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Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

MANAGING COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADJUNCTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education and Learning Technologies

by

Karen Lynch Scott

October, 2010

Monica Goodale, Ed.D. –Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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VITA

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- Management of Human Resources
- Policy Development
- Ethics and Society
- Communication and Information Technology
- Research and Evaluation
- Data Analysis and Interpretation
- Transforming Organization in a Global Community
- Cultural Dimensions and Global Management
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ABSTRACT

As community college enrollments swell, two-year institutions are choosing to hire part-time faculty so that they can offer more courses without exponentially increasing dollars spent on the salary and benefits required to hire full-time faculty members. The growing adjunct population is becoming an essential organizational asset that needs to be carefully managed by the institution. Although the use of adjuncts in the community college market is not new, there is little research to show how institutions manage the adjunct population.

This study surveyed one hundred and twenty community college personnel on how their institution manages adjuncts. Respondents were asked a series of questions around orientation programs, professional development programs and mentoring programs. The data collected indicated that although adjunct professors are teaching more courses at the community colleges, most community colleges do not have a full-time employee dedicated to the success of the adjunct employee. Additionally, most institutions do not have the necessary programs and services needed to manage, train and provide professional development to this essential population. Most respondents indicated that time and money and resources were the major reason why adjuncts were not well supported at their institution.

This study supports the recommendation that institutions need to invest in resources to help support these essential employees. Existing tools and technology at the institution such as learning management systems need to be explored as possible short-term solutions to increase communication with adjuncts until funding for additional

resources can be secured. Finally, orientation programs, professional development programs and mentoring programs needs to be expanded to support the growing needs of the adjunct population.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Community colleges today are at a crossroads where traditional models of teaching are being challenged by a revolution of digital technologies that allow institutions to extend their reach and offer programs and services to exponentially more students in both local and remote locations. This revolution has increased the number of courses that are taught off campus, and community colleges are struggling to meet the growing demand and enrollment for these courses. The slumping economy, the slide in endowment dollars, and the increased number of students registering for courses contribute to the pressure community colleges are feeling to evolve to meet the new and diverse needs of today's students.

In an effort to be meet these demands, community colleges are exploring ways to support the growing enrollments while simultaneously staying within or below the institution's budget. One solution to the problem is to hire part-time faculty members to teach more courses and lessen the course load of their full-time faculty members. Additionally, the institution benefits financially because part-time faculty can teach courses for a fraction of what the institution would pay their full-time counterpart. In tough economic times, institutions cannot afford to hire full time faculty, and are opting to hire part-time faculty as a way to quickly increase staff while not having to pay benefits and salary of a full-time faculty member (Wallin, 2005, p. 3).

The hiring of adjunct professors is not a new phenomenon. However, it is becoming widespread and popular as colleges are forced to find ways to increase services to the community while keeping costs low. The number of adjuncts being hired as part-

time faculty members is growing quickly. In a June, 2009 article in the Chronicle of Education, adjunct faculty are said to make up more than two-thirds of the eight-hundred thousand faculty in the United States (Louis, 2009, p. A72).

Institutions benefit tremendously from hiring adjuncts. Not only can adjuncts teach more courses for less money, but the part-time status of adjuncts also allows the college budgeting flexibility. If the institution cannot make the projected budget, it is easy for a community college to not retain a part-time faculty member. This flexibility allows institutions to have more control over their budget from year to year.

However, even given the necessity of part-time faculty, adjuncts are not always treated like a vital part of the institution. Part-time faculty voice concern that they make less money than full-time faculty members and do not receive some of the health and tenure benefits that that full time professors have. Many part-time professionals also feel disconnected from the institution and feel the faculty and the administration are overlooking the vital role they play within the organization (Lyons, 2007).

What follows are excerpts from a hypothetical letter that an adjunct, Dr. Joy Klein, wrote to a parent of one of her students in an attempt to voice her concerns with the role of the adjunct professor. The letter paints a poignant picture of how an adjunct can have a difficult job serving the student and the institution.

Why Joy Can't Teach

Dear Parent of My First Year Student:

Thanks for the letter concerning Johnny's grade. I am sorry your email didn't reach me, but I do not have an account at the school. As well, I would have answered your letter earlier, but the new department chair doesn't know my name

(it's not listed in the catalogue or the directory and I don't have the same office space as last semester), so your letter was a little slow to find me. Certainly, we can meet as the dean suggested. You should know, however, that I don't exactly have an office—I don't even have a Woolfian chair to call my own, for that matter. I know the brochures of the university show beautiful buildings, but in order to keep up with the latest in education, the school is experimenting with some concepts from virtual workplaces; to maintain a technological edge, the university didn't issue me an office. In keeping with this philosophy, I have created virtual office hours in my virtual office and propose that we set up a virtual meeting in the future. If this is unsatisfactory to you, I should mention that I will be at the community college across town Monday night where I teach two courses. Please let me know if this time and location are more convenient for you. By evening time, there is usually an unoccupied office we could borrow...

Efficiency is, you understand, important at the university. It is much more cost efficient, for example, to put twenty-eight students in a writing class than lower numbers suggested by writing organizations. Likewise I aim for efficiency in my grading. I have yet to try multiple-choice tests instead of writing assignments, but the speed in which I could perform the grading of these tests would probably justify them. I have, nonetheless, found a few grading shortcuts. I sometimes choose a minimum amount of writing for the course to cut down on grading time. Also, I have used methodology that I didn't especially believe in, like peer editing, because it shares the work with the students, promoting student ownership in my eyes. Finally, I have given "Bs" to students doing "C" work.

“Cs,” I learned early on, usually meant a conference with the student and later the parents; moreover, if the student was still upset about the grade, there would be a conference with the composition director and the department chair. Sometimes paperwork had to be filled out, and my teacher evaluation from the “C” student would be poor. And suddenly I would not even be making minimum wage, having added five to six additional hours to my week’s work. I know that you are after “value” for your money, and “Bs” will look much better to Johnny’s employers than “Cs”. So, I see this arrangement as a win/win situation for both of us....

Sorry I can’t be more helpful with your textbook questions. I didn’t pick out Johnny’s textbook; in truth, it was given to me three days before class met.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance. Be informed, however, that my contract expires at the end of the semester, so you will have to take questions elsewhere after that time.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joy Klein. (Klein, 2003, pp. 70-71)

In his book, *Best Practices for Supporting Adjunct Faculty*, Richard Lyons succinctly sums up the situation that community colleges are facing with adjuncts by writing, “our colleges and universities are under increasing pressure from state legislatures, the business community, and individual citizens to serve increasing numbers of place- and time-challenged students, align educational programs with economic development goals, and achieve additional accountability measures. Where they are

properly trained and supported, adjunct instructors provide a flexible, affordable way to achieve those objectives” (Lyons, 2007, p. x).

As the number of adjuncts increase, there will be a growing need for institutions to ensure that part-time faculty members are properly trained and supported. Currently, some institutions employ an adjunct coordinator or administrator to manage part-time faculty members while others rely on faculty or administrative resources to play this role within the institution.

The role of adjunct administrator or coordinator is often times given to a full-time faculty member in addition to their teaching responsibilities. Alternatively, an adjunct coordinator or administrator can be a senior adjunct and is given an extra stipend to manage the other adjuncts on campus. In either situation, research needs to be done to determine how coordinators can best manage these necessary part-time professionals and what tools and services are needed to better support, train and evaluate these essential employees.

Statement of Problem

New technologies have provided new ways for institutions to teach more courses and reach more students. Community colleges, with their increased student enrollment and particular student demographics are poised to see a terrific increase in the number of students they can service.

Community colleges need to find qualified part-time faculty to teach this new pool of students. If they are to be successful, part-time professionals will need to be trained, receive professional development and feel like valued members of the institution. An adjunct’s success could depend on their manager’s access to technology tools and

services that allow them to mentor, train, and evaluate them. To date, there has been little research on what tools and services these managers of adjuncts require. Without this knowledge, institutions cannot provide the necessary services to support part-time faculty members that play a vital role in the success of the institution.

Research Questions

This paper will attempt to determine what technology tools adjunct managers or coordinators need to facilitate the management of part-time faculty members and the courses they teach. The research will focus on two-year community colleges that have seen the largest growth in the number of students they service through distance and online education programs. Seven over-arching research questions will be explored.

They include:

1. What percentage of community colleges employs a full-time adjunct coordinator or administrator responsible for managing adjuncts? How many community colleges do not have an adjunct coordinator managing their adjuncts?
2. How is the role of the adjunct coordinator defined at community colleges? How are the roles similar and different among institutions?
3. How do community college adjuncts deliver on-line content using a learning management system like Blackboard or WebCT? Are adjuncts trained on the tool used to deliver content? Are adjuncts required to use that tool?
4. What percentage of community colleges offers an orientation program for adjuncts? Do adjunct coordinators think orientation programs can and should

be improved to contain not only institutional governances, but also learning modules tied to curriculum and classroom teaching?

5. How can professional development and mentoring programs for adjuncts be improved?
6. How are adjuncts evaluated at community colleges?
7. Would adjunct coordinators welcome an outside resource such as an educational company to facilitate in the development of their adjunct program if it did not cost a lot of money nor require internal resources to support it?

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to help identify the specific needs of the adjunct coordinator responsible for adjuncts teaching at a two-year community college. Adjunct coordinators and/or deans who are responsible for the recruitment, hiring and training of adjuncts at community colleges will be the target population of the study. The research will attempt to determine best practices on how adjunct coordinators monitor and manage adjuncts and the courses they teach.

The ultimate goal of this research is to determine a product model for the delivery of technology tools and professional services that can be offered to adjunct coordinators and/or deans that will facilitate the training and evaluating of part-time professionals. The study will investigate topics that include professional development opportunities and training services for adjuncts. The implementation of mentoring and orientation programs at an institutional level will also be explored.

Limitations

This study will survey a variety of community college institutions across the United States. Although these colleges will have certain similarities, each institution is likely to have different policies in hiring, training and evaluating their adjuncts. The research will attempt to find commonalities within these areas, but there are likely to be institutional governances that make the creation of a standard set of tools and services unavailable for a certain number of adjunct managers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In order to find out what tools and services managers or coordinators need to facilitate the management of adjunct faculty, a literature review must first focus on the adjunct and the challenges they face within an institution. Management theories linked to the success or failure of part-time employees will then be covered and a theoretical framework of social exchange theory and social capital theory will be used to help to provide insight into the management of these important part-time workers. The literature review will continue by summarizing research done on existing programs and services used at community colleges across the country as a way to provide the reader some context regarding the role of adjunct managers and what programs and services are currently being used to manage part-time faculty members.

Definition of Terms

In this literature review, the term “adjunct” means a community college professor who is not a tenured or tenured track faculty member. Adjuncts have varied backgrounds and motivations for teaching. Some adjuncts join the staff at a community college because they are hoping to land a full time teaching position at the school, while other adjuncts choose the profession as a way to supplement their existing salary base. Graduate students are also often times called on to serve as adjunct faculty members, though this is less likely at the community college level because of the limited number of post-graduate, research programs being taught at these schools.

Another category of adjuncts includes retired professors and teachers looking to keep teaching, but only teach a limited amount of courses. The final category of adjuncts includes adjuncts that are able to teach multiple courses at different institutions. Informally known as “hoppers”, these adjuncts have the added responsibility of knowing the varying policies and procedures of each institution.

Contingent Workers Defined

In 1985, the term “contingent work” was used by Audrey Freeman to describe a laborer that was hired when there was a specific market demand for services (*Testimony of Audrey Freedman, 1988*). The bureau of labor and statistics defines contingent worker as any job in which “an individual does not have explicit or implicit contract for long-term employment” (Polivka & Nardone, 1989). Sometimes referred to as workers who are hired “on demand”, contingent workers face several obstacles, not the least of which is job security. Contingent employees are hired based on changes in the economy or marketplace that result in the need for companies or institutions to quickly increase their work force to meet these changing needs.

Counting and defining contingent workers can be a difficult task. Often times, employees are unable to distinguish temporary or alternative work arrangements from contingent labor. For example, some adjuncts are hired to teach one course at a time. When course enrollments decline, they are less likely to be hired. However, a worker who is “filling in” for a permanent employee that has taken leave from a full-time position is considered a temporary employee, not a contingent worker. When the worker is ready to return to their job, the “temporary” employee will no longer have employment.

There are several reasons why contingent workers are attractive to institutions and organizations. Contingent workers allow institutions to increase staff quickly and easily to meet new market demands without adding significant cost in salary, benefits or personnel development. In addition, being able to hire contingent employees allows institutions to respond and monitor market trends before committing to increase full-time staff. Finally, companies often times use contingent employees to determine if the employee can do the job well before they hire them as a full-time employee. This trial period helps employers screen candidates and gives them some confidence that they are hiring the right person for the job.

There are also reasons why employees would prefer a contingent job. Just as employers are screening employees, often times, contingent workers are screening the employer or the field in which the job is based. In addition, most contingent jobs allow more flexibility in schedule. This flexibility helps workers meet non-work demands including school and caring for young children or elderly parents. Finally, some contingent workers are working to supplement the income from their full-time job.

Current State of Adjuncts at Community Colleges

The use of adjuncts at community colleges is not a new phenomenon. Community colleges have often times relied on local expertise in fields such as business and education. These relationships were seen as a way to strengthen the community and make a close connection between the skills students are learning in class and the real world application of those skills.

Today, community colleges are seeing an increase in an enrollment while simultaneously seeing a decline in resources to support the escalating demand for their

services. In addition, demand for online courses and the new technology they require, are demanding that community college professors have a technology skill set that was not previously required.

In 2005, JBL Associates conducted a study for the American Federation of Teachers. In that study, JBL examined the staffing trends in higher education and confirmed that 70% of people teaching in college in America are not full-time faculty members (Teachers, 2008, p. i). In terms of demographics, the study indicated that women ages thirty-five to sixty-four were most likely to seek out adjunct faculty employment and that adjuncts were typically white, although there had been some increase in the overall numbers of minorities in the field.

Compensation

Adjunct faculty members are compensated less than their full-time counterparts (Wallin, 2005). In fact, in most cases, adjuncts receive only a quarter to one third what a full-time faculty member would receive for teaching the same course (Fountain, 2005). It is important to note that these figures do not take into account the additional responsibilities that a full time faculty member has within their institution. Responsibilities for full time faculty could include research, community outreach, participation in student activities and work on institutional committees. However, even with these extra responsibilities, adjunct faculty members are still being paid much lower wages than full-time faculty members.

Tenure

Tenure has been a valuable benefit for full-time faculty members for decades. Tenure was originally created to “protect faculty from the abuses of academic freedom”

(Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 1). Today, fewer institutions are willing to fiscally commit to tenure given the amount of time, resources and dollars it drains from an institution's budget every year. Adjunct faculty members typically are not tenure track employees and do not represent the fiscal commitment that full-time faculty members do.

Faculty in community colleges in the United States are divided into two groups: those that have tenure and those that do not. Part-time faculty who are not on the tenure track, make tenure possible for the full-time faculty. According to Gappa and Leslie, "the low costs and heavy undergraduate teaching loads of the have-nots help make possible the continuation of a tenure system that protects the jobs and perquisites of the haves" (Gappa & Leslie, p. 2).

Job Satisfaction

The research surrounding contingent workers and job satisfaction is mixed. A study by Berman (2002) indicates that contingent workers are less satisfied with their job than their full-time counterparts. This study is contradicted by other studies that suggest the opposite is true and contingent workers are actually more satisfied with their work than permanent employees. (Galup, Saunders, Nelson & Cerveney, 1997; Mc Donald & Makin, 2000).

There are two interesting factors that influence a contingent worker's level of job satisfaction. The first is their perceived level of job security. If a contingent worker feels that their position is well established and secure within the institution, they are likely to have a higher degree of job satisfaction (De Witte & Naswall, 2003). The second factor of job satisfaction is indicated by whether or not the contingent status was a

choice or done out of necessity (Ellingson, Gruvs, & Sackett, 1998; Krausz, Brandwein, & Fox, 1995;).

Theoretical Framework

There are two common theories used when studying contingent workers: social exchange theory and social capital theory. Social exchange theory is the most common theory associated with contingent workers. Blau first introduced social exchange theory in 1964. When applied to contingent workers, this theory suggests that there is a reciprocal relationship between an adjunct and the institution they work for. Social exchange theory is often used to measure an adjunct's level of commitment to an institution, job satisfaction and performance (Ang & Slaughter, 2001; Van Dyne & Ang, 1998).

An expert on social exchange theory, George C. Homans states that, "social behavior is an exchange of goods, material goods but also non-material ones, such as the symbols of approval or prestige. Persons that give much to others try to get much from them, and persons that get much from others are under pressure to give much to them"(Homans, 1958). If you apply social exchange theory to the management of adjuncts, it would seem that the more the institution invests in their adjuncts, the more likely the adjuncts are to invest in the institution.

Social capital theory (Burt, 1992) is another theory used to study contingent workers. Social capital theory suggests that *whom* a worker knows might be more important than what they know. A study by Castaneda (1999) looked at how a contingent worker's social network is related to their career success. The study showed that the

quality, size and scope of a contingent worker's network can be an indicator of a contingent worker's success (Castaneda).

Commitment to the Institution

A contingent worker's commitment to an institution is often measured against the commitment of a full time employee. The research is split on determining if contingent employees are more or less committed than full time employees. In several studies, research proved that permanent workers were more committed to their institution than contingent workers (Van Dyne & Ang, 1998). However, conflicting research suggests that contingent workers were actually more committed to their organization than their permanent counterparts (Mc Donald & Makin, 2000). Still other research claims that there is little difference in organizational commitment between these two type of workers (Pearce, 1993).

The apparent contradictions in this research could be due to contingent workers having different working arrangements from institution to institution. For example, some institutions have an entire department dedicated to their adjunct faculty. The department includes an adjunct coordinator and is positioned to provide a suite of resources for incoming adjunct faculty members. In other schools, adjuncts are given little more than a class assignment and a class roster. A study by Levesque and Rousseau shows the organization's level of both intellectual and emotional support is positively correlated with a contingent workers commitment to that organization (Levesque & Rousseau, 1999).

Institutional Support for Adjuncts

Looking at the role of adjuncts through social exchange theory, it would seem that the more invested an institution is in their adjuncts the more committed to the institution the adjuncts will be. However, today in most community colleges, part-time faculty express that they feel disconnected from the institution and often times have little or no input to curriculum design, book choice or use of technology (Wyles, 1998). This is a major problem for community college administrators. Unless institutions find a way to connect and support their adjunct faculty, they are likely to face turnover and have to invest time, money and energy into hiring new part-time faculty each semester. Institutions need to put programs and infrastructure in place to solidify the adjuncts role within the institution in order to build expertise and retain valuable adjuncts.

According to Baron-Nixon, an institution can help support adjuncts by creating a culture that is “inclusive, supportive and collegial” (Baron-Nixon, 2007, p. 15). Baron-Nixon believes that an institution is inclusive when there is little difference between the roles of full-time and part-time faculty. In this scenario, part-time and full-time faculty members have access to the same campus resources and professional development programs. To date, most community colleges are unable to create a culture that does not distinguish between full-time and part-time faculty members. Without this inclusive culture, part-time faculty members will likely never feel the full support of their institution or their full-time colleagues. Smith and Wright summed up the importance of creating this culture by saying, “the way in which an institution selects, orients and cultivates a different but significant long-term relationship with its adjunct faculty is a

key determinant of the quality that will be brought to the institution” (Smith & Wright, 2000, p. 47).

The Role of Adjunct Administrator

In community colleges, the people who manage and evaluate adjunct faculty are often referred to as “adjunct administrators” or “adjunct coordinators”. An adjunct coordinator can manage adjuncts for the entire institution or only have responsibility for the adjuncts in their department. The coordinator is often times a full time faculty member, but can also be a trusted and loyal adjunct in the institution, a department head or a dean.

Adjunct coordinator’s roles vary from institution to institution depending on the number of adjuncts an institution employs and how well the adjuncts are supported by the institution. Some responsibilities coordinators have include making sure adjuncts are made aware of the institution’s vision and mission and the role they play in it. Adjuncts must also be advised about institution policies surrounding grading, evaluation and technology usage. If professional development is offered to adjuncts, it is the coordinator that is typically responsible for organizing the training.

Orientation

One way to help build connections between the adjunct employees and full-time faculty members is through the development of a comprehensive orientation program. Depending on the institution, an orientation can accomplish a multitude of goals. In general, though, an orientation program for adjuncts attempts to accomplish two things. First and foremost, it connects the adjunct with the institution and gives them insight into the institution’s goals and mission. Secondly, orientation for adjuncts can be used to

teach instructional methods that ensure that the adjunct is successful in the classroom (Smith & Wright, 2000, p. 46).

It is essential that an adjunct orientation program help the adjuncts understand the purpose and goals and core values of the institution and help them understand how they fit in to the overarching institutional mission. Orientation programs also provide the institution an opportunity to give the adjuncts valuable information about the student population at the school and their particular needs.

Part of any orientation program should include the institution's handbook. The handbook is a vital resource for the adjunct containing valuable information about the institution's core values and beliefs. Most handbooks also speak to institutional policies surrounding grading, testing and assessment procedures as well as the institutional standards surrounding discrimination, academic freedom and sexual harassment.

An orientation program also allows an institution the opportunity to discuss curriculum issues such as book choice and syllabus creation. Depending on the experience of the adjunct candidate, time can be devoted to teaching methodologies including building a lesson plan and classroom management techniques.

Teaching/Adjunct Certificate Programs

Some community colleges have enhanced their orientation program to create a "certificate" program. A teaching certificate program is typically a required set of courses or modules that the adjunct must complete either before they begin teaching at the institution or completed while teaching throughout the semester. Teaching certification programs vary widely from institution to institution depending on the resources available to create and maintain a program.

Florida International University has a popular and effective teaching certification program. In their program, adjuncts are responsible to attend a series of workshops that cover the basic courses of teaching. Adjuncts are also responsible for attending faculty workshops and maintaining a journal of their teaching experiences over the course of two consecutive semesters. Additionally, adjuncts must also write reviews of scholarly articles in their discipline and write a personal statement about their philosophy of education. After fulfilling all the requirements, the adjuncts must obtain acknowledgement from their department chair that they have participated in the certificate program and have fulfilled all of the requirements. Baron-Nixon believes that this type of certificate program is desirable by many institutions because it allows for professional development, helps foster relationships between full and part-time faculty members, and helps the institution gauge the commitment of the part-time faculty member (Baron-Nixon, 2007).

Adjunct certification programs will vary from institution to institution, but Burnstad and Gadberry believe that, at a minimum, adjuncts that have completed an adjunct certification program should be:

1. Cognizant of the college's mission
2. Aware of policies and procedures of the academic branch
3. Comfortable in the college's learning community
4. Equipped with more resources to enhance student learning in the classroom

(Burnstad & Gadberry, 2005, p. 118) .

Professional Development

Though experts in their field, many adjuncts have never taught before. If an institution is committed to the success of their adjuncts, they need to commit to supporting their adjuncts by providing a comprehensive professional development program (Baron-Nixon, 2007).

At Johnson County Community College, they offer their part-time faculty (68% of their total faculty) benefits such as sick leave, tuition reimbursement, and access to the same professional development programs that are offered to their full time faculty members (Wallin, 2005). Other model professional development programs include:

- Jackson Community College where adjuncts were employed a semester ahead of when they were going to teach to “sit in” on the same class they would be teaching the following semester.
- The Virginia Tidewater Consortium consists of a collection of educators from surrounding communities that put together a weekend of professional development for adjuncts focused on teaching and learning. Adjuncts are not charged a fee to attend, nor are they paid a stipend.
- Valencia Community College provides professional development throughout the calendar year and offers a stipend for completion.

Baron-Nixon offers a variety of tips for making professional development more relevant to the part-time instructor. Some of her suggestions include:

- Offer professional development opportunities at night and on the weekends so that part-time faculty members who are working two jobs can attend.
- Invite part-time faculty members to submit articles to scholarly journals.

- Offer part-time faculty tuition discounts.
- Participate in scholarly forums and discussions (Baron-Nixon, 2007).

Technology Training

Online courses require the instructor to not only have a grasp of the subject matter, but also have some level of expertise with the tools associated with teaching these courses. Online courses are normally taught using a learning management system such as Blackboard, WebCT or Moodle. Different institutions have different contracts and/or policies with the companies that own the installed learning management system and part-time, adjunct faculty typically do not have influence on what learning management system an institution will use.

Teaching distance learning online also requires both full and part-time faculty members to be aware of new technologies that allow them to leverage content and instructional value. Adjuncts need to be trained and receive ongoing professional development on how to use these technologies and be supported in their use of technology. According to Banks, the best solution to this problem is to have a dedicated staff at the college assisting the faculty on the implementation of technology (Banks, 2000).

Mentoring Programs

“There is no stronger and more effective way to connect to and integrate into a department’s life than to have part-time faculty pair up with full-time faculty in a mentoring relationship” (Baron-Nixon, 2007, p. 55). Mentoring programs benefit both the full-time and the part-time faculty members. A full-time faculty member benefits by being a professional role model while playing a part in the success of their part-time

counterpart. Adjuncts benefit from a mentoring program by having one key contact to communicate with regarding school policies, academic issues or overall teaching concerns or issues.

Mentoring programs will vary from institution to institution depending on the number of adjuncts the school employs. The establishment of mentor programs will often depend on the “status” of the adjunct. For example, adjuncts that are on a long-term contract would typically have a different mentoring program than those adjuncts that work from a semester-to-semester contract.

Adjuncts that are teaching online also benefit from a mentor program even if the relationship between them and the full-time faculty member is built over email or is developed over the phone. It is essential that part-time faculty members who are teaching online feel connected to the institution.

Evaluating Adjuncts

In most community colleges, the person responsible for evaluating adjuncts is the adjunct coordinator or administrator. Evaluations are an important tool for the institution as they can give the institution important information not only about the faculty and adjuncts teaching at the school, but they also allow the institution to gather information about the success of a particular course or program.

Most institutions have policies and procedures for how faculty is evaluated. Very little research has been done to support or reject the claim that that adjunct faculty should be evaluated by the same methods. In general, whether full-time or part-time, researchers such as Stoops, agree that an evaluation procedure should be a “formative and summative process that (a) visibly supports the values of the institution, (b) is supported by the

administration and accepted by the faculty, and (c) evaluates those aspects of the faculty role that are considered important and are rewarded (Stoops, 2000, p. 230).

Research has shown that there are common characteristics that all faculty evaluations should share. At a minimum, the evaluations should take into account baseline behaviors such as teaching the contracted number of sections and/or students, showing up for class, and adhering to administrative guidelines and procedures (Stoops, 2000). For adjunct specific evaluation, Stoops breaks down the process into three separate evaluation procedures: coordinator evaluation, student evaluation and institutional evaluation and feels that it is the combination of these three evaluations that will create a fair evaluation of a part-time faculty member (Stoops).

Today, there is no standard way to administer any of these evaluation tools. Some colleges create these evaluations in the form of an online survey; other schools require students to write their student evaluations at the end of class without the instructor there. Still other schools will mail hard copies of the evaluations to students and request that they return them by U.S. postal mail.

It would seem that the administration of these evaluations would benefit from a consistent method of delivery an automated way to track responses and generate reports. Implementing such technology could go a long way to establishing a more concrete, valid and reliable evaluation process.

Existing Resources and Services for Adjuncts

There are currently a handful of resources and services available to adjunct coordinators to help them manage their part-time faculty members. One such program is titled 4faculty.org. Launched in California, 4faculty.org is an online site developed by

community colleges in California in response to the growing number of adjuncts that because of their schedule and teaching conflicts could not attend the traditional face-to-face professional workshops and training sessions. 4faculty.org was launched in 2001 and was funded by eleven California based community colleges. The content in 4faculty.org is developed in modules and contains two distinct paths; one for the new adjunct and one for the experienced adjunct who is using the site for ongoing professional development. Modules include:

- Quick Start Guide for Community College Faculty
- History and Mission of Community Colleges
- Introduction to Your College
- Characteristics of Community Colleges and Their Students
- Preparing for the 1st day of class
- Building Your Syllabus
- Assessment
- Grades and Testing
- Effective Class Management
- How People Learn
- Learning Theories
- Approaches to Teaching
- Technology in the Classroom
- Technology and Distance Education
- Legal & Ethical Issues in the Digital Information Age
- Increasing Effective Communication and Student Resiliency
- Helping Your Students
- Student Support Services
- Focusing on Diverse Needs
- How College Governance Affects You
- Surviving the Journey (4faculty.org, 2001)

Each module is divided in five parts following the acronym D.R.E.A.M. The first part, entitled “Discover” will introduce the learning module and give the user some context for why it is important and relevant to them. The second part, Read, is where the user will find the bulk of the content surrounding that learning objective. The content is not always in text, but often times video, audio and PowerPoint are used to help construct

the content. “Explore”, the third part of the learning module, references other books, websites and journals that give the user more information on what they have just read and absorbed. In the fourth part of the learning module, users are asked to “Apply” what they have learned and use it to make connections to their current job and institution. Finally, “Measure” allows the users to respond to several multiple-choice questions to make sure that they have learned the objectives of the module.

4faculty.org has existed for several years, but as of 2009 they are no longer able to continue to offer their services. A note on the home page reads,

PLEASE NOTE: Due to a lack of funding and shrinking educational budgets around the country, we are no longer able to provide support for 4Faculty.org. While we have no intention of taking this site offline at this time, we cannot guarantee its availability in the future.

Please be aware that content may be more than 3 years old and some links may not be active. This site is free for you to use, but the 4Faculty.org Project and Riverside Community College District offers no guarantee of the accuracy or availability of any of its contents”. (4faculty.org, 2001)

Scenarios OnLine is the name of a similar program created out of Valencia Community College. In 2004, more than 87% of Valencia’s developmental math courses and 57% of college reading and writing courses were taught by adjuncts (Lyons, 2007, p. 49). In response to this over-whelming influx of adjuncts, Valencia Community College partnered with Houghton Mifflin and WisdomTools, Inc to extend their outreach to adjunct faculty by creating a series of online workshops using WisdomTools “Scenario” platform. The goal of these workshops was to provide adjuncts with available and accessible professional development that was grounded in learning theory, pedagogically sound and would help them succeed almost immediately.

The content of these workshops was organized in a similar method as the D.R.E.A.M module referenced above. WisdomTools approach to modularizing content started with “Start”, an opportunity to introduce out the module and learning objective. Next came “Present” where the application would present content in the form of a case study or real-world application. Third was an “Enrich” activity that gave the learner an opportunity to learn more about the topic at hand. “Launch” was the next step in the module and allowed for learners to work together in groups either synchronously or asynchronously to solve a problem related to the topic. The “Guide and Mentor” step follows “Launch” and allows for subject matter experts to weigh in on the topic and allows for group discussion. The next to last step is “Blend” and this provides the user the opportunity to make connections between this topic and other topics or learning objectives they have covered in the past. Finally, the last step in the Scenarios method is “Finish”, a final look at the topic, assessment and wrap up. Using this methodology several professional development workshops were created including: Creating an Individual Learning Plan, Creating a Competence-Based Portfolio, Succeeding with Online Group Projects and Doing the Write Thing (Lyons, 2007, p. 51).

The Scenarios program at Valencia is unique in that they were able to secure institutional funding to sustain as well as build out this professional development tool. Most community colleges lack the resources to create, maintain and continue to develop online workshops and courses for their adjunct population. What Scenarios Online does provide in terms of professional development, it lacks in content on institutional governances, by-laws and policies. Without this content, it would seem that Valencia is

missing an opportunity to introduce and connect adjuncts to the institutional mission and provide around the clock administrative resources to adjuncts that need them.

A third and final example of an existing resource for adjuncts can be found at Santa Fe Community College. Funded by a FIPSE grant, The Online Faculty Teaching Excellence Network (OFTEN) was created as a way to help assimilate adjuncts into the college and offer professional development to their part-time faculty.

The goals of the project were three fold. The first goal was to increase the success of adjuncts in the classroom. The second goal was to foster a sense of community and involvement. The final goal was to increase the adjuncts ability to integrate technology into their syllabus and coursework (Wagoner, 2005, p. 203).

In OFTEN, each department had a “template” that could be customized to the department’s needs. A completely online environment, OFTEN took advantage of online tools such as discussion boards, chat functions as well as media related content such as video and audio to introduce and reinforce content. The content was updated regularly by the department and the department was responsible for making the sure the content was accurate and up to date.

The project was only funded for three years and is no longer viable. However, as a result of the project, Santa Fe Community College was able to give adjuncts a voice within the institution by prompting them to launch their own website with important links to institutional resources. The adjuncts have also been empowered to create their own newsletter and now have representation in the college senate.

Conclusion

As community college enrollments swell, two-year institutions are choosing to hire part-time faculty so that they can offer more courses without exponentially increasing dollars spent on the salary and benefits required to hire full-time faculty members. The growing adjunct population is becoming an essential organizational asset that needs to be carefully managed. Although the use of adjuncts in the community college market is not new, there is little research to show how institutions manage the adjunct population. Adjunct administrators have varying amounts of institutional training and support, and to date there has been little research on what the needs of this population are. Adjunct coordinators need to have more tools, systems, and procedures in place to help facilitate the management of part-time faculty members. Without appropriate management, the part-time faculty members are likely to continue to feel unsupported and disconnected from the institution.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

Community colleges in America are struggling to continue to provide the services and instruction many citizens have relied on for decades. In the past two to three years, the economy has triggered massive job losses. As a result, many workers have decided to go back to school to achieve new skills and certifications that will better equip them to compete in a tight job market. As a result, community colleges have seen their enrollments grow exponentially. Unfortunately, even given the increase in enrollment, community colleges have found themselves in a position where they have less money in their budget to offer additional courses and achieve their institutional goals.

In an effort to continue to provide services and instruction to their community while maintaining or bringing down costs, many community colleges have decided to hire part-time, adjunct professors to teach a majority of classes that were originally assigned to be taught by tenured professors. Hiring part-time faculty members allows institutions to teach more courses, while not having to offer the salary and benefits associated with a full time faculty member. If the economy and institutional endowment dollars continue to decline community colleges are likely to continue to see an increase in the amount of adjuncts they employ and the success of those adjuncts will likely have a direct effect on how successful the institution is in fulfilling their institutional mission.

While adding adjuncts to the community college faculty can be an effective way of keeping costs down while offering more courses to support growing enrollments, there are also challenges institutions face when hiring part-time faculty. Many of the adjuncts community colleges hire may not have teaching experience or may not be familiar with

the institution's goals and objectives. Other adjuncts may need training on classroom management or could benefit from an orientation and mentoring program.

To date, there has been little research on how community colleges are managing their part-time faculty members. Some institutions have adjunct coordinators or administrators that are responsible for the management and success of adjuncts. The role of adjunct administrators and coordinators are not always well defined and can vary from institution to institution. For example, in some community colleges the adjunct coordinator is also the dean of the department. At other colleges, the adjunct coordinator is a full-time role responsible for the management of adjuncts across all the disciplines in the institution.

The tools, services, and support that institutions provide these adjunct coordinators can also vary widely. It is essential to know what tools these coordinators are currently using to facilitate the management of adjuncts. Additionally, research needs to be done on what other tools, services and support could and should be considered to provide help and empower adjunct coordinators to be better managers and enhance and enrich the adjunct role within the institution.

In summary, the needs of the adjunct community are many and diverse and community colleges are just at the beginning of understanding how to best support these essential employees. Determining what technology tools adjunct coordinators are currently using such as learning management systems, Web 2.0 applications and campus portals while also investigating the usefulness of other available technologies will help institution better understand how to better support adjunct coordinators in the management of their part-time faculty members.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research was to determine what technology tools, if any, adjunct coordinators are currently using to manage their adjuncts and measure if those tools are meeting their needs. In addition, adjunct coordinators are asked about new tools and services that are or could be made available to them and their interest in these tools and services.

As community colleges rely more on part-time and adjunct faculty, more research needs to be done on how to ensure adjuncts are filling the needs of the institution. Today, at most community colleges, an adjunct coordinator or an adjunct administrator manages adjunct faculty members. To date, there has been little research focused around the adjunct coordinator position, but with the growing dependency on adjuncts in the community college marketplace, the position of adjunct coordinator is growing in importance and it is essential that research be done to help determine how best to support adjuncts and their managers at community colleges around the country.

Research Questions

This paper will attempt to determine what technology tools adjunct managers or coordinators need to facilitate the management of part-time faculty members and the courses they teach. The research will focus on two-year community colleges that have seen the largest growth in the number of students they service through distance and online education programs. Seven over-arching research questions will be explored. They include:

1. What percentage of community colleges employs a full-time adjunct coordinator or administrator responsible for managing adjuncts? How many community colleges do not have an adjunct coordinator managing their adjuncts?
2. How is the role of the adjunct coordinator defined at community colleges? How are the roles similar and different among institutions?
3. How do community college adjuncts deliver on-line content using a learning management system like Blackboard or WebCT? Are adjuncts trained on the tool used to deliver content? Are adjuncts required to use that tool?
4. What percentage of community colleges offers an orientation program for adjuncts? Do adjunct coordinators think orientation programs can and should be improved to contain not only institutional governances, but also learning modules tied to curriculum and classroom teaching?
5. How can professional development and mentoring programs for adjuncts be improved?
6. How are adjuncts evaluated at community colleges?
7. Would adjunct coordinators welcome an outside resource such as an educational company to facilitate in the development of their adjunct program?

Research Design

In order answer these research questions, an online survey was created and administered to adjunct coordinators and administrators. The survey was primarily quantitative, but contained some open-ended qualitative questions. The survey was a new

survey and was not based on any existing instrument. The survey was created and administered online using Survey Monkey.

Survey responders were asked to volunteer to contribute further to the study by agreeing to participate in a follow-up phone interview. A phone interview was conducted with three participants. The goal of the phone survey was to dig deeper into some of the survey topics and gain a better, more thorough understanding of individual institutional governances and how they affect the management of the adjunct population.

There were several advantages to using a quantitative survey for this research. Primarily, an online survey allowed for the mass collection of data across community colleges in the United States. Gathering a large number of data from community colleges across the country was important because there are likely to be differences in community colleges based on the state in which they operate in, the size of their institution and their individual institutional governances. Online survey research was capable of capturing those differences and similarities, so that the results of the survey are more generalizable to the full population. In addition, an online survey was an efficient way to gather the data in a standard format. Once the data was collected, the standard format made data analysis efficient.

There were also a few limitations to the survey method. The primary limitation is not having the advantage of performing one-on-one interviews with the entire population. A survey also does not give in-depth information on the adjunct coordinator's particular situation and the circumstances that surround that situation that could influence the resulting data from the survey. The three respondents that participated in follow-up phone interview allowed for the partial mitigation of this concern.

Additionally, according to Nardi's book on survey research, there is often times a "gap between what people report they do and what they actually do" (Nardi, 2006, p. 17) when answering online surveys. Nardi also points out that this, and other qualitative surveys, run the risk of experiencing a low return rate which would consequently limit the generalizability of this study (Nardi, p. 18).

Target Population and Sampling

The target population for this research was adjunct coordinators or managers who teach in two-year community colleges. Adjunct managers and coordinators are not classified as a separate demographic, meaning that most adjunct managers and coordinators assume that role as well as being a full-time faculty member or department head or chair. Therefore, in order to find the adjunct coordinators and administrators, the sample must include deans and department heads from two-year community colleges across the country.

Market Data Retrieval Company, MDR, provided a list of nine hundred and twenty professionals that serve as either a department chair or dean at a two-year community college. The data from MDR did represent the entire population of adjunct coordinators or administrators, rather according to Anne Gato, Quality Advocate for MDR, it represents ninety percent of the entire population. As a consequence, the data from MDR does not represent a complete sample and results of this survey may contain some bias.

Validity and Reliability

A pilot study found that this research is both valid and reliable. The pilot study was conducted before the survey was sent to the target population. The purpose of the

pilot was to test the survey and make sure that the questions are clear and the instrument accurately tests the hypotheses listed above. The pilot study also tested how the data would be collected and tested assumptions on how this data will be analyzed.

The pilot study confirmed that the answers to the survey questions gave valuable insight into technology tools adjunct managers or coordinators need to facilitate the management of part-time faculty members and the courses they teach, thereby making this research valid. The pilot study also provided insight into the tool itself and allowed me to evaluate the stability and usability of the tool. This information helped determine the reliability of the research.

The pilot consisted of two local professionals who have earned a doctorate in education and volunteered to take the survey and offer feedback before it was administered to the target population. After pilot participants had taken the survey, I interviewed each of them separately and asked for their feedback on how the survey can be improved. Based on their feedback, I made some small adjustments to the survey instrument. I also analyzed the results of the two respondents and ensured that the data collected on the survey could be analyzed and interpreted to test the project's hypotheses.

Consideration for Human Subject

An exempt review for Pepperdine's Institutional Review Board was requested and approved for this research. Risks to participants were mitigated in several ways. First, the email that was sent along with the link to the survey communicated the purpose of the study to the participant and also articulated how the data will be used and stored. The email served as a form of informed consent and gave the participant important

information on why the survey was important and how the data collected from the survey could possibly benefit their field and profession.

Secondly, participation in this study was optional, so any participant that did not want to answer the survey for fear of damaging their reputation or the school's reputation was allowed to do so. The researcher acknowledged that some adjunct coordinators and department heads might not be willing to discuss their role with adjuncts because they are unhappy with their own or their institution's method of managing and supporting their adjuncts. By allowing the survey to be optional, these respondents were protected from having to respond in an unfavorable manner and risk damage to their personal reputation as well as their school's reputation.

Finally, although the survey asked for the respondent's name and affiliation, these fields were not required allowing the participant the option of remaining anonymous. Making personal fields optional allowed the respondent to answer the survey without having their responses attached to their name or their affiliation. As with allowing the entire survey to be optional, the option of the survey being anonymous allowed the respondent to be protected from any consequence if their responses could effect their reputation or the reputation of their school.

Researcher Bias

Although I was an employee of Pearson Education at the time data was collected, the research that I conducted is my own. Pearson is aware that the adjunct community is growing in numbers and together we hope that this research will provide insight into the role of adjunct manager allowing the corporation to conceive a new product model or new service model that adjunct managers would find valuable.

Pearson did not fund the cost of the data sample nor are they requiring me to disclose the results of the study. As a result, I do not feel any pressure to provide a study that looks favorable to Pearson executives. Pearson does not currently have any technology tools or services that were designed to assist adjunct coordinators or administrators managing adjuncts, so the data collected from this study cannot be used or manipulated to prove or disprove any product model or service that Pearson already has in the marketplace.

Data Collection and Interpretation

Data collection for this survey started on March 17, 2010, allowing two weeks for the survey to be completed and submitted by the research participants. Participants received an email from my Pepperdine student email address. In the email, I stated the goal and importance of the research as well as information about how the data they provide would be used and stored. See Appendix B for a text copy of the email.

Two weeks after the survey was distributed, data analysis began. Data analysis was broken down into steps recommended by Creswell (2003). The first piece of data to be analyzed is some information and analysis on who did and who did not respond to the survey. The information, which is presented as percentages, provides useful information for the reader about who from the target population participated in the study. Information on who participated and who did not participate helps the reader by providing a useful framework and context for the study.

The second step in my data analysis process addressed any response bias that could have occurred due to the makeup of people who responded and those that did not respond. Response bias was essential to report on because the results of the study could

be skewed if it can be determined that the people who did not respond to the survey could have had a significant effect on the data.

The third step of data collection entailed statistical analysis of the data that was collected. Most of the survey questions were quantitative by nature and their results were reported with numbers and graphs. The few questions that require or allow for additional information were recorded, coded, grouped into categories and reported.

In summary, the online survey allowed for the creation of a great deal of data from community colleges across the country. Appropriate precautions and provisions for the human subject were thought of and accounted for. A pilot study helped ensure validity and reliability while ensuring that the data could be analyzed in a meaningful way.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

Introduction

Data for this research was generated using an online survey created in Survey Monkey. The survey was created in advance and an email was sent to 920 possible survey participants on March 17, 2010. The email contained formal information regarding consent and a link to an online survey. A follow up email reminder was sent out on March 23, 2010. Survey results were calculated on April 16, 2010. In all, one hundred and twenty people, or 13.2% of the respondents finished the survey.

Although 13.2% is considered a good return rate for an online survey, it is important to recognize that 86.8% of the participants did not participate. There could be several reasons for this. The spring season is notoriously busy for college professors who are trying to issue final exams and generate grades for the close of the semester. Additionally, because the sample from MDR included a large group of community college professionals, it could be that many of the people who were emailed the survey, did not have responsibility for adjuncts and the survey was irrelevant. Finally, some colleges asked that I clear this research through their IRB board before they could participate. Given the time that would take, I opted to not participate in that process.

In terms of response bias, it is difficult to predict how the data would have changed if more people would have taken the survey. One of my recommendations for future study would be to find a way to target only those community college employees who are responsible for the management for adjuncts so that the sample can be clean. In addition, had I started the survey with a question asking respondents if they were

responsible for managing adjuncts and if not, offered them a skip-to-end option, I would have been able to better determine how many of my non-respondents did not complete the survey because it was not relevant to them.

Demographics

The survey began with some basic demographic questions to determine who the participant was, what school they were from and their title. Each survey participant had the option to remain anonymous and ultimately, 36 of the 120 participants choose to not give me their name. Responders were asked to select a position from a drop down menu. When the results were calculated, 44.4% of the respondents were department chairs, 29.9% were full-time professors, and 9.4% were division deans. Seventeen respondents choose “other”. Write-in titles included: senior lecturer, associate dean, associate professor, and full time professors who are also deans and division chairs.

The number of diverse titles is one indication of how difficult it is to find the managers of adjunct faculty. Managers of adjuncts often wear several hats within the institution and the role of “adjunct manager” is not an official title that is recognized within most community colleges. As a result, it is difficult to target this population and although the survey was sent to 920 participants, there is a strong likelihood that important people that manage adjuncts were missed in the sample.

Next, the survey asked participants to indicate the college they work for and what state their college was located in. The population that completed the survey represented thirty-two states. More than one quarter of the respondents came from California or Texas. California was responsible for 17.2% of the survey data and Texas followed with 11.2%. New York and Illinois followed California and Texas with each of state

contributing 5% to the data. The rest of the data collection was split fairly evenly across the remaining twenty-eight states. It is not surprising that California and Texas had a large number of survey participants given the size of their state, population and number of community colleges.

Finally, the survey asked what department within the university the participants worked in. The goal of this question was to determine where adjunct managers could be found within the institution. An overwhelming majority of participants were in the social science and behavioral science department in disciplines such as psychology, history, anthropology, and political science.

The remaining questions in the survey focused on answering the study's seven research questions:

1. What percentage of community colleges employs a full-time adjunct coordinator or administrator responsible for managing adjuncts? How many community colleges do not have an adjunct coordinator managing their adjuncts?
2. How is the role of the adjunct coordinator defined at community colleges? How are the roles similar and different among institutions?
3. How do community college adjuncts deliver on-line content using a learning management system like Blackboard or WebCT? Are adjuncts trained on the tool used to deliver content? Are adjuncts required to use that tool?
4. What percentage of community colleges offers an orientation program for adjuncts? Do adjunct coordinators think orientation programs can and should

be improved to contain not only institutional governances, but also learning modules tied to curriculum and classroom teaching?

5. How can professional development and mentoring programs for adjuncts be improved?
6. How are adjuncts evaluated at community colleges?
7. Would adjunct coordinators welcome an outside resource such as an educational company to facilitate in the development of their adjunct program?

Below, the results from each question are described in detail. The quotes included in those details and the subsequent phone interviews were obtained from the participants in the study in either the online survey or the follow-up phone conversation that took place in March and April of 2010.

Research Question #1

What percentage of community colleges employs a full-time adjunct coordinator or administrator responsible for managing adjuncts? How many community colleges do not have an adjunct coordinator managing their adjuncts? Survey participants were asked two survey questions in order to determine what percentage of community colleges have a full-time adjunct coordinator. The first question asked them to indicate what percentage of courses were taught by adjuncts. Of the 120 participants that answered this question, 52 of them or 43.3% indicated that adjuncts teach 41-60% of the courses in their department. The remaining participants were almost equally divided with 20% answering that 21-40% of classes were taught by adjuncts and another 23.3% indicating that part-time faculty teaches 61-80% of their users.

What percentage of the courses taught in your department are taught by adjuncts?

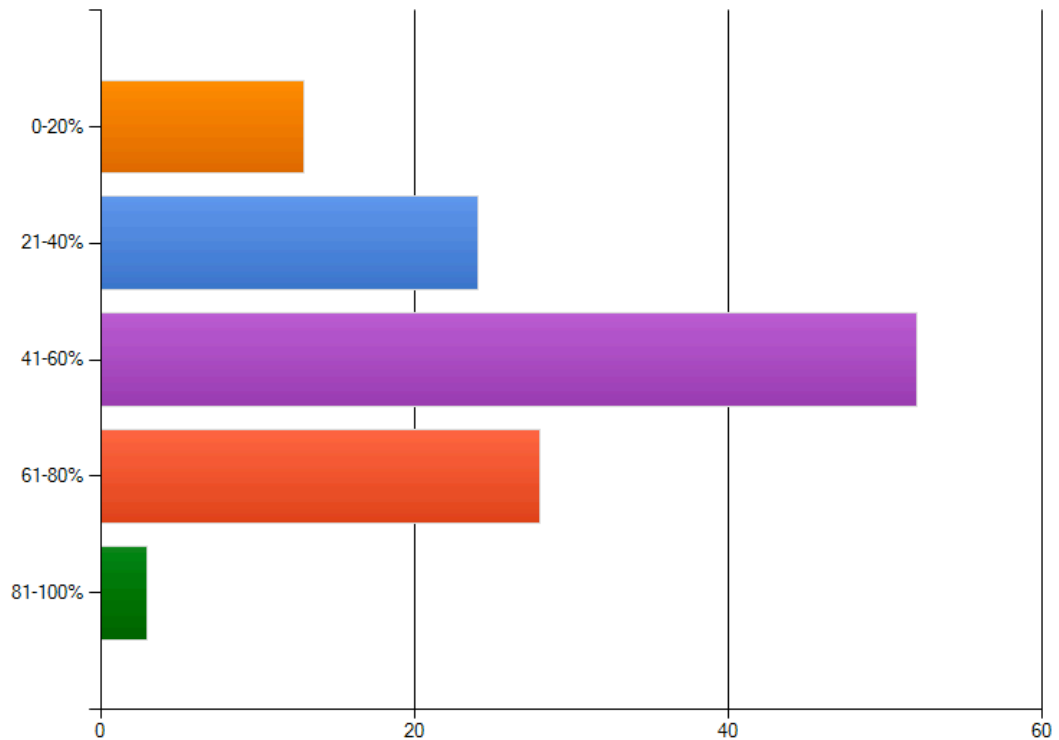


Figure 1. Percentage of courses taught.

The second question asked if their institution had a full time adjunct coordinator or administrator. Of the 120 participants, 108 of them or, 90% indicated “no” that their institution did not employ a full time adjunct manager. Only 10% of participants indicated that their institution employs a full time adjunct coordinator or administrator.

It is particularly interesting that close to half of the survey participants indicated that 41-60% of their department courses are taught by adjuncts. Additionally, when aggregated, the data shows more than 86% of responders indicated that their institutions have adjuncts teach between 21% and 80% of their courses, yet only twelve responders for 10% of these institutions have a full time faculty member to support the adjunct

population. The data seems to suggest that institutions are faced with having more part-time faculty teaching more and more classes, but most institutions do not have the infrastructure or management structure to support this growing population.

Research Question #2

How is the role of the adjunct coordinator defined at community colleges? How are the roles similar and different among institutions? The survey listed seven responsibilities that defined an adjunct coordinator and asked participants to check all that apply to the adjunct coordinator role at their institution. The responsibilities included: recruiting adjuncts, hiring adjuncts, scheduling adjuncts, organization professional development for adjuncts, creating professional development opportunities for adjuncts, evaluating adjuncts and creating course material and/or syllabi for adjuncts. Only the twelve participants who indicated that their institution has a full time adjunct coordinator answered this question. The results were split across all responsibilities with “hiring adjuncts” getting 66.7% of the responses. The other two top responses included: recruiting adjuncts, 50% and scheduling adjuncts 41.7%. It would seem from these responses that the role of adjunct coordinator, though not recognized in more than 90% of the institutions I surveyed, varies very little in terms of responsibility.

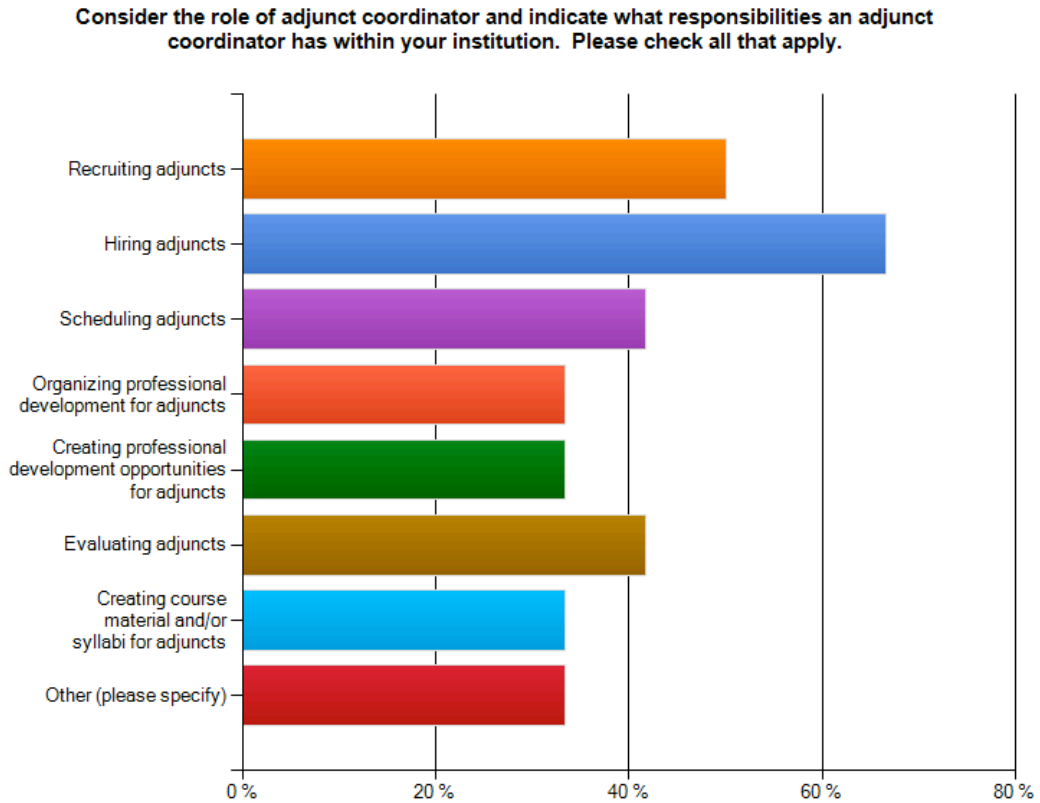


Figure 2. Role of adjunct coordinator.

Research Question #3

How do community college adjuncts deliver on-line content using a learning management system like Blackboard or WebCT? Are adjuncts trained on the tool used to deliver content? Are adjuncts required to use that tool? In an overwhelming majority 98.3% of the survey respondents indicated that their institution does use a learning management system with only 2 responders indicating that they did not. However, even though nearly all the institutions had a learning management system in place, only 21.8% of the schools require adjuncts to use the tool to deliver online content.

When asked about training adjuncts on the learning management system 65.3% indicated that there is a combination of informal and formal training. When questioned about the quality of the training that was offered, almost 48.3% ranked the training as “good” with only 4.3% indicating that the training was “poor”.

In summary, it would seem that most institutions are not taking full advantage of the learning management system that 98.3% of the institutions say is available for their use. If community colleges could find the resources to offer sufficient and good training on the tool and put in place some best practices and policies in relation to how the learning management system is used, the tool could become an invaluable asset to adjunct administrators providing a vehicle to organize course content and assessment while having the administrative capabilities to monitor several courses at a time. Additionally, the learning management system could help monitor course progress and be able to intervene and assist an adjunct that might be having difficulty.

Research Question #4

What percentage of community colleges offers an orientation program for adjuncts? Do adjunct coordinators think orientation programs can and should be improved to contain not only institutional governances, but also learning modules tied to curriculum and classroom teaching?

Eighty seven and a half percent of participants indicated that they do offer an orientation program for their adjunct faculty members. Of those institutions that did offer orientation programs, almost half, or 47.1%, ranked their orientation program as “good”. When asked what content was covered in their orientation program, there were a mix of responses. The largest category was “institutional missions and objectives” with 82

participants or 79.6% indicating that this topic was covered in their orientation program. Close runners up included learning modules that cover the basic teaching concepts such as lesson planning, syllabus building, and assessment and institutional governances and bylaws getting 55.3% and 50.5% respectively. Less than 40% of responders indicated that training on the school’s learning management system was part of their adjunct orientation program.

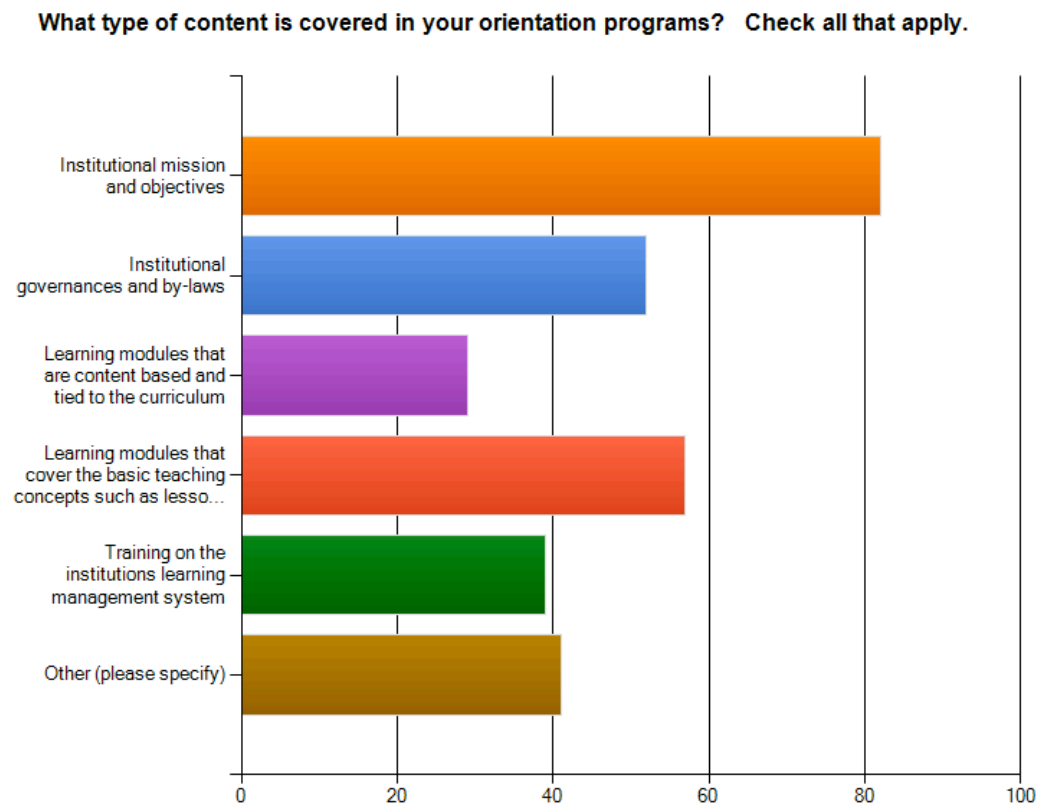


Figure 3. Content in orientation programs.

Participants that choose “other” indicated a variety of topics were covered in orientation programs that included human resources topics such as sexual harassment,

using technology in the classroom, and practical information about copy centers, reporting absences and submitting grades.

When asked how orientation programs could be improved , there was a tie between adding learning modules that cover the basic teach concepts and training on the institution's learning management system. Each got 45.1% of the vote. Additionally, 42.3% indicated that that they would like to see their orientation programs augmented by the addition of learning modules that are content based and tied to the curriculum.

In summary, it would seem that although the majority of institutions offer decent orientation programs for their adjuncts, there is room to make improvements to these important programs. Most notably, adjunct administrators would like to offer more learning management system training to their adjuncts. Getting adjuncts trained and comfortable on the institution's learning management system will help both adjunct administrators and adjuncts themselves. The addition of a training program to train adjuncts and adjunct administrators on the institution's learning management system seems like a win/win for, adjuncts and adjunct coordinators. Adjuncts benefit from a central, shared, organizational tool that will help them deliver course content and monitor student progress and results. Adjunct coordinators benefit by a consistent way to view, monitor and track adjuncts and the students they teach.

Participants also indicated that they would like to see an opportunity to provide adjuncts with some instructional content during the orientation program. The content can be curriculum based, meaning the content covers the content that is going to be taught in the course. Participants also welcomed an opportunity to provide adjuncts with some

teaching training during the orientation program including topics such as classroom management, student learning and assessment.

Providing training on the institution's learning management system can help adjuncts and adjunct coordinators make use of an existing tool that can be invaluable in providing course structure and allowing for a shared, common platform that can be used to leverage content, monitor course progress and track performance. Orientation programs can also be of greater value if they are able to deliver content both in terms on curriculum and teaching strategies to adjuncts that may be teaching a new course or adjuncts that have little teaching experience at all.

Research Question #5

How can professional development and mentoring programs for adjuncts be improved? Almost eighty one percent (80.8%) of survey respondents indicated that their institutions offered professional development opportunities to their adjuncts. About half of the schools that did offer professional development offered it as face-to-face instruction at the institution. Only one percent of schools that offered professional development served that instruction in a completely online environment. However, the majority or 51% of respondents that offered professional development to their adjuncts offered it as a combination of face-to-face and online instruction.

The range of content taught during adjunct professional development varied. Respondents that indicated that they did offer professional development to their adjuncts were asked to choose what topics were covered. The topics included: strategies on incorporating technology in the classroom, classroom management strategies, training opportunities on learning management systems and a write-in "other" category. The

results of the survey indicate that the programs seem to cover most of these topics with “strategies on incorporating technology in the classroom” just barely beating “training opportunities on (your) learning management system”.

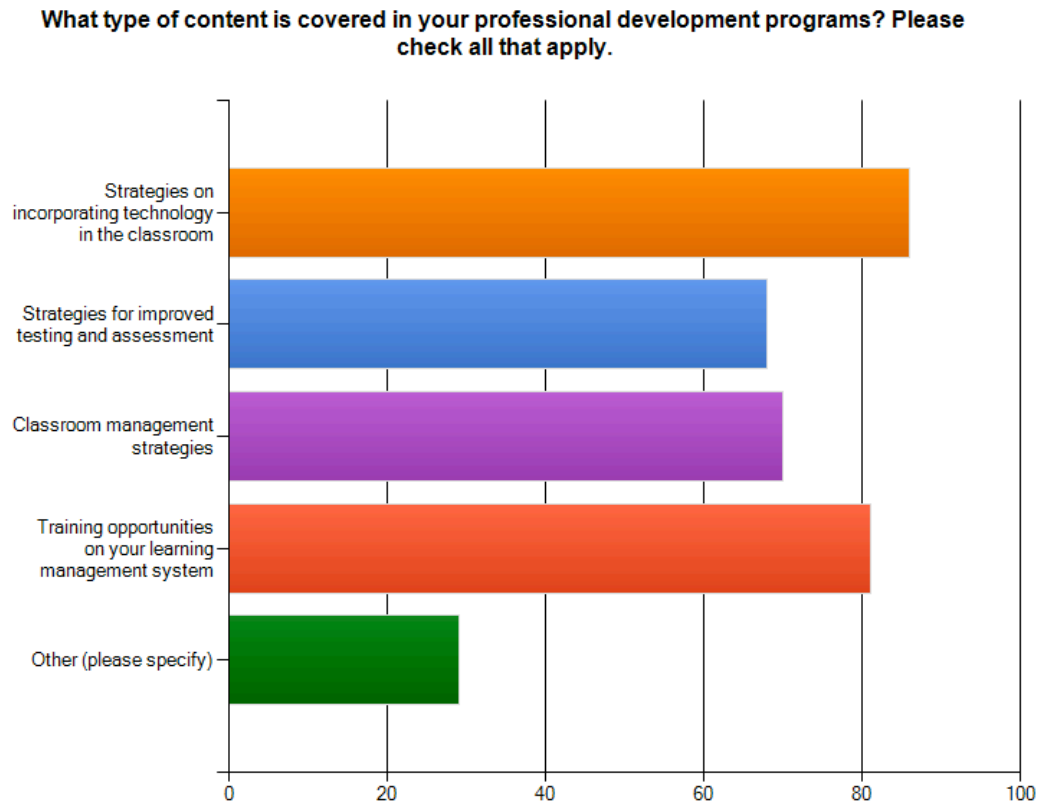


Figure 4. Content in professional development programs.

Some of the write-in responses included: adult learning theory and brain based learning, presentations by faculty concerning areas of expertise, weekly roundtable sessions sponsored by the institution, funding for adjuncts to attend conferences, and an option to take a free community college course of their choices.

The next question asked respondents to consider what topics could be added to improve their professional development program for adjuncts. The options were the

same as the previous question. The results indicated that 50% would like to see classroom management strategies covered. Worth noting is that the topic “strategies for improved testing and assessment” had the second highest total with 45.2% of respondents indicating that it would be a valuable addition to the adjunct program.

When asked to rate their institution’s professional development programs for adjuncts, 43.3% indicated that their program was “good” while almost 30% indicated that it was “very good”, 24.7% of respondents thought their program were “fair” and only 4% indicated that their program was “poor”.

In summary, the data indicates that the majority of community colleges that employ adjuncts do have a professional development program that allow the adjuncts an opportunity to continue to learn and develop their skills as educators. The data also suggests that the professional development opportunities that are available are somewhat consistent across programs and most institutions. Close to 70% indicated that their professional development programs with either good or very good.

The second part of research question number five was to learn more about the institution’s mentoring program and how it could be improved. The results indicated that 50.8% of the participants surveyed do have a mentoring program and 75% of those programs are managed in an online environment.

Next, an open-ended question asked participants to describe their mentoring program. The results were mixed with a combination of informal and formal programs. In most cases, adjuncts were paired up with full-time faculty members to help them assimilate into the institution and answer important questions they might have. In some cases, full time faculty members were compensated for this work but often times it was

an unpaid responsibility. In other situations, department heads were called upon to be mentors and work with adjuncts to help assist them during their first semester.

Department heads would share vital course and school information with adjuncts and in some cases allow them to sit in on their class.

Fifty-two and half percent of the respondents rated their mentoring program as “good” while 23% ranked their mentoring program as “fair”. When asked how their mentoring program could be improved, there were multiple suggestions for a more formalized process for adjuncts to be mentored. Others suggested that a mentoring program be created at an institution level, as opposed to the discipline level in an effort to standardize the treatment of adjuncts and coordinate a more sophisticated mentoring program.

In general, it appears that most community colleges that do have a mentoring program think it is working, but also agree that could be working better. As with most programs at the community college level, mentoring programs tend to rely on resources that are becoming scarce. Finding a way to expand mentoring programs in a way that can scale across an institution and provide necessary efficiencies would be of great benefit to adjunct managers.

Research Question #6

How are adjuncts evaluated at community colleges? In an effort to find out how various community colleges assess their adjuncts, a section of the survey asked respondents to indicate what evaluation strategies they use in assessing their adjunct population. The survey question asked respondents to choose from a list of assessment options including: classroom evaluation student evaluation, self evaluation, number of

professional development hours completed, formal assessment based upon an agreed upon rubric and an write-in “other” option. Respondents had the capability of choosing more than one option. One hundred and thirty respondents answered this question with only fifteen members of the target population skipping this question.

An overwhelming majority, 95% indicated that they assess adjuncts by student evaluation. The second most popular option was classroom evaluation with 90% of respondents indicating that they assess adjuncts performance by observing the adjunct in a classroom setting. After student evaluation and classroom evaluation, self-evaluation was a distant third option with 28.3% of the respondents indicating they use an adjunct’s self-evaluation as a way to assess their adjunct.

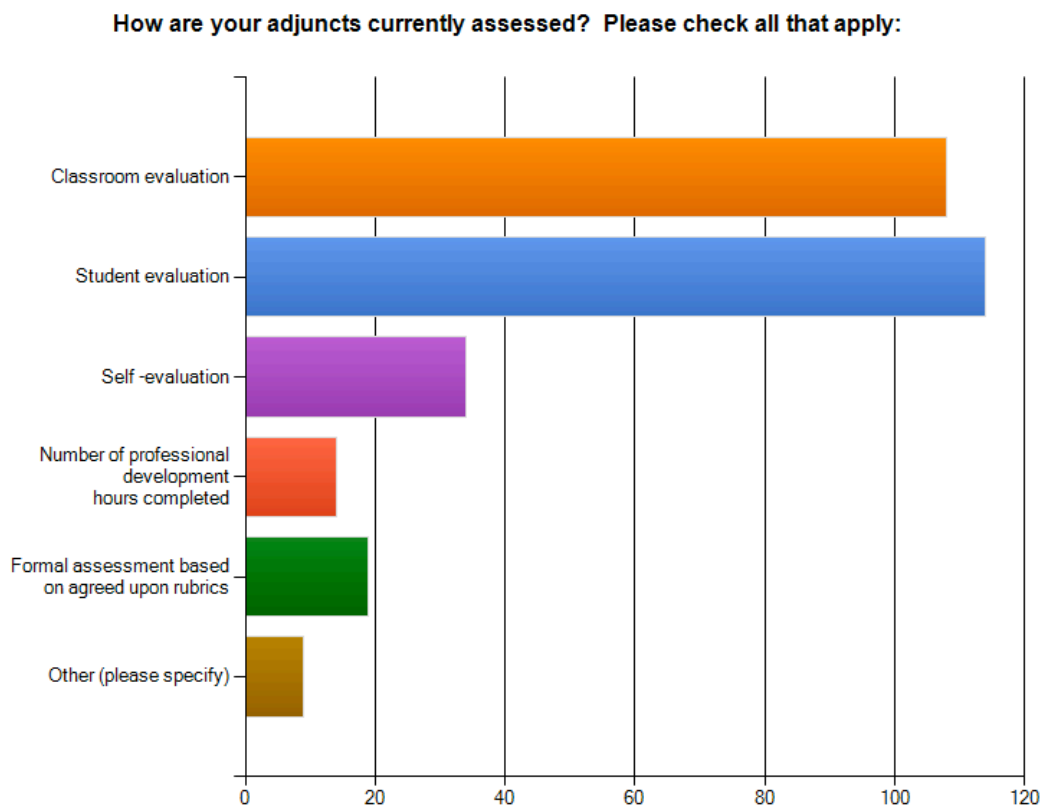


Figure 5. Assessment of adjuncts.

The “other” category contained nine write in responses indicating that in at least one school, a pre-approved supervisor evaluation instrument is used, in another a complete and thorough review of a portfolio is used to assess adjuncts and at least one respondent indicated that they currently do not have any formal way to assess adjuncts.

A follow up question asked respondents if their institution would consider using an online evaluation system to assess adjuncts. The results indicate that the majority of respondents, 52.5%, were unsure if their institution would consider using an online system to help assess their adjunct population. The rest of the population was split fairly equally between “yes” and “no” with 28% indicating that they thought their institution would consider such a tool and 19.5% noting that they did not think an online tool to manage adjuncts would be considered for implementation at their institution.

A subsequent survey question asked if their institution were to implement an online evaluation system, what features and content should this tool capture. Responders were allowed to choose more than one category/option. An overwhelming majority, 89.3% of responders indicated that the system should contain a file for each adjunct’s student evaluation, mentor evaluation and coordinator’s evaluation. The second most popular selection was “information on classroom assessment” getting 73.8% of population’s vote. Getting almost equal percentage of the votes, 61.2% and 57.3% respectively were the ability for the online tool to capture each adjunct’s schedule, workload and class rosters as well as a place to include personnel files for each adjunct including their resume, work experience, certification and emergency information.

What would be some important features of an online evaluation system? Check all that apply.

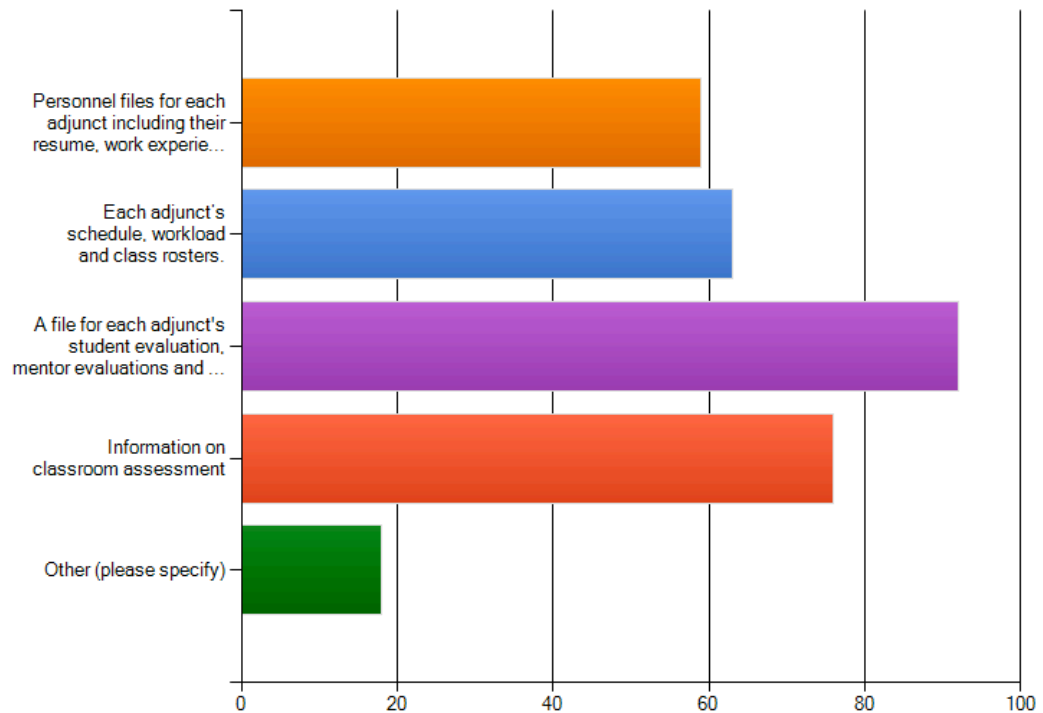


Figure 6. Features for an online evaluation system.

A write-in option allowed responders to share other ideas for an online product to assist adjuncts. Some of the write-in responses were including a place for professional organizational membership, professional conference attendance and records of any professional paper or research. One respondent indicated that all of the options he had to choose from was available at their institution, but not at the same place. Another indicated the importance of keeping the content in the system secure and confidential and could be used for hiring/firing decisions.

In summary, the way adjuncts are assessed at community colleges appears to be varied and inconsistent. The majority of responders seem to evaluate their adjunct

population in traditional ways including student evaluation and classroom evaluation.

The data from this section seems to indicate that although the population was split about an online system to assess adjuncts, there did seem to be a need for some place to store adjunct records and personnel data.

Research Question #7

Would adjunct coordinators welcome an outside resource such as an educational company to facilitate in the development of their adjunct program? Finally, the survey asked adjunct coordinators if they would welcome an outside resource such as an educational company to facilitate in the development of their adjunct program? In order to answer this question, the survey first asked the population what types of services did they think their institution needed to help adjunct succeed. Respondents were able to check more than one response. The possible responses included: orientation programs, mentoring programs, professional development programs, technology training programs, administrative services that track and store adjunct information including vitae, courses taught, date hired, student evaluations and completed professional development. Also included was an “other” option that allowed responders to write-in other possible answers.

The majority of the population, 80.3%, indicated that “mentoring programs” were needed to help adjuncts improve. More than 65% of respondents thought that orientation programs and technology training programs were important, while 59.8% indicated that the importance of professional development programs should not be ignored.

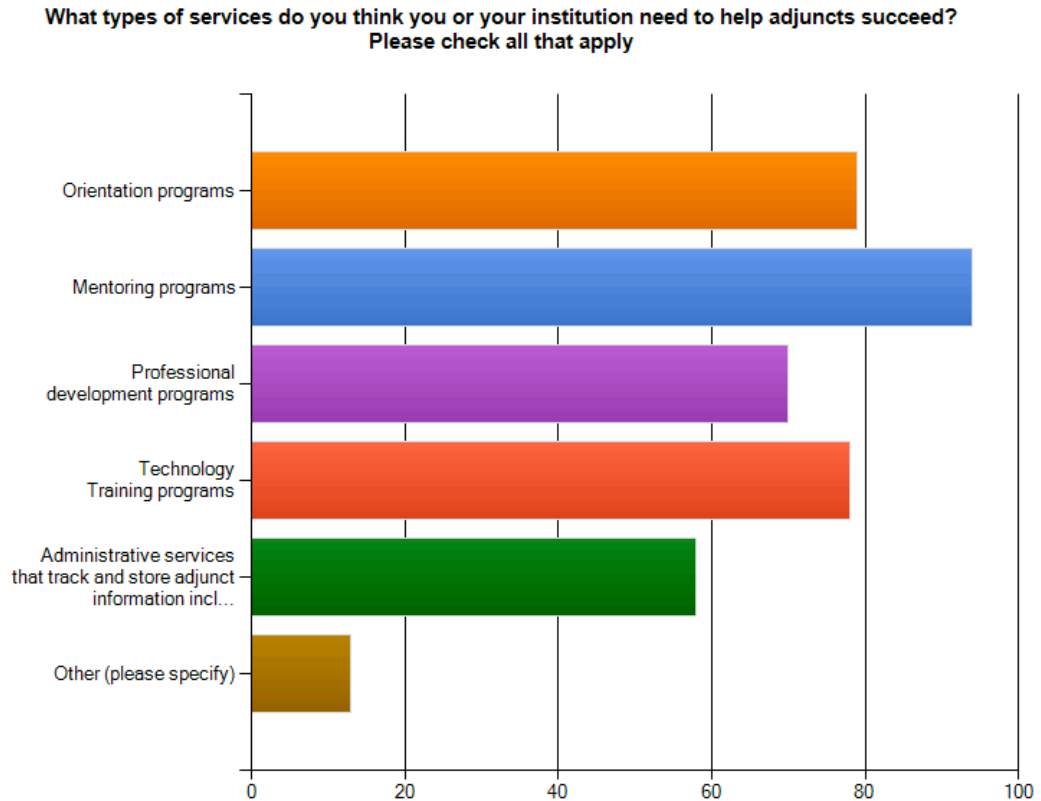


Figure 7. Services to help adjuncts succeed.

Write-in responses were varied and included providing the adjuncts more money, offering adjuncts more continuous supervision, formalize mentoring and orientation programs, considering tenure options for adjuncts, and having adjuncts become more involved in department and faculty meetings.

The next question asked if they thought their institution would consider partnering with an educational company to create an online resource to help support adjuncts with orientation, mentoring and professional development programs for your institution. One hundred and seventeen respondents answered this question and the majority 70.9% of

them indicated that they did not feel like their institution would consider such a partnership with only 28.7% indicating that a partnership could be possible.

If a respondent answered “no”, the survey requested that they indicate why a partnership would not be considered. The majority of “no” respondents indicated that it would likely be a cost, money and resource issue. Others indicated that they did not feel they had the authority to make such a decision. Still others worried about the complexities with working with an outside educational company and whether they could be assured of privacy. Finally, some institutions felt that they had the capability of building their adjunct programs in house if they had the funding and resources to do so.

Phone Interviews

The methods section of this paper indicated that three interviews are conducted to go deeper on concepts that were touched upon in the survey. A final question in the survey asked participants if they would agree to a follow up conversation and each volunteer submitted a phone number and convenient day and time when they could be contacted. Given the time of year that this research was being conducted, getting participant to schedule time was difficult and many professors were extremely busy delivering final exams and posting grades. All three interviewees were asked the same questions:

1. Can you tell me more about how adjuncts are managed in your institution?
Do you see this changing in the near future? How?
2. Do you feel like the learning management system your institution uses is a valuable tool for your adjuncts? Why? Or why not? Can you imagine a

scenario where your learning management system might be able to help train or deliver content to your adjuncts? Why? Or why not?

3. What is your opinion on the way your institution handles adjunct orientation? How do you think it can be improved?
4. Do you think there are enough professional development opportunities for your adjuncts? If not, what opportunities would you like to see added?
5. Can you elaborate on how your adjuncts are currently evaluated by your institution?
6. Knowing that resources are stretched in most community colleges, do you think your institution would consider outside resources to help with the management of your adjunct population? Why? Or why not?

The first interview took place on April 29, 2010, between the researcher and the head of the social science department of a small community college in California. In the survey, this respondent said that 21-40% of their courses were taught by adjuncts and their school did not employ an adjunct coordinator.

When asked how their adjuncts were managed and if they saw this changing in the future, the interviewee stated that the management of adjuncts was left up to the divisional chair. In this school, there were five divisions and each division had a different way of managing their adjuncts. She indicated that not having a set procedure made it hard to coordinate efforts across the institution to manage and support adjuncts in a meaningful way. She hopes that this changes and sees a lot of valuable time and resources being wasted each semester getting adjunct faculty up and running.

The learning management system in use at this community college is called etudes. The interviewee was not happy with this platform and feels that it is very cumbersome and is used primarily in distance learning courses. When asked if she felt if etudes could be used as a way to manage adjuncts, she responded that it would take too much time and effort to get all the adjuncts into a class and trained on the system and it would simply be easier to just phone them or email them information as it becomes available.

This community college currently does not have an orientation program, but the interviewee thought one is needed. “Orientation of adjuncts is left to the divisional chairs and is handled in different ways”, she said. There is no consistency across the disciplines, nor is there a standard set of procedures all adjuncts must follow. The interviewee thought an orientation program would help adjuncts “assimilate into the college” and provide the necessary guidance and support adjuncts need, especially if they are teaching at the college for the very first time.

When asked if there are enough professional development opportunities for their adjuncts, the interviewee stated that there were some professional development opportunities for adjuncts, but there could be more. She gave an example of the ESL division getting grant dollars to send adjuncts to special development conferences and how they were able to get some funding to set up a blog for adjuncts to create and share information but securing that kind of grant funding also takes time and resources that are currently not readily available. Additionally, the college opens up all their professional development opportunities to adjuncts, including faculty in-service opportunities.

The community college also has an informal mentoring program that they have started to implement in some disciplines. Specifically, in psychology, a full time faculty member will have a first time adjunct shadow them for a semester before the adjunct starts teaching on their own. Often times, they will add the adjunct into their class as a student and have them involved throughout the semester. The role of mentor in this scenario is totally voluntary, but the faculty sees the value in the program and do not seem to mind that they do not get a monetary stipend for the extra work. The interviewee suggested that she would like to extend this program to other disciplines, but she simply did not have the faculty or resources to scale the program in disciplines such as political science or history.

When asked to elaborate on how adjuncts were managed, the interviewee said that their institution uses several methods of evaluating their adjuncts. In almost every situation, a student evaluation of the adjunct is performed at the end of the semester without the adjunct being in the room. Student evaluations are then sent to human resources, are tallied and given back to the division chair and the chair shares the results with the adjunct.

Additionally, there are several in-class observations that happen. If this is the first semester the adjunct has taught at the college, there are typically observed three to four times during the semester. A more experienced adjunct is only observed one to two times a year. Divisional chairs also look at and evaluate an adjunct's class syllabus, class assignments, and graded assignments. The results of these observations are shared with the adjunct during a face- to face meeting that happens a few times during the semester.

The last question in the interview focused around whether the institution would consider an outside resource to help with the management of adjuncts. The interviewee felt adamant that their institution would benefit from some outside assistance. She felt that having an outside perspective on the management of adjuncts would certainly help establish an orientation program, a more effective mentoring program and also allow the institution to find more professional development opportunities for their adjunct population. She also thought that including technology training, as a service to adjuncts would be helpful to her population. In addition, having an administrative side to the service that would track and save pertinent adjunct information such as vitae, courses taught, date hired would be a necessary component of any online service.

In summary, the interviewee appreciates the hard work that adjuncts do and acknowledges them as true professionals that need adequate institutional support. She thinks that if the institution had a more standard set of guidelines, policies and procedures would greatly benefit the institution's ability to effectively train and mentor adjuncts and retain them semester after semester. The lack of institutional governance and any relevant theoretical underpinning over the management of adjuncts will continue to stretch resources and limit the ability to successfully manage adjuncts.

The second interview was done on May 4, 2010, with a full time professor from California. The respondent indicated said that 41-50% of their courses were taught by adjuncts and their school did not employ an adjunct coordinator. When asked to provide more details on how adjuncts were managed within her institution, the respondent stated that, "adjuncts are not managed at all by our institution and it's a real problem!" She went on to say that the university did not see adjuncts as part of faculty or

even part of the institution, rather they see them as part-time workers being used to fill a “void” when resources are at a minimum.

When asked if she thought the institution would change the way they manage their adjuncts, she said, “change was not going to be easy given the economic climate and the fact that the institution does not have the resources to structure and implement any meaningful change”. She indicated that if real change were to happen, it would have to be mandated from higher levels of the institution in response to criteria that the institution was going to be measured against. She did not think this would happen anytime soon because although many in the institution know that there is a problem with managing adjuncts, it is not a topic that is discussed beyond the division/chair level.

The second interview question was focused around the use of a learning management system to facilitate the training and management of adjuncts. The respondent indicated that their institution uses Blackboard, but adjuncts are not required to use it and only a very few of them use it at all. The respondent further explained that the adjuncts she has employed are typically older and at the end of their careers. Most of the adjuncts do not have a technology background and the amount of work to get the adjuncts up and running and trained on Blackboard would take too long and would soak up valuable teaching resources. The respondent saw the value in leveraging Blackboard as a way to help with her adjunct population, but noted “unless there was an institutional program to help train adjuncts on how to use it, I do not think individual chairs would take the time, money and resources to do it on their own”.

When asked about adjunct orientation, the respondent indicated that adjuncts are invited to an optional face-to-face orientation program at the beginning of the semester.

She also indicated that because it is not required and because they do not pay adjunct to attend, attendance at this program is limited to only a fraction of the overall adjunct population. She further noted that adjunct orientation is clearly something that her institution could and should invest in. She said that she would have two major priorities in an orientation. First, she believed strongly that the adjuncts should receive technology training not only on their learning management system, but other educational technologies that could help them with their curriculum and teaching. Secondly, she thought adjuncts would benefit from an orientation program that would introduce them to the institutional goals and missions as well as provide them with some information on how certain policy and procedures such as submitting grades and conducting student evaluations.

After discussing orientation programs, the interview continued to talk about professional development opportunities offered to adjuncts. The respondent emphatically answered “no” when asked if there were enough professional development opportunities for her adjuncts. She did say that adjunct faculty are invited to a two day professional development seminar in the summer but they have to pay for it and they do not get paid for being there. Full-time faculty do not pay for the seminar AND they get paid for a days work. Adjuncts never attend this seminar and see it as an indication of how their institution treats adjuncts differently than full time faculty members.

When asked to elaborate on how adjuncts are evaluated, the respondent indicated that her adjuncts are evaluated by students using student evaluations. These student evaluations are done in the classroom without the adjunct being present. When students are done, the evaluations are collected and sent to the department chair. It is unknown

what happens to the evaluations after this point. Student evaluations are not posted online, nor is it clear that these evaluations become part of any official record for the adjunct. The respondent indicated that sometimes the results of the evaluations are given back to the adjunct, but that is not always the case. She went on to say, “ adjunct evaluation process is a manual one where hard copies of the evaluations are moved from person to person and department to department and are often times lost in the shuffle”. The respondent was frustrated with the system, realized it was flawed and indicated that she was hopeful that it will be improved.

The last question focused on whether she felt that her institution would consider an outside resource to help with the management of her adjuncts. She indicated that help from an outside provides was “really appealing” to her, but she does not have the authority to make those type of decisions. The respondent noted that until higher levels of the institution realized the severity of the problem and were told to “fix it” other priorities would prevail.

In summary, the respondent was not satisfied with the way her institution was handling the management of adjunct and thought there was a lot of room for improvement. She seemed frustrated that the decision to do more would have to be forced on the institution as she as well as many of her colleagues realizes the importance of providing the appropriate level of support to train and retain good adjuncts.

The final person interviewed on May 7, 2010, and was from a mid-sized college that uses adjuncts to teach close to 75% of the school’s classes without a full time adjunct manager. In this institution, “lead faculty member” in each department manages adjuncts. The school is broken down into individual departments and within each

department there is a chair and a lead faculty member. The lead faculty member is in charge of ensuring that all the faculty members in his/her department are up to date on the most recent research and trends for their discipline. Other responsibilities include managing course syllabi, updating all course material for the department and updating curriculum with new standards. These “lead faculty” are also responsible for the hiring, training and mentoring of all adjuncts within their department.

When asked if he thought the way adjuncts were managed in his institution would change, he was skeptical. He elaborated by saying, “Each department needs are different, so different that I cannot foresee a time when adjuncts would be able to be managed by a central entity”. He went on to say that there is a need to centralize information for adjuncts at an institutional level. This type of centralization would help the institution know who is teaching at their school as well as ensure that all adjuncts were informed of the school’s mission and vision and had access to basic information surrounding the school’s institutional policies.

The next series of questions focused around the use of the school’s learning management system and how that tool could possibly be helpful in managing adjuncts. The learning management system in this respondent’s school is Ecollege and when asked about using it to help manage pertinent information for adjuncts, the respondent uttered an emphatic “NO”. He was clearly frustrated with the school’s use of Ecollege. When probed, the respondent made it clear that his main frustration was with Ecollege’s inability to interoperate with PeopleSoft, the schools student information system. Without this interoperability, class rosters and student information had to be updated manually by the instructor and he thought this manual process stood in the way of

adjuncts being able to get up to speed quickly enough to use Ecollege from the first day of class. He also noted that each full time instructor gets a notice from the institution when course shells need to be created for the upcoming semester and it is up to the full time faculty to push that message down to adjunct faculty. In the words of the responder, “that process sets the adjunct up to fail from the get-go”. By the time the adjunct realizes that his class shell is due, there is little time for them to learn how to create a course shell let alone get trained on doing it. In the end, most adjuncts do not use Ecollege because of the time it takes to get trained and get their courses set up for student use.

When asked about orientation programs for adjuncts, the respondent indicated that his school does not offer any official orientation program for their adjuncts. Rather, it is up to the lead faculty member to get their adjuncts familiar with the school, the department and the course content. He does see the value in an institutional orientation program, but does not see it happening anytime soon because the departments within the institution work differently and have different ideas and methods for managing their adjunct population.

The next question asked the respondent to comment if he thought there were enough professional development opportunities for adjuncts and if not, what opportunities would he like to see added. There was no hesitation from the respondent when he indicated that there are “absolutely no professional development opportunities” for his adjuncts. He felt very strongly that there should be and went on to stress the importance of part-time faculty members being current in the field by attending the major conferences in the disciplines that they teach. He did indicate that although his college did not have the funding to send part-time faculty to conferences, some of his adjuncts

were fortunate enough to have another institution and/or company they are associated with send them instead.

Next, we discussed how adjuncts were evaluated at this college. He noted that at his institution students evaluated adjuncts at the end of the semester. The results of those evaluations were sent to the lead teacher and the adjunct. If the lead teacher sees something concerning, he has two options. One option is to do nothing at all and simply not hire that adjunct again. Or, he can try to work with the teacher and remedy the issue. The respondent indicated that in most cases, it is easier to just find someone else to teach next semester. The respondent seemed discouraged that there was not a more formal evaluation process in place. He went on to say that he would like to do in-class evaluations of all his adjuncts, but there simply is not the time or resources to do it.

The last question asked the respondent if he thought his institution would consider an outside resource to help with the management of the adjunct population. The respondent seemed split on this issue. On one hand, he realized the value of having a single place where adjuncts could go to get information on the school and policy, but he seemed conflicted with losing the departments control over how course content and syllabi would be managed outside the department. Ultimately, he thought his school was too “traditional” to take on something so ambitious, but he did not rule it out for future consideration. He went on to say that “the pricing of the system and service would be the ultimate determining factor and that the decision would ultimately site with the dean”.

In summary, this respondent spends a great deal of his time managing adjuncts as well as teaching a full course load. He sees the value in the work that they do and seems committed to making sure they are up to date with course curriculum and pedagogy.

What he is unable to do on his own is provide his adjuncts with a comprehensive orientation program or quick access to him when the adjuncts have questions on institutional policies like submitting grades and choosing a textbook. He would clearly like to see his institution play more of an administrative role, but also like some more resources within his own department to help hire the right people as adjuncts and to disseminate course content and pedagogy.

In conclusion, all three interviews helped to personalize the data. The frustration and empathy the professors had for their adjuncts came across clearly in their responses to their interview questions. It was also clear that each respondent knew that their school was not doing a good job managing their adjuncts and they knew there that the successful management of this population was going to be vital to their institution's success. Unfortunately, they also knew change was going to be difficult due to suffering budgets and a lack of resources.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

Enrollments in community colleges are on the rise and institutions find themselves trying to increase the number of classes they offer while working with very limited budgets and resources. In order to meet this need, community colleges have hired more adjunct faculty to teach courses that in the past taught by full time faculty members. Hiring adjuncts provide the institution with a way of offering more courses without having to hire a full-time faculty member with full-time pay and benefits. Hiring adjuncts also allows community colleges to hire “on-demand” on a year-to-year or semester-to-semester basis giving the institution more control over their short-term budgets.

This study focused on finding out more information on how adjuncts are currently being managed and what professional services such as orientation programs and professional development opportunities were available to part-time faculty members and how those programs and services might be improved. Data was collected using an online survey that targeted faculty members who worked with the adjunct population at their institution.

An online survey was conducted in March, 2010. The survey was sent to nine hundred and twenty possible respondent and had a return rate of 13.2% or one hundred and twenty people. Data was collected for approximately two weeks and the results of the survey were analyzed and reported. The data collected for this study led to the following conclusions:

Key Findings

The first key finding is that adjunct faculty are teaching a large percentage of courses. The literature review in Chapter 2 of this paper cited a 2009 article in the *Chronicle of Education*, indicating that adjunct faculty are said to make up more than two-thirds of the eight-hundred thousand faculty in the United States (Louis, 2009, p. A72). As expected, this study confirmed this finding. One hundred and twenty adjunct managers chose to participate in this study, and 43.3% of them indicated that adjuncts teach between 41-60% of their courses. Additionally, an overwhelming majority of schools (90%) did not employ a full-time adjunct coordinator to help manage, organize and develop their adjunct population. The implication of this finding is that community colleges do not have sufficient resources to support, manage and retain valuable adjuncts. A recommendation from this study is for community colleges to find the resources to hire a full time adjunct coordinator for their institution. Although the role will likely vary from institution to institution, the survey data indicated that some of the functions for this role could include: recruiting, hiring, scheduling, evaluating and developing professional services such as orientation programs and professional development programs for the adjunct population.

The second key finding is that lack of resources is a major factor in implementing change. The data collected during the phone interviews and the survey indicate that time, money and resources are the main reason why many of the adjunct programs and services within an institution have not been created or enhanced. The data from the phone interviews made it clear that the adjunct coordinator is aware of the issues, but the institution does not have the infrastructure and/or dollars to implement a solution. Two

of the interviewees sited that it would take a legislative push at a state or national level to generate the necessity for change and to help secure funding for appropriate adjunct programs and support. The implications of not providing the necessary infrastructure and support to adjuncts is that community colleges are in a constant cycle of hiring and training adjuncts without fully integrating them into the institution's culture and mission. As a result, adjuncts continue to move from school to school and lack a sense of institutional commitment. As mentioned in chapter 2, Smith and Wright summed up the importance of creating this commitment by saying, "the way in which an institution selects, orients and cultivates a different but significant long-term relationship with its adjunct faculty is a key determinant of the quality that will be brought to the institution" (Smith & Wright, 2000, p. 47). A recommendation would be for community colleges to realize the necessity of supporting this essential population and target budget dollars towards not only establishing an adjunct coordinator role within the institution, but also growing their mentoring, orientation and professional development programs.

The third key finding is that learning management systems are being underutilized. An overwhelming majority, 98.3%, of the participants surveyed in this study indicated that their institution had a learning management system in place however; only 21.8% of the schools require adjuncts to use the system. A learning management system seems like a natural tool to help organize and monitor adjunct courses. Additionally, when survey respondents were asked how orientation programs and professional development programs could be improved, a large percentage of respondents indicated that they would like their adjuncts to receive formal training on the learning management system platform. The implications of not using this valuable, and likely

expensive tool are that institutions are that missing an opportunity to use an existing resource to help organize and train their adjuncts as well as having a place to collect and retain data on their adjuncts. A recommendation is for institutions to look at ways to leverage their existing learning management system as a way to help assist and manage their adjuncts and track data until a longer-term, more comprehensive solution can be implemented.

Another key finding is that orientation programs and professional development programs need improvement. Back in Chapter 2, it was noted that if an institution is committed to the success of their adjuncts, they need to commit to supporting their adjuncts by providing a comprehensive professional development program (Baron-Nixon, 2007). Nearly all survey respondents indicated that their institutions had both an orientation program and a professional development program for adjuncts although most respondents also indicated that they thought these programs could be improved. This data from this study implies that most institutions should consider further developing and growing their adjunct orientation and professional development programs.

Recommendations to help facilitate the growth of these program include: having technology training both for their internal learning management system, integrating curriculum based technology into the course syllabi, providing professional development with learning modules that cover basic teaching concepts such as lesson planning, syllabus building, and assessment and providing a combination of face to face and online orientation programs.

A final key finding is that more mentoring programs are needed. Only about half of the survey respondents indicated that they have a mentoring program. As mentioned

in this study's literature review, mentoring programs benefit both the full-time and the part-time faculty members. Many researchers agree that, "there is no stronger and more effective way to connect to and integrate into a department's life than to have part-time faculty pair up with full-time faculty in a mentoring relationship" (Baron-Nixon, 2007, p. 55). One implication of not having a mentoring program is that adjuncts lack a model for instruction. Additionally, a mentoring program allows adjuncts the opportunity to ask questions to a colleague during the course of the semester when problems are likely to arise. A recommendation would be for community colleges should find a way to establish a mentoring program to cement the relationship between the adjunct and the institution. A mentoring program does not have to be a formal program, but can function well as an informal program at a department level with a one to one pairing of adjunct to faculty member.

Closing Thoughts and Conclusions

The data collected from this survey and the summary of findings leads to some interesting topics for thought and considerations. The future of tenure in full-time professors, the current funding model for community colleges, and the introduction of new methods for managing adjuncts with limited resources are all themes that this research suggests need to be addressed.

As written in chapter 2, tenure was originally created to "protect faculty from the abuses of academic freedom" (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 1). Adjuncts do not receive the benefit of tenure and given the resource strapped and fiscally unstable nature of most higher education institutions, it is not difficult to imagine that schools will likely get to the point when they cannot afford to offer tenure benefits to their full-time faculty

members. Without the comfort and protection of tenure, it would seem that schools will hire more adjunct faculty and less full time faculty and establish a new model for higher education where non-tenured faculty members become the majority and the role of a full time professor changes dramatically.

It is clear from the research collected in this paper that community colleges are in the midst of a financial crisis. The professors that participated in the survey and participated in the phone interviews cited time and time again the lack of resources and dollars to implement affective change. In addition, the professors I talked to on the phone did not indicate that they saw the budget problems getting solved anytime soon. Obviously, the existing model of funding community colleges cannot continue to be unsuccessful without creating substantial problems for the institution as well as the students that are served by it.

Finally, although this research has shown that the role of adjunct coordinator at a community college could significantly help institutions, it has also shown that few colleges have the funding or resources or information to make an argument for this position over the hiring of another adjunct or department resource. Community colleges need to think of other solutions to helping adjuncts succeed. One suggestion is to create a group of existing and established adjuncts that the college has used in the past and grouping them together as “near faculty”. Near faculty can then act collaboratively to help the institution hire, train and recruit new adjunct. In effect, the “near faculty” becomes a community that can help the institution as well as serve as a resource for new adjuncts.

Further Research

This survey was intended to answer seven specific questions surrounding the management of adjunct faculty. Those questions were:

1. What percentage of community colleges employs a full-time adjunct coordinator or administrator responsible for managing adjuncts? How many community colleges do not have an adjunct coordinator managing their adjuncts?
2. How is the role of the adjunct coordinator defined at community colleges? How are the roles similar and different among institutions?
3. How do community college adjuncts deliver on-line content using a learning management system like Blackboard or WebCT? Are adjuncts trained on the tool used to deliver content? Are adjuncts required to use that tool?
4. What percentage of community colleges offers an orientation program for adjuncts? Do adjunct coordinators think orientation programs can and should be improved to contain not only institutional governances, but also learning modules tied to curriculum and classroom teaching?
5. How can professional development and mentoring programs for adjuncts be improved?
6. How are adjuncts evaluated at community colleges?
7. Would adjunct coordinators welcome an outside resource such as an educational company to facilitate in the development of their adjunct program?

All seven of these questions were answered in chapter 4, but each question also lends itself to further research. What follows is a brief summary for each question and some ideas for how this research could be extended.

The first and second research question regarding the percentage of courses taught by adjuncts and the role of adjunct coordinators were addressed by asking respondents to indicate if their institution employs a full time adjunct manager and if so, what were the responsibilities of that role. Surprisingly, 90% of the survey population did not employ someone full time to manage their adjunct community. There seems to be an opportunity for institutions to consider creating this type of role to help facilitate the various programs adjuncts need to succeed. The research done here suggests that this role could help institutions recruit, hire, and schedule adjuncts. Additionally, the person in this role could help establish orientation programs, professional development programs and mentoring programs. Further research is needed to determine if this role is a viable one for institutions and how institutions can fund this type of role considering the general lack of funding many are experiencing.

The third research question in this study asked adjunct managers to answer questions regarding their college's learning management system and how it did or did not interface with the adjunct community. One of the interesting pieces of information that came out of this research was that 98.3% of community colleges that were surveyed already had a learning management system, such as Blackboard, already installed and ready for use. However, only 78.2% of adjuncts are required to use it. It seems that community colleges could take more advantage of the existing learning management system to help disseminate both instructional content as well as institutional content and

messages. Further research can be conducted to determine how to leverage this existing resource to ensure community colleges are getting the most use out of this expensive and likely under-utilized tool.

The fourth research question focused around the community college's adjunct orientation programs. Although most, 87.5%, of the colleges that were surveyed had an orientation program, most thought that it could be improved. One of the interesting findings of this study is that respondents were considering adding learning modules to their orientation programs. In fact, 55.3% of respondents indicated that they would like to see learning modules that cover basic teaching concepts such as lesson planning, syllabus building and assessment. This information seems to speak directly to adjuncts that come to the job without any teaching experience. These modules would likely not be too difficult to create, but research needs to be done to determine what content should be covered, how the modules should be delivered and what, if any, assessment should be written around them.

Professional development programs and mentoring programs were the topic for the study's fifth research question that asked how each of these programs could be improved. Far more colleges had professional development programs than mentoring programs. The data showed 80.8% had professional development programs to 50.8% of institutions that embrace a mentoring program. In terms of professional development, 51% of the schools surveyed indicated that their institution provided a combination of online and face-to-face professional development opportunities. There are interesting findings from this question that deserve further research. First, when asked how their professional development could be improved, the top two choices were technology

related. The highest number of people, 88.7%, wanted their professional development program to be upgraded by adding strategies on incorporating technology in the classroom. The second largest number of survey respondents, 83.5%, indicating that they would like their professional development opportunities to be enhanced by adding training opportunities on the institution's learning management system. Given that these topics are about technology and the fact that 51% indicated that their professional develop is offered online, it would seem that there is opportunity for the creation of content around these two topics for online delivery. Further research would have to be done to determine the scope of the content, how it will be delivered and what type of assessment, if any, would be created.

The sixth question focused on how adjuncts were evaluated at community colleges. There was consistency to the responses, with over 90% of adjuncts being evaluated by either by student evaluation or classroom evaluation. The interesting data from this question came when asked if their institution would consider an online evaluation system to help track and manage adjunct evaluations. There was almost an equal split between "yes" and "no". Interestingly though, 52.5% indicated that their institution "might" consider an online evaluation system. The survey probed further asking what criteria or feature set should be included in such a system. Almost 90% of respondents indicated that the system contain a file for each adjunct's student evaluation, mentor evaluations and coordinator's evaluation. More than half of the respondents thought an online system should contain an adjunct's personnel file as well as a place to store each adjunct's schedule, workload and class rosters. More research needs to be done to determine if an online system to help with the evaluation of adjuncts is a real

possibility. Market needs would have to be researched and clearly delineated and product models would have to be developed and tested.

Finally, the last research question tried to get respondents to focus on the possibility of using an outside service to help facilitate the development of their adjunct program. Almost 29% of respondents indicated that they would be interested in such a service, while a little over 71% indicated they would not. When asked why they would not consider it, most were concerned about their institution not having enough money or resources for implementation. Others thought they were not in a position to make a decision that would impact more than their department. The data would appear to show that there is some interest in the creation of an online product and/or service to help manage adjuncts. More research would have to be conducted to prove the return on investment each college would see from the implementation of this type of product model. Additionally, more research would have to be done to validate the product model and to ensure that the target audience is appropriately marketed to.

The theoretical underpinning of this study is social exchange theory. Social exchange theory indicates that the more an institution invests in their adjuncts, the more loyal and committed adjuncts will be to the institution. With community colleges increasingly relying on adjuncts to teach more and more courses that were traditionally taught by full-time faculty member, the need to invest in adjuncts is more important than ever. Unfortunately, the majority of community colleges do not have the infrastructure or resources in place to help support, manage and train this increasingly important population. Without investing in the success of adjuncts, community colleges are putting their reputation and more importantly, the education of their students at risk.

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APPENDIX A

Survey

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey! This survey should take you approximately 20 minutes. Your responses to the questions will help to conceptualizing a new product that will help you and your institution support the growing number of adjuncts in Community Colleges.

Name: *(personal information)*

Title: *(personal information, demographic information: chair vs. dean)*

Institution Name: *(demographic information)*

Department: *(demographic information)*

1) What percentage of the courses taught in your department are taught by adjuncts?

(general, demographics)

- 0-20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- 61-80%
- 81-100%

2) Does your institution have a full-time adjunct coordinator or administrator? *(HI)*

- Yes
- No (go to 4)

3) Consider the role of adjunct coordinator and indicate what responsibilities an adjunct coordinator has within your institution. Please check all that apply. *(H2)*

In my institution, adjunct coordinators are responsible for:

- Recruiting adjuncts
- Hiring adjuncts
- Organizing professional development for adjuncts
- Creating professional development opportunities for adjuncts
- Evaluating adjuncts
- Creating course material and/or syllabi for adjuncts
- Other (please describe)

4) Does your institution currently use a learning management system such as Blackboard, WebCT or Moodle? *(H3)*

- Yes
- No (go to 8)

5) Are your adjuncts required to use the campus learning management system? *(H3)*

- Yes
- No (go to 8)

6) What type of training best describes the training adjuncts receiving on the institution's learning management session? *(H3)*

- Formal training designed specifically for the adjunct population

- Informal help sessions used to address specific needs and/or problems
- My institution offers very little or no training on the Learning Management System (go to 8)

7) How do you think your adjuncts would rate the quality of the training your institution provides on the learning management system? *(H3)*

- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

8) Does your institution offer an orientation program for adjuncts? *(H4)*

- Yes
- No (go to 13)

9) Is your orientation program for adjuncts: *(H4 and demographics)*

- On campus
- Online
- Hybrid of on campus and online

10) What type of content is covered in your orientation programs? Check all that apply.

(H4)

- Institutional mission and objectives

- Institutional governances and by-laws
- Learning modules that are content based and tied to the curriculum
- Learning modules that cover the basic teaching concepts such as lesson planning, syllabus building, and assessment.
- Training on the institutions learning management system
- Other (please describe)

11) What type of content do you think would add value to your current orientation program for adjuncts? Choose all that apply. (H4)

- Institutional mission and objectives
- Institutional governances and by-laws
- Learning modules that are content based and tied to the curriculum
- Learning modules that cover the basic teaching concepts such as lesson planning, syllabus building, and assessment.
- Training on the institutions learning management system
- Other (please describe)

12) On a scale, how would you rate your institution's or department's orientation program for adjuncts? (H4)

- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

13) Do you offer professional development opportunities for your adjuncts? *(H5)*

- Yes
- No (go to 18)

14) Is your professional development program for adjuncts: *(H5 and demographics)*

- On campus
- Online
- Hybrid of on campus and online

15) What type of content is covered in your professional development programs? *(H5)*

Please check all that apply.

- Learning modules that are content based and tied to the curriculum
- Learning modules that cover the basic teaching concepts such as lesson planning, syllabus building, and assessment.
- Learning modules that can be customized by you or the adjunct
- Training opportunities on your learning management system
- Other (please describe)

16) What topics do you think could be added to improve your professional development program for adjuncts? *(H5)*

- Learning modules that are content based and tied to the curriculum

- Learning modules that cover the basic teaching concepts such as lesson planning, syllabus building, and assessment.
- Learning modules that can be customized by you or the adjunct
- Training opportunities on your learning management system
- Other (please describe)

17) How would you rate your current professional development program for adjuncts?

- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

18) Do you currently have a mentoring program available for your adjuncts? *(H5)*

- Yes
- No (go to 22)

19) Is your mentoring program for adjuncts: *(H5 and demographics)*

- On campus
- Online
- Hybrid of on campus and online

20) Please briefly describe your adjunct mentoring program: *(H5)*

21) How would you rate your current mentoring program for adjuncts? *(H5)*

- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

22) How are your adjuncts currently assessed? Please check all that apply: *(H6)*

- Classroom evaluation
- Student evaluation
- Self -evaluation
- Number of professional development hours completed
- Formal assessment based on agreed upon rubrics
- Other (please describe)

23) Would you or your institution consider using an online evaluation system to assess adjuncts?

- Yes
- No (go to 25)

24) What would be some important features of an online evaluation system? Check all that apply. *(H6)*

- Personal files for each adjunct including their vitae, work experience, certifications and emergency information.

- Each adjunct's schedule, workload and class rosters.
- A file for each adjuncts student evaluation, mentor evaluations and coordinator's evaluation.
- Information on classroom assessment
- Other (please describe)

25) What types of services do you think you or your institution needs to help adjuncts succeed? Please check all that apply (*H7*)

- Orientation programs
- Mentoring programs
- Professional development programs
- Technology Training programs
- Administrative services that track and store adjunct information including: vitae, courses taught, date hired, student evaluations, completed professional development.
- Other (please describe)

26) Would you consider partnering with an educational company to create an online resource to help support adjuncts with orientation, mentoring and professional development programs in your institution? (*H7*)

- Yes (go to 27)
- No Please indicate why this does not appeal to you or your institution. (go to end)

27. Could I contact you for a follow-up phone interview to dig deeper into some of the concepts of this survey?

Yes

No (end)

28. Please provide your phone number and best day and time to reach you.

Thank you!

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

Dear possible survey participant,

My name is Karen Scott, and I am a graduate student in education at Pepperdine University, who is currently in the process of recruiting individuals for my study entitled, “Managing Community College Adjuncts in the 21st Century”. The study is designed to investigate the adjunct population at community colleges, so I am inviting individuals who either manage adjuncts directly or who connected to those who do manage adjuncts to participate in my study. Please understand that your participation in my study is strictly voluntary. The following is a description of what your study participation entails, the terms for participating in the study, and a discussion of your rights as a study participant. Please read this information carefully before deciding whether or not you wish to participate.

If you should decide to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete an online survey consisting of approximately 30 multiple-choice questions regarding the management of adjuncts at your institution. It should take approximately twenty minutes to complete the survey.

Although you might not directly benefit from this particular survey, the data it generates will provide important information on the current adjunct population. This data can be

analyzed and interpreted in an effort to find new and meaningful ways to help institutions better understand this growing and important population.

If you should decide to participate and find you are not interested in completing the survey in its entirety, you have the right to discontinue at any point without being questioned about your decision. You also do not have to answer any of the questions on the survey that you prefer not to answer-just leave such items blank.

If the findings of the study are presented to professional audiences or published, no information that identifies you personally will be released. The data will be kept in a secure manner for at least three years at which time the data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions regarding the information that I have provided above, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address and phone number provided below. If you have further questions or do not feel I have adequately addressed your concerns, please contact Monica Goodale at monica.goodale@pepperdine.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Jean Kang, Manager, GPS IRB and Dissertation support at Pepperdine University at (310) 568-5753.

By completing the survey and returning it to me, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand what your study participation entails, and are consenting to participate in the study. If you wish to complete an official informed consent form, please contact me at Karen.l.scott@pepperdine.edu and I will email one out to you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information, and I hope you decide to complete the survey. Please remember to send me back the survey whether you decide to participate in the study or not. You are welcome to a brief summary of the study findings in about 1 year. If you decide you are interested in receiving the summary, please email me at Karen.l.scott@pepperdine.edu and I will send you a copy electronically.

Sincerely,

Karen L Scott

Doctoral Candidate

Karen.l.scott@pepperdine.edu

<add link to the survey>