

Off the track: A profile of non-tenure track faculty at McGill University

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ABSTRACT

A survey conducted at McGill University suggests that non-tenure track faculty are a diverse group of highly-qualified individuals whose employment status involves a high degree of uncertainty. In accordance with other Canadian and American studies, the survey also found that a disproportionate number of women occupy non-tenure track as opposed to tenured or tenure track positions. Since the 1980s, North American universities have responded to increasing student enrollments and continued cuts to government funding by appointing significant numbers of faculty to full-time and part-time non-tenure track positions. Due to the precariousness of their employment status, non-tenure track faculty represent an attractive buffer in times of financial restraint. Despite their increasing numbers, however, little is known about the composition and concerns of non-tenure track faculty as a group. This article describes this group at one university and puts into question the structural and power relations that have led to their increased use and abuse.

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RÉSUMÉ

Une étude faite à l'université McGill suggère que le corps enseignant dont le statut ne donne pas accès à la permanence est fortement diversifié et composé d'individus très qualifiés, mais que ce même statut implique une grande incertitude d'emploi. À l'instar des études canadiennes et américaines, cette étude montre également qu'à l'université McGill, un nombre disproportionné de femmes occupent des postes qui ne donnent pas accès à la permanence par opposition à des postes permanents ou qui donnent accès à la permanence. Depuis les années 1980, les universités Nord-américaines ont réagi à l'accroissement de la clientèle étudiante et aux compressions répétées des subventions de l'État en embauchant un nombre important d'enseignants à des postes à temps partiel ou plein temps qui ne donnent pas accès à la permanence. La précarité inhérente à ce statut d'emploi est une solution attrayante en période de restriction budgétaire. Quoique le nombre de postes soit en croissance constante, on connaît peu de choses sur la composition de ce groupe et leurs préoccupations à propos de leur statut. Cet article décrit un groupe dans une université et soulève des questions de relations structurales et de pouvoir qui ont mené à accroître et à abuser de cette forme d'emploi.

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with other North American studies, a recent survey of non-tenure track faculty at McGill University found that a disproportionate number of women faculty members occupy non-tenure track as opposed to tenure track positions; and that both men and women non-tenure track faculty have a high level of academic and professional qualifications. Thus, despite the intent of the equity initiatives which led universities to examine the structural and power relations existing on Canadian campuses in the 1980s, there appear to have been few sustained substantive changes.¹ Therefore, new initiatives are required. This is particularly critical as universities increase their reliance on faculty hired outside the tenure stream.

Indeed, in the past 20 years, universities in North America and Britain have appointed significant numbers of academic faculty members to full- or part-time contracts without access to tenure or job security. These appointments have increased to the extent that non-tenure

track faculty now constitute approximately one-half of all academic faculty in North American universities. Despite holding comparable qualifications and performing duties similar or identical to their colleagues in the tenure stream, non-tenure track faculty continue to occupy precarious positions. They tend to be paid less and they do not benefit from the incidents of tenure such as academic and sabbatical leave or some other opportunities for professional development. Furthermore, their exclusion from university rewards systems and governance structures often leaves non-tenure track faculty feeling isolated and powerless.

Despite their numbers at McGill and at other North American universities, non-tenure track faculty largely remain hidden, a formless underclass whose contributions are largely unknown and unacknowledged, for whom regulations are absent at most universities, and for whom inequities abound. Two critical reasons have been cited for this invisibility: first, universities tend to perceive non-tenure track academic staff as temporary and marginal to the professional collegium (Gappa & Leslie, 1993); second, as a result of this perception, universities often fail to maintain centralized data on non-tenure track faculty in a routine and systematic way (Rajagopal & Farr, 1992). Moreover, there exist relatively few detailed surveys of this cohort which comprises almost half of the faculty at universities in North America. Effective and equitable policy-making on the part of universities in the future will require a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of the needs and aspirations of faculty hired outside the tenure stream. It is for this reason that a survey of this class of faculty was undertaken by the McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT, 1996b).²

This article will discuss the issues identified at the outset by providing excerpts of the results from the McGill survey and by relating them to Canadian and American data where such data exists. The discussion section will put into question the lack of a viable career path for non-tenure track faculty and the impediments that prevent them from being hired into the tenure stream despite their high level of academic and professional qualifications.

CONTEXT OF THE SURVEY: THE INVISIBILITY AND PRECARIOUSNESS OF NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY

In the context of steep increases in student enrollment in 1960s and 1970s and in response to government funding cuts in the 1980s and 1990s, universities in North America have increasingly turned to non-tenure track faculty to provide a low-cost, flexible pool of academic labour (Rajagopal & Farr, 1992). As noted above, this response to a developing crisis has resulted in non-tenure track faculty in North America comprising a large percentage of academic appointments. About one half of the total faculty in the United States are appointed to non-tenure track positions (AAUP, 1992); in Canada, the percentage is estimated closer to 45% (Lortie, 1994).

The problems encountered by non-tenure track faculty are increasingly being identified and addressed by researchers in North America (AAUP, 1992). There are as yet no comprehensive studies of non-tenure track faculty in Canadian universities, although a study by Rajagopal is currently underway at York University and will provide a first look at the population as a whole.³ A study of part-time faculty in Canada has been published by Statistics Canada (Lortie, 1994). However, since part-time faculty form only one portion of non-tenure track faculty at Canadian universities, it is of limited use in assessing the situation faced by non-tenure track faculty members as a group.⁴ It is in this context that the present survey was undertaken in order, first, to shed light on the composition and concerns of all non-tenure track academic faculty at McGill University (full-time and part-time) and, second, to contribute to the development of a research base for future analysis of the issues faced by this class of faculty in North American universities.

THE SURVEY

Unlike other related studies in Canada which have focused on part-time faculty (Rajagopal & Farr, 1992; Lortie, 1994), the survey expanded this scope to include all part-time and full-time faculty outside the tenure stream. The survey was directed at all faculty employed at McGill University with academic titles which did not confer or lead to tenure. The survey aimed to investigate the profile and experiences of non-tenure track faculty as a group since many of the concerns and

interests of part-time faculty are shared by their colleagues who, despite working full-time, remain subject to the uncertainty and invisibility that comes with not holding a tenure track position. Therefore, while the study included part-time ranked professors (assistant, associate, and full professors) whose part-time status prevents them from being eligible for tenure at McGill,⁵ it also included full-time faculty lecturers, academic librarians, and other faculty members with research titles who are also not eligible for tenure.

METHOD

A questionnaire was designed to gather information regarding position and terms of employment including whether the respondents' positions were full or part-time; the number of contract renewals; and their knowledge of and satisfaction with benefits and conditions of employment.

According to the university's administrative database, there were 1634 non-tenure track faculty members at McGill as of February 1993 as compared to 1320 faculty members who held tenure track positions. The questionnaire was sent to 1135 of the McGill faculty members identified by the administrative database as being non-tenure track of which 375 (33%) were research assistants. Post-doctoral fellows who are primarily students or trainees and full-time hospital employees in the Faculty of Medicine were excluded from the survey. Confidentiality was assured by having questionnaires returned directly to the project statistician — significantly, even with this safeguard, over half of respondents (56.1%) specifically requested anonymity.

Survey Group

A total of 414 responses were received which constituted 35.8% of the survey group. Among these responses, 95 were from research assistants. As the latter were seen to be primarily short-term employees having different concerns from the other non-tenure track faculty, their information was compiled separately in parts of the analysis. With research assistants removed, there were 319 responses which represented a response rate of 42% of that cohort of academic employees.

RESULTS

This section describes the size and composition of non-tenure track faculty at McGill — the percentages of non-tenure track faculty working either full-time or part-time; and the break-down of non-tenure track faculty according to sex, age, highest degree obtained, type of contract, renewal period, and years of service. These results will be used to highlight significant themes on the use and abuse of non-tenure track faculty in North American universities.

The proportion of faculty in the non-tenure stream at McGill is similar to that in the Canadian context as provided by Lortie for Statistics Canada (1994) and Reisborough for the Canadian Association of University Teachers (1993). The proportion of McGill teaching faculty occupying non-tenure track positions (37.7%) was below the Canadian national average (43.5% calculated by Lortie and 47.6% calculated by Reisborough) (see Table 1).

Using McGill's own criteria, there is a considerably higher percentage of full-time non-tenure track faculty at the university (17.3%) as compared to the Canadian national average (6% reported by Lortie, 7.2% reported by Reisborough). However, once the McGill data were recalculated to match the selection criteria used by Statistics Canada, the percentage of full time as compared to part-time non-tenure track faculty at McGill was found to be essentially identical to the Canadian national statistics.⁶

Full- vs. Part-Time

Non-tenure track faculty are significant contributors to their departments and to the university as a whole rather than merely constituting a marginal group of individuals. As shown in Table 2, most of the non-tenure track faculty (approximately 61%) reported working more than half-time with approximately half (50.5%) being employed full-time.

Of the 121 part-time respondents who reported the percentage of their part-time employment, 11.6% worked more than two thirds time whereas 55.4% worked less than one quarter-time, indicating that a substantial number of part-time non-tenure track faculty were contracted to work relatively few hours. As discussed below, there existed significant gender differences in the composition of faculty working relatively few hours as compared to those who worked half time or more. A higher

Table 1
Canadian and McGill Data on Percentages of Non-Tenure Track Faculty

Description of Group	Stats Can 1991-92		CAUT 1990-91		McGill 1993 ^a		McGill 1993 ^b	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Full-time tenure	34,904	56.4	32,785	52.4	1,320	62.3	1,320	62.3
Full-time Non-tenure track	3,740	6.0	4,536	7.2	366	17.3	129	6.1
Part-time Non-tenure track	23,200	37.5	25,300	40.4	433	20.4	670	31.6
Total	61,844	100.0	62,621	100.0	2,119	100.0	2,119	100.0

^a Data from university administrative database.

^b Data from the university's administrative database recalculated to match StatsCan criteria.

Table 2
Full- vs. Part-Time Faculty

Status	<u>Survey Data</u>		<u>Administrative Database</u>	
	Number	%	Number	%
Full-time	161	50.5	342	44.1
Part-time				
< 25%	67	21.0		NOT
25 – 49%	19	5.9		
50 – 66%	21	6.6		RECORDED
> 66%	14	4.4		
Unknown %	35	11.0		
Total part-time	156	48.9	434	55.9
Unknown status	2	.6	0	
Total	319	100.0	776	100.0

Note: Median percentage for part-time = 20%; mean = 30%.
 Percentage of part-time was not available from the administrative database, June 1993

proportion of men fell within the former group, whereas a higher proportion of women fell within the latter.

Age

Of the 319 respondents 18 (5.6%) were under 30 years of age. The mean age of respondents was 43.3 years (minimum 25; maximum 71); four were over 65 years of age.⁷ The median age of 42 compares with a median age of 47.2 for tenure track faculty at McGill according to the university's administrative database.

Sex

Women faculty members make up a significantly higher percentage of non-tenure track faculty than of faculty in the tenure stream. Slightly less than half of non-tenure track faculty members were women (47.3%)

including more than half of full-time non-tenure track faculty (55.0%). By comparison, women made up only 18.3% of tenured or tenure track faculty at the university (McGill University, 1991) (see Table 3). As discussed later in this article, this is broadly representative of the situation in Canada as a whole and in the United States.

As is also the case in Canada and in the United States (Lortie, 1994; AAUP, 1993) a greater proportion of men (59.7%) than women (40.3%) were part-time employees. Of the men working part-time, 80% were employed less than half of full-time. In contrast, 63% of the women occupying non-tenure track positions were employed full-time and a further 15% were employed half-time or more when one excludes those who did not indicate their full or part-time status.

Degree, Contract, and Renewal Period

The most common degrees, held by a total of 46.1% of the non-tenure track faculty excluding research assistants, were Doctoral degrees (PhD, DDS, MD). Table 4 shows a breakdown by degree, type of contract and renewal period for both the full sample and the sample without research assistants (RAs).

For the sample without Research Assistants, respondents in the modal category (approximately 40%) had Master's degrees. The most common type of contract (53%) was "annual" which, according to the university's classification, refers to contracts of one year or more. The most frequent renewal periods were one year (34.2%), followed by three, two, and five years, respectively.

There were discrepancies between the type of contract as recorded by the administrative database as compared to the respondents' report of their renewal period. While only 7%, of survey respondents reported periods of renewal of less than one year, the administrative database indicated that 139 (33.6%) of respondents had short contracts of less than one year. Therefore, approximately 79% of respondents with short contracts appeared mistaken as to their employment status with respect to duration of contract and renewal period.⁸

Years of Service

Non-tenure track staff are more than a transient group within their faculties. Instead, they are often long service employees who have contributed to their institutions over several years. Table 5 shows a

Table 3
Comparisons by Sex and by Percent of Full-Time

Survey Data	Female		Male		Missing	
	N	%	N	%	N	
Academic Category:						
NTT (ex RAs) ^a	(319)	151	47.3	167	52.4	1
RAs only	(95)	56	59.0	35	36.8	4
Tenure Track ^b	(1320)	242	18.3	1078	81.7	--
Work Status of Non-Tenure Track Faculty:						
With Research Assistants						
Full-Time		124	56.1	97	43.9	
Part-Time	<50%	36		60		
	≥50%	28		17		
	% unknown	16		24		
	Total Part-Time	80	44.2	101	55.8	
Without Research Assistants						
Full-Time		88	55.0	72	45.0	
Part-Time	<50%	30		56		
	≥50%	21		14		
	% unknown	11		22		
	Total Part-Time	62	40.3	92	59.7	

^a Survey data excluding Research Assistants (RAs).

^b Tenure Track figures taken from *Employment Equity for Women at McGill: Diagnostic Report* (McGill University, 1991)

Note: Discrepancies in totals are due to missing values; some respondents did not report their full- or part-time status, their sex or both.

Table 4
Degree, Type of Contract and Renewal Period

	<u>Full Sample</u>		<u>Without Research Assistants</u>	
	(N=414)		(N=319)	
	N	%	N	%
Degree				
Diploma	11	2.7	5	1.6
Bachelors	42	10.1	25	7.8
Masters	170	41.1	126	39.5
PhD	102	24.6	94	29.5
MD/DDS	54	13.0	53	16.6
Unknown	35	8.5	16	5.0
Type of Contract^a				
Annual	192	46.4	169	53.0
Sessional ^b	61	14.7	53	16.6
Short (<1 year) ^c	139	33.6	95	29.8
Unknown	22	5.3	2	.6
Renewal Period				
<3 mos.	11	2.7	6	1.9
4-6 mos.	12	2.9	7	2.2
7-9 mos.	6	1.4	4	1.2
1 yr.	134	32.4	109	34.2
1.5 yrs.	2	.5	1	.3
2 yrs.	14	3.4	13	4.1
3 yrs.	57	13.8	54	16.9
3.5 yrs.	1	.2	1	.3
5 yrs.	13	3.1	11	3.5
>5 yrs.	1	0.2	1	0.3
Unknown	163	39.4	112	35.1

^a Data taken from the administrative database about the subjects in the sample, June 1993.

^b Appointed for a year but paid for less than one year (usually 8 months).

^c Appointed for less than a year of full-time employment.

Table 5
Full- and Part-Time Status by Years of Service
(excluding Research Assistants)

Years of Service	Full Time	Percent Part-Time					Total
		>67%	50-66%	25-49%	<25%	Unknown	
0 – 5	92	4	7	8	26	9	146
6 – 10	25	2	6	2	9	4	48
11 – 15	8	4	1	5	10	8	36
16 – 20	21	2	1	2	7	0	33
21 – 25	7	2	3	0	8	8	28
26 – 30	1	0	2	0	5	0	8
31 – 35	5	0	1	1	1	1	9
Missing	2	0	0	1	1	5	9
Total	161	14	21	19	67	35	317

comparison of full- and part-time appointments by the length of continuous employment. Research assistants were excluded from these calculations as they are typically employed on short-term research contracts for three years or less.

The mean number of years of service reported in the survey for non-tenure track faculty was 9.8 years with a median of 6.75 years. Over half of respondents (52.6%) had been employed for more than five years; over one quarter were employed for more than 15 years. The percentage of time employed did not appear to be related to the years of service. Many part-time faculty members who had been contracted to work a low percentage of time had been employed in this fashion for many years. Nearly half the respondents contracted for a quarter of full-time or less had been employed for more than ten years, one third for more than 15 years.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There were some weaknesses in the data due to inadequacies in the university's administrative database and from the questionnaire. Some of the information in the administrative database regarding non-tenure track faculty was not available, not current, or otherwise not reliable. In retrospect, important questions such as the classification of academic duties

performed and whether McGill was the respondent's primary source of income should have been included in the questionnaire. These questions would have enabled the researchers to gain a better understanding of the nature and extent of the contribution that non-tenure track academic faculty make to the university. It would also have permitted them to better gauge gender differences in the extent to which non-tenure track faculty rely on their university employment as their main source of income.

Although the response rate of 42% is very respectable for a mail survey, the nature of some of the written responses suggests that a number of factors and conditions which exist at McGill may have been partly responsible for the failure of many individuals to respond. The above-mentioned problems with the university's administrative database information and the respondents' lack of basic information on their own employment status were two such factors. Some non-tenure track faculty members felt that the questionnaire did not apply to them; for example, some researchers did not believe they were members of the academic faculty since they did not teach any courses.

DISCUSSION

This section foregrounds two significant themes arising within research on non-tenure track faculty: (1) the high proportion of women outside the tenure stream, and (2) the high level of qualifications of both men and women non-tenure track faculty which combines with typically precarious employment to suggest the lack of a viable career path for this class of faculty. As will be discussed, these themes emerge clearly within the McGill survey. They are also broadly reflected in existing data from Canada and the United States although further research is crucial to gaining a detailed understanding of the implications which flow from them.

Women Outside the Tenure Stream

While the proportion of women faculty in North American universities may be increasing, numerous studies show that a disproportionate number of women faculty members occupy lesser positions than their male colleagues. Two studies in the United States and Canada have compared the differences in sexual composition within part-time faculty as compared to full-time faculty. A 1992 study by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) indicated that, while women held about 33% of all faculty positions, they constituted about 42.4% of part-time

faculty as compared to merely 27.1% of full-time faculty. Similarly, according to the most recent Statistics Canada study, the proportion of female part-time university faculty members (38%) is nearly twice that of their full-time counterparts (21%) (Lortie, 1994).

This same sexual composition appears in comparisons of non-tenure track faculty with faculty in tenure track positions. In their analysis of data from a survey conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in the United States, Chronister, Baldwin, and Bailey (1992) found that more than half (50.8%) of non-tenure track professors were women as compared to only 35.7% of tenure track faculty. The McGill survey showed similar results as women made up 47.3% of non-tenure track faculty at the university whereas they constituted only 18.3% of faculty occupying tenure track positions.

Women are likely to be career part-time faculty performing part-time academic work as their principal source of income for long periods of time despite the widespread perception that they are voluntarily working part-time to contribute to household wages (Sherwood, 1993). Studies conducted in the early part of the decade suggest that proportionately more women part-time faculty members depended on their university positions for a major share of their income (Rajagopal & Farr, 1992). Unfortunately, respondents of the McGill survey were not specifically asked about other sources of income. However, the McGill results may be combined with these and other studies to show that women faculty are more likely than their male colleagues to have to rely on unstable university employment as either part-time or non-tenure track faculty as their principal source of income.

A recent analysis of Canadian part-time faculty found that women constituted a majority (53%) of "part-time only faculty" who rely on their part-time university positions as their only source of income. By contrast, women represented only 32% of "full time non-academic faculty teaching part-time" — defined as professionals employed full-time outside of the university who also teach on a part-time basis (Rajagopal & Lin, 1996). In addition to comprising a majority of "part-time only" faculty, the McGill survey results suggest that women tend to rely more than men on precarious non-tenure track employment. More than half of the women occupying non-tenure track positions at McGill were employed full-time (58% as compared to 43% of men) with a further 14% being employed half time or more (as compared to 8.4% for men).

The already disproportionate number of women within the ranks of part-time or non-tenure track faculty will be exacerbated unless Canadian universities actively ensure that gains for women take place within the full-time tenure stream as universities seek to increase the number of women on their faculties. Correcting the gender imbalance in universities will require research into the structural and personal impediments to increasing the number of women in tenure-track positions. Among other things, correcting this imbalance will require that institutions re-examine and modify faculty hiring and promotion processes (West, 1995) to accommodate women who are trying to balance academic careers and child rearing responsibilities (Finkel & Olswang, 1994).

Non-Tenure Track Faculty:

A Highly Qualified Group Coping With Uncertain Conditions

Non-tenure track faculty as a group are highly qualified members of the professorate. Many non-tenure track faculty members at McGill were employed full-time and had been employed at the university for many years. Further, the vast majority of non-tenure track faculty members (86%) had graduate training as indicated by the possession of a Masters and/or a Doctoral degree. Non-tenure track faculty members were certainly more than a simple source of labour as almost half the survey respondents (46% if Research Assistants are excluded) had a doctoral degree (PhD or MD/DDS) giving them academic qualifications equivalent to the professional tenure stream faculty. Another 40% of survey respondents had a Masters degree indicating that many of the non-tenure track faculty may have aspirations of following an academic career.

The level of academic qualifications within the segment of non-tenure track faculty committed to pursuing academic careers may be even higher. To obtain an accurate profile of non-tenure track faculty, a distinction needs to be made between two groups: those who rely on their university employment as their principal source of income and professionals primarily employed outside of the university who occasionally teach on a contractual basis. According to a study by Rajagopal & Lin (1996), members of the former group tend to possess higher levels of educational training as compared to the latter. Significantly, according to the same authors, the members of the first group, "part-time only faculty," are also more likely to be actively seeking a full-time academic career as compared to the members of the second group.

The latter group of "full-time non-academic faculty teaching part-time" are more likely to be content with their non-academic full-time employment outside the university.

Despite the high qualifications and the long service of many non-tenure track faculty, they occupy precarious positions compared to their colleagues in the tenure stream. The concern most frequently expressed by the McGill survey respondents in their written responses was their lack of job security. Unsatisfactory employment benefits and working conditions as well as insufficient information regarding benefits and employment entitlements were also frequently identified as serious concerns. These concerns accord with those identified by other studies of non-tenure track faculty (Baldwin & Bailey, 1992). Finally, non-tenure track faculty often have little or no input or representation in the administration of their departments or in university affairs generally. Consequently, these individuals become isolated from the university community leaving them feeling disenfranchised and expendable.

The precariousness of non-tenure track work also manifests itself through the lack of a viable career path which could provide a route to achieve tenure. Numerous studies in both Canada and the United States indicate that structural deterrents make it difficult, or even impossible, for faculty members to move from non-tenure track positions into tenure track appointments. Frequently, after many years of teaching at the same institution, non-tenure track faculty members find themselves passed over if their positions are converted to a tenure track appointment or if other tenure track positions become available (AAUP, 1992; Sherwood, 1993). There is little incentive for department chairs to move non-tenure track faculty into tenure track positions since the chairs often argue that their departments/programs/universities are better served by bringing in persons from the outside.

Recommendations for Strengthening the University

The graduate experience and specialized skills evident among non-tenure track faculty clearly indicate that this sector could be a rich source of career academic faculty and should be actively considered when new tenure stream academic positions are advertised. Educational and sabbatical leaves for non-tenure track faculty would be a useful way of strengthening the qualifications of those who wish to be considered for tenure track positions (Baldwin et al., 1993). Moreover, the removal of current structural impediments to permit non-tenure track faculty to

move into the tenure stream would provide enhanced and equitable career options for them. Increased access to tenure-stream positions could also enhance program quality since the increased reliance on volatile non-tenure track faculty on the part of North American universities leads not only to the potential loss of highly talented and qualified individuals, but also to a lack of program continuity and staffing stability which negatively affects program quality. These issues should be of utmost concern to university administrators and public policy makers when considering the future of the university.

CONCLUSION

Analyses of the use of non-tenure track faculty by universities and the relationship between these individuals and their tenured or tenure track colleagues must take into account the increased commodification of non-tenure track work. In accordance with the underlying power relations and structural factors existing at North American universities, faculty who occupy positions outside the tenure stream are treated as a buffer against the financial pressures faced by universities (Baldwin et al., 1993; Rajagopal & Farr, 1989). However, the attractiveness of this buffer depends on the security enjoyed by non-tenure track faculty remaining slight or non-existent. In many cases, it also depends on non-tenure track faculty foregoing aspirations toward career paths as fluid and upwardly-mobile as those enjoyed by their colleagues in the tenure stream (Baldwin et al., 1993).

Within this context, research both on non-tenure track and on part-time faculty will continue to be crucial to the equitable treatment of these individuals and the enhancement of academic quality at universities in the future. According to Rajagopal and Farr:

Should universities decide to recognize that what they have treated as a peripheral and contingent workforce is central to the delivery of their instructional programmes, and holds the potential to contribute significantly to the research activity of their institutions, a knowledge of the area of intersection of part-timer motivations and university purposes will be critical in developing equitable policies for part-time faculty (1992, p. 329).

As the results outlined in this article suggest, non-tenure track faculty represent much more than a pool of inexpensive academic labour, even if they are often treated as such. They form a diverse, well-educated and qualified group of individuals who represent a significant resource to their faculties and to the university as a whole. Many non-tenure track faculty are employed full-time and many are long service employees. As such, they represent a valuable resource with experience from which to recruit faculty into the tenure stream. Moreover, such an initiative could potentially lead to the desegregation of women from part-time and non-tenure track positions and lead to enhanced opportunities for career advancement for all non-tenure track faculty. ❁

Notes

¹ The Federal Contractors Program implemented in 1985 required universities and other employers contracting with the federal government to show that they were taking appropriate measures to maintain a fair and representative workforce.

² For a copy of the full report titled, *Non-Tenure Track Academics at McGill University*, contact the McGill Association of University Teachers, 3495 Peel Street, Montréal, Québec, Canada, H3A 1W7.

³ Rajagopal is in the process of compiling a national database on part-time and limited term faculty. She also plans to survey part-time and limited term faculty as well as faculty administrators on a variety of non-tenure track faculty issues.

⁴ Much of the difficulty in obtaining good statistics on non-tenure track faculty stems from how and whether information is gathered and stored in each of the various university information systems. Statistics Canada in conjunction with the Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec (CREPUQ) are in the process of designing a uniform method of gathering these statistics. Many universities in Canada have recently started to adapt their information systems so as to keep information in a uniform way.

⁵ At McGill University there is also a full-time reduced-load category for tenured faculty who for family, health, or other reasons work less than full-time. These faculty members were not included in the survey.

⁶ Most of the non-tenure track employees who were considered full-time according to McGill's own criteria were considered part-time employees by Statistics Canada. Whereas Statistics Canada considers part year appointments working full-time as falling within the category of part-time faculty, these appointments are considered full-time according to McGill's criteria.

⁷ . At present, there is no mandatory retirement in Quebec — though this is currently under review in the province as a whole and under active discussion in Quebec universities (MAUT, 1996a).

⁸ Since 1996, non-tenure track academics are on “permanent” contract after five years of continuous employment.

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