

To: The NYSMATYC Membership

From: Sean Simpson, Westchester Community College

Re: 2009 – 2010 Curriculum Survey

Each year, the Curriculum Chair of NYSMATYC is charged with conducting a survey on a topic important to the mathematical education of two year college students. The 2009 – 2010 survey was designed to highlight the use of adjuncts in mathematics departments across the state.

The survey was distributed to the NYSMATYC campus representatives at 51 two-year college campuses in New York State. The campus representatives were asked to either take the survey themselves, or pass on the survey to a member of the department with extensive knowledge about the adjunct instructors at their school. The survey responses from 26 of the campuses were linked on a web-based survey through a (nonpublic) link on the NYSMATYC website. The 51% response rate was a result of four e-mails being sent to the campus representatives over a 10 week period. Due to the nature of the questions asked, this lower response rate than usual is not surprising.

I would like to thank Ken Mead publicly for his assistance in creating the webpage for the survey and the file for keeping track of all the information as it came in. His work made the collection of the data a much easier task for me.

The Report

An exact count of the number of adjuncts and full time faculty at each school will not be included in this report because these counts are always in flux (especially the adjunct count). However, a general ratio can be computed, as summarized in the following table.

Summary of Number of Adjuncts versus Number of Full Timers in Department

More Full Time than Adjunct	3 schools
1:1 ratio	1 school
Less than a 2:1 ratio	6 schools
Less than a 3:1 ratio	10 schools
Less than a 4:1 ratio	2 schools
More than 4:1 ratio	4 schools

It is worth noting that of the schools with the highest proportion of adjuncts, 3 of them are located in metropolitan New York (Rockland, Westchester and Suffolk). Additionally, the three schools with more full timers than adjuncts would not be classified as traditional county-sponsored community colleges (Morrisville, Delhi, and Paul Smiths). Location seemed to play a role in the ratio; the more urban the environment, the higher the proportion of adjuncts (generally). When we look at the corresponding ratio for the entire school, we have the following table.

Summary of Number of Adjuncts versus Number of Full Timers in School

More Full Time than Adjunct	3 schools
Less than a 2:1 ratio	11 schools
Less than a 3:1 ratio	4 schools
Less than a 4:1 ratio	3 schools
More than 4:1 ratio	1 schools

Not every response included information about the number of adjuncts and full time faculty members for the school at large. It is worthy to note that of the 21 responses, 11 schools have a worse ratio of adjuncts to full timers inside the department, 8 schools have a worse ratio of adjuncts to full timers outside of the department and 2 schools have very similar ratio of adjuncts to full timers inside and outside of the department.

Some schools also have additional instructors that are not necessarily full-time, but also not considered adjunct. For instance, 4 schools report having some part-time instructors that we distinct from adjuncts. One school reported having many instructors and lecturers, which are full-time, but not in the same category as a “typical” professor. Two schools reported that professional tutors provide some course instruction; these teachers have other duties involving tutoring centers on campus. One school reported that members of the math learning center (separate from tutors) were teaching for the math department. Perhaps most worrisome, one school reported that they have two “full time adjunct” faculty members.

Typically, office space is provided for the adjuncts – 22 of 26 schools that responded said that they do provide office space. However, the office space provided is not always the best. Fourteen schools said

that there is one office to be shared among all adjuncts; this might be fine if there the number of adjuncts is small. When the number of adjuncts is substantial, having only one office is problematic. Four schools said that there are multiple offices shared by the adjuncts; 2 schools said that the adjuncts share offices with full time faculty and school reported that the adjuncts share an office, but it could be with other adjuncts, or it could be with full time faculty.

Office hour requirements were split. Thirteen schools reported that office hours are required while 13 schools reported that office hours are not required. Of the schools that do require office hours, 6 schools said that adjuncts have one office hour per course. Two schools reported that adjuncts have 1 office hour be week, 2 other schools reported that adjuncts have 1 – 2 office hours per week, and one school reported that adjuncts have 1 – 3 office hours per week. One school (not included earlier) reported that adjuncts have to hold one office hour per week if they are teaching 6 or more credits. Finally, one school said that their adjuncts have 3 – 4 office hours per week, by far the largest figure reported.

Many schools reported that their adjuncts have the opportunity to belong to a union. Fourteen schools said that their adjuncts are in the same union as the full time faculty while 2 schools reported that their adjuncts are in a union, but different from the full time faculty. Ten schools reported that their adjuncts do not belong to a union.

For the most part, compensation is driven by credit hour – 22 schools report that their adjuncts are paid by the credit hour. One school reported paying their adjuncts per course, and one school reported paying their adjunct by the course and based on their degree. Two schools report paying their adjuncts per contact hour (which could potentially vary within a course, depending on the schools calendar).

While compensation is driven by credit hour, 20 schools report that their adjuncts are eligible for pay increases (6 schools report that their adjuncts are not eligible). For the most part, pay increases are tied to longevity at the school: 13 schools report this. Two schools report that longevity and instructor degree are used for pay increases, while one school reported that an annual review is used to determine pay increases. Most interesting to the writer of the report is one school reporting a certification program (that all adjuncts can participate in) is used to determine eligibility for pay increases.

Even though pay increases are common, promotions are not common among the schools reporting. Only 8 schools report adjuncts being eligible for promotions; 17 schools report that adjuncts are not eligible for promotions. Seniority does play a role in class assignments at most schools: only 7 schools report seniority playing no role in class assignments while 19 schools report seniority having a role. Seniority seems to be defined as “time at institution” (15 schools), although 2 schools report “experience” as being the type of seniority considered in class assignments.

Measuring benefits is a tricky issue. Eight schools report that adjuncts are not given access to benefits of any sort, while 18 report that (at least some) adjuncts have access to benefits of some kind. Of the schools that do offer benefits to adjuncts, 10 offer medical benefits to adjuncts, 7 offer dental benefits (all of these schools also offered medical benefits), 13 offered professional development benefits and 11 offer retirement benefits. However, it is not clear if this gives adjuncts access to benefits, or is an additional “compensation” in some way.

Generally speaking, the hiring of adjuncts and oversight of adjuncts lies primarily with department chairs. Sixteen schools reported that the department chair is responsible for hiring adjuncts, and 17

schools reported that the department chair is responsible for adjunct oversight. The division chair is responsible for hiring adjuncts and adjunct oversight at one school; the dean has these same responsibilities at 2 schools and the math program facilitator has these responsibilities at one school. The department chair in conjunction with the Academic Vice President is responsible for hiring adjuncts at one school. The adjunct coordinator is responsible for hiring adjuncts at 4 schools, and is responsible for adjunct oversight at 5 schools. A search committee is responsible for hiring adjuncts at one school, and a reappointment committee is responsible for adjunct oversight at one school.

The idea of adjuncts participating in committee work is split among the NYSMATYC member schools; 14 report that committee work is encouraged among the adjuncts, while 10 schools report that committee work is not allowed. Department meetings are a different story: 20 schools report encouraging adjuncts to attend department meetings, while 4 schools report that adjuncts are not allowed to attend department meetings. Additionally, one school reports that adjuncts are required to attend department meetings.

The maximum teaching load for adjuncts during a fall/spring semester varies greatly among the NYSMATYC member schools. One school reports a maximum of 24 credits among fall and spring combined; one school reports a maximum of 22 credits and one school reports a maximum of 20 credits. Meanwhile, 5 schools report a maximum of 12 credits per semester, one school reports a maximum of 11.9 credits per semester, and one school reports a maximum of 11.5 credits per semester. Two schools report a maximum of 9 credits per semester, and 3 schools report a maximum of 8 credits per semester. Other schools have a maximum based on number of courses: one school has a maximum of 2 courses per semester, 3 schools have a maximum of three courses per semester, and one school has a maximum of 5 courses per year.

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