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*Old Dominion University*

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ADJUNCT FACULTY ORGANIZATIONAL SENSE OF BELONGING

AND AFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

by

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BS June 1997, SUNY Empire State College

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Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of  
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirement for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

May 2010

Approved by:

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Alan M. Schwitzer (Director)

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Marv H. Duggan (Member)

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **ADJUNCT FACULTY ORGANIZATIONAL BELONGING AND AFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT**

Constance L. Merriman  
Old Dominion University 2010  
Director: Dr. Alan M. Schwitzer

In recent years all public higher education institutions have increased their reliance on adjunct faculty. Adjuncts provide expertise in key areas, are available at times that meet the needs of the changing student demographic, and cover an increasing number of introductory courses. It has been suggested that adjunct faculty may be more weakly linked to their students, colleagues, and institution. This may, in turn, be detrimental to the organizational health of the institution. Prior research has indicated that adjunct faculty have different motivations and expectations from teaching that impact the connections they form in the higher education workplace. This study examined sense of belonging and organizational commitment among adjunct faculty at a public research university. The study also investigated the distribution of adjunct faculty types at the institution.

The study was conducted using an online Survey of Workplace Relationships and included 292 adjunct and fulltime faculty participants. Self-report measures were used to gain demographic information and employment characteristics, and to place adjunct faculty in a pre-established typology. Individual subscales were used to obtain measures of Organizational Sense of Belonging (OSB) and Affective Organizational Commitment (AOC). A variety of methods were used to analyze the data, including descriptive analyses, ANCOVA, and Pearson Correlation.

Results indicated that, at the institution being studied, adjunct faculty had a slightly weaker OSB than full-time faculty; and that development of OSB varies among the different types of adjunct faculty. Results indicated a statistically significant linear relationship between OSB and AOC. Further research is needed to clarify factors that contribute to the development of OSB in a higher education setting. Further research is also needed to determine causality in the OSB-AOC relationship.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Don. You embraced my dream; and your belief in my ability to achieve that dream never wavered. For always knowing exactly the right thing to do or say, for being there whenever I needed someone to just listen, for your pride and confidence in me – THANK YOU; I could not have accomplished this without you.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

For more than three decades, researchers have been voicing their concerns about the roles of adjunct faculty in higher education. Over that time, the social and demographic environments surrounding the reliance on adjunct faculty seem to have changed very little (American Association of University Professors [AAUP], 2006; American Federation of Teachers [AFT], 2009; Anderson, 2002; Curtis & Jacobe, 2006; Leslie & Gappa, 2002; National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2006). In the preface to their 1982 investigation of part-time faculty in higher education, Leslie, Kellams, and Gunne described “the exigencies of an eroding financial base...the aging of the professoriate... an emerging professional generation...and the shifting popularity of academic fields” (v). Similarly, in their 1995 treatise on part-time faculty in American community colleges, Roueche, Roueche, and Milliron describe “increasing numbers of new and retiring faculty, increasing student diversity, expanding college missions” (vii). In a March 2009 personal interview, Leslie mused that he could just as easily have written his description of the environment surrounding the reliance on adjunct faculty “last week, as opposed to 27 years ago.”

Although community colleges have historically employed the largest proportion of adjunct faculty, all categories of public higher education institutions have increased their reliance on part-timers over the past two decades (AFT, 2009; NCES, 2006; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Schuster and Finkelstein found that between 1970 and 2001, the numbers of part-time faculty at all types of higher education institutions

increased at more than five times the rate of fulltime faculty. Between 1987 and 2003, percentages of adjunct faculty at public four-year comprehensive institutions increased from approximately 25% to nearly 40%, while percentages at doctoral-level institutions increased from about 15% to approximately 25% (AFT). According to NCES, of the approximately 834,000 faculty members employed at all public higher education institutions in fall 2005, nearly 50% were adjunct (part-time) and another 18% were fulltime non-tenure eligible faculty. In aggregate, these data indicated a public teaching corps in which two-thirds of faculty occupied contingent annual appointments.

### Definition of Adjunct Faculty

The extant literature references “part-time” faculty, “adjunct” faculty, and “contract” faculty. These terms frequently seem to be used interchangeably (Gappa, 2000; Lyons, 2007). Many researchers include adjunct faculty under the umbrella term “contingent” faculty. In 2006, Curtis and Jacobe identified two distinct categories of contingent faculty appointments. The categories were fulltime, fixed-term positions with no opportunity for tenure; and part-time appointments limited to a single academic term (although frequently renewed for subsequent terms), generally referred to as “adjuncts.” For purposes of this study, the generally accepted definition of “those individuals who are temporary, non-tenure track faculty employed less than fulltime” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 3) was used. This included those individuals appointed for the first time during the data-collection semester and those who have previously taught part-time at this institution. Doctoral students, including those with adjunct faculty status, were excluded from the study.

## Research Problem

Old Dominion University is a four-year public university with the Carnegie Classification of Doctoral Research University (high research activity) (NCES, 2009). Although community colleges have historically employed the largest proportion of adjunct faculty, all categories of public higher education institutions have increased their reliance on part-timers over the past two decades (AFT, 2009). Researchers and academicians have offered several reasons for the steady increases in adjunct faculty ratios at four-year research universities. The most frequently cited is the economic benefits realized by institutions in terms of decreased dollars spent on faculty salaries. At research institutions, an even more critical reason is the need to release tenured and tenure-track faculty from teaching responsibilities to support the escalating emphasis on research productivity (Gravois, 2006; Noble, 2000). Additionally, professional disciplines such as business, law, and medicine acknowledge the benefits of having established practitioners bring special expertise to the classroom (Bender & Hammons, 1972; Fagan-Wilen, Springer, Ambrosino, & White, 2006; Guthrie-Morse, 1979).

In July 2009, Old Dominion reported totals of 717 fulltime and 449 part-time faculty members at the fall 2008 official reporting date. This would indicate that approximately 38% of faculty members were considered part-time. However, data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IRA) specifically for this study (see Table 1 on page 5) indicates there were actually a total of 501 part-time faculty on record as actively teaching in fall 2008. Using the reported fulltime figure of 717, the approximate percentage of part-time faculty is 41%. One possible reason for the discrepancy could be miscoding of graduate teaching assistants as part-time faculty. The



University has six academic colleges: College of Arts and Letters, College of Business and Public Administration, Darden College of Education, Batten College of Engineering and Technology, College of Health Sciences, and College of Sciences. Each of these colleges employs adjunct faculty, although the number, type, and purpose may differ depending upon the needs of the college. All colleges also assign Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) to teach some undergraduate courses. For this study, the IRA Office provided faculty workload data based on the fall semester official reporting date for a period of three years. The report included every course taught and the assigned faculty member name and employment attribute (fulltime, part-time, or GTA). Table 1 provides a summary of the number of adjuncts teaching, the total course sections taught, and the percentage of course sections taught by adjuncts for each college in the fall semester of the three years included in the report. For this analysis, dissertation, thesis, internship, and practicum supervision were excluded from the totals. The data indicate that all colleges had more adjuncts teaching in 2008 than in 2006. Over the three-year period, four colleges experienced an increase in the percentage of course sections taught by adjuncts. In the College of Business and Public Administration this trend did not occur, however additional data provided by the report indicated a significant increase in the number of course sections taught by GTAs. The College of Health Sciences reversed the trend, experiencing a higher percentage of course sections taught by adjuncts in 2006, followed by a decrease in 2007. The high number in 2006 could be the result of greater than average vacant fulltime positions, research leaves, or extended sick leaves.

Table 1

*Number of Adjuncts, Total Course Sections and Percentage of Course Sections Taught by Adjuncts, by College - Fall 2006, 2007, 2008*

College	Reporting Period	Adjunct Faculty	Total Course Sections	% Taught by Adjuncts
Arts and Letters	Fall 2006	197	1041	45.1
	Fall 2007	228	1078	51.8
	Fall 2008	235	1184	50.1
Business and Public Administration	Fall 2006	38	329	18.0
	Fall 2007	49	315	22.5
	Fall 2008	42	321	17.2
Education	Fall 2006	117	431	39.7
	Fall 2007	133	463	39.3
	Fall 2008	136	487	40.7
Engineering and Technology	Fall 2006	20	228	10.1
	Fall 2007	24	238	12.6
	Fall 2008	26	231	13.9
Health Sciences	Fall 2006	34	156	33.3
	Fall 2007	29	159	26.4
	Fall 2008	36	158	29.1
Sciences	Fall 2006	14	394	7.6
	Fall 2007	26	390	12.3
	Fall 2008	26	421	13.3

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to investigate organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment among adjunct faculty at a four-year doctoral institution, including measuring mean differences in organizational sense of belonging between adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty, as well as mean differences in organizational sense of belonging among different types of adjunct faculty as defined by Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty. Consequently, the study examined the distribution of adjunct faculty among the four categories described in the typology. The study also investigated the correlation between organizational sense of belonging and the related construct of affective organizational commitment.

### Significance of the Study

The limited degree of change in the working conditions of adjunct faculty members over the past three decades has been described as "alarming and discouraging" (Leslie, 2009). In 1982, Leslie and others reported that the part-time faculty member "is a truly marginal member of the academic labor force" (p. 6). Further, these researchers questioned whether or not adjunct faculty could find equitable employment conditions that "could lead to more productive relations between part-time faculty and other members of the academic community?" (p. 8). In 1993, Gappa and Leslie conducted a comprehensive study of 18 higher education institutions, now considered some of the most widely-cited research in the field (Eney & Davidson, 2006; Garii & Peterson, 2006; Wallin, 2005). Although the authors indicated there was cause for hope, overall results of the study highlighted the existence of an invisible underclass in the academic workforce. "Part-timers have strong feelings about whether they are or are not 'connected' to or

‘integrated’ into campus life. For the most part, they feel alienated, invisible...” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 180). Subsequent literature has described adjunct faculty as “strangers in their own land, alienated from their teaching communities” (Roueche et al., 1995, p. 5); “faculty of convenience, without any real say in their working conditions and disconnected from the community of leaders” (Wallin, p. 7); and having “undefined commitments...and incompatible expectations” (Garii & Peterson, p. 218).

A common thread woven throughout the literature cited above is the concept of connection and integration, two key components in the psycho-social constructs of sense of belonging and commitment (Hoffman, Richmond, Morrow, & Salomone, 2002; Lee & Robbins, 1995; Steele, 1999; Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, Christ, & Tissington, 2005). Ouwerkerk, Ellemers, and de Gilder (1999) posited that social identification and affective commitment are two of the most important variables in explaining work-related attitudes and behaviors. In their analysis of five studies attempting to measure correlation between identification, pay satisfaction, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, Van Dick and others (2005) found that organizational identification (belongingness) was a much more significant predictor of job satisfaction than pay satisfaction. Sense of belonging has been identified as one precursor to cohesion, defined as the tendency for members of an organization to remain united in the pursuit of the organization’s goals and objectives (Carron, 1982). Research suggests that as the perceived cohesion of the individual organization members increases, the organization will begin to exhibit a unity of purpose (Bolen & Hoyle, 1990). Van Dick (2001) posited that an individual employee who self-identifies in terms of membership in an organizational group is more likely to have work-related attitudes that are governed by the group membership. Benefits for the

organization include lower absentee rates and more employee commitment to organizational goals. For the individual employee, stronger organizational identification should result in higher motivation, and higher levels of physical and emotional well-being (Van Dick, 2001)

Increasing dependence upon adjunct faculty combined with a perceived lack of institutional attention to the needs of those faculty members have resulted in stern warnings from researchers. Alfred (2003) argued that colleges and universities place substantial trust in adjunct faculty by allowing those faculty members to be the primary point of contact with the institution, yet these same institutions traditionally offer inadequate responses to the tangible and intangible needs of their adjuncts. Grasgreen (2008) contended that, despite their heavy reliance on adjuncts, institutions are not as concerned with the emotional well-being of adjuncts as they are with fulltime faculty.

The findings of these and other studies (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Gappa & Leslie, 1997; Lyons, 2007; Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1995) provide specific justification for an investigation of the construct of organizational sense of belonging among adjunct and fulltime faculty. It is also “widely argued that the part-time professoriate has at once grown explosively and continues to represent a wide diversity of motivations, commitments, and qualifications” (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006, p. 411). Gappa & Leslie’s (1993) research suggests that the diversity of motivation and commitment can be explained, in part, by adjunct faculty “type.” This would indicate the need to investigate the distribution of adjunct faculty types at the institution under study, as well as examine the construct of organizational sense of belonging among those adjunct faculty types. The work of psycho-social researchers suggests that certain forms of organizational

commitment result in organizational unity of purpose (Bolen & Hoyle, 1990), positive work-related behaviors (Ouwerkerk et. al, 1999), and improved internalization of organizational goals and objectives (Van Dick, 2001). These studies provide justification for an examination of the correlation between organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment.

### Research Questions

The study posed five research questions about adjunct faculty at Old Dominion University (ODU) and their organizational sense of belonging (OSB) and affective organizational commitment (AOC). The first question focused on the distribution of adjunct faculty among the categories delineated in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty. The second question examined the mean difference in OSB between adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty and the third focused on the mean difference in OSB among the different types of adjunct faculty. The fourth and fifth questions focused on the correlation between OSB and AOC for adjunct faculty and for fulltime faculty.

1. At this institution, what is the distribution of adjunct faculty among the categories delineated in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty?
2. At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB between fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?
3. At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB between adjunct faculty types, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?

4. Is there a statistically significant linear relationship between OSB and AOC among adjunct faculty at this institution?
5. Is there a statistically significant linear relationship between OSB and AOC among fulltime faculty at this institution?

### Method

Two types of data were collected to investigate adjunct faculty types, investigate the relationships between faculty status and development of OSB, and evaluate the linear relationship between OSB and AOC: self-reported data and numerical scores from two attitude measurement scales. Data were collected using a three-part web-based Survey of Workplace Relationships (SWR). Self-reported data were used to establish the employment status of all participants (fulltime or adjunct) and to determine the adjunct type (according to Gappa and Leslie's 1993 typology). The other two parts of the SWR were psycho-social construct measurement scales to calculate an OSB Score and an AOC Score for each participant. These scores were used to evaluate differences in OSB by faculty employment status and by adjunct faculty type. The scores were also used to examine the linear relationship between OSB and AOC. The study's variables with corresponding measures are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

*Variables with Corresponding Measures*

Variable	Measure
Faculty employment status	Self-report Questionnaire of the SWR
Adjunct faculty type	Self-report Questionnaire of the SWR
OSB Score	OSB Subscale of SWR
AOC Score	AOC Subscale of SWR

## Limitations

One potential limitation of the study was response (self-selection) bias, especially in terms of refusals. In survey research, the randomness of the obtained sample, or actual respondents, is reduced by subject loss. Subject loss can result from the inability to contact all members of a targeted sample or from the inability to gain participation from potential respondents who were requested to participate (Braver & Bay, 1992). The study used an online survey and invitations to participate in the survey were emailed to university e-mail addresses. In some cases, rules applied to individual e-mail accounts resulted in non-delivery of the e-mail message. Response bias may also exist if those who choose to respond to the survey are disproportionately concentrated among certain values (Braver & Bay). For this study, it could be argued that faculty members with a strong sense of organizational belonging or organizational commitment were more likely to respond favorably to a survey request. Generalizability was also weakened because the study was limited to a single institution.

Other limitations also existed. The economic climate in the year of the study and in the two years immediately preceding the study could have influenced responses to



some survey items, particularly for fulltime faculty. Fulltime faculty at ODU have received no annual pay increase for two years and no raise is expected this year. Budget constraints have placed limitations on spending for conference travel, supplies, and printing/copying. Losses in retirement accounts may have caused some faculty to continue working beyond their desired retirement date. In the two years prior to the study, the University experienced a change in leadership at two top positions, Provost and President. The uncertainties created by these changes could be reflected in survey responses.

### Summary

In recent years, faced with increasing student populations and decreasing financial resources, all public higher education institutions have increased their reliance on adjunct faculty (AFT, 2009; NCES, 2006; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Adjuncts provide expertise in key areas, are available at times that meet the needs of the changing student demographic, and cover an increasing number of introductory, or gatekeeper, courses (Heathcott, 2005; Jaeger & Eagan, 2008; Lyons, 2007). Despite their critical role in higher education, adjunct faculty may be more weakly linked to their students, colleagues, and institution (Rifkin, 1998; Schuet, 2002). Such trends indicate a potential lack of personal relatedness or sense of belonging (Hoffman et al., 2002; Osterman, 2001). Sense of belonging is central to the overall psychological health of individuals, and increases the tendency for group members to embrace the organization's goals and objectives (Carron, 1982). The findings of this study will inform institutional decision-making regarding the need for programs that strive to integrate adjunct faculty into the

culture of the organization, thereby improving the potential for mutually-beneficial long-term relationships.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To lay the foundation for a comprehensive study of adjunct faculty organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment, several critical areas must be investigated. This review begins with an introduction to adjunct faculty in American colleges and universities, which includes (a) an historical background of “adjunct faculty” in American higher education; (b) a comprehensive definition of adjunct faculty; and (c) the work environment of adjunct faculty. A discussion of psycho-social health follows, including (a) the psycho-social construct “sense of belonging,” (b) organizational commitment, and (c) the complex inter-connectedness of organizational sense of belonging and organizational commitment viewed from the perspective of commitment to organizational mission, goals, and objectives. The chapter concludes with a drawing together of the literature as it relates specifically to the problems of this study.

#### Adjunct Faculty in American Colleges and Universities

##### *Brief History of Adjunct Faculty*

Throughout the body of higher education literature, the terms ‘adjunct,’ ‘part-time,’ and ‘contract’ faculty seem to be used interchangeably, with the generally accepted definition of “those individuals who are temporary, non-tenure track faculty employed less than fulltime” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 3). An analysis of existing literature related to the relationship between adjunct faculty and their institutions indicates three primary focus areas (a) financial considerations, including the economic benefits to institutions and the generally inequitable financial rewards provided to adjuncts (Murphy, 2002; Noble, 2000; Sonner, 2000); (b) impact on instructional quality (Klein, Weisman, &

Smith, 1996; Murphy; Sonner); and (c) the support and development of adjunct faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Thompson, 1995). Although the topical focus of the literature may be highly specific, it is evident that the areas are strongly interconnected (Fagan-Wilen et al, 2006). For example, where job security is linked to positive student teaching evaluations, adjuncts may decrease the rigor of their instruction or inflate grades (Sonner). Similarly, when faced with exigent financial circumstances, institutions may hire adjunct faculty with little advanced notice, limiting opportunities for developmental activities (Fagan-Wilen et al.).

Historical data indicate that the use of adjunct faculty is an increasingly prevalent practice in higher education. The majority of research in this area involves quantitative analyses, many of them longitudinal comparison studies tracking trends in ratios of adjunct to fulltime faculty (Anderson, 2002; AFT, 2009; Curtis & Jacobe, 2006; NCES, 2006). These studies show a steady increase in the number of adjunct faculty at both two-year and four-year institutions. Between 1982 and 2002, the number of adjunct faculty employed by colleges and universities increased by 79%, while hiring on the traditional tenure track experienced much slower growth (Anderson). According to NCES, of the approximately 834,000 faculty members employed at all public higher education institutions in fall 2005, nearly 50% were adjunct (part-time), and another 18% were fulltime non-tenure eligible faculty. In aggregate, these data indicated a public teaching corps in which two-thirds of faculty occupied contingent annual appointments. Curtis and Jacobe further identified rapid growth in two categories of what they describe as “contingent” faculty appointments. The categories were fulltime, fixed-term positions with no opportunity for tenure; and part-time appointments limited to a single academic

term (although frequently renewed for subsequent terms), generally referred to as “adjuncts.”

Although community colleges have historically employed the largest proportion of adjunct faculty, all categories of public higher education institutions have increased their reliance on part-timers over the past two decades (AFT, 2009). Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) found that between 1970 and 2001, the numbers of part-time faculty at all types of higher education institutions increased at more than five times the rate of fulltime faculty. Between 1987 and 2003, percentages of adjunct faculty at public four-year comprehensive institutions increased from approximately 25% to nearly 40%; while percentages at doctoral-level institutions increased from about 15% to approximately 25% (AFT). NCES (2006) reported that approximately 30% of faculty members employed at public four-year colleges in fall 2005 were classified as “part-time.” This may not seem significant when compared to the percentage of part-time faculty members at community colleges (69%). However, when one considers that fulltime faculty at 4-year institutions spend only about 60% of their time teaching students (Gravois, 2006); the educational impact of adjunct faculty becomes especially evident.

Several reasons have been offered for the perpetual increases in adjunct faculty ratios at four-year research universities. The most frequently cited is the economic benefits realized by institutions in terms of decreased dollars spent on faculty salaries (AFT, 2009). At research institutions, an even more critical reason is the need to release tenured and tenure-track faculty from teaching responsibilities to support the escalating emphasis on research productivity (Gravois, 2006; Noble, 2000). Additionally, professional disciplines such as business, law, and medicine acknowledge the benefits of

having established practitioners bring special expertise to the classroom (Bender & Hammons, 1972; Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006; Guthrie-Morse, 1979.).

Researchers seem to agree that reliance on adjunct faculty is unlikely to change in the near future. At times, economic slowdowns mean that universities eliminate non-tenure track positions to protect tenure-track faculty members. However, when those same institutions experience enrollment growth there is a need for more instructors. Frequently, the response is to replace tenure-track lines with adjunct faculty, who receive lower pay, no benefits, and no long-term employment commitments (Jaschik, 2008, August).

#### *Who Are “Adjunct Faculty”?*

The image of adjunct faculty in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as presented by popular media, perpetuates the conjecture that adjuncts are “a temporary lot who patch together part-time jobs by teaching at several institutions simultaneously and queue up for academic career opportunities that seem more and more scarce” (Leslie & Gappa, 2002, p. 59). Although this representation may be accurate for some adjuncts, it is largely incorrect for a significant percentage of them. Studies have shown that large segments of the adjunct faculty population are employed fulltime in professional positions, have taught at the same educational institution well beyond a single year, and are not interested in fulltime academic work (AAUP, 1993; Gappa & Leslie, 1997; Roueche et al, 1995). Further, these faculty members are “more motivated by the intrinsic satisfaction they find in teaching than by economic or career interests” (Gappa & Leslie, 1997, p. 60). These observations are supported by personal statements from adjuncts. One faculty member teaching at both a university and a technical community college in Tennessee taught a

total of 10 courses in 2007 and earned barely over \$15,000 (Jaschik, 2008, August). Yet, as stated in an interview with *Inside Higher Education*, this individual loves teaching so deeply she continues with the work, despite the fact that she could work fewer hours a week at Wal-Mart, earn more money, and also receive benefits (Jaschik, 2008, August).

Much of the research conducted to help “define” adjunct faculty has been typological in nature. Tuckman (1978), using data from a 1977 nationwide survey of about 4,000 part-time faculty, defined seven groups of adjuncts based upon career objectives and conditions. The categories were summarized as follows in Tuckman and Tuckman (1981) and in Gappa and Leslie (1993). The category to which the largest percentage of adjuncts (27.6%) in the sample were assigned was called “full mooners;” described as individuals who held another, primary, job of at least 35 hours per week. These faculty members were characterized as devoting a relatively small amount of time preparing lectures and participating in other teaching activities. They also strictly limited their teaching hours each semester. Another significant percentage of the sample (16.6%) were classified as “hopeful fulltimers;” individuals who desired fulltime academic positions, as well as those who were teaching sufficient part-time hours at two or more institutions to constitute fulltime employment. Other categories in Tuckman’s taxonomy included: “part-mooners,” those teaching part-time while simultaneously employed less than 35 hours per week outside of academia; “graduate students” teaching at institutions or in colleges other than the one in which they were pursuing their graduate degree; “homeworkers,” those who chose part-time positions in order to have time for home and child care; “semi-retired,” former fulltime faculty and retired professionals; and “part-unknowners,” those in the sample for whom the reasons for teaching part-time were

unknown or subjective. Although there were some objections to the labels assigned to the categories, Tuckman's research played an instrumental role in illuminating the complexity of the part-time academic work force.

In their 1993 seminal work *The Invisible Faculty*, one of the most widely-cited sources on the status of part-time faculty (Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006; Roueche et al., 1995), Gappa and Leslie reported their research on part-time faculty practices and policies at all levels of higher education. For their study, Gappa and Leslie re-evaluated Tuckman's (1978) taxonomy of adjunct faculty, collapsing the seven classifications into four broader categories. These categories acknowledge complex patterns of experience and motivation, as well as diverse levels of part-time faculty engagement. These range from involvement that is merely incidental to the individual's overall existence to an all-consuming engagement equal to that of many fulltime faculty members. Gappa and Leslie (1993) found that over half of all adjunct faculty members are employed fulltime outside of academe and can be best categorized as specialist, expert, or professional. They are often pursuing new contacts, either social or professional, and the opportunity to gain personal fulfillment through sharing their expertise. It is these individuals who bring current, real-world experiences into the classroom and are "living their disciplines daily by virtue of their fulltime jobs," (Bianco-Mathis & Chalofsky, 1996, Introduction). Adjunct faculty ranks at four-year doctoral institutions are largely comprised of individuals in this category (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Lyons, Kysilka, & Pawlas, 1999). Their percentages are lowest among the faculties at liberal arts colleges and highest at private, doctoral-granting institutions.



The remaining three categories described by Gappa and Leslie (1993) can be summarized as follows. “Career enders” include not only those who are already fully retired but also the rapidly growing number of those who have cut back on their fulltime work hours and are transitioning to a more balanced lifestyle. “Freelancers” include those who by choice combine two or more part-time jobs to satisfy their multiple needs, artists and others who leverage their association with the college or university, and those whose primary role is caregiver to children or other family members. Gappa and Leslie’s fourth category—aspiring academics—includes Tuckman’s “hopeful fulltimers,” as well as doctoral students who also teach. This category encompasses the “freeway fliers,” a group that is commonly the focus of media attention, gaining part-time employment concurrently at several institutions to patch together a fulltime wage (Murphy, 2002; Selingo, 2008; Wallin, 2004). While the ramifications of that situation might cause concern, researchers argue this is not the dominant part-time teaching profile at most institutions and therefore should not drive the strategies higher education administrators use to achieve effectiveness from adjunct faculties (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Lyons, 2007; Roueche et al., 1995).

One void in Gappa and Leslie’s study identified by some researchers is that the limited scope precluded an estimation of the relative proportion of each type of adjunct, and distributions to specific institutional types or academic fields and disciplines (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). In their investigation of changes in the composition of each category, one significant shift noted by Schuster and Finkelstein was in educational attainment. In both the 1976 and 1998 data, “hopeful fulltimers/aspiring academics” were the most likely of all groups to have earned a doctorate and to have published their

research. However, in 1976 the second group most likely to have a PhD was career-enders; by 1998 that group had been surpassed by the “specialists, experts, professionals.” A second trend identified by Schuster and Finklestein demonstrated a shift in adjunct faculty schedules from the majority teaching in continuing education divisions in 1976 to, in 1998, “the vast majority teaching within regular academic programs in the liberal arts and sciences and in the professions” (p. 411).

In terms of demographic characteristics, gender and ethnicity percentages for adjunct faculties generally mirror those of fulltime faculty (AFT, 2009; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). However, although the average age of both fulltime and adjunct faculty is not significantly different, adjunct faculty are more concentrated at both ends of the age range (NCES, 2006). Specifically, a larger proportion of adjunct faculty members fall into the under-35 or over-64 categories. This may indicate that part-time teaching provides an entrance into or exit from the profession, which correlates with Gappa and Leslie’s (1993) aspiring academics and semi-retireds. These data may also point to the role of adjunct teaching as a preliminary career or semi-retirement option for the specialists, experts, and professionals identified by Gappa and Leslie.

#### *Nature of Adjunct Faculty Employment*

As noted previously, discussions of the perceived troubling nature of adjunct faculty employment are not a contemporary phenomenon. Beginning in the late 1960s, manuscripts with titles such as “Adjunct faculty: Forgotten and neglected” (Bender & Hammons, 1972); “The utilization of part-time faculty at community colleges” (Guthrie-Morse, 1979); and “The use and abuse of part-time instructors” (Hoffman, 1980) began appearing in educational journals. In the early 1980s, researchers reacted to the growing

reliance on part-time faculty at community colleges with several studies on the effective use of part-time faculty (Beman, 1980; Eliason, 1980). Although based on a study of adjunct faculty at community colleges, Gappa and Leslie's *The Invisible Faculty* (1993) inspired conversations and controversy as all classifications of higher education institutions began to examine their own practices related to adjunct faculty (Anthony & Valdez, 2002; Burnstad & Gadberry, 2005). Subsequent studies, however, indicate that the hoped-for response of additional attention and resources did not materialize. In their 1995 study *Strangers in Their Own Land*, Roueche et al identified a community college adjunct workplace fraught with lack of resources, lack of inclusion, and lack of respect. A full 10 years after Gappa and Leslie's groundbreaking work, Alfred (2003) presented yet another warning regarding the working environment of adjunct faculty.

Adjunct faculty are the largest payroll group in our colleges by headcount and our reliance upon them is increasing. Yet, we pay them poorly, provide them with marginal support, and barely connect them to the institution. Office space and a computer are a luxury, as are most other basic amenities. We do not effectively orient part-timers to our core values, invest in their development, or evaluate their performance. For a group that is a primary point of contact with the institution for many students, how can we place so much trust in their work and provide such a shabby response to their needs? We are expecting a lot from people we are unwilling to invest in. (p. 20).

Working conditions of adjuncts vary from campus to campus; however, a November 2000 report of the Coalition of the Academic Workforce (CAW) found that adjuncts rarely have offices, are not compensated for office hours or course preparation

time, and have little access to computers or photocopying equipment. Adjunct faculty are frequently overworked, generally under-compensated, receive few fringe benefits, and, at most institutions, have no job security (AAUP Policy, 2006; CAW, 2000; Marshall, 2003). Frequently, institutions do not “devote the attention or concern to part-timers that they would to fulltime professors, despite the institutions’ heavy reliance on adjuncts” (Grasgreen, 2008). They are routinely portrayed as second-class citizens in the academic hierarchy (Gappa, 2000; Garii & Petersen, 2006; Marshall, 2003), marginalized and unappreciated (Jaschik, 2008, December), and working at the fringes of the academic community (Merriman, 2008). In 2008, several media outlets reported on comments from an educational administrator describing adjunct faculty as “highly-educated working poor” (Monaco, as quoted in Selingo, para. 3) and “suffering gross disparities in salaries and benefits, but doing an increasing share of the teaching” (Monaco, as quoted in Jaschik, 2008, October).

While the trend toward increasing dependence on adjunct faculty is widely recognized, there are distinctly different interpretations of the impact these faculty have on the students they teach and the institutions they serve. Research conducted in the community college setting has generated contradictory results. Some of these studies find relatively minor differences in instructional practices, teaching skills, and student results (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Roueche et al., 1995). Strom-Gottfried and Dunlap (2002) described adjuncts as “individuals who possess relevant, contemporary practical experience, bringing specialized knowledge and skills to the curriculum...and making them highly prized by students” (p. 3). Other studies indicate widely disparate student educational experiences, including inflated grades and higher overall GPAs, depending

upon the status of the instructor (Burgess & Samuels, 1998; Kezim, Pariseau, & Quinn, 2005; Moore & Trahan, 1998; Thompson, 1992; Sonner, 2000; Welsh-Huggins, 2001). All of these researchers surmised that adjunct faculty members were reluctant to give lower grades because of the potential for student complaints which could result in loss of employment.

In a 2002 study of the instructional practices of part-time and fulltime faculty at over 100 community colleges, Schuetz investigated differences in “faculty behaviors that help students learn” (p. 40). The study collected data on teaching methods (specifically the presentation of instructional materials and conducting of educational activities) and faculty behaviors beyond the classroom that are viewed as supporting student learning. These behaviors include interactions with individual students and colleagues, as well the educational organization as a whole (Schuetz, 2002). Although the study found some differences in teaching methods, more significant disparities were indicated for several types of extra-classroom interactions. Using “the most recent working day” (Schuetz, p. 42), survey results indicated that part-time faculty were twice as likely to report spending no time with students. While there is insufficient research to unequivocally place students at a disadvantage when faculty is less available, the importance of faculty interaction with students outside of the classroom is regularly cited as critical to student learning, engagement, and persistence (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Tinto, 1993; Tinto & Russo, 1994).

Jaeger and Eagan (2008) found that first-year college students had a greater likelihood of dropping out if their required introductory, or “gatekeeper,” courses were taught by adjuncts. The trend did not hold true when these courses were taught by

graduate students or fulltime contingent faculty, indicating that availability, rather than teaching skill, is a key factor (Jaeger & Eagan). Haeger (1998) highlighted the perception that adjunct faculty threaten the quality of academic programs, both in terms of faculty-student interaction and collegiality in academic colleges. Schuster (2003) found that adjunct faculty are less accessible to students. Umbach (2007) demonstrated a difference in adjunct faculty and student interaction across all institutional types, with the lowest levels of interaction at research institutions. Because adjuncts do not have office hours and are rarely on campus except when teaching, students are likely to become disengaged and frustrated with the course content (Haeger; Jaeger & Eagan). AFT concurs with these suggestions, stressing that its concern over the escalating percentage of undergraduate courses being taught by adjunct faculty is primarily focused on the limited ability of these part-timers to fully participate in campus life and be available to students beyond class hours (Jaschik, 2008a). Klein et al (1996) found that social work programs with higher utilization of adjunct faculty had higher student satisfaction ratings, but only when there existed a corresponding higher rating for perceived availability (Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006). Findings from several studies indicate that both retention and degree completion declined in direct correlation to an increase in exposure to adjunct faculty (Ehrenberg and Zhang, 2005; Harrington & Schibik, 2004; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Ronco & Cahill, 2004).

The importance of these studies extends beyond the overt issue of student grades and student retention/completion and points to a broader problem in adjunct employment, that of lack of institutional connection and perceived lack of institutional support. Although generally well-qualified to teach, part-time faculty may be more weakly linked to their students, colleagues, and institutions (Grubb & Worthen, 1999; Rifkin, 1998;

Schuetz, 2002). These faculty are less likely to interact with students beyond scheduled class time and participate in the institutional community, and rarely receive the institutional support they need to be effective teachers (McGuire, 1993; Ronco & Cahill, 2004). Banachowski (1997) stressed that teachers who establish only loose connections with their institutions are unlikely to give students instruction of a quality comparable to fulltime faculty. Grubb and Worthen found that, in general, less effective teachers were alienated from their peers, while strong connections with other faculty members was predictive of more effective classroom performance. On their “most recent working day” (Schuetz, p. 42), part-time faculty members at community colleges were twice as likely to report no interaction with colleagues and no time spent on administrative activities; and were less likely to have taught jointly with another faculty member. These faculty members tend to be less knowledgeable about available student services and the need for and use of those services (McGuire; Schuetz). “A large number of part-time instructors slip in and out of their classrooms without much interaction with the rest of the institution,” (Grubb, p. 42).

These trends may, in part, correlate to the organizational structure of higher education institutions. Quality suffers not because adjuncts have inadequate teaching skills, but because the organizational infrastructure precludes the establishment of relationships inherent in a quality educational institution (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). The exclusion of part-time faculty members from the governance structure leaves these faculty members feeling powerless and isolated (AAUP, 1993). Part-time faculty members have fewer opportunities to develop the connections with colleagues, students, and their institution that have been linked to enhanced student educational experiences

(Kuh & Vesper, 1997; Schuetz, 2002; Tinto, 1993). Without contact among colleagues, discussions about instruction rarely occur and there are no forums where pedagogical issues can be debated and resolved (Grubb & Worthen, 1999). A university administrator provided one perspective of the situation, noting “Adjuncts, as good as they are in the classroom...are not part of the institution or the institutional culture in the same way [as fulltime faculty]” (Jaschik, 2008c, para. 18). Such attitudes and trends indicate lack of personal relatedness or “sense of belonging” (Hoffman et al., 2002; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Osterman, 2001).

### Psychological Perspectives

#### *Sense of Belonging and Psycho-Social Health*

The term “sense of belonging” can be found in several of the content theories of motivation. In Maslow’s (1962) needs hierarchy, belongingness is the first upper-level need and must be achieved before esteem (for self and others) can be realized. As it relates to the work environment, this translates to the need for experiencing liking and respect from supervisors and peers, which must be achieved before individuals readily accept responsibility and maximize the use of their skills and abilities (Berl, Williamson & Powell, 1984). Belongingness is further defined as the “need for friendship, affiliation, interaction, and love” (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2002, p. 151). Alderfer (1972) presented a similar hierarchy, commonly referred to as ERG theory. The central element of ERG theory is relatedness, highlighting the human need for meaningful interpersonal and social relationships (Ivancevich & Matteson). Another seminal theory of motivation especially applicable to part-time faculty is that of Frederick Herzberg. According to Robbins (2003), Herzberg’s theory can be interpreted as indicating that intrinsic factors,



such as perception of belongingness, are related to job satisfaction. Baumeister and Leary (1995) conducted an extensive theoretical meta-analysis to evaluate the hypothesis that “a need to belong is a fundamental human motivation” (p. 497), concluding that human beings have an elemental, pervasive need to belong. Kohut’s (1971, 1977) self psychology theory originally proposed two self needs, the need for grandiosity and the need for idealization. He later proposed a third major self need, which he described as belongingness (Kohut, 1984). In describing this need, Kohut proposed that “people seek to confirm a subjective sense of belongingness or ‘being part of’ in order to avoid feelings of loneliness” (Lee & Robbins, p. 232).

Social identity theory (SIT) provides an additional psycho-social perspective (Tajfel, 1978). SIT, originally developed to explain intergroup attitudes and group-relevant behaviors, proposes that a potentially important component of people's identities derives from their group memberships (Van Dick et al., 2005). Within SIT, social identity is defined as: “... that part of an individual's self concept which derives from his [or her] knowledge of his [or her] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1978, p. 63). Sense of belonging has also been identified as one of two factors that inform an individual’s perception of their cohesion to an organization, specifically “perceived cohesion encompasses an individual’s sense of belonging and feelings of morale associated with membership” (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990, p. 480).

#### *“Organizational” Sense of Belonging*

A significant amount of research has been conducted related to the construct of belongingness; however, relatively few of these studies have addressed the concept from

the perspective of the employing organization. Quinn (2006) described organizational belongingness as the extent to which individual members of the organization are included in (or consider themselves to be included in) opportunities available to all members of the organization. These may include access to persons in positions of authority over them, access to those persons in the organization who are perceived to be “influential,” and ability to form social contacts (establish relationships and participate in social activities). Other research has linked organizational sense of belonging to perceived organizational support (Quinn), organizational socialization (Allen & Meyer, 1990a), and “affective commitment” (Allen & Meyer, 1990b). Jaffee (2001) found that the inequitable distribution of power and opportunity within an institution can result in different levels of organizational belonging. Inequities in the availability of options for development and participation further inhibit the development of organizational belongingness (Quinn).

Although much of Steele’s (1996) research on sense of belonging as a dimension of social integration was focused on group membership, her qualitative investigation of the dimensions of sense of belonging identified concepts that also correlate with sense of belonging from an organizational perspective. The most relevant of these is the dimension of “utility, the group member’s belief in the inherent value of their contributions” (p. 266) to the organization and its goals. Specifically, this concept refers to the extent to which individuals think their presence matters to the organization; their sense of efficacy within the organization. The importance of this dimension of sense of belonging is supported in earlier research highlighting the connection between knowing one’s role within the organization and the strengthening of one’s sense of a “meaningful guided existence which is crucial to psychological health” (Thoits, 1983, p. 75).

When investigating organizational sense of belonging, it becomes evident that the concept is inextricably woven into numerous organizational behavior and management models and theories. While many researchers establish a distinction between organizational belongingness and the related concept of organizational commitment, the terms organizational belongingness and organizational identification are found to be used interchangeably (Pratt, 1998; Van Dick et al., 2005). While commitment has been strongly linked to exchange-based factors, belongingness and identification more powerfully acknowledge the individual's sense of oneness with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Pratt, 1998). Further, both identification and belonging concern the extent to which an individual identifies with an organization of which he or she is a member (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990).

Founded in the political theory research of Lasswell (1965), the concept of "organizational identification" has played a major role in organizational research over the past two decades (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Johnson, Johnson, & Heimberg, 1999; Thompson, 1992). Johnson et al. found "to a large extent, the importance of identification in a practical as well as a theoretical sense lies in its association with organizational influence and power" (p. 159). The earliest and most-widely used instrument for measuring organizational identification was developed by Patchen (1970) at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center. The three key concepts in Patchen's theory are loyalty, membership, and similarity, which Patchen defined as "the reciprocity of perceived joint goals and interests of the other members in the organization" (Johnson et al., p. 160) or the extent to which individual employees feel they belong to the organization. Patchen's research provided the foundation for Cheney's (1982)

Organizational Identification Questionnaire (OIQ), an instrument widely accepted for use in the measurement of organizational identification. Several items on the questionnaire are directly correlated with previously identified aspects of belongingness, including shared values and goals. One item specifically asks the likelihood that the employee would describe the organization as a family in which most members feel a sense of belonging (Johnson et al).

Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, and Dunham (1989) identified an individual's interpretation of being a valued, trusted, effective, and supported member of an institution as important preconditions to developing organizational self-esteem and belonging. This is supported by the primary prediction of Social Identity Theory in organizational contexts, which indicates a link between the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of membership in an organization and the extent to which decisions are based on the good of the organization (Van Dick et al., 2005). Thus the ability of the individual employee to develop and maintain an organizational sense of belonging is highly dependent upon the employing environment. In the higher education environment, university policies that preclude the development of strong feelings of organizational membership may adversely impact the ability of adjunct faculty members to develop a sense of organizational belongingness (Quinn, 2006).

### *Organizational Commitment*

As noted previously, many researchers establish a clear distinction between organizational belongingness and the related concept of organizational commitment (Pratt, 1998; Van Dick et al., 2005). Although there is a substantial amount of literature related to organizational commitment, there appears to be lack of agreement about what

commitment “is,” how it develops, and how it affects behavior (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Previous empirical research on organizational commitment has alternately treated the construct as both an independent variable and a dependent variable (Reichers, 1985). The majority of earlier studies using commitment as an independent variable investigated outcomes related to job persistence, absenteeism, and performance (Fukami & Larson, 1984; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). A much larger body of research has focused on the antecedents and correlates to organizational commitment, including feelings of personal importance (Buchanan, 1974); satisfaction of affiliation needs (Hall, Schneider, & Nygren, 1970); involvement (Fukami & Larson, 1984; Wiener, 1982); and alignment with organizational goals (Lee, 1971; Schneider, Hall, & Nygren, 1974). The foci of these studies result in two distinct views of organizational commitment: (a) commitment as a function of the rewards and costs attributable to organizational membership, also defined as calculated commitment (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972); and (b) commitment that occurs when individuals identify with and extend effort towards organizational goals and values, also defined as attitudinal commitment (Mowday et al.; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974).

Calculated organizational commitment has been described as highly transactional in nature, involving financial consideration, side bets, and sunk costs invested in the organization (Hrebiniak & Alutto; Reichers, 1985). In higher education institutions, one example of a side bet is tenure (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Reichers), while being vested in a retirement program is an example of sunk costs (Mathieu & Zaiac, 1990). Based on these definitions, the nature of adjunct employment described earlier in this manuscript would likely preclude the establishment of this type of organizational commitment for this

group. By comparison, attitudinal commitment is less tangible than calculated commitment and is described as

the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Conceptually, it can be characterized by at least three factors: a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982, p. 27).

One of the major contemporary models of organizational commitment was developed by Allen and Meyer (1990a). This model, which represents a dimensionalization of Mowday et al's (1979) attitudinal commitment, describes three distinct components: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. One of major differences with these dimensions is the behavioral consequences. Behavioral consequences of continuance and normative commitment are typically very concrete, while the behavioral consequences of affective commitment are much more abstract (Allen & Meyer, 1990a). According to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), the behavioral consequence of continuance and normative commitment, as conceptualized and measured, is continued employment. With continuance commitment, employees remain with an organization because they need to do so, but not necessarily because they want to do so (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Reichers, 1985). When normative commitment exists, employees remain with an organization because of a moral obligation, which may also engender a level of resentment on the part of the employee (Meyer & Allen). Conversely, affective commitment has been related to a variety of

employee behaviors, including intention to leave and intention to seek alternative employment, but also job performance, emotional attachment to the organization, and shared ownership of the organization's mission, goals, and objectives (Allen & Meyer, 1990a; de Gilder, 2003; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Essentially, employees who are affectively committed to an organization remain with the organization because they want to do so (Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990).

### *The Organizational Belonging - Organizational Commitment Relationship*

Prior research has helped to establish a link between organizational commitment and organizational sense of belonging. Employees with affective commitment to their organization are found to have “a sense of belonging and identification that increases their involvement in the organization's activities, their willingness to pursue the organization's goals” (Rhoades, Eisenberger & Armeli, 2001, p. 825). As part of their attitudinal formation process, employees assess the organization's willingness and ability to value and reward their contributions. If this assessment is positive, employees are more likely to develop a strong emotional attachment to the organization (belongingness) and will experience greater motivation to contribute meaningfully to the organization (affective commitment) (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) suggested that, for affective commitment to form, individuals must have the “mind-set of desire” (p. 316), a pervasive want to take action that is relevant to the organization. They posit that the mechanisms underlying the creation of this desire include involvement, shared values, identification, and belonging. Thus, Meyer and Herscovitch propose

Any personal or situational variable that contributes to the likelihood that an individual will (a) become involved (intrinsically motivated, absorbed) in a course

of action, (b) recognize the value-relevance of an association with an entity or pursuit of a course of action, and/or (c) derive his or her identity from association with an entity, or from working toward an objective, will contribute to the development of affective commitment (p. 316).

The alignment of the variables identified in the above paragraph as contributors to affective commitment with those variables identified in the previous discussion of belongingness helps to further clarify the interconnectedness of the two constructs.

In his 2001 study of alternative work practices (AWPs), Godard established a distinction he termed “the experience of work itself.” He specified a set of relevant variables described as psychosocial and including achievement of a sense of belonging, task involvement, and empowerment. Godard further described a tangential set of “attitudinal” variables, including job satisfaction and commitment. Research on work design has indicated that levels of employee motivation and commitment are directly linked to the extent to which social-psychological needs are fulfilled (Cappelli & Rogovsky, 1998; Godard). Adler (1993) posited that increased sense of belonging and organizational identification foster both improved team participation and organizational commitment. There is evidence that individuals have a fundamental need to belong to social groups (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and that fulfillment of this need may promote cooperation because it leads individuals to assign more weight to the group’s interest (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002). Fostering a sense of belongingness (i.e. “we”) may help shift the behavioral emphasis from the pursuit of solely individual interests to the pursuit of group or organizational interests (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Turner, Hogg,



Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Specifically, self-interest becomes defined at the organizational level (Van Knippenberg, 2000; Van Knippenberger & Slebos, 2006).

Research indicates that individuals with strong organizational belongingness evaluate alternatives in terms of perceived consequences to the organization and are more likely to select the alternative that best supports the goals and objectives of the institution (Tompkins & Cheney, 1985). Researchers further posit that the more individuals identify with their organization, the more they think and act from the organization's perspective, and therefore, the more effort they are likely to expend on behalf of the organization (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; van Knippenberg, 2000). Identification is contingent upon the assumption of shared fate and perceived similarity with the organization (Mael & Ashford, 1992). An individual identifies with an organization because of an alignment between the individual's goals and objectives and those of the organization (Van Dick, 2001). Ashford and Mael (1989), however, argued that identification alone is a cognitive construct that may not necessarily be associated with behaviors or affective states. Specifically they stated, "To identify, an individual need not expend effort toward the group's goals" (Ashford & Mael, p. 21). Thus it is the affective constructs of belongingness and internalization that more accurately predict commitment (Hogg & Turner, 1987; Tajfel, 1978).

The ability to foster organizational belongingness is enhanced by the perceived fairness of treatment that people receive, or *procedural fairness*, which influences attitudes, behavior, and commitment (Tyler & Lind, 1992). Folger (1993) found that procedural fairness in the form of providing individual employees a role in decision making communicates key information regarding the member's standing within the

organization. Enactment of fair procedures expresses respect and acknowledgement of the individual's belongingness, whereas perceived unfair procedures communicate disrespect and marginality within the organization (Tyler & Lind). As a consequence, procedural fairness influences one's sense of self-worth and belongingness to the group or organization (Koper, van Knippenberg, Bouhuijs, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1993; Tyler, 1999). Such perceived fair treatment and the resultant sense of organizational belongingness may, in turn, bolster commitment to the organization as defined by cooperative behavior in organizational dilemmas (van Knippenberger & Sleebos, 2006). De Cremer and van Knippenberg (2002) found that the interactive effect between procedural fairness and cooperation is mediated by a sense of organizational belonging. Some researchers suggest that perceived organizational support is an antecedent to organizational commitment (Boehman, 2006; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), while concurrently creating a strong sense of belonging and facilitating a feeling of organizational membership (Rhoades & Eisenberger; Buck & Watson, 2002). Failure to establish and maintain connections with others has been shown to contribute to feelings of hopelessness and perceived exclusion from important workplace relationships has been posited as a fundamental cause of anxiety (Somers, 1999).

### Current Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate organizational sense of belonging and organizational commitment among adjunct faculty at a four-year doctoral institution. In recent years, there has been some investigation of the psycho-social aspects of higher education faculty employment, primarily at community colleges. These investigations included the concept of sense of belonging as reflected in satisfaction with interpersonal

relations, degree of autonomy, orientation to the institution, and opportunities for professional development (Lyons, 2007; Weisman & Marr, 2002); relative deprivation (Feldman & Turnley, 2004); and institutional support (Leslie & Gappa, 2002; Quinn, 2006). At higher education institutions, relative deprivation (perceived inequities) among faculty result in less job satisfaction, lower levels of professional commitment, and increased negativity toward work (Feldman & Turnley, Lyons). Results of prior studies indicate that a large percentage of part-time faculty members at community colleges are dissatisfied with their level of institutional knowledge and there is evidence of a need for increased institutional support (AAUP Policy, 2006; Leslie & Gappa; Lyons; Weisman & Marr). “Part-timers have strong feelings about whether they are or are not ‘connected’ or ‘integrated’ into campus life; for the most part, they feel powerless, alienated, invisible, and second-class” (Gappa & Leslie, 1993, p. 180).

The level of integration is predicated on the success of efforts the institution makes to ensure that adjuncts are valued, successful, and supported (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Roeche et al, 1995). In a personal narrative reflecting on over 25 years of adjunct employment, Moore (1997) writes that the adjunct faculty who leave an institution after one or two terms are those “who arrive to teach classes and who leave without speaking to other faculty or being spoken to. The adjuncts who stay are those who become involved...in ways other than simply teaching their classes” (p. 5). Foreman (2008), in a personal narrative on her 23 years in higher education, concluded “Adjunct faculty are not really part of the academic division...the tenured and tenure-track faculty don’t see us as colleagues” (para. 20). Foreman further stressed that, over her years as an adjunct professor, she rarely interacted with her department chair, never met any fulltime faculty,

and was included in no meetings, activities or discussions. She believed it was “apparent that my job is to teach a class and not cause problems or take up anyone’s time” (2008, para. 21).

Although organizational commitment research specific to adjunct faculty is limited, insight may be provided by studies related to the broad category of “contingent workers.” Studies examining the contingent workforce present contradictory results, especially in regard to the consequences of contingent work arrangements on the employees themselves. Some research results are negative, indicating that employers treat these employees badly and, in turn, the workers demonstrate unfavorable job attitudes and poor work performance (de Gilder, 2003; Rogers, 2005). Other studies have shown that contingent workers are valuable resources, essentially improving the performance of the organization (de Gilder; Lepak & Snell, 1999). Redpath, Hurst, and Devine (2009) found that 38% of contingent employees at five Canadian organizations believed their commitment to the organization was negatively impacted by the uncertainties inherent in their employment circumstances. These employees also reported feelings of exclusion and differential treatment based on their status. Researchers have further posited that the low affective commitment among contingent workers results in fewer constructive behaviors such as loyalty and positive organizational citizenship and more destructive behaviors such as neglect (de Gilder).

It seems evident that the role of adjunct faculty in the efficacy and viability of higher education institutions will continue to expand. It will, therefore, become even more essential that institutional leaders recognize the need for adjunct faculty to become “effective partners in the teaching and learning enterprise” (Roueche et al., 1995 ) and

become fully integrated into the culture and life of the college (Wallin, 2005). If continually excluded from campus decision-making processes, adjuncts may feel powerless and lacking in autonomy (Rifkin, 1998; Skinner, 2005). With poorly-defined roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations, it is difficult for adjunct faculty to recognize their value to and connections with the institution. Schuster (2003) posited that adjunct faculty are significantly less integrated into the campus culture. The resulting institutional culture, created by low commitment and rapid turnover, means that few faculty members are available for long-term institutional planning and collegial responsibilities and has a destabilizing effect on the entire faculty (AAUP Policy, 2006; Lyons, 2007; Rifkin; Skinner). A concurrent increase in reliance on faculty members with limited or vague commitments to the educational institution may result in differing, frequently incompatible, expectations of the roles of all faculty members (Garii & Peterson, 2006).

In 2009, trends in adjunct faculty employment at four-year doctoral research institutions were following the earlier pattern established at community colleges. However, differing institutional characteristics would indicate some dissimilarity in adjunct faculty demographics and employment requirements and motivations. Gappa and Leslie (1993) identified four distinct adjunct subpopulations. The proportionality of these groups varies by institution type, as well as by discipline. For example, Gappa and Leslie found that the group “specialists, experts, and professionals” was more strongly represented at doctoral institutions, and in the business and engineering disciplines. Although research examining disciplinary differences in adjunct faculty characteristics is limited, Schibik (2005) suggested that business adjuncts are different from adjuncts in

other disciplines because they bring real-world expertise to the classroom. “These specially classified part-time faculty members should not be viewed as a cost-saving effort on the part of the school...but rather, an astute attempt by business schools to staff the classrooms with talent that could not typically be afforded” (Schibik, p. 126). Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) described a growing concentration of part-time faculty in some humanities disciplines, as well as in mathematics and business, causing these disciplines to “be on their way to becoming collections of potential transients, even at research universities” (p. 325). Garii and Peterson (2006) posited that schools of education are becoming increasingly dependent upon adjunct faculty to provide expertise and practical knowledge. Thus, while prior studies provide preliminary insight into the psycho-social health of certain higher education faculty, there is a need to broaden the scope of inquiry through a study that acknowledges potential differences not just between adjunct and fulltime faculty, but also between types of adjuncts and the disciplines in which they teach.

### Summary

Much of the available research on adjunct faculty focuses on the nature of the employment itself (AAUP Policy, 2006; Gappa, 2000; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Garii & Petersen, 2006; Marshall, 2003). Some recent research has explored the impact of adjunct faculty on the institutions they serve and the students they teach. These studies are primarily quantitative in nature, examining faculty status ratios and practices in the employment of adjunct faculty or seeking to identify correlations between adjunct faculty and student performance (Banachowski, 1997; Haeger, 1998; Jaeger & Eagan, 2008; Jaeger & Hinz, 2008; Umbach, 2009). Despite findings that sense of belonging is a

critical precursor to employee psycho-social health and commitment to organizational goals and objectives (Moore, 1997); little research has been conducted to assess sense of belonging in faculty. This is especially true of adjunct faculty at four-year institutions. Ronco and Cahill (2004) found that adjuncts are generally perceived as lacking commitment to the university. Others have posited that the lack of commitment actually rests with the institution itself (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Moore, 1997; Roeche et al, 1995).

The current study examined the organizational sense of belonging among adjunct faculty at a four-year doctoral research institution, including six colleges and a total of 21 disciplines identified as employing high percentages of adjunct faculty. Prior research seems to indicate the presence of several “types” of adjunct faculty, described by academic and professional backgrounds, professional goals, and reasons for seeking employment as an adjunct faculty member (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Further, the concentration of adjunct types may vary by college and discipline (Garii & Peterson; 2006; Schibik, 2005; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Shared characteristics have the potential to influence the ways group members construct and ascribe value to belongingness (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Van Dick et al., 2005). This research supports the need to identify the adjunct faculty types present at the university under study and to include a broad range of disciplines to help ensure representation of all types. The extant research also suggests a relationship between organizational belonging and organizational commitment and supports the existence of three types of organizational commitment (Allen, & Meyer, 1990a; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Van Dick, 2001.) Of these, affective commitment, or commitment to organizational goals and objectives, is central to this

study. Therefore, the study also investigated the affective organizational commitment of faculty members, including an analysis of the correlation between the two constructs of organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment.



## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

The purpose of this study was to examine OSB and AOC among adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty at a public Research University (high research activity). The study was designed to (a) determine the distribution of the University's adjunct faculty across the categories described in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty, (b) measure the OSB and AOC for each group of participants, (c) examine the differences in OSB between fulltime and adjunct faculty and between adjunct faculty types, controlling for length of time teaching at the University; and (d) investigate the correlation between OSB and AOC. This chapter describes the study's research design, setting and participants, measures and procedures used for data collection, and the statistical procedures used for data analysis.

#### Research Design and Research Questions

In his discussion of contemporary research, Creswell (2003) suggested "the best that can be said is that studies *tend* to be more quantitative or qualitative in nature" (p. 4). For the most part, this study employed a non-experimental, quantitative research design. A one-shot, cross-sectional study was conducted using a survey for data collection, with the intent to generalize from the sample to a population (Babbie, 1990).

Three goals were established for this research. The first goal was to determine the typological distribution of ODU's adjunct faculty. The second goal of the study was to investigate the difference in OSB between adjunct and fulltime faculty members, as well as the extent of difference in OSB between the defined categories of adjunct faculty, controlling, in both cases, for length of time teaching at the University. An additional

goal of the research was to determine the relationship between OSB and AOC in each of the two faculty populations.

Pertaining to the first goal, a single research question was developed: At this institution, what is the distribution of adjunct faculty among the categories delineated in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty? For this research question, a frequency analysis was used to establish the distribution. Pertaining to the second goal, two research questions were established: (a) At this institution, is there a statistically significant difference in OSB between fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty, controlling for length of time teaching?; and (b) At this institution, is there a statistically significant difference in OSB between the different types of adjunct faculty, controlling for length of time teaching? For these two research questions, Two-Way ANOVA (Between Subjects) techniques were used to assess the extent to which OSB was affected by the faculty factor only, and by the interaction of the faculty factor and length of time teaching at the University.

The research questions pertaining to the inquiries of the third goal were: (a) Is there a statistically-significant linear relationship between OSB and AOC among adjunct faculty at this institution?, and (b) Is there a statistically-significant linear relationship between OSB and AOC among fulltime faculty at this institution? For these two research questions, Pearson product-moment correlation analyses were conducted. Use of a correlational research design supports the investigation of relationships that may exist between two or more variables, especially in a research setting (McMillian & Schumacher, 2001). The study's research questions, variables, instruments, and statistical procedures are summarized in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

*Research Questions, Variables, Instruments, and Statistical Procedures for Determining Typological Distribution of Adjunct Faculty and Measuring Mean Differences in Organizational Sense of Belonging*

Research Question	Predictor Variable	Criterion Variable	Co-Variate	Instrument	Statistical Procedure
At this institution, what is the distribution of adjunct faculty among the categories delineated in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty?				Self-Report Questionnaire of SWR	Frequency Distribution
At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB between fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?	Faculty status	OSB Score	Length of time teaching at ODU	OSB Subscale of SWR	Two-way Factorial Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Table 3 continued

Research Question	Predictor Variable	Criterion Variable	Co-Variate	Instrument	Statistical Procedure
At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB among adjunct faculty types, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?	Adjunct faculty type	OSB Score	Length of time teaching at ODU	OSB Subscale of SWR	Two-way Factorial Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Table 4

*Research Questions, Variables, Instruments, and Statistical Procedures for Measuring Linear Relationship Between OSB and*

*AOC*

Research Question	Variable	Instrument	Statistical Procedure
Is there a statistically significant linear relationship between OSB and AOC among adjunct faculty at this institution?	(1) OSB Score (2) AOC Score	(1) OSB Subscale of SWR (2) AOC Subscale of SWR	Pearson product-moment correlation
Is there a statistically significant linear relationship between OSB and AOC among fulltime faculty at this institution?	(1) OSB Score (2) AOC Score	(1) OSB Subscale of SWR (2) AOC Subscale of SWR	Pearson product-moment correlation

### Setting

The study was conducted at ODU, an urban public university with the Carnegie Classification of Research University (high research activity). The University, located in the Commonwealth of Virginia, is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Founded in 1930 as a division of the College of William and Mary, ODU was officially designated a university in 1971. In addition to its main campus in Norfolk, the University has three extended campus centers in the immediate region and an international distance education program. According to the mission statement available on the website, the University is “committed to providing the highest quality instruction to all of its students and teaching excellence is encouraged through faculty development programs and appropriate recognition of superior instruction.” The University has six academic colleges: College of Arts and Letters, College of Business and Public Administration, Darden College of Education, Batten College of Engineering and Technology, College of Health Sciences, and College of Sciences. In July 2009, Old Dominion reported a total enrollment of 23,086, including 17,330 undergraduates and 5,756 graduate students.

### Participants

One of the goals of this research was to assess differences in OSB between adjunct and fulltime faculty at ODU. The University’s Office of Academic Affairs (AA) has responsibility for processing official appointments of adjunct faculty. A report provided by AA on September 15, 2009 lists 1355 active adjuncts, with the highest number of adjuncts teaching for the colleges of Arts and Letters and Education. It is important to note, however, that adjuncts remain active in the employment system for

several years. Therefore, the number of adjuncts with the employment status of “active” may not accurately reflect the number of adjuncts teaching classes in a specific semester. College Workload Reports, prepared each spring and fall semester by the IRA, list every course section offered that semester. For each course section, the report provides the name and employment status of the faculty member, which may include “fulltime,” “part-time,” “Other,” and “GTA.” According to AA, the designation of “Other” is generally used to refer to University administrators or other employees teaching part-time in addition to their fulltime duties, but may be used in other situations as well. Graduate students teaching classes and receiving financial assistance are designated “GTA;” however, graduate students may also be hired and paid as adjunct faculty. All faculty listed in the Workload Reports for the semester in which the study was conducted (Fall 2009) and the semester immediately prior (Spring 2009) provided the population for the study.

The study was conducted with a purposive, rather than random, sample, using “logic, common sense, or sound judgment to select a sample that was representative of a larger population” (Levin & Fox, 2006). Purposive sampling helped to ensure a more equal number of cases for fulltime and adjunct populations of the predictor variable “faculty type.” This was expected to result in (a) less likelihood of violating the assumptions underlying significance tests for Pearson correlation, and (b) more accurate *p* values from two-way factorial analyses of variance (ANOVAs) (Levin & Fox; Green & Salkind, 2008). Purposive sampling is also beneficial when time and financial resources will not allow a broader study. As noted by Posavac and Carey (2003), “the strategy of selecting a representative sample and devoting resources to obtaining data from as many

of that sample as possible produces a more representative result than a half-hearted attempt to include the whole population would yield” (p. 38).

Based on the College Workload Reports, the researcher identified 21 disciplines with 10 or more adjuncts teaching in one or both of the semesters, or in which the percentage of non-fulltime faculty was greater than 40%. These parameters were established to provide relatively equal populations of fulltime and adjunct faculty while also ensuring that all six academic colleges were represented in the study and increasing the likelihood of representation by all adjunct faculty types (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). All individuals teaching in the 21 disciplines in either or both of the selected semesters were invited to participate in the study, including those designated as “Other” or “GTA.” This was to compensate for any mislabeling of faculty type on the Workload Reports. Table 5 details the spring 2009/fall 2009 composite distribution of faculty type and percentage of non-fulltime faculty for each discipline included in the study.



Table 5

*Spring 2009/Fall 2009 Composite Distribution of Faculty Employment Designation, and Percentage of Non-Fulltime Faculty, by College and Discipline/Department*

College Discipline/Department	Fulltime Faculty	Part- time Faculty	“Other” Faculty	GTA	% Non- Fulltime
<b>Arts and Letters</b>					
Art	16	26	1	0	63
Communication/Theater Arts	29	25	6	0	52
English	56	50	12	26	53
Foreign Languages	11	35	2	0	77
History	25	26	5	10	55
Music	19	28	2	2	61
Political Science/Geography	23	11	3	5	38
Sociology/Criminal Justice	26	23	8	2	49
<b>Business &amp; Public Admin</b>					
Finance	15	10	4	3	46
Management	20	23	3	4	57
Marketing	13	9	2	0	41
<b>Education</b>					
ESSE	26	15	7	4	42
Educational Curriculum	26	37	5	6	62

Table 5 continued

College Discipline/Department	Fulltime Faculty	Part- time Faculty	“Other” Faculty	GTA	% Non- Fulltime
Exercise Science/Physical					
Education	18	29	6	5	65
Occupational/Technical Studies	5	13	7	2	75
Engineering					
Engineering Technology	21	14	11	5	48
Health Sciences					
Community/Environ Health	11	11	0	6	61
Medical Lab Technologies	8	8	0	0	50
Nursing	32	46	1	4	61
Sciences					
Math/Statistics	36	21	11	5	42
Psychology	29	10	18	0	26

The preliminary sample of 1138 faculty members included 465 fulltime, 470 adjunct, 77 “Other,” and 126 “GTA.” These numbers changed over the course of developing the e-mail list for the survey mailing, and due to invalid e-mail addresses and self-removal from the study. Six adjunct faculty members and two fulltime faculty members removed themselves from the study after receiving the first invitation to participate. Three adjuncts who asked to be removed from the study indicated that their

only responsibility was field supervision and they thought it inappropriate for them to complete the survey. Three individuals did not want to complete the survey because they were in their first semester with the University. A total of 339 faculty members, or 34% of the sample, participated in the study through completion of an on-line survey. Details on the survey instrument and data collection procedures are provided in the Research Design and Data Collection sections of this manuscript. Table 6 provides the faculty status breakdown of the initial sample, the revised sample, and the study participants. As seen in Table 6, the faculty status distribution of participants is well-aligned with the distribution in the revised sample. The purpose of the study was to examine the OSB and AOC of fulltime and adjunct faculty. Therefore, respondents who reported any other faculty status were removed prior to further demographic and data analysis. Table 7 provides detailed demographic information about the 292 fulltime and adjunct participants.

Table 6

*Composition of Initial Sample, Final Sample, and Participants by Faculty Type*

Category	Fulltime		Adjunct		“Other”		GTA		Total
	Faculty		Faculty		Faculty				
	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	N
Initial Sample	465	40.8	470	41.3	77	6.7	126	11	1138
Final Sample	462	43.1	423	39.4	77	7.1	110	10.2	1072
Participants	168	49.6	124	36.6	10 <sup>a</sup>	3	37 <sup>a b</sup>	11	339

Table 7

*Demographics and Employment Attributes of Fulltime and Adjunct Participants*

			Fulltime Faculty		Adjunct Faculty	
Category/Attribute	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>total N<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>
Gender						
Men	114	39	71	62	43	38
Women	155	53	80	52	75	48
Not Reported	23	8	17	74	6	26
Ethnicity <sup>b</sup>						
White	222	76	120	54	102	46

Table 7 continued

Category/Attribute	Fulltime Faculty				Adjunct Faculty	
	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>total N<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>
Black or African						
American	17	6	13	76	4	24
Hispanic	9	3	5	56	4	44
Asian	11	4	7	64	4	36
All other minority	13	4	2	15	11	85
Prefer not to answer	35	12	24	69	11	31
Highest Academic Degree <sup>c</sup>						
Bachelor's Degree	5	2	1	20	4	80
Master's Degree	135	46	47	35	88	65
Doctorate	149	51	117	79	32	21
Other	3	1	3	100	0	0
Employment Attributes						
College Affiliation						
Arts and Letters	120	41	60	50	60	50
Business and Public Admin	36	12	24	67	12	33

Table 7 continued

Category/Attribute	<u>n</u>	Fulltime Faculty		Adjunct Faculty	
		<u>% of</u> <u>total N<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>	<u>n</u> <u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>
Education	60	21	35	58	25 42
Engineering	11	4	7	64	4 36
Health Sciences	39	13	27	69	12 31
Sciences	26	9	15	58	11 42
Primary Location of Teaching <sup>c</sup>					
Norfolk Campus	243	83	145	60	98 40
Higher Education Centers	14	5	5	36	9 64
TELETECHNET	16	5	7	44	9 56
Other	19	7	11	58	8 42
Primary Levels Taught <sup>b</sup>					
General Education Courses	56	19	22	39	34 61
Undergraduate Electives	100	34	62	62	38 38

Table 7 continued

Category/Attribute	Fulltime Faculty				Adjunct Faculty	
	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>total N</u> <sup>a</sup>	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Attribute</u>
Undergraduate	158	54	96	61	62	39
Core Courses						
Masters' Level	98	34	75	76	23	24
Doctoral Level	44	15	42	95	2	5
Other	4	1	3	75	1	25
Length of time teaching at ODU						
First Year	15	5	6	40	9	60
1-3 Years	81	28	39	48	42	52
4-6 Years	64	22	27	42	37	58
7-9 Years	31	11	15	48	16	52
More Than Nine Years	101	35	81	80	20	20

Note – N = 292.

<sup>a</sup> Total may be more than 100% if multiple response were allowed

<sup>b</sup> Multiple responses allowed

<sup>c</sup> Some responses from "Other" were collapsed into defined categories

## Measures

All data were collected through an online survey administered through the University's internal survey program - Inquisite. The survey instrument (Appendix A), titled Survey of Workplace Relationships (SWR), was comprised of three sections, including an OSB Subscale, an AOC Subscale, and a Self-Report Questionnaire. The OSB Subscale was based on the work/school subscale of Somers (1998) Revised Belongingness Scale (BES-R). The AOC Subscale was the commitment subscale of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Through the Self-Report Questionnaire, adjunct faculty were asked to self-categorize based on Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty. An option was provided for adjuncts to indicate they do not fit in any of the categories and to provide information about their characteristics. The Self-Report Questionnaire also collected length of time teaching at ODU as a categorical variable with five levels and faculty employment status (fulltime, adjunct, GTA, or Other).

Demographic data were collected for gender and ethnicity. All respondents reported college and academic discipline/department, as well as primary location of teaching (main campus in Norfolk, higher education center, field supervision, or distance learning). Fulltime faculty reported academic rank. For adjunct faculty, data were collected on the number of courses being taught during the current semester, adjunct positions held concurrently at other institutions, status of employment other than adjunct teaching, and participation in non-teaching and professional development activities. These data were examined for evidence to support the category selected by the adjunct faculty respondents.



*Measuring Organizational Sense of Belonging (OSB Subscale)*

Various measures of “belongingness” were evaluated for use in this study. No existing measure of belongingness was found, in its entirety, to meet the specific needs of the study. Lee and Robbins (1995) developed a scale based upon Kohut’s model; however the items on the scale were customized to a younger audience (college freshman). Anderson-Butcher and Conroy (2002) developed a similar scale to measure belongingness in youth development programs. In this case, items and response scales were constructed for young adults. Other scales incorporated belongingness in overall measures of quality of life (Kahle, 1983; Sashkin, 1990). These scales were designed to measure one’s general feeling of belonging and were inappropriate for use in measuring organizational belonging specifically. Somers’ (1998) Revised Belongingness Scale (BES-R), comprised of four environment-based subscales, was identified as having a subscale suitable for the research questions being investigated.

Somers’ (1999) Revised Belongingness Scale (BES-R) is grounded in the theoretical framework of Baumeister and Leary (1995) who proposed belongingness as a fundamental human motivation. This model supports the observation that the construct of belongingness occurs in four major interpersonal environments: (a) family, (b) friends, (c) work or school, and (d) neighborhood/community. These environments were chosen because they represent central role areas and types of interpersonal relationships and provide for the evaluation of belongingness in a variety of settings (Somers). Baumeister and Leary’s model also indicates two primary components of belongingness, connectedness (fitting-in), and esteem (feeling valued and respected by others). Survey items were written to reflect either connectedness, esteem, or a combination of the two.

Demographic data were collected for purposes of norming, and an optional open-ended question was posed to help establish construct validity through known-groups analyses (Messick, 1989).

Content relevance and representativeness of the belongingness construct was established through a five-member panel of raters representing a diverse group with regard to demographics and psychological clinical experience (Somers, 1999). The scale was revised based on rater input and then administered to a nine-member focus group. Additional revisions were made based on focus group feedback. The revised scale was incorporated into a cross-sectional descriptive survey administered to 330 men and women attending classes or working at three higher education institutions. An exploratory factor analysis of 10 factors provided support for the environmentally-based model (correlation coefficients ranging from  $-.0009$  to  $.42$ ). Specifically, the analysis supported Somers' hypothesis that different factors contribute to the formation of belongingness in various environments, such as work/school, home, friends, and community. Six of ten factors analyzed were pure in terms of containing items which solely represent one of the four environments. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine internal consistency of each subscale. Internal consistency coefficients were high for all subscales, with an alpha of  $.94$  for the work/school subscale. The Work/School subscale of the BES-R is comprised of 34 items measured on five-point Likert scale with endpoints of "never true" and "always true." Examples of items from the subscale include "I feel like I fit in with others at work;" "There are people I work with who share my values;" "Co-workers ask for my ideas or opinions about different matters."

For the SWR, all items from the Work-School Subscale of Somers' (1999) BES-R were incorporated into a scale to measure organizational sense of belonging (OSB Subscale). The purpose of the current study was to examine a psycho-social construct specific to a certain workplace environment and specific to interpersonal relationships inherent to that environment. For this reason, the ambiguity of terms such as "others," "co-workers," and "colleagues" could inhibit appropriate interpretation of Somers BES-R survey items. To address this concern, several items were rewritten to clearly establish the context for the response. The original revision used "college" as the context for the response; however, feedback from department chairpersons and University administrators ultimately resulted in the use of department/discipline as the context. This was to help clarify for respondents that they should respond to the questions based upon their experiences in the specific department or discipline in which they teach. Research demonstrates that this contingency-specific wording does not preclude generalizing the findings to the broader university setting. For example, a 1994 study by Morgan and Hunt found that workers transfer contingency-specific commitment to the larger organization, thereby creating links between positive relationships with work groups and the global organization. Example items from the OSB Subscale include: "I feel like I fit in with other faculty in my department," "There are faculty I work with in my department who share my values," and "Faculty I work with in my department ask for my ideas or opinions about different matters." Dr. Somers granted permission to use the BES-R in this study and to revise the scale items as described above. An e-mail communication granting this permission is provided in Appendix B.

Theorists have specified that belongingness from the organizational perspective also refers to the extent to which individual members consider themselves to be included in opportunities available to all members (Miller, 1975). Specific examples include interactions with persons in positions of authority, including feedback on job performance; and interactions with persons in the organization who are perceived to be “influential” (Miller; Quinn, 2006). For faculty included in this study, the person in the immediate position of authority and having responsibility to provide performance feedback is the department chairperson. To complete the OSB Subscale, four items were added to assess faculty perception of the appropriateness of evaluation and feedback on their job performance, as well as access to supervisors. Example items to measure faculty perception of these interactions include “I feel comfortable contacting my department chair if I have the need to do so,” and “I receive sufficient feedback about my job performance.” For faculty included in this study, persons perceived to be influential include college-level administrators such as deans and associate or assistant deans. An item used to measure this relationship was “I have opportunities for social interaction with college administrators.” Similarly-worded items were used in a 2006 survey of adjunct faculty institutional belongingness (Quinn). The Quinn survey was not used in its entirety for this study because 75% of the items are nearly identical to items in Somers (1996) BES-R work/school subscale.

When a researcher modifies an instrument or combines instruments in a new study, original validity and reliability may not necessarily hold true (Creswell, 2003). Efforts were made to preserve the content validity of the original instrument to the greatest possible extent. The rewording of survey items resulted in greater specificity of

context only. Prior to the formal data collection phase of the study, the OSB Subscale items were provided to a group of 12 raters having significant experience with research in, or application of, organizational behavior constructs. Raters were asked to indicate the extent to which each item on the OSB Subscale measures OSB. They were provided with a study-specific definition of organizational sense of belonging:

The need to be or the perception of being involved with others in the organization at levels that contribute to one's sense of *connectedness* (being part of, fitting in, and/or feeling accepted) and *esteem* (begin cared about, valued, and/or respected).

Available responses included "Significantly," "Adequately," "Somewhat," and "Not At All." The primary purpose of the rating exercise was to help determine if the four items added to the original Work/School Subscale of Somers' 1999 BES-R could potentially adversely impact content validity of OSB Subscale. All raters responded "Significantly" or "Adequately" to the four new items. One item from the original Work/School Subscale, "It is important that someone I work with in my department acknowledges my birthday in some way," received several ratings of "Somewhat" or "Not At All." Per the agreement with Dr. Somers, the item was not removed and the Work/School Subscale was included in its entirety.

As recommended by Creswell (2003), reliability was re-established during data analysis. Two internal consistency estimates of reliability were computed for the OSB Subscale: a split-half coefficient expressed as a Spearman-Brown corrected correlation and co-efficient alpha. For the split-half coefficient, the scale was split into two halves such that each half contained two of the four questions relating to relationships with persons in positions of authority or influence. The analyses yielded values indicating

satisfactory reliability: Cronbach's  $\alpha = .95$ ; Spearman-Brown coefficient = .93. Item analyses were conducted on the four specified items of the OSB Subscale. Each of the items was correlated with total score for OSB (with the item removed). Three of the correlations were greater than .40, indicating very good discrimination, and the fourth correlation was .38, indicating good discrimination (Pallant, 2007).

*Measuring Affective Organizational Commitment (AOC Subscale)*

A numerical AOC score was calculated using an AOC Subscale, comprised of the complete Affective Commitment subscale of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ; Meyer & Allen, 1997). The three-part OCQ is a 27-item survey measuring employee commitment based on a three-component model of commitment: affective, continuance, and normative. Affective commitment was singled out for this study because it identifies an employee's specific affinity toward the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This affinity invokes a shared identity and is a source of motivation to contribute meaningfully to the general good of the organization. Employees with high affective commitment report higher levels of adherence to policy and are found to have better job performance (Mowday et al, 1982; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 1992). These conditions are critical to a higher education institution that relies heavily on adjunct faculty. Precedent for using the Affective Commitment subscale of the OCQ independent of the other subscales has been established in previous research (Allen & Meyer, 1990a; Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001). The Affective Commitment subscale is comprised of eight items measured on seven-point Likert-type scale with endpoints of "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree." The Affective

Commitment subscale has been published in its entirety in numerous research manuscripts (Hackett et al.; Karim & Noor, 2006; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Internal consistency reliability for the Affective Commitment subscale of the OCQ has been reported at  $\alpha = .87$  (Allen & Meyer, 1990b). In a study with a sample of 2,218 nurses, Hackett, Bycio, and Hausdorf (1994) reported reliability of  $\alpha = .86$ . For the AOC Subscale used in the current study, all items from the OCQ Affective Commitment subscale were included verbatim with the exception of the reference to “my agency,” which was rewritten as “my college.” Prior studies have shown that reliability and validity are retained when references to “my agency” are changed to define the study setting (Hackett et al., 1994; Karim & Noor, 2006). Sample items from the SWR AOC Subscale are: (a) I enjoy discussing my college with people outside it; (b) I really feel as if this college’s problems are my own; and (c) I do not feel “emotionally attached” to this college (reverse scored). As part of the data analysis process, co-efficient alpha was computed to estimate reliability of internal consistency for the AOC Subscale. The value,  $\alpha = .88$ , indicated satisfactory reliability.

#### *SWR Self-Report Questionnaire*

Data relevant to the predictor variables for research questions examining differences in OSB were collected in the Self-Report Questionnaire of the SWR. All respondents were asked to report faculty employment status and length of time teaching at ODU. Adjunct faculty were asked to place themselves into one of Gappa and Leslie’s (1993) adjunct faculty types or to indicate they do not think they belong to any of the types. For this survey item, complete descriptions of the categories were provided (a) “career-enders,” described as former fulltime academics, fully-retired individuals, and

those transitioning from non-academic careers; (b) “specialist, expert, or professional” with a primary, usually fulltime career elsewhere; (c) “aspiring academics,” described as those who aspire to teach fulltime; and (d) “freelancers,” described as those who are not employed fulltime elsewhere and are part-time faculty by choice. Respondents who indicated they do not fit in any of the categories were asked to provide comments that might help to inform development of additional categories to be added to the typology. Faculty employment status and adjunct faculty type were categorical variables and were treated as the predictor variables for the SPSS analyses for research questions one and two. As noted by Green and Salkind (2008), when data are collected using non-experimental methods, the variables are more appropriately referred to as predictor variables and criterion variables. Length of time teaching at ODU, identified as a potential covariate to the predictor variable, was collected as a categorical variable with five levels: (a) first year, (b) 1-3 years, (c) 4-6 years, (d) 7-9 years, and (e) more than 9 years.

### Data Collection

The study was conducted during the fall 2009 semester. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Human Subjects Research Committee of the Darden College of Education at ODU. To improve survey rate of return, efforts were made to increase adjunct and fulltime faculty interest in the topic of study. A presentation detailing the purpose and process for the study was given at a regular meeting of the University’s Provost Council. The Council, led by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, is comprised of the deans of the six academic colleges and the vice provost of each of the University’s academic departments. The Provost endorsed the research and requested that



deans and vice provosts support the study. Department chairpersons of each department/discipline represented in the study were sent an email requesting that they contact all of their faculty members to publicize the study and encourage participation. All survey respondents had the opportunity to enter a drawing for a gift card from the University bookstore. Two gift cards were awarded.

Data were collected using the web-based online SWR (APPENDIX A), comprised of three subscales, the OSB Subscale, the AOC Subscale, and the Self-Report Questionnaire. The survey was first administered to a volunteer group of PhD students and University faculty and staff members to check for technical problems and to determine an average time for completion. The volunteers reported no concerns with opening and/or viewing the survey with various commonly-used Internet browsers. Overall, volunteers reported completing the survey in 15-20 minutes.

All requests for participation in the study were made via e-mail, using a distribution list compiled from e-mail addresses available in the University's e-mail directory. A preliminary personal e-mail was sent by the researcher. The e-mail (APPENDIX C) contained information about the researcher, the purpose of the research, and details about subsequent messages that would be received. The formal request to participate, with the link to the on-line survey, was e-mailed through the University's survey system. All communication received in response to the survey e-mail were forwarded to the researcher. These included clarification requests, delivery failure notifications, and requests to be removed from the study sample. The ODU fall 2009 semester began on August 24 and concluded on December 11. The pre-survey personal e-mail was sent on November 5. The first survey invitation was e-mailed on November 9,

with follow-up reminders/requests sent to non-respondents each Monday. The final reminder/request was e-mailed November 30 and data collection concluded on December 4.

### Data Analysis

This non-experimental, quantitative study used descriptive, comparative, and correlation methods to analyze the data. The study was considered non-experimental because the independent or predictor variables could not be manipulated or controlled by the researcher (Kumar, 2005), and because no treatment was administered during the study. Specifically, its purpose was to study a phenomenon, behavior, or relationship that occurs naturally in a real-world setting (Barker, Pistrang, & Elliott, 2004).

### *Response Bias*

A wave analysis procedure was conducted to determine potential response bias, or the effect of non-responses on survey estimates (Fowler, 1988). Two waves were included in the analysis: (a) week one, 171 responses (b) and weeks three and four combined, 95 responses. Weeks three and four were combined because the University's Thanksgiving break occurred during the third week. A total of six items were selected for the wave analysis, including four items from the OSB Subscale and two items from the AOC Subscale. Individual items were selected such that individual concepts in the OSB Subscale were represented: (a) relationships with co-workers, (b) relationships with persons in positions of authority, and (c) importance of belonging. The two items selected from the AOC Subscale represent: (a) commitment to remain with the college, and (b) ownership of the colleges problems. The analysis was based on the numerical values of

responses to individual items. The minimum value for both subscales was one and the maximum values were five for the OSB Subscale and seven for the AOC Subscale.

To determine if there were differences in responses between participants in the first wave of responses and participants in third (final) wave of responses, an independent samples *t* test was conducted to compare the mean responses on each selected item. There was no statistically significant difference in responses between the two waves for any of the items included in the wave analysis. Wave analysis as a check for response bias is based on the assumption that those who return the survey at the end of the response period are nearly non-respondents (Creswell, 2003). The results of the wave analysis conducted for this study suggest that if non-respondents had participated, their responses would not have substantially changed the overall results of the study. This indicates that response bias did not significantly affect the generalizability of the study results. Table 8 presents the results of the wave analysis.

Table 8

*Test for Response Bias - Group Differences for Wave One and Wave Three Respondents for Mean Scores on Selected OSB and AOC Subscale Items*

	Wave One		Wave Three			
	n = 145		n = 89			
Item	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>t</u> (232) <sup>a</sup>	<i>p</i> <sup>b</sup>
I feel like I fit in with other faculty in my department	2.01	.821	2.10	.812	-.856	.393
I receive sufficient feedback about my job performance	2.38	1.00	2.40	1.06	-.183	.855
I view my department as a place to experience a sense of belonging	2.46	1.08	2.35	1.07	.738	.461
When I approach a group of faculty co-workers, I feel welcomed	2.05	.802	1.96	.767	.877	.381
I really feel as if this College's problems are my own	3.33	1.57	3.26	1.51	.349	.728
I would be very happy to spend the rest of teaching career at this College	2.17	1.43	2.29	1.60	-.594	.553

<sup>a</sup> Equal variances assumed

<sup>b</sup> All results not significant at the 95% confidence interval

### *Data Preparation*

After completing basic demographic analysis, the data file was split to remove all cases in which the respondent identified a current faculty status other than fulltime faculty or adjunct faculty. All variables in the OSB and AOC subscales were examined to ensure that numerical values were appropriately assigned to each response. Four variables in the OSB Subscale and four variables in the AOC Subscale were reverse-coded such that numerical values increased in accordance with the level of positive feeling expressed by the response, similar to the other items in the scale.

### *Statistical Analyses*

Several types of analysis were used. Descriptive analyses were conducted to gain an overall picture of the sample being studied by describing the data and summarizing results (Levine, Stephan, Krehbiel, & Berenson, 2005). A frequency distribution was run to determine distribution of adjunct faculty participants among the categories delineated in Gappa & Leslie's (1998) typology. For each participant, a computed variable named OSB Score was calculated by summing the numerical values of responses to individual items on the OSB Subscale. The maximum possible OSB score was 140 and the minimum possible OSB score was 38. A two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the difference in OSB Score between fulltime and adjunct faculty, while also measuring the effect of the interaction with length of time teaching at Old Dominion University. A two-way factorial ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the difference in OSB between adjunct faculty type (Gappa & Leslie), while also measuring the effect of the interaction with length of time teaching at Old Dominion University. In both cases, the two-way factorial ANOVA was a more appropriate analysis

than analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) because the Levene's test of homogeneity of variance for the covariate length of time teaching was significant, and because the covariate was a categorical variable.

For each participant, a second computed variable, AOC Score, was calculated by summing the numerical values of responses to individual items on the AOC Subscale. The maximum possible AOC score was 56 and lowest possible AOC score was 7. For the research questions investigating the linear relationship between OSB and AOC, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) were computed separately for each faculty group (all fulltime faculty and all adjunct faculty) using the computed variables OSB Score and AOC Score. The Pearson correlation was a more appropriate analysis than bivariate linear regression because the variables could not be conclusively categorized as predictor or criterion.

#### Ethical Protection of Participants

The researcher is an administrator in the College of Business and Public Administration (CBPA) at ODU. All members of the study sample were made aware of this relationship. Specifically, faculty and adjunct faculty in the three CBPA disciplines included in the study were provided assurances that responses and results from the study would be discussed in aggregate only. Several steps were taken to protect the confidentiality of the participants. The survey was e-mailed through the University's online survey application. Completed surveys were submitted to the Inquisite database and managed by a staff member in the IRA Office. Members of the study sample were identified by code number only, and only for the purpose of preventing respondents from receiving follow-up participation requests. Some individuals who received the initial

request to participate contacted the researcher and asked to be removed from study. These requests were honored immediately. Participants had the opportunity to enter a gift card drawing. The entries were submitted via a second survey instrument that collected name and e-mail address only. Individual drawing entries could not be connected to individual SWRs. The IRA staff member provided the researcher with the names of the drawing winners. A list of participants was never available to the researcher. At the conclusion of the data-collection phase of the study, the researcher was provided with an SPSS data file with participants identified by case number only.

All data files associated with the survey were stored on a password-protected laptop that is in the sole possession of the researcher. Files were backed up on a portable drive that is stored in a locked cabinet when not in use. Data will be stored only until it is no longer needed by the researcher. To address the ethical commitment for full disclosure to those impacted by the research, two forums will be conducted to publicly present the study findings. These will include a presentation to the Provost's Council and a town-hall type meeting to which adjunct and fulltime faculty will be invited. The study results, possible implications, and recommendations from the researcher will be presented at both forums. The town-hall meeting will be recorded and made available electronically for those faculty who are not able to attend the meeting.

#### Methodological Limitations

One potential limitation of the study was response (self-selection) bias, especially in terms of refusals. In survey research, the randomness of the obtained sample, or actual respondents, is reduced by subject loss. Subject loss can result from the inability to contact all members of a targeted sample or from the inability to gain participation from

potential respondents who were requested to participate (Braver & Bay, 1992). The study used an online survey, and invitations to participate in the survey were emailed to university e-mail addresses. In some cases, rules applied to individual e-mail accounts resulted in non-delivery of the e-mail message. Especially in the case of adjunct faculty, individuals may use e-mail accounts other than those provided by the university. This had the potential to diminish the representativeness of the sample, especially if one assumes that adjuncts choosing to use a university-provided account are inherently more connected to the institution than those who do not.

Response bias may also exist if those who choose to respond to the survey are disproportionately concentrated among certain values (Braver & Bay, 1992). A wave analysis procedure conducted to test for response bias indicated a low likelihood that response bias significantly affected the generalizability of the study results (See Table 8). However, no tests of response bias are considered conclusive and some response bias is inherent in all survey research (Creswell, 2003). Generalizability was also weakened because the study was limited to a single institution.

### Summary

This study was conducted to assess differences in OSB between adjunct and fulltime faculty at ODU and to assess differences in OSB between the different types of adjunct faculty. In both analyses, the interaction effect of length of time teaching was considered. The study also investigated the correlation between OSB and AOC. Affective commitment is a form of organizational commitment specifically associated with an individual employee's propensity to embrace the organization's strategic mission, goals, and objectives. The results of this study are applicable to higher education institutions as



reliance upon adjunct faculty continues to increase across academia. If the ways in which faculty form organizational connections are better understood, higher education administrators can evaluate current policies and procedures and potentially identify ways to improve relationships with all faculty members, resulting in a more positive work environment for all faculty and higher quality educational experience for students.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Overview

The purpose of this research was to investigate OSB and AOC among adjunct faculty at a four-year doctoral institution, including measuring mean differences in OSB between adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty, as well as mean differences in OSB among different types of adjunct faculty as defined by Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty. In both investigations, the interaction effect of length of time teaching at ODU was also examined. Further, the study examined the distribution of adjunct faculty among the four categories described in Gappa and Leslie's typology. The study also investigated the correlation between OSB and the related construct of AOC. All data for these research questions was obtained through the SWR. Table 9 provides the means and standard deviations for OSB and AOC scores for each faculty employment group.

Table 9

*Means and Standard Deviations for OSB Scores and AOC Scores by Faculty Group*

Faculty Group	<u>N</u>	OSB Score <sup>1</sup>		AOC Score <sup>2</sup>	
		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Adjunct Faculty	124	136	22.32	39.9	8.7
Fulltime Faculty	168	145.8	18.51	37.8	9.9

Notes. <sup>1</sup>Measured by OSB Subscale; <sup>2</sup>Measured by AOC Subscale

## Presentation of Research Findings

### *Research Question 1*

*At this institution, what is the distribution of adjunct faculty among the categories delineated in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty?*

Data to determine the distribution of ODU's adjunct faculty among the categories delineated in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty were collected through the Self-Report Questionnaire of the SWR. Full descriptions of each of the four types, as written by Gappa and Leslie, were included in the SWR: (a) Career-ender (former fulltime academics, fully-retired individuals, or individuals in transition from fulltime employment); (b) Specialist, Expert, or Professional (having a primary, usually fulltime career elsewhere); (c) Aspiring Academic (aspiring to teach fulltime); and (d) Free-lancer (not employed fulltime elsewhere and part-time faculty by choice). Adjunct faculty respondents were asked to select the category that best described their current circumstances as an adjunct. Alternatively, a respondent could select "Other" and provide details about their personal circumstances. Of the 124 adjunct faculty participants, nine individuals indicated "Other." After examining the supplemental information provided by these faculty, three of the "Other" responses were recoded into one of the four categories. The appropriate category seemed evident from the information provided, the individuals having selected this response to have an opportunity to share other information. Of the six remaining "Other" responses, only two provided supplemental information: (a) fulltime faculty member at another institution and (b) a combination of two categories (Career-ender who is also an Aspiring Academic).

### *Frequency Analysis Results*

The results of the frequency analysis of adjunct faculty types, in aggregate and by college, are presented in Table 10. Of the 124 adjunct faculty, 23 (18.5%) self-selected or were recoded into the Career-ender category; 39 (31.5%) into the Specialist, Expert, or Professional category; 34 (27.4%) into the Aspiring Academic category; 22 (17.7%) into the Free-lancer category, and 6 (4.8%) into “Other.” As seen in Table 10, the College of Arts and Letters had the highest proportion of Aspiring Academics (43.3%). The colleges of Education (44%), Engineering (75%), Health Sciences (44%), and Sciences (45.5%) had high proportions of Specialist, Expert, or Professional, although it should be noted that the number of adjunct faculty participants in the College of Engineering was very small. The College of Business and Public Administration had equal percentages (33.3%) of Career-enders and Specialist, Expert or Professional. More than 50% of all adjunct faculty self-categorized as Aspiring Academics were employed by the College of Arts and Letters, with nearly 34% of those Aspiring Academics teaching English.

### *Descriptive Analyses*

In developing their typology of adjunct faculty, one key characteristic Gappa and Leslie (1993) examined was the employment status of the individuals beyond their teaching as an adjunct faculty member. Similar data were collected in the Self-Report Questionnaire of the SWR. Adjunct faculty respondents were provided with nine descriptors for employment other than adjunct teaching. For the analyses, responses to the non-adjunct teaching employment question were recoded twice to create two new variables. The first recoding was to allow for analysis regarding the extent of non-adjunct employment. The second recoding was to allow for analysis regarding the relationship

between current or former employment and the discipline in which the individual was teaching as an adjunct faculty member. The results of these analyses are reported in Tables 11 and 12. As shown in Table 11, approximately two-thirds of adjuncts participating in the study are employed at least part-time in addition to their adjunct teaching responsibilities. As expected, a significant number (95%) of Specialist/Expert/Professional adjuncts are employed fulltime, and approximately 83% of Career Enders indicated they are retired or employed only part-time. These findings indicate that adjuncts responding to the survey likely self-selected into the appropriate adjunct faculty type. As shown in Table 12, 68.5% of all adjuncts participating in the study reported current or former employment in an area related to their teaching discipline. Approximately 18% of those in the Specialist/Expert/Professional adjunct type reported current employment in an area not related to their current teaching responsibilities.

Two other variables investigated to gain a better picture of adjuncts in the study were the number of courses taught at ODU in the study semester and the number of courses taught at other academic institutions in the study semester. These results are reported in Tables 13 and 14. As shown in Table 13, approximately 55% of adjuncts in the study were teaching more than one course at ODU in the study semester. The adjunct faculty type most likely to teach multiple courses was Aspiring Academics, with almost 40% teaching three or more courses. As shown in Table 14, approximately 27% of adjuncts in the study reported teaching at least one course at another academic institution in the study semester. Teaching at other institutions was highest among Specialist/Expert/Professional adjuncts, with 41% reporting teaching at least one course at another academic institution. Approximately 21% of Aspiring Academics reported teaching at

other academic institutions in the study semester, with about 18% teaching two or more courses at other institutions.

Another factor to be considered when examining organizational belongingness is the extent to which individuals participate in non-classroom activities of the institution. For this study of adjunct faculty, two statistics were collected: (a) participation in University-sponsored faculty development opportunities and (b) participation in non-academic University events and activities. As shown in Table 15, Career-Enders and Free-lancers were more likely to participate in both faculty development opportunities and non-academic University events. Overall, approximately 57% of adjuncts reported participating in faculty development opportunities, and about 66% reported participating in non-academic University events and activities.

Table 10

*Distribution of Adjunct Faculty Types by College*

College	N	<u>Career-ender</u>			<u>Specialist, Expert, Prof</u>			<u>Aspiring Academic</u>			<u>Free-lancer</u>			<u>Other</u>		
		<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Arts and Letters	60	48.4	9	15	10	16.7	26	43.3	12	20	3	5				
Business & Public Admin	12	9.7	4	33.3	4	33.3	2	16.7	0	0	2	16.7				
Education	25	20.2	6	24	11	44	3	12	4	16	1	4				
Engineering	4	3.2	0	0	3	75	0	0	1	25	0	0				
Health Sciences	12	9.7	2	16.7	6	50	1	8.3	3	25	0	0				
Sciences	11	8.9	2	18.2	5	45.5	2	18.2	2	18.2	0	0				
<b>University Total</b>	<b>124</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4.8</b>				

Note. Measured by Self-Report Questionnaire of SWR

Table 11

*Extent of Non-Adjunct Employment by Adjunct Faculty Type*

Adjunct Faculty Type	<u>Employed</u>			<u>Employed</u>			<u>Retired</u>			<u>No Other</u>			<u>Status Not</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Reported</u>
Career-ender	23	18.5	3	13	6	26.1	13	56.5	1	4.3	0	0	0		
Specialist/Expert/ Professional	39	31.5	37	94.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5.1			
Aspiring Academic	33	26.6	9	27.3	13	39.4	0	0	7	21.2	7	21.2			
Free-lancer	22	17.7	1	4.5	7	31.8	4	18.2	3	13.6	7	31.8			
Other	7	5.6	4	57.1	2	28.6	0	0	0	0	1	14.3			
<b>University Total</b>	<b>124</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11.3</b>			

Note. Measured by Self-Report Questionnaire of SWR



Table 12

*Relationship of Current or Former Employment to Adjunct Teaching Discipline by  
Adjunct Faculty Type*

Adjunct Faculty Type	<u>N</u>	<u>Related to</u> <u>Teaching</u> <u>Discipline</u>		<u>Not Related to</u> <u>Teaching</u> <u>Discipline</u>		<u>Not Reported or</u> <u>Not Evident</u>	
		<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Career-ender	23	21	91.3	1	4.3	1	4.3
Specialist/Expert/ Professional	39	30	76.9	7	17.9	2	5.1
Aspiring Academic	33	18	54.5	4	12.1	11	33.3
Free-lancer	22	10	45.5	2	9.1	10	45.4
Other	0	6	85.7	0	0	1	14.3
<b>University Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8.9</b>

Note. Measured by Self-Report Questionnaire of SWR

Table 13

*Number of Courses Taught at Old Dominion University during Study Semester by  
Adjunct Faculty Type*

Adjunct Faculty Type	N	<u>One Course</u>		<u>Two Courses</u>		<u>Three Courses</u>		<u>Four or More Courses</u>	
		<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Career-ender	23	13	56.5	6	26.1	4	17.4	0	0
Specialist/Expert/ Professional	39	23	59	8	20.5	6	15.4	2	5.1
Aspiring Academic	33	5	15.2	7	21.2	6	18.2	15	45.5
Free-lancer	22	11	50	1	4.5	4	18.2	6	27.3
Other	0	4	57.1	3	42.9	0	0	0	0
University Total	124	56	45.2	25	20.2	20	16.1	23	18.6

Note. Measured by Self-Report Questionnaire of SWR

Table 14

*Number of Courses Taught at Other Academic Institutions during Study Semester by Adjunct Faculty Type*

		<u>No</u>		<u>One</u>		<u>Two</u>		<u>Three</u>		<u>Four or</u>	
		<u>Courses</u>		<u>Course</u>		<u>Courses</u>		<u>Courses</u>		<u>More</u>	
										<u>Courses</u>	
Adjunct Faculty											
Type	<u>N</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Career-ender	23	20	80	1	4.3	0	0	0	0	2	8.7
Specialist/Expert/ Professional	39	23	59	6	15.4	3	7.7	1	2.6	6	15.4
Aspiring Academic	33	26	78.8	1	3	3	9.1	1	3	2	6.1
Free-lancer	22	18	81.8	2	9.1	1	4.5	0	0	1	4.5
Other	7	3	42.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	47.1
University Total	124	90	72.6	9	7.3	8	6.5	2	1.6	15	12.1

Note. Measured by Self-Report Questionnaire of SWR

Table 15

*Participation in Faculty Development Opportunities and Non-Academic Activities by Adjunct Faculty Type*

Adjunct Faculty Type	<u>N</u>	<u>Participate in Faculty Development</u>		<u>Participate in Non-Academic Activities</u>	
		<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
Career-ender	23	16	69.6	17	73.9
Specialist/Expert/Professional	39	20	51.3	22	56.4
Aspiring Academic	33	16	48.5	19	57.6
Free-lancer	22	15	68.2	18	81.8
Other	7	4	57.1	4	57.1
<b>University Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>57.3</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>64.5</b>

Note. Measured by Self-Report Questionnaire of SWR

*Research Question 2*

*At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB between fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?*

To assess the significance of differences in OSB between fulltime and adjunct faculty, a two-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare

mean OSB scores for fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty and to examine the interaction effect of length of time teaching. The predictor variable, faculty status, included two levels: fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty. The covariate, length of time teaching at ODU, was a categorical variable with five levels: (a) first year, (b) 1-3 years, (c) 4-6 years, (d) 6-9 years, and (e) more than 9 years. The criterion variable, OSB Score, was a continuous numerical variable computed by summing the values of responses to individual items on the OSB Subscale of the SWR. The lowest possible OSB Score was 38 and the highest possible score was 140.

#### *Screening for Statistical Assumption Violations*

Before proceeding with data analysis, all variables were screened for possible statistical assumption violations using SPSS Frequencies, Explore, and Plot procedures. Two outliers for OSB score were detected. Some negative skewness (-.993) was associated with the OSB score. This value was just inside the acceptable range of +1.0 to -1.0 (Myers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006). The two outlier cases were deleted, resulting in a reduction of negative skewness to -.30. Screening of categorical variables for violations of normality returned no significant results.

#### *Two-Way Factorial ANOVA Results*

A 2 X 5 between subjects factorial ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the effects of faculty employment status (fulltime and adjunct) and length of time teaching (five categorical levels) on the OSB score. The means and standard deviations for OSB score as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 16. Levene's Test for Equality of Error Variance was not statistically significant,  $F(9, 280) = 1.79, p > .07$ , indicating homogeneity of variances among the dependent variable groups. The ANOVA indicated

significant main effects for faculty employment status, [ $F(1, 280) = 13.7, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .05$ ]. This Partial Eta Square value of .05 indicates that faculty employment status accounted for approximately 5% of the variance in OSB Score. Because the main effect for faculty employment status contained only two levels, no follow-up pairwise tests were conducted. The ANOVA indicated a non-significant main effect for length of time teaching, [ $F(4, 280) = .43, p = .79$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .01$ ] and a non-significant effect for the interaction between faculty employment status and length of time teaching, [ $F(4, 280) = 1.01, p = .40$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .01$ ]. The results of the factorial ANOVA are presented in Table 17. Figure 1 provides a visual comparison of mean OSB Score for fulltime and adjunct faculty at each level of the covariate length of time teaching at ODU. As seen in Figure 1, the mean OSB is lower for adjunct faculty than for fulltime faculty at all levels of the length of time teaching factor. The most significant differences in mean OSB occur in the first year of teaching and in the four to six years of teaching category.

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Table 16

*Means and Standard Deviations of OSB Score for Faculty Status as a Function of Length of Time Teaching at Old Dominion University*

	<u>First year</u>		<u>1-3 years</u>		<u>4-6 years</u>		<u>7-9 years</u>		<u>More than 9 years</u>	
Faculty	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Fulltime <sup>1</sup>	153.5	20.14	143.8	19.72	144.5	16.34	146.8	18.99	145.9	18.59
Adjunct <sup>2</sup>	133.8	14.32	141.3	20.30	133.2	23.32	136.0	23.60	139.3	27.14

<sup>1</sup>N = 168

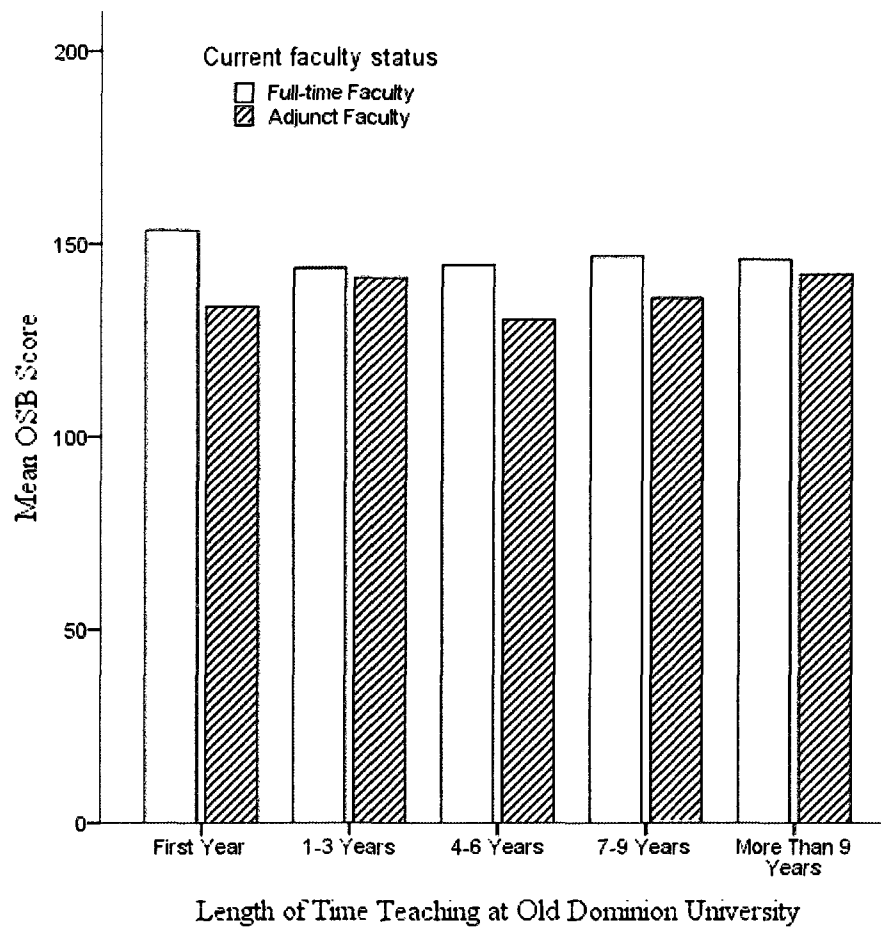
<sup>2</sup>N = 122

Table 17

*Summary of the Two-Way Analysis of Variance for Faculty Status and Length of Time Teaching at Old Dominion University*

Source	df	MS	F	p	$\eta^2$
Faculty Status	1	5394.3	13.7	.000*	.05
Time Teaching	4	170.2	.432	.785	.006
Faculty Status x Time Teaching	4	398.4	1.01	.402	.014
Total	290				

\* $p < .05$



*Figure 1. Comparison of OSB Scores for fulltime and adjunct faculty by length of time teaching.*

### *Research Question 3*

*At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB among adjunct faculty types, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?*

To assess the significance of differences in OSB between adjunct faculty types, a factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare mean OSB scores for each type of adjunct faculty and to examine the interaction effect of length of time teaching. The predictor variable, adjunct faculty type, included four categories: (a) Career-ender, (b) Specialist/Expert/Professional, (c) Aspiring Academic, and (d) Freelancer. (The seven adjunct faculty members not identified as one of the defined types were removed prior to this analysis.) The covariate, length of time teaching at ODU, was a categorical variable with five levels: (a) first year, (b) 1-3 years, (c) 4-6 years, (d) 6-9 years, and (e) more than 9 years. The criterion variable, OSB Score, was a continuous numerical variable computed by summing the values of responses to individual items on the OSB Subscale of the SWR. The lowest possible OSB Score was 38, and the highest possible score was 140.

#### *Screening for Statistical Assumption Violations*

Before proceeding with data analysis, all variables were screened for possible statistical assumption violations using SPSS Frequencies, Explore, and Plot procedures. Preliminary screening returned a significant Levene's statistic, indicating a violation of the homogeneity of variances assumption. Screening for outliers identified three outliers for OSB score for two conditions of the length of time teaching variable. The variable was recoded to collapse the lowest category "first year" into the category "1-3 years" and to collapse the upper most category "more than 9 years" into the category "7-9 years."



The resulting three categories were: (a) 3 years or less, (b) 4-6 years, (c) 7 or more years.

The recoding was successful in correcting the homogeneity of variances violation,  $p >$

.16. The occurrence of outliers was also corrected. Skewness and kurtosis values for OSB

Score in aggregate and at each condition of the categorical variables were within the

acceptable +1.0 to -1.0 range (Myers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006).

### *Factorial ANOVA Results*

A 4 X 3 between subjects factorial ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the effects of adjunct faculty type (four categories) and length of time teaching (three levels) on the OSB score. The means and standard deviations for OSB score as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 18. Levene's Test for Equality of Error Variance was not statistically significant,  $F(11, 105) = 1.04, p > .41$ , indicating homogeneity of variances among the dependent variable groups. The ANOVA returned a non-significant main effect for adjunct faculty type,  $[F(3, 105) = .83, p = .48, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02]$  and a non-significant main effect for length of time teaching at Old Dominion University,  $[F(2, 105) = .87, p = .42, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02]$ . The ANOVA returned a significant interaction effect,  $[F(6, 105) = 2.3, p < .05, \eta^2 = .12]$ . The partial  $\eta^2$  of .12 indicated that the interaction of adjunct faculty type and length of time teaching at ODU accounted for 12% of the variance in OSB Score. The results of the factorial ANOVA are presented in Table 19.

Table 18

*Means and Standard Deviations of OSB Score for Adjunct Type as a Function of Length of Time Teaching at Old Dominion University*

Adjunct Type	<u>N</u>	<u>3 years or less</u>		<u>4-6 years</u>		<u>7 or more years</u>	
		<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Career-ender	23	123.5	19.16	126.0	25.87	152.8	25.34
Specialist/Expert/ Professional	39	141.8	23.17	128.6	24.25	128.9	22.00
Aspiring Academic	33	141.1	16.55	133.6	15.24	125.8	12.26
Free-lancer	39	139.4	12.71	138.0	16.99	147.0	24.18

Table 19

*Summary of Analysis of Variance for Adjunct Type and Length of Time Teaching at Old Dominion University*

Source	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>	<u><math>\eta^2</math></u>
Adjunct Type	3	354.8	.833	.479	.023
Time Teaching	2	368.6	.865	.424	.016
Adjunct Type x Time Teaching	6	978.8	2.29*	.040	.12
Total	117				

\* $p < .05$

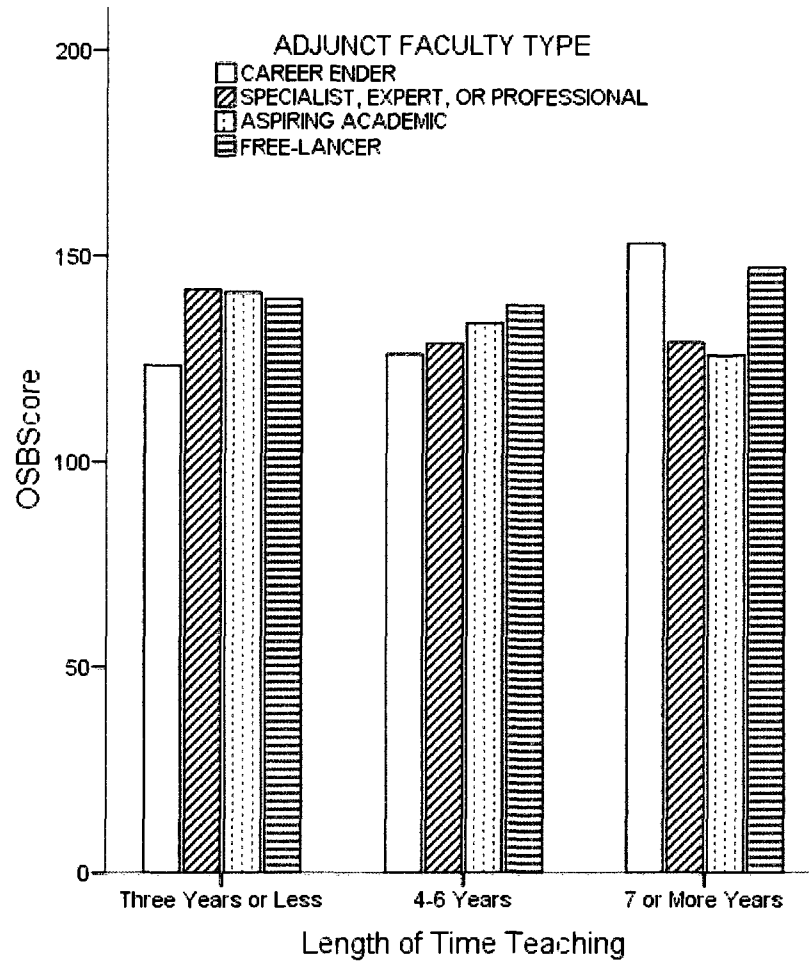
#### *Follow-up Analyses*

As follow-up to the significant interaction effect, simple main effects analyses were conducted for both factors. For the adjunct type main effect, examining differences among the four adjunct faculty types for the three levels of the length time teaching

separately, alpha was set at .017 to control for Type I error. The results indicated significant differences in mean OSB score between adjunct types for the 7 or more years condition of the length of time teaching variable,  $F(3, 105) = 3.28, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .10$ . Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate the four pairwise differences among the means for length of time teaching of 7 or more years. The only significant difference in mean OSB score identified was between Career-ender and Specialist/Expert/Professional,  $MD = 23.89, p < .05$ .

For the length of time teaching main effect, examining differences among the three levels of length of time teaching for the four adjunct faculty types separately, alpha was set at .013 to control for Type I error. The results indicated significant differences in mean OSB score between the different length of time teaching levels for Career-enders,  $F(23, 105) = 5.35, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .09$ . Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate the three pairwise differences among the means for Career-Enders. Significant differences in mean OSB score were identified between Career-enders teaching for seven or more years and Career-enders teaching three years or less ( $MD = 29.3, p < .05$ ) and Career-enders teaching between 4 and 6 years ( $MD = 26.8, p < .05$ ).

Figure 2 provides a visual comparison of mean OSB Score for the four types of adjunct faculty at each level of the covariate length of time teaching at ODU. As shown in Figure 2, the mean OSB score for Aspiring Academics and Specialist/Expert/Professionals decreased as length of time teaching at ODU increased. For Career-Enders and Free-Lancers, the mean OSB score increased as length of time teaching increased.



*Figure 2. Comparison of OSB Scores for adjunct faculty types by length of time teaching.*

#### *Research Questions 4 and 5*

One purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between OSB and a specific type of organizational commitment known as affective organizational commitment (AOC). The investigation also included determining if the relationship is different for the two faculty employment groups, adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty. The research questions for this investigation were (a) What is the relationship between OSB

and AOC among adjunct faculty at this institution? and (b) What is the relationship between OSB and AOC among fulltime faculty at this institution?

For the purposes of this study, OSB was defined as having a level of connection to the organization that contributes positively to one's sense of *connectedness* (being part of, fitting in, and/or feeling accepted) and *esteem* (begin cared about, valued, and/or respected). While these factors can be critical to the emotional health of the employee, employers may be more concerned with the impact of low OSB on the health of the organization itself. AOC has been shown to identify an employee's specific affinity toward the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This affinity invokes a shared identity and may be a source of motivation to contribute meaningfully to the general good of the organization. Employees with high AOC report higher levels of adherence to policy and are found to have better job performance (Mowday et al, 1982; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 1992).

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) assesses the degree that quantitative variables are related in a particular sample. For these two research questions, the two variables are the OSB Score and the AOC score. The OSB Score was a continuous quantitative variable computed by summing the values of responses to individual items on the OSB Subscale of the SWR. The lowest possible OSB Score was 38 and the highest possible score was 140. The AOC Score was a continuous quantitative variable computed by summing the values of responses to individual items on AOC Subscale of the SWR. The lowest possible OSB Score was 7 and the highest possible score was 56. Table 20 shows the means and standard deviations for OSB Scores and AOC Scores for the two faculty employment groups.

### *Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Results*

Separate Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed for each faculty employment group. The correlation between OSB and AOC among adjunct faculty was significant,  $r(122) = .69, p < .001$ . The correlation between OSB and AOC among fulltime faculty was significant,  $r(166) = .60, p < .001$ . In general, the results indicated that if a faculty member from either employment group had strong OSB or AOC, they tended to be strong in the other construct as well.

Table 20

*Means and Standard Deviations for OSB Scores and AOC Scores by Faculty Employment Group*

Faculty Group	<u>OSB Score</u>		<u>AOC Score</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Adjunct Faculty	136	22.32	39.9	8.7
Fulltime Faculty	145.8	18.51	37.8	9.9

### Summary

This study was conducted to assess differences in OSB between adjunct and fulltime faculty at ODU and to assess differences in OSB between the different types of adjunct faculty. In both analyses, the interaction effect of length of time teaching was considered. The study also investigated the correlation between OSB and AOC. In general the analyses indicated that adjunct faculty at ODU have a lower OSB than fulltime faculty; that some differences exist in OSB levels based on adjunct faculty type,

and that there is a strong linear relationship between OSB and AOC, regardless of faculty employment status. Chapter V provides a detailed discussion of the findings.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate organizational sense of belonging (OSB) and affective organizational commitment (AOC) among adjunct faculty at a four-year doctoral institution, including measuring mean differences in OSB between adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty, as well as mean differences in OSB among different types of adjunct faculty as defined by Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty. Further, the study examined the distribution of adjunct faculty among the four categories described in Gappa and Leslie's typology. The study also investigated the correlation between OSB and the related construct of AOC. The investigations included in the study were organized around five research questions. This chapter provides a summary and discussion of the findings for each research question. The chapter also includes discussions of the implications for stakeholders and researchers; the limitations of the study; and specific recommendations for future research.

#### Discussion of Research Findings

##### *Research Question 1*

*At this institution, what is the distribution of adjunct faculty among the categories delineated in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty?*

The context for this question is grounded in the research of Judith Gappa and David Leslie. In their 1993 seminal work *The Invisible Faculty*, Gappa and Leslie reported on part-time faculty practices and policies at all levels of higher education. The categories, or types, of adjunct faculty established by Gappa and Leslie acknowledge



complex patterns of experience and motivation, and diverse levels of part-time faculty engagement (Fagen-Wilen et al., 2006; Roueche et al., 1995). Gappa and Leslie's research, along with that of Bianco-Mathis and Chalofsky (1996) and Lyons et al. (1999) suggests that (a) over half of all adjunct faculty members are employed fulltime outside of academe and can best be categorized as specialist, expert, or professional; (b) these faculty work in professions directly related to their teaching discipline; and (c) adjunct faculty ranks at four-year doctoral institutions are largely comprised of individuals in this category. Additional findings from the research suggest that the majority of adjuncts teach in the liberal arts and sciences and in the professions (Bianco-Mathis & Chalofsky; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006).

While the largest percentage of ODU adjuncts participating in this study were Specialist, Expert, or Professional (31.4%), they were not the strong majority suggested by the research. Only a slightly smaller percentage of respondents (27.4%) self-selected into the Aspiring Academic category, a category researchers identify as being predominantly found at non-research institutions (Fagen-Wilen et al., 2006; Roueche et al., 1995). In accordance with the extant research, more than 50% of the University's Aspiring Academics participating in the study teach in the College of Arts and Letters. More than 40% of all adjuncts in the College of Arts and Letters participating in the study were Aspiring Academics, with nearly 34% of those Aspiring Academics teaching English.

The literature also indicates that professional disciplines such as business, law, and medicine acknowledge the benefits of having established practitioners bring special expertise to the classroom (Bender & Hammons, 1972; Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006;

Guthrie-Morse, 1979). Study findings support this trend in the colleges of Health Sciences and Sciences, with more than 40% of adjuncts in each college indicating they are Specialist, Expert, or Professional. Contrary to the literature, adjuncts in the College of Business and Public Administration are equally as likely to be Career-enders. Approximately 18% of all study participants in the Specialist/Expert/Professional category reported current employment in an area not related to their current teaching responsibilities, which seems inconsistent with the description of this adjunct type provided in the literature (Bender & Hammons; Fagan-Wilen et al.; Gappa & Leslie, Guthrie-Morse). In aggregate, 68.5% of adjuncts participating in the study reported current or former employment in an area related to their teaching discipline.

Although contemporary media tend to portray adjunct faculty as “freeway fliers” piecing together fulltime employment from adjunct positions at several institutions (Murphy, 2002; Selingo, 2008; Wallin, 2004), only about one-quarter of the adjuncts participating in this study reported teaching at least one course simultaneously at another institution. While prior research (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Roueche et al., 1995) indicated that Aspiring Academics are most likely to teach at more than one institution, this study found that behavior to be more prevalent among Specialist/Expert/Professional adjuncts, with about 40% reporting teaching at least one course at another academic institution. Conversely, Aspiring Academics were most likely to teach multiple courses at ODU, with nearly 40% teaching three or more courses. Approximately two-thirds of adjuncts participating in the study were employed at least part-time in addition to their adjunct teaching responsibilities. This is consistent with data reported in prior research (Gappa & Leslie; Murphy; Roueche et al.). Also consistent with prior research are the findings that

a significant number (95%) of Specialist/Expert/Professional adjuncts were employed fulltime and approximately 83% of Career Enders indicated they were retired or employed only part-time (Fagan-Wilen et al., Gappa & Leslie, Roueche et al.).

### *Research Question 2*

*At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB between fulltime faculty and adjunct faculty, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?*

Research concerning the relationship between adjunct faculty and the academic institutions at which they work suggests a transient, disenfranchised workforce having loose or weak connections with their institutions and being unlikely to participate in the institutional community (Grubb & Worthen, 1999; Ronco & Cahill, 2004). Concerns about the increased use of adjunct faculty frequently focus on the limited ability of part-time faculty to fully participate in campus life (Jaschik, 2008a). Researchers posit that adjunct faculty may be alienated from their peers and are twice as likely as fulltime faculty to report no interactions with colleagues on a given work day (Grubb & Worthen; Schuetz, 2002). Adjunct faculty are perceived to be a threat to the quality of academic programs due, in part, to the inability to form collegial relationships (Umbach, 2007). One researcher noted that “many part-time instructors slip in and out of their classrooms without much interaction with the rest of the institution” (Grubb & Worthen, p. 42). The attitudes and behaviors described by these researchers are inherent in the construct of organizational sense of belonging (Hoffman et al., 2002; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Osterman, 2001).

Findings from this study confirmed a statistically significant difference in OSB between adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty, controlling for length of time teaching at ODU. Results of the factorial ANOVA indicated significant main effects for faculty employment status; however, it is important to note that the Partial Eta Square value of .05 indicated that faculty employment status accounted for only approximately 5% of the variance in OSB Score. The findings also indicated that length of time teaching or the interaction of faculty employment status and length of time teaching did not significantly affect OSB.

### *Research Question 3*

*At this institution, is there a statistically-significant difference in OSB between adjunct faculty types, controlling for length of time teaching at the University?*

Literature related to the adjunct faculty types included in Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology suggested different backgrounds and motivations for each type. These differences would, in turn, affect the extent to which adjuncts of each type tend to engage in activities that support formation of a strong OSB (Gappa & Leslie; Lyons, 2007; Lyons et al., 1999; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). Based on the extant research, it was expected that Aspiring Academics would be least likely to establish strong OSB, based on their need to have part-time employment concurrently at several institutions to patch together a fulltime wage (Murphy, 2002; Selingo, 2008; Wallin, 2004). Career-enders, described as either fully-retired or using adjunct teaching as a transition to a more balanced lifestyle, would also be unlikely to develop strong OSB (Lyons). Conversely, Specialist/Expert/Professional adjuncts would be more likely to establish strong OSB, based on their desire to pursue new social and professional contacts and gain fulfillment

through sharing their expertise (Bianco-Mathis & Chalofsky, 1996; Gappa & Leslie; Lyons, Kysilka, & Pawlas; Schuster & Finkelstein). The propensity for Free-lancers to establish strong OSB would be dependent upon their specific motivations for the employment. Free-lancers who choose part-time teaching because of other primary obligations (care-giver to children or others) would be less-likely to form strong OSB (Gappa & Leslie; Lyons et al.; Schuster & Finkelstein). Conversely, artists or others who want to leverage their association with the academic institution would be expected to engage in behaviors that would lead to strong OSB (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Gappa & Leslie; Jaffee, 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Pratt, 1998; Van Dick et al., 2005).

Contrary to the indications of the literature, initial findings from this study identified no statistically significant differences in OSB among the four adjunct faculty types. A between- subjects factorial ANOVA using length of time teaching at ODU as the covariate found nonsignificant effects for adjunct faculty type and for length of time teaching at ODU. The ANOVA indicated a significant effect for the interaction of adjunct faculty type and length of time teaching. Follow-up analyses found a statistically significant difference in OSB between Career-enders and Specialists/Experts/Professionals with a length of time teaching of seven or more years. The mean OSB score for Career-enders teaching seven or more years was approximately 24 points higher than that of Specialists/Experts/Professionals in the same length of time teaching category. Additional follow-up analyses found statistically significant differences in OSB between Career-enders teaching for seven or more years and Career-enders in the other length of time teaching categories. These findings tend to confirm prior research for traditional Career-enders who view adjunct teaching as a short-term transitional experience.

However, when Career-enders opted to extend their teaching beyond the initial three-year period, they tended to establish very strong OSB.

*Research Questions 4 and 5*

*What is the relationship between OSB and AOC among adjunct faculty at this institution? and What is the relationship between OSB and AOC among fulltime faculty at this institution?*

The extant literature strongly suggested the existence of a relationship between OSB and AOC (Allen & Meyer, 1990a; Allen & Meyer, 1990b; Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Jaffee, 2001; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Pratt, 1998; Thoits, 1983; Van Dick et al., 2005). Godard (2001) established a specified a set of variables described as psychosocial and including achievement of a sense of belonging and aligned those variables with a set of attitudinal variables, including commitment. The concept of “procedural fairness,” the perceived fairness of treatment individuals receive, has been shown to influence the sense of organizational belongingness and to increase commitment to the organization as defined by cooperative behavior in organizational dilemmas (Folger, 1993; Koper et al., 1993; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Findings from this study are consistent with the literature, indicating a strong relationship between OSB and AOC, regardless of whether the faculty member has part-time or fulltime status. Pearson Product-Moment correlations between OSB and AOC were significant for both adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty. In general, the results indicated that if a faculty member from either employment group had strong organizational belongingness or affective organizational commitment, they tended to be strong in the other construct as well.

## Implications for Stakeholders

### *Implications for Higher Education Administrators*

The findings that OSB and AOC have a strong linear relationship suggest several implications for higher education administrators, especially in the development of policies for adjunct faculty employment. Prior research has demonstrated a direct link between AOC and the extent to which all employees are motivated to contribute meaningfully to the organization, to evaluate alternatives in terms of perceived consequences to the organization, and to select the alternative that best supports the goals and objectives of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch; Tompkins & Cheney, 1985). Although the current study does not establish directionality in the OSB-AOC relationship, the findings indicate that the strength of one factor tends to influence the strength of the other. The ability of the individual employee to develop and maintain OSB is highly dependent upon the employing environment (Van Dick et al., 2005). Specifically, development of OSB is dependent upon the extent to which the work environment contributes to the employee's interpretation of being a valued, trusted, effective, and supported member of the organization (Pierce et al., 1989).

For higher education administrators, these relationships emphasize the need to identify and reevaluate University policies that may adversely impact the ability of adjunct faculty members to develop a sense of organizational belongingness. One key environmental characteristic in the formation of OSB is procedural fairness, especially the extent to which individual employees are given a role in decision making (Koper et al., 1993; Tyler & Lind, 1992; Quinn, 2006). Higher education leaders should strive to actively involve adjunct faculty in the governance of the institution, including having

representation on university-wide committees and institutional searches. When universities are evaluating readiness for accreditation reviews, especially when some standards of the accreditation are related to adjunct faculty credentials, adjuncts should be directly involved in the process.

Organizational belongingness has been linked to the extent to which individual members of the organization consider themselves to be included in opportunities available to all members of the organization. Inequities in the availability of opportunities to establish collegial relationships and to participate in professional development inhibit the development of organizational belongingness (Allen & Meyer, 1990a; Jaffee, 2001; Quinn, 2006). Programs designed to increase opportunities for adjunct faculty to interact with each other and with fulltime faculty may facilitate stronger OSB. A mentorship program that matches adjunct faculty with fulltime faculty members teaching in the same discipline would improve both organizational socialization and professional development. Through mentoring relationships, excellent part-time instructors will be recognized and less-effective instructors will receive the support necessary to improve their classroom skills.

In this study, over 40% of adjunct faculty reported never having participated in faculty development activities. This could be attributed to policies that exclude adjunct faculty from applying for fund programs such as course development grants and research grants. Making some of these opportunities available to part-time faculty would acknowledge part-time faculty as serious scholars and acknowledge the individual's value to the organization. Faculty development programs that are open to adjunct faculty should be scheduled at alternative times to increase opportunities for participation. As



more adjunct faculty participate in faculty development, the university benefits from both the potential increase in OSB and from having adjunct faculty who are current with pedagogical developments.

There are numerous other options for the university to convey the message that adjunct faculty are valued, trusted, effective, and supported member of the institution (Pierce et al., 1989). These include teaching and service awards for adjunct faculty, updating pay practices that create financial hardships, and providing a comprehensive adjunct faculty handbook that collates all critical information into one easily accessible publication.

#### *Implications for Department Chairpersons*

This study also investigated OSB at the departmental level. Several conditions measured by the OSB Subscale can be linked to specific behaviors of department chairpersons or to the work environment, which can be influenced by the department chairperson. The OSB Subscale included four items measuring the participants' perceptions of their interactions with persons in positions of authority, including feedback on job performance; and interactions with persons in the organization who are perceived to be "influential" (Miller, 1975; Quinn, 2006). Study findings suggest that improving the mechanisms for evaluation and performance feedback for adjunct faculty will likely improve OSB and AOC for this group. Increasing opportunities for adjunct faculty to have input into decisions that affect the department might also improve OSB and AOC.

Additional implications for department chairpersons were provided by findings tangential to the SPSS analysis of the data. During the data collection phase of the study, individual adjuncts contacted the researcher to suggest that questions related to the flow

of communication should have been included. Adjuncts often work a schedule that prevents participation in departmental or college-wide faculty meetings. As such, they would appreciate receiving reports of discussions and actions that occur in such meetings. For department chairpersons, these comments indicate that adjunct faculty members have a need to share in the governance of the department. This conclusion is supported by prior research into the role of shared governance in the development of positive organizational relationships (AAUP, 1993; Schuetz, 2002; Quinn, 2006).

Other efforts likely to improve OSB include programs that provide opportunities for adjunct faculty to interact professionally and personally with other adjunct faculty and with fulltime faculty. One recommendation identified by researchers as having the potential to improve both supervision and provide opportunities for interaction is to design an evaluation process that includes department chairpersons and fulltime faculty (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron). Other recommendations include formal orientations specifically for adjunct faculty, encouraging (and compensating) adjunct faculty to participate in college life through committee work and student advising, and assigning adjunct faculty a mentor (either a fulltime faculty member or a veteran adjunct faculty member) (Fagan-Wilen et al., 2006; Leslie, Kellams, & Gunne, 1982). To the greatest extent possible, departmental administrators should strive to create a working environment for adjunct faculty that is less isolated and provides more opportunity for interpersonal interactions and professional development (Quinn, 2006)

Additional implications for department chairpersons are informed by the results of the factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted to compare mean OSB scores for each type of adjunct faculty and to examine the interaction effect of length of time

teaching. The results indicated that the mean OSB score for Aspiring Academics and for Specialist/Expert/Professionals decreased as length of time teaching at ODU increased. For Career-Enders and Free-Lancers, the mean OSB score increased as length of time teaching increased. This finding suggests that department chairpersons should be aware that individual adjuncts have different personal circumstances and motivations that affect their employment as a faculty member. As noted by Wallin (2004), knowing what motivates adjunct faculty will help department chairpersons identify ways they can help adjuncts feel a part of the department. The finding that OSB for Aspiring Academics and Specialists, Experts, Professionals decreases over time could indicate that these individuals enter their teaching role with expectations that are not met, leading to a sense of disillusionment. Possible ways to address this issue are for department chairpersons to be honest with adjuncts about the prospects for future fulltime employment and to give some seniority consideration to adjuncts in the scheduling of courses (Monaco, in Jaschik, 2008, October).

#### *Implications for Adjunct Faculty*

One of the major implications for adjunct faculty is the value of establishing solid, reciprocal inter-personal relationships. Over 80% of the adjunct faculty participating in this study indicated they view their department as a place to experience a sense of belonging. Specific personal behaviors have been identified as contributing to the development of organizational sense of belonging, including seeking support from and offering support to colleagues. It is widely recognized that the pay scale for adjunct faculty does not encourage extra-role behaviors. However, efforts on the part of adjunct faculty to strengthen their inter-personal relationships in the academic workplace will

likely contribute to improved psycho-social health, especially in the form of improved self-concept and feelings of morale (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Tajfel, 1978).

It is important that adjunct faculty personally recognize their value to higher education. In contrast to the picture of adjunct faculty presented in the press and by some researchers, there is significant evidence that adjunct faculty are key to the integrity and viability of higher education institutions (AAUP Policy, 2006; Quinn, 2006). In the current study, over 70% of the adjunct participants reported viewing the College's problems as their own. Adjunct faculty who have potential remedies for those problems should feel free to share those solutions without hesitation. Study findings indicate that adjunct faculty ascribe value to information. The university e-mail system is the official avenue of communication for the university; therefore, it is important that adjunct faculty activate and use their faculty e-mail account.

In this study, approximately 57% of adjuncts reported participating in faculty development, and about 66% reported participating in non-academic University events and activities. Scheduling of these events can potentially impact ability to participate; however, adjuncts are encouraged to be involved in these activities to the greatest extent possible. If, as a result of this study, opportunities are provided to adjunct faculty to become more involved in departmental or institution-wide governance, it will be critical that adjuncts embrace those responsibilities. Another implication for adjunct faculty is the importance of participation in studies such as this one that attempt to inform higher education leadership about adjunct faculty and the circumstances of their employment.

### Implications for Research

A major implication of this study is the need for additional research. Some findings of this study contradict the traditional portrayal of adjunct faculty as more disenfranchised from their academic institution than fulltime faculty. Researchers and reporters routinely describe an employee group comprised of individuals who feel disconnected and alienated, have undefined commitments, are unavailable to colleagues and students, and are not part of the institution or institutional culture to the same extent as fulltime faculty (Alfred, 2003; Gappa & Leslie, 2003; Garri & Peterson, 2006; Grasgreen, 2008; Grubb & Worthen, 1999; Jaeger & Eagan, 2008; Haeger, 1998; Lyons, 2007; Murphy, 2002; Noble, 2000; Roueche et al., 1995; Schuster, 2003; Selingo, 2008; Sonner, 2000; Umbach, 2007; Wallin, 2005). All of the characteristics described by these researchers are inherent in organizational belongingness; however, the study found that faculty employment status was responsible for only about 5% of the difference in OSB among study participants. This suggests the need for additional research to identify additional conditions, specific to adjunct faculty, which support or detract from the development of organizational belonging

Findings from the study suggest a strong linear relationship between OSB and AOC, confirming the relationship suggested in the literature. Although the analysis examined only the existence of a relationship and did not investigate causality, extant research provides some indicators of the direction of the relationship (Adler, 1993; Cappelli & Rogovsky, 1998; Hogg & Turner, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Tajfel, 1978). Meyer and Allen found that when employees have a positive opinion of the organization's willingness and ability to value and reward their

contributions, they are more likely to develop a strong emotional attachment to the organization (belongingness) and, in turn, will experience greater motivation to contribute meaningfully to the organization (affective commitment). Meyer and Herscovitch suggested that, for affective commitment to form, individuals must have a strong desire to take action that is relevant to the organization. They further identified belongingness as one of the mechanisms underlying the creation of this desire.

Adler (1993) posited that increased sense of belonging and organizational identification foster both improved team participation and organizational commitment. Research also indicates that perceived fair treatment and the resultant sense of organizational belongingness may increase commitment to the organization as defined by cooperative behavior in organizational dilemmas (Tyler & Lind, 1992; van Knippenberger & Sleebos, 2006). Based on the existing research and the findings of this study, additional research is recommended to investigate causality in the relationship between OSB and AOC. The tangential observations related to communication suggest the need for studies that investigate adjunct faculty perceptions of the communication structure within their college or university and the connection, if any, between organizational communication and the formation of OSB.

### Limitations

The study had several limitations, primarily associated with the ability to generalize the findings, and with the research design.

#### *Generalizability of Findings*

The ability to generalize the findings of this study to all adjunct faculty or to all academic institutions is limited. The study was conducted a single four-year doctoral

university. Both the adjunct and fulltime faculty populations at this institution may be different from populations at other doctoral institutions and at academic institutions of different types, such as community colleges. Similarly, the sample size might also limit generalizability. The survey had a 32% response rate. Results of the study may have been different if all 1138 members of the initial sample had completed the survey. The randomness of the obtained sample, or actual respondents, was reduced by subject loss, resulting from the inability to contact all members of the targeted sample and the inability to gain participation from potential respondents who were requested to participate (Braver & Bay, 1992). Further, those who chose to respond to the survey might have been disproportionately concentrated among certain values (Braver & Bay). For this study, it could be argued that faculty members with a strong sense of organizational belonging or organizational commitment were more likely to respond favorably to a request for participation in the study.

Other limitations also existed. The economic climate in the year of the study and in the two years immediately preceding the study could have influenced responses to some survey items, particularly for fulltime faculty. Fulltime faculty at the study institution have received no annual pay increase for two years and no raise is expected this year. Budget constraints have placed limitations on spending for conference travel, supplies, and printing/copying. Losses in retirement accounts may have caused some faculty to continue working beyond their desired retirement date. In the two years prior to the study, the University experienced a change in leadership at two top positions, Provost and President. The uncertainties created by these changes could be reflected in survey responses.

*Limitations of the Research Design*

The study was further limited by the research design. The study was non-experimental and causal/comparative and correlational in design. This design limits the ability to identify cause and effect; results can only be interpreted to show that a relationship exists. Although study findings provide strong evidence to establish a relationship between OSB and AOC, both causality and temporal relationships remain unclear (Thompson & Panacek, 2007). Specifically, the findings cannot be interpreted to indicate that one construct, either OSB or AOC, causes the other or to indicate which construct is the independent or predictor variable.

The use of an internet-based survey, as well as some qualities of the survey, also limits the generalizability of the findings. The survey was constructed so that individual items could not be skipped; however, neither of the subscales provided a “not applicable” response choice. Some individuals taking the survey might have found some items on the survey to not apply to their situation. They would, however, be required to choose a response or abandon the survey. Another limitation of the design is the manner in which adjunct faculty participants were assigned to one of Gappa and Leslie’s (1993) adjunct faculty types. For this study, participants were provided with a description of the characteristics of the individual types and asked to self-select. It is possible that participants could misinterpret the descriptions or not clearly recognize the individual variables that place one in a specific type.



### Recommendations for Future Research

This study provides one perspective for examining OSB among adjunct and fulltime faculty and for investigating the relationship between OSB and AOC. Further research of these complex issues is needed.

#### *Recommendation 1*

The first recommendation for research is further refinement of methods for measuring organizational sense of belonging in a higher education setting. The current study utilized a modification of an existing scale. Both the original scale and the modified version were examined for internal consistency by computing a split-half coefficient expressed as a Spearman-Brown corrected correlation and co-efficient alpha. The analyses yielded values indicating satisfactory reliability: Cronbach's  $\alpha = .95$ ; Spearman-Brown coefficient = .93. There are, however, characteristics specific to the higher education environment which may indicate the need for additional items to be added to the scale. Additionally, the unique attributes of the higher education work setting may support the exclusion of some individual items from the original scale.

#### *Recommendation 2*

The study should be replicated with adjunct and fulltime faculty at other higher education institutions, including institutions similar to the study institution and those with different classifications, such as community colleges. A comparison among the findings could be useful in determining if the factors vary based on educational environment.

#### *Recommendation 3*

Based on the existing research and the findings of this study, additional research is recommended to investigate causality in the relationship between OSB and AOC. This

could be accomplished through a longitudinal study in which the OSB and AOC of participants is measured, followed by interventions based on the proven contributors to OSB, and post-intervention measures of OSB and AOC. Other recommendations include utilizing more sophisticated data analysis techniques to investigate directionality, including Exploratory Tetrad Analysis (Glymour, Scheines, Spirtes, Kelly, 1987)] and Confirmatory Tetrad Analysis (CTA) (Bollen & Ting, 1993).

#### *Recommendation 4*

The study should add a qualitative component. Focus groups could be conducted with adjunct faculty with questions designed to address the conditions and behaviors included in the OSB Subscale. This qualitative component would help to further validate the OSB Subscale or suggest modifications that would result in a more effective scale for measuring belongingness in a higher education setting.

#### *Recommendation 5*

The tangential observations of this study related to communication suggest the need for future research that investigates adjunct faculty perceptions of the communication structure within their college or university and the connection, if any, between organizational communication and the formation of OSB. Some adjunct faculty who communicated with the researcher indicated they consider communication important in the development of organizational belongingness.

#### *Recommendation 6*

This study examines OSB and AOC in aggregate for all fulltime faculty members. Future research to investigate differences in various segments of this population, such as differences among non-tenure eligible, tenure-track, and tenured

faculty, would help provide a more comprehensive understanding these two psycho-social constructs.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine organizational belongingness and organizational commitment among adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty at a public research university, including determining the distribution of the university's adjunct faculty across Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology, examining the differences in OSB between fulltime and adjunct faculty and among adjunct faculty types, and investigating the correlation between OSB and AOC. Over the past two decades, all categories of public higher education institutions have increased their reliance on adjunct faculty (AFT, 2009; NCES, 2006; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). When these part-time faculty members have a weak connection (sense of belonging) to the university, the resulting culture can have a destabilizing effect on the entire institution.

Findings from the study, based on a sample of adjunct and fulltime faculty at one university, indicate that adjunct faculty may have slightly lower OSB than fulltime faculty and that there is a strong linear relationship between OSB and AOC. Organizational commitment has been linked to unity of organizational purpose (Bolen & Hoyle, 1990) and internalization of organizational goals and objectives (Van Dick, 2001). Retaining quality adjunct faculty with a vested interest in the institution benefits everyone, including students. The findings of the study can inform institutional decision-making regarding programs to integrate adjunct faculty into the culture of the university. Further, the findings provide the basis for future research and highlight the complexities of measuring psycho-social constructs in a higher education setting.

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## APPENDIX A

## Survey of Workplace Relationships

**Section One – Organizational Sense of Belonging Subscale****1. I feel like I fit in with other faculty in my department.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**2. It is important to feel accepted by your coworkers.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**3. Faculty I work with in my department see me as a competent person.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**4. Others in my department offer to help me when they sense I need.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**5. I make an effort to help new hires feel welcome.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**6. I receive sufficient feedback about my work.**



*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**7. I view my department as a place to experience a sense of belonging.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**8. I receive support from other faculty in my department when I need it.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**9. I have opportunities for social interaction with my faculty coworkers.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**10. I like the faculty I work with in my department.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**11. I feel discriminated against in my department.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**12. I offer to help other faculty in my department, even if they don't ask for it.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**13. I have opportunities for social interaction with college administrators.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**14. It is important to me that someone I work with acknowledge my birthday.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**15. I invite my faculty coworkers to eat lunch/dinner with me.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**16. As a faculty member in my department, I feel like an outsider.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**17. There are faculty I work with in my department who share my values.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**18. Others in my department ask for my ideas or opinions about different matters.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**19. I feel understood by others in my department.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**20. I feel comfortable contacting my department chair if I have the need to do so.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**21. I make an effort to be involved with other faculty in my department in some way.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**22. I am supportive of other faculty in my department.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**23. I ask for advice from other faculty in my department.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True

☐ Rarely True

☐ Never True

**24. Faculty I work with in my department accept me when I am just being myself.**

*{Choose one}*

☐ Always True

☐ Often True

☐ Sometimes True

☐ Rarely True

☐ Never True

**25. I am uncomfortable attending social functions at my department because I feel like I don't belong.**

*{Choose one}*

☐ Always True

☐ Often True

☐ Sometimes True

☐ Rarely True

☐ Never True

**26. When I approach a group of faculty coworkers, I feel welcomed.**

*{Choose one}*

☐ Always True

☐ Often True

☐ Sometimes True

☐ Rarely True

☐ Never True

**27. Feeling "a part of things" is one of the things I like about being a faculty member in my department.**

*{Choose one}*

☐ Always True

☐ Often True

☐ Sometimes True

☐ Rarely True

☐ Never True

**28. There are faculty in my department with whom I feel a strong bond.**

*{Choose one}*

☐ Always True

☐ Often True

☐ Sometimes True

☐ Rarely True

☐ Never True

**29. As a faculty member, I keep my personal life to myself at work.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**30. It seems that faculty I work with in my department like me.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**31. I let other faculty in my department know I care about them by asking how things are going for them and their family.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**32. I am satisfied with the level of supervision I receive as a faculty member.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**33. Other faculty in my department notice when I am absent from work or social gatherings.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**34. One or more of the faculty in my department confides in me.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True

☐ Never True

**35. I let other faculty in my department know that I appreciate them.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**36. I ask other faculty in my department for help when I need it.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**37. I like the department where I teach.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

**38. I feel free to share disappointments with at least one other faculty member in my department.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Always True
- ☐ Often True
- ☐ Sometimes True
- ☐ Rarely True
- ☐ Never True

## **Section 2 – Affective Organizational Commitment Scale**

**1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of teaching career at this college.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**2. I enjoy discussing my college with people outside of it.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**3. I really feel as if this college's problems are my own.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**4. I think I could easily become as attached to another college as I am to this one.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**5. I do not feel "a member of the family" at this college.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**6. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this college.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree

- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**7. This college has a great deal of personal meaning for me.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**8. I do not have a strong sense of belonging to this college.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Slightly Agree
- ☐ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- ☐ Slightly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

**Section Three – Teaching Demographics**

**1. Current faculty status**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Fulltime Faculty
- ☐ Adjunct Faculty
- ☐ Graduate Teaching Assistant on Stipend
- ☐ PhD Student Teaching As Adjunct
- ☐ ODU Administrator Teaching as Adjunct
- ☐ Other ODU Employee Teaching as Adjunct

**2. College where you teach the majority of your classes.**

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Arts and Letters
- ☐ Business and Public Administration
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Health Sciences
- ☐ Sciences

**3. Discipline in which you teach the majority of your courses.**

*Appropriate dropdowns provided for each college.*



**4. At which level do you typically teach?***{Choose one}*

- ☐ General Education Courses
- ☐ Undergraduate Elective Courses
- ☐ Undergraduate Core Courses
- ☐ Masters' Level
- ☐ Doctoral Level
- ☐ Other [                      ]

**5. Location where you teach the majority of your classes.***{Choose one}*

- ☐ Norfolk campus
- ☐ Higher Education Center
- ☐ TELETECHNET
- ☐ Field/Clinical Supervision (including Student Teacher Supervision)
- ☐ Other [                      ]

**6. Total years as a faculty member at Old Dominion University***{Choose one}*

- ☐ This is my first year
- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-9 years
- ☐ More than 9 years

**Section Three - Adjunct Only Survey Items****1. Number of courses taught this semester at Old Dominion University***{Choose one}*

- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ Three
- ☐ Four
- ☐ More than four

**2. Number of courses taught this semester at other academic institutions***{Choose one}*

- ☐ One
- ☐ Two
- ☐ Three
- ☐ Four
- ☐ More than four

### 3. I participate in University-sponsored faculty development opportunities

{Choose one}

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

#### 4. I participate in non-academic University events/activities

*{Choose one}*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**5. Status of employment other than adjunct faculty member.**

{Choose one}

- ☐ Employed fulltime in career related to my adjunct teaching discipline
- ☐ Employed part-time in career related to my adjunct teaching discipline
- ☐ Employed fulltime in career NOT related to my adjunct teaching discipline
- ☐ Employed part-time in career NOT related to my adjunct teaching discipline
- ☐ Retired faculty - same discipline in which I am teaching as adjunct
- ☐ Retired faculty - DIFFERENT discipline from the one I am teaching in as adjunct
- ☐ Retired from non-higher education career related to my teaching discipline
- ☐ Retired from non-higher education career NOT related to my teaching discipline
- ☐ Other [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

## 6. Adjunct Faculty Type

**Researchers have established categories of adjunct faculty based upon personal and employment-related characteristics. Please read the following descriptions and choose the category you feel BEST describes you as an adjunct faculty member. If none of these categories appropriately describes your circumstances, please select "Other" and tell us about yourself and your role as an adjunct faculty member.**

{Choose one}

- ( ) CAREER ENDER (Former fulltime academics, fully-retired individuals, or individual in transition from a well-established career outside of higher education to a pre-retired or retired status in which part-time teaching plays a significant role.)
- ( ) SPECIALIST, EXPERT, OR PROFESSIONAL (Having a primary, usually fulltime career elsewhere)
- ( ) ASPIRING ACADEMIC - (Aspiring to teach fulltime)
- ( ) FREE-LANCER - (Not employed fulltime elsewhere and part-time faculty by choice.)
- ( ) OTHER [ ]

## Section Four – Basic Demographics

## 1. Gender



## APPENDIX B

## Permission to Use Somers BES-R Scale

**Merriman, Connie**

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**Subject:** FW: formal request for permission to use BES-R

-----Original Message-----

From: drmsomers@aol.com [mailto:drmsomers@aol.com]

Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2009 4:16 PM

To: Merriman, Connie

Subject: Re: formal request for permission to use BES-R

I'm sorry Connie, it got buried in my other emails.

You have my permission to use the BES-R items for Work/School with adaptation geared toward faculty.

This permission is granted under the condition that my scale and dissertation research are properly cited, that I receive a copy of the items as you adapt the wording, and that you send the psychometric data that you collect at the end of your analysis and findings/results.

Per our previous phone conversation, I am in the process of submitting a revised article for publication.

Best wishes in your research and thanks for contacting me!

Marsha

Marsha Somers, Ph.D.  
 Licensed Psychologist  
 8811 Colesville Road, Suite 104  
 Silver Spring, MD 20910  
 301-625-7612  
[drmsomers@aol.com](mailto:drmsomers@aol.com)  
<http://therapists.psychologytoday.com/37115>

-----Original Message-----

From: Merriman, Connie &lt;cmerrima@odu.edu&gt;

To: 'drmsomers@aol.com' &lt;drmsomers@aol.com&gt;

Sent: Thu, Aug 20, 2009 9:59 am

Subject: FW: formal request for permission to use BES-R

Dr. Somers,

Per our telephone conversation of August 10, 2009, I am submitting this written request to use the Work/School subscale of your revised Belongingness Scale (BES-R) for my dissertation study of adjunct faculty organizational sense of belonging. As we discussed, I will change the wording of some items in the scale to provide participants with the appropriate frame of reference for their responses. I will forward you the final version of the scale that is used in the study and will happily share with you the results of the study.

Thank you again for your help and I look forward to talking with you in the future about the very important topic of "sense of belonging!"

## APPENDIX C

## E-Mail to Target Population Sample

Dear Old Dominion University faculty member,

I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Administration PhD program in the Darden College of Education and a faculty administrator in the College of Business and Public Administration. I am e-mailing today to request your help with my dissertation research on how higher education faculty develop key workplace relationships (including organizational sense of belonging and organizational commitment). The dissertation topic is Adjunct Faculty Organizational Sense of Belonging and Affective Organizational Commitment. The study will include analysis of data provided by both fulltime and part-time faculty in 18 individual disciplines at Old Dominion University. This study has been approved by the Darden College of Education Human Subjects Review Board and is supported by the deans of the six academic colleges. My dissertation committee chair is Dr. Alan Schwitzer and he may be contacted via e-mail at [aschwitz@odu.edu](mailto:aschwitz@odu.edu).

I recognize that faculty members are extremely busy; however I hope that you will take the time to complete the online *Survey of Workplace Relationships*. The findings of this study will help inform institutional decision-making regarding the need for programs that strive to integrate adjunct faculty into the culture of the organization, thereby improving the potential for long-term relationships that benefit faculty, student, and the University.

The survey is anonymous and no personally-identifiable data is being collected. At the conclusion of the survey, you will have the opportunity to complete a response e-mail to enter a drawing for one of two \$50 gift cards from the University bookstore.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Connie Merriman

## APPENDIX D

## Application for Exempt Research Submitted to Darden College of Education Human

## Subjects Research Committee [Excluding Appendices]

Note: For research projects regulated by or supported by the Federal Government, submit 10 copies of this application to the Institutional Review Board. Otherwise, submit to your college human subjects committee.

<b>Responsible Project Investigator (RPI)</b>		
The RPI must be a member of ODU faculty or staff who will serve as the project supervisor and be held accountable for all aspects of the project. Students cannot be listed as RPIs.		
First Name: Alan	Middle Initial: M.	Last Name: Schwitzer
Telephone: 683-3251	Fax Number: 683-5756	E-mail: aschwitz@
Office Address: 256-1 Education Building		
City: Norfolk	State: VA	Zip: 23529-0157
Department: Counseling and Human Services		College: Darden College of Education
Complete Title of Research Project: Adjunct faculty organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment		Code Name (One word): SCHWITZER - Belongingness
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Investigators</b></p> <p>Individuals who are directly responsible for any of the following: the project's design, implementation, consent process, data collection, and data analysis. If more investigators exist than lines provided, please attach a separate list.</p>		
First Name: Constance	Middle Initial: L.	Last Name: Merriman
Telephone: 757-683-6548	Fax Number: 757-683-4076	Email: cmerrima@odu.edu
Office Address: Old Dominion University, CBPA, 2005 Constant Hall		
City: Norfolk	State: VA	Zip: 23529
Affiliation: <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
First Name:	Middle Initial:	Last Name:
Telephone:	Fax Number:	Email:
Office Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Affiliation: <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Student <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other		

List additional investigators on attachment and check here: \_\_\_\_

## Type of Research

1. This study is being conducted as part of (check all that apply):

\_\_\_\_ Faculty Research  
 XXX Doctoral Dissertation  
 \_\_\_\_ Masters Thesis

\_\_\_\_ Non-Thesis Graduate Student Research  
 \_\_\_\_ Honors or Individual Problems Project

## Funding

2. Is this research project externally funded or contracted for by an agency or institution which is independent of the university? Remember, if the project receives ANY federal support, then the project CANNOT be reviewed by a College Committee and MUST be reviewed by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

\_\_\_\_ Yes (If yes, indicate the granting or contracting agency and provide identifying information.)  
 XX No

Agency Name:  
 Mailing Address:  
 Point of Contact:  
 Telephone:

## Research Dates

3a. Date you wish to start research (MM/DD/YY) 10/15/2009

3b. Date you wish to end research (MM/DD/YY) 05/08/2010

## Human Subjects Review

4. Has this project been reviewed by any other committee (university, governmental, private sector) for the protection of human research participants?

\_\_\_\_ Yes  
 XX No

4a. If yes, is ODU conducting the primary review?

\_\_\_\_ Yes  
 \_\_\_\_ No (If no go to 4b)

**4b. Who is conducting the primary review?**

**5. Attach a description of the following items:**

XX Description of the Proposed Study

XX Research Protocol

XX References

XX Any Letters, Flyers, Questionnaires, etc. which will be distributed to the study subjects or other study participants

\_\_\_ If the research is part of a research proposal submitted for federal, state or external funding, submit a copy of the FULL proposal

Note: The description should be in sufficient detail to allow the Human Subjects Review Committee to determine if the study can be classified as EXEMPT under Federal Regulations 45CFR46.101(b).

**Exemption categories**

**6. Identify which of the 6 federal exemption categories below applies to your research proposal and explain**

**why the proposed research meets the category. Federal law 45 CFR 46.101(b) identifies the following EXEMPT categories. Check all that apply and provide comments.**

SPECIAL NOTE: The exemptions at 45 CFR 46.101(b) do not apply to research involving prisoners, fetuses, pregnant women, or human in vitro fertilization. The exemption at 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2), for research involving survey or interview procedures or observation of public behavior, does not apply to research with children, except for research involving observations of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not participate in the activities being observed.

\_\_\_ (6.1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

**Comments:**

XX (6.2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; AND (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

**Comments:**

- a.) Researcher will conduct an online survey using the University's survey system "Inquisite." An invitation to participate in the study will be e-mailed to a targeted population of adjunct and fulltime faculty at Old Dominion University. The survey will collect basic demographic information but no personally identifiable information. The survey will also include two



psycho-social measurement instruments – an Organizational Sense of Belonging Scale and an Affective Organizational Commitment Scale. All data collected via the survey will be stored on a password-protected laptop that is in the sole possession of the researcher and backed up on a portable drive that will be stored in a locked cabinet when not in use. Data will be stored only until it is no longer needed by the researcher.

- b.) Researcher will conduct one Town Hall meeting to present the quantitative findings of the study. All adjunct faculty members will be invited to attend the meeting and provide feedback on the study findings. Written notes will be taken and the notes will contain no personally identifiable information. Handwritten notes will be stored in a locked cabinet and transcribed notes will be stored on a password-protected laptop that is in the sole possession of the researcher and backed up on a portable drive that will be stored in a locked cabinet when not in use. Data will be stored only until it is no longer needed by the researcher.

\_\_\_\_ (6.3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, if:

- (i) The human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or  
(ii) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.

**Comments:**

**XX** (6.4) Research, involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

**Comments:**

Researcher will disaggregate data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment that includes courses taught and employment status of the individual teaching the course. Researcher will conduct a review of items published on the University website ([www.odu.edu](http://www.odu.edu)) to obtain general University information (Fast Facts) and published data on adjunct and fulltime faculty demographics.

\_\_\_\_ (6.5) Does not apply to the university setting; do not use it

\_\_\_\_ (6.6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**Comments:**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

1. You may begin research when the College Committee or Institutional Review Board gives notice of its approval.
2. You **MUST** inform the College Committee or Institutional Review Board of **ANY** changes in method or procedure that may conceivably alter the exempt status of the project.

<b>Responsible Project Investigator</b> (Must be original signature) <b>Date</b>

### **Description of the proposed study:**

#### Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to investigate organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment among adjunct faculty at a four-year doctoral institution, including measuring mean differences in organizational sense of belonging between adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty, as well as mean differences in organizational sense of belonging among different types of adjunct faculty as defined by Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of adjunct faculty. The study will also investigate the correlation between organizational sense of the belonging and the related construct of affective organizational commitment.

#### Significance of the topic:

The use of adjunct, or part-time, faculty is prevalent practice in higher education. Percentages of adjunct faculty have been steadily increasing at four-year doctoral universities. The limited degree of change in the working conditions of adjunct faculty members over the past three decades has been described as alarming and discouraging and researchers question whether or not adjunct faculty can find equitable employment conditions that could lead to more productive relations between part-time faculty and other members of the academic community. A common thread woven throughout the literature is the concept of connection and integration, two key components in the psycho-social constructs of sense of belonging and commitment. Social identification and affective commitment have been identified as two of the most important variables in explaining work-related attitudes and behaviors. Sense of belonging has been identified as one precursor to cohesion, defined as the tendency for members of an organization to remain united in the pursuit of the organization's goals and objectives. Research suggests that as the perceived cohesion of the individual organization members increases, the organization will begin to exhibit a unity of purpose. Research also suggests that an individual employee who self-identifies in terms of membership in an organizational group is more likely to have work-related attitudes that are governed by the group membership. Benefits for the organization include from lower absentee rates and more employee commitment to organizational goals. For the individual employee, stronger organizational identification should result in higher motivation, and higher levels of physical and emotional well-being. These and other studies provide specific justification for an investigation of the construct of organizational sense of belonging among adjunct and fulltime faculty, as well as an examination of the correlation between organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment. It is also widely argued that the part-time professoriate represents a wide diversity of motivations, commitments, and qualifications. This would indicate the need to examine the construct of organizational sense of belonging among several types of adjunct faculty.

## Research protocol

### Sampling procedure

Data provided the University's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment show that specific disciplines within each college have a higher concentration of adjunct faculty. Therefore, the study will be conducted with a purposive non-random sample. Purposive sampling will help to ensure a more equal number of cases for each population of the independent variable "faculty type." Based on the adjunct faculty distribution data, the researcher will identify the three disciplines in each of the six academic colleges with the largest numbers of adjunct faculty. All adjunct faculty and fulltime faculty in these 18 disciplines will be invited to participate in the study. Department chairpersons for each discipline will be contacted to request assistance with publicizing and encouraging participation in the study.

### Instruments/data collection methods

- a) A researcher-developed Survey of Workplace Relationships administered using the University's internal survey program "Inquisite" will be used to collect pertinent demographic data and to administer two psycho-social measurement scales:
  - 1.) Organizational Sense of Belonging (OSB) will be measured using an Organizational Sense of Belonging Subscale based on the work/school subscale of Somers (1998) Revised Belongingness Scale (BES-R). Permission has been received from Dr. Somers to use her scale in this study and to revise the scale items to help the participants establish the appropriate frame of reference for their responses. Validity of the revised scale will be re-established through a pilot group.
  - 2.) Affective Organizational Commitment score will be measured using the an Affective Organizational Commitment Subscale based on the Affective Commitment subscale of the Allen & Meyer's Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Precedent for using the Affective Commitment subscale independent from the other subscales of the OCQ has been established in previous research. The Affective Commitment subscale has been published in its entirety in numerous research manuscripts.
- b) A town-hall meeting will be conducted to present findings from the quantitative analysis.
- c) The researcher will disaggregate data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.
- d) The researcher will conduct a review of documents available on the College and University websites.

## VITA

Constance L. Merriman received her Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York Empire State College in 1997. She earned a Master of Public Administration from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia in 2005. After working for 12 years as a journalist and community relations coordinator for several rural school districts, she began her career in higher education in 1998. She is currently Assistant Dean of the College of Business and Public Administration at Old Dominion University and teaches undergraduate courses in Public Service and Personal Financial Literacy. She lives in Virginia Beach, Virginia, with her husband, Donald.