Contingent Faculty Unionization:
The Impact of Collective Bargaining on Course Pay, Benefits, and Contract Lengths for Part-time Faculty at Four-year Institutions in the U.S.

Mary Alice LeFlore

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Abstract

Contingent part-time faculty experience far greater insecurity in their employment than their full-time and tenured colleagues, and may experience improvements to their working situation as a result of collective bargaining by academic unions. Are these collective bargaining efforts more effective when unions operate on behalf of a broader constituency, or are outcomes better when unions concentrate on narrower interest groups? This study focused on part-time instructional faculty at four-year institutions in the U.S. and considered four employment outcomes that may be influenced by different types of union representation in collective bargaining agreements with their academic employers: pay for courses taught, health and retirement benefits, and contract length for teaching. Union membership criteria and coalition operating strategy are both found to significantly influence these outcomes, with higher course pay, greater odds for health and retirement benefits, and longer contract terms generally associated with unions that include all types of faculty as members, rather than representing part-time instructors separately from others, and that choose to ally with other unions in their efforts, rather than operate alone.

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Introduction

This study considered four outcomes for part-time, non-tenure-track faculty that may be influenced by different types of union representation in collective bargaining agreements with their academic employers: course pay, health and retirement benefits, and contract length for teaching.

Although full-time, non-tenure-track lecturers are also considered contingent academic employees due to their exclusion from the strongly protected tenure status, they differ from their part-time counterparts in important ways. Whereas full-time faculty are salaried and frequently have contracts lasting several years, part-time instructors are more commonly retained and paid per course or term (Liu & Zhang, 2013).

Unions vary in their membership characteristics and in their strategies for organizing, bargaining, and advocating for their members, and it was these differences that were used to define the independent variables in this study. Academic unions organize around different criteria for membership. Some represent faculty with a wide variety of employment statuses – both full- and part-time, and both non-tenured (contingent) and tenured or tenure-track – representing a larger membership on a broader range of issues. Others restrict membership to more specific types of faculty, choosing to represent only part-time or only full-time, or only non-tenured, or only tenured full-time faculty; these unions are able to target their advocacy toward their membership's more specific issues, at the expense of broader support from a larger group. In addition to choices about membership, unions also adopt different strategies in representing their members. Some exist at a national level, with affiliated state- and local-level

agents across the country, while others are independent and bargain with specific academic employers. These individual unions may operate alone in representing and bargaining for their members, or they may ally in coalitions with other unions, both in higher education and other industries.

Because part-time faculty experience greater insecurity in their employment, an assumption underlying this research was that they stood to gain greater improvements to their situation as a result of collective bargaining by faculty unions, and for this reason the decision was made to focus the study only on part-time faculty. Furthermore, if the power of union representation lies in collective bargaining, another assumption underlying this research was that a more fragmented collective would be less effective. Therefore, the hypothesis for this study was that union configurations involving broader constituencies would be associated with better employment outcomes for their part-time faculty members: specifically, that unions representing faculty with a variety of employment statuses and working in coalitions with other unions would secure higher average course pay, better access to health and retirement benefits, and longer teaching contracts for part-time faculty.

There may, of course, be factors in addition to union activity that influence faculty pay, benefits, and contracts. For this study, institutions were segmented by control and degree level. The control of an institution refers to whether it is controlled by public and private entities. The degree level indicates whether the highest degree offered by the institution is bachelor's, master's, or doctor's degree.

Review of Literature

Growth in Contingent Faculty Numbers

Temporary or contingent work arrangements for faculty at U.S. institutions of higher education have risen sharply in recent decades. In 1969 only 21.7% of faculty worked in non-tenure-track positions (Kezar & Maxey, 2012), but by 2011 non-tenure-track faculty accounted for 71.7% of the total (Laurence, 2013). At four-year institutions that year, the share of non-tenure-track faculty stood at 49.4% (Zhang, Ehrenberg & Liu, 2015). This trend shows no signs of halting: Laurence reported that from 2003 to 2011, 90% of the 238,000 faculty added at all degree-granting, non-profit U.S. higher education institutions were in non-tenure-track positions.

In 2011, half of the roughly 1.5 million faculty at all institutions were part-time; about three-quarters taught at four-year rather than two-year institutions, and part-time faculty at those schools numbered almost half a million (Laurence, 2013). Between 1993 and 2011, the share of part-time faculty at four-year institutions rose from 29.7% to 37.9% (Zhang, et al, 2015). From 1979 to 2013, while full-time faculty positions increased by 80% from 445,000 to 804,500, part-time positions shot up from 230,000 to 765,700, a 233% increase (Finkelstein, Conley & Schuster, 2016).

Many factors contribute to these shifts in academic hiring, though leading explanations point to institutional needs for greater flexibility and to reduce costs. According to a 2012 survey of college deans, the top three pressures contributing to the decision to hire non-tenure-track faculty were to respond to enrollment surges, fill positions at the last minute, and reduce costs (Kezar & Gehrke, 2014). More than higher pay or better physical working

conditions, initial faculty efforts at organizing in the 1940s centered on demands for tenure as a way to protect job security, with the primary justification that this would protect academic freedom, a requirement for the pursuit of knowledge (Dobbie & Robinson, 2008). But permanent, secure employment as guaranteed by these tenure arrangements poses a challenge for institutions facing volatile demand and resource pressures.

Academic Union Organizing in Response

Dobbie and Robinson describe how in response to these hiring trends, contingent faculty in the 1990s increasingly attempted to organize unions driven by concerns over this "casualization" of the academic workforce. Although job security remained the priority in collective bargaining, justifications for it shifted from academic freedom to align more with the traditional improvements to pay and working conditions that had motivated non-academic unionization efforts. Where previous union organizing involved almost exclusively full-time, tenured faculty, non-tenure-track and part-time instructors grew as a share of unionized faculty.

The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions [NCSCBHEP] reported in 2012 that 27.0% of all faculty were unionized and working under collective bargaining agreements, with 21% of part-time faculty among that group. 93% of unionized faculty were teaching at public institutions (Berry & Savarese, 2012), and about a third of these were at four-year institutions (Dobbie & Robinson, 2008). Non-tenure-track faculty continue to account for the vast majority of academic union growth, with 71% of newly unionized faculty in 2016 belonging to this group (Cross, 2017).

The huge disparity in public and private unionization rates can largely be attributed to two U.S. Supreme Court decisions. In 1980, *National Labor Relations Board [NLRB] v. Yeshiva University* found that faculty at private institutions did not have collective bargaining rights under the National Labor Relations Act [NLRA] because they may be classified as managerial workers. A year earlier, in 1979, the court in *NLRB v. Catholic Bishop of Chicago* found that religious liberty protections restrict NLRB jurisdiction over teachers at religiously-affiliated institutions (Herbert, 2016). However there have been recent successes in organizing faculty at private institutions: Herbert reported a 25.9% increase in bargaining units at private schools between 2012 and 2016, compared to only 2.1% growth in unions representing faculty at public institutions in the same period, although some of these new units face legal challenges. Given that unions at private schools still only account for 14.5% of all academic unions, the private sector remains fertile ground for growth in academic unionization.

Yet despite all of these recent efforts to unionize, the increase in non-tenure-track faculty overall, and particularly in part-time faculty, continues unabated. Dobbie and Robinson suggested that "union strategies that institutionalize divisions between tenure-track and non-tenure-track, and/or between part-time and full-time faculty, probably play a role in" the fact that higher unionization rates have not acted as a brake on the expansion of contingent academic hiring.

Unionization and Working Conditions

Although seemingly ineffective at stemming the growth in contingency status for faculty, have academic unions contributed to improved outcomes for faculty, such as higher pay, better access to benefits, or longer teaching contracts?

Compensation

While a number of studies have investigated impacts on wages associated with collective bargaining in general and academic unions in particular, very few have specifically considered part-time faculty. Monks (2007), using data from the National Center for Education Statistics' National Study of Postsecondary Faculty [NSOPF 1999], found that part-time, non-tenure-track faculty earned about 64.0% less than full-time, tenure-track faculty per hour, and experienced more dramatic positive outcomes associated with collective bargaining, with a 16.8% wage advantage over those at nonunionized schools, more than three times that for full-time, tenure-track faculty. He also concluded that institutional attributes had more of an impact on wage differences for part-timers than individual characteristics like gender or race, while both kinds of factors influenced wages for full-time, tenure-track faculty. While Monks' study included both two- and four-year institutions and addressed contingent faculty wages relative to their tenured peers, the current study narrowed the focus to faculty at four-year institutions only and considered benefits and contracts in addition to earnings.

Recent work by Hedrick, Henson, Krieg, and Wassell studied the impacts of unionization on faculty wages at four-year institutions using a refined methodology and challenging previous assumptions. Their 2011 study concluded that average full-time salaries were not significantly impacted by collective bargaining (Hedrick, et al, 2011). This team's 2015 study found that the presence of unions reduced the dispersion of wages across faculty in different disciplines without changing average wages, regardless of tenure or non-tenure status. Lower-paid faculty thus benefitted from union activity while outcomes for higher-paid faculty were poorer (Wassell, et al, 2015). Citing Tullock (1994), Hedrick, et al note that public institutions are in a

unique position because they depend on sources outside their control for a majority of revenue (as state governments dictate public funding and often restrict tuition rates as well), and that unions may be able to influence distribution of wages but not total wages at these institutions.

Benefits

Little research exists assessing the impacts of unionization on benefit access for contingent faculty, part-time or otherwise. Hoeller (2014) reported that non-tenure-track faculty organized in the 10-campus University of California system were able to secure better benefits through collective bargaining. Berry (2005) argued that contingent union activity on behalf of members could bend toward providing health care through trusts or toward advocacy for universal national health care, as most contingent faculty do not believe health insurance should be attached to employment, perhaps due to the precarious nature of their own situations. Similarly, he argued retirement and other benefits might more effectively be secured for members by unions negotiating directly with providers of these services, rather than bargaining with academic employers. He also pointed to assistance procuring public unemployment insurance as another important union benefit for members, and stated that union efforts in California had secured millions of dollars in unemployment benefits for members.

Contracts

DeCew's review (cited in Hoeller, 2014) of Rhoades' 1998 work indicated that 80% of 183 contracts studied did not include protections around part-time hiring and firing. Berry (2005) stated that in his experience, employers were most amenable to negotiating

compensation, but less so to benefits, while most strongly resisting collective bargaining efforts related to security for contingent faculty (i.e., flexibility for their institutions).

A 2017 study of full-time, non-tenure track faculty at six research universities found that union representation was not necessarily correlated with multi-year contracts: although the three organized public institutions had language regarding such contracts in their collective bargaining agreements, the three non-unionized institutions (one public, two private) also offered multi-year contracts to their faculty. And at one of the unionized schools, only about 7.0% of non-tenure-track faculty had successfully applied for the longer-term contracts, while at one of the nonunionized private schools a majority of non-tenure-track faculty enjoyed long-term contracts. (Cross, 2017)

The present study is intended to contribute to understanding how collective bargaining by academic unions may influence employment outcomes for part-time faculty, which have not received substantial attention in the literature thus far.

Data and Methodology

Data Sources

The primary data source was the 2010 Coalition on the Academic Workforce [CAW] Survey of Contingent Faculty Members and Instructors. The total number of survey respondents was 28,974, whom survey logic routed to sections relevant to their specific faculty employment category. The dataset was structured in cases, each representing a unique combination of respondent, single course taught in the fall term of 2010, and institution where that course was taught, with dozens of variables describing each case. For previous work linking

institutions to collective bargaining variables, University of Washington researcher Dr. Dan Jacoby removed all cases with data missing from variables required for matching institutions to a unique IPEDS identification code.

Data about union representation at campuses nationwide were surveyed in 2012 by the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions [NCSCBHEP]. Variables included institutional characteristics and union information, such as where and when collective bargaining agreements were established, national, state and local union agents for those agreements, and membership information specific to seven faculty categories. This dataset was cleaned to remove union data from any institutions where the initial collective bargaining agreement was ratified after 2010 or the current agreement expired before 2010, the year the CAW survey was administered. The union agent variable was expanded to create new variables describing which agents represented each of the four types of teaching faculty: full- and part-time, tenured-or-tenure-track and non-tenure-track. Unique IPEDS institution codes were added to this union dataset to facilitate a data merge.

The third dataset contained 2010 characteristics for U.S. higher education institutions sourced from the National Center for Education Statistics' [NCES] Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System [IPEDS]. This dataset was trimmed to include only four-year institutions.

Merged Data

The modified NCSCBHEP and IPEDS data were merged using the IPEDS institution code as the key match variable and a one-to-one matching process in SPSS, to create a new dataset containing 2697 unique institutions with variables describing both school characteristics and union activity on those campuses. This was merged with the CAW survey data using the

institutional characteristics state, sector, total enrollment, and full-time enrollment as key matching variables and a one-to-many matching process in SPSS.

This process allowed CAW survey respondent identification numbers to be linked to IPEDS institutional identification numbers, which had already been linked to the reported union data in the previous merge. In this way, individual faculty respondents to the CAW survey could be associated with specific union agents for analysis. The terms of use for the CAW data were that individual institutions not be identified, and no analyses presented in this study revealed institution names or identification codes. However it was necessary to link the CAW respondent data to institutions, in order to link them to union data.

Finally, data were filtered to include only faculty teaching part-time at one or more institutions, the focus of this study, and also to exclude private-for-profit institutions. These were associated with fewer than 3.0% of all cases and deviate operationally from their non-profit public and private counterparts in substantial ways that would complicate meaningful analysis for this study. The resulting dataset contained 9189 cases for analysis, representing part-time faculty respondents and each course they reported teaching at a four-year institution in the fall term of 2010.

New Variables

Several variables were modified or created to enable the analysis. The union data described above were recoded to produce four distinct variables. These described: 1) whether or not there was a union representing part-time, non-tenure-track faculty at an institution [PTNTTUnionYN]; 2) what type of membership that union included (only part-time faculty, only non-tenure-track faculty but both part- and full-time, or all faculty including full-time, tenured-

and-tenure-track [PTNTTUnionOnly]); 3) whether the union representing part-time faculty operated alone or in alliance with other unions [PTNTTUnionCoalition]; and 4) the national-level union agent (AAUP, AFT, CWA, NEA, SEIU, UAW, or Independent – local-level unions with no nationwide affiliation [PTNTTUnionNat]).

The [Pay] variable described pay in dollars for a three-credit, semester-long course after CAW researchers standardized the values across different term lengths and to exclude foreign and zero-reported values; this was transformed to natural logarithm values to normalize the distribution [PayLN]. The Contract variable, describing the length of a respondent's contract to teach at any particular institution, included hundreds of unique values derived from a free-response survey instrument which were recoded into five broad categories (no contract, less than one year, annual, multi-year, and unsure [Contract]).

Methodology

Descriptive statistics were produced to report respondent demographics, institutional attributes, and union characteristics of the sample, by using frequencies and cross-tabulations in SPSS. Respondent demographics included gender, race or ethnicity, age, and highest education level attained; also surveyed were primary occupation, length of time served, and feelings about contingent teaching status. Workload was described in terms of number of institutions and number of classes taught during the fall term of 2010; and personal income and the relative importance of contingent teaching income to that annual total was reported. The different union membership types, coalition approach, and national agents were described and cross-tabulated by institutional control and degree level, and to consider the association between unionization and respondent awareness of union status and eligibility for public

unemployment benefits. Frequencies and cross-tabulations were used to describe the four dependent outcome variables for course pay, health insurance, retirement benefits, and contract length. ANOVA and regression analyses were used to explore the relationship between contract length and the other three outcome variables.

Because the survey instrument regarding pay was free-response rather than multiple choice, raw values included extreme outliers, particularly at the high end. A sensitivity study was conducted comparing the full data to a dataset eliminating outliers beyond three times the standard deviation from the mean (89, or about 1.1%, of the 8306 cases with pay data). The study indicated little difference in the significance of results for the influence of union coalition strategy, however the influence of union membership type on pay was sensitive to the exclusion of these outlier values. Therefore, results of analyses on both the full and filtered datasets were included here.

SPSS was used for the main analysis. The independent variables described what types of faculty defined a union's membership [PTNTTUnionOnly], and whether the union representing part-time faculty operated alone or in a coalition with other national unions [PTNTTUnionCoalition]. The dependent outcome variables were course pay (transformed to natural logarithm values as [PayLN]), and whether a respondent received health insurance [BenH] and retirement benefits [BenR] from the institution at which they taught. The length of a respondent's contract [Contract] was used as both a dependent outcome variable and a controlling factor in the analyses of the other dependent variables. Two other control variables described whether an institution operated under public or private control [Control], and

whether the highest degree level offered by an institution was bachelor's, master's, or doctor's [DegreeCodeSimpl].

ANOVA with Tukey Post Hoc tests were used to analyze the impact of the two independent and three control variables on the scale PayLN variable. Binary logistic regression was used to analyze the impact of the independent and control variables on the dichotomous benefit outcome variables. Multinomial logistic regression was used to analyze the impact of the two independent union variables and two institutional control factors on the categorical Contract variable.

For all independent variables, the reference category was taken to be those part-time, non-tenure-track faculty teaching without any union representation, against which their counterparts teaching under various union memberships and coalitions were compared. The reference category for the control variable describing the highest degree level offered was institutions granting only bachelor's degrees, and the reference category for the Contract variable when used as a controlling factor was faculty teaching with no contract. In all cases, confidence intervals were required to reach 95% ($p < .05$) to consider results significant.

Results and Discussion

Description of the Sample

Respondent Demographics

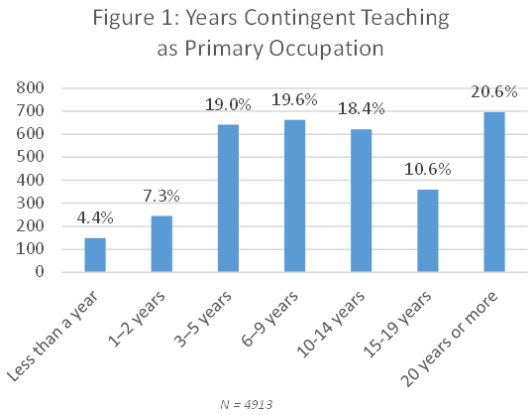
The survey sample included 9189 cases, associated with 5034 unique respondents teaching as part-time, non-tenure-track faculty at 915 four-year or higher institutions. Table 1 summarizes demographic information for the sample.

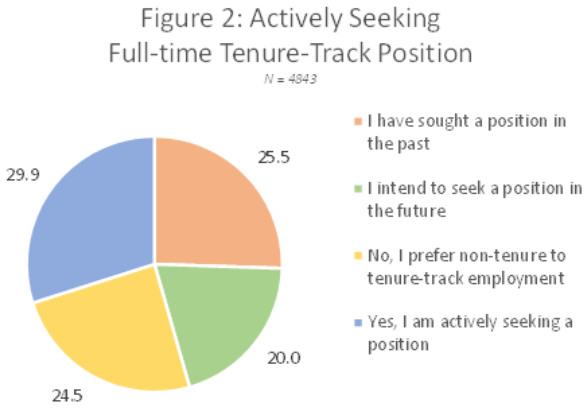
Table 1: Respondent Characteristics *(N = 5034)*									
Gender	60.4% Female	38.2% Male	0.1% Other					1.3% Prefer not to answer	*4770 N*
Race / Ethnicity	1.9% Asian/Pacific Islander	1.7% Black (non-Hispanic)	2.4% Hispanic/ Latino	2.0% Multiracial	40.0% Native American	86.0% White (non-Hispanic)		5.3% Prefer not to answer	*4764 N*
Age	0.9% 25 or under	20.7% 26-35	21.9% 36-45	23.3% 46-55	23.9% 56-65	7.3% 66-75	1.1% 75+	0.9% Prefer not to answer	*4799 N*
Highest Education	0.1% HS Diploma	0.1% Associate	2.5% Bachelor	43.4% Master	39.8% Doctor	14.1% Other			*4798 N*

The sample was 60.4% female, and 86.0% identified as White; these portions are somewhat higher than those reported by Monks (2009), who determined from 2004 NSOPF data that part-time faculty were about evenly split between genders, and that non-Hispanic Whites constituted 77.0% of all part-time faculty. The largest share had completed a master's degree as their highest education level (43.4%), followed by a doctor's degree (39.8%). These shares are slightly lower than the figures for all non-tenure-track faculty at four-year institutions, 46.5% for master's and 42.6% for doctor's degrees, estimated by Laurence (2013), also using 2004 NSOPF data. These discrepancies between the current study and previous work may be attributable to the fact that the NSOPF data was more representative of the population it sampled, while the CAW survey was a voluntary sample.

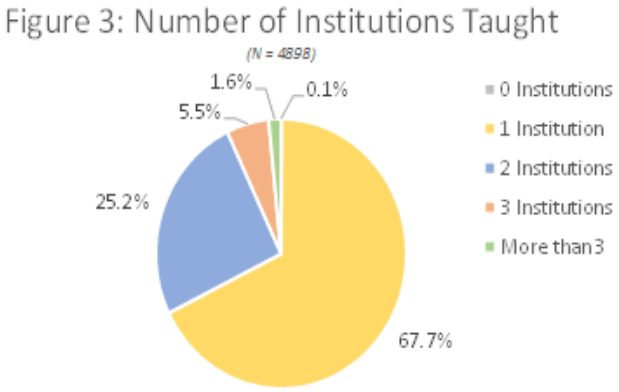
Almost three-quarters (73.8%) considered contingent teaching as their primary occupation, and of those half had been teaching for 10 years or longer (Figure 1). This is double Laurence's estimate that about a quarter of all contingent faculty had been teaching in their current position for 10 or more years, though his figure included both two- and four-year institutions. Other primary professions included other non-academic work (13.2%), followed by retired, student, other non-teaching academic, and research, each selected by

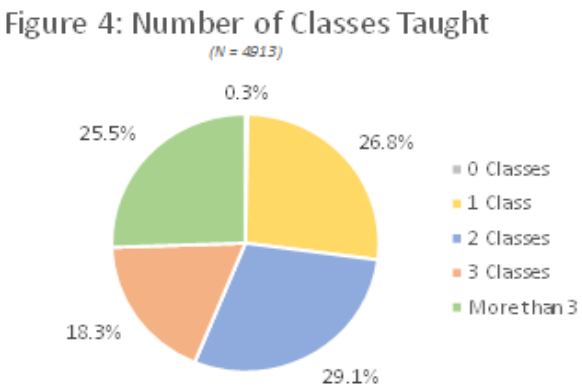
fewer than 5.0% of respondents. When asked specifically about their contingent faculty status, only a quarter indicated they preferred non-tenured employment (Figure 2).



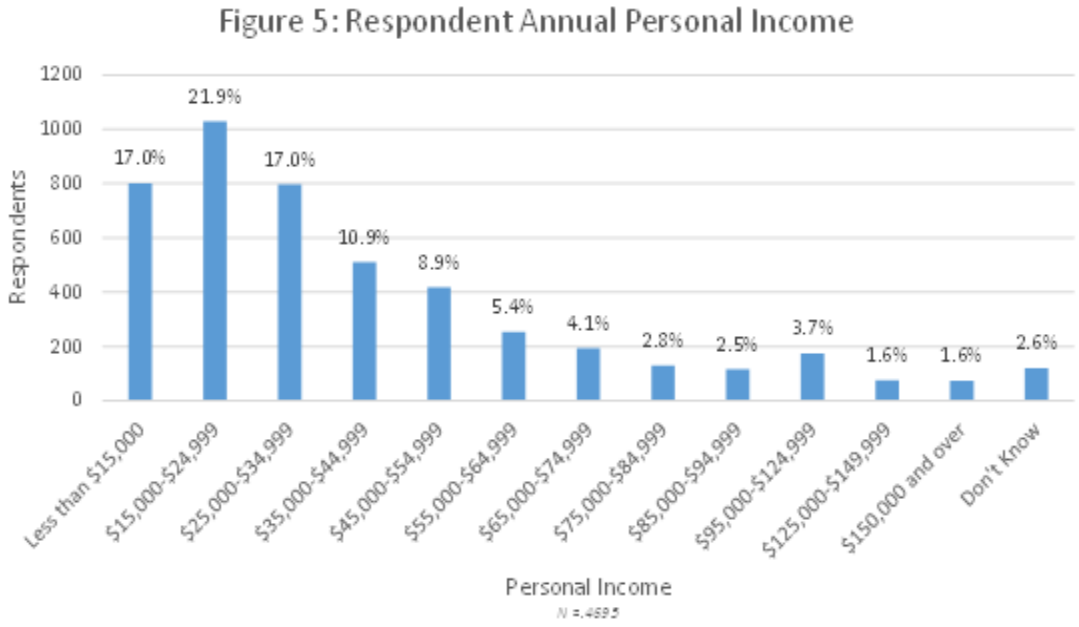


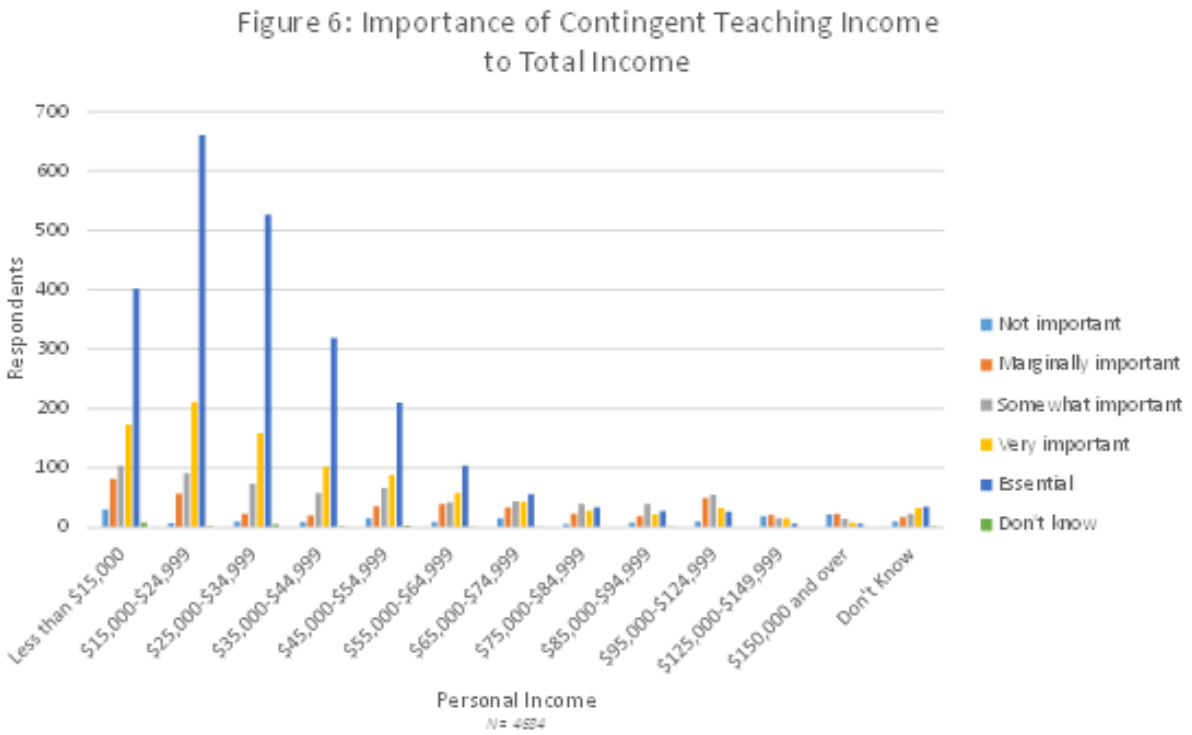
Just over two-thirds (67.7%) reported teaching at only one institution, and only 7.1% taught at three or more institutions during the fall term of 2010 (Figure 3). The first figure is comparable to Laurence's (2013) estimate that 70.0% of part-time faculty at four-year institutions were teaching at only one school, however he assessed the share of part-time faculty teaching at three or more institutions at double this (14.4%). As for course load, the mean for the 2010 fall term reported by those in this sample was three classes, though the largest share (29.1%) taught two classes (Figure 4).





More than half (55.9%) reported annual personal income from all sources, not only contingent teaching, under $35,000 (Figure 5); and nearly three quarters (71.9%) described their contingent teaching earnings as essential or very important to their total income. Chi-square tests indicated significance ($p < .001$) in the relationship between total annual income and how important income from teaching was as a portion of that total. Contingent teaching income was less important as total annual income rose, with the share describing it as essential dropping steadily from about two-thirds for those earning $15,000-$24,999 to only 8.2% for those earning more than $150,000 annually from all sources of income (Figure 6).



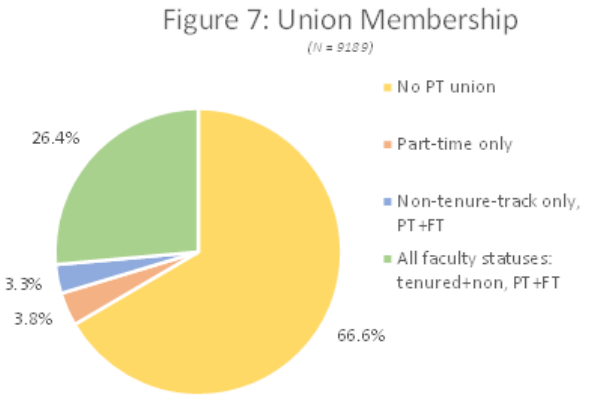


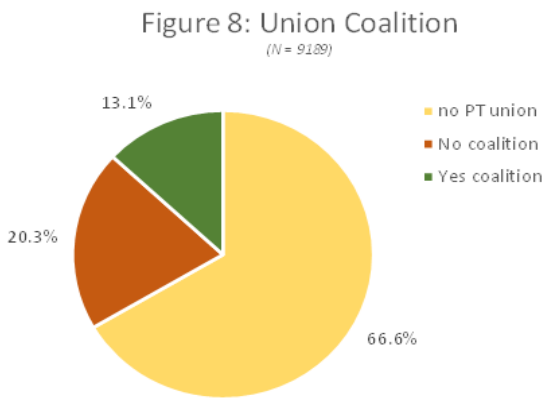
Union Characteristics

Two thirds of cases in this study (unique combinations of respondent and single course taught) occurred at institutions that had no union of any kind representing part-time faculty (Figure 7). Of those cases that were associated with a union that included part-time faculty, the vast majority (79.0%) were unions that included all classes of faculty as members: part-time and full-time, non-tenured and tenured-or-tenure-track; this type of union was associated with about a quarter of all cases. Those remaining were split roughly evenly between unions exclusively representing part-time, non-tenure-track faculty (11.3%), and those whose membership also included full-time faculty but only those without tenure (9.7%); together these accounted for only 7.1% of all cases.

Regarding operating strategy, unions worked in coalitions in 39.2% of cases in which there was a union operating at the institution, or 13.1% of all cases (Figure 8). The largest share

of the remaining cases involving unions acting alone were associated with the AFT (36.9% of union-associated cases, 7.5% of all cases), followed by the AAUP (24.5%, 5.0%), and the NEA (12.6%, 2.6%), with the remaining national-level unions UAW, SEIU, and CWA associated with fewer than 100 cases each (together, these accounted for fewer than 7.9% of the cases involving unions acting alone, and fewer than 2.0% of all cases). Independent, local-level unions were associated with 18.1% of cases in which a union agent operated alone, and 3.7% of all cases.





Respondents and Union Awareness

There was a significant ($p < .001$) relationship between the presence of a union including part-time faculty on a respondent's campus and the respondent's understanding of their eligibility for public unemployment benefits (Figure 9). In more than a third of cases, instructors were unsure of their eligibility for public unemployment benefits during periods between contingent teaching gigs, and this was true at institutions with a union representing part-time faculty and at those without. However a quarter of those teaching on campuses with a part-time union stated that they were eligible for public unemployment benefits, compared to only 6.7% teaching on campuses with no part-time union. This suggests that unions may influence

members' general knowledge of benefits and resources they may access, even those not sourced by their academic employer, though the high uncertainty rates indicate room for improvement.

In 9.0% percent of cases respondents were unsure whether or not they were represented by a union in their contingent teaching position. This included 7.8% of those on a campus where a part-time union was operating (Figure 10). Of those 3037 cases associated with a unionized campus, another 12.2% reported not being represented by a union. The survey did not delve further to ask whether they had deliberately opted out of the union, so this figure may include instructors who were unaware of their collective bargaining status. A fifth of cases associated with institutions that had union representation for part-time faculty involved respondents indicating they either weren't union members or weren't sure; while 14.7% of cases on campuses without a part-time union involved respondents stating they were union members or weren't sure. These figures may indicate that unions have room for improvement around awareness and promotion of their activity on behalf of members.

Figure 9: Are you eligible for unemployment insurance?

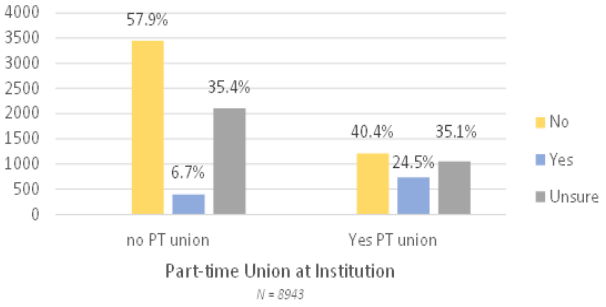
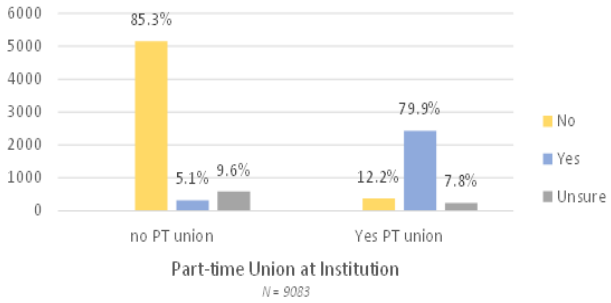


Figure 10: Are you represented by a union?



Institutions and Unionization

In this sample, although 37.8% of the institutions were universities and colleges under public control, more than half of all courses reported in the survey were taught at public institutions. Doctoral institutions comprised half the sample institutions but accounted for two-thirds of the reported courses. (Table 2)

As expected, there was a significant relationship between these institutional attributes and union presence on campus ($p < .001$ for both, Table 3). Public institutions were unionized at much higher rates than their private counterparts, with half of the cases at these schools associated with a part-time union of any kind; private institutions had only 12.8% of cases involving part-time faculty working under a collective bargaining agreement. Part-time faculty at institutions granting only bachelor's degrees were almost never unionized (only 2.3% of cases). Doctoral institutions had a higher unionization rate, though still less than a third (31.5%) of cases were associated with a collective bargaining agreement. Master's level institutions were split most closely, but even their part-time faculty had union representation in only 44.0% of cases.

Table 2: Institutional Characteristics

	Sample	Courses
Control		
Public	37.8%	55.9%
Private	62.2%	44.1%
Highest Degree		
Bachelor	13.4%	4.8%
Master	36.0%	29.0%
Doctor	50.7%	66.1%
	N = 315	N = 9189

Table 3: Institutions and Unionization

	PT Union	No PT Union
Control		
Public	49.7%	50.3%
Private	12.8%	87.2%
Highest Degree		
Bachelor	2.3%	97.7%
Master	44.0%	56.0%
Doctor	31.5%	68.5%

N = 3189

Outcomes

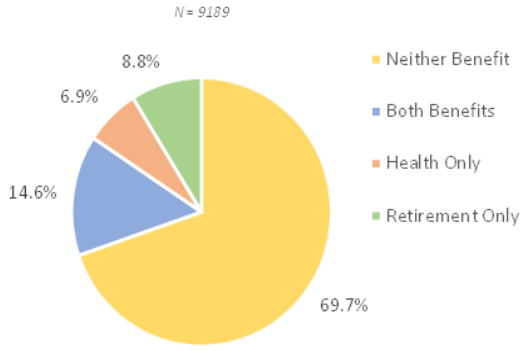
Reported minimum and maximum values for course pay were $1 and $45,000, with a mean of $3078. After outliers greater than three standard deviations from the mean were excluded, the minimum and maximum values were $375.00 and $24,000.00, with a mean per-course pay of $3157. (Table 4)

Slightly more cases were associated with retirement benefits than health insurance, although for both less than a quarter received the benefit – 23.4% and 21.4%, respectively (Figure 11). There was a significant relationship between these two benefits ($p < .001$): about two-thirds of those receiving one of these benefits from their institution also had the other. Overall, a large majority of cases received neither benefit from their academic employer, 14.6% had both, and 15.7% received only one of these.

Table 4: Course Pay *(In values)*

PayLN	Full Data	Outliers Excluded
Mean	8.032	8.057
Median	8.055	8.063
Std. Deviation	0.702	0.573
Range	10.714	4.159
Minimum	0.000	5.927
Maximum	10.714	10.086
	N= 8306	N= 8217

Figure 11: Health and Retirement Benefits



Results for analyses involving contract length may be somewhat less reliable, as the open-ended design of the survey instrument generated extremely wide-ranging responses that were in some cases difficult to code into five simple categories. Just under three per cent of cases had no response for this question, and the 8901 individual responses comprised 863 unique values. Reported minimum and maximum values for contract length ranged from 0 or

no contract to over 20 years. Some respondents appeared to misinterpret the question and may have supplied the length of time they had been teaching, rather than the length of the contract they currently worked under to teach any particular course.

The small number of unsure responses (35, or .4%) were excluded when analyses were performed to avoid errors. Nearly 70.0% of cases involved contracts of less than one year (Figure 12). The 3.3% reporting no contract was lower than expected, and it's likely some respondents who entered contract lengths of less than one year were in fact reporting merely the length of time for which they had been hired to teach on an at-will basis, with no formal contract.

Nevertheless, a large majority of cases involved short-term teaching positions. Those with annual or long-term contracts earned significantly more than their counterparts with no or short-term contracts, whether considering the full dataset or excluding the outlying pay values ($p < .001$ for all comparisons, Figure 13).

Figure 12: Contract Length for Teaching

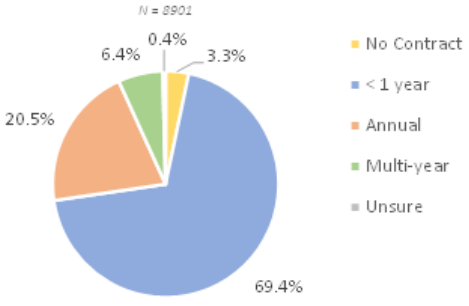
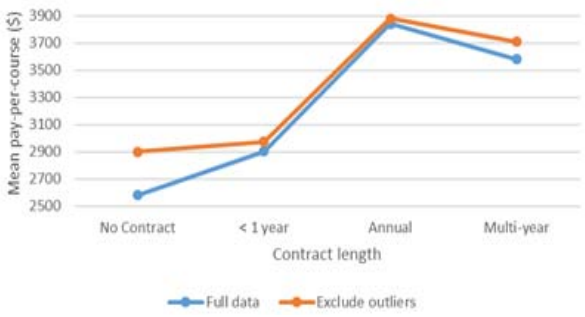


Figure 13: Contract Length and Course Pay



There was a significant and strong relationship between contract length and benefits, with the share rising sharply from fewer than one in seven of those with no contract or with contracts shorter than one year reporting health and retirement benefits, to more than two-thirds of those with multi-year contracts. The odds of having health insurance were three-to-

one for an annual contract and 10-to-one for a multi-year contract compared to no contract; for retirement benefits those odds were 2.6 and 7.5. ($p < .001$ for all comparisons, Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5: Contract Length and Health Benefit

Contract	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
(Ref: No Contract)			0.000	
< 1 year	-0.564	0.156	0.000	0.569
Annual	1.102	0.158	0.000	3.009
Multi-year	2.319	0.176	0.000	10.166
Constant	-1.492	0.151	0.000	0.225

Table 6: Contract Length and Retirement Benefit

Contract	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
(Ref: No Contract)			0.000	
< 1 year	-0.584	0.145	0.000	0.558
Annual	0.968	0.148	0.000	2.605
Multi-year	2.013	0.167	0.000	7.489
Constant	-1.259	0.141	0.000	0.284

Union Membership Criteria

Course Pay

The sensitivity study for the pay variable indicated that the significance of the influence of union membership type on course pay was sensitive to whether outliers were included in the data or not. Results for both the full dataset and the dataset excluding outliers beyond three standard deviations from the mean are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7: Union Membership and Course Pay (Full Data)

PTNTTUnionOnly		Mean Diff. ($)	Mean Diff. (ln)	Std. Err. (ln)	Sig.
No PT union	PT only	-108	-0.035	0.040	0.811
	NTT only PT+FT	-292	-0.092	0.043	0.139
	All faculty	-217 ***	-.069 ***	0.017	0.000
Part-time only	No PT union	108	0.035	0.040	0.811
	NTT only PT+FT	-184	-0.057	0.057	0.749
	All faculty	-109	-0.034	0.041	0.842
Non-tenure-track only, PT+FT	No PT union	292	0.092	0.043	0.139
	PT only	184	0.057	0.057	0.749
	All faculty	75	0.023	0.044	0.956
All faculty statuses: tenured+non, PT+FT	No PT union	217 ***	.069 ***	0.017	0.000
	PT only	109	0.034	0.041	0.842
	NTT only PT+FT	-75	-0.023	0.044	0.956

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 8: Union Membership and Course Pay (Outliers Excluded)					
PTNTTUnionOnly		Mean Diff. ($)	Mean Diff. (ln)	Std. Err. (ln)	Sig.
No PT union	PT only	-89	-0.028	0.032	0.812
	NTT only PT+FT	-343 *	-.106 *	0.035	0.013
	All faculty	-343 ***	-.106 ***	0.014	0.000
Part-time only	No PT union	89	0.028	0.032	0.812
	NTT only PT+FT	-254	-0.077	0.046	0.339
	All faculty	-254	-0.077	0.033	0.096
Non-tenure-track only, PT+FT	No PT union	343 *	.106 *	0.035	0.013
	PT only	254	0.077	0.046	0.339
	All faculty	0	0.000	0.036	1.000
All faculty statuses: tenured+non, PT+FT	No PT union	343 ***	.106 ***	0.014	0.000
	PT only	254	0.077	0.033	0.096
	NTT only PT+FT	0	0.000	0.036	1.000
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

In both analyses the type of union representing part-time faculty appeared to influence mean course pay, but the significance level was higher after outlying pay values were excluded ($p < .05$ for the full data, $p < .01$ with outliers excluded). However the full model interaction between union influence and both institutional characteristics and contract length was significant only for the full dataset ($p < .01$); after outliers were excluded the significance level for the model dropped to $p < .19$. For the full dataset, higher mean course pay was associated only with unions representing all types of faculty, compared to cases without union representation ($p <.001$). Excluding outliers pointed to another significant positive association, for part-timers in non-tenure-track unions with other full-time members compared to those without a union ($p < .05$). Unions representing only part-time faculty were not significantly associated with higher pay in either analysis.

Benefits

The membership type of unions representing part-time, non-tenure-track faculty significantly impacted their chances of receiving health and retirement benefits from their

academic employers, compared to cases with no union association. When controlling only for institutional characteristics, union memberships of all types significantly improved the odds of receiving health and retirement benefits; however once contract length was factored in, the slight differences in benefit outcomes for part-time faculty in part-time-only unions could not be attributed significantly to union influence, while both types of unions that included full-time faculty were still shown to improve outcomes significantly.

Table 9: Union Membership and Health Benefit

Category	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
PTNTTUnionOnly (ref: no PT union)			0.000	***
Part-time only	0.030	0.165	0.855	1.031
NTT only PT+FT	1.284	0.144	0.000	3.610 ***
All faculty	1.108	0.073	0.000	3.027 ***
Private (ref: Public)	-0.535	0.074	0.000	0.586 ***
Degree level (ref: Bachelor)			0.007	***
Master	-0.386	0.151	0.011	0.680 *
Doctor	-0.450	0.145	0.002	0.637 **
Contract (ref: no contract)			0.000	***
< 1 year	-0.744	0.164	0.000	0.475 ***
Annual	1.008	0.167	0.000	2.740 ***
Multi-year	1.799	0.186	0.000	6.042 ***
Constant	-1.120	0.219	0.000	0.326 ***
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001				

Table 10: Union Membership and Retirement Benefit

Category	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
PTNTTUnionOnly (ref: no PT union)			0.000	***
Part-time only	0.017	0.160	0.915	1.017
NTT only PT+FT	0.903	0.140	0.000	2.466 ***
All faculty	1.053	0.070	0.000	2.866 ***
Private (ref: Public)	-0.807	0.071	0.000	0.446 ***
Degree level (ref: Bachelor)			0.020	*
Master	-0.366	0.149	0.014	0.694 *
Doctor	-0.400	0.143	0.005	0.671 **
Contract (ref: no contract)			0.000	***
< 1 year	-0.824	0.155	0.000	0.439 ***
Annual	0.833	0.158	0.000	2.301 ***
Multi-year	1.407	0.177	0.000	4.082 ***
Constant	-0.741	0.210	0.000	0.477 ***
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001				

Tables 9 and 10 show health and retirement benefit outcomes when both institutional characteristics and contract lengths were accounted for ($p < .01$ for the full model). The odds of receiving health insurance for part-time faculty in non-tenure-track unions with both part- and full-time members were 3.6 times greater than those for part-time faculty without any union representation; and being represented by a union with all types of faculty increased odds by three to one. Odds for these groups receiving retirement benefits were improved at slightly lower rates, 2.5 and 2.9, respectively. ($p < .01$ for all comparisons)

Teaching at a private rather than public institution reduced odds for health insurance by 41.4% and for retirement benefits by 55.4% ($p < .01$ for both), and the chances of receiving benefits were reduced by about a third for part-time faculty at master-level and doctoral schools. Contract length had a much larger impact on outcomes than these institutional classifications: an annual contract increased the odds of part-time faculty receiving benefits by 2.7 times for health and 2.3 for retirement, compared to those with no contract, while the odds of receiving benefits for part-time faculty with long-terms contracts were 6.0 times greater for health and about 4 to 1 for retirement. Short-term contracts appeared to reduce the odds of receiving benefits by more than half compared to those with no contracts. Note that the significance of this result could be unreliable due to the previously described confusion many respondents demonstrated in answering this survey question. ($p < .001$ for all comparisons)

Contract Length

There was a significant relationship between union membership type and contract length for part-time faculty (Table 11). Part-time faculty membership in a non-tenure-track union with full-time colleagues did not significantly influence the chances of having an annual contract, but it almost doubled ($p < .05$) the odds of a long-term contract while reducing the odds of a short-term contract by nearly two-thirds ($p < .001$), compared to having no union membership. Unions representing all types of faculty improved the odds for a long-term contract nearly six to one ($p < .001$), and the odds for an annual contract were 1.6 times ($p < .05$) greater. Unions with only part-time members more than doubled ($p < .05$) the chances for a long-term contract, but did not significantly alter the odds for contracts of one year or shorter, compared to part-time faculty teaching without a union.

Table 11: Union Membership and Contract Length					
Contract[a]		B	Std. Error	Sig.	Exp(B)
< 1 year	Intercept	3.773	0.362	0.000	***
	All faculty	0.361	0.185	0.052	1.435
	NTT only PT+FT	-0.994	0.287	0.001	0.370 ***
	Part-time only	-0.402	0.272	0.140	0.669
	no PT union	0[b]			
	Private	-0.360	0.138	0.009	0.698 **
	Public	0[b]			
	Doctor	-0.583	0.351	0.097	0.558
	Master	-0.485	0.363	0.181	0.616
	Bachelor	0[b]			
Annual	Intercept	3.026	0.370	0.000	***
	All faculty	0.445	0.193	0.021	1.560 *
	NTT only PT+FT	-0.310	0.299	0.299	0.733
	Part-time only	0.057	0.285	0.841	1.059
	no PT union	0[b]			
	Private	-0.432	0.146	0.003	0.649 **
	Public	0[b]			
	Doctor	-1.098	0.359	0.002	0.333 **
	Master	-1.046	0.372	0.005	0.351 **
	Bachelor	0[b]			
Multi-year	Intercept	1.317	0.470	0.005	**
	All faculty	1.747	0.211	0.000	5.739 ***
	NTT only PT+FT	0.669	0.322	0.041	1.932 *
	Part-time only	0.793	0.337	0.019	2.210 *
	no PT union	0[b]			
	Private	-1.243	0.186	0.000	0.288 ***
	Public	0[b]			
	Doctor	-0.836	0.461	0.070	0.433
	Master	-1.097	0.476	0.021	0.334 *
	Bachelor	0[b]			
a. The reference category is: No contract.					
b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.					
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

Teaching at a private institution significantly lowered the odds of having a contract of any length, though the difference was extreme for multi-year contracts, 71.2% ($p < .001$). Teaching at a master's-level institution lowered the odds of an annual ($p < .01$) or long-term ($p < .05$) contract by about two-thirds, but teaching at a doctoral institution only significantly reduced the odds for an annual contract.

Union Coalition Strategy

Course Pay

The pay variable sensitivity study did not indicate that the influence of union coalition strategy on course pay was significantly different whether outliers were included in the data or not. In both analyses, the union choice to work in coalition with other unions or alone did not significantly influence course pay either on its own ($p < .95$, $p < .88$) or after institutional characteristics and contract length were controlled for ($p < .37$, $p < .67$).

Benefits

The strategy to ally with other unions for collective bargaining significantly impacted benefits (Tables 12 and 13). After controlling for both institutional characteristics and contract length, the odds of part-time faculty receiving health insurance from their academic employer when represented by unions working in coalitions were 6.4 times the odds for their counterparts without representation, while the odds for faculty in unions that worked alone were only 1.5 times greater. The impact on retirement benefits was less dramatic but still significant: the odds for part-time faculty in allied unions receiving this benefit were 3.0 times the odds for those without a union, while the odds for part-timers on campuses where unions bargained alone were only twice that of faculty without a union. ($p < .001$ for all comparisons)

Table 12: Union Coalition and Health Benefit				
Category	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
PTNTTUnionCoalition (ref: no PT union)			0.000	***
No Coaltion	0.435	0.078	0.000	1.545 ***
Yes Coalition	1.858	0.088	0.000	6.413 ***
Private (ref: Public)	-0.523	0.072	0.000	0.593 ***
Degree level (ref: Bachelor)			0.023	*
Master	-0.395	0.151	0.009	0.673 **
Doctor	-0.391	0.144	0.007	0.677 **
Contract (ref: no contract)			0.000	***
< 1 year	-0.682	0.167	0.000	0.506 ***
Annual	1.038	0.170	0.000	2.825 ***
Multi-year	1.632	0.190	0.000	5.112 ***
Constant	-1.196	0.221	0.000	0.302 ***
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001				

Table 13: Union Coalition and Retirement Benefit				
Category	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
PTNTTUnionCoalition (ref: no PT union)			0.000	***
No Coaltion	0.777	0.071	0.000	2.176 ***
Yes Coalition	1.106	0.085	0.000	3.022 ***
Private (ref: Public)	-0.884	0.089	0.000	0.413 ***
Degree level (ref: Bachelor)			0.005	**
Master	-0.334	0.148	0.024	0.716 *
Doctor	-0.435	0.142	0.002	0.647 **
Contract (ref: no contract)			0.000	***
< 1 year	-0.777	0.154	0.000	0.460 ***
Annual	0.839	0.157	0.000	2.314 ***
Multi-year	1.368	0.178	0.000	3.928 ***
Constant	-0.711	0.209	0.001	0.491 **
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001				

The chances of receiving health and retirement benefits were reduced for part-time faculty teaching at private institutions compared to those at public schools, by 40.7% for health and 58.7% for retirement ($p < .001$ for both); and those at master and doctor-level institutions also had their odds of receiving benefits reduced by roughly a third ($p < .05$ for all comparisons), relative to those at schools granting only bachelor's degrees.

Again, contract length had a much stronger association with benefit outcomes than these institutional classifications: an annual contract raised the odds of part-time faculty receiving health insurance by 2.8 times and their odds of receiving retirement benefits by 2.3 times, compared to the chances of faculty without contracts receiving these benefits. Odds for those with multi-year contracts compared to those with no contracts were about five to one for health and four to one for retirement benefits, and short-term contracts reduced the odds of receiving benefits by roughly half. ($p < .001$ for all comparisons)

Contract Length

There was a significant relationship between union coalition strategy and longer contracts for part-time faculty (Table 14), with nearly an eight to one ($p < .001$) chance that faculty represented by a union working in coalition with other unions would have a multi-year contract, as compared to non-unionized part-time faculty; unions working alone only doubled ($p < .01$) the odds for a multi-year contract.

Table 14: Union Coalition and Contract Length

Contract[a]		B	Std. Error	Sig.	Exp(B)
< 1 year	Intercept	3.842	0.361	0.000	***
	Yes Coalition	-0.329	0.221	0.136	0.720
	No Coalition	0.172	0.171	0.314	1.188
	No PT Union	0[b]			
	Private	-0.438	0.135	0.001	0.645 **
	Public	0[b]			
	Doctor	-0.646	0.350	0.065	0.524
	Master	-0.381	0.363	0.293	0.683
	Bachelor	0[b]			
Annual	Intercept	3.031	0.370	0.000	***
	Yes Coalition	0.271	0.228	0.234	1.311
	No Coalition	0.194	0.179	0.279	1.215
	No PT Union	0[b]			
	Private	-0.439	0.142	0.002	0.645 **
	Public	0[b]			
	Doctor	-1.108	0.358	0.002	0.330 **
	Master	-1.000	0.372	0.007	0.368 **
	Bachelor	0[b]			
Multi-year	Intercept	1.165	0.472	0.014	*
	Yes Coalition	2.059	0.241	0.000	7.839 ***
	No Coalition	0.668	0.212	0.002	1.950 **
	No PT Union	0[b]			
	Private	-1.115	0.184	0.000	0.328 ***
	Public	0[b]			
	Doctor	-0.707	0.461	0.125	0.493
	Master	-1.052	0.477	0.028	0.349 *
	Bachelor	0[b]			

a. The reference category is: No contract.

b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Teaching at a private institution reduced the odds of a long-term contract by two-thirds ($p < .001$) and the chances of contracts one year or shorter by about a third ($p < .01$ for both).

Teaching at a master's-level institution lowered the odds of an annual ($p < .01$) or long-term ($p < .05$) contract by about two-thirds, but teaching at a doctoral institution only significantly reduced the odds of an annual contract.

Broader Beneficiaries for Better Outcomes

In general, these results support the hypothesis that unions representing a larger and broader range of faculty are able to secure better outcomes for part-time faculty than those that concentrate their membership and advocacy only on behalf of part-time, non-tenure-track faculty, or those that choose not to ally with other unions in coalitions. However other factors may have stronger influence.

Only the broadest union membership type, that which included part- and full-time and tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty, was consistently associated with higher course pay for part-time faculty. The relationship between course pay and whether unions operated alone or together in coalitions was not significant. This suggests that although part-time faculty do see improved outcomes when they belong to unions with other tenured faculty, there are other factors, such as contract length, that more strongly influence earnings than collective bargaining by unions at their institutions.

Union activity was more strongly associated with better outcomes for benefits than for course pay. While part-time-only unions were not significantly associated with better outcomes, both non-tenure-track unions with part-and full-time members and unions representing all types of faculty improved the odds for health insurance and retirement benefits, compared to no union at all. Likewise, unions working in coalitions had better odds for health and retirement benefits than unions working alone. The union influence in both

scenarios was a far stronger predictor of positive health and retirement benefit outcomes than whether an institution was public or private or the highest level of degree it offered, but longer contracts were also strongly associated with better access to academic employer-provided health and retirement benefits.

Contract length generally had a stronger, more consistent association with higher course pay and better odds for health and retirement benefits than union influence of any kind, and it is through these associations that union influence may be most important. Unions with even the narrowest membership criteria, part-time only, increased the chances for long-term contracts for part-time faculty, though the odds were less than half those for unions with the broader membership strategy including all types of faculty – full- and part-time, tenured and not. Similarly, coalition actors produced far better odds for long-term contracts for their part-time members, although even unions acting alone doubled the odds of a long-term contract for part-time faculty over those without a union.

Collective bargaining that includes part-time faculty, therefore, appears to influence both pay and benefit outcomes for these contingent instructors not only directly, but also indirectly through influence on longer contract terms, which are themselves associated with better pay and benefit outcomes; and this influence is strongest when the bargaining is conducted on behalf of as broad a group of faculty as possible, whether that is by unions with broader membership types or by union agents working together in coalitions.

Conclusion

The results of this study appear to indicate that part-time, non-tenure-track instructors can benefit from membership in unions that collectively bargain for other types of faculty and do so in coalition with other unions. However the overall picture for contingent faculty remains unclear, as better data and research in this area are needed.

Limitations and Further Research

A notable limitation is the availability of data to study the impacts of union activity on outcomes for faculty. The primary data source used here, the CAW survey, was nearly a decade old, and the organization that produced it is no longer active. The survey methodology relied on a convenience sample, collecting responses from any faculty who volunteered to complete the questionnaire, meaning that the sample may not be representative of its target population. Even the staid world of academia is subject to the increasingly rapid changes apparent in the larger economy, and external pressures from students and their families, industry, and political actors necessitate responses informed by current and high-quality data.

As noted earlier, the decision was made to include only part-time faculty in this study due to important differences in their status relative to their full-time, non-tenure-track colleagues. However, all non-tenure-track academic employees are contingent workers in that they lack the permanent stability traditional tenured positions guarantee. A comprehensive assessment of the contingent academic workforce would include these full-time lecturers alongside part-time ones to better illustrate the full scope of labor dynamics in higher education.

This study considered only two institutional factors influencing the relationship between unionization and outcomes for part-time faculty, control of the institution and highest degree level offered. Further efforts to situate this research within larger economic, social, and policy contexts could help identify the effects of unionization more clearly.

Other influences could include enrollment (total, full time, part time), resources and funding (tuition, state appropriations, federal grants, endowments), and location (as related to local or state variations in policies and prevailing wages). Any of these factors, and others, may be correlated with union activity, making it difficult to tease out the true impact of collective bargaining on outcomes for contingent faculty, relative to the influence of other policy choices. For example, how is enrollment and associated tuition revenue linked to local and regional employment and wage conditions that also impact union membership rates and strategies? How might variations in state funding for education or unemployment insurance correlate with labor activity? Would different relationships be observed in states with right-to-work laws, compared to those considered more labor-friendly?

A closer look at the faculty population could deepen understanding, not only including personal characteristics like gender, race, and age but particularly with respect to experiential factors like education and field of study, career history and longevity, or non-academic professional background. Academic disciplines and work histories might influence compensation to the extent they are associated with course offerings and demand, established versus emerging fields of study, and industry growth or contraction in demand for certain topics and skills.

Further refining the analysis to explore how outcomes are associated with different national unions could shed more light on how competing philosophies and strategies toward bargaining, representation, and advocacy are more or less effective in producing positive outcomes for faculty. And in addition to the critical outcomes for pay, benefits, and contract lengths studied here, other conditions of employment may be influenced by union activity, such as total student load, participation in faculty governance, opportunities and support for research, expectations around non-teaching responsibilities, and access to campus resources and privileges (e.g., office space or administrative support).

Also of interest are consequences of other aspects of union activity, such as when multiple unions operate at the same institution to represent different faculty segments, or how union bargaining on behalf of members influences non-unionized faculty at the same schools or among peer institutions. How is part-time faculty employment impacted by full-time, tenured faculty unionization? Liu & Zhang (2013) note that contradictory hypotheses in response to this question have support in what literature exists: that full-time, tenured faculty unions may actively and successfully work against part-time faculty hiring in order to protect positions for their members, or that part-time faculty hiring might increase as successful union bargaining on behalf of permanent faculty drives institutions toward more flexible, lower-cost contingent labor, or if full-time, tenured faculty unions actively support part-time hiring to alleviate teaching loads in favor of research.

Implications

Even with only about a quarter of faculty in unions, higher education remains unionized at considerably higher rates than the general workforce, and efforts continue to increase that

proportion. Nationally, only 10.7% of all workers belong to a union, and that unionization rate is down by half since 1983 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). But if academic unions succumb to the same economic and policy forces that have diminished labor organizing in other industries, then faculty may anticipate greater insecurity due to stagnant or declining pay, reduced benefits, and greater contract instability as union influence on their behalf weakens.

Given the huge impact legal decisions have had on union activity in the past, this is not unlikely following this year's U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Council 31*, which overturned the previous 1977 ruling in *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education* that agency or "fair share" fees could be required of all workers who benefit from union bargaining on their behalf, though they may opt out of joining and paying full dues toward the union's political work. This change in the legal landscape effectively makes right-to-work a national standard for all employees in the public sector, replacing state-by-state adoption of these policies; 22 states required agency fees prior to the ruling. The Illinois Economic Policy Institute predicted an 8.2% reduction in union membership among government employees and associated 3.6% drop in pay over three to five years as a result. Justice Elena Kagan wrote in her dissent that "thousands of ongoing contracts involving millions of employees" would be disrupted, forcing new negotiations. (Tumulty, 2018)

Resource and demand pressures in higher education will no doubt continue to lead institutions toward the more flexible labor arrangements enabled by hiring part-time faculty. If they are to protect their members in response, unions must pursue strategies toward expanded membership criteria and coalition partnering to broaden their constituent base and obtain better outcomes, even as it may become more difficult in the current legal and political context.

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