



Adjunct Faculty: Who are these Unsung Heroes of Academe?

Gail D. Caruth and Donald L. Caruth
Eastfield College

A trend in hiring adjuncts exists. Adjuncts bring real-world perspectives to students, provide scheduling flexibility for department heads, and are a cost savings for colleges and universities. The purpose of this paper was to examine the role of AF within the overall professorate. Who are these part-time instructors? This research study was an archival quantitative, data mining study using data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). This study identified full-time and part-time faculty according to gender and race from a total of 4,426 degree-granting universities in the United States. Examination of the data revealed that adjuncts represented 50 percent of the total faculty in degree-granting institutions in the United States for the year 2011. Implications from this study have a bearing on institutional morale, turnover, productivity, student service, community relations, employee relations, and institutional image.

Keywords: adjunct faculty, adjuncts, part-time faculty, full-time faculty, non-tenured faculty

Employment of adjunct faculty in colleges and universities maintains the employment of full-time faculty. One university official even compared adjuncts to fine wine at discount prices (Halcrow & Olson, 2008). Adjunct faculty (AF) are part-time employees who can be classified as either non-tenured or non-permanent; paid by course or on a year-by-year appointment; receive little or no health insurance or retirement benefits; experience few raises or advancement opportunities; have very little or no say in college or university governance; and may have earned a doctorate, master's degree, or bachelor's degree. Adjuncts are hired as a cost savings for colleges and universities because they are compensated at a rate of roughly one-third that of full-time faculty. Moreover, there is a large pool of instructors willing to be hired part-time with lower wages and few if benefits making this an attractive hiring alternative for institutions of higher learning (Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Morton, 2012).

Student enrollment is on the rise in higher education. Offering the number of classes necessary to meet the student demands extends beyond acceptable workloads for tenured/tenure track faculty and institutions

are not able to meet these demands. As a result, higher education is hiring part-time faculty to teach the overcrowded, preparatory courses. Furthermore, senior faculty at research institutions are less interested in teaching these lower level courses leaving these courses available for part-time instructors (Halcrow & Olson, 2008).

The professorate today is divided into two separate faculty segments (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 2005; Halcrow & Olson, 2008). The problem with having the two segments is the eventual disillusionment and lack of motivation of AF. These instructors receive substandard compensation and are not well integrated into the system. As instructors, adjuncts tend to rely on traditional pedagogical methods of teaching and seldom incorporate new teaching methods because they receive little or no professional development opportunities as compared to their colleagues. Ultimately, quality problems could exist such as substandard teaching from the AF who may be currently well qualified for teaching. According to Halcrow and Olson (2008), this could also result in the overall decline in the merit of instructors in higher education due to the unwillingness to maintain the

status of all faculty. Furthermore, instructors without tenure become fearful of anything that might upset students for fear of losing their jobs. Studies have demonstrated that graduation rates decrease as the rates of hiring AF increases. This finding, as maintained by the researchers, is the result of the disincentives for AF rather than substandard teaching.

Apparently it is common practice in higher education to keep AF in the rank of part-time status thereby guaranteeing flexibility for academic departments. Department chairs are prepared to continue this practice indefinitely. AF are often excluded from reaching 50% or better workloads to remain disqualified for receiving institutional benefits, for example. Some colleges and universities will even interrupt the continuity of the full-time teaching loads of AF to prevent the appearance of *de-facto* tenure. Moreover, adjuncts often have larger course loads than the full-time faculty receiving benefits (Halcrow & Olson, 2008).

AF maintained that they receive minimal support and resources, if any, from their departments and are seen as transient by institutions. As a result, AF are generally required to work in cramped spaces or to meet their students in hallways; lack any form of job security; feel they receive no respect; and are omitted from opportunities for involvement. Many AF, however, have willingly accepted their second-class citizenship status and substandard compensation to teach for personal growth, to share real-world experiences, or to earn extra income. This practice continues because there are a large number of AF willing to accept these conditions, even though many express anger and frustration over their limited career opportunities and the general lack of appreciation. However, as a result of the cost savings and flexibility that adjuncts provide, higher education has become dependent upon the use of adjunct or part-time faculty (Halcrow & Olson, 2008).

It is ironic that differentiation of the “haves” and “have-nots” even exists in higher education. Since the mid 1950s higher education has promoted opened doors and claimed to provide equal playing fields for all students. Colleges and universities have promoted diversity for their students. Then, to be charged with disadvantaging any group would be odious for any institution of higher learning. Halcrow and Olson (2008) maintained that that is exactly what is happening to part-time faculty, the invisible or disposable segment of the overall faculty. The purpose of this paper was to examine the role of AF within the overall professorate. Who are these part-time instructors? Are there specific groups within the overall AF that are disadvantaged?

A review of the literature presents a compilation of research, peer-reviewed journals, non-peer reviewed journals, books, and online sources on AF. The academic databases used were from the online library of Texas A&M University-Commerce and included, but were not

limited to, Academic Search Premier, EBSCO, Education Research Complete, Eric, ProQuest, and Sage Publications. The key descriptive term used for this research was adjunct faculty.

Review of the Literature

There is a trend in higher education. The number of full-time tenured/tenure track or non-tenured faculty is on the decline, as department heads hire more AF to teach classes (Altbach et al., 2005; Ballantyne, Berret, & Harst, 2010; Duncan, 1999; Langen, 2011; Thyer, Myers, & Nugent, 2011). Langen maintained that this trend in hiring adjuncts may exist in part because adjuncts bring real-world perspectives to students and provide scheduling flexibility for department heads. Additionally, adjuncts come at a reduced cost (Ruiz, 2007).

The Digest of Education Statistics provides statistical data that covers the broad field of American education. The digest includes a compilation of information from various resources consisting of surveys and activities conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The NCES, a part of the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences, is designed to collect and analyze data related to education in the United States. A comparison of part-time faculty numbers from 1970 of 104,000 to 761,996 in 2011 represented an 86 percent growth in AF (NCES, n.d.).

Charlier and Williams (2011) studied the impact of institutional type (rural, suburban, urban) on dependence on and need for AF. Findings suggested that rural institutions depend less on adjuncts, whereas both rural and urban institutions reported large numbers of unmet needs in particular disciplines. Even though the percentage of AF surpassed 60% for all types of community colleges, Chief Academic Officers claimed that AF handled a much smaller percentage of the overall instruction. Therefore cautioned the researchers', evaluating dependency and need of adjuncts in higher education on the basis of percentage of the overall faculty alone does not accurately reflect the role of AF in institutions. Omitting workload differences results in exaggerated illustrations of dependence and need on AF. This inflation of dependence and need of AF through inadequate measurements of assessment, claimed the researchers, has the potential to aggravate the negative views of AF without addressing the positive impact adjuncts have on the academy.

It is anticipated that there will be an ongoing need for AF in higher education. For example in schools of nursing, hiring adjuncts is essential to meet the changing course loads each semester and is a definite cost savings for institutions. AF frustrations, due to expectations and role ambiguity, can lead to job dissatisfaction and employee turnover. Understanding the needs and minimizing any obstacles to teaching is essential to increasing job satisfaction, reducing turnover,

and enhancing teaching quality (Forbes, Hickey, & White, 2010).

Status of Adjunct Faculty. The continued status of AF is problematic for higher education due to the substandard compensation, according to Morton (2012). The average salary for AF is not enough to live on and therefore they are forced to eventually leave the profession. According to the author, it is not the compensation or benefits that tie AF to part-time teaching in higher education. Adjuncts teach because of a devotion to teaching.

Despite some of the concerns, Halcrow and Olson (2008) suggested that some AF view their role as one of opportunity as opposed to being disadvantaged. Furthermore, adjuncts elect to teach online at multiple institutions. With sufficient personal drive some AF even believe that there is potential to make a decent living at teaching where institutions do not require much if any research or service (Smallwood, 2001). Quality of instruction may be at risk, cautioned the researchers, due to the large number of students being taught by most AF (Halcrow & Olson, 2008).

Halcrow and Olson (2008) maintained that the majority of adjuncts originally agree to accept their positions with determination and enthusiasm. They take teaching positions due to their affection to the subject matter, the profession, and the students. The academy views it the same way. One provost stated that adjuncts were like fine wine at bargain prices that could be poured down the drain in the event of a problem. In spite of the fact that most AF are viewed as well qualified, devoted, and hard working, according to the researchers, they will ultimately feel deprived due to the division between the "haves" and the "have-nots."

Colleges and universities are encouraged to take responsibility for embracing these devoted teachers in their respective institutions. This can be accomplished through a number of opportunities, such as:

- Orientation, addressing secretarial support, classroom assignments and access, office space, phone and email, mail distribution, and class material distribution.
- Adequate training, providing mentoring programs, tracking the progress of AF, and conducting evaluations.
- Sense of belonging, supplying office space, providing name plates, offering name badges that are also given to full-time faculty, communicating necessary information, making available training material and opportunities, inviting adjuncts to attend events (meetings and other celebrations), and including AF names in course schedules.
- Recognition of quality work, supporting scholarship (research, writing, and service) and contributions made to the various disciplines.

An effective AF "roadmap" (Jacobson, 2013, p. 11) provides part-time faculty with opportunities to be included in helping institutional missions leading to student success. This in turn enhances AF effectiveness in the classroom and personal satisfaction in reaching institutional goals. The planned development and continued retention of AF allows higher education to reap the benefits of effective teamwork throughout the institutions. Effective roadmaps include:

- strong starts in teaching through orientation programs that make or break the success of newly hired faculty,
- strong senses of community through the establishment of instructional teams among the faculty departments,
- strong "one-stop-shop resource centers" (p. 11) through the creations of effective instructor support areas for faculty,
- strong committed support through the availability of someone able to answer questions and provide direction as needed, and
- strong logistical considerations through flexibility with schedules to enhance AF success with teaching.

Responsibility of Higher Education. Should higher education not take responsibility for hiring adjunct it can expect AF to take legal action or leave the profession. For example, some adjuncts have taken a stand against this substandard treatment through the court system. Since 1998, two different class action lawsuits were filed to stop exploitation of part-time faculty. Members of the Part-Time Faculty Association of Washington State Community and Technical Colleges, for example, are one group of part-time faculty who brought a lawsuit against the state of Washington. They elected to unite in class-action litigation to confront faculty exploitation. As a result of this lawsuit, benefits were improved and the state has been looking into the overuse of part-time faculty, job security for AF, and faculty salary rates. This type of legal confrontation is rare but addressed the frustrations that adjuncts deal with across the nation (Ruiz, 2007).

In another situation, a part-time instructor who wanted to remain anonymous decided that after five years of part-time teaching she was throwing in the towel to do something different. At the time she had no idea what that would be. Her leaving higher education was not just about her, it was about how the hiring system in colleges and universities was not working. To the college or university employing her she was only part-time and her exit from teaching would "cause barely a ripple...no farewell parties. No mentions in the department newsletter" (para. 4). Keep in mind that she was part-time and therefore disposable (Smallwood, 2004).

A year earlier this part-time instructor started a

popular Weblog ([http:// www.invisibleadjunct.com](http://www.invisibleadjunct.com)) called "Invisible Adjunct" (Smallwood, 2004, para. 19). In an early entry she stated that she felt "like a ghost in the department" (para. 21). She claimed that she died a "small death" (para. 2) when she explained to office personnel that she needed them to unlock a door so she could meet with students. This was time for which she was not paid.

The academic profession has declined she claimed. Higher education is producing too many graduates who cannot get sufficient jobs, which is an indication of a system problem and not the fault of the graduates. For example, even if the graduates are not of the quality to secure positions the academy is still at fault for producing substandard faculty. If these adjuncts are not of high enough caliber to be hired full-time by colleges and universities, then the graduate schools are still the failures, not the students (Smallwood, 2004). Furthermore, part-time instructor advised her blog readers to:

Read through a year's worth of Invisible Adjunct posts and you will get a good glimpse at what's happening in higher education, at least in terms of graduate school, the job market in the humanities, and the adjunct world. (para. 33)

Colleges and universities are encouraged to include AF in student learning outcomes assessments. These adjuncts represent a sizable percentage of course loads. One community college (Danley-Scott & Tompsett-Makinm, 2013) experimented with assessments by part-time faculty. Findings suggested that peer mentoring and communication were better predictors of part-time faculty participation than stipends, adaptable assessment prompts, or administrative pressure.

Results demonstrated that stipends did not encourage involvement, administration's mandate pressured some AF to be involved, and mentoring relationships were the strongest indicators of participation in design and implementation of student assessment. Two adjuncts who regularly participated in the student learning outcomes assessments both had frequent communication and mentoring relationships. AF with no mentoring relationships tended to ignore e-mails and seldom participated. These findings suggested that full-time faculty should develop relationships with AF. Collegial relationships promote a sense of belonging and contributions from an important segment of the professoriate (Danley-Scott & Tompsett-Makinm, 2013).

Moreover, the academe grumbles that it needs more excellence in its AF to support teaching loads but falls short with accepting its responsibility to the part-time faculty employed in higher education. Some institutions have claimed that adjuncts are substandard to tenured/tenure track faculty. Morton (2012) maintained that this is not true. In fact, there are numerous AF

available to serve, teach, research, and write who will be of benefit to both the students and the institutions who hire them. There is a dilemma. On the one hand institutions greatly benefit from the AF but, how much if any do AF benefit from the employing institutions? Research suggests that when instructors are compensated and involved student learning, retention, and completion rates rise.

Quality of Teaching. AF may be better instructors because they generally have jobs in addition to teaching in colleges and universities. It might be wrong to assume automatically that tenured faculty are the better teachers. AF provide opportunities to teach specialized courses and there is no evidence to suggest that AF are substandard instructors. In fact, in a study conducted by Thyer, Myers, and Nugent (2011), findings demonstrated that there were no significant differences in 294 course evaluations between full-time and part-time faculty.

A study by Langen (2011) was conducted to determine how the performance of AF is evaluated. Langen gathered data from academic administrators in Michigan (a large and diverse population of higher education institutions) to identify what sources of information were used to evaluate AF. In addition, the researcher wanted to see how this same information was utilized by administrators during evaluations and reappointment decisions. The underlying goal was to develop a better understanding of current evaluation practices. A better understand would provide higher education administrators opportunities to ensure that quality learning is available in the classroom.

The findings revealed that there are many procedures in higher education for evaluating AF. Some of the information used by the universities to evaluate adjuncts included: student evaluation tools, classroom observations, syllabus reviews, review of teaching materials, informal faculty feedback, peer evaluations, grade reviews, informal student feedback, and instructor self-evaluations. However, a number of these procedures do not follow accepted decision-making concepts. Administrators are encouraged to establish guidelines, follow the established guidelines, and clearly define evaluation procedures. Without the establishment and compliance the evaluation guidelines and procedures, faculty evaluation will have little meaning or value. Evaluating AF is too important to employ ineffective assessment tools and procedures (Langen, 2011).

Faculty Development. In 2006, members of Maryland Consortium for Adjunct Faculty Professional Development (MCAPD) conducted a survey to determine what professional development opportunities AF wanted. The 2004-2005 results of that study, based on 810 responses, suggested offering at least one yearly, cost-effective, statewide professional development conference created specifically for AF. Attendees indicated popular topics of interest that have helped with faculty

professional development and verification that Maryland was taking appropriate steps. In 2009 a second survey of 1,645 adjuncts was conducted five years after the first report by the MCAFD. This survey sought to determine what trends exist in AF. The survey focused on AF members' opinions and demographic information, including degrees and credentials, number of adjunct positions held, number of courses typically taught, and types of professional development offered for adjuncts in their higher education institutions. Implications for current practice, especially in professional development, and future research were included in the report (Dolan, Hall, Karlsson, & Martinak, 2013).

Due to the increase in AF, colleges and universities are encouraged to train and retain AF in order to continue to operate efficiently. The demands on teaching cannot be achieved without AF. Continued faculty development is important to the quality of education and should be offered to AF as well as full-time faculty. Dolan et al. (2013) maintained that AF desire and warrant opportunities for professional development from their respective employers.

Faculty Support and Communication. In a study conducted by Ballantyne et al. (2010) findings revealed that minimal support from full-time faculty or administration exists to include AF in the governing process at Franciscan institutions while there is some encouragement for adjuncts to attend departmental meetings. Apparently adjuncts are consulted on occasion regarding some departmental curricular needs. According to the researchers, AF might have opportunities to have their issues dealt with if they are permitted to attend faculty council/senate meetings or are represented by an AF spokesperson. In order for this to occur, change in attitude of full-time faculty and administration is necessary.

Adjuncts are in need of support and resources to teach students in the foreign language program at Longwood University, according to Scott and Edwards (2012). Professional development designed to enhance connections with the campus departments and full-time faculty contributed to demonstrations of support for these instructors. Additionally, designing opportunities for AF to collaborate on the challenges of teaching resulted in improved communication of student learning experiences. Performances of students with disabilities have demonstrated improved academic success. The design of professional development catered to the needs of adjuncts, resulting in improved learning experiences for students with disabilities.

In a discourse analysis study (Thirolf, 2012) examining faculty identities, findings suggested that AF enjoy teaching and interacting with students and feel most satisfaction when dealing with students. Positive reactions, however, are deficient when interacting with peers. Therefore, adjuncts do not tend to interact with

full-time faculty. This lack of interaction results in a deficiency in faculty professional development. Consequently, relationships between part-time and full-time faculty can be disadvantageous.

A grounded theory qualitative research study (Dolan, 2011) investigated experiences of 28 adjuncts working at the same university. The researcher examined their positions regarding the affect of occasional meetings on motivation and the quality of education offered to students. Of all the suggestions provided by instructors, many included the need for unambiguous, regular, and broad communication. A number claimed that face-to-face meetings of faculty would improve relationships. Administration is encouraged to generate opportunities for all faculty to collaborate together on institutional issues and goals resulting in improved student learning, experiences, and outcomes.

Research indicates that adjuncts are appreciated and provide opportunities for smaller programs to meet curricular demands. According to Clark, Moore, Johnston, and Openshaw (2011) however, there are indications that departments may depend too much on the availability rather than on teaching experience. Therefore, this confirms the importance of continuous faculty development, training, support, and evaluation once faculty are hired. Hiring, integrating, and keeping skilled part-time faculty can be improved with sufficient preparation. Creating opportunities for integrating AF into the academy should increase their effectiveness and the success of the programs hiring them.

Accreditation. To assure quality of faculty in the educational process, accreditation was designed more than a century ago by colleges and universities. Its basic purposes included quality assurance and improvement in the educational system. Accreditation is a process of self-regulation by means of peer and professional review. Currently there are more than seven thousand institutions who voluntarily go through intermittent accreditation reviews by nineteen institutional accreditors and sixty-one programmatic accreditors with more than twenty thousand programs all aimed at serving twenty-four million students. Accreditation is nongovernmental. It relies on financial support from colleges, universities, and programs. Accreditation relies on unpaid assistance from institutions who take part in self-studies, function as peer and professional reviewers, and work on accrediting associations' executive bodies (American Association of University Professors, n.d.b).

Over time these organizations have dealt with many issues in American higher education. It could then be expected that these organizations would be on top of the issues with AF. They are not. Accreditors, moreover, have very different definitions of full and part-time faculty. Even though the organizations are hesitant to address these differences, they agree that AF must be supported and integrated into the institutions (American

Association of University Professors, n.d.a).

Concerns by the accrediting bodies have surfaced regarding the qualifications of AF who work in the midst of perpetual turnover and are frequently employed at the last minute as a result of the increase in AF in the academy. It would be reasonable to assume that warning signals would be set off with non-tenure track faculty reaching 68 percent giving rise to a significant reliance on AF. Apparently this is not the case either (American Association of University Professors, n.d.a.).

The accrediting bodies do address student education and support, faculty development, and the importance of maintaining instructors included and informed in all accreditation handbooks in spite of the collective avoidance of AF issues. The trouble with these general statements is that their elusiveness provides opportunities for institutions to put a spin on their compliance reports. It would be much more effective to require colleges and universities to report on part-time teaching no more than two courses per semester, for example, rather than requiring them to just comment on their use of part-time instructors. Unfortunately the public is in the dark about the problems surrounding AF due to the limited amount of information provided by these accrediting bodies (American Association of University Professors, n.d.a).

In summary, a review of the literature revealed the following main themes:

- Universities are hiring more AF and full-time tenured/tenure track or non-tenured faculty is on the decline (American Association of University Professors, n.d.a; Altbach et al., 2005; Ballantyne et al., 2010; Clark et al., 2011; Dolan et al., 2013; Duncan, 1999; Langen, 2011; Thyer et al., 2011).
- AF are hired as a cost savings for higher education (American Association of University Professors, n.d.a; Clark et al., 2011; Danley-Scott & Tompsett-Makinm, 2013; Forbes et al., 2010; Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Morton, 2012; Ruiz, 2007; Smallwood, 2004).
- AF receive substandard compensation, minimal support, and little or no opportunities for professional development (Altbach et al., 2005; American Association of University Professors, n.d.a; Clark et al., 2011; Danley-Scott & Tompsett-Makinm, 2013; Dolan, 2011; Forbes et al., 2010; Halcrow & Olson, 2008; Morton, 2012; Smallwood, 2004).
- Universities are encouraged to provide support and opportunities for integration and professional development for AF (American Association of University Professors, n.d.a; Ballantyne et al., 2010; Clark et al., 2011; Danley-Scott & Tompsett-Makinm, 2013; Dolan, 2011; Dolan et al., 2013; Jacobson, 2013; Morton, 2012; Scott & Edwards,

2012).

With colleges and universities hiring AF at increasing rates, it seems prudent to focus on this segment of the faculty receiving substandard support, compensation, integration, and opportunities for professional development. Who are these part-time teachers? Once it is determined who these adjuncts are, plans can be made to meet their needs more effectively. Providing part-time faculty with opportunities for involvement within the academy can then lead to improved student success. This in turn could also improve instruction in the higher educational classrooms and overall faculty satisfaction. Furthermore, planned professional development for adjuncts could ultimately lead to continued faculty retention resulting in opportunities for higher education to reap the benefits from improved teamwork throughout the institutions (Jacobson, 2013).

Method of Procedure

This study was an attempt to identify who these part-time instructors are in higher education. AF are growing in number and therefore deserve to be recognized as significant players in the higher educational system. This research study was an archival quantitative, data mining study using data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) of the NCES. This study identified full-time and part-time faculty according to gender and race from a total of 4,426 degree-granting universities in the United States.

Data for this study were extracted from IPEDS, a system of interrelated surveys compiled each year by the NCES. IPEDS was selected for several reasons. First, IPEDS provides an extremely large database. It gathers information from colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutions that are involved in federal student financial aid programs. Second, IPEDS offers a higher degree of confidence for researchers. The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, requires institutions that are involved in federal student aid programs to submit data on enrollment, program completion, graduation rates, faculty and staff, finances, institutional prices, and student financial aid (The Higher Education Act of 1965). Thirds, IPEDS is open to the public to for general scrutiny. These data are made available to the public through the IPEDS data center. Fourth, IPEDS was selected because such a study had not been done before.

Data were extracted for faculty according to gender and race in degree-granting universities in the United States. The data were downloaded from IPEDS and converted into an Excel document. The Excel document was formatted and cleaned up.

Findings

The findings revealed the following information shown in Table 1 about full-time and part-time faculty according gender and race for the year 2011.

Table 1
 2011 Full-time and Part-Time Faculty According to Gender and Race

Gender/Race	Part-time Faculty	Full-time Faculty	Total Faculty
Total	759,103	762,523	1,521,626
Women	398,419	334,844	733,263
Men	360,684	427,679	787,244
Total American Indian	3,686	3,533	7,219
Total Black	63,358	41,640	104,998
Total Hispanic	33,829	31,348	65,177
Total White	559,029	564,162	1,123,191
Total Asian	28,358	65,504	93,862
Total Native Hawaiian	1,598	1,449	3,047
Total Race/ethnicity unknown	54,751	17,146	71,897

Specifics about the variables in Table 1 include the following:

- Full-time and part-time faculty were listed in IPEDS as "Instruction/research/public service"
- Gender numbers included American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, and Race/ethnicity unknown as listed in IPEDS.
- Gender numbers excluded "Two or more races and Nonresident alien" as listed in IPEDS.

Discussion and Conclusion

Examination of the data revealed that adjuncts represented 50 percent of the total faculty in degree-granting institutions in the United States for the year 2011. For every full-time instructor there was one part-time instructor. Females comprised 52 percent of the total part-time instructors and 44 percent of the total full-time instructors. Whites represented 74 percent of both part-time and full-time faculty. American Indian or Alaska Native, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, and Race/ethnicity unknown combined accounted for the remaining 26 percent of the faculty in higher education.

Vast differences exist in working styles, outlooks, remuneration, and responsibilities between instructors from one college or university to another, from one discipline to another, and from one faculty status to another. With the changing nature of faculty in higher education it is increasingly more difficult to think of the professorate as a unity. Altbach et al. (2009) encouraged colleges and universities to address the growing adjunct component of the faculty. For example, only 50 years ago total faculty were comprised of whites, males, and Protestants. The number of women in faculty positions has been increasing steadily and represented 48% of all faculty (44% full-time and over 52% of part-time). Blacks/African Americans (over 7% full-time and 8% part-time) and Hispanics/Latinos (over 4% fulltime and

4% part-time) continued to remain proportionately low. In 2011 Asians represented over 6% of the total faculty and over 4% of the part-time faculty. However, the United States Census Bureau announced in 2013 Asians were the fastest-growing race or ethnic group in the United States during 2012. Asians grew 2.9 percent to 18.9 million, Hispanic/Latino population grew 2.2 percent to just over 53 million, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders grew 2.2 percent to about 1.4 million, American Indians and Alaska Natives grew 1.5 percent to a little over 6.3 million, and blacks or African-Americans grew 1.3 percent to 44.5 million. Therefore, future faculty numbers are likely to be quite different from those of the present.

An examination of the numbers and a review of the literature suggested that American colleges and universities cannot operate without using AF. Colleges and universities rely on adjuncts to keep their doors open. Adjuncts are subsidizing colleges and universities through their acceptance of inadequate compensation. Adjuncts are in effect the unsung heroes in higher education.

Implications

Adjuncts have experienced an 86 percent increase in employment since 1970 (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.). Identifying who these part-time employees are has a number of implications for institutions of higher education. One implication from this study is that it will enable colleges and universities to customize professional development training with more informed knowledge on who the adjuncts are in higher education as identified in this study. This is important to colleges and universities because training and development has an important impact on institutions. A college or university, for example, having a reputation for offering first-rate professional training and development may discover that it easier to attract and retain qualified faculty. Turnover also may be reduced because faculty are hesitant to depart from a college or university that offers the required knowledge, skills, and learning opportunities. Productivity can also be improved because adjuncts are

better able to perform and assume positions of higher responsibility as positions become available (Caruth et al., 2009).

Another implication is that this information will assist institutions in examining their hiring practices with a view toward creating an appropriate mix of talent. Hiring practices affect the overall institution in a number of ways. Some of the evident influences hiring has on institutions include morale, turnover, productivity, student service, community relations, employee relations, and institutional image. If hiring is performed effectively, morale will tend to be high, turnover will tend to be low, and productivity will tend to be above average. If hiring practices are ineffective, student service will tend to suffer, community relations can be affected negatively, institutional image could be damaged, and employee relations may be negative. Caruth, Caruth, & Pane (2009) maintained that it is very important to higher education that hiring practices be conducted to improve the positive impacts on colleges and universities and minimize and potential negative impacts.

Recommendations for Further Study

It is recommended that additional studies be conducted on AF to verify the results of this study. It is also recommended that additional studies be conducted on AF in the various types of institutions to determine if adjuncts are concentrated in one type versus another. In addition, studies could be conducted on other characteristics of AF such as age, level of degree held, etc. to identify further adjuncts in higher education. Another study could be conducted on course loads of adjuncts to compare the number of AF to the individual course loads of AF to discover if a difference exists and to what extent. Finally, cost analysis studies could be conducted to ascertain the financial impact of adjuncts in colleges and universities.

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Article Citation

Caruth, G. D. & Caruth, D. L. (2013). Adjunct faculty: Who are these unsung heroes of academe? *Current Issues in Education*, 16(3). Retrieved from <http://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/view/1269>

Author Notes

Gail D. Caruth, Ed.D.
1876 Oak Bend Drive
Rockwall, Texas 75087
Gail.Caruth@dcccd.edu

Gail D. Caruth, Ed.D., is a member of the Adjunct Faculty at Eastfield College. She is a former human resource manager as well as an organizational consultant specializing in training and development. She holds the professional designation of Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR). She is the coauthor of *Staffing the Contemporary Organization*, 3rd ed. and her articles have appeared in a number of academic and trade journals.

Donald L. Caruth, Ph.D.
1876 Oak Bend Drive
Rockwall, Texas 75087

Donald L. Caruth, Ph.D., is an Independent Human Resource Management Consultant who taught HR courses at the university level for many years. He is a Senior Professional in Human Resources. He is the coauthor of *Staffing the Contemporary Organization*, 3rd ed. and his articles have appeared in numerous academic and trade journals.



Current Issues in Education

Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College • Arizona State University
PO Box 37100, Phoenix, AZ 85069, USA

Manuscript received: 08/28/2013
Revisions received: 10/18/2013
Accepted: 10/22/2013



Current Issues in Education

Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College • Arizona State University
PO Box 37100, Phoenix, AZ 85069, USA

Volume 16, Number 3

November 15, 2013

ISSN 1099-839X

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