

Confronting Precarious Academic Work

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Panel Session Three: Why University Governance Matters

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Director of Labour Relations, University of Toronto

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“It is difficult to imagine what being valued and respected might mean in a system that systematically marginalizes an entire segment of its workforce. The fact that marginalization does not necessarily translate into hostility is commendable, but even so it is hard to feel valued and respected when one is on the outside looking in.”

Anonymous Sessional at University of Toronto

“Respected within limits, but not as ‘real’ faculty”

“I’ve always been treated with respect, but my lack of job security affects by own sense of professional esteem”

Anonymous Sessionals at University of Toronto

“We’re invited to [some] meetings...[but] the other meetings which directly affect my life and income are closed to sessionals. The result is that every year I will be plagued by the mystery of whether or not I will have any teaching, even after 12 years teaching close to 4000 students, and having helped hundreds win prestigious awards, be admitted to graduate/professional programs, or obtain gainful employment. I’ve also have been nominated for an won teaching awards, yet still have the sinking feeling that every year will be my last...So by its very design, that only tenured faculty make curricular decisions, there is a fundamentally disrespectful environment that shapes all sessional life”

Anonymous Sessional at University of Toronto

Contract faculty should be treated as “major stakeholders” in the university.

“Sessionals should be more firmly integrated into departmental work which would give us voice and visibility”

“change the leadership culture and attitude”

“involve us in key decisions as they affect us and the well-being of our students.”

Anonymous Sessionals at University of Toronto