
From: Michael Dolzani

Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 10:51 AM

To: Ana Boe; Anita Acklin; Anna Cole; Catherine Kissling; Catherine Lewis; Denise M. Kohn; Emily Star; Eric Gardner; Jacqueline E Jordan; Janet Joseph; Jeffrey Covington; Judette Kullins; Kevin Keating; Leslie Hunter; Margaret Stiner; Michael Dolzani; Michael Garriga; Nicole Michael-Adams; Sharon Kubasak; Susan Oldrieve; Tammy Layton; Terry Martin; Victoria Madden

Subject: Bad News: New Rules for Adjunct Employment

I am sorry to announce that a new rule will be in force beginning in the fall limiting adjunct employment to no more than 3 composition sections each semester. This means that five people will have to relinquish sections to which they are currently assigned.

Some of you may already know about this, especially if you teach at other schools, because all schools are facing it. It is a result of the coming of Obamacare, which requires that employers provide health benefits for any employees working 30 hours a week or more. Employees are not allowed to waive those benefits. The problem in academia is that we do not normally employ faculty in terms of hours per week but in terms of credit hours, so the question is how many hours per week constitutes one credit hour. The government has not given an answer to this, and no one knows when it will, so the assumption is that it will adapt the traditional answer, which is that one credit hour translates in terms of actual labor to one hour in the classroom and two hours or preparation or grading outside it. There are efforts being made to convince the government to accept a different formula, but no one knows what the chances of that are. So BW is going to assume that that will be the interpretation. I

assume that any other school at which you are teaching is likely to do the same. The new rule does not legally take effect until Jan. 2014, but we are not allowed to switch in the middle of the year, so it really goes into effect for fall semester.

BW cannot possibly provide health care benefits for the number of adjuncts involved. We were all a bit shocked at the Chairs meeting to find that BW employs as many as 225 adjuncts a semester. Though only a minority of these teach beyond the 3-course limit, to provide single-person health coverage would cost \$7000-8000 per person; family coverage can go up to \$20,000 per employee. Coverage would probably cost the school well over half a million dollars a semester. You should know that right now BW is facing a budget crisis because we lost over 150 students between fall and spring semesters, twice the previous norm; we already have a \$500,000 budget shortfall which the administration is struggling anxiously to close—and that's just for one semester. Though I dearly wish we did not have to follow the path of Walmart in keeping employment below the line where benefits begin, there is no realistic way to do so. I can only hope that some of you will at least get some kind of health care coverage out of this tragedy, which is especially ironic because our adjuncts are often the very kind of people Obamacare was designed to help. Unfortunately, it is helping them and hurting them at the same time.

BW's English Department has a special complication that other schools may not have, which is the lopsided nature of adjunct employment. Because not all students take ENG 111, we have a huge demand for sections in fall, which drops by half to two-thirds in spring. If the government would accept calculations based on total academic year employment rather than by semester, we could get around

the rule, but again no one knows if they will do so, so we have to assume otherwise.

Such uncertainties have made me decide that I am not going to remove anyone's courses and reassign them until the beginning of August. However, you should look ahead and make whatever plans you need to make to cope with this problem; those of you who are affected by the new rule should feel free to work with me and Lee Ann—we will do everything we can to make it as convenient for you as we can. If anyone wants a letter of recommendation for applying to other schools, you will most certainly get one from me. I bitterly regret this; it adds even more pain and uncertainty to the lives of people who are already caught in an undesirable system.

Mike