



Chapter 3. Organizing for Change

This chapter outlines different ways that contingent faculty have organized to make their workplaces more democratic and just. The goal here is to examine actual practices and how they have come into being, such as those described by Ashley Dawson in relation to the City University of New York in her article “Another University is Possible,” and to offer a guide to collective organizing in both unionized and non-unionized settings. I begin with a discussion of the basic aspects of organizing, and then I move on to specific examples of NTT faculty members working together to improve their working conditions. It is important to stress that my main audience in this chapter is contingent faculty members and organizers who are dedicated to improving the employment situation of teachers who are not eligible for tenure.

The first key to building a more democratic workplace is to fight against the notion that only certain faculty can perform specific functions. To break away from this class and caste system, precarious faculty should start with the principle that their employment status should not determine their role in shared governance. Even when an institution does discriminate against faculty based on whether they are eligible for tenure or not, contingent faculty should believe that they have the right to participate as equal members of a shared community (Dawson 99). At times, this attitude requires demanding equal voting power through an appeal to democratic principles. In other words, just as we argue “no taxation without representation,” we should also argue “no work without shared governance.” Of course, this may be an impossible ideal, but it can function to change the mindset of workers who are used to being controlled and managed in an authoritarian manner.

It is important to remember that one reason why contingent faculty often have little say over their working conditions is that tenured professors are afraid of giving the NTT faculty power (Kezar et al., “Challenging Stereotypes” 130). From this perspective, the people in power are on the defensive, and this means that they are vulnerable to the collective force of the disempowered. For instance, when part-time teachers are told that they cannot attend faculty meetings, they can demand inclusion, and if they are rejected, they can consider just showing up and presenting a collective front. Of course, the fear is that they will lose their jobs for acting in such a “disrespectful” way, but contingent faculty need to realize that the department is dependent on their labor, and if people stick together, it is highly unlikely that they will all be let go. When people occupy a space as an act of resistance, they show that they belong there and that they are not willing to be ignored (Jansen 40). My experience is that each time workers engage in a collective action like this, they gain a stronger sense of their power, which makes them fight for more justice and fairer treatment, much as described in Jason A. Ostrander et al.’s “Collective Power to Create Political Change.” Sometimes all it

takes is a group of faculty writing a letter together; the key is that people see that they have power and that they can work with others to organize their power in a collective manner.

In terms of higher education, contingent faculty members need to influence how people are hired, how they are assessed, how budgets are spent, how classes are distributed, and how decisions are made in general. The NTT faculty can demand to be on all committees and to have full voting rights, and, as Keith Hoeller suggests in “The Future of the Contingent Faculty Movement,” they should also fight to have their work compensated on an equal basis. If a certain institutional rule prohibits their full participation, they can fight to change it, and they should shame professors and administrators for not living up to their own liberal standards of justice. In other words, they need to fight for the democratization of their workplace, and this requires seeing their institution as a place organized around democratic principles, even when, as Karl E. Klare points out, it is not (68-69). I have found that shaming tactics usually do not work well when negotiating contracts, but they can be effective when dealing with people who are trying to manage the reputations of their institutions or their own careers.

Some professors and administrators may argue that NTT faculty members do not have the time or expertise to participate in shared governance, but the response of the contingent faculty should be to demand the time and training to be able to participate as full citizens of their academic community. What I am stressing here is that contingent workers have to first change their mindset before they can change their workplaces since they need to see themselves as worthy of full democratic participation. Even if their department or college is far from being democratic, it is important to demand democracy whenever possible.

● The Power of Not Working

My experience in bargaining with university officials over the terms and conditions of contingent academic work shows that the main thing administrators want is to maintain the status quo and keep everything running as smoothly as possible. The reason, then, why strikes and other forms of work stoppages can be so effective is because they disrupt the smooth functioning of the administrative machine as they open a space for people to think about doing things differently (Godard 169n14). Even if one is in a state that does not allow collective bargaining agreements or strikes, there is no way to stop workers from meeting together and engaging in a wide range of collective activities. The first step is that employees have to see themselves as worthy of power, and then they have to find ways of working with others to gain more control over their working lives.

It is often important to seek out allies in order to enhance a group’s power, and for contingent faculty, this often means finding non-contingent faculty who will support the cause of precarious academic workers because “tenured faculty do still wield considerable power on many of our campuses” (Betensky). While this process of gaining allies can be frustrating and disappointing at times, it is

important to get liberal and progressive faculty to see how their ideals should be applied to their own workplaces. I have found that potential allies are often simply ignorant of what is going on in their own departments, or they have blindly bought into a system of prejudice. In fact, by getting the TT faculty to see the devaluation of contingent faculty as a form of discrimination, they may be more likely to join a group or sign a petition. As many organizers know, it often starts with one small act, which then can lead to other more ambitious actions (Alinsky).

It is also vital to see how a group or union needs to form a coalition with other groups that may appear at first to have little common cause (Eaton 408). For instance, in the UC-AFT union's push to have a tax on the wealthy to support higher education in California, the union worked with immigrant groups, groups fighting for prison reform, and people focused on LGBTQ rights. All of these different collective organizations had a desire to protect public institutions, and they realized that their power was enhanced when they worked with other groups, even when those groups had a different central focus. Coalitions are most effective when they realize that they can gain influence and leverage by working on issues that are adjacent to their own (Dyke 226). In this structure, when janitors come out to support contingent teachers, the janitors know that when they need support, the teachers will be there for them (Carter et al.).

The problem with many coalitions is that the different groups are sometimes unable to give up their focus on their own main issues in order to help out another group, and this often leads to infighting and a lack of unity (Kelly 721). What the coalition needs to concentrate on is building long-term collective power so the victory of one member group can lead to the enhanced future power of the other related groups (Levkoe 176). In the case of contingent faculty, this process of coalition building at times has been hindered by a narrow focus on specific, immediate problems, which blocks access to a more long-term, strategic approach.

Contingent faculty are also hard to organize because many simply have little time since they are working multiple jobs and have other important commitments (Levkoe 178). To overcome this issue, it is important to discover what people are willing to do—even if what they can do appears to be minimal. This process requires people actually talking to other people, and this can be hard to do if contingent faculty do not have offices or time to meet. However, meeting in person is necessary for building solidarity, and so if nothing else, organizers should seek out teachers in their classrooms to see if they are willing to talk. This strategy is what Gladys McKenzie and Kris Rondeau used at the University of Minnesota when organizing workers there (Oppenheim 51-52).

● The Organizing Conversation

The first conversation with someone who is not involved in the collective movement to increase workplace democracy and improve working conditions usually centers on simply letting the new person say what they do not like about their

current job. Once this person feels they have been listened to without judgment, the next stage is to simply ask if they would be willing to meet again or go to a meeting. The important thing is not to begin with telling them what they need to do and asking them to engage in an activity they may find risky or burdensome; instead, the organizer has to slowly build the relationship based on mutual understanding and respect (Yates).

After a contingent faculty member shows a willingness to take the first step and attend a meeting, it is vital to give that person something to do so that their connection to the organization will be sustained. A key focus of all meetings should be the building of a sense of community by helping faculty see that their issues are recognized and shared by other people. It is also important to point to examples of success in overcoming problems in order to give people hope that change is possible. What organizers should avoid is turning a meeting into a session of mere complaining; problems should be recognized, but they also should be tied to possible solutions (Bronfenbrenner et al.).

Much of what I have been discussing revolves around a change in perspective, and this is more about psychology than pure politics. Employees have to believe that their work is important and that they are stronger as a collective than as individuals. They also have to feel that they are being heard and that their issues matter to other people. My experience is that it is important to focus on these basic elements of organizing because most academic workers do not have much knowledge about building collective democratic organizations (Markowitz n.p.). In fact, one problem with many unions is that they tend to be undemocratic and top-down because most of the workers do not have the time or the resources to be involved in a very active way. However, if we want our workplaces to be more democratic, we have to model democracy in our own collective organizations (Turner and Hurd 9).

Making a collective group democratic does not mean that there is no leadership or structure; rather, there has to be a constant effort to get everyone involved in every activity so that people do not feel alienated. Many academic organizations suffer because only a few people do most of the work, while the vast majority of members cede power to people with the loudest voices or the most experience. At all times, the goal should be to model an effective form of democracy that will make people feel their voices matter (Johnston). It is also important to guard against activist fatigue, which occurs when all of the work falls on just a few of the members.

Since contingent faculty are often rightfully afraid of losing their jobs, it is important to stress the protections gained through being part of a collective. This can be achieved by constantly referring to the power of the group and the importance of its labor. People have to believe that the other members of the group will have their backs in tough times, and they have to move from a sense of being vulnerable to a sense of being powerful. Of course, this will not always work, and some people may lose their jobs when they engage in collective

action, but the group needs to defend these displaced workers through a constant signaling of solidarity, which can be enhanced through the development of a strike fund.

● Bargaining Versus Organizing

One big issue I have seen in my own union experience is that people do not understand that organizing and bargaining are often two different things with distinct processes and priorities. Organizers try to build solidarity among a group, and this often requires an “us vs. them” mentality, which is because the people in the group need to have a defined grievance and a defined enemy (Melucci). This binary logic helps to solidify the group around a set of demands that are made to the people with power, but since this method of organizing requires a focus on emotion and antagonism, it can subvert the ultimate goal of working with the other side to achieve a fair and reasonable outcome. From this perspective, bargaining requires a more rational and less antagonistic approach because one has to negotiate with the group that was previously represented as the enemy, a practice illustrated by Harry C. Katz et al. (587-88). If in organizing one seeks to shame the other side, in bargaining, one has to see those on the other side as equals working for a common good.

This conflict between organizing and bargaining occurs in all groups, not just unions (Doellgast and Benassi). Whenever a collective seeks to have a wrong addressed, it needs to first rally around a grievance in order to gain power to negotiate as a unified front. However, even if the group with the demands thinks the other side is the cause of its problems, it is usually ineffective to try to come to an agreement with a group for which the aggrieved group does not have respect or trust. Therefore, a transition has to be made between organizing and bargaining in order to build that respect and trust, and this switch mirrors the difference Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson describe between campaigning and governing (xiii-xv). While recent strikes by K-12 teachers in Chicago and Los Angeles have shown that organizing and negotiating can be combined in an effective manner, it still important to see how these two aspects of collective organizing can move in opposite directions.

If we look at the history of minority-based social movements, we see that often they first rally around a shared trauma and identity, but their ultimate goal is to be included into a system of equal justice (Zinn). Once again, there is a conflict between the means and the ends since the way a group gains solidarity is by focusing on their particularity, yet what it aims to achieve is based on universality (Butler et al.). In other words, paradoxically, a group that sees itself as different has to demand to be treated the same as others. As we shall see in the next chapter, one of the biggest stumbling blocks for gaining more respect and better treatment for contingent faculty is the way they are often represented by the people who want to help them.

● Alternative Models of Organizing for Collective Power

While it is evident that the most effective way to improve the working conditions of contingent faculty is through unionization, it is vital to look at alternative modes of organizing since many faculty work in states that do not sanction collective bargaining (Kezar et al., *Gig Academy* 121). We can gain a sense of some of the ways precarious faculty have sought to improve their jobs on a collective basis both with and without union support by examining examples from the edited collection *Contingency, Exploitation, and Solidarity: Labor and Action in English Composition*; all the examples in the following subsections come from this book. For instance, in the chapter “Silent Subversion, Quiet Competence, and Patient Persistence,” we see how a few NTT faculty members began a process of gaining a course release by first meeting with their chair as a group (Lind and Mullin 14). In other words, they did not use a formal organization to push for a desired change; instead, they simply met together with someone who had a certain amount of authority in their workplace.

These contingent faculty members decided to write a formal proposal, which they later presented to the chair (Lind and Mullin 17). This very process of collectively producing a document can be seen as a part of organizing for more democratic power since it required individual teachers to enter into a collaborative process directed towards a group concern. As is common of a bottom-up effort, they were not guided by an external organization or any formal structure; rather, they worked together to take matters into their own hands by crafting a collective demand (Macy and Flache). The chair suggested ways that they could improve their document (Lind and Mullin 18), and here we see the power of people self-organizing and creating a productive relationship with someone who held the power to effectuate change. Although these actions may seem small and insignificant, each collective effort has the possibility of producing a sense of group agency, which fights against a sense of isolation and despair.

The next stage in this process involved creating a committee to oversee the process of distributing class releases to the NTT faculty, and this group included “the department chair, the associate chair, the director of the writing program, and one NTT” faculty member (Lind and Mullin 18). In creating a committee with the inclusion of a contingent faculty person, we see the importance of using academic structures to enhance the power and recognition of precarious teachers. While some people see committee work as dreaded service, this type of activity can represent a key way of augmenting the power and status of contingent faculty (Kezar and Lester). In fact, every time a structure is produced that pushes tenured and NTT faculty to work together on a common goal, the possibility for improving the working conditions of contingent faculty increases (Rhoades, “Creative Leveraging”). This does not mean that the process will always be successful, but the more people work together, the less likely the dominating group will be able to treat the subordinate group with indifference or ignorance.

○ Creating an Advocacy Group

Another way that contingent faculty can organize to improve their working conditions without the aid of a union is through the formation of an advocacy group (Jolley et al.). In their chapter, “Despair Is Not an Option,” Anna K. Nardo and Barbara Heifferon describe how, after their local union at Louisiana State University separated itself from the national union, some of the faculty decided to form an independent organization that focused on going to monthly board of supervisor meetings in order to present their issues during the public comment part of the sessions; since they knew that the press would be covering these events, they felt they had a good chance to expose their grievances to the general public (38). In fact, once the chancellor responded to some of the comments by calling for a salary increase for all faculty, the people involved in the group were able to use their victory to call for more secure positions for contingent faculty (39).

This example demonstrates that when faculty members work together to make a grievance public, they can sometimes put enough pressure on their administration to extract concessions. We learn from the title of their chapter that despair is not the solution but that people must organize and agitate for better working conditions. It is also vital to stress that when an advocacy group is formed, it is hard to predict how successful it will be or what will happen in the future, yet the mere act of creating a collective organization can help to transform the psychology of the people who feel oppressed by the system (Whittier). By creating a new community with a set purpose and strategy, people are motivated to move from a position of helpless victimization to one of empowered involvement. As Nardo and Heifferon note about the situation on their campus, “Respect and advocacy have helped restore morale, returned stability to the core writing faculty, and made substantial progress toward concrete improvements in employment conditions” (39). While these advocates did not get everything they wanted, they were able to improve both their working conditions and their state of mind, which should not be discounted.

○ Working Inside and Outside of the Union

In their chapter, “An Apologia and a Way Forward: In Defense of the Lecturer Line in Writing Programs,” Mark McBeth and Tim McCormack illustrate how local advocacy can take advantage of a union contract by fighting for specific solutions to particular programmatic needs. They describe how, by enlisting the help of a new writing program administrator, contingent faculty members at John Jay College were able to transform many part-time positions into full-time, non-tenure track jobs (54). Part of the way that they advocated for this transformation was through organizing around new curricular changes that were being demanded by the English department leadership (43). Since they knew that they would not be able to change how their courses were taught without a more stable faculty who had the time and support to learn the new curriculum, they

were able to successfully ask the administration for several full-time, non-tenure track lines, which were defined by the following requirements:

- Lecturers hold full-time positions within the English department, with the potential of a Certificate of Continued Employment [hereafter, CCE] in their fifth year, as provided by the union contract;
- Lecturers earn one course of reassigned time in their first year to take a teaching practicum seminar;
- Lecturers have a constructive and progressive agenda of service to the writing program, the department, and the college;
- Lecturers will go through faculty review and promotion processes of annual review by the chair and submission of a Form C; however, these evaluations will focus only on teaching and service;
- Lecturers are assessed by the P&B committee based on their teaching observations, their student evaluations, their pedagogical and curricular contributions, and their service to the writing program, department, or college;
- Lecturers are eligible for promotional steps to associate and full lecturer. . . ;
- Lecturers may apply for sabbaticals after attaining the CCE and 6 years of full-time service;
- Lecturers have departmental voting rights, office space, and travel funds in the same way that tenure-track faculty do;
- Lecturers are eligible for the same reassigned time as tenure-track faculty, based on service contributions to the writing program, the department, or the college;
- Lecturers can apply for fellowships, grants, and other non-teaching opportunities and have access to reassigned time for college or departmental service in the same manner as full-time faculty (49; square brackets in the original).

These position are very similar to the ones in the UC system that I described in the previous chapter; however, one of the interesting additions is the requirement that contingent faculty members earn reassigned time in the first year to take a teaching practicum. Because the new curriculum would require faculty to be trained to teach in a specific way, the program was able to argue for improved working conditions in the form of compensatory time for professional development. It is interesting to note that the authors discuss that some of the faculty members were against these positions because, similar to the stance of the American Association of University Professors, they wanted to protect tenure and thought that the creation of full-time, non-tenure track faculty would only serve to create a new class of exploited workers (45-47). However, McBeth and McCormack argue that when these positions are constructed with care, they can offer an effective middle-ground between tenure and total contingency:

By listing specific work criteria and explicit benefits, we defined the positions as equal to tenure-track positions; lecturers would have

additional teaching and service contributions in place of the scholarship and publishing responsibilities of TT faculty. By outlining lecturers' equal access to the benefits and opportunities of full-time faculty, we also circumvented concerns of our tenure-track colleagues who worried about a two-caste full-time professoriate. (49)

The fact of the matter is that this type of position is growing, so it is essential to make sure that these contingent positions are structured in a more fair and equitable manner (Drake et al.). This example also focuses attention on the need to make sure that the hiring processes for FTNTT faculty positions approximate the rigorous requirements for TT hires (Kezar, "Needed Policies" 4). McBeth and McCormack address how they handled this:

To further allay the perception that there is a two-tier faculty, and as a means to insure a competitive hiring process, we asked applicants to meet rigorous candidacy requirements equal to our tenure-track hires. Each applicant submitted a philosophy of teaching, a course syllabus they had taught, and a prospective course they could teach, as well as examples of their teaching practice. All candidates completed a qualifying interview, and a full-day campus visit. (50)

One of the best ways to assure that contingent positions will be treated with respect and dignity is to make sure that the hiring process is seen by the tenured faculty as being as demanding as TT searches.

McBeth and McCormack make the important argument that FTNTT positions often a middle ground that undermines the institutional binary pitting the tenured faculty against adjuncts and note that

we see the mistake of manufacturing a binary labor division between fully-employed, happy tenure-track faculty and underemployed, unhappy, part-time faculty. At John Jay College, if we had retained this either-or vision, we would not have gained the qualified writing program faculty that we can boast today, and those faculty would have remained on the low-status spinning wheel of "adjunctland." (53)

The type of advocacy promoted by these faculty members revolves around a pragmatic vision that eschews binary thinking or the hope for a complete revolution; instead, they illustrate that positive social change often involves finding ways to work within the system and transforming the system from the inside (Henig and Stone).

○ Is This a Workable Compromise?

As mentioned above, the number of FTNTT positions are increasing faster than TT positions in many fields. In fact, in their chapter, "Real Faculty But Not: The Full-Time, Non-Tenure-Track Position as Contingent Labor," Richard Colby and

Rebekah Shultz Colby discuss how this transformation is reshaping higher education. They note a 2008 MLA report showing “that while tenure-track faculty employment . . . increased 5 percent between 1995 and 2005, FTNTT positions [showed] a 40 percent increase and adjunct faculty a 38 percent increase during that same time” (58). They also note the American Association of University Professors reports this trend “is also true across departments” (58). Therefore, due to the tremendous increase in these contingent positions, it is essential for faculty to figure out how to make them as fair and equitable as possible.

As Colby and Colby insist, one way to enhance these jobs is to make sure that contingent faculty members are able to participate in the same range of activities as tenured faculty. In looking at their home institution of the University of Denver and others, they highlight that “many FTNTT positions provide faculty opportunities to sit on faculty senates, participate in advising students, direct programs, or share in the governance of the writing programs to which they belong, and, most importantly, to provide comparable if not better instruction to students than TT faculty” (59). The main point here is that instead of fearing the loss of tenure, a better strategy might be to see how we can make full-time, non-tenure track positions even more effective and just than TT ones (Levin and Shaker).

The University of Denver model seeks to enhance these FTNTT contingent faculty positions by providing a quarter off each year for “programmatic research, writing center work, or [teaching] a first-year seminar based on a research interest” and by providing “\$1,000 a year for conference expenses” and “\$500 each year for professional development” (60). Since this department is largely self-governed, the FTNTT faculty have a central role in developing curriculum, but the director still retains a great deal of power (60). Colby and Colby affirm that while these positions are not perfect, they represent a dramatic improvement over the past:

For those who have worked as adjuncts, the FTNTT position can offer security of employment, benefits, a living wage, and time to develop professionally and pedagogically. Furthermore, as an academic couple with newly minted Ph.D.s, we counted ourselves lucky to have found positions where one or both of us did not have to commute for hours to work as adjuncts at multiple institutions. (61)

One lesson to be drawn from this example is that we should not let the perfect be the enemy of the good as we work to steadily improve the working conditions of NTT faculty. By using a pragmatic approach, these contingent workers were able to work with their director to create positive social change as they focused on professional development and democratic participation in workplace decisions. However, it is important to point out that these FTNTT faculty were in part dependent on the good will of a tenured administrator who was sympathetic to their cause and acted as a buffer between the faculty and the higher administration. Therefore, another lesson to draw from this example is that it is often necessary to work with tenured faculty and administrators who are willing to improve the status and support for contingent faculty. Therefore, instead of

simply demonizing tenured professors and administrators, it is often essential to form alliances and work together in the formation of collective agency.

○ Converting Contingency

A possible alternative to simply working within the system and trying to use collective organizing to improve the status and working conditions of contingent faculty is to create a path for NTT faculty to convert to TT positions; some argue that conversion is the best possible option (Besosa et al. 90). This process is documented by Lalicker and Lynch-Binieck in their chapter “Contingency, Solidarity, and Community Building: Principles for Converting Contingent to Tenure Track.” Drawing from their experience working in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), where they are represented by the Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculty (APSCUF) union, these authors outline a system where each department develops a procedure to convert temporary positions to the tenure track (91).

Lalicker and Lynch-Binieck offer several key principles for making these conversions possible and effective as they show how a system-wide contract provision can result in very different outcomes according to the local community and departmental culture. The first principle they present is the need to hire faculty with real expertise in their discipline, explaining that since the conversion to a TT position will require the assessment of disciplinary knowledge, it is essential to hire contingent faculty who will have a good chance at passing a tenure review (93). Moreover, another principle they suggest is that the hiring process should mirror as much as possible the process that is used to search for and hire TT faculty (95). In other words, if you want to give contingent faculty the best chance at attaining tenure, you have to plan ahead at the start and make sure that the people you hire will have the credentials and the expertise that will help them pass a rigorous tenure review process. One benefit of this system is that it encourages departments to stop relying on last-minute hires of under-qualified people (95).

Furthermore, another principle suggested by Lalicker and Lynch-Binieck is to make sure that contingent faculty will have their past years of service counted towards their tenure clock (96). Similarly it is necessary to provide FTNTT faculty with opportunities for professional development and committee work (96). In order to give contingent faculty the best chance at being converted, Lalicker and Lynch-Binieck explain it is important to “maximize contingent faculty access to the complete collegial life of the department: meetings, policy discussions, social events, scholarly discussions, committee service and funding for professional development” (96). In other words, all contingent faculty should be treated as equals, and they should be given the same opportunity to involve themselves in all collegial activities.

Not only should opportunities for involvement exist, but, according to another principle advanced by Lalicker and Lynch-Binieck, assessment of FTNTT and TT faculty members alike should be based on teaching, research, and service

(97). The great potential of this system is that even if a particular faculty member does not gain conversion, each contingent worker is treated in a more equitable way. We also see here the power of breaking down the strict binary between tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty. If all faculty are required to do instruction, service, and research, then it is hard to maintain a strict hierarchy and system of oppression (Mbuva 94).

One way of breaking down hierarchies and combining organizing with service is through the process of mentoring new faculty. By assigning tenured faculty members to work with contingent faculty, both people are pushed to learn from each other and develop expertise together. As Lalicker and Lynch-Binieck argue in yet another principle, mentorship is a vital way to build a collegial community, which can lead to a more just and equitable workplace (99).

○ Faculty Bill of Rights

For faculty who do not have a union or who have a union that does not fight for the protections of contingent faculty, one possible path to improved working conditions through collective action is the formation of an academic bill of rights, which can be voted on by the faculty senate. As we see in Rolf Norgaard's "The Uncertain Future of Past Success: Memory, Narrative, and the Dynamics of Institutional Change," faculty at the University of Colorado-Boulder in 1993 used the shared governance system to pass a document called the "Instructors' Bill of Rights," which included the following stipulations:

- Lecturers working for three years at 50 percent appointments or greater should be appointed as full-time instructors.
- Instructors should have multi-year, presumptively renewable appointments, ranging from two to four years, with three years being the default term.
- The typical workload for instructors was defined as three courses per semester (3/3 for the academic year), with a merit evaluation ratio of 75 percent teaching and 25 percent service. (Tenure-stream faculty generally teach a 2/2 load, with merit evaluations of 40 percent research, 40 percent teaching, and 20 percent service.)
- The floor for starting salaries for full-time instructors was set, at the time, at \$50K (instructors are merit-pool eligible).
- After seven years in rank, instructors would be eligible for promotion to senior instructor.
- Senior instructors are eligible for a semester of reduced teaching load after every seven years of full-time teaching for purposes of pedagogical and curricular research. (135)

This system was designed to create a clear career path for contingent faculty while recognizing the different employment situation of TT and NTT faculty. It also aimed to set minimums for salaries and establish a merit review process.

Interestingly, as Norgaard explains, Colorado is a right-to-work state, so the agreement with the university covering these positions is not protected by a union, and there is spotty adherence to the agreement's provisions (136). Although it is clear that this lack of the enforcement coming from a collective bargaining agreement makes this arrangement more vulnerable, it does allow us to think about how to organize in states where union protections are not possible. Instead of simply positing, as Thomas Auxter does, that unionization is the only real way to organize, we have to take a pragmatic approach and develop multiple modes of collective organizing to improve the working conditions of contingent faculty.

Norgaard argues that since the FTNTT positions at the University of Colorado-Boulder did not require or reward research, professional development had to be tied to different forms of service:

Were it not for instructor service, residential academic programs in the residence halls and service-learning initiatives would not have been possible. Indeed, given that instructor appointments did not require (nor did they explicitly reward) research, service became the contractual space that permitted professional development, conference presentations, grant writing, and publishing. Thanks to this service component, instructors gained influence with administrators and began playing an active role in campus-wide faculty governance. (136)

Like the University of California's system contract for lecturers, the University of Colorado-Boulder structure uses the category of service to help expand beyond teaching the expectations of NTT faculty, and this expansion allows for more involvement in shared governance and a host of other activities.

One of Norgaard's key points is that since the "Instructors' Bill of Rights" was not binding, it was up to the faculty to constantly remind administrators of its existence (137). Therefore, he argues that part of organizing is making sure that the "institutional memory" is kept alive, and this process often entails contingent faculty involving themselves in departmental and university-wide governance (137). One lesson here is that the work of organizing never ends, so it is essential to develop a sustainable collective organization. Ideally, this organization would be a union with collective bargaining rights, but in our current political system, sometimes it is necessary to settle for a more tenuous form of collective power.

○ Writing to Right a Wrong

As we have seen throughout this chapter, organizing can occur in many different forms, so we should be open to a flexible model of collective action. For example, in their chapter, "Non-Tenure Track Activism: Genre Appropriation in Program Reporting," Chris Blankenship and Justin M. Jory describe how a group of NTT faculty at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs worked together to produce a report that countered an official report made for a seven-year external

program review (152). This group collaboratively created an alternative description of the needs and working conditions of these precarious laborers, and then they presented their own document to the external reviewers, and they made sure that each NTT faculty member would talk to the reviewers about particular areas of concern (157). Here we see one of the ways outlined by Nhung Pham and Valerie Osland Paton that an informal group can insert themselves into a formal process in order to make sure their issues are confronted.

As described by Blankenship and Jory, the report written by the NTT faculty led to a series of meetings between TT and NTT faculty, meetings that were made less contentious through the use of Robert's Rules of Order⁶ and the presence of the dean (158). This process eventually resulted in the contingent faculty gaining governance rights in their department for the first time (159). While this inclusion of NTT faculty produced much conflict and resistance (160-63), we should expect nothing less from a process calling for a more equal distribution of resources and power. Sometimes the very resistances that seem to block progress help to build a sense of solidarity amongst the workers trying to improve their working conditions. Moreover, as the situation described by Blankenship and Jory reveals, it is often necessary to play both an inside and outside game in the sense that one has to use internal processes, such as writing and submitting a report, while one agitates from an external position (Jarzabkowski and Fenton).

● The Future of Empowering Contingent Faculty

One of my aims of this chapter has been to explore the many different ways contingent faculty can work together to improve their working conditions, much as Joe Berry does in *Reclaiming the Ivory Tower: Organizing Adjuncts to Change Higher Education*. As we have seen, when it comes to organizing, there is no one-size-fits-all solution that works in every situation. However, what should be clear is that when NTT faculty work together to improve their plight, they can create a more democratic and just workplace. Yet, as we shall see in the next two chapters, some of the major resistances to this movement for positive social change comes from the very people who want to help improve the situation.

6. For details about Robert's Rules of Order, see *Robert's Rules of Order Revised for Deliberative Assemblies* by Henry Martyn Robert.