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# An Examination of the Psychological Contracts of Contingent Faculty Teaching at Urban, Proprietary Colleges

Ann Marie Marlier

*University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS OF CONTINGENT  
FACULTY TEACHING AT URBAN, PROPRIETARY COLLEGES

by

AnnMarie Marlier

A Dissertation Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in Urban Education

at

The University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee

May 2014

## ABSTRACT

### AN EXAMINATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS OF CONTINGENT FACULTY TEACHING AT URBAN, PROPRIETARY COLLEGES

by

AnnMarie Marlier

The University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee, 2014  
Under the Supervision of Professor Larry Martin

Even though proprietary colleges and universities continue to gain market share in the higher education landscape, negative perceptions about proprietary institutions remain including reliance on contingent faculty to meet fluctuating student enrollments. Little research about the experiences of contingent faculty teaching in proprietary settings exists, and even less research exists about the unwritten expectations, or psychological contracts, contingent faculty bring with them to the employment relationship with an institution. As heavy use of contingent faculty continues, campus administrators need a more comprehensive understanding of how to best manage the expectations, benefits, challenges, and resources of this type of employment relationship.

This qualitative inquiry study collected data using open, semi-structured interviews, then analyzed data using phenomenological research methods to better understand what contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions experience. This study also used the organizing framework of psychological contracts in order to apply the findings into recommendations for campus administrators working with contingent faculty.

The results of this study indicate that a contingent faculty member's early experiences with an institution significantly determined the way the psychological contracts with the institution were formed and maintained in later experiences. For most, once the initial relationship was formed, little experienced afterwards changed the relationship with the exception of major changes regarding institutional focus and/ or position within the institution.

Consistent with the literature, contingent faculty perceiving their overall experiences and relationship with the institution as positive had longer tenure with the institution, identified more with the institution, and exhibited more organizational commitment behaviors. Contingent faculty perceiving their experiences as negative tended to have shorter tenures with their institutions, did not identify with the institution, and exhibited less organizational commitment behaviors. However, even though organizational practices and experiences varied greatly, two types of experiences and perceptions remained consistent. First, participants were surprised and disappointed in student level of preparation for college academic work yet expressed commitment to their students' success as greater than their commitment to institutional expectations. Second, participants expressed overall satisfaction with teaching experiences, and began to identify themselves as teachers, regardless of prior professional affiliation or relationship with the institution.

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Clare Booth Luce, prominent playwright, feminist, politician, and socialite once said: “No good deed goes unpunished.” I am sure that the family, friends, and colleagues who have supported me feel that they have been “punished” in some way as I asked for favors and patience, ducked out of responsibilities at home, and more recently, took longer chunks of time away from work to finish this good deed that is my dissertation. Although there are many more than those mentioned here, special recognition goes to the following:

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Introduction, Background of Study, and Problem Statement.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Problem Statement.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Use of Contingent Faculty in Higher Education .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Defining contingent faculty.....	2
Use of contingent faculty.....	3
Rationale for studying contingent faculty.....	4
<b>Impact of the Urban Environment.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Defining the urban environment.....	5
Urban post-secondary education student considerations.....	5
<b>Proprietary Education in the United States.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Defining proprietary education.....	7
Post-secondary proprietary education type and enrollment.....	7
Rationale for studying proprietary education.....	9
<b>Psychological Contracts.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Defining psychological contracts.....	9
Using psychological contracts as an organizing framework.....	10
<b>Methodological Overview .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Phenomenology and the phenomenological method.....	11
Rationale for using phenomenological research methods.....	12
Purpose statement and research questions.....	14
Organization of this dissertation.....	14
Remaining chapter descriptions.....	15
Appendices.....	16
<b>Chapter Two: Literature Review.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Chapter Introduction.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Understanding Role and Use of Contingent Faculty in Post-Secondary Education .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Defining contingent.....	17
Characteristics of contingent faculty.....	18
Advantages and disadvantages of using contingent faculty.....	19
Contingent faculty teaching in proprietary education.....	23
<b>Impact of the Urban Environment.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Race, culture, gender, and power.....	25
Socio-economic factors.....	27
Curriculum and classroom engagement.....	29
Language.....	30
<b>Proprietary Post-Secondary Education in the United States.....</b>	<b>31</b>
History of proprietary post-secondary education in the United States.....	31
Characteristics of proprietary colleges.....	33
Student demographics.....	34
Advantages and disadvantages of proprietary education.....	35
<b>Understanding Psychological Contracts.....</b>	<b>40</b>
Conceptual history and primary research.....	40
Types of psychological contracts.....	41
Variables impacting psychological contract formation and change.....	44

Breach and violation of psychological contracts. ....	45
Impact of psychological contracts on organizational behavior. ....	46
Psychological contracts of contingent workers. ....	52
Psychological contracts of contingent faculty. ....	58
<b>Chapter Three: Methodology</b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>Chapter Introduction</b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>Study Methodology</b> .....	<b>63</b>
Phenomenological foundations.....	63
Understanding phenomenological research methods. ....	65
Using phenomenological research. ....	66
Purpose statement and research questions.....	72
Data collection timeframe. ....	72
Participant sample and access to sample. ....	72
Data collection methods.....	73
Data analysis methods.....	75
Reporting findings. ....	77
Ethical considerations.....	78
Validity, generalizability, and limitations of the study.....	80
<b>Chapter Four: Discussion of Findings</b> .....	<b>82</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>82</b>
<b>Introduction to Participants and Institutions</b> .....	<b>84</b>
<b>Institutional Demographics and Characteristics</b> .....	<b>89</b>
<b>Textural and Structural Descriptions</b> .....	<b>95</b>
<b>Major Theme One- Formation of the Relationship (Psychological Contract)</b> .....	<b>96</b>
Expectations carried into the relationship. ....	96
“Figure it out”- initial interactions and resources. ....	98
“A rude awakening”- surprise regarding students’ lack of preparation and motivation. ....	103
Other significant experiences and/ or incidents.....	106
<b>Major Theme Two – Change in, and Re-Examination of, the Relationship (Psychological Contract)</b> .....	<b>107</b>
“Overwhelming in the middle”- change in institutional focus. ....	107
Role and/ or position changes within the institution.....	113
Other significant experiences and/or incidents.....	115
<b>Major Theme Three –Continuance of the Relationship (Psychological Contract)</b> .....	<b>116</b>
“That annoying person”- commitment to students rather than institution. ....	116
“A revelation”- identification of self as a teacher. ....	117
“Just cogs in the wheel”- deciding to continue the relationship with the institution. ....	118
Other significant experiences and/or incidents.....	124
<b>Summary of Research Questions and Findings</b> .....	<b>125</b>
Formation of the relationship (psychological contract). ....	125
Change in, and re-examination of, the relationship (psychological contract). ....	128
Continuance of the relationship (psychological contract). ....	128
What employment expectations did the contingent faculty member bring with them to the teaching experience? .....	130
What experiences were perceived as having a positive impact on the psychological contract with the institution? .....	130
What experiences were perceived as having a negative impact on the psychological contract with the institution? .....	132
Other final discussion points. ....	134



<b>Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings and Analysis .....</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Phenomenological Analysis of Experiences.....</b>	<b>136</b>
Forming the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution. ....	137
Change in the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution. ....	141
Continuance of the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution. ....	143
<b>Summary Diagram of Teaching Experiences, Psychological Contract Formation, and</b>	
<b>Resulting Organizational Behaviors .....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>Results Compared to Literature .....</b>	<b>151</b>
Nature of contingent work. ....	151
Teaching urban learners.....	153
Structure, processes, and resources at proprietary institutions. ....	154
Psychological contract formation and resulting organizational behaviors. ....	155
<b>Implications for Administrators Working with Contingent Faculty .....</b>	<b>160</b>
Nature of contingent work. ....	161
Teaching urban learners. For proprietary institutions who enroll urban students, and the	
administrators who prepare contingent faculty to teach urban students, a responsibility exists	
to provide as much training and on-going support for faculty as possible in order to increase	
satisfaction with the teaching experience as well as the achievement of institutional and	
student learning outcomes.....	162
Structure, processes, and resources at proprietary institutions. ....	165
Psychological contract formation and resulting organizational behaviors. ....	166
Supporting contingent faculty teaching in an online environment.....	167
<b>Implications for Contingent Faculty, Psychological Contract, and Proprietary Institution</b>	
<b>Research.....</b>	<b>169</b>
Limitations of this study. ....	169
Suggested areas for future research.....	170
<b>Final Remarks .....</b>	<b>172</b>
Importance of this study. ....	172
Contributions to literature. ....	174
Contributions to practice. ....	175
<b>References .....</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>Appendix A- Interview Questions.....</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>Appendix B- Letter of Informed Consent.....</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE.....</b>	<b>216</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b> “T” Table Formatting.....	76
<b>Figure 2:</b> Participant Psychological Contract (PC) Summary Diagram.....	148

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 4a:</b> Participant Demographic Profiles.....	84
<b>Table 4b:</b> Institutional Demographic Profiles.....	90

## Chapter One: Introduction

*“To understand employee attitudes and behaviors, it is necessary to understand their perceptions- their reality” (McLean Parks, Kidder, & Gallagher, 1998, p. 697).*

### Introduction, Background of Study, and Problem Statement

The landscape of higher education in the United States is changing rapidly in ways barely conceivable just 50 years ago. Online learning and MOOCs (massive open online courses) allow greater access to higher education opportunities than ever before to potential learners who might not otherwise have been able to attend traditional face-to-face classes. Adults, particularly women and minorities, who may never thought of themselves as college student material now participate in numbers eclipsing traditional college-aged white males- a trend that is expected to continue (Yeoman, 2010). The dramatic rise and fall in the numbers of proprietary, or for-profit, colleges and universities also impact available higher education learning opportunities. Along with the changing enrollments bring reliance on greater proportions of adjunct or contingent, faculty members to adapt to these changing enrollment numbers. These instructors bring expectations with them to the employment relationship- both stated and unstated- often referred to as *psychological contracts*.

### Problem Statement

When high numbers of contingent faculty are used, the continual turnover that occurs when contingent faculty are dissatisfied, disengaged, and discouraged with their teaching experiences costs an institution time, money, and effort for orientation and training. Additionally, more than any other higher education sector, proprietary institutions are under fire from local, regional, and federal regulatory agencies to improve student

outcomes including retention, graduation, placement, and student loan default rates.

Ideally, a stable and satisfied faculty will better be able to help the institution positively impact institutional student and financial outcomes as well as meet student learning needs. It is important to understand the experiences of contingent faculty teaching at urban proprietary institutions, and the psychological contracts formed between these faculty and their institutions, in order to better assist administrators at proprietary institutions with developing a more stable and satisfied contingent faculty body that can positively impact institutional student and financial outcomes as well as meet student learning needs.

As will be explained in greater detail in the following chapters, little research on the psychological contracts of faculty of any status teaching in post-secondary institutions has been conducted and even less, if at all any, research on the psychological contracts of contingent faculty has been conducted. This paucity of research on psychological contracts in education, combined with limited research on contingent faculty in proprietary institutions, limits understanding about how contingent faculty develop relationships with the institutions for which they work. Campus administrators working with contingent faculty in these institutions will benefit from understanding how individual and contextual factors shape the psychological contracts contingent faculty have with their institutions, as well as the outcomes of these psychological contracts on job satisfaction, organizational identification, and organizational commitment levels.

### **Use of Contingent Faculty in Higher Education**

**Defining contingent faculty.** Accompanying an exploding post-secondary student population, such as occurred in the late 2000s, are fiscal strains on physical

resources such as space and classroom materials, as well as personnel resources such as faculty. To better meet these challenging resource demands, more colleges and universities are turning to virtual resources, such as distance learning platforms, and part time contract-based personnel such as contingent faculty to fulfill these needs. Colleges and universities use many synonyms to describe contingent faculty; some prefer the terms ad hoc, adjunct, contract, or part-time. Some literature reviewed for this study even considered non-tenure track full-time faculty, full-time faculty on a limited term contract, and permanent-part time faculty the same as contingent faculty for research purposes (Benjamin, 2003; Dolinsky, 2013; Halcrow & Olson, 2011; Kezar, Maxey, & Eaton, 2014). This study will use contingent faculty to mean any faculty member who is not a permanent, full-time member of an institution's faculty. Additionally, the primary role of participants in this study was to teach unless their contract specified otherwise or they transitioned to a full-time role with their respective institutions as happened to three participants. Exceptions to expected roles are discussed in Chapter Four.

**Use of contingent faculty.** The use of contingent faculty at post-secondary colleges and universities has existed for quite some time, primarily when an academic program's curriculum necessitated teaching very specific, hard-to-find content expertise. (R. Lyons, 1999). Only in recent decades has the growth in the use of contingent faculty at all types of institutions significantly expanded. Today, depending on the sector of higher education, anywhere from 40- 75% of all faculty teaching are considered to be contingent (Ginder & Kelly-Reid, 2013).

Since the early 1990's adjunct working conditions have been the subject of research and most recently, inquiry by the U.S. Congress (Bach, 1999; Gappa & Leslie,

1993; Kezar, Maxey, & Eaton, 2014; Professors, 2003; Staff, 2014). Research in the 1990's, the first main thrust of research regarding contingent faculty, found that for the most part contingent faculty were often treated as second class citizens with low pay, little to no benefits, little participation in faculty governance, few physical resources such as office space, and no guarantee of future employment (Banachowski, 1996, 1996b, 1997; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Roueche & Roueche, 1996). More recently, research regarding contingent faculty has reexamined working conditions, (which appear not to have changed much), compensation and benefits (still significantly lower than that of permanent full-time faculty), participation in faculty governance (some progress here), physical resources (still lacking), and begun to focus on the reactions and organizational behaviors of contingent faculty regarding their working conditions (Dee, 2004; Elman, 2003; Kezar & Sam, 2013; Roney & Ulerick, 2013; Strom-Gottfried & Dunlap, 2004).

**Rationale for studying contingent faculty.** Much of what is known about contingent faculty comes from literature on community colleges where the use of contingent faculty is particularly prevalent (Banachowski, 1996; Banachowski Yackee, 2000; Cashwell, 2009; Clowes & Hawthorne, 1995; James & Binder, 2011). Little is known about contingent faculty teaching in proprietary institutions, where they typically comprise the vast majority of faculty (Ginder & Kelly-Reid, 2013). This study examined a facet of contingent faculty member life seldom explored-- the expectations contingent faculty bring with them to a teaching position; what happens to those expectations as contingent faculty actually experience teaching; the impact of those experiences on the perceived relationship with the institutions at which they teach; and the resulting outcomes of the relationship.

## **Impact of the Urban Environment**

**Defining the urban environment.** Although the words and phrases city, urban, metropolitan, inner city, and central city all have been used interchangeably, the United States (US) Census Bureau uses the word urban as population density attribute, typically to denote a city with a population of 250,000 or more (Greer, 1989; Martin, 2004; K. B. Murphy, 2006). However, this definition is too simplistic as it only describes a geographic attribute rather than the myriad of societal characteristics associated with the location. Urban locations, while dense by the US Census Bureau definition, are typically characterized by the complexity and diversity in race, class, and psychical and intangible boundaries and associated issues such as competing economic and political power interests and resources found in such a compact area (Daley, Fisher, & Martin, 2000). People living in urban areas often have greater proximity to centers of economic and political power, greater exposure to racial and ethnic diversity, and greater access to education and social services. However, depending on population sub-groups and actual residence location, access to these resources may vary greatly. Urban locations may also contain higher levels of disorganized growth, greater physical distance between areas of differing economic power, tensions between urban family life and work survival, persistent population stereotypes and constant racial and class tension (Harper & Associates, 2014; Stromquist, 1994). This study will use the word urban to describe both the geographic areas as well as the complex, contextual characteristics often associated with urban areas and urban students.

**Urban post-secondary education student considerations.** Students coming from an urban environment bring with them great diversity in experiences and



characteristics that influence how these students think about and perceive education, prioritize responsibilities, and envision their future. Many urban students and their families value a college education and make great sacrifices to make one possible. These students exhibit strengths such as resilience, faith, and cultural competence. Other urban students, however, are often “written off” and stereotyped by mainstream post-secondary education as being unprepared for college-level studies, needing additional support to be successful in college, and at higher risk of not persisting or graduating (Engagement, 2014). Rapidly expanding immigrant populations also contribute to the diversity, assets, and challenges found in urban locations

While full-time faculty have the benefit of availability and proximity on their side in getting to know more fully and support the students they serve, contingent faculty may not have the time or opportunity to build the rapport with, or support for, their students. Furthermore, if faculty are unfamiliar with the urban environment from which their students hail, and cultural forces that shape these students’ experiences, there may be difficulties in building the rapport necessary to get students to trust in the student/ faculty relationship in order to feel comfortable obtaining assistance when needed (Goldenberg, 2014; Sanchez, 2000). Sleeter (2001) found that few institutions included preparation for teaching in an urban environment in their training of teachers. One such way of understanding how best to prepare faculty for working in an urban environment is to better understand the expectations they bring with them to their teaching experiences. This can be achieved by better understanding the psychological contracts of contingent faculty who teach in urban environments.

## **Proprietary Education in the United States**

**Defining proprietary education.** Little is known about proprietary colleges despite a somewhat lengthy, albeit checkered, past. Simply put, a proprietary college or university is one that primarily operates to make a profit. The proprietary industry is a multi-billion business with some large proprietary systems publicly traded on NASDAQ and the New York Stock Exchange; in the 2011-2012 fiscal year, for example, the University of Phoenix alone made \$4.2 billion- down from \$4.7 billion in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

Proprietary institutions are often thought of as opportunistic, spending vast amounts of money on marketing to recruit student populations traditionally not well served by other institutions of higher education and whose retention, academic performance, and graduation rates are typically lower than those of other types of students (Liu & Belfield, 2014). Indeed, much of the past and present literature regarding proprietary colleges and universities makes mention of financial improprieties and deceptive marketing practices committed by these institutions (Beaver, 2009; Commission, 2013; Floyd, 2007; Lauerman, 2014; Wilms, 1974).

**Post-secondary proprietary education type and enrollment.** Despite the generalizations regarding proprietary colleges and universities, they are as varied in the demographics of their student populations, structure, accreditation, and size as more traditional not-for-profit post-secondary institutions. Some proprietary colleges may be little more than a jewelry making school approved by a state board of education while others such as the University of Phoenix, rival the size of the largest state public post-secondary systems. Regulatory oversight of proprietary colleges and universities may be

either controlled by the state, a national accreditation agency such as Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS), a regional accreditation agency such as the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS), or a programmatic accreditation agency such as Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Some proprietary schools enroll primarily underserved populations in diploma programs while others are more selective and cater to a student population more prepared for post-secondary academic work in a graduate level program. This study primarily focuses on degree-granting institutions.

The dramatic rise in numbers of proprietary colleges and universities is a more recent phenomenon, within the last 25 years or so, although the types of students proprietary institutions typically attract has remained reasonably consistent. As early as 1974 Wilms described the typical proprietary students as non-traditional, female, minority and often first generation in their family to attend college (Wilms, 1974). In the 1990s, research by Cheng and Levin (1995) described the typical proprietary student as similar to Wilms' description-- female, minority, non-traditional, and often first generation in their family to go to college. Recent literature and statistics confirm earlier findings (Deming, Goldin, & Katz, 2013; Ginder & Kelly-Reid, 2013). Proprietary students often do not meet the entrance requirements of a more traditional, or more selective, institution and when they do, they often had unsuccessful experiences at these institutions. Additionally, many smaller proprietary colleges have lower entrance requirements and are therefore able to accept students not accepted elsewhere, including students from a more urban environment who may not have had access to educational resources that would have prepared them for a more selective post-secondary institution.

**Rationale for studying proprietary education.** Two primary reasons exist for studying proprietary education. First, little scholarly research has been conducted on proprietary education. Most of the literature on proprietary education is found in periodicals and focuses on the business aspect of these institutions (Golden, 2010; A. Gonzalez, 2012; Howard-Vital, 2006; Kinser, 2006b). This literature also often highlights the negative aspects of proprietary institutions-- financial improprieties, poor quality of education, and high debt loads of students and graduates-- without also mentioning the benefits proprietary institutions offer their students and faculty (Bellin, 2013; A. Gonzalez, 2012; Hamilton, 2011; Lederman, 2009; Yeoman, 2010).

Second, over the past ten years proprietary education has been the fastest growing, and declining, section of the higher education landscape. According to the United States Department of Education, “Students at for-profit institutions represent 12 percent of all higher education students” (Hamilton, 2011, para. 4). Currently, students at proprietary institutions comprise approximately 10 percent of students enrolled in higher education (Ginder & Kelly-Reid, 2013). Given the increased scrutiny on this educational sector, and the significant numbers of urban and underserved students enrolling in them, prospective adjunct faculty interested in teaching at these institutions would benefit from having more accurate information about proprietary institutions before working at them so that the students might be better served by their faculty.

### **Psychological Contracts**

**Defining psychological contracts.** Psychological contracts are the unwritten expectations people bring with them to an employment experience. Rousseau (1995) defines a psychological contract as “individual beliefs, shaped by the organization,

regarding terms of an exchange agreement between individuals and their organization” (p. 247). Psychological contracts are carried into the workplace by the new employee and are further developed as the working relationship between employee and employer is established.

**Using psychological contracts as an organizing framework.** By understanding the nature of employees’ and employers’ psychological contracts, and what happens when those expectations are fulfilled or violated, managers will be better able to predict and determine a course of action when working with an employee. For example, employees who feel their psychological contracts have been fulfilled typically exhibit strong organizational commitment and positive organizational citizenship behavior (Chambel & Castanheira, 2006; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; Moorman & Harland, 2002; Robinson & Wolfe Morrison, 1995). Those who feel their psychological contracts have been violated typically exhibit higher rates of absenteeism, anti-social behavior, and are less committed to the organization (Deery, Iverson, & Walsh, 2006). Additionally, factors such as organization versus professional identification, person-organization/position fit, and perceived organizational support impact the perceived relationship with the organization and the resulting behaviors demonstrated by the contingent faculty member. For faculty working in a contingent position, commitment (or lack thereof) to their work and support (or lack thereof) organizational practices during their time with an organization may have a significant impact on teaching practices, student outcomes, and an institution’s financial bottom line when compliance, extra-role behavior, dissatisfaction, turnover, and absenteeism persist.

As will be explained in greater detail in the next section, and in Chapter Three (Methodology), psychological contracts are an excellent means to understanding the unwritten expectations of an employment relationship, particularly in a qualitative inquiry study (Conway & Briner, 2005a). Just as the unwritten expectations brought to the employment relationship are unique to the individuals involved in the relationship, so are the perceptions and meaning made by the individuals about what is experienced with regards to that relationship. Using psychological contracts as an organizing framework provides a means to organizing and understanding the essences and themes of the experiences of contingent faculty teaching for urban, proprietary colleges and universities. Once these experiences are better understood, recommendations for campus administrators working with contingent faculty can, and will be, provided.

For those who hire and work with contingent faculty, understanding the nature of psychological contracts brought by contingent faculty may prove to be valuable in developing, coaching, and keeping (or releasing) them. Deans and department chairs working at proprietary institutions are not only bound to student outcomes, but also to the bottom financial line. When the use of contingent faculty positively or negatively impacts student outcomes, this also impacts an institution's fiscal position, and decisions must be made to balance and determine what is best for the student's learning, the institution, and the faculty member.

### **Methodological Overview**

**Phenomenology and the phenomenological method.** This qualitative inquiry study drew heavily from phenomenology and phenomenological research methods, beginning with an initial interest in, and engagement with, a particular phenomenon to be

explored (Moustakas, 1994). In this case, the researcher's interest developed from her experiences teaching as a contingent faculty member at an urban proprietary institution.

According to Creswell (1998), "A phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experience for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon" (p. 51). The focus in phenomenological research is on the subject's experienced meaning instead of on simple descriptions of their overt actions or behavior. The researcher's own experiences and prejudices or biases are set aside, or bracketed in a process known as epoche. The aim, then, of a phenomenological study is to understand and explain how people make sense of what they experience and what that experience, or experiences, mean to them both individually and as a collective. Believing that an essence exists, and capturing the essence of that experience or phenomenon, is the fundamental dimension that sets phenomenology as a philosophical approach, and research methodology, apart from other research approaches and traditions.

**Rationale for using phenomenological research methods.** Most research on psychological contracts has been quantitative, beginning with Rousseau's Psychological Contract Inventory (PCI). (Conway & Briner, 2005b) To date, however, limited qualitative research has been conducted on psychological contracts. Conway and Briner (2005b) cite a few psychological contract studies that used qualitative research methods such as critical incident recall, diary studies, and case studies, however, phenomenology rarely appear as research methodologies for studying psychological contracts. The main benefit to using a qualitative research method such as phenomenology is that qualitative research methods provide an opportunity for sharing a deeper understanding of the psychological contract formation process as told by the people living the experience. A

recent editorial in the *Academy of Management Journal* noted that these methods “theoretical contributions generally are seen as involving findings that change, challenge, or fundamentally advance our understanding of a phenomenon...it’s not just about ‘filling a gap’ in the literature; it is also about changing the way scholars think and talk about the phenomenon” (Bansal & Corley, 2011). By using qualitative research, the author and researcher can bring the reader closer to the phenomenon being researched and closer to the discussion about what the research results mean for understanding the phenomenon.

Additionally, a lived experience, as viewed from a phenomenological perspective, is not always a one-time event. Mezirow (1991) and Schon (1983) contend that understanding an experience is constructed from not only going through an event or series of events, but also from reflecting on the experience and making meaning from it, especially in contexts so affected by social and political forces such as those occurring in urban contexts. Conway and Briner (2005b) contend that “a process perspective is necessary to gain anything other than superficial insight into how the psychological contract operates” (p. 131). While quantitative research can tell us the “what” of the process, it is limited in helping us understand the “how” the psychological contract process continues to change as an ongoing and dynamic process (Conway & Briner, 2005b).

In phenomenological research, the experimenter (researcher) knows the situation and general context while the subject has lived it; both subject and experimenter learn about the other perspective and both are meaningfully present in the research situation (Giorgi, 1985). As psychological contracts are unique for each individual and institution



due to the lived experiences that contribute to the psychological contract, phenomenological research methods are ideal approaches to use in exploring the contributing factors of the psychological contracts of contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions.

**Purpose statement and research questions.** This study aims to better understand what contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions experience and how those experiences impact the psychological contracts of these faculty members. The primary guiding question of this study will be: What do contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary colleges experience in the first one to three terms that impacts the development of their psychological contract with the institution? In this study, the word “term” was used to describe the period of time an institution used to define individual course length; “term” was used interchangeably to mean semester, quarter, or any multi-week session.

Questions also of interest to the researcher that may help lead to a better understanding of the nature of the psychological contracts of contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions include the following:

1. What employment expectations did contingent faculty bring with them to the teaching experience?
2. What experiences were perceived as having a positive impact on the psychological contract with the institution?
3. What experiences were perceived as having a negative impact on the psychological contract with the institution?

**Organization of this dissertation.** This qualitative study consisted of single in-depth, in-person open interviews with ten contingent faculty who taught at four different brick-and-mortar urban, proprietary institutions as well as three different online divisions for

urban, proprietary institutions that also had brick-and-mortar locations. The online experiences were included because the participants felt they were an integral part of their overall teaching experiences at proprietary institutions. The interviews were conducted at a variety of locations of the participants choosing from October through December of 2013 and transcribed by the researcher from audio recordings of the interviews as the data were gathered during this same timeframe. Analysis consisted of reviewing transcripts for individual meaning units and critical incident identification for the purposes of discerning overall themes that described a positive and/ or negative impact on a participant's psychological contract with the institution (S. Brookfield, 1995). The individual experiences were then compiled into a holistic description of the phenomenon and the holistic phenomenon was then analyzed to determine significance of meaning and recommendations for future research and practice.

**Remaining chapter descriptions.** Chapter Two consists of a review of the literature regarding proprietary post-secondary education, the use of contingent faculty in post-secondary education, psychological contracts (types, formation, impact of psychological contract fulfillment or violation on organizational commitment behaviors or OCBs, effects of perceived organizational support or POS on psychological contract development, and organizational identification), and urban post-secondary education characteristics. Chapter Three further outlines the use of phenomenological inquiry as a research methodology, the choice of participant and site samples, data gathering processes, and research analysis methods. Chapter Four presents research findings and Chapter Five presents implications of the findings for future research and institutional practice.

**Appendices.** Materials contained in the appendices include the Interview Questions and the Letter of Informed Consent that were given to participants to sign before interviews took place.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

*“Conversations with numerous faculty and administrators undergoing regional accreditation self-study processes reveal that the more proactive an institution is in ensuring that discussions about contingent faculty occur on a regular and systematic basis as part of departmental, school, and academic affairs planning meetings, the less hostile the climate is toward contingent appointees. This, in turn, can result in a greater level of satisfaction on the part of contingent faculty and their students” (Elman, 2003, p. 72).*

### Chapter Introduction

Chapter Two reports findings from the literature in four distinct areas, three of which directly relate to education and one to management and organizational behavior: contingent faculty, proprietary education, urban education, and psychological contracts and organizational behavior. While some of the findings from each area may overlap slightly into another area, this literature review will show that the intersection of all four topic areas is extremely small, if not non-existent. When possible, and other than seminal research in a particular topic area, the findings contained in this review primarily span the past 10-12 years to reflect recent research.

### Understanding Role and Use of Contingent Faculty in Post-Secondary Education

**Defining contingent.** Temporary workers are found in most industries and organizational levels from blue collar to professional. They may also be referred to as independent consultants, contractors, seasonal help, contingent workers, adjunct faculty and ad hoc help. Although there are subtle differences implied in the words used to describe temporary workers, most words have been used interchangeably to describe

workers with the absence of a continuous relationship with an employer (McLean Parks et al., 1998), work undertaken by employees who do not have implicit or explicit understanding of long-term employment (G. J. Lee & Faller, 2005), or "any job in which an individual does not have an explicit or implicit contract for long term employment and one in which the minimum hours can vary in a non-systematic manner" (Polivka, 1996a, p. 11). This study will use contingent faculty (or contingent faculty member) to mean any faculty member who is not a permanent, full-time member of an institution's faculty.

**Characteristics of contingent faculty.** Hired as temporary, contract-based workers, contingent faculty is the fastest growing category of faculty in the United States. They may be contracted to teach only one course, or they may have a longer fixed term contract encompassing many courses over many terms. Regardless of contract length, estimates of contingent faculty use vary widely. Edgren (2012) examined more recent National Center for Educational Statistics data to determine the frequency of contingent faculty use. He found that as of 2009, contingent faculty comprise 49% of all faculty positions, a 225% increase in part-time to full-time ratios over the last four decades (Edgren, 2012). James and Binder (2011) found that 67% of all faculty at two-year colleges are contingent. Charlier and Williams (2011) found that 68% of adjunct faculty teaching at urban or suburban institutions taught approximately 49% of credit hours. Most recently, a report by the House Committee on Education and Workforce Democratic Staff found that 1.3 million people, or approximately 75.5% of the instruction workforce in higher education are contingent faculty (Staff, 2014). These numbers include graduate teaching assistants, part-time, adjunct, and full-time non-tenure track faculty. According to recent National Center for Educational Statistics data, more

than half of contingent faculty are women with some percentages higher depending on the field (Ginder & Kelly-Reid, 2013).

Contingent faculties choose to teach for a variety of reasons. Some contingent faculty choose to teach for purely financial reasons; they either rely solely on teaching to provide an income or teach to supplement a primary source of income (Stephens & Wright, 1999). Other contingent faculty teach to gain experience in a particular field with the expectation of making a professional career change once their current career lacks challenge, fulfillment, becomes too physically demanding, or does not provide the quality of life hoped for by the contingent faculty member. Still other contingent faculties begin teaching part-time as a means of breaking into a field of study for which they have been preparing to teach in a full-time capacity (Banachowski, 1996, 1996b).

**Advantages and disadvantages of using contingent faculty.** Using contingent workers offers institutions significant advantages. Many contingent workers in a variety of skilled professions around the globe find the work itself personally and professionally rewarding and satisfying (Banachowski, 1996; Benjamin, 2003; Redpath, Hurst, & Devine, 2009; Wilkens & Nermerich, 2011). Additionally, administrators in higher education often feel that contingent faculty are highly committed to and conscientious in their responsibilities, provide strong links to the workplace and community, allow for adaptation to hiring for varying enrollments, and offer a wide variety of subject matter expertise in their own fields for one-third of the cost of full-time faculty (Bach, 1999; Banachowski, 1996).

However, contingent workers often suffer from abuse and exploitation of the cheap labor they provide (they can be paid up to 64% less than full-time counterparts)

role ambiguity, not being fully integrated into organizations, no guarantee of future employment or benefits, little decision making ability, little time to spend outside of class with students, little to no professional development opportunities or funding, and perceptions of inferior status by full-time colleagues (Benjamin, 2003; Dorfeld, 2007; Guest, 2004; Murphy Nutting, 2003; Schneider, 2006; K. Thompson, 2003; Townsend, 2000). Furthermore, studies show that contingent workers often feel disillusioned by their temporary work experiences, are treated as second-class citizens, and are not fairly compensated, respected, or valued by their department through inequitable administrative practices (Banachowski, 1996b; Murphy Nutting, 2003; Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998; Strom-Gottfried & Dunlap, 2004; K. Thompson, 2003). Dorfeld (2007) even suggests that once a faculty member is labeled as contingent, he or she tends to stay in that status, perpetuating marginalization of his or her work. Dorfeld cites early work by Gappa and Leslie (1993) who claim that adjunct faculty are "powerless, alienated, invisible, and second class" (p. 180). In urban locations, Cross and Goldenberg (2003) suggest that "in urban areas where employment is plentiful, the turnover rates are higher, and urban-based universities sometimes establish formal policies that limit the possible duration of one individual's appointment" (p. 54). Finally, field of practice and job availability may also influence the tendency to feel unfulfilled by contingent work (Stephens & Wright, 1999).

Physical and personnel resources for contingent faculty vary greatly from institution to institution. Some institutions provide physical office or meeting space and equipment such as computers for contingent faculty. Others provide administrative and media support (Stephens & Wright, 1999). Some institutions even ensure representation

of contingent faculty on faculty governance committees, institutional committees, departmental practices and evaluation policies (Berret, 2007).

Critics of expanded contingent faculty member use accuse contingent faculty of inconsistency in teaching effectiveness as a result of lacking pedagogical training, relying on traditional teaching methods so as to avoid negative student evaluations, and grade inflation (Association, 2013; Banachowski, 1996; Benjamin, 2003; Kezim, Pariseau, & Quinn, 2005). Other research shows that increased use of contingent faculty, especially at the two-year college level and the first two years of a four-year college, lead to lower retention and graduation rates, lower faculty-student interaction, lower grade point averages, and lower two-year to four-year transfer rates (Association, 2013; Kezar, Maxey, & Badke, 2014). However, Kezar, Maxey, and Badke assert that adjuncts themselves are not to blame for these results. Rather, they assert, “poor working conditions and a lack of support diminish their capacity to provide a high quality learning environment and experience for students” (p. 3)

Full-time colleagues perceive contingent faculty to be of inferior academic status and demonstrating lower performance (Bach, 1999; Kezar, Maxey, & Badke, 2014). These full-time colleagues may also feel threatened by contingent faculty who they see as weakening their job security. However, these perceptions are not always accurate as some studies have found that contingent faculty do just as good of a job of teaching as their full time peers, experience a positive self-efficacy especially when working in an all-adjunct environment, and experiencing higher levels of collegiality from full-time faculty who themselves had taught at a proprietary university (Barr, 2009; Spangler, 1990; Stephens



& Wright, 1999; Strom Kays, 2009). Elman (2003) suggests that a collegial relationship between full-time and contingent faculty is critical to student outcomes:

“The greater the compatibility between an institution’s stated mission and purposes and the resources it allocates to achieve them, the more likely there will be a harmonious relationship between full-time faculty and contingent faculty, and the more likely the latter will be actively involved in curricular activities that enhance the quality of all of the institution’s educational offerings whenever and however they are offered” (p.77).

Other criticisms regarding the use of contingent faculty suggest that contingent faculty are less likely to receive regular evaluations, serve on committees, participate in faculty governance, attend professional conferences, engage in research, receive funding for research, and interact with colleagues (Kezar, Maxey, & Badke, 2014; Stephens & Wright, 1999). Elman (2003) asserts that “failure to create a culture that enables these faculty to be effective is inequitable, and furthermore, it compromises the educational experience of students and puts the integrity of the institution at risk” (p. 73). She also notes that the greater the institutional commitment to the faculty, the greater the faculty commitment to the institution. While the advantages to institutions seem to outweigh the disadvantages, it is little wonder that contingent faculty are concerned about speaking out, asking for resources, being too rigorous, or too easy, for fear of losing a contract (Schneider, 2006).

In very recent years, three initiatives surfaced as paramount to the contingent faculty experience: reduction in hours assigned to them by their institutions as a result of the Affordable Healthcare Act, unionization, and governmental involvement. The Affordable Care Act, or as it is more commonly known- Obamacare, was enacted to ensure access to affordable healthcare for all Americans. The Affordable Care Act mandates that employers provide health insurance coverage to all employees working at

least 30 hours or more per week. Depending on the amount of contracts and credit hour loads, which do not count hours spent by contingent faculty outside the classroom preparing for class and grading, some institutions felt that the amount of hours worked by contingent faculty approached the 30 hour threshold too closely and thus began reducing the amount of hours and contracts contingent faculty taught despite clarification from the Internal Revenue Service. Some institutions responded to the Affordable Care Act by creating new temporary full-time positions or permanent non-tenure track benefit eligible positions (C. Flaherty, 2013a; C. Flaherty, 2013). In the wake of poor working conditions and the reduction in hours, contingent faculty have begun to seek out unionization as a means to fight for better pay, working conditions, and more stable employment (C. Flaherty, 2013b; Hananel, 2013). Most recently, and following the release of results compiled by the House Committee on Education and Workforce Democratic Staff that confirmed earlier findings on the poor working conditions of contingent faculty, part-time worker bill of rights legislation was introduced in the United States House of Representatives (Schakowsky, 2013; Staff, 2014).

**Contingent faculty teaching in proprietary education.** While most literature on contingent faculty has been regarding those teaching in traditional higher education institutions, very little has been written using the environment of proprietary education. Only one book really explored faculty teaching in the proprietary environment and that research included 51 full-time and contingent faculty from only four institutions (Bland, 2008).

Little current research has explored the relationships contingent faculties have with their employers and resulting behavioral implications for the institutions at which

they work. Some research from the 1980's suggests that part-time faculty teaching for a number of terms may begin to view their commitment to the institution as a sense of entitlement for a full-time faculty position (Wallace, 1984). Later research regarding the contingent faculty/ employer relationship focused on satisfaction and organizational identification. For example, one study found that contingent faculty experienced higher job satisfaction at institutions where administrators were up front regarding chances of full-time employment at the institution (Stephens & Wright, 1999). Other studies found that part-time faculty who identified with an organization flourished and committed to an institution because of both systemic efforts (having input into organizational processes) as well as isolated pockets of excellence such as recognition efforts (Berret, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2013; M. J. Murphy, 2009). Some contingent faculty even reported higher emotional commitment to an institution than full-time faculty, suggesting that institutions are doing a better job of providing support to contingent faculty than previously thought (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). Edgren (2012) explored the organizational commitment behaviors (OCB) of faculty at two year colleges and found no difference in the level of OCB between full-time and contingent faculty. Edgren also found that organizational support behaviors (OSB) were more prominent for full-time faculty than for contingent faculty. Additionally, Edgren found that OSB is a predictor for OCB in contingent faculty. In a similar manner, Roueche and Roueche (1996) found that contingent faculty who felt alienated were more likely to leave or sabotage teaching efforts. Strom-Kays and Dunlap (2004) suggest that contingent faculty experiencing more negative than positive aspects of teaching in a contingent capacity may finally act on those feelings of

disenfranchisement by leaving, exhibiting less organizational commitment behaviors, and performing poorly.

It seems, then, that "it is not the nature of part-time work that is disillusioning; job satisfaction more often results from unrealized or unrealistic expectations" (Roueche & Roueche, 1996, para. 11). Dee (2004, cited in James, 2011) suggests that contingent faculty want fulfillment of similar needs as their full-time faculty colleagues:

- To feel part of the institution,
- To feel valued by the institution,
- To have a sense of permanency,
- To grow professionally, and,
- To be fairly compensated for their contributions to academia and society.

However, because contingent faculties choose to teach for individual reasons, it is difficult to generalize exactly how these expectations can or will be realized for all contingent faculty. Maynard and Joseph (2008) mention Rousseau's work with psychological contracts and suggest that future research be conducted on the psychological contracts of contingent faculty especially regarding job characteristics and psychological contract features that would help sustain positive job attitudes.

### **Impact of the Urban Environment**

**Race, culture, gender, and power.** With minority groups attending colleges and universities in higher numbers than ever before yet often possessing the lowest educational attainment outcomes, issues of race and class are particularly salient when working in urban classrooms and issues of race, gender, and power are especially prevalent in urban institutions where minority students are often the majority and the

majority of faculty members are non-minority (Engagement, 2014; Townsend, 2000). Race and class are defined as vast groups of people loosely bound together by historically contingent, socially significant elements of their ancestry and socioeconomic status (Lopez, 1994). They are socially, economically, and politically constructed as categories of differences for material as well as psychological purposes (Lopez, 1994; R. J. Payne, 1998). Furthermore, ideas about race come from part of a wider social fabric into which other relations, including gender and class, are also woven (Lopez, 1994).

Race, class, and gender often influence and perpetuate one group's dominance over another, allowing the dominant group greater access to social, economic, and educational resources. However, educational achievement is often instrumental in overcoming barriers of race and class. For example, McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, and Shwed (2011) suggest that black women have long held higher educational attainment over black males for many years mostly due to completing educational transitions (high school diploma or GED) more frequently and with greater supports, greater social acceptance and support of black women working (especially in female dominated professions such as teaching and nursing), and fewer alternatives to working (military) in earlier years. Echoles (2011) highlighted a study of 28 Black women who saw their decision to attend college as “life or death” because it was a way out of unstable, violent home lives and dead end jobs that were not sustainable (p. 174). Lopez (1994) noted that more education is associated with more earning power.

In exploring power relations in the classroom, Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2000) found that the race of the faculty was the most important and relevant issue affecting class dynamics and student learning. Faculty new to teaching in urban classrooms are

often “forced” to address issues of racial identity in their urban classrooms, some for the first time and in many cases, not intentionally. In discussing experiences of non-minority faculty members at minority institutions, Townsend (2000) suggests that “unlike minority instructors in a majority institution, white faculty members because of their race, are [still] in a position of power and privilege within society” (p. 87). This sense of power and privilege experienced by non-minorities is further explored as the concept of “whiteness” in other studies and essays (Manglitz, 2003; S. Shore, 2001; Warren, 1999). Many non-minority faculty are not even aware of their own whiteness and take for granted the power and privilege they have in a classroom as a result of their being White. Whiteness implies that being white is normal and any race other than white is viewed as abnormal, causing non-whites to be seen as “others” rather than as equals in the learning process who have valid ideas, practices, and beliefs (Warren, 1999). Issues of marginalization, powerlessness, and discrimination do not exist in daily life for them as they do for the students they teach in urban contexts.

**Socio-economic factors.** Multiple forces including race, immigration status, social class, religions, and economic status shape cultural reality and students from non-dominant cultures perceive their environment differently than a teacher from a dominant culture. As such, faculty in positions of power and privilege may not recognize their students as possessing “valuable cultural capital” especially when working with language/ communications, behavior/ expression, and values/ interests (Goldenberg, 2014, p. 111). Faculty not cognizant of this deficit perspective may see a student’s language differences and/ or difficulties rather than an ability to translate and communicate between cultures. For example, urban learners often bring experiences with

poverty, joblessness, low educational opportunity and/ or attainment, racism, discrimination, and violence (Kantor, 1999; Martin, 2004). All of these experiences can interfere with an urban learner's ability to attend class and focus on schoolwork. This is especially true for economically disadvantaged African-American students who dropout of school more often and do worse on tests than their peers in more well-off neighborhoods (Kantor, 1999). Echoles (2011) suggests that "Enrolling Black collegians is not enough, but supporting them during their matriculation, as well as with out-of-class experiences are increasingly important as more of these students are likely to drop out or fail out if they are not properly supported and enter campuses underprepared" (p. 173). K. B. Murphy (2006) found that urban immigrant students were less likely to persist and graduate, especially if they lived with family, although many did eventually return later.

Both the residents who live and work in urban areas, as well as the population at large, see these images perpetuated in the media and in real life that do nothing to combat the negativity often contained in these issues and experiences (Daley et al., 2000). Furthermore, behavior seen as deviant or disengaged might really be expressive, reflective, or respectful depending on the culture and not resistant to learning but rather is a student's way of engaging with content through lens of own lives. It is through education that we first come to understand societal structures and the ways that power relations permeate them; educational systems are one of the most important means of hegemony (Nesbit, 2005). If students do not feel comfortable or safe in their urban learning environment, chances are that meaningful learning will not take place. Without understanding the challenges and strengths urban learners bring to their educational experiences, and their effect on academic performance and persistence, faculty and staff

not knowledgeable about college or community resources will be less able to refer students to resources than can help them address the challenges.

**Curriculum and classroom engagement.** Multiple factors contribute to student engagement with the curriculum. Post-secondary educational institutions are generally a middle-class domain. As such, their policies and practices are weighted strongly in favor of middle class and dominant cultural values. Disinterest and lack of persistence on the student's part are often due to perceptions that education programs offered or required by the institution are not relevant to the urban student since curriculum and programs are usually planned and conducted by those reflecting middle-class values, assumptions, and experiences (Amstutz & Sheared, 2000; Goldenberg, 2014; Nesbit, 2005). Faculty members not versed in issues affecting urban and minority learners may assume that just because his or her learners are not fully engaged in, or struggle with, the subject matter that the learners are not college material nor do they have a real desire to complete their programs (Sanchez, 2000). For example, expectations for good teaching practices often include eye contact, group work, and time-on-task. However, these engagement behaviors often represent cultural bias towards white, middle class expectations and faculty must be conscious that these practices may not be appropriate or effective for students in urban contexts (Townsend, 2000). Faculty must also be cognizant that less typical teaching methods, and out of the classroom support, may be more effective in working with urban students. For example, Knowles (1976) found that a tutorial style of interaction with inner-city mature adults worked well to enhance learning process. Harper and Associates (2014) found that faculty need to initiate relationships with students of



color because these students may not know how to engage in a collegial relationship with their faculty members inside or outside of the classroom.

Amstutz and Sheared note that marginalization of certain groups often found in urban areas such as ethnic minorities, unemployed, or the poor often lead to the development of programs designed to address deficits rather than strengths. For example, some adult educators unfamiliar with Native American culture assume that Native Americans do not aspire to college completion and instead emphasize vocational training for them (Amstutz & Sheared, 2000). In a similar manner, Simmala (2006) asserts that fewer Southeast Asian students want to pursue the same kinds of post-secondary educational programs as their more educationally prepared Chinese, Japanese, and Korean counterparts. As a result many Southeast Asian students struggle in programs they neither really want to be in nor are they well prepared (Simmala, 2006). Additionally, cultural preferences for instructor feedback, collaboration, and participation in the classroom differ among urban students. Guild (1994) as cited in Sanchez (2000) asserts that the “educator must consider the connection between culture and learning style, and that effective educational practices derive from an understanding of the way individuals learn and the impact of culture upon learning preferences” (p. 37).

**Language.** Most faculties spend some time learning the jargon of the institution at which they are employed. They must also learn, to a degree, the “language” spoken by their students. While not referring to learning an entirely new language from a foreign country, many urban cultures and subcultures develop an alternative language system used with family and friends that may be “foreign” to faculty and staff. Students may continue to use this dialect or alternative language system spoken at home or with friends

in the classroom even though Standard English is primarily spoken in the workplace for which they are being prepared. This often creates distance between themselves and the instructor or classmates who do not use the same dialect or language system. In order to better communicate with their students, faculty and staff often engage in switching back and forth between the dominant and alternative language systems. This is a concept referred to as “codeswitching” and is prevalent in urban classrooms (Flowers, 2000).

Martin (2004) notes that “adult learners who experience difficulty distinguishing between an alternative language system and the dominant language system will likely experience difficulty in a mainstream labor market that views alternative language systems as deviant” (p. 12). These views reflect the assumptions of many non-minority people who see, for example, Ebonics used by many urban African Americans as an inferior language system that is not a “legitimate way of communicating in American society” (Flowers, 2000, p. 230). In the classroom, students using Ebonics, a native language if an immigrant, or any other alternate language system may be perceived as being less intelligent and/ or even academically inferior. Faculty teaching in urban classrooms must be cognizant of their own views on language use in order to be able to effectively reach their students without viewing them as an inferior learner due to language differences.

### **Proprietary Post-Secondary Education in the United States**

#### **History of proprietary post-secondary education in the United States.**

Proprietary schools have existed in the United States since the 1600s providing both basic adult and vocational education (Beaver, 2009; Hittman, 1995; Ruch, 2001; Thor, 2000; Wilms, 1974). Their popularity has waxed and waned through the centuries with booms

typically coming after times of post-war economic and population expansion, especially after the United States Civil War and most recently after World War II with the GI Bill creation (Beaver, 2009; Wilms, 1974). Cronin and Bachorz (2005) attribute the rise in proprietary education to four economic factors: the “massification of higher education, the demands of the “knowledge” economy, the globalization and the “death of distance”, and competition for a market share of billions of dollars spent on education and training. Kamenetz (2009) notes that "For-profits are the only sector significantly expanding enrollment--up 17% since the start of the recession in 2008" (para. 3).

Although enrollments at proprietary institutions sharply increased during the past two decades, the past few years have actually shown a decrease in enrollments as more face-to-face and online opportunities became available and competition for enrollments grew. Blumenstuck (2013) notes “Enrollment in for-profit colleges fell by about 7 percent from the fall of 2011 to the fall of 2012, according to December estimates from the National Student Clearinghouse. That is a much steeper decline than the drop of 1.8 percent for higher education overall during the same period” (para. 2). Blumenstuck also notes that many of the largest “super systems” have recently been contracting rather than expanding. In 2012 and 2013 Career Education Corporation closed approximately 25% of its campuses and reduced 900 positions, DeVry plans to cut 570 positions, Capella Education plans to eliminate almost 200 jobs and the Apollo Group (parent company of the University of Phoenix), began closing 50% of its campuses and will have eliminated 1500 jobs by the end of the year (Blumenstuck, 2013). Cronin and Bachorz (2005) suggest that the rapid expansion of proprietary institutions led to less comprehensive curriculum,

less focus on higher order thinking skills, neglect of research, and increased penalties from the United States Department of Education for aggressive profit-seeking.

Research on proprietary schools has been sparse and contradictory with two main periods of relatively recent research happening in the 1970s and then again from 1990 until current day. Academic researchers have largely ignored the sector and articles in peer reviewed educational journals are relatively rare (Kinser, 2005, 2006a; J. B. Lee & Merisotis, 1990a, 1990b). This might be due to for-profit institutions not wanting their stockholders to learn about any negative research findings (Lefebvre, 2008). Most of the existing information on proprietary colleges appears in business and trade periodicals focusing more on the financial aspects of the industry rather than academic outcomes (Beecher, Callard, & Hanan, 2013; Golden, 2010; Harpool, 2005; Lederman, 2009; Yeoman, 2010). Some research comparing proprietary colleges to community colleges also exists, primarily focusing on the relatively similar composition of students at each type of institution, as well as similarities in academic mission and outcomes (Lederman, 2009).

**Characteristics of proprietary colleges.** Proprietary colleges are often compared to community colleges in terms of the mission and students served (Clowes & Hawthorne, 1995; L. Lee, 1996; Miller & Mupinga, 2006; Outcalt & Schirmer, 2003). At the diploma and associate degree level, both types of institutions use curricula that are more vocational in nature as well as drawing from and serving similar student populations. Zamani-Gallaher (2004) notes: "Similar to community colleges, private, for-profit institutions have been important contributors to the higher education community's attempts to equalize access and broaden postsecondary opportunities for disenfranchised

groups" (p. 68). Proprietary colleges, however, seem to have had historically higher graduation, placement, and earnings rates than those of community college grads although that may be changing as of recent years, especially for baccalaureate programs where graduates of both public and private not-for-profit institutions report higher earnings (Evelyn, 2000; Lang & Weinstein, 2013).

Typically, most proprietary colleges and universities choose to pursue less rigorous accreditation, merely to prove that the institution is accredited and therefore deserving to receive federal funding. A more recent trend is for many of the degree granting proprietary colleges and universities to seek regional accreditation in order to build academic credibility and access additional state and federal financial resources (Zamani-Gallaher, 2004). Those granted regional accreditation are held to the same scrutiny as their not-for profit-peers (Berg, 2005; Kinser, 2005). In fact, some recent "purchases" of financially troubled not-for profit colleges, and the regional accreditation they carry, by large for-profit education corporations have been noted in recent media as efforts to buy legitimacy in the academic community. However, many larger publicly held proprietary schools have stronger accountability measures and financial transparency because of their for-profit status and need to file public Securities Exchange Commission reports (Kinser, 2006a).

**Student demographics.** The demographics of students served by proprietary schools have changed only slightly in the research conducted over the past few decades. Early studies in the 1970s found that students attending proprietary schools were: less academically prepared than those attending traditional higher education institutions, minority, of lower socio-economic status, born to parents of lower educational attainment

levels, female, and highly motivated by fast training and job success (Wilms, 1974). These statistics remained much the same throughout the 1980s as the mission and programs offered by proprietary colleges remained primarily vocational in nature (Apling, 1993; Cheng & Levin, 1995). Today, students at proprietary institutions tend to be: older, female, minority, working at least 35 hours per week, married with dependents, economically disadvantaged, and less academically prepared for college level work despite having some college experience (Clowes & Hawthorne, 1995; Fox Garrity, Garrison, & Fiedler, 2010; Liu & Belfield, 2014; Outcalt & Schirmer, 2003; Ruch, 2001; Yeoman, 2010). Sheldon (2009) also found that strong predictors of students transferring to proprietary institutions from community colleges were part-time enrollment, age, grade point average, social background, and being a student of color. The era of proprietary education serving its traditional students seems to be changing as marketing efforts target a wider base of potential students, “serving proportionally fewer minorities, low-income students, younger students, and part-time students than it was in earlier eras because of different enrollment rates by degree level” (Kinser, 2006a, p. 74). Still, from a funding standpoint, “for-profit colleges have become a dominant destination for students from low-income families. Nearly a quarter of all Pell Grant dollars now flow to students at proprietary institutions” (Lederman, 2009, para. 5).

**Advantages and disadvantages of proprietary education.** While community colleges have traditionally served marginalized populations, today’s proprietary colleges and universities have also created a niche for themselves by purposefully targeting marginalized student populations who want more practical education in shorter time (Berg, 2005; Collison, 1998; Harpool, 2005; Ruch, 2001). Thor (2000) notes that

proprietary institutions are experts in identifying unserved and underserved student markets. They have also learned quickly to adapt delivery modes to student needs and lifestyles, especially those of adult students. Proprietary schools offer viable alternatives because they often have lower admissions standards, are thought to be more cost-effective, and are generally located in urban areas that are close to where many students of color live or work (Berg, 2005; Collison, 1998; Zamani-Gallaher, 2004).

Additionally, proprietary institutions often provide opportunities for historically disadvantaged populations to complete a secondary education while beginning work on a post-secondary education; these students are considered ability-to-benefit students for federal funding purposes. St. John, Starkey, Paulsen, and Mbaduagha (1995) found that when opportunities to obtain ability-to-benefit funding existed to complete post-secondary education, historically disadvantaged populations such as African Americans, Hispanics, and students who had not attained their high school degrees were more likely to persist to graduation. Gonzalez (2009) found that degrees awarded by proprietary schools rose faster than the number awarded by nonprofit colleges and universities. She also found that students at proprietary colleges tend to finish faster than students attending other public and private institutions. Gramling (2013) found that students entering proprietary institutions with higher grade-point averages, were enrolled full-time, were African American, had higher family financial contribution levels, and needed less credits to graduate completed at a higher rate than other students at the same institution. Finally, proprietary institutions equally, and in many cases outperform community colleges with regards to certificate, diploma, and associate degree completion, however, at the baccalaureate level, proprietary graduation rates and

graduate earning potential are lower than public institutions and well below private nonprofit institutions (J. Gonzalez, 2009; Liu & Belfield, 2014; Yeoman, 2010).

Driven by their bottom line economic roots, proprietary schools tend to exhibit a customer service orientation (Zamani-Gallaher, 2004). This customer service approach often leads proprietary institutions to employ more learner-centered pedagogical approaches thus differentiating proprietary schools in the marketplace as providing more consistent quality of instruction and better meeting the needs of students who see themselves as customers (Berg, 2005; Ruch, 2001). Classes are often held year-round and at times that are convenient for students who are working while attending classes, giving them a short-term economic advantage (Floyd, 2007; Liu & Belfield, 2014). Furthermore, as proprietary institutions answer to a board of directors or shareholders, and not to politicians, changes in policy and curriculum occur in rapid response to the changing nature of the workplace. The lengthy bureaucratic strangleholds that plague large, public higher education systems just do not seem to exist in the same way for proprietary institutions (Burnett, 2003; Floyd, 2007; Hittman, 1995; Ruch, 2001).

As leaders in distance and distributed instruction, proprietary colleges and universities have "freed instruction from being time and place bound, making it more flexible and attractive to adult learners" (Morey, 2004, p. 4). Additionally, proprietary institutions tend to have lower costs per full-time equivalent (FTE) students than traditional not for profit public and private institutions by eliminating large physical campuses, centralizing and standardizing curriculum, using more adjunct faculty, less focus on faculty research in favor of teaching, and reducing the number of "frills" such as student unions, residence halls, and extra-curricular activities (Blumenstuck, 2006; Fox



Garrity et al., 2010; Harpool, 2005; Laband & Lentz, 2004; Morey, 2004). The idea, for faculty, then, is to focus on meeting the needs of their students in the classroom (Berg, 2005; Morey, 2004; Ruch, 2001). The large numbers of contingent faculty employed by proprietary schools who are still active in their professions also offer students a strong connection to the workplace.

As proprietary colleges accept students who are less prepared for college level work, they also often provide remedial classes and academic support for these students (Berg, 2005; Outcalt & Schirmer, 2003). However, some critics claim proprietary institutions provide services strictly to keep students retained because the school makes a profit on them (Apling, 1993; Blumenstuk, 2006). Other critics claim that ethnic minority youth may be "ghettoized" in applied (vocational) courses of study because they possess poor writing skills to start and instructors focus on skills rather than liberal education including writing (Berg, 2005). Critics further suggest that proprietary schools cannot provide intense services to the most needy; nonetheless, students do benefit from receiving support services (Apling, 1993).

Unless accredited by a regional or programmatic accrediting agency that holds institutions accountable for standards of academic rigor and support services, proprietary colleges and universities have typically not been subject to the same types of scrutiny as traditional public and private college and university systems, despite needing some accreditation status if they are to receive federal financial aid funding in the United States (Beaver, 2009; Hamilton, 2011). Now, however, controversial proposed legislation in the United States Congress as part of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 2011 may be requiring more disclosure from proprietary institutions regarding loan debt, graduation

rates, employment placement statistics, and accuracy in marketing practices-- thus ensuring more intense scrutiny of operating practices (Education, 2011; Fain, 2014).

In very recent years, many examples of students frustrated with the quality of the education received at proprietary colleges and universities have gained media attention. Students transferring to for-profit institutions from community colleges earned fewer credits, had lower grade-point averages, and were less likely to obtain a degree or other credential than those transferring to a not-for profit institution (Liu & Belfield, 2014). More standardized curriculum contributes to proprietary institutions being viewed as less rigorous by the traditional academic community where emphasis is not only on career skills but on developing students who will contribute positively to their communities (Outcalt & Schirmer, 2003). Since post-World War II, claims of financial impropriety and fraud, including large student debt loads and greater federal loan default rates have plagued proprietary institutions (J. Gonzalez, 2009; Lederman, 2009; Yeoman, 2010). Recent claims of inflated grades, and large amounts of student loan debt coupled with an inability to find a job with the degree or diploma earned, have prompted legislators in the United States Congress to pass greater accountability measures for proprietary schools using federal funds (Beecher et al., 2013; Education, 2011; Lederman, 2009; Yeoman, 2010). Additionally, Attorney Generals from several states, as well as the Federal Trade Commission, have recently become involved in pursuing legal action against several proprietary institutions in an effort to curb deceptive marketing practices and skyrocketing student loan default rates (Commission, 2013; Lauerman, 2014).

## Understanding Psychological Contracts

**Conceptual history and primary research.** The fields of organizational behavior and industrial psychology provide most of the foundation for psychological contract theory. Early research began in the 1960s when the term *psychological contract* was first used by Chris Argyris in 1962, and additional writing by Chester Barnard and Harry Levinson further advanced the emerging theory (Rousseau, 2005). The 1990s and Rousseau's work with psychological contracts elevated the taxonomy of psychological contracts to construct status (Millward & Brewerton, 1999; Rousseau, 1990, 1995, 1998; Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). It is Rousseau's work, as well as the work of those who collaborated with her early on- Sandra Robinson (contract violation), Violet Ho (resource exchange), and Guillermo Dabos (position in social structure), that forms the basis for a thorough understanding of psychological contracts (Rousseau, 2005). Most recent literature regarding psychological contracts still comes from the fields of organizational behavior, industrial psychology, or management with smaller subsets coming from public administration and to a much lesser extent, education. Research regarding psychological contracts comes from all over the globe with most conducted in the United States (Rousseau and colleagues as well as Turnley and Feldman), Europe (David Guest, Neil Conway and Rob Briner, Jacqueline Coyle-Shapiro and Ian Kessler, Nele De Kuyper, and Lynne Millward are frequently cited), Asia (Violet Ho, Linn Van Dyne and Soon Ang are early pioneers), as well as Australia and New Zealand (Branka Kivokapic-Skoko, Grant O'Neill, and Rupert Tipples are frequently cited).

Underlying psychological contract theory are the beliefs that these contracts are fundamentally psychological, mutually constructed, reciprocal, and voluntary in nature. It

is in “creating and sustaining mutuality of understanding between employers and employees [that] facilitates not only better quality employment relationships, but...also contributes to improved individual performance and career success” (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004, p. 68). Furthermore, the full array of obligations associated with such contracts is not known at the outset of the employment relationship; contracts are fleshed out over time and the components may not be known until a discrepancy in expectations is realized (Morrison, 1994; Rousseau, 2005). The promissory nature of psychological contracts also results in employees considering its terms to be more binding than other types of work rewards (Robinson, 1996 cited in Manturuk, 2004).

**Types of psychological contracts.** “A contract is a mental model that people use to frame events such as promises, acceptance, and reliance” (Rousseau, 1995, p. 27). Most literature regarding psychological contracts classifies psychological contracts as either relational (social and long-term) or transactional (economic and short-term), however, many psychological contracts actually contain elements of both something Rousseau refers to as a hybrid or “balanced contract” (Rousseau, 2004). J. A. Thompson and Bunderson (2003) even suggest that instead of viewing the “currency” of a psychological contract as either relational or transactional a third type of currency, ideological (moral) currency, may also exist. Those who see their psychological contracts as more ideological typically identify contract fulfillment or breach as affiliated with the organization’s mission. Other studies suggest that rather than classify psychological contracts as relational or transactional, psychological contracts should be considered in terms of the factors that impact the development of the psychological contract (McLean Parks et al., 1998).

A relational contract is typically referred to as more personal and focused on the relationship of the parties involved. They are generally perceived as long-term, dynamic, subjective, and based on trust. In a relational contract, Millward and Brewerton found that employees are more willing to exhibit extra-role behavior and focus on maintaining their relationship with the employer; however, emotional investment does not necessarily imply relational contracting (Millward & Brewerton, 1999). They also found that organizational identification predicted relational contracting. In contrast, a transactional contract is thought to focus more on the explicit promises of the contract, employing a more quid pro quo approach. Transactional contracts tend to be based more on economic factors such as compensation and tend to be finite, static, narrow and easily observable (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003).

Psychological contract theory literature often refers to Blau's social exchange theory as a foundation for understanding relational and transactional psychological contracts as the equivalent of social and economic exchange. For example, the long-term nature of a relational contract implies a stronger socially supportive relationship between employee and employer whereas the short-term nature of a transactional contract suggests that employees perform in ways consistent with the specific economic compensation for which they are paid. If the expectations of either contract go unfulfilled, it is likely that there will be a termination, either voluntary or involuntary, of the contract (Millward & Brewerton, 1999).

Employees tend to favor employers offering relational contracts, and in return, employers are more likely to form relational contracts with valued workers (Rousseau, 2004). In this sense, maintaining relational contracts better simulates conditions of full-

time employment (G. J. Lee & Faller, 2005). However, a study by Millward and Brewerton (1999) found no significant differences between regular full-time employees and permanently employed agency contractors in how relational they viewed the terms of their employment. In another study, Rousseau (1990) found that if a new hire wants long-term employment, they will likely attempt to enter into a relational contract whereas if a person views work as a stepping stone they will likely enter into a transactional contract. In the same study Rousseau also found that expected tenure or length of stay in the organization is positively related to a perceived relational contract with the employer. Research by Braekken and Tunheim (2013) supports Rousseau's work. They found "that careerism is negatively related to new hires' belief in a relational contract and positively related to a transactional contract with an employer... New hires who are high on careerism would most likely not be interested in contributing 'above and beyond' unless it would benefit them personally" (p. 257).

Ho (2005) researched shared psychological contracts, which are likely to occur for similar groups of employees. She found that in a shared psychological contract, specific job related promises are evaluated with help of equivalents, or colleagues, while organization-wide evaluations are made with others, known as social referents. If an employee observes the organization as having transactional contracts with similar referents, then the employee is likely to form or maintain a transactional psychological contract with the organization as well. If the organization has formed relational psychological contracts with their employees as a standard practice, an employee would see that and likely expect a relational contract as well (Ho, 2005). Similarly, Ho and Levesque (2005) found that psychological contracts are prone to social influences.

Employees observe and use the experiences of others in similarly situated positions as an indication of how an organization might fulfill or breach their own individual psychological contracts with an organization. Harvey (2010) proposed “greater individual perceptions of group contract breach will increase the likelihood that group members who experience breaches in the group psychological contract will also experience individual psychological contract breaches” (p. xii).

**Variables impacting psychological contract formation and change.** According to Rousseau (1995), the psychological contract formation process begins with message framing and encoding that is influenced by the personal histories, preferences, expectations, and biases an individual brings with him or her to the contractual relationship. The message(s) is (are) are then decoded by the other person in that relationship. After the decoding, a feedback loop to the message sender furthers the cycle of development. Early experiences such as initial assignments, socialization, training and development, feedback from peers all significantly influence the development of psychological contracts (Manturuk, 2004; S. C. Payne, Culbertson, Roswell, & Barger, 2008; Rousseau, 2004). Sources of information also contributing to the development of the psychological contract include agents of the firm, social influence of peers and mentors, administrative signals, and structural cues (Rousseau, 2005). Additionally, specific labor or market factors such as availability of jobs can also influence the relationship between employer and employee.

Psychological contracts are typically revised numerous times throughout the employee's tenure with the organization. Robinson, Kraatz, and Rousseau (1994) found that in first two years of employment, permanent employees developed an expectation

that they owed less to their employer whereas their employers owed them more. For contingent workers, this change in expectations would occur if or when the nature of the contract changes from transactional to relational or vice versa. Rousseau (1996) proposed that psychological contracts change in two ways: via accommodation or via transformation. If a psychological contract changes via accommodation, meaning expectations are modified, clarified, substituted or expanded “within the context of the existing contract, employees may feel the old deal continues despite the change” (Rousseau, 1996, p. 50). If however, the psychological contract changes via transformation, when “new mindsets replace old ones,” the change may be more difficult to accept (Rousseau, 1996).

**Breach and violation of psychological contracts.** More serious transformations in the psychological contract, especially negative transformations resulting from perceived lack of contract fulfillment, are referred to as a breach of the psychological contract. Despite psychological contract researchers often using the terms interchangeably, Ho (2005) found that breach of contract (lack organizational promise fulfillment) is distinct from violation of contract (strong emotional and affective state resulting from breach). Both breach and violation result from a variety of factors including perceived renegeing on promises, expectations, and obligations as well as both parties having incongruent expectations (Wolfe Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Furthermore, perceptions of contract violation are likely to have the same negative impact on employees who plan to have relational contracts as well as employees who plan to have transactional contracts with their employer (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994).



Both breach and violation of psychological contracts have been associated with absenteeism, turnover, mistrust, anger, lower performance, emotional withdrawal, and in some cases, litigation, especially where the breach was perceived to be purposeful (Nicholson & Johns, 1985; Robinson et al., 1994; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson & Wolfe Morrison, 1995; Rousseau, 2004; Rousseau & Wade-Benzoni, 1995; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). Psychological contract breach may also lead to reduced job satisfaction, reduced organizational trust, reduced organizational commitment, reduced loyalty, reduced willingness to participate in organizational commitment behaviors (OCB) including civic virtue, and decreased in-role performance (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; Robinson & Wolfe Morrison, 1995; Turnley & Feldman, 1999). Additionally, contract breach and violation may lead an individual to focus on his or her individual career rather than provide loyalty to the organization (Rousseau & Wade-Benzoni, 1995). Finally, G. J. Lee and Faller (2005) found support for perceived psychological contract violations interacting with the psychological contract orientations of contingent employees such that increased violations will stunt any growth towards more relational contracts over time.

**Impact of psychological contracts on organizational behavior.** Psychological contracts and the resulting behaviors have been associated with a variety of organizational behavior theories. Two of the areas discussed here (perceived organizational support and fit) tend to contribute to psychological contract formation, while the others (organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification) tend to form as a result of psychological contract fulfillment and/ or violation.

Fit, often referred to in the literature as congruence or values congruence, includes a variety of categories that all focus on a specific aspect of fit including fit with a job, an organization, or a profession. Kristof (1996) defined person-organization fit as “the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both” (pp. 5-6). Chatman et al (1989) proposed that higher levels of person-organization fit will lead to extra-role behavior and will exist when the organization provides greater variety and number of socialization components such as orientation, training, and mentoring. O'Reilly III, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991) found that the level of fit between a person and their job or organizational culture can predict performance, satisfaction, commitment and turnover. Higher levels of fit, or congruence between the person and their job or the organization, predicted higher levels of job performance, satisfaction, commitment, and lower levels of turnover intention (all independent of age, gender, and tenure) with an organization. Cable and Edwards (2004) discovered that both complementary (psychological needs) fit and supplementary (value congruence) fit influence work attitudes (effects). Dissatisfaction with either type of fit will lead to negative behaviors.

Organizational support theory (Education) maintains that employees form beliefs about the extent to which the organization cares about them and values their contribution to the organization. According Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) "Organizational support theory supposes that employees personify the organization, infer the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, and reciprocate such perceived support with increased commitment, loyalty, and performance. Our

review of over 70 studies suggests that basic antecedents of POS include fair organizational procedures, supervisor support, and favorable rewards and job conditions and that consequences include increased affective commitment to the organization, increased performance, and reduced withdrawal behaviors” (pp. 711-712). Perceived organizational support, or POS, then is based on an employee’s history with the organization; the more the employee perceives favorable treatment by the organization in the form of equity, supervisor support, job security, role clarity, and training, the more he or she will repay the organization by helping it realize its goals (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS, in turn, is related to job satisfaction, positive mood, affective commitment, performance, and decreased withdrawal behavior (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) also found that POS enhances employees' perceived obligations in their psychological contracts with the organization and is positively related to employees' perceptions that the organization has fulfilled its obligation to them under the psychological contract. Additionally, Aselage and Eisenberger found that employees in supportive relationships give employers the benefit of the doubt when evaluating degree of obligation (contract) fulfillment unless a change in the psychological contract is perceived to be exploitative. This would hold true for permanent, full time, part-time, or contingent workers (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003).

Findings from Coyle-Shapiro and Conway (2005) interestingly provide little support for a reciprocal relationship between POS and psychological contract fulfillment. They found that psychological contract fulfillment positively predicts employee perceptions of organizational support, but employee perceptions of POS do not predict psychological contract fulfillment. Rather, POS *and* specific fulfilling psychological

contract components are better predictors of organizational commitment than actual psychological contract fulfillment. As such, Coyle and Shapiro suggested that POS is both an antecedent and outcome of psychological contract fulfillment where higher POS may lead to a lowered importance of the psychological contract. If employees perceive the organization to be supportive, they may feel that the organization is fulfilling their psychological contracts, therefore reducing any indebtedness either through increasing their own obligations to the employer or reducing what they perceive to be an organization's obligation towards them. While these findings seem contradictory, this study was the first to explore the reciprocal nature of relationship between POS and psychological contract fulfillment over time; others had only explored the relationship between POS and psychological contract fulfillment as being synonymous (Millward & Brewerton, 2000, cited in Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005) or using psychological contracts as a mediator between POS and organizational commitment (Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994 as cited in Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005).

Gakovic and Tetrick (2003) asserted that "POS is positively expected to relate to employee fulfillment of obligations" (p. 651) and found that part time employees reported more POS than full time employees. This may have to do with part-time employees entering into employer relationship with lower initial expectations due to their part-time status and suggest that additional research needs to be done comparing the work agreements of part-time employees with long-term relationships with their employers and part-time employees who have short-term relationships with their employers. This may also hold true for contingent workers who enter the workforce choosing a contingent position because of the flexibility provided in the nature of the work. Regardless of work

status, employees who perceive their organization as caring and supportive have stronger socio-emotional relationships with them (relational contracts), in turn increasing employee commitment to the organization and forming the basis for a more long-term, fulfilling psychological contract (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003).

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is behavior (altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, courtesy, and sportsmanship) that contributes indirectly to the organization through the maintenance of the organization's social system (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002). OCB is discretionary in nature and influenced by the perception of either fulfillment or violation of a psychological contract.

A final organizational theory considered in this exploration of psychological contracts is that of organizational identification. Organizational identity is a form of attachment that occurs when members adopt the defining characteristics of the organization and defining characteristics for themselves (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994). A person is strongly identified with an organization when identity as organizational member is more salient than individual identity and self-concept has many of same characteristics that define the organization as a social group. According to the model developed by Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, members of an organization assess the attractiveness of organizational images by how well the image preserves self-concept, provides distinctiveness, and enhances self-esteem. If the images are positive and match an individual's salient defining characteristics, the individual is more likely to identify with the organization. The stronger the organizational identification, the more often a member exhibits organizational citizenship behaviors.

Identifying with an organization perceived to maintain a strong, positive reputation

might confer positive attributes for its employees and promote evolution of relational contracts. When identification with an organization confers negative attributes, employees may try to maintain more transactional contracts and show little investment in OCB or intention to stay. Detached and self-interested employees will likely have commitments, identities, and energies focused elsewhere (Millward & Brewerton, 1999). Zagenczyk, Gibney, Few, and Scott (2011) claimed that “employees are less apt to identify with and more apt to disidentify with their organizations in response to relational psychological contract breach because it signals to them that the organization does not care for them or value their contributions” (p. 278). Meyer, Becker, and van Dick (2006) noted "the specific terms of the commitment [affective, normative, or continuance] that develop will depend on the target of the identity [group, organization, profession] and the psychological contract that is formed" (p. 669). They further assert:

The nature of identity and commitment might be different for contractual, temporary, or marginal employees than it is for full-time core employees. It might be difficult for the former to develop anything more than a situated identity and an exchange-based commitment to the organization. As noted above, situated identity and exchange-based commitment can have benefits for the organization as long as the organization's expectations for these employees (i.e., the terms of their commitment) can be clearly specified. However, given the uncertainties of the modern workplace, it is possible that even contract or temporary employees will be empowered to make decisions (e.g., how to respond to a customer's complaint). Exchange-based commitment might not be sufficient to ensure that employees consider the organization's best interest in making such decisions. If developing a strong affective commitment to the organization is not possible (e.g., due to the need to maintain flexibility in the employment relationship), it is possible that employers can achieve the desired behaviors from contractual or temporary employees by selecting for or helping to establish a deep structure identity and value-based commitment to another collective (e.g., occupation, clientele) with similar goals and values (p. 678).

It may also follow that contingent workers who identify more strongly with themselves will have psychological contracts that are more transactional in nature whereas contingent workers who identify more with the organization will have relational

psychological contracts. Social identity theory, or SIT, offers a social- psychological perspective regarding an individual's identification with an organization that is distinct from the commitment to, or behaviors towards, the organizations to which they belong (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Contingent workers who strongly identify with the organization for whom they work may show increased OCB. Reward structures and POS may also change identification from one level to another, thereby shifting loyalties and affecting OCB shown (Brickson, 2000).

**Psychological contracts of contingent workers.** As mentioned before, few, if any, studies on the psychological contracts of contingent faculty exist. Much of the research about contingent workers appears in the management literature and concerns job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reasons for pursuing contingent work. For example, Ellington, Gruys, and Sackett (1998) found that involuntary pursual of contingent work may lead to decreased satisfaction while voluntary pursual of contingent work is unrelated to satisfaction and neither classification (voluntary or involuntary) of contingent work is related to job performance. McLean Parks et al. (1998) explored contingent work and psychological contracts less from a classification approach than one of exploring the underlying dimensions and intersections of contingent work and psychological contracts.

Maynard and Joseph (2008) contended that research into contingent work job satisfaction has really only developed since 2000 and findings have been mixed depending on reasons for contingent status, specific facets being researched, and the more exploratory nature of the research being conducted. For the most part, they found that the nature of contingent status itself was not inherently dissatisfying, only for those wishing

full-time status and advancement. Few additional studies exist in management literature that shed light on the relationship between psychological contracts and contingent work status. The reference information that follows comes from that body of management literature.

The research of Wilkens and Nermerich (2011) supports that of Maynard and Joseph (2008). Using psychological contracts as a framework to assess satisfaction, Wilkens and Nermerich found that contingent work by itself was not unsatisfactory. In fact, for skilled workers, Wilkens and Nermerich found that satisfaction is equal to that of permanent workers with regards to autonomy, self-concept, and career aspirations affecting the psychological contract as much as the employment relationship itself. Wilkens and Nermerich used psychological contracts as a framework because of the contracts' ability to change over time.

Guest (2004) argued that the behavior of contingent employees may be more sensitive to variations in the content of the psychological contract than that of permanent employees, leading to the conclusion that psychological contracts moderate factors such as OCB, job satisfaction, commitment, etc. Guest, Mackenzie, and Patch (2003) found that fixed term and agency contract workers, but not contingent contract workers, reported a better state of psychological contracts than permanent workers. For other contingent workers, however, fixed term and contingent contracts are associated with higher job insecurity, sense of marginalization, loss of career development opportunities, and lack of organizational identification. Studies comparing the commitment of contingent and permanent workers show mixed results regarding job security, yet workers on flexible employment contracts show either the same or slightly lower



commitment to organizations as permanent employees.

Since psychological contracts are based on social exchange theory, it is reasonable to assume that when contingent workers consider that they receive fewer inducements or socio-economic resources they will exhibit fewer positive behaviors such as OCB towards the organization (Chambel & Castanheira, 2006; Nicholson & Johns, 1985). Stamper and Van Dyne (2001) tested a model of differences in the OCB of full-time and part-time employees; they found that part-time employees exhibited less helping OCB than full-time employees. Additionally, when contingent workers view their psychological contracts as transactional and based on primarily economic exchange, they will perform at minimal level to meet terms of agreement. When they view their contracts as relational, they will demonstrate more positive OCB.

By the transactional nature of their psychological contracts, contingent workers would be less likely to believe that the employer is obligated to provide job security, opportunities for career development, and skill development. Additionally, due to differing expectations and inducements from the organization, contingent workers are less likely to have positive relationships with employers as compared to permanent employees (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002). Results from Coyle-Shapiro's and Kessler's study support traditional views of contingent workers as having a less favorable view of the exchange relationship and they found that contingent employees did indeed report lower organizational commitment and engage in less OCB than permanent employees. Contingent employees also held less favorable attitudes towards their employers, perceive fewer employer obligations than permanent employees, and were the recipients of fewer employer inducements than permanent employees. However, contingent

workers were more likely to view employers as fulfilling socio-emotional needs than permanent employees (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002).

Van Dyne and Ang (1998) found in a comparison study that contingent workers in Singapore were not necessarily more emotionally detached or committed than permanent workers from the workplace, however, they were less likely to display positive attitudes and commitment behaviors than permanent staff unless provided with necessary inducements. Van Dyne and Ang also found that “when organizations treat contingent workers with respect and do not view them as peripheral, some contingent workers will have high commitment to the organizations, a positive view of their psychological contracts, and will engage in OCB just like regular employees” (Van Dyne & Ang, 1998, p. 701). Moorman and Harland (2002) found that contingent workers who have high levels of commitment to the client organization, and perceive positive actions taken by the client organizations, increase their citizenship behaviors.

A number of studies cited in Chambel and Castanheira (2006) also found results showing increased levels of OCB by temporary workers. For example, a study by Millward and Hopkins (1998) found that when employees view an employment relationship as based on social exchange (relational contracts) rather than economic exchange (transactional contracts), they are more likely to exert extra effort and perform non-required behaviors. Furthermore, when direct hire temp workers perceive their work relationship as a means to gain entry into an organization, they will tend to exhibit OCB similar to that of core workers. Kidder (1998) found that when temporary workers perceive a relational psychological contract they are more likely to perform OCB. However, J. L. Pearce (1993) found no significant differences between temporary and

permanent employees in the levels of OCB shown. For contingent workers, it seems not to necessarily be the nature of part-time work that is disillusioning. Rather, job dissatisfaction more often comes from unrealized or unrealistic expectations (Guest, 2004).

J. Pearce and Randel (1998) found that choosing a flexible contract had no impact on perceived job security but was associated with higher job satisfaction and trust for contingent workers. Intentionally choosing a flexible work contract may be the key to contingent workers perceiving a positive psychological contract, regardless of whether the psychological contract is transactional or relational. In a mini US census, Polivka (1996b) found that 30% of contingent workers expressed a preference for a flexible work contract.

For the most part, the psychological contracts of contingent workers have been shown to be transactional in nature although exceptions do exist (Chambel & Castanheira, 2006; Millward & Hopkins, 1998). The psychological contracts of contingent workers are more likely to be transactional due to having less employment stability, less successful prior work relationships, split loyalties to both employer and any labor broker, feelings of detachment from the organization, less voluntary nature of the exchange leading to decreased satisfaction, a shorter duration, and less precise performance requirements (G. J. Lee & Faller, 2005)

L. M. Shore and Tetrick (1994) suggested that employees seeking to build careers with an organization are more inclined to seek out information conveying long-term mutual obligations and contracts whereas employees with short term interests will seek information about, and form, short term obligations and contracts. Marler, Barringer, and

Milkovich (2002) found that these “boundaryless” contingent professionals prefer their status as it allows for accumulation of knowledge and ease of transition between organizations. Millward and Brewerton (1999) also found that contractors may be more willing to go the extra mile for their own personal integrity as a professional rather than as a commitment to the organization, especially if they maintain a transactional psychological contract. Overall, career minded workers tend to see work as a stepping-stone and tend to form more transactional contracts (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1990, 2004). However, Chambel and Castanheira (2006) found that different contingent workers had different psychological contracts. In their study, the psychological contracts of some direct hire contingent workers developed into relational psychological contracts similar to those of core (permanent) worker's psychological contracts when their contracts were extended and workers perceived socio-emotional support rather than just economic support.

There are occasions where contingent workers do feel supported and will report higher levels of job satisfaction. Ellington et al. (1998) investigated whether voluntarily or involuntarily pursuing temporary work is related to satisfaction and performance. They found that individuals involuntarily pursuing contingent work may be less satisfied at their jobs whereas individuals voluntarily pursuing contingent work show no difference in satisfaction levels; whether an individual is voluntarily or involuntarily pursuing contingent work is unrelated to performance (Ellington et al., 1998). While there is little direct evidence to support this, the voluntary nature of work may lead to a more relational psychological contract and improve chances for a satisfying work experience. Conversely, involuntarily pursuing contingent work may lead to an employee's

psychological contract to be transactional in nature, leading to decreased job satisfaction

Steffy and Jones (1990) hypothesized that because part-time employees may be differentially treated in compensation, task assignments, and socialization, differences in various work-related satisfaction might be found. However, they found no differences in the levels of job satisfaction between contingent and permanent workers. Steffy and Jones also looked at role strain variables such as perceived role load pressure, role ambiguity, and job tension (defined as anxiety and depression ascribed to work). These variables were hypothesized to be greater for part-time employees because these employees may not be as integrated into the organization's social and governance fabric as their full time counterparts. Steffy and Jones found that contingent employees experienced more role strain than permanent workers. While not directly tested, the negative effects of role strain may have a negative effect on contingent worker's job satisfaction and ultimately job performance (Steffy & Jones, 1990).

**Psychological contracts of contingent faculty.** The effects of psychological contract type, fulfillment or violation on job satisfaction, POS, OCB, organizational identity and performance have been well explored for permanent workers but significantly less research has been conducted on contingent worker's experiences, including contingent faculty. Some research on cross-cultural views of psychological contracts has been done but more is needed in order to fully explore the effects of culture on the psychological contracts of workers (Rousseau, 2000; Thomas, Au, & Ravlin, 2003). This line of research would be beneficial in understanding how culture may impact psychological contracts for contingent faculty teaching in urban environments. Peirce et al. (2012) studied psychological contract breach of pharmacy faculty but did not

include any contingent faculty in the study sample. Gutierrez, Candela, and Carver (2012) studied the relationships of POS, fit, satisfaction and organizational commitment in Nursing faculty and found that POS, fit, and job satisfaction positively predicted organizational commitment but again, did not include any contingent faculty in the sample. Models of new psychological contracts characterized by flexibility, commitment to more than one organization, mobility, multiple careers, less emphasis on loyalty have also been developed and explored starting with Kissler (1994). This research will be beneficial to understanding the contingent faculty experience as the numbers of contingent faculty teaching at multiple institutions continues to increase.

While some more recent literature examines the psychological contracts of full-time faculty, very little literature exists that explores the psychological contracts of contingent faculty and most of that research has been overseas (Chu & Fu, 2006; Chu & Kuo, 2012; Krivokapic-Skoko, O'Neill, & Dowell, 2009; O'Neill, Krivokapic-Skoko, & Dowell, 2010; Shen, 2010; Tipples, Krivokapic-Skoko, & O'Neill, 2007). For example, both O'Neill et al. (2010) and Tipples et al. (2007) agree that more variety in research methodology is needed as psychological contract research has fallen into a quantitative survey rut. Tomprou and Nikolaou (2011) suggested that since psychological contracts are a construct developed by researchers and not practitioners, the lack of practical application research and more conceptual research is to be expected. Even a primarily propositional piece of literature by McLean Parks et al. (1998) indicates that qualitative inquiry, in particular phenomenological research, would be a good research method to employ in studying the psychological contracts of contingent workers: "The psychological contract is inherently idiosyncratic. Its foundation is *perceptual*, so while

‘objective’ or absolute measures of any given dimension may exist, our concern is in how the contract and its characteristics are *perceived or experienced*” (p. 705).

Tipples et al. (2007), and O'Neill et al. (2010), both found that researchers studying the psychological contracts of academics generally fall into one of two philosophical approaches: those following Rousseau’s work generally focus on the individual employee and is most embraced while those following Guest’s work focus on both parties in a mutual obligational agreement. For example, Levesque and Rousseau (1999) found that when labor markets are tight, contingent faculty are more likely to be valued as they are hard to replace. Levesque and Rousseau also found that some institutions may be better able to fulfill the psychological contracts of contingent faculty as opposed to full-time faculty, leading to stronger OCB on the part of contingent faculty, especially if socialization of contingent faculty and perceived organizational support began early in the employment relationship. Researchers following Guest’s approach would have generally have explored the psychological relationships of contingent faculty from both the individual faculty member as well as that of the institution’s administration.

Shen (2010) found that the psychological contracts of academics differ from those of other professions, is transactional, and is fulfilled at low levels having a negative effect on performance. However, Chu and Fu (2006) and Chu and Kuo (2012) found that positive leadership behaviors contributed favorably to school climate, enhancing the development of relational psychological contracts. Both argue that if favorable climate conditions are created, faculty will enjoy their work more and have more positively perceived psychological contracts. Tipples et al. (2007) noted that some academics may

actually perpetuate a negative environment if they are complacent with practices and focus on their discipline rather than the organization. Despite the findings above, multiple studies note a dearth of literature regarding the psychological contracts of academics exists, each calling for additional research in this area due to corporatization of academia and struggles to maintain positive relations with faculty and staff who are experiencing increased job strain as a result of the rapidly changing institutional conditions (Krivokapic-Skoko et al., 2009; O'Neill et al., 2010; Shen, 2010; Tipples et al., 2007). Finally, little longitudinal research has been conducted on the psychological contracts of contingent workers due to the nature of contingent work; however, longer-term contingent workers do exist and organizations must consider how these workers' psychological contracts impact POS, OCB, organizational identity, and performance.

The existing literature regarding the psychological contracts of contingent workers suggests three things: First, the contingent workforce has increased dramatically across the globe. Second, the psychological contracts of contingent workers mostly thought to have been transactional in nature may not always follow that pattern (Chambel & Castanheira, 2006; G. J. Lee & Faller, 2005; Millward & Hopkins, 1998). Third, perceived organizational support, and career stage may have an impact on the nature of the psychological contracts formed by contingent workers that in turn may impact job satisfaction, performance, organizational identity and commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Administrators who understand the influences of people and processes on, and dynamics of, the various types of psychological contracts held by contingent workers (for the purposes of this study- contingent faculty), will be better



prepared to maintain a more satisfied and productive workforce, in turn producing more desirable behaviors to support stronger student outcomes and organizational bottom line.

### Chapter Three: Methodology

*“Phenomenologists are interested in showing how complex meanings are built out of simple units of direct experience.” (Merriam, 2002, p. 7)*

#### Chapter Introduction

Chapter Three describes the rationale for using phenomenology as a methodological approach, and how the researcher chose the participant sample. This chapter also describes the processes used for collecting, analyzing, and reporting the data obtained in this study. Specific tools used to gain participant consent and collecting the interview data can be found in the Appendices section.

#### Study Methodology

**Phenomenological foundations.** Phenomenology derives its roots from both philosophy- capturing the meaning of experience, and psychology- understanding perception, memory, emotions of experiences (Fischer & Wertz, 2002; Spinelli, 2005). The philosophical approach primarily stems from the work of Edmund Husserl, widely considered to be the founder of Transcendental Phenomenology, and arose out of discontent with research focused on material objects rather than the intangible aspects of objects available in consciousness (Moustakas, 1994). The psychological aspects of the phenomenological approach derive from the Duquesne Studies in Phenomenology and focus on individual experiences, not group experiences (Creswell, 1998).

According to Spinelli, "Phenomenology, like all Western philosophical systems, is concerned with the relationship between the reality which exists outside our minds (objective reality) and the variety of thoughts and ideas each of us may have about reality (subjectivity)...phenomenology argues that we experience the phenomena of this world,

rather than its reality" (Spinelli, 2005, p. 31). In other words, to understand the meaning of a phenomenon, we must tap into the intentionality, or the internal experience of being conscious of something, as the means to describe the phenomenon. Furthermore, we can only describe experience after it occurs, not during, due to nature of, and reliance on, the reflective rather than straightforward experience of the phenomenological method.

Reflection on the experience leading to a description of the essence of a phenomenon is the key to understanding the phenomenon, not the analysis or actual explanation of the phenomenon since experience is dynamic and changes upon reflection and further experience. Any phenomenon may be used as a subject, and, according to Husserl, as perception is the primary source of knowledge in phenomenology, it, cannot be doubted. Spinelli (2005) noted that by the very nature of the "indissoluble" inter-relationship between investigator and focus of investigation when exploring shared experiences to determine meaning, phenomenological inquiry is foundationally collaborative and constructive in nature.

Phenomenology has been around as a philosophical movement since 1900 and is ideal for doctoral research that concerns itself not only with results but also philosophical beliefs and biases (Giorgi, 1985). The foundational question asked in phenomenological research is "What is the meaning, structure, and essence of this phenomenon for this person or group of people?" (Patton, 2002, p. 104). As such, using phenomenology as a research approach is ideal for exploring the very personal and individual nature of psychological contracts and understanding the essence of what those who teach as a contingent faculty member at urban, proprietary colleges experience.

**Understanding phenomenological research methods.** The phenomenological method helps to “determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived, in other words, the essences of structures of the experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). The guiding theme of phenomenology is to go "back to the things themselves" (Husserl, 1970/1900, cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). In other words, the experiences are examined for relevant essences that form a pattern that helps to explain the whole of the phenomenon. Despite slightly differing philosophical approaches, a number of core characteristics of phenomenological research appear in the literature (Fischer & Wertz, 2002; Giorgi, 1975; Moustakas, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1965; Spinelli, 2005). First, researchers adopt an engaged, objective, descriptive, atheoretical approach to explaining the phenomenon studied. Data gathering requires an open (rather than fixed) approach to inquiry processes, rapport with participants to be built early on, detailed notes and quotations from participants to fully represent their perspective, and continual reflection and questioning about potential gaps in understanding the full meaning of the experience. Second, researchers describe the phenomenon from the viewpoint of the subject and remain faithful in their descriptions of the phenomenon as it is lived by study participants. No hierarchies of significance exist when describing experiences; all descriptions are given equal consideration and importance. This concept is known as horizontalization (Spinelli, 2005). Finally, the phenomenon as the unit of research implies a structural approach where the meaning of the situation is the measurement of the research. Potential alternative meanings are explored before the final description of the phenomenon is put forth as definitive.

**Using phenomenological research.** As with all research, phenomenological research begins with the researcher determining initial interests and questions. Once the researcher determines interests and questions, he or she takes part in an individual phenomenological reflection to identify data analysis referents and biases/ presuppositions (Polkinghorne, 1989). Once this reflection is completed, the researcher gathers data from those who have experienced the research phenomenon. Ideally, the researcher wants a sample that can speak to the full range of variation of experience.

Using the phenomenon as the unit of research implies a structural approach where the meaning of the situation is the measurement of the research. Potential alternative meanings are explored before the final description of the phenomenon is put forth as definitive. The researcher constantly returns to the data in order to check for significance and validation of interpretation and description of experience; the story of each research participant is then compiled into a creative, holistic description of the experience, or phenomenon. The rigor of using the phenomenological method as research methodologies comes from “the systematic observation of and dialogues with self and others, as well as depth interviewing of co-researchers” (Patton, 2002, p. 108).

While a core group of characteristics exists when conducting phenomenological research, the actual process varies slightly depending on the research “tradition” followed. For example, Husserl’s basic structure of the phenomenological method consists of four steps:

1. Interest and inspiration to research a particular phenomenon;
2. Epoche, or, bracketing one’s own biases, preconceptions and assumptions as a separate and distinct phenomenon to be considered separately during synthesis;

3. Derive meanings from data via reduction and horizontalization where each statement is given equal value and consideration, and,
4. Imaginative variation which seeks to arrive at a structural, unified, description of the essence (universal quality that makes something what it is) of the experience (phenomenon) “through utilization of imagination, varying the frames of reference, employing polarities and reversals, and approaching the phenomenon from divergent perspectives, different positions, roles, or functions” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 98).

Giorgi (1985) also described four basic components in the phenomenological method, with more of an emphasis on the analysis phases:

1. Data constitution-- reading the entire description to obtain a general sense of the phenomenon without initial categorization,
2. Identification of meaning units-- the researcher reads the description again with the aim of identifying distinguishable changes in meaning or perception,
3. Search for relevant essences-- the researcher reviews meaning units to determine individual structures (relevant essences) of the phenomenon being researched, and,
4. Synthesize structure of phenomenon-- the researcher transforms individual meaning units into a consistent statement regarding the subject's experience as behavior and/ or meaning intentionally directed at something.

Other phenomenological approaches also contain the four basic steps but alter the specific processes contained within the four steps. Wertz (1985) placed more focus on the stance a phenomenological researcher takes. In his view, a researcher must also be

concerned about:

1. Empathic immersion in the world of subject's description
2. Slowing down and dwelling in details of experience
3. Magnification and amplification of situation details
4. Suspension of belief and employment of intense interest to moving past naïve beliefs and preliminary understanding, and
5. Turning from objects to their meanings, in other words, understanding the situation as experienced by subject.

Denzin (2002) referred to phenomenology in terms of deconstructing and constructing a phenomenon. For Denzin, deconstructing a phenomenon involves:

1. "Laying bare" (p. 352) all prior conceptions of the phenomenon,
2. Critically interpreting previous definitions, observations, and analyses of the phenomenon,
3. Critically examining the underlying theoretical model of human action implied and used in prior studies of the phenomenon, and
4. Presenting preconceptions and biases surrounding current understandings of the phenomenon.

It is in this stage of deconstructing that bracketing (holding the phenomenon for serious inspection and taking it out of the world where it occurs) occurs. For Denzin, bracketing involves:

1. Locating within a personal experience story, key phrases and statements that speak directly to phenomenon in question,
2. Interpreting meanings of these phrases as an informed reader,

3. Obtaining the subject's interpretations of these phrases, if possible,
4. Inspecting meanings for what they reveal about essential, recurring features of the phenomenon being studied, and,
5. Offering tentative statement about or definition of phenomenon in terms of the essential features identified in #4.

Once analysis occurs, the phenomenon is constructed (Denzin, 2002). Constructing a phenomenon involves:

1. Listing bracketed elements of phenomenon,
2. Ordering elements as they occur within a process or experience,
3. Including how each element affects, and is related to, every other element in the process being studied, and
4. Stating concisely how structures and parts of phenomenon cohere into a totality.

According to Denzin (2002), the researcher's goal in constructing phenomenon is to recreate lived experiences in terms of constituent elements that can be compared and synthesized, and the main themes of these stories identified so that their differences may be brought together in a reformulated statement of process. The constructed phenomenon is then contextualized back into real world.

As alluded to above, data analysis and reduction processes also differ from tradition to tradition. According to Polkinghorne (1989) data reduction occurs when the researcher looks to identify themes as they actually appear not as they are pre-made by researcher. The aim is to reveal and unravel the structures, logic, and interrelationships of the experiences obtained in the phenomenon under investigation. As the research progresses, the researcher will begin to understand the essential features (structure) of that experience



through thematization and bracketing (putting aside researcher beliefs and assumptions).

Specifically, Polkinghorne's steps to data analysis include:

1. Classification of data into categories,
2. Reduction and linguistic transformation of selections into more precisely descriptive terms; this may take multiple iterations,
3. Elimination of those reduced statements developed in step 2 not inherent in Experience,
4. Creation of a first hypothetical identification and description of experience, and, eventually, the phenomenon in question,
5. Application of understanding to phenomenon in question,
6. Valid identification of general description (individual cases and group as a whole) and, finally,
7. Presenting results to participants for validation (Polkinghorne, 1989).

In the end, what remains after data analysis is an understanding of the phenomenon in question and how that understanding might be generalized in another context to provide understanding of the phenomenon to others in a similar context.

Spiegelberg (1965) steps are exceptionally similar to Polkinghorne's steps with two exceptions. First, Spiegelberg allows for the possibility that the researcher may also have experience with the phenomenon and could place himself or herself in the phenomenon without being absorbed by it. Second, Spiegelberg encourages suspension of belief in the existence of the phenomenon being studied as a means to emphasize the epoche process to keep objectivity in the data analysis and reduction methods.

A final consideration in using phenomenological research methods is the ability to remain balanced between personal biases and objective analysis. As biases and traditions shape how we see the world and are impossible to shed or put aside, Schwandt (2000) asserts that researchers must balance engaging biases as a means to understand others without allowing the biases to influence data analysis. A researcher's ability to bracket personal understandings of a phenomenological experience becomes critical during the data analysis phase.

Other considerations researchers face in using phenomenological methodologies are:

1. A need to define what understanding means and ensure that claims of understanding are justified,
2. Assurance that the interviewer did not influence content of descriptions; transcription must be accurate and convey the meanings of participants,
3. The ability to envision and occupy space where researchers and the researched relate to one another during times of research,
4. The ability to make connections found in raw data to conclusions and vice versa,
5. The ability to identify other conclusions which could have been drawn from data, and,
6. Understanding how to frame the interpretive project as broadly conceived and generalizable rather than mired in detail (Polkinghorne, 1989; Schwandt, 2000).

Ultimately, though, no matter the research tradition followed, it is the researcher who must determine which features of individual structures contained in the description of the

experience manifest a general truth and which do not. This study primarily followed Polkinghorne's (1989) steps but also included Spiegelberg's (1965) additional considerations allowing for the possibility of the researcher to experience and be present in the phenomenon without being absorbed by it.

**Purpose statement and research questions.** As mentioned in Chapter One, this study sought to better understand what contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions experience and how those experiences impacted the psychological contracts of these faculty members. The primary guiding question of this study was: "What do contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary colleges experience in the first one to three terms that impacts the development of their psychological contract with the institution?" Questions also of interest to the researcher that may help lead to a better understanding of the nature of the psychological contracts of contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions included the following:

1. What employment expectations did the contingent faculty members bring with them to the teaching experience?
2. What experiences were perceived as having a positive impact on the psychological contract with the institution?
3. What experiences were perceived as having a negative impact on the psychological contract with the institution?

**Data collection timeframe.** Data collection took approximately place from October to December of 2013.

**Participant sample and access to sample.** In phenomenological research the researcher and participants are seen as "co-researchers" (Moustakas, 1994). Also according to Moustakas (1994), "evidence from phenomenological research is derived from first-person reports of life experiences" (p. 84). To this end, data were collected by

interviewing contingent faculty who taught at urban, proprietary institutions for between one to three terms in the past ten years. This length of term(s) was to allow for enough development of their psychological contract with the institution. The recency of employment with the institution was important as it allowed the participant's experiences to reflect the more recent context in which proprietary education operates.

In a phenomenological study, interviews are typically conducted with between 5-25 participants; 12-15 participants is the average (Creswell, 1998; McMillan, 2000). For this study, ten participants were solicited via the researcher's personal networks and social media connections e.g., current colleagues, former colleagues, LinkedIn, etc. Men and women at a variety of career stages and representing a variety of professions and institutions were chosen using criterion sampling since all participants fit a specific criterion, specifically, they taught at an urban proprietary institution for one to three terms within the past ten years. Criterion sampling is designed to assure quality and consistency of the sample (Patton, 2002). Additionally, the researcher used purposeful sampling in the final selection of participants to ensure reasonably diverse representation in gender, career stage, profession, and institution type.

The institutions at which the contingent faculty worked represent urban proprietary colleges and universities located in a large urban area in the upper Midwest region of the United States. Institutions were at minimum, nationally accredited and offered a variety of diploma and degree programs; institutional profiles are located in Chapter 4 as part of the findings.

**Data collection methods.** Personal interviews used for gathering data in a phenomenological study typically consist of open-ended questions and last anywhere

between 30 - 120 minutes in duration

(Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). Once potential participants fitting the identified criterion were identified, the researcher contacted contingent faculty to verify willingness to participate in the interview, have their interview recorded, allow the researcher to take notes during the interview, and create a written transcript of the recorded interview. Once a faculty member agreed to be a participant in this study, this researcher sent each participant electronically a copy of the Letter of Informed Consent (Appendix A) for review. Participants identified a site for the interview and the researcher traveled to that site to obtain a signature on the Letter of Informed Consent and conduct the interview.

After short, informal conversations designed to build rapport with participants, 60 – 90 minute interviews were conducted with each participant asking them to fully describe the nature of their contingent teaching experiences at urban, proprietary institutions and any particular points impacting the nature of the relationship (psychological contracts) they had, or in some cases, still have, with the institution at which they taught. Two 60-minute interviews were conducted with one participant who taught at three different institutions; there was not enough time to cover all her teaching experiences at one sitting. In the interviews conducted for this study, the researcher used semi-structured interview questions that guided participants chronologically through their experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The open-ended nature of the questions provided the opportunity for participants to subjectively report experiences (what was it like) rather than give objective descriptions (what happened). This particular style of interview also allowed for the individuals to construct meaning from his or her lived experiences (S.

Brookfield, 1995; Conway & Briner, 2005b; Nicholson & Johns, 1985). Interview questions used in this study can be found in Appendix B.

The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed by the researcher to maintain closeness to the data. Transcripts and filed notes were kept at the researcher's home on her personal computer and in locked files. Field notes were recorded and transcribed after the interviews took place to capture observations about non-verbal behavior expressed during the interview, tone of voice, environmental context, additional questions from participants, reminders for follow-up with participants, and any other miscellaneous considerations that might arise surrounding the interview. Field notes were kept in the same manner as the interview data. After the interview and transcript review to ensure accuracy, participants received a \$25 VISA card as a thank you for participating in this study.

**Data analysis methods.** According to Giorgi (1975), the first step of analysis is reading through the entire protocol to get a sense of the whole experience; in this study, the protocol was the individual interview transcript. After transcript creation, they were read and re-read to gain a more general, objective understanding of the contingent faculty member's experience teaching in an urban, proprietary institution. Once the transcript was read, filler words such as "um" or "ah," and generic indications of agreement by the researcher such as "ok" were eliminated. The second step was trying to determine individual "meaning units" of the experience, each indicating a distinguishable moment, realization, or critical incident. These individual meaning units are different from more universal central themes ("natural units") that emerged as individual meaning units were delineated and compared to the transcripts of others experiencing the phenomenon.

To aid in these associations, this researcher used “T” table formatted documents to isolate and reduce the transcript data. The “T” format name comes from the top line across the page with column titles (like the top line of a capital letter “T”), and the two columns separated by a “line” (column separator) extending from the top title line. See Figure 1 below:

**Figure 1:** “T” Table Formatting

<u>Transcript for Analysis</u>	<u>Meaning Unit/ Themes Identified</u>
1. Word for word transcript placed here	1. Identified meaning unit placed here
2. Meaning units placed here	2. Natural themes placed here
3. Natural themes placed here	3. Temporal themes placed here

In the first set of documents, the verbatim transcript was placed on the left side of the table and then identified meaning units of no longer than a sentence or two were copied onto the right side of the table near the original transcript text. Once the entire transcript was reviewed and meaning units identified, these identified meaning units were then transferred to another document again using the “T” table format. Meaning units were placed on the left side of the table. This researcher then read through the meaning units again to identify associated natural themes; these natural themes were copied and placed on the right side of the “T” table. Finally, the natural themes were copied onto a third “T” formatted document where they were placed into temporal order. As Rubin and Rubin (1995) explain, “themes are statement that explain why something happened or what something means and are built up from concepts” (p. 57).

As both meaning units and natural units (central themes) were identified, the results

were “interrogated” by the researcher asking, “What does this tell me [the researcher] about...?” As more central themes emerged from the natural units, these central themes were integrated into a descriptive statement of the essential non-redundant themes. These essential themes formed the basis for understanding the meaning of the experiences that comprise the phenomenon. These units and themes were then organized into an individual non-repetitive narrative consisting of a few paragraphs, with non-essential facts dropped from the descriptive narrative, and synthesized into a single, structural description of the phenomenon, in this case, what the experience was like for a contingent faculty member to teach at an urban, proprietary institution. (Moustakas, 1994).

These reduced descriptions were analyzed again using the same process mentioned above to search for common meaning units throughout all the individual descriptions (Polkinghorne, 1989). Finally, the essential themes were entered into an Excel spreadsheet for ease of comparison across the emergent themes and critical incidents. The researcher’s notes accompanied all steps in the analysis on themes and reflections and, as necessary, this researcher contacted the contingent faculty member interviewed for clarification of any notes or answers given.

**Reporting findings.** Fischer and Wertz (2002) suggested that brief individual case synopses of what was essential to the individual’s experience accompany the larger synopsis of the phenomenon’s shared events, experiences and meaning. To this end, participants have been offered the opportunity receive a copy of both their individual “essence” synopsis as well as a copy of the final study results; over half have indicated that they wanted to receive both so these will be sent to participants. Additionally, Denzin (2002) recommends that once the larger themes and meaning of the experience have been



identified, the phenomenon still needs to be contextualized and placed back into the real world. This contextualization answers the “so what” of the study and provides direction for application of the findings and areas for future research. As a practitioner who works with contingent faculty teaching in urban, proprietary institutions, the findings of this study are as much of interest to this researcher as they would be to other academic managers working with contingent faculty teaching in urban, proprietary schools. Findings from this research would help to inform hiring, orientation, development, and potentially firing practices for contingent faculty in these institutions. This researcher plans to present findings at appropriate conferences and meetings with colleagues who want to know more about the findings as well as to publish findings in appropriate professional journals as accepted.

**Ethical considerations.** While risk to the participants in a phenomenological study seems minimal, anytime a participant shares personal information there exists a risk of anxiety and mistrust of the researcher that must be taken into consideration. To this end, the researcher took care to create a comfortable environment for the interview and encouraged the participant to share what was comfortable for him or her to share.

Participants had assurance from this researcher that:

1. Data would be kept confidential in a secure location at the researcher’s personal residence,
2. Names would be changed in descriptions to protect the identity and anonymity of participants,
3. The researcher’s intent and statements were accurate and honest, and no deception was used to obtain information, and

4. Findings would be shared in an appropriate venue for legitimate educational purposes.

These assurances are consistent with the four core guidelines outlined in Christians (2000). Additionally, a signed letter of consent that outlined the purpose of the study, how data will be kept, assurance of anonymity, and appropriate presentation of findings was obtained from each participant and each of the assurances listed above were kept. Rubin and Rubin (1995) state that “the interview should not only not hurt the interviewees but, if possible, actually leave them somewhat better off for having talked with you” (p. 40). Several participants in this study expressed appreciation for the ability to share their story with someone knew a little bit about what they experienced; one participant even related the sharing of their story to “therapy.”

As the perspective of the participant was crucial in building understanding of the experiences of participants, this researcher did her best to not to allow her own interpretations and biases to overpower the voices of the participants in writing up the research. Horizontalization took place during the data analysis phase and this researcher engaged in the continual process of epoche early and often to maintain objectivity in data analysis, reduction, and synthesis of the essences of the phenomenon.

Finally, a data collection concern was the need to negotiate upfront with participants that the data collected will be the researcher’s for the purposes of this study. All data were kept in a secure location at the researcher’s home and identities of contingent faculty participating in the study, and the identities of the institutions for which they worked, were kept confidential and given pseudonyms of the participant’s choosing. One exception to this practice occurred when the pseudonym chosen by one of

the participants for one of the institutions could have led to the institution being identified. That particular pseudonym was altered slightly to help ensure that the institution could not be identified.

**Validity, generalizability, and limitations of the study.** According to Giorgi (1985) "...one of the poorest perspectives for accurate behavioral description is the perspective of self- description" (p. 51). Polkinghorne (1989) and Fischer and Wertz (2002) agree. As this study relied on self- report method of gathering data in the form of an interview, the researcher remembered that the individual's remembrance of events and experiences is not always objective or even accurate. It was influenced by perception, or in some cases, misperception, that might have clouded full understanding of the phenomenon. Individual biases, prejudices, and willingness to remember all components- positive or negative- of an experience all influenced the accuracy of recollection. According to Collins (1995), we are rarely in a complete state of not knowing; previous knowledge influences the manner in which new knowledge is integrated. Collins advises adult educators to be aware of imposing their own understandings of life world onto the meaning structures of their learners' differing understanding of reality. This is relevant to phenomenological researchers, such as this researcher, who tried her best to remember not to impose her own understandings onto the phenomenon being studied.

Even the process of reflection itself may lead a person to recall the experience in a different manner than previously done. Polkinghorne (1989) spoke to validity as the notion that ideas are well grounded and well supported. He refers to questions such as those listed below to offer a yardstick by which to measure internal validity and objectivity in gathering and analyzing data.

1. Did the interviewer influence contents?
2. Is transcription accurate and did it convey meaning of interview?
3. Could conclusions other than those offered by researcher have been derived and did researcher identify those alternatives?
4. Can one go from structural description to transcripts to account for specifics and original examples? and,
5. Is structural description specific or does it hold in general for experience in other situations?

Finally, transcribing and coding data was tedious and often took numerous attempts at reducing the data in order for it to be manageable (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). This researcher was diligent in transcribing the interviews in a timely manner so as not to let too much time elapse after the interview which could have increased the possibility of error in recollection of not only words, but also body language, reactionary phrases, etc. This could have lead to inaccurate interpretation of the data and ultimately a misinterpretation of the phenomenon being researched.

Even as no one institution represented the entire spectrum of areas of study, the sample of participants did not represent every possible demographic characteristic. They do, however, represent both men and women at various career stages- early, mid, and late/ retired. Additionally, although participants represented a sample of the population of contingent faculty teaching at urban proprietary institutions, it was not practical for this type of study to include a larger sample of other demographic characteristics including race, content/ profession area, or institution type.

## Chapter Four: Discussion of Findings

*“Even noting that nothing surprised you or that there were no high or low emotional moments in your learning tells you something about yourself...” (S. Brookfield, 1995)*

### Introduction

This chapter presents the individual participants and the summary (essences) of their individual experiences as emerged from the data collected. A brief profile of the institutions at which they worked, as a contingent faculty member, will also be presented from the data collected.

This study sought to better understand what contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions experience and how those experiences impact the psychological contracts of these faculty members. The primary guiding question of this study was: “What do contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary colleges experience in the first one to three terms that impacts the development of their psychological contract with the institution?” Questions also of interest to the researcher that may help lead to a better understanding of the nature of the psychological contracts of contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions include the following:

1. What employment expectations did the contingent faculty members bring with them to the teaching experience?
2. What experiences were perceived as having a positive impact on the psychological contract with the institution?
3. What experiences were perceived as having a negative impact on the psychological contract with the institution?

To aid in introductions to the participants, basic demographic data for each of the participants will be presented, as well as a profile of each participant’s educational and

professional background, the reason(s) they began teaching, and how they discovered their respective teaching opportunities. This chapter will also discuss the major themes that emerged from the essences of their experiences. As expected in phenomenological methods research, findings were derived from textual analysis- in this case analysis of word for word interview transcripts, and are provided in this chapter through a textual description of what happened as well as a structural description of how the phenomenon was experienced by the participants (Creswell, 1998). Findings, and the meaning making that results from those findings, are organized into and presented as major themes and sub-themes, both of which are supported by specific examples and quotations from participants.

The major themes emerging from the participant data collected are:

1. Formation of the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution,
2. Change in, and re-examination of, the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution, and
3. Continuance of the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution.

Subthemes within the first theme of relationship formation include: expectations carried into the relationship, initial interactions and support resources, and surprise regarding students' unpreparedness for college-level work. Subthemes within the second theme of change include a change in institutional focus and role and/ or position change within the institution. Subthemes within the final theme of continuance of the relationship include: commitment to students, identification of self as a teacher, and deciding whether or not to continue the relationship with the institution. Each of these sub-themes will be discussed within the larger structure of the major themes.

## Introduction to Participants and Institutions

**Table 4a:** Participant Demographic Profiles

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Minority/ Non-Minority	Professional Field	Main Job Status	Prior Teaching Experience	Career Stage
Anna	Female	Non-minority*	Architecture	FT, non-teaching	No	Mid
Don	Male	Non-minority	Information Technology; Business	FT, non-teaching	No	Late
Lexie	Female	Non-minority	Advertising/ Design	FT, non-teaching	No	Early
Liz	Female	Non-minority	Science; Mathematics	FT, non-teaching	Yes, Secondary & Post-Secondary	Early
Mequon	Male	Minority	Information Technology; Business	Retired, non-teaching	No	Late/ Retired
Mike	Male	Non-minority	Information Technology; Business	FT, non-teaching	Yes, Non-Post-Secondary	Mid
Smith	Male	Non-minority	Graphic & Video Communication	PT, teaching	No	Early
Stacy	Female	Non-minority	Business	Ind., non-teaching	Yes, Post-Secondary	Mid
Susan	Female	Non-minority	Social Work; Intercultural Communication	FT, non-teaching	Yes, Post-Secondary	Early
Tiger1	Male	Non-minority	Business	FT; teaching	No	Late

**Notes:** 1. Minority status includes all non-Caucasian racial groups.

2. \* Participant is foreign born, and raised, of Eastern European descent

3. Early Career Stage represents 0-10 years in professional field, Mid-career Stage represents 11-20 years in professional field, and Late Career Stage represents 21+ years in field or retired from active full-time employment in field.

### Anna

Anna is a mid-career professional who earned her bachelor's degree in Architecture abroad in her home country in Eastern Europe. She moved to the United States after graduating from college. The move to the US changed Anna's career trajectory significantly as she couldn't work for a few years until she received a work permit. Once Anna received her work permit, she worked for an architectural design company for four years until she was laid off. Despite giving lectures for a large Pacific Northwest state college her teaching experience at UWI was her first formal teaching position. Anna found out about the UWI teaching opportunity from a friend who was working at UWI and shared with Anna that UWI was accepting applications for new adjunct faculty. Anna was hired by UWI in December 2008 or 2009 and taught for them for 3.5 years until she decided to look for a full-time architectural job.

### Don

Don is a late career professional who earned his bachelor's degree in Economics, and eventually his master's in Information Systems from Mayfair University- the same institution at which he would eventually teach as a contingent faculty member. Prior to teaching for Mayfair, Don built a 30-year career in the IT field beginning with Don's U.S. Navy days and culminating in owning a strategic consulting firm for which he still works full-time. Don decided to pursue his master's degree because despite the long career in the IT field, he felt he needed the piece of paper (credential) to prove mastery of his field.

While in the Navy Don earned over 350 credits in a variety of subject areas and when he finally earned his bachelor's degree, he started formal teaching to fill the hole in his life left from going to school for so long, and out of love for academia. According to Don, "I still loved learning new things and talking about them and engaging with other people. Discussing academic topics and so found teaching was the perfect solution to fill that void." Don never taught formally for any other institution other than Mayfair, although Don taught leadership and Total Quality Management classes while in the Navy and taught a variety of "non-educational" skills and hobby classes. Don began teaching at Mayfair University when they approached him to teach while he was finishing his graduate studies there. Five years later, Don is still on the faculty at Mayfair University teaching both technology and business courses.

### Lexie

Lexis is an early career advertising professional who works full-time in the marketing and advertising industry. She spent a number of years working for large firms focusing on the client side of the industry but she indicated that it consumed her entire life and she was defined by her job. Lexie began to feel as though the corporate life was not worth the money and began to explore other career options. She always enjoyed the teaching aspects of her job, and decided to interview many of her own undergraduate and graduate professors to see what a formal teaching experience might be like. Armed with a feeling



that she possessed many of the critical teaching elements recommended by the faculty members she interviewed, Lexie applied online to Institution A that was new to the geographic area of this study and was hired. Lexie taught two classes for Institution A while deciding whether or not to continue a career in the marketing and advertising industry. At the time of data collection, Lexie was finishing a class and was contemplating whether or not to continue teaching for Institution A because she travels a lot for work now and could only teach virtually or online, neither of which are viable options for Institution A in this area.

### Liz

Liz is an early career full-time secondary teaching professional. Even as an undergraduate student majoring in natural science, she was always interested in teaching at the college level. After earning her undergraduate degree Liz began teaching at area high school before applying to teach at UWI. For the most part Liz had positive experiences teaching high school. She feels like she was good at her job and has an ability to reach students “where they are at.” Liz also taught at a variety of other post-secondary institutions- private, public, proprietary, and non-profit- as a contingent faculty member prior to applying to teach at UWI. Her interest in UWI was sparked when her full-time secondary teaching appointment was not renewed and she lost faith in the public school system for which she worked. She began searching for teaching opportunities, saw UWI’s ad, and applied. She was hired and taught for UWI as a contingent faculty member, as well as a full-time faculty member, until her position was eliminated in 2012.

### Mequon

Mequon is a retired engineering and information systems business professional. He came from India to the United States where he earned both bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Engineering. After graduation, Mequon accepted a position in the Eastern United States and earned an MBA degree while working out there. He later moved to the Midwest and eventually started his own consulting business for which he still occasionally accepts assignments even though he has primarily retired from full-time consulting work. He has lived in the area in which this study takes place since 1993. Any teaching was usually supplemental income to support the up and down nature of income earned from his consulting business.

Mequon’s interest in teaching stems from his early days as an engineering student. He recalls, “Even when I was in school lot of my classmates used to come to me for when there were difficulties. So I must have been good at explaining to them. They said ‘You are good teacher.’ I said ok, maybe I should do that.” Mequon started teaching at UWI in 2000/2001 after finding out about the opportunity from a mutual friend teaching at UWI who said they were looking for faculty. He applied and was hired to teach IT classes. About 4 years later Mequon learned about opportunities to teach IT and business classes at Mayfair University and was hired to teach there as well. He taught on a contingent basis for both institutions from 2004 – 2006 when he stopped teaching for UWI and focused on teaching only at Mayfair in both their brick-and-mortar as well as online

divisions after accepting a full-time position there. Mequon still teaches for Mayfair University although only in a part-time capacity since his full-time position was eliminated in 2009. He also teaches business classes part-time for a state university campus

### Mike

Mike is a late-career full-time consultant. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in the following fields: Program Analysis, Banking and Finance, Business Management, and Computer Science; he also earned an MBA. He describes the most influential decision to start teaching as starting back in high school when he developed an evolution course. In addition to a 30 year career in banking, IT and business-to-business, Mike always enjoyed working with complex subjects and finding simple ways to explain and educate. Eventually, that early love for teaching grew. Mike recalls: "I started, um, becoming a corporate trainer and I traveled the nation training and designing, you know, work flow systems in stores and bringing on staff there. I very much enjoyed that and it was a natural transition into business to business where I would, at the dawn of the, really the dot.com boom, I'd get to meet with everyone from very low level entry people to high level CEO class individuals to explain very complex technology issues that they frankly had never thought of or dealt with before. I really enjoyed that. Um, so I really enjoyed that. I enjoyed being on the cutting edge of it, um, educating everyone I worked with. That naturally led into doing some, ah, you know, teaching."

Mike has only taught at UWI. He just decided one day he should teach and went to UWI to apply; he has no idea what led him to UWI- didn't know anyone there or anything about UWI. Mike was hired and three weeks later was teaching two classes. He worked for UWI as a contingent faculty member for about two and a half years until a new dean came in and just forgot about Mike. Mike took a break and never taught again for UWI. He says he would not return to UWI to teach but would teach again and would like to find a way to integrate mentoring, work, and education in a program- much like an apprenticeship partnership opportunity.

### Smith

Smith is an early career graphic and video communications professional. He grew up in a family of teachers but never thought about teaching professionally prior to his experience at UWI. Smith earned a bachelor's degree in film and has always been interested in the arts. After graduation Smith worked in television (video and news production) in Florida before moving back to the geographic area in which this study takes place. He attended graduate school in the same fields as his bachelor's degree and earned his master's degree.

Smith started applying online for teaching jobs in his home state to help supplement income earned while in graduate school. He saw the open position posted online at UWI and figured he could try it, as it was only one class and the content sounded like

something he knew. According to Smith, he just fell into teaching and stayed with it because he “kind of liked it.” After only one quarter teaching at UWI, Smith accepted a full-time teaching position with them and stayed in that role for eight years until UWI ultimately eliminated all full-time faculty positions. He remains teaching for them in a contingent role, much like how he began with them. Additionally, Smith teaches online for UT in a part-time capacity, a position he applied for, and began, while he was still employed full-time at UWI.

### Stacy

Stacy is a mid-career independent training and development consultant with extensive teaching experience in higher education. After college graduation, she worked for a large global management-consulting firm doing project management and benefits consulting. Eventually Stacy came back to the geographic area in which this study took place and worked in manufacturing with a welfare-to-work agency developing training programs. After that opportunity ended, Stacy returned to the financial services field doing account management, then training and development. She earned a master’s degree in Human Resource Development and has completed all but her dissertation in Organization and Management.

Stacy was drawn to teaching after completing her master’s degree and started teaching part-time. She heard about Mayfair University from a colleague in her PhD program, applied, was hired, and has been with Mayfair since their initial existence in the study location. Once she began teaching at Mayfair in 2000 she recalls this about teaching her first course: “I had a passion for that topic and a passion for that course and passion for the students and a passion for the school and once I got my feet wet, I didn’t want to stop. I always saw teaching as my retirement career. I’ve been able to do that career for the past 13 years. And I’m not near retirement yet.” During Stacy’s tenure (timeframe not position status) with Mayfair, she worked as both a contingent and a full-time faculty member on renewable contracts at both brick-and-mortar campuses as well as the online division. After her full-time contract was not renewed, Stacy began pursuing teaching opportunities at other institutions to supplement her income as a consultant. After being hired at 12 other institutions over the 2006-2007 period, including University D and the University K- an opportunity she solidly pursued because they offered benefits she needed.

Currently Stacy still maintains contingent teaching practices at a local university that provides her a steady income and benefits as well as senior lecturer status, and Mayfair University where she still holds associate and lead faculty contracted positions.

### Susan

Susan is an early career professional who is currently employed full-time as an administrator for a proprietary institution in the geographic area in which this study takes place. Her current position is at a different institution from Alterra University when she worked as a contingent faculty member. Susan holds a bachelor’s degree in Social Work

and a master's degree in intercultural communication. She worked in the social services field before teaching doing soft skill job training for welfare to work programs and case management and training grant administration for adults 65+.

Susan began her teaching experiences as a teaching assistant while in graduate school. After graduation she was hired to teach one course for her alma mater. She learned of the teaching position at Alterra through her father who was friends with the former Director of Education at Alterra. The Director of Education mentioned that Alterra was looking for a new communication instructor so Susan's father shared Susan's phone number and she got the job. Susan started with Alterra in July of 2005 and worked there until May of 2009. For a number of reasons that will be shared later in this study, Susan would not go back to teach for Alterra.

### **Tiger 1**

Tiger is a late career education professional who earned a bachelor's degree in Economics, and master's degrees in Business Administration (MBA) and Human Resource Management (HRM). Tiger's first brush with teaching occurred when he worked in economic development. His MBA alma mater approached him about teaching for them as he completed his MBA, however, the opportunity never came to fruition. After earning his MBA, Tiger went to work for a consulting firm where he began training. He recalls: "I started doing it and wondering where has this been all my life and I loved it." Tiger's training experiences influenced him to earn his master's degree in HRM and from that time he "had it in the back of my mind that I would like to do some adjunct work."

Tiger doesn't recall exactly how he found out about the UWI teaching opportunity, where he teaches mostly business and human resources classes. Tiger likes the classroom interaction and the looks on his students' faces when they grasp a concept describing the feeling as very rewarding. Tiger travels a distance to teach there- about an hour and fifteen minutes- and while he doesn't completely mind the drive, he would eventually like to find a teaching opportunity closer to home. Tiger also taught for a very short time at UT in 2013 after a former UWI mentor who worked at UT contacted Tiger to see if he'd be willing to sit on an advisory committee for UT that was developing a new Human Resources concentration at the time. The committee opportunity led to a one quarter online teaching opportunity in June of 2013 that Tiger found frustrating, not a good match for his interests, and conflicted with his full-time position.

### **Institutional Demographics and Characteristics**

The seven proprietary institutions included in this study all had either brick-and-mortar campuses in a single medium-sized Midwest urban location-- the primary setting for this study-- or had an online division that participants were able to access from the

same urban location as the brick-and-mortar campuses. Three of the institution locations were brick-and-mortar campuses only, one institution had both brick-and-mortar campuses as well as an associated online division at which the participants taught, and the remaining three had both brick-and-mortar as well as online divisions, however, participants only taught for the online division after teaching for another proprietary brick-and-mortar location. Table 4b below provides basic demographic information about the urban proprietary institution locations.

**Table 4b:** Institutional Demographic Profiles.

<b>Institution Pseudonym</b>	<b>On-Ground/Online</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Class Structure</b>	<b>Accredited</b>	<b>PT Benefits/Resources Provided</b>
Alterra University	On Ground	National	Certificate, Diploma, Associate	5 week terms, 8 hours/week	National; Programmatic	
Institution A	On Ground	National	Associate, Bachelor	Quarter System, 4 hours/week	National	Informal “meet & greet” faculty orientation; textbooks; syllabus
Mayfair University	Both	National	Associate, Bachelor, Master, Doctorate	UG- 5 week terms, 4 hours/week; G- 6 week terms, 4 hours/week	Regional; Programmatic	401 K; formal faculty training & mentorship; textbooks; syllabus; ongoing faculty development; faculty lounge w/ computers
University D	Both*	National	Associate, Bachelor, Master	Semester System; class length	Regional; Programmatic	Online faculty orientation; faculty

				varies		mentor; pre-determined course shell; textbooks
University K	Both*	National	Certificate, Associate, Bachelor, Master	9 week terms, class length varied	Regional; Programmatic	Health; formal faculty training; pre-determined course shell; textbooks
University T	Both*	Regional	Associate, Bachelor, Master	Semester System	Regional; Programmatic	Formal technology training for faculty; paid for training; limited faculty development opportunities
UWI	On Ground	National	Associate, Bachelor, Master	11 week terms, 4 hours/week	National	Performance bonuses; now formal faculty training; limited mentoring; pre-determined course materials and textbooks; ongoing faculty development opportunities

\* University has both on-ground and online divisions, however, participants only taught in online division as second contingent teaching position.

### **Alterra University**

Alterra University was new to the area at the time of Susan's experience with them only had a brick-and-mortar campus in the location in which this study took place. After the initial hiring processes, Alterra University provided no new faculty orientation or job preparation, only training on sexual harassment.

Alterra's classes were organized into five-week terms; each class lasted approximately eight hours per week although the exact class format changed multiple times while Susan taught there. Ongoing professional development was minimal. Alterra provided no ongoing faculty development opportunities and all faculty did to show professional development was write down what they did on a sheet of paper.

### **Institution A**

Institution A was new to area when Lexie began teaching there and only had a brick-and-mortar campus in the location in which this study took place. They operate on a quarter system; most classes run one night a week for four to five hours. Initial hiring processes include a lot of HR paperwork but no formal or structured orientation and/ or training for faculty. The only orientation provided was more of a "more of a meet and greet" about a week before class and, according to Lexie, focused on the institution- "this is what we do, this is how we want you to feel, this is the type of students that we're going to get in, and a lot about the institution and the culture and the level of students that we were getting in- very urban, varying degrees, and let's talk about how to approach that." Institution A has requirements for using certain teaching tools but provided no orientation to actually using them. Instructors receive a syllabus from corporate with structured requirements and learning objectives but no coursework, lesson plan, other templates, etc. Finally, Institution A provided ongoing faculty meetings, education opportunities, and learning sessions on a variety of topics that revolved around working with students.

### **Mayfair University**

Mayfair University has both brick-and-mortar, as well as online, divisions in the location where this study took place. Initially brick-and-mortar and online divisions were separate entities until they merged in recent years. Classes run four to five hours once a week for five to six weeks, depending on the degree level. Mayfair University initially required faculty to have at least five years business experience and references to apply, this requirement has been relaxed more in recent years. Once faculty candidates passed an initial screening they interview with professionals already teaching there, are expected to provide an engaging teaching demonstration in front of administration and staff, and participate in a team activity. New faculty members also undergo a four (later five) week self-paced online training period that includes sessions on syllabus preparation, classroom behavior, university policies & procedures, and ethics. No training is given on actual course development, however, new faculty are given a sample syllabus for the course they will be teaching.

Pending successful completion of all requirements, new faculty members are paired with a mentor who observes the first course taught by the new faculty



member. New faculty members are considered under probation until they successfully complete the mentorship period, then they are “officially” hired and scheduled independently for courses. Additionally, after the initial mentoring, faculty members are classified as achieving green, yellow, or red status. If the faculty member achieves green status, they are “certified” for two years and are typically left alone. If a faculty member achieves yellow status, there is some guidance given for performance improvement. If a faculty member achieves red status, there are serious performance concerns and they are likely not asked back. The same general procedures apply for brick-and-mortar as well as online faculty members. However, if faculty members are already certified to teach in brick-and-mortar campuses, their orientation to teaching in the online environment only lasts two weeks. If they are not already certified to teach for Mayfair University, then the orientation lasts approximately four to five weeks long.

Mayfair University provides numerous faculty development opportunities, some of which require annual attendance in order to maintain faculty certification. These include: two general faculty meetings a year (all faculty members must attend at least one), two content/ department area meetings (all faculty members must attend at least one), and monthly/ semi-monthly weekend sessions about teaching topics that weren't mandatory (but it was “frowned upon” if faculty did not go periodically). Random peer faculty members from other teaching locations also observed all faculties at least every two years. Finally, all faculty members had access to a lounge/ resources center at the brick-and-mortar location that included computers everywhere for faculty use.

Over the last decade, Mayfair University experienced significant student population evolution from more professional degree completion students to more traditional aged students now. Also, Mayfair University has experienced both significant growth, and subsequent decline, of approximately 35% in both student and faculty population. Some brick-and-mortar departments closed and students were forced to take classes online if they wanted to continue.

### **University D/ UD (Online)**

University D has both brick-and-mortar, as well as online, divisions in the location where the study took place. According to Stacy, once potential faculty members passed screening and hiring processes, they completed a self-directed online new faculty training. There were a certain number of assignments to complete. Upon completion of training, new faculty were matched with a mentor who helped prepare a new faculty member for his or her first class. Stacy did not experience any course observations or evaluations but she only taught for two terms so they may have been an annual course observation that would have occurred in her third term. Online faculty received a pre-set up course shell for their class that was not to be altered other than to adapt some of the discussion questions and faculty responses.



### **University K/ UK (Online)**

University K has both brick-and-mortar, as well as online, divisions in the location where the study took place. Class sessions are nine weeks long and are scheduled in three schedule cycles. Once a faculty member receives a schedule in a particular cycle, he or she will only teach in that cycle. Hiring process takes place in phases. First is a HR screening, then a conversation with the dean's office. Finally candidates are invited to training. Training is more structured and involved; it is not self-paced. There is also a group-training component but Stacy reported that there was actually not a lot of interaction with new faculty during this component. New faculty members are not provided with a mentor but they are provided with the same benefits as full-time faculty, to include health insurance.

Course shells are built for faculty ahead of time. There is no ability for changing course materials other than crafting responses to discussion board postings. When courses need redesign, input from faculty in that department is solicited. The University of Kay has an extensive technological system for tracking student retention that all faculty members are expected to use. Additionally, faculty members are expected to make phone calls to students prior to class beginning to establish a relationship. If students do not attend class by the third day, faculty members are expected to contact the student via phone or e-mail. Faculty members are also expected to issue progress reports via phone or e-mail at certain touch points during the class session.

### **University T/ UT (Online)**

UT has both brick-and-mortar, as well as online, divisions in the location where the study took place. They are on a quarter system. According to Smith and Tiger One, once faculty passed screening and hiring processes, new faculty training was online and self-directed including a good month of training on the learning management system. Most training occurred during the day. UT also offered continuing faculty development in the form of online in-services every term and faculty members were paid a little extra for attending trainings. UT also wanted all professional development requirements for the year done at once.

Some classes were already developed. Others needed designers and faculty would get paid to design the course. Those who designed a course received the option to teach it first. All online faculty members are expected to hold regular office hours by phone for specified hours as well as by continuous e-mail availability. At the six to eight week mark in the term the chair sends around available classes for the next term. Faculty scheduled for a class receive an electronic contract, which they then electronically accept or not.

### University WI (UWI)

UWI existed in the area for a few decades at the time a number of participants began teaching there and only had a brick-and-mortar campus in the location in which this study took place. They operate on a quarter system with 11 weeks terms and once a week classes of 4-5 hours. Over the duration of the time period for which participants taught at UWI, application processes ranged from simple electronic postings to full online applications. Initial hiring processes ranged from simple interviews and some paperwork with department chair or dean to later including short teaching demonstrations with other staff and faculty. Faculty Orientation ranged from none to a combination of a single in-person session plus self-paced online series of 5-6 modules (including ethics training); a dean, or associate dean about a week before classes began typically ran these. New faculties were sometimes matched with experienced faculty mentor, especially in more recent years.

For the most part, course materials are developed for faculty and faculty new to teaching a course receive thick binders full of course materials prior to teaching the course. Ongoing faculty development efforts include all-faculty in-services held once a quarter with many individual departments holding meetings every few weeks. Faculty (full or part-time) is not paid extra for trainings but could receive bonuses for achieving certain levels on student evaluations and retention. The faculty evaluation process includes peer (or department chair/ dean) classroom observation, student evaluations, and student retention. UWI has an early alert system to notify a student's counselor via e-mail of student issues; faculty members are expected to enter attendance and notes into system. Multiple participants mentioned some evaluation processes changing slightly, but not job expectations, as scrutiny on proprietary colleges increased.

### **Textural and Structural Descriptions**

In phenomenology, both textural and structural description of the participants' experiences are shared to assist the reader in more fully understanding the essence of their individual and collective experiences. For the purposes of this study, the understanding to be gained is what contingent faculty teaching in urban, proprietary institutions experience and how those faculty members make meaning from their experiences. The detailed textural descriptions of participants' experiences, including specific critical incidents as inspired by S. D. Brookfield (1995), and quotations are

presented first, with overall structural descriptions of the collective experiences presented after that.

### **Major Theme One- Formation of the Relationship (Psychological Contract)**

**Expectations carried into the relationship.** The expectations participants brought into their employment relationships varied and typically developed according to career stage. Participants who had no formal prior teaching experiences, and somewhat experienced in their professional careers commented that they did not know what to expect. Anna, Smith, and Stacy, in particular, experienced this. Smith recalled:

I was kind of expecting, you know I don't really know if I had any specific expectations. Just like I didn't know what I was getting into. I'll just try to roll with the punches and I'll adapt to whatever was around in terms of the students and the technology there.

To a lesser extent, Susan who had very limited teaching experience but none at a proprietary institution, also experienced this and upon reflection later realized that she didn't understand "for-profit education versus what I was used to and the [large state] system." She "didn't understand that it was a corporation...and didn't understand the culture." Liz, who had prior teaching experience at the secondary level as well as limited teaching experiences at the post-secondary level, said this about her expectations coming in to her UWI experience:

I didn't have a lot of expectations of the school itself. I had more expectations about my students- where they would be, especially in the two classes that I taught because they were classes that were more towards the end of their school career...Getting closer to graduation. And their skills were very low. And so I was very surprised, especially in the science class I was teaching.

Participants who had some prior teaching and/ or training experience, and significant professional work experience such as Don, Lexie, Mike, and Tiger One based their expectations primarily on either their own graduate school experiences or their work

expectations in their primary profession. For example, Don didn't think he'd have courage to teach if his first time teaching was at an institution where he was not familiar.

He recalls:

I don't know if it influenced my decision to do it so much as it was just familiar to me when I did do it. I knew what to expect and I'd been through it long enough. But I mean it would have been the same thing had I gone to UW and I would have felt I knew what their course structure was and I knew how they worked. I think with a for-profit, having done, if I had gone just through traditional, you know, had I left UW and this was my first time teaching and I was at a for-profit, I would have been shocked.

Lexie knew that “any for profit gets a weird label” and that the pay would not be great but she liked Institution A's desire to promote “application of the trade versus straight, straight education only aspect of it. The ‘how do you actually apply this in the real working setting?’ That appealed to me.” She interviewed her own faculty before even applying to get a sense of what to expect, even though her initial expectations of her colleagues and students turned out to be vastly different in reality. Mike described the new faculty orientation and subsequent faculty development opportunities he experienced as “formulaic.” He recalls being “unimpressed with the level and knowledge and ability” of the people in and giving the orientation; they seemed to be “flying by the seat of their pants” and not prepared. He expected them to be more professional than they were, expectations that came from his own professional career and MBA program.

Participants who taught at a brick-and-mortar location and then moved to an online teaching environment at a proprietary institution, without prior online teaching experience, brought with them expectations based on what they experienced from their brick-and-mortar experiences. For example, Smith had low expectations of UT based on his experiences with UWI. One didn't really know what to expect about UT other than he

expected UT to be about the same as UWI but just online. Stacy's expectations revolved around technology and expecting learning management systems to be similar, which they were not. Stacy was also more selective with the subjects she would teach based on classes she taught before. Mequon seemed to be the exception in that he continually stated that he had no preconceived notions about what to expect from the institutions at which he taught.

**“Figure it out”- initial interactions and resources.** Of almost all the major themes and sub-themes, participants' experiences varied most in this area from practically non-existent to handholding. For example, Don expected people at Mayfair to be “a bunch of good people” and, for the most part, he found that to be true. He recalls interacting with the head liaison for faculty who was “wonderful and helped him understand how to teach, what to expect, what to do when students don't get it, and how to spend class time.” Tiger One's interactions with others in the early days were mixed. He remembers the school chair as “very affable, very friendly, very warm,” and receiving good interaction and feedback from her from the beginning while the site director had a very flat affect and after the initial hiring processes, rarely interacted with Tiger One. Lexie received mixed messages from those she interacted with in the initial experiences at Institution A. She describes her dean as very nice, very understanding and focused on having students come away with good understanding of competencies whereas the focus from Lexie's program coordinator was more about process ” and felt some expectations were “too micromanagy.” Also, Lexie's initially perceived Institution A as being disorganized, chaotic, and less personable than she initially thought her interactions would be. “I could just sense that they were still fledgling and still figuring things out,” she

recalls. Lexie even admits that she thought faculty would be better aligned, more collegial, and would have fun and get together- expectations she now realizes were a more romanticized view.

Liz mentioned that her department chair was supposed to be her go to person but was rarely around for help; she relied on fellow adjunct [contingent] faculty for assistance on her first day of teaching. Her only other interactions in the early days were with a crabby secretary and a “very odd” associate dean she met during faculty orientation. Susan interacted with few people in her early experiences other than the campus director who basically told Susan to “go figure it out” when she had questions and an experienced adjunct [contingent] faculty member who helped mentor Susan for a little while. Being told to “go figure it out” by campus director made Susan very sad and very frustrated.

All participants who taught at Mayfair University were assigned a mentor as part of the orientation process and described their experiences and relationship with the mentor as positive. Don recalls his mentor pulling him aside before class to talk about what to expect. This helped Don to be “less freaked out” during class. In addition to her mentor, Stacy quickly discovered that there were “always people to go to” (staff, peer faculty, administration) and “there are always resources.” She also found her mentoring experience at UD as “the best I’d ever seen.” Her mentor communicated frequently with Stacy throughout the duration of her first course and Stacy “never felt, alone” during the mentoring process.

Depending on when and where participants started teaching, the levels of preparation, support, and resources varied greatly. For example, all participants who

taught at Mayfair University (Don, Mequon, and Stacy) praised the University for the extensive training, mentoring, course preparation assistance and resources available to them even as contingent faculty. Right away Don met with his area chair and other faculty to develop course materials. Mequon shared that the amount of prep work done for you in online courses was “amazing,” and describes all his meetings as very good. Overall, he was happy with Mayfair at this point. All faculty had access to a faculty lounge with computers.

At the other extreme Lexie and Susan both taught at institutions (Institution A and Alterra University, respectively) whose campuses were new to the area despite existing in other locations. They both describe not having any substantive new faculty orientation, technological and personnel resources as minimal, and processes as disorganized and chaotic- especially in the evenings when there were few campus staff members around. Lexie said the “onus was really on you” to figure out how to structure the course and find resources and she mentioned not having technology resources in every classroom. “I was excited about the opportunity and teaching but I didn’t feel I was well equipped. I didn’t feel like I was given enough resources or I had a great network underneath me,” she reflects. As mentioned before, Susan was told by her campus director to “figure it out” when she had questions.

Mike and Smith recalled textbook and technology issues at UWI as challenging while Anna described having all the resources she needed when she taught there. For example, Mike was not given any course materials to prepare for class until about 25 minutes before class was to begin on the first night. He also had many questions for which staff at UWI had no ready answers: “I’m not caught off guard with questions I

don't know or if I, there are questions I don't know, I try to handle it far better than they did. Not a blank stare and 'Guess I gotta look in to that.' That lame catchall is uh, it was not exceptionally reassuring." Smith recalls needing to search out a television and projector for a visual communications class he was teaching and the equipment almost not being able to fit through the doorway or be situated in the classroom in a manner that he could operate it comfortably while teaching. Anna recalls someone walking her around to give her keys and show her the facilities while Liz recalled the exact opposite for her teaching experiences, recalling her new faculty orientation in this way:

So during the orientation it was, it wasn't like a relaxed "This is how we're going to do things." It was "This is not how you do things or you're not going to be around here much." It was very, I don't know, it just left a bad taste in my mouth...it was "Here's the handbook, and here's the steps to do so figure it out." And I remember going in the first day and, um, I was clueless.

She had to seek out a fellow adjunct [contingent] faculty member to help her get situated on her first night and recalls "The first couple of weeks I was completely on my own. I was just left to teach and, um, kind of do my own thing...I didn't have a lot of interaction with a lot of other people." Susan also sought out resources on her own. She recalled finding a mentor to assist her:

[She] took me under her wing a little bit in some sense because I wasn't used to dealing with students who had huge learning disabilities or students that were fundamentally not prepared for this type of work so she sort of helped me a little bit in those early years.

Participants teaching in the online environment for proprietary institutions (Mequon, Smith, Stacy, and Tiger One) all mentioned that course materials and structures were pretty much developed for them with little ability to change anything. Additionally, they all needed to go through about three to four weeks of training on the learning management systems at each institution, something that both Stacy and Tiger



One mentioned as frustrating since they both had “extensive” experience using several different learning management systems. Stacy describes her course at UD as “too organized,” “low administration,” “low creativity,” and “low engagement;” she could only bring in little additions to the discussions.

Tiger One’s frustrations and disappointment with UT went beyond just the initial training. He further recalled “everything leading up to the teaching was not a good experience” and teaching at UT in general was “not a particularly pleasant deal for me.” In addition to having to complete additional training in course design that he did not want to do because he did not want to design courses, Tiger One thought he might get to teach a Human Resource class for UT but was only offered Business 101. He was “not pleased about that either.” In contrast, the first thing Smith ever did before teaching online for UT was to develop a course and indicated a good degree of excitement and enthusiasm for being able to develop courses.

Like interactions with others and institutional resources, communication experiences varied greatly. Mequon commented that expectations at Mayfair were expressed clearly in the faculty contract, regardless of the environment (face-to-face or online). “They emphasize this during orientation too and during faculty certification. They tell you ‘Here are our expectations.’ And you are ready with expectations from [Mayfair University]. [Mayfair] says “Here is what we give you as a benefit, here’s what we expect of you.”

For others, communication was in some cases, non-existent or even overly negative. For example, Mike mentioned that at UWI, all communication stopped after orientation. Smith commented that there was no one in the department to train him and he

was “basically left alone” at UWI. Lexie and Susan both mentioned that they had no guidance on how to develop course materials and help students achieve course outcomes. Susan also mentioned “there was no one to talk to at night.” She even recalled extremely threatening communication from the campus president at the time:

Our own campus president when I first started working there, he would come into our weekly meetings and threaten to fire all of us... then I talked to the other people I worked with and they were like “Just ignore him.” It’s like, oh, ok. It’s just part of the job. Like, he just does that.”

At UWI Liz had this to say about being observed in the classroom: “I kept thinking I wonder when I’m gonna get observed. And it was probably in week 7 or 8 when the dean came in and she observed me and said, “Yeah, sorry about that, we forgot about you.”

Communication in the online environment typically consisted of the early faculty training on the learning management system through which Mequon, Smith, Stacy, and Tiger One learned about institutional expectations for giving feedback, using student-tracking systems, and using course materials. Stacy mentioned that communication with her mentor at UD was regular throughout her first course and her relationship with the institution consisted solely of communication with her mentor at this point. She also mentioned that at the UK, she had more connections to the dean’s office, as frequent of contact as needed with her department chair, and she could contact the course developer with content questions anytime. Mequon and Smith both commented that they were pretty much left alone after the initial training unless there were student issues.

**“A rude awakening”- surprise regarding students’ lack of preparation and motivation.** Participants described their classes as containing men, women, minority, non-minority, full-time workers, recent high school graduates, first generation college

students, parents, and working professionals who just needed to complete a degree. Tiger One described his face-to-face students at UWI as “very urban” while Stacy described her early students at Mayfair University as “working professionals.” Smith recalls having a lot of military wives in his online classes at UT. Anna summed up the diversity of students, and the challenges for her as a teacher to best meet their needs:

Um, their life, um, experiences are so, all so difficult. Some of them came straight from school. Some of them came from, um, army. Some of them were laid off of work after a few decades of working. Some of them have family life and family- you know some of them worked as single moms for example and then decided to go to school. So that was also a challenge for me. Um, just the teaching and not just the subjects that I was supposed to present but, um, the way to communicate with all of them and understand, um, their capabilities and their time that they have and their resources that they have at home so that was a challenge.

Susan expressed as slightly different perspective:

I had students who didn't know what a verb was, or a noun, or who couldn't put a sentence together, who were having true academic struggles. And I'm not just talking about who, people that couldn't- they had childcare issues. They might have had AODA issues. They had baby daddy issues. I meant, they were in and out of jail. And that part, that social services piece of it I actually like. I mean not to sound sick or weird, but I like the challenge of it like “I'm gonna help you.”

Almost without exception though, participants expressed surprise, disbelief, and disappointment in their students' overall level of preparation for, and commitment to, college level work. “When I started receiving papers and my first classes and getting things from people I was just horrified by some of the things I received” said Don. This was particularly true for the face-to-face teaching experiences. Writing was the ability all participants mentioned as being deficient with reading and math following closely behind.

Anna, Don, and Lexie expected their students' commitment levels to match their own as a student; when this turned out not to be the case, they all expressed surprise, disappointment and frustration with their teaching experiences. Anna recalls:

Pretty soon I learned that not all those, um, students are really interested in learning. Which was at that time, um, very strange to me because that school, it was pretty costly. So they had to pay a lot of money and then they just would do nothing or not enough to pass the course or learn what they needed. That was, um, the first real obstacle I went in to. I was also told by the College that I should do everything I can to get them through the, you know, curriculum and have them pass the course and, you know, learn the minimum and retain the minimum knowledge they were supposed to. So, um, even when they were not really skilled or interested at all, I had to kind of play games with them and find ways to get them interested and motivated and have them do their work. Um, the way we as teachers, um, ah work there we were supposed to pamper them, call them, e-mail them, remind them of the deadlines, ask them if they had problems with their homework, were they ready to submit- things like that. So that was also weird for me because I expected them to be more responsible and motivated. Which they were not- not all of them.

Don remembers, "There was a little naivety I must admit. I thought my students would be more like I was as a student. That was a rude awakening." In the online environment, Stacy shared this about her online UK students: "people who have a little more experience and maturity, that's not something that would prevent them from being successful in school. Where with this group, that, it seemed like any little thing that could get in the way did." Lexie expressed it this way- "I didn't want to emotionally invest in something that they didn't care about- this was their education."

Most participants expressed having a good first night. The biggest thing that stood out for Smith in the early days of teaching is the comfort level he experienced working right alongside his students, something he attributes to being close to the same age as many of his students. Smith also appreciated that comfort level and mentioned his students' openness with, and trust in, him when they had complaints about other faculty

and processes. Stacy was eager to create engaging experiences for her students and felt she personally connected with them. Susan recalls the first night was nice for her. She describes it as more fun, interactive, and contained project work. Participants who also taught online in proprietary institutions in addition to teaching in a face-to-face environment (Mequon, Smith, Stacy, and Tiger One) mentioned that while the diversity of students was similar to that found in their face-to-face classrooms, the level of preparedness for college level work and focus on their assignments was slightly better. Smith even discovered that he liked teaching online because he did not have to deal with student issues.

**Other significant experiences and/ or incidents.** Don was a student at Mayfair when he was asked by them to teach and he recalls this: “I always knew I liked teaching. But, uh, so it was an interest but I, to be honest when I was first approached I was very flattered. I was all excited. I was like “Oh my! Somebody thinks enough of the work I’ve done to ask me to do this.” Lexie liked what she was doing, and wanted to do a great job, but felt alone- “like an island.” She recalls: “Teaching at night I, I was alone. There was a few other professors in a few other classes that was going on but I didn’t feel part of anything-, which I thought I would. She also said this about Institution A: “In my institution I figured it out and I navigated it but emotionally, I didn’t feel real good about it.” She enjoyed the students who were engaged, and enjoyed giving back, but the level of students was not what she thought it would be.

Mequon and Stacy both felt that Mayfair University- both in the face-to-face and online environment- sets great examples for learning how to teach and according to Stacy, “If you want to talk about onboarding practices and those kinds of things, no one

has done it better than Mayfair. Mayfair also does an exceptional job [with faculty development].” Mequon concurred: “I’m really impressed with them...they really prepare you to be successful.”

Stacy also describes her relationship with the UK as “solid” after her first terms of teaching for them. She had all the resources she needed and felt that the UK had a commitment to student success and needed faculty to be prepared to support that commitment. Tiger One described the actual online teaching as good but not as enjoyable as classroom; he also described the early relationship with the institution as fine once teaching started.

In most cases, the initial interactions experienced set the tone for later interactions, and ranged from isolating to very positive. It is after this point of teaching for the first term that significant change starts to occur for most of the participants.

### **Major Theme Two – Change in, and Re-Examination of, the Relationship (Psychological Contract)**

Change is a word that best describes a number of participants’ experiences during this timeframe. The range of significant experiences and incidents certainly reflected the range and diversity of the participants and institutions for which they taught.

**“Overwhelming in the middle”- change in institutional focus.** After participants had been with their institutions for a term or two, they began to notice subtle at first, then more noticeable, change in the institution’s focus and how they supported faculty during these changing times. For example, at UD, Stacy’s second class went great; everything ran smoothly. She mentioned that at UD there was no one watching over her shoulder and it was pretty much a repeat of first term but since Stacy knew UD’s

expectations better, it was easier for her to manage her classes. Don said it was an “exciting time for him to teach” at Mayfair and the experience was very positive at this point including the ability to teach project management classes. However, he began to teaching technology classes to business students which was sometimes difficult for Don because he felt they were less intellectually invested, just filling a requirement, and didn’t seem to care about what he was teaching- which turned him off a little.

At UWI, Mike commented that his students were a positive influence on his relationship with UWI. However, he also noted that it “got overwhelming in the middle” as massive change in management and instructors began. He recalled:

I can count on one hand how many instructors are still there from when I was there and the amount we’ve had from throughout that time was immaculate to the point to where you didn’t even want to try to associate with an adjunct because you didn’t know if they were going to be back next quarter.

Not all management changes were challenging. About this time Liz also received a new supervisor at UWI- an associate dean of General Education. Liz “really liked her...she was upfront and honest, and accessible.” She felt she could talk to her new supervisor. Also at UWI, Smith worked under the same associate dean for five years and she liked him. She stuck up for him. Things ran smoothly from her and Smith knew what she expected of him. According to Smith, she was the best dean UWI ever had.

Tiger One noticed this change too describing that as UWI’s business model changed, it meant fewer classes for him- a common experience for many of the participants.

At Alterra, Susan noticed a cultural change occurred when the institutional focus shifted from the student to more on money.

At that point you could see things were probably not 100% legit. Or so they were not, um, there were probably some ethical issues happening at that point. Um, some weird stuff was happening, especially with attendance. Um, like I would mark students absent in the computer system and then miraculously they would be marked present. Or there were forgeries on my attendance sheets.

She also had this to say:

We would have monthly- well at that time we had monthly staff meetings, and they would talk about how much money the student makes. You know, like each student brings in X amount of dollars and we need to keep those students and they talked about education and entertainment...[one teacher] got let go 'cuz he was confrontational. They didn't like that. They didn't like if you spoke against them. There's a fine line and we would always joke that you have to stay under the radar there like just go do what you have to do and pray that nothing happens and just get out.

During this time, several participants also noticed a change in the types of students accepted at their respective institutions. For example, at Mayfair University both Mequon and Stacy noticed that with declining enrollments came a decline in preparation for college level work. Mayfair University used to only admit working professionals needing degree completion; now they admitted most anyone who could pass the initial entrance assessment. Tiger One liked his UWI students as well even though he was still most surprised by how poorly prepared for college level work his students were, especially with regards to writing, grammar, and spelling.

Stacy mentioned that despite great student retention tracking technology systems, the UK felt desperate with regards to retention and she did not experience this phenomenon at any other places she taught to the degree she experienced it at the UK.

It's difficult to be the outreach person trying to focus on retention at the same time you're trying to be the teacher. Because the outreach person who's focusing on retention, I, sometimes the student wants to get into the "This is why this is going on." And the teacher in me says "I get that you have all this stuff going on but if you want to pass this class, I can't care about that...so it puts the instructor in kind of a tough position to be expected to do both. Not that as an instructor I don't care but I can't be that main resource for that student. There are advisors



who can be that resource and I don't know why as an instructor I'm the one doing that outreach.

Susan's experiences at Alterra also reflect this sentiment:

I felt like I was back in social services because they all had different issues and barriers to their education. Like one of them, um, she was a prostitute. Like, um, she was very open about being a prostitute and she had a pimp and she missed a couple of days of class 'cuz she said her pimp like pretty much sold her to this house and she was locked up in there. And some of it was like well, is she mentally ill? Did she want to like, I mean it was like one of those things- who do I tell? What do I do? And I talked to her about it and she's telling this to the class like it's like normal to talk about. So stuff like that was happening and I talked to them and they just were pretty much like "What do you want us to do about it?" And then it wasn't until a little bit later on that they hired a social worker so then I could go to him. But he didn't last very long...

During this time, most of the participants reported overall levels of support during this time as either the same as that received during their initial experiences or feeling slightly less supported. On the positive side, Stacy recalled that Mayfair University provided a lot of good tools for faculty and for her personally to manage her responsibilities, both in the face-to-face as well as the online divisions. Also at Mayfair, Don mentioned that on-going faculty development opportunities continued and monthly department meetings surrounded continuing education sessions. Mequon describes interactions with his colleagues at UWI as good from the beginning.

However, several participants reported feeling less supported, especially when students complained to administration about a grade they received. At Mayfair University, both Don and Mequon felt pressure to pass along students when students complained to campus administrators about grades they had been given. Don remembered a student who filed a formal grievance about a grade he had given her. The review panel ruled in his favor but the experience still left him frustrated for a while:

They recommended that she got an F. They lowered her grade instead of raising it. And she failed the course. I'm sure she was unhappy that she made the grievance. But it put a fairly sour note in my mouth for maybe a few months. Then I got some more good students and then I felt better again. I love it when you reach somebody. That's the thing that keeps me going back. 'Cuz you can't let the few get to you. Or you just give up.

Mequon was asked to review an assignment in question again after he issued a D to a student; he did, and did not change the grade. He also felt that same pressure at UWI, albeit indirect, to pass students. "I felt that they, you were after, ah, money and you are not really looking at the welfare of the student... I'm not going to compromise my integrity by just simply passing the student. 'Cuz I told them eventually the employers will find out and then the institution will suffer." Anna also felt additional pressure at UWI to retain students when receding numbers occurred. She recalled the pressure and efforts as tiring and frustrating because sometimes a student's decision to drop out was out of faculty [her] control.

I remember once I kind of complained about a student I had. I was teaching technical courses that required lots of drawing and drafting and I had a student who had some sort of disability. He couldn't hold a pencil. He couldn't manage rulers, triangles, and he was just not capable of doing the assignments we had to do. So I was, um, talking to my chair and the dean, um, about that and I remember they told me 'Well, you have to find, or you have to modify the homework and, ah, exercises so he can actually perform them.' So, yeah I was never told that I had to have him pass. I was just told to find a way to, for him to be able to perform. And I think that one of the issues I was frustrated with was that people who, ah, registered students, who, um, I don't know, got them in the school- they didn't really care when interviewing them. They didn't care if the student is capable, talented, interested, motivated. They only wanted to sign them in. That was their job. And our job was to then use those students to, you know, have them go through.

She was disappointed in these expectations of college and the commitment from students; however, she felt that most of her students appreciated her efforts to reach out to

them. Liz also mentioned great surprise at how appreciative and vocal students were regarding faculty who really helped them.

Mike reported feeling frustration with feedback given by him to others in administration as glad-handed and no efforts were made to correct anything. Also, Mike mentioned that if he had to do it all over again at UWI, he would “skip all the in-services,” seeing them as fairly useless. Tiger one also recalled that in the past at UWI, department chairs would address student behavior issues but “not so much anymore” and Tiger One doesn’t feel that the level of support is there from administration. Susan’s experiences at Alterra also reflect lack of support from the institution:

You know I had one situation before I left Alterra where it was a night class, there was no security, and this guy came to get his girlfriend and she saw him before I did and the door was closed and the students were supposed to take an exam so it’s quiet and they were taking an exam and he came by the door and he stood there and she said I have to go. I was like “What about your exam?” and I didn’t realize he was standing there because my back was to him and then I turn around and the other students, one of the students said something. The next thing he comes in and grabs this student by the hair, pulls her out into the hallway and there’s no phones in the room and I didn’t have my cell phone. You know what I’m saying? So I went out there and I’m yelling at him to let go of her and then she told me it was ok ‘cuz she didn’t want me to get hurt or involved and she’s telling me to go back in the classroom. We’re screaming in the hallway and the registrar, ‘cuz her office is down the way, to call 911 and as soon as I said that, then he let go of her and it was a thing and the school told me I didn’t handle it well, that I should have locked myself in the classroom and called 911 but then they didn’t really want me to call 911 ‘cuz then they’d come so it was this weird thing but no one ever said “Hey, in this situation, you should do blank, blank, blank.”

Ongoing communication between the institution and the participants remained as varied as in the initial experiences with an institution. For example, Stacy described her relationship with her department at the UK as good and she experienced good communication. She felt part of the “process” even if she could not influence the process, especially with communication about scheduling.

Mequon experienced mixed messages at Mayfair recalling that the core expectations of faculty never changed but some details in how expectations were to be carried out did and communications about the expectations were often conflicting. For example, Mayfair emphasized to faculty that they should both fail students if they were not ready and yet, at the same time, move students along in their courses and programs of study. Expectations were communicated via regular department meetings.

At UWI, Liz experienced very little initial communication from the institution and came to expect little to no positive feedback, an expectation that was a holdover from both prior work experiences as well her initial experiences with UWI. Tiger One expressed frustration regarding institutional communication with faculty:

There's never any input on it and usually, I understand not getting any input from adjuncts but there's no discussion whatsoever and they changed school chairs one time and everybody practically I talked to knew about it except me, a member of the faculty... Yeah, it's like some of the students knew about it before the faculty did. So yeah, I'd say the communication is not the best but I think that just goes with the whole adjunct thing.

Tiger One described other communication from his department chair at UWI as not always professional- one in particular was “pissy.” When Tiger One told his department chair that he did not appreciate the tone of the e-mail, Tiger One suspects his course load was reduced for challenging him because Tiger One had fewer courses to teach the next term. At Alterra, Susan mentioned that communication about future teaching schedules was “awful” until she either made friends with the registrars or assisted with the scheduling process.

**Role and/ or position changes within the institution.** At UWI, both Smith and Liz were offered full-time positions before the end of their first year of teaching for their respective institutions and with mixed reactions to these new roles. Smith began this

phase feeling good about a new role as a full-time instructor. He reflected that, to him, the full-time position means “these people have a lot of trust in me and know that I can do the job.” Smith said that when his department chair approached him about the full-time position he felt nervous and overwhelmed about the opportunity because of needing to teach courses outside of his comfort level. However, the chair reassured him that he didn’t have to know everything. Once in the full-time role, Smith reported feeling more a part of UWI and noticed more staff associating with him more frequently.

During this time Smith also began teaching online at UT. While teaching at UT, Smith said that overall, he felt like a part of the UT faculty. Smith recalled opportunities to contribute to curriculum development at UT, even as a contingent faculty member:

It [department meeting] wasn’t mandatory but I went and we talked about a class that, um, would be an intro to kind of introduce them to two applications before they actually do anything. And so they actually approved it and I said this would be kind of a cool class and then we could call it this and it could be this number, and I was able to write it and it’s still there. That was kind of cool.

Liz was pleasantly surprised when she was offered the full-time position; it wasn’t her dream job but she needed the full-time work. She recalled not feeling as though she would get the job because she didn’t think the site director liked her based on feedback she provided to him about the contingent faculty experiences she observed. For the most part, though, “I was happy,” said Liz with the exception of heightened expectations for enrollment and retention that were sometimes out of her control yet impacted her annual performance review as a full-time faculty member. She hadn’t experienced this frustration right away as an adjunct and she became frustrated as a full-time faculty member because not meeting institutional expectations reflected poorly on her performance. Furthermore, as a result of Liz’s experiences with not having much initial

support, she was very sensitive to incoming instructors and wanted to help them as much as she could; she would put together detailed course binders for other faculty members-- especially contingent faculty members, teaching in the same subject area so they would have ample curricular resources.

At Mayfair, Stacy often saw change coming and tried to be proactive in her response to it. When enrollments declined, and full-time positions were cut in the brick-and-mortar division, she began teaching part-time for the online division of Mayfair University as well. As other full-time roles opened up at Mayfair, Stacy wanted those positions because of the benefits and wanting to grow her career with Mayfair; they were often offered to her. Stacy sought multiple positions such as content chair in addition to her teaching, and even though Stacy received no extra pay or full-time benefits for the chair position, she was just excited to be part of the “bus headed in right direction.” Stacy enjoyed teaching online but as others in this study have mentioned, she felt alone as an online instructor. In 2006, more change occurred for Stacy as she became an online chair. Eventually, her overall teaching load between the two divisions at Mayfair decreased 33% so she finally sought additional teaching opportunities at other institutions to maintain regular income.

**Other significant experiences and/or incidents.** Mequon describes ongoing interactions with his colleagues as good during this time and said he enjoyed teaching at UWI. Don also experienced a lot of camaraderie with fellow faculty members at Mayfair University and these interactions positively impacted his relationship with the institution. However, Mike expressed mixed feelings about personnel at UWI during this time. Mike enjoyed working with his dean as well as a number of colleagues and other faculty there

even though he did not see much of them. However, Mike was “blown away” by low levels of effort, thought, and organization put into faculty in-services, reflecting that some staff and processes were not as positive of an influence on his relationship with UWI.

From the beginning, UT wanted Tiger One to take additional trainings that he felt were unnecessary since he already had extensive experience with that learning management system. According to Tiger One, UT also scheduled trainings, in-services, and meetings at inconvenient times during the day for faculty who worked during the day and UT was “constantly wanting something.” This last point is what most surprised Tiger One about UT- the constant demands for time outside the classroom.

At UWI, Anna made sure she fulfilled “everything they [UWI], ah, expected me to do.” Overall she liked teaching at UWI and said it was “better once she found her own pace.”

### **Major Theme Three –Continuance of the Relationship (Psychological Contract)**

**“That annoying person”- commitment to students rather than institution.** In many cases, participants recalled feeling more committed to their students than to their institutions. The quality of students, Tiger One felt, negatively impacted his overall relationship with UWI but he tried hard to make sure that the educational experience was available for anyone who wanted it. Mike shared a similar philosophy:

In fact, one of my students who had actually had a number of runs at college, and kind of dropped out because he was incredibly bright but he wasn’t used to pushing past those failures, um, I worked with him to get him past that and worked with him to get him through some, ah, teamwork problems and issues he was dealing with... he was the first student I know of to go on and develop a software application he sold for over a million dollars...He’s doing very well now and...I’m very happy with what he has gone on to do.

Mike also recalled:

I became [laughs] at the same time, their [UWI's] greatest asset and probably one of their largest problems. I held that minimum level of expectations to my students and to the institution and where they weren't hitting it, I would call the dean and I don't know, whoever it was I would take to task for not hitting it. I expect minimum levels of performance from everyone I work with, um, that could be very, ah, it's an unusual conversation to have with a superior that they're not meeting your expectations. But I work full-time and I make a very good living and I don't, didn't need the job if they were going to fire me. It didn't hurt me in any way. It only hurt their institution to not have me. It only hurt the institution to not meet my minimum levels of expectations. You know, having the materials on time for class, you know, allowing the students to access labs, and having the resources they needed to complete their education. Those are not asking for a great deal and any institution should be able to provide that.

Susan recalls a similar feeling. She thought she was “that annoying person” who would bring up issues and advocate on students' behalf.

I was, like, really upset because there was a student like they had a policy where if you failed a class you could take it once for free. But they also had a policy where you could take the same class five times. So, and I had a student there who he had some cognitive disability. I don't know what it was but he was slow, he was just slow. Super sweet guy, he just tried and he was in my English class for like the fourth time- it was either his third or fourth time- and he, I took him in to the Director of Education's office, and I still feel bad about this, I took him into the Director of Education, sat him down, and said “Please read this to the Director of Education.” And he couldn't really, he couldn't read it... I said to the Director of Education “You know, this is what I'm talking about.” And I wasn't very nice about it. He told me what I did was, I shouldn't have done that. I put the student in a bad position.

At UWI Tiger One once drove two and a half hours each way in a snowstorm to get to and from class for his students and was very aggravated that UWI did not foresee the difficulties with students getting to classes and close for the night. Only one of his students showed up that night.

**“A revelation”- identification of self as a teacher.** For participants with little to no prior teaching experience, reflection about their abilities as a teacher revealed newfound confidence in their abilities and identification with the teaching profession



rather than the institution. Anna recalled: “This whole teaching experience for me was a revelation. I figured out that I can do that. And I discovered that I liked doing that. So it was very positive for me.” She continued: “They never said anything to me that referred to me as being not a perfect English speaker or anything like that. That was very nice. That was one of the positive things I remember. Um, I made new friends there. That was nice.”

At UWI, Liz’s recollections reflect Anna’s- “I felt like, ok, I can handle all the craziness with the administration and things like that, um, because I am here for the students and that’s kind of what made me decide to stay... having an overwhelming response from the students was like ‘I have to have Liz as my math teacher,’ um, it was wonderful. It still is and I still love teaching.”

During his online teaching at UT, Smith recalled his experience changing his teaching style and he felt a better and more personal connection with his students for the following reasons: 1.) he was impressed with the work his students produced, 2.) his online students seemed more focused, and 3.) it was easier for him to communicate in writing than in person. Recall that despite growing up in a family of teachers, Smith never saw considered teaching as a career.

**“Just cogs in the wheel”- deciding to continue the relationship with the institution.** The decision to teach again was not always the participant’s decision to make, even for those who eventually assumed a full-time role. Most participants felt that despite some initial challenges, the first class went well and they were interested in continuing to teach for a second term. Lexie was the exception to returning to teach. She chose not to teach the following semester although she did return to teach for Institution

A one term after that. Like many faculty and staff, at Institution A Lexie didn't feel supported enough and decided it wasn't rewarding enough. After an absence of one term, however, Lexie returned to teach and reflected that she had a better understanding of what she was getting into and lowered her expectations from her prior expectations, which were at a much higher level.

Those teaching at UWI (Anna, Liz, Mequon, Mike, and Smith) commented that they were contacted about teaching for the coming term a little after the mid-point of the current term. Most had some input into availability. However, this left little time for planning course materials causing frustrations for most. Susan mentioned that at Alterra, scheduling was very last minute and it wasn't until she got to know those who put the schedule together, she often had little say in which classes she would be teaching.

You never knew what your schedule was and it was every five weeks and you didn't know if you had zero classes, if you had one class, if you had three classes, if you had four classes. That part was really stressful because every five weeks the schedule would change.

Those teaching at Mayfair University commented that they had much more notice about available courses and input into their schedules. According to Stacy, since classes were scheduled on a rolling basis, "I knew there would be another one coming right away." Don just assumed and expected that he would teach continuously as long as he didn't "screw anything up." However, he typically finds out at last minute whether or not he will be teaching for the next term. This is an area for which he would like more communication from UWI.

Scheduling teaching for future terms in the online environment tended to be a little more structured. Participants shared that the schedule was sent to them in advance and they had a fair amount of input into classes for which they were available and

interested in teaching. The short course preparation timeframe did not seem to be an issue for those teaching in the online environment because course shells and materials, especially for existing courses, were already prepared and loaded into the learning management system for instructors. Smith shared that when he developed a course for UT, he was offered the opportunity to teach it first so he knew how the course was structured and teaching it was relatively easy.

At UWI - Mike, and at UD - Stacy, stopped teaching for their respective institutions because communication with the institution stopped and they were never offered classes. With Mike, after the first term a new dean came in and just forgot about Mike. Mike took a break and never taught for UWI again. At UD Stacy recalled that communication was poor from the beginning- no department meetings, communication with the department chair, or any additional contacts with anyone; even a contact provided by her mentor has not returned Stacy's contact attempts. She had even applied for teaching at a brick-and-mortar location with them but never heard from them. With regards to returning to teach, about midway through the first class at UD she found herself reaching out to say she was available for teaching the next term but received no response. She found out one of her contacts was no longer with the organization and at that point, after teaching only two classes for UD, all communication stopped. Within six months, and not by her choice, Stacy was no longer teaching due to lack of communication. She simply could not get in touch with anyone and stopped trying. She would not teach for UD again due to lack of communication and because teaching for them is not where she wants career to be now. Stacy also mentioned that she had same thing (lack of communication) happened at other schools. AT UK Stacy did not see the

layoffs coming towards the end of teaching experiences; not having the ability to continue teaching for UK caught her completely off guard. However, Stacy commented that UK communicated the layoffs she experienced in a “kind and gentle way,” and she was very surprised by the overall high touch level of communication.

For those who were able to decide their fates, some participants chose not to return because of financial reasons and some because of their overwhelmingly negative experiences. Anna made the decision to stop teaching at UWI when she found a full-time job, however, Anna would consider coming back if she still had no full-time position. Liz, on the other hand, made her decisions not to return to teaching as a contingent faculty member at UWI after her full-time position was eliminated. Even though she felt that the associate deans and other instructors were 100% behind her, she felt that full deans and the campus director were not supportive. Even though he is not teaching for them now, Don would teach at Mayfair again and despite mixed feelings about defending school’s reputation, his whole experience hasn’t soured him on teaching. Despite early excitement, Lexie will never teach for Alterra again although she holds an administrative staff position at another proprietary institution.

The rest of the participants- Smith, Tiger One, and Mequon are still teaching for UWI and Mayfair University. Tiger One recalled this about UWI:

It’s the classic adjunct thing where I’m a marionette on the strings. I didn’t have any say in whether I’d be teaching at all or very little say on what if I were offered something. You’re always concerned that if you turn something down, [laughs] you might not get asked again. Um, always afraid that if I sat out a quarter- I’d done it a couple of times- out of sight out of mind...There was never any sort of, somebody to sit me down and say here’s what’s going on here and here’s what the future looks like. Here’s how we think it’s going to impact you. It’s just like well, we’re not going to have a class. Or we’re not teaching that class anymore and that type of thing. I had one quarter where I was supposed to be teaching and then, like, two days before the class they cancelled it.

Tiger One is not currently teaching for UT; he was offered a second class to teach but there was no further discussion about it after the initial offer and he suspects it may have fallen victim to some behind the scenes complaining he did. At the time of data collection, Lexie was still deciding about whether or not to return to Institution A to teach again for a third term.

Smith knew his full-time position at UWI was eventually going to be eliminated. He saw other programs and positions going first and knew his would be next. Once his full-time position was eliminated, UWI offered him the opportunity to continue to teach part-time. Smith still continues to teach part-time for UWI until he finds a full-time position somewhere. He needs the money, doesn't have other full-time prospects at this time and because he's done it so long, he is used to the environment and likes dealing with students. During the time Smith saw his job changing and was facing position elimination, he began looking for other opportunities to teach at other places. Smith would like to teach more at UT, however, the number of classes he teaches at UT has been cut as well and his future with UT remains uncertain. Upon reflection about the declining enrollments and corresponding decrease in class loads, Smith had this to say about his relationship with UT:

The same relationship I guess. I can't blame the chair- what's he supposed to do? He said he'd throw me any extra classes that he can. He's just saying that there's been a lot of dropping in enrollment as well and so, well, I'm just hoping I can stay on and get as much work as I can.

Stacy's chair contract was not renewed at Mayfair University and now she rarely teaches for Mayfair, choosing not to fully resign but instead remain very selective about the classes she accepts. Like Smith and Stacy, Mequon pursued other opportunities both

with his current institution as well as with other institutions. All of them mentioned wanting and/ or needing additional income. Mequon actually began teaching for UWI first, and then pursued the Mayfair University teaching opportunities- both face-to-face and online. In fact, Mequon was eventually awarded a full-time contract as an area chair at Mayfair. Through all his changes with Mayfair, and with UWI, Mequon reported that once he started with an institution, relationships with the institution remained constant and without real problems- each was just a different job with its own expectations.

Most participants possessed, and still possess, mixed feeling about their experiences. For Don, he still loved teaching at Mayfair through all the changes in student demographics; however, he became more frustrated and discouraged with the level of student preparation. Now that Don rarely teaches for Mayfair University anymore, he has found other ways to give back to those people just starting in their careers in information technology by mentoring and teaching through his business.

Lexie was more comfortable and familiar when she came back to teach for Institution A for the second time. The second time she also “just accepted the situation” and mentioned she felt a little pressure to design course project work in ways that benefitted the school with regards to marketing rather than just meeting student outcomes. Overall, Lexie believed that people at Institution A were well intentioned, concerned about student success, and really wanted to get good students out there. She still supports the institution and hopes that the students would appreciate their education more. Lexie would teach again at a different institution but not if she had to relearn everything and face the same disorganization.

Liz was proud of what she did as a faculty member at UWI, but not necessarily of the school itself. Mike would not return to UWI to teach because he does not think that UWI gives a good education to students and was most surprised that he saw UWI turning into a diploma mill. “I probably, you know, would have been really happy to go back, and would have fought to go back, except for the institution wasn’t driving those students to get to a level that they’d be able to perform in the real world.” Tiger One found the opportunity at UWI to be rewarding and if it stops being rewarding, he’ll stop teaching for UWI. He would consider teaching online for UT again, but only if he could teach without course authorship expectations and if he did not have to participate in the additional trainings required.

Though it was, and still is, difficult for Stacy to stay engaged at Mayfair, she stayed mostly because it’s been a 12-year relationship and teaching at Mayfair still feels a little like home; she likes that feeling. However, now all her regular contacts at Mayfair are gone, she feels disconnected. At UD since Stacy experienced no formal closure or final communications she described her relationship with them as disengaged and a very solitary experience. Stacy would not teach for UK again, even if she could. First, she does not want to “go there” with her career. Second, the retention expectations were so heavy and she doesn’t think UK would have changed their expectations of faculty.

**Other significant experiences and/or incidents.** While most participants taught to earn money as well as for personal fulfillment, money was not the primary motivator for everyone. Lexie recalled giving up a well-paying corporate job in order to teach and have a better overall quality of life. Mike ran a successful business-to-business consulting business when he began teaching at UWI. Don shared that he didn’t teach for financial

compensation, recalling that teaching didn't pay "all that well." Stacy concurs and says this- "Pay [laughs] was not that exciting."

However, benefits for contingent faculty were good and he always knew where he stood financially with contract expectations and remuneration levels. Anna said she was "paid what they promised" even though she easily put in double the amount of hours she was paid for. Susan recalled that she was paid very well as a contingent faculty member- almost as much as a full-time faculty member.

### **Summary of Research Questions and Findings**

The primary guiding question of this study was: "What do contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary colleges experience in the first one to three terms that impacts the development of their psychological contract with the institution?" What follows is a collective summary of participants' experiences.

**Formation of the relationship (psychological contract).** In general, participants whose initial experiences took place at established locations and with institutions that possessed established processes, recalled formal and comprehensive new faculty orientations and mentoring relationships that one participant, Stacy, described as "the best I'd ever seen." Mequon and Don also expressed similar sentiments about the same institution. These initial experiences positively impacted their institutional relationships all the way through participants' experiences.

At the other end of the spectrum, participants whose initial experiences were at a newer campus location frequently recalled disorganization, limited or no formal orientation, few physical or personnel resources, and little to no mentoring. These "fledgling" processes, as one participant recalled, created a sense of isolation and



frustration from the beginning that was difficult for participants to move past, ultimately negatively impacting their final psychological contracts.

Participants who experienced positive and frequent interaction and communication with campus administrators (deans, department chairs, campus/ site directors) and colleagues were more likely to perceive their overall experiences as positive and supported. Participants who experienced infrequent interaction and communication with campus administrators or colleagues described their experiences as isolating, a perception that persisted throughout participants' entire teaching experiences with the institution and that negatively impacted the institutional relationship. Most participants reported positive relationships with their peers and supervisors; only Susan reported an extremely negative relationship with her supervisor that ultimately led to her decision not to teach for Alterra University.

With regards to student relationships, most participants based their expectations of their students' ability on their own experiences as a student; the two sets of experiences differed greatly and participants reported feelings of surprise, disappointment, and frustration with their student's lack of preparedness for college level work and varying levels of commitment to their studies. For most participants, the discrepancy negatively impacted participants' relationship with the institution starting with these initial student interactions although the three participants in their early career stages reported lower overall levels of frustration with their students. Two of these participants seemed to think that it was because they were similar in age to their students, making them more relatable.

Participants who reported frequent and varied types of communication early on also reported frequent and multiple types of communication in later experiences. Participants who described early communication as infrequent or non-existent typically described later communication patterns as infrequent. Only one participant, Liz, reported a shift from feeling isolated early on to feeling connected to the institution, largely due in part to a change in supervisory personnel and more frequent interactions with colleagues. Also, only one participant, Stacy, reported experiencing frequent communication early on and then very little after that. For the most part, female participants made more mention of communication patterns in general than did the male participants and female participants more frequently reported that frequent institutional communication – not just communication between peers- helped them to feel more connected to the institution, especially early on.

Finally, like all initial experiences described thus far, levels of resources and support varied greatly by institution. Participants who reported access to ample physical and personnel resources expressed feeling very supported and prepared for their teaching experiences. Participants who reported receiving few physical or personnel resources and/ or support from the institution expressed feeling left on their own to “figure it out” as one participant put it. Most institutional levels of support remained constant over time with only one institution, UWI, changing practices over time as reported by participants who experienced their initial teaching at UWI at various times in the past ten years. Some participants referred to attending ongoing faculty development opportunities and actively participating or facilitating them. These participants reported more positive overall relationships with their institutions than did those who were not able to take part

in development opportunities. Two participants, both male, reported strong dissatisfaction with ongoing development opportunities although for different reasons. Mike felt the content and presentation of the development opportunities at UWI was not up to his high standards of professionalism while Tiger One expressed frustration that UT only seemed to schedule the opportunities during the day that conflicted with his work hours.

**Change in, and re-examination of, the relationship (psychological contract).**

Several participants who were with their institutions for more than one year reported experiencing an institutional shift in the focus from student to, as one participant put it, generating “more money, more money, more money.” This shift typically corresponded with declining enrollments starting in the late 2000’s and continuing until now. As this shift occurred, participants also noticed increased expectations for student retention efforts and, in some cases, indirect pressure to pass students along and less support when student behavior became difficult. The shift in focus was disheartening and frustrating to most participants, and negatively impacted the relationships participants experienced with their institutions.

Also occurring during this time of change were changes in some participants’ roles and/ or positions within their institutions. For example, when UWI experienced dramatic increases in enrollments, Liz and Smith were offered full-time positions to accommodate a growing student population. At Mayfair, Stacy and Mequon experienced similar opportunities; both were offered either additional contracts that equaled a full-time position or they were offered full-time positions.

**Continuance of the relationship (psychological contract).** In general, once a participant started with an institution he or she tended to continue teaching for an

institution until his or her teaching loads were reduced or eliminated. Most participants reported knowing whether or not they would return to teach for an institution as “last minute.” With one exception, institutions typically initiated communication about next term’s schedule at or after the midpoint of the current term, leaving little or no time for participants to decide about returning, or plan and prepare for teaching the next term.

Stacy, Mequon, and Don reported that Mayfair University’s frequent institutional communications allowed them to always know institutional expectations and where they stood in terms of status with the University. Stacy also reported that the UK had a “high touch level of communication” that helped ease the news of her contract not being renewed. Participants reporting infrequent or non-existent institutional communication generally reported more negative relationships with their institutions. Mike and Stacy reported leaving UWI and UD, respectively, due to a lack of communication regarding future scheduling opportunities. Tiger One’s frustrations with UT constantly wanting something different from him certainly influenced his decision not to continue teaching for them.

Only one participant, Mequon, expressed ambivalence about communication regarding his department closing at Mayfair University:

I asked them several times but they said “Well, we don’t know.” Again, whether they knew it and didn’t tell me or they themselves didn’t know, so I didn’t know and I didn’t really care. I was always confident and since I had my consulting business - which I put it on the back burner because of my full time role. I just kind of reactivated and started doing that again.

Not a single participant reported leaving an institution solely because of their experiences with their students, in fact, most participants wanted to continue teaching,

across institutions, because of their connections to their students, enjoying teaching, and despite any challenges they encountered.

Two participants, Anna and Lexie, left their teaching positions institutions to pursue other opportunities in their professional fields.

Secondary questions of this study and collective summaries resulting from data collected are captured in the following sections.

**What employment expectations did the contingent faculty member bring with them to the teaching experience?** Not a single participant had ever taught for a proprietary institution before, much less one located in an urban location. Most did not know what to expect in terms of institutional culture or structure unless they had a colleague who provided the referral, or, in one participant's case- had been a student at the institution. Although specific expectations varied across participants, any expectations brought into the employment relationship came from the participants' own educational and/ or work experiences. For those participants who brought specific expectations based on prior experiences, there was no clear pattern as to whether the prior experiences were positive or negative.

**What experiences were perceived as having a positive impact on the psychological contract with the institution?** Participants who experienced clear and reasonable expectations set by the institution, received thorough and relevant training and ongoing support, felt as though their contributions were valued, and encountered positive interpersonal interactions with administrators, peers, and students tended to see their relationship with the institution as positive. They were also more likely to want to continue teaching for the institution, put forth extra effort, exhibit higher levels of

commitment behaviors, and support and identify positively with the institution. This is true even for participants no longer teaching for an institution but who saw their relationships with the institution as positive upon leaving the institution. For example, throughout all Mequon's recollections about his experiences at Mayfair, he mentioned multiple times that expectations were made clear in a contract and reinforced during regular department meetings. Don shared that he liked always knowing where he stood financially with Mayfair because their processes and policies for compensation and status were very clear. Also, participants who taught online recalled receiving specific guidelines about what the institution expected of them while they facilitated their online courses. This in turn helped alleviate some anxiety about the structure and design of the class when in an unfamiliar environment.

All participants who taught at Mayfair University and went through the extensive new faculty training and mentorship they offered generally felt that their relationship with Mayfair University was positive, even when their teaching loads were reduced or their full-time positions eliminated. All three still remain active on the faculty roster. At UT, Smith felt much the same way that Don, Mequon, and Stacy did about teaching at Mayfair. Even though he started teaching there for extra money when his full-time position at UWI was eliminated, he experienced a more supportive atmosphere and enjoyed his overall online teaching experiences at UT more than his face-to-face experiences at UWI.

Both Smith and Stacy mentioned greater satisfaction with their positions when they were able to contribute to institutional practices and felt valued as faculty members. Smith spoke very highly of his course design opportunities at UT that arose from a

department meeting discussion. He described them as “cool” and indicated the he wanted more of them. Stacy mentioned that when she was able to become more involved in developing student support activities at Mayfair she wanted to do more, even if she wasn’t paid, because she felt like she was making a difference.

Positive and supportive relationships with supervisors and peers also contributed to a positive institutional relationship but were not the determining factors. Participants such as Liz and Smith mentioned experiencing the support of their immediate supervisors and peers as reassuring. Smith and Don recalled strong relationships with their peers as positive experiences. Don, Mequon, and Stacy all mentioned positive communication practices at Mayfair University that helped them remain committed to their relationship at Mayfair, even in times of change.

**What experiences were perceived as having a negative impact on the psychological contract with the institution?** Participants who felt the institution did not make clear their expectations, provide supportive resources, did not communicate regularly, or had unpleasant interactions with peers and/ or supervisors generally viewed their relationships with the institutions as negative. Additionally, when participants noticed a shift in institutional focus from student to making money, their perception of the institution became increasingly negative although the entire relationship with the institution was not negative.

At UWI, Liz and Mike left viewing their relationships with the institution as negative, as did Susan at Alterra. They all mentioned frustrations and disappointment with early experiences such as limited new faculty orientation helpfulness and limited mentoring and setting a negative impression early on. They also cited a lack of ongoing

support and resources and influencing their relationship with the institution. Susan's experiences with Alterra reflected Mike's more closely than Liz's, however, all three experienced frustration and disappointment when their feedback was not well received by those in administration. Lexie's experiences at Institution A mostly reflect those of Mike, Liz, and Susan. However, she and Mike are most similar in that because of their early experiences they never fully committed or engaged in institutional practices for the length that Liz and Susan did.

In terms of interpersonal relationships, negative relationships with supervisors and administration contributed to a negative relationship with the institution, but were not the sole determining factor. For example, Stacy recalled a difficult experience with a new supervisor and campus director at Mayfair University. Stacy was not motivated to leave Mayfair completely, however, she was motivated to shift from only face-to face teaching to include online teaching as well. Other participants did not specifically recall their supervisors as supportive, in fact, some like Stacy and Susan mentioned feeling very alone and isolated in some teaching experiences, negatively influencing their perceptions of the institution. Lexie began her teaching at Institution A wanting more from her peers and was very disappointed when that did not happen.

All participants cited a perceived change in how the institution viewed students as money rather than learners that negatively influenced the relationship with the institution as well. Not a single participant felt indifferent about this shift or the institutional expectations accompanying the shift. All were disappointed in the shift and began to speak negatively about the focus on retention and passing students along versus maintaining standards of quality and rigor. Interestingly enough, most participants did not



perceive this shift as so overwhelming as to cause them to leave the institution; the shift only served to further cement any perceptions already experienced by participants.

**Other final discussion points.** Most participants actually had mixed feelings about their experiences at, and relationships with, their institutions. Only Stacy's, Mike's, and Tiger One's UT experiences were so negative so as to cause them to leave. However, even Tiger one said that with some changes, he would consider coming back. Most participants' actual teaching experiences and later experiences with those same students after graduation, were very affirming to participants, however, their institutional relationship was neither perceived as positive or negative because of experiences with their students.

In terms of the psychological contract framework, participants generally perceived their experiences teaching for urban, proprietary institutions as fulfilling although the source of fulfillment varied from participant to participant. Some found fulfillment in the interpersonal relationships with students and peers, others found fulfillment in professional growth, and yet others found fulfillment in the ability to make a difference in a student's life. They were also more likely to exhibit behaviors that demonstrated a lack of commitment to the institution including leaving, and non-compliance with institutional policies.

Only two participants, Susan and Tiger One, described and reflected on their experiences in such an overwhelmingly negative manner that could be interpreted as violating the psychological contracts they had with their respective institutions, ultimately leading to their decision to discontinue teaching for their institutions. Even Lexie, whose experiences with Institution A were not what she was expecting, decided to

come back to teach for them after taking a term off, indicating that any contract breach or violation was likely mitigated by other factors. Further analysis of participant experiences are discussed in Chapter 5.

## Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings and Analysis

*We must train...educators at all levels to identify the personal and professional factors that impact expectations and provide coaching to teachers on mindfulness practices, privilege and the dangers of low expectations” (Grant, 2013).*

### Phenomenological Analysis of Experiences

According to Moustakas (1994) the final step in the phenomenological research process is to construct a “composite textural-structural description of the meanings and essences of the experience”. This composite description encompasses the core experiences and the meaning derived from these experiences that hold true for all participants. While the experiences teaching in urban, proprietary institutions varied across gender, career stage, profession, and institution, three themes surfaced during analysis of their experiences: formation of the relationship (psychological contract), change in the relationship (psychological contract), and finally continuance of the relationship (psychological contract).

Each participant provided reflection on not only what happened, but also how the experiences impacted their relationship with the institution throughout the varying themes. All of the participants were very open about the range of their experiences and most appreciated the opportunity to tell their story to someone who generally understood what they had been through, as this researcher also taught as a contingent faculty member at an urban, proprietary institution. A number of the participants mentioned that telling their stories helped to process their experiences and in some cases, bring some closure to them. Liz commented that the interview session felt a little like therapy and it helped her to process her experiences. Smith felt the same way, saying that the ability to share was

“good to get it off your chest and say it aloud to someone, who’s not experienced that particular situation.”

The essence of the experience, then, of contingent faculty teaching in urban, proprietary institutions is best described as such:

- 1.) Varied initial expectations and experiences including hiring, orientation, and teaching of the first class that form the foundation of a participant’s relationship (psychological contract) with the institution;
- 2.) Ongoing experiences that include a change within the institution or role/ position of the participant that prompts reexamination of the relationship with the institution, and
- 3.) Final experiences, reflection, and realization about the institutional relationship that include making decisions about teaching in general and continuing to teach again for the institution.

#### **Forming the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution.**

Institutional hiring, orientation, and mentoring practices varied greatly. As a result, participant’s experiences, and how they created meaning from those experiences also varied greatly. In general, participants who experienced a more thorough orientation period, received mentoring, reported frequent communication, and were provided multiple types of continued support from the institution tended to view their relationships with the institution as positive, strong, and generally felt their expectations had been fulfilled, especially during this initial stage. Don, Mequon, and Stacy all fell into this category with regards to their experiences with Mayfair University. The three of them were really the only participants whose experiences with an institution reflected more

similarities than differences, including the fact that all were in mid to late career stages; only Don had no formal post-secondary teaching experience before teaching at Mayfair University. Even though the Mayfair location was brand new when Stacy began her experiences, the policies and processes were well established in accordance with how the corporate structure and regional/ programmatic accreditation governed operations at their other locales. Don, Mequon, and Stacy all began teaching to bring in additional income to already existing consulting businesses.

Lexie and Susan, both in early career stages, experienced almost the exact opposite with their respective institutions- Institution A and Alterra University. Both Lexie and Susan had limited formal post-secondary teaching experience; Lexie had none but Susan taught as a graduate assistant. Lexie's and Susan's early experiences were informal, chaotic, and the institutions provided little in the way of orientation, support, resources, communication, or positive interpersonal interactions. To help learn more about teaching, both spoke to other professionals they knew before beginning their teaching experiences and had different ideas about what to expect based on their own experiences than what they actually encountered. Lexie's and Susan's expectations were not met; Lexie and Susan felt isolated, alone, and left on their own to "figure it out." Their early expectations were most definitely not fulfilled and even indicated violation of the psychological contract with the institution but not quite yet breach. Recall that both Institution A and Alterra University campuses were new to the study location although campuses existed in other locales. Both Lexie and Susan began teaching to bring in primary income.

To a lesser extent, Anna, Smith, Liz, Mike, and Tiger One encountered similar structures and processes at UWI during their initial experiences although each of their experiences differed slightly depending on when they began teaching for UWI. For example, Anna and Tiger One reported more positive interactions, more institutional support, reasonably thorough orientations and some limited mentoring. They are both mid to late career professionals and for the most part, their experiences at UWI seemed to meet most of their expectations, resulting in a relatively positive relationship. Mike, Smith, and Liz experienced limited institutional support and communication, and inadequate orientations; Smith and Liz are early career stage professionals while Mike is a mid career professional. For the most part, Mike's, Smith's, and Liz's experiences at UWI seemed to meet few of their expectations, resulting in a relatively weak and somewhat negative relationship. The UWI location in this study was fairly well established in the study locale; it is governed by the same policies and processes as other campus locales in the national system in conjunction with national accreditation requirements. Anna, Liz, and Smith began teaching to bring in primary income while Mike and Tiger One had full-time positions elsewhere.

In the online environment, experiences varied greatly. Stacy and Mequon taught at Mayfair's online division and both reported positive initial experiences with regard to orientation, institutional support, resources, and mentoring that continued into subsequent terms teaching for Mayfair. At University T, Smith reported experienced adequate orientation and even some collegial interactions while Tiger One experienced the exact opposite- he was frustrated with his experiences from the beginning. Stacy also taught for University D, for which she reported experiencing the best mentoring she'd ever seen and

University K, for which she reported a lot of “handholding” for faculty and great course materials given to her during the initial time with the institution. As Mequon, Smith, Stacy, and Tiger One all had post-secondary teaching experience when they began teaching online, all shared that most their expectations of the institution going into this period revolved around using online technology; these expectations were met to greatly varying degrees ranging from completely met to not met at all.

The final experience of note common to all participants during their initial time with an institution, was meeting and teaching their students. Without exception, participants expressed shock and disappointment in their students’ level of commitment and preparation for college level work, in particular with reading, English and math skills; this sense of challenge continued throughout participants’ entire experience with an institution. All participants expected their student to be more like they were as students and were challenged by and disappointed with the lack of motivation and preparation in the students they taught. While the commitment to teaching their students will be described later in this section, the disappointment of discovering the lack of motivation and preparation negatively impacted the relationship with the institution.

For most participants, the types of personal interactions, available support resources, and institutional communication patterns that occurred in their initial institutional experiences continued into their later experiences with the institution. Those who experienced positive interactions, thorough orientations and mentoring, and had access to a variety of institutional resources early on found that for the most part, the positive interactions and access to support resources continued. For these participants, positive and fulfilling relationships with the institution also continued. Participants who

experienced less positive interactions and had access to fewer supportive resources began to sense some violation of the psychological contracts they developed with their institutions as their expectations were not met.

**Change in the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution.** Many of the realizations participants shared regarding this theme formed as they reflected on periods of change at the institutions for which they taught. Regardless of institution and institutional relationship, the most significant change was a shift in institutional focus from academic quality and rigor to enrollment and retention when enrollments declined and the institution adapted to changing market conditions. During this shift in institutional focus participants commented on two things: first, the quality and preparation levels of their students declined and second, participants perceived that the extra retention focused expectations of faculty by the institution were less about student's success and more about the revenue the student brought in. Stacy's perception sums up the others' perceptions as well- it was about "making more money, more money, more money." Across the board, all participants found this altered focus frustrating and unpleasant even though most continued teaching for the institution at least for a little while.

About half of the participants during this time of change reported either continued, or more frequent and positive interactions with colleagues and supervisors via department meetings or additional faculty development opportunities. These collegial and supportive relationships and resources helped to mitigate the unpleasantness of the shift in institutional focus mentioned above. Some participants also reported becoming more



involved with student support services such as tutoring or mentoring- either informally or formally- other faculty.

The second area of change for participants was a change in role and/ or position within the institution from contingent status to full-time status. Four participants (Mike, Liz, Stacy, & Mequon) took on full-time roles, either contract based or permanent. None of the full time roles at any institution were tenure track positions and even the full-time roles at Mayfair were contract based and thus still considered contingent in the broadest sense of the word. All participants who took on these new roles experienced greater numbers and qualities of interactions with colleagues and students, however, the overall relationship with the institution did not seem to change as a result of the new role/ position. Participants who experienced positive relationships with the institution early on continued to experience positive relationships after taking on the new roles. Conversely, participants who experienced negative relationships with the institution early on continued to experience negative relationships even after taking on the new roles, mostly as a result of increased expectations for retention and progression.

Eventually all of these positions were eliminated and all participants in these roles were offered the opportunity to return to contingent status. All participants in these roles knew this change was coming based on declining enrollments and while disappointed in the change, all but Liz chose to continue teaching for the institution as a contingent faculty member citing the respectful manner in which the institution communicated the status change as a positive factor.

Participants who experienced more positive relationships with their institution, and who voluntarily took on more extra-role responsibilities and demonstrated more

commitment to their institutions also began to positively identify with the institution. Participants who experienced less fulfilling relationships with their institutions- even bordering on relationships that violated and possibly breached their psychological contracts- did not identify with the institution, or demonstrate extra-role, commitment, or organizational citizenship behaviors. For all participants, institutional relationships changed multiple times, with some of the changes directly impacting participant's decisions to continue teaching for the institution.

**Continuance of the relationship (psychological contract) with the institution.**

Overall, participants came to realize that their experiences were a mix of both positive and negative aspects of their positions-- all of which impacted their relationships with their institutions. First, across all relationship types and status, every single participant expressed commitment to helping their students succeed, regardless of institutional policy, available resources, etc.:

Liz- The students were always my number one concern; meeting my numbers was not. It was very eye opening as far as my expectations as far as not being met even close to where my students should have been

Mequon- You must be knowledgeable of the subject and then convey to the students your enthusiasm. You are there to help them succeed. That is the key. The focus is always on the student.

Mike- We did have a number of noticeably inner city individuals whose, I guess, expectations levels for themselves was significantly below what I would expect of an employee. There was some growing pains, on their side as I brought them up to line. I explained that the minimum performance levels never ever changed, right? You're just various degrees either below or above it and I helped them at least get to it... Through dedication and sticking to standards, if you have those standards that you clearly communicate to students every single time, people begin to understand that this is the level that is expected... I just stayed with it. I never got angry. I just never saw it as a personal failing. It never hurt me if they didn't reach it, and the next time they will reach it.

Stacy- It almost felt like those students were left to sink or swim. I struggled with that.

Second, participants enjoyed the actual teaching and found that aspect of their experiences fulfilling, regardless of institution and despite some challenging students.

Here's what participants had to say:

Mike- We continued to drive and push these students who had never been pushed before and it was very rewarding to see that.

Stacy- It was they needed me to teach so I enjoyed being needed. I enjoyed the subject matter very much. I found that often times we had student behavior issues, classroom management issues. Those kinds of things that just then kind of got in the way of the pure joy of teaching.

Susan- I was excited. I'm still excited to do it. I really do like teaching and I would say I'm pretty passionate about it. I would say that I would be very, very happy to live my days as a full-time instructor somewhere, because I generally like teaching. For me it was still like that awe.

Tiger One- I'm really doing it more for the opportunity to teach and because I enjoy adult education.

Regarding face-to-face teaching versus online teaching, Stacy felt as though she encountered more personal experiences in face-to-face teaching and had this to say:

“Online teaching is much more transactional. Face-to-face teaching is much more transformational.” Mequon also preferred face-to-face; only Smith preferred the online teaching because did not have to deal with as many student personal issues.

Third, most of the participants are no longer actively teaching for their institutions. For some- especially Tiger One at University T and to a lesser extent Lexie at Institution A- the end to their teaching for an institution came quickly due to the very unpleasant nature of their experiences. Neither Tiger One nor Lexie felt supported or felt as though the institution met their expectations or needs; after two terms both decided not

to teach for their respective institutions again. For others, namely Mike and Susan, the end to their teaching for their institutions came a bit later but for many of the same reasons as mentioned by Tiger One and Lexie- unpleasant initial experiences and a lack of on-going support and in Mike's situation- poor communication about future teaching opportunities at UWI- led to a sense of the institution not meeting their expectations or needs. Like Tiger One and Lexie, Mike and Susan said they would never teach for their respective institutions again.

For those whose teaching experiences at their institutions lasted longer, the final reflections on their experiences revealed mixed perceptions about their institutional relationships. While Anna expressed an overall positive experience and relationship, as a mid-career professional she continually identified more with her profession in architecture and design than with teaching. This identification with her profession eventually influenced her decision to pursue a career outside of teaching and she left UWI after a few years. Participants like Don, Mequon, and Stacy who felt as though their overall experiences and relationship with Mayfair University were very positive and fulfilling would continue to teach for them as long as classes were available; Mequon still actively teaches for them. Stacy summed up her experiences as such: "My work during the day is what makes me my money and what I do at night is what fulfills me." This sentiment also seemed to resonate for Mike, Don, and Mequon- all of whom had their own consulting business as a primary income generator and all of whom were mid- to late- career stage professionals. Early career stage participants like Liz and Smith who looked to their teaching experiences as their primary income generator, and who invested significantly in the institutional relationship with their respective institutions, seemed to

feel the strongest sense of psychological contract violation. Smith still needed the full-time job, but because he was discouraged about institutional expectations, he just did what was important to institution and minimized everything else. In his own words, he “got away with a lot of stuff...I’m still going to prepare the materials, and print everything out and treat the students with respect. If the classes have to go a little earlier, or if they want to leave early, I’m not gonna be a big stickler or keep making sure they’re around.” Despite a sense of violation, only Liz consciously chose not to return to UWI after her full-time position ended even though she was offered the opportunity to continue.

Finally, all participants came to realize the business nature of for-profit education and accept what they experienced while teaching at their institutions because try as they might, they realized that they could not influence processes they saw as inequitable or unsupportive for students and faculty. The reflections of a few that follow summarize what all felt:

Smith (about the loss of his full-time position due to declining enrollments)-  
I’m mad for sure and I am upset that it’s happening but I get that I can’t do anything about it. It’s just they way it is.

Stacy- In for-profit education you’re never truly in academia. You’re always on the business side of academia.

Also,

We are just cogs in the wheel and we’re not driving this thing. If you don’t like it, you have a choice. You don’t have to teach here. It’s not something that they’d say, it’s just something I think I would take for granted in this business.

Susan- Would I ever go back to a for-profit? It’s funny because as negative and upset as I am with them, I do believe that there is a place in some whatever world.

Also,

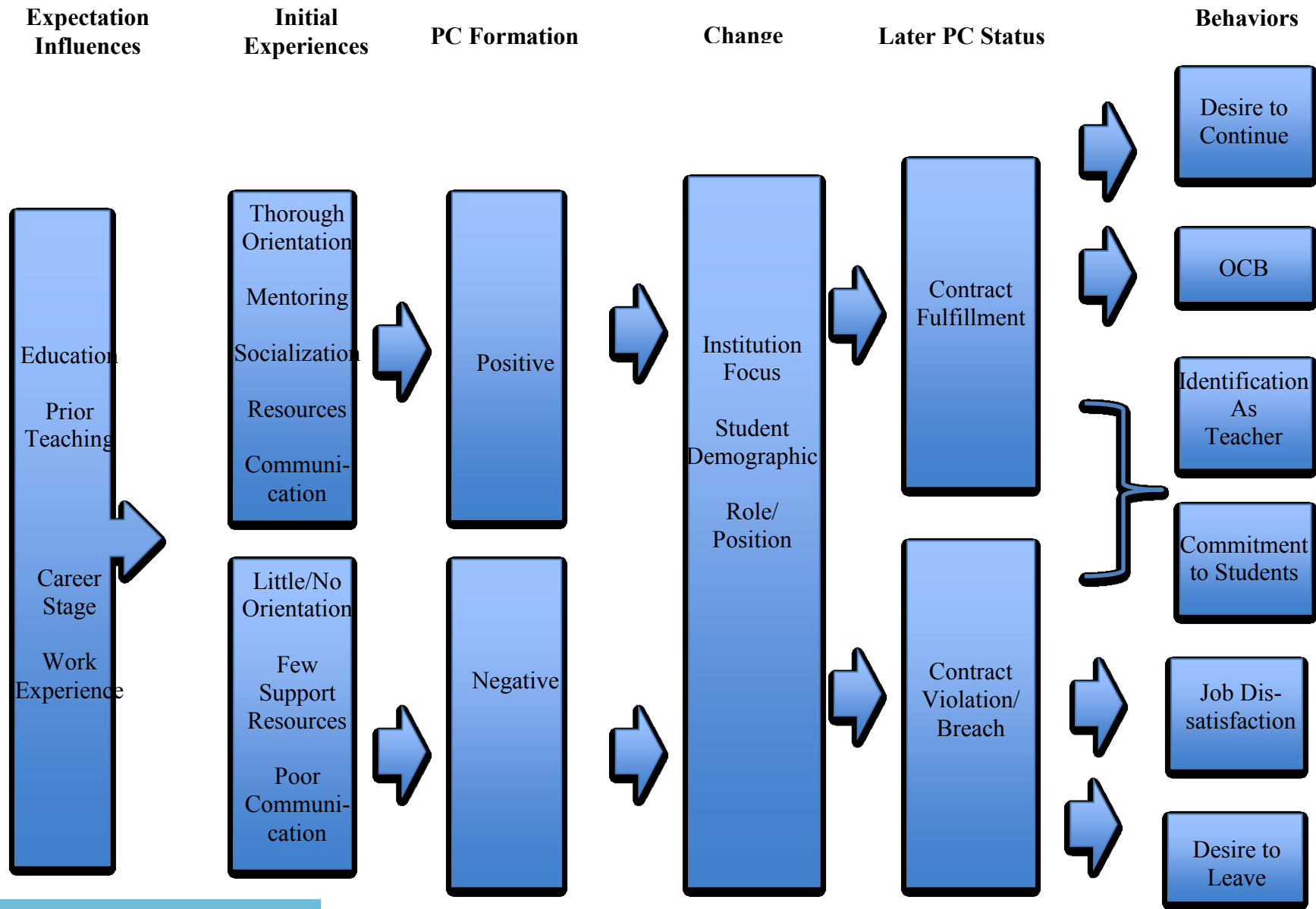
I saw really great things come out of there. I also saw some not so great things come out of there but I still think at the end of the day you gotta say there's a need for education."

Tiger One- I like the teaching part of it. I just don't like to be messed with. I realize there's standards and- the being observed and all that stuff- I get that. I get the need for in-service. I get the thing about keeping your credentials up to date and all that sort of stuff. But I don't get messing with people. Particularly for what you're paying.

### **Summary Diagram of Teaching Experiences, Psychological Contract Formation, and Resulting Organizational Behaviors**

What follows in Figure 2 is a diagram summarizing participants' experiences teaching at urban, proprietary post-secondary institutions and the resulting psychological contract development with the institution.

Figure 2: Participant Psychological Contract (PC) Summary Diagram



According to the diagram, contingent faculty bring with them to the employment relationship expectations for their experiences typically based on either their own experiences as a student, prior experiences as a teacher, their career stage, or as a professional. For participants in this study, the earlier the career stage and the less professional work experience they had, the more the participant drew expectations for the new teaching experience from their own educational experiences. Participants with prior teaching experience, with more work experiences, and in later career stages, tended to form expectations from those experiences. For example, participants with little prior professional and or teaching experience based their expectations for faculty interactions on how they saw their own faculty interact. Participants with significant professional and even teaching experience expected a high level of performance and support resources from the institution similar to that of what the participant provided to clients in his or her own professional experiences.

As participants entered into their initial experiences with an institution, what they encountered during this time in terms of orientation to the institution, interpersonal interactions, supportive resources, and communication practices set the foundation for not only the initial relationship with the institution, but also the later psychological contract as well. If the overall initial experiences were positive and supportive, participants tended to have more positive relationships with their institutions. Participants whose initial experiences lacked orientations, encountered negative interpersonal interactions, were unsupportive, and lacking communication lacking tended to perceive their overall relationships with the institution negatively.



Despite the initial experiences setting the foundation for the relationship with the institution, changes experienced after the initial relationship formation were sometimes able to mitigate initial experiences and change the relationship. All participants, regardless of initial relationship status, felt that their relationships with their institutions were negatively impacted when the change involved a shift in institutional focus away from quality of student and rigor to enrollments and retention. This ultimately led to most of the participants identifying not with their institutions but with the profession of teaching.

Other than the change in institutional focus experienced by all participants, change was often situational. For example, one participant experienced negative interpersonal encounters and felt alone on her first day. However, an opportunity arose for a full-time position and because she needed the income, the participant pursued the opportunity and was selected for the full-time position. She commented that as a full-time faculty member she spent quite a bit of time helping other faculty, especially contingent faculty, because of what she experienced. Three other participants also pursued, and were selected for full-time positions with their institutions and commented that their relationships with the institution did change and their commitment to the organization did as well.

Towards the end of their first few terms teaching, as participants reflected on their overall relationships with the institution, the status of their relationship influenced, but did not completely determine, a number of organizational behaviors including the desire to continue teaching for the institution, commitment to their students, organizational identification, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Generally, the

more positive, supportive and fulfilling participants perceived the relationship (psychological contracts) with the organization to be throughout their experiences, the more they engaged in productive organizational behaviors, exhibited additional engagement and extra-role behaviors outside of the classroom, and wanted to continue teaching for the institution. Participants who perceived their overall experiences with the institution as negative and felt some degree of relationship and psychological contract violation, tended to exhibit counterproductive organizational behaviors such as disengagement, disidentification with the organization, lack of desire to continue teaching for the institution, and little commitment to, or satisfaction with the organization as a whole. However, despite perceiving a negative relationship with the institution, participant still expressed commitment to helping their students succeed.

One factor not explored in this study, and a recommendation for future research, is that specifically of how experiences teaching at one institution might impact the expectations contingent faculty bring to teaching at another institution of a similar type. Additionally, this diagram does not indicate how might the experiences teaching at one institution in a brick-and-mortar setting might impact the expectations contingent faculty bring to teaching at the same institution but in an online environment. Finally, this diagram does not indicate which or how any of the later psychological contract status and resulting behaviors impact either future institutional expectations or how any feedback loops might be experienced or incorporated into this diagram.

### **Results Compared to Literature**

**Nature of contingent work.** Participants in this study began teaching for a variety of reasons- many of them corresponding with their career stage. Lexie, Liz,

Smith, and Susan began teaching for economic reasons and for career building experience. All of them mentioned needing to consider income benefits more heavily than teaching for altruistic reasons. As mid- to late career stage professionals, Don, Stacy, Mequon, Mike, and Tiger One all had limited teaching experience, if at all, and began teaching primarily to share their professional knowledge and secondarily to supplement income gained from their respective consulting businesses. These participants' impetus for teaching are consistent with findings of Stephens and Wright (1999).

The varied conditions under which many of them taught and lack of supportive resources available to them reflect what has been consistently described in the literature for the past three decades and continuing into very recent times. While a few had extensive orientation and support resources available, most struggled early on to become fully acquainted with and acclimated to institutional culture and resources due to limited interactions with key personnel and limited resources. Those few who experienced a thorough orientation, supportive relationships and access to resources early on flourished in subsequent terms, consistent with the recent findings about systemic efforts to offer recognition of and opportunities for input from contingent faculty (Berret, 2007; Kezar & Sam, 2013; M. J. Murphy, 2009).

Of note, and contrary to most of the literature on adjunct faculty, not a single participant mentioned that the full-time faculty treated them poorly as a contingent faculty member. While some participants who eventually assumed a full-time faculty role commented on greater access to institutional resources because of time and proximity, for the most part participant perceived the relationship between full-time faculty and contingent faculty as collegial. One explanation for this could be that at most proprietary

institutions, contingent faculty comprise the majority of faculty- typically 70% or more- and the focus at proprietary institutions is on teaching, not research or service to the institution. In this manner, the core responsibilities are pretty much the same; what differs is access to benefits, resources, and the teaching loads.

Even when contingent faculty comprised the majority of faculty on campus, which was the case at all the proprietary institutions in this study, many participants felt alone and isolated, especially those teaching in online environments, consistent with the findings of Roueche and Roueche (1996). Furthermore, all participants wanted to provide a positive and engaging experience for their students but were challenged by limited resources and institutional support. Two quotes from the literature sum up this study's participants' experiences well. First, Kezar, Maxey, and Badke (2014) found that: "poor working conditions and a lack of support diminish their [participants'] capacity to provide a high quality learning environment and experience for students" (p. 3). Second, Roueche and Roueche (1996) found that "it is not the nature of part-time work that is disillusioning; job satisfaction more often results from unrealized or unrealistic expectations" (para. 11).

**Teaching urban learners.** All participants noted that the demographic make-up of their classrooms was diverse in terms of gender, age, experience, race, and ethnicity but no one mentioned any one demographic as impacting overall classroom experiences either positively or negatively. Also, student demographics were less of an issue in online classrooms as other than gender, most demographic characteristics were not apparent unless disclosed. Only specific student behaviors, either positive or negative, were

mentioned by participants and generally not in the context of a stereotype. Interestingly enough, only one participant ever referred to students as “urban.”

Several, however, mentioned multiple socio-economic factors (lack of transportation to class, working full-time, family responsibilities, domestic violence) as interfering with students’ ability to fully engage in their studies. This is consistent with the findings of Kantor (1999) and Martin (2004). While most participants wanted to support their students, they were not always sure of the best way to do so and when they turned to the institution for assistance, participants were often met with indifference on the part of campus administrators, frustrating the participants. Furthermore, all participants expressed surprise and disappointment in their student’s level of preparedness for college level work, not one participant specifically mentioned the urban context from which many of their students hailed as a factor in students’ success; this was a bit surprising. Language did not seem to be a barrier for communicating with students, even for Anna as a non-native English speaker.

**Structure, processes, and resources at proprietary institutions.** Consistent with the literature, the enrollments at the proprietary institutions fluctuated dramatically during the time period covered by this study ranging from growing exponentially to rapidly declining within a few years’ time (Blumenstuck, 2013; J. Gonzalez, 2009; Kamenetz, 2009). This altered the number classes available for contingent faculty to teach and impacted four participants’ status as contingent or full-time with an institution. Additionally, as enrollment numbers declined, institutions became somewhat less selective in the quality and preparedness for college level work of the students they admitted and enrolled, a shift noticed by all participants. Consistent with the literature,

although diverse across many demographics and programs, students enrolled in the proprietary institutions included in this study tended to be mostly female, employed but socio-economically disadvantaged, non-traditional aged, and had family responsibilities that at times interfered with their ability to be successful in the classroom (Kinsler, 2006a; Lederman, 2009). Also consistent with the literature, most institutions in this study had fewer physical resources, more standardized curriculum, higher numbers of contingent faculty than full-time faculty, more focus on teaching rather than research, and fewer “frills” such as extracurricular activities and facilities (Blumenstuck, 2006; Fox Garrity et al., 2010; Harpool, 2005; Laband & Lentz, 2004; Morey, 2004).

#### **Psychological contract formation and resulting organizational behaviors.**

Participants in this study generally brought expectations to their teaching experiences from one of two places-- their own experiences as a student in the case of the early career stage participants, or their professional experiences in the case of mid- and later career stage participants. Other participant demographics such as gender or profession did not seem to impact the relationships formed with the institutions in this study. Consistent with the literature, and as mentioned earlier in this document, early experiences such as initial assignments, socialization, training and development, feedback from peers all significantly influence the development of psychological contracts (Manturuk, 2004; S. C. Payne et al., 2008; Rousseau, 2004). The more positive participants perceived early experiences, the more fulfilled and positive in nature participants saw their later experiences and overall relationships with the institution. The converse is also true; the more participants perceived their early experiences as negative in nature, the more negative they perceived their overall later relationship with the institution.

Most participants tended to possess psychological contracts that were at first more transactional in nature (Millward & Brewerton, 1999). However, more of the female participants described initial expectations as more relational in nature, especially when describing the types of relationships they hoped to have with their supervisors and fellow faculty. Additionally, the longer participants remained with an institution, the more relational in nature their psychological contracts tended to become, especially for those who were offered either full-time or full-time equivalent positions (Braekken & Tunheim, 2013; Rousseau, 1990).

With regards to on-going experiences and the change in institutional focus mentioned by all participants, participant's psychological contracts with the institutions started to change as well, consistent with findings by Rousseau (1996). This change became difficult to accept for some, and feelings of psychological contract violation led to the termination of the institutional relationship while for others whose psychological contracts had become more relational in nature, the change caused some feelings of psychological contract breach but not violation (Ho, 2005). Rousseau's (1996) concept of contract change by transformation is especially important for understanding how participants' relationships with their respective institutions changed when institutional focus changed from student centered to money centered. As the nature of participants' psychological contracts began to change, so too did the behaviors exhibited by participants towards their institutions.

As noted by Chatman et al (1989), determination of person-organization fit or person- job fit typically takes place in early experiences with an organization. A number of participants described early hiring and orientation practices as basic, limited, or even

in some cases, non-existent. For this reason, and limited discussion of fit on behalf of the participants, it was difficult to assess how well participants saw themselves as a good fit for the organization from the beginning. Additionally as the nature of the relationship with the institution changed at least once for all participants, it was difficult to assess fit in later experience. However, because their earlier experiences were described as thorough and supportive, and Stacy, Mequon, and Don had the longest tenure and greatest overall satisfaction with Mayfair University as compared to other participants at their respective institutions, one might reasonably assume that the person- organization fit was strongest with these three and Mayfair University.

Stacy, Mequon, and Don also seemed to express the strongest feelings of overall perceived organizational support of any other participant or institutional group although they did mention isolated incidents at Mayfair University where they did not feel the institution was supportive. This is contrary to a finding by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) who noted that larger organizational size leads to less perceived organizational support overall; Mayfair University as a system of campuses was probably the largest institution in the study and certainly the individual campus at which Stacy, Mequon and Don taught was the largest in the study when enrollments were at their peak.

Furthermore, even though all three owned their own consulting businesses as a primary means of generating income, Stacy and Mequon accepted full-time contracts and cited satisfaction with their institutional experiences as the primary motivation for pursuing the additional contracts rather than purely economic reasons. This suggests that Stacy and Mequon experienced a stronger sense of organizational identity-- as defined by Dutton et



al. (1994)-- at the time although this lessened as their psychological contracts with the institution began to change and the contracts were not renewed.

While Smith and Liz felt as though their direct supervisors at UWI were supportive overall, neither mentioned any other administrator or institutional process/policy as being particularly supportive. In fact, when Smith knew he was losing his full-time position, he specifically mentioned his supervisor as honest and upfront with him about the position change and offered her support in keeping him on as a contingent faculty member. Other participants like Lexie, Liz, Mike and Tiger One (at UT, not UWI) who did not perceive organizational support from the beginning left the institution sooner than other participants and showed less organizational commitment and identified more with their professions than with the institution. Only Susan, who clearly did not perceive organizational support, stayed with her institution because she felt she was paid very well for part-time work. In no way did her experiences reflect commitment to, or identification with, the organization. Finally, of all participants, only Stacy spoke of participating in what could be construed as organizational citizenship behaviors as described by LePine et al. (2002). She mentioned several instances where she volunteered to provide student support services, and engaged in committee work to develop additional services for students and Mayfair without being paid to do so. As Stacy put it, she was just excited to be part of the “bus headed in the right direction.”

In summary, the vast majority of participant’s experiences seemed to support findings in the literature with regards to the nature of contingent work, the experiences of being a contingent faculty member, the characteristics of proprietary institutions, and of teaching urban learners. The majority of participants were hired and rehired at the “last

minute,” experienced barely adequate orientation and support resources, and often felt isolated and alone especially when teaching online. As a result, their engagement with, and commitment to, the institution itself was lacking and participants generally identified more with their profession or their teaching identity than the institution. Stacy, Don and Mequon were notable exceptions, however, all felt that from the beginning Mayfair University provided them with all the tools and resources they needed to be a successful faculty member. As a result, they demonstrated more commitment to and, on average, length of teaching for Mayfair than any other participant for any other institution included in this study.

With regards to teaching in an urban classroom, most participants were aware that external environments and socio-economic status impacted their students, especially when it came to preparation for college level work. Most participants noticed the diversity of students they taught; only one of the participant referred to their students as “urban.” Most participants also felt extremely committed to the students’ success regardless of student demographic and despite institutional pressure at times to pass students along. Participants often tried to adapt their teaching methods to match students’ learning needs while maintaining what participants felt to be appropriate rigor for course level and subject matter.

The time period covered in this study and the setting of the urban, proprietary institution contribute to a new understanding of how the rapid growth and decline of these institutions enrollments during both the economic boom and recession of the mid-to-late 2000s impacted contingent faculty experiences at these institutions. When enrollments increased and more opportunity for teaching positions appeared, teaching

positions at proprietary institutions were relatively easy for contingent faculty to find and the relationships formed with these institutions seemed slightly more positive than the ones formed, and/ or continued later with the institution when enrollments began to decline. During this period of rapid change in enrollments and institutional focus, the increased (almost overwhelming) emphasis on retention and progression at the expense of academic rigor began to negatively impact contingent faculty member's relationships (psychological contracts) with their respective institutions.

### **Implications for Administrators Working with Contingent Faculty**

While the nature of contingent work is such that a permanent relationship with an organization does not exist, many of the participants in this study had relatively long relationships with their respective institutions and their psychological contracts became more relational in nature than transactional. In the beginning, all expected reasonable training and orientation to the institution as well as supportive interpersonal interactions. As their relationship with the institution continued, participants expected on-going institutional support and access to support resources in order to provide meaningful learning experiences for their students. What follows next is a summary of findings and recommendations from the literature for administrators who work with contingent faculty in urban, proprietary institutions and would benefit from a greater understanding of their psychological contracts with the institution. While the vast majority of literature in these areas does not specifically include contingent faculty teaching for proprietary institutions as part of their samples, the findings seem to apply to most any post-secondary environment.

**Nature of contingent work.** A number of organizations and resources devoted solely to assisting contingent faculty have developed in the past two decades, providing research and best practices for supporting contingent faculty. For example, a report by the American Educational Research Association on non-tenure track faculty found that many institutions approach hiring contingent non-tenure track faculty more casually than they do full-time hires and do not typically have formal systems for hiring or orientation (Association, 2013). Since research suggests that early experiences set the stage for later institutional relationships, institutions that thoroughly screen applicants for fit and orient contingent faculty early on to institutional expectations will likely be better able to predict and manage later relationship behavior. R. E. Lyons and Kysilka (2000) recommend that a new adjunct (contingent) orientation plan include a structured individual orientation, participation in instructional effectiveness training, individual mentoring, opportunities for socialization, and the creation of a faculty resource center. Lyons has long supported contingent faculty and his website, <http://www.developfaculty.com/online/index.html> provides numerous articles and resources for contingent faculty. Mangan (2009) proposes an adjunct faculty certification system to ensure consistency and quality of practice. The institution at which this researcher is employed implemented several initiatives of teaching practice and curriculum development for all faculty, regardless of status, based on commonly accepted standards of practice such as Bloom's original 1956 Taxonomy and Bloom's Revised 2001 Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002) and the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* by Chickering and Gamson (1991).

Research and support coming out of the Delphi Project suggests that regardless of the actual resources provided to contingent faculty, two components most positively impact contingent faculty and their practices: institutional processes that provide for equity among all faculty and the support of upper-level administrators such as deans (Kezar & Gehrke, 2013; Kezar, Maxey, & Eaton, 2014). Equitable institutional processes include: allowing contingent faculty to take part in accreditation practices, developing singular and consistent roles and responsibilities across all faculty levels regardless of employment status, creating “full-time” benefit eligible contingent faculty positions, including contingent faculty in shared governance practices, recognizing contingent faculty accomplishments, providing evening and weekend administrative support, and offering faculty development at a variety of times to encourage contingent faculty participation (Berret, 2007; Kezar, Maxey, & Badke, 2014; Mangan, 2009; Roney & Ulerick, 2013). As one participant in a study by Kezar and Sam (2013) shared: “When you are treated with respect, as a professional, you think more about your obligation to the institution and students. When you are not, it is easy to forget obligations” (p. 79).

**Teaching urban learners.** For proprietary institutions who enroll urban students, and the administrators who prepare contingent faculty to teach urban students, a responsibility exists to provide as much training and on-going support for faculty as possible in order to increase satisfaction with the teaching experience as well as the achievement of institutional and student learning outcomes. For example, Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2000) note that issues of race and power cannot simply be left outside the classroom door. These issues must be addressed both systemically and individually through discussion, curriculum, and the educational process. Martin (2004) found that a

need exists for diversity training programs to assist individuals working in urban contexts to be culturally sensitive as does a need for beginning urban adult educators to learn strategies for effectively dealing with the complexities of the urban context (Daley et al., 2000).

Faculty development programs, when planned well, address issues of classroom dynamics, power, and privilege. They can be an effective way to prepare faculty how to address the issues they will face as adult educators in urban contexts. However, many faculty development programs designed for post-secondary institutions serving urban students target only the multiculturalism of the underprepared student, instead of focusing on how faculty might better work with these students and what they might face in the classroom (Alfano, 1993, para. 3; Townsend, 2000). While the multicultural approach is a place to start, developing faculty to be successful in urban classrooms must take a more systematic approach, including transforming deficit based approaches, such as those experienced initially by many of the participants, to ones of promise and opportunity that participant later adopted. Goldenberg (2014) suggests educators transform “closing the achievement gap” mindset to one of closing the opportunities gap, including educational and socio-economic variation in school resources, living conditions, etc. – a sentiment shared by other as well (Engagement, 2014). Goldenberg further asserts “moving into a more anti-deficit framework, educators must tap into student’s non-dominant cultural capital to promote academic success” (p. 120).

Appropriately addressed and processed with trained faculty developers, feelings of marginalization and powerlessness experienced by faculty new to teaching in an urban institution could be used to build a common ground on which to understand what many

students in urban post-secondary institutions experience in their daily lives. Roueche and Roueche (1996) suggest that “a socialization experience should give... the opportunity to learn about the culture of the organization, the mission of the...college, and the nature of the students” (p. 43). Encouraging innovation in teaching methods is also suggested as a way to increase faculty job satisfaction and reduce turnover in urban post-secondary institutions (Dee, 2004). Ideally, a stable and satisfied faculty will better be able to meet the needs of their students.

Townsend (2000) asserted opportunities for dialogue and discussion about issues of race and class need to exist for faculty. She suggests that the most important thing faculty can do “is to acknowledge their racial identity and how it frames their perspective and behavior” (p. 89). This can be achieved through open, honest dialogue between faculty and students about limitations in understanding the differences in culture and race, especially where a clash of cultures prohibits learning for all students in the classroom (Guy, 2004; Townsend, 2000). Just as new faculty facing issues of class or race for the first time will probably need some guidance from experienced colleagues and administrators who can act as mentors, so too can contingent faculty act as mentors to underserved and marginalized populations, increasing levels of engagement for both student and faculty (Dolinsky, 2013). An awareness of one’s own strengths and limitations/ biases regarding teaching in an urban environment is crucial to success for both marginalized student and faculty performance as is honest and regular assessment of performance and recognition and reward structures to encourage persistence (Niskode` - Dossett, 2008). For teachers like a few of the participants in this study who struggled with finding a balance between teaching and feeling the need to be a social worker,

Delaney (2014) outlines suggestions and advice for teachers from both a teaching and counseling perspective including understanding and managing one's own expectations, focusing on the positive, focusing on the events one can control, understanding that inappropriate student behavior is not always directed at the teacher, and a finding peer and administrative support to find solutions.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the institution to prepare faculty for working in an urban environment, especially when faculty have not taught in an urban environment before.

**Structure, processes, and resources at proprietary institutions.** While most considerations for supporting and managing contingent faculty apply to any type of post-secondary institution, administrators at proprietary institutions are expected to be especially mindful of the financial bottom line. As such, resources of low or no cost to the institution will likely be more appealing to administrators responsible for contingent faculty. For example, a report by Kezar and Maxey (2013) outlines a number of low and no cost options for working with contingent faculty including: access to existing full-time faculty resources, in-house faculty development opportunities, participation in department meetings and campus activities, participation in curriculum design and shared governance activities, and opportunities for orientation and mentoring. Mentioned by all participants in this study as desired and important to feeling supported by the institution, thorough orientation and mentoring seemed to be of primary importance. Multiple studies have explored the supportive nature of mentoring; two in particular explore the need for mentors and mentees (or protégés) to understand how diversity plays a role in



the mentoring relationship (Eby, Butts, Durley, & Ragins, 2010; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005; Ragins, 1997).

**Psychological contract formation and resulting organizational behaviors.** Ho and Levesque (2005) offer multiple insights of use to managers when trying to predict employee behavior. First, they suggest “managers who keep abreast of perceptions regarding the department or firm keeping its promises are subsequently in a better position to predict employee behaviors such as turnover or citizenship and attitudes such as job satisfaction...By tapping into cliques of friends beyond the manager’s own group, a more accurate understanding of contract fulfillment across the organization can be determined” (p. 286). Additionally, while "managers may have little control over promises made by recruiters or senior managers involved in the hiring process...they may be able to help employees make more realistic assessments of fulfillment by communicating with and perhaps influencing key people within the social network" of contingent faculty” (p. 286). Ho and Levesque further suggest “employers can also make use of the broader organizational culture to shape employees’ psychological contracts and fulfillment perceptions" (p. 286).

Finally, M. J. Murphy (2009) found “Evidence to support the hypothesis of the study that institutional practices relating to recognition, support, and compensation build the organizational commitment of contingent faculty” (Abstract). For example, she found that positive interaction with a supervisor leads to more affective commitment. Also, as noted elsewhere, socialization is critical to building organizational commitment as an opportunity for new contingent faculty to feel welcomed into an organization and understand institutional expectations up front.

Murphy also suggested that organizational commitment provides long-term benefits such as a stable workforce, which in turn leads to improved positive student outcomes including increased retention and graduation. She found that part-time adjunct faculty possessed a greater sense of commitment to help students personally develop, even greater than the sense of commitment from full-time tenure-track faculty, a difference she ascribes to differing priorities i.e., research over teaching. Furthermore, Murphy noted that contingent faculty wanted to be good teachers. Both findings are consistent with the findings of this current study.

The contingent faculty in Murphy's study stayed with their institutions for an average of seven years. While this length of relationship is slightly longer than the average of participants in this study, the length does suggest, as Murphy found, that contingent faculty wish to remain affiliated with their institution. "As faculty perceive favorable work experiences, they respond with loyalty, and thus their commitment to student development grows. Specifically, institutional practices that include recognition and support promote POS and engage faculty in committed behavior" (p. 144).

**Supporting contingent faculty teaching in an online environment.** Although not originally included in the literature review, four of the ten participants shared that they taught in both face-to-face and online environments as part of their teaching experiences so it is appropriate to include some research that offers insight into supportive practices for working with contingent faculty teaching in the online environment.

Faculty choose to teach in the online environment for many of the same reasons that faculty choose to teach in the face-to-face environment-- career advancement,

convenience of less commute, try new teaching pedagogy or subject, and to bring in additional income (Shea, 2007). However, consistent with the findings of this study, many faculty, especially part-time faculty, find that they lack the ability to provide input into course design and compensation and benefit levels at proprietary institutions lag behind those of other not-for-profit institutions. Lefebvre (2008) explored part-time faculty teaching at virtual universities and most findings of this current study supported her research. First, she found the lack of research on proprietary education surprising given that the majority of virtual faculty are part-time and teach at for-profit institutions. Second, Lefebvre also found that virtual faculty tend to be older, male, have significant work experience inside and outside of academe, and often hold terminal degrees. Most work elsewhere to support teaching income and many have their own consulting business. Third, like their face-to-face counterparts, the primary responsibility of virtual contingent faculty is to teach; staff typically design and evaluate courses. Finally, consistent with participants in the current study, participants in Lefebvre's research expressed interest in greater involvement with decision-making processes.

Green, Alejandro, and Brown (2009) noted that the turnover of faculty, especially adjunct faculty, in distance education damages an institution's reputation and costs an institution money. Seeing as proprietary institutions already struggle with questionable reputations, it would behoove them to reduce faculty turnover and build a stable faculty in the online environment. Green, Alejandro, and Brown suggest that while adjunct faculty members begin teaching in the online environment for a variety of reasons to include gaining experience, additional income, convenience, etc., they experience the same disincentives and discouragement to continue teaching as their face-to-face

counterparts-- amount of course preparation, lack of institutional support, poor compensation, inadequate orientation to teaching in the online environment, lack of integration into the institutional culture, and concerns about the quality of students. These findings are consistent with what the participants in the current study experienced. Mentoring, continuous training, collegial collaboration, and assimilation into institutional culture all help reduce feelings of isolation and Green, Alejandro, and Brown all note that adjunct faculty are very motivated by increasing income, a sense of loyalty to the institution, institutional support, and opportunities to assist with course or program development.

Shattuck, Dubins, and Zilberman (2011) outlined an orientation and mentoring program designed to mirror for faculty new to teaching in the online environment what their students will experience, noting that at four year institutions part-time faculty are more likely to teach online than full-time faculty. Vaill and Testori (2012) recommended a three-part approach to faculty development in online education that includes orientation to technical and pedagogical content, mentoring, and ongoing support. Each component uses adult learning principles in a student-centered and constructivist approach that models best practices. Faculty participating in this particular model reported an 84% satisfaction rate and indicated that they felt more prepared for online teaching. Indeed, “Faculty who are well-trained are more likely to build courses that engage students and increase student achievement of learning outcomes” (Vaill & Testori, 2012, p. 112).

### **Implications for Contingent Faculty, Psychological Contract, and Proprietary Institution Research**

**Limitations of this study.** As with any qualitative inquiry study, the scope and generalizability of findings are somewhat limited. This study only included proprietary

institutions as the setting; results may not be generalizable to other types of institutions where the experiences of contingent faculty may be vastly different from the experiences of participants included in this study. For example, administrators working in large research focused institutions may not find the results of this study particularly helpful if they employ few contingent faculty and the focus of faculty is on research rather than teaching. Also, while participants represented a variety of different professional fields typically taught at proprietary institutions (business, information technology, design, etc.), this researcher was not able to include a participant with healthcare experience. This is significant as healthcare programs at proprietary institutions make up about 40-50% of available programs of study so including a contingent faculty member teaching in healthcare programs would have increased the scope of experiences across more professional fields.

**Suggested areas for future research.** The focus of this study was not to compare and contrast the experiences and psychological contracts of full-time faculty teaching in urban, proprietary institutions with experiences of contingent faculty teaching for the same institutions. Nor was it to compare and contract the resulting psychological contracts of the contingent faculty with those of their supervisors. However, both avenues of research would provide additional insight into the nature of the psychological contracts developed and maintained between proprietary institutions and the contingent faculty who work for them.

Additionally, this study briefly mentioned organizational behaviors such as fit, commitment, organizational identity, organizational citizenship behaviors, and perceived organizational support as impacting and resulting from participants' experiences. While

there has been some research exploring the psychological contracts of faculty and the intersection of one or many of the aforementioned behaviors, little research has been conducted that explores the nature of these behaviors with contingent faculty. This avenue of research is especially crucial since contingent faculty now typically comprise over half of all faculty teaching for an institution, and even more at proprietary institutions and community colleges.

Another avenue for future research stems from the understanding that the participants in this study brought certain expectations with them to their new teaching experiences with the proprietary institution. While the influence of prior education and professional work experiences was explored in this study, the influence of prior teaching experiences at a different post-secondary institution, particularly another proprietary institution, on new teaching experiences was not explored. The same research avenue of carrying expectations developed from teaching in a face-to-face environment to that of teaching in an online environment, particularly for a proprietary institution, is also one that has potential for further exploration. In particular, despite a body of research that exists regarding serving urban learners, much is focused on the K-12 environment and little focuses on serving urban adult learners. Perin (2013) searched the literature regarding literacy interventions for urban, adult learners and found "only limited conclusions could be drawn on instructional effectiveness. This area is clearly ripe for an agenda of rigorous research" (p. 125).

Finally, despite wildly fluctuating enrollments and educational market share in the past decade, proprietary institutions have existed in the United States since early colonial times and serve to fill a gap in educating underserved and marginalized populations not

likely to be accepted as a student elsewhere. Despite their lengthy existence, little is known about proprietary education other than what appears in mainstream media. Lefebvre (2008) suggested that little scholarly research has been conducted about proprietary education to minimize the impact of potentially negative findings on shareholders and the institution's bottom financial line. However, students, staff, and faculty considering learning or working at a proprietary institution would be better served, and expectations better managed, if they knew more about these institutions ahead of time. For this reason, any scholarly research into the expectations brought to the learning or working relationship would benefit all parties involved.

### **Final Remarks**

**Importance of this study.** This study sought to better understand what contingent faculty teaching at urban, proprietary institutions experience and how those experiences impact the psychological contracts of these faculty members. From a qualitative inquiry standpoint, this study provided rich descriptions and analysis of what ten participants teaching at a variety of urban face-to-face and online environments experiences and how the participants reflected on those experiences to make meaning for themselves as an educator and professional.

While experiences varied from institution to institution, and even from participant to participant within the same institution, five overall realizations were common to all participants and critical to understanding participants' experiences. First, every single participant expressed commitment to helping their students succeed, regardless of institutional policy, available resources, etc. Second, all participants noticed a shift in institutional focus from the student and learning process to bringing in enrollments

regardless of student preparation for college level work. Participants found this altered focus frustrating and unpleasant. Third, participants often mentioned collegial and supportive relationships and resources that helped to mitigate the unpleasantness of the shift in institutional focus mentioned above. Fourth, all participants shared that they enjoyed the actual teaching and found that aspect of their experiences fulfilling, regardless of institution and despite some challenging students. Finally, participants came to accept what they experienced while teaching at their institutions because try as they might, they realized that they could not influence processes they saw as inequitable or unsupportive for students and faculty. While all five realizations could apply to any faculty member teaching at any institution, the second realization in particular seems to be more characteristic of proprietary education, especially in recent years.

From a practice perspective, this study provides important realizations, considerations, and recommendations for administrators working with contingent faculty teaching for urban, proprietary institutions. First, the important of providing early and thorough orientation and socialization opportunities cannot be emphasized enough. These early experiences, including mentoring, provide the basis for support needed by contingent faculty in order to understand institutional expectations, increase satisfaction with the teaching experience, enhance teaching performance capabilities, and better meet student-learning needs. Second, for contingent faculty unaccustomed to working in an urban environment, this study illustrates the importance of orientation to working in the urban environment and the need for institutions to provide additional ongoing support in order to assist faculty with understanding the wide and complex range of issues and abilities urban learners bring with them to the classroom. While many faculty do not feel



as though it is their role to address the extra-curricular and personal issues of their students, often time the faculty member is the only person to whom a student may reveal the need for additional support and understanding. Understanding appropriate boundaries and referral channels is critical for providing the support a student might need in order to have both their personal, and subsequent learning needs met.

**Contributions to literature.** From a literature perspective, this study is one of only a small number of qualitative studies regarding psychological contracts and one of a small number of formal studies regarding the experiences of faculty teaching in a proprietary institution. The findings of this study generally supported the results of earlier research regarding the nature of contingent faculty work, psychological contract theory, organizational behavior and organizational support theory. However, this study situated contingent faculty and their experiences in a seldom-explored environment- that of proprietary education where contingent faculty comprise the majority of faculty employed at these institutions.

This study also contributes to the body of literature regarding contingent faculty by confirming that early institutional practices significantly impact the relationship between new faculty and the institution, not only during the hiring and orientation period, but throughout a faculty member's experiences with the institution. By using psychological contract theory as an organizing framework for understanding contingent faculty' experiences, practitioners working with contingent faculty will better understand and manage expectations contingent faculty bring with them, and carry through to the duration of the employment relationship with their institutions. This in turn helps to inform the supportive resources needed to assist contingent faculty in feeling more

satisfied with their experiences, abilities to serve urban learners, and meet institutional expectations

Additionally, this study provides valuable insights into how contingent faculty teaching in urban, proprietary environments came to understand their students' ability, or in some cases, inability, to successfully meet learning outcomes. Despite early surprise and frustrations, the participants in this study demonstrated strong commitment to helping their students succeed regardless of institutional expectations and available resources. This commitment also helped to shape how a number of participants began to develop professional identities as themselves as teachers. Prior literature regarding professional teacher identity focused on either K-12 teachers or full time faculty (Abbas & McLean, 2001; Levin & Shaker, 2011; Lieff et al., 2012). Other research found that often a dualistic identity structure existed for faculty, especially those contingent faculty who identified with a particular professional field other than teaching professional identity (Malcolm & Zukas, 2002; Shreeve, 2011; Thirolf, 2013; Trede, Macklin, & Bridges, 2012; Washington, 2011). The contingent faculty in these studies often struggled with resolving the dual identity, perceiving in some cases that the part-time nature of the work was seen by academe insiders as less prestigious than a full-time faculty position. The participants in this study, however, took pride in their work as a teacher, regardless of status and if they also identified themselves as a member of another profession.

**Contributions to practice.** Several recommendations from the literature for managing and supporting contingent faculty were made earlier in this chapter. The findings of this study not only confirm that many of the recommendations in the literature for orienting, socializing, and supporting contingent faculty lead to more overall

satisfaction and productivity, but also to enhancing a contingent faculty member's commitment to their student's success both inside and outside of the classroom.

Thorough orientations that include an introduction to institutional resources, teaching expectations, mentoring, and curriculum development all help prepare new contingent faculty for their initial teaching experiences. Opportunities for on-going faculty development, participation in curriculum development and review as well as shared governance processes, fair compensation, recognition for accomplishments, and an environment where all faculty are treated with respect and value regardless of employment status set the stage for a more engaged, committed, and satisfied faculty.

Additionally, those responsible for developing faculty members should include initial and ongoing discussions about managing the diversity of students typically found in urban classrooms. While it might be more tempting upfront to simply discount urban learners as simply unprepared for, or disengaged in their education, the complexity of experiences and cultural considerations needing to be understood by faculty teaching in urban classrooms can be overwhelming. Providing institutional support to contingent faculty can help them better utilize their students' cultural capital to build a more engaging and supportive learning environment for their students.

Finally, there may be some faculty who are not a good fit for an institution and exhibit behaviors that are inappropriate or even harmful to their student's learning. Managers who understand the nature of the expectations contingent faculty bring with them to the employment relationship, and how those expectations are fulfilled, changed, or violated will be better able to coach faculty performance and address behaviors that

negatively impact the learning process. It may be that the faculty member is not a good fit for the institution and the employment relationship needs to be severed.

No teaching experience is ever really easy and most faculty members spend countless hours preparing what they hope will be a meaningful learning experience for their students. However, new contingent faculty hired at the last minute not provided adequate resources to help them prepare for their teaching experiences simply do not have the same advantages as faculty who did receive those resources. Not only does the faculty member experience disappointment and frustration, but also, these negative perceptions may turn into behaviors that spill over into the classroom and inadvertently jeopardize student learning and student outcomes. Urban, proprietary institutions and the students they serve benefit when they have a stable, satisfied, and productive contingent faculty body.

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## Appendix A- Interview Questions

### **Getting to know you:**

Name:

Degrees Held:

Current Position:

Institutions at which you have taught:

Please tell me a little about your professional career experiences.

Which of these experiences most influenced your decision to begin teaching as a contingent faculty member?

### **Getting to know why, and how, you began teaching at your institution:**

1. What led to your decision to begin teaching as a contingent faculty member at your institution?
2. What did you expect of the institution during the hiring process? What led you to have these expectations?
3. What did you experience during the application, interview, actual hiring, and orientation processes. Describe any personal interactions, circumstances, and/ or emotions surrounding these experiences and what made them significant for you.
4. How did these initial experiences impact your expectations of the institution?
5. As you actually began teaching, please describe your early experiences with the institution. Describe any personal interactions, circumstances, and/ or emotions surrounding these experiences and what made them significant for you.
6. How did these early experiences impact your initial relationship with the institution?

### **Experiences during on-going teaching for the institution:**

1. As you continued teaching for the institution, please describe your expectations. How were they similar or different from your initial expectations?
2. As you continued teaching for the institution, please describe your experiences during this time. Describe any personal interactions, circumstances, and/ or emotions surrounding these experiences and what made them significant for you.
3. How did these on-going experiences impact your relationship with the institution?

### **Deciding to continue, or discontinue, teaching for the institution:**

1. If you decided to continue teaching for the institution after your first term, who or what impacted to your decision? Describe any personal interactions, circumstances, and/ or emotions surrounding these experiences and what made them significant for you.

2. If you decided not to continue teaching for the institution after your first term, who or what impacted your decision? Describe the personal interactions, circumstances, and emotions surrounding these experiences and what made them significant for you.

**Wrapping up:**

1. What, if anything, about your teaching experience(s) surprised you most? In what way did it (they) surprise you and what impact did these experience(s) have on your relationship with the institution?
2. What, if anything, about your teaching experience(s) surprised you least? In what way did it (they) surprise you and what impact did these experience(s) have on your relationship with the institution?
3. Is there anything else of significance that you would like to share about your experience(s)?

## Appendix B- Letter of Informed Consent

### UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MILWAUKEE (UWM) CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH IRB Approval #14.502

#### 1. General Information

**Study Title:** "AN EXAMINATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS OF CONTINGENT FACULTY TEACHING AT URBAN, PROPRIETARY COLLEGES"

**Person in Charge of Study:** Dr. Larry Martin, Professor of Administrative Leadership- UWM Urban Education Doctoral Program, Principal Investigator; AnnMarie Marlier, Doctoral Student- UWM Urban Education Doctoral Program ([amarlier@uwm.edu](mailto:amarlier@uwm.edu) or [amarlier@wi.rr.com](mailto:amarlier@wi.rr.com) ), Student Principal Investigator

#### 2. Study Description

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to.

The purpose of this study is to better understand how the experiences of contingent faculty teaching in urban, proprietary institutions impact, if at all, their psychological employment relationship with their employer. Ten contingent faculty (five men and five women) who are, or have worked at, an on campus proprietary institution in the Midwest (primarily the Milwaukee, WI; Madison, WI; Chicago, IL; and Minneapolis, MN areas) will be interviewed for this study. You are free at any time to decide not to participate.

Participation in this study will consist of a single, 60 – 90 minute individual interview, held at a mutually agreed upon location by the participant and the student principal investigator. Additional follow-up contact from the student principal investigator may be needed for either additional information or clarification of interview material during the transcribing process. Data (interviews) will be conducted over through the Fall of 2013. While the student principal investigator will know your identity only for contact purposes, participants will choose a pseudonym to be used during the interview.

#### 3. Study Procedures

Participants will be asked to meet the student principal investigator for an in-person single, 60 – 90 minute individual interview, held at a mutually agreed upon location by the participant and the student principal investigator. The interview will be audio recorded by the student principal investigator for later transcription as the content of the answers will be analyzed and grouped into themes that will reflect the overall perceptions of participants. Participants will be asked questions designed to allow them to reflect on their teaching experiences, and share what they experienced with the student principle investigator. Follow-up questions may be asked for clarification during the interview, and during the transcribing process by the student principal investigator.

#### **4. Risks and Minimizing Risks**

There are no known risks, discomforts, or ethical dilemmas associated with this study other than those that one might encounter in your daily life. Participants may decline to answer any questions with which they are not comfortable answering and participants may decide to withdraw from participating in this study at any time and without repercussion of any kind

#### **5. Benefits**

The expected benefits associated with your participation in this study are a greater understanding of how the employment relationship between contingent faculty and the urban, proprietary institutions for which they teach is impacted, if at all, by what the contingent faculty member experiences, in earlier stages of their time with the institution. There are no direct benefits to you other than to further research.

#### **6. Study Costs and Compensation**

You will not be responsible for any of the costs from taking part in this research study. Upon completion of this study, each participant will be presented with a \$25 gift card as a token of appreciation from the student principal investigator.

#### **7. Confidentiality**

All information collected about you during the course of this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. We may decide to present what we find to others, or publish our results in scientific journals or at scientific conferences. Information that identifies you personally will not be used or released. Only the principal investigator and the student principle investigator will have access to the information. However, the Institutional Review Board at UW-Milwaukee or appropriate federal agencies like the Office for Human Research Protections may review this study's records.

Participants' real names and contact information will be kept separate from the data collected, will not be shared with any one, and will not be associated with anything that identifiable in the study. A pseudonym chosen by the participant will be the only name by which participants will be known for the duration of the study to include transcribing of the interview, field notes, data analysis, writing and sharing of results, and possible publications of the results – all of which will be conducted solely by the student principal investigator. Even the institution at which participants are (or were) affiliated will be given a pseudonym. All data will be kept in a secure, locked and/ or password protected location at the student principle investigator's personal residence. The data will be stored in the student principle investigator's personal residence for 3 years for future publication and presentation use.



## **8. Alternatives**

There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study.

## **9. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal**

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

Should you choose to withdraw from the study, we will use only the information collected to that point.

## **10. Questions**

Questions are welcome at any point in the study, including before any interviews are conducted, while the research is being conducted, and after the results are finalized. I would be happy to share final results of the study with you after completion of the study.

### **For more information about the study or the study procedures or treatments, or to withdraw from the study, contact:**

Dr. Larry Martin,  
UWM School of Education- Enderis Hall  
2400 E. Hartford Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53211  
414.229.5754

Or  
AnnMarie Marlier  
5785 Stefanie Way  
Caledonia, WI 53108  
414.759.4050

If you have questions about your rights, or complaints towards my treatment as a research subject, you may contact the UWM institutional Research Board. The Institutional Review Board may ask your name, but all complaints are kept in confidence.

Institutional Review Board  
Human Research Protection Program  
Department of University Safety and Assurances  
University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee  
P.O. Box 413  
Milwaukee, WI 53201  
(414) 229-3173

## 11. Signatures

### ***Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:***

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. If you choose to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time. You are not giving up any of your legal rights by signing this form. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, including the risks and benefits, and have had all of your questions answered, and that you are 18 years of age or older.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Subject/ Legally Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative      Date

### ***Research Subject's Consent to Audio/Video/Photo Recording:***

It is okay to audiotape me while I am in this study and use my audiotaped data in the research.

Please initial: \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

### ***Principal Investigator (or Designee)***

I have given this research subject information on the study that is accurate and sufficient for the subject to fully understand the nature, risks and benefits of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Study Role

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please indicate your consent by signing below, with full understanding of the nature and purpose of this study and procedures, to participate in this study. A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep for your records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### EDUCATION / HONORS/ INTERESTS:

Ph.D. in Urban Education: Concentration- Administration and Leadership/Adult Education; Minor- Business.

University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, May, 2014.

Master of Education degree in Adult Education.

Carroll College (now Carroll University), Waukesha, Wisconsin, December, 2001.

Bachelor of Arts degree in English and Communication.

St. Norbert College, De Pere, Wisconsin, May, 1990.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

#### Midland University

April, 2014 - Present

Dean of Graduate Programs and Faculty Development

#### Bryant and Stratton College- Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

June, 2002 -2014

Dean of Instruction (October, 2008 – April, 2014)

Associate Dean of Instruction (August, 2003 - October, 2008)

Learning Support Specialist (June, 2002 – Present)

#### YWCA of Greater Milwaukee- Milwaukee, Wisconsin

January, 2002 - June, 2002

Senior Instructor Specialist

#### Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families- Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Training Consultant

April, 2000- December, 2001

#### Bryant & Stratton College- Milwaukee, Wisconsin

June, 1999- April, 2000

Admissions Representative

#### Alverno College- Milwaukee, Wisconsin

July, 1995 - May, 1997

Coordinator of Student Activities

#### Ripon College- Ripon, Wisconsin

August, 1991 - May, 1992

Head Resident / Student Activities Para-Professional

#### Suomi College- Hancock, Michigan

August, 1990 - May, 1991

Resident Director / Student Activities Director

### ACADEMIC HONORS:

Golden Key Honors Society- Inducted in 2009.

National Scholars Honor Society- Accepted in 2006

Pi Beta Lambda International Education Honor Society- Inducted in 2006.

Chancellor's List in American Colleges and Universities- Recognized for 2006.

National Dean's List in American Colleges and Universities- Recognized for 2006.

### RESEARCH

“An Examination of the Psychological Contracts of Contingent Faculty Teaching at Urban, Proprietary Colleges” (Doctoral Dissertation)

University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin- May, 2014

“Defining Success: Perspectives of Fragile Family Parents” (Master’s Degree Final Project)  
Carroll College, Waukesha, Wisconsin- December, 2001

Peer reviewer for *Urban Review* journal- October, 2009- Present

### **PRESENTATIONS**

Faculty In-service Series- 2012-2013

Bryant & Stratton College, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
“Community of Inquiry, Student Engagement, and Active Teaching Methodologies”

Partner Thank You Event- October, 2009

Bryant & Stratton College, Milwaukee Market, Wisconsin  
“Why Accreditation?”

All Staff In-service- July, 2009

Bryant and Stratton College, Milwaukee and Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
“Career Mapping”

All Staff In-service- July, 2008

Bryant & Stratton College, Milwaukee and Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
“Portfolio Development for Students, Staff, and Faculty”

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education- November 9, 2006

Hyatt Regency, Milwaukee Wisconsin  
“Preparing Faculty to Teach Information Literacy in an Urban Context”

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education- November 9, 2006

Hyatt Regency, Milwaukee Wisconsin  
“Using Strategic Management to Plan, Create, and Measure Faculty Development Plans”

Faculty Mid-Semester Check-in- Fall 2006

Bryant & Stratton College, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
“Active Teaching”

Faculty In-service Series- 2005-2006

Bryant & Stratton College, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
“Rigor and Rubrics”

Faculty In-service Series- 2004-2005

Bryant & Stratton College, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
“Assessment”

- Faculty In-service Series- 2003-2004  
Bryant & Stratton College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Creating Teaching Portfolios”
- New Faculty Orientation- 2003-Present  
Bryant & Stratton College, Milwaukee and Wauwatosa, Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Action Research Consortium- April 13, 2002  
Mount Mary College, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
“Defining Success: Perspectives of Fragile Families”
- Virtual Care Providers Quarterly In-service Training- March 16, 2002  
Extendicare, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Listening, Communicating, and Follow-up for Customer Service”
- Wisconsin Fatherhood Conference- November 1, 2001  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Including Fathers In the Family Equation”  
With Leondis Fuller, Workforce Development Coordinator- Wisconsin  
Resource Center on Fragile Families
- Next Door Foundation- May 20 & 21, 2001  
Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Team Parenting”
- Next Door Foundation- May 30, 31, & June 1, 2001  
Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Motherhood Development”
- Adolescents and Families Conference- April 25, 2001  
Cable, Wisconsin  
“Including Fathers in the Family Equation”
- Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families- October, 2000-December, 2000  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Basic Skills for Practitioners”
- Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families- December 6, 2000  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Including Fathers in the Family Equation”
- All Staff In-service for the Department of Services to Children, Youth, and  
Families - December 19, 2000 (3)  
Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin and Metropolitan  
Chicago, Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Back to Basics”

- New Staff Training for the Department of Services to Children, Youth, and Families - Fall, 2000 to December, 2001 (10)  
Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin and Metropolitan Chicago, Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“History, Policies, Outreach, Case Management, and Facilitation”
- Fathers Matter: Next Steps Racine Community Forums- August 31, 2000  
Gateway Technical College, Racine, Wisconsin  
“Maneuvering Through Systems”
- Fathers Matter: Next Steps Racine Community Forums- July 12, 2000  
Gateway Technical College, Racine, Wisconsin  
“Breaking Stereotypes”
- Milwaukee Bureau of Child Welfare- June, 2000- June, 2001 (31)  
Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Including Fathers in the Family Equation”
- Quarterly Customer Service Training- June, 2000- Present (4)  
Workforce Development Center, Racine, Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Department of Corrections- June 22, 2001  
Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Nontraditional Opportunities for Work”
- Bryant and Stratton College- Spring, 2000  
Kettle Moraine High School, Delavan, Wisconsin  
“Career and Education Planning”  
With Kathryn Cotey, Admissions Representative- Bryant and Stratton College
- Bryant and Stratton College- Spring, 2000  
Pius High School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Dress for Success,” “Mock Interviews”
- Bryant and Stratton College- January 11, 2000  
Waukesha West High School, Waukesha, Wisconsin  
“Job Preparation, Portfolio Development, and Interviewing”  
With Kathryn Cotey, Admissions Representative- Bryant and Stratton College
- Bryant and Stratton College- Fall, 1999 and Spring, 2000  
Juneau High School and Pius High School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Job Preparation, Portfolio Development, and Interviewing”  
“Making Your Dreams Come True” (Goal Setting)

- Peer Advisor Training- May 16, 1997  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Empowering Yourself as a Peer Advisor”
- National Association for Campus Activities Regional Conference- April 12, 1997  
University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point, Stevens Point, Wisconsin  
“Share Everything, Play Fair, and Don’t Hit People” (Team Building)
- National Association for Campus Activities Regional Conference- April 11, 1997  
University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point, Stevens Point, Wisconsin  
“Getting Your Group Focused in Times of Change”  
With Pamela Fredendall, Career Services- Alverno College
- Milwaukee United Campus Activities Organization Milwaukee Metropolitan Student  
Leadership Conference- October 11, 1996  
Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Share Everything, Play Fair, Don’t Hit People”
- Alverno Overnight- Fall, 1996; Winter, 1997; Spring, 1997  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Life as a Student”
- Take One- Fall, 1996  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Peer Advisor Training- May 17, 1996  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Many Faces of Leadership- Revised”
- Admissions Department- May, 1996  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Presentation to Deerfield and Highland Park High Schools  
“Student Life in College”
- Women In Communication Meeting- September 13, 1995  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Benefits of a Liberal Arts Education”
- New Student Orientation- Fall, 1995  
Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
“Getting Involved”
- Mid Year Residence Life Conference- February 1, 1992  
University of Wisconsin- Oshkosh, Oshkosh, Wisconsin  
“What is Normal Anyway?: Celebrating Diversity”  
With Becky Wolf, Head Resident- Ripon College

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

On-going New Faculty Orientation and Faculty In-service workshops

First Year Experience- Winter 2010 through present

Career Management- Winter and Spring, 2003 and Spring, 2008

Composition and Research- Spring, 2003 and Spring, 2005

Human Relations- Fall, 2002 and Winter, 2003

Small Group and Interpersonal Communication- Spring and Fall, 2002  
Bryant & Stratton College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

General Education Diploma Classes- January, 2002 through June, 2002

YWCA of Greater Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Pre- Apprenticeship Program- Fall, 2000

Children UpFront, Racine, Wisconsin

“Skills for Life and Work”

New Student Seminar- Fall, 1996

Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Resident Assistant Preparation- Spring, 1991

Suomi College, Hancock, Michigan

With Mark Cavis, Dean of Students- Suomi College

### **CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

Developed and led Human Relations, Critical Thinking, Career Management, Internship, Interpersonal and Small Group Communication, Pre-College Math, Survey of Math, and Introduction to Information Literacy courses.

Led Associate and Baccalaureate Criminal Justice, General Education/ Liberal Arts (including Biology, Career Preparation, Communication, English, Math, Sociology, and Psychology courses), Health Services Administration, Technology/ Graphic Design, Medical Assisting, and Paralegal programs.

Bryant & Stratton College- Milwaukee and Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

Outside Reviewer- *Student Success Textbook Series*

Houghton Mifflin Publishing Company, New York, New York

“Master Student Reader” by Catherine Anderson published August, 2006

General Education Diploma Classes- January - June, 2002

YWCA of Greater Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Motherhood Development- Fall, 2001

Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Revisions and Editing



Team Parenting- Spring, 2001

Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

2001 Training Series

Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

New Staff Training for the Department of Services to Children, Youth, and Families - Fall, 2000 to December, 2001

Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin and Metropolitan Chicago, Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

“History, Policies, Outreach, Case Management, and Facilitation”

Fathers Matter: Next Steps Racine Community Forums- Summer, 2000- Spring, 2001 (6)

Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Customer Service- Summer, 2000

Wisconsin Resource Center on Fragile Families, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Orientation Simulation- Summer, 2000 and Fall, 2000

Bryant and Stratton College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Peer Educators for Effective Relating (P.E.E.R.) Program- Spring, 1991

Suomi College, Hancock, Michigan

With Francine Jones, Counselor

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Bryant & Stratton College- Milwaukee Market- June, 2002- April, 2014

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Pre-College Math Blended Learning Pilot Team (System)

Code of Conduct Committee- Chair / Judicial Officer (Local)

Portfolio Development Day Planning Committee- Chair (Local)

Student Learning Portfolio (System)

Student Success Committee (System)

Faculty Development Committee- Chair (Local)

Progress Report Assessment Committee (Local)

Accreditation planning, self-study completion, and visit committees for Middle

States Commission on Higher Education, Medical Assisting Educational

Review Board/Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education

Programs, and National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission

(now Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing), and

Wisconsin State Board of Nursing

Dismissal Appeals and Re-Admission Committee (Local)

Retention Committee (Local)

Student Awards Committee (Local)

Bryant and Stratton College- July, 1999- May, 2000  
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
 Open House Planning Committee- Chair  
 Retention Committee

Alverno College- July, 1995- June, 1997  
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
 Orientation Committee- Chair  
 Travelship Selection Committee- Chair  
 Common Hour Advising Committee- Chair  
 Weekday College/ Weekend College Student Support  
 Quality of Campus Life Committee  
 Committee on International Study and Student Exchange  
 Milwaukee United Campus Activities Officers

Alverno College- July, 1996- June, 1997  
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
 Project LEAD Steering Committee- Chair

Ripon College- September, 1991-May, 1992  
 Ripon, Wisconsin  
 Media Council- Chair  
 Johnson Hall Council- Chair  
 Caestecker Fine Arts Committee- Secretary

Suomi College (now Finlandia University)- September, 1990 - May, 1991  
 Hancock, Michigan  
 Judicial Review Committee  
 Consortium on Substance Abuse and Lifestyle Awareness

#### **AFFILIATIONS/ PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS, PAST AND PRESENT**

Wisconsin Women in Higher Education Leadership- Since 2008  
 American Association for Adult and Continuing Education- Since October, 2005  
 Professional and Organizational Development Network- Since October, 2005  
 MENSA America- April, 2005-April, 2006  
 Carroll College- January – December, 2002  
 Waukesha, Wisconsin  
 Mentor for students in the Master's in Education Graduate  
 Research Core  
 St. Norbert College- January, 2002- Present  
 Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
 Milwaukee Alumni Chapter  
 National Association for Campus Activities- Wisconsin- Spring, 1996-  
 June, 1997  
 Association of College and University Housing Officers- Midwest-  
 September, 1991- May, 1992

American Association of University Women- 1996-1997

### **ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Certified Prior Learning Assessor - December 2013

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, Chicago, Illinois

International Conference on First Year Experience and Students in  
Transition – July, 2009

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Wisconsin Women in Higher Education Leadership Conference- Octobers,  
2007, 2008, 2011, & 2012

National Conference on Student Assessment – July, 2008

Phoenix, Arizona

Element K Modules:

“Accepting a Decision”- October, 2008

“Change Management for Employees”- October, 2008

Brightline Compliance Module:

“Preventing Harassment on Campus: Supervisors’ Edition” –  
October, 2007

StrengthsQuest Educator Seminar – September, 2007

American Association of Adult and Continuing Education National  
Conference – Novembers 2006 & 2007

Professional and Organizational Development Network National  
Conference- October, 2006

Bryant and Stratton College In-Services and Seminars:

“Being an Online Advocate” – September, 2005

“Living our Philosophy” – March, 2005

“Learning from Our Stories” – April, 2003

“Understanding the Business” – April 2003

“All Star Team Building” – February, 2003

“Teaching the Workplace Competencies” – January, 2003

“Student Success” – September, 2002

“Diversity Training” – April, 2002

Noel Levitz National Conference on Student Retention – July, 2004

Houghton Mifflin Student Success Conference – July, 2003

Adolescents and Families Conference – April, 2001

Cable, Wisconsin

National Institute on Domestic Violence Training– June, 2000

Learning International Seminar – December, 1999

“Professional Selling Skills”

National Seminars Group- February, 1996

“Thinking Outside the Box”