

# FORUM

ISSUES ABOUT PART-TIME AND CONTINGENT FACULTY

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### Editor's Introduction: Reading with Intent to Act

Amy Lynch-Binieck

During my time as editor, I have highlighted scholarship with a local, material, or activist bent. I own this bias in the submission guidelines: "Of special interest are research, analyses, and strategies grounded in local contexts, given that labor conditions and the needs of contingent faculty vary greatly with geography, institutional settings, and personal circumstances."

Behind this agenda is my fervent hope that more members of the higher education community, including faculty of all ranks, graduate students, and administrators, will see in these pages practical paths for making changes in their home institutions and professional organizations. I couldn't stay in higher education generally and English studies specifically if I didn't believe that we can improve it—even if that means the improvements differ in form and scope from campus to campus.

I hope you will keep that sentiment in mind as you read this issue of *Forum* and indeed as you read any issue from our archive, generously made accessible by NCTE and CCCC. The takeaways from our contributors are material, suggesting more than theory, even more than strategy. There are those of you among our readers who can actually take up the authors' calls. You may have the resources, the status, or simply the time to commit to *building* in addition to reading.

In the case of William Christopher Brown's "Scholarly Journals Should Not Replicate the Systemic Inequality of Higher Education," the opportunities for action are many and varied. Are you faculty or an administrator shaping policy on professional development grants or alternative work assignments? Brown reminds you that

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## About *Forum*

*Forum* is published twice a year by the Conference on College Composition and Communication. Amy Lynch-Binieck, editor of *Forum*, welcomes you to submit essays related to the teaching, working conditions, professional life, activism, and perspectives of non-tenure-track faculty. Faculty and scholars from all academic positions are welcome to contribute. Of special interest are research, analyses, and strategies grounded in local contexts, given that labor conditions and the needs of contingent faculty vary greatly with geography, institutional settings, and personal circumstances.

Essays should address theoretical and/or disciplinary debates. They will go through the standard peer-review and revision process.

Submissions for the fall issue should be received no later than April 1; for the spring issue, the deadline is August 1. Note: Submissions will not be returned. Submit your work electronically to [lynchbin@kutztown.edu](mailto:lynchbin@kutztown.edu) and put the words “*Forum* article” in your subject line. Submissions should include your name, title(s), institution(s), home address and phone number, institutional address(es) and phone number(s), and if applicable, venue(s) where the submission was published or presented previously.

**For further information and to make submissions, please contact Dr. Amy Lynch-Binieck, Editor, *Forum*, at [lynchbin@kutztown.edu](mailto:lynchbin@kutztown.edu).**

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non-tenure-track faculty are active scholars who need and deserve institutional support as much as anyone else. Are you a leader in a professional organization or on a publication’s board? You can craft policy that allows for and even invites non-tenure-track faculty participation in every position.

Brown challenges the perception of the *unscholarly untenured*, and co-authors Sarah Austin and Erica Stone support his case. Both are English instructors and PhD candidates with substantial scholarly agendas, and Austin is coeditor of *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry* and book review editor for the *Journal of Veterans Studies*.

In “The Ethos Triad for Contingent Composition Faculty: Location, Modality, and WPA Support,” Austin and Stone specifically “call for more action-oriented interventions.” WPAs should consider how the strategies analyzed in their examples might be adapted for their own contexts and campuses. They further call on professional organizations to “work together for joint advocacy” and for the creation of a centralized site for collecting contingent faculty resources and stories. That is a worthy project for anyone with the grant, sabbatical, or other institutional support to make it happen.

While I have long called myself an advocate, the contributors to *Forum* regularly remind me of what more I can do if I just recognize my opportunities. Of course, advocacy and action are never that simple—we all encounter obstacles to doing more. As you read this issue of *Forum*, I invite you to reflect on the possibilities and to rise to the challenges as much as you can.

## Scholarly Journals Should Not Replicate the Systemic Inequality of Higher Education

William Christopher Brown

Scholarly monographs, scholarly articles, and educational news sources all describe the inequitable treatment of contingent academic labor from the standpoint of “material [in]equity,” including “pay parity, job security, and benefits” (Davis 31). Discussions of “professional [in]equity” have focused on internal limitations to “opportunities for development and advancement” at the university level (Davis 46). However, it is important to note that this professional inequity extends to leadership in the field and to its professional organizations. For instance, in the “Announcements and Calls for Papers” section of *College English* (May 2018, volume 80, number 5), the journal advertised a “Search for Next Editor of *English Education*.” I was intrigued to see this stipulation for consideration to be editor: “Applicants for the editorship should be tenured (or have completed the tenure process with a reasonable certainty that tenure will be granted) and should have published in *English Education* or a national journal of similar quality” (489). Had I read this five years or so previously, I would not have paused about tenure being a requirement to edit a journal. As I write, though, I am in my final year on the Modern Language Association’s (MLA) Committee on Contingent Labor in the Profession (chair, 2018–2019), and my experience on that committee has made me more sensitive to issues affecting contingent academic labor. When I see a call for a new editor that excludes contingent academic labor, I worry that restricting the editorship of scholarly journals to a shrinking number of tenured faculty has the potential to limit the scope and range of experiences represented in scholarship.

As noted regularly in discussions of academic labor, contingent academic labor is “the new faculty majority” (see “Home”), and I understand the term to mean both part-time and full-time instructors in higher education who are not on the tenure line or its equivalent. Citing research from the National Center for Education Statistics’ Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Steven Shulman observes in *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry* that as of 2014, “contingent faculty employment increased to 65 percent of all faculty employment” (2). Reports on contingent academic labor in English departments report similarly high rates of reliance on non-tenure-track faculty:

The Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW) . . . found in a 2012 survey of contingent teachers that 16.4 percent of all contingent faculty in the United States were from English language and literature departments; most of these faculty were teaching writing courses. A 2007 Association of Departments of English of the MLA study also

found that almost 70 percent of composition courses housed within English departments are taught by contingent faculty. (“CCCC Statement on Working Conditions for Non-Tenure-Track Writing Faculty”)

These English classes, particularly first-year composition courses, are vitally important to universities and colleges because they provide many students with their first real engagement with college-level writing. It is important to keep in mind the importance of contingent academic labor when viewing the *English Education* journal’s description on the National Council of Teachers of English’s (NCTE) website: *English Education* “serves teachers who are engaged in the preparation, support, and continuing education of teachers of English language arts/literacy at all levels of instruction” (“English Education”). The journal purports to “serve” teachers in English, including writing instructors, yet it prohibits a majority of faculty associated with the field from serving in a leadership position as editor. *English Education* and other scholarly journals that exclude contingent faculty from participating in the leadership of the field should reconsider this position and encourage equitable treatment of non-tenured faculty in scholarship as well as in teaching.

### **Institutional Contexts**

I understand some of the reasons for limiting the application pool to tenured or almost tenured faculty. First, the job search description notes the necessity of support from the editor’s home institution: “[L]etter(s) specifying financial support from appropriate administrators at the applicant’s institution [are required]. Applicants are urged to consult with administrators on the question of time, resources, and other institutional support that may be required for the editorship of this journal” (“Search”). Institutional support “typically include[s] graduate assistant support, reduced teaching assignment, clerical support, office space, and operational funds” (“Call for Editor Politics, Groups, and Identities”). In brief, leadership of learned societies and journals understand institutional support to be a privilege of the tenured and tenure-track faculty.

This practice of favoring tenured and tenure-track faculty for editorial opportunities is further reinforced by universities that exclude contingent academic labor from publishing subventions. In “Books, Glorious Books: Explorations in Open Access Monograph Publishing,” Karin Wulf discusses the challenges of funding subventions in general and notes in particular that tenure-track faculty “and their non-tenure-track (NTT) colleagues [at Indiana University and the University of Michigan] shared a strong concern about how subventions might exacerbate inequities in universities.” For instance, the University of Massachusetts Amherst favors only tenured or tenure-track faculty in subventions for publication: “Mass Amherst

tenured and tenure-track faculty members at any stage of their careers, including those on emeritus appointments, are eligible to apply. Specifically excluded from eligibility for support are adjunct, research, or visiting faculty members, as well as faculty members whose contracts will not be renewed for the following year" ("Publication Subvention Program"). Likewise, the University of Wisconsin-Madison also only provides subventions for publishing scholarly monographs to tenured or tenure-track faculty ("Publishing Subvention"). These types of policies are not exclusive to these two universities. In both learned societies and universities, contingent academic laborers are marginalized from leading through research or service to the profession.

Second, the journal is looking for a published scholar with a research record ("Search"). The *English Education* advertisement for the editor position holds an outdated view of publication as a marker that distinguishes tenured faculty members from non-tenure-track faculty. Obviously, tenured faculty have an expectation to publish (or perish), but tenured faculty are not the only faculty who publish (or perish). Non-tenure-track faculty in both part-time and full-time positions often are active publishing scholars, all the while managing larger teaching loads than tenure-track faculty. The diminishment of tenure-track jobs has resulted in publishing expectations for non-tenure-track faculty. For instance, the WPA Job Board lists several non-tenure-track writing program administration positions that list publication as one of the job duties. One job description calls for a non-tenure-track "Visiting Assistant Professor of Professional Writing, University of New Orleans," and states that "publications [are] strongly desirable." The WPA Job Board also lists a three-year, non-tenure-track "Senior Lecturer with Research at Institute for Writing and Rhetoric" position at Dartmouth that that requires teaching and "maintaining an active personal scholarly research agenda focused on data-driven research (qualitative or quantitative)." In an *ADE/ADFL Bulletin* article, Laura Brady and Nathalie Singh-Corcoran describe a non-tenure-track writing program administrator position that requires research. Although the pay for the non-tenure-track writing center coordinator was "eighty percent of what a new tenure-track position would earn," they still expected research as described in the job description:

By using this existing faculty category, we could define the writing center coordinator's role to recognize administrative responsibilities as central while still being able to value teaching and research. Specifically, we configured the position as fifty percent administrative work, forty percent teaching, and ten percent research. In this way, a clinical faculty position had a distinct advantage over a teaching faculty line, which, at the time, did not recognize any time allocated to research. The research component was important to us, because a coordinator who was actively engaged with the profession and aware of current theories, research studies, and practices would understand

his or her work in a much larger context than one who focused solely on student–tutor interactions. Given the opportunity for research, the writing center coordinator could collaborate with the undergraduate writing program on planning, curriculum development, and faculty outreach. (73)

The quotation is long but worth studying because it illustrates a logic of exploitation. The authors frame the research aspect of the position as enhancing the value of the position for the job seeker and the institution while paying the non-tenure-track faculty member less than they would a faculty member on the tenure track. They provide lofty goals of research without enhancing the conditions necessary for research to occur. The added requirement of research to non-tenure-track jobs reflects the supply of job seekers with doctorates. Daniel Davis notes that “47% [of contingent faculty] have a PhD or professional doctorate, and another 7% are still finishing their doctorates” (8). These are people who have written dissertations and have been trained to write and publish their research. Universities can take advantage of this expertise without having to provide the same job protections or salaries to non-tenure-track faculty as they do tenured faculty. The important thing to note here is that tenure-track faculty are not the only faculty who publish and know the research landscape. To exclude non-tenure-track faculty from an editorship position because of their job status reproduces the systemic inequity that universities commit within the context of subventions and job security.

### **Organizational Context: NCTE**

I was startled to see *English Education* prohibit contingent academic labor from the editorship role because the journal is published by NCTE, an organization which announced in an email to the entire membership in 2017 its new vision statement. This new vision emphasized five key aspects: “access, power, agency, affiliation, and impact for all learners” (Kirkpatrick). NCTE’s revised vision statement states that it

will apply the power of language and literacy to actively pursue justice and equity for all students and the educators who serve them. As the nation’s oldest organization of pre-K through graduate school literacy educators, NCTE has a rich history of deriving expertise and advocacy from its members’ professional research, practice, and knowledge. (“About Us”)

Access is the first, and presumably most important, goal of its vision: “NCTE and its members will strengthen or create inclusive hubs for state-of-the-art practices, research, and resources, providing access for more diverse voices to create, collaborate, and lead, within and beyond the organization” (“About Us”). This focus on “access” is important when reflecting on the current policy at *English Education* to exclude contingent academic labor from the opportunity to compete for the editor-

ship position. Universities have created significant barriers to scholars off the tenure track through policies that ignore contingent academic laborers' research—and journals replicate these systemic barriers.

NCTE journals like *English Education* aspire to be “inclusive hubs,” but criteria that favor only tenure-track faculty in the selection of journal editorship contradict that goal. NCTE's vision specifically includes “providing access for more diverse voices to create, collaborate, and lead, within and beyond the organization” (“About Us”). The emphasis on diversity is important and has not been attended to very well by hiring committees for tenure-track positions. For instance, the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America (TIAA) Institute reported in 2016 that “[w]hile underrepresented minorities held 12.7% of faculty positions in 2013, up from 8.6% in 1993, they held only 10.2% of tenured positions. Similarly, women in 2013 held 49.2% of all faculty positions, up from 38.6% in 1993, but just 37.6% of tenured positions” (Finkelstein, Conley, and Schuster; Colleen Flaherty provides a useful summary of the report—see “More Faculty Diversity”). Limiting editorship of *English Education* to tenured faculty impedes the ideal of providing accessibility to diverse voices. To reiterate, universities create systemic barriers to leadership by prioritizing tenured faculty over contingent academic labor; scholarly journals that replicate these barriers reinforce inequitable restrictions on the variety of people able to lead in the field.

## Conclusion

Journals like *English Education* should reconsider how the diminishing number of tenure lines affects the pool of candidates who can apply to editorships, and reflect on what is lost when non-tenure-track faculty are prohibited from consideration. This practice contradicts the calls from past authors of *Forum: Issues about Part-Time and Contingent Faculty* for contingent academic labor to make their voices heard in the profession. In 2009, Vandana Gavaskar recommended that “contingent faculty need to enter the public discourse (outside of brown-bag lunches and marginalized local settings) and define the parameters that will create viability/visibility for a professional career” (A7). In 2010, Whitney Larrimore called for greater representation of contingent academic labor in learned societies: “Through the forums presented by NCTE, CCCC, MLA, and other professional organizations, my fellow contingent colleagues should challenge the ‘path’ of contingency that forces them into silence. I challenge contingent faculty members . . . to challenge NCTE, CCCC, and MLA for increased attention” (A8). A decade later, Gavaskar's and Larrimore's recommendations are still relevant, and in this article, I repeat Larrimore's challenge. The opportunity to serve as editors of journals can give contingent

faculty a venue for encouraging the understanding of those in contingent positions as people rather than as objects of study by tenured researchers. For these changes to occur, publishers and universities need a different understanding of what contingent academic labor can bring to scholarly conversations. Given the prevalence of contingent academic labor in higher education, the practice of denying those in contingent positions the opportunity to compete for editorships of journals should be reconsidered.

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### **The Ethos Triad for Contingent Composition Faculty: Location, Modality, and WPA Support**

Sarah E. Austin and Erica M. Stone

Writing studies scholars have been working to create spaces for students to engage in intercultural knowledge-making through the act of writing (Flower 280). Therefore, recent composition curricula has been situated around community literacy, civic engagement, and service learning. While universities often serve as the point of origin for most community engagement projects, the practices and infrastructures of higher education often constrain and adversely affect community engagement work (Cushman; Goldblatt; Long). As we see it, there are three major problems that

affect the work of community-engaged contingent faculty: (1) short-term, contract labor does not support long-term community engagement; (2) online courses undermine local faculty ethos; and (3) a lack of support from WPAs prohibits the creation of a locally relevant curriculum. Since contingent faculty are the new faculty majority (“Portrait”), it is important to consider the problems they might face as community-engaged teacher-scholars.

Using two site-based, narrative examples, we explore how contingent faculty can develop and maintain their ethos through community-engaged courses, and how WPAs can facilitate this development. Because contingent faculty ethos is often built upon the triad of institutional location, instructional modality, and the support of their WPAs and programs, we offer examples of how contingent faculty members and WPAs might intervene when one or more of the triad pieces is removed or misaligned.

### **Example 1. How an Adjunct Restructured a Community-Engaged Writing Course for an Online Instructional Modality**

Erica M. Stone

The first narrative example, situated around an adjunct faculty member who teaches the same community-engaged writing course in both face-to-face and online modalities in an urban Midwestern research university, explores the following questions: How does shifting the location of a community-engaged writing course from face-to-face to online affect contingent faculty ethos? What power and affordances are available for the contingent faculty member to maintain a located ethos within an online instructional modality? Additionally, how does the contingent faculty member shift the rhetorical situation of the course toward an online community without adjusting the student learning outcomes? Moreover, we know that students enroll in asynchronous online courses for a variety of reasons, but the most important two are “convenience and access” (Salter 213). Some students cannot commit to meeting during a specific time at a particular location, but they have committed to investing some of their non-nine-to-five time in their education. Because this site serves a primarily nontraditional student population, a community-engaged course, whether it meets face-to-face or online, can be quite a challenge for students with inflexible schedules; it is unreasonable to ask them to spend an additional five-to-ten hours per week cooperating with nonprofits and community organizers. It is also difficult for adjunct faculty members, who are paid only for their instructional time (Wallin 385), are assigned courses at the last minute (379), and often work at more than one institution (380) to build sustainable, long-term partnerships that support the work of a community-engaged writing course (Simmons).

As a community organizer in Kansas City, I have invested time in building partnership networks for my students outside of the classroom. Situating myself as what Elenore Long identifies as a “non-interventionist agitator,” someone *with* formal institutional ties (e.g., a WPA) who takes an activist stance and connects people and resources over time (111), I have created opportunities for my students to engage in community-centered writing projects that span more than one semester (Simmons). To me, Long’s idea of a non-interventionist agitator is *almost* the perfect persona for a community-oriented teacher, except for one thing: as an academic with formal institutional ties, an adjunct in this role lacks the ability to focus on the needs of the community instead of the benchmarks of the institution (Goldblatt 315). Working from the liminal space of an adjunct, I prioritize the Kansas City community rather than a particular institution. This investment in the community instead of the goals of an institution has allowed me to more successfully design community-oriented projects for my students, which in turn situated me to engage in long-term community partnerships and build a location-centered ethos, transcending the limitations of a sixteen-week course.

For instance, this year I was asked to teach my 300-level, community-engaged writing course in an asynchronous, online modality instead of a synchronous, face-to-face environment. Initially, this shift caused some concern for how an online learning modality might impact our relational work with my established community partners and my own faculty ethos. First, I tried to simply move my face-to-face course into an online course, and students were expected to jump from the online learning environment into their communities with little regard for how it might impact their lives or the work of our community partners. This attempt was unsuccessful because I failed to account for the shift in the rhetorical situation of the course. Understanding the expansion of the rhetorical situation, from one that addresses only speaker/writer, listener/reader, and context, to one that also includes location and modality (Rice 248), I restructured the course assignments and shifted the community engagement project from a face-to-face space to a digital one. Instead of asking students to engage with a community organization outside of our online location, I coordinated an opportunity to work with an online community organizing group working to build a map of community projects in the Kansas City area. This solution accommodated the needs and expectations of my online students and continued the growth of my ethos as a local community organizer who understood the needs and work of the Kansas City community in “the streets” (Mathieu 2) as well as the construction of knowledge-making practices in digital community organizing spaces.

But accommodating a shift in instructional location and modality is not always a part of the online course design process. All too often, composition departments

and WPAs will construct one predesigned version of a course for all contingent faculty (or GTAs) to teach instead of allowing instructors to incorporate their expertise and located ethos (Salter, Simmons). Because my university recognizes the importance of faculty expertise, ethos, and academic freedom, I was able to take into consideration the expansion of the rhetorical situation into an online course.

Because I was working from the liminal space of a community-engaged adjunct, I was able to strategically restructure my course to function in both face-to-face and online instructional modalities by creating opportunities for my students to engage in a civically engaged project that was built for and works in an online community space.

## **Example 2. How WPAs Intervened in Curriculum Design to Focus on Local Issues**

Sarah E. Austin

Although Long's conception of a noninterventionist agitator can be effective in community work and advocacy, WPAs should also consider how their work can take an activist stance (Adler-Kassner) toward contingent faculty. As such, I tell the story of how the WPAs at a land grant university in the Rocky Mountains acted as interventionists, recreating their FYC curricula to be locally relevant, thereby increasing the location-centered ethos of contingent faculty. The curriculum originated in a traditional model focusing on grammar, style, syntax, and the five-paragraph essay before moving into modes/forms, writing about writing, process, the rhetorical situation, and cultural studies. It then shifted toward a locally relevant curriculum, an interventionist move that empowered contingent writing faculty.

As part of a comparative analysis, I coded and categorized the transcripts of seven interviews. I conducted the interviews in 2013, but the individuals interviewed held the position of WPA at various points between 1973 and 2013. Participants were given the opportunity to explain and/or clarify their experiences, explain their knowledge of department histories, and provide personal and professional stances regarding FYC curricula and/or impacts of a contingent majority on FYC curricula in order to "avoid constrain[ing] individual responses" (Creswell 387). The timeline I was able to piece together from these encounters included a corpus of online and hard copy curricular documents.

Notably, there were several shifts toward a locally-centered curriculum in the periods 2002–2006, 2006–2009, and 2012–2018. These shifts toward a local ethos not only spoke to the conversations in the surrounding communities, but the particular WPA's desire to shift power toward the localized ethos of contingent faculty. In 2008, the WPA switched the curricular focus from a generally critical one to a

locally specific one called Rhetoric of Green (WPA 2). The change was impactful because a land grant university, in particular, encompasses polarizing opinions on global warming within its student body, faculty and staff, and across the rural community. Although the topic was met with some contempt, it allowed for local ethos in the classroom. As a result, faculty, GTAs, and NTTF were able to explain the controversies to students from a land grant, rural agrarian point of view, a tangible reality that was clearly visible to students. The move from an abstracted curricula to a local one centered on experience shifted the classroom ethos and set a precedent for WPAs at the institution to be interventionists. By utilizing local interests as foci for FYC courses, NTTF community members are able to speak from a place of power because they live the environmental, educational, and agricultural moments from which the curricula was derived.

One of the NTTF members teaching at this institution was instrumental in researching, compiling, and editing the current reader on Health, Food, Energy, and Water. This faculty member has lived and worked in the area for several years and has an intimate knowledge of the university. She can speak to students' logistical and geographical questions with credence. She knows the history of the curriculum and the reasoning behind its shifts; she understands the political bent of the town, and can speak to specific programmatic, curricular, and departmental decisions; she knows the students are mostly white, mostly from in-state, and largely working class. Such knowledge might seem outside the realm of relevance for a teacher-student interaction, but FYC classes are often the smallest courses students have. The teacher-student interactions that occur in these classes matter for the success and retention of both the NTTF member and the students.

When one considers the potential flammability of such course foci as Rhetoric of Green, which focuses on global warming; the Ethics of Higher Education, which brings to light the new majority of contingent faculty; and Food, Energy and Water, which discusses such issues as Monsanto and food sources, having local street cred matters. Here, local ethos is especially useful given that the students at this institution are largely interested in being veterinarians, engineers, scientists, or corporate farmers. The local ethos many face-to-face instructors wield, in addition to the small class sizes, allows for effective navigation of the democratic ideals of education: to create civic-minded, critical thinkers. Unfortunately, these intentional WPA interventions are virtually impossible when one considers the shift from local, face-to-face instruction to increasingly corporatized online learning.

Locality in face-to-face courses is an important aspect of contingent faculty ethos. As Erica noted in our first example, moving courses online can often rob instructors of their local ethos. They don't have institutional credibility and often

do not have a clear path to recover it. In fact, at this same institution with a long lineage of WPAs who have acted as interventionists for their contingent faculty, a corporate model for online education has been developed (WPA 1). Online courses and degrees are managed from a completely separate, corporatized office where course sections are usually larger than face-to-face writing classes, thereby increasing the teacher's workload for grading, emphasizing product over process, and further mechanizing the teacher-student relationship. As an interventionist working toward maintaining contingent faculty ethos and power through locally centered courses, I believe that it's imperative that opportunities for intervention are recognized before the power for advocacy is lost. In cases where there is no WPA willing or able to intervene, instructors like Erica have to shift into noninterventionist agitator mode, reconfiguring their own courses in order to maintain their local ethos. Though dismal, both realities underscore why interventions toward rebalancing the ethos triad for contingent composition faculty are imperative.

### **Conclusion and Call**

In light of our examples, we call for more action-oriented interventions that work toward rebalancing the ethos triad: location, modality, and WPA support. Designing locally relevant curriculum increases adjunct faculty's ability to grow and sustain ethos within the subject matter. This can only occur if WPAs and contingent faculty collaborate to make course foci more relevant to the students. If contingent faculty are able to anchor their ethos in a specific location, then the modality of the course content delivery has less of an impact on faculty members' ability to maintain a specialization that is not just rooted in a course sequence or a subject, but in a specifically located topic that transcends the mode of delivery. Although the trend toward online teaching modalities is unlikely to slow, we advocate for collaborative interventions that work to repair and sustain contingent faculty's ethos before such interventions are rendered impossible by an increasingly corporatized higher education model.

Choosing curricular topics that are nationally relevant and can also be tailored to students' and faculty's local experiences and interests (like Sarah's example topics of global warming, higher education faculty shifts, and food and water issues) allow the curricular foci to circumvent modality issues (such as an asynchronous online medium). Institutions like the University of Oklahoma have recently prioritized this type of curricular shift by emphasizing primary and field research practices in their undergraduate FYW classes. Roxanne Mountford, the WPA at OU, has focused her FYC course sequence partially on the development of "civic empathy" and, from our perspective, ensures that students are engaged in their own research interests

while also supporting contingent faculty ethos through local expertise and connections. Following this model, we suggest that WPAs work to support all faculty members' efforts toward community engagement or outreach. This support can come in the form of stipends, course releases, networking opportunities with local nonprofits, or even a local conference like the University of Missouri Kansas City's Educate-Organize-Advocate Conference, which focuses on the development of relationships between the university and civic organizations and activists. Similarly, contingent faculty should choose curricular foci that reflect their own expertise; this structure will vary based on location, course type, and student population, but most importantly, it will develop a meaningful relationship between teacher, student, and content. Further, faculty of all types should expand students' understanding of their identities past that of quintessential talking head at the front of the classroom by contextualizing what they do both in and for their institution and within their field of expertise. For example, students can make the connection between their MLA handbooks and the conference at which their professors might be presenting, thereby adding to their professors' ethos or perceived expertise.

In addition, professional and grassroots organizations like CCCC, The Center for the Study of Academic Labor, Tenure for the Common Good, ConJob, AAUP, CWPA Resource Center, and MLA need to work together for joint advocacy. As noted in Amy Lynch-Binie's guest post for *Inside Higher Ed*, "Avoiding Groundhog Day on Contingent Labor," there are multiple teacher-activists and universities working to dismantle the systemic inequity of academic labor; however, our fractured documentation and limited collective action have decreased our productivity and undermined our ability to listen intently to one another in order to effectively build off one another's efforts. While we acknowledge that a short reflection in *Forum*, like this one, merely contributes to this cacophony, we call for the creation of a centralized website or wiki where contingent faculty and labor activists can share stories, collaborate, advocate, and organize toward a better future for all of us.

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