

## THE OUTSOURCING OF FACULTY WORK IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

Higher Education enters the 21<sup>st</sup> century torn between two worlds. On one hand, institutions of higher learning cling to the old Ivory Tower – we do things differently here – mentality, while their external constituencies cry out for greater accountability with respect to productivity and costs. The entities promoting this closer focus on the bottom line advocate that universities utilize a more business-like model. One major outgrowth of this paradigm shift has been the seemingly recent emergence of outsourcing in higher education.

While outsourcing is a widely accepted means to increase opportunity at lower costs in the business world, higher education has seemingly been slow to adopt this strategy. Or has it?

The recent debate on whether outsourcing should be a routine part of how higher education operates seems to have overlooked the fact that higher education has been outsourcing classroom instruction for many years. In fact, recent statistics on the utilization of part-time faculty suggest that almost half of all instruction is done by employees contracted from outside of the higher education institution's regular full-time faculty.

So, is this form of outsourcing working in higher education? Are institutions of higher learning getting greater service and more flexibility for lower costs? Or, as suggested by much of the literature on part-time faculty, is the growing use of part-time faculty placing higher education on the road to ruin.

This paper analyzes the use of part-time faculty within the context of evaluating the

success of an outsourcing relationship. How does the use of part-time faculty fair within an assessment model used by businesses that are designed to evaluate outside contractors? Under what circumstances do these partnerships succeed or fail? How is higher education fairing under a more business-like model of assessment?