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Connection Matters: A New Cultural Anchor for Mediating Part-Time Faculty Value

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

by

Leticia Maria Pastrana

June 2019

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DEDICATION

To my wonderful son Mustafa: I am so proud of the intelligent young man whom you have become. I love you to the moon and back. This achievement is yours and mine.

To my parents and siblings: For your love and support, thank you.

To my friend Bobbi: For your friendship and writing support, thank you.

To my accountability partners, JoeAnn and Robert: For going through the pain and stress of the process with me and sharing in the joys of achievements along the way. Thank you.

To my part-time community college colleagues: For giving me the strength to finish my dissertation, I dedicate this dissertation to you.
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Connection Matters: A New Cultural Anchor for Mediating Part-Time Faculty Value

by

Leticia Maria Pastrana

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Education
University of California, Riverside, June 2019
Professor John S. Levin, Chairperson

Nationally, the major faculty corps in community college is a contingent part-time (PT) faculty, as only 17% are tenured or on the tenure track. A negative researcher bias exists in scholarly literature on this faculty majority due to an unquestioned assumption that contingent employment leads workers to reduce their performance in order to minimize the inequality of their employment. This deficit view has resulted in scholarship that undertheorizes this PT faculty corps as passive objects of management peripheral to the institution, who are useful only for fiscal efficiency and institutional productivity and who have a negative effect on student learning outcomes and the academic profession. This view has limited scholarly knowledge as to the nature of faculty work and the working lives of PT community college faculty.

This qualitative investigation uses an alternate theoretical approach to identify and explain the extent to which professional activity and experiences shape the development of a professional identity for PT faculty. An interpretive approach and ethnographic
fieldwork methods were employed. This investigation was regional in nature and undertaken at a California community college region with eight colleges. Data in this investigation comprise individual semistructured interviews of 18 PT faculty members, two focus group interviews, and 10 months of participant observation. A cultural analysis was an overarching analytical framework that guided analysis, coding, and categorization of the data.

PT faculty are able to develop a professional identity outside of the institutionally defined positions of the workplace, although identity development is initially institutionally oriented. Alternate locations for professional identity development are situated by the student-faculty relationship and engendered by the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship. Characteristics of the temporary employer-employee relationship mediate development of a professional identity based on the intensity of the experienced employment stressors. The findings indicate that PT faculty who author a professional identity through an occupationally defined figured world of work legitimize professional identity through discourse (Discourse identity) and shared social practices (Affinity identity). Participation in shared social practices constitutes membership in an educator affinity group that is not bound by geography or a higher education institutional type.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

During his presidency, President Obama articulated a national sentiment regarding the importance of a higher education as an “economic imperative that every family must be able to afford” (Curtis, 2012, para. 1) and highlighted the role of the community college in providing an avenue to higher education. Student enrollment data for fall 2015 showed that the 1,103 U.S. public community colleges provided access to higher education for 41% of all U.S. undergraduate students and 40% of all first-time freshmen (American Association of Community Colleges, 2018). However, research reveals that the national percentage of community college students who complete a degree or certificate after 6 years of enrollment is 37.5%, compared to the completion rate of 64.7% for those who start at a 4-year public institution (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2017). Low completion rates signal issues regarding the quality of education, including institutional and practitioner effectiveness (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Grubb et al., 1999).

The role of community college faculty is a key element in increasing student attainment (i.e., graduation, retention, transfer rates), as scholars have explained that contact with faculty with a caring orientation to students is linked to educational experiences that improve student engagement, a predictor of student achievement as measured by grades, persistence, degree attainment, and student notions of personal development (Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006).
Chickering and Gamson (1987) offered seven principles of effective professional pedagogical practice that improve student engagement: encourage student-faculty contact, encourage cooperation among students, encourage active learning, provide prompt feedback, emphasize time on task, communicate high expectations, and respect diverse talents and ways of learning. These seven principles are similar to other guidelines for professional practice that advocate a learner-centered approach (Boroch et al., 2007; Guskey & Easton, 1982; Kuh et al., 2006) and have become standard benchmarks for measuring student engagement and effective professional pedagogical practice (McClenney, 2006).

As community college faculty engage in limited research and service work, classroom teaching and the student composition have provided the basis for scholarly conceptualization and examination of the professional status and effectiveness of this faculty corps (T. Clark, 1993; Cohen, Brawer, & Kisker, 2014; Frye, 1994; Grubb et al., 1999; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2011). In the higher education literature, community college faculty work has become synonymous with classroom teaching (Cohen et al., 2014; Frye, 1994). Such a conceptualization is limited, as it ignores the findings of an entire discipline in education: curriculum and instruction. Specifically, scholarship on curriculum and instruction makes clear that pedagogical practice (i.e., the classroom strategies and methods of enacting a curriculum that best address student characteristics and needs) is the enactment of a complex curriculum process and is only one element of curricular work (English, 2000; Gordon, Taylor, & Oliva, 2018; Parkay, Anctil, & Hass, 2009). The conceptualization of community college
faculty work as narrowly limited to classroom teaching practice impedes both scholarship on faculty work and advancement of research on student attainment in higher education.

The scholarly preoccupation with instructional practices is evident in studies on community college faculty that detail the methods and effects of instruction but ignore other components of an iterative curriculum process (Benjamin, 2003; Bettinger & Long, 2010; Center for Community College Student Engagement [CCCSE], 2009; M. K. Eagan & Jaeger, 2009; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Harrington & Schibik, 2001; Jacoby, 2006; Jaeger & Eagan, 2009; Umbach, 2007, 2008). Broadly, the curriculum process begins with development of a philosophy of teaching and learning, although this process is based more often on ideology when a philosophy is not formulated (English, 2000). Next is selection of knowledge that resonates with the epistemological viewpoint and creation of macro level goals for the curriculum. After that, the content of the curriculum is chosen. A needs assessment functions to highlight the gap between the current level of student performance with the end performance. The gaps are then located in the content area and course of study, and units are created. The learning activities, objectives, and lesson plans that structure a unit are delivered, or taught, in the classroom and elsewhere. The end performance is gauged by a set of outcomes that are considered indictors that the intended performance level has been met. These outcomes are aligned with and then measured by an assessment process that includes a variety of assessment tools (English, 2000). This process takes place at the individual course level, as well as at a programmatic level, as course alignment occurs for structured and systematic fields of study (English, 2000; Gordon et al., 2018; Parkay et al., 2009).
In order to advance research on student attainment to address the needs of students and public interest, researchers need to reconceptualize the work of faculty as engagement in a complex curricular process of which classroom teaching is only one part and to which the role of the student is central. Although teaching faculty are understood as individualistic because they teach in silos, which impedes professional interaction with other faculty (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; G. Rhoades, 1998; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), teaching faculty have extensive professional interaction with their students (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Grubb et al., 1999). To date, few research studies have examined the professional experiences of faculty to explain the teaching contexts of student learning.

Consequently, much about community college faculty work is unknown or based on theoretical assumptions (Cohen et al., 2014; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; Levin et al., 2011; Townsend & Twombly, 2008) due to a methodological trend in scholarly research to ignore the reported professional experiences of faculty and actual classroom practices as a site for investigation and instead rely on survey methods to direct research on faculty work (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Tinto, 2012). Moreover, scholars articulate this gap in the literature has been exacerbated by a general marginalization of the community college and its faculty in scholarly research (Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Frye, 1994; Kisker & Outcalt, 2005; Levin, 2018; Outcalt, 2002; Townsend & Twombly, 2008).

Thus, scholarly knowledge of the experienced professional activities of community college faculty and the composition of this faculty group are either unknown or based on incorrect theoretical assumptions (Cohen et al., 2014; Frye, 1994; Levin,
2001; Meier, 2008). Such gaps in the scholarly literature are evident in the lack of scholarship on the professional activities and composition of the major faculty corps in community college: part-time (PT) faculty (Cohen et al., 2014; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; Levin, 2018; Levin et al., 2011; Townsend & Twombly, 2008).

Scholarly attention that is limited to those activities defined narrowly on surveys as representative of classroom activities has restricted scholarship on the professional behaviors and experiences of PT faculty work. Consequently, the salience of PT faculty on student attainment has been limited theoretically and methodologically. Within this literature, scholars have indicated a causal relationship between exposure to PT and other non-tenure track (NTT) faculty to negative student outcomes (Benjamin, 2003; Bettinger & Long, 2010; CCSSE, 2009; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Gross & Goldhaber, 2009; Harrington & Schibik, 2001; Jacoby, 2006; Jaeger & Eagan, 2009; Umbach, 2007, 2008). This body of literature is based on the theoretical assumption that learner-centered pedagogy leads to improved student engagement and student learning. A negative researcher bias is present in this literature due to an implicit assumption that contingent employment leads workers to reduce their performance in order to minimize the inequality of their employment (De Cuyper et al., 2008; Feldman, 1996). Thus, theories such as social exchange theory (Blau, 1968, 2017; Emerson, 1976) and job characteristics theory (Hackman, 1980; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Turner & Lawrence, 1965) guide studies of PT faculty and their work (Kezar & Sam, 2011). However, the sociological literature on contingent workers contradicts such assumptions, as findings within this literature demonstrate that contingent work results in increased performance by the
worker (Cappelli, 1997; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Lewchuk, Clarke, & de Wolff, 2008; Padavic, 2005; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977).

The studies framed through a deficit view of PT faculty are also limited methodologically (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Harrington & Schibik, 2001), as few studies have included observation of classroom practice or interviews with faculty and students (Cox, 2009; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Grubb et al., 1999; Rose, 1990). The few studies that have included classroom observation and interviews challenge the validity of survey measures, as these studies have identified learner-centered educational practices that did not work to raise student engagement when instructors used such practices within a teacher-centered approach (Grubb et al., 1999). Collectively, the literature on PT faculty has not offered conclusive evidence of direct effects of PT faculty behaviors on student attainment, yet scholars continue to adopt a deficit perspective to frame this literature (Kezar & Sam, 2011; Kezar, Maxey, & Badke, 2014).

The second outcome of the paucity of higher education research on community college faculty has been the conceptualization of PT faculty as comprising a monolithic body instead of several distinct groups serving distinct purposes (exceptions include Jacobs, 1998; Levin, 2013; Levin et al., 2011). Scholarship on the composition, social identity, and economic and academic functions of part-time faculty reveal several contradictions among groups (Benjamin, 1998; Kezar & Sam, 2014; Valadez & Antony, 2001; Wagoner, 2007). Consequently, recent scholarship has described PT faculty as
several distinct groups serving distinct purposes (Jacobs, 1998; Levin, 2013; Levin et al., 2011).

One important difference identified by this research has been that the economic function of the PT faculty corps is contingent on the academic function that they perform (Wagoner, 2007; Levin et al., 2011). Vocational faculty are those who teach the vocational curriculum of the institution and are highly valued for their rare and valuable skills (Levin, 2001; Levin et al., 2011). This group of PT faculty is not dependent on their academic salary, as the majority have full-time employment in the private sector or are retired (Levin et al., 2011; Monks, 2009; Wagoner, 2007).

In contrast, academic faculty are used to address the traditional academic transfer function of the institution and are not valued for their skills but for their economic value (Levin et al., 2011). Thus, the curricular function of the faculty determines their economic function, similar to the precarious workforce in the wider economy that is used steadily to replace full-time positions (Kalleberg, 2009; Levin et al., 2011; V. Smith, 1998, 2001). PT vocational faculty are field experts in specific areas who work full time or have the ability to find full-time work in the private sector (Levin, 2001; Levin et al., 2011). On the other hand, PT faculty who help the institution to address the transfer function of the college and teach in the traditional academic areas of the humanities, social sciences, and sciences do not possess skills that are rare or highly valued. This second faculty group is dependent on academic employment, as they have limited opportunities for private sector employment (Levin et al., 2011; Monks, 2009). Although conceptualized as a heterogeneous group, it has become apparent that vocational PT
faculty are highly paid professionals valued for their skills, while PT faculty who teach
the traditional academic areas of transfer are not highly paid professional valued for their
skills (Levin et al., 2011).

**Research Problem**

The values of new capitalism (Sennett, 2006, 2008) and structural changes related
to resource dependency (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977) and academic capitalism (Slaughter &
Leslie, 1997) have changed the nature of faculty work, as well as the composition of the
community college faculty. A growing cadre of professional managers now manages an
ever-growing faculty corps of PT workers who are valued for their cost effectiveness but
not for their work (Levin, 2007; Levin et al., 2011; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). As
managed professionals, PT community college faculty have experienced a divided
professional identity in which they are confident in the classroom but not outside of it
(Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014). A divided professional identity has serious
implications for the professional identity of all faculty, regardless of employment status.
The effects are clearly visible in the continual replacement of full-time positions with PT
positions and the growth of a full-time professional managerial staff (Wagoner, Levin, &
Kater, 2010; Weisbrod, Ballou, & Asch, 2008; Wellman et al., 2011). The PT faculty
group has been positioned at the periphery of decision making as the managerial class has
assumed greater power and control over the domains of faculty work (Wagoner et al.,
2010).

In contrast, the scholarly literature on student learning and development has made
clear the central role of faculty in fostering educational experiences that support student
learning of academic skills (Grubb & Grabiner, 2013; Kuh et al., 2006), social and economic knowledge (Levin, 2007), and subject content knowledge (Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Cox, 2009; Kuh et al., 2006; Levin, 2007; Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2009; Shaw, 1999). Furthermore, it is the faculty who have been charged by scholars and policy makers to implement the effective practices identified in the literature as bolstering grades, persistence, degree attainment, and student personal development (Boroch et al., 2007; Baxter-Magolda, 2001; Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Guskey & Easton, 1982; McClenny, 2006; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2003). The dominant perception of PT faculty as peripheral and useful only for fiscal efficiency and institutional productivity when combined with institutional resource dependency is reflective of a cultural narrative of scarcity (Brown, 2017; Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013) that mistakenly positions PT faculty as lacking in the professional ability to serve their students.

The ramifications of a cultural narrative of scarcity are more than theoretical, as new policies stemming from such a theoretical orientation constrain and affect PT faculty work negatively (Dougherty et al., 2016; C. P. Smith, 2015). The conditions of work that have been created through new capitalism and the values ascribed to these are not consistent with the self-asserted professional identity of workers (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014; Padavic, 2005; Sennett, 2006). Research that ignores the educational value of PT faculty academic work impedes development of scholarship based on alternative theoretical frameworks (Kezar & Sam, 2011; Kezar et al., 2014).

Furthermore, research on student attainment in community colleges has been hindered by unquestioned theoretical assumptions as to the nature of faculty work and
limited scholarly knowledge of the working lives of community college faculty: particularly that of PT faculty. Current theoretical assumptions of PT faculty have been limited by the use of the individual, instead of interaction and context, as the unit of investigation (McDermott & Varene, 2006). The individual as the unit of investigation is incorrect as it fails to account for the social construction of human experience (Goleman, 2006).

Scholars conceptualize PT faculty as passive objects of management who have a negative effect on both student learning outcomes and the academic profession. Consequently, in order to provide explanations of the ways in which PT faculty comprehend, describe, react to, and manage their employment status and the ways in which such self-understanding affects the formation of a professional identity, there is a need to reframe the educational value of PT faculty work.

**Purpose of the Investigation**

The purpose of this investigation is to explain the self-described experiences of PT community college faculty and the cultural tools (e.g., discourse, shared social practices) that are available to conceptualize their professional identity within an alternate theoretical framework. Furthermore, this investigation identifies and examines the ways in which PT faculty participate in the formation and maintenance of new connections and affirmations of a professional culture. This investigation applies the principles of qualitative research based on an interpretive approach (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; McDermott & Varenne, 2006; Ortner, 2006; Sennett, 2006, 2008).
I am guided by previous research of work and worker identity within the culture of late capitalism by Sennett (1998, 2006, 2008) in which Sennett proposed that occupationally and psychologically defined ways to conceptualize PT worker’s professional identity formation offer alternatives to an institutionally defined and legitimized professional identity. Sennett’s concepts of the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship are elements of the theoretical framework of this investigation.

I offer alternative concepts to the institution of the community college as central to the formation of a professional identity. I seek to identify and explain how the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship are used and are useful to the creation of this alternate formation of worker professional identity (Sennett, 2006). In order to locate possible locations central to the formation of a professional identity for PT faculty, I address the specific ways in which PT faculty develop their professional identity through internal self-sense making and positionality that alter activities and practices to align with their perceived changed in social position. I identify and examine the ways in which PT faculty participate in the formation and maintenance of new connections and affirmations of a professional culture beyond the limits of the institution.

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this investigation was informed by two interdisciplinary theories of identity formation: culture theory (Holland et al., 1998) and identity theory (J. P. Gee, 2000). Culture theory and identity theory allow for study of interactions between and among institutional and outside actors through language and
shared practices as constitutive of professional identity. These theories frame the formation of professional identity in locations other than those that are defined and legitimized institutionally. This framework includes theories and concepts from the sociological literature on characteristics of the contingent employee-employer relationship that mediate worker professional identity formation. These include underemployment theory (Feldman, 1996; Maynard & Feldman, 2011), the concepts of uncertainty and personal effort from employment strain theory (Lewchuk, de Wolff, King, & Polanyi, 2003), and the concept of identity management strategies from identity management theory (Padavic, 2005). Through this theoretical framework, I explore and explain the types of structures and activities that have been proposed by previous scholarship to engender the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship through the self-defined work activities and experiences of PT faculty (Wagoner et al., 2010).

**Research Questions**

This investigation employs a qualitative interpretive approach. Consequently, research questions focused on the dialectal relationship between institutional structures and enacted social practices and activities guide this research (Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006). These questions address the purpose of this research.

1. In what ways do the self-described work activities and experiences of PT faculty define or characterize their self-represented identity as members of a professional class?

2. In what ways do the affiliations and organizational structures outside of the community college shape the self-presented professional identity of PT faculty?
Research Design

The concern of this investigation is the extent to which professional activity and experiences shape the development of a professional identity for PT community college faculty. The aim is not to determine the status of PT faculty as an occupational or professional group. Instead, this investigation focuses on the construction of meanings that PT faculty use to narrate their professional lives through self-sense making and interactions among and between institutional stakeholders (e.g., students, full-time tenure-track faculty, staff, administration), as well as outside actors (e.g., members of the public or of a professional association). The research questions focus on PT faculty perspectives and the process by which they understand and narrate themselves and their professional experiences and activities. Accordingly, a qualitative research design was appropriate as it facilitates rich descriptions of the social world through attention to the individual’s point of view and the centrality of daily life and its constraints (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Erickson, 1986; Geertz, 1973; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Ortner, 2006).

An interpretive approach that relies upon ethnographic field methods was employed (Erickson, 1986; Wolcott, 1990, 2005). An interpretivist position demarcates ontological assumptions of human thought as mediated by social interaction (Geertz, 1973; Ortner, 2006; Peirce, 1992). Epistemologically, knowledge is socially constructed and knowledge about social life comes through examination of the ways in which individuals make sense of their experiences and their self-understanding (Geertz, 1995; Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006). Thus, an interpretive approach is signified through its
focus rather than prescribed methods of data collection (Erickson, 1986). Individual interviews, group interviews, and participant observations were field methods that enabled me to attend to explanations of how people construct and are constructed by the social world through their subjective accounts and perceptions (Geertz, 1973; McDermott & Varenne, 2006; Ortner, 2006).

The research design was influenced by Sennett’s cultural analysis of work and worker identity within the culture of new capitalism in the broader U.S. culture (1998, 2006, 2008). His attention to the broader U.S. culture allowed him to contextualize identity formation by identifying the arrangements of power and the resources available to various individuals (Sennett, 1998, 2006). Through interviews, economic and historical data, and participant observation, Sennett studied workplace flexibility and its role in worker identity formation at both the individual and group levels. Sennett found that structural changes which resulted in alternate (to full-time) working arrangements impeded workers’ ability to develop a worker identity due to three attendant social deficits of low institutional: loyalty, trust, and knowledge. Sennett proposed that a new cultural anchor (i.e., an alternate process of identity development not institutionally centered), defined through the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship, would foster the formation of worker identity that he found to be blocked by the social deficits of flexible workplace arrangements (Sennett, 1998, 2006, 2008).

Similarly, in this research, I spent ten months in the field observing, interviewing, and leading focus groups of PT faculty to gather rich descriptions that provided valid
answers to the research questions of this investigation. The concept of validity is limited by the social construction of reality, which can result in multiple interpretations of a single event (Ortner, 2006).

The research was conducted between fall 2017 and fall 2018 and was regional in nature, based on the literature that identifies geographical regions as the sites of organizational affiliations for PT faculty (Berry, 2005). I chose a California community college region based on the presence of a Regional Part-Time Association for faculty and faculty unions. The data set included 18 individual interviews, 2 focus group interviews, participant observations focused on regional activities, and collection of documents from observations.

A cultural analysis was an overarching analytical framework that guided analysis of the data. The focus in a cultural analysis is on the ways in which a group of people act, interpret, and make sense of experience collectively as they work together to retell and act upon their experiences “whether they personally accept, understand or even know much about these constructions” (McDermott & Varenne, 2006, p. 10). Memos and field notes allowed me to engage in data analysis during data collection and upon completion of data collection. Interviews, participant observations, field notes, and memos were transcribed and coded descriptively and analytically through the Atlas.ti™ software (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2019). Atlas.ti facilitated organization, revision, modification, and expansion of conceptual codes. Document analysis provided context to

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1 I use understanding as an alternate to validity. Understanding is defined as the power to make experience intelligible by applying concepts and categories (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2019; Wolcott, 1990).
observation and interview data. Documents were analyzed concurrently with first- and second-cycle analysis through the Atlas.ti software (Miles et al., 2019).

**Significance of the Investigation**

This investigation generates knowledge about alternate values and affiliations central to professional identity formation by PT community college faculty that are not centered institutionally, which is a limitation of previous research. Research on worker identity within flexible working arrangement has focused on low-skilled workers (Kunda, Barley, & Evans, 2002); thus, little is known about alternate sources for professional identity formation for groups such as college faculty (Kunda et al., 2002; Padavic, 2005; Sennett, 2006). The professional identity formation of PT faculty is relevant to future study of PT faculty institutional behaviors and effects on student learning as identity formation leads people to learn new ways of self-understanding that lead to modification of activities and behaviors to align with internal changes.

By situating this investigation within the sociological literature on worker identity, I employ a theoretical framework that moves beyond rational choice models such as social exchange theory and job characteristics theory. This alternate theoretical framework could be used to understand and explain PT faculty work, as well as the social and psychological outcomes of the conditions of work on this faculty body, which is missing in the research literature. This investigation contributes to scholarship on the application of Sennett’s (2006) proposed new cultural anchor that would provide an alternate site for worker identity formation. The results from this investigation can help
scholars to analyze the professional identity and work of faculty and the ways in which faculty can reestablish professional jurisdiction over academic work.

The years since the 1990s have seen the rise of various contingent faculty movements against exploitative conditions of work, such as the national adjunct walkout day in February 2015 (American Association of University Professors [AAUP], 2015). Collectively, these movements can be understood as a national movement for increased visibility and support of contingent and PT faculty arising from a growing collective awareness of the shared experiences of contingent faculty across all types of higher education institutions. This investigation has the potential to contribute to scholarship that focuses on how individual and collective agency is exercised (Kalleberg, 2009; G. Rhoades, 2014), particularly of PT faculty in community colleges. For the PT faculty corps, this investigation raises awareness of the various forms of agency that are available to them. An increase in agency can help PT faculty members to assess whether the new employment conditions are worth the mental, physical, and emotional toll that they take (Sennett, 2006). Furthermore, the results can impart a sense of collective awareness and understanding of the national scale of action for PT faculty. By identifying and explaining the structures and activities that contribute to creation of a new cultural anchor for members of the PT faculty group, the results of this investigation can help PT faculty to identify the social practices that unite contingent academic faculty over space and time.

**Organization of the Dissertation**

Chapter 2 consists of a critical review of the scholarly literature and the theories and concepts that comprise the theoretical framework of the investigation. Specifically, it
includes analysis of the ways in which a national narrative of scarcity both directs institutional action and shapes the literature on PT community college faculty. The sociological literature informs an alternate conceptualization of PT faculty as non-ideal workers, followed by sociological research on the changed employer-employee relationship and information regarding how these theories (in addition to those on identity formation) may contribute to understanding of PT faculty professional identity. Chapter 3 describes and explains the design and methods of this investigation, which include information regarding site selection, methods, and data analysis, as well as my perspective as a researcher. Chapter 4 presents the findings of this investigation. Chapter 5 offers discussion and conclusions, with recommendations for theory, practice, and future research.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE AND THEORY

Academic research on PT community college faculty has centered on scholarly explanations of the conditions that have led to and continue to require a temporary faculty corps in the academic workplace and of the connections of this faculty group to other faculty, to students, to institutional stakeholders, and to the institution (Levin, 2001, 2007; Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2011; Richardson, Fisk, & Okun, 1983; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Significantly, researchers have focused on the connection of PT faculty to student attainment, resource dependence, a weakened faculty profession, and institutional prestige. However, scholars have ignored the central role of teaching to shape the work life of PT faculty and failed to position this faculty group among the professoriate. Indeed, there is limited scholarship on the effects of work life on PT faculty, with some exceptions (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Grubb et al., 1999; Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014; Levin et al., 2011; Outcalt, 2002; Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1995; Townsend & Twombly, 2008; Wolf-Wendel, Ward, & Kulp, 2017). The research on PT faculty, when read as a story of this faculty group, presents disjointed and contradictory characterizations that reveal the limitations and gaps in current scholarly understanding of PT faculty (Kezar & Sam, 2011; Levin, 2013).

The limitations of current scholarship have been shaped by a national neoliberal ideology that has focused on the economic aspects of work and has framed faculty as both individualistic and as objects of management (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; G. Rhoades, 1998; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter &
Rhoades, 2004). One critique has been that unquestioned theoretical assumptions of the individualistic nature of the profession have precluded conceptualization of higher education faculty as a collective with a collective professional identity and collective agency (Brint, 1994; G. Rhoades, 1998, 2014). Furthermore, researchers who are critical of a neoliberal framing have argued that scholarly focus on the economic aspects of faculty work has impeded study of the social and psychological effects of work on faculty (Kezar & Sam, 2011). The use of multiple terms to refer to PT and other NTT faculty assignments has served to delegitimize this faculty group (Kezar & Sam, 2010) and further prevented understanding of PT faculty as part of the larger faculty collective (G. Rhoades, 1998, 2014).

The contingent nature of the employment contract has led to a variety of nomenclature used to describe NTT faculty in higher education such as contingent, adjunct, PT, and contract (Goldenberg & Cross, 2011; Kezar & Sam, 2010). The term contingent refers to alternate employment structures not based on notions of employment permanency or stability (Kalleberg, 2009) and is the term for NTT faculty recognized by such organizations as the National Education Association (NEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP; AAUP, 2006; NEA, 2018). However, the term used most commonly in community college literature has been PT faculty, as it reflects an institutional preference for PT contracts for its faculty (Cohen et al., 2014; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Levin et al., 2011; Richardson et al., 1983).
A variety of contingent employment contracts exists in all types of higher education institutions (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Goldenberg & Cross, 2011; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006) but is most visible at the community college, where only 17% of the faculty are tenured or on the tenure track (Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016a). Instruction accounts for the entirety of the work assignment of PT community college faculty (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016a; Roueche et al., 1995). Contingent employment contracts may be of shorter or longer duration (e.g., a quarter, a semester, a year), comprise either a fraction or the entirety of a full-time workload (e.g., PT or full-time NTT), and reflect a difference in faculty rank (e.g., instructor, lecturer, or professor). The use of a contingent contract marks almost total institutional disinvestment (Jacobs, 1998; Levin et al., 2011). For example, faculty who are employed through contingent contracts have not had regular access to resources such as office space, staff assistance, professional development, or paid benefits that are offered to full-time tenure-track (FTTT) faculty. Lack of a standard term to theorize and study contingent faculty consistently has impeded formation of a cohesive scholarly literature (Curtis & Thornton, 2013; Goldenberg & Cross, 2011; Kalleberg, 2000; Levin et al., 2011) and has resulted in scholarship that has conflated the professional conditions of work with the professional identity and expertise of PT and NTT faculty in higher education (Gappa & Leslie, 1993).

**Neoliberalism and Higher Education: Scarcity Sets the Stage**

Scholars have articulated the links among the rise of a national neoliberal ideology, the changing nature of academic work, and the composition of the academic workforce in higher education (Eckel & Morpew, 2009; Levin, 2017; Levin et al., 2011;
G. Rhoades, 1998; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The rise of PT faculty, most prominent at the community college, the deleterious conditions under which this PT faculty corps labors, and the increasingly restrictive managerial control over both areas of faculty expertise and the autonomy to carry out such work have been the visible effects of neoliberal policies and the adoption of neoliberal values by the institution (Castells, 2000; Deem, 1998; Giroux, 2014; Levin, 2013, 2017). Increased institutional reliance on PT faculty has been articulated as a cost-saving measure that has allowed the institution to manage limited fiscal resources and be accountable to the public. For the community college, a PT faculty corps has made possible the accommodation of a growing student population, institutional responsiveness to market and public demand for new educational programs, student access to professional experts in technical fields, and lower tuition costs (Christensen, 2008; Weisbrod et al., 2008; Wellman et al., 2011).

Resource dependence, that is, institutional dependence on governmental and outside financing (Leslie, Kellams, & Gunne, 1982; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) has been the central explanation of the growth of PT faculty in community colleges. Of all higher education institutions, the community college has been found to be particularly sensitive to changes in funding, as it depends heavily on federal and state funding (Cohen et al., 2014; Wellman et al., 2011). Nationally, institutional revenue comes from state and local government (52%), net tuition revenue (33%), and federal appropriations (15%; Ma, Baum, Pender, & Welch, 2017). As neoliberal ideology has favored governmental disinvestment in higher education funding, net tuition revenue has increased (Baime &
Baum, 2016; Ma et al., 2017). In more than 20 states, net tuition has become the largest source of the educational revenue: more than 80% in Vermont and New Hampshire (State Higher Education Executive Offices [SHEEO], 2015). The national average net tuition relative to total state funding is 88% and indicates the decline in state funding despite a national call to make the community college tuition free (Palmadessa, 2017). State and local funding fell from 60% in 2002-2003 to 52% in 2014-2015 (Baime & Baum, 2016; Ma et al., 2017). Per-student state and local funding has continued to be 20% to 30% lower than before 2008 for all public higher education institutions, yet data from 2009 on recession effects have shown that the community college experienced the greatest declines in revenues per student at a rate beyond other public institutions (Desrochers & Hurlburt, 2016; Wellman et al., 2011; SHEEO, 2015).

Declining state appropriations for an institution that enrolls 43% of the nation’s undergraduate students (Ma et al., 2017), combined with the considerable growth of a permanent PT faculty as an institutional response, have made visible one of the maxims of neoliberalism in higher education: the need to both obtain and manage limited resources (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), a concept of scarcity (Brown, 2015, 2017; Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013). Scarcity, the concept of “having less than you feel you need” (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013, p. 3), has captured the attention of higher education institutions and their agents (Brown, 2015, 2017; Giroux, 2014). Scholars have proposed that, more than a physical constraint, scarcity captures and constrains mental capacity psychologically (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013). Scarcity directs what one notices, one’s choices and behaviors to improve short-term efficiency or the focus dividend. However, a
focus limited to improving short-term efficiency comes at the expense of other concerns and long-term efficiency, or goal inhibition (Mullainathan & Shafir, 2013).

One illustration of neoliberal policy in and a scarcity view of the community college that increases the need for controlling costs via a PT faculty corps has been the implementation of performance-based funding (PBF), which accounts for the portion of state funding base provided by the state (Burke, 2002; Dougherty et al., 2016; Hillman & Corral, 2017; Hillman, Tandberg, & Fryer, 2015; Lumina Foundation, 2009; Tandberg & Hillman, 2014). Currently, state funding represents the largest revenue source for community colleges nationally (Baime & Baum, 2016; SHEEO, 2015). PBF (2.0) calculations are based on student certificate and degree attainment, in contrast to the traditional calculation based on the number of students enrolled (C. P. Smith, 2015).

Research has shown that PBF has not led to improvement of graduation rates, retention rates, or Associate degree production, with the exception of a small increase in short-term certificate completion (Dougherty et al., 2013; Dougherty et al., 2016; Hillman, 2016; Hillman et al., 2015). Despite research that has indicated that graduation rates are not reliable measures of productivity (Kelly, 2009; Kelly & Jones, 2005), as of 2015, 33 states had PBF that required community colleges to quantify their outcomes (Dougherty et al., 2016; Smith, 2015). The focus dividend of institutions with PBF has been to improve educational outcomes through assessment and accountability (Dougherty et al., 2016; C. P. Smith, 2015) by graduating as many students as possible to increase funding. However, researchers have shown that attention to improving short-term efficiency to meet the demands of PBF have come at the expense of long-term efficiency: goal
inhibition. In this case, researchers have found that a restriction in access by underrepresented students and a decline in academic standards have been unintended consequences of PBF (Dougherty et al., 2013; Dougherty et al., 2016; Hillman, Tandberg, & Gross, 2014; Tandberg & Hillman, 2014).

As the scarcity view has shaped funding and policy in U.S. higher education, it has also shaped both the main areas of scholarly study on faculty and theoretical assumptions about the PT faculty. The neoliberal necessity of resource dependency has driven the imperative to control costs locally (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Levin, 2007; G. Rhoades, 1996, 1998) and has led to scholarship centered on the finance of higher education. As instructional costs (e.g., faculty salaries) have accounted for the largest portion of institutional expenditures, historically around 70% (Cohen et al., 2014) and currently 46% of the budget (Ma et al., 2017), the economic aspects of faculty work have become central to the institutional and administrative need to obtain (through faculty work) and manage (through faculty salaries) limited resources (G. Rhoades, 2014).

**Faculty Salaries**

A large stream of literature on faculty centers on faculty salaries (Fairweather, 1994; Hearn, 1999; Perna, 2001; Toutkoushian, Bellas, & Moore, 2007). This literature has been informed by large national surveys of faculty, such as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF), and the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey, as well as the analyses carried out on such data sets as the Delta Cost Project database (Baime & Baum, 2016). Funded from 1987 to 2004, the NSOPF collected data on the salaries of both full-time
and PT faculty in public institutions of higher education. Since that time, the IPEDS system and the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey have continued to collect salary information, although only for full-time instructional faculty. Thus, a large gap in this literature has been the dated knowledge on PT faculty salaries and concomitant research has been limited (AAUP, 2006; Coalition on the Academic Workforce [CAW], 2012; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; House Committee on Education and the Workforce [HCEW], 2014; Levin et al., 2011; Monks, 2007; Palmer, 2000). Furthermore, scholars have found that data from the national surveys may have understated the numbers (Tam & Jacoby, 2009) as nomenclature has varied and affected institutional reporting (Berry, 2005; Cross & Goldenberg, 2009; Tam & Jacoby, 2009).

Scholars have suggested that the lacuna in this literature has been exacerbated by a general lack of scholarly attention on the community college and its faculty (Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Frye, 1994; Kisker & Outcalt, 2005; Outcalt, 2002; Townsend & Twombly, 2008). Townsend, Donaldson, and Wilson (2005) examined articles from 1990 to 2003 from five prominent higher education journals (Journal of College Student Development, Journal of Higher Education, NASPA Journal, Research in Higher Education, and Review of Higher Education) and found that only 8% of articles focused on the community college. In another study of major educational journals from 1990 to 2000 (Journal of Higher Education, Research in Higher Education, and Review of Higher Education), Townsend, Bragg, and Kinnick (2001) found only 30 articles focused on some aspect of the community college and only 3 of those were about faculty. Even within peer-reviewed journals about community colleges (Community College Journal of
Research and Practice, Community College Review, and Journal of Applied Research in Community Colleges), scholars found that from 1990 to 2000 only 11% of articles were about faculty (Townsend et al., 2001). Townsend and Twombly (2008) have argued that, as community college faculty (both PT and FTTT) comprised 43% of higher education faculty, this faculty group merited scholarly attention.

Scholars have offered four general explanations for the lack of scholarly attention on the community college and its faculty (Cohen et al., 2014; Frye, 1994; Townsend & Twombly, 2008). The first explanation has been that research for publication has been conducted mainly by faculty at research universities who have focused on the institution with which they have the most familiarity (i.e., the research university) and have ignored the institution with which they may not have much experience (i.e., the community college; Frye, 1994; Grubb et al., 1999; Townsend & Twombly, 2008). The second explanation has been that, whereas community college faculty are not rewarded for research, faculty at research universities are rewarded for research and so have been able to research themselves (Townsend & Twombly, 2008). The third explanation has been that community college faculty have been part of larger-scale studies of the U.S. professoriate in which the 4-year institutions and faculty have been used as models for theorizing and assessing both the community college and its faculty (Frye, 1994; Meier, 2008; Townsend & Twombly, 2008). The fourth explanation has been that the existent literature in community college journals, institutional reports, and dissertations has been irrelevant to 4-year faculty members (Townsend & Twombly, 2008).
In this literature, the salaries of FTTT faculty have been problematic in the context of resource dependence (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). While the cost effectiveness of PT faculty wages has been used to mitigate the high percentage of the budget allotted to instruction (Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Kezar et al., 2014; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006), seemingly high FTTT faculty salaries have remained at the forefront of scholarly attention (Archibald & Feldman, 2011; Desrochers & Hurlburt, 2016; SHEEO, 2015). Such attention, both political and scholarly, illustrates a focus dividend to lower instructional costs to meet immediate budgetary constraints. The focus on improving short-term efficiency (i.e., current budgetary constraints) has directed attention to addressing immediate issues of resource dependence through reduction of FTTT faculty salaries, which has been perceived to be an inefficient use of public funds (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Powell, Gilleland, & Pearson, 2012; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). This reduction has been attained through reduction of FTTT positions and increase in PT positions. However, long-term solutions to address continued fiscal constraint have been absent, both in practice and in the literature (Breneman, 2001; Cheslock, Ortagus, Umbricht, & Wymore, 2016; Doughtery, Hare, & Natow, 2009; Powell et al., 2012).

There is insufficient scholarship offering any formal or structural response to resource dependency via PT faculty salaries (an example of goal inhibition), although scholars have stated the need for models and benchmarks to guide practice (Bowen, 1980; Jones & Wellman, 2010; Powell et al., 2012). The persistent argument in this scholarship has been, and continues to be, the imperative to reduce FTTT instructional
costs (Desrochers & Hurlburt, 2016). However, the lack of models or benchmarks for understanding the economic outcomes of a majority PT faculty has impeded scholarship on the impact of expenditures on institutional efficiency and effectiveness (Dougherty et al., 2009; Powell et al., 2012). Thus, there has been insufficient research to determine what percentage of the instructional budget is composed of PT faculty salaries (Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016a), the extent to which institutions simply shift savings to increase spending in other areas (Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016b) or to dispel the unchallenged assumption of FTTT faculty salaries as driving institutional inefficiency (Breneman, 2001; Cheslock et al., 2016; Powell et al., 2012).

A scholarly conceptualization of faculty as only those employed with a FTTT contract has been evidenced by this gap between theory and practice (Kezar & Sam, 2011). This theoretical assumption has led to conceptualization of PT faculty as temporary and marginal (Bowen & Schuster, 1986) when in practice they have become both a central and permanent solution to lowering FTTT salaries and a permanent faculty majority (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar, Maxey, & Holcombe, 2015; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). The American faculty tripled from 1939 to 1970, but this growth represented a majority faculty with a FTTT employment contract (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). In contrast, the following 30-year period saw continued faculty growth but mainly in the number of PT faculty. From 1969-1970 to 2001, the number of PT faculty increased by 376% (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006), from 18.5% in 1969-1970 to 75.5% in 2011 (CAW, 2012; HCEW, 2014), illustrating the changed trajectory of an employment contract that offered and represented full-time employment.
Current employment contracts currently offer and represent underemployment for the faculty majority and contradict the assumption of PT faculty as a marginal group for the institution. Despite the theoretical assumption that a PT contract is not based on notions of employment permanency or stability (Curtis & Thornton, 2013; Kalleberg, 2009; Levin et al., 2011), the most current national data set available on PT faculty (2004 NSOPF data) indicates that PT faculty had an average employment of 7.0 years, compared to 12.2 years for FTTT faculty, at individual institutions (K. Eagan, 2007). A 2010 national survey of PT and adjunct faculty found that the length of employment at a single institution has continued to increase: 40% had an average employment of 11 years or more, 32% had 6 to 10 years, and 1 in 4 had 5 years or less (AFT, 2010). Such data further contradict the assumption of the temporary nature of PT faculty.

The paucity of scholarship conceptualizing the long-term use of PT faculty to address instructional costs has demonstrated long-term goal inhibition as scholars have not directed their attention to understanding the ways in which PT faculty salaries affect the overall budget or the permanent nature of PT work for faculty and this faculty for the institution (Cheslock et al., 2016). Furthermore, the unquestioned assumptions in the literature on faculty salaries have resulted in scholarship that has been both unsuitable for advancing scholarly understanding of PT faculty and injurious to PT faculty. The limitations of current literature are visible in two streams of literature within the larger literature of faculty salaries: (a) the study and comparison of FTTT and PT faculty salaries, and (b) the scholarly work directed at understanding the relationship between
instructional expenditures and their educational outcomes (Bowen, 1980; Jones & Wellman, 2010; Powell et al., 2012).

**PT Faculty Wages**

Both data and scholarly studies on PT faculty wages have been limited as IPEDS and the AAUP faculty survey collect information only on FTTT faculty salary and the NSOPF data have become dated (CAW, 2012; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; HCEW, 2014; Levin et al., 2011; Monks, 2007; Palmer, 2000; Tam & Jacoby, 2009). Furthermore, the few studies on PT faculty salary do not disaggregate data according to institutional type (Curtis, 2005; Hollenshead et al., 2007; Toutkoushian et al., 2007). Although reliance on PT faculty is greatest at community colleges, this reality has not been reflected in the studies in the literature, as the majority of research produced by university scholars has been on university faculty (Kezar & Sam, 2010; Townsend & Twombly, 2008). Since the NSOPF stopped collecting data on PT faculty salaries in 2004, there has been only one survey on PT faculty salary to gather national information by the CAW (2012); several studies have resulted from those data (CAW, 2012; Curtis & Thornton, 2013). Consequently, current scholarship has depended on dated findings and has impeded an accurate account of PT faculty wages. For example, Monks (2007) used 1999 NSOPF data and found that PT community college faculty earned 64% less per hour than their tenured counterparts; this figure has continued to be the statistic offered on PT faculty salary in more current literature (e.g., Cheslock et al., 2016; Ehrenberg, 2010; Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016a; Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014).
Studies of PT faculty wages have centered on inaccurate comparisons between FTTT and PT faculty and have impeded understanding of PT faculty work life. In this literature, scholarly convention has been to compare faculty on a standardized three-unit-per-course basis as FTTT faculty receive a salary but PT faculty are paid on a per-hour basis (AAUP, 2006; CAW, 2012; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; Hollenshead et al., 2007; HCEW, 2014). Such comparisons have been problematic because they have not reflected the uncompensated work in which PT faculty engage as part of their academic workload (CAW, 2012; HCEW, 2014). The PT faculty hourly wage is paid only for in-class teaching time. The costs of benefits have been ignored in such comparisons and have further understated pay differences (Callie & Cheslock, 2008; Cheslock et al., 2016). Increasing costs for health care and retirement have been a driving force in increasing higher education costs (Desrochers & Kirshstein, 2014; Jones & Wellman, 2010), and PT faculty have either been ineligible or have not received benefits from their employers (CAW, 2012; Cheslock et al., 2016; HCEW, 2014).

Compensation for the academic work of course preparation, grading, record keeping, office hours, other communication with students, curriculum development at the course and programmatic levels, professional development, and participation in shared governance work through committee meeting attendance is reflected in FTTT faculty salary but not in the PT faculty hourly wage. Although individual institutions may pay for office hours or other resources, there has been no standardization of PT faculty compensation for out-of-classroom work (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Kezar, 2013a, 2013b). Furthermore, the indispensable work of course preparation, grading, record
keeping, and communication with students has been entirely uncompensated for PT faculty (HCEW, 2014). Thus, the scholarly convention to calculate the PT compensation for a 3-unit course excludes compensation for required academic work, as well as benefits that have been included in the FTTT faculty compensation for the 3-unit course.

The CAW (2012) survey found that the median pay for a PT faculty member for a 3-credit course was $2,700, with a full-time equivalent load of eight classes per year amounting to an annual salary of $21,600, which would be taxed and without benefits. An annual salary of $21,600 is below the federal poverty level for a family of four, compared to a median FTTT salary of $47,500 (CAW, 2012; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; HCEW, 2014). A PT faculty member who taught the equivalent of two full-time teaching loads, pieced together at various institutions, would not be able to earn a median FTTT salary (HCEW, 2014). Anecdotally, PT faculty members describe the breakdown of their combined time spent in teaching and preparing as resulting in earnings less than minimum wage (HCEW, 2014). Faced with poverty-level wages, it has been documented that PT faculty supplement their academic income by working at low-wage jobs such as delivering pizzas, Walmart, or sex work (Gee, 2017; HCEW, 2014). Yet, scholars have been able to articulate only the exploitation of PT faculty compensation euphemistically, for example “most part-timers are paid . . . at wages that barely cover the rent” (Brint, 2008, p. 24).

In contrast to the scholarly convention of estimating PT faculty wages via a standardized 3-unit course, a report by HCEW (2014) described PT faculty work as “piece work.” The authors explained that contingent faculty were “paid at a piece rate, a
fixed amount of compensation for each unit produced, regardless of how much time it takes to produce. In this case, the unit of production is a college course” (HCEW, 2014, p. 5). Although few researchers have utilized the term *piece rate* (Brint, 2008), such an assumption has been implicit in the standardized 3-unit course comparison (e.g., CAW, 2012; Curtis & Thornton, 2013). Although the literature comparing faculty salaries has made evident the cost savings engendered by PT faculty (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Kezar, 2013a, 2013b; Monks, 2007), scholars have obscured the magnitude of the disparity between salaries by not explaining PT work as piece rate work. In addition, studies on the hourly wages of PT faculty have been misleading, as these studies have not accounted for the absence of benefits or the unpaid time for preparation and grading work required for classroom teaching (CAW, 2012; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; HCEW, 2014; Monks, 2009).

**Psychological Outcomes of Contingent Work**

The low pay earned by PT faculty has led to two streams of literature that have examined the observable psychological outcomes of the changing work life (De Cuyper et al., 2008): individual attitudes (job satisfaction) and organizational attitudes (organizational commitment; Antony & Valadez, 2002; Clery, 2001; Feldman & Turnley, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Leslie & Gappa, 2002; Toutkoushian & Bellas, 2003; Valadez & Antony, 2001). Central to this literature has been the essential role of the organization for both scholarly theorizing and understanding the outcomes of the changing work life on PT faculty. Such a narrow focus on the relationship between the organization and faculty work has precluded study of a range of issues that accompany
the contingent contract (Clarke, Lewchuk, de Wolff, & King, 2007; Cooper, 2002; Lewchuk et al., 2008; Lewchuk et al., 2003). Thus, the inconclusive findings of this literature have a basis in the theoretical and methodological limitations that have arisen from the unquestioned assumption of the central role of the institution for explanations of PT faculty work life.

One methodological limitation of the literature on job satisfaction has been that almost all recent scholarship on PT faculty job satisfaction has relied on NSOPF data and has been limited by the characteristics used by the survey to measure job satisfaction (Maynard & Joseph, 2008; Wagoner, 2007). Inconclusive findings from studies on job satisfaction, as measured by satisfaction with the job overall, job security, advancement opportunities, salary, and benefits, have concluded alternately that PT faculty are satisfied (K. Eagan, 2007; Gappa & Leslie, 1997; Valadez & Antony, 2001), dissatisfied (Dubson, 2001), or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (Roueche et al., 1995). Furthermore, a review of literature on job satisfaction concluded that studies reported similar levels of job satisfaction for both PT and FTTT faculty (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). Researchers who have employed different measures than those measured in the NSOPF data have demonstrated differences between the two faculty groups (Antony & Valadez, 2002; Clery, 2001; Leslie & Gappa, 2002), and this has led to varied results for explanations of PT faculty job satisfaction across studies (Dubson, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1997; Valadez & Antony, 2001; Roueche et al., 1995).

Similarly, the literature on organizational commitment by PT faculty has yielded inconclusive findings as inaccurate theories (Kezar & Sam, 2011) and unquestioned
assumptions of a negative relationship between commitment and the short-term contract (De Cuyper et al., 2008) have guided such studies. The sociological theories that have been used to study contingent workers are based on the assumption of rational behavior found in economic theory (Thaler, 2016), an assumption that precludes the possibility of individual agency or consideration for ways in which work is socially constructed (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). Described collectively as need-satisfaction models (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977), theories such as social exchange theory (Blau, 1968, 2017; Emerson, 1976) and job characteristics theory (Hackman, 1980; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Turner & Lawrence, 1965) have been used by scholars to explain FTTT faculty attitudes and organizational behaviors and these theories have formed the basis on which negative behaviors of PT faculty vis à vis the institution have been predicted (Connelly & Gallagher, 2004).

In the broader scholarship on contingent workers, scholars have challenged the presumed causal link between attitudes and behavior and concluded that intervening constructs must be taken into account (Cappelli, 1997; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Kalleberg, 2000; Salanick & Pfeffer, 1977). However, few higher education scholars have acknowledged that the productive behaviors for the institution by PT faculty are mediated by the type of work arrangement (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006; Wagoner, 2007) and issues associated with such work arrangements (e.g., the uncertainty of future employment, the effort to obtain and maintain employment, and the support received as a result of employment; Clarke et al., 2007; Lewchuk et al., 2008; Lewchuk et al., 2003).
The perceptual bias that PT faculty will be less committed if they do not receive institutional support has been visible in the research literature that has failed to challenge the assumption that greater job commitment would be linked directly to performance of behaviors that benefit the institution (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Benjamin, 2002; CCSSE, 2009; Umbach, 2007, 2008; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). Thus, the presence of good teaching practices has been correlated to student outcomes to demonstrate that PT faculty have low organizational commitment (Umbach, 2007). Research on teaching and learning has demonstrated the importance of teacher-student interactions, both in the classroom and outside the classroom, to the improvement of student learning and outcomes (Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Kuh & Hu, 2011; Pascarella, 1980; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2003). Therefore, scholars have examined time spent on classroom preparation, student advising, use of learning-centered strategies (e.g., essay exams, research papers, multiple drafts of written work, oral presentations, groups projects, and student peer evaluations) to explain the performance, and by extension the commitment, of PT faculty (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Benjamin, 2002; CCSSE, 2009; Umbach, 2007, 2008; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). As in the literature on job satisfaction, results have been inconclusive as some scholars have found that PT faculty are less likely to use student and learning-centered teaching practices (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Banachowski, 1996; Benjamin, 2002; CCSSE, 2009; Hagedorn, Perrakis, & Maxwell, 2002; Umbach 2007, 2008), while other scholars have found no difference in instructional practices between FTTT and PT faculty (Grubb et al., 1999; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013).
Although scholars have acknowledged that research has failed to provide conclusive evidence of the direct effects of PT faculty behavior on student learning outcomes (i.e., graduation, retention, and transfer rates), researchers have continued to employ a negative bias to interpret PT faculty commitment and productivity (Kezar & Sam, 2011; Kezar et al., 2014). Furthermore, as most scholars have not employed alternate theories that take into consideration the conditions of work (such as the length of the contract) or other processes (such as the preference for full-time or PT employment) to mediate behavior and performance, a growing body of literature has indicated a causal relationship between “exposure” to PT and other NTT faculty to negative student outcomes (Benjamin, 2003; Bettinger & Long, 2010; CCSSE, 2009; M. K. Eagan & Jaeger, 2009; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Gross & Goldhaber, 2009; Harrington & Schibik, 2001; Jacoby, 2006; Jaeger & Eagan, 2009; Umbach, 2007, 2008). Other scholars have argued that PT faculty are equally, if not more, effective than FTTT faculty (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Figlio, Schapiro, & Soter, 2015; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Roueche et al., 1995). However, scholarly examination of the collective literature on PT faculty has revealed a general deficit perspective that has been used to frame the literature on PT and contingent faculty in higher education (Kezar & Sam, 2011).

The literature on PT faculty has paralleled that of the sociological literature on contingent workers as studies on the long-term well-being and citizenship behaviors engendered by contingent work have received less scholarly attention (De Cuyper et al., 2008) than the proximal psychological outcomes (such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment; Connelly & Gallagher, 2004; De Cuyper et al., 2008;
Kalleberg, 2003). Although scholars have pointed to the limitations of the research design of early studies, other explanations for the limited and inconclusive nature of the collective literature have been that the variety of contingent appointments necessitate more complex research designs that take into account these differences and incorporate possible positive aspects of contingent employment and hidden costs to permanent employees (De Cuyper et al., 2008; Connelly & Gallagher, 2004).

In the higher education literature, some scholars have suggested that the study of the psychological outcomes of contingent work on PT and NTT faculty make use of recent theories from sociology and psychology that are not premised on rational choice models to move beyond the limitations of current theoretical assumptions (Kezar & Sam, 2011; Maynard & Joseph, 2008; Wagoner, 2007). Theories that have been suggested include professionalization or managed professionals (Abbott, 1988; Brint, 2008, 2011; Larson, 2013; G. Rhoades, 1998), underemployment theory (Feldman, 1996; Maynard & Feldman, 2011), constructs on occupational identity (Kunda et al., 2002), and identity management theory (Padavic, 2005). In the next section, the literature on these theories and their application to PT faculty is explained.

**Professional Identity and Professional Status**

Research on the professional identity of PT faculty is distinct from the research on the professional status of PT faculty in that the research on the professional status of PT faculty has been used to understand, explain, and argue for changes to the working conditions of faculty, whereas research on the professional identity of PT faculty could be used to understand and explain the social and psychological outcomes of the conditions
of work on this faculty body, which is missing in the research literature. As scholars of the literature on contingent workers have explained, the professional status of white-collar workers affects identity formation in ways that are distinct from the effects on blue-collar workers (Blau, 1968, 2017; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Kunda et al., 2002; Morrow & Goetz, 1988; Padavic, 2005). Thus, the literature on professional status informs researchers of professional identity as to the theoretical frameworks (such as culture theory, professional identity theory, occupational identity, or identity management theory) that align with research findings. However, lack of scholarly consensus as to the professional status of PT faculty has impeded study of PT faculty experience and identity formation, which this present investigation was designed to address.

The contested professional status of PT faculty has been situated in the larger debate regarding the professional status of FTTT community college faculty. The gap between scholarly understanding of the community college and the actual conditions and practices of the institution and its agents has been a central limitation of this literature (Cohen et al., 2014; Frye, 1994; Levin, 2001; Meier, 2008). To date, the scholarly literature on the community college has been dominated by the use of the university as a model for theorizing and assessing the educational outcomes of the institution (Frye, 1994; Meier, 2008). Literature within this orientation has focused on the often-disjointed academic practices found in the community college to support claims of the institution’s failure to meet academic and social standards of a higher education institution (B. Clark, 1960; Grubb et al., 1999; McGrath & Spear, 1991; Richardson et al., 1983). Thus, the traditional work of university faculty (research, service, and teaching) historically has
defined the professoriate (Brint, 1994; Frye, 1994; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Three related theories have been used by scholars to argue the professional status of community college faculty and inform current research: a functionalist professionalization theory, professionalization theory, and managed professionals (Abbott, 1988, Brint, 2008, 2011; Hermanowicz, 2011; Larson, 2013; G. Rhoades, 1998). As expertise is central to the three theories, literature that has examined the teaching preparation of community college faculty and the nature of teaching expertise contextualizes the three theories applied to community college faculty.

Teaching Expertise

Teaching is the core function of the institution and its faculty, and scholars have examined and defined the faculty’s professional role through the curricular functions that they perform and the students whom they teach (T. Clark, 1993; Cohen et al., 2014; Frye, 1994; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Grubb et al., 1999; Levin et al., 2011). However, faculty work has remained undertheorized and studied infrequently in the higher education literature (Cox, 2009; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Grubb et al., 1999; Rose, 1990). Scholarly attention on narrow aspects of the curriculum has obscured scholarly understanding of the actual work of college faculty and the teaching expertise of both the FTTT and PT faculty. Consequently, much about PT faculty work is either unknown or based on untested theoretical assumptions (Cohen et al., 2014; Curtis & Thornton, 2013; Levin et al., 2011; Townsend & Twombly, 2008).

Although scholarly attention has been centered ostensibly on curriculum, it is the curricular function and not the principles of curriculum that has continued to direct
scholarship. Curriculum is the content of schooling and includes elements for both the
design and delivery of content (English, 2000), with scholarly definitions placing varying
degrees of emphasis on content, outcomes, and student experience (Parkay, Anctil, &
Hass, 2009). As curriculum is imbued with ideological norms that reflect and conform to
the cultural and political-socioeconomic system from which it emerges (Bourdieu, 1984;
Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Foucault, 1980), attention to curricular functions, the purposes
(e.g., academic transfer preparation, general, developmental, vocational, continuing
education) and values (i.e., social mobility and democratization) have garnered the most
attention in the literature (Brint & Karabel, 1989; B. Clark, 1960; Cohen et al., 2014;
Dougherty, 1994; London, 1978; R. Rhoades & Valadez, 1996; Richardson & Bender,
1987; Weis, 1985).

The principles of curriculum and instruction and the work that faculty must
perform to develop and deliver a curriculum have been ignored as curricular functions
have become the mainstay of scholarly attention. The unquestioned assumption in this
literature has been that the process of curriculum development and delivery is limited to
classroom instruction (Cohen et al., 2014; Levin, Haberler, Walker, & Jackson-Boothby
2014; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). The trinity of faculty work as teaching, research, and
service has reflected this essentialized understanding in the description of teaching as the
“most concrete such component” (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006, p. 77). The theoretical
assumption that teaching is limited to classroom time has been evident in the literature as
descriptions of faculty work define teaching as the time spent in the classroom and
associated work in preparing the lesson and grading (Cohen et al., 2014; Levin et al.,

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In the multiple editions of the acknowledged touchstone book on community colleges by Cohen and Brawer (2003), curricular work is ignored in descriptions of faculty workload. In their latest edition, the faculty workload was described as “hours spent in the classroom . . . occasionally with a nod to committee service” (Cohen et al., 2014, p. 88). A finding of an analysis on U. S. faculty was that higher education faculty expressed almost unanimously a desire to decrease the time spent in teaching (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006); this indicates that instructional work may be a more abstract activity than current scholarship on faculty work has suggested (Cox, 2009; Grubb et al., 1999; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Rose, 1990).

The conceptualization of curricular work as classroom teaching has also been evident in the paucity of training and preparation of community college faculty. Community college faculty are content experts (Brint, 2008, 2011; Cohen et al., 2014). Unlike primary and secondary school teachers who are expected to acquire a teaching credential that entails courses in education, teaching, and learning, as well as a period of mentored teaching practicums, the standard minimum qualifications to teach at a community college has been a master’s degree in the content area (Cohen et al., 2014). Historically, community college faculty had some educational training, as many faculty members had teaching experience at secondary schools, but that trend declined after the 1970s (Bushnell, 1973; Cohen et al., 2014). Consequently, newly hired faculty have had little to no preparation for the level of teaching at the community college and little knowledge of the institution (Cohen et al., 2014). Courses in teaching and pedagogy or
learning theory have been absent in Master’s degree programs that are not specifically in the education field. Although a Master of Arts in Teaching appeared in the late 1960s, it and other similar programs did not succeed in becoming a source for preparing new community college faculty (Cohen et al., 2014).

The gaps in scholarly understanding of the complexity of curricular work coupled with educational policy have resulted in little preparation for community college faculty, as well as little scholarly interest to conduct research on the quality of that teaching and the skills that faculty have to perform it (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Grubb et al., 1999). Currently, content area expertise is the minimum requirement for teaching at the community college, with no pedagogical knowledge required (Cohen et al., 2014). In an example of circular logic, the public, policy makers, and other institutional stakeholders, including faculty, have concluded that content area expertise translates unproblematically into faculty teaching expertise in the content area; however, scholarship on teaching expertise has disproven such assumptions (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005; Shulman, 1987; Turner-Bisset, 1999). Thus, community college faculty, both FTTT and PT faculty, are content experts by training but assumed to be teaching experts. Expertise in instruction has been central to the three conceptual frameworks (functional professional theory, professionalization theory, and managed-professionals theory) for understanding the professional nature of PT faculty work that are reviewed in the following section.
The Professional Status of Community College Faculty

Historically, sociologists used a functionalist approach to the study and definitions of professions; although new theories of professionalization and managed professionals have gained prominence in scholarly study, a functionalist perspective has remained implicit in higher education literature and in public perception. Scholars of the functionalist approach defined a profession as a way to organize work to respond to the requirements of patrons and society in which practitioners’ intent was to gain monopolies of practice and eschew market gains (Abbott, 1988; Larson, 2013; G. Rhoades, 1998). Traits such as “technical expertise, meritocracy, codes of ethics, values learned in professional education, and altruism” were used to categorize professionals (G. Rhoades, 1998, p. 20). Faculty have been assumed to possess these traits as they have been considered technical experts who train other experts (Hermanowicz, 2011; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). However, unlike other professions, such as medicine or law, the professoriate has had neither an explicit code of ethics nor a shared set of explicit values encoded in professional oaths. Without an explicit code of ethics, altruism and other values of the professoriate (e.g., academic freedom, individual autonomy, shared governance, innovation) were in part legitimated through the research and service function of public universities as classical professional theory defined a profession by the organization of work to improve society (G. Rhoades, 1998). Philanthropy, community engagement, and other professional values were encapsulated in the process of basic research because no other sectors would undertake such research for the sole function of providing a social good to the public (Rice, Saltmarsh, & Plater, 2015; Weisbrod et al.,
Community college faculty professional status was questioned as instruction has occupied the central function of this faculty (Frye, 1994).

The 1980s marked a shift in both faculty work and professionalization theory. Scholars identified U.S. legislation designed to foster expansion of research and development sold by research universities to the public (e.g., the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980) as a turning point in which the search for external funding sources led to academic capitalism: market and market-like behaviors by university faculty (Eckel & Morphew, 2009; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). The result of academic capitalism by faculty at public universities and the community college has led to increased valorization for faculty work that attracts funding (research or grant writing) and a devalorization of faculty work that can be performed at a lower cost, such as teaching (Eckel & Morphew, 2009; Ikenberry, 2009; Weisbrot et al., 2008). This transformation was reflected in the professionalization theory that emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s in which professionals were defined as self-interested practitioners seeking to establish jurisdiction (monopolies) of domains of work or expertise (Abbott, 1988; Larson, 2013; G. Rhoades, 1998).

Academic capitalism in research has created internal stratification of the academic faculty with new faculty roles that focus on research and not teaching, transformed a collegial environment into one of increased competition, and increased the value placed on research through rewards via the tenure process (Eckel & Morphew, 2009; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Toutkoushian, 2009; Weisbrot et al., 2008). Faculty involvement in academic capitalism has been the foundation for the conceptualization of faculty as self-interested and individualistic (G. Rhoades, 1998). Scholars have utilized
professionalization theory to challenge the professional status of a stratified and individualistic faculty (Brint, 2008, 2011; Geiger, 2011; G. Rhoades, 1998; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997), although few articulate clearly the loss of professional status for any segment of the faculty (Brint, 2008, 2011; G. Rhoades, 1998). The commonality in scholarship has been that, as academic work, even that of classroom teaching, has become unbundled, differentiated, separated, and performed by different individuals (Austin, 2003, p. 124), that professional status has rested on the individual’s expertise and control over work.

The concepts of expertise and control over work have been central in professionalization theory literature to define the professional status of community college faculty (including PT faculty). A focus on the concept of expertise has led scholars to conclude that teaching does not constitute professional activity but instead amateur activity as

relatively little in the professional model informs the college teaching function. Most instructors are unceremoniously dropped in front of classrooms once they have been qualified as researchers by virtue of their scholarship. They are required to demonstrate no skills in pedagogy, no understanding of the aims or purposes of education. For most, college teaching is, in short, an amateur activity performed with limited regard to effectiveness as long as teaching evaluations are acceptably high, by people whose real training is for something else. (Brint, 2008, p. 3)

Focus on control over work has led to research that has found community college faculty to be managed professionals (G. Rhoades, 1998) who have lost and continue to lose authority over the areas of their expertise to new educational professionals and professional managers (G. Rhoades, 1998, 2011). Although the theory of managed professionals has not described teaching as an amateur activity, its author has explained
that the narrow definition of educational space as exclusively physical space has reduced the authority of the professoriate (Rhoades, 2011).

The theory of managed professionals has been used in an emerging stream of literature that examines professional and social identity through examination of the working experience of community college faculty, both PT and FTTT (Levin et al., 2014; Levin & Shaker, 2011; Levin et al., 2013; Shaker, 2008). The neoliberal ideology from which scholars theorized human behavior through rational choice models has resulted in theoretical constructs that explained culture and identity as static concepts and theorized PT faculty unproblematically as occupying the same place and position as FTTT faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Roueche et al., 1995). In contrast, recent literature has utilized sociocultural theories such as culture theory (Holland et al., 1998) and identity theory (J. P. Gee, 2000) as lenses by which to understand PT faculty as individuals who construct a professional identity and who are able to position themselves within social conditions. The conclusions of literature from a sociocultural approach have extended scholarly understanding of PT faculty professional identity and differ from rational choice approaches to understand human behavior.

**Professional Identity as a Social Practice**

A sociocultural orientation differs from a static understanding of identity to one that takes into account the power of PT faculty to effect change and position themselves within given social and cultural structures (Tierney, 1997). Through the lens of culture and identity theory (J. P. Gee, 2000; Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006), professional identity formation is a negotiated process of developing self-understanding and self-
definition as a member of an occupational or professional group within a given context (Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). The organizational context is important in that it provides social and cultural tools that members use to negotiate their identity (Fine, 1996; Leicht & Fennell, 1997). The concept of “figured worlds” from culture theory identifies a space where identity formation occurs within given sociocultural contexts (Holland et al., 1998).

Scholarship that utilizes this theoretical framework has documented the tensions inherent in PT community college faculty professional identity negotiation (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014). These scholars examined the construction of professional identity for a subset of academic community college PT faculty: faculty in the social sciences and science areas. The scholars noted that PT faculty’s view of teaching as professional work mediated the development of a professional identity. Their findings demonstrated that the classroom and the department constitute two principal, yet distinct, figured worlds for PT faculty. Within the figured world of the classroom, PT faculty viewed their academic work as valued. Consequently, PT faculty identified with a professional identity within that figured world. In contrast, PT faculty did not perceive value for their professional work outside the classroom, in the figured world of the department. Furthermore, the researchers found that institutional detachment moderated and lessened self-understanding of a professional identity. Thus, PT faculty experienced a “divided” professional identity: They had professional status in the classroom but they lacked professional status outside the classroom (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014).
Managed professionals theory has allowed scholars to examine the ways in which institutional spaces inform development of a professional identity (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014; Levin & Shaker, 2011; Thirolf, 2012) and sociocultural theories, such as culture theory, identity theory, practice theory, and professional identity theories, have allowed scholars to research the ways in which professional experiences shape professional identity. Yet, such studies have situated the work organization as central to understanding the professional identity of contingent faculty. Sociologist have explained that the rise of contingent work necessitates new theoretical frameworks and reconceptualization of alternate locations for identity formation, such as through the occupation (Kunda et al., 2002), internal and psychological sources (Padavic, 2005), and alternate associations and institutions (Sennett, 2006). Higher education scholars have agreed that the use of cross-disciplinary theoretical frameworks would contribute to the emerging body of literature (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016; Kezar & Sam, 2011; Lester, 2016; Maynard & Joseph, 2008). To date, the theory of underemployment and the associated theoretical concept of non-ideal workers has been the only one of these used by higher education scholars and has fostered the growth of study on the professional experiences and identity of PT faculty (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016; Lester, 2016; Lester, Sallee, & Hart, 2017; Maynard & Joseph, 2008; Thirolf, 2012, 2015; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2016). The following section describes the literature on underemployment applied to PT faculty and the current limitations of this research.
PT Faculty as Underemployed Workers

Status as a PT faculty member demarcates membership in a downwardly mobile class of underemployed workers: workers whose employment is of lower quality or below a particular standard (Feldman, 1996; Maynard & Feldman, 2011; Maynard & Joseph, 2008; Newman, 1999). Five dimensions of underemployment are (a) more formal education than is required by the job, (b) involuntary employment in fields outside the area of formal education, (c) possession of higher-level skills and more work experience than are required by the job, (d) involuntary engagement in PT or temporary jobs, and (e) pay that is lower than that of a previous job or others in the same occupational track (Feldman, 1996). Any one characteristic is a measure of underemployment; categories can be determined both subjectively and objectively along a continuum (Feldman, 1996). Combinations of these characteristics also result in three central types of underemployment: (a) time related (identified by involuntary PT work and temporary work), (b) skills related (identified by underpayment and overqualification), and (c) pay related (identified by earning 20% less than at previous jobs; Maynard & Feldman, 2011; Tipps & Gordon, 1985; Weststar, 2011; Wilkins & Wooden, 2011).

Although downward mobility has long been a part of the economic story of the United States (Kalleberg, 2009; Newman, 1999), the concept has been ignored by the public, policy makers, and scholars as cultural assumptions about failure conflate downward mobility with poverty (Newman, 1999). The narrative of the American dream has led to research focused on upward mobility (Feldman, 1996; Kalleberg, 2009; Newman, 1999). Scholarship on underemployed workers has pointed to the lack of
vocabulary or ritual in U.S. culture to encapsulate the experiences of failure. Thus, underemployment occupies a liminal space in U.S. culture that has been difficult to articulate culturally and linguistically (Newman, 1999; Padavic, 2005; Zelizer, 2011). In the scholarly literature, only 785 peer-reviewed articles on underemployment have been published in the past 50 years, compared to 31,839 on unemployment (Maynard & Feldman, 2011). Newman (1999) explained that the downwardly mobile do not always experience poverty but instead experience a downward turn in status that leads to a standard of living below that to which the worker had been accustomed. This “fall from grace” indicates economic hardship, especially the “psychological, social and practical consequences” of the loss of status (Newman, 1999, p. 8).

Underemployment has been found to have negative outcomes on job attitudes (Borgen, Amundson, & Harder, 1988; Khan & Morrow, 1991), psychological well-being and mental health (Feather & O’Brian, 1986a, 1986b; Padavic, 2005), career attitudes (Borgen et al., 1988), job performance, and familial and social relationships (Casey, 1995; Feldman, 1996; Newman, 1999; Sennett, 2006). The existent literature on PT faculty has examined job attitudes (Benjamin, 1998; K. Eagan, 2007; Valadez & Antony, 2001; Wagoner, 2007), career attitudes (CAW, 2012; Jolley, Cross, & Bryant, 2014; Kezar, 2012; Thirolf, 2012), and job performance (M. K. Eagan & Jaeger, 2009; Kezar, 2013b; Kezar et al., 2014; Maynard & Joseph, 2008; Shaker, 2008). However, the study of the psychological and social outcomes of underemployment for PT workers has been limited (Jolley et al., 2014; Kezar, 2014; Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2014; Thirolf, 2012) despite research that has indicated that underemployment mediates development of
a professional identity (Anderson & Winefield, 2011; Cappelli, 1997; Kunda et al., 2002; Malenfant, LaRue, & Vézina, 2007; Padavic, 2005). As previously discussed, the literature on job and career attitudes and performance has been problematic in that the use of rational choice models has resulted in contradictory findings. The second limitation of the literature has been methodological, as much of this literature has depended on quantitative measures and excluded qualitative methods, such as interviews or observations, as sources of data.

Few studies of job performance have included observation of classroom practices or interviews of faculty and students; however, the studies that do so present challenges to the validity of survey measures (Cox, 2009; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Grubb et al., 1999). Survey-based studies assume that the use of learner-centered pedagogy leads to improved engagement and student learning (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Harrington & Schibik, 2001). Scholars who have observed classroom practice have identified educational practices that appeared to be constructivist and learning-centered pedagogy but did not work to raise student engagement (Cox, 2009; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Grubb et al., 1999). Classroom observations led Grubb et al. (1999) to conclude that, when instructors continued to “focus on facts and knowledge transfer, . . . use humiliation as motivation, . . . and dominate classroom discussion” (p. 251), they essentially eliminated the benefits of effective practice.

**PT Faculty as Non-Ideal Workers**

In this section it is argued that, when compared to the ideal worker image, PT faculty are viewed as deficient (Kezar & Sam, 2011). The concept of the non-ideal
worker presented in the literature on underemployed workers contrasts to the concept of
the ideal worker and offers an alternate way to conceptualize faculty that is not premised
on comparison.

An implicit argument in the higher education literature has been that FTTT
faculty, employed for a minimum of 40 hours a week throughout the year, are ideal
workers (Acker, 1990; Williams, 2000). A further assumption has been that the intrinsic
nature of faculty work is the work of the 4-year university FTTT faculty member
(research, service, and teaching; Frye, 1994; Meier, 2008; Townsend & Twombly, 2008)
and that the stratification of faculty has resulted in higher professional status as ideal
workers for those with more professional autonomy over how their work is done and
what type of work they do (e.g., more research and less teaching or service; Brint, 1994;
Eckel & Morphew, 2009; Weisbrod et al., 2008) and less professional status as ideal
workers for those who have little to no control over how their work is done or the type of
work that they do (e.g., curricular; Austin, 2003; Brint, 1994; G. Rhoades, 1998; Tierney
& Hentschke, 2007). The idealized assumptions of what constitutes faculty work have
resulted in a body of research based on fundamentally biased and prejudiced comparisons
as community college faculty engage in teaching only (Cohen et al., 2014; Frye, 1994;
Lester, 2016). Moreover, the unquestioned assumption of faculty status for only those
with FTTT employment has encouraged bias and comparisons among FTTT and PT
community college faculty (Kezar & Sam, 2014; Townsend & Twombly, 2008).

The belief that underemployed workers (such as PT faculty) decrease their
performance to reduce the inequality of their employment status has underscored these
comparisons (Feldman, 1996). However, research on underemployed workers both disproves such assertions and demonstrates that precarious employment results in improved performance (Cappelli, 1997; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Lewchuk et al., 2008; Padavic, 2005; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). In a synthesis of theories of underemployment, Feldman (1996) argued that the interplay and salience of the subjective and objective components of underemployment both factor into outcomes so that an overqualified worker might decrease performance in order to perform at a level equal to that of other workers and a worker who wants full-time employment may increase performance and go above and beyond what is required in an attempt to gain the desired employment status. Feldman’s assertion aligns with research on PT faculty that has shown that PT faculty invest more hours than they are paid to work (Kezar, 2013b; Shaker, 2008). Furthermore, PT faculty are paid only for classroom instruction; course preparation and grading are uncompensated work performed by all PT faculty. Thus, all PT faculty can be viewed as increasing their performance via economic outcomes (i.e., cost savings and productivity).

Theoretical conceptualizations of an ideal-worker norm, unstated assertions as to the nature of faculty work, narrow focus on the institution to understand contingent contract effects on work, and unquestioned comparisons between faculty groups have hindered development of research that could examine the ways in which PT faculty understand, explain, react to, and cope with their employment status and the ways in which such understandings affect professional identity formation (Feldman, 1996). A deficit view is evident in the dearth of research that either recognizes, or attempts to recognize, any positive contributions by PT faculty to students, institutions, or the
academic profession (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Leslie et al., 1982; López-Damián, 2017; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2007). The theory of underemployment (Feldman, 1996; Maynard & Feldman, 2011) and the concept of a non-ideal worker (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016; Williams, 2000) afford scholars an alternate way to identify and explain the experiences of PT faculty and their work that does not superimpose an unattainable image of idealized FTTT faculty member and workload (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016; Lester, 2016; Lester et al., 2017).

The theory of the non-ideal worker originated as a feminist critique of gendered work and the gendered care ideal implicit in the concept of an ideal worker (Hochschild, 1989, 1995; Williams, 2000). Arguing that ideals of work have been organized around the traditional life trajectory of men, which discriminates against both women and men, Williams (2000) explained that the social context of full-time work excludes a normal family life. In the arena of academia, the barrier for non-ideal workers is not access but advancement. Barriers to advancement are apparent in the composition of faculty that is male dominated in upper academic posts but female dominated in lower academic posts, which stems from structural inhibition of female advancement as advancement has been linked to performance of traditionally masculine behaviors (such as male social bonding through sports or the requirement of overwork in schedules that exceed 40 hours a week; Williams, 2000). Women are overrepresented in the PT faculty group that teach the traditional academic areas of humanities and sciences—the group whose main source of income is academic work and who earn the lowest individual income (Levin et al., 2011).
Meanwhile, researchers have found that corresponding FTTT faculty in these areas are disproportionately men (Levin et al., 2011).

**Domesticity**

Defined as work that is organized around an ideal worker who works full time with little to no time off for childbearing or childcare or other caregiving activities, domesticity is a system that marginalizes caregivers and precludes the possibility of a caregiver fulfilling any social roles that carry responsibility or authority (Williams, 2000). Domesticity, a U.S. norm and practice (Williams, 2000), ensures that full-time work impedes the ability to engage in a normal family life. Ideal-worker norms are premised on the assumptions that an ideal worker is unfailingly available to work and that childcare is not expected of the worker because the worker either does not have children or has a spouse to take care of children (Acker, 1990; Hochschild, 1995; Williams, 2000). Thus ideal-worker norms marginalize caregivers, both male and female, and frame issues of work-life balance around issues of health and caring for children and aging parents (Hochschild, 1995; Lester, 2016; Lester et al., 2017).

Scholars have advocated the notion of the non-ideal worker as an alternative to the ideal worker concept to understand the experiences of PT and other NTT faculty with families (Kezar & Bernstein Sierra, 2016; Lester, 2016; Lester et al., 2017). They have argued that qualitative studies of PT faculty experience align with the theory of underemployment in that the studies have indicated that ideal-worker norms direct PT faculty to put in extra work (Kezar, 2013b; Shaker, 2008; Ward, Morphew, & Wolf-Wendel, 2016) and demonstrate the constrained choices of faculty members who are
caregivers (Lester et al., 2017; Levin & Shaker, 2011; Maynard & Joseph, 2008).

However, Kezar and Bernstein-Sierra (2016) argued that ideal-worker norms are not relevant to PT faculty because these workers are not visible to the institution except in the institutional expectation for classroom teaching. These scholars have argued that, except for limited cases, an ideal-worker norm does not apply to PT faculty and proposed the notion of non-ideal worker as an alternate way to conceptualize PT faculty that is based on the theory of underemployment (Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016).

The scholarly argument that ideal-worker norms are not relevant to PT faculty (Kezar & Sam, 2011; Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016) is limited in two ways. First, such an assertion fails to acknowledge Williams’s (2000) explanation of domesticity as structuring work in a way that constrains the choices of caregivers. Williams (2000) argued that ideal-worker norms permeate the culture and that alternate working arrangements are held to measures of the ideal worker. The central assumption of domesticity is that choice does not preclude discrimination because choices are constrained (Williams, 2000). Furthermore, the choice of contingent employment may be due to the lack of available traditional full-time employment; thus, the choice for PT employment may be an involuntary choice (Bauer & Truxillo, 2000; Cappelli, 1997; Gallagher & Sverke, 2005; Williams, 2000). For PT community college faculty, the choice for PT employment may be understood as a reluctant choice, since only 17% of faculty positions are FTTT (Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016a).

The second limitation of the assertion that ideal-worker norms are not relevant to PT faculty is the free-agent orientation to the psychological contract between employer
and employee that it assumes. The psychological contract between employer and employee in bureaucratic organizations refers to the expectation of permanent employment in return for work that was well done and was characterized by an internal labor market in which employees were compensated for their company loyalty (Cappelli, 1997; Cooper, 2002; Kalleberg, 2009; Reuben, 2005). The shift to external markets that characterizes neoliberal ideology and policies has changed the psychological contract to one in which individuals are defined through their entrepreneurial skills and roles as flexible, self-actualized workers in an external labor market (Cappelli, 1997; Kalleberg, 2009; Kunda et al., 2002). The free agent perspective assumes that the increase in alternate work arrangements reflects worker preference (Cappelli, 1997; Kunda et al., 2002). According to labor scholars, this perspective lacks empirical support and fails to take into account the drawbacks and costs of flexible employment contracts (Cappelli, 1997; Kunda et al., 2002). Furthermore, scholars have found that the neoliberal shift to external labor markets has been driven by employer interests and that these changes have been involuntary for many workers (Cappelli, 1997; Gallagher & Sverke, 2005; Kunda et al., 2002).

Although Kezar and Bernstein-Sierra’s (2016) intention of studying PT faculty experience as distinct from that of an idealized FTTT faculty member does not acknowledge the role of domesticity in constraining choice nor does it explore the assumptions of a free-agent perspective, the intention is consistent with the argument for the need of alternate constructions of work (Feldman, 1996; Maynard & Feldman, 2011; Williams, 2000). Thus, conceptualization of PT faculty as non-ideal workers serves as a
central theoretical notion for the examination of PT faculty experience that allows for a focus on additional elements that characterize the new employment relationship (Clarke et al., 2007; Lewchuk et al., 2003), and could close a large gap in the literature on PT faculty.

**Employment Strain Model**

Labor studies on underemployment have offered an employment strain model (Lewchuk et al., 2003) as a framework that could lead to scholarship that addresses issues of work-life balance through the study of the effects of underemployment on life satisfaction, mental health, and the quality of marital, familial, and social relationships (Feldman, 1996; Maynard & Feldman, 2011; Pedulla & Newman, 2011). The employment strain framework takes into account employment stressors that are caused by the characteristics of temporary work (e.g., high demands, reduced control, role stress, limited support) that result from the employment contract (Lewchuk et al., 2008). Unlike previous models in which the employment relationship was understood only in relation to the job and the workplace (De Cuyper et al., 2008; Karasek & Theorell, 1990), the employment strain model considers three comprehensive characteristics of the employment relationship (i.e., the uncertainty of future employment, the effort to obtain and maintain employment, and the support received as a result of employment; Clarke et al., 2007; Lewchuk et al., 2003; Lewchuk et al., 2008). Thus, the conditions of work are simply part of a broader set of characteristics that can be used to understand and explain PT faculty experience and identity formation.
Conceptual Framework

Scholars have identified that, for white-collar workers such as PT faculty, notions of a life-long career and full-time employment are cultural markers for mediating self-value and professional identity (Osterman, Kochan, Locke, & Piore, 2001; Padavic, 2005; V. Smith, 1998, 2001). As the employment relationship has changed in contingent employment, the use of models that take into account the changed employment relationship (e.g., underemployment theory and employment strain) and offer alternatives to the conceptualization of institutions as central to professional identity formation (e.g., the new cultural anchor; Sennett, 2006) is needed. For this investigation, identity theory (J. P. Gee, 2000) and culture theory (Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006) provide the theoretical framework for the understanding and explanation of professional identity, including the self-understandings and experiences of PT faculty within a variety of sociocultural contexts, including occupation (Kunda et al., 2002), internal and psychological sources (Padavic, 2005), and alternate associations and institutions (Sennett, 2006). Sennett’s (2006) concept of an alternate cultural anchor provides a framework for examination PT faculty’s professional identity and points to structures and activities that are proposed to engender new values and new figured worlds (Wagoner et al., 2010).

Identity Theory

As actors in a social world, humans participate in numerous interactions in a variety of sociocultural contexts or “figured worlds” (J. P. Gee, 2000; Holland et al., 1998, p. 53). Within these contexts, actors are recognized, both by others and the self, as
being a “certain kind of person” (J. P. Gee, 2000, p. 99), and the “kind of person” varies according to the sociocultural context and across time (Ortner, 2006). Identity development is co-constructed through both dialectal and dialogical processes (Holland et al., 1998). Identity development is dialectal in that it is formed in relation to other people within and across actions and interactions. It is dialogic in that the individual engages in self-understanding through internal dialogs (Holland et al., 1998). Thus, the process of identity development involves an ongoing negotiation between the self and others in which there is a process of understanding one’s self as a “certain kind of person” and the recognition by others of who that “certain kind of person” is (J. P. Gee, 2000, p. 1).


Although professional identity is also developed through the figured world of the workplace (Assaf, 2008; Beijaard et al., 2004; Fine, 1996), a professional identity is not owned by the workplace. Identity theory that is composed of institutional perspective (I-identities), discursive perspective (D-identities), and affinity perspective (A-identities) directs attention to the ways in which identity formation is mediated by aspects of identity beyond a narrow focus on institution (J. P. Gee, 2000). Discourse identity (D-identity) offers one perspective on identity formation in which institutionally “own[ed]” identities are constructed outside of an official institution (J. P. Gee, 2000, p. 103). That is to say that, while professional identity is often sanctioned (I-identities) and resides within the figured world of an institution (such as that of a teaching professional in the community college), people are able to cultivate and sustain professional identity through
interactions and discourses (D-identities) with people outside the institution (J. P. Gee, 2000). Through self-authoring and interaction, a professional identity can be co-constructed between individuals “not because they are ‘forced’ to do this by ritual, tradition, laws, rules, or institutional authority” (J. P. Gee, 2000, p. 103). Furthermore, the affinity perspective allows consideration of a social group that is composed of people who share “allegiance to, access to, and participation in specific practices that provide each of the group’s members the requisite experiences” with a focus on shared social practices and not on people (J. P. Gee, 200, p. 105). Thus, identity theory allows for the study of interactions between and among institutional agents (I-identities) but also outside actors through discourse (D-identities) and shared practices (A-identities; J. P. Gee, 2000).

**Culture Theory**

Culture theory advances sociocultural explanations of social and cultural practice (Holland et al., 1998). The theoretical framework of culture theory focuses attention on the formation of self and identities premised on a view of culture and identity as fluid and not static concepts (Holland et al., 1998). Within this framework, identities are understood to be developed through activity or participation in a sociocultural world. Identity formation requires integration of the internal or personal world within an external shared space of cultural arrangements and social relations or “figured worlds” (Holland et al., 1998, p. 53). The interpretive process of meaning making, about the self and the relationship of self to others through social practice, points to the agency of the self in
identity formation (Holland et al., 1998). Four key concepts of culture theory are figured worlds, positionality, self-authorship, and agency.

A figured world is an abstraction of expectations from everyday events and the interpretation given to these events based on previous experiences (Holland et al., 1998; Urrieta, 2007). A figured world is also a lived social reality that includes everyday social practices and activities (such as in the classroom with students or the teaching department with colleagues; Holland et al., 1998; Urrieta, 2007). Figured worlds both arrange and are arranged by a particular grouping of participants such as PT faculty, students, full-time faculty, and other institutional agents (J. P. Gee, 2000; Holland et al., 1998). These participants act within a figured world in meaningful ways (teaching, meeting with students, negotiating deadlines with students, participating in departmental meetings) driven by specific motivations. J. P. Gee referred to figured worlds as a “discourse” as understood as a “certain [kind] of people,” such as a PT or FTTT faculty member (2000, p. 110).

Self-authorship is a conceptual process that occurs within a figured world (Holland et al., 1998). This conceptual, or dialogical, process is driven by internal dialogues that foster self-sense making. Through the dual processes of participation in a figured world and generation of internal self-understanding, one is able to develop new perspectives and attribute new meanings to behavior and artifacts. As one learns new ways of understanding, one can modify activities and practices to align with the changes or reshaping of one’s figured world (e.g., the significance given to participation in departmental decisions). The ability to reconfigure action and the meaning ascribed to
action describe the concept of positionality (Holland et al., 1998). The interpretive ability of the actor to participate in activity from a certain social position provides agency to position oneself within a figured world despite the limitation of roles that are available (FTTT or PT faculty). It is the ability to accept, reject, or negotiate the available roles that gives one agency (Holland et al., 1998; Urrieta, 2007). Although choices that are available to actors within a given figured world might be constrained, the agentic individual has a choice of how to position himself or herself. Thus, the ability to adapt and change social practices through both internal sense making and practice in social activity makes agency possible (Holland et al., 1998).

**Sennett’s New Cultural Anchor**

Sennett (2006) has studied workers and working arrangements within new capitalism for more than 3 decades. He argues that the quality of institutional life and worker identity formation has been affected negatively by new capitalism. He argues that workers in contemporary society need a set of values not currently supported by new capitalism to help them to reinterpret and evaluate working conditions and to confront new capitalism ideology. Sennett (2006) referred to this alternate set of values as providing a “mental and emotional anchor” (p. 185). This new cultural anchor is synonymous with aspects of the concepts of discourse (J. P. Gee, 2000) and figured worlds (Holland et al., 1998). Thus, Sennett’s concept of a new cultural anchor can be understood as a new figured world that could exist and be identified through access to and participation in certain activities (J. P. Gee, 2000; Holland et al., 1998; Sennett, 2006). Sennett proposed the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship to
comprise a figured world (A-Identities) that might moor identities, both individually and collectively.

The first value, narrative, functions to connect and thread experiences along a continuum that does not exist in the contemporary, fast-paced, and continually changing new economy organizations that institutions of higher education have become (Gergen, 1991; Sennett, 2006). As the agentic actor engages in self making and social activity, narrative connects internal self-understanding to external behaviors in that it allows the individual to represent himself or herself within a figured world (Bradbury & Miller, 2010). Sennett suggested that creation of a narrative can be facilitated through “parallel institutions” such as reimagined labor unions or informal collegial networks and job sharing, as well as through participation in learning communities (Sennett, 2006, p. 184; Wagoner et al., 2010).

The second value, usefulness, refers to the legitimation of one’s labor (Sennett, 2006). From decades of interviewing public workers, Sennett found that workers accepted lower pay in order to attain public recognition of their work. He found that work became meaningful to the worker when it was validated publicly. He argued that institutions offer legitimacy to their workers when they recognize their usefulness. Through legitimacy, status is both conferred on the worker and acknowledged publicly.

The third value, craftsmanship, refers to the desire for work that is well done for the intrinsic rewards that it fosters, not for external rewards. The key to craftsmanship, Sennett (2006) argued, is commitment: commitment to the task and to the belief that the task is worthy and worthwhile. Faculty scholarship tied to the teaching role is a possible
location for faculty to cultivate and demonstrate the deep knowledge signifying commitment (Boyer, 1990; Wagoner et al., 2010).

Through these three core values, Sennett’s (2006) proposal for a new cultural anchor can help the individual and the collective to reframe and reinterpret the value of the self as a professional. Sennett and other scholars have described elements of a new figured world within which members could engage in the process of self-authorship and positionality to strengthen their professional identity (Sennett, 2006; Wagoner et al., 2010). Sennett’s theory of the values that are necessary for a new cultural anchor offers alternate contexts and ways in which to understand and explain the professional identity development of PT faculty.

**Research Questions**

Based on the reviewed literature and the conceptual framework described above, two research questions guide this investigation:

1. In what ways do self-described work activities and experiences of PT faculty define or characterize their self-represented identity as members of a professional class?

2. In what ways do the affiliations and organizational structures outside of the community college shape the self-presented professional identity of PT faculty?
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Methodology

Through investigation of the self-described work activities and actions of PT community college faculty, the purpose of this investigation was to document and explain the ways in which work and perceptions about work mediate development of professional identity for PT faculty. The specific aim of the investigation was to examine the role of subjectivity in the formation of PT faculty professional identity within U.S. culture as expressed through the self-described work activities and experiences of PT faculty. As a qualitative research design facilitates attention to the individual’s point of view, centers on daily life and its constraints, and results in rich descriptions of the social world, a qualitative design was appropriate for this investigation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Erickson, 1986; Geertz, 1973; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam 2009; Ortner, 2006).

I utilized an interpretive approach (Geertz, 1973, 1995; Holland et al., 1998; McDermott & Varenne, 2006; Merriam, 2009) and anthropological field methods (Erickson, 1986; Wolcott, 1990, 2005). While staying mindful of the constraints and the need for flexibility in this type of research (Merriam, 2009; Ortner, 2006; Patton, 2015), I used this approach to data collection and analysis in order to provide access to the figured worlds of PT faculty. This approach enabled me to explain the professional figured worlds from the participants’ perspectives and understandings. I conducted semistructured interviews (Seidman, 2013), focus group interviews (Morgan, 1997), participant observations (Mulhall, 2002; Wolcott, 1990), and document analysis.
(Merriam, 2009). As the inquirer is understood as a key instrument in data collection and analysis (Geertz, 1973; Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2005), an interpretive approach takes into account “the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013, p. 13). This perspective aligns with the concepts of positionality, self-authorship, and agency in culture theory and identity theory.

**Researcher’s Perspective**

The researcher in qualitative research must acknowledge that research is reflexive and that a researcher cannot simply seek to understand meaning but instead is an active participant in the creation of meaning (Geertz, 1973; Wolcott, 1990). Thus, rigorous subjectivity (Erickson, 1973; Peshkin, 1988; Wolcott, 1990) or reflexivity (McDermott & Varenne, 2006) that attends to the ways in which my personal experiences and values intersect with the webs of meaning produced in interaction was a central component to both data collection and analysis (Geertz, 1973). Guided by the maxim by Wolcott (1990) that “you do not have to be neutral to be objective” (p. 145) in fieldwork, I share my personal experiences and values as a practice of critical awareness and objectivity to acknowledge and attend to the ways in which my experience as a FTTT community college faculty member, higher education student, educational researcher, and contingent worker has shaped “the voice, interpretive authority and representation” as narrator of this investigation (Chase, 2005, p. 663).

My position and identity as a FTTT faculty member at a California community college (CCC) marks an important orientation to this investigation as the social product
of my behaviors as a researcher were guided by my self-understanding. Identities are “psychohistorical formations” that are the “imaginings of self in worlds of action, as social products . . . that . . . are lived in and through activity and so must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice (Holland et al., 1998, p. 5). Thus, disclosure of my assumptions, beliefs, and biases allows the reader to understand my positions and opens a space for self-reflection by the reader (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Such candidness serves as an artifact of the work to attend to the influence of my feelings and actions in order to refrain from imposing judgments as a practice of rigorous subjectivity throughout this investigation. The use of ethnographic field methods has been instrumental in my ability to clarify and attend to the participant role that I occupy in the field. Thus, the work that I have done to author myself provides a critical awareness to observe myself as I observe. “A lens can have a focus and a periphery, but it must be pointed somewhere; it cannot ‘see’ everywhere at once” (Wolcott, 2005, p. 11).

I have been a FTCC faculty member at a community college for more than a decade and, with the exception of my first semester as a full-time temporary faculty member, my experience at the community college level has been through the lens of the tenured faculty position. My experience also includes a role as a department chair and working with PT faculty on work schedules and evaluation, among other things. This identity constitutes an institutional (I) identity as the community college legitimizes this role through both formal and discursive practices (J. P. Gee, 2000).

A challenge to my institutionally legitimized professional identity has been my 10-year experience as a doctoral student of higher education. During my studies, I
learned that only community college faculty in California use the term professor and that faculty from more prestigious institutions question the status of community college faculty as professionals (Frye, 1994; Meier, 2008). As my knowledge of the scholarly literature expanded, I experienced confusion over my professional status. I had an institutionally sanctioned I-identity as a faculty member, yet the figured world of the scholarly literature (conceptualized as both I-identity as a profession can be the source of identity legitimization and D-identity as discourse can both construct and support identities outside of official institutions) denigrated and diminished this identity.

Intellectually, I understand my agency and ability for positionality to author myself in this figured world, yet the social reality of negative comparison and disengagement highlighted in the higher education scholarly work (and by extension in my course work) resulted in my experience of constant feelings of shame and low self-worth. The psychological effects of such feelings mediated my self-understanding as a professional. From my perception, I did not understand anything (e.g., academic concepts and theories of my coursework) if I could not understand everything (e.g., their epistemological and ontological assumptions). Although I have been in therapy for years to address this issue, I continue to think that in many ways I occupy a subject position that I do not want to occupy within the figured world of higher education. This self-understanding reflects the explanation by Holland et al. (1998) that “humans’ capacity for self-objectification . . . and self-direction—plays into both their domination by social relations of power and their possibilities for (partial) liberation from these forces (p. 5). My original research questions reflected this tension as I originally questioned whether
PT faculty developed a professional or an occupational identity. I have eliminated this wording from my research questions and have defined *professional identity* as the cultivation of self-understanding and self-definition as a member of a professional or occupational group mediated by the social circumstances and conditions of work (Assaf, 2008; Beijaard et al., 2004; Fine, 1996; J. P. Gee, 2000; Leicht & Fennell, 1997).

Paradoxically, the scholarly literature on the community college has also afforded me a way in which to engage in self-authorship as an agentic member of higher education to, in some ways, reject the D-identity as less than a professional. My 12 years as a FTTT community college faculty member gives me experience that most higher education scholars do not have and the importance of which scholars trivialize. John Levin, one of the few community college scholars with first-hand community college experience, has argued that there is a gap between scholarly understanding of the community college and the actual conditions and practices of the institution and its various agents that has its basis in the lack of scholars with practical community college experience (Levin, 2001). As a FTTT community college faculty member, I have the experience to read the literature critically, identify gaps, and then point to contextual factors that I understand from experience to be relevant.

The practices I have undertaken throughout this investigation to engage in reflexivity brought awareness that I was reproducing a similar gap in this investigation. Through the process of reflection, I attended to my bias and beliefs and realized that I understood myself as an expert on PT community college faculty despite my lack of experience as one. Although I had been department chair and was friendly with a few PT
colleagues, I was ignorant of the lived experiences of PT faculty. From my perspective, I assumed that most PT faculty only wanted to teach PT and if they could not gain a FTTT position, the failure could be attributed to some personal characteristic or lack of qualifications. Despite having served on multiple hiring committees in which favoritism and other in-group committee dynamics played a determining role in the selection of the person who was hired, I continued to assume that someone who was qualified would gain a FTTT position if that was what the person wanted. I had never connected my selection of extra courses to teach to the economic survival of PT faculty who earn their sole income from their teaching work. In the area of wages, my FTTT experience was that I would be paid for any work that was over and beyond through an extra-duty contract. These assumptions led to my initial analysis of participant data. One of the main questions that I asked myself throughout the first half of the interviews was why anyone would do a considerable quantity of unpaid work. However, participants expressed how offensive they found this view when it was expressed by institutional members. I conceptualized unpaid work as central to agency and self-authorship, and I refocused my questions to encompass the relationship between work and students, as this was a central focus for participants.

I realized that I had had a negative and callous attitude toward PT faculty despite my view that I had a collegial attitude toward this faculty group. The magnitude of my callousness was highlighted for me at a participant-observation at a meeting of the union of Faculty B (UFB) in which a PT faculty representative told the majority FTTT faculty in the room (about 50 people) that an article had been recently published on PT faculty
who turned to sex work to make a reasonable living. Before he could finish the idea for which he had brought up the article, the entire room of FTTT faculty erupted in laughter with the exception of the PT representative and the six PT faculty members in the back of the room. The laughter lasted for an extended period of time, although I did not time it, but long enough to make me uncomfortable. I realized that, if I had not conducted any interviews prior to that observation, I might not have realized the seriousness of the article as a reflection of the economic struggles of PT faculty. I also would not have noticed the furrowed brows and downturned mouths reflected in the shared looks between PT faculty members.

I realized that I had used my identity as a tenured faculty member and experience as department chair to author myself as an expert on community college PT faculty. However, as I have been guided by McDermott and Varenne’s (2006) advice to “never accept a problem as stated; Be particularly wary of problems defined in terms of individuals; Resist vigorously all problems identified by received categories of kinds of person” (p. 28), I could not continue my work until I had resolved this disparity. Through an iterative process of observing myself observing and refocusing my attention, I made visible the comparisons that I was making between the PT and FTTT faculty groups. “Tracking your own ‘should and oughts’ may provide valuable insights into your own processes as an observer” (Wolcott, 2005, p. 12). This process was central for me as I struggled to understand why I would assume to be an expert on PT faculty simply by merit of my higher status when I knew that to be an issue for higher education scholars who studied the community college. After extensive reading of the scholarly literature in
other academic areas (economics, sociology, social-neurobiology, ethnic studies, and anthropology), memo writing, and other reflexivity practices, I found two theories that I used both to rewrite my literature review and to refocus data collection and analysis.

The first theory is actor-observer bias theory. Jones and Nisbett (1987) explained the actor-observer bias as one in which the actor’s perspective on his or her behavior places emphasis on the environmental circumstances in place at the moment of action, whereas the observer’s perspective is dominated by the actor and consequently the actor’s characteristics to account for action. Therefore, context is always less salient for the observer as the actor comes to dominate, literally and figuratively.

Conceptually, the literature on the community college and faculty is replete with scholarship that focuses on the actor (faculty or student) to try to explain behavior without consideration or understanding of the context in which those actors are responding (Jones & Nisbett, 1987; Steele, 2011). Jones and Nisbett’s (1987) actor-observer bias theory accounts for the gap between the scholarly literature and the practices of the institution. This theoretical lens helped me to articulate the limitations of the scholarly literature and my marginalization of context in my understanding and explaining PT faculty experience through their characteristics. I argue that any person who intends to understand PT faculty experience, either as researcher or consumer of scholarly work, must attend to personal perceptions on the salience of characteristics and context to shape knowledge.

The second explanation comes from the concept of stranger fetishism (Ahmed, 2000). Although perception would make a person assume that a stranger is a person who
is unknown, Ahmed argued that the act of recognition of a stranger is an act of recognition of a socially constructed other because an actual stranger would be one whom we failed to recognize. Stranger fetishism refers to the social construction of the stranger who has been cut off from the histories of his/her formation (Ahmed, 2000; Cacho, 2012; Patterson, 1982). Furthermore, the act of recognition reveals that the stranger is someone who is already known. Through identification of socially constructed others, one comes to self-understanding of identity. Ahmed (2000) proposed that, to avoid stranger fetishism, one should consider “how the stranger is an effect of processes of inclusion and exclusion, or incorporation and expulsion, that constitute the boundaries of bodies and communities, including communities of living (dwelling and travel), as well as epistemic communities” (loc. 209). Prior to this work, PT faculty were the strangers whom I already knew because I understood myself in relation to them in the figured worlds of my work environments. I had made PT faculty the focus of my investigation and identified this PT faculty group as strangers whom I did not know. However, the act of identifying PT faculty as strangers meant that I had both displaced social relations onto the object of the stranger and then transformed the objects into persons (Ahmed, 2000). Examination of the social relationships in the figured worlds of PT faculty was central to this cultural analysis and helped me to move beyond an “ontology of stranger” (Ahmed, 2000, loc. 215).

Finally, my experience as a contingent worker is also salient to the process of this investigation as my experiences provided the basis for my attention to the sociological literature on underemployment and employment strain, which is only marginally present
in the higher education literature. Prior to my tenure at the community college, I had
taught internationally at the high school level and at two research universities.
Domestically, I had taught part-time at adult schools and at the high school level. As I
was a graduate student at the time of my year-long experience in teaching part-time at an
adult school, I welcomed the temporary nature of my employment. However, I found my
experience with part-time employment at a U.S. high school to be problematical. I had
returned from teaching at the university level abroad to give birth to my son in the United
States.

My university work abroad was through a program of the U.S. Department of
State in which I was employed full time as an independent contractor; I did not have
benefits through that work. At the time, I did not perceive this as problematical because I
taught at a university that had a medical school and many of the heads of department of
each medical specialty were my students. I had only to mention a symptom or trouble and
I would be swiftly escorted to the appropriate department without the need for an
appointment; I was never charged for my visits with these students.

My medical experience upon my return to the United States was the exact
opposite. As I did not have a job when I returned and thus no medical insurance, I was on
public assistance, which included public health insurance, Medi-Cal, which meant that I
had constrained access to providers and experienced long waits for medical attention. As
the jobs that I found advertised were for PT positions, I saw the K–12 system to be a
location for a full-time job that would provide insurance for my son. However, contrary
to my perceptions about the full-time nature of teaching jobs in the K–12 system, I was
hired as a daily temporary teacher to replace a full-time teacher who had quit in the middle of the semester. I had been promised a full-time temporary contract with the requisite medical benefits but was kept in the position as daily substitute for an extended period of time. Although the superintendent called me to offer me a contract once I had quit, I rejected his offer because I had accepted a full-time temporary position at a community college 3 hours away. As the parent of a small child, medical benefits were and continue to be my central concern. Although my institution is located geographically at a great distance from my social and familial network and is in an area known to affect health negatively, I have declined to find employment elsewhere because I cannot risk losing my medical benefits. Through interviews, I found that, despite my FTTT status, I shared the anxiety regarding issues of medical benefits. This shared anxiety led me to pursue the issue of medical benefits. During interviews, some participants shared frightful medical experiences in which the fear of their precarious financial situation shaped their self-understanding and guided their subsequent interactions. As a result I incorporated the sociological literature and theories about the psychological and economic effects of employee benefits for professional workers, which is a current gap in both the sociological and higher education literature (Cappelli, 1997; De Cuyper et al., 2008; Kezar & Bernstein-Sierra, 2016; Kunda et al., 2002; Lester, 2016; Lester et al., 2017; Lewchuk et al., 2008).
Research Design, Site Selection, and Field Relations

Research Design

This investigation is grounded in an interpretive approach to qualitative research design. The ontological assumptions of an interpretive approach concern the social construction of social life with epistemological assumptions concerning the basis of knowledge. An interpretivist position regards human thought as necessarily mediated by social interchange (Geertz, 1973; Merriam, 2009; Ortner, 2006). Explanations of how people construct and are constructed by the social world require the collection of subjective accounts and perceptions (Geertz, 1973; McDermott & Varenne, 2006; Ortner, 2006). Although previous conceptualizations of culture in interpretive research ignored the role of power structures and historical context on human agency (Geertz, 1973), the “new-old concept of culture” (Ortner, 2006, p. 14) explains human experience as agentic in both the construction of meaning and positioning within cultural frames of understanding (Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006). Thus, culture, defined as “public symbolic forms . . . that both express and shape meaning for actors engaged in the ongoing flow of social life” (Ortner, 2006, p. 114; italics in original) allows attention to the ways cultural discourses and practices both reflect and organize human experience (Geertz, 1995). Also, a new-old concept of culture makes flexible the purpose of research to include those considered to be critical or postmodern in perspective. Thus, an interpretive approach based on a new-old concept of culture encompasses the purposes to describe, understand, and interpret as well as change, empower, problematize, question, and interrupt as part of a cultural critique (Merriam, 2009; Ortner, 2006).
Epistemologically, knowledge is socially constructed and thus personal and subjective as multiple interpretations of a single event are possible (Merriam, 2009; Ortner, 2006). Knowledge about social life comes through examination of the ways in which individuals make sense of their experiences and their subjectivity (Geertz, 1995; Ortner, 2006). Subjectivity refers to a cultural and historic consciousness in which the individual is a “knowing subject” who is reflexive and aware, in limited ways, of the circumstances that have formed him/her (Giddens, 1979, p. 5; Ortner, 2006).

An example of this appears in Sennett’s (1998) cultural analysis of work and worker identity within the culture of late capitalism, which informs this investigation. Sennett’s study of workplace flexibility, through formal interviews, economic and historical data, and participant observation, allowed him to explain worker identity formation at both the individual and group levels. Furthermore, his attention to the broader U.S. culture allowed him to contextualize identity formation by identifying the arrangements of power and the resources available to various individuals (Sennett, 1998, 2006). Sennett’s cultural critique of flexible workplace arrangements (Sennett, 1998, 2006), as well as other scholarship on cultural analysis (Ahmed, 2000; Cacho, 2012; Holland et al., 1998) and qualitative methods, guided this investigation, of which ethnographic fieldwork was a central component (Erickson, 1986; Geertz, 1973, 1995; Maxwell, 2013; McDermott & Varenne, 2006; Merriam, 2009; Miles et al., 2019; Ortner, 2006; Patton, 2015; Wolcott, 1990, 2005).
Site Selection

Purposeful sampling was used to determine the investigation’s site to address the research questions (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2015). In qualitative research, purposeful sampling serves to reflect the purpose and research questions of the investigation (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2015). As I purported to describe the lived experience of PT community college faculty and identify the structures (affiliations and organizations) that foster a narrative thread of experience central to the formation of a work identity, I was guided by my conceptual framework in which unions and alternate associations, as locations outside the employment organization for narrative development, were identified (Sennett, 2006, 2008). I was also guided by literature on contingent faculty that identified geographic regions as the site of organizational affiliations (Berry, 2005).

A CCC region was the site for this investigation. With 115 community colleges, the state of California has the largest community college system in the United States (California Community College Chancellor’s Office [CCCCO], 2019). The CCC is divided into districts, which are further grouped into 10 regions. I selected a region based on the presence of a regional adjunct faculty association, herein assigned the pseudonym Regional Part-Time Association (Regional PTA). Membership in the association requires PT faculty status at one of eight regional community colleges. The colleges in the region were assigned the pseudonyms West Coast College, Mountain View College, City North College, City Central College, City South College, Valley Central College, Valley Eastern College, and Inland Southern College. West Coast College, Mountain View College, and Inland Southern College are single college districts. City North College,
City Central College, and City South College comprise a three-college district, herein given the pseudonym Urban City District. Valley Central College and Valley Eastern College comprise a two-college district herein given the pseudonym Valley College District.

An additional requirement was the presence of a union for PT faculty at the colleges, as Sennett (2006) suggested the union as a location for narrative formation. There are three community college faculty unions in the state and the PT faculty at the eight colleges were represented by these unions. The three unions were assigned the pseudonyms union of faculty A (UFA), union of faculty B (UFB), and union of faculty C (UFC). Institutional union membership numbers are not public information, and I was unable to obtain this information. However, statewide UFA is the bargaining agent for FTTT and PT faculty at 41 colleges, UFB is the agent at 37 colleges, and UFC is the agent at 14 colleges. PT and FTTT faculty can be represented by the same bargaining agent and the collective bargaining agreement will be negotiated for both PT and FTTT faculty (wall-to-wall bargaining), which was the case for four of the five college districts that represented seven of the eight colleges in the selected region (Urban City, Valley College, Mountain View, and Inland Southern districts). Alternate union arrangements across the state exist in which PT and FTTT faculty do not share a collective bargaining agreement and each group negotiates with the district independently of the other group. FTTT and PT faculty at the fifth college, West Coast District, are not represented in a wall-to-wall bargaining unit. Instead, FTTT faculty are represented by the UFC, and PT faculty are represented by the UFA.
Although the site selection was regional in nature and was based on the presence of a Regional PTA for faculty and faculty unions (UFA, UFB, UFC), through participant observations and interviews additional locations for observations were identified that went beyond the geographical area of the selected region. These locations included the biannual UFA conference, local meetings, and yearly conference of the Statewide Part-Time Association (Statewide PTA), a biannual symposium for faculty through the State Faculty Association (SFA), and the biennial faculty conference of the International Part-Time Association (International PTA).

Field Relations

Ethnographic fieldwork requires a clear approach to gaining entry and maintaining rapport with participants prior to entry to the field (Eisner, 2003; Wolcott, 2005). Trust and rapport are essential in gaining insight into an informant’s point of view and can affect the quality of the data collected from participants (Erickson, 1986; Maxwell, 2013). As a member of the culture in which I was studying and observing, I had to ensure that I was “making the familiar strange” (Spindler & Spindler, 1982, p. 24). Such a task is often difficult for members of the culture because members can be “locked into a self-reinforcing, self-maintaining socio-cultural system of action, perception, and reward” (Spindler & Spindler, 1982, p. 26). A two-phase pilot of this investigation was instrumental to my decisions in shaping entry to the field.

In Spring 2016, I conducted the first phase of the pilot investigation to establish my approach to gaining entry and establishing rapport, thus allowing me to develop and test an interview protocol and questionnaire and to determine the level of access that I
could achieve to the text-based documents that I had proposed to use. In this first phase, I interviewed two PT faculty members whose main source of income was their academic work (details on participant criteria for selection are presented in the next section). I followed Seidman’s (2013) semistructured three-interview series protocol and used the first interview to test the interview questions and provide context for the second interview, in which information from the first interview was revisited. The third interview allowed me to have the participants reflect on meaning of their experience from the previous interviews. As each interview built on the previous interview, I analyzed that interview to inform the subsequent interview. During this process I determined that the first and second interviews had the information relevant to this investigation and that the third interview was unnecessary. Analysis of the interviews also raised the issue of access and rapport due to my status as a full-time faculty member, which led me to reassess my plan for gaining entry to the field. The two participants in this initial phase were co-workers who knew that I was a FTTT faculty member. They denied perceiving any issues of contention between PT and FTTT faculty; however, I perceived that the answers to my questions were censored. I determined that I would not reveal my FTTT tenured status to participants, and I kept my role as a FTTT faculty member covert in the remainder of the pilot investigation and the subsequent investigation. I reflected, continually, in memos and during analysis, on relationship issues (Miles et al., 2019; Wolcott, 2005). I also realized that, in order to minimize financial harm to participants, who were already underpaid for their time, and to acknowledge the value of participants’ time, I should compensate the interviewees ($60) for their participation (National Institutes of Health,
Office of Extramural Research, 2011). As the PT community college faculty corps is the most exploited faculty group in public higher education, it was important that I compensate participants for their time (Head, 2009; Miles et al., 2019; Thompson, 1996).

In fall 2017, I conducted the second phase of the pilot investigation. I interviewed two additional PT faculty members, using the revised interview guide (Appendix A). From this process, I determined that one 60- to 90-minute interview was sufficient to ask the questions relevant to the research focus. While the second interview allowed me to follow up on the first interview with in-depth questions about experiences discussed in the first interview, the second interview was difficult to arrange. Scholars suggest that the interviews be spaced 3 days to 1 week apart to allow participant to elaborate on information from the first interview without losing connection to the first interview (Seidman, 2013). I found that scheduling a second interview took 3 to 4 weeks due to the schedule of PT faculty members who work at multiple institutions over a large geographical region. I determined that in-depth questions about information from initial interviews could be done through focus group interviews (Morgan, 1997). Furthermore, I determined that entry to the field as a graduate student in higher education allowed for a relationship that was both collegial and educational. Although I led with my graduate student identity, I was not comfortable in concealing my FTTT faculty employment status.

The four board members of the Regional PTA offered me access to their association, members, and PT faculty in the region. My goal was to establish a relationship of rapport and trust with these members (Miles et al., 2019; Patton, 2015).
Therefore, I determined that I would not lie if I were asked directly about my teaching role and employment status. Although I did not reveal my employment status, I did not deceive participants as to the nature and purpose of the investigation (Merriam, 2009; Miles et al., 2019). The one time that I was asked in an interview about my teaching experience, I acknowledged my experience but avoided discussion of my employment status.

In my role as participant-observer, my relationship with the observed varied according to the context of the observation (Merriam, 2009; Spradley, 1980). For observations at Regional PTA and Statewide PTA meetings (see Table 1 for participant observation sites), I was an observer as participant (Merriam, 2009), in which my observer status was overt and revealed to participants. Thus, my role as participant was secondary to my role as observer. In these meetings, I was asked about my teaching role, and I acknowledged my role as an instructor in English as a Second Language but kept the focus on my identity as a “full-time” graduate student. However, at my observation at the UFB meeting, my observer status was covert, as I did not disclose my researcher role to the UFB president, who granted me permission to attend one union meeting as a nonmember. At the UFA conference, SFA symposium, and International PTA conference, I was a complete participant (Merriam, 2009) and my role as FTTT was acknowledged overtly. My role as a FTTT faculty member allowed me access to these sites and my membership in the group concealed my observer role so as not to disrupt the natural activities of the group. At the statewide conference for UFA, I went as a member of the union representing my institution. In this situation, my FTTT status was indicated
Table 1

*Research Methods and Sources of Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part-time faculty interviews</td>
<td>18 interviews (60-90-minutes) and demographic questionnaires (11 females and 7 males)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group interviews</td>
<td>Two 2-hour group interviews (4-5 participants each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant observation sites</td>
<td>Regional PTA: Monthly regional membership meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statewide PTA: Regional and statewide meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International PTA: International 3-day conference</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SFA: Statewide symposium</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UFA: Statewide 3-day conference</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>UFB: Local union meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mountain View: Campus Equity Week 2017 activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>Regional PTA: Monthly regional membership meetings agendas, online documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stateside PTA: Regional and statewide meeting agendas, quarterly newsletters, photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International PTA: International 3-day conference agenda, plenary/session material, photos</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Statewide FA: Statewide symposium agenda and journal</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>UFA: Statewide 3-day conference agenda, union budget, session material, including handouts and PowerPoint presentations, and exhibitor material from U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, CalSTRS, and PT Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UFB: Local union meeting agenda, budget report, and resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mountain View: Campus Equity Week 2017 skit and photo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CalSTRS: <em>California Teachers' Retirement System Member Handbook</em> 1999 to 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eight regional community colleges: Collective bargaining agreements for FT and PT faculty 2017, Governing Board policies, Medical insurance enrollment data, faculty employee numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO): Online documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Senate For California Community Colleges: Published online documents and unpublished committee papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>California Education Code: Online documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federal Government: Departments of Education and Treasury online documents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
on my name tag and several PT faculty who were active in the union (whom I had hoped to interview) became aware of my FTTT status and declined to participate in the investigation. Finally, my observer role in the Mountain View campus Equity Week skit was that of a collaborative partner (Merriam, 2009). This position involved my participation in the group as a member of the group, with members’ full knowledge of my role as observer. Although I wanted to remain in my position as observer, there was insufficient participation by PT faculty to play all the parts in the skit. In the spirit of reciprocity, I agreed to participate when asked (Miles et al., 2019).

It was not always possible for me to be a neutral observer in my fieldwork. Involvement in work-related activities beyond the classroom is difficult for PT faculty members who must fulfill duties for multiple employers while navigating a large geographical region in addition to personal and familial demands. The consequence of such demands is that few PT faculty are involved in events consistently. Although the Regional PTA officially had 60 members, only the four board members carried out the activities of the association, with an additional two members who assisted infrequently. The board members understood my role as observer, but, as I became a consistent presence, I was asked to help in various ways. I was aware of the issue of reciprocity constantly as I realized that my long-term access was contingent on maintaining rapport and negotiating the requests that were made. One decision was to assist in ways that would not interfere with my observations and would not require me to speak. In general, this included helping to clean the room after a meeting or taking a picture of the group (the most frequent request). I found that remaining after a meeting provided the benefit of
access to the group’s interactions after the meeting had concluded. I was also asked to deliver the Statewide PTA journal to my college’s mailroom, which I did. Finally, my participation in the Campus Equity Week skit was the only time that I participated actively in any group function.

**Participant Recruitment**

Participants were recruited based on purposeful theoretical sampling (Merriam, 2009). Theoretical sampling, a continual sample selection process, began with a criterion-based sampling process with initial recruitment of participants based on the research problem and conceptual framework. Then, through the process of data collection and analysis, sampling of emerging theoretical constructs was conducted through identification of three variant cases (Merriam, 2009). For participants, membership in a professional association through academic discipline, union affiliation, or regional or statewide PT faculty association was a requirement for participation. The participants also were required to identify their academic income as their main source of income, express their aspiration for full-time employment, and teach in a discipline within the traditional academic disciplines of humanities, social sciences, or sciences. These requirements were based on the scholarly literature that indicated that the majority of the PT academic workforce in the community college (Levin et al., 2011) mirrors alterations in the national labor force resulting from neoliberal ideology and new capitalism (Carnoy, 1999; Castells, 2000; Sennett, 2006; V. Smith, 1998, 2001). This literature has recognized the creation of two types of PT labor in new capitalism that can coexist within the same institution: one that possesses rare and highly valued skills and another that does
not possess those skills (Castells, 2000; V. Smith, 1998, 2001). Part-time faculty have therefore been conceived of as two groups within the same institution: one highly valued for their skills and expertise and another valued for economic savings and flexibility for the institution (Jacobs, 1998; Levin et al., 2011). The second group of PT faculty teach in the traditional academic areas of the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. While they are often as qualified as their full-time counterparts, they do not possess skills and abilities that are rare or highly valued. Therefore, they are similar to the stratum of temporary labor in the wider economy (V. Smith, 2001) whose possibilities for private sector employment are limited and whose main source of income is their academic employment (Levin et al., 2011; Monks, 2009).

Initial recruitment of participants was realized through the president of the Regional PTA, who provided me access to the association’s membership list by forwarding my recruitment email to all members. Although the president of Regional PTA wrote a letter providing me access to the membership list of 60 people, which was approved by the Institutional Review Board, she actually sent the initial email recruitment letter to Regional PTA members and to approximately 600 PT faculty at City South, City North, and City Central. I was not aware of this action until I received 45 emails from interested PT faculty in a single day. When I asked the president, she told me she had sent my recruitment email to the entire three-college district list of approximately 600 adjunct faculty. In this initial email, I advertised the research process and compensation ($60 for each individual and focus group interview) and provided my email contact information for those who were interested in participating in the investigation. I
sent the demographic questionnaire (Appendix B) and the informed consent form for the questionnaire to the 101 PT faculty who responded. The emailed documents provided detail about the research and their participation (Appendix C). Of the 101 initial emails, 31 returned the completed questionnaire. I screened responses to ensure that eligibility requirements were met and that appropriate signatures were in place. I emailed the 9 participants who did not meet the eligibility criteria (one retired from another position and eight whose academic income was not their main source of income) to thank them for their interest. Those who met the criteria were emailed the interview consent form (Appendix D) and times and places for the interviews were arranged for those who responded. Compensation for participation in individual and focus group interviews was given in cash or via electronic means (PayPal or Venmo). All recruitment documents and procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board.

Initially, this literature guided me to exclude anyone who had nonacademic full-time employment, who did not belong to a professional association, who did not teach in traditional academic areas, or who was retired. Of the 31 returned questionnaires, only 10 met these initial criteria. Through the process of theoretical sampling, I expanded the criteria to take into account emerging findings based on initial interviews and observations. The changes to criteria included membership in associations, retired but teaching PT faculty (1 participant), academic counseling faculty (2 participants), and PT faculty (1 participant) with nonacademic FT employment. In the first instance, I conducted the first three interviews with PT faculty who were members of discipline-related associations. Through these interviews, I found that participation in discipline-
related associations was instrumental and that participation in these groups was peripheral to the working life and experiences of the participants, as membership had served as an instrumental function to enhance the resume. I had already excluded 4 participants based on the original criteria, but after the initial interviews, I included 4 participants who did not identify membership with an association. Table 2 summarizes participant affiliation.

Table 2  

*Participant Affiliation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty association affiliation</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Institutional organization affiliation</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Other association</th>
<th>Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional PTA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Discipline/academic-related association</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State PTA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Academic Senate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International PTA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Discipline Committee</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Faculty Association</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student Club advisor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* PTA = Part-time association.

In the second instance, participant observation and document collection led me to a recent phenomenon in which PT faculty retire through the retirement system but
continue their PT academic employment. Thus, while they are officially retired, their PT employment continues uninterrupted and unchanged. Although I included only one participant who had concluded the process of retirement, by the end of the fieldwork period, another participant had also finalized the process. PT retirement is a recent phenomenon and the literature on PT faculty who continue to work in retirement has examined only FTTT faculty who teach PT after retirement from their FTTT positions (Levin et al., 2011). Unlike this group, PT faculty who retire and continue their PT work are not retired in practice.

The third instance was a PT faculty member who had accepted full-time work after 20 years of PT academic work. Although he had accepted full-time employment, he continued to teach PT at a regional community college and continued with his 27 years of advocating for PT faculty. He was a founding member of the Regional PTA and had extensive experience in organizing PT faculty in both southern and northern California community colleges. Although it is argued that those with full-time employment outside of academia develop a professional identity through their full-time position, participant PT faculty employment continued to shape this participant’s self-understanding of his professional identity.

The fourth instance included academic counselors who responded to the recruitment email but did not seem to fit the criteria. The literature on community college PT faculty does not refer to PT counselors because in many states they are not considered faculty. However, academic counselors in California are considered academic faculty, as they can teach counseling courses that are cross-listed under Psychology (a discipline
within the traditional academic area of social sciences). Furthermore, the collective bargaining agreements for faculty in California include academic counselors and define their role as both nonteaching (e.g., counselors) and teaching faculty. Therefore, I included two participants who were academic counselors based on purposeful theoretical sampling. While academic counselors have been considered academic faculty in California, they have been absent in scholarly research as part of the faculty body. The criterion of saturation of information, as well as limited responses, guided the decision to conduct no interviews beyond these 18 individual interviews. Table 3 describes the participants by discipline and institution.

Although recruitment based on social identity was not a goal for this investigation, the gender composition of the participants (11 female, 7 male) was reflective of PT faculty composition. Scholars have explained that women are overrepresented in the PT faculty group who teach in the traditional academic areas of humanities and sciences (Levin et al., 2011). Women are also identified as comprising a majority of the faculty groups with the lowest personal incomes (Levin et al., 2011).

Participants in this investigation varied in the number of colleges at which they taught, as well as the cumulative length of their community college PT faculty career. Of the 18 participants, one had PT experience at only one community college (Robert, Humanities). It was the first semester that Robert had taught at the community college, and his experience was limited to that semester. The other 17 participants described working either currently or previously at multiple colleges (up to six colleges in the same semester) in the region and throughout the state. Multiple participants worked
Table 3

Participant Affiliation by Institution and Discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City South</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Central</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City North</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inland Southern</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valley Eastern</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Business 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Central</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain View</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>ESL/Foreign Language</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>History/Humanities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Political Science</td>
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</tbody>
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concurrently in other educational sectors, such as universities (in state and out of state) and online for-profit universities. However, the interview protocol ensured that participants described, primarily, their experiences solely at the community college. The length of PT employment at community colleges ranged from one semester to 33 years. As the number of colleges and the length of work experience were found not to mediate PT faculty identity development, I do not identify participants by their employment
locations or cumulative length of employment at community colleges. Instead, I identify participants by pseudonym and discipline.

**Data Collection**

The methods for data collection for this investigation included a demographic questionnaire, semistructured interviews, focus groups, participant observations, and document analysis. These methods allowed me to explore both individual and collective experiences and meaning-making processes (Mason, 2006). Table 1 presents a summary of research methods and sources of data.

**Interviews**

Interviewing is a way to collect the stories that people make of their lived experiences that reflect both their self-understanding and the process of meaning making (Seidman, 2006; Wolcott, 2005, 2008). As an ethnographic field method, interviewing supports and deepens the observations about cultural patterns that are made by the researcher in the field (Patton, 2015). Guided by qualitative scholarship that described interviews as social meaning making acts and conversations with a purpose (i.e., a focus on the research questions; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2015), I conducted 18 semistructured interviews that focused on participants’ personal and professional backgrounds, interactions with institutional members on campus, and interactions with institutional members off campus. All 18 participants were interviewed once for 60 to 90 minutes, which was sufficient time to explore the topics and make scheduling manageable (Seidman, 2006).
All interviews began with questions about the personal and professional background of the participant because such information provided me an understanding of the experiences that had shaped perceptions (Ortner, 2006). I then asked participants to tell me their professional aspirations, which allowed the interviewee to talk at length about aspirations and the ways their current situations matched those aspirations, as well as to identify short-term goals that they had established based on their aspirations and current employment status. I then asked about interactions with other institutional members (e.g., FTTT and PT faculty, administrators, staff, and students) both on campus and off campus. Toward the conclusion of the interview I invited the participant to contribute anything that had been missed in any area of professional life and experience (Patton, 2015). Finally, I summarized key elements of the interview by member checking so that participants could confirm and expand my interpretations and conclusion (Miles et al., 2019; Wolcott, 2005). The interview guide provided a flexible map to make effective use of interview time and to keep the interview focused while allowing for emergence of individual perspectives and experience (Patton, 2015). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Field notes were written at each interview, either during the interview or immediately afterward; they were used as the basis for analytical memos (Miles et al., 2019).

**Focus Groups**

Focus groups offered an intermediate method between individual interviews and participant observation (Morgan, 1997). Specifically, focus groups were useful to the production of socially constructed data within the group interaction that would have been
less accessible through either individual interviews or participant observations (Merriam, 2009; Morgan, 1997). As the literature indicated, two strengths of the focus interviews were the range of data concentrated on the topic of interest and the insights that they provided on behaviors and experiences based on the participants’ comparison and understanding of each other’s experiences (Morgan, 1997). Participant selection was purposeful to include those who were involved actively in an institutional activity (e.g., academic senate, union, student club, or consistent use of PT office space), in an association for PT faculty (e.g., Regional PTA or Statewide PTA), or expressed a frustrated aspiration to participate in such activities; these persons were asked to participate in the focus group sessions. Of the 15 participants who were invited, only 9 participated due to scheduling difficulties and geographical considerations. I conducted two focus group sessions, one with four participants and one with five participants.

Open-ended prompts and questions regarding various elements of work experiences that were identified from individual interviews and observations guided each focus group. I did not use my original focus group session guide because many of the questions mirrored those in the individual interview guide. Of the six types of interview questions described in the literature (Merriam, 2009), the individual interviews were guided by experience and behavior questions, knowledge questions, and background questions. Therefore, the focus group sessions provided an opportunity to ask opinion and value questions (i.e., Are there differences in the way PT and FT faculty teach and how do you know? In what ways does your department or departmental members help or impede your ability to organize and teach your classes the way you want?). Focus group
interviews were audio recorded and transcribed and field notes were written and used as
the basis for analytical memos (Miles et al., 2019).

**Participant Observation**

Participant observations were useful to obtain naturally occurring information on
cultural behavior (e.g., those related to association membership and the shared practices
of those associations) and experience in the figured worlds identified by the conceptual
framework and individual interviews (Merriam, 2009; Spradley, 1980; Wolcott, 2005).
Participant observation allowed me access to the times, locations, purposes, and
participants that were not accessible through interviews (Spradley, 1980; Wolcott, 2005).
Attention to the physical aspects of locations in which I conducted participant
observations provided valuable information about the role of the environment as a
mediator of professional identity formation for PT faculty (Mulhall, 2002). The initial
sites were identified as the monthly meetings of the Regional PTA and the union (UFA
and UFB) meetings.

I conducted intensive fieldwork for 3 months, focused on regional activities such
as Regional PTA meetings, union meetings, and a Campus Equity Week event. Although
I had planned to observe Campus Equity Week events throughout the county, scheduling
and geographical constraints limited observation to one event. As few PT faculty
attended this event, I was asked to participate in the skit that was performed at a central
campus space as a collaborative partner (Merriam, 2009). This event allowed me to view
the activities that PT faculty view as useful to raising campus awareness of PT faculty
and served as a comparison to the other campus activities that were held during equity
week that I did not attend because they were focused on student equity issues. I also attended meetings held by the Statewide PTA, SFA, and the biannual International PTA during the next 10 months. The meetings that I attended allowed me to observe PT faculty interactions and dialogues on the topics of employment and relationship with their institutions, other institutional members, and students.

**Documents**

Documents were a valuable source of information for the descriptive and historical information that they contained and as sources for fostering awareness of alternate paths for inquiry that were not revealed by observation or in interviews (Merriam, 2009). An advantage of public documents is that they are not affected by the research process (Merriam, 2009). Thus, documents gave access to data that were the products and reflections of the meaning-making context in which they were produced. Data from documents were a useful source of information about the relationships between PT faculty and other stakeholders that could not be observed and that participants were unable to discuss. For example, ethnographic content analysis of collective bargaining agreements with regard to the method for calculating PT faculty classroom time and pay led to California Educational Code documents and then to board policy documents for each community college to understand the legal framework in which policies are determined and enacted. These additional documents allowed me to document and understand meaning making of PT faculty at the institutional and state legislative levels and provided an additional source of information about which the
participants had no explicit knowledge. Such data proved useful in confirming emerging theoretical relationships (Merriam, 2009).

Researchers are advised to keep an open mind when approaching document collection (Table 1 lists collected documents), and I detail the process of document collection here (Merriam, 2009). I began with collection of meeting and conference artifacts: the agendas and other material produced for participants by the organization and other invited organizations. I accessed public online materials that were discussed at events. For example, at Regional PTA monthly meetings, the board members presented or referred to information that they had posted online for public use, such as PowerPoint® presentations and other material related to a variety of issues (e.g., CALSTRS retirement, the grievance process, and applying for unemployment benefits). Several of the associations produced journals and newsletters; these documents were also collected for analysis. I collected online public documents from groups that were identified through observations and interviews, such as CALSTRS member handbooks, the California Community College Academic Senate resolutions and position papers, SFA agendas and journal, UFA and UFB collective bargaining agreements, and other publicly published union documents. Content analysis of these documents led to data collection of online public documents from the eight colleges’ boards of trustees, the CCCCO, the California Education Code, and the U.S. Department of Education and Department of the Treasury. Furthermore, I used the California Public Records Act to request information that is not published publicly by individual institutions, including the numbers of FTTT and PT faculty employees and the numbers of PT faculty receiving medical benefits for the fall
2017 semester, which is when the individual interviews and focus group sessions were scheduled. Finally, I produced several visual documents (photographs) that were useful for subsequent reflection of observations (Merriam, 2009). These included pictures that I was asked to take at Statewide PTA meetings and the International PTA conference. I was photographed during my participation observation at Regional PTA meetings and the Campus Equity Week skit. Only this last picture is included in this document, as participants wore Janus masks to obscure their identities while performing the skit.

Data Analysis

Cultural analysis was employed as the overarching analytical framework in this investigation. A cultural analysis takes culture as the central unit of analysis, which consists of a minimal unit of three or more people interpreting one another over time (McDermott & Varenne, 2006). Although social inquiry requires the interaction of two individuals in which actions are caused and understood against the other, in a cultural analysis the third actor serves to interpret interaction of the other two so that the focus of analysis is not on causes of behavior but on the consequences of co-constructed experiences (McDermott & Varenne, 2006). The focus in a cultural analysis is the way that a group of people collectively act, interpret, and make sense of experience as they work together to retell and act on “whether they personally accept, understand or even know much about these constructions” (McDermott & Varenne, 2006, p. 10). Furthermore, “a cultural analysis is less about how people in the different groups can be expected to behave, and more about how people in ever shifting circumstances develop categories for consistently assigning behavioral traits to make up kinds of persons”
A cultural analysis was appropriate to address the research questions regarding the ways in which experiences, as well as affiliations and organizational structures both within and outside of the community college, foster social interactions that shape the self-presented professional identity of PT faculty. A cultural analysis addressed the research questions through a series of basic questions that guided analysis.

What are the resources available to people in a given situation, how and when are they applied, to whom, and with what consequences? Who else is concerned with the people in a given situation, and what are the mechanisms that allow them to limit or amplify what is done? (McDermott & Varenne, 2006, p. 10)

As this investigation was designed to interpret the ways in which PT faculty understood and defined their professional identity as a collective activity, an analytical framework of social practice theory allowed me to incorporate theoretical concepts from other relevant theories. Culture theory and identity theory frame identity formation as a product of lived social practice (J. P. Gee, 2000; Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006), which provided theoretical constructs that were useful in analysis despite areas of overlap. In the initial analysis, I utilized culture theory (Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006) to identify the ways in which PT faculty members’ perceptions of their work and work experience were shaped through their self-authoring, positionality, and agency within various figured worlds. Identity theory (J. P. Gee, 2000) expanded the concept of figured worlds by specifying the location of figured worlds based on the power and historical contexts that legitimized the authoring of subject positions. Thus, institutional
(I-identity), discourse (D-identity), and affinity (A-identity) identities served to define figured worlds that were institutionally bound, as well as those that were a result of collective discourse and cultural practice to make sense of work experience.

This investigation was guided by Sennett’s work on contingent workers in new capitalism, in which he proposed that values alternative of those of the employing institution would foster identity formation for workers (Sennett, 1998, 2006, 2008). As I sought to understand professional identity formation in a variety of sociocultural contexts, including alternate associations and institutions (Sennett, 2006), occupation (Kunda et al., 2002), and psychological sources (Padavic, 2005), I utilized theoretical concepts from additional theories for the analytical framework. The concepts included the values of narrative, craftsmanship, and usefulness for a new cultural anchor (Sennett, 2006, 2008) and identity management strategies from identity management theory (Padavic, 2005). Sennett’s concept of a cultural anchor with the values of a narrative of continuous time (as opposed to that of the temporary work contract), usefulness, and craftsmanship served to identify the formation of a figured world (as I-identity, D-identity, and A-identity) through access to and participation in activities that fostered these values. Other sociocultural contexts proposed in the literature were the concepts of occupation as distinct from the employment organization and the concept of internal and psychological sources for mediating identity formation through identity management strategies (Padavic, 2005). The theory of underemployment (Feldman, 1996; Maynard & Feldman, 2011) and concepts of uncertainty and personal effort from the employment strain model (Lewchuk et al., 2003; Lewchuk et al., 2008) were useful in adding context
to the ways in which PT faculty perceived their agency and self-authorship of professional work identity through their work experiences. Although culture theory and identity theory were useful in identifying the cultural resources available to participants, underemployment and employment strain added dimensionality to the findings as they led to identification of the role of underemployment characteristics, both subjective and objective, and the role of uncertainty and personal effort (both conceptualized as characteristics of temporary work) as mediators of agency, positionality, and self-authorship.

Data analysis was an iterative process of formal and informal analysis that began as soon as data collection began (Miles et al., 2019). I commenced informal analysis with interviews and observations, followed by memo writing, based on either written or recorded oral notes that I made after each session. As I had an almost 3-hour drive home after each interview and observation (except for the five telephone interviews), the driving time allowed me to reflect on the interview or observation and identify areas of focus for subsequent interviews and observations (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). During that time, I made a concerted effort to document reflections throughout the observation and interviews in field notes (Wolcott, 2005). I did this by writing memos in the margins to distinguish them from field notes. Although I began the process of transcription after the first interview, I was unable to transcribe each interview before the next interview. However, the round-trip driving time of 5 hours allowed sufficient time for reflection both before and after fieldwork and data collection (Wolcott, 2005).
The formal process of data analysis began at the end of fieldwork when all interviews had been transcribed and all observations concluded. As this investigation builds from Sennett’s anthropological study of workers in flexible working arrangements, provisional coding was the most appropriate for the first cycle of formal data coding (Miles et al., 2019). Provision coding began with an a priori code list based on the conceptual framework of the investigation. Codes were defined operationally and organized into conceptual families in Atlas.ti and revised, modified, and expanded to include new codes (Miles et al., 2019). For example, I had used the code “Figured World” from culture theory, as well as “Dis Id,” “Inst Id,” and “Aff Id” from identity theory. However, the “Figured World” code became interchangeable with these other codes and thus I eliminated the code “Figured World,” as it was redundant. Magnitude coding was a supplemental coding analytic in the first cycle of data analysis. Magnitude coding added symbolic codes to coded data to indicate dimensionality, direction, and frequency (Miles et al., 2019). Magnitude coding was useful in enhancing description of findings. For example, the concept of underemployment has a subjective component that is understood in the standard of comparison from which a person perceives underemployment. Scholars have asserted that the most salient standard of comparison is previous employment (Feldman, 1996; Mynard & Feldman, 2011). However, this was not supported by the data. Thus, the seven codes that were identified from the data regarding the standard of comparison identified by the participants added dimensionality to the findings of a subjective component of underemployment.
After the first cycle of theoretical and magnitude coding was concluded, I engaged in a second cycle of coding that consisted of pattern coding. Although I remained flexible to new information, pattern coding allowed for concepts and themes that were identified from the first cycle of coding, including analytic memos, to be organized into explanatory and inferential codes (Miles et al., 2019). As I condensed the large amount of data and codes into fewer concept codes, a cohesive pattern from which to conceptualize the sociocultural tools and contexts that mediate professional identity formation were identified from the data. For example, initially I identified three stages that described the collective ways that individuals self-authored their professional identity in various socially constructed figured worlds, as codes “Anch: Stage 1,” “Anch: Stage 2,” and “Anch: Stage 3.” As concepts remained flexible, the process of clarification that resulted from the iterative process of second cycle coding resulted in better details of the patterns (Miles et al., 2019). Thus, as interviews, observations, and analytical memos were recoded, I was able to add dimensionality to pattern codes from the data.

The final round of analysis consisted of document analysis. Artifacts from the various meetings and conferences that were the sites of participant observation were included in initial analysis and provided context to observations and interview data. These artifacts were analyzed concurrently with first- and second-cycle analysis. However, findings in the data from interviews and observations illustrated the argument of cultural analysts that “people in a culture can be made systematically inarticulate about the fundamentals of this culture” (McDermott & Varenne, 2006, p. 15). For example, one finding was that various institutional stakeholders (including PT faculty, FTTT faculty,
deans, and human resource specialists) claimed to understand the method of calculating PT faculty salary for each course, but the way in which participants, both individually and collectively, conceived their pay to be calculated and the way in which it was calculated by the institution were not congruent. Consequently, I engaged in collection and analysis of policy documents from the institutional, community college system, state, and federal levels, as well as from the retirement system, in order to understand the fundamentals of the culture about which the participants were not knowledgeable.

**Understanding as Validity**

The purpose of cultural analysis is to attempt an understanding of a social system without the claim of knowing everything because truth claims mask and serve particular interests (McDermott & Varenne, 2006; Richardson, 1994) and qualitative scholars have argued that the metaphor of a crystal is a useful image for validity of the ways one can know *something* without knowing *everything* (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Richardson, 1994). Crystals “are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves” (Richardson, 1994, p. 522), and the view is dependent on the angle at which the crystal is approached. The metaphor of the crystal indicates that one’s view is dependent on one’s orientation to the crystal. In a cultural analysis, both the view and the position must be described. This metaphor is reflective of the epistemological orientation of a cultural analysis in which knowledge is understood to be socially constructed, subjective, and distinct from the conceptualization of the existence of ready-made worlds waiting to be discovered (Wolcott, 1990). Within this orientation, the concept of validity is best expressed as *understanding* (Wolcott, 1990). The concept of validity as *knowledge* or as a
way of knowing is limited by the social construction of reality and the subjectivity of individuals, which can result in multiple interpretations of a single event (Ortner, 2006). In contrast, understanding, defined as “the power to make experience intelligible by applying concepts and categories” (Merriam-Webster, 2019; Wolcott, 1990), offers an alternate way to conceptualize validity as “identifying critical elements and writing plausible interpretations of them, something one can pursue without becoming obsessed with finding the right or ultimate answer, the correct version, the Truth” (Wolcott, 1990, p. 146).

I approached understanding in this research through thick description and researcher reflexivity (Emerson et al., 1995; Geertz, 1973; Wolcott, 1990). Thick description refers to the description of the webs of meaning of socially constructed experience that is achieved through the interpretative process of research. I followed the guidance in the scholarly literature (Behar, 1996; Emerson et al., 1995; Geertz, 1973; Wolcott, 1990, 2005) throughout the process of this investigation. In particular, I followed the suggestions in the fieldwork manual by Wolcott (2005). Fieldwork is a strategy for data collection and entry to the field that includes attention to entry to the field and maintaining rapport, issues of reciprocity, tolerance of ambiguity, and being present (Wolcott, 2005).

**Chapter Summary**

I have documented the ways in which I have attended to issues of methodology and methods throughout this chapter. I detailed my entry to the field through the initial pilot study and access gained through Regional PTA members. I discussed issues related
to the establishment and maintenance of rapport through discussion of the decision to lead with my researcher identity, and I documented the role of reciprocity though my participation at events. I demonstrated my tolerance for ambiguity though the flexible approach I have used for identifying sites for observation and analysis. I addressed the criterion of “being there” in observations by documenting my assumptions and beliefs and noticing what areas I focused on through notes in my field notes as well as through the creation of analytical memos based on analytical review of those field notes (Geertz, 1988, p. 1; Wolcott, 2005). In interviews, I played an interactive role by speaking little and summarizing the key elements of the interview. This summarizing also served as a member check for participants to confirm and expand information.

Reflexivity is another element of the crystal that reflects the position of the researcher. Attention to and explanation of reflexive practices contribute to the production of a thick description (Geertz, 1973). Throughout this chapter, I have documented the process of the ways in which I produced, processed and assembled field notes into analytical memos as a practice of rigorous subjectivity (Emerson et al., 1995; Erickson, 1986; Wolcott, 1990). I detailed the ways in which my meaning making and self-understanding both informed the investigation and were informed by the investigation in the section on the researcher’s perspective. Although the section on my subjectivity is by no means exhaustive, it reflects the areas that I found to be the most relevant to the investigation. Rigorous subjectivity is a practice of a vulnerable researcher to the extent that the self-disclosures are essential to the argument (Behar, 1996).
CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS ON PART-TIME FACULTY PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

This investigation examined the working experiences of PT community college faculty and the organizations and affiliations that are central to their professional identity development. This chapter addresses the research questions of the study: (a) In what ways do the self-described work activities and experiences of PT faculty define or characterize their self-represented identity as members of a professional class? and (b) In what ways do the affiliations and organizational structures outside of the community college shape the self-presented professional identity of PT faculty? The findings are explained both analytically and descriptively.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, I identify and explain two figured worlds of work and the role of the employee-employer and student-faculty relationships to the identification of each figured world. I found that the student-faculty relationship organizes a figured world of work that is occupationally defined instead of institutionally defined. In the occupationally defined figured world of work, PT faculty engaged in professional activities constructed on the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship. These values became relevant to PT faculty members not through participation in affiliations and organizational structures; instead, an occupationally defined figured world of work directed PT faculty members to engage in specific behaviors and activities oriented to the student-faculty relationship. As the individual PT faculty member’s self-knowledge is transformed through a devaluation of
the values fostered in an institutionally defined figured world of work, PT faculty members engaged in professional behaviors that were understood as typical within a new frame of understanding: an occupationally defined figured world of work.

The second section focuses on an occupationally defined figured world of work as a cultural system that is new to PT faculty members. This figured world becomes a new frame of understanding of both the self and the world. Self-authorship (reinterpretation of self-understanding and the experienced past) and positionality (the interpretive ability to modify activities and practices that align with new perspectives) provide PT faculty members agency to author their professional identity from a social position that they have negotiated. That is, PT faculty members are agentic individuals who can accept or reject socially defined positions within the figured world of work based on the centrality of the occupation or institution. PT faculty member’s professional identity was legitimized through discursive practices (a D-identity) and through the shared social practices of an affinity group (an A-identity). Thus, I explain the ways in which an occupationally defined figured world of work offered PT faculty the opportunity to develop their professional identity (D-identity and A-identity) by means other than those narrowly defined and legitimized by the institutional authority of the employing college (J. P. Gee, 2000).

In the third section of the chapter I identify and explain the mediating effects of income-related underemployment (a characteristic of underemployment) and employment uncertainty (a concept of employment strain) on the ability of individual PT faculty members to conceptualize the occupation as central to an alternate figured world
of work. The salience and interplay of several aspects of the employee-employer relationship mediated assimilation of the occupationally defined figured world of work. Not all PT faculty members developed a new frame of understanding, although elements of the new frame of understanding transformed professional identity formation in limited ways. Due to the salience and intensity of the characteristics of contingent employment, professional identity development was framed primarily along a continuum of the two figured worlds of work. For some PT faculty, the importance of the student-faculty relationship, while recognized, did not become the central component in their professional identity development. All PT faculty recognized the centrality of the student-faculty relationship to their work life; however, for some PT faculty members, this acknowledgement did not become a source of knowledge that was assimilated to a new figured world of work. The salience and interplay of income-related underemployment and employment uncertainty mediate this transformation. Furthermore, the effects were visible not as two distinct figured worlds (an institutionally defined figured world of work and an occupationally defined figured world of work) but instead as a continuum. In this continuum, concepts from one figured world are weakened as concepts from the second figured world gain significance for the PT faculty member. The location of the individual along this continuum (as shaped by income-related underemployment and employment strain) mediates the development of a professional identity and, by extension, PT faculty professional behaviors (described as taken-for-granted professional behaviors).
The Figured World of Work

PT faculty members expressed lack of control over workplace and workplace activities, which frustrated the development and maintenance of a professional identity that was institutionally focused and legitimized. The college, as the employing institution, is the location of a figured world of work because the college is a cultural system in which rules and traditions shape the formation of a professional identity. The institution legitimizes certain social positions (FTTT or PT faculty member), as well as the status accorded to these positions. However, the figured world of work that is institutionally defined and legitimated (I-identity) is a cultural system that is a new figured world for all new members. New PT faculty members must learn the appropriate behaviors and values of this figured world and learn to interpret their actions and experiences within this figured world of work. Robert, in his first semester of teaching at the community college, illustrates the variety of behaviors a new PT faculty member must learn to navigate.

I felt like they didn’t tell me much of anything before I started. I mean, we did have a few hours of orientation, but it was mostly administrative stuff. It was basically how not to get sued. . . . They didn’t say anything about how to teach the class. And I did arrange to get a few sample syllabi, so that was really all that I had to go on. The first day that I came into the class, they hadn’t gotten a key for me. They had to unlock the door. They hadn’t told me that I had to take a special class in order to use the technology in the classroom, so I wasn’t able to give my PowerPoint. I didn’t know how to print things yet, so I hadn’t been able to print the syllabus. I didn’t know that they didn’t . . . you had to bring your own supplies, so I didn’t have any markers to work on the board. It was kind of a mess. I wish some of those basic things, you know, they would have told me before I went in there for the first day. (Robert, Humanities)

Robert also expressed that he understood that self-sufficiency was an important value as an institutional member of the college, and he did not ask his faculty colleagues for assistance except to request copies of syllabi.
[I learned by] trial and error. . . . I mean after a couple of days, I was able to figure it all out. Perhaps I was overly cautious, but I didn’t want to badger the department head with too many questions. You know, I did ask him a few things, such as to provide the sample syllabus. But . . . I wanted to show that I was able to do this on my own. (Robert, Humanities)

Within an institutionally defined figured world of work, each new PT faculty member must interpret events and experiences and identify his or her social position (which shapes the professional identity formation) within the hierarchy of professional identities legitimized by the institution. PT faculty expressed that their expectations that the figured world of higher education, as experienced through their graduate education, would align with an institutionally defined figured world of work. However, their experiences did not align with those expectations.

The problem is, they have these workshops about academic careers at [research university] but nobody knows about community college teaching, since they all teach at a 4-year school. So, in terms of that, I didn’t really know what I was getting into, to be honest. (Robert, Humanities)

I come from a master’s program that was so supportive. The faculty there were amazing. I mean, they were consistently there to hear your concerns and give you productive feedback. And when I moved into teaching, I thought that I would be able to encounter teachers who’d been there for decades who’d be able to give me advice. And it’s kind of like the opposite of what I experienced. I felt like I was dissuaded from asking questions. . . . [I created] learning objectives . . . for myself [and decided] to shadow people and to pick up on some of their . . . best practices. So every time that I asked to shadow someone, it was almost like a threatening situation. Even full-timers or people who’d been teaching for multiple decades. I felt like I was threatening them. (June, Sociology)

Consequently, an institutionally defined figured world of work required new PT faculty members to reinterpret the values and behaviors that they experienced as students in order to reconstruct what it meant to be a PT faculty member through the authoring of a professional identity. However, PT faculty described every major aspect of their work
experience related to the employee-employer relationship to be both different from their expectations and uncertain. PT faculty expressed that the employment stressors of temporary work (high demands, reduced control, role stress, limited support), combined with the effort to maintain current and obtain future employment at multiple colleges, heightened employment uncertainty related to their working conditions. Thus, the institutionally defined figured world of work impeded the individual PT faculty member’s self-authoring of professional identity.

**PT Faculty Experiences of Uncertainty**

PT faculty expressed a lack of control over where and when they worked. They described heightened personal effort to maintain employment as a result of employment uncertainty related to working conditions. Uncertainty was experienced in the major aspects of their employment relationship with the college, including the length of advanced notice about their teaching assignment, control of hours to be worked, and location of work. Due to institutionally prescribed practices, PT faculty as organizational members had restrained choices regarding the design and implementation of their work schedule.

The PT faculty schedule changed every semester. “Every semester is different. It’s completely different every semester” (Martha, Sociology). Although some colleges have negotiated seniority rights for PT faculty, this seniority system did not guarantee a schedule or specific classes; instead, it guaranteed that the PT faculty member would be offered a course load of a certain number of units.

What [seniority] did was that it made it so they couldn’t cut my class; they couldn’t cut my load. They have to give me three classes; they have to give me a
60% load. But what classes they give me is still completely up to them. They could give me that 60% load and teach the classes I want to teach: the class that I wrote the curriculum for and developed. But instead, they give me a different class. (Pamela, Art)

Although contractually negotiated, there was no institutional enforcement, and adherence to the seniority lists by department chairs who schedule classes was not consistent.

I started getting fewer classes. I started looking at who was getting classes instead, and I noticed that there were names that I was unfamiliar with. . . . I went to the full-timer and I said, “I think they’re bringing in part-timers who have less time than me and in the Inland Southern contract and I supposedly [have seniority rights].” I’d been receiving evaluations like I [have seniority rights]. And he goes, “You [do have seniority].” . . . Two weeks later I was offered a class. (Lynette, Humanities)

PT faculty received little advanced notice of their work schedule. Although classes were scheduled by the department in advance, PT faculty members described receiving little or no notice as to their schedule, despite their repeated efforts to ascertain their schedule for the upcoming semester.

One thing that [the department chair] did was he would produce the schedule and give it to the dean and sort of have it make its way through the process. And he would tell me that he had talked to the adjuncts and that we had agreed to teach classes, and that would be a lie. He would tell [the administration] that, even though he had never mentioned it to us [PT faculty]. We would find out later. They would say, “Oh, you’re teaching this class.” And we’d be like, “I guess.” It means 2 weeks before school starts and I’m just now finding out about this and I’ve been trying to find out for months. . . . We would find out like a week or two before class was supposed to start . . . that we had been assigned classes. (Michael, Political Science)

PT faculty’s efforts to ascertain their schedule included a wide-range of methods beyond asking the department chair. These methods included examination of the online schedule
of classes, the college faculty portal, and the bookstore. “I find out that I’m even going to have classes when the bookstore asks me for my book order” (Bryan, Anthropology).

The uncertainty of the work schedule was heightened for PT faculty who work at multiple colleges. PT faculty who teach at multiple locations expressed a preference to not reject classes, based on experience that colleges would not offer them continued employment if assignments were rejected. This fear intensified the employment effort and uncertainty faced by PT faculty as time constraints and distance became limitations to their ability to work at multiple locations. This fear also heightened the uncertainty of future employment. Colleges with multiple campuses added a dimension of complexity. Legally, California Code of Regulations (CCR) § 87482.5(a) restricts PT community college faculty to 67% (10 units) of a full-time course load (15 units) in one district. This regulation is cited in each of the collective bargaining agreements of the five districts in the region. At districts with multiple colleges and multiple extended campus locations (Valley College District had two colleges and Urban City District had three colleges, in addition to multiple extended campus locations), PT faculty are limited to the legal maximum of 10 units and must make decisions as to what schedules they can accept across the multiple colleges of a district.

I ended up taking those nine classes at six different institutions because it was earlier in my teaching career. And it was very hard to say no to them because, if you say no it’s like, “Well, you’re turning down work.” . . . You think that maybe they won’t call you back. And sometimes that is the case, they won’t call you back because you said “no” and that kind of shows that you’re not really available. (Martha, Sociology)

[If] we are at the limit on a combination of campuses [because they are one district] but then are offered additional courses at one of the schools, we can only take the new course if we balance it out by rejecting another offer. So we can be
forced to make career/livelihood gambles. I want to take those three City North courses instead of the City South courses. My goal is to get out of the high schools and back on the college campus. . . I haven’t taught at City North before, but I’ve been warned that they have at least one very bad full-time political science professor who in the past has taken over courses originally assigned to adjuncts in order to fill out his schedule when his own courses were canceled for lack of enrollment. So it’s possible that I will be rejecting teaching opportunities that would have been certain through City South, only to have my courses canceled or given to a full-timer at City North and end up with less than three total. (Michael, Political Science)

PT faculty are thus at the mercy of college officials such as department chairs and have to live through conditions of uncertainty in a work environment where the onus is on them to match their lives to their college’s (or colleges’) priorities and practices.

This lack of control over workplace and work activities (i.e., employment status) frustrates or blocks development and maintenance of a professional identity that is institutionally legitimized (I-identity). The figured world of work centered on the institution as a cultural system is further minimized by college policy that restricts the place that PT faculty occupy as limited to the space of their classrooms (physically and online). Thus, the classroom is the only institutionally legitimized space for PT faculty to occupy.

I’ve never really reached out much to the department chair at Inland Southern or Mountain View or West Coast. I think proximity has a lot to do with it. You know, at City South, we’re close space-wise. And over there they have their offices in other parts of campus. So you get to talk to them less. Less trust, less rapport. (Martha, Sociology)

Such restrictions, perceived as additional elements of employment strain and uncertainty, made PT faculty socially and physically uncomfortable (both within and outside of their classrooms) and functioned to impede further the formation of a co-constructed professional identity in an institutionally defined figured world of work.
because it limited their social interactions with institutional members outside the classroom.

It’s very, it can be a very isolating experience. . . . It’s hard to stay in touch with your colleagues because you don’t see them on campus. It’s denigrating sometimes if you run into a faculty member that doesn’t respect part-time faculty members. Sometimes you can get lost in the shuffle at like the administrative level because you’re just another name and kind of like, they’re full of people work for them, but never considered permanent. You could be working there for 10 years, but you’re still considered a temporary employee. I think that says a lot about the institution itself and can say a lot of how the person feels about their job. . . . It can be an experience where you feel very unsupported both socially and physically. Like one of the classes that I work in is tiny classroom where literally, to get into our seats, students have to go in one by one because that’s all that will fit between the rows of desks. (June, Sociology)

There is no cafeteria, there is no lounge. There is nowhere where the people hang out, part-time faculty. Full-time faculty, they have their offices, they have their neighbors. There’s a whole environment. They’re always on campus. They work with each other on committees. So they just, they know each other, they’re colleagues for 25 years. They’re all family and friends. Part-time faculty pretty much sort of just floating around with very little attachment. (Mark, Foreign Language)

I teach a lot of classes at night which . . . end at about 10:00 [p.m.], so meeting with students afterwards becomes very impractical. Especially for female students. They don’t feel safe on campus if they stay afterwards and have to walk across campus alone. . . . I think a lot of my female co-workers don’t like night classes because they are there so late by themselves. (Edward, English)

Although PT faculty described the library and cafeteria as alternate physical spaces that they could occupy, these spaces could be problematic.

I went to the library once, but you are only allowed to go where the students are. There was a student . . . watching pornography. Then after that, I didn’t go in that room again. . . . At Valley Central, there is one adjunct [office] for all the adjuncts in every department. I think there is an office for adjuncts somewhere. But, it’s nowhere near where you are, or your classroom, or anything. [As an adjunct], you might have a lot of time between classes. So I would just go sit in my car, because there wasn’t anywhere to go. (Andrea, Math)
In addition to the social isolation and physical discomfort experienced by PT faculty members due to restricted physical space, a fear of retaliation for occupying alternate physical spaces was expressed. This fear was an element of employment strain and the personal effort to obtain and maintain future employment.

I’ve seen just total lack of respect, total disregard of opinion, total disregard of, even like authority in someone’s classroom. For example, . . . I was meeting with club members and [a FTTT faculty member] came in 10 minutes before [his] class started to get ready. I knew who it was. I [said] “Hey, so sorry, we’ll be out of here in a second.” And he came over to me and he got really close to my face and he said, “Teaching always is prioritized over extracurricular activity.” And he turned around, and he went to the podium and started the setup. And I apologized. I felt very odd. (June, Sociology)

PT faculty reduced the importance of the college and institutional agents in their self-understandings through a gradual process of withdrawal from institutional spaces other than their scheduled classrooms in order to reduce the anxiety produced by the PT working conditions.

We were not allowed to attend the department meetings at Mountain View. I asked, but the full-time professors said they do not want any adjuncts to attend either business or computer science. . . . Because they told me when I asked, “It’s none of your business. You cannot attend.” Fine. And when they did the SLOs [student learning outcomes], I said I would do it as a volunteer because there were some classes I was teaching, computer science, that nobody else was teaching. And they said, “No, because we can’t pay you, you are not allowed to do it.” (Andrea, Math)

When I ran for the Academic Senate, I didn’t go to my dean and say, “I’m thinking about running for the Academic Senate, are you going to be accepting it?” Well, it turns out she doesn’t like it. And I didn’t know that. In fact, last term I did not get a teaching assignment. . . . I called Ellen [department chair] . . . and I said, “Ellen, I haven’t gotten a teaching assignment” and she said, “It’s so inconvenient what you’re doing at Senate. . . . I don’t really have to give you anything. You do not have [seniority rights]. I can give you a Saturday class and be done with you.” I said, “I thought being on the Academic Senate would be a feather in my cap and you’d be proud of that.” She didn’t give me [an] assignment again this semester. . . . I can’t run again. I already told Ellen, “I promise I will
not run again. So I’ll finish off this term and the next term I won’t run again. I’ll be available all [possible] hours.” (Sydney, ESL)

PT faculty experiences in institutional spaces outside the classroom were not all negative and PT faculty reported cordial interactions with FTTT faculty and administrators; however, negative experiences made institutional behavior incoherent for PT faculty. “We’re adjuncts . . . we’re not invited. . . . I have learned my lesson of wanting to be there. . . . If we’re not invited, I just go home” (Andrea, Math). Incoherence is the result of employment at multiple institutions whose practices differ.

The fact that every college has their own policy so it’s kind of hard to keep track of how to behave here, how to behave over there. At City South College [the issue of miscalculation of pay] was never an issue because they have a clear policy about the hours and the educational units. But at Inland Central they never explained how the pay goes [so I didn’t realize for 3 years I was being mispaid]. Every college is different. (Martha, Sociology)

Incoherence can also result from experiences at a single institution over time as faculty leadership changes. “We used to have department meetings where adjuncts were invited and the new chair that came in a couple of years ago just didn’t invite adjuncts anymore” (Bryan, Anthropology). “I left Valley Central very specifically because I’d been at Valley Central for 27 years and I left because the environment had changed so drastically. The administration was 95% new” (Mark, Foreign Language). PT faculty emphasized that institutional incoherence and rejection of PT faculty occur at all levels of the faculty and administrative hierarchy.

Our fairly new president sent out an email this last spring inviting the faculty to “The Faculty Recognition” lunch and he did his whole invitation and everything. Then he got to the bottom and this last line was “adjunct faculty welcome too.” That may say it all. (Sara, ESL)
An Occupationally Defined Figured World of Work

Within the context of employment strain that characterized an institutionally defined figured world of work, PT faculty members experienced the student-faculty relationship as the only constant element of their community college employment (over time and at multiple colleges). Although the employment contract restricts the duration of the student-faculty relationship to a semester, this relationship is continual over the professional work life of PT faculty. Therefore, for PT faculty the student-faculty relationship replaces the institution as central to professional identity formation and is constitutive of an occupationally defined figured world of work. An occupationally defined figured world afforded PT faculty members a narrative agency through which they connected their professional work experiences along a continuum that was absent through the temporal fragmentation caused by the temporary employment contract.

Specifically, the self-understandings, reinterpretations of their pasts, and engagement in professional activities (that are unpaid, restricted, and underacknowledged by the college) represented a particular interpretation of what it means to be a community college faculty member based on new frames of understanding centered on the student-faculty relationship. The student-faculty relationship represented a symbolic device that aided a process of professional identity development in which old concepts of the employee-employer relationship were replaced by new concepts of the student-faculty relationship.

In particular, the student-faculty relationship fostered a reinterpretation of the self as articulated through two identity management strategies: a dedication to an educator ethic and to work as a source of personal fulfillment. These identity management strategies
used by PT faculty to manage their identity typify a reorganization and alteration of self-understandings, and, thus, professional identity development.

Dedication to an educator ethic and to work as source of personal fulfillment allowed PT faculty to negotiate a professional identity through the value of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship. That is, the interpretive ability of PT faculty to participate in professional activity that is occupationally oriented provided them the ability to develop and narrate a professional identity that had been blocked by the institution. Despite limitations imposed by the institution and the temporary employment contract, PT faculty were able to develop and sustain a professional identity that is occupationally defined with the student and teaching at the core. “I like community college. I’d love to teach [full-time] at community college. I like those students the best.”(Michael, Political Science). “I feel lucky. I feel privileged to have my job. I go in front of those students and I’m happy to be there. . . . I feel good in the classroom” (Bryan, Anthropology).

[I’m] definitely passionate about teaching. I love being in a classroom. My students are . . . first day of the semester is so exciting to me and even leading up to the first day, I just think, “Oh my gosh, I can’t wait to see who I’m gonna get to know this semester.” (June, Sociology)

I just love ESL. . . . It’s my absolute passion. It’s everything. It’s helping people. It’s teaching. It’s creativity. It’s being around people from other parts of the world. It’s language itself. It’s encouraging people. It’s my own personal development. It’s drama, you know, it’s just so many things. I just love it. (Sara, ESL)

I started my college studies at Inland Central College, which is a community college, and then I transferred over to [State University] and the difference in teachers was so profound. The teachers at the community college were much more inspired to teach than at the 4-year colleges and university. They’re expected to publish, so they aren’t that interested . . . in their students. But it inspired me that I wanted to . . . become a community college instructor. (Briana, Business)
The Value of Narrative

PT faculty reflected and incorporated a dedication to an educator ethic and to work as a source of personal satisfaction. The dedication to an educator ethic and the dedication to work as a source of personal satisfaction shaped the individual PT faculty member’s construction of what it means to be a community college faculty member and of what kinds of professional activities mark their life as PT community college faculty. As a symbolic device, the student-faculty relationship provides PT faculty a way to develop a narrative about their work life. The narrative of work life is based on a professed dedication to the student and to work as a source of fulfillment. This symbolic device offers PT faculty a way to connect their professional lives that has been hampered by their PT temporary employment position. Thus, PT faculty members were able to reinterpret their own pasts along a continuum of time and, by such organization, transform incoherent experiences into a coherent narrative of self. As Briana (Business), who has been teaching PT for 33 years, expressed above, her decision to teach at the community college was articulated through a dedication to the student rather than to engagement in other professional activities. Bryan (Anthropology) narrated his 20 years as a PT faculty member as a “privilege” because he received personal satisfaction to be “in front of those students.” Robert (Humanities), in his first semester of teaching at the community college, also reflected the student-faculty relationship as reorganizing of his own understandings of himself. Robert had earned a doctorate at a research university where he had been a teaching assistant for 4 years. As he discussed his professional
goals, Robert narrated a version of his professional self that indicated that knowledge reorganization was in process.

My first choice [for full-time employment] would be a 4-year institution. But I’m open to opportunities at the community college level, too. Although I think for those, I really need to build up more teaching experience. . . . [My experience in teaching] has been great so far. I wasn’t really sure what to expect because I hadn’t been to a community college myself, so I didn’t really know what it was like. But I’m really enjoying having the opportunity to teach my own class and I find that it actually winds up being very similar to a 4-year school like at [research university]. Because I did teach a couple of my own classes there as well. And I find that [with] the students . . . we can have quite engaging conversations sometimes [in] some ways even more so than at [research university]. . . . It’s been a good experience so far.

Robert’s interpretation of his teaching experience (past and present) indicated that he found the community college students different from those at the research university and that his conversations with his students were more “engaging” than those with his students at the research university. Robert also expressed that his experiences as a teaching assistant contrasted with his experience at the community college. Robert reinterpreted his past experience in a way that allowed him to reorganize his current experience teaching community college students as becoming meaningful to him and to his future career path.

I think that the TA’ing I enjoyed in some ways, but I also found it frustrating in other ways. I sort of questioned [whether] this could be the career for me. Granted that I’m just getting started, but for the time being, I am enjoying . . . teaching my own class[es] a lot more. I do think that this is what I want to do for the rest of my life, if I’m able to.

The dedication to an educator ethic helps to foster articulation of a dedication to work as a source of personal fulfillment: “I do think that this is what I want to do for the rest of my life, if I’m able to.” Robert’s experiences indicated that the student-faculty
relationship represented the only constant element of his professional life (“I don’t really interact with anyone besides the students”) and that his interactions on campus with other institutional members were limited because there is no defined space for PT faculty to occupy, aside from the classroom.

I occasionally stop by the dean’s office to talk to the assistant there. And I have heard that they have a supply room as well, but I have not investigated that. And then I go down on occasion to the copy room. And the cafeteria of course. Those are pretty much the only places.

Through a process of disruption of his existing self-understanding (expressed as his first choice for academic employment to be at a university), Robert articulated a new self-understanding that he could gain satisfaction in teaching community college students for the rest of his life. Through the symbolic device represented by the student-faculty relationship, Robert articulated an answer to “Who am I?” through which he authored a professional identity as a community college faculty member.

As individual PT faculty members altered their understanding of the self (professional identity), they positioned themselves and modified their activities and practices to align with their altered figured world. Through the occupationally defined figured world of work, PT faculty engaged in the formation of a professional identity through activities that were recognized in this figured world as bolstering the values of usefulness and craftsmanship.

**The Values of Craftsmanship and Usefulness**

The student-faculty relationship, in addition to providing a source of conceptual narrative along a continuum of time not offered in a temporary employment contract, offers a source of public recognition of PT faculty work (usefulness) enacted for intrinsic
rather than external rewards (craftsmanship). *Craftsmanship* refers to commitment to a task that is worthy and worthwhile, done for intrinsic rewards. *Usefulness* refers to the legitimization of one’s work through public recognition (Sennett, 2006). The values of usefulness and craftsmanship enabled PT faculty members to discredit both the institutionally defined figured world of work and their professional identity as understood within that figured world. The symbolic device of the student-faculty relationship fostered the values of usefulness and craftsmanship that signaled a reinterpretation of the values of the former, traditionally defined figured world of work. PT faculty engaged in a variety of uncompensated activities that were understood and explained as a dedication to an educator ethic and dedication to work as a personal source of satisfaction. As professional identity is both internally and social co-constructed, PT faculty negotiated the social co-construction of a professional identity through their voluntary participation in unpaid activities such as curricular work of classroom preparation and grading, office hours, an honors component to their classes, club advisement, and adult learner accommodation in the classroom.

Much of the professional work of PT faculty members is not acknowledged publicly by the institution, as the collective bargaining agreements of all colleges limit compensated professional activities of PT faculty to classroom teaching, limited office hours, and limited professional development hours.² PT faculty members are hourly

²Each collective bargaining agreement defines a set number of office hours and professional development hours for PT faculty members. These activities are an additional source of incoherence, adding to employment uncertainty and effort as the numbers of hours and the rate of compensation vary by district. Furthermore, professional
employees hired to teach a legal maximum of 10 course units a week. Unlike their full-time counterparts, both full-time non-tenure track (FTNTT) and FTTT, PT faculty are not paid for curricular work associated with classroom teaching. Through the new figured world of work, PT faculty articulated that although their unpaid efforts amount to wage exploitation by the college, this exploitation was tolerated as it ultimately benefitted the student. “It’s incredibly rewarding, and I love my students, and I love being in the classroom with them, but the exploitation is just incredible” (June Sociology).

We’re paid for the time we are in class. If I am in class for the hour, I am paid for the hour. And everything else I do is unpaid, volunteer. So, usually you are a volunteer when you are an adjunct. Most of your job is volunteer. (Andrea, Math)

It’s like if a part-timer like myself, I’m teaching a course and we get the 10 hours of paid time, which isn’t much in comparison to our regular pay. Any extra effort outside of that is volunteer. It’s because I want to do it, because the student is asking for help, extra assistance, and I want to do it for my personal, “I’m a good teacher.” Then I put in that extra time because I feel that student’s putting the extra effort, I should put in the extra effort, too. Just to kind of meet them half-way. (James, Math)

The contract defines that the job of teaching for a full-time faculty is 15 hours of instruction with a parallel of 15 or 10, depending on how they [define the] hours of preparation. That’s what the college is saying you need to do. For us they go, “Forget that half. You don’t need to grade, prepare, or anything outside of your classroom” is what they’re saying. The full-time faculty need the same amount of time outside of class [for preparation and grading]. What are we, chopped liver? (Mark, Foreign Language)

PT faculty described their unpaid work as worthy and worthwhile because it benefitted their students and aligned with their self-understanding of work as a source of personal satisfaction. Thus, PT faculty members engaged in professional activities beyond classroom teaching that were not compensated because these activities were development hours are mandatory and the compensation for these hours is calculated as part of the semester pay for courses at some institutions, while at other institutions professional development participation is optional and paid separately.
identified as the appropriate activities of an occupationally oriented professional and central to the development of a professional identity. Within this figured world, PT faculty members narrated a social position as a professional that allowed them to reinterpret their unpaid work as both exploitation and an embodiment of their professional commitment through their commitment to a job well done (craftsmanship).

Craftsmanship is also expressed through the decision of PT faculty not to inform their students about their exploitative working conditions. PT faculty were engaged in professional activity and reconfigured the meaning ascribed to their actions with the student-faculty relationship at the forefront. The choice expressed by PT faculty members not to discuss their precarious employment position, except when germane to the class material, illustrates the ways in which PT faculty self-described professional activities and practices aligned with a changed or reshaped figured world of work based on the value of craftsmanship. Although PT faculty identified the potential power of student support for improving their employment conditions, they emphasized the significance of the student and his/her role over the individual PT faculty member’s personal situation.

That power of what we could do as adjuncts is pretty impressive. There’s some power that we actually have, being the majority of faculty on a campus. Seeing the majority of students and interacting with them. I think that’s an untapped resource that adjunct faculty have not used for their benefit is the contact they have with 90 students a semester and the amount of lobbying they can do to exhort political power through their students. I try to not tap in too much to myself because I feel little bit like, “Oh, my job is to teach Anthropology. I really shouldn’t be talking about my own problems.” But it’s important. . . . I try to bring [it up] when it’s relevant and when it’s not relevant, then that’s when I sort of hesitate. (Bryan, Anthropology)

Without exception, PT faculty demonstrated through their language and actions that students were more important than their work conditions. “I try not to bring it up
because I didn’t want them to feel bad” (Andrea, Math). “I do not discuss my adjunct position with my students. That's just not something that I feel comfortable involving my students in” (Laura, Geography).

I teach political science and . . . I can use [the situation of PT faculty] as an example of some things that are going on politically because it’s a trend. So, socioeconomically, I can talk about it. But I don’t. I try to bring it up in sort of general terms when it fits in with what we’re studying. But . . . I don’t want to sound like I’m whining. Especially with the student populations that we have. It’s hard to say, “Yeah, I’m really [struggling]” . . . and then they say, “You think it’s difficult? Try working, try raising three kids as a single parent as you work at McDonalds.” I don’t stir the pot. (Michael, Political Science)

The new figured world of work allows PT faculty members to assert appropriate behaviors and values that align with an altered professional identity. The value of craftsmanship encapsulates characteristics of a profession that are functional in nature and include trust and altruism. PT faculty members self-author themselves as trustworthy faculty members who place students and their learning above personal considerations. PT faculty members identified that, when compared to students, their situation was less important. There is nothing that prohibits PT faculty members from communicating to students that their reduced professional conditions result in reduced learning conditions for the student, yet they do not do so (except to a limited degree when appropriate to instruction). The development of a professional identity directs the behavior of PT faculty members in ways that are consistent in the figured world in which that identity was authored. The choice not to tell students about PT faculty working conditions indicates the alignment of professional behaviors with the personal interpretations of a professional self. Moreover, the unpaid labor of PT faculty members increases the economic and academic performance of PT faculty, both for students and the college(s). However, the
college and its institutional members fail to acknowledge the ways in which PT faculty members increase institutional performance through the refusal of institutional members to acknowledge PT faculty work as an expression of dedication to students.

Sometimes I feel like a chump. I’ll have these arguments and they’ll say, “Well, why do you do all that extra work for the students?” People will say that to me. You know full-timers will say, “Hey, you’re only getting paid to show up in class. Why do you do all the extra stuff?” I just hate that. It makes me feel so mad. It’s like taking the good will that I have towards the students . . . and just kind of like rubbing it in my face, “You’re an idiot to do that.” . . . I’ve had lots of people do that, lots of people. Never an adjunct, amazingly enough. It’s always a full-time faculty member or even . . . a community college board member told that to me to my face. . . . I think that’s the most important thing is to not burn out is to see your students as also being exploited and to commiserate with them and work with them to do what you can for them. Because I think that’s your goal. The whole adjunct thing is a way to get more money, get more resources to better serve the students; that’s the ultimate goal. (Bryan, Anthropology).

Due to the lack of institutional acknowledgement of unpaid PT faculty work, the student gains importance over the institution as a source of recognition of PT faculty professional work. The centrality of the student-faculty relationship is indiciative of a figured world in which work is publicly recognized by the student instead of the institution (usefulness). The importance of the student is visible in the unpaid activities that align with a dedication to an educator ethic and to work as a source of personal satisfaction. The interpretive ability of PT faculty to renegotiate and reorganize their professional identity despite institutionally defined constraints was visible in the ways in which they navigated the incoherence of experienced institutional mistreatment through the symbolic device of the student-faculty relationship. The story of Andrea, a math instructor, illustrates PT faculty members’ interpretive ability to incorporate and reflect the knowledge of a new figured world of work.
Andrea has a law degree and has worked as a computer programmer in private industry but she made the decision that her educational work would be her main source of income. Andrea had broken her leg and, because she was without health insurance through any of the six colleges that employed her, she used a credit card to pay for the surgery. She was not able to afford physical therapy after the surgery and her leg remained weak. Due to this weakness, she later fell and broke her foot while she was teaching a community college class. Andrea did not report the injury to the college because she feared that she would lose her job; she was uncertain about her rights regarding workplace injuries.

I was teaching, so I didn’t say anything, because I didn’t want to cause any problems. . . . I thought, “Oh, they are not going to give me work if I do. So I just better shut up and do nothing.” Because at Mountain View, when I broke it, I had a severe break. They would not help me at all. . . . I didn’t tell anyone [at the college] because I didn’t want to lose the job. . . . I am not sure if you could [get workman’s compensation] as an adjunct. If you did, I was . . . worried that I wouldn’t get more work.

Andrea explained that she would still choose academic work over private industry because of her social identity as a woman.

The only thing is, there is less gender discrimination than there is in private industry. So much in programming computer field. So much against women. So much vulgarity. . . . It’s like being beaten up every day. You just don’t want to be insulted every single god-damned day. And then you come to the one [place] where it’s OK to be a woman. And then you are a part-time piece of shit. So there is nothing you can ever do to be a human being. That is really what it is to be an adjunct. There is nothing you can do for them to see you as equal to them.

Andrea narrated her experiences with the employing college(s) as characterized by their failure to acknowledge her humanity. However, the dedication to an educator ethic and work as a source of personal satisfaction directed her professional behaviors within an
occupationally defined figured world of work. These behaviors included the choice not to tell her students about her personal experiences, as well as the choice not to reduce the quality of her work through a refusal to perform unpaid work.

One student said, “I was looking for you, and wanting to find your office,” and I said, “Sorry, I don’t have an office in this building.” But I try not to bring it up because I didn’t want them to feel bad. But if they say, “Oh, I need to meet with you,” I have actually met with some students and tutored them for free at Barnes & Noble because I don’t have access to the campus on the weekend or . . . when it’s closed.

Andrea has authored her professional identity based on the student-faculty relationship. This relationship constituted a new figured world of work that allowed Andrea to reconcile what she articulated as her institutionally legitimized professional identity (I-identity) as a “part-time piece of shit” with her self-authoring of a professional identity through discourse and engagement in professional activity, both paid and unpaid, centered on the student-faculty relationship (D-identity). Thus, despite the limitations of her institutionally defined role as a PT faculty member, Andrea was able to position herself in a new figured world of work in which her belief in her work as worthwhile directed her to engage in unpaid professional activity oriented to the student. The new figured world created a context in which Andrea could develop a professional identity and emotionally invest in that world through the student-faculty relationship.

**Legitimization of Professional Identity**

PT faculty members reinterpret the world, develop new self-understandings, reinterpret their pasts, and learn to produce and enact cultural forms (i.e., professional activities and social practices) relevant to an occupationally defined figured world of work. An occupationally defined figured world of work is not afforded institutional
legitimacy; thus, PT faculty members engaged in discursive practices (D-identity) and social practices (A-identity) to legitimize their self-authorship as professionals. Through engagement in these practices, PT faculty develop a professional identity relative to an occupationally defined figured world of work. The process of reinterpretation of self and action is fostered through the narrative agency available from conceptualizations of the student-faculty relationship and the attendant values of narrative, craftsmanship, and usefulness. In the previous section, I showed the ways in which the propositions of a dedication to an educator ethic and to work as a source of personal satisfaction foster an alteration of the interpretations given to events and experiences through the discursive practices (D-identity) that PT faculty members use to affirm a professional identity. In this section I describe the social practices beyond the classroom that are constitutive of an occupationally defined figured world of work and that represent a source of professional identity legitimization (A-identity) for PT faculty members.

Through self-authorship and positionality, PT faculty shared knowledge of the professional activities typical of an occupationally defined figured world of work with other members of the figured world. These activities included those that are centered on the faculty-student relationship within and outside of the classroom (i.e., lesson planning, grading, aligning outcomes with course objectives, creation of exams, creation of extra assignments for honor students, office hours, and student advising). For PT faculty, engagement in these activities was typically unpaid (although each college does pay for a limited and variable number of office hours per semester) but reflected a belief in the objective value of an education and a dedication by the PT faculty member to work
well done (craftsmanship). However, within this figured world, professional activity related to the advancement of the occupation (education) for the benefit of students and of a collective faculty directed professional behaviors in areas beyond curricular activities. Activity related to the advancement of the occupation is not limited to the occupation at a specific institution (such as the community college) but encompasses all institutions of higher education. Within the occupationally defined figured world of work, PT faculty expressed an interpretation of what it means to be an educator through practices aimed at the improvement of contingent faculty in higher education. As PT faculty members engaged in social practices at regional, statewide, national, and international levels that place professional practice beyond the boundaries of an individual institution, such practices functioned to legitimize a professional identity through identification of an affinity group.

**An Affinity Group Legitimates Professional Identity**

An affinity group is a social group in which group membership is based on shared social practice rather than on characteristics of any individual member. An educator affinity group is one in which members participate in behaviors directed at improving higher education through the advancement of contingent faculty working conditions. PT faculty engagement in social practices related to the improvement of contingent faculty working conditions is based on the value of craftsmanship. *Disinterested commitment* 

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I use the term *contingent* to refer to the NTTT faculty across higher education institutions. The propensity of the community college for PT temporary contracts is not mirrored at other higher education institutions. Thus, contingent is the most appropriate term for this collective faculty group.
encapsulates the spirit of craftsmanship as the drive to behave in accordance with an ethical standard without the possibility of any rewards based on a belief in the objective value of the activity (Sennett, 2008). PT faculty members, as members of an affinity group, place cultural value on appropriate behaviors of the new figured world that transcend monetary reward. Moreover, PT faculty members reflected the knowledge that such behaviors were not intended for the benefit of any one individual (i.e., that of the individual engaged in the activity) but instead for the benefit of the collective contingent faculty group. Commitment to the improvement of the collective contingent faculty corps enabled PT faculty members to engage in the shared social practices of an affinity group. Collectively, these shared practices included advocacy for contingent faculty centered on the improvement of contingent faculty conditions of work, despite their personal ranking of the importance of the issue. For example, Pamela (Art) ranked the issue of wage parity to be a high priority but indicated that she worked willingly on issues upon which the Regional PTA had agreed collectively to be a priority, such as issues of contractual rehire rights and legislation to increase the percentage of a full-time work load that a PT faculty member could teach.

The Regional PTA for PT faculty promoted regional participation in activities focused on improving contingent faculty working conditions through activities that help PT faculty members to reduce employment strain. Membership in the association required PT faculty status at one of the regional community colleges and a nominal membership fee. James (Math) was a founding member of the Regional PTA and has
been active since the 1990s in advocating for better working conditions for PT faculty.

He expressed that the intent of the association was to educate faculty.

There’s a lot misinformation, misunderstanding and fear on both fronts that there’s an entitlement that goes with being a full-time tenured professor . . . [expressed as] “I’m part of this institution, [but] you’re temporary.” Yes well, [as a FTTT faculty member] you’re misunderstanding the document that Ed[education] Code says I’m temporary but I’ve been here for 27 years. What does it mean to be temporary? And this plugged-in-ness comes not from full-time versus temporary, but rather . . . [i]t comes from full-time versus part-time; it comes from the simple fact that a full timer is there, is there for the students, is there to meet with other people, gets to know people on campus, understands the system, and knows what’s going on because they’re physically there. Part timers fly in, fly out, cobbling together a livelihood by teaching at multiple locations and so there’s always this sense of “You’re an outsider because we just don’t see you, you don’t come to my office and we have coffee, you’re not there.” . . . We are all still people and we all care about our students, and we all, to varying degrees, care about each other. The distinction has to be, at least in a significant part, a failure to really see each other and understand each other. (James, Math)

Another founding member reiterated James’ intent that the Regional PTA help educate PT faculty members about their working conditions.

We do at our meetings what I feel the union should be doing: reaching out and giving part-time faculty information, answering their questions, telling them about retirement, social security, all the things that you need to know. The union, with their millions of dollars, should be doing [that] but they’re not. (Mark, Foreign Language)

Members of the association negotiated collectively the areas of importance for the group. Improvement of conditions for the self was not articulated as the goal of the association.

Amongst each other, we’re always like in-fighting. . . . But it’s great because we get these different positions where . . . one person will represent this issue and then the other person will represent a different position and we’ll come to a compromise and then work together on it. I just think that’s really healthy to have those discussions and those debates and the fights, they’re good. (Bryan, Anthropology).
I’m just hoping that my activism can help to make some changes. Some of the things that I’d like to see changed, they don’t necessarily have to be changed for me personally. But I see how it affects others, especially younger people just starting out. . . . Hoping I can have some kind of an impact to change things keeps me motivated. (Pamela, Art)

Through association-related activities, PT faculty members shared their knowledge of institutional life and policy in an effort to reduce employment strain. The information that is communicated through association meetings spans a wide range of topics, from the mundane to the crucial.

When I first got hired in, I didn’t have access to anything. . . . I didn’t even have a key of the faculty bathrooms because my department chair didn’t think we needed them because, after all, “You’re just an adjunct.” . . . Through [Regional PTA], I make sure other adjuncts know. They have a right to get that key to the bathroom. (Briana, Business)

Retirement represented an important issue in the life of PT faculty who have experienced their professional lives through piecing together years of PT faculty work. Regional PTA members expressed that the institution, as well as the faculty unions, have failed to provide necessary information to this group of faculty.

When our union or the district has workshops about retirement, it’s always aimed at the full-timers. “Oh, yeah, you’re going to have 30 years credit, and this is how we’re going to calculate your retirement.” Well, we don’t get 30 years. No matter how we do it, we will not get 30 years credit. So, like I’ve said, I’ve been there 34 years and I’ve got 9 years credit that they use for the calculations. Nobody ever addressed adjuncts. [Briana, Business]

Regional PTA members articulated that employment strain resulting from PT and temporary contracts was pervasive throughout the institution. Consequently, uncertainty over PT faculty professional conditions of work was shared by FTTT faculty as well as administrators.
We can teach up to 67% [of a full-time equivalent course load] now. . . . But the problem is that the schools keep you below 50% because at 50% most of the labor agreements around here [state] they have to give you benefits. Now my department chair . . . kept me at 50% for a long time. I said, “Why don’t you just let me teach 60% load instead of 9 units in the fall and 6 in the spring? Why can’t I teach 9 and 9?” He said, “Because if I give you 60%, then I have to give you benefits.” . . . I said, “I have had benefits for years because we get benefits at 50%.” He didn’t know that. (Briana, Business)

My department chair would say to me and to my other [adjunct] colleague . . . that we make more than she did. She says that we make more per hour than she does. . . . It was kind of this false sense . . . that I was getting [what I ] was entitled to and it was pretty good. (Pamela, Art)

Uncertainty by human resource administrators with regard to the legally and institutionally defined conditions of faculty work negatively affected the ability of PT faculty to plan for retirement.

When I first started there, I asked [HR] about retirement and . . . this was back in ‘82, and they said, “No, you’re a part-timer. You don’t get any benefits.” Well, in the ‘80s, I was elected member of the board of directors of [city] fire protection district and the fire fighters told me, “No . . . you tell HR you will get retirement [because] it is termed by law.” And I went and they said, “Oh no, you’re a part-timer. You don’t get any benefits.” So I told the firefighters. And so then I went back and I said, “No. I’m a part-timer but I get retirement and I’m not leaving your desk until you give it to me.” And because of that, I lost out on a couple of years’ worth that I could have belonged to [Cal]STRS . . . because HR was doing that. . . . They’re just a bunch of incompetent people. (Briana, Business)

Briana, who had recently retired through CalSTRS, explained that uncertainty about PT faculty working conditions remained a characteristic of human resource workers at the college three decades later.

4From June 1, 1972, to 2004, CalSTRS calculated service credit based on the member’s earnings divided by compensation earnable (defined as “compensation that the member would have earned if he or she had been employed and worked full-time in that position” (CalSTRS, 1999, p. 9). Using the average 2010 PT and full-time faculty salary ($38,918 and $96,277, respectively; CCCCO, 2019c), a PT faculty who would have worked at multiple institutions to accrue the hours legally defined as full-time equivalent would only have earned only .40 of a year service credit.
I [recently] retired under STRS . . . and I had unused sick leave over at Valley Central that I needed to get transferred over to Urban City District. And the [human resources] lady refused to do anything about it. She said, “No, we only use if from our district.” I said, “No, the rules say I have to get it transferred over.” And she said, “Well, you’re going to have them transfer it over to us.” . . . And when they did, she said, “I can’t accept it because you have to have quit that job before you started with us.” And I’ve questioned this with CalSTRS and they said, “That’s nonsense. Not with adjuncts. There’s too many of you with overlapping times.” But this HR lady, that’s the way she was and she refused to accept it.

The shared practices of the Regional PTA as an affinity group demonstrated the disinterested commitment of its members. For PT faculty members, engagement in activities that reduced employment strain included holding monthly informational meetings; posting information online; attending union meetings; meeting with individual PT faculty members; writing letters of support for individual PT faculty members; writing informational articles for the Statewide PTA journal; gathering statistical information from the state; learning the issues relevant to each individual college in the region; presenting information at regional, statewide, and international conferences; meeting with legislative state representatives; and organizing activities for the biannual national Adjunct Equity Week. Some Regional PTA members were also active members of Statewide PTA, Statewide Faculty Association (an association of both FTTT and PT community college faculty), the California Community College Academic Senate, and the International Association for contingent faculty. All members of these groups shared (with varying intensity) social practices of indifferent commitment.

Thus, the answer to the second research question, “In what ways do the affiliations and organizational structures outside the community college shape the self-presented professional identity of PT faculty?” is that membership in an association such
as the Regional PTA does not shape professional identity but is constitutive of a professional identity that is constructed within an occupationally defined figured world. Specifically, the commitment to advancement of the occupation is a value of the new figured world of work that shaped behavior within a broader social and personal context than that of the individual college. Consequently, higher education faculty worldwide, both FTTT and contingent, constitute an affinity group through their commitment to their occupation that directs professional behaviors for advancement of working conditions of contingent faculty that could lead to improved student learning conditions. Professional identity is legitimized through the participation and practices of individual (PT) faculty members. Participation in the shared social practices of an educator affinity group legitimizes professional identity. Thus, the affiliations and structures related to higher education contingent faculty (that are not disciplinary based) are shaped by professional activity. For PT faculty members, professional activity is shaped by the individual PT faculty member’s interpretation of the social world and not imposed by the organizations. An individual PT faculty member does not develop a professional identity by joining an association and taking part in its activities. Instead, an individual PT faculty member participates in activities consistent with an occupationally defined professional identity, and membership in an association is consistent with that professional identity. The alteration of identity through reinterpretation of the self and the world allows PT faculty members to author themselves as higher education faculty, despite the cultural system of state and institutional policy that restricts the place of PT faculty members to the classroom in the community college.
Employment Characteristics Mediate Professional Identity

The figured world of work within which PT faculty members author their professional identity is comprised of a central symbolic device of the student-faculty relationship that helps them in the process of self-authorship and positionality. However, an individual PT faculty member’s ability to develop new understanding of an occupationally centered figured world is mediated by several contingent employment characteristics. These employment characteristics blocked the alteration of knowledge necessary for self-authorship and positionality within a new figured world for some PT faculty. These underemployment characteristics are constituted by the employee-employer relationship through which PT faculty members experienced involuntary PT work, involuntary temporary work, underpaid work, and underutilization of skills. In California, these characteristics are objectively defined through legal definitions encapsulated in educational and labor laws per the CCR, as well as the collective bargaining agreements of the individual college districts. However, these characteristics were also experienced psychologically along a continuum that represents a subjective dimension of these characteristics. As explained above, every major aspect of PT faculty members’ work experience related to the employee-employer relationship was characterized by underemployment and employment strain. As a result, employment strain fostered an alteration of a professional identity that was self-authored and positioned based on the conceptualization of the institution as central and legitimizing to a renegotiation of the focal element represented by the student-faculty relationship.
However, the salience of underpaid work (income-related underemployment) had a mediating effect on the psychological effects of employment strain.

Income-related underemployment related to and shaped the salience of employment strain in three ways. In the first instance, income-related underemployment was not salient for the individual faculty member relative to the ability to earn a living wage. Despite high employment strain, PT faculty members who were able to earn a living wage through various means (such as parental or spousal support) engaged in professional behaviors related to their commitment to an educator ethic that were defined by the values of an institutionally defined figured world of work. These included participation in shared governance committees, student clubs, educational grants, and community participation. In the second instance, income-related underemployment was salient and experienced as the inability to earn a living wage. Both underpayment of work and employment strain were at a high level; thus, the professional activities related to the commitment to an educator ethic were directly defined by the student. These activities included participation in professional development activities that were intended to improve pedagogical practice, increase knowledge of student populations, increase knowledge of student learning, improve knowledge of online pedagogical practices, and improve disciplinary pedagogical knowledge (through disciplinary based associations). In the third instance, both income-related underemployment and employment strain were at a low level. Although individual PT faculty members experienced difficulty with earning a living wage, uncertainty as to the consistency of future employment and income was low. Placement on a seniority system of class selection, retirement from CalSTRS (but
not PT work) and financing the home mortgage (refinancing and reverse mortgage) were various methods that led to lowered economic uncertainty. For these PT faculty members, the ability to reduce the uncertainty of temporary work also reduced employment strain. The professional activities related to a commitment to an educator ethic were directed to occupation and defined by faculty (rather than students). These included participation in activities shared by the occupationally defined educator affinity group: activities that advocated for improved working conditions for PT faculty. Based on the salience of income-related underemployment and employment uncertainty, some PT faculty members were able to author a professional identity that was legitimized and developed discursively (D-identity) and through participation in an affinity group, while other PT faculty members understood the institution as legitimizing their professional identity.

**An Institutionally Legitimized Professional Identity**

An institutionally defined figured world of work remained central to the construction of professional identity for individual PT faculty members who experience high employment strain but low income-related underemployment. In the first section of this chapter I described that employment strain frustrates the development of an institutionally legitimized professional identity. The restrained choices that PT faculty members had regarding the design and implementation of their work schedules, combined with the lack of physical space on campus accessible to PT faculty, led faculty to reduce the anxieties created by employment stressors through their withdrawal to the institutionally defined physical space of the classroom. However, when income-related underemployment was less salient, the individual PT faculty member experienced the
student-faculty relationship as one relationship among several relationships encompassed by the employee-employer relationship. The student-faculty relationship organized self-knowledge to a limited extent and appropriate behaviors were those that were consistent with an institutionally defined figured world of work.

PT faculty members expressed that an academic income based on PT faculty work was not sufficient to provide a living wage, but other economic factors contributed to an individual PT faculty member’s ability to earn a living wage. The ability to earn a living wage shaped the subjective effects of a PT faculty’s academic income. For five participants in this study, these factors included parental support, as well as the lack of an obligation to support others (e.g., children, spouse, parents).

I have a situation [living with parent] where I can [deal with it financially]. I mean, I still worry about how much money I’m going to make every year, but I don’t have a family. I’ve purposely put off pursuing having kids because of this job. (June, Sociology)

I figured out once that you’re basically not getting much more than . . . it came out to $15 an hour or something like that. . . . I can get by on it. And I’m still getting my parents to help me out with a few things actually. . . . I’m hoping it won’t be something that I won’t have to do for more than a couple years because . . . by the time you’re 30, you want to sort of be getting on with your life . . . it’s just not something you can do when you’re living on that kind of salary. (Robert, History)

Other economic factors included a dual-household income or engagement in multiple academic employment that resulted in a living wage.

I have worked as an educator and as a consultant with my CIS degree. I’m trained in geographic information systems, remote sensing, and digital image processing. So I’ve done quite a lot of consulting work. . . . I’ve done contracted work with conservation organizations and I’ve also done quite a lot of curriculum development . . . most recently [through] two major NSF-sponsored projects. I’ve [also] worked as a writer to supplement my part-time teaching as an adjunct professor. (Laura, Geography)
Unlike classroom faculty, PT academic counselors are compensated for every hour of work as PT counselors, which can vary by institution (although they are limited to 10 weekly contact hours if they choose only to teach).

Every campus has a different number of hours. And usually it’s 50% of a full-time counselor. . . . At Mountain View I work about 19 hours and at City North . . . I work 15, so that’s about half. So I guess it’s depending on the district. (Marikita, Counselor)

Consequently, the academic salaries of PT counselors were higher than those reported by PT faculty. For instance, Marikita reported that the yearly combination of her PT counseling and teaching work (across three colleges) was $80,000. In contrast, June (Sociology) reported that she earned $44,000 a year for teaching more than a full-time equivalent course load. June taught three 3-unit courses at two institutions for a combined 18 units per semester. Laura reported earning $16,000 to $18,000 a semester, depending on her teaching load, which she described as four to six classes (she did not specify the unit total).

For the variety of reasons noted above, income-related underemployment was not salient to this group of PT faculty members, and their construction of what it means to be a community college faculty member (their professional identity) was shaped by an idealized understanding of community college faculty work. While the student-faculty relationship was important to self-authoring due to high employment strain, it represented only one relationship among others encapsulated by the employee-employer relationship. Thus, PT faculty members expressed that their relationships with their FTTT faculty and other institutional members were also central to their professional identity, which they described as a FTTT community college faculty. These relationships were fostered
through their participation in institutionally organized activities and aimed at the creation of relationships with institutional members that would aid in future full-time employment.

I did a training two summers ago on distance education faculty training at Inland Southern college. So now I’m [a distance education] mentor and that means that I’m trained in how to use the new Canvas platform [and can assist other faculty]. (Laura, Geography)

So I’m very involved at Inland Southern, which . . . I consider my home base campus. . . . I’m the part-time representative of the Executive Senate Committee. I also work as a senator. I’m on a variety of committees, including the distance education committee. . . . I’ve also been involved in union work [through] member organization . . . . [And] I’m the faculty advisor for [a student club]. (June, Sociology)

Other relationships include those with community members and with the wider academic community.

I’m an advisory board member for a fellowship, students for economic justice fellowship that occurs every summer. It’s run through the center on policy initiatives, which is a policy work group nonprofit in the [Region]. . . . I’m part of the group that oversees, these fellowships. . . . I also volunteered here and there with the ACLU over the years. I’ve also worked with the center on policy initiatives group, doing research and publishing policy reports. (June, Sociology)

I have done two major NSF-sponsored projects. [Although colleagues were from around the country], we still stay in touch. . . . We did a 2-year project with all of us working together using virtual meeting rooms and Skype and email. And we do still keep in contact. (Laura, Geography)

The relationships that were fostered through institutional and community involvement are constructed as important for the development of a professional identity that led to full-time employment. The construction of a professional identity for these faculty was based on a particular interpretation of what it means to be a community college faculty member: a FTTT faculty member. This interpretation includes a
professional identity that is enacted through community, institutional, and scholarly activities that were in addition to their development as teaching professionals.

The qualities necessary for a FTTT faculty position include having sufficient content knowledge . . . Having a solid academic background in the field that you want to teach in . . . having experience as an educator and really being able to teach to today’s learners. And I think that it’s very important to have training in technology, in learning theory, and going beyond just being an expert in your field. I’ve always really kept my eye on being an educator, as well as a professional in my field. It’s far more than just having the academic degrees and the experience. It’s also knowing how to work with people, how to design a curriculum that applies to different learning theories, and more and more to our digital learners. The community college is a very wide range of ages, backgrounds, abilities and goals of why they are there . . . I think there’s also a very strong human component of knowing how to relate to students. You’re not just delivering information. As a professor, you are oftentimes called upon to be very understanding of their lives, their situations, their educational goals, their backgrounds, their preparation or lack thereof . . . It’s a very complicated and important job with many facets to it. (Laura, Geography)

Robert (Humanities) had received a PhD and expressed that teaching was the main factor in attaining a FTTT faculty position. “My understanding is that typically you need to have a few years of teaching experience before you can get a tenure track or equivalent to tenure track job at a community college.” However, Robert added that the community college system was not familiar to him and that his higher education experience had not provided information about the institution. “The problem is [that] they have these workshops about academic careers at [research university] but nobody knows about community college . . . since they all teach at a 4-year school.”

As economic factors were not as salient for this group of PT faculty members, they were able to participate in unpaid professional activities. The activities were based on their definition of what it meant to be a community college faculty member. Thus, for June (Sociology), Lynette (ESL), and Laura (Geography), this definition directed
professional activity in the community, the institution, and the wider realm of academia. For Robert (Humanities), the activity of teaching was the conceptual device for defining a community college faculty member and directed his professional engagement in unpaid work. Robert described his unpaid preparation time for his three 3-unit classes (all the same course) as “about 30 hours a week on the class, maybe even more sometimes,” which he attributed to his being “quite slow in the lesson planning” as it was his first semester teaching at the community college. In addition, Robert said that his class had an honors component for which he received 10 hours of professional development credit, despite the college’s calculation that it represented 30 hours of work (based on the number of honor students). Robert described the work for the honors component as part of his employment contract. “It’s not really extra money. It just fulfills that requirement.”

For these faculty members, income-related underemployment was not a principle characteristic of their employment experiences. Although it was more relevant for some than others, financial hardship did not limit their participation in unpaid activity, with the exception of the PT counselor faculty member (whose experiences as a PT counselor indicated that all her work should be compensated). These PT faculty members experienced the employment stressors characteristic of employment strain; however, because income-related underemployment was not as salient for these members as it was for others, their self-understanding of what it meant to be a community college faculty member directed their participation within a institutionally defined and legitimated figured world of work. For these PT faculty members, a self-authored professional identity would not be complete until they had attained FTTT faculty status and their PT
status (defined by the employee-employer relationship) impeded development of a professional identity. These PT faculty members, with the exception of June (Sociology), who had been a finalist for two FTTT positions in the past several years, were frustrated about the failure to procure a FTTT faculty position.

It’s always been a big mystery about the hiring, the whole hiring process. Because nobody tells you anything. They’re obligated not to share any information. So I’ve tried to talk to some faculty and maybe get some pointers about what I’m not doing right and why am I not being selected. But they always stonewall me in the regards that they cannot disclose that information. . . . I really need to talk to somebody but I don’t know who, about what . . . [is] wrong with the way I’m answering those [interview] questions. (Erik, Math)

In the last year I’ve applied to at least 20 (FTTT positions). I’ve gone to the second interview at least six times. And every time, someone that got hired had less experience, didn’t teach. I’m in counseling, so it’s encouraged for us to teach. And I see, at least in my discipline, people getting hired who don’t have enough experience . . . even though I have more experience. . . . It’s just something about the second interview that I can’t seem quite yet [to figure out] what I need to say, or what they’re looking for. . . . I’ve kind of lost hope. (Marikita, Counselor)

A Discursively Legitimized Professional Identity

The second way that underemployment and employment effort interacted is that both were experienced as salient features of the employee-employer relationship. The experience of income-related underemployment, articulated as an academic income that was insufficient for a living wage, intensified the experience of employment strain. The intensity of these factors in PT faculty experiences led to a devaluation of an institutionally defined and legitimated professional identity and an attendant increase in the prominence of the student-faculty relationship. Consequently, an occupationally defined figured world of work directed professional activities and bolstered the formation of a professional identity. For four PT faculty members, professional identity was
authored in the new figured world of work and legitimized through discourse. Although discourse and interaction sustained an institutionally legitimized identity (and by extension, the professional identity of all PT faculty in this investigation), this discourse and interaction were fostered between members not including institutional authority figures (such as other FTTT faculty and administrators). Instead, discourse and interactions were oriented to the student, and the student-faculty relationship helped PT faculty members to cultivate and sustain a professional identity through this relationship. However, due to the salience of income-related underemployment and the stated need to earn more money through their PT college work, the college as an institution was a presence in the figured world of work. The experiences of PT faculty in this situation demonstrated that the formation of a new professional identity occurred within a transitional area in which the student-faculty relationship directed reinterpretation of the self and social activity through a process of weakening old self-understandings. Consequently, professional identity was formed by a combination of old (institutionally defined) and new (occupationally defined) concepts of self.

Economic insecurity was described as a prominent characteristic for this second group of PT faculty. This group of PT faculty articulated the inability to provide a living wage for the individual self and others supported through PT academic income.

I handle my parent’s mortgage and I have a car. I have student loans. I have, other bills. . . . I’m single; if I had a partner maybe that would make it easier. I heard some people that . . . their spouses work. So, you know, they can share expenses. So as a single female, it’s very hard. (Martha, Sociology)

I would like to have a [FTTT] contract so that I can teach more hours. We are limited to the number of hours we can teach and it’s not survivable, so it requires
just constantly scampering to find different things to add up to what would be a full-time position. (Sara, ESL)

The salience of earning less than a living wage restricted the definition of what it meant to be a community college faculty member to those activities related to the classroom. Institutionally oriented activities of shared governance peripherally legitimated professional activity, but the mainstay of professional activity was understood to be related to improving classroom teaching due to the constraints of time and unpaid work.

Working as an adjunct faculty, there’s a lot of time pressures. And a lot of the professional work that you’re tasked to do is unpaid and that is kind of how the system is set up. You’re a professional when it comes to work that you should quote unquote be doing and when it’s convenient to the administration to have you as a professional and asking you to do these extra things. . . . At some point you have to decide what is going to work best for you because you do have limited time frame commuting to different colleges. This somewhat impedes your ability to be active and participate in different either professional associations or campus committees such as the Academic Senate because when your schedule changes, . . . then your ability to be at those meetings changes. And since they’re unpaid, it makes prioritizing those a little bit more difficult. (Michael, Political Science)

[Committee work is] something that helps build one’s curriculum but, honestly, when it comes to teaching at so many different colleges for so many different classes, it’s really hard to be part of committees. . . . For example, this semester I wanted to get involved at City South college in one committee, but the meeting was actually at a time that I had to be at Valley Central college teaching a class. So those kind of things might get in the way of participating in committees. (Martha, Sociology)

As economic hardship led to reframing the figured world of work in which other institutional members and relationships were not central, the student-faculty relationship became central through a gradual process to self-authorship in the new figured world. This process of professional identity reconstitution is indicated in the experience of PT faculty in this group who had previously authored their identity through the institution
through participation in institutionally oriented committees (e.g., shared governance committees and community organizations). These PT faculty indicated that they no longer engaged in such activities. The change in behavior is reflective of a change in the values attributed to those behaviors and an alteration of professional identity. The experiences of Sara (ESL) illustrate the process of identity reconstitution. Sara described that she had attended Academic Senate committee meetings previously, even though she was not on the committee, because she considered participation to be important. She described “feel[ing] out of the loop . . . with the union” but asserted that she still kept abreast of the issues by “follow[ing] their threads and their communications about the issues that they’ve brought up.” Sara stated that she had “every intention of getting involved [again]” when her schedule allowed her to do so, but that it had been 3 years since she had been able to attend a meeting of the union or the Academic Senate. As Sara reconfigured her professional identity, behaviors related to teaching and activities focused on the teaching occupation gained prominence. Sara stated, “I’m too passionate about the teaching” and explained that her passion was reflected in her decision not to accept the position of teacher trainer, which had been offered to her several times. Sara continued to help co-workers on curricular issues and identified that “adjunct issues” were an area of added interest for her.

As the values of an occupationally defined figured world transformed professional identity, the role of the college as blocking a professional identity development was part of the cultural knowledge of the new figured world. Michael (Political Science) stated that the difference between FTTT and PT faculty “is really in our relation to
administration and the district as a whole and whether [they are] going to allow us to continue doing what we’re passionate about.” Michael also stated that there were no differences in the credential and instructional work of FTTT and PT faculty members and highlighted that there was also no difference for the student. He emphasized that the “only difference is in how we’re treated by administration. . . . How many hours we can work. And what benefits we don’t get. But as far as our work, it’s absolutely the same.”

The institution and institutional behaviors were interpreted as the cause of individual PT faculty’s inability to attain a FTTT position or, more important, to earn a living wage. Andrea (Math), who had asked her union president to support increasing the hours that PT faculty were allowed to work, responded to his negative answer by referring to the California State University system. “I said, ‘There is already a two-tiered system and the lecturers at the CSU can work 100% and more are making enough money there, but we aren’t.’” Of his negative response, Andrea stated, “He does not care. He just doesn’t.”

The faculty union legally represents the FTTT and PT faculty and the institution through the collective bargaining agreement and the union president’s refusal to support increasing paid working hours represented disinterest in the problems of PT faculty by both the FTTT faculty and the institution.

Through PT faculty members’ interactions and discourse centered on student learning with people other than institutional authorities (e.g., their students, other adjunct faculty, public observers), PT faculty members were able, discursively, to articulate, enact, and sustain a professional identity within a new figured world of work. The financial constraints of economic life were attributed to institutional causes instead of to a
frustrated professional identity. Over time, former institutionally defined conceptualizations of self were discredited and replaced by the new values of an occupationally defined figured world. The PT faculty in this group identified that the working conditions of PT faculty should be improved so they could earn a living wage, but such identification did not result in participation of the shared social practices of an affinity group. High employment strain and the subjective intensity of income-related underemployment mediated development of a professional identity legitimized through an affinity group. The combination of these two employment characteristics shaped a professional identity legitimized by discursive practices that reflected a gradual alteration to the figured world of work.

An Affinity-Legitimated Professional Identity

The third way in which the subjective experience of income-related underemployment and employment strain directed the formation of a professional identity within an occupationally defined figured world of work was to remove institutionally defined barriers in the construction of a new figured world of work. PT faculty members who articulated the ability to support themselves and their families economically through their PT academic income concurrently articulated that such economic stability reduced the experiences of employment strain. Paradoxically, it was the reduction of employment uncertainty and effort regarding the maintenance of current and obtainment of future employment through several mechanisms (including contractual rehire rights and retirement from CalSTRS) that led to a degree of economic security. As economic uncertainty lost primacy, other areas encompassed by employment strain (such
as multiple worksites, pressure from close and constant evaluation, harassment and
discrimination, unfavorable physical location, and unpaid administrative duties) also
weakened in their intensity. Unlike the first group of PT faculty whose subjective
experience of low income-related underemployment did not result in low employment
strain, this group of PT faculty experienced a reduction in employment strain as
institutional behaviors became coherent. Consequently, this third group of PT faculty
members were able to engage in a process of identity formation that was authored
uniquely within an occupationally defined figured world of work. The self-knowledge
reflected by the experiences of this group of PT faculty indicated that professional
identity was framed solely by the new figured world of work and that the old
institutionally defined figured world of work no longer defined the social world of these
PT faculty members or blocked formation of a professional identity.

Initially, all PT faculty in this investigation necessarily engaged in professional
identity development through an institutionally defined figured world of work. In the first
section of this chapter, I explained the ways in which an institutionally defined figured
world of work was new to all PT faculty at the start of their PT faculty careers. I also
noted the ways in which institutional incoherence blocked professional identity formation
through employment strain. The personal experiences as a student in a community
college or as a graduate student shaped the individual PT faculty member’s particular
interpretation of what it meant to be a community college faculty member. Furthermore, I
explained the ways in which experiences of high employment strain reduced the
importance of the employee-employer relationship, which was then replaced by the more
consistent student-faculty relationship. Consequently, high employment strain characterized both the initial and subsequent experiences of all PT faculty participants, which over time disrupted institutionally defined self-understandings. For the last group of PT faculty members, low employment strain and low experience of income-related underemployment fostered development of a professional identity in an occupationally figured world of work (A-identity) in which values of the former figured world of work were replaced entirely.

Reducing Employment Strain

PT faculty members of this group employed two methods to reduce their financial insecurity (a lessened subjective experience of income-related underemployment). These included the attainment of contractual rehire rights at the individual institution and retirement from the CalSTRS system but not from PT work. In the first case, individual college faculty unions had negotiated with the local district for contractual rehire rights for long-time PT faculty members. Not all colleges had contractual rehire rights codified in their collective bargaining agreements, and policies varied according to the institution. For example, PT faculty at Urban City District can attain contractual rehire rights after eight semesters of employment but at Inland Southern they can do so after six semesters. Furthermore, CBAs that include contractual rehire rights specify that the process is not automatic and must be initiated by the PT faculty member. Contractual rehire rights guarantee that a PT faculty member is offered a specific number of units each semester but do not guarantee the course, time, location, or format (face to face or online). The
CBAs that codify contractual rehire rights negate these contractual rights within the CBA for the purpose of managerial discretion.

The parties agree that all part-time faculty assignments are temporary in nature contingent on enrollment, funding, and program changes, and that no part-time faculty member has a reasonable assurance of continued employment at any point in time, regardless of the status, the length of service, or re-employment preference seniority, of the part-time faculty member. (Urban City District CBA, 2016-2018, p. 9)

This language specifies that, despite codified rehire rights for PT faculty within the CBA, there is never any certainty of continued employment.

The request to initiate the process of contractual rehire rights increased employment strain for PT faculty. Many PT faculty have experienced or have heard of someone whose employment relationship was terminated by the college in the term following the request.

I got to the point where I [obtained seniority rights] but they gave me classes at a different campus where there was low student enrollment of like six or seven people so I lost the [class and the possibility for rehire rights]. It was a good way of getting rid of me. (Martha, Sociology)

That happened to me at Inland Southern, too. I did a full . . . . They hired me for 3 years and [when I qualified for rehire rights, they] didn’t hire me anymore. That was the end of my Inland Southern [employment] (Bryan, Anthropology)

However, for some portion of PT faculty, contractual rehire rights were obtained and reduced the instability of a temporary PT employment contract and defined limited rights for PT faculty with regard to their contract. As the story of Lynette (Humanities) from the first section illustrated, she was not given continued employment despite her contractual rehire right of an employment offer based on a seniority system and her seniority in that system. After she became aware that PT faculty with no seniority were
offered employment, she engaged the assistance of a FTTT faculty member and then her union in asserting her contractual rights of rehire to obtain an offer of one course. Lynette noted that the union helped her with this matter as rehire rights were defined contractually. Similarly, Pamela (Art) explained the seniority system as a guarantee that she was offered a specific number of course but not specific courses. She had developed the curriculum for several courses in the program but was not afforded the opportunity to teach the courses. Although contractual rehire rights permitted PT faculty members little control over the work schedule, it offered these PT faculty members stability of employment and income from academic work. A stable source of income lowered employment strain and income-related underemployment.

The second method used by PT faculty in this group to reduce employment strain and income-related underemployment was a technical retirement. A technical retirement is a recent phenomenon in California community colleges that consists of retirement from the CalSTRS system but continued PT community college academic employment. Thus, a PT faculty member’s college(s) employment remained unchanged and PT faculty collected their retirement funds at the same time. Two PT faculty members, Briana (Business) and Mark (Foreign Language), had experienced this process. These two PT faculty members articulated that this method gave them an increased sense of power over their working conditions.

You retire from the retirement system, which means the colleges no longer take retirement out of your pay. But you don’t necessarily retire from working because part time is not contractual. If you’re part time, it really doesn’t change anything because you’re . . . just semester to semester. I’ll continue teaching at City Central College as long as I feel like it.
Mark had earlier expressed the uncertainty created by administrative turnover and added that this method allowed him the choice not to teach at the specific college.

They’re very mean to me, which was not nice, just absurdly mean. And so, I just said, “I don’t need to teach here anymore.” My retirement covers the income that I would’ve made from that one class. So, why subject myself to that when they can just send me the check?

Similarly, Briana related that the fear of elimination of her classes was allayed through this method. Briana explained how a technical retirement also increased her income.

Two years ago, administration was really threatening us about classes being cut. If you didn’t have this high of enrollment [the course would be cut]. They were going to make me have 34 people enrolled in my class or they were going to cut the class. Just high anxiety times. I decided [that] I’ve been listening the [Cal]STRS people talking about adjuncts [and] I’m going to do it. And what they said was, and this where its adjuncts helping adjuncts, my union never told me this, the district never told us this but the workshops that were arranged by RPTFA, adjuncts helping adjuncts, is where I got the idea that’s worked for me. They said, “When anybody retires from STRS, full-timer or part-timer, you are allowed to come back on a 60% [contract]. It’s what they call a pro-rata load. Well, guess what? You’re limited to 60% anyway, teaching right now before retirement, so why not go ahead and retire, start collecting your STRS pension and just keep teaching your 60% load or whatever your load is, as if nothing happened, nothing changes. The only thing that changes is they won’t be taking out STRS contribution out of your paycheck anymore. Sounds like a $200 paycheck raise per paycheck.

Despite her fears of institutional reprisal, Briana explained that a technical retirement had reduced her anxiety. “So now the stress it’s been really, really, really relieved because I can collect my STRS pension and I’m getting paid my paycheck for teaching, so it’s really amazing.” In the past, the subjective experience of income-related underemployment and employment strain were at a high level for both PT faculty members. Briana explained that she would have lost her home if she had not acquired a
reverse mortgage; Mark described refinancing his home 15 years ago as a way to make the parts of his job that “suck not suck so much” (Mark, Foreign Language).

Through these two methods, PT faculty reduced the experience of employment strain and income-related underemployment. Although elements of employment strain (e.g., uncertainty over the work schedule, locations, times, and courses) were present, other areas of employment uncertainty (e.g., a specific income from retirement or academic work and the certainty of that income) were reduced. In both Briana’s and Mark’s experiences, CalSTRS retirement reduced the intensity of the experiences of harassment and discrimination. For other PT faculty members, contractual rehire rights reduced the intensity of harassment and discrimination. Lynette (Humanities), who had used her contractual rehire rights to procure a course to teach, expressed that the reduction in her course load from three to none was due to the new department chair’s personal dislike of her. The contractual rehire rights that she had earned ensured her continued employment despite her experiences of harassment and discrimination.

**Participation in Educational Affinity Groups**

As a result of a relatively stable income and reduced employment strain, this group of PT faculty members developed a professional identity within an occupationally defined figured world of work. The symbolic device of the student-faculty relationship fostered development and assimilation of the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship. An espoused commitment to an educator ethic directed professional behaviors that were reflective of the value of indifferent commitment (craftsmanship). This group of PT faculty members expressed a dedication to their students’ education;
their positionality helped them to identify that the ability of PT faculty members to engage in professional activity was an essential component for the improvement of student learning.

I’m all in favor of student equity and basic skills and everything. It’s really important, but I also want people to acknowledge that you’ve got a really easy solution on the table that you have to also look at, which is funding of adjunct office hours, having them be the . . . first responders. The first line of defense is that professor helping you pass a class. And anything else you get study skills, and this and that, all that . . . it’s good, but all that stuff is to me secondary than an actual physical person that can sit down and hear your specific problem, understand it in the context of the classroom where you’re taking that class and help you overcome that problem. (Bryan, Anthropology)

The articulated desire to improve student learning through improvement of contingent faculty working conditions led these PT faculty members to engage in outside-of-classroom activity related to reducing employment strain.

My job and Bryan’s job, we’re pretty secure because we have [rehire rights]. So that’s not really an issue for us personally, but we also are wanting to fight when they changed the language in the last contract. . . . They basically added an extra year to [the process]. . . . That didn’t affect us, but we were strongly wanting to do that for other people. (Pamela, Art)

I think part of the reason people who are involved in these activists groups stay involved is because they see more of a big picture and they want to lift other people and help resolve other issues for other people, not just their own issues (Bryan, Anthropology)

These activities collectively embodied an affinity group, as participation in shared social practices is the requirement for participation, rather than membership in a specific organization. For example, Lynette (Humanities) said that, since the time she had been able to enforce her contractual rehire rights, she had become more active in her support for contingent faculty at her college.
I sent a general email to all adjunct faculty. [I said], “I don’t know about you, but I am sick of how [the] part-time faculty is being treated. I plan to do something about it. And if you’re sick of it too, just let me know.” . . . I started [putting together surveys and petitions and] going to some union meetings. I’d [ask], “Where is the protection for part-time?” I kept pushing them and I kept pushing them. [And eventually the co-president of the union before a meeting] came over to me and she was screaming at me. . . . I said, “Listen, I don’t know who you work for, but I work for a whole bunch of other part-timers. And what we’re interested in is what works for all of us, not what works for you.” (Lynette, Humanities)

Although most of the PT faculty members in this group were active members in the Regional PTA, their participation varied in distinct ways. For example, Lynette (Humanities) mainly described involvement in activities restricted to a specific college: Mountain View College. Briana (Business) and Brian (Anthropology) described activities related to the geographic region. Pamela (Art) described regional and state-level participation through Statewide PTA and Statewide Faculty Association. Mark described his participation at local, regional, statewide, and international levels. Despite the differences in membership to specific faculty affiliations and organizations, the practices of these members were consistent with a professional identity authored through an occupationally defined figured world of work. Professional identity was legitimated through discursive and professional practices that provided the experience in shared practices that constitute an educator affinity group.

The experiences of this group of PT faculty indicated that the combination of economic uncertainty and employment uncertainty functions to shape the self-presented professional identity of community college PT faculty. As the experienced intensity of these characteristics of the employee-employer relationship was reduced, the self-presented professional identity as a community college faculty that was authored was no
longer premised on (or blocked by) the interactions between and among PT faculty members and institutional agents (such as FTTT faculty and administrators) but instead through discourse and shared practice with outside actors (such as students and the general public).

The next and final chapter addresses this investigation’s conclusions based on the findings. The chapter explains in brief the larger implications of the answers to the research questions, the implications for practice, and the need for further research.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS

In this investigation, I aimed to address two research questions: (a) In what ways do the self-described work activities and experiences of PT faculty define or characterize their self-represented identity as members of a professional class? and (b) In what ways do the affiliations and organizational structures outside of the community college shape the self-presented professional identity of PT faculty? Motivated by scholarship critical of a neoliberal framing of PT faculty and their academic work, my intention in this investigation was to understand the nature of PT faculty work and professional life through the perspective of PT faculty members and to explain the ways in which work and perceptions about work mediate development of a professional identity. The research questions had two implicit assumptions. The first assumption was that PT faculty were members of a professional class so that their worker identity represented a professional identity. The second assumption was that PT faculty could author a professional identity in spaces outside the employing institution represented by outside affiliations and organizations (Sennett, 2006), as well as by occupation (Kunda et al., 2002) or internal psychological sources (Cappelli, 1997; Padavic, 2005).

I explored the ways in which PT faculty members defined their self-represented identity as members of a professional class through the application of theories grounded in the concept of humans as socially motivated actors. These theories included culture theory (Holland et al., 1998; Ortner, 2006), identity theory (J. P. Gee, 2000), identity management theory (Padavic, 2005), underemployment theory (Feldman 1996; Maynard...
& Feldman, 2011), notions from employment strain theory (Lewchuk et al., 2003), and notions from the concept of a new cultural anchor (Sennett, 2006, 2008). These theories provided an alternative to economic-based theories in which human behavior is conceptualized singularly as rationally motivated. Also, this theoretical framework allowed for investigation of professional identity development in locations outside of the formal institution of work.

The empirical data were generated by qualitative methods that produced a thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the work life and experiences of PT community college faculty. These data addressed the research questions and advanced the higher education and sociological fields through the use of an innovative framework. First, the findings indicate that PT faculty are able to develop a professional identity outside of the institutionally defined positions of the workplace but that identity development, initially, is institutionally oriented. An alternate location for professional identity development is figurative in nature and represented by occupation. The student-faculty relationship is a symbolic device for the occupation of an educator that is used to engender the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship. The figurative location of occupation becomes a location for development of a professional identity and replaces the traditional role of the employing institution in identity development. Second, the findings indicate that characteristics of the temporary employer-employee relationship mediate development of a professional identity. The intensity of the experienced employment stressors orients the development of a professional identity through either an institutionally defined figured world of work or occupationally defined figured world of work. Third, the findings
indicate that PT faculty who author a professional identity through an occupationally
defined figured world of work legitimize professional identity through discourse (D-
identity) and shared social practices (A-identity). Participation in shared social practices
constitutes membership in an educator affinity group that is not bound by geography or a
higher education institutional type.

Summary of the Findings

The Figured World of Work

Every major aspect of work life, as described by the PT faculty members in this
investigation, is characterized by employment strain (uncertainty and effort), with the
exception of the student-faculty relationship. PT faculty described a lack of control over
their schedules and even over the decision to work at multiple institutions. Employment
uncertainty was a result of institutional policies and practices that shaped the employment
relationship with the college. PT faculty had limited knowledge of the policies of each
college due to limited physical access to the individual college. Contractually, the
classroom was the only location for PT faculty to be physically present, although some
institutions provided limited office space and time for the PT faculty collective. PT
faculty who taught both online and traditional format courses did not describe differences
in the work experiences or institutional interactions based on the course format. The
geographical constraint of the classroom impeded access to a variety of institutional
actors and impeded knowledge of institutional policy and procedures. Typically, contact
with administrative personnel such as department chairs and deans was conducted
electronically on a limited basis, such as one or two times in a semester. Such findings
were consistent with the literature that explains that the narrow definition of educational space as exclusively physical space has functioned to reduce the authority of PT faculty (Rhoades, 2011).

**Motivations for Work**

A professional identity, as conceived by the PT faculty in this investigation, directs the professional activities of the workplace. PT faculty engaged in professional activity for reasons other than uniquely instrumental motives (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Kezar & Sam, 2011). PT faculty articulated that their hourly compensation for classroom teaching time did not include compensation for the work activities outside of the classroom, such as lesson preparation, assessment of student work, or completion of classroom administrative duties. Outside-of-classroom activities were acknowledged as necessary for compensation of classroom time. Related, the second motivation was structural in nature. Due to employment strain and the need to maintain current and future employment, fear of the loss of future employment also motivated PT faculty engagement in unpaid outside-of-classroom work activities. However, PT faculty considered the unpaid nature of professional work activities as an exploitative employer practice. They engaged in unpaid professional activity to align activity with an interpretation of what it means to be a community college faculty defined by the characteristics of altruism, trust, and authority. Thus, PT faculty who engaged in uncompensated outside-of-classroom work indicated a subjective motivation for their work. This finding contradicts the scholarly conceptualization of PT faculty as low-skilled laborers who engage in productive behaviors for purely instrumental motivations.
PT faculty described their uncompensated out-of-classroom work activities as evidence of a dedication to an educator ethic and a dedication to work as a source of personal satisfaction. Work was not simply an activity that provided an income but was instead articulated as an activity that demonstrated a commitment to student learning and concomitant self-fulfillment. PT faculty consented to a high level of work commitment to ensure that professional behavior was consistent with an internal psychological state. Thus, the expression of a dedication to an educator ethic and a dedication to work as a source of personal satisfaction were two identity management devices that PT faculty used to engage in, make sense of, and describe professional activities reflective of an internal psychological state of the self as an educator (Padavic, 2005). This finding is consistent with scholarship that indicates professional workers develop psychological strategies to overcome the barriers to identity formation of alternative arrangements of work (Padavic, 2005). However, unlike professional contingent workers studied in previous scholarship, PT faculty members in this investigation did not reflect the good worker ideology of the Fordist employer-employee relationship, which ascribed value to hard work (Padavic, 2005). Instead, hard work was a means for individuals to live up to their perceived potential and was valued as a source of self-fulfillment and personal satisfaction. The expressed value of dedication to work as a source of personal satisfaction supports scholarship that has indicated a national shift in worker values as a result of neoliberal restructuring of employer-employee relationship (Cappelli, 1997; Yankelovich, 1994).
The expression of a dedication to an educator ethic was defined by the central role of a student-faculty relationship that is the one consistent social relationship throughout the work life of PT faculty. As PT faculty experienced social isolation from their FTTT and PT faculty peers, the classroom provided the social context for a consistent student-faculty relationship. For PT faculty, the isolation from peers functioned to mitigate the role of the institution and its agents and bolster the role of the student to the organization of cultural knowledge through which a professional identity is developed. Through the consistency of the student-faculty relationship, students represented a public that recognized the labor of PT faculty. Thus, in the figured world of the workplace, the student replaced the institution and its agents as the source of public acknowledgment of the labor of PT faculty.

A New Cultural Anchor as a Reinterpretation of Work

The student-faculty relationship represented a symbolic device that engendered the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship. The consistency of the student-faculty relationship provided the social location for the generation of these values, which were absent in a temporary employer-employee relationship. The experiences of PT faculty highlighted that the temporary nature of the employment contract impeded institutionally acknowledged accumulation of experience and consequently blocked a narrative of work life. That is, after 20 years of continued employment at a single institution, a PT faculty member could continue to be considered a temporary and transient institutional member. In these conditions, accumulation of experience, either for salary purposes or attainment of contractual rights, did not follow a linear temporal
directionality but instead a fragmented directionality, for example, the calculation of the experience factor that determined compensation on the salary schedule. At three districts in the region, even the combination of a full-time teaching load composed of multiple PT assignments at several institutions would not be counted as a year of experience. Thus, the logic of temporal directionality was fragmented by the temporary employment contract. A PT faculty member such as Briana who had taught PT for 33 years would be considered as having no prior experience for the calculation of her salary at such institutions. These 33 years of employment were counted as the equivalent of 9 years for purposes of the CalSTRS retirement system. The external behaviors codified in the temporary employment contract and collective bargaining agreement of each individual college prevented the narration of self as anything but a temporary institutional member. As a result, the student-faculty relationship fostered a narrative agency for PT faculty to reinterpret work life along an unbroken continuum of time, whereas the temporary employment contract had been fragmented.

The second value, usefulness, was also engendered by the student-faculty relationship. Usefulness refers to the public contribution to what is valuable to others (Sennett, 2006). PT faculty articulated that the unpaid outside-of-the-classroom work was contributing to student learning. Neither the institution nor institutional members acknowledged the value of the unpaid out-of-classroom work performed by PT faculty. However, the unpaid out-of-classroom work organized and directed the classroom experiences of the student; thus, the value of such work was perceived as acknowledged through student experience. Various institutional agents such as FTTT faculty,
administrators, and board of trustee members, indicated through action and discourse that they perceived no value to the uncompensated out-of-classroom work of PT faculty. Such perception explains why PT faculty members are asked, “Why do work you’re not paid for?” PT faculty described a conscious choice not to permit the lack of institutional acknowledgment to shape external behavior. Instead, external behavior of PT faculty was shaped by the value of usefulness based on the student-faculty relationship. Consequently, PT faculty persisted in unpaid activities as these activities were acknowledged by the student experience in the classroom.

The third value, craftsmanship, was engendered by the student-faculty relationship. The student-faculty relationship is organized by in- and out-of-classroom learning experiences structured by a faculty member. The preparation and act of teaching and the student-faculty relationship delineated an occupation as an educator and directed external behaviors based on internal self-authorship of a professional identity. PT faculty constructed an interpretation of what it means to be a community college faculty member based on their conceptualization of an occupation as an educator. The commitment to education and to the student indicated that learning and teaching were assumed to be worthwhile tasks of the occupation. PT faculty described their pedagogical practices as more learner centered and their classroom standards as higher than those of their FTTT peers. Such perceptions belie purely instrumental motivations of work. That is, PT faculty engaged in classroom teaching and associated activities not solely for financial compensation. Instead, work activities were the enactment of personally held ideas of the self as an educator. Work activities, both paid and unpaid, reflected understandings of the
self as an educator and, consequently, professional activities as a source of personal fulfillment. Thus, paid and unpaid professional activities were the external behaviors reflective of internal interpretations of the self as a member of an educator occupation whose work is considered worthy and self-validating. For PT faculty, unpaid professional work was representative of a disinterested commitment: the drive to produce quality work based on a belief in the objective value of that task without the possibility of monetary reward (Sennett, 2008). The central role of the occupation to the interpretation of what it means to be a community college faculty member provides evidence of the occupation as a source of work identity development and legitimization (Lewchuk et al., 2003).

Collectively, the creation of the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship indicates that PT faculty have the ability to reinterpret work lives and author a professional identity despite the organizational barriers. This reinterpretation is created through the symbolic device of the student-faculty relationship. This finding supports Sennett’s concept of a new cultural anchor for nontraditional workers in neoliberal institutions, such as the community college (Levin, 2018). Although scholars conceptualize the employing institution as the only location for the development and legitimization of a work identity, the findings in this investigation indicate that the alternate locations of occupation and attendant psychological strategies serve as sources for identity development and legitimization. One limitation to a figurative location is that the student-faculty relationship limits social recognition of PT professional identity to the students in the classroom. The lack of social interaction with the institution and its agents not only mitigates the role of the institution to the formation of a professional work
identity but also limits the social actors with whom social identity is negotiated. The inability of PT faculty to develop a professional identity through their social interactions with other institutional agents has negative consequences on the work lives of PT faculty as the perceptions and assumptions of these institutional agents shape the working conditions of PT faculty through their power over institutional policies and decisions to enforce and adhere to such policies.

**Theoretical Framework: Its Implications and Contributions**

**Research**

This investigation has implications for future research. The theoretical and analytical frameworks point to a valuable direction for future examinations of PT faculty. Many of the preconceived assumptions in the scholarly research on PT faculty are based on the notion of this faculty group not as professionals, which results in inappropriate theories based on low-skilled workers to explain the behaviors and status of this faculty group (Kezar & Sam, 2011). Furthermore, the standards for assessment of FTTT faculty are applied unproblematically to assess the quality of contingent faculty despite the difference in the employment contracts. The theory of underemployment allows for a conceptualization of PT faculty as non-ideal workers and contingent work as non-ideal. However, care must be taken in the use of underemployment, particularly in the use of terminology. The conceptualization of PT faculty as non-ideal workers allows for scholarship not premised on incommensurate comparisons between PT and FTTT faculty but the term *non-ideal* has negative connotations that might be used to bolster current scholarship that frames PT faculty through a deficit model. Instead, scholarship could
describe PT faculty work as the constrained choice to work PT and temporary employment contracts as an involuntary choice for PT faculty due to the systemic preferences and practices of community colleges for PT contracts. The theory of underemployment, which to date has been applied infrequently to the study of PT faculty, allows examination of the subjective experiences of individuals and broadens the characteristics of employment used to explain faculty work (e.g., underutilization of skill). Combined with concepts of employment strain, underemployment theory can direct scholarship on the psychological and social effects of contingent work on PT faculty to explain the ways in which contingent work affects student learning and shapes citizenship behaviors. Moreover, the theory of underemployment provides an alternate orientation to research on employer-employee relationships that has assumed either a free-agent orientation or an employee-relation perspective.

New knowledge about the professional behaviors and experiences of PT faculty and their effects on student learning will not come from the current orientation of scholarship. Instead, a theoretical shift is necessary to make visible the liminal spaces created by a conceptualization of human behavior as rationally directed. Sennett’s work provides an avenue for such a shift. Sennett argued that the structure of work life under new capitalism blocks the social connections that were identified by workers as central to self-authorship and positionality. The values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship are valuable in locating alternate social connections that were previously ignored. As actor-observer bias theory (E. E. Jones & Nisbett, 1987) indicates, the actor’s perspective places emphasis on the context, and context is always less salient for the observer.
Tenured university faculty who conduct the mainstay of academic research on contingent academic faculty (of which PT faculty are one group) are inside actors in the figured world of academic work. The traditional employer-employee relationship provides the context for this FTTT faculty group and their professional identity formation. In this context, the relationships legitimized by the employing institution (the university) are the central symbolic device for professional identity formation. Consequently, when this FTTT faculty group studies contingent faculty, their observations are directed to the characteristics of the observed and the role of context is marginalized. It is the marginalization of context, particularly the context of contingent faculty work activity and experiences, and a focus on the characteristics of the individual that create liminal spaces in scholarly conceptualization. These liminal spaces represent the social spaces in which work is experienced by contingent faculty who are not centered solely on the employing institution. Such an orientation elucidates the limitation of commonly used theories, such as person-job fit and job characteristics, in current scholarship on the professional behaviors and experiences of PT faculty (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011; Benjamin, 2002; CCSSE, 2009; Umbach, 2007, 2008; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005).

The application of Sennett’s work to scholarship on PT academic faculty will aid in a theoretical shift that highlights the context of contingent faculty experiences through the identification of the values of narrative, usefulness, and craftsmanship—a new cultural anchor. Future research can examine community college PT faculty in other states (as this investigation focused on California) to determine whether the legal and structural framework of employment and work in community colleges in those states affects the
occupational identity of PT faculty. The frameworks used in this investigation and the research methodology are suited for examination on PT faculty nationally. Research on the population in other states will indicate whether the findings from this investigation are generalizable nationally.

Culture and identity theories framed the explanations of PT faculty professional behaviors and experiences from the perspective of the PT faculty. These explanations provided a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) of the lived experiences and meanings that directed professional identity formation within an occupationally defined figured world of work. This investigation revealed that the centrality of the institution to the development of a professional identity is lessened by the salience of the employment stressors that characterize the contingent employment relationship. Additional investigations that utilize culture and identity theories can contribute to the identification and explanation of concepts and locations central to identity formation beyond the figured world of the institution. Future investigations on the location of alternate figured worlds for the formation of a professional identity can add to the scholarly discourse on the professional behaviors of PT faculty. These could show that the academic value of PT faculty is not necessarily based on the assumption that the institution and the values of the institution (e.g., fiscal efficiency and productivity) are the sole concepts used to ascribe value to PT faculty work.

Practice

Practices in community college over the past two decades have relied almost solely on a functionalist perspective of fitting PT faculty into the faculty mainstream,
without cognizance of their cultural identity. In line with Holland et al. (1998), this investigation has demonstrated through the self-authorship of PT faculty that this population has both different experiences in and understandings of their work than typical FTTT community college faculty. They experience the community college in ways that were not well expressed in earlier examinations of contingent faculty in community colleges. For example, they are not authoring an identity that is dependent on the institution, or their I-identity (Gee, 2000).

This observation from the findings of this investigation in California suggests that institutional practices aimed at PT community college faculty require radical change. Such practices should cover not only compensation alterations, which are amply documented in the scholarly literature, but also managerial changes, which include the treatment of PT as a legitimate professional class. Furthermore, direction as to these changes could come from local, statewide, or national levels, as practices vary by college, and many PT faculty work at multiple colleges. In California, specifically, there is a need for systemic directives, as current institutional practices are incoherent for both PT faculty and FTTT faculty and administrators. Current regulations that direct community college practice are not enforced appropriately at the individual college due to a lack of knowledge of these regulations by institutional members. Managerial changes and the consistent adherence to current regulations could be directed by the faculty union. A finding of this investigation is that union support, while not consistent, is directed to enforceable areas of the contract. Managerial practices related to the treatment of PT
faculty as a legitimate professional class could be negotiated and explained as part of the
purview of the faculty unions.

**Contributions**

This research advances knowledge of the general topic of contingent faculty in
higher education the United States. This investigation relies on the theories of social
practice (e.g., culture and identity theory) to explain the behaviors and experiences of
social actors from their perspectives, particularly for PT community college faculty. The
work lives of contingent faculty members in community colleges have consequences for
the shaping of the work lives of all faculty, including FTTT faculty. The trend has been to
discount the academic value of contingent faculty in favor of their economic value, which
also parallels the trend in views of FTTT faculty, who are valued for their measurable
contributions to the community college (Levin, 2007, 2018; Wagoner, Levin, & Kater,
2013). Attention to the economic value of faculty shapes the research questions and
theories used to explain phenomena. Such a focus ignores the valuable actions of PT
faculty and their contributions to their institution that, cumulatively, represent their
academic value. Scholars have acknowledged that PT faculty are valued for their
economic value but have failed to explain the academic value of PT faculty.

This investigation identified that participation in an educator affinity group is not
based on characteristics of the individual (such as part-time faculty status) or by
institutional type, or geographical region, and, thus, an educator affinity group as the site
of collective power for higher education advocates is open to anyone with a conviction to
improve the learning conditions of students in higher education. Stakeholders such as
full-time faculty, administrators, and students can work together jointly through participation in the activities of members of an educator affinity group (such as raising awareness of working conditions, sharing strategies used to negotiate working conditions, creating online platforms to increase collegial interactions, and participating in the scholarship of teaching and learning [Boyer, 1996]) to address the working conditions of contingent faculty, which represent the learning conditions of students. Such an educator affinity group identifies a location for collective awareness and action. The working conditions of PT faculty direct managerial practices that shape FTTT working conditions. Thus, FTTT faculty members have personal interest as well as the duty to engage in collective action to improve the learning conditions of students by addressing the conditions of work for all educational faculty members in higher education.

This investigation remedies numerous oversights and provides both voice and value to PT community college faculty. In so doing, this investigation honors the major body of teachers or instructors (only 17% of community college faculty are tenured or tenure track [Hurlburt & McGarrah, 2016a]) who educate and train a largely disadvantaged student population. They work without suitable acknowledgement of their worth and without fair compensation. PT faculty are not passive objects of management who have negative effects on student learning outcomes and the academic profession. Indeed, as the teaching corps (Wagoner et al., 2011) and core of the community college, they enrich both the institution and the students.
REFERENCES


Lumina Foundation. (2009). *Four steps to finishing first: An agenda for increasing college productivity to create a better-educated society*. Indianapolis, Ind.: Lumina Foundation.


Turner, A. N., & Lawrence, P. R. (1965). *Industrial jobs and the worker: An investigation of response to task attributes*. Boston, MA: Harvard University, Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration.


APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Personal and Professional Background:

1. Tell me about yourself and your academic background.
2. Tell me about your employment background and your professional aspirations.

Professional Interactions on Campus:

3. Describe a typical day on campus.
4. What places on campus do you go to?
5. What do your students know about adjuncts?
6. Do you discuss this issue with students?
7. Tell me about your interaction with other adjuncts or faculty on campus.
8. Tell me about your interactions with the full-time faculty and department chair and deans.
9. What types of professional development activities do you have access to?

Professional Interactions off Campus

10. Could you identify spaces where you can interact with other adjunct faculty off campus?
11. Tell me about the professional associations you identified on the questionnaire.
12. Tell me about Regional PTA/union activities and your participation.

Basic Concluding the Interview

13. Is there anything else you would like to add? Did I miss something about your work, work experiences, and profession that you could explain to me?
14. Thank you for your help. These are some of the key points I have gained from you. Tell me if I have this right.
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Responses from this questionnaire will be used in the planning of the study. The results may be used in the final narrative of the study as descriptive summaries. Your name will not be associated with your responses in the final narrative and identifying information, such as subject area or institutional affiliation, will be changed. Your responses are voluntary and strictly confidential.

1. What is your gender and race or ethnic identification? ____________
2. What year were you born? ____________
3. Please list your postsecondary and graduate degrees, and educational training. ______
4. What subject(s) do you teach? ______
5. How many years have you worked as an adjunct faculty member at community colleges? ______
6. If possible, would you like to have a full-time teaching position? ______
7. Have you retired from another position? ____________
8. What professional associations are you a member of? ____________
9. What union(s) are you a member of? ____________
10. How many institutions of higher education do you teach for, and how many classes do you teach at each institution? ______ (Please list)
11. What is your basic salary per semester (or quarter) for each institution where you teach?
12. Do you view the community college(s) where you work as your primary employer(s)?
13. Do you have employment outside of your academic work? ______
14. Is your academic income the main source your income? ______

Thank you!

Please return this form via e-mail to lpast001@ucr.edu
APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM: QUESTIONNAIRE

We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire will determine your eligibility to continue in the study of which you will be notified of via email.

This study is being conducted by a student, Leticia Pastrana, under the supervision of faculty member, Professor John Levin, of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Riverside.

What is the purpose of this research and my participation in this project?

The investigator would like you to participate in a research study on adjunct community college faculty in order to understand and explain the personal and professional experiences of adjunct community college faculty. This study will add to research on adjunct faculty from the perspective of adjunct faculty members. The investigator will interview approximately 30 adjunct faculty members for the study.

What will happen during this research?

First you will be asked to respond to a questionnaire. If you meet the eligibility requirements, you will be asked to participate in an individual interview. Eligibility requirements include that you are employed by a San Diego area community college, teach a subject in the academic areas of humanities, social sciences, and sciences, and are an active member in a professional organization. The interview will take between 60 to 90 minutes. You will be asked a series of questions about your professional experience as faculty at community colleges, your work history, your sources of income, and your interactions with students and other faculty as well as your participation in professional associations. You may also be asked to participate in a group interview lasting from 1 to 2 hours. The areas explored during the interviews, both individual and group, include: 1) your institutional interactions with students, faculty, and other institutional agents, and 2) professional associations and unions that you are involved with through meetings and other forms of participation.

Will I get money or payment for being in this research study?

While there is no compensation for completion of the questionnaire, you are entitled to compensation in the form of $60 per session for individual and group interviews, if you so choose. All compensation received may be kept in the event that you withdraw from the study. There will not be any reimbursement for travel or transportation.
Are there any bad things that might happen during the research study?

As the investigators will be collecting identifying information, such as your name and locations of work, there is a potential risk for breach of confidentiality. However, data will be kept in a password protected computer accessible to only the investigators of the study. In addition, all identifying information, such as names, will be changed to pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of participants. During the interview, you can skip a question or choose not to answer a question at any time. You can also withdraw your participation at any time.

For group interviews, the investigators can offer only limited confidentiality as other participants in the group interviews will be aware of what other participants say and may share that with others. The investigators do ask participants of the group interviews to respect the privacy of others by not sharing what is said in the group interviews.

How will the questionnaires be kept?

With your consent, the questionnaire will be kept in an electronic form.

How much time will I spend on research activities?

Your participation on the questionnaire portion is expected to last between 5-10 minutes. Your participation in the individual interview will take between 60 to 90 minutes. You may be asked to participate in a group interview which will take no more than 2 hours.

Are there any good things that might happen during the research study?

The benefits reasonably expected from this study are the ability to ask for a report of the study’s findings (which will not have any identifiable individual information). I cannot and do not guarantee that you will receive any additional benefits from this study.

What if I decide to I don't want to continue participating in the study?

Your participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or terminate participation at any time. You also have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you choose to withdraw from the study, please communicate with the researcher immediately. You may also choose not to participate in group interviews if asked. There will be no negative consequences as a result of your decision to withdraw. If you choose to stop participating completely, the researcher will keep any data received from you, including audio-recordings, unless you ask in writing for the data to be destroyed.

How will my confidentiality be kept?

Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. The participant names themselves are not utilized and will also be eliminated from the questionnaire if they were included. All research records, including audio-recordings, transcriptions, researcher notes, and documents will be stored in a locked cabinet and password protected computer. The principal investigator and faculty advisor will be the only people who will have access to this study’s records to protect your safety and welfare. On occasion, a
representative of the Office of Research Integrity may review records for quality assurance and to assure adherence to relevant laws and guidelines. Any and all information accessed by the Office of Research Integrity will be held to the same level of confidentiality as described in this section.

**Who can I contact if I have questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, its procedures, risks, and benefits, contact the Principal Investigator, Leticia Pastrana at past001@ucr.edu or (951) 609-5109. You can also contact the faculty advisor, John Levin at john.levin@ucr.edu or (951) 827-5984.

If you have any questions about your rights or complaints as a research subject, please contact the IRB Chairperson at (951) 827-4802 during business hours, or to contact them by email at irb@ucr.edu.

**Please check one of the following:**

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older.

Please check. ______Yes   ______No

I give consent to complete a questionnaire to determine my eligibility to participate in the study.

Please check. ______Yes   ______No

I understand that in the event that I withdraw from the study, any data received by me, including the questionnaire, will be kept unless I request in writing for it to be destroyed.

Please check. ______Yes   ______No

**Voluntary Participation Statement**

I understand that participation in the study is voluntary. I may refuse to answer any question or discontinue my involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I might otherwise be entitled. *My electronic signature below indicates that I have read the information in this consent form and I consent to participate. Electronic signatures can be created by uploading an image, using a cursor to draw a signature, or using your keyboard to type your signature.*

________________________________________________________________________
Participant’s Signature                                           Date

________________________________________________________________________
Participant’s Name
APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM: INTERVIEWS

We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by a student, Leticia Pastrana, under the supervision of faculty member, Professor John Levin, of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Riverside.

What is the purpose of this research and my participation in this project?

The investigator would like you to participate in a research study on adjunct community college faculty in order to understand and explain the personal and professional experiences of adjunct community college faculty. This study will add to research on adjunct faculty from the perspective of adjunct faculty members. The investigator will interview approximately 30 adjunct faculty members for the study.

What will happen during this research?

After submitting the questionnaire, you will be asked to participate in an interview. The interview will take between 60 to 90 minutes. You will be asked a series of questions about your professional experience as faculty at community colleges, your work history, your sources of income, and your interactions with students and other faculty as well as your participation in professional associations.

You may also be asked to participate in a group interview lasting from 1 to 2 hours. The areas explored during the interviews, both individual and group, include: 1) your institutional interactions with students, faculty, and other institutional agents, and 2) professional associations and unions that you are involved with through meetings and other forms of participation.

Will I get money or payment for being in this research study?

You are entitled to compensation in the form of $60 per interview session, if you so choose. All compensation received may be kept in the event that you withdraw from the study. There will not be any reimbursement for travel or transportation.

Are there any bad things that might happen during the research study?

As the investigators will be collecting identifying information, such as your name and locations of work, there is a potential risk for breach of confidentiality. However, data will be kept in a password protected computer accessible to only the investigators of the study. In addition, all identifying information, such as names, will be changed to pseudonyms to protect the
confidentiality of participants. During the interview, you can skip a question or choose not to answer a question at any time. You can also withdraw your participation at any time.

For group interviews, the investigators can offer only limited confidentiality as other participants in the group interviews will be aware of what other participants say and may share that with others. The investigators do ask participants of the group interviews to respect the privacy of others by not sharing what is said in the group interviews.

**How will the interviews be kept?**

With your consent, individual and group interviews will be audio recorded, digitized, and transcribed by the investigator or a professional transcriber. If you decline to be audio recorded, you may not participate in the study.

**How much time will I spend on research activities?**

Your participation in the individual interview will take between 60 to 90 minutes. You may be asked to participate in a group interview which will take no more than 2 hours.

**Are there any good things that might happen during the research study?**

The benefits reasonably expected from this study are the ability to ask for a report of the study’s findings (which will not have any identifiable individual information). I cannot and do not guarantee that you will receive any additional benefits from this study.

**What if I decide to I don’t want to continue participating in the study?**

Your participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or terminate participation at any time. You also have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you choose to withdraw from the study, please communicate with the researcher immediately. You may also choose not to participate in group interviews if asked. There will be no negative consequences as a result of your decision to withdraw. If you choose to stop participating completely, the researcher will keep any data received from you, including audio-recordings, unless you ask in writing for the data to be destroyed.

**How will my confidentiality be kept?**

Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. The participant names themselves are not utilized and will also be eliminated from transcribed audio-recordings. In the case of individuals who share scenarios with others by name, the name of the individual will be removed and a pseudonym will be used. All research records, including audio-recordings, transcriptions, researcher notes, and documents will be stored in a locked cabinet and password protected computer. The principal investigator and faculty advisor will be the only people who will have access to this study’s records to protect your safety and welfare. A professional transcriber may have access to the audio-recording for transcription purposes and will agree to protect your confidentiality. On occasion, a representative of the Office of Research Integrity may review records for quality assurance and
to assure adherence to relevant laws and guidelines. Any and all information accessed by the Office of Research Integrity will be held to the same level of confidentiality as described in this section.

**Who can I contact if I have questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, its procedures, risks, and benefits, contact the Principal Investigator, Leticia Pastrana at lpast001@ucr.edu or (951) 609-5109. You can also contact the faculty advisor, John Levin at john.levin@ucr.edu or (951) 827-5984.

If you have any questions about your rights or complaints as a research subject, please contact the IRB Chairperson at (951) 827-4802 during business hours, or to contact them by email at irb@ucr.edu.

**Please check one of the following:**

I confirm that I am 18 years old or older.
Please initial. _____Yes _____No

I give consent to be audio recorded during this interview.
Please initial. _____Yes _____No

I give consent for recordings resulting from this study to be analyzed by the researcher for the finalized study which will not identify any individuals.
Please initial. _____Yes _____No

I give consent to be participate in a group interview.
Please initial. _____Yes _____No

I give consent for the group interview to be audio-recorded.
Please initial. _____Yes _____No

*I confirm that I will respect the privacy of others by not sharing what is said in the group interviews.*

Please initial. _____Yes _____No

I understand that in the event that I withdraw from the study, any data received by me, including the questionnaire and audio interview, will be kept unless I request in writing for it to be destroyed.
Please initial. _____Yes _____No
Voluntary Participation Statement

I understand that participation in the study is voluntary. I may refuse to answer any question or discontinue my involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I might otherwise be entitled. My signature below indicates that I have read the information in this consent form and I consent to participate.

___________________________________  __________________
Participant’s Signature                  Date

___________________________________
Participant’s Name

___________________________________  __________________
Signature of person obtaining consent    Date

___________________________________
Name of person obtaining consent

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