This is not meant to be an exhaustive list; neither do the proposals represent a floor or ceiling for considering standards for contingency. However, we believe that if APSA truly aspires to represent all political scientists—including those in contingent positions—the Council must consider and move forward with the adoption of a set of standards similar to those outlined here. ■

NOTES

1. This means that faculty need an explicit explanation of what their prospects are at any institution by identifying whether the job is a one-term deal or has the opportunity to go beyond the current contract. This alleviates some of the job insecurity that our group lamented. Similarly, if a contract is terminated, an explicit explanation is required.
2. We realize that TTT have other obligations in service, advising, and research; therefore, we considered prorated pay, compensating for contact hours, and/or paying based on course-buyout policies for those on leave. The buyout method seemed to be the most agreed-on and preferred solution for calculating contingent pay.
3. These should be universally available proportional to employment, with opportunities for subsidization to ensure full coverage.
4. These can be social- or professional-development events that connect contingent faculty to other members of the department and institution. They should occur mostly during business hours out of respect for family and other professional obligations that contingent faculty often have.
5. This should include the actual number of full- and part-time contingent faculty, along with the total number of full-time permanent faculty; the number and percentage of political science courses taught by full- time permanent, full-time temporary, and part-time instructors, respectively; the contractual length of employment for each full- and part-time contingent political science faculty member; and the total length of service of each full- and part-time contingent political science instructor in the department, division, or program.
6. In many cases, contingent faculty are expected to know about or find out for themselves basic necessities such as classroom location, advising rules, and add/drop procedures.
7. We believe that even if these data are not initially incorporated into any ranking system, their availability to prospective students, parents, and donors could greatly influence the status of contingent faculty.

CANARY IN THE COAL MINE: CONTINGENT FACULTY IN THE PRO-DIVERSITY ERA

Catherine Guisan, *University of Minnesota*

DOI: 10.1017/S1049096519000489

The APSA September Chart of the Month, "Field of Study Diversity," stresses APSA's commitment "to advancing diversity and inclusion through the profession," although "more work needs to be done" (APSA 2018). "Diversity" here refers to diverse backgrounds and experiences, organized around categories of gender, race, disability, and sexual identities rather than diversity in economic status. This is in keeping with the American view that the organized pursuit of political representation and political equality is more legitimate and feasible than the pursuit of economic equality (Hochschild 1981).

In 2016, APSA established a status committee on contingent faculty in the profession, with a mixed membership of contingent, tenured-track, and tenured faculty, which joined the long-standing status committees representing women, blacks, Latinos, LGBT, and other underrepresented groups. One long-term goal motivates the new committee's projects, some of which this spotlight showcases: changing the terms of debate within the profession so that the extreme "diversity" (read "inequity") in compensation and opportunities for professional advancement in political science loses its legitimacy, as well as when discrimination due to gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation is not involved.

Thus, this political theorist wonders: Is there a way to recast the problem so that treating contingent faculty as genuine colleagues becomes not only intellectually legitimate but also ethically imperative and economically feasible?

One reason why it is difficult to think through issues linked to contingent faculty is that this term masks much diversity also in the working conditions of those concerned. Some full-timers are in secure and decently paid teaching positions; others cobble together teaching positions at several institutions to survive. Some professionals teach part-time for love of their topic and students; however, most part-timers do so constrained by personal reasons and without making ends meet. Although research has shown for one generation that many non-tenured academics are underpaid and experience minimal professional and infrastructure support such as yearly library privileges (Pratt 1997), little has changed. So what is to be done when state support for public universities also is declining?[1]

Individual negotiations can help, up to a point. They may provide a title, which acknowledges publication, service, and awards; an office; and library and email privileges. Negotiations also may inform about administrative mindsets and policies and, in turn, highlight the human cost of bureaucratic decisions. However, improved monetary compensation and job security remain out of reach. In 2008, starting salaries for adjuncts were quietly slashed by almost 15% in the University of Minnesota (U of MN) political science department, and long-standing course-by-course appointments were not renewed—with no apparent reaction from tenured faculty. As for collective action, a two-year effort at the U of MN to organize tenured, tenure-track, and contingent faculty within a single union failed in 2017 when a Minnesota Court of Appeals ruled against it, rewarding a $500 thousand investment in legal fees by university administrators, and faculty opposition.[2]

Thus, this political theorist wonders: Is there a way to recast the problem so that treating contingent faculty as genuine colleagues becomes not only intellectually legitimate but also ethically imperative and economically feasible? So that offering lower overall compensation because of "some pressure on discretionary funds" to a long-term and highly productive contingent faculty who has just created a new course upon departmental request becomes unthinkable? Budgets are flexible; what is legitimate becomes affordable. Witness the demand for a $15/hour minimum wage, deemed undoable a few years ago; it is now being adopted in many parts of the United States. Why not envisage similar changes of mindset in academia, and eventually, changes of policies?

I argue that the concept of "diversity" should be harnessed to legitimize the improvement of working conditions for contingent faculty. Some members of "diverse" categories in tenure-track

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096519000489 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and tenured positions are skeptical of this concept. It burdens them with representation on countless committees at considerable personal and professional cost (Htun and Tungohan 2018). Yet, "diversity"—a mixed blessing—at least acknowledges that a certain category of people exists. If contingent faculty joins its ranks, it will help to delegitimize treating "contingent" as "disposable" colleagues. This more capacious understanding of diversity could be deployed on campuses where a majority of faculty may not support unionization—or even oppose it—but endorses "equity and diversity." The U of MN Office for Equity and Diversity (OED) asserts its "special responsibility… to serve, support, and partner with people…facing social, cultural, and economic barriers to education and jobs, to promotion and advancement, and to the highest level of achievement and success" (OED 2012). Undoubtedly, contingent faculty fits this definition.

The issue of inequality of salary and benefits within departments does not concern only contingent faculty, which is like the canary in the coal mine. Tenured faculty—tacitly if not always explicitly—has endorsed a market-based rhetoric, which justifies enormous differences of treatment within its own ranks, with the paradoxical result that it has become "disenchanted" (Kaufman-Osborn 2017, 102).[3] Faculty fears rightly for the future of its doctoral students. Rethinking the concept of diversity and its practices to include the interests of under-recognized academics also will serve the privileged, according to OED: "Transformed by diversity, our University will be looked to…around the world for its commitment to social justice; its equitable and transparent recruitment, hiring, and promotion policies and practices" (OED 2012, 2). In 2019, in its eighth symposium, "Keeping our Faculty," the U of MN Institute on Diversity (which works for OED) is including a break-out session entitled "Contingent Faculty as the Canary in the Coal Mine: Market versus Ethical Aspirations in Academia" (Institute on Diversity, U of MN 2019). This is one step in the right direction. ■

NOTES

1. In 1989, Minnesota funded 38.8% of the state's land-grant university's costs; in 2017, it funded 14%. Available at www.mndaily.com/article/2017/04/university-of-minnesota-higher-education-state-funding (accessed January 27, 2019).
2. For more information, see www.mndaily.com/article/2018/03/n-this-is-not-over-umn-faculty-reflect-on-the-failed-union-movement (accessed October 14, 2018).
3. U of MN incoming president Joan Gabel explained her large salary by "the market," which values "things based on what supply and demand dictate" (Koumpilova 2018). Already in the 1990s, the chair of the U of MN department of political science was concerned about the growing inequality in compensation among his colleagues: a matter of shrinking state allocation but also of a change in faculty mindset, which became increasingly "competitive" (Interview with Edwin Fogelman 2018). Because it is a state institution, all U of MN salaries are posted for public knowledge.

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FIVE TIPS ON CONTINGENCY

Isaac Kamola, *Trinity College*

DOI: 10.1017/S1049096519000441

Most job-market advice received by political scientists begins by acknowledging the perils of un- and under-employment, then proceeds as if intensified professionalization and a more skillful approach to the job market is enough to avoid this unfortunate outcome (Carter and Scott 1998; Miller and Gentry 2011; Saiya 2014). However, as demonstrated by many authors in this spotlight, contingency is now a reality experienced by many political scientists, no matter how hardworking or savvy. As such, it becomes important to develop strategies for navigating the all-too-common realities of academic contingency. Doing so helps cultivate networks of self-help and mutual solidarity, while publicly exposing and resisting the many indignities reproduced and normalized within an academy heavily dependent on contingent labor.

I entered the academic job market in 2008. After the financial crisis, half of the jobs I applied for ceased to exist after I submitted the applications. This dire economic situation—from which the academy has not recovered—meant that my partner and I set out on a multiyear circuit of postdocs and unemployed "visiting-scholar" positions. We lived in five cities in five years; one year, we filed taxes in four different states. We got really good at packing and unpacking an apartment. Over time, I developed a list of practical advice to pass along to fellow travelers who were just entering the unsettling postgraduate world of applying for jobs, teaching in new and random places, and imagining a thousand possible (but unlikely) futures. I developed these five tips during our years of vagabondage:

1. **Set your own wage.** I decided not to work for less than $20 an hour. One school paid me $3,200 per course, which meant I could spend only 160 hours on that class. I used an Excel spreadsheet to track the time spent teaching, preparing, grading, holding office hours, and responding to email. By the end of the semester, I had only enough hours to either prepare for class or grade final papers, so I taught the last classes without prepping them. The school got what it paid for—and I earned $20 an hour.
2. **CVs are editable documents.** Given that many employers consciously or unconsciously discriminate against those in contingent positions, avoiding full disclosure is often advantageous. Because no crime of omission exists with CVs, when teaching at multiple institutions, I find it perfectly reasonable to list only one school per year. List only the more prestigious school, and/or the job title most easily misinterpreted as a full-time position.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096519000489 Published online by Cambridge University Press