strength of faculty governance is threatened both by the high turnover of and the exclusion of contingent faculty from governance (AAUP 2003). As Curtis and Jacobe (2007, p. 16) note, “The shrinking ranks of tenured and tenure-track faculty must share the weight of institutional service among fewer eligible individuals and wield a correspondingly weaker collective voice.” With less faculty power and engagement, universities have a great deal to lose.

Given this backdrop, what are the experiences of contract faculty at the University of Massachusetts? As noted earlier, contract faculty at the university – particularly full-time – have greater protections than in many other universities. Yet, how do they, and their tenure-stream colleagues, experience the changing university?

Methods

Data were collected as part of a faculty caregiver equity study commissioned by the Joint Administration-MSP Work-Life committee, and funded by the MSP, the provost’s office, and the Office of Faculty Development. To best understand the experience of faculty the researchers used both surveys and focus group interviews.

Our data collection process is documented in detail in a separate report (Templer et al. 2009). Survey data were collected in December 2008 and February 2009, through a web-based survey, as well as a paper survey sent through campus mail. Although the email request came from the Massachusetts Society of Professors, deans and department chairs also promoted survey participation. It was stressed that faculty only participate in the survey once. Seven hundred and twenty people started the surveys (a 61% response rate), but only three hundred and forty nine faculty completed surveys, (a 30% response rate).³ We focus our analyses on the 349 completed surveys.

Men were somewhat underrepresented and women were somewhat overrepresented in our sample, although men and women faculty compose similar proportions—53% of the sample is female while 45% is male.⁴ The higher response rate for women than men in this sample is consistent with other campus studies that address work-life and work-family balance (University of Wisconsin, 1999; Suitor et al. 2001). There was relatively good representation by college; however, faculty in the College of Engineering and the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics were slightly underrepresented, while members of the College of Social and Behavioral Science were slightly overrepresented.

³ This response rate is average for a web-based survey (Shih and Fan 2008).

⁴ In comparison, the population gender composition is 38% women and 61 % men.

The survey included time-use measures for professional and personal activities, with special attention to caregiving responsibilities broadly defined as time spent caring for children, elders, or other long term care. Although we have no University-wide data on care – many survey respondents were parents. This may reflect realities in the larger population, although it may be that parents were more likely to respond to our survey. The time-use component of the survey used stylized questions for professional and personal activities. Stylized questions provide respondents with a fixed set of categories (e.g. how much time did you spend on research, teaching, and mentoring).⁵ We maximized reliability by providing a discrete list of activities for each category of time use. The following list explains the activities listed in the surveys.

- **Research or Creative Activities:** Research, reading, writing, meeting with research assistants or collaborators, presenting at conferences, practicing, performing, directing, or composing
- **Teaching:** Teaching undergraduate and graduate courses or independent studies, teaching preparation, grading, emailing and office hours
- **Mentoring:** Assisting with senior theses, serving on committees, reading and commenting on papers, advising, emailing and writing letters of recommendation
- **Service to the University:** Serving on committees, attending meetings, emailing, organizing or participating in workshops or forums, mentoring and advising other faculty members, participating in faculty senate, and holding MSP leadership positions.
- **Service to your Professional Discipline:** Reviewer for professional journal, press, or foundation/agency, editor for professional journal, peer-review panels, serving on associational committees, attending meetings, emailing & organizing conferences or workshops, application of expertise, technology transfers, clinical work
- **Housework and Home Maintenance:** Shopping, cooking, cleaning, laundry, paying bills, and home repair
- **Childcare:** Meeting the needs of or spending time with children and teenagers under the age of 18
- **Eldercare:** Providing physical care, emotional support, spending time with, and assisting with daily living tasks, finances, transportation, or housekeeping, for adults age 65+
- **Other Long Term Care:** Providing physical care, emotional support, spending time with, and assisting with daily living tasks, finances, transportation, or housekeeping, for a family member or friend between the ages of 18 and 65

Respondents were asked to provide weekly time use estimates for professional and personal activities for the five-day workweek (120 hours) and for the weekend (48 hours). We asked them to provide us with data for the preceding week, or if that week was atypical, a typical week.

Six focus group luncheons for faculty were held in April of 2009. All contract, assistant, and associate faculty members were sent an email invitation to participate in the focus groups, of the 100+ faculty who responded to the invitation, 65 participated. Faculty worked in small groups of 3-5 for the first 15-20 minutes. Each group answered: (1) what challenges have you experienced regarding work-life balance while employed at the University of Massachusetts and (2) what types of programs, services, and/or other support would help you most in terms of navigating work-life balance? After working in small groups a larger group discussion was facilitated by representatives from the MSP and the Office of Faculty Development.

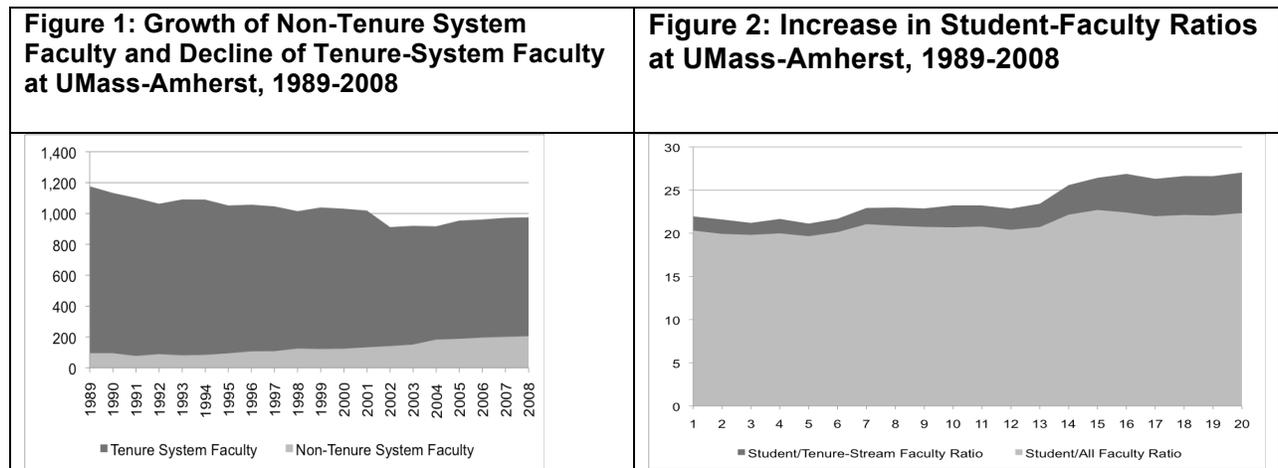
⁵ This is in contrast to time diary or beeper studies where respondents simply report what they were doing at a given time. While we would have preferred the time diary or beeper approach, it would have been prohibitively expensive. Stylized questions are still the most widely used form of time-use data collection since they are more affordable than time-diary or beeper studies.

By rank, contract faculty were slightly underrepresented compared to the overall population. In the population data, 21% of all faculty are contract faculty, as compared to 17% in our survey sample. In particular, relatively few part-time contract faculty (12) participated in the survey, though full-time contract faculty (48) had more robust response rates. For the focus groups, we had a relatively high number of contract faculty (23) attend – although all of these were full-time faculty. This means that contract faculty were actually over-represented, as compared to the overall faculty population (35% of the faculty interviewed were contract faculty). We expect that our findings are more representative of the experience of full-time than part-time faculty.

Findings

American higher education has dramatically changed over the last several decades. On the one hand, public subsidies to universities have dramatically decreased (Clawson 2009); on the other hand, universities are increasingly moving away from relying on primarily tenure-system faculty for instruction, to relying on contingent – both part-time and full-time – faculty, who are not in the tenure stream. As Clawson (2009, p. 1147) documents, core tenure-system faculty now make up less than a third of all faculty nationwide. Although UMass still has a majority of its faculty concentrated in tenure-line positions, the general trend toward increasing contract faculty is also true at UMass, as shown in Figure 1.

This shift – to both fewer total faculty and a larger proportion of contract faculty – must also be read in the context of growing student enrollment at the university. As Figure 2 shows, this same period witnesses the increasing student-faculty ratio both for tenure-stream faculty, and for all faculty. Not only have the numbers of total faculty been reduced while contract faculty have increased (from 1271 to 1180 total faculty and from 95 to 205 contract faculty) – but enrollment has been growing through this same period (from a low of 23028 in 1992 to a high of 26360 in 2008). Such a shift suggests higher work-time pressures on faculty at the university.



Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 describes some of the characteristics of the contract faculty at the university. As in higher education more generally, lecturers are more likely to be women, as compared to tenure-stream faculty. In our sample of mostly full-time lecturers, we did not find a more racially and ethnically diverse contract faculty. This may be an indicator of the rural, less diverse region where UMass is located; other studies have noted that the diversity of contract faculty varies from place to place (Berry 2005). Contract faculty are partnered at equal rates as tenure-stream

faculty, and are more likely to be parents of young children. While contract faculty are somewhat less likely to be over 55, they are more likely than tenure-stream faculty to be between 45 and 55. Contract faculty composed 17% of the sample.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Contract and Tenure-Stream Faculty

	Contract	Tenure-Stream
Women	57.1%	52.3%
Men	42.8%	47.3%
White	81.7%	79.2%
Non-white	18.3%	20.8%
Partnered	82.9%	81.6%
Not Partnered	17.1%	18.4%
Parent	61.7%	68.7%
Parent of Child<12	43.3%	35.9%
Parent of Child <19	45.6%	46.6%
Childless	38.3%	31.8%
< 36	15.0%	13.7%
36-45	33.3%	31.8%
46-55	36.7%	27.5%
>55	15.0%	26.8%

Across colleges, there are some interesting differences, although when we compare the sample to population estimates collected by the Office of Institutions Research, our sample is fairly representative of the population in each college. For both the population and our sample, the largest numbers of contract faculty are in the School of Management, School of Education, and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (more than 17% of all faculty). Similarly, the population estimate for contract faculty in engineering is 2%, and we did not have any contract faculty in engineering in our population (Office of Institutional Research, www.umass.edu/oir). Clearly, contract faculty are not evenly dispersed across the colleges.

Working Patterns

Time-use findings suggest that there are important differences in the working patterns of contract and tenure-line faculty. In Figure 3, we summarize the key work-time dimensions of their work, focusing on mean hours⁶ spent on different activities for full-time faculty only.⁷ Both tenure-stream and contract faculty report long hours – with **contract faculty working approximately 59 hours a week**. As one contract faculty member noted, the “*work we’re given is in excess of 40 hours, but required to work . . . with no compensation for the hours I work outside of the office.*” (April 28). Another commented in an open-ended response on the survey, “*Is there a defined ‘lecturer’ position across the board, with the same basic requirements? It is not clear, and difficult to figure out what, exactly [what] my time commitments are meant to be. A 40 hour week?*”

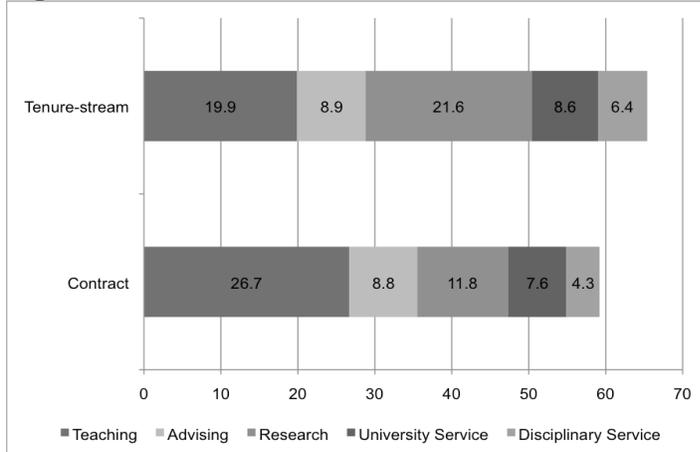
Yet despite these long hours, contract faculty earned approximately thirty thousand dollars/year less than tenure-stream faculty. This disjuncture was troubling to a number of contract faculty, who also seemed aware of pay differences by college. One noted, “*If I taught [a certain course]*

⁶ Medians for this data are very similar to means.

⁷ The 12 part-time contract faculty who responded to the survey tended to spend less time on teaching and advising; significantly less time on service; and more time on research (although still less time on research than tenure-line faculty).

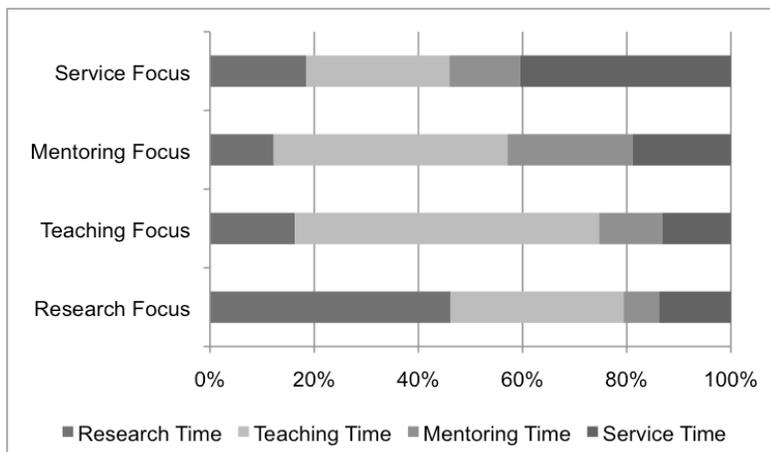
in the School of XX rather than the School of YY, I could triple my salary. I stay because I value YY, but they shouldn't be that discrepant.” (April 3) Another argued, “It is a systematic failure. When there is such an unequal workload, and a very scary unequal pay scale, people in lower positions will always pay the price in terms of quality of life. . . middle and low-level workers who are always underpaid, lack parity with those doing similar work, and who are given expectations that are not shared by those working at a higher level.” (April 28)

Figure 3: Work-Time Patterns for Full-Time Tenure-Stream and Contract Faculty



Although Figure 3 may make it appear that tenure-stream faculty specialize in research, while contract faculty specialize in teaching, there is significant heterogeneity among contract faculty (as well as tenure-stream faculty). In Figure 4, we examine all contract faculty (both part-time and full-time), and characterize them by how they spent their time. Contract faculty that spend more than the mean number of hours of all faculty (tenure-stream and contract) on research are characterized as having a research focus; those who spend more than the mean number of hours on teaching are characterized as having a teaching focus; those who spend more than the mean number of hours on advising and mentoring are characterized as having a mentoring focus; and those who spend more than the mean number of hours on service as characterized as having a service focus. While some contract faculty have more than one focus, this display is meant to highlight the variation among contract faculty.

Figure 4: Work-Time Patterns for Full-Time and Part-time Faculty who Focus on Particular Areas



As Figure 4 should illustrate, contract faculty who focus on research are spending a significant amount of their time on research – more than on teaching, mentoring, or service, and more than most tenure-line faculty. Contract faculty who focus on either teaching or mentoring spend the majority of their time on teaching, and more time on advising than the contract faculty who focus on research. Contract faculty who focus on service and administration are spending the majority of their time there. *All* types of contract faculty, however, spend some time on all four elements of the faculty workload. While there are a few contract faculty who reported spending no time on one of these elements (the same is true for tenure-line faculty), the vast majority are engaged in research, teaching, mentoring/advising, *and* service.

While fifty percent of contract faculty spent eight or fewer hours on research every week; ten percent of contract faculty spent thirty or more hours on research every week. Contract faculty who focus on research are often employed on “soft money” – working on funded research grants, and often submitting grants to fund their own salaries. These faculty members may have very high workloads and stress levels; indeed, although the average work time for contract faculty is a 59 hours/week, average work time for fourteen contract faculty with a research focus in our sample is more than 66 hours/week – closer to the average work time for tenure-stream faculty, despite their lower salaries and job security.

In addition, research activities and professional development are important for other contract faculty as well, both for their career growth and their pursuit of employment elsewhere. Since most lecturers are on temporary teaching contracts that may or may not get renewed, there is great pressure to remain marketable in the case that they find themselves without a job at the end of the contract year. In our survey, the eighteen lecturers who were hired since 2005 spent 15.3 hours/week on research, compared to the 10.7 hours/week on research spent by the other forty-two lecturers. One lecturer added, *“when we are on 1-2 year contracts, we have to do the professional development; if you don’t, you shoot yourself in the foot.”* (April 10) Almost all contract faculty discussed the need to continue their research and professional development so that they could remain current in their field. This includes time for reading current research, publishing, attending conferences, and the like. One contract faculty suggested that sabbaticals should be available for lecturers, *“There is a senior lecturer status now, which is good. But when people are here for the long term, they still need the opportunity to stay current and stay respectable in the field. This would be giving them the time to do it.”* (April 2)

On average, however, teaching takes up a significant amount of most contract faculty’s work-time and Figure 4 makes it clear that almost all contract faculty – including those with a research focus – are involved in teaching (only one contract faculty member in our sample did not teach any classes). However, this does not mean that their teaching is fully supported. Contract faculty members lamented the fact that students’ educational experience can suffer as the result of lecturer faculty turnover and instability:

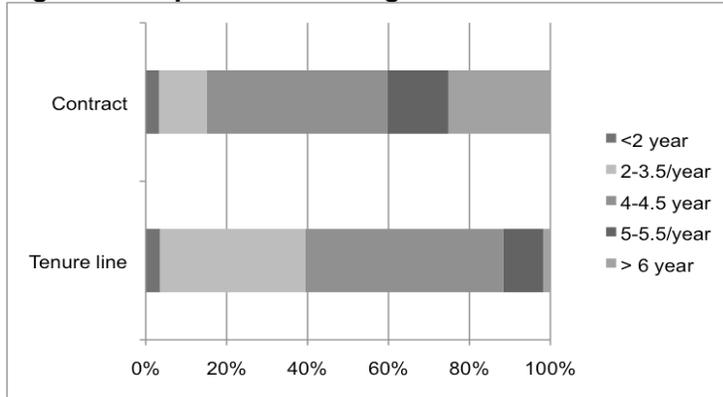
Not being in tenure system shouldn’t preclude longer term job security. We feel this improves the quality of education. (April 10)

Advising and a letter of recommendation is what you are doing with your students. If the person who made this relationship with the student. . . is gone after a year it is a disservice to the students... Students are the big loser with the current system. (April 10)

Yet, many contract faculty who focus on teaching discussed the double bind of balancing large course loads along with advising and service obligations, while at the same time feeling pressure to keep up a research agenda. In our survey, we found that faculty reported that

contract faculty usually had higher teaching loads than tenure-line faculty, though of course teaching loads are extremely variable across campus. As Figure 5 shows, only about 10% of tenure-line faculty report teaching five or more courses a year, as compared to 40% of contract faculty – with many of those teaching 6+ courses each year.

Figure 5: Reported Teaching Loads for Contract and Tenure-line Faculty



Our results also show that contract faculty spend a substantial amount of time on service each week. To return to Figure Three, tenure-stream faculty spend only about one hour more a week than contract faculty on service for the university, and another two hours a week on disciplinary service. As this figure show, contract faculty are also involved in service and governance activities both for the university and their wider disciplines. Yet, on average contract faculty spend about 12 hours a week on service and governance, and some contract faculty, as noted in Figure Four, spend 40% of their time on their service activities.

The extent of service work engaged in by contract faculty was a frequent item of discussion in the focus groups. Although lecturers are not usually required to sit on committees, many do. This leads to difficult trade-offs, especially for those with very high teaching loads. As one contract faculty member reported, it feels like *“doing two jobs at once. Teaching a 3-4 load, while also performing a huge staff position.”* Another noted, *“there needs to be more equitable treatment across lecturers, we want to be able to serve on committees, and while we aren’t required to, it’s important that we do so, but we want to have lower teaching loads if we are doing committee work.”* (April 3) Contract faculty also expressed concern about how difficult it can be to turn down service requests: *“We can never turn down a request with the justification that it will hurt the quality of our teaching the way they [tenure-line faculty] can do for the sake of research.”* (April 28)

One focus group participant noted that contract faculty in Commonwealth College sit on an average of 3 committees (April 3). Indeed, in our survey, we find that the five Commonwealth College lecturers who answered the survey reported higher levels of service than either the Commonwealth College tenure-line faculty or non-Commonwealth College contract faculty. Commonwealth College lecturers reported on average 14 hours of service a week. Although these numbers are based on only five cases, Commonwealth College faculty voiced similar concerns in the focus groups. Additionally, since there are relatively few tenure-line faculty in Commonwealth College, this may place a greater burden of service on contract faculty. Currently, Commonwealth College is reconfiguring, and hiring tenure-line faculty outside of the college, so many of the contract faculty who have devoted substantial time to the College are faced with the loss of their jobs.

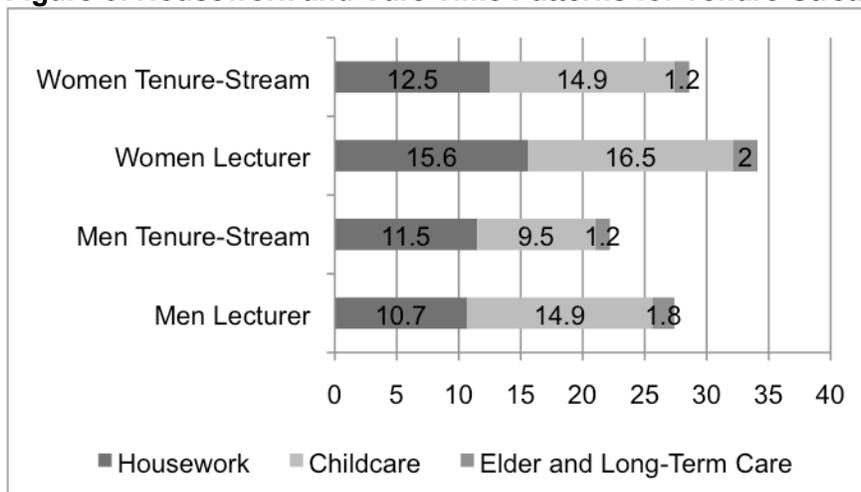
All in all, the work-time data shows us that contract faculty are spending substantial amount of time working for the university, and are engaged in many types of work. As one contract faculty suggests, “long-term contracts. . . [could] allow faculty to specialize in area of interest with performance benchmarks to encourage quality work.” (April 30). All faculty, including contract faculty, need support for their research and professional development, as well as their teaching, advising/mentoring, and service.

Work-Life Balance

In addition to professional work, contract faculty balance housework, and care for children, elders, and others. Figure 6 describes housework and care time for contract and tenure-stream faculty, divided by gender. Women spend more time on housework, although contract women spend more than tenure-stream women on housework. While overall, men spend less time on care than women, lecturer men spend slightly more time on childcare, eldercare, and long-term care than tenure-stream women. Women lecturers spend the greatest amount of time on housework, childcare, eldercare, and long-term care. Being in less permanent positions appear to be related to higher levels of care – although it is unclear if higher care responsibilities shape employment opportunities, or vice versa.

Making decisions about how to balance work and home was still difficult for lecturers. One faculty member noted, “The amount of time required to address all the parts of my work well makes it very difficult to give the time I want to give to my family.” (response to open-ended question on survey) Another added: “Not having parity with tenured colleagues, I end up having to do their responsibilities as well, which pressures me to take time away from my family.” (April 10) A lecturer in a research appointment noted that he makes it a rule not to work one weekend day: “I made a decision early on to have one day a week I don’t open my computer, part of it is religiously motivated, but also I could be in this job another 40 years and I want to still be on my feet when I am in my 60s. . .” (April 28)

Figure 6: Housework and Care Time Patterns for Tenure-Stream and Contract Faculty



Contract faculty also face barriers to use of existing work-life policies. For example, contract faculty members must have worked at the university in a full-time, state-funded position for 6 years before being eligible for a parental leave. As contract faculty members noted, “Lecturers . . . [have] no access to family leave, sabbatical” (April 30), and “For non tenure-line there should be benefits so that [they] can consider starting a family.” (April 3) Contract faculty also noted

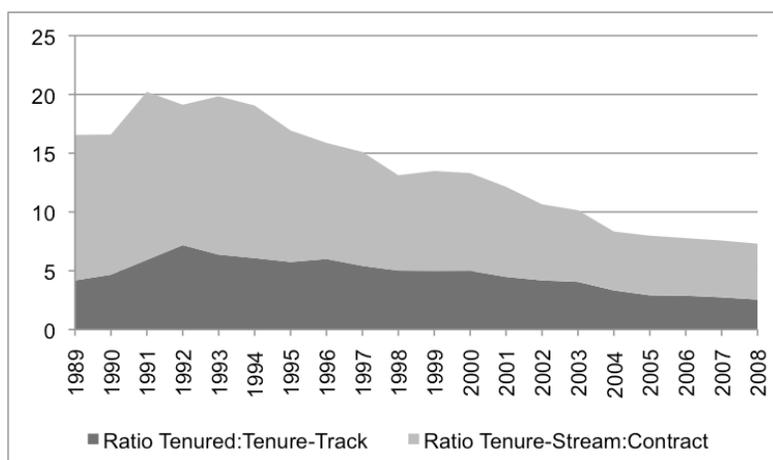
that taking an unpaid parental leave might be dangerous: *“taking time off jeopardizes job.”* (April 3)

As Lundquist et al. (2010) notes, only four contract faculty parent in the survey met the requirements to take parental leave. The average age at hire for tenure-line faculty (34) is much younger than for contract faculty (42). By the time the average contract faculty member becomes eligible for parental leave, they are nearing the age of fifty. Unless women contract faculty plan to adopt, this family benefit is symbolic at best. One focus group respondent noted, *“You are hired at 35, and 6 years later you are eligible”*; another responded with, *“By then your eggs have dried up.”* (April 3). These different standards of benefit eligibility exacerbate existing inequalities between tenure line and contract faculty.

Changing Contexts at the University

While the previous sections have considered the demographics, work-time, and work-life issues for contract faculty, another concern may be in how the university has changed, and how increasing numbers of contract faculty may affect the university, and particularly issues of governance. As Figure 7 shows, over the past twenty years, as older faculty have retired, the ratio of tenured to tenure-track faculty has declined remarkably. With fewer senior faculty to take on and lead in service roles, at the same time that service needs have risen, university governance has become increasingly more difficult.

Figure 7: Tenured to Tenure-Track Faculty Ratios, and Tenure-Stream to Contract Faculty, 1989-2008



At the same time, the ratio of tenure-stream to contract faculty has also been decreasing. Most contract faculty face lower expectations regarding involvement in governance decisions, as they are seen as “short-term” employees. But as our survey data shows, many are spending significant time on service and governance. This may be a reflection that the burden has become too large to be shouldered only by tenure-line faculty; yet contract faculty earn significant less than tenure-line, while often facing higher teaching loads.

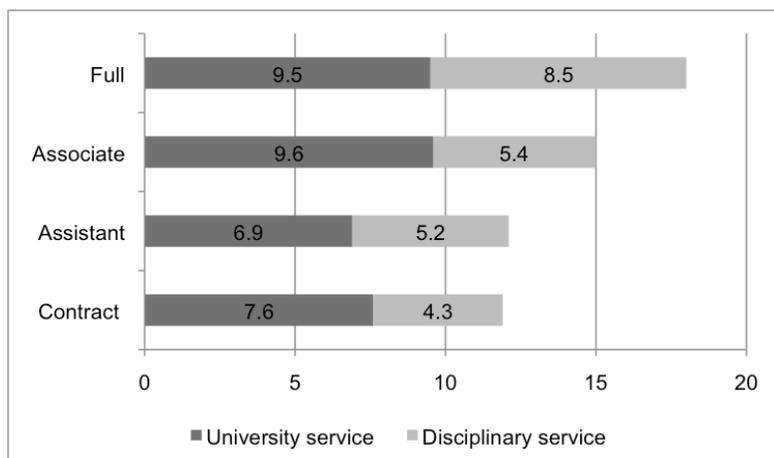
The outcome of the decreasing numbers of senior faculty and increasing number of junior and contract faculty is that service burdens are unequally distributed. While junior faculty have been somewhat protected from overly demanding service obligations, and contract faculty are engaged in some, but not all, governance activities at the university, senior faculty are responsible for significant service.

In our focus groups, associates discussed at significant length the difficulties of this distribution of service work. As one faculty member argued, *“I have been here a long time, and the amount of administrative work that is expected [of faculty] has increased exponentially”* (April 30). Because senior faculty cannot be forced to take part in governance, some faculty also expressed concern about the uneven distribution of service within their departments and colleges. As one participant argued, to nods around the room: *“I have colleagues who have not seen service in 10 yrs.”* (April 7) At the same time, associate faculty expressed concern about the undervalued and unrewarded nature of service work: *“service is considered ‘volunteer’”* (4/10) and *“I knew there would be service, but I think it is uncompensated.”* (4/24) One participant argued, *“as associate faculty, among the ones that want to go up for full professor...at one level we become penalized.”* Another noted, *“There is a price to pay for the administrative load,”* while a third participant chimed in, *“yes, \$13,000”* (the salary increase associated with being promoted to full professor). (April 7)

Contract faculty also noted that by protecting assistant professors, the university was placing greater pressure on contract faculty to carry out service to the university. As one contract faculty member argued, *“As a lecturer, there is a very big push to protect pre-tenure faculty, not loading them down with administrative work so that they can meet the unrealistic expectations regarding research. Lecturers get dumped on; we don’t have a way to protect our jobs because our job is not defined.”* (April 28) Yet assistant professors also expressed significant concern about their service work: *“When can you say no, or I’ve done enough service, and being a new person how will this be taken, will it jeopardize my career?”* (April 10)

Our survey data bears these concerns out. As Figure 6 illustrates, contract faculty are spending slightly more time on university service than assistant professors, while associate and full professors spend substantially more time on university service than their untenured and contract colleagues.

Figure 6: Service Work-Time Patterns for Full-Time Faculty by Rank

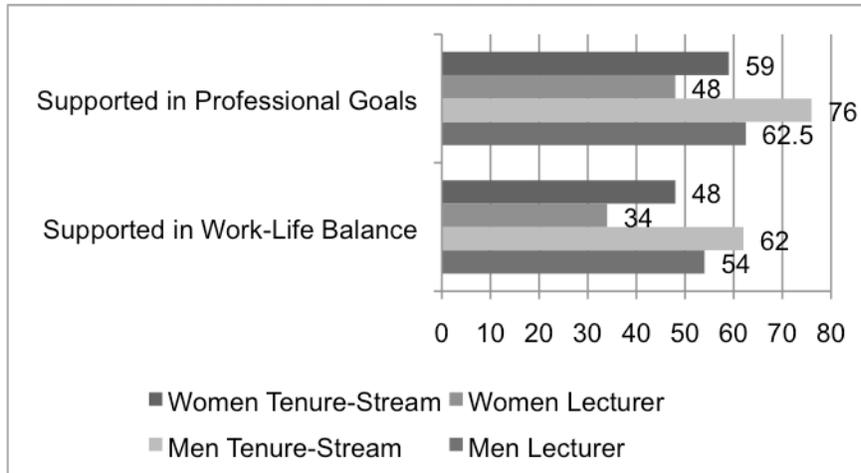


Perceived Support for Faculty & Concerns about Vulnerability

While UMass-Amherst has a number of policies and programs in place meant to support both the professional development and the work-life balance of faculty, faculty are still under significant pressure. In Figure 7, we describe what percentage of contract and tenure-stream faculty feel supported by their department and university in their professional goals and in work-life balance. Both tenure-stream and contract men feel more supported in both of these goals

than either tenure-stream or contract women. At the same time, lecturer men feel less supported than tenure-stream men, and lecturer women feel less supported than tenure-stream women, for both work-life balance and professional goals.

Figure 7: Percentage of Contract and Tenure-Stream Faculty who Feel Supported in Professional Goals and Work-Life Balance



This perceived lack of support affects all faculty, but it has particular resonance for contract faculty. As one contract faculty member noted, “*Non tenure-line faculty need to be valued. . . need the same benefits as tenure-line faculty.*” (April 3) Another argued that the lack of access to benefits for tenure-line faculty, such as parental leave and sabbaticals, creates “*another level of exploitation.*”

Overall, a pervasive sense of vulnerability characterized many of the focus group discussions among contract faculty. Contract faculty, although aware of the greater protections their union status provides them, also feel that they are part of a stratified system that reinforces inequality across the faculty: “*There is a real class difference in tenure system faculty and lecturers - they are an underclass.*” (April 28). As one contract faculty noted, “*Because lecturers are not hired by a national search, it is believed that they could not possibly be as . . . qualified as tenure line faculty who are hired nationally*” (April 3). Contract faculty also argued that various programs and resources on campus are not open or perceived as not open to contract faculty.

Despite being members of a union that can protect their interests, the contract faculty feel a remarkably high sense of vulnerability. Several contract faculty indicated that they had been asked to increase their course load, or had been assigned larger and larger numbers of students, with fewer and fewer TAs. Yet, they did not feel that reporting grievances over these dramatic changes in workload was possible. Some noted that contract faculty, with short 1 or 2-year contracts could simply not be re-hired for an additional contract if they complained about working conditions. Contract faculty noted that the time it takes to resolve grievances also makes grieving useless, since contract faculty must follow the instructions of their supervisors until the grievance has been resolved.

Recommendations:

- It is not sustainable for a university to increase enrollment, without also increasing faculty. In such a context, the quality of instruction, governance, and the quantity and quality of research will suffer. Although new technologies such as distance education can help alleviate pressures on classroom space, they do not change the importance of substantial interaction between faculty and students for a strong educational experience. Therefore, enrollments need to be more closely connected to faculty numbers; to increase enrollment must require increasing faculty.
- One strategy has been to increase the proportion of contract faculty among the faculty, as they are a less expensive, more flexible workforce. Yet, for contract faculty to provide a high quality education, they cannot simply be viewed as ever-expandable teaching machines. Instead, they should be able to play a role in governance and should be given opportunities for professional development. Both of these aspects strengthen the institution in ways that would increase quality and prestige. Both full-time and part-time contract faculty's appointments should allow for active engagement with their disciplines, teaching, mentoring, as well as governance, decision-making, and service to the institution and community – and these elements should all be included in both compensation and review. This suggests that workload limits be instituted to ensure that contract faculty are not being asked to work more than 40 hours per week, and are being given opportunities within those 40 hours for service and research activities.
- UMass-Amherst, to its credit, already includes protections and support for long-term continued employment for contingent faculty. The university also ensures that contract faculty are reviewed by their peers through academic due process, to ensure adequate merit compensation for their work (though this is most relevant to contingent faculty with long-term ties to the university). There are many examples of contingent faculty doing exemplary scholarly work and breaking new ground in such areas as Community Service Learning. In addition, the university should help develop “on ramps” – opportunities and support for contingent faculty to be considered for tenure-line positions, since many are in contingent positions due to the shrinking market rather than any reasons of inferior qualifications or merit, while also ensuring that any faculty recruited for tenure-line jobs have good prospects for eventually achieving tenure. By welcoming part- and full-time contingent faculty with “experience, length of service, and a record of accomplishments” into tenure-line positions (AAUP 2003), such efforts should strengthen the faculty as a whole.
- The distribution of service across faculty more generally needs to be reconsidered. Although faculty numbers have been decreasing, service obligations have not also been reduced. Each unit – the university, colleges and schools, departments, programs – should consider the service activities being carried out, and try to identify which service and governance activities are most important, and which are less necessary. New technologies, such as service wikis, should be instituted to create lasting historical documents, which keep faculty from “re-inventing the wheel” anew each academic year.
- Full-time contract faculty should be able to access work-life benefits such as parental leave and sabbaticals, in order to allow their pursuit of work-life balance, as well as the continuation of their research careers.

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