Academic Labor: Research and Artistry

Volume 6 *Academic Labor During a Pandemic*

2022

Academic Labor During a Pandemic

ALRA Editors

This volume was originally made available at on the Cal Poly Humboldt Digital Commons at https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra. You can now find it at https://wac.colostate.edu/alra.

Academic Labor: Research & Artistry

From the Editors

The collective scholarship included in this sixth volume of *Academic Labor: Research & Artistry* explores key issues at the intersection of contingency studies and the COVID-19 pandemic. One thing is clear, as Natalie Dorfeld definitively states, "2020-2021 shed light on academic haves and have-nots." Each contributor to this issue shines that light into the deep recesses of academic labor life, wherein they find the negative effects of neoliberalism, an ideology which, according to political theorist Wendy Brown, "casts the political and social spheres both as appropriately dominated by market concerns and as themselves organized by market rationality" (694). The authors of this volume elucidate the myriad ways neoliberalism wreaks havoc on faculty and students' physical and mental health, preparation, working conditions, and sense of purpose.

We begin with an analysis of classic neoliberalism at work. **Courtney Allen Wooten and her colleagues** discuss faculty experience at an institution that, like so many others during the pandemic, added additional online and hybrid sections to keep up enrollments. These modalities, however, come with difficulties, such as "helping students understand the hybrid course format (and) building bridges between synchronous instruction and asynchronous online instruction," that often fall at the feet of contingency faculty. Next, **Natalie Dorfeld** takes a hard look at the specific issues that resulted from universities' decisions to return to face-to-face instruction in the Fall of 2020. Many already vulnerable adjuncts were laid off, and those who weren't risked illness and death by returning to the classroom before a vaccine became available. Some older faculty did die, in fact, including one of Dr. Dorfeld's own colleagues at Florida Tech. In the third article, **Amy Flick and Sommer Marie Sterud** recount their experience using labor-based grading contracts during the pandemic. The authors chose this assessment strategy in order to be more equitable but found that such contracts did not account for the emotional labor students put into their writing and academic work.

Next, **Andrew Herr et al.** frame contingent issues within human rights and religious doctrine by revisiting their earlier study which highlighted "the increasing reliance on contingent faculty in Catholic higher education from 2001 - 2017." In the present study, which analyzes 2020 data trends, the authors find that conditions have not improved. Yet keenly of interest for King et al. is the uneven effect of the pandemic on men vs. women. Our issue continues with **Sarah V. Seeley**, who uses faculty's recent experience using Zoom for distance learning to assess "classroom engagement in terms of performativity." Seeley extends Jane Thompson's "critique of the performance model of education" from

focusing on teachers to students as well. We end this issue with an article from **Kelli Lycke and Ann Shivers-McNair**, who analyze COVID-era "calendar disruptions" as examples of "a culture of overwork" brought on by what Allison Laubach Wright names the *rhetoric of excellence*, a neoliberal ideology that hides the competitive, market-driven nature of academic practices.

At the time of publication, COVID deaths have topped 800,000 in the United States alone. While devastating, this context has enabled new labor conversations across many industries–an encouraging development to those of us who have long been engaged in academic labor issues. We are grateful for these contributors' keen sense of *kairos* during this extremely difficult time. It is inspiring and heartening, and it adds to the momentum of achieving equitable, humane working conditions and compensation for all faculty.

ALRA Editors

Sue Doe
Colorado State University

Sarah Austin
Air Force Academy Preparatory School

Mary Hickey
Colorado State University

Catherine Ratliff
Colorado State University

Joe Schicke
Colorado State University

"Drowning a Little Bit All the Time": The Intersections of Labor Constraints and Professional Development in Hybrid Contingent Faculty Experiences

Courtney Adams Wooten, Brian Fitzpatrick, Lourdes Fernandez, Ariel M. Goldenthal, Jessica Matthews
George Mason University

Courtney Adams Wooten is Director of Composition at George Mason University. She is a co-editor of *WPAs in Transition* and *The Things We Carry: Strategies for Recognizing and Negotiating Emotional Labor in Writing Program Administration*, and her work has been published in *Composition Studies, WPA, Peitho,* and *Harlot*, as well as in several edited collections.

Brian Fitzpatrick is an Associate Professor at George Mason University where he teaches composition. His research is primarily focused on workplace writing, as well as online and hybrid pedagogies. He is the co-founder of the Archive of Workplace Writing Experiences and was recipient of the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Emergent Researcher Award for 2017-18. His work has appeared in *Effective Teaching of Technical Communication: Theory, Practice, and Application* by WAC Clearinghouse, as well as *Performance Improvement Quarterly* and *Double Helix*.

Lourdes Fernandez is Assistant Director of Composition at George Mason University, where she teaches advanced composition, technical communication, document design, and rhetorical theory courses. Her work has been published in *Rhetoric Review*, *Technical Communication Quarterly*, and *Reflections: A Journal of Community Engaged Writing and Rhetoric*.

Ariel M. Goldenthal is an Assistant Professor of English Composition at George Mason University. Her research interests include community-engaged courses and hybrid English composition, which she has taught since the pilot of the course in Fall 2017. Her recent presentations at the Conference on College Composition and Communication and the EDUCAUSE Annual Conference share findings on hybrid course design and implementation.

Jessica Matthews is the Associate Director of Composition for George Mason University. Since 2019, she has served as the Faculty Fellow for the George Mason Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning where she provides professional development for online course design and pedagogy. Her recent presentations at

EDUCAUSE, the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, and the Conference on College Composition and Communication focus on how students and faculty evaluate the quality of learning in online writing courses.

Abstract
Faculty teaching during COVID-19 have been asked to adapt to a wide range of instructional modalities that have often increased the labor they experience without commensurate compensation. Hybrid courses, which were already popular pre-pandemic, have become even more common as schools and universities have rushed to adapt instruction to students' needs. This article reports on interviews with faculty teaching hybrid courses to investigate their perceptions of the labor involved in teaching in this instructional modality, drawing connections to the labor many faculty are experiencing as they adapt to hybrid or other, similar instructional modalities. It then argues that targeted professional development activities are needed to support faculty teaching hybrid courses in particular, but that offering such opportunities are complicated by the amount of labor faculty teaching hybrid courses often already perform.

> *"Because there's always somebody emailing, or I need to send something out, or there's a discussion on Blackboard that I need to- so I feel like I'm always giving feedback." - Participant 6*
>
> *"The biggest difference [between hybrids and other modalities] is that every face-to-face class in the hybrid classroom is exhaustingly engaging." - Participant 7*

When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down in-person classes and forced K-12 schools and higher education institutions to rethink instructional modalities, the focus was often on how schools could pivot the types of instruction offered to students. While there has been some discussion about the impacts of switching to a variety of new modalities on teachers and faculty, especially those faculty already at risk (Flaherty; Kramer; Schlemmer), this aspect has often been elided as higher education institutions in particular faced budget crises that did not allow faculty to be compensated for the additional labor of teaching in new modalities but sometimes threatened their jobs. Schools and institutions developed an array of instructional models—online asynchronous, online synchronous, hybrid with an online synchronous component, and so on—and policies that guided decisions about instruction. Often, they did so without much teacher input and

consideration of increases to teacher workloads, or the dangers teachers were sometimes forced to choose between (for example, between retaining a job by teaching face-to-face or leaving a job). As a result, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) announced in September 2020 that they were launching an investigation into eight institutions' potential violations of faculty governance during the pandemic. Without retaining or gaining a voice in faculty governance, higher education faculty, particularly non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) by the tenuous nature of their positions, have found that the labor they do is often lost in conversations and decision-making about how their institutions should handle the pandemic.

Before the pandemic began, a hybrid task force in the general education writing program[1] at our institution—an R1 in the mid-Atlantic that serves almost 40,000 students—had already begun analyzing how NTTF in particular (full-time and part-time NTTF and graduate teaching assistants (GTAs)) experience the transition to teaching hybrid courses, which in our program means classes that are evenly divided each week between a face-to-face or synchronous online meeting (referred to collectively as "synchronous" throughout the rest of the article) and an asynchronous meeting. Serving over 9,000 students per year, almost all of our composition courses are taught by NTTF (48% full time, 23% part-time, and 28% GTAs). This means that many aspects of the program relate to, revolve around, or take account of faculty labor conditions and how to work within or around workload issues. Prior to the pandemic, classes were offered in three instructional modes: fully face-to-face, fully asynchronous online, and hybrid with one synchronous meeting per week and the remaining instruction occurring asynchronously online.

The hybrid task force, beginning in Fall 2019, consisted of seven faculty in our program (six full-time NTTF and one Ph.D. TA). We wanted to learn more about the professional support systems NTTF had in teaching this under-researched mode of instruction and how our program could better support them. Despite the low percentage of classes offered in a hybrid format before the pandemic (10%), we anticipated that we would be increasingly asked to teach hybrid courses given classroom space constraints that were exacerbated by increasing enrollments without commensurate increases in classroom spaces, including ongoing major construction projects that placed many classrooms offline. We also anticipated that more faculty might want to teach hybrid courses because they offer faculty more scheduling flexibility, which is particularly important for faculty with long commutes (which are very common in our area) and for part-time NTTF teaching at multiple institutions (which is also quite common in our area), while also retaining close ties to their institutional, professional communities.[2] In order to address the increase in hybrid course offerings and to investigate the experiences of the faculty who teach them, our program convened a hybrid task force to study the experiences of these faculty and offer them better support. However, as

our group interviewed faculty teaching hybrid courses in Spring and Summer 2020, the pandemic altered the nature of work on our campus and, as a result, informed our study. During the pandemic, our program began offering synchronous online courses, both fully synchronous and hybrid courses with instruction offered both synchronously and asynchronously in addition to previous instructional modalities. These additional modalities were added mainly due to our institution's imperative, like many others, to offer students various types of online instruction to serve their different learning needs while following COVID-19 guidelines. Faculty in Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021 were able to choose what instructional modality they preferred, and as a result very few of our courses were taught face-to-face in those semesters. Our program's ability to offer classes in these modalities depended, in large part, on the faculty expertise developed quickly in Spring and Summer 2020 to teach in these modalities effectively, pedagogical skills that were often developed without compensation.

Focusing in part on NTTF in transition during a pandemic, this article explains the types of labor that faculty in hybrid courses experienced, particularly during this time of upheaval, and how our program has tried to address labor concerns that have not been adequately confronted and dealt with at the institutional or national levels. This is particularly fertile ground because hybrid courses are labor-intensive—or are perceived by faculty to be labor-intensive—in ways that have not been previously researched, and even more so right now as a result of faculty being asked to teach in hybrid or other types of hy-flex instructional modalities during the pandemic. We then explore what programs and institutions can do to support hybrid faculty through professional development, particularly given labor conditions that constrain the types of instructional innovations and pedagogical changes faculty can make and the professional development opportunities that are offered.

Increasing Workloads Without Compensation

Writing studies' attention to NTTF labor conditions and the types of labor often required in online writing instruction (OWI) makes it an apt field to examine when focusing on hybrid faculty labor conditions. Both within the field and in higher education more broadly, teacher-scholars have made calls for the professionalization of NTTF positions (Hassel and Giordano; Kezar, DePaola, and Scott; Lynch-Biniek; Doe et al.; Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson). Lynch-Biniek, for example, claims that exclusion from institutional, departmental, or programmatic communities can lead some NTTF to feel that their professional identities are not valued or supported; as a result, they may feel more constricted in how they act as professionals (in terms of academic freedom in particular). One particular constraint on professionalization that Doe et al. found was tension between "plans for professional development and for building a

better professional future with advancement and recognition" and the time it took to teach, especially grading and providing feedback (435). In the case of online or hybrid writing courses, this tension can be exacerbated by the additional workload it takes to teach these courses and NTTF perceptions of this workload.

Faculty teaching in online environments, whether in completely online or hybrid courses, typically experience higher labor loads than faculty teaching face-to-face courses. Higher education researchers have found that faculty teaching online see increases in development, administration, and instruction time compared to teaching face-to-face (Bender et al.; Cavanaugh; Spector; Delgaty). Although these sources do not differentiate between the time and labor required of online and hybrid courses, faculty teaching hybrid courses experience similar increases in preparing courses and communicating with and supporting students. In writing studies specifically, research in the field has found that OWI requires more faculty time due to increased literacy loads, communication with students, feedback on written work, technology support for students, etc. (CCCC "A Position Statement"; Griffin and Minter; Borgman and McClure). This work tends to collapse online and hybrid courses together to focus on OWI broadly; for example, the CCCC Position Statement on OWI explains that the document focuses on "effective strategies ... for use with various online media and pedagogies primarily for teaching writing in fully online (i.e., having no onsite components) and hybrid (i.e., classes meeting in distance-based and/or computer- mediated settings and in traditional onsite classrooms) writing courses." However, faculty teaching hybrid courses, in addition to the labor concerns that accompany online courses, also have additional labor problems to contend with such as helping students understand the hybrid course format, building bridges between synchronous instruction and asynchronous online instruction, and so on as we discuss below. While attention to this increased labor burden in online courses broadly construed has led to arguments that faculty teaching fully online and hybrid courses need to be additionally compensated (CCCC "A Position Statement"; Beck; Mechenbier), few institutions have taken up these recommendations. In fact, during the pandemic many schools increased the numbers of fully online and hybrid courses offered without providing additional faculty compensation, which made this problem all the more visible as it has affected larger numbers of faculty across the country who have been vocal in voicing their objections to being asked to do additional labor without additional pay.[3]

Although asking faculty, particularly NTTF, who are teaching in online modalities to do professional development can seem like an additional burden, it became clear during the pandemic that faculty in our program needed pedagogical support as they transitioned to new instructional modalities. Writing studies scholars have already formed some professional development models for online writing instructors (CCCC "A Position Statement"; Borgman and McCardle; Melonçon;

Melonçon and Arduser; Jaramillo-Santoy and Cano-Monreal; Mechenbier). While much less studied, there is some research explicitly focused on the professional development that should be offered to faculty teaching hybrid writing courses, especially since, as Lyra Hilliard comments, teaching courses that are typically small and discussion-based in a hybrid format differs substantially from teaching larger, lecture-oriented courses. These professional development initiatives focus on training faculty before they teach hybrid courses as well as more informal, ongoing support systems such as brown bag discussions, regular informal meetings to share ideas, etc. (Paull and Snart; Hilliard). Hilliard in particular supports a Community of Practice (CoP) model that fosters collaboration and community, pinpointing several areas in which faculty need professional development in order to become effective hybrid instructors: integrating the synchronous and asynchronous components of the course, resisting overloading students with work in a hybrid course, and taking advantage of the many learning modalities available in a hybrid course (213). While we did not have a formal hybrid training program or workshop before faculty began teaching hybrid courses, we thought that faculty teaching hybrid courses were already engaged in community-building practices and had formed supportive connections with each other and our program's administrative team (comprised of a Director, three Associate Directors, two Assistant Directors, and a graduate Assistant Director) around their teaching. We found in our study, though, that while faculty did build relationships with members of the administrative team, they did not form a peer network with each other as we assumed they had. The pandemic's disruption and subsequent movement of more faculty into online/hybrid courses made professional development support for faculty teaching these courses, such as encouraging the formation of peer networks, even more imperative.

The sticking point in our program for offering or even requiring faculty to engage in professional development at any time is that the program is often unable to provide compensation for this labor. While many have advocated that compensation should be provided for faculty engaged in professional development (Hilliard; Mechenbier; Nagelhout; Doe et al.), our program has struggled to advocate for compensation for this work, particularly for full-time NTTF whom our institution seems to view as not needing compensation since professional development is seen as part of their regular workloads. Problems with professional development funding also include the slow nature of any internal and external grant funding that is not guaranteed and that can take a lot of time to receive and use, a problem particularly in the case of the rapid uptake of online and hybrid instruction during the pandemic, and the many institutions where budgets have been cut and/or frozen. The pandemic has further exacerbated the lack of compensation for professional development due to faculty's substantial workload increases and pressures on other areas of their lives without commensurate increases in

compensation. As a writing program, this has led us into more scrutiny of the types of professional development we offer faculty, what modalities we offer professional development in, and how we invite faculty into them. In the next few sections, we briefly describe the methodology for the research component of our project. Using interview data, we explain how faculty teaching hybrid courses perceived their labor as they taught in this modality, and we show how our program has provided professional development that speaks to their immediate pedagogical needs while trying to balance that needed support against our often being unable to offer stipends or course releases for this work. We advocate for changes at the institutional and national levels around faculty involvement in pedagogical decisions and compensation for workload increases, changes that are needed not just to address labor concerns during the pandemic but also after a return to more "normalcy."

Methodology

During Fall 2019, the hybrid task force designed a survey and interview protocol to gather data, which was approved by our institution's Institutional Review Board.[4] In January 2020, we emailed a Qualtrics survey to seventeen faculty in our program with experience teaching hybrid courses. The survey asked basic questions about faculty experience teaching hybrid courses, including *when* these faculty taught hybrid courses, *where* they taught these courses, and for *how long*. Fourteen faculty responded to the survey and all agreed to be interviewed.[5] Of the fourteen participants, thirteen had taught mostly composition courses; one had never taught composition but had taught hybrid technical communication courses. The faculty included two part-time NTTF, one GTA who was formerly a part-time NTTF, and eleven full-time NTTF. Although our interview participants reflected a larger percentage of full-time NTTF than are part of our overall program, our interviewees described different types of labor conditions experienced by all NTTF who teach in our program. Two participants had taught hybrid courses at different institutions, and one had developed training for faculty about how to teach hybrid courses at a former institution. There was a mix of experience from faculty who had taught mostly online, mostly face-to-face, or both.

Our interview protocol used focused questions regarding instructor lessons learned, professional development resources, and practices in feedback and student engagement in an effort to explore the ways in which faculty prepare and transition to teaching hybrid courses. While the interview protocol was designed prior to the pandemic, by the time faculty were interviewed in Spring and Summer 2020 all of our institution's courses had moved online, and faculty frequently referred to synchronous and asynchronous online learning modalities. These semi-structured interviews lasted 30-90 minutes and were conducted and recorded using Zoom. Due to its utility in analyzing qualitative data

(Lindlof and Taylor), we elected to leverage grounded theory as our coding approach. Therefore, all interview transcripts were interrogated using no prescribed constraints (e.g., open-coded). Because we were a relatively large team, we coded in pairs. The pairs met to normalize codes and sampling methods; after our initial round of coding and comparison, the entire team met to discuss our main observations and emerging themes, eliminating redundant terms and agreeing on common terms. This resulted in over 75 codes that we collapsed into 15 categories, including categories related to feedback, students, course design, and mentoring. These categories encompassed more granular codes; for example, the category of professional development housed several codes, including collaboration with colleagues, learning from past mistakes, and mentorship, to name a few. We analyzed each major category and corresponding codes to trace recurring and emerging themes across categories and codes. For this article, looking specifically at the categories of professional development, adaptation, and use of technology gave us rich insight into labor conditions and how faculty manage hybrid course design.

In the following sections, we describe how faculty perceived the labor required when teaching hybrid courses. These line up in some ways with scholarship about the labor involved in teaching writing online, but faculty describe hybrids as creating other, specific challenges that, at the time of the interviews, remained under-addressed in our programmatic professional development. As the pandemic changed how faculty taught, these challenges became more urgent and the ongoing imperative to specifically support faculty teaching hybrid courses became more visible.

Results: Data Analysis

Throughout the interviews, faculty noted several areas where hybrid courses present labor challenges that impact their workload and how the program plans professional development for faculty teaching hybrid courses:

- Hybrid courses require extra planning transitions between synchronous and asynchronous components;
- Faculty perceive hybrid courses as having a different rhythm that requires adjustment;
- Hybrid courses require additional time spent supporting students who struggle to navigate the hybrid course structure.

The pandemic also necessitated specific adjustments that created more work for faculty in the short term and increased the sense that hybrid teaching requires different strategies that are time-consuming and labor-intensive to design and implement. All these challenges demonstrate the workloads faculty teaching hybrid courses experience, particularly those making a transition to teaching hybrid courses for the first time and during

the pandemic. Finally, these challenges, which have been accelerated by the pandemic but will likely persist, need to be addressed at the institutional and programmatic levels and should reflect the way faculty engage in hybrid course design and shape professional development initiatives.

Hybrids Require Additional Planning

Because hybrid courses require transitions between synchronous and asynchronous components, the result is that faculty spend more time sequencing the course. However, the interwebbing of this sequencing also makes it more difficult to make adjustments based on student need, interruptions such as the pandemic, and so on. Even for experienced faculty, the hybrid modality requires different considerations that contribute to the labor spent on hybrid courses. As Participant 2, a part-time NTTF who teaches graduate editing courses and runs a professional writing consultancy, states:

> It's kind of like teaching two different classes. I think that's the biggest challenge. It has to be extraordinarily organized. I know online teaching also has to be extraordinarily organized, but I think it being half in-person complicates it more because even though the in-person classes gave me the opportunity to do that little bit of pivoting that I could do…I had to bring printouts every week for the handouts for them and I had to take advantage of the fact that it was in person to adjust my lectures every week based on how the online week went.

This participant's attention to the work needed to bridge between the face-to-face and online components of the hybrid course is echoed by Paull and Snart: "when developing a hybrid course, it is vital to make sure students are moving as seamlessly as possible from the online environment to the classroom environment. We need to make sure that students understand that in taking a hybrid course they are indeed taking one, single class, rather than feeling like they are involved in two, barely related enterprises" (127). One of the other members of our task force, Kerry Folan, described the work that goes into sequencing synchronous and asynchronous work in a hybrid course as "braiding." She uses this term to point out how faculty teaching hybrid courses must consider how synchronous components feed into asynchronous components of the course and vice versa. This creates extra labor for faculty because they have to more carefully scaffold and organize work than they do in a completely synchronous or completely asynchronous course; otherwise, the course design can fail to adequately support students and their learning.

The delicate balance faculty teaching hybrid courses have to strike can also easily be disrupted if something arises, whether as large as the pandemic-interrupted instruction in Spring 2020 or as small as a faculty

member being sick for a week. Participant 2 goes on to say, "I mean, I had everything planned, just orchestrated so carefully that if I got sick during an in-person week or if we had like an earthquake or a massive pandemic, I would have had to do some massive retooling of the course that would have, A, been really painful for me, and B, definitely would have lost some of the quality of the course for the students." The braiding hybrid faculty create between the components of their courses means that any disruption can unravel some of the intricate work they have done on the course, disrupting student learning and creating even more labor for them in trying to re-construct the course. Participant 2 ultimately decided to teach fully asynchronously during the Fall 2020 semester rather than teach a virtual hybrid course in part due to these constraints.

Hybrids Require Additional Adjustment Periods

Because faculty in our program synchronously meet once per week with students, they feel pressured to use this class session productively to meet all student needs and engage students in the course, which makes the class session feel more intense. As Participant 7 says, "the biggest difference [between hybrids and other modalities] is that every face-to-face class in the hybrid classroom is exhaustingly engaging." This intensity is ramped up for those faculty who teach one part of the course synchronously online via web conferencing rather than in a face-to-face classroom. As Hilliard explains: "teaching via video conferencing is not easy! It requires an entirely different approach to teaching and learning than those we've developed for face-to-face or asynchronous online teaching…It's resource-intensive. It's exhausting. It's intimidating. For many instructors, it's downright terrifying" (215) . Although we had not offered hybrid courses with a synchronous online component instead of a face-to-face component prior to the pandemic, we anticipate this type of hybrid course will continue to be an option at our institution and elsewhere because of the additional flexibility it offers faculty and students (and the classroom space it frees up on campuses).

Some of the intensity of teaching class sessions, whether online synchronously or face-to-face, lessens as faculty develop a rhythm between the synchronous and asynchronous components of the hybrid courses, but this process is time-consuming and takes faculty several semesters to figure out. Paull and Snart identify this rhythm as central to a successful hybrid course: "To have a successful hybrid course, instructors must be able to make it clear what will go in each environment and how both pieces support each other. Students should never get the impression that either environment is more important than the other but rather they feed into one another, working on a learning arc from start to finish" (130) . Participant 6 describes their experience teaching hybrids and struggling to decide what activities would be taught synchronously and asynchronously:

> So, I felt compressed in the hybrid, but I tried to make up for that with Blackboard, and after I kind of got in the rhythm of it, I was able to do that. The first time or two, I think I felt more awkward than perhaps the students did because I was trying to figure out what pieces do I take online. But after I got the hang of it, I realized what I could do and that actually was sometimes better on Blackboard because other students could see what other students were posting. And so they could see that, "Oh, I guess everybody's struggling with this, and everybody's concerned about that."

Once this participant was able to set up a rhythm for the course, they were able to minimize some of their labor and recognize the benefits of the hybrid modality. However, this was only after a semester or two of additional labor spent trying to figure out how to establish a rhythm for hybrid modalities overall.

Because hybrid courses require more planning, more troubleshooting, and because the courses might require changes that are more challenging to implement given the rhythm of the course, other logistical issues such as faculty access to technological tools and ability to use those tools become more salient. In the survey, we asked how important the use of technology is in a hybrid classroom; 64.2% said "very important" and 35.7% said "important." Faculty recognize, then, that their management and use of technology is a key part of their success in teaching hybrid courses. They can become frustrated, however, when some technological tools or features of tools that they can use when teaching face-to-face or online courses do not work as well when teaching hybrid courses. One interview participant commented on being unable to combine hybrid courses into a master course in a learning management system (LMS) to minimize some of the redundancies when teaching multiple course sections, which added to their workload: "and here's the other thing about hybrid that really changes it from online [asynchronous], in my opinion, from the work perspective is that you can't—what is that called?—marry your courses." For hybrid courses, it is difficult to create master courses in an LMS because students are not all meeting at the same time for the synchronous session, which means faculty teaching these classes also have to establish different rhythms of when asynchronous and synchronous work occurs. As Participant 9 describes:

> In a face-to-face class, you can [use a master course] because you're not doing usually online groups or anything like that. In an online [asynchronous] class, you can because who cares? It's all the same pool anyway. But in a hybrid class, you have to keep them all separate so that you can continue to have groups, which means I have to recreate the course three times. And any adjustment to the calendar is recreated three times, and the groups

> have to be made three times…I mean, besides just the time that takes, it's also so easy to make mistakes that way when you're—it's almost impossible not to make mistakes.

Although handling the LMS may seem like an inconsequential problem, for NTTF with high course loads (whether at one institution or across multiple institutions), any additional interactions with an LMS can incrementally add up to a lot of total time spent managing hybrid courses.

Managing hybrid courses becomes even more challenging and labor-intensive when faculty teach multiple courses a semester using different learning modalities. Because hybrid courses have a synchronous component, teaching fully synchronous or asynchronous courses alongside these complicates a faculty member's ongoing weekly schedule. For Participant 9, arranging time for grading and providing feedback presents a challenge:

> But with hybrid, it's two days a week where you have stuff due online. And if you're teaching four classes, you're teaching those other days. And so somehow it's more work than even fully online is by a lot because there's just not the empty, flexible time where you could be responding to students online. You still have to do that, but you also have to be in the classroom, and you have to get to campus, and you have to do the sort of other stuff. … So, I would say the logistics of structuring the sequencing with what days things are due and to keep things streamlined; to be really conscious about what both you and students can accomplish online.

As Borgman and McClure among other scholars note about online and hybrid courses, heavier workloads can occur in part due to the increased amount of reading and commenting that occurs on discussion boards, emails, and written texts students produce in these courses (A4). Balancing this workload while still teaching face-to-face classes can create labor challenges for NTTF teaching multiple sections of classes. For faculty teaching hybrid courses, things that can seem less difficult when teaching in other course modalities such as engaging students in synchronous classes, dealing with an LMS, or juggling a course schedule take up a lot of time and energy. NTTF teaching hybrid courses can particularly struggle to perform this labor because of the overall high teaching loads they have and the potential number of hybrid courses they might teach in a given semester.

Hybrids Require Providing Additional and/or Different Student Support

Once a course begins, faculty experience an increased logistical burden and describe hybrid courses as challenge of adjustment and adaptation. Faculty develop various tactics to manage the course, but those tactics are

often labor-intensive, requiring unanticipated time and effort. In the interviews, we found that beyond the usual labor of teaching online courses, faculty in hybrid courses also experienced shifts in the types and number of assignments they incorporated into the class and the amount of guidance they had to provide students navigating the modality. These contributed to additional labor that faculty identified with interacting with students through and about hybrid courses.

One way faculty found themselves supporting students was through changes to the low stakes work they felt they had to assign and the ways they approached giving feedback or grades on this work. Paull and Snart note that it is important for faculty to carefully attend to the way they assign grades to the face-to-face and online components of a hybrid course so that students do not privilege doing work in one modality over another (127). These types of considerations, while not framed necessarily in terms of time and effort, feel like a big shift in approach for faculty that is time-consuming and requires planning. Faculty mentioned changing grade books, changing their assessment approach to completion grades, and adapting assignments to give students "bridges" between online and face-to-face class sessions (as seen above in the discussion of the "braiding" required between synchronous and asynchronous class components). As Participant 4 describes, some of the assignments used in the hybrid course are designed to provide guidance rather than evaluation: "doing smaller assignments to kind of bridge between face-to-face and the online portions. Those kinds of things are less focused on evaluation, more on guidance." While these types of assignments support student learning in hybrid courses, designing and providing feedback or grades on these assignments creates additional faculty labor. Participants 4 further explains:

> So, I find myself doing more little turn-in assignments with the hybrid than I normally would with a face-to-face. But it's trying to find that balance—I don't want to be grading all the time because that's not good for me or my students to always be commenting on small stakes assignments and not have the energy or whatever to focus on other things, office hours, conferences, big assignments, stuff like that.

Faculty in this position do develop strategies to provide feedback on these assignments without overloading themselves; for example, Participant 4 said they look at several activities her students have done over a couple weeks and provide an "overall comment about how their writing is progressing." However, figuring out how to approach low stakes work in this way, as related to the time it takes faculty new to teaching hybrid courses to develop a rhythm mentioned above, requires additional faculty labor.

Another way faculty supported students was through the time they took to try to help students adapt to the hybrid course design. Part of this is helping students acclimate to the use of technology in these classes. When faculty were asked on the survey if they take time to orient students on how to use technology in the classroom, 57.14% said always or often, 28.57% said sometimes, and 14.29% said never. It can be tricky for faculty to determine how much technological support students need as a whole and whether they should take up valuable class time helping students orient to the technology (as opposed to sending them to IT or other resources). Beyond technological orientation, Participant 7 connected the asynchronous portions of the hybrid course with part of the reason some students need additional support in hybrid courses:

> I have had students who are really great in person because they have someone to talk to, and then when they work online by themselves, they struggle with working through things because they can't ask questions immediately. And so, with those students, I'll find myself meeting with them in my office hours every week or every other week or recording audio messages where I kind of walk them through what my thinking process was behind what they were doing and helping them to understand that for the online portion.

Students' struggles to adapt to the asynchronous part of the course in particular increases labor for faculty, who then spend more time supporting these student transitions. Although setting student expectations for the course can help mitigate some of this time (McGee and Reis 16), some students still need additional support in adapting to the hybrid course modality. Beyond meeting with students in office hours or recording audio messages for students, Participant 7 also identifies an increased number of student meetings needed to help students with those transitions: "So for those students, I meet with them a lot. And I find myself talking to them a lot before class or after class, kind of guiding them through things and showing them on the screen, 'Here's what you need to do, and here's why you want to do these.'" While faculty did not resent having to help students adapt to the hybrid course design, they did identify this as a way that their labor increased when teaching hybrid courses. These issues are even more salient for NTTF teaching multiple sections of hybrid courses, which increases the number of students who need this type of support. During the pandemic, faculty have had to move quickly towards scaffolding additional support for students, generally with no additional compensation and without reductions in course caps.

Discussion: Faculty Labor Constraints and Hybrid Faculty Professional Development

As the literature has noted (Bender et al.; Cavanaugh; Bolliger and Wasilik; Delgaty), faculty across different disciplines describe spending more time preparing to teach online or hybrid courses than to teach face-to-face courses. Creation of videos and new materials, increases in written feedback, and troubleshooting technology are all issues faculty teaching online or hybrid courses routinely face. However, it can be easy for faculty to underestimate the amount of labor that will be required until they begin to design and teach these courses. Participant 4 describes underestimating the additional time and effort that teaching a hybrid course would require: “The first time I taught online, you learn really fast, even though you think you know that it's totally different from face-to-face and you know that you can't just take a face-to-face lesson and throw it online. You don't learn how deep that really is until you get into the teaching online.” The issue, as this participant puts it, is not an expectation that teaching hybrid courses will be the same as putting materials from a face-to-face class online; they were well aware that they would need to change their pedagogical approach. Nevertheless, the actual labor involved in making changes when transitioning from a face-to-face to hybrid modality is not visible until a faculty member actually begins doing this work.

Faculty also can find themselves reacting without the benefit of professional development that specifically supports hybrid pedagogies, whether because this is not offered or because they cannot take advantage of it. When faculty were asked on the survey if they had been offered training or professional development in teaching hybrid courses, 64.29% said yes and 35.71% said no. Of survey participants, 57.14% had actually participated in training or professional development for hybrid courses while 42.86% had not.[6] However, five answered a follow-up question about this training to indicate that they had participated in training that generally supported faculty teaching online and not specifically hybrid courses. This shows that training or professional development opportunities specifically shaped for faculty teaching hybrid courses was less available than for faculty teaching fully online. As Participant 7 says:

> I received no professional development or training before teaching a hybrid class. I think having some training would have helped me to realize that I couldn't translate my face-to-face into a hybrid—that I really needed to build it from scratch…I think that would have been the most useful thing because I was already comfortable with Blackboard, with the technology tools. None of that was a problem for me. It was really just the foundational understanding of how to develop a hybrid course for the first time.

Melonçon also found that some faculty received little or no training to support their teaching online or hybrid courses, with one interviewee

reporting that he "'just hacked [his] way through it'" (261) . In the context of NTTF labor conditions, the additional labor needed to design and implement a hybrid course specifically creates additional constraints for how and when faculty get access to professional development opportunities that might ease this transition in the first place. At our institution, professional development had been offered for faculty teaching face-to-face courses and online courses, but not hybrid courses specifically. This underscored an assumption that professional development for other modalities would easily transfer to the hybrid modality, which was not true. Faculty teaching hybrid courses for the first time thus found themselves piecemealing together their knowledge about teaching in other modalities to try to transition to teaching hybrid courses. They also looked to experienced colleagues who could help them make this transition. Participant 4 notes:

> Familiarize yourself with lots of technologies because if one doesn't work, you can roll to another. Talk to your colleagues. There's no better resource than the people that are suffering through or struggling through the same stuff that you are. And you're going to get a new idea for a lesson plan from them—how they're handling all the grading that comes with a hybrid class. That's your resource. Your mentors, your colleagues.

Because of a lack of professional development geared exclusively at supporting faculty transitioning into teaching hybrid courses, this interviewee explained that colleagues had to become a central resource in figuring out how to navigate the labor of teaching a hybrid course, particularly as a NTTF member. These colleagues often were members of the administrative team who interviewees saw as a main source of advice and information; faculty named the same administrator repeatedly as essential to the transition to hybrids, while at the same time lamenting the lack of access to peer networks and training resources.

While our institution's center for teaching and learning offers an online course design workshop, most of the faculty we interviewed who had taken it thought the workshop did not address the uniqueness of the hybrid format adequately: "I think we give [resources] to teachers when they're going into distance learning. We have things like [the Online Course Development Institute] and the curricular designers. And I don't know that we necessarily give hybrid the same treatment" (Participant 4). One faculty member who felt comfortable with the transition had previous curriculum and course design work experience, but for the most part, faculty, regardless of experience level, expressed gratitude for the support from one administrator but pointed out the lack of resources and limited faculty interactions around hybrid courses. The geographic dispersal of faculty across the region, varying schedules, and high teaching loads meant that faculty did not as often form supportive peer networks; this was

only exacerbated by the pandemic's physical distancing of faculty from each other. However, they wanted to have regular access to models, templates, and peers who could provide tips and advice. Study participants also noted the lack of program-level professional development and support for hybrid courses specifically, and they described solving problems mostly on their own. In short, our institution and program did not provide adequate support for faculty teaching in hybrid formats, which are particularly difficult for faculty to navigate on their own.

Since faculty teaching in online modalities have reported higher levels of depersonalization with lower feelings of personal accomplishment (Borgman and McClure; Golden; Hogan and McKnight; Schieffer), this lack of professional development and contact can lead to faculty feeling isolated and overwhelmed. Participant 5 explains:

> I thought I was figuring it out as I was doing it.…They just said, "Here, you're going to teach this online." And so there was absolutely no faculty development, no resources, nothing for that. So, I never had a comp pedagogy course in graduate school. Everybody has always just thrown me into the deep end and said, "Okay. You figure it out, and try not to drown." But in the end, you do drown a little bit all the time.

Given the weakness in the support systems faculty in our program teaching hybrid courses experienced, our program has made efforts to strengthen these support systems. However, perhaps the largest constraint on what we do hinges around faculty labor conditions. The program has sought to provide opportunities for hybrid faculty to talk with each other, gain support from the program, and so on while keeping in mind that we cannot (and will not) require faculty to participate without compensation. Since we have generally not had compensation to offer, this means we have tried to be particularly attuned to what types of professional development we offer.

Facing a similar set of circumstances, Ed Nagelhout's "Faculty Development as Working Condition" claims that professional development must either be "built into the expected workload" or "designed to save teachers time" (A15). If professional development does this, Nagelhout argues, then it can be "about making our *lives* better" (A16) and positively contribute to faculty professionalization. Similarly, Hilliard's approach to hybrid professional development was to try to build a Community of Practice (CoP) that included, along with a required workshop for faculty before teaching hybrid courses, optional day-long pedagogy days and regular meetings driven by faculty needs. Like us, Hilliard struggled to argue that her faculty should be compensated for this professional development work, and she argues for transparency when such requests are denied (217). Taking up some of these practices, our

program has had to be very strategic in offering professional development if and when faculty compensation is not provided.

Before our study took place, our program had already established several professional development opportunities that, as we discovered, were not adequately supporting faculty teaching hybrid courses. Our center for teaching and learning offered stipends to faculty who took an Online Course Development Institute (OCDI). Faculty in our program had started and facilitated faculty-led monthly pedagogy meetings called Teachers Need Teachers (TNT), some of which were led by faculty teaching hybrid courses (these were open to faculty teaching in any modality) . Finally, our program's administrative team reviewed hybrid courses faculty developed before they began teaching to provide feedback and mentoring support to those faculty. As can be seen, however, the program did not have many professional development opportunities available for hybrid faculty in particular, partially because this was a smaller number of faculty before the pandemic and partially due to the labor conditions faculty experience and our attempts to be cautious about adding to their already-high workloads.

As a result of our study specifically focused on hybrid faculty, however, our program recognized the need to better support these faculty's unique challenges more specifically and to offer a broader variety of support for hybrid faculty that would meet a wider variety of their needs while giving them flexibility in opting into those opportunities that made sense for them individually. We focused on building hybrid teaching skills and community throughout the professional development offered. However, we continue to make arguments that the institution should compensate NTTF who participate in professional development work, as is in keeping with CCCC's "A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction (OWI) " and other work in the field (see previous sections). Building voluntary professional development that meets faculty needs—both in terms of content and community building—is necessary, but it does not make up for a lack of compensation that would actually acknowledge faculty labor conditions.

The professional development we have offered in Fall 2020 and continued into Spring 2021 has included short, one-time workshops; help desk sessions; and more structured opportunities for faculty to share their own ideas. These have been offered in a variety of modalities, including synchronous video sessions, taped sessions, and online sharing of materials generated during sessions. Through funding from our college, we have been able to compensate faculty who have facilitated workshops and to compensate some faculty participants. By drawing upon faculty expertise within our program, we have also been able to build more of a CoP that views expertise as distributed rather than concentrated in the program's administrative team. In thinking ahead, we also know that we want to work on further opportunities such as more decentralized and

informal opportunities for faculty to meet up; mentoring opportunities for faculty new to teaching hybrid courses to work with experienced hybrid faculty; and hybrid program materials that more deliberately help faculty manage workload issues. We know that hybrid faculty need professional development opportunities targeted specifically to their needs, and we hope to continue building on these.

Finally, while our faculty have shown a willingness to adapt, experiment, and do the labor-intensive work of continuing to learn new ways of teaching hybrid courses, they recognize systemic barriers in our institution's evaluation systems that particularly stifle innovation. Participant 9 explains:

> One huge issue I've had is the way that we're being evaluated teaching these [hybrid] courses. I think it is so unfair—people who are trying to teach hybrid or online are being asked by the university to try something new that nobody's figured out and then are being punished for it in some ways. And that, I think, is wildly unfair and unproductive. I think it discourages people from innovating.

They particularly identified the use of low student evaluations of teaching to penalize faculty who are teaching hybrid courses, sometimes for the first time or in a new way, as a "bummer for morale." Further, they took issue with evaluations that failed to take the context of a course into account, especially if a faculty member is trying something for the first time, and that were applied to all faculty in the same way, regardless of the instructional modality they were teaching. Whether through (structural) reconceptualization of the university's hybrid designation or revision of the ways in which faculty are evaluated in these new modalities, participants express a need for greater administrative and institutional support to advance their hybrid instruction. Participant 9 also highlights how questions of labor and precarity inform the ways faculty view the innovative work they are trying to do. At our institution, this problem remains unresolved; while student evaluations were suspended during the Spring 2020 semester, as most courses suddenly moved online due to the pandemic, student evaluations have remained in subsequent semesters, even as faculty have continued to teach new modalities and variations of online and hybrid modalities for the first time.

Conclusion

One of our hopes in writing this article is to create a space at the pedagogical table for further research and institutional and programmatic attention to hybrid courses as creating unique labor issues that need to be addressed separately from fully face-to-face and asynchronous online courses. To this point, there is a lack of research in writing studies and higher education more broadly about approaches to teaching hybrid

courses, and at our own institution like many others, hybrid courses have been largely invisible and, as a result, this has contributed to the invisibility of the labor NTTF perform to teach these courses. As more faculty have experienced teaching in different modalities and as hybrid courses have become even more commonplace and will continue to be an important part of the educational landscape, scholarship about these courses and institutional support for the faculty teaching them can construct a fuller portrait of the labor involved when NTTF, in particular, are asked to take up this approach.

As the epigraphs to this article point out, NTTF teaching hybrids are often constrained by the labor conditions they experience that limit the time they have to learn new things and to adequately switch instructional modalities as so many have been asked to do in such a short amount of time in the last year. As Participant 9 noted above, faculty evaluation systems do not always encourage or reward innovation, often treating any decreased student evaluations of teaching (SET) scores or challenges in teaching as signs of failure rather than as chances a faculty member took to try something new, even if that new thing did not work perfectly the first time. Even innovations to the hybrid format itself can be impossible or risky for NTTF without job security. Participant 4 states: "I would like to see a much more flexible vision of what constitutes hybrid, because I think that there are certain portions of the course…that could maybe not have to adhere so strictly to one [modality] or the other, bouncing back and forth each week. I would really like to be able to explore that." This participant identifies other possible types of hybrid course design that have occurred in other institutions and other parts of our institution that could better support student learning (such as longer stretches of the semester spent in synchronous sessions mixed with time working asynchronously). However, the size of our program means that individual faculty who are almost entirely NTTF cannot choose how they want to balance synchronous and asynchronous work in hybrid courses (all hybrid courses in our program must meet once per week synchronously and assign other work asynchronously). As reflected in faculty concerns during the pandemic (and prior to it), due to the fact that faculty evaluations are tied so explicitly to often-erroneous benchmarks of "success" it is imperative that school and university systems determine how to encourage and reward innovation and chance-taking in teaching, particularly for those faculty who already feel vulnerable in their positions and particularly during times of crisis such as a pandemic when teachers/faculty are forced to innovate quickly, without as much support as needed and without compensation for this work.

In recognizing the labor conditions NTTF in our program and, as seen in scholarship in and out of the field, teachers and faculty in other schools/institutions continue to face, we keep working on the types of professional development opportunities that will support our faculty. These lead to questions institutions/programs should ask as they consider

the types of professional development support to offer to faculty teaching in various instructional modalities:

- What kinds of professional development can and/or should our institution/program offer, especially if we don't have compensation to provide to attendees?
- What expectations can we have for teachers/faculty new to teaching instructional modalities such as hybrid or hy-flex courses given an institution/program's labor constraints and evaluation practices?
- What ongoing professional development expectations can or should we have for teachers/faculty who teach hybrid, hy-flex, or other instructional modalities given an institution/program's labor and compensation constraints?

Importantly, and in contrast to assumptions sometimes made about faculty, our study did not find that faculty are resistant to learning new instructional modalities or innovating in their courses. In fact, several commented on things they have learned, an openness to evolving skills, and their desire to try new things. Participant 4 explained, "if one good thing comes from it [the pandemic], I think maybe it's learning that a lot of this stuff does work really well synchronously. . .It can mean we have opportunities to do lots of different things." Similarly, Participant 6 said, "this pandemic has shown us that we have to be able to teach in a lot of different formats" and that they have used this as an opportunity to emphasize with students that everyone is learning new things in this environment. Both participants explicitly note how the pandemic had pushed them and their students to learn new things, something they embraced. Participant 7 also noted that their use of screen-capture videos as a new skill they had developed and found "validating" because it "was helpful to my [first-year writing] students." These participants demonstrate an openness to learning new things and envisioning their students' learning as evolving with their teaching, identifying these as ways to better support their students in an ongoing way. The reality of labor conditions, however, means that NTTF's continued employment is dependent on positive student evaluations and evaluation by department supervisors. Innovating course design is not only labor-intensive but represents a risk for NTTF facing precarious labor conditions where NTTF may not be rehired or where high student course caps limit what a NTTF may be able to do during a semester.

Beyond individual departments or programs trying to serve faculty teaching in different instructional modalities, schools and institutions need to understand the web of labor constraints on their teachers and faculty and how these have an enormous impact on the teaching and professional development work faculty can do or should be required or asked to do. As has been made apparent during the last year,

schools and institutions need to include faculty in decisions about instructional modalities since it is their labor upon which these models are built. Finally, organizations such as AAUP need to continue to advocate for faculty compensation that relates to actual faculty workloads and workload increases during times such as the pandemic. This may involve continued advocacy for increased federal and state funding for education that ultimately could lead to more support for what Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson call "the re-professionalization of teaching" that provides "professional development and job security" for all faculty (133), whether faculty teaching hybrid courses during a pandemic or teaching face-to-face courses in a new, post-pandemic "normal."

Notes

[1]The program offers several options for students to fulfill a first-year general education writing requirement: one three-credit-hour course, one four-credit-hour course for multilingual writers, or in partnership with an international pathways program on campus either two stretch courses or one four-credit-hour course co-taught by composition faculty and EAP faculty. Students also take a junior-level general education writing requirement that introduces them to research and writing in their disciplines through our program, a writing intensive course taught by faculty in their field, and a capstone or synthesis course taught by faculty in their field with a strong written and oral communication focus.

[2]See Stickney et al. for a study of online faculty satisfaction in relation to flexibility in balancing their professional and personal lives and the professional development offered to them.

[3]See "CWPA and CCCC Joint Statement in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic" for recommendations specific to the pandemic about types of compensation needed to support faculty making the transition to alternative instructional models.

[4]IRB No. 1514418

[5]Members of the task force were also part of the faculty who were interviewed.

[6]These are similar to Melonçon's findings that 62% of the NTTF she surveyed who taught technical and professional communication classes had taken a course about online teaching, although she does not report whether this included any attention specifically to hybrid courses (260).

Works Cited

Beck, Evelyn. "From the Editor: Working Conditions for Online Adjuncts." *College Composition and Communication,* vol. 59, no. 1, A1-A4.

Bender, Diane M., et al. "Teaching Time: Distance Education Versus Classroom Instruction." *American Journal of Distance Education*, vol. 18, no. 2, Routledge, June 2004, pp. 103–14. doi.org/10.1207/s15389286ajde18024.

Bolliger, Doris U., and Oksana Wasilik. "Factors Influencing Faculty Satisfaction with Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education." *Distance Education*, vol. 30, no. 1, May 2009, pp. 103–16. doi.org/10.1080/01587910902845949.

Borgman, Jessie, and Casey McArdle. *Personal, Accessible, Responsive, Strategic: Resources and Strategies for Online Writing Instructors*. WAC Clearinghouse, 2019, https://wac.colostate.edu/books/practice/pars/.

Borgman, Jessie, and Christine McClure. "The Ultimate Balancing Act: Contingent Online Teaching and PhD Coursework." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 71, no. 1, 2019, pp. A3–8.

Cavanaugh, Joseph. "Teaching Online - A Time Comparison." *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, vol. 8, no. 1, University of West Georgia Distance and Distributed Education Center, Mar. 2005, https://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/spring81/cavanaugh81.htm.

CCCC. "A Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction (OWI)." *National Council of Teachers of English*, Mar. 2013, https://prod-ncte-cdn.azureedge.net/nctefiles/groups/cccc/owiprinciples.pdf.

"CWPA and CCCC Joint Statement in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, 26 June 2020, https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/cccc-and-cwpa-joint-statement-in-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic.

Delgaty, Laura. "A Critical Examination of the Time and Workload Involved in the Design and Delivery of an E-Module in Postgraduate Clinical Education." *Medical Teacher*, vol. 35, no. 5, May 2013, p. E1173. doi.org/10.3109/0142159X.2012.737963.

Doe, Sue et al. "Discourse of the Firetenders: Considering Contingent Faculty through the Lens of Activity Theory." *College English*, vol. 73, no. 4, 2011, pp. 428–49, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23052350.

Flaherty, Colleen. "Faculty Pandemic Stress is Now Chronic." *Inside Higher Ed,* 19 November 2020, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/11/19/faculty-pandemic-stress-now-chronic.

Golden, Julie E. "Supporting Online Faculty through Communities of Practice: Finding the Faculty Voice." *Innovations in Education and Teaching International,* vol. 53, no. 1, Jan. 2016, pp. 84–93, doi:10.1080/14703297.2014.910129.

Griffin, June, and Deborah Minter.. "The Rise of the Online Writing Classroom: Reflecting on the Material Conditions of College Composition Teaching." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 65, no. 1, 2013, pp. 140–61, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43490811.

Hassel, Holly, and Joanne Baird Giordano. "Contingency, Access, and the Material Conditions of Teaching and Learning in the Statement." *Labored: The State(Ment) and Future of Work in Composition*, edited by Randall McClure et al., Parlor Press, 2017, pp. 147–66.

Hilliard, Lyra. "Using PARS to Build a Community of Practice for Hybrid Writing Instructors." *PARS in Practice: More Resources and Strategies for Online Writing Instructors*, edited by Jessie Borgman and Casey McArdle, The WAC Clearinghouse, 2021, pp. 209–23, doi:10.37514/PRA-B.2021.1145.2.12.

Hogan, R. Lance, and Mark A. McKnight. "Exploring Burnout among University Online Instructors: An Initial Investigation." *The Internet and Higher Education*, vol. 10, no. 2, Jan. 2007, pp. 117–24, doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2007.03.001.

Jaramillo-Santoy, Janie and Gina Cano-Monreal. "Training Faculty for Online Instruction: Applying Technical Communication Theory to the Design of a Mentoring Program." *Online Education 2.0: Evolving, Adapting, and Reinventing Online Technical Communication,* edited by Kelli Cargile Cook and Keith Grant-Davie Routledge, 2013, pp. 91-112.

Kezar, Adrianna, Tom DePaola, and Daniel T. Scott. *The Gig Academy.* Johns Hopkins UP, 2019.

Kramer, Jillian. "The Virus Moved Female Faculty to the Brink. Will Universities Help?" *The New York Times*, 6 Oct. 2020. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/06/science/covid-universities-women.html.

Lindlof, Thomas R. and Bryan C. Taylor. *Qualitative Communication Research Methods.* 4th ed. Sage, 2017.

Lynch-Biniek, Amy. "Don't Rock the Boat: Curricular Choices of Contingent and Permanent Composition Faculty." *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry,* vol. 1, 2017, pp. 15-30, https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra/vol1/iss1/4/.

McGee, Patricia and Abby Reis. "Blended Course Design: A Synthesis of Best Practices." *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks,* vol. 16, no. 4, 2012, pp. 7-22, http://dx.doi.org/10.24059/olj.v16i4.239.

Mechenbier, Mahli. "Contingent Faculty and OWI." *Foundational Practices of Online Writing Instruction*, edited by Beth L. Hewett et al., The WAC Clearinghouse and Parlor Press, 2015, pp. 227–49, doi:10.37514/PER-B.2015.0650.2.07.

Melonçon, Lisa. "Contingent Faculty, Online Writing Instruction, and Professional Development in Technical and Professional Communication." *Technical Communication Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2017, pp. 256–72, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10572252.2017.1339489.

Melonçon, Lisa, and Lora Arduser. "Communities of Practice Approach: A New Model for Online Course Development and Sustainability." *Online Education 2.0: Evolving, Adapting, and Reinventing Online Technical Communication,* edited by Kelli Cargile Cook and Keith Grant-Davie Routledge, 2013, pp. 73-90.

Melonçon, Lisa, Mahli Xuan Mechenbier, and Laura Wilson. "Introduction to 'A National Snapshot of the Material Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty in Composition and Technical and Professional Communication.'" *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry*, vol. 4, no. 1, Aug. 2020, https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra/vol4/iss1/3.

Nagelhout, Ed. "Faculty Development as Working Condition." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 59, no. 1, National Council of Teachers of English, 2007, p. A14-A16.

Paull, Joanna N. and Jason Allen Snart. *Making Hybrids Work: An Institutional Framework for Blending Online and Face-to-Face Instruction in Higher Education.* NCTE, 2016.

Schieffer, Lori. "The Benefits and Barriers of Virtual Collaboration among Online Adjuncts." *Journal of Instructional Research*, vol. 5, Center for Innovation in Research and Teaching at Grand Canyon University, 2016, pp. 109–25, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1127636.pdf.

Schlemmer, Liz. "At-Risk Teachers Struggle with Returning to In-Person Classes." *NPR,* 21 December 2020, https://www.npr.org/2020/12/21/948697843/at-risk-teachers-struggle-with-returning-to-in-person-classes.

Spector, J. Michael. "Time Demands in Online Instruction." *Distance Education*, vol. 26, no. 1, May 2005, pp. 5–27, doi.org/10.1080/01587910500081251.

Stickney, Lisa T., Regina F. Bento, Anil Aggarwal, and Veena Adlakha. "Online Higher Education: Faculty Satisfaction and Its Antecedents." *Journal of Management Education,* vol. 43, no. 5, 2019, pp. 509-542, doi.org/10.1177/1052562919845022

Safety vs. Security: Returning F2F During a Global Pandemic

Natalie Dorfeld
Florida Institute of Technology

In March of 2020, most educators across the nation received the same curt email: "Classes will be online until further notice. You have one week to prepare. Good luck." Given that there were only a few weeks left in the semester, most of us hobbled through with notes, Zoom, and Panopto recordings. But then the big test came—would faculty, staff, and frontline workers return for the Fall 2020 semester?

This left many administrations in a conundrum. Going online, naturally, would be the safest and most ethical choice, given the unknown nature of COVID-19 at the time. However, doing so would also create a new set of headaches. For one, as of March 2020, populations in agricultural areas and/or with poor internet services would suffer:

> . . . most rural and socioeconomically disadvantaged students are least likely to have broadband Internet access at home. Only 47% of students who live in rural areas have high-speed Internet access at home compared to 77% of those in suburban areas. Of those who do not have home access, 36% live in a home with no computer and 58% live on a farm or other rural setting. (Bauer et al. 2)

Therefore, going fully remote would simply not work in some geographical areas.

Secondly, if going online was a viable option, smaller colleges faced the potential financial windfall of students simply not coming back and/or taking a gap year due to uncertainty. MacMurray College, a liberal-

---

Dr. Natalie Dorfeld is currently an Associate Professor of English in the School of Arts and Communication at Florida Institute of Technology. Her work has been featured in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, *Working Papers in Composition and TESOL*, *Journal of Excellence in College Teaching*, and *CEAMAGazine*. Additionally, she serves on the editorial board of *Forum: Issues About Part-Time and Contingent Faculty*, which focuses on adjunct professors working in the humanities.

arts school with around 500 students in Illinois, “survived the Civil War, the Great Depression and two world wars. But it could not survive COVID-19” (Aslanian 1). Like many schools that were already floundering, the emerging pandemic scared banks away. Loans became tighter, enrollment dropped significantly, and endowments were not generous enough to recoup the losses.

Robert Zemksy, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education, said this pandemic was the final nail in the coffin for many under-resourced institutions. In fact, “Zemsky and his colleagues estimate that 20% of America’s private liberal-arts colleges—about 200 or more institutions—are on the verge of going under” (Aslanian 3).

To combat these issues, numerous colleges and universities opted to return face-to-face before any vaccine was rolled out. While safety protocols were set in place (face shields, mandatory masks, and sanitization stations in every classroom), students had the option of coming and going as they pleased. No attendance was taken, and while they were strongly encouraged to attend live via Zoom, many simply watched the videos at their own leisure.

While this decision—“flexible learning options” as many administrations called it—kept some colleges and universities financially afloat, what effect did it have on our most vulnerable populations? Was it morally sound, or will we look back on these decisions with horror in years to come? This article will discuss how returning F2F or to the classroom during COVID-19 shed a regrettable light on the haves (tenured professors) and have-nots (adjuncts, older faculty members, and frontline workers) on campuses across the country.

Adjuncts

The bleak job market, especially in humanities, wasn’t always the norm in academia. At one time, being a college professor was considered a pretty good job. *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation* states that more than half of the faculty in public intuitions were unionized in the 1960s (Bousquet 187). Furthermore, in the 1960s-1970s, part-time faculty made up 20% of the population. They were used as more of a stopgap measure, i.e., if a full-time faculty member took a sabbatical and/or an emergency hire was needed. The rest, 80%, were either tenured or tenure-track (201). And then the 1980s rolled in with a vengeance.

In the era of Reaganism and trickledown economics, buzzwords like “flexibility” and “supply vs. demand” and “alternative perspective” began to swirl around college campuses (Bousquet 198-199). Couple that with anti-union rhetoric from politicians, and things started to decline rapidly. Higher education became a business model, one to make money and cut all humane corners. What was one easy way to accomplish this? Deny all the bells and whistles that come with full-time employment. In

1987, part-time faculty rose to 40% of the academic population in higher education (Bousquet 201).

Currently, 75.5% of college faculty are contingent, meaning no access to tenure-track positions. Of that percentage, 50% are adjunct (part-time). This means dismal pay, no retirement contributions, and no access to health care benefits. According to New Faculty Majority, that represents 1.3 out of 1.8 million faculty members ("Facts about Adjuncts" 1) . And let's not forget: no office space, no voting rights in departmental matters, or campus orientation. Those outside the ivory walls may find it hard to believe that one can obtain a Ph.D. and make more money as a manager at Burger King.

When COVID-19 hit, life for part-time faculty in every field went from bad to worse very quickly. Layoffs began almost immediately. Jax Kinniburgh, a composition professor at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, was given very little notice or warning. "'They gave the boot to a third of their teaching staff,' says Jax, meaning all of their adjuncts and contingent faculty, with an abrupt note saying they would not be able to hire them and thanking them for their service" (Schanzer 3) . Like many adjuncts, Jax was not a stranger to this situation. In fact, a year prior, she was homeless. She adds:

> 'I have no idea what I'm going to do now . . . I live paycheck to paycheck anyway.' The amount they'd been making, $22,000 a year, $18,000 after taxes 'even with working as a writing tutor' did not insulate them from the shocks of ordinary life, let alone a pandemic, and has not allowed them to develop any cushion. The University of Cincinnati, their remaining school, has promised them a summer course, 'but it won't be enough to cover rent at all.' (Schanzer 3-4)

Marty Baldwin, another composition professor at Jefferson College, said the pandemic had a strange, equalizing effect across the board. Adjuncts have always been poorly compensated, readily dismissed at any moment, and now others were just becoming aware of how detrimental that lifestyle is on one's mental health. Baldwin states, "It's strange. I've been in such a precarious financial position but now everybody is" (Schanzer 7-8).

For those so-called lucky enough to keep their jobs, they faced the fear of getting sick without being insured. Because most adjuncts teach introductory or survey courses, that means larger classes, mostly brimming full of freshman students. And while it's not meant to be demeaning in any way, many 18-year-olds did not take the virus as seriously as they should have (parties, and subsequent crackdowns, were reported off campus on the weekends across the nation).

In the article, "COVID Crisis Endangers Adjunct Professors," David Chatfield is profiled. He is 42. He is an art history adjunct professor at two community colleges in Aurora and Fort Lupton, Colorado. In

addition to doubling his workload during the COVID-19 pandemic (recording and uploading all his lectures), he had to deal with the pressure of returning to environments that would not protect him if he got sick. Making just $28,000 a year made it difficult to afford a plan on his own: "If I do get infected, what are my options? Do I cancel class? Do I get a sub? Do I get health insurance" (Rodriquez 2)?

Adding insult to injury, if contingent faculty members became ill on the job, very few received any sick leave benefits. Although Congress passed legislation "entitling workers to paid sick leave for reasons related to the virus," sizable organizations (500 or more employees) do not have to provide it, "which could affect adjunct faculty who work at larger colleges and universities" (Rodriquez 4).

> Meanwhile, a professor teaching a three-credit course at a public community college earned a per-class average of $2,263 in the 2019-20 academic year, according to a report by the American Association of University Professors. At a university, the amount shoots up to $4,620 per class. The result: These adjuncts often teach at multiple campuses in order to make ends meet. In the midst of this pandemic, moving among different locations adds to their risks and their potential to spread the virus. (Rodriquez 4)

The term "freeway flyer" is certainly very applicable here. Because adjuncts usually work at several schools to make ends meet, even in the best of times, being forced to travel back and forth only increased their risk of catching / spreading the virus.

Some could say adjuncts were placed in the perfect storm during all this: layoffs, no healthcare, larger class sizes, and commuting between campuses. Just the thought of being in enclosed spaces (classrooms, hallways, stairwells, and elevators) with students was panic inducing for many. Unlike tenured faculty, who if approved from human resources could teach from home, many adjuncts were given no choice. Return to the classroom, or do not come back at all. Given no wiggle room, many opted to leave the profession for good after 2020.

Older Faculty Members

A common gripe amongst some college students is their professor is just so "ancient." While it's true that some stay in academia for the love of their subject and students, the dark underside is many have to stay in the game in order to make ends meet. This, once again, highlights the uncomfortable divisions within faculty ranks, the haves and have-nots.

The haves are tenured professors who have the fiscal means to retire at an appropriate age. Say 65. The have-nots include everyone else. (Margaret Mary Vojtko, the adjunct highlighted in NPR and *Slate*, who died penniless after 25 years of service to Duquesne University, is a perfect example.) These individuals keep working well into their seventies and

even eighties. Statistically, this gap is not great for women or minorities either. According to the article "The Aging Faculty" in *Inside Higher Ed*:

> The median age of the U.S. labor force is 42 years, versus 49 for tenure-track professors, the report says. Similarly, compared to the general working population, significantly more faculty members are age 55 or older (23 percent in general versus 37 percent in academe). Consistent with other research, the brief says that women and minorities are underrepresented among professors, particularly those more senior. Women make up just 25 percent of tenure-track faculty members older than 55, for example, while racial minorities are just 16 percent. (Flaherty 1)

Because so many faculty members are off the tenure track, with dismal pay and no retirement nest egg, staying often becomes a matter of necessity. In fact, "a survey commissioned by Fidelity Investments and reported at *Inside Higher Ed* in June found that 'some 74 percent of professors aged 49-67 plan to delay retirement past age 65 or never retire at all'" ("Are College Professors Too Old?" 1). In the same study, 55% declared feeling "uncertainty over having enough money to retire comfortably" as their number one reason for staying in academia (2).

With age comes increased health risks and vulnerability, including cardiovascular disease, stroke, high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes, and so on. Even with all the safety protocols in place, without a COVID-19 vaccine readily available at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, these professors were put into a higher risk category. As a result, some older faculty members that were not granted the benefit of teaching remotely passed away.

Marjorie Valbrun, author of "A Requiem for Academics," states "It's always tragic when a professor dies unexpectedly. It can mean the loss of a valued faculty member, a respected colleague, or a favorite instructor or beloved mentor" (1). But even more than that, it is the years of experience, which includes counseling younger faculty members, working across the disciplines, and networking with different schools, all of which glue people and their institutions together. Their talents are not easily replaceable.

When Valbrun's article was published in *Inside Higher Ed* on April 15, 2020, she paid tribute to three of the pandemic's earliest academic victims who were adored by their students and peers:

- David C. Driskell, Distinguished University Professor, Emeritus, at the University of Maryland at College Park, passed away April 1. His colleagues said he was "recognized worldwide for his scholarship and expertise in African American art" but remained generous and kind. He was 88.

- Truby Bernard Clayton, chairperson of music education at Wiley College in Texas, where he taught for 42 years, also died April 1. Students described him as "a caring professor who challenged them beyond their limits." He was 75.
- George Gannage, an assistant teaching professor of marketing and assistant director of the Center for Professional Selling at Ball State University in Indiana, died April 6. He was a "consummate students' professor" and known for being charming, witty and a pretty great dresser. He was 63. (Valbrun 1-2)

And one professor that was not included on that list was Dr. Alan Rosiene, 60, an English professor and colleague of mine at Florida Tech. He passed away from complications of COVID-19. During his 28-year career with Florida Tech, he received multiple in-house teaching awards and the President's Award for University Excellence between 2013 and 2015 (Rogers 1).

Globally, it was the same story. At Aligarh Muslim University, located in India, as many as 17 working professors died of COVID-19 in the last 18 days. (This was reported in May of 2021.) Professor Aftab Alam, the former secretary of the Teachers Union, said, "This is a very bad phase for the university. This has never happened before when so many people associated with the university have died" (Ahmad 2). Many of these professors were older, with underlying conditions, such as hypertension and diabetes (Ahmad 1).

It has been said that so-called "older" professors love the profession so much that they cannot bear to leave their students. This is admirable and telling of their passions. But it could also be said that they were just adjuncts who were exploited by the system, stayed because they could not monetarily retire, and were not given options how do update their teaching pedagogies since 2020.

Frontline Workers

Lastly, there are the unsung heroes of COVID-19 on college campuses, the frontline workers. They include the custodians, plumbers, chefs, managers, carpenters, purchasing assistants, administrative assistants, HVAC/control mechanics, delivery drivers, maintenance folks, and so on. Without them, no campus would last more than a week. They serve everyone and are often unappreciated.

As campuses reopened during the pandemic, they were responsible for "coordinating quarantine housing and mask distribution and managing conduct hearings for students who break social distancing and other public health rules" (Anderson 1). Like adjuncts and older faculty members teaching primarily service courses, they had more physical interaction with students than tenure track professors and

administrators. However, most remained quiet about their own personal health and safety concerns. Why? Limited protection.

> Lacking the job security of tenured faculty members backed by influential unions and faculty senates and empowered by shared governance policies, student affairs staff tend to be young and in the early stages of their careers -- and have fewer job protections. Instead of speaking out, they're working to carry out and improve return-to-campus plans and retain their jobs amid widespread budget and program cuts, faculty layoffs, and staff reductions due to the financial havoc the pandemic has created for higher ed. (Anderson 2)

Unlike faculty members, who may have union backing, they were not under the same security umbrella. And in some states, such as those with right to work laws, it was not even option. In fact, frontline workers at colleges (food services workers, custodians, and housing staff) are usually the least protected group on campus.

While there were some instances of frontline workers unionizing and striking, it was extremely rare. The economic impact on colleges at the beginning of the pandemic was swift, which meant layoffs and furloughs. As a result, keeping silent was almost a requirement under such dire conditions: "job loss means losing health-care coverage during the pandemic, and for residence life staff members, it could also mean losing housing" (Anderson 4). Not surprisingly, and like adjuncts and older faculty members making the lowest wages, these workers became exhausted, and mental health issues skyrocketed across college campuses.

Conclusion

At the time of writing, 5,496,300 people have died from COVID-19 ("Coronavirus Death Toll" 1). When the pandemic hit college campuses in March of 2020, administrations faced tough choices. Going fully online would have been the most respectable choice, but that was not feasible in some remote areas of the nation. Likewise, if they did, they faced the possibility of students not returning. Many parents questioned the full price of tuition when lectures were delivered via Zoom and advocated for discounted tuition fees.

Regardless, the 2020-2021 academic year shed light on academia's haves and have-nots. Adjuncts, most lacking health care benefits, put themselves and others at risk by traveling back and forth between institutions. Older professors, some with preexisting health conditions, were forced to play Russian Roulette by returning face-to-face. And frontline workers showed up on a daily basis trying to provide normalcy for everyone when supplies were constantly running out and not arriving quickly enough. Our most vulnerable populations in academia

suffered greatly because of the pandemic, and its long-term effects on the field will be analyzed, debated, and scrutinized for years to come.

Works Cited

Ahmad, Qazi Faraz. "17 AMU Professors Succumb to Covid-19 in 18 days." *News 18*, 10 May 2021, https://www.news18.com/news/education-career/17-amu-professors-succumb-to-covid-19-in-18days3720794.html.

Anderson, Greta. "Job Security, Health Fears Make for Uneasy Mix." *Inside Higher Ed*, 20 August 2021, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/08/20/student-affairs-staff-challenged-pandemic-demands.

"Are College Professors Too Old?" *Diversity in Higher Education*. 2021, https://diversityinhighereducation.com/news/Are-Our-College-Professors-Too-Old.

Aslanian, Sasha. "Some Small Colleges are Closing Their Doors for Good Amid Pandemic." *Marketplace*, 20 August 2020, https://www.marketplace.org/2020/08/20/some-small-colleges-closing-for-good-covid19/.

Bauer, Johannes, et al. "Poor Internet Connection Leaves Rural Students Behind." *Michigan State University*, 20 March 2020, https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2020/poor-internet-connection-leaves-rural-students-behind.

Bousquet, Marc. *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation*. New York: NYU Press, 2008. Print.

"Coronavirus Death Toll." *Worldometer*, 21 June 2021, https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/coronavirus-death-toll/.

"Facts About Adjuncts." *New Faculty Majority*, 2021, http://www.newfacultymajority.info/facts-about-adjuncts/.

Flaherty, Colleen. "The Aging Faculty." *Inside Higher Ed*, 27 January 2020, https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2020/01/27/aging-faculty.

Rodriguez, Carmen Heredia. "COVID Crisis Endangers Adjunct Professors." *U.S. News*, 21 July 2020, https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2020-07-21/adjunct-professors-face-high-coronavirus-risk-with-jobs-low-on-pay-health-benefits.

Rogers, Eric. "Award-Winning Florida Tech Professor Dies from COVID-19 Complications." *Florida Today*, 20 January 2021, https://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/education/2021/01/20/award-winning-florida-tech-professor-dies-covid-19-complications/4232630001/.

Schanzer, Olivia. “Professor Precarious: Adjuncts in The Time Of COVID.” *Economic Hardship Reporting Project*, 23 July 2020, https://economichardship.org/2020/07/professor-precarious-adjunct-professors-covid-19/.

Valbrun, Marjorie. “A Requiem for Academics.” *Inside Higher Ed*. 15 April 2020, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/04/15/academics-lost-covid-19-fondly-remembered.

Am I Doing This Right? The Emotional Labor of Confronting Inequitable Writing Assessment

Amy Flick
University of Pittsburgh

Sommer Marie Sterud
Henry Ford College

Abstract
During the pandemic, we, like many others, found ourselves reimagining the practices we engage in to best meet the needs of our students. While adjusting to a new class structure was challenging, we found that writing assessment was particularly fraught. To create the most equitable assessment practices, we implemented Inoue's conception of labor-based grading. Inoue argues that "A grading contract based only on labor is better for all students and undermines the racist and White Supremacist grading systems we all live with at all levels of education" (16-17). These circumstances motivated us to employ labor-based grading given the difficulties many of our students were experiencing as a result of the changed learning environment, as well as the social, economic, and health implications resulting from the pandemic.

As one might expect, there was substantial emotional labor that accompanied letting go of old values and assessment practices. Newman, et al. ask, "How do emotional labor and artful affect translate into our understanding of leadership?" (6). This is an instructive question for many

Amy Flick is a lecturer in the Composition Program at the University of Pittsburgh. She teaches in the Public and Professional Writing major and directs the Public Communication of Science and Technology certificate program. Her current research examines public health rhetoric and the communication of risk.

Sommer Marie Sterud is a professor of English at Henry Ford College. A feminist researcher who studies the literate activity associated with social movements, she spent a year conducting ethnographic research on a prominent pro-life organization. Her current research interests are the rhetoric of protest, activism, and civic engagement.

Abstract, cont.
reasons. For one, many writing teachers don't often think of themselves as "leaders" per se, especially those of us who value collaborative learning and are averse to the banking concept of education. That said, the decisions about assessment are ours to make. While we feel our students benefited from the practices we employed, actually assessing work in this way was often uncomfortable and left us wondering, "Am I doing this right?" This article will address the tensions we experienced and how to better navigate them moving forward. More importantly, we will discuss the ways in which this has allowed us to engage in the necessary but vulnerable work of reflecting on our own internalized hegemonic value systems and how these systems have inadvertently influenced our assessment strategies.

"Feelings can't be ignored, no matter how unjust or ungrateful they seem."
--Anne Frank

"Emotions are not good, bad, right, or wrong. The first step to changing our relationship to feelings is to be curious about them and the messages they send to us."
--Dr. Lane Pederson, Dialectical Behavior Therapy

During the pandemic, we, like many others, found ourselves reimagining our teaching practices to best meet the needs of our students. While adjusting to a new class structure was challenging, we found that writing assessment was particularly fraught. Suddenly, students and faculty were being asked to compose and learn in new, digital environments and under unprecedented social and cultural conditions. Writing assessment and questions of equitable assessment practices have been heavily criticized as they have historically favored writing that reflected middle-class white male ideologies, while punishing other styles of writing. We recognized that our students' personal living conditions during the lockdown, as well as issues of class, sex, gender, and race, created important differences in students' work, and we wanted to employ an assessment model that honored these differences and respected our students' lives and their right to their own language.

To do this, we implemented labor-based grading, a model of assessment that both of us were drawn to because of its promise of more equitable student writing assessment. According to the leading scholar on this type of assessment, Asao Inoue, a labor-contract "calculates final course grades purely by the labor students complete, not by any judgments of the quality of their writing. While the qualities of student writing [is]

still at the center of the classroom and feedback, [it] has no bearing on the course grade" ("*Antiracist Writing"* 3). This style of grading employs labor logs in which students document the amount of effort and time spent on assignments. Inoue contends, "A grading contract based only on labor is better for all students and undermines the racist and White Supremacist grading systems we all live with at all levels of education" (16-17). Understanding this, and the difficulties many of our students were experiencing as a result of the pandemic, motivated us to adopt labor-based grading practices.

Despite our commitment to changing our approach to assessment, changing course assessment practices was very labor-intensive. Expectedly, there was research involved, restructuring objectives, and revising policies. Less expectedly, there was a lot of emotional labor involved in this change. The more traditional assessment practices we had always used, despite their limitations, were part of how we understood our role in the writing classroom; changing them—grading labor, rather than the produced texts—evoked moments of tension, frustration, and doubt, leaving us to wonder, "Am I doing this right?" Moreover, in trying to assess our students' labor during the pandemic, we found that their emotional labor became more apparent. This deepened our understanding of labor and thus further complicated the goals of assessing labor.

Broadly, this article aims to explore how emotional labor impacted our approaches to writing assessment during the pandemic. We discuss how the move to labor-based grading necessitated engagement in the important but vulnerable work of examining our own internalized hegemonic value systems and the ways in which they have influenced our work. Secondly, while attempting to assess student labor, we found the definition of labor very limited and static and did not account for students' emotional labor. To that end, we raise questions about whether emotional labor can or should be assessed and how emotional labor complicates the use of labor-based grading.

Emotion is present throughout work, both ours and our students. Our ability to manage how we feel, how we display our feelings, and how we make others feel is vital to feeling effectual. Moreover, emotions are central to the work we do in the writing classroom. Brand stated when things go wrong in the classroom or in the English department, or even in assessment, it is typically related to emotions—same goes for when things go right. Likewise, Kerr contended "communication…*is* emotional, it is 'touchy-feely' despite the tendency to want to 'take it outside' rather than focus on the emotions at hand" (27). In agreement with these scholars, we contend that by acknowledging the emotions we have and the role they play in our assessments, we can better understand the role that emotional labor plays in assessment and create productive spaces for us to consider our relationships with assessment, with our students, with our departments, schools, and with our field.

Assessment: A Labor (-Based Contract) of Love

In his book *Antiracism Assessment and Ecologies,* Asao Inoue argues for a new vision of writing assessment. He asserts we must view assessment as an environment comprising unique features. A champion of labor-based contracts, Inoue asks, "How can a conscientious writing teacher understand and engage in her classroom writing assessments as an antiracist project with her locally diverse students?" (Inoue 9) . Via an ecological view of assessment is his answer. Pointing out that while many assessment scholars have done similar important work on how we evaluate student writing, none have employed antiracist frameworks (*Antiracism Assessment* 16).

What does it mean to view assessment as an ecology? Inoue describes the ecology of assessment as a "full cycle of writing assessment through a cycle of rubric creating, drafting, judging, revising, and reflecting on the ways students read and make judgments on peer's texts" (17). When writing instructors do this, students are learning to value their own work, an act that invites agency. And secondly, by having students learn how to assess their own work, the instructor dismantles the hegemonic nature of the educator alone who bestows judgment because students are also participating in the process. Moreover, the curtain is pulled back and the ways of the wizard, so to speak, are revealed and with them, the biases of the assignment, rubric, and the instructor herself.

Within this reimagining of assessment is a commitment to labor-based grading contracts, which Inoue describes as:

> essentially a set of social agreements with the entire class about how final course grades will be determined for everyone. These agreements are articulated in a contract, a document, that is negotiated at the beginning of the term or semester, then reexamined at midpoint to make sure it is still fair enough for everyone. It is a social, corporate agreement, which means it may not be a product of full consensus, but instead hard agreements. (*Labor-Based Grading* 129)

Inoue's contract does not track what work is completed but what is *not* completed. In *Labor-Based Grading Contracts: Building Equity and Inclusion,* Inoue created a table that shows the corresponding grades for any work or attendance not completed (see Table 4.1 below). He argues that "The calculus is simple: the more labor you do, the better your grade in the course will be, with no attention to the quality of writing turned in (on the part of the teacher)" (130).

Table 4.1: The Final Grade Breakdown in the Grading Contract

	# Non-Participating Days	# of Late Assignments	# of Missed Assignments	# of Ignored Assignments
A (4.0)	3	3	1	0
B (3.1)	3	3	1	0
C (2.1)	4	4	2	0
D (1.1)	5	5	3	1
E (0.0)	6	6	4	2

A different labor-based approach originated from Jane Danielewicz and Peter Elbow. Their contract focuses on what work must be completed to guarantee a B. This includes, among other things, attending class regularly, meeting assignment deadlines, completing in-class and lower-stakes homework assignments, substantial revision, and thorough peer review feedback. According to Danielewicz and Elbow, a B grade is based on a student's participation in the class and engagement with assignments. "The grade of B does not derive from my judgment about the quality of your writing" (2). To earn an A, however, does rest on the instructor's evaluation of "high quality" writing (2). But how is this quality determined? And how can you show that it is fair? For us, Danielewicz and Elbow's answer is unsatisfactory, but they do point to Inoue as a resource for instructors who wish to give students more agency over their grades:

> We use class discussions to explore the student's notions about what constitutes 'exceptionally high quality' writing, and we can often derive our criteria from students' comments. We try to make these criteria as public and concrete as possible—often providing handouts and feedback relevant to these criteria. But we don't profess to give students any power over these high-grade decisions. (2) (For a fascinating picture of a course where the teacher does authorize his students to grade, see Inoue.)

Of course, the models from Inoue and Danielewicz and Elbow are not the first arguments in favor of re-imaging writing assessment strategies. In

(Re)Articulating Writing Assessment for Teaching and Learning, Brian Huot talks about assessment in terms of "instructive evaluation" (69) . This term gets at a primary objective of Huot's writing classroom: he wants students to learn the vocabulary of judgment and to examine and problematize the process of writing evaluation. The difference between Huot's and Inoue's perspectives, however, is that Huot fails to explicitly discuss race in his vision of "instructive evaluation." Inoue points out that while Huot does call for more "context-sensitive" evaluation and proposes a "very intriguing model for teachers and students," he fails to directly "interrogate or understand racism in practices in the model" (*Antiracist Writing* 20).

The above evaluation methods lead to vital questions more teachers should be asking. For example, "Is my course ecology punishing other students for who they are? Is it punishing students who are other than the ones who embody the ideal habitus that your standards and grading practices use to grade so-called quality?" (Inoue 240) . While these are indeed important questions, another perhaps more immediate question arises in a time of pandemic: How do I adequately "interrogate and understand racism" (or any -ism for that matter) from behind a computer screen? How can I gauge labor when faced with a flurry of muted mics and black boxes on Zoom? And how can I ensure the entire class has a voice in crafting the course contract from miles away? It seems that during a time of social distancing and even more social unrest, the calculus is not "so simple" after all. In what follows, we grapple with these questions and present new questions about emotional labor and assessment, while unpacking the challenges we faced incorporating labor-based grading practices during the pandemic.

Emotional Labor

Ashforth and Humphrey assert, "…emotions are an integral and inseparable part of everyday organizational life. From moments of frustration or joy, grief or fear, to an enduring sense of dissatisfaction or commitment, the *experience* of work is saturated with feeling" (98) . Emotions are imbued in everything that we do as professionals, and the labor of navigating, understanding, and managing these emotions is an important, if often under-examined, part of our work.

Hochschild defines emotional labor as the labor required "to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" or "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" (7) . Simplistically, emotional labor is the act of suppressing, repressing, and/or altering one's emotions to be in accordance with social expectations about feelings and expressions of feelings or "feeling rules." Hochschild notes that feeling rules, "govern how people try or try not to feel in ways 'appropriate to the situation'" (552) . Thus, if an individual assumes that a certain level or kind of emotion is appropriate for a given situation, that

assumption is essential to the expression or suppression of emotions. Moreover, the response to feelings rules often appears as expressing emotions the individual may not feel or checking their emotions to see if they are appropriate to a situation. Emotional labor occurs when the individual's emotional response does not match the emotion dictated by the feelings rules—the result of this dissonance being that the individual must either change his or her emotional response or change the situation.

The definition of emotional labor has evolved to include management of other individuals' emotions. England and Farkas state that emotional labor also pertains to "efforts made to understand others, to have empathy with their situation, to feel their feelings are part of one's own" (qtd. in Steinberg and Figart 11). Thus, emotional labor can be expanded to pertain to both the labor of regulating one's own emotions and the labor of understanding and engaging with others' emotions.

Grandy, Diefendorf, and Rupp build on the definition of emotional labor, synthesizing scholarship on emotional labor in the fields of sociology, organizational behavior, and psychology. They argue that emotional labor can more usefully be defined and examined as a combination of occupational requirements, emotional displays, and intrapsychic processes (17). Occupational requirements refer to managing feelings as a direct part of a job. This type of emotional labor requires the worker to suppress or manufacture emotions to induce feelings in those they are caring for. Emotional displays refer to "*displaying* the emotions specified by the organization" as part of "job performance" (Grandy, Diefendorf, and Rupp 10). This might include smiling or making eye-contact. Lastly, intrapsychic processes refer to "effortfully managing one's emotions when interacting with others at work" (Grandy, Diefendorf, and Rupp 8). In combining these approaches, Grandy, Diefenndorff, and Rupp maintain that emotional labor is the "the dynamic interplay of occupational expectations, expressed emotions, and emotion regulation strategies" (17) Defined in this way, emotional labor speaks to the totality of how workers display and create emotions that are at odds with their authentic feelings and how the effort involved in this practice is felt and is internalized by workers.

Emotional Labor in Teaching

As educators, emotional labor is inextricably intertwined with every aspect of our professional position and identity. Hargreaves writes,

> Teachers, learners and leaders all, at various times, worry, hope, enthuse, become bored, doubt, envy, brood, love, feel proud, get anxious, are despondent, become frustrated, and so on. Such emotions are not peripheral to people's lives; nor can they be compartmentalized … Emotion, cognition, and action, in fact, are integrally connected. (812)

Emotion is omnipresent in the work we do as teachers, not only in our relationships with or responses to students, but in the decisions, we make as teachers, the pedagogy we employ, the professional and political structures we encounter, the evaluations we receive from students and superiors, and public criticisms and projected ideologies about teaching we face. Jacobs and Micciche contends emotional labor in composition studies is apparent in the "daily work" of "building relationships with students and colleagues, reading and responding to student texts, constructing and implementing conceptions of rhetoric that shape curricular design and research practices, excavating rhetorical history in the service of contemporary contexts and purposes, and administering writing programs" (2). Emotion and the management of emotional responses and displays are core to our work as writing teachers. Some scholars have expanded upon this position, stating emotions are central to personal identity in teachers.

Zembylas writes, "Issues of emotions and teacher identity inform each other and construct interpretations of each other both on a conceptual and on a personal level" (214) and, subsequently, "emotions can become sites of resistance and self-transformation" (214). He urged a deeper examination of emotions as they pertain to a teacher's identity and sense of professionalism that allows for teachers to "identify how their emotions inform the ways that their emotions expand or limit possibilities in their teaching, and how these emotions enable them to think and act differently" (232). Zembylas claimed that in identifying and analyzing emotions, teachers could regain and enhance their sense of agency and personal power and could resist pervasive tropes seeking to shape teacher identity.

In feminist research, scholars have explored how analysis of emotion can be used to trouble pervasive, colonist ideologies that create barriers to social change and increased equity. Worsham defines emotion as "the tight braid of affect and judgment, socially and historically constructed and bodily lived, through which the symbolic takes hold of and binds the individual, in complex and contradictory ways, to the social order and its structure of meanings" (216). She further claims that emotions are shaped, informed, and instructed by what she terms "pedagogic violence" in which emotions are often silenced and associated with the "other" as a way of enforcing existing power structures.

Similarly, Jacobs and Micciche see the examination of emotion as a mechanism for challenging inequity in the field of writing studies. "Composition's familiar claims for creating equity in the discipline and in classrooms may be expanded through analyses of emotion at multiple levels, including analyses of the institutional structures that circumscribe our activities as teachers and administrators" (Jacobs and Micciche 6). They argue that emotion is not bound to private lives but is woven throughout our work.

For the purposes of this article, we are particularly interested in how emotional labor affects writing assessment. O'Neill, Schendel, Williamson, and Huot (2007) state:

> The time and energy—a large percentage of our professional resources—that go into reading and student writing is often invisible to colleagues across the disciplines, yet very visible to composition teachers and scholars who spend much of their professional lives involved in it. What's not so visible to compositionists, however, are the structures, assumptions, and values that inform the assessment work we do. (78)

Assessing student writing is an important part of the work we do, made more important because of the real-world implications of grades for the student, ourselves, and our programs more broadly. Though O'Neill, Schendel, Williamson, and Huot were not speaking to emotional labor per se, value systems, assumptions, and prescriptive structures which shape assessment practices discussed in their work can become critical spaces for the examination of emotional labor in relation to how we assess and why we assess. Moreover, as they point out, assessment has been used historically as a mechanism of "gatekeeping" (80). The role of determining who will be successful and who will not is fraught with feelings of guilt, sadness, fear, and even anger.

Steinberg more directly explicates the role of emotion on assessment, maintaining that assessment is never a neutral act, that it always involves the judgments, beliefs, and emotions of the teachers who perform the assessment. In her meta-analysis of teachers' emotions during the assessment process, she notes that with regards to assessment, "Teachers experienced fear-based emotions—nervousness, anxiety, defensiveness, and anger-based emotions—annoyance, irritation, and frustration in relation to anticipated and real student responses" (50). These feelings were borne out of perceptions of students' efforts (48), fears over students' reactions to grades (50), and teachers' pedagogical beliefs and goals (50).

Caswell similarly recognized that responding to student writing was an emotional practice and often triggered powerful emotions in the assessor. She states, "responding to student writing is one activity where teachers' emotions become relevant, but there are limited scholarly conversations directly discussing emotion as a component of teachers' response practices" (1). Caswell found that the act of teachers responding to student writing adheres to a pattern of values, triggers, emotions, then actions. Within what she calls a "dynamic, recursive emotional episode," Caswell evaluates how emotions occur in relation to the response act. While Caswell's research notes the ways in which assessment, and particularly responding to student writing, can trigger emotions in teachers and how those emotions participate in the response act, there is a lack of

discussion about how individuals manage those emotions and how they have been trained to manage those emotions.

Implementing Labor-Based Contracts

Both of us independently began implementing labor-based grading practices at the beginning of the pandemic. When the CFP for this journal asked us to consider how our labor changed in the pandemic, we began talking to each other and discovered that we both turned to labor- based assessment. We discussed why we did it, how we did it, pitfalls we experienced, and the impact of COVID on assessment work. As we continued these discussions about what labor- based grading was like for us, the focus of our conversation shifted away from the minutiae of changing assessment practices to the feelings and points of felt difficulty we experienced about assessing labor. It was through sharing our own teaching stories that we were able to better understand our feelings and experiences. Pagnucci explains in his advocacy of narrative research that, "Stories reach us in a form that naturally matches our basic modes for understanding the world" (17) . He further writes, "Stories from my life can illuminate the ideas I am talking about, can help readers connect back to the stories in their own lives" (28) . Sharing our stories with each other helped us to articulate feelings and ideas that before we had been unable to name. Moreover, in sharing, we found validation and support. Because of the impact our personal stories had on each other, we chose to share them here as a way to connect with others and organically explore the challenges we faced in employing labor-based writing assessment.

Sommer's Story

For several semesters leading up to the pandemic, I had made it a priority to employ more anti-racist pedagogy in my courses. Specifically, I was working on cycling in Asao-esque labor-contract assessment strategies. I had already implemented a contract-style syllabus in which I explained to students on the first day that a syllabus is indeed a contract: it is my promise to them of what I will do, what I hope they will do, and what we can do together. I even ask students to sign the syllabus just like any other legally binding contract, assuring them they could opt out of signing with the caveat that they had to present to the class their concerns for discussion and suggestions for syllabus revision. As mentioned above, one primary goal of contract grading is to give students more agency; making the syllabus a signable contract itself was the first symbolic act of inviting them to have a say in their learning.

When I was teaching during the shutdown, my administration told me to be "flexible" and "lenient" with attendance and late assignments. I took this suggestion—that we all need to be more understanding during this "challenging time" —as an opportunity to implement a new labor-based grading system. If I was expected to cut my students slack, perhaps my higher-ups would also give me a break as I introduced this new system

because no doubt there would be hiccups. And there were. What I quickly learned is that being “flexible” and “lenient” with attendance and late assignments seriously challenged a labor-based grading contract; moreover, it seriously challenged my identity as a writing instructor who was raised on the fundamentals of outcome-based learning. This was especially so because my students were coming to me with increasing mental health issues, stemming from anxiety over racial tensions, grief over the deaths of people of color at the hands of police, and fear about loved ones who were or could be infected with COVID (among other things). What does labor look like when one takes into account these issues and is asked to remain “flexible?” What does “fairness” look like? And what emotional toll does it take on a teacher?

Moreover, I discovered that while I might be able to pat myself on the back for urging my students to challenge my labor and syllabus contract at any point, most would not because no matter how much I tried to dismantle the classroom hierarchy with open dialogue and collaborative peer-review guidelines, students still saw me as the boss because I am the giver of grades. Labor-based contract or not, I can directly affect students’ GPAs, and, in turn, their opportunities and even their identities as students.

For me, there were three emotionally fraught areas throughout COVID teaching, all related to assessment: worry that my students did not have enough of a voice in the matter, preoccupation with being flexible enough, and, conversely, the fear that I was being too flexible and thereby not adequately preparing my students to write within academia and the world at large. But the last concern was always top of mind, further complicated by the term “contract grading.” The very nature of a contract is meant to place limits on a thing, not broaden its boundaries with flexibility. I have always felt a responsibility to be mindful of my students’ unique needs. However, there is an equally critical responsibility--one that I earned two higher education degrees to be able to handle. No matter how we slice it, there are objectives for every course; there are learning outcomes. When a groom pays for dance lessons before his wedding, he wants to come out of those lessons prepared for the big day. Why should it be any different, especially when the financial burden of attending college is so great? Likewise, I was charged with teaching students how to achieve these objectives and outcomes; more importantly, I had the task of teaching my students to communicate in a world with *inflexible* genres. Therefore, as our title puts forth, “Am I doing this right?” became a question I asked myself time and time again when faced with the question of fair and equitable grading.

One anecdote in particular exemplifies the emotional complexity of an instructor’s attempt at any new pedagogical approach, but it also reflects our students’ dynamic interior lives. Additionally, this story reveals how versatile and present instructors must be if they are to accommodate their students, especially when it comes to assessing their writing. This versatility is an example of England and Farkas’ expansion

of the definition of emotional labor to include the management of other's feelings. Indeed, it shows the recursive nature of emotional labor—how when an instructor labors to manage her students' emotions, she in turn has emotions about doing such work and vice versa.

It is sad but unfortunately not surprising that the following scenario involves sexual assault. This student not only had to start her freshman year isolated on a new campus, but she also had the added trauma of being sexually assaulted within the first week of classes starting. Compassion and flexibility are key attributes for a teacher dealing with any student during such a challenging time, but it was even more vital for me to model them with a student who experienced such a traumatic event like sexual assault. After missing the first week of classes, she asked to meet virtually, explaining what had happened to her and that she had contacted the proper authorities, as well as a counselor. I briefed her on the layout of the class and what we did the days she missed. She seemed to be holding up remarkably well and was sincerely enthusiastic to get to work despite what she had gone through.

Cut to a muddled email and even more jumbled text message the next day that implied this student was not holding up as well as she conveyed in our Zoom meeting. According to the email, she had taken "all the pills she had" because she was so devastated by what had happened. Luckily, she made it to the hospital in time and returned to class within a week. After assuring me she was seeing a professional to help her work through her trauma, she made a plan to catch up, and, once again, things seemed to be on the mend.

Of course, I was relieved the student was okay. But in the weeks that followed, I found myself struggling. If she missed a class, I would panic. If she was late to post on the discussion forum, I wanted to reach out. Essentially, I had turned into a helicopter teacher. Moreover, when she would miss meetings or fail to complete an assignment, I was frustrated, even a little annoyed. She would often appear in our class Zooms eating lunch with friends, driving her car, or at her job. I was conflicted. Knowing what she had been through, I thought I needed to be compassionate now more than ever. This is the flexibility that my department chair requested of me, right? But when her essays would lack cohesion, a thesis statement, or even a topic sentence, should I show compassion and flexibility then too? Should I evaluate her labor differently than the others? Isn't that what contract grading is all about, acknowledging all students communicate differently and the work is what matters? But how do I judge effort, especially when the amount of labor she is putting into the class may involve a lot of behind-the-scenes, emotionally complicated hoop-jumping just to muster the energy to get something on the page?

The Invisibility of Emotional Labor

These questions highlight an underestimated aspect of the emotional labor that both students and instructors engage in and is often invisible. This feature of emotional labor makes it all the more difficult to assess. Early emotional labor scholars describe emotional labor as "performed through face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact" (Steinberg & Figart 10). Initially, Arlie Hochschild pointed to "observable" facial and bodily action (10). Later, scholars expanded this to include spoken word, tone of voice, and other effects. Research needs to broaden even more to include the invisible emotional work that accompanies trauma, mental health issues, and other factors that affect how both teachers and students perform. Furthermore, instructors must also acknowledge that invisible emotional labor is and has always been present, regardless of newly emergent circumstances like pandemics.

As for how this invisible labor affects assessment, scholars who study grading equity give a fairly simple answer to the complex questions this issue poses: consistent dialogue and transparency Researchers like Peter Elbow, Richard Haswell, and Jaclyn Royster suggest encouraging students to be honest about issues they are having that make completing an assignment difficult. These scholars also imply it is important to explain to students that there will likely be a work or school situation where they must write a memo, email, research paper, report, or whatever the genre may be. And those who read it will have expectations related to what that genre of communication looks like. Those expectations may be unfair, exclusive, or otherwise prejudiced. These expectations might also be complicated by the student's own life. The key here is that 1) students can recognize and then discuss the features of the genre of writing that seem unfair, exclusive, or otherwise prejudiced; and 2) they know the features of a particular genre and can execute this type of writing if they so choose. This is critical thinking, something writing teachers are charged with teaching because it is part of the writing process.

That said, dialogue and transparency become murky with a situation like my student who experienced sexual assault, and even murkier when involved in distance learning. For one, as my therapist would tell me, managing another person's emotions is a fruitless endeavor made even more cumbersome from behind a screen. Nevertheless, the reality is that instructors do feel compelled to manage their students' emotions or at least try to avoid inflaming the emotions students may feel as a result of trauma. This emotional work is further compounded when it comes to assessing our student's labor. This relates to what Grandy, Diefenndorff, and Rupp argue about the interior and exterior displays of emotion in workplace settings. As we mention above, they suggest that this type of emotional labor requires the instructor to repress their own emotions based on what their training has indicated or implied is appropriate in order to honor the emotions of students. And while yes, many instructors, including myself, feel compelled to tend to our students'

emotions, we also feel competing responsibilities to our field and our institutions to help students complete course objectives, and so the interior and exterior emotions about assessment are often at war.

This responsibility is further highlighted when instructors must provide evidence to their institutions that students are meeting these expectations. For example, the school where I taught during COVID required us to submit our grades, as well as our students' final writing projects, to our department chair to comply with the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) requirements. What does it look like when I give a student a B because of the checked-off labor requisites, but upon closer examination by my department or the HLC, they deem this work to be less than B-quality? I have often felt concerned that evaluating labor with flexibility and compassion leaves me vulnerable to the criticisms that not only do I not know how to accurately assess, but I am also not delivering on the promise to help students achieve course objectives. This conflict leaves me wondering whether it is more important that the student feel validated and understood or that they learn to write the sort of research paper their political science professor can validate and understand? I am not suggesting an instructor should not aim to do both, but we must acknowledge it is a tricky thing for a teacher to navigate.

Additionally, if writing instructors do favor understanding, inclusion, and emotional awareness in our teaching philosophies, then perhaps we need to reimagine not only assessment but also college teacher training to include emotional intelligence training. I made myself extra available for this student by giving her my cell phone number and checking in with her regularly when I hadn't heard from her. We would start our conferences with a scan of how she was feeling about everything, not only schoolwork, giving her space to express herself if she needed. Nevertheless, I was uncomfortable handling this students' emotional and mental health issues—not because I am uncomfortable with emotions or mental health, but I am not a licensed therapist. How can I be sure if I am not doing more harm than good? What if slack is not what some of these students need? Or perhaps they need more? These questions make assessment emotionally fraught, even when it is purely based on labor. Who is to say what enough effort looks like? How can I really decide when some of my students produce truly amazing work in a day, while others need a week or more because of whatever their circumstances are?

In addition to potentially reimagining assessment and teacher training to include emotional labor, writing and assessment scholars across all curricula would do well to reimagine the role of emotion in both our work and the work of our students. Anuj Gupta argues for this very thing in his article "Emotions in Academic Writing/Care-Work in Academia: Notes Towards a Repositioning of Academic Labor in India (& Beyond) ." A situation similar to mine happened to him with a student in India who wrote about her sexual assault. The discomfort he felt assessing this student's work led him to interrogate the value we place (or fail to place)

on emotion. He wisely points out that, especially for sexual assault victims, personal traumas are not validated the same way public traumas such as war or mass shootings are (Gupta 118). This may cause feelings of alienation and shame, emotions that add another layer of invisible labor which is/often impossible to assess. His suggestion is to acknowledge with the student the often "unpreparedness" we feel as instructors and the concern to not "make things worse" (8). Instead of trying to hide our ineptness at handling others' emotions or trauma, admit it so that we might normalize it. Such honesty leads to trust, which is vital in learning situations. We cannot learn if we do not feel safe to fail.

Asao Inoue poses one fundamental question in his labor-contract scholarship that was ever present in my mind when assessing my student who was a sexual assault victim: "Is my course ecology punishing other students for who they are?" And whether I assessed the student's writing quality or labor, one could argue I would be punishing her. She wasn't writing what I had been trained to assess as high-quality work, and she wasn't displaying A or even B-level effort in participation. Nevertheless, I am certain she was doing significant emotional labor that was indeed invisible to me. In the end, I admittedly had to be intuitive about my assessment practices, balancing what I knew of her circumstances with her actual work. In essence, I was looking at the ecology of the student.

Looking at the whole student, however, meant that I did assess her differently than I assessed my other students, something that was incredibly uncomfortable for me to admit. On the one hand, I felt strongly that I was doing what my teaching philosophy dictates—considering the whole student and approaching each student uniquely. But on the other hand, while assessing her labor, or lack thereof, could yield a failing grade, perhaps that's what this student needed—to slow down and heal, then try the class again when she was mentally and emotionally up to it. Inevitably, this gets into financial aid issues as she was on scholarship. Thus, she could feel penalized for her trauma. As Gupta remarked, he did not want to make things worse for a student who experienced such victimization. Just as assessment scholars have argued for instructors not to punish students when they use their own language in their writing, I did not want to punish my student for being affected by her own life. Ultimately, balancing what I knew the student had experienced, her potential, and what she actually did felt like my best option.

Amy's Story

On March 11, 2020, while my university was on spring break, university faculty, staff, and students received notification that because of the pandemic and state regulations, in-person classes were not going to resume, and the remaining month of class was to be delivered in a fully online environment. Students and faculty were given an extra week of break. During this time, students were asked to move from the dorms if they could, and faculty were to adjust their courses to an asynchronous,

online learning space. At the time, I remember being both relieved and worried. Moving to an online course format was the best way to ensure the safety of everyone involved and allow the students to complete the courses they had already begun. Nevertheless, the shift in course delivery was abrupt and jarring, particularly for my students who had never taken an online class. I was very concerned about my students' ability to successfully adapt and my own ability to change the course in a way that accounted for the myriad of ways their lives were being impacted by the pandemic, but still met the goals of the course.

In the end, I tried my best to continue with the course as planned. I felt that because we had such a short time left in the term, changing major assignments, types of course work, goals, and habits was going to be more difficult for everyone. Instead, I made modifications to major assignment deadlines, eliminated a number of smaller assignments, and created new guidelines for things like peer review and discussion that would need to take place in digital spaces and asynchronously. I emailed my students before we resumed classes, sharing with them my plan and asking for feedback, specifically about the manageability of the work. With no objections, we moved forward, trying to create a new sense of normal.

However, things were not normal; we were living and working in unprecedented cultural contexts. Students communicated with me regularly about what they were going through, sharing their struggles, not even necessarily with the course per se, but with their mental and physical health, sense of safety, financial stability, family, and even residence. The pandemic had created very real difficulties for students. Awareness of these personal difficulties created new considerations and challenges for me as a teacher, particularly with regard to the assessment of student work. Assessment has always been difficult for me, more so in the last few years as more scholarly attention has been paid to the ways in which assessment upholds bigoted cultural and institutional practices. With this in mind, and with consideration for the challenges created for my students by the pandemic, I adopted a labor-based approach to assessment, one that accounted for the completion of work and engagement with the course, efforts that were unquestionably made more onerous because of COVID for the following semester.

Implementation of Labor-Based Grading

Implementing Inoue's recommendations for labor-based grading, my assessment of student work emphasized production, rather than the quality of what was produced. Students completed drafts, revisions, peer workshops, and commentary on readings. They received substantive feedback from me on their work, but their actual grade was based on their completion of the task and their adherence to the assignment (e.g., they included source material if that was an expectation of the assignment). Initially, this approach went very well. Labor-based grading facilitated greater equity and transparency in the assessment process. Students knew

very clearly what they needed to do to be successful in the course, and everyone had the same ability to succeed. As Inoue explained, in a labor-based grade contract, "all final course grades are more accessible to every student in the room, regardless of the languages they practice, their linguistic backgrounds, or most other social dimensions" (p. 140). Having definitive expectations for work that were not only explicated but accounted for in their grades seemed to motivate them to attend, participate, and fully commit to the course.

This transparency and accessibility undoubtedly benefited students, and I found that I benefited as well from not having the pressure of determining a grade. I was able to work with students without applying prescriptivist ideas about writing quality. For me, labor-based assessment alleviated some of the tension and pressure that I have always felt when grading. Providing feedback without a grade penalty created more of a dialogue about their writing and an opportunity for students to articulate their goals and expectations for their work. I was excited to see that a number of my students envisioned their work in spaces beyond my classroom. One student worked with me extensively over the course of two semesters on a paper advocating for the release of people imprisoned for cannabis-related offenses. The paper was initially submitted as an op-ed for a public writing course, and she wanted to have it published in a local newspaper. Seeing her investment in her words, ideas, and the way she envisioned the piece having public and political power was exciting for me. I don't know if that would have happened had I been more focused on product and attaining the outcomes set by me and the university.

Despite these successes, changing my methods of assessment was unexpectedly hard. As a scholar, teacher, and researcher, I recognize the ways in which hegemonic structures— racist, classist, sexist, and ableist structures—are embedded in our institutions and our pedagogies. Social justice is an important part of my pedagogy. But when I really tried to actually resist these dynamics in my assessment, I was afraid. I was afraid of what letting go of outcomes-based assessment meant, what letting go of conceptions of "successful" meant for my class and for me as a teacher. I was almost chronically worried about how my grading practices would be understood and evaluated by my students, writing program directors who might look at my students' work, those in administration looking at grade distributions, and accrediting bodies. To be clear, my institution was incredibly supportive of faculty during the pandemic, and they were also encouraging of labor-based grading contracts. The fear of judgment was an internalized fear, rooted in my experiences in academe, both as a student and teacher. Performance-based assessment is so pervasive in education that I felt like I should be able to speak, not only to student labor, but also to the quality of their work as a professor in this discipline.

Like Sommer, my doubts and fears were heightened in moments where there was a potential for surveillance. When I submitted final grades, I remember questioning myself and thinking that there was

something wrong because I had so many students receiving A's. I worried that if my chair or dean saw these grades, they might think my course lacked rigor or, worse, that I wasn't seriously engaged with my students' work. Similarly, at the end of the academic year, I was required to submit a teaching dossier that included syllabi from the courses taught that year, samples of assignments, rubrics, and student work. In this space, again, I could not help but wonder whether my approach to assessment made me vulnerable to criticism.

My experience with labor-based grading also made me confront how much I have ascribed to potentially harmful assessment practices as a part of my professional identity. Even though I want to challenge practices that disadvantage students and rob them of their authentic voices, lives, and ideas, I also struggled to let go of the familiar. Lehn confronted this dissonance in her discussion of pedagogical failure, writing, "While I may purport to be committed to justice, I recognize that I am a participant in a system I want to resist. By virtue of that participation, the reenactment of ideologies that harm our students and that harm ourselves may be hard to avoid" (150) . I have internalized hegemonic values about what "good writing" is; these values have influenced my own writing practices and pedagogies. Attempts to confront and dismantle these left me feeling vulnerable and uncertain.

Micciche writes, "Rather than characterize emotion exclusively as a reaction to a situation or a tool used to create a reaction in an audience, we need to shift our thinking to examine how emotion is part of the 'stickiness' that generates attachments to others, to world views, and to a whole array of sources and objects" (1) . I was far more emotionally attached to outcomes-based assessment than I ever imagined because I equated my ability to assess performance to some degree with how I viewed my capabilities as a teacher. Even after we returned to in person teaching and I planned for a new term, I am still grappling with what this means for me and how to use my frustration, fear, and anxiety productively. A big part of that process for me is becoming more comfortable with questions rather than answers. Occupying spaces of not knowing invites dialogue and open, recursive engagement, which is useful in trying to attain fairness and equity in assessment. Questioning myself and working in new and different ways was emotionally labor intensive. I was intensely uncomfortable. But maybe being uncomfortable is how we know we are doing something right, how we know we are growing.

Students' Emotional Labor

Early on in my utilization of labor-based grading, I began to encounter difficulties assessing labor, at least how it has been assessed in model grading contracts. For example, Inoue (2019) identifies the following metrics for assessing labor: adherence to deadlines, guidelines for participation, earnest engagement in revision, and self-reported time spent on tasks (labor logs). Within the first week of digital learning, I began

getting reports of students who had been diagnosed with COVID. If students were asymptomatic, this did not affect their work. Conversely, I had instances where students reported being very ill. They might log on to our class's Zoom session to avoid missing material, but they were not able to participate in discussion or activities. Even though they were not active in these class sessions, I did not take away points because I recognized the effort being put forth just to attend.

I then started to get reports about students' mental health issues. The isolation they were experiencing coupled with the fear they felt about their safety and that of their loved ones lurked persistently in the backgrounds of their lives. I received so many emails and saw so many students during office hours. Some students just wanted to talk to someone; others were seeking help with their work or extensions on deadlines. As a teacher and not a mental health professional, I was limited in what I could do. I was empathetic. As someone who is treated for anxiety, I understand how oppressive a burden it can be, how even aimless fear can be crippling. I passed on information on student resources. And I made so many exceptions for students. I gave more time without question. I excused absences. I worried about my students and their well-being first and my obligations to assessment after. From a labor-grading standpoint, I wondered if I was being too lenient. After all, if I exempt students from almost all of the grading criteria, what's left?

One of my students, Drew[1], had been in one of my courses when the pandemic began; he then took another course with me in a subsequent term. During this time, Drew was very open with me about his diagnoses of PTSD and depression. Though he was a strong and committed student, he began to have difficulties meeting deadlines, completing assignments, and focusing on school. He emailed me about the shame he felt in not meeting expectations and his feelings of "being underwater" and" overwhelmed." Drew missed almost every deadline for the second half of the class. But he got everything in, and his work showed clear effort. His writing reflected the feedback he received from me and his peers. He always attended class, even if at times his camera was off, and he did not speak. If I had assessed Drew's labor in accordance with the grading criteria above, he would not have done well in the course. These metrics, devised to assess labor, failed to recognize or account for the emotional labor Drew was experiencing. This anecdote illustrates the limitedness of a definition of labor that centers on time spent on tasks and the completion of tasks; while these metrics can seem equally achievable to everyone, regardless of background, the inattention paid to physical, emotional, and intellectual effort as part of labor creates inequities. Drew exerted a great deal of effort to complete the course. His labor was real. His emotional

[1]Students' names have been replaced with pseudonyms.

labor, while invisible to us, was a shaping force in his ability to interact with course materials and his own writing.

Discussion

In their book, *Very Like a Whale: The Assessment of Writing Programs*, White, Elliot, and Peckham (2015) asserted, “Consideration of all who may be intentionally or unintentionally influenced by an assessment is the preferred axiological stance for writing program administrators in their instructional design and program assessment roles” (p. 151) . The authors use ecology as a metaphor to understand the situatedness of writing program assessment and its relationships within the university and other invested entities. While the authors are discussing writing program assessment, we feel that the same metaphor of an ecosystem can be useful in articulating the relational aspects of classroom writing assessment as they extend beyond the classroom.

Since the 1970s, ecological metaphors have been used extensively in our field to study literacy practices and learning. Scholars like Richard Coe, Shirley Bryce Heath, Brian Street, and James Paul Gee, to name a few, have employed ecology as a metaphor long before contract grading became as popular as it is today. More recently, Inoue has addressed ecology as it pertains to writing assessment, stating that an ecology accounts for the “full cycle of writing assessment through a cycle of rubric creating, drafting, judging, revising, and reflecting on the ways students read and make judgments on peer’s texts” (17) . He contends that, “An antiracist classroom writing assessment ecology provides for the complexity and holistic nature of assessment systems, the interconnectedness of all people and things, which includes environments, without denying or eliding linguistic, cultural, or racial diversity, and the politics inherent in all uneven social formations” (Inoue 77) . This body of scholarship speaks critically to the interconnectedness of writing practices and writers’ private lives and experiences. There is intrinsic value for individual writers, for teachers of writing, and for our field in examining not only a final product, but the forces shaping the writer and their work.

Similarly, in thinking about our own approaches to writing assessment, it is useful to think about our work as part of a larger ecosystem while striving to understand the influences shaping our own assessment approaches, goals, and values. Thinking about our specific roles in this way has helped us to locate one of the most salient points of tension about making changes to our assessment practices: we don’t feel like assessment choices, even in our classes, are entirely ours to make. The writing classroom and its stated learning outcomes are part of a larger system that includes students, ourselves, our programs, and our universities. In discussions we had about our experiences with labor-based grading during the planning of this article, we talked extensively about feeling anxious and worried about how we were grading, how our grading practices would be viewed by programmatic directors and chairs, and

whether our students achieved the goals of the course. How effective would feedback be if students knew quality was not being assessed as heavily as effort? How might others view our grade distribution? Were we even capable of truly assessing labor? In short, while we believed in our choice to use labor-based assessment, it seemed so antithetical to what we had always done that we were left wondering, were we doing this, the work of assessment, right?

Much of what was creating this doubt for us was simply that we had come to understand outcomes-based assessment of writing "the right way" to teach and assess writing. Accreditors and political bodies have given the outcomes-based approach power—financial, political, and social power. Outcomes-based approaches are also largely used in K-12 programs and standardized assessments, leading students to equate assessment with the meeting of stated learning goals in produced work. Lastly, through our own educational and professional experiences we have developed ideas about "good writing" and the importance of evaluating performance, ideas that have been shaped by groups who have historically held power and then reinscribed onto our students through our approach to assessment. Furthermore, expectations about our ability to teach these values and assess our students' ability to meet set outcomes are intrinsic to our professional identity and sense of self-efficacy, making any attempts to change emotionally fraught.

We adopted a labor-based approach to assessment during COVID because we hoped it would help account for the complications of learning during a shutdown. What became most apparent is that labor is 1) difficult to define; and 2) even more difficult to assess, especially because the two of us writing this article came out of a tradition of outcomes-based learning assessment. What does labor look like and what is *enough* labor? Moreover, we learned that labor is also affected by race, gender, and socioeconomics (among a host of other factors) just as "quality" is. How should we judge labor if a student has a disability and cannot complete his readings within 20 minutes? What about when a student is a new mother? What do their labor logs look like if they are being truly honest?

Finally, we learned that regardless of whether we are implementing labor-based grading or outcome-based grading, the buck stops with us, and, thus, we cannot escape a certain hierarchy when it comes to writing assessment. Despite our best efforts, we had to confront the idea that grading based on labor may even be an assessment of *quality.* For example, when describing what B-level labor looks like, Inoue explains that it involves revisions: "When the job is to revise your thinking and work, you will reshape, extend, complicate, or substantially clarify your ideas—or relate your ideas to new things" (334). Such "reshaping, extending, complicating, and substantially clarifying" for us equals "quality." Thus, while it is always crucial to attend to the inequities that accompany hierarchies, we must admit they are already always present.

So what can instructors do to address these inequities that are always present because racism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism are systemic? We arrived at one answer: vulnerability. Instructors must be allowed to acknowledge they do not know all the answers. This obviously is an uncomfortable thing. An instructor's concern with her institution or an accrediting body thinking that her evaluation is too easy gets at the ever-looming sense that someone is constantly watching and, as a result, assessing her progress in addition to her students'. Interestingly, this feeling, what we have deemed the "internalized panopticon," only intensified for us while teaching during COVID. That is because many writing instructors (we would argue many academics in general) feel they need to be held accountable by someone, *anyAone.* As a result, vulnerability is a tough pill to swallow because even if no one is watching, it feels like they are because accountability is a high expectation in our field. Empirical data and source attribution are what the field of rhetoric and composition relies on. Nevertheless, there are some occupational hazards where this standard is concerned, a primary one being the institutional angel on our shoulder telling us, *Grade harder. Challenge them. That's the only way to prepare them for what's to come.*

Works Cited

Ashforth, Blake E., and Ronald H. Humphrey. "Emotion in the Workplace: A Reappraisal." *Human Relations*, vol. 48, no. 2, 1995, pp. 97-125. *APA PsycNet*, https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679504800201.

Brand, Alice G. "Writing Assessment at the College Level." *ERIC Digest,* 1992, https://www.ericdigests.org/1992-3/writing.htm.

Brandt, Deborah. "Sponsors of Literacy." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 49, no. 2, May 1998, p. 165, https://doi.org/10.2307/358929.

Broad, Bob. *What We Really Value: Beyond Rubrics in Teaching and Assessing Writing*. Utah State University Press, 2003, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46nxvm.

Coe, Richard M. "Eco-Logic for the Composition Classroom." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 26, no. 3, Oct. 1975, p. 232, https://doi.org/10.2307/356121.

Cooper, Marilyn M. "The Ecology of Writing." *College English*, vol. 48, no. 4, Apr. 1986, p. 364, https://doi.org/10.2307/377264.

Danielewicz, Jane, and Peter Elbow. "A Unilateral Grading Contract to Improve Learning and Teaching." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 61, no. 2, 2009, pp. 244-68.

Davis, Rhonda D. "A Place for Ecopedagogy in Community Literacy." *Community Literacy Journal*, vol. 7, no. 2, Apr. 2013, https://doi.org/10.25148/CLJ.7.2.009350.

Gee, James Paul. Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses. 3rd ed, Routledge, 2008.

---. “The New Literacy Studies: From ‘Socially Situated’ to the Work of the Social.” *Situated Literacies: Reading and Writing in Context*, Jan. 2000.

Grandey, Alicia, et al. *Emotional Labor in the 21st Century Diverse Perspectives on Emotion Regulation at Work.* 1st ed, Routledge, 2013.

Gupta, Anuj. *Emotions in Academic Writing/Care-Work in Academia: Notes Towards a Repositioning of Academic Labor in India (& Beyond)*. no. 2021, 2021, p. 32.

Hargreaves, Andy. “Mixed Emotions: Teachers’ Perceptions of Their Interactions with Students.” *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 16, no. 8, 2000, pp. 811–26. *APA PsycNet*, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00028-7.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. “Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure.” *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 85, no. 3, 1979, pp. 551-75.

---. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Germany, University of California Press, 2012.

Horner, Bruce, et al. “OPINION: Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach.” *College English*, vol. 73, Jan. 2011, pp. 303-21.

Huot, Brian. *(Re)Articulating Writing Assessment for Teaching and Learning*. p. 230.

Inoue, Asao B. *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future*. The WAC Clearinghouse; Parlor Press, 2015, https://doi.org/10.37514/PER-B.2015.0698.

---. *Labor-Based Grading Contracts: Building Equity and Inclusion in the Compassionate Writing Classroom*. The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado, 2019, https://doi.org/10.37514/PER-B.2019.0216.0.

Jacobs, Dale, and Laura R. Micciche, editors. *A Way to Move: Rhetorics of Emotion & Composition Studies*. Boynton/Cook, 2003.

Kaplan, Robert B., editor. *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, 2010.

Micciche, Laura. *Doing Emotion: Rhetoric, Writing, Teaching.* Boynton/Cook Publishers Inc. 2007.

Royer, Daniel J., and Roger Gilles. “Directed Self-Placement: An Attitude of Orientation.” *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 50, no. 1, Sept. 1998, p. 54, https://doi.org/10.2307/358352.

Steinberg, Carola. “Assessment as an ‘Emotional Practice.’” *English Teaching*, p. 23.

Takayoshi, Pamela, and Patricia Sullivan, editors. *Labor, Writing Technologies, And the Shaping of Competition in the Academy*. Hampton Press, 2007.

Tannen, Deborah, editor. *Spoken and Written Language: Exploring Orality and Literacy*. Illustrated edition, Praeger, 1982.

Wagner, Daniel A. "Literacy in Theory and Practice. Brian V. Street. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pp. 241." *Applied Psycholinguistics*, vol. 7, no. 2, June 1986, pp. 171–75. *Cambridge University Press*, https://doi.org/10.10sch17/S0142716400007402.

Weisser, Christian R. *Ecocomposition: Theoretical and Pedagogical Approaches*. State University of New York Press, 2002.

Wharton, Amy S. "The Affective Consequences of Service Work: Managing Emotions on the Job." *Work and Occupations*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1993, pp. 205–32. *APA PsycNet*, https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888493020002004.

White, Edward M. "The Opening of the Modern Era of Writing Assessment: A Narrative." *College English*, vol. 63, no. 3, Jan. 2001, p. 306, https://doi.org/10.2307/378995.

White, Edward M., et al. *Very Much Like a Whale: The Assessment of Writing Programs.* Utah State UP, 2015.

Worsham, Lynn. "Going Postal: Pedagogic Violence and the Schooling of Emotion." *JAC*, vol. 18, no. 2, JAC, 1998, pp. 213–45, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20866183.

Yancey, Kathleen Blake. "Looking Back as We Look Forward: Historicizing Writing Assessment." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 50, no. 3, Feb. 1999, p. 483, https://doi.org/10.2307/358862.

Zembylas, Michalinos. "Emotions and Teacher Identity: A Poststructural Perspective." *Teachers and Teaching*, vol. 9, no. 3, Aug. 2003, pp. 213–38, https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600309378.

The Pandemic, Contingent Faculty, and Catholic Colleges and Universities

Andrew Herr
Saint Vincent College

Julia Cavallo
Conference for Mercy Higher Education

Jason King
Saint Vincent College

Abstract
In this paper, we explore the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on contingent faculty in Catholic higher education. As a baseline for comparison, we draw on our 2019 essay which traced the increasing reliance on contingent faculty in Catholic higher education from 2001-2017. When compared to 2020, we find three significant results. First, Catholic colleges and universities responded to the pandemic by reducing all employment—administration, staff, tenured/tenure-track faculty, and contingent faculty. In this general reduction, contingent faculty was reduced by 2.6%. Second, the reduction in employment was particularly pronounced in small Catholic schools. At these schools, contingent faculty was reduced by 10.7%. Third, surprisingly, the reduction in contingent faculty was 5.2% for men, whereas for women it was reduced by 0.7%

Andrew Herr is an Associate Professor of Economics at Saint Vincent College.

Julia Cavallo is the Executive Director of Conference for Mercy Higher Education.

Jason King is the Irene S. Taylor Endowed Chair for Catholic Family Studies and Director of the Core Curriculum at Saint Vincent College.

In the immediate aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, U. S. colleges and universities were forced to move to online instruction and then faced declining enrollments, empty residence halls, and greatly reduced athletic schedules. These changes significantly lowered the revenue of these institutions of higher education. To address this financial loss, colleges and universities cut contingent faculty, many institutions by more than half (June and O'Leary). Women were hit particularly hard by these forces. As primary schools and daycare centers closed, women took on greater responsibilities for childcare and, as a result, reduced their presence in the economy, including in higher education (McMillen). The experience was so difficult for faculty that a third (35%) considered changing jobs and another third (38%) considered retiring (*The Chronicle* 11).

As institutions of higher education, Catholic colleges and universities were subject to the same pandemic-related forces affecting other institutions. They are a subset of higher education in the United States, with roughly 225 four-year schools across the country, so, like other schools, they struggled with loss of revenue, smaller enrollments, empty residence halls, and fewer athletic events. Even so, because they are Catholic, these colleges and universities should be committed to a tradition that emphasizes the rights and dignity of workers. According to the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace's *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*, work "is essentially ordered to and has its final goal in the human person" (no. 272). Thus, to protect the dignity of the person as worker, laborers must be justly compensated, have benefits that include retirement and medical insurance (no. 301), and, of relevance to contingent faculty, have the ability "to reach satisfactory levels of employment" (no. 288). Within their work, as with all of life, there is to be equality "among all people, regardless of their race, nation, sex, origin, culture, or class" (no. 144).

In this paper, we draw on data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to explore the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on contingent faculty in Catholic higher education. As a baseline for comparison, we draw on trends that we reported in our 2019 essay, which traced the increasing reliance on contingent faculty in Catholic higher education from 2001-2017 (Herr, Cavallo, and King). We then compare these trends with data from 2020 to understand the impact the pandemic had on faculty in Catholic higher education. We find three significant results. First, Catholic colleges and universities responded to the pandemic by reducing all employment—administration, staff, tenured/tenure-track faculty, and contingent faculty. In this general reduction, contingent faculty was reduced by 2.6%. Second, the reduction in employment was particularly pronounced in small Catholic schools. At these schools, contingent faculty was reduced by 10.7%. Third, surprisingly, men fared worse than women at Catholic schools. The

reduction in contingent faculty was 5.2% for men whereas for women it was reduced by 0.7%. Since these effects were felt across Catholic higher education, although most significantly at small Catholic schools, it seems that the exigencies of the pandemic were stronger than commitments to mission.

Background

Contingent faculty have been on the rise since the late 1970's. As the AAUP has observed, the rise in contingent faculty occurred alongside a rise in the number of women and part-time instructional staff in the late 1970s (AAUP). More recently, "The Employment Status of Instructional Staff Members in Higher Education," released in 2011 and updated in 2014, brought this issue to the foreground in higher education (Curtis). The report concluded that the increase in contingent faculty had continued to rise and then stood at 70% of the professoriate. The Coalition on the Academic Workforce reaffirmed this statistic in its own analysis ("A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members").

In "The Data and Ethics of Contingent Faculty at Catholic Colleges and Universities," we studied the rise of contingent faculty in Catholic higher education, compared it to the rise of higher education overall and then sought to explain the rise within Catholic schools. We were trying to see if there was a difference in these schools because of their labor commitments found in Catholic Social Teaching expressed in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*. We discovered that Catholic schools did have a lower percentage of contingent faculty in their ranks than non-Catholic colleges and universities. From 2001-2017, the percentage of contingent faculty at Catholic schools increased from 22.2% to 30.6% (Herr, Cavallo, King 172). While this is significantly lower than the AAUP 2014 analysis of 70% contingent faculty, much of this divergence comes from a comparison of dissimilar institutions. The AAUP analysis includes 2-year colleges and for-profit colleges, and there are no for-profit Catholic schools and only a handful of 2-year colleges. To correct for this, we removed these schools from our dataset and found that the percentage of contingent faculty at Catholic colleges and universities is roughly 5% lower than at non-Catholic schools (173). It was a real difference but not as profound a difference as a superficial analysis might suggest.

Even so, contingent faculty increased in Catholic higher education over the previous two decades, growing 10% during this time (173). When we delved further into the data, we found three significant dynamics related to the use of contingent faculty (179-184). First, gender played a key role. Holding other factors constant, the contingent faculty percentage for women was 7.6% higher than for men. Second, the contingent faculty percentage was inversely related to Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) students. In other words, holding other factors constant, an increase in students was related to a decrease in the percentage of contingent faculty. Finally, the

use of contingent faculty differed between larger Catholic schools with Carnegie classifications 15-20 (Doctoral Universities and Master's Colleges and Universities) and smaller Catholic schools with Carnegie classifications of 21-23 (Baccalaureate Colleges).

We saw two main differences between these two classifications of Catholic schools. First, the FTE student effect at the smaller schools was more pronounced than at larger schools. At smaller schools, an increase in FTE of 37 students was associated with a 1% decrease in the percentage of contingent faculty. At larger schools, it took an increase of 1,400 students to elicit the same 1% decrease in contingent faculty. Second, at smaller schools an increase in administrators was related to a decrease in contingent faculty percentage. We found an opposite relationship at larger schools; namely, the contingent faculty percentage increased with more administrators.

To summarize, our previous analysis showed that, on the whole, Catholic colleges and universities relied on fewer contingent faculty than their non-Catholic peers. While this could partly be attributed to the labor commitments of these schools, the deeper analysis suggested a more complicated conclusion. Larger schools seemed to hire more expensive administrators that reduced resources for tenure-track lines, and a larger number of students were needed to reduce reliance on contingent faculty. For smaller schools, administrators were more likely to be those who helped with recruitment and retention and so generated more resources for tenure-track lines. Moreover, just a small number of students would increase the resources for these small schools and thereby reduce contingency for faculty. The key dynamic shared across these two classifications of Catholics schools was women were more likely to be contingent faculty than men.

This was the state of contingent faculty in Catholic higher education when the Covid-19 pandemic hit the United States. Given that contingent faculty lack tenure protections, their employment depends upon the vagaries of institutional enrollment. Thus, it is unsurprising that initial reports suggested that colleges and universities responded to the pandemic with a reduction in the number of contingent faculty and that this reduction significantly impacted women. In this paper, we set out to explore if these effects are similar for Catholic higher education and how these effects compare to our previous analysis that covered 2001-2017.

Data and Analysis

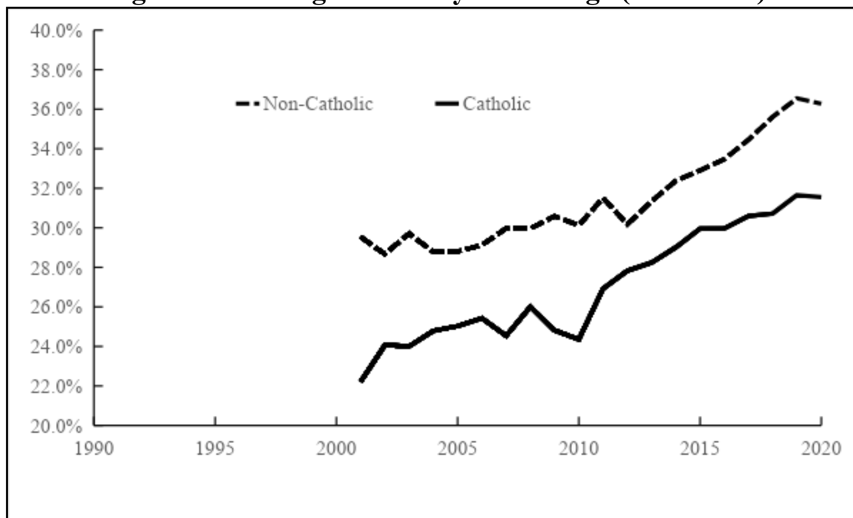
To gain an understanding of the situation in Catholic higher education, we utilized IPEDS. These data sets provide comprehensive data for all schools offering Title IV federal financial aid to their students. The data include information that enables us to track tenured and tenure-track faculty, contingent faculty, and faculty gender. The data also include Carnegie classifications of schools and a subcategory for Catholic schools. Our analysis focuses on colleges and universities in Carnegie classifications

15-23, which cover Doctoral Universities (classifications 15-17), Master's Colleges and Universities (18-20), and Baccalaureate Colleges (21-23). This enables a comparison of Catholic higher education with higher education overall as almost all of Catholic higher education is within the 15-23 classifications.

Overview: All Schools Compared to Catholic Schools
In our previous essay, we tracked contingent faculty percentages from 2001-2017. For this essay, we added years 2018-2020, taking us through the fall of 2020 and including the initial impact of the pandemic. Our dataset includes 183 Catholic and 1,511 non-Catholic schools. We calculate the contingent faculty percentage by dividing all faculty with rank not on the tenure track divided by all faculty with rank.

Figure 1 shows a trend of increased use of contingent faculty through 2019, followed by a drop in 2020. This trend is seen in both non-Catholic and Catholic institutions. Contingent faculty percentages at non-Catholic colleges and universities increased from 34.5% in 2017 to 35.6% in 2018 to 36.5% in 2019 but then dropped by 0.2% in 2020. For Catholic colleges and universities, contingent faculty percentages increased from 30.6% in 2017 to 30.7% in 2018 to 31.7% in 2019, before dropping by 0.1% in 2020.

Figure 1. Contingent Faculty Percentage (2000-2020)



This overall picture becomes a little more complicated when one breaks down the schools by Carnegie classifications. For non-Catholic colleges and universities, the percentage of contingent faculty rose in 2018 and 2019 before falling slightly in 2020. This trend was consistent between Doctoral Universities and Master's Colleges and Universities (Carnegie classifications 15-20) and Baccalaureate Colleges (Carnegie

classifications 21-23) (Figure 2a). For Catholic colleges and universities, schools with Carnegie classifications 15-20 consistently increased their percentage of contingent faculty from 2017 through 2020, with only a 0.1% drop in 2020. However, for Catholic schools with classifications 21-23, the contingent faculty percentage fell substantially, from 33.1% to 29.5% (Figure 2b). In other words, the decrease in contingent faculty for Catholic higher education was predominantly in the smaller, baccalaureate-granting institutions.

Figure 2a: Contingent Faculty Percentage at Non-Catholic Institutions, Carnegie Classifications 15-20 vs. 21-23 (2000-2020)

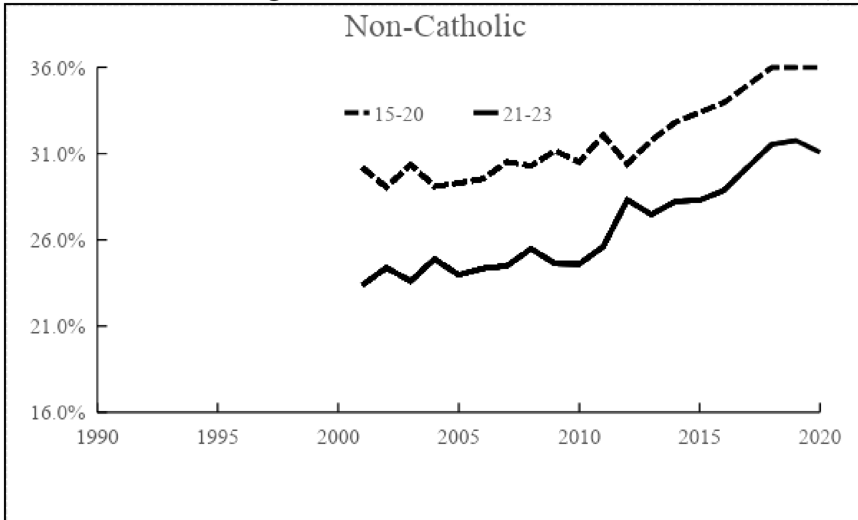
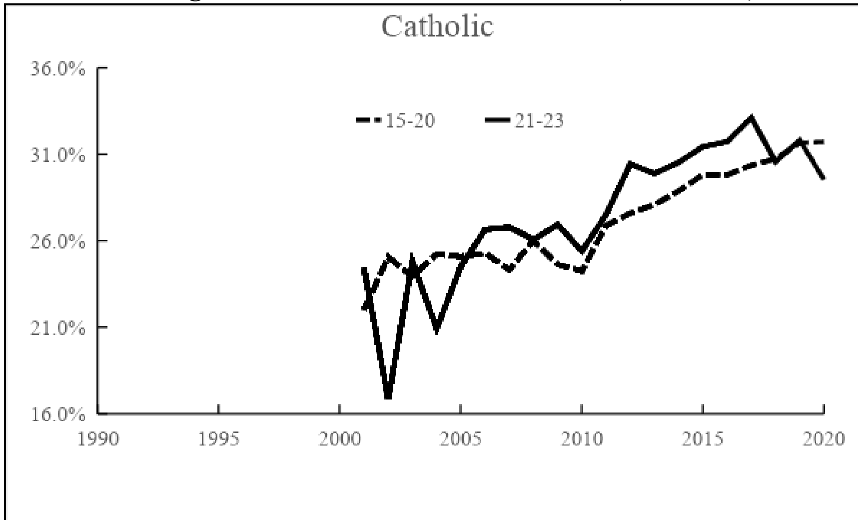


Figure 2b: Contingent Faculty Percentage at Catholic Institutions, Carnegie Classifications 15-20 vs. 21-23 (2000-2020)



In past years, a decline of contingent faculty would seem to be a positive development, implying greater use of tenure and tenure-track faculty. This is not the case for 2020. There was an overall decrease in faculty numbers in every category of school (Table 1). For non-Catholic schools in classification 15-20 (Doctoral Universities and Master's Colleges and Universities), all faculty numbers decreased by 1.0% and contingent faculty by 1.7%. For Catholic schools in classification 15-20, there were similar decreases with all faculty declining by 2.1% and contingent faculty by 1.9%. The largest decreases came from schools in the 21-23 classification (Baccalaureate Colleges). Non-Catholic schools in this classification saw a decline in all faculty of 3.0% and contingent faculty of 5.1%. The Catholic Baccalaureate Colleges (classification 21-23) saw large decreases in all faculty of 3.9% and contingent faculty of 10.7%. Thus, faculty were decreasing across the board in 2020, but the cuts in contingent faculty were deeper, resulting in the declining percentage of contingent faculty.

Table 1: Annual Percentage Change in Faculty (All Faculty vs. Contingent Faculty)

	2012-2017		2020	
Non-Catholic	All Faculty	Contingent	All Faculty	Contingent
All	2.1%	4.8%	-1.2%	-2.0%
15-20	2.0%	4.9%	-1.0%	-1.7%
21-23	3.3%	4.8%	-3.0%	-5.1%
	2012-2017		2020	
Catholic	All Faculty	Contingent	All Faculty	Contingent
All	0.3%	2.2%	-2.2%	-2.6%
15-20	0.3%	2.3%	-2.1%	-1.9%
21-23	0.4%	2.2%	-3.9%	-10.7%

Gender and Catholic Schools

Gender played a role in the decrease in contingent faculty at Catholic schools (Table 2). The percentage of men who were contingent faculty, as opposed to tenured or tenure-track faculty, generally increased from 2017 to 2019 and then dropped in 2020. This was true overall and when broken down by Carnegie classifications. The contingent faculty percentage for men fell from 26.2% to 25.7% for all Catholic schools, 26.0% to 25.7% for Doctoral- and Master's-granting Catholic schools, and 28.8% to 26.6% for Baccalaureate-granting Catholic schools.

The picture for women was surprisingly different. Overall, the percentage of women who were contingent faculty, as opposed to tenured or tenure-track faculty, increased by 0.2% (Table 3). This increase was only at Catholic schools with Carnegie classifications of 15-20 (Doctoral Universities and Master's Colleges and Universities). There, the percentage of women who were contingent faculty rose by 0.4%. At Catholic schools with Carnegie classifications of 21-23 (Baccalaureate

Colleges), the percentage of women who were contingent faculty decreased by 2.4%. While severe, it is close to the 2.2% decrease of men in these classifications. Thus, at Catholic schools, it seems that cuts in female contingent faculty were smaller than for male contingent faculty. In comparison, non-Catholic schools had decreases in the percentage of men and women contingent faculty, but the gender disparity was smaller than at Catholic schools.

Table 2: Contingent Faculty Percentage at Catholic Institutions, by Gender and Carnegie Classifications

	All		Carnegie 15-20		Carnegie 21-23	
Year	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
2017	25.0%	36.2%	24 6%	36.2%	30.1%	36.2%
2018	25.3%	36.2%	25.1%	36.3%	27.2%	34.3%
2019	26.2%	37.0%	26.0%	37.2%	28.8%	35.0%
2020	25.7%	37.2%	25.7%	37.5%	26.6%	32.7%

Table 3: Contingent Faculty Analysis, 2019-2020

	Catholic			Non-Catholic		
All Classifications	2019	2020	Diff	2019	2020	Diff
All	31.7%	31.6%	-0.1%	36.5%	36.3%	-0.3%
Men	26.2%	25.7%	-0.5%	30.9%	30.5%	-0.3%
Women	37.0%	37.2%	0.2%	43.4%	43.0%	-0.3%
Classifications 15-20						
All	31.6%	31.7%	0.1%	37.1%	36.8%	-0.2%
Men	26.0%	25.7%	-0.4%	31.0%	30.7%	-0.3%
Women	37.2%	37.5%	0.4%	44.5%	44.2%	-0.3%
Classifications 21-23						
All	31.8%	29.5%	-2.3%	31.8%	31.1%	-0.7%
Men	28.8%	26.6%	-2.2%	29.8%	29.1%	-0.7%
Women	35.0%	32.7%	-2.4%	33.9%	33.1%	-0.8%

The decreases do not reveal the true depth of cuts to contingent faculty. These percentages speak to the percentage of the overall faculty that are contingent, a ratio where contingent faculty is the numerator and overall faculty the denominator. The problem is that there were substantial faculty cutbacks between 2019 and 2020 (Table 4). All faculty were being reduced. This was true for Catholic and non-Catholic schools, both Carnegie classifications of 15-20 and 21-23, and for men and women. In other words, Table 3 shows the makeup of faculty consisting of less contingent faculty, but Table 4 shows that this was not because of increases in tenure and tenure-track faculty but because contingent faculty were cut deeper than faculty overall. So, when looking at the absolute

numbers (Table 4), the starkness of the cuts in contingent faculty becomes clear. It was most shocking at small Catholic schools (Baccalaureate Colleges, classifications 21-23). The decline in contingent faculty at these institutions was over 10%.

One trend stands out: the percentage decrease in contingent faculty was larger than the corresponding percentage decrease in all faculty in every single category but three: women in all Catholic schools, all contingent faculty at Catholic schools with classifications of 15-20 (Doctoral Universities and Master's Colleges and Universities), and women at Catholic schools with classifications of 15-20 (Doctoral Universities and Master's Colleges and Universities). Two of these three categories address women and contingent faculty and point to an unexpected result. For Catholic schools, male faculty declined more severely than female faculty.

Table 4: Percentage Change in Faculty Numbers, 2019-2020

	Catholic		Non-Catholic	
All Classifications	All Faculty	Contingent	All Faculty	Contingent
All	-2.2%	-2.6%	-1.2%	-2.0%
Men	-3.3%	-5.2%	-2.1%	-3.2%
Women	-1.1%	-0.7%	-0.2%	-0.9%
Classifications 15-20				
All	-2.1%	-1.9%	-1.0%	-1.7%
Men	-3.2%	-4.5%	-1.9%	-2.9%
Women	-1.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.6%
Classifications 21-23				
All	-3.9%	-10.7%	-3.0%	-5.1%
Men	-4.9%	-12.2%	-3.8%	-5.9%
Women	-2.8%	-9.3%	-2.2%	-4.4%

Administration, Staff, and Catholic Schools

It is worth noting that the pandemic not only hit faculty but also administration and staff. Catholic colleges and universities saw a decrease in the percentage of Non-Instruction or Research Employees from 67.1% in 2019 to 66.5% in 2020 (Table 5). Prior to 2020, this percentage had varied narrowly in the range between 67.1% and 67.4%. This decrease is about twice the decrease for faculty (Table 6). Just as with faculty, the most significant decreases came from Catholic schools with Carnegie classifications of 21-23 (Baccalaureate Colleges).

Table 5: Catholic Colleges and Universities: Percentage of

Non-Instruction or Research Employees

Year	% Non-Instruction or Research
2012	67.3%
2013	67.1%
2014	67.4%
2015	67.2%
2016	67.1%
2017	67.3%
2018	67.1%
2019	67.1%
2020	66.5%

Table 6: Percentage Change in Number of Employees, 2019-2020

	Total	Non-Instruction or Research	Instruction
All Catholic	-3.6%	-4.3%	-2.3%
15-20	-3.4%	-4.1%	-2.1%
21-23	-5.4%	-6.2%	-3.7%

Discussion

The effects of the pandemic were particularly bleak for Catholic higher education. We make three significant observations. First, Catholic schools responded to the pandemic with a substantial decrease in employment in the fall of 2020. Administration and staff decreased by 4.3%, all faculty decreased by 2.2%, and contingent faculty decreased by 2.6%. This resulted in an overall decrease in employment of 3.6%. This first effect is the easiest to explain. Hit by unexpected financial exigencies, schools cut employees to save money. Staff and administration seemed easier to cut than faculty. With fewer students on campus in the fall of 2020, schools likely found it easier to cut student life officials, for example, than faculty—contingent or not—as classes still had to be taught.

Second, the greatest employment reductions were at smaller Catholic schools, those with Carnegie classifications of 21-23 (Baccalaureate Colleges). In these schools, the overall decrease of employment was 5.4% and of all faculty was 3.9%. Here, though, is where contingent faculty were hit the hardest. More than 10% of contingent faculty were cut at these schools. This is the most significant decrease in all schools, Catholic or non-Catholic. Our explanation of this second effect is a little more speculative. While some Catholic institutions have large endowments, like Notre Dame at $11 billion and Boston College at $2.5 billion, most have more modest endowments. According to the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, the median endowment for Catholic schools is $33.6 million, about half of the $65 million that is the median of all U.S. colleges and universities (Association of Catholic

Colleges and Universities). This creates a precarious financial situation at most Catholic schools. From 2016-2019, 39 colleges closed, and 20% were Catholic (*Inside Higher Ed*). When the pandemic hit, the financial fallout must have impacted these schools significantly, and, as a result, they reacted with substantial cuts in contingent faculty.

Finally, the pandemic seems to have affected men more than women at Catholic schools. This result is unexpected and the most difficult to explain. It contrasts with other research on the effects of the pandemic on women. There were no statements from Catholic colleges and universities saying they were working toward gender parity in employment, so it is doubtful that the result comes from schools' commitment to Catholic social teaching. Thus, without further research and analysis, we can only speculate about this surprising finding. It could be that gender inequity had to do with more men retiring and leaving the field. As the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported, 35% of faculty considered changing jobs and 38% of faculty considered retirement. Given that men tend to hold higher-paying positions in the academy, perhaps they were in a better position to depart or retire when the pandemic hit. Thus, they would be more likely to leave their jobs. If women were not in this position, they would need to keep working and maybe even pick up available sections because of departures and retirement. Or, perhaps, the demands of caring for children or elderly parents during the pandemic meant that women needed their employment more. They would not have fought back against onerous demands of the institutions, whereas men with fewer of these demands and more financial security might not have stood for them. Or, perhaps, it was even simpler: women earned less than men, so it was better to fire men. It is also possible that given the dynamics of childcare and elderly care, women pursued more parttime work than men. None of these are quite satisfactory because they do not explain why women overall lost positions, so clearly more work is needed here.

While difficult staffing decisions are understandable given the dynamics of the U. S. response to the pandemic, they still suggest that the financial decisions of Catholic colleges and universities often end up in tension with their commitments to the dignity of work and workers. It was a trend already operative in faculty hiring practices over the past several decades that has favored contingent, flexible instructors. However, the pandemic seems to have strengthened a justification for hiring contingent faculty—they can be easily released. Even if the 2020 data turn out to be a single data point and Catholic schools return to their previous employment trends, the tensions between their labor practices and labor commitments in Catholic higher education need addressing in order to align mission, principles, and values with practice.

Works Cited

American Association of University Professors (AAUP). "Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession."

www.aaup.org/file/Contingent%20Appointment.pdf.
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. "Frequently Asked Questions." www.accunet.org/Catholic-Higher-Ed-FAQs.
Curtis, John. "The Employment Status of Instructional Staff, Fall 2011." *AAUP: American Association of University Professors*, April 14, 2014, https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/files/AAUP-InstrStaff2011-April2014.pdf.
The Chronicle of Higher Education. "'On the Verge of Burnout': Covid-19's Impact on Faculty Well-Being and Career Plans." October 2020, http://connect.chronicle.com/rs/931-EKA-218/images/Covid%26FacultyCareerPaths_Fidelity_ResearchBrief_v3%20%281%29.pdf.
The Coalition on the Academic Workforce. "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members: A Summary of Findings on Part-Time Faculty Respondents to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce Survey on Contingent Faculty Members and Instructors." June 2012, www.academicworkforce.org/CAW_portrait_2012.pdf.
Herr, Andrew, Julia Cavallo, and Jason King. "The Data and Ethics of Contingent Faculty at Catholic Colleges and Universities." *The Journal of Moral Theology*, vol. 9, special issue no. 2, 2020, pp. 156-184.
Inside Higher Ed. "Private Nonprofit College Closures and Mergers, 2016-Present." www.insidehighered.com/content/private-nonprofit-college-closures-and-mergers-2016-present.
June, Audrey Williams and Brian O'Leary. "3 Things Federal Data Reveal About How Colleges Fared During the Pandemic." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 14, 2021, www.chronicle.com/article/3-things-new-federal-data-reveal-about-how-colleges-fared-during-the-pandemic.
McMillen, Liz. "The Pandemic Hit Female Academics Hardest: What Are Colleges Going to Do about It?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 27, 2021, https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-pandemic-hit-female-academics-hardest.
Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html.

Zoom 'n Gloom: Performativity and Inclusivity during the Pandemic and Beyond

Sarah V. Seeley
University of Toronto Mississauga

Abstract
The pandemic has variously amplified, eliminated, and otherwise transformed the experiences and meanings of work across sectors and nation states. In the context of higher education, this transformation has taken many shapes, which have been molded by pre-existing, if not predictable, inequalities. If we set up all the well-documented pandemic-induced obstacles to work alongside the performative nature of academic work, there is a notable uneasiness. Insofar as the nature of work is changing— becoming more challenging, in general—there must be further implications for work that is "on display." Within this context, the article focuses on the experiences of teaching and learning in online, synchronous, seminar-style classrooms. It further considers how pandemic-induced shifts in the parameters of teaching and learning can offer opportunities for cultivating more accessible, inclusive pedagogies that acknowledge the cross-cutting types of work that encase student learning.

Since many North American universities are still offering remote course delivery in some formation, questions surrounding classroom engagement landscapes are more visible than ever. The importance of cultivating online academic cultures that account for a wide range of lived experiences could not be clearer. Inclusive, accessible pedagogies that aim to engage, empower, and otherwise "see" students across a full spectrum of identities, abilities, and circumstances are essential.

Sarah V. Seeley is an Assistant Professor in the teaching stream at the University of Toronto Mississauga. She teaches first-year writing as a member of the Institute for the Study of University Pedagogy. Sarah holds a Ph.D. in anthropology, and her research interests include language ideology, writing pedagogy, and academic labor practices. Sarah loves to cook and craft, and she practices yoga daily.

For example, Hays and Mallon have written about the inclusivity affordances offered by open educational resources (OER). More to the point, they discuss how the use of OER sets the stage for all students to "learn and grow with equitable access to information that represents diverse perspectives and voices" (Hays and Mallon 21) . The Ontario Human Rights Commission has similarly focused on facilitating accessible educational experiences through its endorsement of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (46-50), and we can see the many ways that UDL principles, like offering multiple means of engagement and representation, have shaped the great shift online. I also want to suggest that, when invoking the lived experiences that exemplify the urgencies and exigencies of accessible pedagogies, labor practices must be centered.

This is because the pandemic has further highlighted the need for pedagogies that account for the lived experiences of simultaneously enacting multiple types of work. I'm thinking here of the interwoven nature of care-based and domestic work, the work of concentration, the work that pays the rent, the work of keeping healthy, and so much more. The fact that all manner of work intervenes on processes of learning is not unique to the pandemic, but it has certainly vitalized a conversation around such connections. For example, 2021 saw a strong focus on the fact that many students juggle their studies with all manners of other work and family responsibilities. To that point, George Veletsianos, a Canada Research Chair in Innovative Learning and Technology, suggests that "the pandemic has made clear for many people that online and blended learning allows more students to continue working or caring for their family while studying" (qtd. in Munroe) . This is surely true, and the need for such flexibility is not inherent to pandemic contexts.

As conversations about the parameters of pandemic life continue to unfold alongside new variants, the shift into a post-pandemic world is clearly prolonged, uneven, and perhaps overestimated. For example, two years into the pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that just under 63% of the American population is fully vaccinated. The Public Health Agency of Canada reports slightly better numbers: Just over 77% of the Canadian population is fully vaccinated. Booster campaigns are prevalent in both nations, but this is to say nothing of vaccine infrastructures outside of the global North. Moving forward will require a continued recognition that we are not all as we once were. By this, I mean that the transference of pandemic-era mindfulness will be essential for traversing continued challenges to our collective work and well-being.

The pandemic has variously amplified, eliminated, and otherwise transformed the experiences and meanings of work across sectors and nation states. In the context of higher education, this transformation has taken many shapes, which have been molded by pre-existing, if not predictable, inequalities. If we set up all the well-documented pandemic-induced obstacles to work alongside the performative nature of academic

work, there is a notable uneasiness. Insofar as the nature of work is changing— becoming more challenging, in general—there must be further implications for work "on display."

The role of performativity within higher education is well documented. The sociologist of education Stephen Ball has suggested that "performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change—based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic)" (216). This phenomenon has been critiqued at length from the faculty perspective. For example, Hayes and Cheng recently critiqued the role of performativity in measuring teaching excellence. The phenomenon has been otherwise studied in terms of neoliberal managerialism (e.g., Kalfa and Taksa; Kenny) and, more recently, in terms of the presentation of the self (e.g., Macfarlane) and professional identity formation (e.g., Wilson et al.). While performativity is certainly not a universal feature of teaching and learning, it is implicated in many toxic academic labor practices. We can also see its reach in academic publishing cultures, the neoliberal casualization of labor, and the over-reliance on graduate student labor. Further, many contingent faculty roles paradoxically demand the material trappings of performative excellence—like stellar student evaluations—yet offer limited and limiting socioeconomic resources.

What's more, Bruce Macfarlane has drawn attention to the growth of *student* performativity. Linking the expectations that are foisted upon students and faculty, Macfarlane suggests that ubiquitous performative sensibilities are negatively impacting student learning. "Students," he argues,

> are now expected to demonstrate more visibly that they are 'learning' rather than simply being offered the opportunity to attend lectures and seminars. What it means to be a student, not just the product of their intellectual endeavors undertaken in private, is now observed and evaluated. (339)

In their 2009 examination of distance learning, DePew and Lettner-Rust similarly observed that "simulated classroom interfaces often reduce the students' identities to their performances" (180). Surely, pandemic-era shifts to online learning have only amplified these pre-existing circumstances. Since much learning will continue to occur online, many educators continue to carve out the space to more fully consider the degree to which face-to-face (F2F) and online pedagogies are transferrable and commensurable.

Since this work is playing out amid pressing conversations about social justice and antiracist pedagogies, I believe there is an opportunity for extending Jane Tompkins' (1990) critique of the performance model of higher education. While Tompkins only really focused on the effects of

understanding teaching as performance, I will explore how this model problematically casts *learning* as a performance of intelligence, knowledgeability, and preparedness. This perspective privileges the student who, perhaps in the image of their teacher, successfully performs these qualities. Performance-centered assessments are reductive and exclusionary, yet, in my own experience, they may be stowed away within an otherwise mindful pedagogical framework. Because of this, I believe we are obliged to consider the degree to which performativity paves pathways to success within our classrooms.

To situate this reflection, I would like to focus on the experiences of teaching and learning in online, synchronous, seminar-style classrooms. Educators have, of course, had wildly different experiences with teaching under these circumstances. Viet Thanh Nguyen, for example, has written about his self-proclaimed "unpopular opinion" that teaching on Zoom is enjoyable. Regardless of personal stance, experiences with pandemic-era online teaching have been shaped by all manner of institutional structures, labor hierarchies, and social variables. I will be reflecting on how the great shift online created an exigency for reimagining classroom engagement landscapes, which prompts the question of how to manage expectations for student engagement in ways that do not contribute to what Asao Inoue has called "unevenness in classroom assessment economies" (79) . In short, this article considers how pandemic-induced shifts in the parameters of teaching and learning—as experienced within online, synchronous contexts—can offer opportunities for cultivating more accessible, inclusive pedagogies that acknowledge the cross-cutting types of work that encase student learning. First, I map the socio-visual landscapes of online synchronous teaching and learning and then move on to consider how the constellation of possibilities for classroom engagement may be expanded in ways that side-step student performativity. In doing so, I will suggest that performativity-based assumptions obstruct empathy and inclusion.

Mapping the Socio-Visual Landscapes of Online Synchronous Teaching and Learning

A wide range of family experiences, technological hurdles, job responsibilities, and all manner of other social circumstances and forms of work encase the experiences of both teaching and learning. While these variables were always there, the pandemic brought them into clearer focus, and this clarity will be important for developing late-pandemic pedagogies. To frame the importance of retaining this awareness, I will draw on some vastly pre-pandemic pedagogical discussions. In particular, I will draw on the work of Jane Tompkins and Miriam Wallace.

"The classroom," suggests Tompkins, "is a microcosm of the world; it is the chance we have to practice whatever ideals we may cherish. And I wonder, in the case of college professors, if performing their competence in front of other people is all that that amounts to in the end"

(656). It is important to put a finer point on what Tompkins means by performing. She framed the "performance model" of education in terms that could not be timelier in 2021:

> I had finally realized that what I was actually concerned with and focused on most of the time were three things: a) to show the students how smart I was, b) to show them how knowledgeable I was, and c) to show them how well-prepared I was for class. I had been putting on a performance whose true goal was not to help the students learn but to perform before them in such a way that they would have a good opinion of me. I think that this essentially, more than anything else, is what we teach our students: how to perform within an institutional academic setting in such a way that they will be thought of highly by their colleagues and instructors. (654)

From the current vantage point, one cannot help but notice how Tompkins' critique of teaching-as-performance shines light on a challenge many educators have faced in the last year: How does one enact, evaluate, enjoy, and otherwise understand the work of teaching now that audience reactions have largely vanished? A looming question has been: "Are my students understanding concept X?" And there is only a fine line between that and another question: "Do my students see how knowledgeably I am explaining concept X?" Of course, effective teaching and learning hinges on being able to answer the first question, but the pandemic has highlighted the degree to which perceived answers to that second question may be problematically entangled with responses to the first.

Turning to Wallace's work, we can further explore the tacit role of performance in education. Drawing on a psychoanalytic framework, she details and critiques two models of education: the "battlefield model" and the so-called "love relationship" (184-5). The battlefield model is the adversarial vision of higher education wherein students succeed via sustained, vocal performances of critique. Or, as Deborah Tannen has put it:

> The way we train our students, conduct our classes and our research, and exchange ideas at meetings and in print are all driven by our ideological assumption that intellectual inquiry is a metaphorical battle. Following from that is a second assumption, that the best way to demonstrate intellectual prowess is to criticize, find fault, and attack.

In contrast, Wallace conceptualizes the love relationship in terms of emotional transference that is centered on the idea of "nurturing, caring for, or liking each other" (185). Stacey Gray Akyea and Pamela Sandoval have similarly discussed the complexities of sharing power within feminist classrooms and critiqued pedagogies that may fall under the "love

relationship" model. Regardless of name or specific flavor, it is clear that acts of performance factor into various pedagogical orientations, which may help to explain why Zoom rooms can be experienced as unsettled and unsettling "places." In the spring of 2020, classroom audiences went through an unforeseen transformation. Indeed, addressing the gallery of tiny photos, avatars, black boxes, and the occasional live camera can feel like the academic equivalent of an athletic competition being staged in an empty stadium.

Debates over student camera use emerged quickly and continue on (e.g., Reed; Finders and Muñoz), but as we move into the second pandemic school year, evidence-based findings and approaches are becoming more widespread (e.g., Castelli and Sarvary; Lin and Gao). Course policies that facilitate students in making purposeful choices about camera use—without requiring it—are an important part of cultivating an inclusive, accessible Zoom room. Leading "camera optional" classes is the right thing to do, but this can—at least in my own experience—raise the question of what constitutes effective teaching. Gone is the ability to discern reactions, to notice glimmers of understanding, to see a student connect "the dots" before our very eyes. Instead, "bad" classes, can feel like shouting into the void, and "good" classes may amount to little more than feeling like we're test-driving ideas in real time. This idea of "good" and "bad" classes is not particularly productive, but there is something there—something worth our attention. As Wallace has suggested, "our emotional responses are important clues to the underground dynamics of the student/teacher/learner interaction" (185) .

I've found myself struggling to teach in the absence of the visual cues that come along with a traditional classroom audience. This absence is palpable, and it demands much more cognitive work. After all, Zoom classes demand more even when the cameras *are* running. For example, linguistic anthropologist Susan Blum has discussed the increased labor involved with processing and searching for the visual cues that are so central to orderly turn-taking conversation. Shahidha Bari has similarly drawn attention to the fact that effective teaching often hinges on being able to read students' faces. A rich socio-visual landscape enables educators to "read the room for responsiveness or reluctance, adapting when we sense incomprehension, clarifying when we find confusion." The camera issue is clearly a flashpoint for questions of participation, comprehension, and accessibility. In figuring out how to read the Zoom room, one may be confronted with some interrelated questions: Are my students understanding concept X? How can I gauge comprehension without a larger socio-visual context? How much stock have I been putting in these socio- and audio-visual cues? Since we are inhabiting a new kind of "room," how can I read it in a way that isn't steeped in memories of my old classrooms? Could figuring this out help to mitigate Zoom fatigue and pandemic-induced inability?

Expanding the Constellation of Possibilities for Classroom Engagement

I'd like to turn now to engage some of these questions as I consider how pandemic-induced changes to the work of teaching open up space for cultivating inclusive pedagogies that acknowledge the cross-cutting types of work that encase student learning. I believe the present context calls for a lasting redefinition and reassessment of what classroom engagement might look and feel like across both online and F2F contexts. We are in a pivotal moment for examining how the weight of performativity props up systems of privilege. Scholars have long drawn attention to the racism and exclusion that comes along with understanding and otherwise assessing writing in terms of a not-equally-accessible set of 'standard' sociolinguistic practices (e.g., Condon and Young; Inoue; Lu; Martinez; Lockett). There have also been longstanding conversations among linguistic anthropologists that locate, theorize, and otherwise problematize what Rosina Lippi-Green has referred to as the standard language myth (e.g., Irvine and Gal; Bhatt; Shankar).

It is against that epistemic backdrop that pandemic-induced changes to teaching and learning have prompted me to consider an additional layer in this massive set of problems. Assessing classroom engagement in terms of performativity reproduces the same ideologies that prop up the standard language myth. Recall Stephen Ball's definition of performativity as "a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change—based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic)" (216). When students are rewarded—or not—for classroom engagements that demonstrate intelligence, knowledgeability, and preparedness, there is an assumption that everyone has equal access to the sociolinguistic habits, technological and economic resources, and cognitive and corporeal abilities necessary to succeed within those parameters. Such an assumption is exclusionary in its racist, classist, and ableist manifestations.

The performance model is, furthermore, out of step with the current realities surrounding what may be referred to as pandemic-induced inability. So-called brain fog or Zoom fatigue may be considered a by-product of such "inability," but the situation is more complex than those terms may suggest. People have experienced an inability to concentrate, an inability to write, an inability to manage time, an inability to control space, an inability to stay motivated, and the list goes on and on and on. When I initially experienced the Zoom room, it felt like there was a complete absence of student engagement. This forced an examination of how my own performativity-based assumptions were obstructing empathy and inclusion, even as I was trying to be mindful of the various "inabilities" my students could be facing.

As is very clear by now, platforms such as Zoom can only go so far in approximating in-person communities. Since questions of how to

cultivate and measure student engagement are typically found in relation to small class contexts, I will focus on what I know best: the writing classroom. Writing classes tend to be conducted in a seminar-style, wherein students are invited to analyze texts and practice different writing techniques, and a common strength of small writing classes is their community-building capability. I can say that the "community of writers" imagery, along with its supportive culture of critique, has been central to my own teaching philosophy. Yet, the purpose, tone, and potential of this community looks and feels very different online. The "look" of and possibilities for online student engagement *are* more diverse, but there is no clear-cut framework for valuing these multiple means of engagement.

For example, it may be challenging to situate actions like pressing the "yes" button or typing into the chat. This is especially true when the participatory landscape is shaped by memories of the lively conversations that took place on campus. The visual features of the Zoom room are similarly uneven. Students who run their cameras dominate the screen while quiet or silent students literally fade into the background. And students' opportunities for selecting from the various means of online engagement are mediated—if not delimited—by a whole host of shifting and largely unknowable social factors. For example, students from Canada's York University have discussed how learning from home has been problematically characterized by a lack of privacy, an inability to stay focused, and a waning sense of motivation (Ong et al.).

The question, then, is how to go about expanding and otherwise equalizing the list of activities that constitute valuable student participation and engagement. I am thinking about how to level the participatory field so that a "gold-standard" means of participation like vocal critique or active listening could become commensurable to other types of participation like yes/no polls, the use of Zoom "reactions," typing in the chat, or just silently attending class.

In his book on labor-based grading contracts, Inoue suggests that "a classroom writing assessment economy calls attention to the various, diverse *habitus* of people in the economy, and how we are all always situated in larger social systems" (84) . While he is squarely focused on the assessment of written texts, this commentary can be stretched to help reimagine assessment schemes that account for the often-invisible social circumstances that frame student engagement.

To begin such a reimagining, I will make two suggestions. First, I will question whether "participation" grades can actually be reimagined or resuscitated. The means of participation I listed above certainly aren't exhaustive. Regardless, any such list will always be enveloped by (in my case) North American sociocultural contexts that prize vocal critique and "active" engagement. For example, entrenched knowledge infrastructures can make it particularly difficult not to privilege one student's critical observation over another student's request for additional information. The Zoom context has definitely made it clearer to me how some forms of

engagement—like vocalized critique—may come to represent a performance of intelligence, or a performance of knowledgeability, or a performance of preparedness. In contrast, other forms of engagement—like regular, but silent attendance—may come to unfairly represent a *lack* of knowledge or a *lack* of preparedness. Yet, one may never know if that student who is in regular, silent attendance is grappling with the inability to be healthy or the inability to control their workspace, or if they are simply emersed (as I once was) in a social system that casts students as passive receptors of information.

Insofar as the traditional participation grade privileges visible, vocal classroom engagement, it promotes exclusion. Yet, programmatic standardization may prevent many faculty—myself included—from doing away with participation grades altogether. Variables like contingent contracts, social precarity, top-down managerialism, and the pursuit of community or departmental standards all contribute to the faculty performativity that obstructs the taking of anti-racist, anti-classist, otherwise inclusive stands against student performativity.

Again, in response to the question of how to reimagine assessment schemes, I would secondly like to suggest the value of integrating very structured opportunities for engagement into daily plans for online classes. Instead of trying to lead stilted discussions, this can mean offering clear-cut, learning outcome-centered opportunities for engagement that do not hinge on (or even really invite) the use of audiovisual modalities. This is a broader, more accessible view of engagement, one that helps answer the question of "are my students understanding X?" in a more socially responsive, neutral manner.

For example, my online classrooms have become increasingly focused on self-directed learning and time management. These skills help students to meet learning outcomes like being able to revise the content and form of their own writing based on peer and instructor feedback.

I have re-purposed spaces for online engagement to work directly with these outcomes. During a recent online summer course, all of this became even more pressing because of our compressed schedule, so I periodically queried the students on what kind of time and resources they would need in order to succeed with a given assignment. For instance, during one class we "discussed" an anonymized sample portfolio written by a former student. I note that we "discussed" it because this activity—the former bread and butter of my F2F class discussions—looks wildly different in the Zoom room. Regardless, we reviewed my on-screen annotations of the document and students had opportunities to add to and otherwise comment on the annotations. During this portion of the class, student engagement took place entirely via non-audiovisual means of communication (e.g., the chat box and reaction emoticons).

At the end of class, we reflected on the fact that the portfolio exhibited many, many strengths, and I concluded class with this question: "What kind of time and resources will you need to produce your own

version of a strong portfolio?" Students were instructed to think of this as a "read, write, think" activity wherein they had already read and thought about the portfolio. Now they were being given the opportunity to think more deeply about the logistics of its production, and in imagining how their writing processes would similarly unfold, they were being invited to practice self-directed learning and time management. I started this activity in the last 10-12 minutes of class, so students would have sufficient time to think and respond via direct message in the chat. The responses were rich with detail and specificity.

Exercises like these are valuable for several reasons. They offer low-stakes opportunities for reflecting on class concepts and expectations. This particular activity tacitly acknowledged how circumstances and "inabilities" might impact individual students' work. The responses to this, and other such queries, helped to confirm whether students were understanding the tasks at hand. And, importantly, students were able to engage in this activity with relative sociolinguistic evenness. An invitation to participate via direct messaging (DM) could, for example, allow a student without a microphone to participate nonverbally. It could similarly allow others who are sharing a workspace to participate. Approaching the situation from a different angle, it could allow students habituated into attending class silently to practice adding their voices in a clear-cut, low-stakes manner. This is all to say that there are many ways to invite engagement that account for the wide range of largely invisible student labor and social circumstances that encase any given class atmosphere.

Concluding Thoughts

Writing in *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* Shahidha Bari has noted that "the veil between work and life has been rent". The degree to which anyone has actually experienced that veil to begin with is, of course, debatable. Responses to that question would undoubtedly vary greatly and, like the bodies that produced them, be scattered across hierarchical systems of privilege. Academic labor paradigms have seemingly always relied upon—and exploited—a false distinction between "work" and "life." Beginning in graduate school (if not earlier) , professorial hopefuls are socialized to embrace the precarious, inherently competitive, and subsuming nature of the academic ethos. Though it takes different shapes across disciplines and ranks, this baseline is undeniable (e.g., Birmingham; Gagné) . I suppose, then, that it's not terribly surprising that performativity consistently re-appears as a guiding principle of higher education.

Depending on where one is standing, the pandemic has cruelly heightened or simply enumerated inequalities across social institutions. They have always been there. The pandemic caused me to question how to educate in a manner that is responsive to all manner of exigencies requiring empathy, kindness, and mindfulness. They have always been there. As Jane Tompkins has long since suggested, "our actions and our

interactions with our students week in week out prove what we are for and what we are against in the long run. There is no substitute for practice" (660). Perhaps it's a by-product of living in a frozen digital time loop, but Zoom has, for many, brought on a draining gloom. For me that gloom derived from recognizing the reach of performativity in my own classroom. Institutional evaluation forms orient teachers *and* learners to value performative labor with common questions like whether a particular course is intellectually stimulating or whether an instructor created an approachable presence. And, when teaching effectiveness is assessed in performative terms, it creates the space for performativity to wiggle its way in to shape expectations for student learning. Circling back to Tompkins once more, the following assertions couldn't be timelier in 2021:

> A kinder, more sensitive attitude toward one's own needs as a human being, in place of a desperate striving to meet professional and institutional standards of arguable merit, can bring greater sensitivity to the needs of students and a more sympathetic understanding of their positions, both as workers in the academy and as people in the wider world (660).

Perhaps performativity has always been there, but that doesn't make it good.

Works Cited

Akyea, Stacey and Pamela Sandoval. "A Feminist Perspective on Student Assessment: An Epistemology of Caring and Concern." *Radical Pedagogy*, vol. 6, 2004.

Ball, Stephen J. "The Teacher's Soul and the Terrors of Performativity." *Journal of Education Polic*y, vol. 18, no. 2, 2003, pp. 215-228.

Bari, Shahidha. "What We've Lost in a Year of Virtual Teaching." *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* 17 Feb. 2021, https://www.chronicle.com/article/what-weve-lost-in-a-year-of-virtual-teaching.

Bhatt, Rakesh. "World Englishes." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 30, pp. 527-550.

Birmingham, Kevin. "The Great Shame of Our Profession: How the Humanities Survive on Exploitation." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 12 Feb. 2017, https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-great-shame-of-our-profession/.

Blum, Susan D. "Why We're Exhausted by Zoom." *Inside Higher Ed*, 22 April 2020, https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2020/04/22/professor-explores-why-zoom-classes-deplete-her-energy-opinion.

Brown, Nicole and Jennifer Leigh, editors. *Ableism in Academia. Theorizing Experiences of Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses in Higher Education*. University College London Press, 2020.

Castelli, Frank R. and Mark A. Sarvary. "Why Students Do Not Turn On Their Video Cameras During Online Classes and an Equitable and Inclusive Plan to Encourage Them to Do So." *Ecology and Evolution*, vol. 11, 2021, pp. 3565-3576.

Condon, Frankie and Vershawn Ashanti Young. "Introduction." In *Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication*. Edited by F. Condon and V. Young. The WAC Clearinghouse/University Press of Colorado, 2017, pp. 3-16.

DePew, Kevin Eric and Heather Lettner-Rust. "Mediating Power: Distance Learning Interfaces, Classroom Epistemology, and the Gaze." *Computers and Composition*, vol. 26, 2009, pp. 174-189.

Finders, Margaret and Joaquin Muñoz. "Cameras On: Surveillance in the Time of COVID-19." *Inside Higher Ed*, 03 Mar 2021, https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2021/03/03/why-its-wrong-require-students-keep-their-cameras-online-classes-opinion.

Gagné, Ann, editor. *The Canadian Precariat: Part-Time Faculty and the Higher-Education System*. Universitas, 2020.

Hayes, Aneta and Cheng, Jie. "Datafication of Epistemic Quality: Advancing Understandings of Teaching Excellence Beyond Benchmarked Performativity." *Teaching in Higher Education*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2020, pp. 493-509.

Hays, Lauren and Melissa N. Mallon. "Using OER to Promote Inclusion in Higher Education Institutions." *Currents in Teaching and Learning*, vol. 12, no. 2., 2021, pp. 20-33.

Inoue, Asao B. *Labor-Based Grading Contracts. Building Equity and Inclusion in the Compassionate Writing Classroom*. The WAC Clearinghouse/University Press of Colorado, 2019.

Irvine, Judith and Susan Gal. "Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation." In *Regimes of Language: Ideologies Polities, and Identities*. Edited by P. Kroskrity. School of American Research, 2000, pp. 35-83.

Kalfa, Senia and Lucy Taksa. "Employability, Managerialism, and Performativity in Higher Education: A Relational Perspective." *Higher Education*, vol. 74, 2017, pp. 687-699.

Kenny, John. "Academic Work and Performativity." *Higher Education*, vol. 74, 2017, pp. 897-913.

Kenny, John, "Re-Empowering Academics in a Corporate Culture: An Exploration of Workload and Performativity in a University." *Higher Education*, vo. 75, 2018, pp. 365-380.

Lin, Xi and Li Gao. "Students' Sense of Community and Perspectives of Taking Synchronous and Asynchronous Online Courses." *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2020, pp. 169-179.

Lippi-Green, Rosina. *English with an Accent. Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States*. Routledge, 1997.

Lockett, Alexandria. “Why I Call it the Academic Ghetto: A Critical Examination of Race, Place, and Writing Centers” *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal,* vol. 16, no. 2, 2019.

Lu, Min-Zhan. “An Essay on the Work of Composition: Composing English against the Order of Fast Capitalism.” *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 56, no. 1, 2004, pp. 16-50.

Macfarlane, Bruce. “The CV as a Symbol of the Changing Nature of Academic Life: Performativity, Prestige, and Self-Presentation.” *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 45, no. 4, 2020, pp. 796-807.

---. “Student Performativity in Higher Education: Converting Learning as a Private Space into a Public Performance.” *Higher Education Research & Development*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2015, pp. 338-350.

Martinez, Aja Y. “A Plea for Critical Race Theory Counterstory: Stock Story vs. Counterstory Dialogues Concerning Alejandra’s “Fit” in the Academy” *Composition Studies*, vol. 42, no. 2, 2014, pp. 33-55.

Munroe, Ian. “How Lessons Learned in Delivering Courses Last Year May Affect the Mode of Course Delivery this Fall.” *University Affairs*, 01 Jun 2021, https://www.universityaffairs.ca/news/news-article/how-lessons-learned-in-delivering-courses-last-year-may-affect-the-mode-of-course-delivery-this-fall/.

Nguyen, Viet Thanh. “I Actually Like Teaching on Zoom.” *The New York Times*, 15 Feb 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/15/opinion/zoom-video-school-teaching.html.

Ong, Joanne, et al. “Seven Missing Pieces: Why Students Prefer In-Person over Online Classes.” *University Affairs*, 02 Dec. 2020, http://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/7-missing-pieces-why-students-prefer-in-person-over-online-classes/.

Ontario Human Rights Commission. *Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities*. E-book, 2018.

Reed, Matt. “Should Showing Faces Be Mandatory?” *Inside Higher Ed*, 13 May 2020, https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/confessions-community-college-dean/should-showing-faces-be-mandatory.

Shankar, Shalini. “‘FOB’ Styles, Gender, and Racial Meanings among Desi Teens in Silicon Valley.” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2008, pp. 268-289.

Tannen, Deborah. “Surviving Higher Learning’s Argument Culture.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 31 Mar 2000, https://www.chronicle.com/article/surviving-higher-learnings-argument-culture/?cid2=genloginrefresh&cid=gensignin.

Tompkins, Jane. "Pedagogy of the Distressed." *College English,* vol. 52, no. 6, 1990, pp. 653-660.

Wallace, Miriam L. "Beyond Love and Battle: Practicing Feminist Pedagogy." *Feminist Teacher*, vol. 12, no. 3, 1999, pp. 184-197.

Wilson, Anat, Wendy Goff, Maryanne Pale, and Kristina Turner. "Transitioning and Re-Membering of Academics in Times of Upheaval." *Reflective Practice*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2021, pp. 250-262.

From “Spring Break” to “Reading Days”: Contingency, Relations of Power, and Positionalities in Experiences of Overwork During Academic Breaks

Kelli Lycke
University of Arizona

Ann Shivers-McNair
University of Arizona

Abstract
In this article, the authors analyze the impacts of their university eliminating Spring Break and replacing it with intermittent Reading Days during the Covid-19 pandemic. With particular attention to contingency, relations of power, and positionalities, they offer narratives of their lived experiences with Reading Days as a graduate student (Author 1) and as a

Kelli Lycke is a graduate associate teacher at the University of Arizona and the Graduate Assistant Director of Placement and Assessment for the Foundations Writing Program in the English Department. She is also a third-year Ph.D. student in Rhetoric, Writing, and the Teaching of English. She earned a Master’s degree in Rhetoric and Writing from the University of New Mexico. Kelli is passionate about advocating for positive working conditions for educational workers, and her research interests include material rhetorics of public memory, especially monuments and memorials. Kelli also enjoys experimenting with film and web texts as compositions, as well as teaching students how to use technology in new and interesting ways.

Ann Shivers-McNair is an assistant professor in the Department of English at the University of Arizona, on the lands of the Tohono O’odham and Pascua Yaqui Peoples. She is the author of *Beyond the Makerspace: Making and Relational Rhetorics* (University of Michigan Press, 2021), and her work has appeared in journals such as *Across the Disciplines*; *College English*; *Computers and Composition*; *enculturation*; *Kairos*; *Learning, Culture, and Social Interaction*; *Programmatic Perspectives*; and *Technical Communication*; and in edited collections and conference proceedings. She is an associate editor of *Technical Communication Quarterly* and a co-organizer of UX@UA, a user experience community in Tucson, Arizona.

Abstract, cont.
pre-tenure faculty member (Author 2). They also offer analysis of the public conversations surrounding the institutional decision. The article also addresses how the particularities of the narratives are symptomatic of a culture of overwork that predates and continues beyond the moment in time and place of the context described. Authors offer takeaways and calls to action that invite readers to continue examining and intervening in larger, persistent structures of inequity—particularly as they come to bear on academic breaks.

In this article, we trace the impacts of a culture of overwork on graduate student learning and labor in the context of an academic calendar change brought about by a global pandemic—specifically, our institution's replacement of spring break with reading days spread throughout the semester to try to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the Spring 2021 semester. We acknowledge that the particularities of the experiences we share are symptomatic of issues that predate and continue beyond the moment in time and place that we describe, even as the specific scenario of replacing a spring break with scattered reading days may be particular to this moment in a global pandemic, so we begin by situating the culture of overwork within broader structures of academic calendar changes and neoliberalized academic labor, as well as within our specific context. Then, with particular attention to contingency and relations of power, we offer analytical narratives of our lived experiences with overwork in relation to reading days from our specific positionalities: we are both white women, and at the time of writing this article, Kelli was a Ph.D. student who was working as a graduate administrator and supplemental instructor for online English courses, and Ann was a tenure-track assistant professor and director of an undergraduate major, minor, and certificate program.

As we embrace the power of narratives to illustrate and interrogate our conditions and possibilities, we also know the individual and institutional privileges in our narratives are particular to our own embodied experiences. As white women, we acknowledge that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and on caregivers as a result of intersecting systems of racism and oppression and as a result of converging and ongoing racial justice, public health, economic, and political crises. We also acknowledge that our individual labor as instructors is inextricably interconnected with the labor of other instructors, staff, administrators, student workers, and all members of our community. Because we are situating our argument about overwork during our institution's pandemic

reading days within a broader understanding of structural inequities in academic labor, we conclude by offering takeaways and calls to action that invite readers to continue examining and intervening in larger, persistent structures of inequity as they come to bear on academic breaks, during and beyond times of crisis. After all, as Sarah Bartlett Wilson and C. Veronica Smith observe, for contingent instructors especially, “the need to develop courses, prep materials, and respond to students’ submissions nearly always bleeds (often heavily so) into weekends and long breaks” (7).

Crisis-Necessitated Academic Calendar Disruptions

Academic calendar disruptions in response to disasters and crises are not new. But the Covid-19 pandemic presented new challenges for university leadership responding to these crises. Much of the focus in the scholarship on academic crisis management and crisis-necessitated academic calendar changes has been on environmental disasters, and specifically hurricanes. For example, both Dominic Beggan’s 2011 qualitative case study of Lamar University’s disaster recovery and Melissa Houston’s 2017 phenomenological case study of faculty members’ lived experiences with disaster-caused disruptions to academic continuity focus on hurricane disasters in the U.S. Gulf Coast region. In both cases, changes to the academic calendar were also accompanied by damage or destruction of institutions’ physical facilities and communication infrastructures. By contrast, the academic calendar change we experienced in Spring 2021—along with many other institutions who made similar decisions to try to reduce the spread of Covid-19—was not accompanied by significant disruptions to our physical or communication infrastructures. This response in Spring 2021 also occurred more than a year into an evolving global pandemic that had already disrupted the Spring 2020 and Fall 2020 terms in different ways (for example, at our institution the Spring 2020 spring break was extended by half a week to facilitate a rapid transition from in-person to online instruction).

Despite these differences, we recognize a commonality our recent academic calendar change has with past emergency-response academic calendar changes. The disruption of the calendar illuminated and exacerbated an existing culture of overwork, or what Houston describes as “faculty experiencing feelings of obligation to perform regardless of their own personal losses both financially and emotionally” (14). Like Houston, we focus on lived experiences to both illustrate and make sense of the ways a pandemic-necessitated academic calendar change exacerbated overwork in academic labor. Our stories attend to the materiality of our working conditions, extending the work of Lisa Melonçon, Mahli Xuan Mechenbier, and Laura Wilson, whose research seeks to understand the working conditions of contingent academic workers.

Structures of Neoliberalized Academic Labor

In tracing overwork in our lived experiences of a crisis-necessitated academic calendar change during the Spring 2021 semester, we locate our understanding of overwork in relation to academic capitalism and neoliberalized labor, especially the ways these structures impact graduate students and marginalized workers. Our framework is inspired by Allison Laubach Wright's *rhetoric of excellence.* Drawing on the work of Bill Readings and Christopher Carter, Wright explains that because "excellence" in higher education has positive associations and an apparent ideological emptiness—excellence "operates without solid referents" and "is applied across many different fields and used to judge disparate ideas"—"excellence actually works to hide the connections to practices that are concerned only with competition, allowing academic programs that have embraced market logic to paint themselves as student-centered" (273) . Wright argues that excellence, then, is "a marker that is hard to turn away from because there is no direct content to critique, and it becomes one of the ways that academic capitalism spreads, not just in the corporate world or in the university administration, but in the behaviors of faculty and students" (272-273). Extending this definition, we also acknowledge how educational and support staff are impacted by the excellence ideology because all our work is interconnected, and those with less power are disproportionately impacted.

Drawing on Laubach Wright's concept, we provide stories from our viewpoints which illustrate how rhetoric of excellence shaped our experiences with reading days (which were interspersed on varying days of different weeks through the Spring 2021 semester to replace spring break). In our cases as a graduate student worker and pre-tenure faculty member, we felt compelled by rhetoric of excellence to work beyond our contracted hours and assigned duties and outside of our institution's recommendations about how to approach reading days. Ultimately, we believe rhetoric of excellence creates an environment of competition and overwork. Roberta Hawkins, Maya Manzi, and Diana Ojeda examine competition and market logics through a number of mechanisms that graduate students, in particular, experience:

> fierce competition between increasing number of PhDs and postdocs hunting for a diminishing number of tenure-track positions on the job market; an increase in non-tenure track positions, adjunct or temporary teaching positions and other contractual hiring; more responsibilities for professors due to an increase in accountability and cuts in administrative staff and services; and more pressure to become entrepreneurs of knowledge in the competition for grants. (334)

Taken alongside Wright's point that the slipperiness of "excellence" makes it difficult to critique even as it fuels competition, Hawkins, Manzi,

and Ojeda's work emphasizes that a context of austerity further amplifies competition.

Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda argue that scarcity in universities' material resources (even before a global public health and economic crisis) further fuels competition through a culture of meritocracy in which "responsibility is internalized by and placed on graduate students for failing to adequately respond to increasing academic demands, pressure and competition. Instead of viewing these issues as a symptom of an increasingly problematic educational system, these issues become a measure of individual capacity and worth" (335). Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda also note that this structure of meritocracy mirrors that of the tenure system (335), and we observed this mirroring in comparing our own experiences as a graduate student and as a pre-tenure faculty member. By continuing to participate in systems that benefit from our excessive labor, we perpetuate such pressure and a culture of overwork that impacts all educational workers, and especially those with less power, including graduate students who experience the impacts from both student and contingent instructor positionalities.

Crucially, both Wright's analysis of rhetoric of excellence and Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda's findings about neoliberal competition highlight the ways in which competition and market logics infuse not only institutional discourses and policies but also the behaviors of faculty and graduate students. Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda locate the connection between institutional discourses and the behaviors of faculty and students in the individualistic logics of neoliberalization in academia. They explain that neoliberalism "convenes a 'free' subject who makes individual, rational choices and is responsible for them, and this freedom is what enables its domination" (334). In other words, locating moral and material responsibility in the individual actions and choices of educational workers creates and perpetuates a culture of overwork that disproportionately impacts those with less power. Specifically, the dominant (and often unacknowledged) norm for educational workers' individual moral responsibility is not neutral. Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda observe in their interviews with graduate students that notions of what constitutes a "good scholar" are often "deeply informed by masculine, white, middle-class and anglocentric ideals" (342). This observation resonates with Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. Gonzalez and Angela P. Harris' argument that the intersections of race, class, and gender in the norms and expectations for academics disproportionately marginalize women of color (2-3).

Positionalities and Relations of Power

The marginalization of women of color and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in structures of academic capitalism and neoliberalized labor has a long history that shapes our present experiences. As scholars like Ibram X. Kendi have observed, the domination of individuals through

contemporary capitalism is rooted in the violent and disproportionate exploitation of Black and Brown bodies, beginning with the transatlantic slave trade of African peoples (213). The violence of what Kendi calls the "conjoined twins" of capitalism and racism (213) is ongoing through multiple crises and pandemics, including the Covid-19 pandemic which is the context of our analysis. This is why we follow legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality. Since introducing the concept of intersectionality in 1989, Crenshaw has more recently explained that "intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LBGTQ problem there. Many times that [way of thinking] erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things" (Columbia Law School) . The unearned privileges of whiteness, both in our own identities and in our institutional discourses and practices, are an important (and, in our case, mitigating) part of the intersecting and interlocking relations of power in our experiences, even as we inhabit different roles in the institution.

In addressing the ways in which our academic labor experiences are entangled with our institutional status and our embodied positionalities, we continue the work of Genesea Carter and Rickie-Ann Legleitner who argue that:

> Naming, claiming, reflecting, and analyzing one's positionality and/or intersectionality must go hand-in-hand with conversations about our academic work—teaching, administration, research, service, evaluation, etc.—as our positionality and intersectionality shape how we see the world, live in the world, experience the world, and respond to the world. (2)

At the same time, as Carter and Legleitner note, "academia's neoliberal model forces us to deny the relational and human-driven side of academia; it forces us to deny our positionality and intersectionality for the institution's greater good" (4). Thus, as two white women describing rhetorics and experiences of overwork, we seek to resist those neoliberal forces by acknowledging that our whiteness shields us from exploitation, underestimation, and violence that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and especially women of color face both in and outside academia. We also acknowledge the interconnectedness of our experiences and the experiences of educational workers in and beyond our campus community. We reflect on our intersecting privileges as we perpetuate and are impacted by a rhetoric of excellence and a culture of overwork. As well, we hope the analysis of our interconnected vulnerability as a graduate student and pre-tenure faculty member bring to light ways in which we can better advocate for others, especially those with less power.

We also believe that an analysis of our emotional experiences is important to our analysis of and advocacy against overwork in academic settings. Following the work of Sue Doe, Maria Maisto, and Janelle Adsit, we account for the affective dimensions of our lived experiences in relation to contingency. Doe, Maisto, and Adsit examine the role of emotion in advocacy work of non-tenure-track faculty as well as the detriment of excluding affect in advocacy work. They explain how "activists may fixate on the outcomes of the movement, ignoring subtle but important shifts that have occurred and the emotional reorientations that have followed, both of which may be more difficult to identify and quantify than idealized outcomes. We are particularly interested in emotion both as a catalyst and as a reorientation" (214). Their work inspires us to use first-person pronouns and discuss the emotions we felt through the semester with regard to reading days. Despite the risks, we offer our stories to other academic workers in hopes that it provides an opportunity for discussion. In writing this article, we do not wish to criticize the individual decisions of our colleagues, peers, or institution with regard to how they handled reading days. We have all been faced with difficult decisions in the Covid-19 pandemic, and we made many judgment errors ourselves, as we explain in our narratives. We treat the Spring 2021 academic calendar changes as an opportunity to learn and reflect on a systemic culture of overwork, so that we can better resist marginalizing practices going forward.

Local Context

On October 14, 2020, the Office of the Provost at our university sent out a university-wide email announcing that in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, spring break would be replaced by five nonconsecutive reading days scattered throughout the Spring 2021 semester. The email explained that by joining the University of Michigan, Ohio State University, University of Iowa, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Purdue University, Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Florida, Indiana University, Boston University, Iowa State University, and Carnegie Mellon in the elimination of spring break, we could limit the spread of Covid-19 by reducing travel. After all, for several months in late 2020 and early 2021, our state was considered an epicenter of the virus in the United States, and the university went to great lengths to track and prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Our institution carries great responsibility for ensuring the safety of the community. As a university in a mid-sized city in the Southwestern United States, the university makes up approximately 9% of the population of the city, according to the university's office of analytics and institutional research. We are a true borderland city located only 60 miles north of the US-Mexico border. Many of our students, staff, and faculty travel back and forth across the border regularly to visit family and attend to their physical and medical needs. As such, it was crucial for our

institution to take measures to limit the spread of Covid-19 by discouraging both domestic and international travel. Furthermore, as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and American Indian/Alaska Native Serving Institution (AI/ANSI), our university has a particular obligation to acknowledge and mitigate the disproportionate suffering that Latinx and Indigenous communities have experienced from the pandemic as a result of structures of racism and inequity. This, no doubt, affected the decision to cancel spring break, as university leadership could not allow sick students, staff, and faculty to carry the virus home.

With few exceptions in the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters, classes were held online, student services were provided remotely, and student dorms were monitored for infection rates through the wastewater drains in order to trace the virus as it moved through campus. After several months of lockdown, the community was worried about how to keep students from traveling home to see their families and carrying the virus back to the campus and local community. University leadership hoped the five reading days—one Tuesday, two Wednesdays, one Thursday, and a Friday—would "allow students and instructors to take needed breaks in the academic term…[while] allowing the same number of class meetings as would normally occur." While the aim to reduce the spread of Covid-19 through travel was grounded in important public health best practices, replacing spring break with a series of reading days also had unintended consequences on instructors and staff, including early semester-burnout, additional unpaid working hours, and a general confusion about how to shift from spring break to reading days distributed over several weeks.

Perhaps most difficult about the switch to reading days was that many instructors struggled to incorporate the interspersed days off in their calendars. The semester began in mid-January, and as the first reading day drew near in February 2021, the Office of Instruction and Assessment shared a memo with faculty (which the Graduate College then forwarded to graduate student instructors) titled "Spring 2021 Week 6 Teaching Update." Reading days were the subject of item number 3 in the email's list of content:

> The first reading day of the semester is Thursday, February 25! As a reminder, these days are intended to provide students (and instructors) a chance to disconnect from academic work, relax, and renew. For most classes, there should be no class meetings; no assignments or exams should be scheduled; and the following day should also be free of exams or high-stakes assessments. Here are some recommendations about honoring the intent of these days.

The last sentence linked to an undated, one-and-a-half-page PDF memo from the Office of Instruction and Assessment titled "Spring 2021 Reading Days Recommendations." The memo included recommendations like

including the scheduled reading days in course syllabi, replacing high-stakes assessments with lower-stakes assessments or assignments, lightening students' load around the time of the cancelled spring break, being mindful of graduate students' grading loads, and encouraging students to take the reading days as true breaks.

Such recommendations acknowledge the kinds of struggles instructors and students faced. The suggestion to lighten students' load around the time of the cancelled spring break speaks to the recognition that students were experiencing burnout. The memo urged faculty to "keep in mind that students are feeling overwhelmed by all the class modalities and juggling school, jobs, and family life, as well as likely frustrated by the elimination of spring break. Your compassion and patience will be appreciated." Furthermore, asking faculty to remember that graduate teaching associates' "grading loads may be heavy during the week that was spring break" acknowledges that graduate students carry a heavier grading load than many of the professors that teach them, and administrators worry about overloading graduate students with more work. These acknowledgements of emotional and material struggles resonate with observations in the emerging scholarship on Covid-19 crisis communication at universities about the importance of what Liz Yeomans and Sarah Bowman call "emotionally sensitive leadership discourse in internal crisis communication" (210). However, by February, instructors had already published their syllabi, and many had already scheduled their content before receiving guidance. In short, educational workers—both instructors and the staff and leadership who support instruction—were operating in difficult conditions, and those constraints impacted pedagogical experiences in complex and interconnected ways.

Indeed, students also expressed concern about the shift to interspersed reading days. An undergraduate student started a petition on Change.org that garnered the attention of local news outlets. Among other arguments, the petition asks the university president to reinstate a traditional spring break because students rely on extended breaks "for stress relief as well as time to catch up on current courses that may have been hard to keep up with." The petition addresses how the pandemic and transition to online classes added to the typical stress of the semester, and students needed a spring break in 2021 more than ever. The petition raised more than 1700 signatures, and other students commented with reasons for supporting the petition. One student who signed the petition commented, "While recognizing that it's important to limit travel, spring break is one of few opportunities some of us have to see our families. Please don't make it so I won't be able to go home and see my little sisters at all for five months straight." Indeed, many students struggle with homesickness and isolation during their college experience, and this was already exacerbated by Covid-19. Another student shared, "Covid is not a reason to eliminate spring break, it's a reason to extend it. A midway break would increase student resilience and dedication in the last few weeks of

the academic year." This comment resonates with our own arguments that academic breaks are important to creating a healthy learning environment.

Interconnected Overwork Experiences and Lessons

Having situated the context of our institution's shift from spring break to reading days, we now turn to analytical narratives of our own experiences. While our collaborative analysis is interwoven through both of our narratives, we begin with Kelli's first-person account and follow with Ann's first-person account, which is both informed by and in conversation with Kelli's experiences and insights. We use this structure to recreate Ann's experience of learning from Kelli's insights to become more critically aware of positionality and power, because Ann's learning moment catalyzed our argument for the importance of resisting the culture of overwork in interactions with graduate students specifically.

Kelli

While reading days impacted me in my various roles as a student, graduate administrator, and instructor, I felt the pain first as a student. I first realized the reading days were a problem when I started looking at the semester schedules in my classes. Two of my graduate seminars met on Monday, and we had not been granted any Monday reading days. It meant that for half of my classes, I did not get a break at all. While the email we received in October from the Office of the Provost assured me that we would have the same number of days in-class, it did not account for one-day-per-week classes. For these classes, not only did reading days eliminate any sort of break, they increased the semester by a week—we had an extra week's worth of reading and assignments.

Despite the memo encouraging instructors to account for the reading days in their syllabi, my professors did not have the reading days marked on their course calendars. Though a few of my classes only met once a week, we still had assignments and peer review responses due on reading days. I felt intimidated to remind my instructors that they should not require assignments on those days. At one point, I emailed my instructor with the Office of Instruction and Assessment recommendations regarding the reading days, asking for them to allocate another day for writing conferences. I felt a lot of anxiety at this moment, hoping they would not misinterpret my tone as pushy or lazy. Their solution was to offer an additional day for writing conferences, that way students could take the reading day off if they wanted to. Who wouldn't want to?

Though my professors accommodated my requests to shift due dates, I struggled to convince them to reduce the number of assignments in order to allow us to take the days off. At one point, I sat in a Zoom session explaining to my whole class how I needed more time to write, and I couldn't keep up. One instructor remarked that I would have to be more diligent about avoiding procrastination. As a very studious and disciplined student, I took this remark personally. I have a processing disorder which

impacts my reading, so I always have to schedule my study and reading time in an agenda each week. How could an instructor mistake this institutional logistics issue with judgment about the character of their students? Another instructor told the class that they gave their undergraduate students a week off, but they lamented that giving us time off would eliminate important content they'd planned—content we would need in our careers.

In a normal semester, I would never take a spring break to begin with. In fact, spring break was when I often had time to sit down and start working on my term papers. Graduate students often have the first drafts of term papers due right after spring break, and this is when I could sit down without getting distracted by emails and discussion boards. I'd review key readings and start making notes about how to connect them to my research. I would also use spring break to catch up on grading. By not having a break, I found myself searching for more time to write. During a normal semester, I would take Saturdays off from work and school to be with my partner. During Spring 2021, I worked 7 days per week to account for extra coursework in my classes. I felt the end-of-semester burnout much faster. My position as both an instructor and student led me to analyze the consequences of overwork.

In response to the shift to reading days, the English Graduate Union, a graduate student advocacy group, met in January and February to discuss how to protect ourselves from overwork. None of our instructors had received training on how to enact reading days, and we were eager to create some resources and guidelines. We determined it was in our best interest to remind our professors not to schedule assignments or conferences for reading days. We gathered the documents, such as the memo described above, in defense of preserving our days off. We also talked about what to do if our instructors continued to require work during the reading days. Who could we report non-compliance to? The university had not considered creating outlets for students to advocate for themselves in the event that instructors did not know how to implement reading days. As instructors ourselves, we became suddenly aware of the nuances of academic power dynamics. The problems with overwork didn't just develop from the administrative decisions; they also emerged from a culture among teachers. If we wanted those days to be breaks for us, we also had to be diligent about preserving the breaks for our own students.

As graduate instructors, we were double-taxed by the lack of a break. We were expected to take on research projects during our "time off" while also tending to the emotional and intellectual needs of our students. Luckily, I had a course release during Spring 2021, and I was not the instructor of record for any classes. However, I was working as a supplemental instructor for online English classes. In order to help another instructor, I met with their students in bi-weekly writing conferences. Early in the semester I met with the core instructor and asked how they'd like me to handle the reading days in their online class. They remarked

how it was a hassle to incorporate the reading days into their class. First, they were teaching out of a predesigned 7-week class, and it would be hard to adjust the course to accommodate the intermittent days off. They also noted how the course operated asynchronously. Though dues dates were scheduled for Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, the instructor noted how students have the freedom to choose their study schedules. As such, they did not have to work on the reading days if they did not want to. Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda's notion of the neoliberal academic "'free' subject," as noted above, allowed us to justify maintaining the high workload, and the inflexibility of pre-designed courses dissuaded us from changing the course calendar. Having worked with pre-designed courses, I empathized with this teacher's reasoning. As a student myself, I was more conflicted. I wanted to give these students a day off. In the end, I suggested adding Saturday conferences to account for the missing day in the week.

Looking back, I realize instructors—myself included—often do not regard spring break as a break at all. In a typical semester of teaching composition 1 or 2, I had often asked students to turn in a final draft of a writing assignment over the break. While they would have already written a draft and received feedback, I was still asking them for their attention. For the students who are punctual with their work and do not face any extenuating circumstances, it's such little work to ask of them. However, I'd never before considered how asking students to work over spring break impacted the students who fall behind or need to work ahead. I've started to wonder if I expect my students to sacrifice bits of their spring break because I am expected to sacrifice spring break myself. The culture of academia seems to valorize overwork, or at a minimum treat it like a rite of passage. In retrospect, I understand how expecting students to complete assignments over spring break disproportionately places marginalized students at risk. Taking breaks is important for mental health, as students pointed out in their critiques of the institution's decision. As the student comments on the petition against reading days reveal, students also need breaks for stress relief and to catch up on courses. They need breaks to spend time with their families. And they need breaks to bolster resilience.

Rhetoric of excellence penetrates our personal decisions about how to account for the reading days through internal metrics that quantify "excellence." Graduate assistants are often measured by tenure standards in the name of career preparation. Though the adage "you are students first" persists, graduate workers often still choose to balance teaching, research, and service in hopes of obtaining a tenure-line job after graduation. There's an unspoken expectation that as a graduate student I should be publishing one article per year, attending at least one conference per year, teaching two classes without the help of a grader or supplemental instructor, and keeping up with all of my own coursework.

Contingent faculty, pre-tenure faculty, and graduate instructors often serve on various boards and as chairs of sub-committees in addition to their teaching duties in order to demonstrate commitment to the

department. Indeed, the many academic labor scholars before us point out it's often unclear how to distinguish between types of contracts and obligations. Melonçon, Mechenbier, and Wilson describe how they struggled in their research to determine the roles of different faculty members because their titles were not listed in public-facing documents: "This issue of visibility is more acute for adjunct faculty (those teaching on term-to-term contracts) than it is for [full-time, non-tenure-track] faculty. So at the very start of our research...simply being 'invisible' at their institution would be a main factor affecting contingent faculty work conditions" (13). The erasure of differences in the normalization of (raced, gendered, classed, abled) tenure-track expectations is what leads institutions to expect contingent workers will operate on the same expectations as tenure-track employees, regardless of pay, years of experience, or contractual roles. And while this impacts contingent workers of all identities, Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality draws our attention to the ways in which contingent workers of marginalized identities are uniquely dis-privileged in an institutional culture of overwork.

As Bartlett Wilson and Smith note, our work expectations are always defined in the shadow of tenure-track expectations: "With tenure-line faculty's work set as the norm in higher education, contingent faculty's work, which varies based on local job descriptions, campus policies, and institutional practices, can certainly look odd or wrong—if it is noticed at all" (173). Their study examines the different ways contingent faculty meet the expectations of teaching, research, and service, regardless of their contractual obligations. While Bartlett Wilson and Smith's study focuses on contingent faculty, it's certainly true of labor in many roles, including pre-tenure faculty and graduate students across campus. In many English departments, graduate student instructors teach as many classes as tenure-track professors, and they often teach courses with higher course caps. They are also juggling their dissertations and coursework. It is one thing to prepare junior scholars for the work they may face ahead of them, but where do we draw the line between practice and overwork? There's no policy regarding graduate students and their service, but it's the cultural practice that has been handed down to us through processes like annual reviews and the tenure portfolio.

Given the restrictions on travel, everyone experienced lulls in their curriculum vitaes from their inability to attend conferences and workshops. Many academics could not collect field research or struggled to balance their personal lives with publishing. Especially during the pandemic, I felt compelled to demonstrate excellence as a teacher and researcher, though many of our typical outlets were unavailable. It's this pressure that so easily allows us to erase our days off. I can sometimes set hard boundaries for my students, but a fear creeps in about setting work boundaries for myself. This culture of overwork will not end when the

pandemic is over unless we reflect on how rhetoric of excellence impacts our varying roles.

Ann

As a pre-tenure faculty member, I often think about the impacts of a culture of overwork through the prism of my individual experience as I strive to build a successful case for tenure. At the time of writing this article, I was just four years removed from being a graduate student myself, and I still strongly identified with the ways that rhetoric of excellence and the academic culture of meritocracy shape the experiences of graduate students. While the stakes are undeniably different (specifically, less contingent and less materially dire) for pre-tenure faculty, Patricia Welsh Droz and Lorie Stagg Jacobs point out that “for untenured faculty, to actively resist the bureaucratic nature of the corporatized university is the fastest way to lose a good job. And yet succumbing fully to the pressures of the fast lane may result in sacrificing a quality life outside academia” (65). But the process of sharing and co-analyzing lived experiences with Kelli has revealed to me that when I succumb to the pressures of the fast lane, I am not the only one who feels the impacts. I realized that I tend to focus more on the ways I am impacted by a culture of overwork and less on the ways I perpetuate and pass on the impacts to my students and colleagues, especially those who are contingent and marginalized.

I trace the emergence of this realization over the course of our collaboration on this project, which began in conversations Kelli and I had while we worked together on a Spring 2021 independent study to support Kelli’s work in documentary and participatory video-based storytelling. We met periodically through the semester, and as we caught up at the beginning of our meetings, our conversation often turned to our experiences with the spring academic calendar changes because we were both teaching undergraduates, and Kelli was also taking graduate courses. As Kelli shared with me many of the experiences she describes in her narrative above, my immediate instinct was to empathize and commiserate from a place of identifying with experiences of contingency (as a relatively recent graduate and as untenured faculty)—and less from a place of recognizing my relative privilege and the ways in which what I say and do set precedents and expectations (however unintended) for the graduate students I work with.

Like Kelli, I felt the impact of the reading days in my teaching, and this was a point of connection and commiseration for us. I taught two asynchronous online classes (one 16-week and one 7-week) in Spring 2021, and because these classes did not have meeting days, but rather weekly modules and deadlines, I struggled to recreate the experience of a break. But I had prior asynchronous teaching experience, and I leveraged that experience to inform my approach to reading days. I planned my course content so that weeks with reading days did not have a major submission deadline, and I noted reading days in the course schedule and

in weekly modules. I made sure that no assignment submissions, high-stakes or low-stakes, were due on a reading day. Following the recommendations from the Office of Instruction and Assessment memo (which we described above), I sent my students a message the week of the first reading day acknowledging that I, too, found the reading days a challenge, sharing my process for honoring reading days, and reaffirming my commitment throughout the term, regardless of reading days, to flexibility with deadlines. But as the weeks with reading days came and went, I was surprised by how un-break-like they felt, both for me and for students who shared their experiences with me. I pondered the language from the administration's messaging about reading days: "a chance to disconnect from academic work, relax, and renew." Not one of the reading days felt like that to me, especially since I continued to receive emails and meeting requests from colleagues and students on reading days, and the "pressures of the fast lane" that Droz and Jacobs describe (65) often compelled me to engage instead of disconnect.

I shared frankly about this pressure in my conversations with Kelli, thinking I was empathizing with the experience of feeling pressured to work on reading days, when in fact I was reinforcing the culture of overwork in active and passive ways: actively by portraying it as unavoidable and passively by letting my approach serve as a model and precedent (however unintended). For example, I could have put an away message on my email on reading days, but I was more guided by the anxiety I feel as an untenured faculty member about putting an away message on my email, even during summers and especially during a semester. Like Droz and Jacobs, I feel guilty about any decisions that might detract from "giving our students the good education they paid for," despite the fact that, as Droz and Jacobs also point out, more is not always better for students or for faculty (68).

In my case, I assumed it would be unfair to students—especially those juggling classes, work, health issues, and caregiving—to ignore their messages on reading days in an asynchronous class where quick and thorough responses to student messages during the work week are crucial to my pedagogical strategy. I also knew that responsiveness was specifically assessed and rewarded in student evaluations for online courses, and student evaluations are an important part of my tenure case. Still, by encouraging students to "take the reading days as true breaks," per the administration's guidance, but then responding to individual messages and publicly engaging in work on that day myself, I was undermining my own encouragement by not practicing what I preached—not only for my undergraduate students, but also for the graduate students I work with, including Kelli.

In addition to sharing my anxiety about being available to students with Kelli, I also shared with her that I was afraid to decline a late-semester reading day meeting about collaborating on building a new interdisciplinary graduate certificate because I'd been looped into the

conversation by a senior tenured colleague. It was Kelli's encouragement and sharing of her own experiences in one of our meetings about this project that inspired me to decline the meeting and acknowledge to myself that the reading day meeting was not the only problem. The collaboration itself was beyond my capacity at that point, since I was already directing a newly launched and still-being-built-out undergraduate major, minor, and certificate; working with graduate students in my home program; and co-leading a user experience professional organization of campus-wide students, staff, and faculty, as well as practitioners and community members outside the university. I declined the meeting and felt no immediate negative impacts, despite my worries. While I am grateful to Kelli for her wisdom and graciousness, I also recognize that she was in the position of performing emotional labor on behalf of someone with more privilege and power. Not only did my own habits of overwork—in this case, a difficulty with saying no to project collaboration requests—serve to normalize overwork because of my position of relative privilege, but they also created more labor for the person I thought I was merely commiserating with.

Here again, by initially portraying this administrative labor request as non-optional, I reified a culture of overwork in which graduate students and pre-tenure and contingent faculty feel pressure to accept administrative and service responsibilities beyond their contractual obligations. As Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda explain, neoliberalism creates a "market" of competition in academic processes and practices by which we compare ourselves, with fewer positions and opportunities and increased responsibilities and pressures (334). The institutional culture of overwork is built on the concept that excellence requires self-sacrifice, such as taking on extra labor in the name of "service." Such service creeps into our personal lives and can take over our weekends, holidays, and academic breaks. Mechenbier, Wilson, and Melonçon explain that the concept of doing service often means doing work as a self-sacrifice for the greater good. Like "excellence," service is often undefined and slippery. While the vagueness can be leveraged for good to encourage educational workers to proactively define service in ways that allow them to get credit for the work they are doing, it can also be a slippery slope to overload. Well-meaning supervisors and mentors are quick to point out opportunities that would look good on a resume—things that might help us get promoted or help with annual reviews, but the power dynamics can make those suggestions feel more like directions. Furthermore, as contingent employment at the university becomes more predominant, graduate students and pre-tenure and contingent faculty are concerned about whether or not their service record is adequate to make them competitive on the market. Academic breaks then become a prime place on the calendar for accommodating "service creep," even when our institution and colleagues encourage us to disconnect.

In reflecting on my experience and learning from Kelli's experience, I recognize that my own ingrained habits of overwork, many of which were rooted in my anxiety about building a successful tenure case, contributed to the un-break-like experience of reading days—not only for me, but also for the students I work with, especially graduate students like Kelli. The temporal and career-stage proximity that I have, as an early-career untenured faculty member, to graduate students tempts me to identify too strongly with their experiences of contingency at the expense of recognizing my own privilege, and in attempting to empathize, I can do harm by inappropriately equating experiences without acknowledging power differences. Furthermore, my temporal and career-stage proximity to graduate students also makes what I say and do function as a defacto (if also unnamed) precedent and expectation for what graduate students should do, especially for those working toward academic careers. And because I am a multiply-privileged white faculty member, normalizing expectations based on what I do also centers raced, classed, gendered, and abled privilege since, as Hawkins, Manzi, and Ojeda observe, notions of what constitutes a "good scholar" are often "deeply informed by masculine, white, middle-class and anglocentric ideals" (342). This is particularly true when people who are white and male comprise the majority of tenure-track faculty, and their practices and ideals are thus normalized in the institution. Indeed, at our institution, 70.5% of tenure-track faculty are white and 63.1% are male, according to the university's office of analytics and institutional research.

Given my positionality as a multiply-privileged white woman in a tenure-track position, I have to acknowledge the complexity of my reading day experiences. On the one hand, the difficulty of "disconnecting" on days interspersed through a long, asynchronous teaching semester was real, and the pressure to overachieve as a pre-tenure faculty member was (and is) also real. On the other hand, my multiply-privileged positionality affords me protections and choices, and I am responsible for my participation in overwork and its impacts on the interconnected educational worker community—and especially those with less privilege and power. Participating in overwork does not only affect me; it also affects the undergraduate and graduate students I work with and other/future junior faculty for whom my actions set a tacit precedent.

Strategies for Resisting Overwork in Academic Breaks and Calendar Changes

We both want to emphasize the impacts of a culture of overwork in our difficulties with setting workplace boundaries about when, where, and how we will work, especially as they relate to academic breaks and changes to academic calendars. As we describe above, we both felt the pressure to work during the reading days as a way to demonstrate our commitment to our various roles. Though working and studying during the designated break days were optional, the cultural expectation persisted

through the idea that good teachers stay available and good students plan their work wisely in order to get everything done because the pressures of overwork were present long before the pandemic.

We also want to emphasize how the naming of breaks can exacerbate longstanding pressures of overwork. In our case, the university's decision to call the dispersed spring break days "reading days" contributed to the dissonance we experienced with our institution's encouragement to "relax and renew." We associate reading days with the days leading up to final exams. Though classes are not scheduled, students often use this time to study, to read, and to write. For instructors, these are often the days we schedule meetings, meet with students during office hours, and send out grade updates before final projects and exams. For the members of the university community with intersecting roles, reading days carry multiple burdens, so using that particular name for the days that replaced spring break amplified an underlying culture of overwork that was further exacerbated by the realities of living and working in the second year of an ongoing global pandemic.

Therefore, while the frustration of reading days was (hopefully) short-lived for us, the elimination of spring break revealed to us how the culture of overwork in the academy is deeply-rooted. Even as instructors, we both reflect back on times before Covid-19 when we overstepped spring break by asking students to complete assignments over the break. While they were generally smaller assignments, such as making revisions after a peer review, we were nonetheless guilty of perpetuating the expectations that students should be constantly engaged in their schoolwork. Even if we cannot completely address how neoliberalism creates a hostile, competitive environment for academic workers, we have the power to protect our students from having that pressure placed back onto them. As we discovered through our experiences, resisting the culture of overwork requires that we are more aware of the importance of breaks and how they are structured.

While we have acknowledged the understandable limitations of institutional messaging about reading days during difficult circumstances, we also want to acknowledge the labor of our colleagues in the Office of Instruction and Assessment. The memo we referenced earlier from the Office of Online Instruction and Assessment provided practical and helpful advice for intentionally framing breaks in the future, including one-off holidays. In the list below, we pass along the helpful suggestions from our institution and add ideas from our own experiences and reflections for how to create space for true breaks in our teaching and leadership:

- Include the scheduled break in the syllabus and explain how you adjusted the assignments to accommodate this day.
- Replace a few, high-stakes assessments with more frequent, lower-stakes assessments or assignments.

- Regularly check in with students about mid-semester exams and/or major assignments in other classes.
- Keep in mind that graduate assistants' grading loads may be heavy during the weeks of fall and/or spring breaks.
- Encourage students to take academic breaks as true breaks, to the extent possible.
- Avoid scheduling exams on the day following a break or holiday.
- Communicate regularly with your students to ask them how they are doing and what would help them be successful in your course.
- When coursework loads are high (i.e., around finals), assign students some reflective learning activities rather than labor-intensive projects.
- If you have regular assignment due dates, and a holiday, reading day, or break falls on your due date, adjust the due dates to a later date.
- When students might generally have to work during academic breaks to catch up in their classes, schedule catch-up days in your calendar instead.
- For administrators, include regular messaging to encourage instructors to create space for academic breaks in their course designs and interactions with colleagues and students.
- For educational workers with more privilege and power, intentionally model boundary-setting practices against overwork at your administrative and tenure levels.
- For faculty who work with graduate students, name and model an intentional approach to academic breaks in your own practices and support graduate students in doing the same.

Perhaps our most important takeaway from the Spring 2021 reading days experience is the realization that educational workers in positions of privilege and power need to be aware of and intentional about the framing of all academic breaks, both in word and in practice, and especially in the case of crisis-necessitated academic calendar changes. As we observed, the naming of breaks themselves are consequential: "reading days" evoked a prior frame of reference involving end-of-term cramming instead of disconnecting and relaxing, which created dissonance with our institution's efforts to promote rest and balance. And this was all the more intensified during a crisis-necessitated academic calendar change in the second year of a global pandemic. Indeed, we hope the increased attention to student and faculty well-being that arose from the extraordinarily difficult circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic will continue beyond the crisis.

And even when our academic calendars and breaks are relatively "normal," we need to attend to and resist a culture of overwork at the institutional level. Resisting an institutional culture of overwork—and the harm it does to all academic workers, especially those who are contingent

and marginalized—requires an ongoing commitment to replacing tacit norms that are rooted in academic rank privilege, as well as race, gender, class, ability, and other identity privileges, with intentionally framed and enacted best practices for academic breaks. All educational workers—and especially those with more privilege and power—can commit to creating space for academic breaks by communicating about breaks and expectations with students, acknowledging how different intersecting identities are impacted by academic norms, and modeling resistance to a culture of overwork.

Works Cited

Armantrout, Kayla. Comment on “Keep spring break 2021.” Change.org, 14 Oct. 2020, https://www.change.org/p/university-of-arizona-keep-spring-break-2021.

Bartlett Wilson, Sarah, and C. Veronica Smith. “Contingent Faculty Performing Scholarship and Service: Examining Academic Labor and Identity at a Public Flagship University.” *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry,* vol. 5, 2021, pp. 168-196. https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra/vol5/iss1/10/.

Beggan, Dominic M. "Disaster Recovery Considerations for Academic Institutions." *Disaster Prevention and Management*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2011, pp. 413-22.

Carter, Genesea, and Rickie-Ann Legleitner. “Prioritizing Ourselves and Our Values: Intersectionality, Positionality, and Dismantling the Neoliberal University System.” *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry,* vol. 5, 2021, pp. 1-19. https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra/vol5/iss1/2.

Columbia Law School. “Kimberlé Crenshaw on Intersectionality, More Than Two Decades Later,” 8 June 2017, https://www.law.columbia.edu/news/archive/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality-more-two-decades-later.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.” *University of Chicago Legal Form* issue 1, article 8, 1989, pp. 139-167.

Doe, Sue, Maria Maisto, and Janelle Adsit. “What Works and What Counts: Valuing the Affective in Nontenure Advocacy.” *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition,* edited by Seth Kahn, William B. Lalicker, and Amy Lynch-Biniek, WAC Clearinghouse and UP of Colorado, 2017, pp. 213-234.

Droz, Patricia Welsh, and Lorie Stagg Jacobs. "FAST Professor: Strategies for Surviving the Tenure Track." *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry*, vol. 2, article 6, 2018, pp. 63-74, https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra/vol2/iss1/6/.

Gutiérrez y Muhs, Gabriella, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. González, and Angela P. Harris. *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia.* Utah State UP, 2012.

Hawkins, Roberta, Maya Manzi, and Diana Ojeda. "Lives in the Making: Power, Academia and the Everyday." *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies,* vol. 13. no. 2., 2014, pp. 328-351, https://acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1010.

Houston, Melissa J. "The Experiences of Faculty and Staff at Academic Institutions Preparing Themselves for Academic Continuity After a Disaster: A Phenomenological Study." *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, vol. 8, no. 7, 2017, pp. 7-18.

"Keep Spring Break 2021." *Change.org,* Oct. 2021, https://www.change.org/p/university-of-arizona-keep-spring-break-2021.

Kendi, Ibram X. *How to Be Anti-Racist*. One World, 2019.

Laubach Wright, Allison. "The Rhetoric of Excellence and the Erasure of Graduate Labor." *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and action in English composition,* edited by Seth Kahn, William B. Lalicker, and Amy Lynch-Biniek, The WAC Clearinghouse; UP of Colorado, 2017, pp. 271-278. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/contingency/chapter17.pdf.

Melonçon, Lisa, Mahli Xuan Mechenbier, and Laura Wilson. "Introduction to 'A National Snapshot of the Material Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty in Composition and Technical and Professional Communication.'" *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry,* vol. 4, 2021, pp. 1-21, https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/alra/vol4/iss1/3/.

Yeomans, Liz, and Sarah Bowman. "Internal Crisis Communication and the Social Construction of Emotion: University Leaders' Sensegiving Discourse During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Journal of Communication Management*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 196–213, https://doi.org/10.1108/JCOM-11-2020-0130.