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Student Outcomes Assessment Among the New Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Majority

Adrianna Kezar and Daniel Maxey

Foreword by Maria Maisto



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About the Authors

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About the Delphi Project

The Delphi Project was initiated to support a better understanding of factors that led to a majority of faculty being hired off the tenure track; the impact of these circumstances on teaching and learning; and potential strategies for addressing issues of rising contingency together. It is a project of the Earl and Pauline Pullias Center for Higher Education at the University of Southern California in partnership with the Association of American College and Universities (AAC&U) and includes more than 30 representatives from across higher education. The project has received generous funding from The Spencer Foundation, The Teagle Foundation, and The Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The original study utilized a modified Delphi method approach, in which a group of experts is consulted and then brought together to develop solutions to complex national problems. Key experts representing a broad cross-section of institutional sectors, unions, professional and disciplinary organizations, as well as other perspectives and interests from higher education participated in the study. More recently, the project has been guided by two meta-strategies developed by the original working group: 1) Creating a vision for new, future faculty models for improving student success and 2) Building a broad base of stakeholder support for improving conditions facing non-tenure-track faculty. The Delphi Project continues to develop partnerships with a wide range of higher education organizations and institutions in our efforts to achieve these goals.

Learn more at <http://www.thechangingfaculty.org/>.

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Abstract

The faculty today is dramatically different from 30 years ago. It is largely non-tenure-track; faculty work has been unbundled into teaching-, research-, or service-only roles, and faculty may be provided little institutional support and have minimal connection to the institution and enterprise. While this change has been occurring over several decades, leaders on many college campuses have not responded to this shift by modifying policies and practices so that faculty can effectively execute their work. The absence of policies and practices aligned with the realities faced by this new majority faculty has significant implications for how faculty can be involved in student learning outcomes assessment. This paper explores the potential for non-tenure-track faculty to meaningfully contribute to student learning outcomes assessment and outlines policies and practices that can facilitate such contributions. Three current courses of action are presented for campus leaders to consider to better support assessment work by today's faculty. Although these efforts are intended to improve conditions and support the work of non-tenure-track faculty, a significant rethinking of faculty models is needed to foster robust assessment efforts on campuses in the future.

Foreword

Student learning outcomes assessment helps point to the needed conditions of a quality education. It also suggests the important role of faculty in student learning. But faculty's role in meaningful educational processes is currently threatened by the reliance on contingent employment models that privilege managerial flexibility over educational quality. But movement is afoot to change this situation. By a fortuitous coincidence, the New Faculty Majority (NFM) and the Delphi Project emerged onto the national higher education stage at the same time: in the first half of 2012. Adrianna Kezar was a featured speaker at NFM's national summit on the crisis of contingent academic employment in higher education in January 2012, titled "Reclaiming Academic Democracy: Facing the Consequences of Contingent Employment in Higher Education." In turn, I was a participant in the Delphi Project's May 2012 convening of "key experts representing a broad cross-section of institutional sectors, unions, professional and disciplinary organizations, as well as other perspectives and interests from higher education." While both NFM and Delphi have reached out to all higher education constituencies, NFM has focused on educating and organizing faculty and the general public while Delphi has made unprecedented progress in mobilizing key institutional and organizational leaders around the need for reform of the contingent model. NFM and Delphi have thus worked as complementary organizations united by the conviction that the overreliance on contingent faculty hiring system undermines educational quality. Significantly, both organizations have understood "educational quality" to depend equally on academic and social justice criteria; practices that exploit faculty and undermine the profession of college teaching should be looked at with concern. Through this occasional paper, Adrianna Kezar and Dan Maxey, together with NILOA, are making an invaluable contribution to the goal of educating -- and more importantly, activating -- the higher education community to address the reality behind the slogan "Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions."

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Student Outcomes Assessment Among the New Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Majority

Adrianna Kezar and Daniel Maxey

The Changing Faculty Context

The faculty today is dramatically different from 30 years ago. It is largely non-tenure-track; faculty work has been unbundled into teaching-, research-, or service-only roles, and faculty may be provided little institutional support and have minimal connection to the institution and enterprise.¹ For many years, non-tenure-track faculty were mostly concentrated in community colleges and within the humanities, but they have now become more prevalent across all institutional types and within almost all fields. While the factors that led to this change are complex (e.g., new institutional types, declining appropriations and revenues, greater demand for flexibility, the emergence of new disciplines, and the massification of higher education), this trend seems to only be increasing. A reversal and return to a largely tenure-track faculty that is engaged simultaneously in teaching, research, and service activities seems unlikely. In this section, we outline the data on these trends related to the change in faculty.

National Trends for Faculty Composition

Whereas full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty were once the norm, the professoriate is now comprised of mostly non-tenure-track faculty. In 1969, tenured and tenure-track positions made up approximately 78% of the faculty and non-tenure-track positions comprised about 22% (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). More than forty years later, in Fall 2011, these proportions had nearly flipped; tenured and tenure-track faculty had declined to about a third (32%) and two thirds (65%) were ineligible for tenure (NCES, 2013). Of the non-tenure-track positions, about 19% were full-time and almost half (49%) were part-time.

Part-Time Faculty

Part-time faculty have long been a part of higher education, particularly within the community college sector, where they grew in numbers beginning in the 1970s. They were not commonly represented in large numbers across four-year institutions until the last decade or so. Part-time faculty have experienced the most significant rate of growth over the last 30 to 40 years. The population increased by 422.1 percent between 1970 and 2003, compared to an increase of only 70.7 percent among all full-time faculty, both tenure-track and non-tenure-track (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). While part-time faculty are often characterized as a homogeneous class of employees, they are actually a very heterogeneous group. Gappa and Leslie (1993) created a typology to describe this population, identifying four broad categories: career-enders (individuals in retirement); specialists, experts, and professionals (typically have a full-time professional job and teach minimally on the side); aspiring academics (individuals who want full-time and tenure-

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¹ This section draws largely on data reports already published by the Delphi Project.

track employment); and freelancers (have another position, often less than full-time). While no national figures exist, many hypothesize the aspiring academics category is the fastest growing within the part-time faculty at four-year institutions and increasingly at community colleges. Most part-timers teach exclusively.

Full-Time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

In 1969, full-time non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) made up only 3.2 percent of the faculty, and now they make up 19% (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Unlike the part-time faculty population, the number of full-time non-tenure-track faculty did not increase significantly until the early 1990s. Schuster and Finkelstein note that full-time non-tenure-track faculty comprised a majority of all new full-time hires, outpacing tenure-track positions, in 1993 and reached 58.6 percent by 2003. While the number has increased over time, it appears that the proportion of these positions has stabilized, remaining fairly constant in more recent years (AFT, 2009). Baldwin and Chronister (2001) established a typology to better understand full-time non-tenure-track faculty based on the terms of their employment responsibilities: teachers, researchers, administrators, and other academic professionals. They often represent the unbundling of the faculty role as many have positions that are research, administrative, or teaching only.

Differences in Composition by Institution Type

Although the numbers of full- and part-time non-tenure-track faculty have increased across higher education, there are significant differences in composition among various types of institutions.² These dissimilarities are largely determined by differences in mission and priorities. Certainly, the faculty composition of individual institutions within a sector will not always reflect these overall proportions.³

Two-year colleges: Community colleges were the first institutions to increase their reliance on NTTFs, as a response to surges in enrollments in the 1960s and 1970s, and still employ the largest percentage of NTTFs among non-profit institutions. According to the most recent provisional data available from the National Center for Education Statistics³ (NCES, 2013) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Survey (IPEDS) from Fall 2011, part-time faculty now comprise approximately 70.3 percent of instructors at these institutions. And, they are responsible for teaching between half and two-thirds of all course sections (CCSSE, 2009). In contrast to their public counterparts, private two-year institutions make up a very small and still decreasing percent of the faculty overall – only 2 percent in 2007 (AFT, 2009). Only 5.1 percent of the faculty in the private two-year sector are tenured or on the tenure-track and 34.5 percent are full-time NTTFs and 60.4 percent are part-time.

Although the numbers of full- and part-time non-tenure-track faculty have increased across higher education, there are significant differences in composition among various types of institutions.

² Charts reflecting the composition of the faculty by institutional type are included in Appendix A.

³ The Modern Language Association has created an online, searchable database containing the numbers of tenured, tenure-track, full-time non-tenure-track, and part-time faculty at each institution in the United States. Find it online at http://www.mla.org/acad_work_search.

Baccalaureate and masters-granting institutions: Among public baccalaureate institutions, 38.4 percent of faculty in Fall 2011 were tenured or tenure-eligible, full-time NTTFs were 11.4 percent, and part-time faculty had become a majority of the professoriate at 50.2 percent (NCES, 2013). Among private institutions, tenured or tenure-track faculty were 39.8 percent; part-time faculty represented 42.1 percent and full-time NTTFs were 18.1 percent. At public masters-granting institutions, tenured and tenure-track faculty were 44.6 percent, with full-time non-tenure-track and part-time faculty making up 12.2 and 43.2 percent, respectively. The numbers of part-time faculty at private masters institutions were substantially larger, 60.2 percent; tenured and tenure-track faculty were 25 percent and full-time NTTFs were 14.8 percent.

Research and doctorate-granting institutions: At public research and doctorate-granting institutions, 47.8 percent of faculty in Fall 2011 were tenured or tenure-eligible, full-time non-tenure-track faculty were 25.9 percent, and part-time faculty were 26.3 percent of the professoriate (NCES, 2013). Among private institutions, tenured or tenure-track faculty were 37.7 percent; part-time faculty represented 35.4 percent and full-time NTTFs were 26.9 percent. There are also large numbers of graduate teaching assistants in instructional roles within research universities making the number of instructors working off the tenure-track even larger.

Private, For-Profit Colleges: Unlike the sectors above, nearly all faculty positions among the private, for-profit institutions are non-tenure-track positions. In 2011, for-profit institutions were comprised of 1.05 percent tenured and tenure-track faculty, 26.1 percent full-time non-tenure-track faculty, and 72.84 percent part-time faculty (NCES, 2013).

Differences in Full- and Part-Time Composition among Academic Fields

Community colleges and four-year research, masters, and baccalaureate institutions typically have high percentages of part-time faculty in composition and humanities courses, as well as math and science courses. Overall, though, faculty in education (55 percent), fine arts (52.5 percent), and business (51 percent) are most likely to work part-time with more than half the faculty assigned to part-time positions (NEA, 2007). The largest percentages of full-time non-tenure-track faculty in 2003 were in the health sciences (44.1 percent) and education (32.6 percent; Forrest Cataldi, Fahimi, & Bradburn, 2005; NSOPF, 2004).

Hiring trends demonstrate that these figures will only continue to go up. Substantial increases, particularly in the percentages of part-time faculty, have been seen since 1983 in fields such as education (+27.7 percent). Even after the recession, the most recent numbers continue to climb with 3 out of 4 positions being hired off the tenure-track—a trend for several decades now (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). These trends demonstrate that the faculty will only continue shifting to be less tenure-track in coming years and much more part-time.

Faculty Composition by Academic Field, 2003

Disciplinary Area	Part-Time NTTF (%)	Full-Time NTTF (%)
Agriculture/ Home Economics	30.2	22.5
Business	51.0	17.3
Education	55.5	32.6
Engineering	29.6	15.4
Fine Arts	52.5	17.9
Health Sciences	38.1	44.1
Humanities	46.9	22.2
Natural Sciences	37.2	24.0
Social Sciences	37.4	16.2
Other fields	50.0	30.7

(National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty, 2004)

Implications of the Changing Faculty for Outcomes Assessment Work—Challenges to Overcome

While the changes described above have been occurring over several decades, leaders on many college campuses have not responded to this shift and modified policies and practices so that faculty can effectively execute their work. Most campuses operate as if they still have a largely tenure-track faculty in place. The lack of policies and practices that are aligned to the realities faced by a majority of the faculty has significant implications for how faculty can be involved in student outcomes assessment. Non-tenure-track faculty often do not have opportunities to contribute directly to assessment efforts and planning for efforts to improve student learning outcomes. They are also frequently excluded from important processes that foreshadow improvement efforts informed by assessment data.

In the sections below, we describe some key aspects of the typical work environment for non-tenure-track faculty members in order to foster a better understanding of the ways they would be constrained or limited in supporting student outcomes assessment. It is important to note that part-time faculty are the most constrained, and experience the worst work environments in terms of support, whereas full-time NTTFs often have working conditions that are more similar to tenure-track faculty. Therefore, campuses that rely heavily on part-time faculty will face greater challenges in their efforts to involve the full faculty in outcomes assessment and improvement efforts. What we highlight is that obstacles to involvement are different than for tenure-track faculty. For example, Hutchings (2010) identifies how tenure-track faculty find the language of assessment usually off putting, lack training, and there are no rewards for assessment. These issues are true for NTTFs, but they also have additional obstacles to overcome.

Exclusion from decision making about curriculum design and assessment:

Most campuses only involve tenure-track—and sometimes full-time NTTFs—in curriculum design and assessment planning efforts. Non-tenure-track faculty often do not participate in the creation of course syllabi, textbook selection, projects to integrate curricular or pedagogical reforms, or other curricular decisions, sometimes even for their own courses (Baldwin & Chronister 2001). This not only means that important insights from instructors who are teaching a large share of courses on campus are excluded from discussions about curriculum design and assessment, but also that NTTFs may have a very limited understanding of course goals and objectives, broader learning outcomes for programs and departments, institutional student learning outcomes goals, and the implementation of plans to improve student learning. These conditions have been found to affect their morale, status, and efficacy as professionals. Studies of outcomes assessment suggest that faculty involvement in the development of student outcomes assessment is important to execution (Hutchings, 2010; Kuh, et al., 2014; Peterson & Augustine, 2000). Recent studies by NILOA also point to the importance of faculty in curriculum design to ensure

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that learning outcomes are developed and implemented (Kuh, et al., 2014). For example, “Provosts rated faculty ownership and involvement as top priorities to advance the assessment agenda” (p. 4). Getting broader buy-in is the main challenge; the growth of NTTFs makes this more difficult to achieve without intentionally involving them in the process and conversations.

Role expectations for NTTFs: The workload of non-tenure-track faculty is typically characterized by their primary responsibilities for providing instruction to students. However, related roles and expectations for their involvement in assessment, holding office hours, class preparation, or communicating with students and colleagues are often not made clear to NTTFs who are often not on collective bargaining agreements.⁴ In fact, their formal involvement in assessment efforts may be very limited. A further problem documented in studies is that when NTTFs are asked to participate in assessment efforts or other activities that extend beyond their primary obligations to students in their courses, they often do so without clarity about pay (Hollenshead et al., 2007). So, tension can emerge when institutions expect an enlarged portfolio of work, but they do not provide additional compensation to NTTFs or release time or reduced teaching load for full-time non-tenure-track faculty, in particular. As Hollenshead and others note, although institutions may provide space and reimburse certain costs for full-time contingents, they do not by and large support such activities by providing neither the time nor incentive of increased compensation. For part-time contingent faculty the rewards are even fewer. The trend of expanding workloads suggests an area of growing concern for the future.

Recruitment and hiring: Many institutions have no formal or systemized process for recruitment or hiring and approach the hiring of non-tenure-track faculty very casually (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). The short time frame between hiring and beginning work may not allow for orientation, socialization, or even preparation for teaching courses. Even for part-time faculty members who teach on a more ongoing basis and are in a pool for hiring each semester, they also still receive late notice about teaching a course, typically days before class. With little to no lead time in hiring, too many of these faculty members begin their work uninformed about campus efforts related to assessment or involvement with course-based assessment efforts.

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⁴ Collective bargaining agreements have been effective in specifically designating the job responsibilities in broad categories such as teaching, making expectations clear for work.

Insufficient orientation, mentoring, and professional development opportunities:

Many campuses lack a formal orientation program for NTTFs where information about institutional goals for student learning outcomes and services available to support both students and faculty is provided for new faculty employees. When an orientation is offered, it may only be offered once a year, so faculty who are hired late, in off semesters, or are unable to attend lack access to this information. Orientations are a key opportunity to educate newly hired faculty about current and ongoing assessment efforts and goals. Another important way to help prepare faculty for participation in assessment and the implementation of campus-wide efforts to improve student learning outcomes is through professional development or mentoring opportunities. Such opportunities are typically lacking for NTTFs, though. Other opportunities for faculty development such as mentoring, wherein NTTFs may be paired with a tenure-track faculty member or an experienced full- or part-time NTTF, exist on few campuses, limiting sharing of information and ideas about improving instructional practices, curriculum and assessment.

Evaluation: Various studies have identified that “diverse, sometimes erratic, approaches to evaluating” the performance of non-tenure-track faculty is a major concern (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001, p.65). Many institutions have no formal process for evaluation in place, meaning that faculty receive little or no feedback on their work or the quality of their instruction. Typically, only student evaluations of teaching are utilized, rather than multiple measures including, but not limited to, peer observation, portfolio development, or outcomes assessment, which could adequately capture data and insights about NTTFs’ performance (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Marits, 1996). As a result, institutional and departmental leaders also may not have a good sense of what efforts and strategies NTTFs are using to help improve student learning outcomes and achieve stated institutional and departmental goals and whether they are aligned with larger, coordinated efforts. However, this suggestion about evaluation is not meant to use assessment data in punitive ways to punish NTTF. Instead, feedback can be supportive in terms of helping to improve performance. The main point is that without feedback, NTTF are unlikely to be able to support assessment efforts and work to improve student learning.

A lack of access to instructional resources, staff support, and communications:

Non-tenure-track faculty, particularly those on part-time contracts, may lack access to basic materials for supporting instruction and assessment efforts, including equipment such as computers and copiers, institutional email accounts, and administrative support staff. They are also sometimes excluded from institutional and departmental meetings and email listservs where important information about current assessment efforts or plans for improving student learning outcomes are shared with faculty members.

Many institutions have no formal process for evaluation in place, meaning that faculty receive little or no feedback on their work or the quality of their instruction.

Summary

The cumulative impact of a work environment that narrowly defines teaching as classroom time, hires faculty at the last moment, provides little orientation to campus learning goals, provides minimal professional development or mentoring about assessment, excludes non-tenure-track faculty from curricular designs and decisions, provides minimal resources and assistance for teaching and teaching related tasks, and lacks evaluations or feedback on performance impedes individual instructors' ability to participate in and support assessment efforts to further student learning. Studies focused on institutionalizing outcomes assessment emphasize the importance of the participation of tenure-track faculty in professional development, decision-making, campus task forces focused on assessment, decisions and design related to assessment (Hutchings, 2010; Peterson & Augustine, 2000; Peterson, Einarson, & Augustine, 1997). The same rationale has yet to be applied to the fastest-growing segment of the faculty on our campuses.

Providing adequate support and opportunities for involvement, though, may contribute to and advance efforts to improve student learning and assessment efforts. In their 2010 study, Eagan and Jaeger uncovered a system of support and development for contingent faculty at several research universities, which included part-time faculty participation in new faculty orientations and targeted attention to address common challenges that part-time faculty face such as large class sizes, a lack of knowledge of campus academic support services and resources for students. The authors' findings suggest that more purposeful integration of contingent faculty into the life and operations of the institution promises to contribute to improving student success, and by extension, efforts to assess and understand student outcomes. What we have seen is that it is not only possible to improve conditions for non-tenure-track faculty, but that by purposefully connecting these faculty members to professional development, providing feedback to enhance their teaching, giving them resources and access to support staff, and involving them in decision making and curriculum development, faculty members are often better prepared to provide a high-quality learning experience for their students.

Capitalizing on Possibilities

Non-tenure-track faculty are often passionate about teaching and fostering student learning. There is an untapped opportunity to involve NTTFs, whose primary roles are related to teaching and learning, in assessment and resulting efforts to improve student learning outcomes. These are individuals who do not need to be pulled away from their research or other scholarly interests; often they are among those faculty members who are most interested in becoming involved in assessment efforts (Kezar, 2011). Yet, the way their roles have been constructed can make it very difficult for them to participate. There are also few incentives and rewards for their engagement in campus assessment efforts and initiatives to improve student learning. However, by making structural changes to involve NTTFs and capitalize on

More purposeful integration of contingent faculty into the life and operations of the institution promises to contribute to improving student success, and by extension, efforts to assess and understand student outcomes.

the dedication and knowledge that they possess, campuses can expand and improve their assessment efforts as they seek to attain important student learning outcomes goals. Hutchings (2010) points to the importance of faculty, across all contract types, who together implement a robust student learning outcomes assessment program. In this section we describe a few of the assets provided by NTTFs that are currently underutilized in many efforts to forward assessment.

Dedication and commitment

A study of commitment levels among NTTFs found that part-time faculty reported higher emotional commitment to their institutions than full-time faculty (Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006). The authors hypothesize that part of what fosters such a commitment may be strong satisfaction. While part-time faculty are often dissatisfied with certain aspects of their roles, whether it be their pay or the hiring process, they register strong commitment to their role as teachers; this is demonstrated in their love of the subject matter and their interest in student learning (Shaker, 2008). This dedication and commitment to teaching and students can be used as a means for getting NTTFs involved in assessment and finding new ways to make it an integral part of their role. Like efforts to involve tenure-track faculty (Hutchings, 2010), assessment needs to be built into NTTF roles, not seen as an add on. Thus, as we consider ways to build on their dedication and inclination to do this work, campus leaders need to ensure that contracts for teaching build in time for NTTFs to be involved with assessment-related work. Like office hours, it can't be an expectation without pay.

Focus on teaching

Non-tenure-track faculty in instructional positions are fully dedicated to teaching and are often more likely than their tenure-track colleagues to be drawn to the work of assessment since it ties directly to their primary role and focus of educating students. One study found that NTTFs like to be considered assessment experts on campus and see this as part of their identity as a scholar (Kezar, 2011); they were found to familiarize themselves with assessment practices and play a leadership role to implement techniques. Other studies of non-tenure-track faculty identity also found that they are open to teaching innovations such as assessment (Shaker, 2008). As a result, involving non-tenure-track faculty in assessment of student learning may take less buy-in, may align more with their work focus, and in the end may be integrated into their role more quickly.

Knowledge about the subject matter and how to apply it

As noted earlier, NTTFs are an extremely diverse group. Many have the same subject knowledge and expertise as traditional tenure-track faculty. Others possess rich practitioner knowledge gained through years of work in professional fields. These instructors may bring different perspectives than tenure-track faculty and could help to develop student learning goals aligned with the challenges and opportunities students will face in their

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careers. So, it could be very beneficial for these NTTFs to be involved in assessment efforts and the development of student learning goals, bringing their practical expertise to bear in preparing students for the future.

Current Approaches to Address Problems/Challenges of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Working Conditions that Affect Learning Outcomes Assessment

In this section we describe three approaches that campus leaders are using to better facilitate assessment efforts with NTTFs. While we describe each separately, some campuses are using two or three of these strategies at a time. What is important is to identify strategies for addressing changes in the faculty composition, engaging NTTFs in assessment work, and designing ways to maintain their involvement in assessment. Further, efforts to continue to leverage their commitment and knowledge to improve student learning outcomes into the future should be considered. At the end, we suggest some limitations or challenges to adopting these three strategies. They are by no means the ideal ways to address the issues, but represent current courses of action that remain unstudied and untested. However, previous papers from NILOA including Hutchings' (2010) paper on involving faculty, argue that learning outcomes assessment should be an important part of the faculty role (no matter what the contract type) and seen as part of professional responsibility of all faculty, suggesting the pitfalls of unbundling assessment from the faculty role.

Hire more full-time non-tenure-track faculty, rather than part-time faculty

One strategy that has been used by some campuses is to hire more full-time NTTFs and involve them in programs to support student learning outcomes assessment. As noted above, the poor hiring practices, lack of orientation and professional development, and lack of incentives and career paths are much more pronounced for part-time faculty. Hiring more full-time faculty can ensure that student learning outcomes assessment is facilitated across campus. Campuses will need to reexamine policies and practices for full-time NTTFs to ensure that they can be involved partners in student learning outcomes assessment. Efforts should be made to include them in assessment planning and discussions, align their work to support institutional student learning goals, and provide them with the professional support and mentoring necessary to facilitate the effective integration of assessment to improve student learning outcomes.

Better support full- and part-time NTTFs

A second strategy identified and utilized by campuses is rethinking policies and practices to support both part-time and full-time NTTFs involvement in outcomes assessment. This begins with more systemic hiring processes where faculty are brought in early enough to participate in, and be knowledgeable about, student learning goals and campus assessment efforts. Orientation programs should include discussions about assessment and introduce faculty to opportunities for professional development and mentoring to support

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the implementation of strategies to improve student learning and outcomes (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Non-tenure-track faculty members should continue to be included in discussions about teaching norms related to assessment, learning goals, grading policies, teaching philosophy, involvement in co-curricular activities, and other campus normative processes. Professional development and training, including modules about conducting outcomes assessment, can be specifically tailored to address the needs of NTTFs and be offered at times where non-tenure-track faculty members can attend (including weekends and evenings) or placed online. Some campuses have also succeeded in utilizing experienced NTTFs to present professional development workshops, compensating them for their efforts. Some have also rewarded faculty who go through professional development with promotion opportunities and seniority rights when tenure-track or full-time jobs become available.

Unbundled faculty role and assessment

Because faculty roles have changed so dramatically, some campuses have decided to separate the assessment role from the faculty role altogether. This approach is typically taken in competency-based education. Institutions such as Western Governors University and Rio Salado College, which is comprised almost entirely of part-time faculty, have created separate assessment units from the teaching faculty. The assessment professionals in these units develop the student learning outcomes for particular programs, as well as course-based learning outcomes. They are often individuals with an education or psychometric background focused on measuring student outcomes. One of the reasons for removing assessment from faculty work is the belief that faculty members may not have proper expertise to design assessments, particularly as greater numbers of part-time faculty are hired with limited connection to the institution. At some institutions, the grading function is also separated from the instruction and review of individual assignments is conducted by an outside unit. Grading and assessment units are linked to ensure that students are meeting their competencies and overall student learning objectives. Certainly, having large numbers of part-time faculty does not necessitate an unbundling of the assessment role, nor should it. Many community colleges employ large numbers of part-time faculty and assign outcomes assessment to smaller groups of full-time tenure-track faculty. Moreover, as stated earlier, assessment should be the professional responsibility of all faculty, regardless of appointment.

Suggestions for addressing NTTF involvement in assessment

While these are the most widely used strategies to date, we recommend campuses experiment with strategies that might work best for their context. Ultimately, though, the Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success believes that efforts such as a student outcomes assessment may best be met by redefining faculty roles to more deliberately involve faculty members in important functions such as assessment. To help with making these changes, we review several resources that can help campus leaders go about altering policies and practices on campus in Appendix B

Professional development and training, including modules about conducting outcomes assessment, can be specifically tailored to address the needs of NTTFs and offered at times when they can attend.

and at our website, www.thechangingfaculty.org. We specifically developed these resources so that campuses have a path for making needed changes and are not left afloat without guidance. The resources include case studies of changed campuses, examples of new policies, ideas for paying for additional support and guidelines for campus-based task forces. The importance of outcomes assessment should also be described in faculty contracts and load documents (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Hollenshead et al., 2007; Rhoades, & Maitland, 2008). Too often, faculty are asked to participate in efforts without it counting toward their workload. While they may only participate once, resentment builds when they are given a poor evaluation for having taken time away from their teaching to be involved in what might be considered extraneous effort by their department chair. Faculty may also need appropriate clerical support for assessment efforts and access to equipment such as a computer, photocopier, phone, email, and other basic tools necessary to do their work.

Each of the courses of action above has its own challenges. For example, unbundling assessment from the faculty role may have unintended consequences of too dramatically separating the subject area experts from the assessment process, moving to more generic assessment measures, and affecting the educational quality offered by institutions. In the long run, it may also be challenging to meaningfully and consistently include part-time faculty, who by their very nature turn over with greater frequency than other faculty members, in these efforts. Instead, we think that full-time NTTF roles focused on teaching can meaningfully integrate student outcomes assessment into their role in the way that best serve students in the long run. Full-time faculty on multiyear contracts can participate in ongoing efforts to capitalize on the professional development that they have been given and to offer mentoring to other colleagues.

In the coming years, the Delphi Project will continue working to explore alternatives and issue reports about new models for faculty roles that create opportunities to better support student outcomes assessment and improvement. Based on our thinking and research so far, we feel the following qualities will be important parts of future faculty models designed to achieve such goals:

1. Alignment of faculty models to major missions of institutions—most prominently teaching, but also service, community engagement, and research, as appropriate.
2. Longer term job stability, but flexibility for institutions, as well. Perhaps greater use of multi-term contracts.
3. An integrated workforce model that includes bundled human resource and support systems for all faculty types, including more comprehensive orientation, professional development, evaluation, and other forms of support.

The Delphi Project will continue working to explore alternatives and issue reports about new models for faculty roles that create opportunities to better support student outcomes assessment and improvement.

4. Putting systems in place to hold faculty accountable for ongoing innovation in teaching and knowledge of newest pedagogical ideas and practices, including assessment.
5. Employing enough core and full-time faculty to support learning goals, curriculum design, and assessment needs of institutions.
6. Fostering institutional citizenship through involvement in governance, academic freedom protections, participation in curricular design, and inclusion in meetings and campus events.
7. Ensuring that aspects of the faculty professional role are appropriately supported such as professional development, opportunities for advancement, and a competitive wage.
8. Putting accountability systems in place to eliminate the use of poor management practices such as last minute hiring of faculty.

Major Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are intended to prompt campuses to take action in order to involve non-tenure-track faculty in more meaningful ways in student learning outcomes assessment work.

Increase awareness about changes in the faculty and its impact on assessment

There still remains very limited awareness among administrators supporting institution-wide assessment programs about the profound nature of changes among faculty. Even as administrators look at data demonstrating that the majority of their faculty are employed off the tenure-track, they often operate assessment programs as if the faculty is largely tenure-track. We need much greater awareness of the changes in the nature of the faculty, and distributing this report to individuals who work with assessment teams or offices can help in that effort. Even when there is awareness that the faculty has changed, there is often a lack of understanding about the constraints on part-time faculty members that limit how they are involved in assessment efforts such as their lack of socialization around assessment, inability to attend professional development, and lack of incentives through any sort of institutional promotion. With greater awareness, campus leaders may be compelled to make changes that can support NTTFs involvement in student learning outcomes such as thoughtful and timely hiring, professional development, orientation, and mentoring.

Foster a culture of inclusion to promote non-tenure-track faculty involvement

Institutional culture plays an important role in the success of assessment efforts. Non-tenure-track faculty, most of all part-time faculty who are on campus less frequently or who may teach courses online or in the evenings, are often not involved in decision making, meetings, and the broader life of the campus. They may also not be included on email listservs and other

There still remains very limited awareness among administrators supporting institution-wide assessment programs about the profound nature of changes among faculty.

means for sharing information with faculty on campus. As a result, they may not be as knowledgeable about assessment efforts on campus or have opportunities to contribute their insights from the classroom to discussions about assessment or possible improvements in student learning. There are a number of ways to ensure that they receive information and can contribute ideas and insights.

- Involving NTTFs in faculty meetings and encouraging them to attend and participate is one way to ensure this can happen and also signals that NTTFs are an important part of the academic community. It is particularly important, though, that avenues for their participation are made available via scheduling meetings at amenable times or using technology to enable NTTFs to participate.
- Mentorship programs that pair NTTFs with tenure-track faculty or very experienced NTTFs can create another opportunity for sharing ideas, information, and knowledge among faculty who may not always be on campus during business hours.
- Ensuring that NTTFs have access to an institutional email address and are included on listservs and other email lists that are used to share important information with faculty is another way to ensure they are informed.
- Steps should also be taken to acknowledge and respect NTTFs and their contributions to the institution and its students.
- Institutions should consider wherever possible how technology might be used to enable connection and community between NTTF and the larger institution.

Even these basic changes can substantially improve the climate for NTTFs, making them feel a part of assessment efforts and ensuring that they are informed and able to share ideas.

Better support and communicate with adjunct faculty about expectations for assessment

From the moment they are hired, expectations for NTTFs' involvement in assessment should be made clear and supported by the institution. Expectations for participation in assessment should be written into job descriptions and NTTFs should be fairly compensated for the time required to participate in assessment-related activities. Information about assessment efforts should be shared as part of institutional and departmental orientation programs for NTTFs, which can be recorded and posted online to ensure faculty members who cannot attend still receive pertinent information. Professional development workshops can also be created to ensure that NTTFs are integrating appropriate classroom activities to engage students and create opportunities for assessment and improving student learning. Evaluation protocols can also be developed to guide peer evaluations and observations of NTTFs' teaching to ensure that they receive feedback about

Expectations for participation in assessment should be written into job descriptions and NTTFs should be fairly compensated for the time required to participate in assessment-related activities.

their instruction and the alignment of classroom assignments to assessment efforts, and identify areas to improve instruction and student learning outcomes.

Build assessment training into graduate education

Higher education leaders also need to rethink graduate training, including preparation for faculty participation in assessment. The Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL) is one effort designed to rethink graduate education (see www.cirtl.net). CIRTL works with graduate students at research universities to focus on their teaching as a form of scholarship and to integrate assessment and the scholarship of teaching and learning into their practice. While the program is focused only on STEM faculty, the same type of initiative could work within any discipline. The project is based around three core principles: teaching as a form of research guided by systematic methods, the importance of faculty learning from each other in groups to improve their instructional practice through learning communities, and integrating diversity by capitalizing on the rich array of backgrounds among different students. The notion of teaching as a form of research ties strongly to notions of assessment. The CIRTL program advocates for the development of student learning goals and measuring outcomes as a way to understand faculty performance. The Teagle Foundation has recently funded a number of similar efforts, some on individual campuses and one—through the Council of Graduate Schools—tellingly entitled “Preparing Future Faculty to Assess Student Learning Outcomes” (see www.teaglefoundation.org/grantmaking/grantees/gradschool.aspx). Without more systemic attention in graduate programs to student learning outcomes assessment, no matter who the faculty are—part-time, full-time, tenure-track or non-tenure-track alike will be limited in their ability to engage in outcomes assessment.

Increase research on supporting NTTF in assessment

There is no research to date on NTTF involvement in outcomes assessment. All of the recommendations developed are inferred based on the changing faculty trends, information about NTTF working conditions, and studies about how current poor working conditions negatively impact their performance. Given that assessment is often a part of the instructional role of faculty, one can assume that the problems experienced by NTTFs in these other areas of teaching will trickle over into their work on assessment. However, we do need studies and research that demonstrate specific supports that are particularly helpful for non-tenure-track faculty members’ involvement in assessment efforts. It is also important to compare the abilities of part-time versus full-time non-tenure-track faculty to support assessment. While research appears to demonstrate a greater promise for full-time faculty involvement in assessment, we have no direct research to support policy at this current point in time. Therefore, we recommend that research focused on non-tenure-track faculty’s role in assessment be conducted to better understand constraints and opportunities. But, we also need comparison studies that look at the potential difference in opportunity for full-time

The notion of teaching as a form of research ties strongly to notions of assessment.

versus part-time faculty to be meaningfully involved in assessment and the cost of such involvement.

In general, we need greater research about how faculty roles can be designed to best support assessment—regardless of contract type or even type of workload. We also need studies that compare assessment when it is unbundled from the faculty role and given to a separate division or office with efforts that embeds assessment into non-tenure-track roles, examining the difference in efficacy and effectiveness of these different models. Another area that remains open for exploration is how NTTTF working conditions may be impacting student learning—such as writing, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning and the like. While we have some evidence about retention or graduation, we lack fine-grained studies of the impact of NTTTF working conditions on student learning outcomes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, assessment efforts cannot ignore the changing nature of the faculty. To be successful going forward, campus leaders need to devise a plan for assessment with their current largely non-tenure-track faculty in mind, rather than only their tenure-track faculty. There are great opportunities to capitalize on the expertise and knowledge of non-tenure-track faculty if campuses' policies and practices are sufficiently revised. Given the diversity of campuses across this country, we recommend guided discussion among campus task forces that bring together individuals with different expertise, including faculty off the tenure-track. Assessing student learning can be supported by the new faculty majority – if we find ways to remove the barriers.

There are great opportunities to capitalize on the expertise and knowledge of non-tenure-track faculty if campuses' policies and practices are sufficiently revised.

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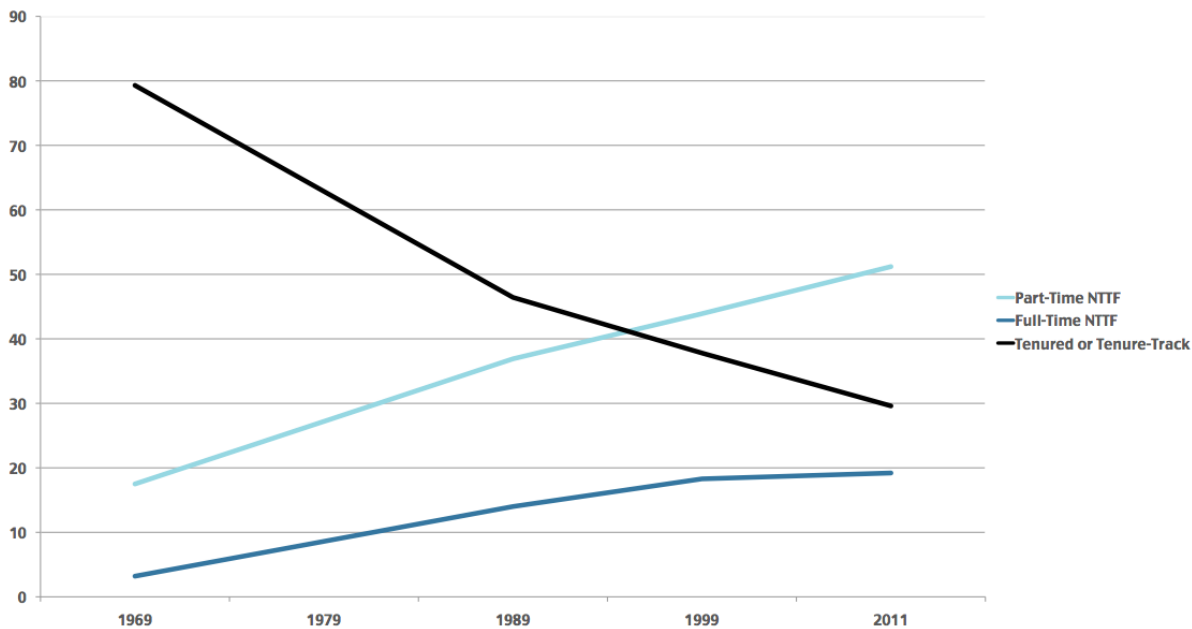
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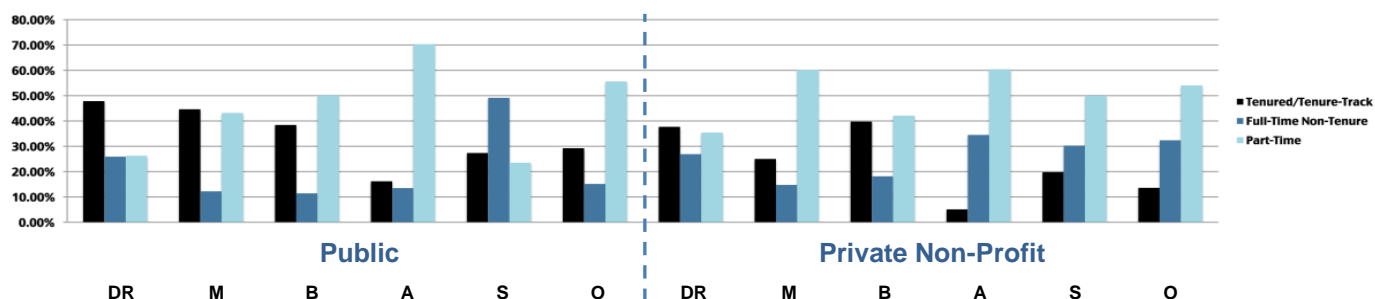
Appendix A

Composition of the Instructional Faculty

The nature of the American academic workforce has fundamentally shifted over the past several decades. Whereas full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty were once the norm, the professoriate is now comprised of mostly non-tenure-track faculty. In 1969, tenured and tenure-track positions made up approximately 78.3% of the faculty and non-tenure-track positions comprised about 21.7% (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Forty-two years later, in 2011 these proportions had nearly flipped; tenured and tenure-track faculty had declined to 29.6% and 70.4% of faculty were ineligible for tenure (NCES IPEDS, 2013).



The latest available data at the time of publication—from the Fall 2011 semester—are detailed below.



All U.S. Nonprofit Institutions	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	32.08
Full-Time Non-Tenure	19.52
Part-Time	49.40

Public Doctoral/Research (DR)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	47.84
Full-Time Non-Tenure	25.91
Part-Time	26.25

Private Doctoral/Research (DR)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	37.69
Full-Time Non-Tenure	26.90
Part-Time	35.41

Public Master's (M)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	44.62
Full-Time Non-Tenure	12.21
Part-Time	43.17

Private Master's (M)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	25.01
Full-Time Non-Tenure	14.75
Part-Time	60.24

Public Baccalaureate (B)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	38.42
Full-Time Non-Tenure	11.41
Part-Time	50.17

Private Baccalaureate (B)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	39.78
Full-Time Non-Tenure	18.14
Part-Time	42.09

Public Associate's (A)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	16.18
Full-Time Non-Tenure	13.49
Part-Time	70.33

Private Associate's (A)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	5.08
Full-Time Non-Tenure	34.49
Part-Time	60.43

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

Data courtesy of John Curtis, AAUP

Figures do not include graduate assistants who may provide instruction to students as instructors or teaching assistants.

Public Specialized (S)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	27.35
Full-Time Non-Tenure	49.15
Part-Time	23.50

Private Specialized (S)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	19.78
Full-Time Non-Tenure	30.22
Part-Time	50.00

Other Public (O)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	29.24
Full-Time Non-Tenure	15.13
Part-Time	55.63

Other Private (O)	
Faculty Type	%
Tenured/Tenure-Track	13.60
Full-Time Non-Tenure	32.37
Part-Time	54.04

Appendix B

Tools for transforming faculty: A look at Delphi Resources

One of the major objectives of the Delphi project has been to create resources for helping campuses to better support non-tenure-track faculty toward facilitating change. We have created a range of resources, which are available on our website (www.thechangingfaculty.org), to help leaders on campuses to make changes to improve processes and support for NTTFs such as professional development, orientation, hiring processes, or promotional and advancement tracks. These improvements can help to foster NTTFs involvement in supporting assessment activities and improving student learning outcomes.

Discussion guides

Our main resource is *Non-Tenure-Track Faculty on Our Campus: A Guide for Campus Task Forces to Better Understand Faculty Working Conditions and Necessity of Change*. This is a guide that provides a set of reflective questions across a number of key areas such as the availability of data about NTTFs, faculty development, involvement in curriculum and teaching, and types of support provided. In each of the sections, users are presented with appropriate questions to gather data to better understand conditions as they exist on campus. This knowledge can be used to inform efforts to make changes in policies and practices that reflect the unique culture, context, and goals of the institution. We have found that offering generic recommendations for change, while a good starting point, does not always address the many unique circumstances that exist on individual campuses. So, these guides offer a way for campus leaders to develop plans for change that meet unique institutional circumstances and needs.

We have also developed supplementary guides for institutional researchers and professionals in centers for teaching and learning, who have important roles in creating a better understanding of NTTFs and initiatives to improve faculty development and support. The questions in these resources guide practitioners through the process of examining how NTTFs are represented and served by faculty development programs, but also help to develop a better understanding of challenges associated with current practices and begin to build the rationale for change. For example, centers for teaching and learning often serve a leadership role in outcomes assessment on campus. Our guides help point them to supports that need to be in place for NTTFs to play a strong role in assessment – items noted above such as mentoring, professional development, and inclusion in curriculum discussions.

Example practices and summary resources

We also provide many example case studies from institutions that have already undertaken efforts to provide better support for NTTFs and involve them more in practices such as assessment. For example, we describe Madison Area Technical College's journey to supportive policies and practices for NTTFs. They began by starting a strategic planning process and were focusing on improving educational quality. Early data showed that NTTFs being excluded from orientation, professional development, governance, and curriculum discussions was impacting their performance. They brought in NTTFs to the discussion to hear more directly about their experiences as faculty and began to formulate an intentional plan of altering practices so that they could support NTTF performance. These detailed case studies often provide information

about the specific policies and practices that were changed, as well as the processes that were followed or utilized to bring about the changes such as through task forces, unionization, data and research efforts, or the mobilization of champions. We also offer additional resources that provide answers to frequently asked questions about topics such as the average compensation for NTTFs, national statistics about NTTFs, and summaries of research about the changing faculty.

Resources for building the rationale and support for change

The two most significant barriers to change that we have identified are the lack of a sense of priority about the importance of supporting NTTFs and concerns that resources are not available to fund changes in professional development, orientation, and other forms of support. We have created resources to help build the rationale for leaders to support these changes as well as understand how to fund them. *Dispelling the Myths: Locating the Resources Needed to Support Non-Tenure-Track Faculty* describes a range of changes that leaders can pursue such as providing a comprehensive orientation, including NTTFs in governance and curricular decision making, or implementing more systemic hiring and the relative costs for each suggested change. This resource emphasizes that many changes to improve support require little, if any, additional investment of funding.

Another resource, *The Imperative for Change: Fostering Understanding of the Necessity of Changing Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Policies and Practices*, reviews the adverse impact of rising contingency and poor working conditions on student learning outcomes, as well as concerns about equity and institutional risk management related to the changing faculty. The document demonstrates how current policies and practices for NTTF actually detract from the positive student learning outcomes we are trying to measure. *The impact of NTTFs' working conditions on student learning outcomes should be of particular concern for those who are involved with assessment and improving outcomes*. Below, we briefly highlight some of the ways that the growing reliance on NTTFs and their poor working conditions have been found to affect student outcomes. Additional details can be found in various resources available on our website.

Diminished Graduation and Retention Rates

Increased reliance on NTTFs, particularly part-time, has been found to negatively impact retention and graduation rates. Ehrenberg and Zhang (2004) and Jaeger and Eagan (2009) found that graduation rates declined as proportions of NTT faculty increased. Increases in part-timers have an even greater impact on graduation rates, as well as retention (Jacoby, 2006). Harrington and Schibik (2001) tied lower retention to growing reliance on these faculty.

Decreased Transfer from Two- to Four-Year Institutions

Gross and Goldhaber (2009) found that students at two-year colleges that had more full-time, tenured faculty were more likely to transfer to four-year institutions. They found a 4 percent increase in transfers to four-year institutions per 10 percent increase in the proportion of tenured faculty. Eagan and Jaeger (2008) also found increased proportions of part-time faculty were correlated with lower transfer rates. Typically, 70 percent or more of two-year college faculty are NTTFs.

Negative Effects of Early Exposure to Part-Time Faculty

In a study of college freshmen, Harrington and Schibik (2001) found that increased exposure to part-time faculty was significantly associated with lower second-semester retention rates, lower GPAs, and fewer attempted credit hours. Jaeger & Eagan (2010) found similar effects on retention when part-time faculty are not adequately supported. Bettinger and Long (2010) also found early exposure had a negative effect on students' major selection.

Reduced Faculty-Student Interaction and Inaccessibility of Part-Time Faculty

Most studies highlight the substantial effects of diminished interaction between students and part-time faculty. Contact time and interaction between traditional faculty and students has been shown to foster student success, suggesting an inverse relationship with regard to NTT faculty (Benjamin, 2003). Research suggests that the inaccessibility of part-time faculty to students due to time pressures, lack of office space, and holding jobs at multiple locations has an inverse, negative effect on student outcomes (CCSSE, 2009; Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Jacoby, 2006).

Part-Time Faculty Often Have a More Pronounced Adverse Effect

Unlike part-time faculty, full-time NTT faculty practices often parallel those of tenured and tenure-track faculty (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011). Most studies focusing on the differences in effects find that more negative outcomes are tied to part-timers' limited time for faculty-student interaction, limited access to instructional resources, staff, and development opportunities, as well as a lack of participation in contributing to the design of courses and curriculum (Eagan & Jaeger, 2008; Harrington & Schibik, 2001; Jacoby, 2006).

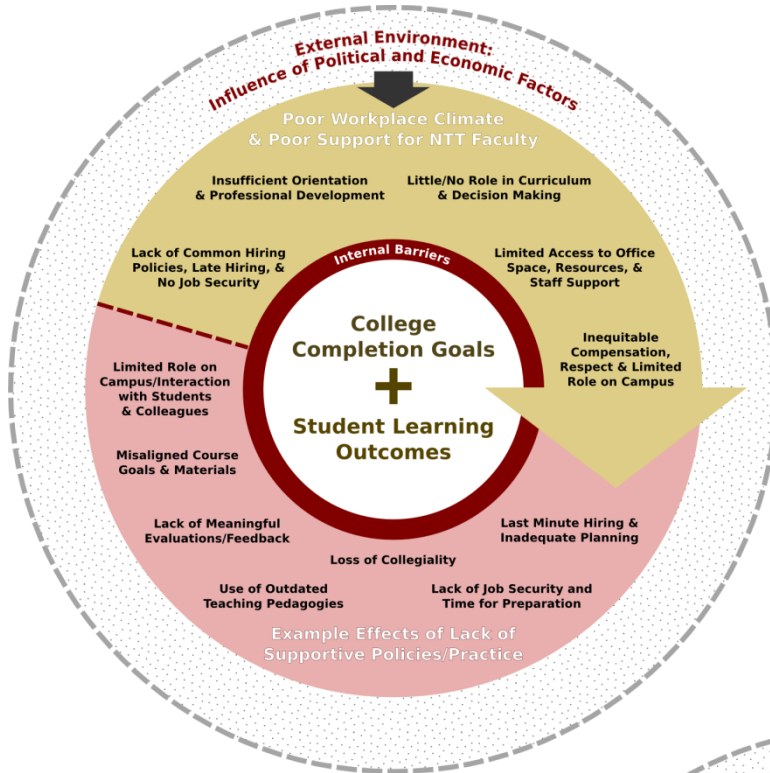
There are many resources to help campus leaders at any level—department chairs, deans, provosts, presidents, individual faculty members, and staff such as institutional researchers and faculty development practitioners—in helping to design and implement better ways to support NTTFs. All that is needed is the will and leadership to better support the full faculty with the goal of improving performance, assessment efforts, and student learning outcomes.

Tools exist for helping campuses better support non-tenure-track faculty involvement in assessment

This paper highlighted that there are many tools to help campuses that are interested in better supporting their non-tenure-track faculty members in assessment efforts. We hope campuses utilize the resources prepared by the Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success, available for free download at www.thechangingfaculty.org, to improve their policies and practices.

Appendix C

Implications of Poor Working Conditions and Potential Improvements



Poor Workplace Climate and Lack of Support for Faculty

The policies and practices often encountered by non-tenure-track faculty fail to utilize the full potential of individuals and negatively impact the ability of these educators, particularly part-timers, to make strong contributions to the department, campus, and the learning outcomes of the students they serve. In addition to the aforementioned issues, inequitable compensation, a lack of respect, and limited inclusion in the life of the campus also impact the workplace climate and experiences of non-tenure-track faculty.

Supportive Workplace and Climate for Faculty

Whereas a lack of support creates obstacles for maximizing the ability of faculty to make strong contributions to student learning outcomes, a supportive campus climate, policies, and practices create the opportunity for all faculty to make robust contributions to learning. High-impact teaching practices such as the ones listed here improve student learning outcomes and enhance opportunities for institutions to build cooperative relationships with the communities they serve.



For more information on high-impact education practices, we recommend visiting the AAC&U High-Impact Educational Practices at <http://www.aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm>

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NILOA Mission

NILOA's primary objective is to discover and disseminate ways that academic programs and institutions can productively use assessment data internally to inform and strengthen undergraduate education, and externally to communicate with policy makers, families and other stakeholders.

NILOA Occasional Paper Series

NILOA Occasional Papers are commissioned to examine contemporary issues that will inform the academic community of the current state-of-the art of assessing learning outcomes in American higher education. The authors are asked to write for a general audience in order to provide comprehensive, accurate information about how institutions and other organizations can become more proficient at assessing and reporting student learning outcomes for the purposes of improving student learning and responsibly fulfilling expectations for transparency and accountability to policy makers and other external audiences.

Comments and questions about this paper should be sent to niloa@education.illinois.edu.

About NILOA

- The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) was established in December 2008.
- NILOA is co-located at the University of Illinois and Indiana University.
- The NILOA website contains free assessment resources and can be found at <http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/>.
- The NILOA research team has scanned institutional websites, surveyed chief academic officers, and commissioned a series of occasional papers.
- One of the co-principal NILOA investigators, George Kuh, founded the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE).
- The other co-principal investigator for NILOA, Stanley Ikenberry, was president of the University of Illinois from 1979 to 1995 and of the American Council of Education from 1996 to 2001.

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

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