

Adjunct Faculty Compensation: A Cycle of Exploitation

Adjunct faculty are almost always qualified to teach the courses to which they are assigned, but they are paid at an exploitative scale and by the course, and they almost never receive any benefits whatsoever. Here are some statistics on the average compensation per course and by discipline for adjunct faculty nationwide. The statistics are from the *Chronicle of Higher Ed*'s database, but they are self-reported and not definitive. But they suggest very pointedly why the institutional reporting of adjunct faculty compensation has been very spotty and unreliable.

Undoubtedly, during our strike, the university will exploit the financial precarity of most adjunct faculty to try to cover some of the courses that full-time faculty teach. We view this tactic as a further exploitation of these faculty. If the priorities at our institution, and others, were not so skewed toward non-academic initiatives and enterprises, administrative bloat, excessive spending on athletics, and property acquisition and development, there would be revenues to provide make full-time positions available to many of the adjunct faculty who are actively seeking such positions.

As you consider the compensation per course, it is easy to calculate the annual compensation for an adjunct faculty member who manages to cobble together a ten-course annual load: just add a zero to the average compensation per course—and then immediately deduct the cost of health insurance that will need to be paid out of pocket. Then consider that in order to arrange a ten-course annual teaching load, an adjunct faculty member will have to teach at two or three institutions and arrange his or her schedule to allow time for traveling back and forth between them, in some instances several times during the course of a day.

Perhaps our strike will provide an opportunity for some adjunct faculty to earn some extra money. No one really can blame them for taking advantage of such an opportunity. But the university's exploitation of adjunct faculty will clearly be given a further grim turn by this administration. Adjunct faculty compensation per course at Wright State is generally below, rather than at or above, the national average by discipline, except in some instances in which adjunct faculty are teaching specialized upper-level courses—and in most of those cases, teaching is not the main source of income for those faculty.

Lastly, in recent testimony before the Ohio legislature, Ohio Conference leaders documented that the problem with so many courses *not being taught* by full-time faculty has much less to do with their workloads than it has to do with the steady erosion in the number of faculty who are full-time, never mind tenure-track.

Accounting \$2,055
Anthropology: \$2,636
Architecture and Design: \$2,405
Art History: \$3,167 per course
Arts: \$3,174
Biology: \$3,098
Business: \$2,115 per course
Chemistry: \$2,600
Communications: \$2,145
Composition, Rhetoric, Writing: \$1,989
Computer Sciences: \$2,867
Criminal Studies: \$1,459
Divinity Studies: \$2,310
Earth Science: \$1,800
Economics: \$2,925
Education: \$2,029
English: \$2,315
Environmental Studies and Forestry:
\$2,255
Family and Consumer Science: \$2,310
Foreign Language: \$3,006
Gender and Sexuality Studies: \$3,161
General Studies: \$1,661
Geography: \$2,248
Health Sciences: \$2,175
History: \$2,062 per course
Human Physical Performance and
Recreation: \$2,070
Humanities: \$2,262 per course
Journalism: \$2,883
Landscape Architecture: \$4,785
Liberal Arts: \$2,404 per course
Library and Museum Studies: \$4,333
Linguistics: \$2,310
Literature: \$2,000
Mathematics: \$2,085
Music: \$2,757
Nursing: \$1,325
Performing Arts: \$3,360
Philosophy: \$2,796
Physics: \$2,310
Political Science: \$2,540
Professions and Applied Science:
\$2,628
Psychology: \$2,128

Public Administration: \$2,310
Religion: \$2,413 per course
Science and Technology: \$2,765
Social Sciences: \$2,150
Social Work: \$2,570
Sociology: \$2,134
Statistics: \$2,310
Systems Science: \$2,310
Transportation: \$2,310
Visual Arts: 2,883 per course