

literature review

Training, support and management of sessional teaching staff: A review of the literature

Introduction

The Australian higher education system is one of the most casualized industries in the employment market. It is difficult to conceive of any major corporations or agencies that function with as high a percentage of part-time professionals as utilized in Australian universities. Significant reductions in government funding, increased student diversity and expectations, burgeoning student numbers, and the accommodation of changing educational technologies and globalisation have led to substantial changes in the employment practices in the higher education system. Most notably, there has been a rapid growth in the number of non-tenured teaching staff who are employed as lecturers, tutors, demonstrators or lab assistants on a casual or sessional basis (DETYA, 2001). As class sizes have increased and permanent staff levels remain unchanged or even diminished, there has generally been a greater reliance on casual or sessional staff to conduct tutorials, problem-based classes, laboratory and practical classes. Previously, casual and sessional appointments were used only occasionally to supplement course offerings and to provide temporary replacements for tenure-track or tenured faculty. But more recently, universities have responded to financial pressures by firmly embedding part-time, casual and temporary teaching positions in their employment structure. As a consequence, institutions are increasingly being encouraged to work toward the enhancement of support mechanisms for sessional employees. The key areas of concern are professional development, employment stability, improving working conditions, the establishment of on-going support mechanisms, as well as assisting supervisors to improve the management of sessional staff. The first part of this paper highlights training requirements, support needs and other issues affecting sessional academics and their supervisors and ultimately the department and the student. The review of literature that follows examines problems associated with a reliance on sessional teachers and highlights recent strategies and suggestions, from Australia and elsewhere, to support sessional university teachers.

Who are sessional teachers?

I am certain of one thing, however..... If one considers the very different categories (of) graduate teaching assistants, postdoctoral fellows, adjunct faculty, and part-time faculty and asks what the individuals in them have in common, the answer is not much-except for one thing-they are all defined by what they are not: they are not regular faculty. That would simply be a fact of life, not a problem, were it not for the propensity of our status-conscious regular faculty, and hence our institutions, to think of them and to treat them as if they were lesser species. (Langenberg, 1998, p43).

For the purposes of this paper, sessional teachers are any university instructors who are not in tenured or permanent positions. The term commonly applies to postgraduate students, research fellows, external people from industry or professions, casual tutors and clinical tutors and people who are regularly employed on a course-by-course basis (often on a regular basis over a number of years). The types of appointments held by sessional teachers include teaching, research and administrative work. Sessional lecturing staff often hold academic positions, generally at A or B level and may be contracted to teach on a per course basis. Academic appointments also include tutors who work under the supervision of a senior tutor or academic. Demonstrators, clinical teachers, practical or field demonstrators may either be

appointed on academic or general staff awards. Sessional teaching staff may also hold research positions as research fellows or post-doctoral researchers who are responsible for limited teaching of a particular aspect of a course.

Some universities distinguish between sessional academic and sessional tutoring positions, providing support and training for one type of position but not the other. Other universities make no distinction between the type of appointment, but distinguish between the type of teaching when providing training. Still others provide no support or training under any circumstances to casual and sessional staff. These inconsistencies in the standards of the provision of training exist across universities, but also exist within and across Schools and Departments. As a consequence, teaching and learning in small group learning sessions (such as tutorials, laboratories and practicals) in certain universities is not reaching its optimal efficacy. The following sections briefly delineate the training and support needs that exist for sessional academics in Australian universities.

Why are sessional teachers employed?

The reasons underlying the employment of part-time faculty vary substantially between higher education institutions (Gappa and Leslie, 1993), and even within the schools and disciplines of those institutions (Benjamin, 1998). Contemporary universities are increasing their dependence on part-time staff in order to accommodate issues of reduced funding, diversity in the student population, changing employment conditions, changing educational technologies, internationalism and globalization (Gappa and Leslie, 1993; Tuckman and Pickerill, 1988; Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998).

The on-going reliance on casual staffing arrangements is considered justifiable by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) for the following reasons:

1. Continued uncertainty as to the level of funding to institutions;
2. The need to alter course offerings to accommodate fluctuating student demands and to alter research priorities in response to changing priorities of research funding bodies;
3. The need to employ staff with specific experience and skills available only from persons actively engaged in the industry of their teaching areas;
4. The need to refresh the skills and knowledge of staff especially in the areas of professional education;
5. The desirability of offering post-graduate employment opportunities;
6. A need to cater for those employees who prefer short-term or non-continuing employment; and,
7. The delay associated with altering staff arrangements involving permanent employees.

It is also noted that while there are legitimate reasons for the use of casual staff and these have been vindicated by the AIRC, the disproportionate levels of casual staff in the higher education sector have been questioned (Australian Industry Relations Commission, 1997). With enrolment pressures increasing and operating resources for students diminishing (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1998), many universities use part-time teachers to achieve 'fiscal flexibility', that is, to accommodate short-term changes in funding. But the AIRC considered that the higher education sector's response to financial pressures was "formulated disproportionately" around the employment of casual and sessional staff and resisting their graduation to permanent positions (Australian Industrial Relations Commission, 1997, p27). Gappa and Leslie (1993, p. 92) argue that it is the permanent academic staff who benefit

because “the use of part-timers serves as a fiscal buffer to protect the salaries, workload, and tenure of full-time faculty.”

Training and support of sessional staff

Most universities require that there be an induction program for new academic teaching staff, that departments develop mentoring programs for new academic staff and that there be an introductory tertiary teaching program or award course in higher education. These programs are primarily provided for the professional development of contract or casual academics (who are regularly and continually employed) and, primarily, full time staff. These are supported by university or faculty wide staff development policies and appointment and promotion procedures for career development.

There are fewer opportunities for professional development for the majority of part-time and casual staff. These staff members are typically employed on a course by course basis to lecture, tutor or demonstrate. The nature of these short-term appointments means that the management of these staff, the training provided and the policies on appointment and career development is more varied across universities and within universities than it is for continuing academic staff. Often sessional academic staff members are fully responsible for the coordination and teaching of a course, yet their access to support, training and mentoring is often limited or non-existent. This is because the nature of casual employment often necessitates employment in other occupations and, therefore, the scheduling of classes in the evenings or on weekends. Also, casual academics are rarely apportioned the necessary office access, which encourages them to spend minimal time on-campus. This is further exacerbated if the sessional staff member is contracted to teach an off-campus course and may rarely attend campus or interact with their colleagues or access services that could support their teaching.

A recent survey of sessional staff at Monash University (1999) found that casual sessional staff were predominantly involved in giving tutorials and laboratory classes, marking assignments and examinations, as well as providing feedback to students on completed work and advice on the preparation of work. The most popular means of assisting these staff was the provision of printed materials that outlined class activity and informal discussions about an activity with supervisory staff. The training methods applied to these staff were primarily in the realm of information provision, rather than any form of instruction designed at improving teaching techniques. It is entirely feasible that the majority of casual sessional staff receive no explicit and direct training for their teaching activities.

Casual and sessional employees are often the teaching staff with the most direct contact with and, hence, influence on students’ learning. As such there is an obligation on universities to provide training for the teaching tasks that sessional academics are being employed to undertake, focussing particularly on the specific teaching tasks to be undertaken. This specific focus would seem essential because sessional teaching staff are often not people beginning a long term academic teaching career. In most, if not all settings, the goals for the training of sessional teaching appointees are quite limited. It would be poor management of resources to require such appointees to any form of general comprehensive teacher-training program. Should sessional staff later move into academic or longer term contracts, they could access, at that time, more comprehensive professional development programs.

Management of sessional staff

Supervisors of sessional staff

The provision of training and support for sessional staff is clearly a problematic issue for universities, but an equally important issue is the management of those staff. The supervisors or coordinators of sessional staff need to ensure that the appropriate employment practices,

training and support are provided, but most are unprepared for this role. Many may be unaware of the appropriate conditions of employment, induction and training requirements, load and resource allocation, or ongoing support and monitoring processes. As a consequence, often practices are established that are not the most effective or supportive of the interests of the department, staff member or students. This may occur because they are unaware of alternative models and/or that there is no policy or documented process to be followed to address these issues.

This is unnecessary because there are excellent examples of policies, processes and practices in the employment, training and support of sessional staff. Unfortunately, in many cases they are not widely known outside the immediate context in which they are employed. Thus, it is important that these practices, and the contexts in which they are applied, are documented and made available to others in the relevant institution, but also to disseminate effective practices and policies within the entire higher education sector. A wider dissemination of information would provide supervisors and coordinators of casual and sessional staff with access to model examples and alternatives for those who would like to improve their existing practices.

Resource managers of sessional staff

Just as supervisors are frequently unprepared for their role, Heads of Schools/Departments are often ignorant of many of the issues associated with employing sessional staff. As the Heads of Schools tend to be responsible for the allocation of resources, it is important that they are aware of the management issues and resource implications involved in employing, training and supporting sessional staff. The provision of good examples, models and policies addressing resource allocation would serve to educate university administrators about the costs and issues associated with employing and supporting sessional staff.

The sections that follow review the existing literature on:

- Problems faced by sessional appointees;
- Examples of good practice in professional development and support of sessional staff;
- Examples of School/Faculty based policy and procedures; and
- Existing policies and trends affecting sessional staff.

In order to identify and describe these issues, solutions and policies that may assist resource managers, course convenors and others involved in the management of sessional appointees to appropriately resource, train and support these staff members and their immediate supervisors. To foreground the issues faced by resource managers and supervisors, it is important to precede them with an examination of the problems arising from an increasing dependence on sessional teaching staff.

Problems emerging from sessional appointments

Increasingly university departments are forced to become flexible in response to ever-changing circumstances (such as sudden enrolment increases, funding cuts, the introduction of technology and departures of permanent staff members). The staffing model in the higher education sector now consists of a core of permanent staff with a periphery contingent workforce (particularly in the range of Lecturer B level and below). This reflects a general trend towards the minimalist, flexible organisational model (Handy 1993). The employment of casual labour in universities has clear financial advantages. Some casual employees report that their part-time status is advantageous for professional or personal reasons. Despite these mutual benefits, sessional appointments are also associated with many institutional and individual problems. Studies from Australia and overseas show that excessive reliance upon

sessional teachers, inappropriate use of their labour or inadequate support can undermine the achievement of educational objectives and compromise individual commitment or satisfaction (e.g. Bassett, 1998; Gappa, 1993; Lundy & Warne, 1990).

Institutional problems

In the decade between 1988 and 1998 there was a 69.9% growth in the employment of casual academics (Richards 1998). Because the option of employing teachers on a sessional or temporary basis offers significant financial benefits for an institution and can enhance the diversity of curricular programs, the importance of ensuring that these individuals are given appropriate privileges is often overlooked. Significant problems engendered by this newfound reliance on sessional teachers include the fact that the availability and willingness of an employee to accept a position is often the primary criterion for selection. Because full-time academic staff are overworked as it is and do not have the time to spend on personnel selection, decisions on the employment of casual staff are commonly made in haste leading to the employment of inexperienced or unsuitable teachers (Jacobs, 1998). In addition, having sessional teachers who are unsupported, uninformed or given inadequate training inevitably leads to inconsistencies in teaching and marking and, therefore, student complaints and time delegated to redressing these problems.

Some universities have invested time and resources to formulate general policies and guidelines for good practices to ensure the long-term quality of academic instruction, academic institutions, and the academic profession. These have included the delineation of institutional measures that have been implemented to improve the quality of part-time and adjunct faculty instruction and professional employment and institutional practices to rectify inappropriate or excessive reliance on part-time and adjunct faculty (Leslie, 1998). In many Australian universities, standard institution-wide practice is to issue a letter of appointment to all casual or sessional teachers (NTEU, 2000). This letter states the type of employment and the terms of employment in relation to:

- The duties required;
- The number of hours and often number of weeks required; the classification level of work and rate of pay;
- A statement that any additional duties required during the term will be paid for; and,
- Other main conditions of employment (including the identity of the employer, or the documentary, or other recorded sources from which such conditions derive) and the duties and reporting relationships to apply upon appointment.

According to Jacobs (1998), in their efforts to apply consistent policy to all circumstances involving sessional teaching staff, many schools and faculties are hampered by over-regulation at the institutional level. He notes that this exacerbates the existing problems and that "Uniformity of practice may be administratively efficient but [it is] educationally unsound" (Jacobs, 1998, p14). Instead, Jacobs recommends a multi-faceted strategy based on the needs and priorities of the course or program. He suggests that more tailored approaches, such as category-specific policies may be needed to ensure that the immediate cost-saving benefits of utilising sessional staff is not by the provision of poor quality instruction as may occur with diminished program coherence and reduced involvement with students.

Departments are often circumscribed by a limitation of resources I their assistance to sessional staff, but they are obliged to address the issues of dissatisfaction and dysfunction. Jacobs (1998) posits a few practical suggestions for overcoming these and other problems, several of which are summarised in Table 1 on page 9.

Individual problems

According to Wyles (1998), sessional teachers regularly receive student evaluations demonstrating that they are as effective in the classroom as their full-time colleagues. She also maintains that they often produce superior student outcomes and possess credentials of equal status to their full-time counterparts. Nevertheless, in most institutions part-time members of staff are marginalized and exploited. They are often deprived of any opportunity to contribute to curricular development, textbook selection, the work of their respective divisions, or generally, in the governance of the institution. The resulting credentialing without credibility, responsibility without authority, and expectations without rewards mean that part-time faculty members are asked to serve with the enthusiasm and dedication associated with emotional investment in an institution, without enjoying reciprocal trust, professional respect or working conditions from their institutions.

A study by Bassett (1998) supports this claim that there is an increasingly large group of dissatisfied academics in sessional teaching positions. She suggests that while most casual academics find their teaching role satisfying they feel marginalised, exploited and expendable in their relations with the university. Bassett's conclusions were derived from data collected from over 90 sessional academics about their working conditions, job satisfaction and aspirations. Respondents reported high levels of stimulation from their teaching experiences, but indicated dissatisfaction and disillusionment about their status and opportunities within the higher education sector. In this and other studies, it seems that sessional staff dissatisfaction can be generalized as falling into two areas: work conditions and workplace culture.

Work conditions

Bassett (1998) notes that for many sessional academics, the chances of obtaining a tenured position are poor. Sessional staff are paid on an hourly rate and have few of the rights or privileges of tenured staff, including paid leave, access to research funding and office facilities. Studies have even shown that in some institutions, access to basic support services, such as offices, telephones and email is severely limited (Kogan et al. 1994; Lundy & Warne, 1990). In addition, they are often employed on an ad hoc basis, outside the stringent selection procedures applied to other academic staff (Castleman et al. 1995; Fine et al. 1992). Unfortunately, there is a disproportionate level of female representation in this poorly paid, insecure section of academia. In 1997, while females comprised 47.3% of the total Australian academic workforce they were over-represented (72.1%) in the fractional-full time category (DEETYA 1997). In a 1995 study, Castleman et al. found that 47.4% of all female academics in Victorian and South Australian universities were sessional.

These sessional academics (who include both short-term contract and casual staff) have been described as 'hidden careerists' (Rajagopal & Lin 1996), 'throw away academics' (Kogan et al. 1994) 'the invisible faculty' (Gappa & Leslie 1993), 'hidden academics' (Rajagopal & Farr 1992) and the 'reserve army of adjuncts' (Scott, 1993). These authors are referring to institutional cultures (discussed next) that deny sessional academics full participation in, or involvement with, their academic contexts. They also refer to the uncertainty and insecurity that characterises continued employment as a sessional staff member. In fact, Leatherman (1997) suggests that the increasing number of part-timer staff in one American university has produced 'faceless departments' where students see a succession of part-timers and it is only in the later stages of their courses that they encounter full-time members of staff.

In summary, low salaries, job insecurity, lack of facilities (such as access to telephone, office space and email), the disproportionate representation of women and exclusion from institutional cultures are all components of less than optimal working conditions. Whether these can be remedied or improved is a function of institutional resources, administrative will and effective policy and enterprise agreements. Efforts to improve working conditions through

salary increases, assurance of continuity and other benefits could yield positive results but, ultimately, are dependent on budgetary constraints and, thus, constitute an improbable avenue of pursuing improvements. In terms of the higher education system, access to resources in the future is likely to be a continuation of the recent past. That is, the reliance on sessional staff will continue and significant increases in funding are unlikely. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that there can be some positive changes to the working lives of sessional teachers (with positive ramifications for both students and the department) through institutional and School-based responses. As Jacobs (1998, p17) has noted “the problems [associated with casual appointments] cannot be entirely resolved to everyone’s satisfaction...[but they] can be reframed and re-configured”.

Institutional culture

In addition to working conditions, the institutional culture is the other primary component of sessional staff dissatisfaction. There are tangible and intangible components of workplace culture. For sessional teaching staff the tangible aspects may include access to resources and the level of explicit support they receive by way of specific policy documents, employment procedures and training. As previously mentioned, sessional teachers may have limited access to office space and other facilities. This deprivation of resources reflects on the institutional value given to sessional staff and, therefore, influences how they are viewed by other faculty members, and how effective they can be in their contact with students.

Intangible aspects of the institutional culture include the more subtle inclusive practices of a School or Department, which add to an employee’s identification with the School or Department, as well as their own perceived status within the School or Department. When Leatherman (1997) employed the phrase ‘faceless departments’ he was also referring to university departments that deny, in a variety of ways, full participation in academia for a high proportion of their academic staff and undermine the interactions of sessional teachers and their students. Evidence to suggest that ‘faceless departments’ also exist within Australia has emerged from a Tasmanian study by Kirov (1989) who found that “fractional lecturers are often not considered members of the faculty, are not invited to faculty meetings, or circulated with the faculty minutes” (p.41). This claim is also supported by Kogan et al. (1994) who suggests that the interaction between part-time and full-time faculty members in academic contexts is limited, and by Bassett (1998) who found widespread dissatisfaction amongst casual academics with their status and role within their department.

Continued re-appointment as a sessional “is characterised by uncertainty and insecurity” (Fine et al., 1992, p51). Despite a degree of satisfaction with their teaching roles, an American study found that sessional staff felt vulnerable and that there was ubiquitous dissatisfaction with their perceived “second-class status” (Gappa & Leslie 1993, p43). This was due to a lack of consultation by supervisors, and lack of appreciation and marginalisation at a departmental and institutional level. Rajagopal and Farr (1989) found that even unionised part timer staff members are excluded from academic decision making processes, which are invariably limited to full-time academics. Other authors including Leatherman (1997) support the view that certain practices within university departments result in workplace cultures that are less than ideal as far as sessional teachers are concerned.

Effective, realistic solutions

Jacobs (1998) argues that policies related to part-time faculty all too often pursue consistency and regularity, when the problems that those policies are designed to address involve inconsistency and irregularity. His fundamental premise is that better policy and improved practice would result if they were based on deliberate deconstruction of the circumstances under which part-time members of faculty are hired and under which they work.

According to Jacobs (1998), virtually every academic administrator who deals consistently with issues related to part-time faculty understands that there are both economical and pedagogical rationales for utilising part-time staff. The economic reasons emerge from budget constraints, availability and expertise of staff members and time constraints. Many of these problems would disappear if more funds were allocated to the higher education sector in general and teaching in particular. But the stark reality is that those constraining issues are not transient - they are permanent. While Jacobs (1998, p. 14) acknowledges and laments the constraints on universities' budgets, he also recognises that many of these are permanent fixtures and, therefore, there will "never be enough time, money or personnel to eliminate many of the problems caused by scarce resources".

Jacobs (1998) recommends that administrators take a closer look at sessional faculty members' status, working conditions and their role in course delivery. He suggests identifying and focussing on the benefits of employing sessional teachers in order to maximise their commitment and effectiveness within the faculty. Administrators, therefore, must contend with the economic imperatives underlying the employment of sessional teaching, how to ameliorate their impact and how to still deliver quality education. First, administrators can note the limited situations in which the use of part-time staff is beneficial and attractive, and separate those uses from the more expedient circumstances. Second, administrators can disaggregate the various uses of part-time faculty and tailor policies to fit particular programmatic needs. Finally, administrators can work to include part-time staff in the institutional culture by defining roles, creating norms, and sharing values and symbols. The power of an inclusive working culture for sessional staff has been underestimated and undervalued in academia. Though it affords few real solutions, inclusion does serve to raise morale and enhance the commitment of part-time staff to the provision of quality education. As Bassett (1998, p1) writes: "the possibility of an entrenched model consisting of permanent academics on the one hand and an under-class [of sessional teachers] on the other has the potential to cause staff problems and to degrade the quality of education provided". Jacobs concurs, admonishing the "culture of separation" (p17) that exists in some departments and recommending instead that the departmental culture be viewed as a vehicle for improving sessional teachers' satisfaction and productivity. He makes several practical, low (or no) cost suggestions for doing this, several of which are summarised in the following table.

Table 1

Locus of Initiative	Type of cost involved	Strategies for consideration
Institutional Level	None	Establish policies that support and improve working conditions (such as multi-year appointments or longer more stable contracts, incremental salary structures for sessional teachers, financial supplements for late notification to teach).
	None	Add sessional teachers to institutional mailing lists
	One-off cost for professional preparation and modest cost for annual updates and printing	Prepare and publish a Handbook for sessional teachers indicating resources and services available to students so they can be well informed and helpful to students
	Variable, depending on available resources and facilities	Policy stipulating that sessional staff members are provided resources, such as office space, voice-mail, email, and mailboxes to promote accessibility to students.

Department or School level	None except the costs of printing and updating	Provide an 'environmental scan' that describes norms, contexts and standards for the faculty or school.
	Time of faculty members	Provide feedback on performance, based on student evaluations and observations of teaching by full-time faculty members.
	Clerical support	Provide logistical support to order books, arrange for special equipment, and collect essays.
	None	Establish a preference system to offer opportunities to currently serving part-time staff

For most university departments, these or similar suggestions should be relatively easy to implement within the scope of current budgets. However, other institutional responses to the problems of how to best support sessional staff may require substantial increases in funding or, where this is unlikely, a redistribution of resources. Strategies that might prove useful but which may require substantial funding and/or redistribution of resources include employing a full-time tutor/administrator to coordinate sessional staff. Although a radical redistribution of resources may not be possible for many departments, the investment of more time and resources in sessional administration is essential, due to the increasing proportion of teaching that such instruction provides.

In addition to these practical, systematic changes, schools, departments and coordinators can provide intangible and/or low cost rewards for proficient performance, or simply to promote inclusivity. The following suggestions have been adapted from an employee motivation website containing ideas for enhancing employee motivation and satisfaction. This site is based on the premise that employees feel more motivated and satisfied when they feel included, when their efforts are recognized and when they reach their work-related objectives. Suggestions that may be relevant for sessional university teachers (depending on the type of department and the number of sessional teaching staff being managed) include:

- 'Welcome to the team' gift (such as flowers, a movie ticket, or a gift voucher).
- Individual thank you notes to sessional teachers each semester from the Head of School or course supervisor.
- Hosting brown-bag lunches or pancake breakfasts for all sessional teaching staff once or twice a semester.
- Departmental pizza party where all faculty including sessionals are invited.
- Reading out comments from satisfied students about sessional staff at a faculty meeting.
- Nominations-based Faculty or School Teaching Awards for sessional teachers (gift voucher or tickets for prizes).
- 'Hall of Fame' with names (and pictures) of past tutors who worked for an extended period of time in the School.
- 'Tutors Only' lolly jar.
- Write letter or email to spouses/partners of tutors thanking them for their support enabling the tutor to do his or her best.

- A 'catch people doing something right' system where students, peers or academic staff point out effective ideas or actions they have noticed from sessional staff members. These are then collected in a common place, such as a web-site or ideas log.
- 'International Week of the Tutor' - course supervisors and students acknowledge this week by doing something nice for their tutor/s.

Other employee motivation ideas can be found at this web-site by visiting <http://www.nelson-motivation.com/recideas.cfm>

Policies and trends affecting sessional staff

Curtin University is one example of an institution with a clear 'Policies and Procedures' statement specifically for the employment of sessional staff. The Curtin University "Academic Staff -Conditions of Employment Award (1999 Clause 6)" contains thorough details with respect to:

1. Selection of sessional staff;
2. Starting procedures;
3. General payments;
4. Special payments;
5. Number of hours worked;
6. Contracts and;
7. The use of general staff as teachers.

But unfortunately, it contains no guidelines pertaining to the accommodation, training and supporting of sessional teaching staff.

Prompted by the results of a survey of 1200 sessional teachers at Monash University, a group of academic developers decided to bring together a broad-based group with a view to drafting a possible policy for the training of casual sessional teaching staff (Monash University, 1999). The intent was to involve people from a range of interested and relevant sections of the higher education industry, each with varied experience and expertise. The proposed policy was as follows:

1. Departments/schools will have responsibility to:
 - Describe the specific roles and duties required of each sessional teaching appointment;
 - Identify the teaching skills of prospective sessional teaching appointees relative to their intended roles and duties;
 - Train sessional teaching appointees in those roles and duties for which they lack sufficient expertise;
 - Provide resources sufficient to enable sessional teaching appointees to perform their assigned roles and duties effectively;
 - Provide on-going support to the sessional teaching appointees during their appointments;
 - Evaluate the performance of the sessional teaching appointees; and

- Provide to individual sessional teaching appointees written reports that describe the roles and duties undertaken, and give feedback on their performance.
- 2. Each department/school will appoint one or more staff members to coordinate the selection, training, and evaluation of its sessional teaching appointees.
- 3. At the end of each academic year departments/schools will report to faculties on the ways in which they have implemented their responsibilities for the selection, training, and evaluation of sessional teaching appointees.
- 4. Each faculty will establish procedures for sessional teaching appointees to report on the perceived adequacy of the training and support that they have experienced.
- 5. The Academic Development Unit will have responsibility to:
 - Assist departments/schools in the development and implementation of their individual procedures for the training, support, and performance evaluation of their sessional teaching appointees, as indicated in Part 1 above;
 - Facilitate interaction and exchange across faculties and amongst departments/schools on the training and support for sessional teaching;
 - Provide guidance to faculties and departments/schools that may wish to develop training programs in a more recognised, award format;

Pennsylvania State University has also formulated guidelines for the preparation of teaching assistants (TA's). These are:

- All TAs must be provided with the instructional goals and objectives for the course and, if teaching in any capacity, direction as to the content to be used to accomplish the goals and objectives.
- TAs must be offered preparation in generic teaching strategies (such as strategies in how to stimulate questioning, responding to student comments, incorporating different types of explanations into lesson plans, and constructing and grading exams).
- Departments must provide TAs with information on appropriate teaching methods, activities, exercises, and/or grading policies and techniques for the course to which the TA has been assigned.
- Departments must provide all TAs with faculty supervision and/or mentorship.
- All TAs must receive some type of formative instructional evaluation (that is, evaluation that provides feedback about instructional effectiveness for the purpose of improving the TA's teaching).
- Departments must direct international teaching assistants (ITAs) who score below 250 on the modified SPEAK test (the University's oral proficiency test) to take the appropriate courses (which constitute certification, required by Pennsylvania State Law) offered through the Centre for English as a Second Language in the speech communication department and follow the guidelines for teaching responsibilities that correspond with the appropriate course.

Industry professionals

External professionals from industry are frequently brought in to teach on a sessional basis within certain disciplines, including law, engineering and business. These types of teachers are often hired to maintain close ties with business and industry, as many are practitioners in the field in which they are teaching. Universities are acutely aware that these practitioners strengthen the occupational and technical programs with applications of real-life perspectives.

But there are also problems associated with industry professionals, as they lack experience with the academic culture, institutional practices and understanding of appropriate and effective pedagogical processes. Furthermore, training and support of industry professionals can be wrought with a whole new set of challenges unique to this type of sessional employed teacher.

Conclusion

Langenberg's (1998) noted that sessional teachers were defined by what they are not (that is, not just 'nonfaculty,' or 'irregular faculty,' but 'sub-faculty'), and it seems that this is also the case in Australian universities. The higher education sector would be advantaged by following Langenberg's advice to recognize that the members of sub-faculties as true partners in the industry of teaching and learning. Langenberg argues that sessional teachers are partners with different but equally important roles, and suggests that if they were enlisted them as regular members of the system many of the problems associated with this section of academia would be ameliorated. And it is important to ensure the satisfaction of these members of a university's teaching staff, because they are increasingly taking responsibility for a higher percentage of classes. Furthermore, they are increasingly taking on the vast majority of the burden of student contact by teaching the bulk of tutorials and laboratory sessions. The employment of casual academic staff as a regular and institutionalised component of teaching can produce positive teaching outcomes, provided that they are appropriately resourced and that their satisfaction levels are high. Increasingly the casual tutor is the primary point of contact and, therefore, the face of a university and, thus, it is important to facilitate their capacity to provide a positive and effective image to students.

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