Commodification of Labor, Teaching, and Higher Education

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The transformation of the profession of college professor from a historically high status occupation with job security through tenure, earning middle class (or higher) salaries, and having extensive control over their work schedules, course content, and broader job responsibilities, into a relatively low status, low paid, part-time, job with greater and greater insecurity, has attracted considerable attention both inside and outside academia. For many inside academia, the phenomenon of contingent academic labor represents an alarming trend that threatens educational standards and, ultimately, the quality and significance of a college education. For others, contingent academic labor is part of the broader trend toward contingent work in the U.S. labor force that has been accelerating since the 1980s. The case of contingent academic labor is especially noteworthy, because the usual explanation for low paid work is insufficient education and job training on the part of the worker, with the usual remedy being more education and more job training. Indeed, the idea that education will guarantee workers a secure economic future has now become conventional wisdom. But, while the "education solution" to job insecurity, unemployment and poverty may apply in some cases, it is clearly inapplicable to the case of academic labor, arguably the most highly educated workers in the labor force.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the rise of the contingent model of academic labor, both in the context of recent changes in higher education and in the broader context of the larger transformation of work in the United States. In part 1, we review the current state of contingent labor in higher education. In part 2, we consider the reasons behind the expansion of the contingent academic work model. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of the increasing reliance on contingent faculty for higher education, for traditional tenured and tenure track faculty, for the growing contingent academic labor force, and for our larger society.

The current state of the academic profession

The Job of College Professor

The conventional view of a college professor is that of an individual employed in a highly respected, high status job, with middle class or higher salaries and benefits, and a high degree of job security. In addition, professors have traditionally had considerable control over their

actual work processes on a day to day basis. However, this conventional view now accounts for a minority of faculty in higher education. A more accurate portrait would be that of an individual employed part-time on a temporary contract with very low pay and status.[1] According to the AAUP annual report, the number of part-time faculty increased by 286% and the number of full-time, non-tenure track faculty increased by 259% between 1976 and 2011; in contrast, the number of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty increased by just 23% over the same period (AAUP 2014). The result is that the traditional tenured and tenure-track faculty academic labor model now represents a minority of total faculty in higher education, with the majority of faculty falling into the "contingent" category of part-time and/or temporary employees. Indeed, the core-periphery model, familiar in manufacturing and high-tech industries, is now firmly established in higher education.

The use of contingent academic workers varies in different parts of the higher education sector. The part-time, adjunct model is most advanced at public community colleges, where over 80% of faculty fall into the contingent category. But the percentage at private baccalaureate and Master's institutions is also high, at around 60% (Curtis 2014).[2] Only at doctoral institutions does the percent of tenured and tenure-track faculty exceed 40% of the total (Ibid). However, if graduate student employees are included in that total, the percentage of tenured or tenure-track faculty at doctoral institutions falls to only 25% (Ibid).

Contingent Faculty

The majority of contingent faculty are part-time employees, working on short-term contracts for one academic term (Curtis 2014). Part-time "adjuncts" are paid by the course and may work concurrently at more than one institution. That is, part-time faculty may actually be working "full time" for multiple employers. Full-time, non-tenure track faculty typically have contracts for a full year or, in some cases, multiple years. In both cases, contracts are

[1] According to Desrochers (2014), over half of the instructional staff in most institutions now consists of part-time faculty and graduate assistants. "Most contingent faculty members are part time, but about 15 percent of all faculty/instructors hold full-time, non-tenure-track appointments" (AFT 2009, Footnote #3:).

[2] Contingent part-time and and full-time faculty account for 59.4% at private baccalaureate and 62.5% at Master's institutions. Private baccalaureate institutions currently have the highest percentage of tenured and tenure track faculty (39.3%), and a higher proportion of contingent workers are full-time compared to other institutions. However, part-time adjuncts still comprise over 40% of faculty at private baccalaureate institutions. For profit institutions have not been included in the discussion, since virtually all of their faculty are contingent (98.2%). See Curtis 2014.

"renewable." Thus, both part-time and full-time faculty may continue working for years in contingent status.

In contrast to the traditional tenured and tenure-track model, contingent faculty members have little or no control over work processes. Not only do part-timers have little or no input into which classes they teach or when, they may not even know whether they will have a job until classes begin.[3] In addition, part-timers may have negligible input into other activities having a direct effect on the process of teaching, such as developing course objectives, learning outcomes, assessment, course development, and evaluation of faculty.

The fervent hope of contingent workers, in higher education as well as in other fields, is that they may ultimately secure full-time, permanent employment. But it is logical to ask, how likely is it that a contingent faculty member will be able to transition into a tenure track job? There are a number of factors working against this outcome. First, the number of tenure track job openings is very small relative to the size of the contingent faculty workforce. Second, while contingent faculty may apply for advertised tenure track job openings, at the institution where they are teaching or anywhere else for that matter, they may be at a distinct disadvantage. Working as a part-time "adjunct" or a full-time "temporary lecturer" is not likely to enhance an applicant's job prospects. While it does demonstrate that the applicant has teaching experience, it may also indicate that the applicant has not been able to be engaged in significant scholarly research. And the longer an applicant is relegated to contingent faculty status, the greater these obstacles to tenure-track employment become. The result is that recent Ph.D.'s hoping for a stable career as a "college professor" may find themselves faced with the choice between low-paid, unstable work and an alternate profession.

Traditionally, the absence of a path from part-time, contingent status to full-time, tenure track was not a problem, when part-time "adjuncts" were employed full-time outside of academia. For example, a Certified Public Accountant teaching an evening class in Financial Accounting, an attorney teaching a class in Business Law, or a retired professor teaching an occasional class would presumably neither expect nor want to transition to a full-time faculty position. However, the explosive growth in contingent faculty over the past 25 years or more has led to significant numbers of individuals, including recent Ph.D.'s, who are trapped in a

[3]Adjuncts may be displaced without notice by the teaching preferences of other faculty or when classes are cancelled due to low enrollment.

series of short-term, low-paid jobs, most with no benefits, and little or no control over their daily schedules (House Committee 2014).

College professors, lecturers, and instructors

An important question is whether faculty in contingent status perform the same job as those in tenured or tenure-track positions. Are contingent faculty receiving abysmally low pay for performing the same job as well-paid tenure track or tenured professors? There is an unambiguous demarcation in title between the two types of faculty. Tenure track and tenured faculty are titled as assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. Contingent faculty are not "professors." Full-time contingent faculty tend to be referred to as "lecturers" or "instructors." What is the significance of reserving the title of "professor" for the traditional tenure track and tenured faculty? If the two categories of faculty are significantly different, then comparisons of salaries, benefits, job security, and status may not be valid. On the other hand, if the difference is minimal, then paying an adjunct to teach a class for $3,000 (equivalent to an annual salary of $18,000 for a six course load or $12,000 for a four course load),[4] while paying tenure-track faculty an average $85,945 salary plus benefits worth another $25,718 (total compensation: $111, 663) is astonishingly unbalanced (Averages for all levels, AAUP Survey 2013-14).

Traditionally tenure-track and tenured professors are expected to engage in activities in three areas: teaching; research; and service. The amount of effort put into each of these three activities varies, but the expectation is that professors are scholars as well as teachers. In addition, depending on the institution, professors also engage in curriculum development and institutional governance. They may also contribute time and effort to professional societies and organizations. To what extent do contingent faculty engage in research and service in addition to teaching? There are distinct differences between full-time, non-tenure track and part-time adjunct faculty. In general the duties of contingent faculty with full-time appointments are fairly similar to those of tenured and tenure track faculty.[5] However, conditions for part-time adjuncts are very different.

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[4] Erwin and Wood quote the Coalition on the Academic Workforce as reporting that the median adjunct pay per course is $2,700 (Erwin and Wood, 2014, 9).

[5] According to Kezar (2013), 70% of full-time, non-tenure track faculty are hired primarily to teach and have the same "work profiles" as tenured and tenure track faculy. Research appointments are more

Adjunct faculty may or may not be engaging in research activities such as writing and publishing papers and attending conferences. Adjuncts may want to do research, since scholarly activity is indispensable to their careers and to their aspirations to escape contingent status. However, adjuncts who do engage in scholarly research, professional development or training must do so on their own time and "on their own dime." That is, research by adjuncts is neither expected nor compensated.

Adjunct faculty are also not expected, or in some cases not permitted, to engage in service activities. As Kezar and Maxey (2013) note, many adjunct faculty "…have little impact on curriculum design, even for the courses they teach... [nor are they] included in faculty meetings in which information about academic policies, curricular goals, and planning is shared." At the same time, they may be called upon to participate in faculty peer evaluations, student advising, writing letters of recommendation, tutoring student athletes, and evaluating teaching materials. In addition, they are typically provided little or no administrative support either for teaching or for service activities. However, adjuncts are not compensated for any activity other than teaching. Another term for the "service" performed by adjunct faculty is "volunteer work."

Finally, how does the teaching of professors compare with that of contingent faculty? Very little research appears to have been done on this question. Several studies have investigated student outcomes and suggest that greater use of adjuncts is associated with lower student retention and graduation (Ehrenberg and Zhang 2005; Jacoby 2006). However, it is reasonable to ask whether these differences are due to the quality of the instructor, or to other factors such as differences in faculty availability for mentoring and advising, differences in the courses taught by contingent faculty, differences in teaching methods, and lack of institutional orientation and support. The wide diversity in working expectations and performance among contingent faculty make generalizations difficult. While meticulous standards and practices apply to the hiring and promotion of tenure track faculty, the hiring and development of contingent faculty is highly variable and often haphazard. The fact is that while contingent faculty represent the majority of faculty at many institutions, they are neither included, nor respected, as full-fledged members of the profession. Kezar and Maxey (2013) conclude that "…

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common in the sciences. Hiring full-time, non-tenure track faculty to provide institutional service has increased as the proportion of tenured and tenure-track faculty declines.

most campuses ignore the needs of this group, operating as though tenure-track faculty members are the norm."

Understanding the expansion of contingent academic labor

The explosive growth of contingent academic labor should be viewed within the context of two major trends: the transformation of higher education and the larger transformation of work. The most common approach is the former. Recent developments in higher education, especially the rising cost of a college education and technological innovations such as online teaching and computerized teaching software, have undoubtedly contributed to the increased use of contingent academic labor. Also at work are the various recurring demands to reform higher education and education in general. However, the growth of contingent academic labor must also be viewed as part of a much broader overall trend that has been in progress since the 1980s, the expansion of contingent work in all parts of the US labor force. According to a recent General Accountability Office (GAO) study, depending on the definition of the term, "contingent," anywhere from 5% to more than a third of the total employed labor force in the US are contingent employees at present (GAO 2015). Moreover, the industry with the highest proportion of contingent workers is education (Ibid).

Contingent Academic Labor and the Transformation of Higher education

The most significant and widely publicized story in higher education is the rising cost to the student of a college education. At public institutions, state funding for higher education fell 12% between 2003 and 2012, while over the same period enrollment increased 20% (GAO 15-151). Funding shortfalls were exacerbated by the 2008 recession and have still not returned to pre-recession levels in forty-seven of the fifty states (47 out of 50). In nine states, state funding for higher education in 2014-2015 is more than 30% below 2007-2008 and more than 20% below in 38 states (Mitchell and Leachman 2015). Since overall costs have not been cut accordingly, this gap in financing has inevitably been shifted to students. Net tuition now provides a higher percentage of total operating revenue than state appropriations at public research and at public master's institutions. For example, net tuition provided 20% of net operating revenue at public bachelor's institutions in 2001; by 2011 that percentage had increased to 36% (Desrochers and Hurlbert 2014, pp. 17-18). At private institutions, tuition and fees have also increased significantly, but with a smaller shift in costs to students (Desrochers and Hurlbert 2014, Supplementary Tables). In fact, at private research and bachelor's institutions, there has been a

significant shift away from reliance on tuition due to significant gains in funding from gifts, investments and endowment income. Net tuition provided 21% of net operating revenue to private research institutions in 2011, compared to 33.3% in 2001. Similarly, reliance on tuition at private bachelor's institutions has fallen from 45.7% in 2001 to 36% in 2011.[6]

How much of the increase in higher education costs are due to hiring of additional full-time faculty or to higher faculty salaries? The answer is, very little. Between 2000 and 2012, faculty hiring increased only *slightly* at private institutions (research, master's and bachelor's), resulting in an increase in staff per student (Desrochers and Kirshstein 2014). Public master's and bachelor's institutions just kept pace with increasing enrollment by adding staff *at the same rate* as students; while public research and public community colleges have actually seen *declines* in the number of instructional staff per student (Ibid).[7] Faculty salaries have also not increased significantly during the past decade (slightly more for private institutions, less for public, and a slight decline for public master's institutions) (Desrochers and Kirshstein 2014). Salaries for established professors have increased, but these increases have been offset by much lower salaries for full-time contingent workers and part-time faculty. In general, higher education institutions have managed to maintain salary levels for tenured and tenure track faculty, expand administrative staff, and keep up with rising benefits costs for full-time employees only through massive shifts to student tuition and fees and shifting much of the teaching work to lower paid contingent workers.[8]

A second major development in higher education has been the growth of distance or online education. Currently 95% of institutions with 5,000 or more students offer online courses. Public institutions, both 4-year and 2-year, have substantial online offerings, and over

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[5]At private master's institutions, the proportion has not changed. Net tuition provided 61% of total operating revenue in 2001 and 60% in 2011 (Desrochers and Hurlbert 2014).

[7]On the other hand, administrative hiring has increased significantly mostly in the area of professional support for non-instructional student services rather than in highly paid executive or managerial positions (Ibid). However, Erwin and Wood report that, at state schools with the presidents who have the highest salaries, the percent of part-time faculty increased faster than the national average between 2005 and 2011, while the percent of permanent faculty "declined dramatically" (Erwin and Wood, 2014, 3). "The average number of faculty and staff per administrator declined by roughly 40 percent in most types of four-year colleges and universities between 1990 and 2012, and now averages 2.5 or fewer faculty and staff per administrator" (Desrochers and Kirshstein 2014, p. 3). As a result of the increase in professional staff, overall benefit costs have increased modestly, from 1.3% per year from 2000 to 2010 at private bachelor's institutions to 4.2% per year at public research institutions (Desrochers & Kirshstein 2014).

[8] Full-time contingent workers receive benefits, but the majority of part-time workers do not.

60% of private non-profit institutions also offer online courses (Allen and Sieman 2014). The growth in online education tends to be associated with the growth in hiring part-time, contingent faculty, although data on the proportion of online courses taught by contingent faculty is not readily available.[9] Nevertheless, there are a number of reasons to conclude that a high proportion of online classes are, in fact, taught by part-time, contingent faculty. In the first place, most traditional faculty view online education with considerable skepticism. According to the most recent survey on online education conducted by the Babson Survey Group, less than 30% of faculty "accept the value and legitimacy of online education" (Allen and Sieman 2014). Acceptance by faculty is even lower in institutions that only offer some online courses rather than complete online programs; and only 8.7% of faculty regard online courses as being legitimate at institutions that do not currently offer courses online (Ibid, pp. 21-22). Moreover, this resistance to online education among faculty " has not shown any significant change in over a decade – the results from reports five or ten years ago are virtually the same as current results" (Ibid, p. 21). An additional source of resistance to online teaching by tenured and tenure track faculty may be the amount of extra time and effort required initially to develop an online class, especially at an institution that does not have an online program with the requisite institutional support. Given the low opinion of online education, it might be reasonable to expect faculty to resist devoting time to an activity that will not enhance their status or career prospects.

Another reason to suspect that online courses are more likely to be taught by contingent faculty is the opportunity to earn profits. Developing an online program may constitute a significant initial investment in technology, equipment, and professional staff, but once developed, the online program will serve as a "cash cow" for universities. The recent arrangement between Arizona State University and Starbucks suggests that an online program can generate sufficient revenue over and above costs to fund other programs at the university.

> In practice, . . . for the cohort of upper-division students enrolling via Starbucks, ASU will be foregoing 59 percent of what it would receive if the students were paying full freight. That it can afford to do that and still not

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[9]Until recently, the only national data on the growth of online education in the US has been provided by a privately funded survey conducted by the Babson Survey Research Group. In 2014, the survey (2014) began using data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics. Currently, information on the proportion of online courses taught by different classifications of faculty was not included in the survey.

> operate at a loss—which it won't be doing, according to Michael M. Crow, Arizona State's president—suggests just how much institutions like ASU ordinarily subsidize their overall operations with revenue from distance education (Blumenstyk, June 27, 2014).

Online teaching is clearly cheaper for institutions. No physical classroom need be provided. Office space for the adjunct, while never very generous, can be dispensed with entirely. Class size can easily be expanded to meet student demand or cancelled without notice. Institutions can hire part-time adjuncts quickly and cheaply without the constraint of geography and often without adhering to accepted faculty hiring procedures. Thus, while institutions save money by hiring part-time adjuncts, they save even more by hiring part-time adjuncts to teach online classes. For public institutions faced with funding shortfalls and increasing costs -- the expansion of online teaching is almost irresistible.[10]

The third factor within higher education contributing to the expansion of contingent academic labor is the call to reform higher education and education in general.[11] The notion that traditional education is a failure and in need of major overhaul has become a widespread belief that is especially prevalent at the K-12 level. One implication of the "educational reform" movement is the view that those within the academy have contributed to current inadequacies and that innovative ideas are more likely to be found among those not directly involved in education. Well-funded and influential foundations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation stress the view that the sole purpose of attending college is to prepare for a career and higher income. Alternative goals such as securing an educated citizenry, promoting the "higher learning" or finding personal enrichment are dismissed, or at a minimum, considered secondary benefits (Parry, Field and Supiano 2013). The drive to reform

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10An additional motivation for hiring adjuncts to teach online only courses is the constraint of geography. The use of part-time faculty in rural areas and small towns was historically limited by the local availability of qualified persons willing to teach a class part-time. As a result, many adjuncts at smaller institutions were spouses of full-time faculty or local professionals. Only in large urban areas could colleges and universities engage in large scale hiring of part-time contingent faculty. The proliferation of online teaching has removed this geographical limitation. Students can enroll in institutions many miles from where they live. Similarly adjuncts can also teach online classes many miles from where they live.

11 Higher education in the United States has been the subject of either grudging admiration or scathing critique for 100 years or more, including Thorstein Veblen's memorable critique in The Higher Learning. Recurring themes include: the influence of pecuniary values or "corporate values;" the expansion of non-educational aspects of the university such as athletics and student amenities; and the changing purpose of higher education from promoting "the higher learning" or securing an educated citizenry to the provision of career oriented vocational, professional and technical education.

higher education includes a heavy reliance on technology, including online courses as evidenced by the following quote from Bill Gates : "The education we're currently providing, or the way we're providing it, just isn't sustainable, …. Instead we have to ask, 'How can we use technology as a tool to recreate the entire college experience? How can we provide a better education to more people for less money?'" (cited in Parry, Field and Supiano 2013).

Educational reform at the K-12 level frequently takes the form of blaming teachers. A "failing school" is a school with bad teachers. This devaluing of the teaching profession has contributed to the impression that "anyone" can teach regardless of training or experience as well as a marked trend toward limiting the control an individual teacher has over the content of individual courses or the goals of the overall curriculum. In higher education, this devaluing of the teaching profession can be seen in the movement to "unbundle" the teaching process into a series of compartmentalized responsibilities such as curriculum developer, content author or curator, instructional designer, course facilitator, grader, advisor, mentor and so on (See Kezar and Gehrke 2015 and Neely and Tucker 2010). Related to these cost-cutting efforts is the notion that all that college professors do is content delivery or vocational training rather than engaging in the fundamental process of inculcating intellectual curiosity and good citizenry (cf. Neem 2012, 64 ff.) Whether training or content delivery are appropriate models even for K-12, they surely are not appropriate for college students, at any institution, if we are to sustain a vibrant democracy. In short, teaching at both the K-12 level and in higher education is becoming deskilled. As the process of deskilling and devaluing the profession of teaching continues, the prospect of raising the earnings and improving job security for contingent academic workers dims.

Contingent Academic Labor and the Transformation of Work

The previous section linked the growth of contingent academic labor to recent changes in higher education. In this section, we look at contingent faculty from an institutionalist labor perspective. The recognition that there are "good" and "bad" jobs has been an important concept in labor economics since Adam Smith. However, for the most part this classification of a job as good or bad hinged on the characteristics of the work itself, such as dangerous, unpleasant, or strenuous. A major contribution of institutionalist labor economics and industrial relations has been the recognition that job quality also depends on the employment relationship. The focus on the employment relationship is particularly relevant for

understanding contingent academic labor, since the essential job characteristics do not differ significantly between contingent faculty and tenured and tenure track faculty.[12] Since World War II, labor economists have relied on three related concepts to examine the employment relationship: 1) identification and classification; 2) segmentation; and 3) structure. Each approach provides some insight into contingent academic labor. In the remainder of this section, we briefly review these approaches and examine their relevance for understanding contingent academic labor.

The term, "contingent," was first used during the 1980s in the literature on labor market flexibility (See Freedman 1985; Appelbaum 1987; and Polivka and Nardone 1989). The term, "contingent," implies that the desired flexibility is on the side of the employer in that workers could be hired, deployed, and fired as needed (Wiens-Tuers 2001). Since that time, researchers have continued to identify and document the wide variety of "nonstandard employment relationships" that can be used to achieve this flexibility. As Kalleberg, Reskin and Hudson (2000, p. 257) point out, quite rightly, "[t]he term "nonstandard employment relationship" implies the existence of a 'standard employment relationship,' although there is no consensus on exactly what this standard relationship entails." Kalleberg, Reskin and Hudson (2000) define a standard employment relationship as one involving a contract, implied or explicit, between an identifiable employer and employee, for full-time work performed under the employer's control, at the employer's place of business with a reasonable expectation of continued employment.[13] In the view of some researchers, nonstandard employment relationships are considered to benefit not only the employer but the employee as well (Belous 1989; Kunda, Barley, and Evans 2002). Thus, in order to retain the original intent of focusing on "employer flexibility," Kalleberg et al. (2000) identify certain key characteristics of nonstandard employment arrangements that would make them "bad jobs" for workers, including low pay, lack of health insurance or pension benefits, uncertainty regarding the duration of the job, and lack of any or all of the labor market protections available to workers in standard employment

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[12] To the extent that there are differences in jobs characteristics, they are not characteristics that would justify "compensating wage differentials." Moreover, the differences that do exist do not vary in the correct direction. The mainstream concept of compensating wage differentials uses unpleasant or dangerous job characteristics to explain why some workers are paid *more* – not *less*.

[13] Kalleberg et al. define standard employment as full-time and classify part-time work as "nonstandard." The definition used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Contingent Worker Survey did not include "part-time" work (Houseman . Variations in definitions used tends to account for the variation in estimates of the number of contingent workers in the US labor force.)

(pp. 257-258). In addition to these characteristics, a key aspect of contingent work is that it shifts all of the risk of unemployment to workers (Wiens-Tuers 2001). Thus, whether or not the employee finds the flexibility of nonstandard employment beneficial due to personal circumstances or other considerations is irrelevant. The definition of contingent academic labor used in this paper conforms not only to a definition of nonstandard employment as one primarily providing flexibility for the employer but also includes many of the characteristics that would render these jobs a bad deal for the employee.

The related concepts of segmentation and structure are used in institutionalist labor theory to describe patterns of employment relationships that occur in different sectors of the economy. In his classic work, *The Harvest Labor Market in California*, Lloyd Fisher (1953) noted that employment relationships for harvest labor were distinctly different from those in other markets. In Fisher's work the analysis of the employment relationship is based on the characteristics of the product and the producer. This demand side analysis was later developed into the dual labor market hypothesis and segmentation theory (Piore and Doeringer 1971; Gordon, Edwards and Reich 1982). The concept of segmentation does not currently describe the demand for contingent academic workers, since both standard (tenured and tenure track) and nonstandard (contingent) faculty are found in the same workplace. However, public and private institutions differ markedly in the numbers and types of contingent faculty hired.

At present, it is not clear whether these differences will diminish as more contingent faculty are hired in private institutions or whether the differences will reflect deeper divisions between public and private higher education. Indeed, some researchers have already expressed concern that higher education in the US could develop into a two-tiered system where a full-fledged, traditional college education is available only for a minority of students, while a commodified, mass market system of credentialing 'serves' the majority.[14] If this dystopian vision for the future of mass higher education becomes more plausible, we could also expect a corresponding segmentation in faculty labor markets.

[14] The vast majority of undergraduate students attend public institutions or private, for-profit schools. In 2013, out of a total undergraduate enrollment in 4 year institutions, only 15.8% attended private, non-profit colleges, while 76.4% attended public institutions (the remaining 7.8% attended private, for-profit institutions); if 2 year institutions are included, the percentage of college students attending a public institution increases to 81.7% (Table 303.7 NCES http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_303.70.asp).

While segmented faculty labor markets are as yet still a possibility for the future, the current situation is more appropriately viewed as a particular type of complex labor market structure consisting of both standard and nonstandard academic labor. The dual labor market hypothesis originally separated the labor market into a "primary" market consisting of structured employment relationships, and a "secondary" market characterized by a lack of structure. Contingent academic labor may *appear* to resemble an unstructured, "casual labor" market due to the often haphazard hiring practices used, but this impression would only be accurate if we were to define the labor market by the characteristics of the worker and the particular job, a common approach in mainstream theory which tends to analyze labor markets from the supply side of the market. In our view, a demand side analysis provides much more insight into the nature of contingent academic labor. The market for individuals who possess the education and experience necessary to perform all aspects of the job of "professor" including research, service and teaching is one labor market. Contingent faculty tend to possess the same qualifications as tenure track faculty – at least initially. It is only after they are hired into different jobs that the opportunities to develop into a fully qualified professor are available to one group and not to the other. Similarly, from the demand side point of view, colleges and universities are hiring *faculty.* Tenure track and contingent faculty exist as part of an interdependent overall structure that constitutes the institution's demand for faculty labor. As was discussed in the previous section, tenured and tenure track positions in public institutions have been maintained, with salaries increasing for established professors, only because of the expanded hiring of contingent faculty.[15] Similarly, a demand for part-time contingent faculty, who are currently hired only to teach, would not exist without the support of tenured and tenure track faculty. In labor Economics terminology, the two types of faculty are not substitutes, they are *complements*. The question going forward is just how these two types of labor will function together as part of the overall staff of university and college faculty.

In our view, the faculty model that has developed in public institutions resembles the core-periphery model common in high tech industries and other large corporations (Appelbaum and Batt 1994; Champlin 1993 and 1995). In this structure, a core of employees in

[15] This situation is not unlike the symbiotic relationship that existed between tenured professors and graduate students in large state universities. Senior professors could teach smaller upper division and graduate courses and have time for continued research only because large introductory classes were being taught and/or graded by graduate students.

standard employment relationships is supported by a large workforce in nonstandard employment providing maximum flexibility and low risk for the employer. The relative size of the "flexible" workforce, the type of nonstandard employment relationship, and the relationship between the "core" faculty and the "peripheral" faculty is crucial to the future. On the one hand, it is possible that the current trend toward more and more contingent faculty will continue, with all the growth in the periphery, increasing the burden on a relatively shrinking core to perform all research and service duties as well as various important aspects of college teaching which cannot be delegated to the periphery.[16] Meanwhile, the periphery could experience continued stagnation in pay, increasing the income and class differences between the two types of faculty. On the other hand, a more optimistic vision would view the two types of faculty not as competitors for a shrinking pool of resources and status, but as partners who are motivated by the same devotion to students and to higher education.

Alternative Visions of the Future

The current literature on the transformation of higher education ranges from rosy scenarios emphasizing creative innovation, student empowerment, and expanded access to higher education, to dire warnings of "the end of teaching," continued growth in student vocationalism, and rising cost concerns for all but the most well-endowed educational institutions. Given limitations of time and space, we will not offer a prediction on those larger questions today but will instead briefly comment on the implications of the rapid devaluation of academic labor.

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[16] In support of this hypothesis, Bradley (2004) notes that, in the not too distant past, many contingent faculty saw their circumstances as phenomena resulting from temporary imbalances in academic job markets in particular disciplines. Bradley observed that contingent faculty may instead be part and parcel of a new academic labor system, in which the availability of lower cost contingent faculty to teach so many courses limits the total number of tenure-track positions. In regard to the latter, Cross and Goldberg note that, due to what they term the "ratchet effect" (Cross and Goldberg, 2009, ??), once a teaching position is designated as a contingent faculty position, it is difficult to return that position to tenure track, because of the presumed permanence of the impact on the budget. In support of this concern, a number of large universities (both public and private) have announced substantial cuts in faculty in response to budgets constrainted by reduced state appropriations and by limits to further increases in student tuition. To the extent these universities still need to offer introductory courses or courses that are prerequisites to other courses, these lost full-time positions will be filled by part-time adjuncts. See Anderson, Nick, "The George Washington University Plans Budget Cuts." *The Washington Post*, April 6, 2015.

The most important implication of the foregoing may be a final causal factor that is responsible for the growth of contingent faculty, and it is this factor that brought us to this panel today, the devaluation of academic work. In other words, it is the – transformation of what was once a highly valued, and highly valuable, profession, into, borrowing from Bob Prasch's taxonomy, a commodity like broccoli or iceberg lettuce, goes beyond deskilling to outright devaluation. The traditional view of the college professor is of the complete scholar: traditionally, professors were not only engaged in teaching complex subject matter, but also engaging in specialized research, and governance of their institutions. To a greater or lesser degree, some see the deskilling of traditional faculty labor and its replacement with low-wage, low-status, contingent faculty as related to the larger attack on the "academic way of life" (Donoghue, 2008, xv) – meaning, placing a high value on efficiency and productivity and a low value on scholarship and intellectual inquiry. The rhetoric of running universities like a business, in this context, has meaning beyond just reducing the high cost of faculty salaries and tuition; it is, according to Donoghue, part of a long tradition of "corporate hostility toward higher education" (Donoghue 2008) that Veblen first identified. Indeed, the growth of contingent faculty is destroying the traditional model of college professors and the traditional university. Plater further observes that this "demobilization" of the academic workforce is a sign that "most American colleges and universities can no longer sustain an academic workforce based on an ideal of the 'complete scholar engaged in coherent, integrated, and self-directed work across the full range of teaching, research, service, and governance" (Plater, 2008, 36-37).

College teaching is, at its idealistic best, a labor-intensive process that has been described as the artisan model. As Anthony Delbanco has argued, for most of the last century, that model has had at its center, and, again, ideally, "a person undaunted by the incremental fatigue of repetitive work, who remains ardent, even fanatic, in the service of [her] calling" (Delbanco 2012, 66), i.e., highly educated individuals *professing* their passion and knowledge of a specialized subject to generations of students who, ideally, will go on and utilize that knowledge to improve society in some unforeseeable way. But, given the trends we have discussed above, it seems evident that both technological factors and cost concerns will continue to "de-standardize" employment relations in the academic labor force. Given the larger trends, Archibald and Feldman see the choice, for higher education and policymakers, as

facing a basic tradeoff between keeping the price of a college education relatively low, asking the public at large to provide more subsidies to students, or increasing educational productivity to keep costs low (Archibald and Feldman 2011, 91). With the first two options increasingly unlikely, universities will likely continue to seek ways "to increase productivity in higher education without decreasing quality," whether or not they want to embrace a full corporate model, in the process diminishing the traditional role of professor as artisan (Archibald and Feldman 2011, 91).

We share their concern, and offer a further thought. The traditional artisan college professor, often parodied for focusing more on obscure research or university politics than on their core teaching activities, has nonetheless, and demonstrably, played a vital role in transmission and creation of knowledge for centuries. And the traditional artisan college professor has played a crucial role in educating the work force for the rest of the economy. If, indeed, as we stated at the outset, education is the remedy for the job insecurity that has befallen the modern workforce, then we should take steps now to reverse this trend by professionalizing the entire professoriate. We fear that, when highly educated college professors become as disposable as three-day old iceberg lettuce, arguably the rest of the workforce is also at great risk. What happens, then, to the future of a society divided among a fortunate few with good jobs and an unfortunate majority without, is worrisome indeed (cf. Halpern, 2015)

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