

**Testimony for Board of Trustees hearing, April 1, 2024**

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Good afternoon. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I am an adjunct faculty member at John Jay College.

Consider the following: I've been teaching at John Jay College for over 25 years in the areas of public management and economics. I'm an experienced teacher. I know how to motivate students, to present complex material, to help them overcome academic challenges and to support them on their educational journey. And my department has relied on my talents and teaching expertise for years.

Yes, I do not truly know whether I'll be teaching the next semester until a week before classes begin. When students ask me, as they often do, what other courses will be teaching and will I be teaching this course again next semester since they want to recommend it to friends, I have to say "I am not sure. I never know for sure until the schedule is finalized—and, in fact, often not until right before the semester begins!"

Longer contracts for adjunct faculty help to alleviate this. In fact, adjunct job security is good for our students, our departments and the adjunct faculty members themselves.

Job security provides predictability for our students. They can plan to take future classes with us if they want. They can recommend a course to others. They can find us for recommendations in future semesters. Having experienced teachers, especially in students' initial college courses, where adjunct faculty predominate, contributes to student success and student retention.

Adjunct job security is good for the departments. It provides predictability and helps to ensure that experienced faculty with knowledge of the department's curriculum, majors and programs will be teaching.

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And adjunct faculty job security is important for the adjunct faculty members themselves, of course. It reduces stress and provides greater income and health insurance predictability.

CUNY is trying to undermine the measure of job security that has been won by the PSC -- the three-year appointment. For those who receive it, they are guaranteed a minimum of two courses a semester or the equivalent for, at least, three years. While this is a key gain, many deserving, experienced adjuncts are not eligible for the three-year appointment as it currently exists.

There are at least 11,000 adjunct faculty and part-timers at CUNY. Only 2,500 to 3,000 have three-year appointments currently. Some are working toward eligibility but many other long-serving adjuncts have not been able to achieve eligibility because the provision's criteria are too narrowly constructed. They may teach fewer than 12 contact hours for one too many semesters making it difficult to qualify OR they teach in a program not a department OR they teach part of the time in Winter or Summer sessions that do not count toward eligibility. Wisely, the PSC has sought to not only preserve the three-year appointment, but to strengthen it by expanding eligibility.

But CUNY is seeking to do the opposite—to make it nearly impossible for all but a small percentage of the adjunct faculty to qualify.

CUNY is falling behind other institutions around the country and in the region. NYU, New School, Fordham, SUNY FIT, the California State System and University of Massachusetts among others – all have provisions for stronger job security than CUNY.

What about the need for flexibility? CUNY does not need all 11,000 of its adjunct faculty to be at risk of losing their income and health insurance, teaching with a Damocles sword hanging over their heads