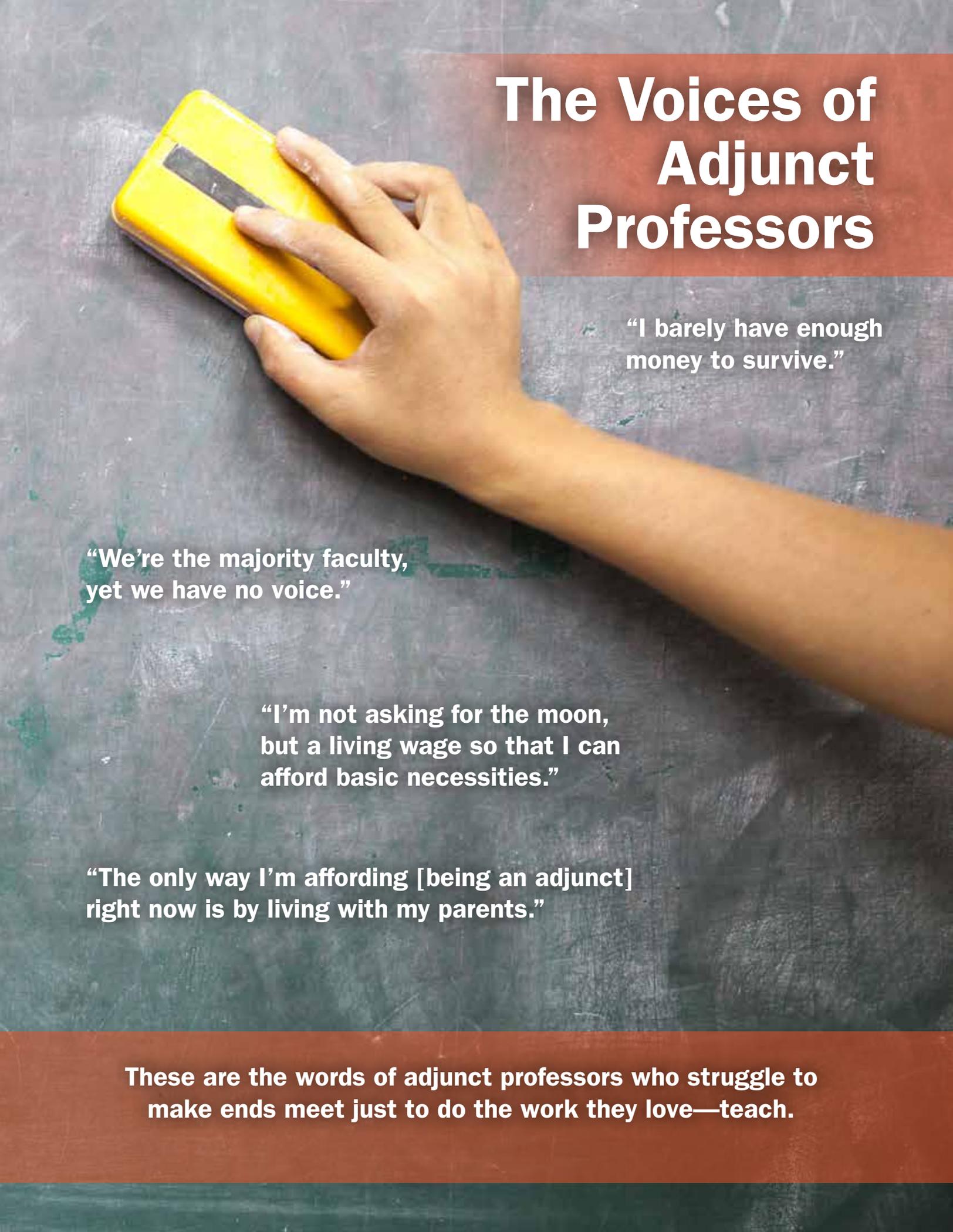


The High Cost of Adjunct Living: Maryland

A report by:



A hand holding a yellow eraser on a chalkboard. The hand is positioned in the upper left quadrant, with the eraser resting on the dark green chalkboard surface. The background is a dark, textured chalkboard with some faint green and white marks. The overall tone is somber and reflective.

The Voices of Adjunct Professors

“I barely have enough money to survive.”

“We’re the majority faculty, yet we have no voice.”

“I’m not asking for the moon, but a living wage so that I can afford basic necessities.”

“The only way I’m affording [being an adjunct] right now is by living with my parents.”

These are the words of adjunct professors who struggle to make ends meet just to do the work they love—teach.

Executive Summary

There is a crisis in higher education.

Quickly rising tuition has resulted in record levels of student debt, putting higher education out of reach for more and more working families.

At the same time, universities are shifting resources away from instruction. More than two-thirds of all faculty work on a contingent basis; facing low pay and no benefits or job security. Many do not even have access to basic facilities such as office space; making it increasingly difficult for adjuncts to do their best for their students.

Being a university professor, once the quintessential middle-class job, has become a low-wage one.

Maryland is no exception.

Private, nonprofit and public colleges and universities in the Maryland market rely heavily on a contingent academic workforce; in 2012, 77 percent of faculty, or 22,600 employees, were not on the tenure track. All of the faculty at Maryland's for-profit colleges—more than 600 faculty employees—do not have access to the tenure system.

Being a university professor,
once the quintessential
middle-class job, has become
a low-wage one.

This shift from a secure, well-compensated academic workforce to a temporary, low-paid workforce impacts the area economy where these colleges and universities are located, surrounding communities, and Maryland in general. Through an analysis of cost-of-living measures and a series of interviews, this report will explore the impact casualization of academic labor has on Maryland professors and the potential impact on the economy and communities they call home. Specifically, the analysis poses the question: How many classes does an adjunct professor have to teach to afford basic cost-of-living measures—housing, healthcare, food, the ability to retire?

The median pay per course in the Mideast—according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis—was \$2,700 for master's level institutions and \$3,750 for doctoral level institutions at private not-for-profit institutions or up to \$4,000 at public institutions. This means an adjunct teaching 12 courses a year—an extraordinary course load—may have an annual income of just \$32,400. Findings include:

- An adjunct professor must teach between 16 and 28 classes a year to afford a home and utilities in Maryland.
- An adjunct professor would need to teach up to seven classes per year to cover the cost of groceries for a family.
- An adjunct professor would need to teach four to six classes to pay for a cesarean section delivery at certain Maryland hospitals.

The increasingly contingent nature of academic labor is not an accident of history but a deliberate business model that leaves taxpayers holding the bag by depriving faculty of wages, benefits and job security, forcing them to collect food stamps and subsidized healthcare, and forgo saving for retirement. In many ways, the crisis in higher education mirrors the crisis in the broader economy, where jobs are increasingly low wage and part time even while revenues and profits are increasing.

Adjunct faculty are joining unions to raise standards.

According to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce, unionized adjuncts report more job security and have a median pay per course that is 25 percent higher than their nonunion counterparts. This translates to campuses having a consistent and stable workforce—and a more secure workforce puts less of a burden on city and county governments.

Adjuncts have already begun to come together to change the face of higher education in Maryland. The 20,200 nonunion adjuncts at nonprofit and public colleges and universities in the state can stand with more than 22,000 faculty that have already unionized with SEIU to improve higher education and improve working conditions and benefits for adjuncts.

Transformation of the Academic Workforce: An Overview

In 2013, more than 1.5 million teachers worked in postsecondary education in the United States.¹ Many of us think of these jobs as being filled by full-time, salaried professors who spend their days on campus educating their students, developing cutting edge research, and increasing the depth of our academic knowledge. The reality is that institutions of higher education are increasingly relying upon contingent academic labor: professors that are hired on a class-by-class basis, semester-to-semester with no job security, paid minimal compensation, provided no benefits, and are outside the tenure system. Faculty teaching jobs—once considered a dream middle-class profession—have become one of the many precarious positions created by the new economy.

What does this transformation—the casualization of the academic workforce—mean? For colleges and universities, a well-paid, stable workforce is being replaced with a lower-paid workforce with no job security. For faculty, it means a dramatic decrease in quality of life and their ability to provide for their families in their chosen profession. The average annual pay in 2013 for a tenured professor at a private research university in the United States is \$167,118.² In comparison, the average pay per course reported by adjunct faculty is approximately \$3,000.³ Even if an adjunct teaches eight courses per year—considered a high course load—that person is making just \$24,000 annually with likely no benefits.

The institutions of higher education in Maryland rely heavily on a contingent academic workforce. In 2012, approximately 77 percent of full- and part-time employees with faculty status at four-year not-for-profit, and two- and four-year public institutions⁴, or almost 22,600 faculty employees, were not on the tenure track or in the tenure system. This is an increase from 2001, when 67 percent, or 11,100 employees, at four-year not-for-profit, and two- and four-year public institutions in Maryland were not on the tenure track or in the tenure system. While the total number of faculty at Maryland colleges and universities increased significantly in the last decade, the growth has been largely in temporary faculty positions. In addition, there are more than 600 full- and part-time employees with faculty status at for-profit colleges Maryland that do not have access to the tenure system; this represents 100 percent of the faculty at Maryland’s for-profit colleges.⁵

This contingent academic workforce at Maryland’s colleges and universities is also increasingly part-time. In 2001, 46 percent, of employees with faculty status, or 7,600 employees, were part time. In 2012, 54 percent of employees with faculty status, or 15,800 employees, were part time.⁶

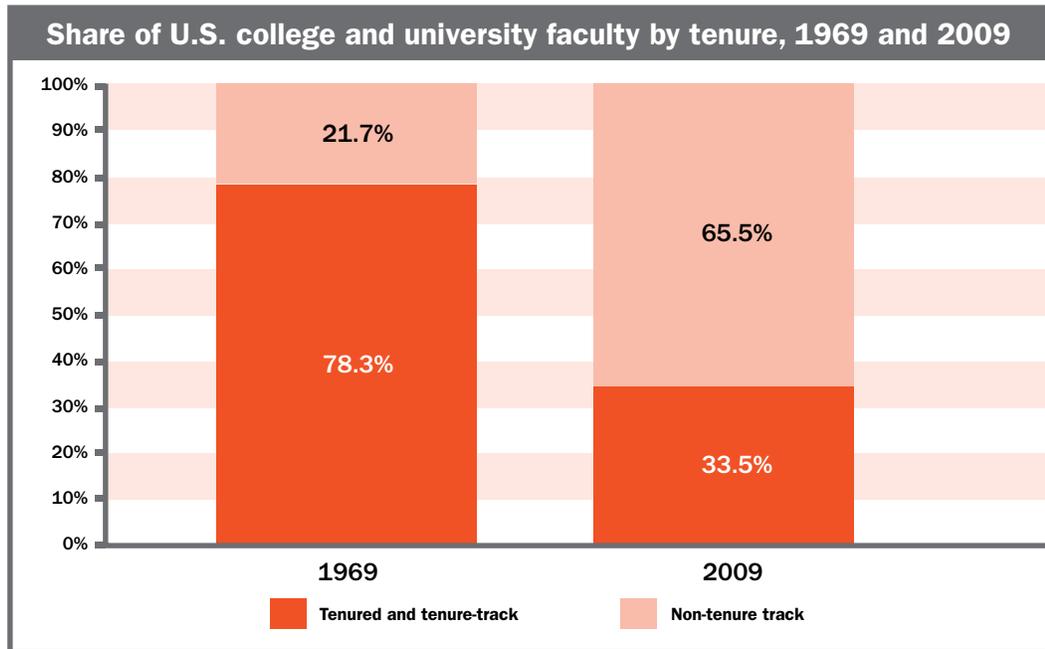
All of the adjuncts interviewed for this white paper reported a love of teaching and students, but many expressed concern for their future and their ability to afford to continue with the job. An interviewee said, “The lack of money is incredibly frustrating, and the humiliation of not having status, of having to scramble for work, the feeling of ‘Oh yeah, I put 20 years into studying this and preparing for this and look where I am now,’ I’m scrounging for piecework basically.”

“I put 20 years into studying this and preparing for this and look where I am now,’ I’m scrounging for piecework basically.”

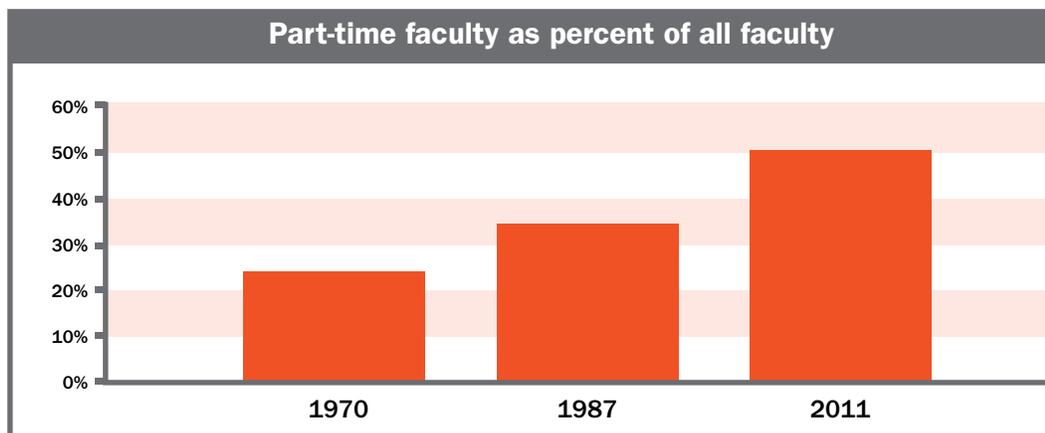
This shift from a secure, well-compensated academic workforce to a temporary, low-paid workforce impacts the area economy where these colleges and universities are located, surrounding communities, and Maryland in general. This report will explore the impact that casualization of academic labor has on Maryland professors and the potential effects on the economy and communities they call home. Specifically, the analysis poses the question: How many classes does an adjunct professor have to teach to afford basic cost-of-living measures—housing, healthcare, food, the ability to retire?⁷

Transformation of the Academic Workforce: A National View

Tenured, full-time faculty positions are on a steady decline. In 1969, tenured and tenure-track positions made up approximately 78.3 percent of the faculty and nontenure-track positions comprised 21.7 percent. In 2009, tenured and tenure-track faculty had declined to 33.5 percent, and 66.5 percent of faculty were ineligible for tenure.⁸



From 1970 to 2003, the number of part-time faculty members in the United States increased 422 percent while full-time faculty has only increased 71 percent⁹ In 2011, part-time faculty represented 50 percent of all teaching faculty at degree-granting institutions, up from 34 percent in 1987 and 22 percent in 1970.¹⁰



Adjunct or contingent faculty positions are often thought to be professionals that have careers outside academia, who teach a class occasionally to offer specific expertise or experience to students, or because they want to make some extra money. Part-time teaching, however, is not a choice for many part-time faculty members. A National Study of Postsecondary Faculty report showed more than 35 percent of part-time faculty, and half of part-time faculty in the humanities, would have preferred a full-time position at their institutions.¹¹

Transformation of the Academic Workforce: Impact on the Individual

In Maryland, full-time professors are paid a salary that varies widely across disciplines, but averaged between \$83,190 to \$147,178 in 2012–13.¹² Generally, full-time professors may teach up to five or six courses per year and spend the rest of their time developing research, serving on committees, meeting with students, advising graduate students, and preparing for classes.

Adjunct faculty often try to teach as many courses as possible to make enough money to pay their bills—many teaching six to 15 courses per year with classes at multiple colleges. An adjunct is often paid by the course, and the median pay per course for part-time faculty members in the Mideast region—as defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis—is \$2,700 at a master’s level private not-for-profit institution; \$3,750 at a doctoral level private not-for-profit institution; \$2,300 at an associate level public institution; \$3,238 at a master’s level public institution; and \$4,000 at a doctoral level public institution.¹³ In comparison, the average tuition at a four-year not-for-profit institution in Maryland was \$26,480 in 2012–13.¹⁴ Despite the high cost of tuition, an adjunct could teach six courses a year and only earn \$13,800 to \$24,000, or 12 courses a year and have an annual income of \$27,600 to \$48,000. As one adjunct who teaches eight courses a semester explained: “Most people look at me and think I’m crazy for working this hard. But it’s worth it, in that, I don’t feel like I’m penalizing my family for pursuing teaching. Here’s the thing, when you start out as an adjunct you sort of have to accept almost any offer you’re given.”

Contingent or adjunct faculty are rarely provided benefits. Even as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2009, often referred to as Obamacare, goes into effect, colleges and universities have begun to institute new limits on adjuncts’ hours to avoid their responsibility for providing affordable healthcare to adjunct professors.¹⁵ In Maryland, the majority of adjuncts interviewed accessed their healthcare through the Maryland Health Connection, the Maryland health insurance exchange, and most were eligible for Medicaid or free or subsidized health insurance for low-income individuals.

“It’s frustrating watching your savings account dwindle, as you’re doing something that everyone else sees as something noble, as something good, as something necessary.”

Adjuncts have no job security. Generally, their contracts are per semester and they have to reapply for their jobs for the following semester. In addition, classes can be canceled up to the day they are scheduled to begin, and if that happens, an adjunct is often not compensated for that class or for the work they have already done to prepare for the class. One adjunct stated: “We’re assigned classes, but we don’t actually sign the contract until the first day. What this means is that we don’t have any security at all. We could expect four classes and show up and have none. Hopefully, that never happens but it’s a reality we’re faced with nonetheless.”

Part-time professors get little support for research, scholarship or any professional development. In 2003, part-time faculty reported spending 90 percent of their time on teaching, 6.6 percent on administrative and other duties, and 3.4 percent on research.¹⁶ The growth of the academic contingent workforce with limited time or support for research or creative work has long-term negative consequences for scholarship and the public benefit. It also negatively impacts the adjunct’s professional development as it limits or prevents the possibility of professional advancement.

Meanwhile, the shrinking availability of tenure-track positions means newly minted Ph.D.s are finding it increasingly difficult to find full-time work and are more willing to teach as adjuncts at low rates with no security, resources or benefits. As one interviewee stated, “It’s frustrating watching your savings account dwindle, as you’re doing something that everyone else sees as something noble, as something good, as something necessary.”

Transformation of the Academic Workforce:

Where do we go from here?

As many as 590,800 Maryland residents may be struggling to make ends meet—more than a tenth of Maryland’s population. In Baltimore, almost one-quarter of the population—as many as 148,500 residents are also struggling to make ends meet.¹⁷ Adjuncts in the Maryland area have decided it is time to come together to build a marketwide movement to improve compensation, benefits, job security, access to the tools and materials to do their work well, support for research and scholarship, meaningful access to academic freedom, and inclusion in the academic life and governance of their institutions.

Unionizing has made demonstrated improvements to the working conditions of adjuncts. In fact, median pay per course is 25 percent higher for part-time faculty represented by a union than for those that are not unionized. According to the 2012 Coalition on the Academic Workforce report, unionized part-time faculty also fare better on job security: 19 percent of unionized part-time faculty report they have some kind of job security, and 18 percent are even paid for course cancellation. In comparison, only 4 percent of nonunionized part-time faculty report having any job security, with only 10 percent reporting they receive compensation when a course is canceled.¹⁸ Unionized adjuncts also report improved working conditions, such as increased access, support from their institution and opportunities to participate in governance.¹⁹

Nationally, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) represents 22,000 faculty, 74,000 nonfaculty higher education employees and 80,000 early childhood educators. Our adjunct faculty is organized in colleges throughout the country, from the Congress of Connecticut Community Colleges to the California State University system. We are growing with campaigns in Washington, D.C., Boston, Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, St. Louis, the San Francisco Bay Area, New Hampshire, Vermont, the Twin Cities and Baltimore. The 2 million SEIU members and their children have a huge stake in the quality and accessibility of education—and a unique perspective on the challenges facing colleges and universities and an understanding that educational success depends on more than just the classroom.

In the District of Columbia, SEIU Local 500 represents more than two-thirds of the adjuncts in the adjunct labor market, and has won improvements in compensation and benefits for their adjunct members. Contractually guaranteed benefits include increased job security, such as enhanced procedures for assignment and reappointment, and standards for discipline and dismissal. SEIU Local 500 has negotiated better compensation packages, including pay increases that resulted in one department at George Washington University receiving up to a 32 percent increase. More recently, in spring 2014 adjuncts at Montgomery College in Maryland negotiated a contract that brings pay increases of between 16 and 22 percent over the three years of the contract.²⁰

California Faculty Association (CFA) represents tenure-track and nontenure-track faculty at the California State University system and is affiliated with SEIU, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the National Education Association. CFA’s contract—often considered the “gold standard” of adjunct contracts—includes increased job security, such as renewable, three-year contracts reserved for incumbents, and access to health insurance and retirement.²¹



Methodology

The adjunct cost-of-living index in this report assumes an adjunct is compensated at a rate of \$2,300 per course or \$4,000 per course. According to AAUP's Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2012–13, the median pay per course for part-time faculty members in fall 2010 in the Bureau of Economic Analysis Midwest region was \$2,700 at a master's level private not-for-profit institution; \$3,750 at a doctoral level private not-for-profit institution; \$2,300 at an associate level public institution; \$3,238 at a master's level public institution; and \$4,000 at a doctoral level public institution.²² The four-year nonprofit colleges examined in this report include bachelor's level, master's level and doctoral level institutions—and so the actual rate of pay a Maryland adjunct is earning may be lower or higher depending on the school and the subject matter of the course. Although this report does not focus on the working conditions of adjunct professors at for-profit colleges in Maryland, it is important to note that 100 percent of the more than 600 faculty members that work at for-profit colleges in the Maryland area are all adjuncts working under similar conditions as those profiled in this report.²³

Interviews with adjuncts living and working in Maryland were done in June, July and August 2014. Adjuncts with teaching experience at 11 different nonprofit and public colleges and universities in Maryland were interviewed. All of the colleges represented are among the 36 colleges and universities in Maryland with a minimum estimated 2013 fall enrollment of 2,000 students or more.²⁴

In this report, full- and part-time faculty not in the tenure track or in the tenure system will be referred to as contingent or adjunct faculty.

Academic Work and the Maryland Economy

Maryland is an expensive state in which to live: 18 percent higher than the U.S. average.²⁵ Baltimore is also an expensive city in which to live: 19 percent higher than the U.S. average.²⁶ This analysis will compare certain cost-of-living measures in Maryland with the compensation paid to adjuncts in the Maryland market. As one adjunct describes, “I’m spending a whole lot of time trying to figure out how to pay for everything bit by bit. So whenever I have an expense, I don’t take it for granted that I can cover it. I am constantly budgeting and I’m constantly thinking about how to make it through the next semester.”

Although many adjuncts express a love for their profession, they also are concerned about the sustainability of the profession with its current conditions. One instructor said: “The most frustrating thing is that I am becoming a better teacher, but as I become a better teacher, my life financially and my position at the university seems to become more precarious. The university itself does not seem to be that interested in helping me improve my position.”

To supplement their low adjunct income and make ends meet, adjuncts often take on additional, nonacademic jobs. One interviewee explained that he has been supplementing his teaching income with construction work. Other adjuncts we talked to made additional money from waitressing, freelance writing, tutoring and journalism. Given the fact these nonacademic jobs can pay far greater than adjunct work, some of the adjuncts that we spoke to have considered leaving the profession to take lower-skilled but higher-paid work. One adjunct said, “I don’t think we should be making personal sacrifices in order to maintain our teaching or integrity as an educator and I think, right now, that is what the entire institution is built on, the generosity and the philanthropy of thousands of desperate adjunct faculty across the country.”

Academic Work and the Cost of Housing

How many classes must an adjunct professor teach to afford an apartment in Maryland?

Median rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Maryland is \$1,570.²⁷ As the federal Office of Affordable Housing Preservation notes, households spending more than 30 percent of income for housing are “considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.”²⁸ Additionally, renters in Maryland spend a median of \$146 per month on utilities.²⁹

- An adjunct professor must teach between 16 and 28 classes a year to afford rent and utilities in Maryland.³⁰

In Baltimore, the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,500.³¹ Additionally, renters in Baltimore spend a median of \$146 per month on utilities.³²

- An adjunct professor must teach between 15 and 27 classes a year to afford rent and utilities in Baltimore.³³

Many adjuncts are burdened by their rental costs. One adjunct we spoke with teaches four classes per semester and earns about \$9,600 per semester. He lives in a shared living space and his rent is \$650 per month, so a large portion of his salary is dedicated to covering his rent. He stated, “This last semester, I was supposed to teach four classes and I ended up teaching three, which meant my biweekly paycheck after taxes was \$660—just over what I pay in rent, so immediately half of my paycheck goes to rent.”

Many of the adjuncts we interviewed rent instead of purchase a home because of the instability of the work, and some have to live with family members or roommates so they can continue to teach. An instructor explained: “The way I do it, I live with my aunt and uncle. I do pay them a rent of a kind but not a fixed amount every month; they’re flexible with me. Obviously I would prefer to be living on my own, but I would have to live like a college undergrad—being one of eight people sharing a Victorian barn of a house would be my other option based on the money I make.”

The instability of the profession can cause a personal economic crisis when income is suddenly taken away. An interviewee explained: “It’s just constant frustration and constant worry and stress about trying to make the budget stretch to fit things. And anytime something unexpected happens, it’s nightmarish.”

The lack of job security results in an adjunct living with the constant stress of losing their income. One adjunct said, “I’m concerned there might be a month here where I won’t be able to make the payment especially if this class I’m scheduled to teach next month gets cancelled.”

How many classes must an adjunct teach to afford a house in Maryland?

Median home cost in Maryland is \$289,985,³⁴ which results in monthly housing payments of \$1,539.³⁵ Owners’ median utilities costs are \$3,272 per year.³⁶

- An adjunct professor must teach between 16 and 28 classes a year to afford a home, including utilities, in Maryland.³⁷

In Baltimore, the median home cost is \$186,300,³⁸ which results in monthly housing payments of \$989.³⁹ Owners’ median utilities costs are \$3,272 per year.⁴⁰

- An adjunct professor must teach between 11 and 19 classes a year to afford a home, including utilities, in Baltimore.⁴¹

Affordable home ownership was often cited as a struggle by the adjuncts interviewed for this project. One Maryland adjunct said, “I’m only one month behind in my mortgage but at one point I was three months behind in my mortgage.” He added, “I subsidized myself with my mother’s retirement savings because I didn’t want to just give up my house. I was constantly drawing checks from her account ... it’s been really awful.”

An adjunct who bought a home with her husband a couple of years ago stated: “We couldn’t even think of affording a free standing house in central Maryland. We have a townhouse with no garage, the car is parked out front and we have a postage stamp of a yard, and that was all we could afford.”

Many adjuncts need to have a home office or rent studio space because they are not provided space at the college or university. This is an additional, but necessary, expense that many incur to grade papers, prepare lectures, or develop materials for the classes they are teaching. The lack of office space at the institution can cause extreme challenges to adjuncts. As one interviewee explained: “We don’t have offices, we don’t have any time to meet with students, and therefore we don’t hold office hours. This doesn’t mean that we, as adjuncts, don’t meet with students. It means that we meet with students on our own time and our own time is essentially time we could be seeking other employment or having a second job. And the time doesn’t end when we’re out of the classroom at all. I almost feel like you do the bulk of teaching while we’re at home, while we’re answering emails, while we’re meeting students in hallways. And a lot of times you have conversations with students in hallways that you really should be having in an office. It’s really hard to counsel someone or to mentor someone, because kids come to you with problems, regardless of where you are, they don’t see a distinction between a professor with an office and an adjunct, to them you’re just a professor and those are conversations you really should be having behind closed doors.”

“I subsidized myself with my mother’s retirement savings because I didn’t want to just give up my house. I was constantly drawing checks from her account ... it’s been really awful.”

Academic Work and the Cost of Groceries

How many classes does an adjunct professor have to teach to afford groceries?

- An adjunct professor would need to teach one or two classes per year just to cover the cost of groceries for one person.
- An adjunct professor would need to teach up to seven classes per year to cover the cost of groceries for a family.⁴²

Adjuncts with small course loads, a common occurrence in the summer, may struggle to afford groceries. An instructor noted: “We eat a lot of hamburger and a lot of pasta. I sort of feel like splurging on fresh vegetables at the farmers market is a luxury—and that shouldn’t be. I should still be eating them, so I do try to find the money to get fresh vegetables from time to time anyways just because I know you need them to stay healthy.”

One adjunct explained that her family struggled when she was the main breadwinner; she stated: “We had to be careful about buying meat. We ate a lot of pasta, we ate a lot of mac and cheese, and we ate a lot of ramen noodles; kind of like college kids do. We couldn’t afford meat or poultry or fish for a long time.”

Courses available to teach are often in short supply during the summer, making already tight budgets tighter. One interviewee said: “During the summer, it is very hard for a part-timer to get work; there’s almost none given and so you have the whole summer with no paychecks. You do have to think twice about how you spend your money.”

“During the summer, it is very hard for a part-timer to get work; there’s almost none given and so you have the whole summer with no paychecks. You do have to think twice about how you spend your money.”



Academic Work and the Cost of Day Care

How many classes does an adjunct professor have to teach to afford day care for one child?

- An adjunct professor would need to teach three to six classes a year just to cover the average cost of full-time infant care at a child care center in Maryland.
- An adjunct professor would need to teach two to four classes a year just to cover the average cost of full-time care for a 4-year-old at a child care center in Maryland.
- An adjunct professor would need to teach two or three classes a year just to cover the cost of before and after-school care for a school age child at a child care center in Maryland.⁴³

One interviewee explained: “When I had a little one, I couldn’t afford full-time licensed certified day care. It would have cost twice as much to send him to day care as I was making. So for a while, I relied on unlicensed home day care, which didn’t work out so well for obvious reasons; it was not a good situation. But I did that for a while, and then there was a student that would babysit for me while I was in class. She didn’t charge much so I was able to run to teach and then come home, so I would only pay for a couple of hours. But I was never able to send my children to a licensed full-time, or even licensed part-time day care.”

Another adjunct said: “If I had to pay for day care, I’d just sit them in my class. There’s no other way I could afford it. If I had kids ... no, there wouldn’t be any money for kids, there is barely money for relationships in general.”

Academic Work and the Cost of Transportation

How many classes does an adjunct professor have to teach to afford to get around the city of St. Louis?

- An adjunct professor would need to teach one to three classes to cover the cost of automobile expenses, gasoline and a monthly subway pass.⁴⁴

Many of the adjuncts interviewed reported that a car is necessary to travel long distances between campuses to teach classes. One adjunct explained: “I put a lot of miles on my car. In theory, if I planned hard enough I could take the Metro, but realistically, that would expand my day tremendously, and also I’d be at the mercy of the Metro system. So I try and arrange my classes so that all my Baltimore classes are in the mornings together so I’m not making more than a couple of roundtrips to Baltimore. You think about travel decisions when you accept the class; you don’t want to be driving way out to Prince George’s County then drive back to, let’s say, Germantown, that’s a long drive.”

Many of the adjuncts interviewed reported they could not afford to own a car, although sometimes a car was necessary to travel between campuses to teach classes. A struggling adjunct said: “I had a major crisis last fall when I had an accident. Now, my car was already 7 or 8 years old, so the insurance company wasn’t exactly going to give me a lot for that car. Shopping for a new car was traumatic because I hadn’t realized how prices had gone up in those intervening years, and I was torn between getting a cheap, used car that would need to get fixed regularly, having unexpected bills, you know, you never know what’s going to happen with all the commuting and driving to different schools. I needed a reliable car so eventually I decided I was going to have to shell out the money for a new car because I needed a car I could count on. My whole livelihood depended on it. But somehow I was going to have to come up with a car payment every month. And I hadn’t had a car payment for years, because of course that old car had been paid off, and I took good care of it so it hadn’t had many problems until the accident.”

Academic Work and the Cost of Health and Medical Care

How many classes must an adjunct teach to afford medical care at certain Maryland hospitals?⁴⁵

- An adjunct professor would need to teach four to six classes to pay for a cesarean section delivery;⁴⁶
- An adjunct professor would need to teach five to eight classes to afford care for heart failure;⁴⁷
- An adjunct professor would need to teach nine to 16 classes to pay for a hip joint replacement.⁴⁸

Some adjuncts report forgoing medical care because of the expense. One adjunct said: “A lot of times I’ve put off getting new glasses or getting my teeth checked at the dentist or something like that just because we have no money. I have no dental insurance at all, and of course as one gets older, one does need to get one’s teeth checked, perhaps more than when you’re younger. I haven’t had new glasses for three or four years now and I’ve got big scratches on these. So there are a lot of things I need that I put off.”

With or without health insurance, adjuncts find it very difficult to pay for medical care. One adjunct explained: “It’s a constant battle. I need to have regular doctor’s appointments and checkups and things like that because I can’t work if I’m not healthy, but I also can’t afford a lot of medical care that isn’t absolutely essential and the insurance company isn’t going to cover.”

An uninsured professor reported: “There was one time when I self-medicated with antibiotics that I bought in India instead of going to the doctor and I had a skin condition. I just never went to the dermatologist because it could have become a couple hundred dollars that I didn’t have. I was also getting therapy, and I had to stop therapy because I couldn’t afford it.”

How many classes does an adjunct have to teach to afford health insurance?

- An adjunct professor would need to teach one or two classes to afford the lowest priced single coverage health insurance.
- An adjunct professor would need to teach two to four classes to afford the lowest priced health insurance for family coverage. These low premiums often come with high deductibles—\$2,000 per year for individuals and \$4,000 for families—before the insurance plan will cover certain services, including some prescription drugs, emergency room visits and hospital stays.⁴⁹

Repeatedly, interviewees pointed to health insurance as one of their biggest concerns. One person said: “I was without insurance for a while. Just before the deadline I finally enrolled through the Maryland Healthcare Exchange. So I have insurance now. But it’s something I have to account for in my finances, another bill I have to pay with the money I make.”

“A lot of times I’ve put off getting new glasses or getting my teeth checked at the dentist or something like that just because we have no money.”

Academic Work and the Cost of Student Debt

How many classes must an adjunct teach to pay back student loan debt?

The average cumulative student loan debt is \$40,208 for individuals with a master's degree and \$58,967 for individuals with a doctorate.⁵⁰

- An adjunct professor would need to teach one to four classes per year just to cover student loan payments.⁵¹

Many adjuncts live with large student debt bills. The burden of high educational debt, which cannot be discharged through bankruptcy and can follow an individual for life, hinders meaningful savings and the ability to make major purchases such as a home.

Many of the interviewees were impacted by high student debt. One adjunct professor said: “We really only paid off our last college loan because when my parents died they happened to have bought a house for a large family and it was in an area of New Jersey that has a train to New York, so it became a pretty expensive suburb, and when we sold the house, half of it just went to our last college loan, which was huge.”

“I know that because I have the student loan debt that I have that I will probably never be able to own property ... ”

One adjunct offered: “It’s a little bit oppressive to think about how much I’m actually going to pay if I pay it off on the 20-year timeline. But right now, there is no way that I can pay it off any quicker and still live.”

Another adjunct explained: “[My student loans] are a mental burden because I haven’t let them become a real financial burden. It’s something for me that I’ve been pushing back and not thinking about but I know that it’s a problem. I know that because I have the student loan debt that I have that I will probably never be able to own property, but it’s also, like I know that I would have ‘X’ amount of extra dollars if I didn’t have student loans that I do.”

Academic Work and the Cost of Entertainment

Adjuncts interviewed for this project talked about not being able to afford to participate in some of the fun things in life—going to restaurants or on vacations—because they could not afford the expense. One said: “Well, we take walks. We try to go out to eat once in a while, and again we look for coupons or deals of some kind or something like that, or someplace inexpensive. I mean Burger King for lunch is a treat when we have a ‘Buy one Whopper, get one free coupon’ and I’m serious, we’ve done that a number of times. We go to Olive Garden for the soup and salad special, it’s like \$5.99 or \$6.99 for each of us. I actually prefer the Olive Garden because I think it’s a little healthier than Burger King. Those are the kinds of things we look for.”

Another adjunct offered: “I’ve spent the month of June basically just shut up in my house. I bought some canned, frozen food from the grocery store to prepare my own meals at home and just not spend money and it sucks with so many leisure activities in the month of June. I decline invitations from friends, saying, ‘I’m sorry, I’m broke, I can’t come out.’”

“I’ve spent the month of June basically just shut up in my house. I bought some canned, frozen food from the grocery store to prepare my own meals at home and just not spend money and it sucks with so many leisure activities in the month of June. I decline invitations from friends, saying, ‘I’m sorry, I’m broke, I can’t come out.’”

Academic Work and the Cost of Retirement

Although some of the nonprofit colleges and universities allow adjuncts to enroll in their retirement saving plans, rarely, if ever, do colleges offer a matching contribution. Most adjuncts cannot afford to participate in any retirement savings plan. One adjunct professor said, “It’s hard to worry about retirement when you’re worried about the next semester.”

When interviewees were asked how they are preparing for retirement, most said they are not, including one who said, “Every year I budget so that I can put money away for retirement and I’ve never actually put money in my retirement account so that’s where I feel like it’s not a sustainable lifestyle, there’s no future.”

Another adjunct reported: “We’re over retirement age. We didn’t have a lot set aside for retirement; we even postponed that because our children were in school so we were setting money aside for that and so far we’ve survived. Now retirement is coming and we’re not going to have that much and we know that.”

Often, interviewees expressed feelings of anxiety when discussing retirement. An adjunct said: “One of the saddest things is, I won’t be able to retire when I’m 65. I will have to take my Social Security and make whatever the maximum amount of money they’ll let me make to get by because Social Security will definitely not be enough. I’m not sure if I’ll ever be able to fully retire.”

“One of the saddest things is, I won’t be able to retire when I’m 65. I will have to take my Social Security and make whatever the maximum amount of money they’ll let me make to get by because Social Security will definitely not be enough. I’m not sure if I’ll ever be able to fully retire.”



Academic Work and the Maryland Economy

What does this low rate of pay mean to an adjunct living and working in Maryland? To put this in perspective, an adjunct that rents a median-priced apartment in Maryland would need to teach 16 to 28 classes to afford to rent the apartment and have enough income to cover living expenses. The reality is adjuncts often teach six to 15 courses per year with classes at one to three different colleges and universities. So, how do adjuncts make ends meet? Through our interviews, we found a reliance on the low- and no-cost programs offered through Maryland's social welfare programs.

The majority of the adjuncts interviewed were either uninsured or they accessed free or low-cost health insurance through the Maryland Health Connection, Maryland's health insurance exchange. Until recently, certain eligibility requirements may have prevented many adjuncts from qualifying for Medical Assistance, the Medicaid program in Maryland, although many may meet the income guidelines. In 2014, Medical Assistance was expanded to include all residents with incomes up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. For example, to qualify, an individual must have an income of \$16,105 or less and a family of four can earn no more than \$32,913 annually in 2014.⁵² If an adjunct teaches four courses a year and earns \$4,000 per course, he or she will have an annual income of \$16,000 and may qualify for Medicaid.⁵³ An adjunct that is the sole breadwinner of his/her family of four could teach up to eight classes and still qualify for Medicaid.⁵⁴

In addition to increased usage of the healthcare safety net, a low-paid academic work force may need other social welfare programs to subsist. For example, to qualify for Maryland's Food Supplement Program (FSP), an individual can earn no more than \$1,916 per month or \$22,992 per year. An adjunct can teach five classes per year and still qualify for food stamps.⁵⁵ Adjuncts living in Maryland may qualify for Section 8 rent vouchers if they are a family of four earning less than \$63,900 a year. An adjunct earning \$4,000 per class could teach up to 15 classes and qualify for a family of four.⁵⁶ Additionally, adjuncts may qualify for Maryland's Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), which provides assistance with heating bills. To qualify, an individual can earn no more than \$20,423 per year. An adjunct can teach five classes per year and still qualify for this assistance.⁵⁷

The impact of high student debt loads may further complicate adjuncts' lives and limit their spending power and their ability to save. Adjuncts may have to delay or forgo home ownership and will struggle when facing retirement. When asked the question: "How are you preparing for retirement?" many of the adjuncts interviewed laughed out loud in response. As one stated: "At my age, I shouldn't be so insecure about my finances. After all these years of teaching I don't expect a lot but I expect at least a little bit of security. After you've given 30 years of your life to a profession, I think you have the right to expect to be financially secure. I don't expect to be wealthy or even comfortable. I just want to know I'm going to be able to make my mortgage payment and my car payment and have health insurance. Is that too much to ask?"

Conclusion

The current situation at institutions of higher education is not sustainable for the adjuncts that represent 77 percent of all teaching faculty at public colleges and universities and four-year private nonprofit colleges and universities—and 100 percent of all teaching faculty at for-profit colleges—in Maryland. As one interviewee summarized: “We’re supposed to get kids ready for a middle-class life. As a part-time professor, I find it sort of galling that I’m expected to get these kids ready for a good life, a middle-class life, yet the college doesn’t feel like I’m entitled to a middle-class life. Why shouldn’t people who are part-time academics be able to enjoy a good middle-class life as well? It’s as simple as that.”

Unionization has made demonstrated improvements to the working conditions of adjuncts. According to the Coalition on the Academic Workforce, unionized adjuncts report more job security and have a median pay per course that is 25 percent higher than their nonunion counterparts.⁵⁸

“We’re supposed to get kids ready for a middle-class life. As a part-time professor, I find it sort of galling that I’m expected to get these kids ready for a good life, a middle-class life, yet the college doesn’t feel like I’m entitled to a middle-class life. Why shouldn’t people who are part-time academics be able to enjoy a good middle-class life as well? It’s as simple as that.”

While this report has focused on adjuncts struggling to survive on adjunct wages, there are also adjuncts from Maine to California who in forming a union have greatly improved their financial situation. Adjuncts at American University for instance, not only fought for and won an increase in minimum pay rates per course, but also protections on recurring assignments and an expanded and more transparent evaluations process, among other important gains. While unionization has the potential to improve compensation and benefits, it also provides an avenue to improve job security, ensure a voice in administration, protect academic freedom, and provide a community for an atomized workforce.

Adjuncts in Maryland have begun to come together with Adjunct Action, a project of SEIU, to change the face of higher education in Maryland. This work must continue and grow so that approximately 20,200 nonunion adjuncts at nonprofit colleges and universities in Maryland can stand with more than 22,000 faculty that have already unionized with SEIU to improve higher education and improve working conditions and benefits for adjuncts.

End Notes

- 1 "Occupational Employment Statistics Data: May 2013, National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates United States: Postsecondary Teachers," Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed August 28, 2014, <http://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>.
- 2 Tamar Lewin, "Gap Widens for Faculty at Colleges, Report Finds," *New York Times*, April 8, 2013, accessed August 18, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/08/education/gap-in-university-faculty-pay-continues-to-grow-report-finds.html?_r=2&.
- 3 Audrey Williams June and Jonah Newman, "Adjunct project reveals wide range in pay," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 4, 2013, accessed August 18, 2014, <http://chronicle.com/article/Adjunct-Project-Shows-Wide/136439/>.
- 4 Hereinafter, colleges and universities in Maryland specifically refer to all four-year private not-for-profit, two-year public; four-year and above public; Title IV-eligible colleges and universities in the state.
- 5 "Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System: Final release data, 2012," National Center for Education Statistics, accessed August 27, 2014, <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/Default.aspx>. Data pulled for all employees with faculty status for full-time and part-time employees. Analysis includes data provided by all private, for-profit; Title IV-participating private, not-for-profit four-year; two-year public; and four-year and above public colleges and universities in Maryland.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 A cost-of-living index is a theoretical measurement that examines the amount a consumer needs to spend on goods and services to reach a certain standard of living over a specific amount of time or for a specific location.
- 8 "The Changing Faculty and Student Success: National Trends for Faculty Composition Over Time," University of Southern California Rossier, Pullias Center for Higher Education, accessed October 3, 2013, http://www.uscrossier.org/pullias/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Delphi-NTTF-National-Trends-for-Faculty-Composition_WebPDF.pdf.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 "U.S. Department of Education Digest of Education Statistics, 2012," Table 290, National Center for Education Statistics, accessed July 24, 2013, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/tables/dt12_290.asp.
- 11 "Part-Time Instructional Faculty and Staff: Who They Are, What They Do, and What They Think," supplemental tables for Fall 2003, Table 19, National Study of Postsecondary Faculty, accessed September 30, 2013, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002163>.
- 12 "U.S. Department of Education Digest of Education Statistics, 2013," Table 316.50, National Center for Education Statistics, accessed August 28, 2014, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_316.50.asp. United States and Maryland average in 2012–13 for full-time instructional faculty on nine-month contracts in four-year degree granting institutions at not-for-profit master's and doctoral institutions.
- 13 John Curtis and Saranna Thornton, "Here's the News: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2012–2013," American Association of University Professors, accessed October 3, 2013, <http://www.aaup.org/file/2012-13Economic-Status-Report.pdf>.
- 14 Author analysis on file. Original source: "Fall 2012, Institutional Characteristics component and Spring 2013, Student Financial Aid component," U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), accessed August 28, 2014, <http://collegecost.ed.gov/catc/#>.
- 15 Carl Straumsheim, "Tackling the Cap," *Inside Higher Education*, April 24, 2013, accessed October 3, 2013, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/04/24/more-institutions-cap-adjuncts-hours-anticipation-federal-guidelines>.
- 16 "Part-Time Instructional Faculty and Staff," supplemental tables for Fall 2003, Table 28- supra n. 11.
- 17 "Maryland Poverty Status in the past 12 months" and "Baltimore Poverty Status in the past 12 months," United States Census Bureau, accessed August 29, 2014, <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>.
- 18 "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members," Tables 25, 39, Coalition on the Academic Workforce, June 2012, accessed October 3, 2013, http://www.academicworkforce.org/CAW_portrait_2012.pdf.
- 19 Colleen Flaherty, "Union raises for adjuncts," *Inside Higher Education*, July 26, 2013, accessed October 3, 2013, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/07/26/adjunct-union-contracts-ensure-real-gains-including-better-pay>.
- 20 Montgomery College Contract Highlights, May 2014, <http://www.seiu500.org/files/2011/08/Montgomery-College-Contract-Highlights-May-2014.pdf>.
- 21 Flaherty, "Union raises for adjuncts."
- 22 Curtis and Thornton, "Here's the News," supra n. 13.
- 23 "Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System," supra n. 5.
- 24 "Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System: Final release data, 2012," National Center for Education Statistics, accessed August 27, 2014, <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/Default.aspx>. Analysis includes Estimated Fall 2013 Enrollment provided by Title IV-participating, private, not-for-profit four-year, two-year public; and four-year and above public colleges and universities in Maryland.
- 25 "Cost of Living Data Series, Second Quarter 2014," Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) survey, Missouri Economic Research and Information Center, accessed September 4, 2014, http://www.missourieconomy.org/indicators/cost_of_living/index.stm.
- 26 "Consumer Expenditure Survey," U.S. Census Bureau, accessed August 30, 2013, <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0728.xls>.
- 27 "Maryland Home Prices & Values: Maryland Rentals, Rent List Price," Zillow, accessed August 29, 2014, <http://www.zillow.com/md/home-values/>. These numbers are calculated on a monthly basis and updated as of July 2014.
- 28 "Affordable Housing," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, accessed October 3, 2013, http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/.
- 29 Author analysis on file, based on 2010–2012 American Community Survey (ACS) data.

- 30 Annual costs for a \$1,570 per month apartment is \$18,840, which means an individual would need an annual income of \$62,800 to avoid being housing cost-burdened. To these housing costs we add \$1,752 per year in renters' costs for basic utilities.
- 31 "Baltimore Home Prices & Values: Baltimore Rentals, Rent List Price," Zillow, accessed September 3, 2014, <http://www.zillow.com/baltimore-md/home-values/>. These numbers are calculated on a monthly basis and updated as of July 2014.
- 32 Author analysis on file, based on 2010–2012 American Community Survey (ACS) data.
- 33 Annual costs for a \$1,500 per month apartment is \$18,000, which means an individual would need an annual income of \$60,000 to avoid being housing cost-burdened. To these housing costs we add \$1,752 per year in renters' costs for basic utilities.
- 34 "Maryland Home Prices & Values: Maryland Market Overview, Median Sale Price," Zillow, accessed August 29, 2014, <http://www.zillow.com/md/home-values/>. These numbers are calculated on a monthly basis and updated as of July 2014.
- 35 Assumes the following: (1) 20% down payment of \$57,997; (2) an interest rate of 4.1%, which is the 30-year fixed mortgage rate for the week ending November 1, 2013 ("Selected Interest Rates (Daily) - H.15," Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, <http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h15/data.htm>); (3) annual premium of \$1,502 for home owners insurance (author analysis showing Maryland homeowners pay an average of 0.51804% of the home's value for insurance premiums, based on 2009–2011 American Community Survey data); and (4) \$3,519 in property taxes (author analysis showing property taxes average 1.2136% of home values in Maryland, based on 2009–2011 American Community Survey data).
- 36 The median annual homeowner's cost for basic utilities—electricity, gas, heating, water—in Maryland is \$3,272 (in 2013 dollars). Author analysis on file, based on 2010–2012 American Community Survey data.
- 37 \$1,539 per month is \$18,473 annually, which means an individual would need an annual income of \$61,577 to be paying no more than 30% of income for housing.
- 38 "Baltimore Home Prices & Values: Baltimore Market Overview, Median Sale Price," Zillow, accessed September 3, 2014, <http://www.zillow.com/baltimore-md/home-values/>. These numbers are calculated on a monthly basis and updated as of July 2014.
- 39 Assumes the following: (1) 20% down payment of \$37,260; (2) an interest rate of 4.1%, which is the 30-year fixed mortgage rate for the week ending November 1, 2013 ("Selected Interest Rates (Daily) - H.15," Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, <http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h15/data.htm>); (3) annual premium of \$965 for home owners insurance (author analysis showing Baltimore homeowners pay an average of 0.51804% of the home's value for insurance premiums, based on 2009–2011 American Community Survey data); and (4) \$2,261 in property taxes (author analysis showing property taxes average 1.2136% of home values in Baltimore, based on 2009–2011 American Community Survey data).
- 40 The median annual homeowner's cost for basic utilities—electricity, gas, heating, water—in Baltimore is \$3,272 (in 2013 dollars). Author analysis on file, based on 2010–2012 American Community Survey data.
- 41 \$989 per month is \$11,868 annually, which means an individual would need an annual income of \$39,560 to be paying no more than 30% of income for housing.
- 42 "Official USDA Food Plans: Cost of Food at Home at Four Levels: U.S. Average, June 2014." U.S. Department of Agriculture, September 3, 2014, http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/usda_food_plans_cost_of_food/CostofFoodJun2014.pdf. Estimates are based on the following: for individuals, moderate to liberal food plan for male and female between the ages of 19 and 70; for families, moderate to liberal food plan for all families.
- 43 "Parents and the High Cost of Childcare, 2013 Report," Childcare Aware of America, accessed September 3, 2014 http://www.naccrra.org/sites/default/files/default_site_pages/2012/cost_report_2012_final_081012_0.pdf. Average annual cost for full-time infant care at a childcare center in MD is \$13,055; \$9,097 for a four year old; and \$5,893 for a school age child.
- 44 Based on a \$64 monthly pass to ride the subway and bus (<https://mta.maryland.gov/pass-store>) and estimates using the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Commuting Calculator (<http://www.commute.com/commuter-options/calculator>). Assumes the following: (1) a roundtrip commute of 13.08 miles (the metro Maryland average, based on 2009 National Household Transportation Survey, <http://nhts.ornl.gov/tables09/ae/work/job29572.html>); (2) a fuel-efficiency rating of 25 miles per gallon; (3) \$3.46 per gallon of gasoline (the "regular" rate as of August 25, 2014, based on the U.S. Energy Information Administration, http://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_pri_gnd_dcus_r1y_w.htm); (4) \$0.0603 per mile for maintenance and tires (calculator default value); (5) \$16.50 per day for insurance, financing and depreciation (calculator default value); and (6) \$50 in monthly parking costs. See also Curtis and Thornton, "Here's the News," supra n. 13. Class estimates have been rounded.
- 45 Assumes no insurance.
- 46 "The Maryland Hospital Pricing Guide Fiscal Year 2012," State of Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, accessed September 4, 2014 http://184.80.193.37/consumerinfo/hospitalguide/hospital_guide/docs/pricing_guide.pdf. Average charge case at Maryland General Hospital for a Cesarean Delivery is \$14,596.
- 47 Ibid. Average charge case at John Hopkins Hospital for Heart Failure treatment is \$19,528.
- 48 Ibid. Average charge case at Prince George's Hospital Center for Hip Joint Replacement is \$37,742.
- 49 Premium estimates for Bronze level obtained on December 5, 2013 using <http://marylandhealthconnection.gov/health-insurance-in-maryland/> for individuals and families. The lowest premium provided for a single individual was \$343 per month. The lowest premium provided for a sample family was \$753 per month.
- 50 "Student Loans," Finaid, accessed October 3, 2013, <http://www.finaid.org/loans/>.
- 51 Assumes a 6.8% interest rate and a standard, 120-month repayment for direct Stafford loans, (<https://studentloans.gov/myDirectLoan/mobile/repayment/repaymentEstimator.action>).
- 52 "2014 Income Eligibility for Adults," Maryland Health Connection, accessed September 3, 2013, http://marylandhealthconnection.gov/assets/mhc_income_eligibility.pdf.
- 53 In 2014, a family of one making less than \$16,105 would qualify for Medical Assistance. Assumes one course is compensated at \$4,000. "2014 Income Eligibility for Adults," Maryland Health Connection, accessed September 3, 2013, http://marylandhealthconnection.gov/assets/mhc_income_eligibility.pdf.
- 54 Ibid. In 2014, a family of four making less than \$32,913 would qualify for Medical Assistance.
- 55 "Food Supplement Program (FSP): Income Guidelines," Maryland Department of Human Resources, accessed September 4, 2014, <http://www.dhr.state.md.us/blog/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/iag.pdf>. Assumes one course is compensated at \$4,000.
- 56 "Section 8 FY2014 Income Limits," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, for Maryland, http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/il/il2014/2014summary.odn?inputname=STTL*2499999999%2BMaryland&selection_type=county&stname=Maryland&statefp=24.0&year=2014. Assumes one course is compensated at \$4,000.
- 57 "The Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)," Maryland Department of Human Resources, accessed September 4, 2014, http://www.dhr.state.md.us/blog/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2015.Brochure.EnG_.pdf. Assumes one course is compensated at \$4,000.
- 58 "Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members," supra n. 18.



Notes



Notes



Adjunct Action is a campaign that unites adjunct professors at campuses across the country to address the crisis in higher education and the troubling trend toward a marginalized teaching faculty that endangers our profession. By coming together in Adjunct Action, we have the power to create change by building a marketwide movement to raise standards for faculty and students alike.

Adjunct Action is a project of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the nation's largest and fastest-growing union and home to more than 18,000 adjunct faculty who have won improvements in pay, job security, evaluation processes, and access to retirement benefits. We are currently active in Boston, Los Angeles, the District of Columbia/Maryland, New York, Seattle, San Francisco Bay Area, Minneapolis, St. Louis and are excited to work with interested adjuncts in any market across the country.