Politics of Service

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"You always worry about saying no because of your perceived willingness to be part of the team."
Study Participant

Often, data reveal insights that have not previously been considered or—at the very least—can be used to display information in a new light. The precarity of contingent work is not a new insight, but our data allows us to pinpoint a new light that we call "politics of service." We are using this phrase to encapsulate several related issues around "service," the first being in the traditional sense, as one key area of faculty evaluation. However, we are also using service to signify broader concerns about the role of service on the relationship between contingent faculty, departments, and institutions.

We draw on the idea of affective investment (see "Affective Investment" article in this special issue for a full definition), and how it underscores the vulnerability of how contingent faculty serve their institutions and how institutions serve contingent faculty. While affective investment provided us a way to understand, in theoretical terms, the contradictions of the labor involved from the perspective of the personal and affective for contingent faculty, politics of service helps us to understand the complex relationship between faculty and the departments and institutions in which they work.

In this article, we provide an extended definition of politics of service and then move to discussions from data and interviews that reflect the material dimensions of how politics of service impacts contingent faculty in three critical areas:

- Service to the Institution
- Evaluations
- Intellectual Property

Defining Politics of Service

Politics of service contains a number of facets that are incorporated into a more precise definition. Although service is listed as a consideration for reappointment, tenure, and promotion, the physical and emotional factors associated with service vary with rank and gender. When a faculty member commits to service activities, that commitment contributes to student success, the overall balance of responsibilities in the department, and support of university organizations. However, these activities may become a burden on those few faculty—especially contingent faculty—who consistently devote time and energy into this invisible society of servers. Although Jean Filetti rightly points out that service is the most ill-defined of the three categories of academic work (i.e., teaching, research, and service), as we mean it, service includes three interlocking parts which are simultaneously contradictory and complementary.

First, we are using service to mean "to do work." Even though teaching is often separated from service and research for tenure-line faculty and described differently for full-time non-tenure-track faculty (FT NTT), our idea of service cannot be separated from the act of doing work for someone: in this case, for an organizational entity. Service, in this regard, then encapsulates not only the act of teaching but also the act of serving students through office hours, conferences, advising, and mentoring. As Theresa Evans points out, "What is most discouraging about contingent work is not so much the lesser status or lesser pay of non-tenure-track instructors compared to tenure-line faculty but rather that teaching is often deemed not even worthy of compensation to sustain a minimally comfortable lifestyle" (88). Because teaching itself is "service," lifelong contingents may make salary concessions because they are participating in the greater good of education. As a key component of the teaching and education mission of institutions, service viewed in this light means that contingent faculty regard their job as both a vocation and a passion, which often puts them in the position to be exploited. "Contingent faculty placate themselves with noble ideals, and institutions gladly accept their willingness to work for so little and to uphold professional values for the sake of students" (Evans 97). However, this mentality oscillates on the border between exploitation and teaching (in all of its positive connotations). Aware that they are educators, contingent faculty focus on the enjoyment they derive from teaching, which makes them more susceptible to saying yes to service—especially when students benefit from service activities. Politics of service draws on and builds on classic work in composition that argues persuasively about gender roles, feminization of composition, and the affective dimensions of service (see e.g., Enos; Schell).

Secondly, outside of the actual job duties defined by contracts, service is bound up in what Evans has called the "the myth of self-sacrifice" for a common good. Evans defines self-sacrifice as "the belief that unpaid or poorly compensated work is acceptable when it serves some greater civic or moral good" (86). In the sense we are using it here, any outside labor or service that is not specifically defined by contracts is deemed self-sacrifice, but self-sacrifice also encompasses taking on additional sections and also supplemental "teaching related" tasks that are often ill-defined and poorly compensated (if at all). For example, FT NTT are on campus for longer periods of time than tenure-line faculty (as a result of the higher teaching load of FT NTTs), and the volume of students taught is higher. Students may have increased opportunities to take more than one course from FT NTTs (versus tenure-line faculty whose teaching presence varies due to sabbatical, research leave, or course equivalency), and that—added to the higher visibility of FT NTTs (physical presence on campus)—results in high numbers of contingent faculty who are invited by students to serve as advisors for internships and undergraduate thesis projects; who are asked to write letters of recommendation for

scholarships, jobs, and graduate school; and who are requested as advisors of student clubs and organizations—all service tasks which are uncompensated. This facet of our definition also includes the constant access that students have to contingent faculty. For example, one participant noted:

> *Because I offer workshops to the undergraduates in our program, they would have access to me even if they didn't take my classes. They craved the personalized help that I offered them. And maybe it's my fault: maybe I shouldn't have proffered my time up so willingly, but I felt it was my duty to 1) serve the students in any way they needed it and 2) add another line to my CV to make sure I was reappointed. In this sense, service is bittersweet to me. I do it because I want to, but I also do it because I feel I have to.*

As we know from our discussion of affective investment, many contingent faculty are in these roles for the students and thus have a difficult time saying no to the countless requests to offer up their time (reviewing resumes, answering emails about networking, offering advice unrelated to the classroom). These examples highlight what we mean by "politics of service" as "self-sacrifice."

Finally, service is being used in the traditional sense of doing the actual work that is necessary through serving on committees (within the department, university, and even for the field in a national capacity) as well as other short-term or specifically defined roles. Among these are program administration, acting as an assessment portfolio reviewer, serving as writing contest judge, or becoming brand ambassador for a program, as many contingent faculty are asked to promote their classes and their programs, which can be a full-time job within itself. Service, in this respect, is expected and is seen (in its most idealistic form) as a shared endeavor that is based on collegiality and the common good. Yet clearly politics remain at play. Additionally, some have observed that:

> Most universities now structure their labor force so that contingent faculty are left out of opportunities for professional development, decisions about curriculum, and discussions about student learning outcomes and program development, etc. This exclusion is deeply gendered, entrenching a largely female workforce in low-status and disempowered positions relative to the work they do. (Adams, Hassel, Rucki, and Yoon 46)

However, if everyone were engaged in the department and service components were clear and regularized along with professionalizing opportunities, the benefits of service would be numerous. As Adler-Kasner and Roen have argued, "Service offers opportunities to make a difference in the lives of many people who are not necessarily affected by

our teaching or our published research." Even considering the current complications with service, it remains an important and valuable contribution to our institutions, as committee service helps to ensure faculty voice in decisions that affect universities.

Beyond these interlocking parts of service, one cannot forget that first-year composition (FYC) and technical and professional communication (TPC) service courses comprise the majority of the teaching loads of contingent faculty in writing studies (see "Results and Findings from the Survey" article in this special issue). Viewing writing as a service to the university community moves us from service to politics. Brad Hammer crystalizes an argument which has long been made that the actual service of FYC "further reinforces an academic hierarchy that substitutes critical inquiry for standards, reduces pedagogy to a set of skills, and further affirms and thereby privileges a hierarchical model for the modern university" (A5). The system of contingency and who teaches what courses in both composition and TPC highlights the ongoing politics of writing instruction and its place within institutional hierarchies. When viewed in this way as a division between what counts (research) and what does not count (teaching and service), no other term except politics can be used. Even teaching *as* service helped shape our definition, which is an ongoing point of many of those who wrote about labor in higher education, such as Adrianna Kezar and Daniel Maxey.

These considerations led us to view the data through a lens of politics. We opted for the use of "politics" because of the word's connections to issues of power and control. We do not mean politics in the sense of national politics and funding issues, as those terms are used in much of the literature about higher education. Even though these sorts of politics have critical impacts on contingent faculty, programs, and institutions, we want to focus on the power, control, and structures that are experienced in the everyday material work lives of contingent faculty. Politics is also an apt term because it encompasses the innate differences found on campuses about the roles and responsibilities of contingent faculty and the ongoing struggles or acquiescence of the role of contingent faculty within departments and the impact on missions. This special issue largely discusses, through contingent voices, the wide range of ways that contingent faculty are employed in both work and service and in how they are protected and listened to (or not). In other words, higher education institutions are highly political because of the ongoing negotiation for resources, which directly impacts the material work lives of contingent faculty.

Politics is the use of (and perception of) strategy in gaining a position of power or control. Contingent faculty lack both power and control regarding their contracts, teaching schedules, office locations, and salaries. Politics, as it relates to institutional structures, also directly connect concepts of labor and service. When considering the data and the material work conditions, we must ask to whom does agency and power

belong and when/how is it attained or wielded? That there is little that faculty can actively do about certain aspects of their positions means that contingency itself is fraught with political ramifications, a politics of powerlessness

Thus, we define politics of service as the influence of structural inequities and hierarchical structures to maintain positions of power while simultaneously encouraging contingent faculty to embrace their service role for the good of the students and institution. Politics of service provides a theoretical framework for understanding the ongoing contradictions found in the role of contingent faculty as they relate to institutional infrastructures and practices.

Politics of service is more directly relational than affective investment. In this sense we mean that framing some of the data in terms of politics of service focuses on the relational aspects between contingent faculty and the institutions they serve. Thinking of contingency in terms of a relationship between faculty and the department and the institution: How can program, departmental, and institutional administrators ask contingent faculty to participate in service in the traditional sense (sit on committees, do advising, further their professional careers, appear at events as departmental representatives) when the institution has often not upheld its equitable end of the relationship? Functioning relationships are dependent on a shared equitable structure that is often absent for contingent faculty as a result of systematized politics and a lack of interactive relationships between faculty with disparate ranks.

Material Dimensions of Politics of Service

As previously stated, our data analysis has revealed several dimensions of a politics of service that illustrate what this looks like in practice. In this section, we look at several of these dimensions:

- Service to the Institution
- Evaluations
- Intellectual Property

Service to the Institution

Embedded within the service role to the institution is the need to understand exactly why service oftentimes has ambiguous definitions and why its components are the least understood of any academic's job. For contingent faculty, service becomes a facet that needs to be defined and better understood. Service to the institution not only means dedicating time and energy to a task, project, event, committee, or student club, but also represents commitment, involvement, and a sense of belonging to the department. Often, contingent faculty who serve desire inclusion as members of the faculty.

As the opening epigram illustrates, many contingent faculty simply feel as though they cannot say no. The culture of service (and the

desire for continuing employment) propels contingent faculty into accepting uncompensated service duties, which is justified by the administration as an opportunity for professionalization, a chance to incorporate all faculty perspectives, and a shift toward inclusiveness. Jean Filletti points to the necessity of service to the function of higher education when she writes, "imagine the landscape of the university if service at the department level, at the university level, at the professional organization level and at the community level did not happen" (345). Filletti opens the door for scholars to consider the double bind contingent faculty then find themselves in. That is, someone has to perform key service roles and often those "someones" are contingent faculty because they feel as though they have no other choice. We are not suggesting that we erase the service or remove the service that contingent faculty do because when we picture the above scenario (what service at our institutions would look like without the help of contingent faculty), the situation is bare and bleak. The critical takeaway here is that institutions cannot demand that this service happen (because who else would do it?) and then withhold credit, support, and compensation from the bodies who are performing the service. In the words of one participant:

> *For committee work in the department, service to the profession nationally, and service to the university, we are given no credit in the annual report scores, yet it is expected that we will participate in these. I personally like to give conference presentations (and very occasionally, when I can find the time, publish articles), but in my position these activities are neither expected nor rewarded.*

While service, professional development, and scholarship are each their own unique labor, it's frustrating for contingent faculty to meet these implicit (and often explicit) expectations of their time with no credit toward reappointment and no compensation for their time.

Service is often a component of earning tenure: "Full-time faculty usually provide office hours, work on curriculum, and serve on search committees. However, many adjuncts wish to perform these duties as a way to feel connected to the institution" (Green 32). When we think about the definition of service, we traditionally imagine service on committees. Committee service is a public interactive activity which—while fraught with its own issues concerning voting, alliances, rank, and backlash—can effectively raise awareness about contingent faculty issues. For contingent faculty, service is not expected and is not a contractual obligation; in some situations, inviting non-term contingent faculty to serve may be considered exploitative of their time in relation to the insufficient income they earn per course section. Let us be clear, however, that our goal is not to recommend less service by contingent faculty; faculty voices in this study show time and again that they want to be involved. They want a seat at the

table. They simply also want to be invited, acknowledged, and credited for their presence.

One participant discussed their commitment to the university in terms of their job. We include their quote here in its entirety, even though it is lengthy, because their words provide an important perspective about the politics of service and the role of contingent faculty in our programs and institutions.:

> *I do not like that I can do nothing to improve my working situation or be promoted. I can commit an extensive amount of time to research and attempting publication--it is not considered as part of my yearly evaluations. I can commit an extensive amount of time to departmental or university service--as a non-tenure-track faculty member, I am not eligible for many opportunities, and if I am eligible, I often do not find out about those opportunities or am not given the chance to apply. Often, non-tenure-track faculty members are seen as not as invested in a department or university; in fact, I feel as or more invested in my program because I do not have the terminal degree required to apply to a nationwide search and family obligations mean I cannot move. I have fewer career opportunities than they do, therefore the same or more investment in the success of the longevity of our program.*

Considering these issues, how do contingent faculty perceive the benefits of college and departmental service? In the pool of part-time faculty who serve, what procedures do these instructors use to gather data and become informed about which committees to serve on and which committees to avoid? More fundamentally, after being elected or appointed to a committee, how do contingent faculty locate and present issues and concerns specific to their jobs to tenure-line colleagues who outrank them? What verbal, non-verbal, behavioral, and diplomatic techniques do part-time faculty adopt when serving?

The reality is that committees are important to professionalization and are pivotal in introducing contingent faculty to the intricacies of department politics. Because "demands for service . . . have swelled because of . . . increased oversight by accrediting and government agencies," creating elected committee positions for contingent faculty would not only maximize the profile of adjunct instructors, but would also generate opportunities for the exploding community of contingent faculty to be represented (Monaghan A8). Additionally, inclusion of contingent faculty in governance "tends to propel more and broader changes" since these instructors teach primarily freshman-level courses and experience first-hand the changing needs of incoming students (Kezar, "Institutionalizing" 74).

Being afforded a voice on a university-wide or department committee has its challenges. If the contingent faculty member has a vote,

how does the instructor execute this vote? Often, contingent faculty are a noted minority presence on committees, and are present as representatives but are not supposed to truly represent. Citing a 2010 AAUP survey, "contingent faculty are not protected by tenure and so may be particularly vulnerable to retaliation for actions or positions taken in carrying out governance duties; for the same reason, they may be more susceptible to pressure from administrators or other faculty than are tenure-track faculty" (Beaky 79). For example, a non-tenure track faculty member may be on a committee as the sole representative of 50 FT NTTs, and the member must weigh the benefits of being firmly outspoken and remaining in the good graces of ranking TT faculty. An additional consideration is choosing to serve to ensure contingent faculty remain visible in departmental politics yet balancing the desire to be involved with the fact that service—for contingent faculty—is often uncompensated (and therefore amounts to volunteer work).

One concern is that many instructors consider teaching a profession and not a job. Teaching is ongoing, continual, dynamic, and rolling. Therefore, service—especially as it relates to students—is perceived as contributing to teaching. The high number of contingent faculty who participate in service activities such as student clubs, orientation activities, service learning, writing letters of recommendation, mentoring students who are considering graduate school, or enrolling in workshops to learn additional classroom skills do so because these activities—although uncompensated—add to their persona as a teacher. However, this activity must be seen through a political lens because of the power present in this kind of service to the students, department, institution, and field.

Evaluations

Two key components exist in evaluation: peer evaluation (the evaluation of one's teaching by other teachers) and student end of term (SET) evaluations. The politics of service at play in both forms of evaluation is critical to understanding the slippery slope upon which contingent faculty tread.

Peer evaluation

Classroom observations are a necessary component of reappointment, tenure, and promotion. However, for faculty members who are off the tenure track, classroom observations are too often the sole cause for—to be delicate— "non-renewal of the contract" . . . or to be blunt . . . "being fired" (Mechenbier and Warnock A8). As Mechenbier and Warnock assert from the perspective of contingent faculty, classroom evaluations completed by peers are problematic for several reasons including rank, power disparity, not having a "true" peer relationship with the faculty evaluator—or worse, meeting the assigned faculty evaluator for the first time when the assessor walks into the classroom on the day of the

evaluation, and a possible awkward resentment because a tenure-line faculty member considers the time it takes to observe teaching and then to write a subsequent letter a waste of time for a faculty member of non-tenurable rank. The politics of who gets to evaluate and the power that evaluation has is of critical importance to the politics of service. Since most contingent faculty are reappointed based solely on their teaching merit, evaluations are often the key component to that decision. Before we delve into the multitude of issues this evaluation model raises, first examine Figure 1, which reflects the responses to the survey question that asked: "Do you receive peer observations of your teaching?"

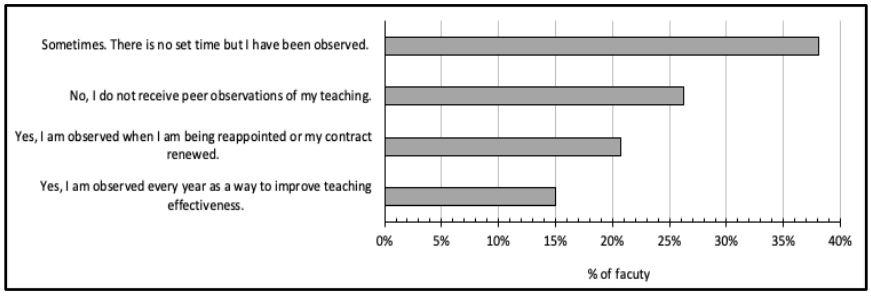

Figure 1: Peer Observations of Teaching (*n* = 294)

The fact that only 15% (*n* = 44) responded that they are observed annually as a way to improve teaching effectiveness is alarming. Contingent faculty, who are primarily teaching faculty, already face numerable obstacles to their classroom success (high teaching loads, low salary, precarity), and this statistic indicates that even less emphasis is placed on improving teaching. While the data provides no way of discovering how long faculty have been employed when they answered "no," seeing that so many faculty (26%, *n* = 77) receive no peer observations of their teaching is disheartening. Next are the 38% (*n* = 112) who receive peer observations, but they are not regularly scheduled or consistent. For the 21% (*n* = 61) who report that they are observed when they are up for reappointment or contract renewal, sharing some insights as to why this structure might be just as problematic as receiving no observation at all is central to this study.

Peer observation that aims to improve teaching effectiveness—that is, evaluation that is structured, scheduled, and programmatically helpful—can be a valuable tool of support and guidance to all faculty. Samuels claims that contingent faculty should be "empowered to observe and review one another's courses using established review criteria" (Samuels A3). Unfortunately, when tenured faculty observe contingent faculty, especially when that observation is used in reappointment or renewal, we have to dissect both what it means to evaluate as well as the hierarchical ramifications of being evaluated only for contractional reasons. Samuels posits that "the current reliance on these evaluation

forms functions as a hidden way of controlling what faculty members say while they are teaching" (A23).

Another issue is that often no relationship exists between the observer and the instructor. The observer may have access to a syllabus, schedule, assignments, or even a content course (like Blackboard or Canvas), but what she sees in one class session can hardly be counted on to paint an accurate and complete picture of one's teaching. Countless other issues abound as well, including, as one participant points out, what happens when the observer does not even stay for the entire teaching period:

> *When a tenured faculty came to observe my night class, he only stayed for one of the three hours and then proceeded to write a letter that pointed out all of the content I needed to bring into my classroom (which, ironically, was covered in the other two hours of the course that he did not witness). I could not use the letter in my reappointment file because it painted such a misinformed, negative picture of my teaching, and I depend on those letters to get reappointed.*

Contingent faculty lack power because of infrastructures that maintain hierarchies. We recognize the constraints in place that do not offer an easy alternative, but by opening up discussion and creating paths to professionalization and development in other ways, some of the politics of service present in peer evaluating can be offset.

Student end-of-term (SET) evaluation

We recognize that just as peer evaluations are meant to improve teaching effectiveness, the ideal behind student evaluations (specifically student end of term [SET] evaluations) is to shed insights into improving course content and delivery. Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world, and contingent faculty in particular are subject to further precarity when students have more power over the course content than their instructors do. A contradiction is extant when instructors are hired as expert teachers (since that is contingent faculty's primary role) but then the most used form of evaluation (and arguably the one that carries the most weight) is the highly problematic student evaluation. This contradiction affects the overall service to the department and the field. They are a poor measure for many reasons, to be further discussed in this section, and they should not be used in the way they are being applied (delivered at the end—when the instructor has no ability to address issues within the class—and then as a core item in the decision of reappointment or renewal).

One concern—to cite the 2014 AAUP's Committee on Teaching, Research, and Publication survey—regarding student evaluations is that "it is inappropriate to treat all teaching in every field or all students as if they were the same" (Vasey). Yet we do treat classes and teachers all the

same, in the form of student end-of-term evaluations, and the power they have is substantial. "Many [contingent faculty] commented that evaluations are used solely in the context of renewal or nonrenewal of contract" (Vasey). Although research and publication are primary assessments used for tenure and promotion, contingent faculty find that renewal is dependent on numerical data points on student evaluations. As one participant points out: *"It seems as though my experience doesn't much matter at all, and what the students think matters a whole lot. This means that I must tailor my teaching to meet student expectations as opposed to having students meet my expectations. This is a problem."*

The manner in which the evaluation is distributed will also affect responses. "There are other problems that could arise with the form design, such as length of questionnaire, or with the context of how and when evaluations are administered" (Langen 188). Is the evaluation hard-copy or electronic? Consider this hypothetical: a student is permitted to complete an electronic evaluation at any time where the response boxes have no word limit versus a student who is asked to complete a paper evaluation with a one-inch space per question to write comments. Disgruntled students may choose to type long answers at 2:00 am on a Friday night (which may have been more civilly answered had it been 2:00 pm on a Tuesday in a face-to-face class period).

However, a WPA or TPC PA may have 100+ contingent faculty on staff per semester and use of a fixed quantitative evaluation system can quickly categorize outliers when the WPA or TPC PA is staffing for the next academic year. Yet considerations such as pedagogical approaches of the course, grading curve, level of the course, size of the class, levels and kinds of feedback and insightful teaching strategies are also crucial in assessing teaching and performance. Dependence on student evaluations as gauges for renewal is related to budgetary concerns (reliance on contingent faculty) and workload issues of WPAs in administering programs with large numbers of faculty. Our survey demonstrated that a great deal of thought and concern goes into how student evaluations influence contingent faculty to manipulate the course content, delivery, and grading to ensure that students will provide positive evaluations at the end of the term. Here is how one of participant explained it:

> *It's a classic "between a rock and a hard place" kind of scenario to please the department (accepting the courses they give me, considering their values regarding student grade averages, knowing they'll look at course evaluations) and trying to please the students (get them to "buy in" to a course they don't want to take, encourage them when their grade isn't what they want, and help them feel positively about the course and me).*

We include a detailed, lengthy response in full because of the importance the viewpoint offers regarding evaluations and the role they play in the

material work conditions of contingent faculty. This detailed quote also illustrates the politics of service in a heart-wrenching way:

> *There is a balancing act here. My department assigns me to teach almost all core required courses. Thus, most of my students would prefer not to take this class.… So I have classes full of students who prefer not to take the course. However, I have a department suggesting my students' average in my courses should be a "C" yet also measuring part of my teaching effectiveness on my students' evaluations of me. …I do feel like toward the end of the semester, I do tend to scaffold for the students some positive thinking about the course, me, and their writing. This may take the shape of reflection on the positives they've learned/demonstrated, my own praise of strengths/changes I've seen, etc. It's nothing over the top (I don't bake for them or something) but I think there is a part of me that is operating from the fear about their course surveys at the end...as much as I wish it weren't true. They are an evaluation form I have to be mindful of (unfortunately).*

If we could sum up how evaluations link into politics of service, it would be this response. When asked, "Do you feel pressure (either explicit or implicit) to modify your teaching practices to ensure positive end of course evaluations?" many participants echoed this sentiment:

> *Absolutely! One hundred percent! Raising grades, dropping assignments, giving lots of extra credit, ignoring absences, giving extensions for papers that are already late! The list goes on and on. I am at a good institution with decent students, but I always feel pressure to let the students have their way in order to get good evaluations so that I can keep my job.*

This reaction demonstrates how SETs degrade classroom pedagogical practices. To have no power over your classroom—over the content area in which you are an expert—because you are so worried about your job (which is tied up so closely with end-of-term student evaluations) that you would rather sacrifice your standards than do what you know is right . . . is disconcerting to faculty of all ranks.

Therefore, how do we balance the requirement of student evaluations with what they actually do (strike fear into the heart of every contingent faculty member and ensure that contingent faculty are catering to student feelings rather than student learning) and what they are supposed to do (encourage thoughtful feedback on course content and teaching effectiveness)? One participant shares thoughts on one such strategy:

> *I think this is a common feeling among contracted instructors. As performance reviews are part of contract renewal and in the current environment of higher ed reliance on part-time adjuncts, that fear of bad reviews is always present. Personally, I believe surveying students at the end of a term surfaces responses on two ends of the spectrum--either those that know they are receiving As or those that are now frustrated at the end of the term because they've missed deadlines, are struggling with final projects, etc. I think mid-term course review and reviews that ask students to assess matters they have some legitimate authority on (how clear was the content presented, how often did the instructor engage, etc.) are of more value to an instructor and the department.*

Many respondents also noted that they were given an opportunity to respond to negative evaluations, which also helps offset the politics of evaluations as they relate to reappointment. *"My teaching effectiveness is partially determined by course evaluations, but it is not considered the whole picture. I am required to respond to negative reviews in my annual report."*

In the end, it is not the use, but the misuse of peer and student evaluations that result in their inclusion in a politics of service. Peer evaluations and SETs are not professional development. They need to be used as a small component of *establishing* professional development programs based on the students' comments as well as other information. We need better ways to collaborate and have pedagogical professional development conversations and activities rather than convincing ourselves that observing someone teach or looking at the course evaluations is a substitute for true professional development and pedagogical improvement. Although a widespread practice, the issue of SETs and observations evokes surveillance rather than inclusive conversations that enact improved pedagogical practices.

Intellectual Property

Here we use intellectual property as an extended example to underscore contingent faculty's access to—and understanding of—institutional resources to effectively perform the duties of their job. One area where institutional access is most noticeable is in online writing instruction because a large number of contingent faculty teach online. The issue of intellectual property encapsulates and becomes a microcosm of larger structural issues.

Part of the ongoing service of contingent faculty is in course development, but we found that the vast majority of contingent faculty have little understanding of their rights around intellectual property (IP). When considering online teaching, contingent faculty do need to develop materials for their online writing courses, and if contingent faculty cannot transport an online class—or even components of a class—to another

institution because of the originating institution's proprietary interests, why would these instructors want to expend time and energy in developing or improving a shell course they will never own? However, ownership of online course materials depends upon the policies at the institution. This section discusses the issues of IP and contingency as another form of the politics of service.

Question 9 asked, "Do you know who has ownership of your online course?" Figure 2 shows those results.

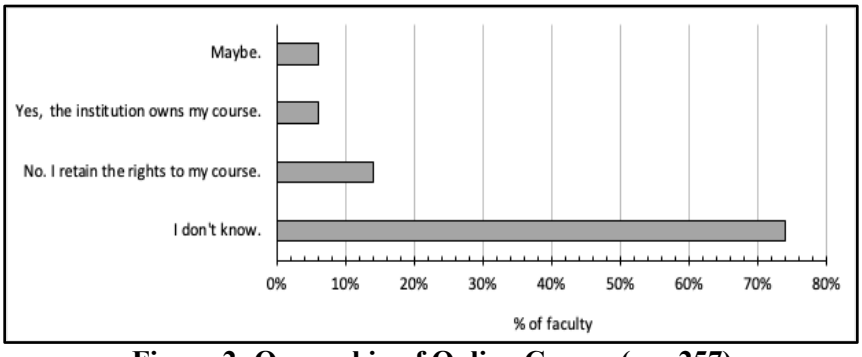

Figure 2: Ownership of Online Course (*n* = 257)

An overwhelming 74% (*n* = 188) of respondents do not know who owns their online courses. One respondent elaborated:

> *Our department chair believes that anything created for a class (web site, materials, textbooks) belongs to our university. A university lawyer once told me that a book I wrote while working in a center within our department belonged to the university (because I wrote it as part of my job). However, those who work in Digital Humanities in our university library tell us that anything produced by an individual belongs to that individual (intellectual property). I suspect that if a product can be sold, it belongs to the university; if it can't, it belongs to the person. :-\.*

Utilizing Educational Technologists (ETs), Accessibility Services for transcription, and Instructional Designers (IDs) often denotes that the university has a proprietary interest in the online course. ETs and IDs are salaried employees of the institution and expending university resources means the university has rights to the class. Not all contingent faculty perceive the situation this way, however. According to one participant: *"I don't care about their [the University's] opinion. I retain rights, as far as I am concerned and will act accordingly."*

However, ownership of online course materials depends upon the policies at the institution. Most online contingent faculty are accustomed to being independent workers; they may prefer to create their own materials and handouts for the course and to design the course themselves.

The reality is that an online course may require technological assistance from experts in the form of Ed Techs and Instructional Designers. Even though the faculty member may be the *content* expert for the subject matter, the technology team may "tell [the instructor how] the cours[e] will operate" (Kelly 8). Contingent faculty need to be aware of both their rights and of the proprietary rights of the online course's home institution. If an adjunct teaches at more than one university, online course materials should be kept separate methodically. *"I've never considered this question. I would assume that since I have departmental support and use institutional software platforms, then the institution would own the course. I never signed an exclusivity contract about the assignments or syllabus."* This response echoes back to the definition of politics of service in that ownership is a power issue. Unfortunately, proprietorship is a power issue where many contingent faculty lack awareness. Course resources, accessibility, and ownership are entwined when it comes to the politics of service. Contingent faculty are creating their courses (because they have to) and yet may be unable to use their own intellectual property at other institutions. This quandary brings us back to the issue of "doing something for nothing" other than serving the "greater good." Of course, the students benefit. Inarguably, the institutions benefit. However, what about the contingent faculty members themselves?

WPAs, TPC PAs, Department Chairs, University Legal, and Distance Learning Coordinators should make the effort to advise and inform online contingent faculty of the layered ownership issues regarding these courses. Alarmingly, our data suggests course content—developed and tweaked by faculty as service—may revert to institutions for "free." If faculty "don't know" where ownership lies, we posit these respondents did not sign any kind of waiver or form agreeing to some kind of compensation for developing course material. Online course material is unique in that is it uploaded to an LMS or other online system under contract with the university. Ownership of these virtual—and therefore reusable, downloadable materials—is more complex than physical handouts or exams which are hard-copy and are disseminated in a face-to-face classroom. However, the idea that course materials developed as part of an instructor's employment are owned by the university is the same regardless of the delivery method of the course. Online materials are more easily reproducible and are therefore more vulnerable to IP violations, especially when they are the materials of contingent faculty, who are not always classified as full-time (and who may not be aware of where their course materials end up or are transferred as a result of non-permanent employment).

Thus, online writing instruction becomes an important example of much larger issues because online teaching resources, and how they are managed and distributed in regard to contingent faculty, are a key indicator of how material work conditions and politics of service intersect. Since the pedagogy of online instruction is vastly different from traditional face-to-

face instruction, we were curious to see the support contingent faculty had when preparing and teaching these online courses. Many spent their own time and money to seek out training and resources to provide this service to the university. This intersection was the main point of "teaching as service." So much of the development for contingent faculty instruction comes on their own time and through their own resourcefulness. Instructors should be aware of the policies which govern intellectual property at their institutions so that they are informed and educated about ownership of their teaching materials. These policies are often not part of contingent faculty term contracts, and (lack of) dissemination of this type of information affects material work conditions in the teaching environment.

Conclusion

Although service is often disparaged, positive connotations to service exist. In TPC, for example, the course that is taught as often and in almost the same numbers of FYC is commonly referred to as the "service course" because in its common forms (as professional writing, technical writing, business writing) the class is taught as service to other departments and programs. James Dubinsky argued for making visible the discourses around the service course and "rediscovering the positive meaning of service in the social contexts of literacy" (40). This move opens a space to have meaningful conversations about the work we do and the value we bring to our institutions and to our programs. Composition, in relation, has typically been viewed as a service discipline because of the role of FYC in general education. Tim Peeples and Bill Hart-Davidson go as far as to claim that composition occupies a humanist/service-status orientation. The point here is that service can be—and is—a positive aspect of the role writing programs of all types play in higher education. So much effort is being made to incorporate cross-discipline learning within institutions (between them numerous colleges and the departments within them), and typically the writing programs are in the center of this activity. What does every major, every discipline, have in common? The answer is the need to communicate—to both experts and lay audiences—what that discipline does and why the field is meaningful. The service courses (of TPC and FYC) play a vital role in bridging these disciplines, and we owe much of that interactivity to the role of contingent faculty serving as the instructors in these classrooms. Therefore, the question we asked when considering the role of politics of service upon contingent faculty teaching writing courses is this: If writing is a key service, then the people who teach it should be key as well, right?

As Sara Ahmed has pointed out in regard to diversity work, when things are less valued by an organization, to inhabit and work in those spaces means the employee is less valued by the institution. This belief is (at the core) the reason we need to think through issues of the politics of service. What we have presented through weaving together data from our

study and present scholarship is that specific ways exist in which politics of service directly—and negatively—impact contingent faculty. As discussed in the "Data Takeaways" and "Looking Forward" articles in this special issue, WPAs and TPC PAs and tenure-line faculty can—and should—take actionable steps to alleviate the negative impacts of the politics of service on contingent faculty.

Even when contingent faculty understand their roles based on contracts or conversations, confusion exists over how they are appointed and the function that service plays. Filetti encourages transparency and clear criteria for evaluating service. Complications in assessing levels of service include how to award credit for one committee over another (time? department level? university level? *ex officio*? elected? standing? *ad hoc*?) or one activity over another, especially as no concrete measure of completion exists (such as a peer-reviewed article or book). Additionally, the use and misuse of peer and student evaluations needs to be addressed so that contingent faculty can claim their positions as experts in their fields and in their classrooms. Finally, intellectual property policies, particularly in online contexts, need to be clarified for contingent faculty prior to their being commissioned to engage in the construction of online courses. Keeping politics of service in mind, program administrators, department chairs, and deans should seek to refine language in contracts, handbooks, and university policies in order to clarify what service involves (and leads to) for contingent faculty.

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