

Non-tenure-stream Positions: the Future of our Profession?  
A Panel Sponsored by the Committee for the Promotion of Latin  
Kristin O. Lord (Wilfrid Laurier University), co-president  
Carin M. Green (University of Iowa), co-president

Like many fields in academe, an increasing proportion of positions in Classics is non-tenure-stream. Such limited-term appointments may be single-year or multi-year, full-time or part-time. This panel will discuss the relative number of such positions, the causes of the changes in the job market, and trends for the future. We will also look at career-building strategies for Classicists in contingent employment who are trying to work their way toward a tenure-stream position. Finally, given the increasing interest in unionization among contingent faculty throughout North America, we will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of faculty unions, as well as the legal status of such unions in private post-secondary institutions in the US. Statistical analysis of all of these trends will be provided where it is available.

1. Introduction: President's Remarks
2. Contingent Faculty in Classics: Numbers and Causes
3. Limited-Term Jobs: a Strategy or a Career?
4. Moving up the Totem Pole: one person's account of (finally) landing that tenure-track position
5. Sticking (or not) with a Union: Some Benefits and Limits of Unionization for Classicists in Non-Tenure-Stream Positions
6. Response: President

Contingent Faculty in Classics: Numbers and Causes  
Adam D. Blistein (American Philological Society)

This paper will review the available data concerning the use of contingent faculty in Classics classrooms. The American Philological Association (APA) has been collecting data about faculty staffing in Classics departments for a number of years, but the focus of those questionnaires has been on the experiences of women and minority groups in obtaining positions in the field. Still, the surveys conducted in the 1990's and early 2000's by the APA's Committee on the Status of Women and Minority Groups ([http://www.apaclassics.org/profmat/deptreport\\_03.html](http://www.apaclassics.org/profmat/deptreport_03.html)) and more recently its Division of Professional Matters (<http://www.apaclassics.org/profmat/Dec04ReportFigures.pdf>, see esp. figures 2 and 3) suggest that through this period 20%-25% of Classics faculty were not on the tenure-track.

A survey conducted in 1999 by the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW: <http://www.academicworkforce.org>) suggests that the number of contingent faculty is higher than that reported by APA. CAW is a group of learned societies in the humanities (including APA) formed because its members felt that the use of contingent faculty was increasing on North American campuses, and that the extent and educational implications of their use were not well understood. The 1999 survey (<http://www.historians.org/projects/caw/>) focused on contingent faculty themselves and included graduate assistants. Table 1 of the CAW survey shows about 30% of "Philology" faculty off the tenure track plus another 25% consisting of graduate assistants. These figures may be inflated because they include fewer responses by Classics departments than the APA instruments, and they emerge from a significant difference in methodology: CAW asked for numbers of individuals while APA asked for FTEs.

This paper will present data from APA and CAW surveys as well as preliminary information from a new Humanities Indicator Project being undertaken by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (<http://www.amacad.org/projects/indicators.aspx>). New APA data from the academic year 2006-2007 should also be available by next April. The paper will also discuss reasons for hiring contingent faculty and whether the experience of Classics differs in any respect from that of other disciplines in the humanities. Even in a fantasy world of completely adequate academic funding, departments would still need to find temporary replacements for tenure-track faculty taking sabbatical or personal leaves and to staff courses that suddenly become popular. In the real, financially difficult world, is there evidence that Classics positions are being removed from the tenure track when incumbents depart, or that non-tenure track positions are being created to respond to higher enrollments? APA's placement listings show that tenure-track positions continue to exist in the field, but what is the significance of the fact that newly minted Ph.D.'s rarely obtain such positions until they have held a few one-year appointments?

Limited-Term Jobs: a Strategy or a Career?  
Madeleine M. Henry (Iowa State University)

Workers in the U.S. across most occupational fields are less and less likely to garner positions that will last the duration of their working life and are even less likely to receive a guaranteed-benefit pension. Academic workers and academic work do not escape, as the growth of limited-term jobs shows. While the growth of limited-term positions is in itself not a positive development, other threats to the viability of a lifetime vocation of classical studies also present themselves. Notable among these threats are the growth of the model of the “new American university” and the increasing array of humanities coursework in nontraditional, new areas. Today’s students can choose interdisciplinary fields which combine representation, performance, language study, and history, such as indigenous studies, diaspora studies, and area studies which have no obvious connection to the Mediterranean or to the traditional, Eurocentric concept of the classical tradition. While we welcome these new fields, we must acknowledge as well that they compete for the stage in many postsecondary institutions—particularly in vocationally-oriented public ones like that real State University which inspired novelist Jane Smiley’s 1995 comic masterpiece *Moo*.

It is incumbent on our profession to make sure graduate and even undergraduate students are aware of their employment prospects, and to make them aware of the shifting terrain. As Stanley Burstein recently noted, most graduate degree programs aim to produce research-university scholars whose graduates’ main goal is a tenure-track position at a research university or liberal arts college. At the same time, jobs are also available for those wish to teach general humanities fields and who are willing to work in comprehensive universities, precollege settings, or even—gasp—community colleges. The duties and opportunities in these realms entail research productivity far less than they entail teaching and outreach.

The paper shall address (with statistics and anecdotes) such questions as: Is “The New American University” eclipsing the European model of research university? Is the latter model, from which elite humanities Ph.D.-granting American universities derive, outmoded? What are the tensions between the N.A.U. model and classical studies? Where might the best employment prospects and research opportunities be for those in classical studies and allied fields? What is the role of professional organizations? How might we productively encourage research and publication in cultural studies areas; interaction among pre-university, university, and postgraduate teacher-scholars; interaction with Hispanists, Spanish-speaking classicists, and Latin Americanists? Demographics of our future students and colleagues.

#### Bibliography

- Marc Bousquet, *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation*. NYU Press 2008.
- Stanley Burstein, APA Ballot and Election Materials statement, pp. 10-11, *APA Newsletter* (June 2008).
- Michael Crow, *The New American University: The New Gold Standard*. Inaugural Address, Arizona State University 2002.
- Jane Smiley, *Moo!* Knopf 1995.

Moving up the Totem Pole: one person's account of (finally) landing that tenure-track position  
Georgia L. Irby-Massie (College of William and Mary)

Although the number of tenure stream positions in the Classics has remained stable for the last several decades, University programs continue to award terminal degrees to deserving young scholars, further glutting an already overcrowded job market. After time in “the trenches,” some leave the field altogether or accept, to their credit, high-school teaching positions. Others continue to accept temporary teaching jobs, which may last a year or two, or the duration of a career. A series of temporary teaching posts is, admittedly, disruptive to one's professional and personal life, and it is particularly dispiriting to junior faculty who successfully manage to juggle the demands of active research with full-time, and sometimes oppressively heavy, teaching loads.

Inasmuch as a stellar teaching record is essential to obtaining and keeping academic jobs, the tenure track offer is made only to those who have managed to remain active scholars. I will reflect further on this particular challenge to the un- and pre-tenured faculty. I will share some of the techniques that have worked for myself and colleagues who have undergone similar experiences.

For most of us, finally obtaining the tenure track position is the result only of a delicate and incalculable combination of raw luck, dedication, talent, visibility, and connections. Few of us will “catch the brass ring” directly out of graduate school, and it is important to keep this perplexing process in perspective. It is easier to say in hindsight to say that I would not exchange my experiences as an academic gypsy for anything in the world. I have first hand knowledge of the methodologies and philosophies of other academic departments, of large and small schools, and of students from a broad range of backgrounds and expectations.

Sticking (or not) with a Union:  
Some Benefits and Limits of Unionization for Classicists in Non-Tenure-Stream Positions  
Kristin O. Lord (Wilfrid Laurier University)

Post-secondary educational institutions differ from most employers in other economic sectors in that their administrators are typically chosen from among their peers. This emphasis on collegiality is one of the reasons academics may find it difficult to contemplate organizing a faculty union. Full-time faculty members at private colleges in the US typically do not have union representation due to legal constraints. However, there is an increasing interest in unionizing part-time faculty at these institutions. Unionization of both full-time and part-time faculty is also a factor at public colleges in the US and is even more significant in Canada.

Because of the tenuous employment position of non-tenured and non-tenure-track faculty (whether full-time limited term or part-time), the prospect of joining or organizing a labor union may seem especially attractive. This is perhaps even more true of those classified as part-time, as they may nevertheless have responsibilities approximating those of their full-time colleagues. Despite differences in public and institutional attitudes toward unions in communities and regions of North America, certification procedures are broadly similar across jurisdictions, allowing for comparative analysis.

Union negotiations are complicated by the diverse and sometimes conflicting interests of their membership. Unionized non-tenure-stream faculty may belong to their own associations, form a separate bargaining unit with permanent faculty, or may be classified with graduate student teaching assistants. Within each group there are people who teach for a variety of reasons (e.g., gaining experience while completing the Ph.D., long-term non-tenured faculty, and professionals outside the university who teach one or two courses in their area of expertise). Classicists are somewhat atypical of such union members in that they are much less likely to hold outside professional jobs and are more likely to engage in research.

For Classicists and others in a similar position, the results of unionization are mixed. Based on broad data sets and several case studies, including an informal survey at the presenter's own institution, the available information suggests that unions have spearheaded real achievements in redressing the most egregious inequities of non-tenure-stream employment, in both compensation and fair labor practices. However, they have so far had much less success in reducing the disparity between tenure-stream faculty and others, particularly those with per-course contracts, in job stability and seniority. While some union contracts allow for the possibility of conversion to a permanent position, most have not achieved these goals. As Classicists may be overrepresented among faculty who would benefit from such conversions, this is a major limitation.