

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty's Social Construction of a Supportive Work Environment

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Background: *The number of non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF), including both full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) positions, has risen to two-thirds of faculty positions across the academy. To date, most of the studies of NTTF have relied on secondary data or large-scale surveys. Few qualitative studies exist that examine the experience, working conditions, and worklife of NTTF. The study is framed by the theory advanced by Berger and Luckmann that reality is socially constructed and the broader sociological tradition of symbolic interactionism described by Blumer, Denzin, and Stryker.*

Purpose: *This study fills this gap in our current understanding by using qualitative methods to understand a fundamental issue that has not been examined and is critical to NTTF success and performance—how they perceive and experience support or lack of support within their work environments, particularly their departments.*

Participants: *I identified three four-year public institutions that are Master 1 according to the Carnegie Classification scheme. In total, I interviewed 107 NTTF, comprised of 58 PT and 49 FT, across the three institutions in 25 departments (14 unsupportive and 11 supportive).*

Research Design: *The study employed a multicase study approach using typical case sampling. The overall study examined departments that had made changes in policies and practices to support NTTF, compared to those that had not made changes, in order to investigate the impact on faculty performance and perspective. I conducted one-to-one interviews with NTTF as the main source of data collection.*

Findings: *The main findings of the study are that individual life conditions, such as career stage, and organizational features, such as the history of the department, shape the way NTTF construct support at any given time, and that this process of constructing support is dynamic and changing over a career.*

Conclusions: *The study suggests the importance of Shaker's hypothesized set of conditions that shape the perspective of NTTF. The study findings suggest that to understand the complex, multifaceted beliefs around support that are shaped by varying individual and institutional conditions, chairs might meet with the entire NTT faculty once a year in an open forum to discuss support or to anonymously survey all the faculty. NTTF leaders also need to be more aware of these differences in perceptions of support so they might better respond to needs.*

The number of non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF), including both full-time and part-time positions, has risen to two-thirds of faculty positions across the academy (AFT, 2010). In order to understand the magnitude of this shift, the total faculty in the United States is approximately 1.3 million and approximately 800,000 are nontenure track in the most recent data that has been analyzed (AFT, 2010). Despite their large numbers, limited research exists and it is narrow in scope. The first research focused on documenting the number of NTTF, developing awareness of their presence, examining their poor working conditions, and providing recommendations for ameliorating them (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993).¹ Disciplinary societies and unions, such as the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, and American Association of University Professors, began to create reports and papers documenting the poor working conditions and unsupportive work environment (for example, see AAUP, 1993). Some studies have followed up more recently to identify if changes in policies are being developed. For example, the Hollenshead et al. (2007) study demonstrated that institutional leaders have engaged in the creation of policies and support rather than ignoring their NTTF, as found in earlier research (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gappa & Leslie, 1993).

The next set of literature asked questions about the rise of NTTF, connecting this trend to neoliberalism and rising managerialism in higher education (Bousquet, Scott, & Parascondola, 2004; Rhoades, 1996; Schell & Stock, 2001). As scholars and national leaders began to critically examine this trend, another set of studies examined the outcomes or impact of this new type of employment and documented some disturbing trends, such as lower graduation and transfer rates for students who take courses with NTTF. For example, students who take more classes with part-time and full-time NTTF have lower graduation rates, and institutions with large numbers of NTTF have lower graduation rates than institutions that utilize fewer NTTF faculty members (Ehrenberg & Zhang, 2005; Jacoby, 2006). Furthermore, Eagan and Jaeger (2009) and Jaeger and Eagan (2009) found that increasing exposure (more courses taken with) to part-time faculty in the community college sector

negatively affected the likelihood that students would transfer to four-year institutions. In addition to outcomes, some studies have examined NTTF members' instructional practices and suggest that part-time faculty use less active learning, student-centered teaching approaches, service learning, educational innovations, and culturally sensitive teaching approaches (Jacoby, 2006; Umbach, 2007, 2008). Several of these researchers have hypothesized that the poor working conditions and lack of support of non-tenure-track faculty impact student learning and their choice of instructional practices, but none of the studies control for or examine working conditions. While these studies exist, key data is still missing to inform campus leaders. Research does not explain how NTTF experience their working conditions, whether policy changes happening now are working as intended to create support, and how policies are impacting performance and outcomes. Many of these questions require speaking with and understanding the perspectives of NTTF themselves.

To date, most of the studies of NTTF have relied on secondary data, either about institutions and their policies through Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) or large-scale surveys like the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF), which has presented important trend data. Yet, this data also has many limitations that need to be addressed in future research and could be addressed through qualitative methods. For example, large-scale surveys of NTTF have been critiqued for poor samples as most NTTF do not fill out surveys, so the representativeness and generalizations to be drawn are likely spurious. Researchers using this data often do not disaggregate data by contract type, such as full time and part time, and surveys (particularly the national surveys) ask a very limited set of questions and do not allow for NTTF to voice what they think is important to communicate about their work lives and experience (Kezar & Sam, 2010; Levin & Shaker, 2011). Few qualitative studies exist that examine the experience, working conditions, and work lives of NTTF. Even the researchers in the Gappa and Leslie (1993) and Baldwin and Chronister (2001) case studies spoke to a small number of NTTF out of their total sample. This study builds on the Gappa and Leslie (1993) and Baldwin and Chronister (2001) studies of support needed to make NTTF successful, but focuses on the NTTF member's perspective, which was not a major focus within the studies.

One of the most fundamental questions that scholars need to understand about NTTF (from their own perspective) is how they experience their work lives. This study fills this gap in our current understanding by using qualitative methods to understand a fundamental issue that has not been examined and is critical to NTTF success and performance—how they perceive and experience support or lack of support within their

work environments, particularly their departments. The question addressed in this particular article is, *How do NTTF construct an understanding of support within their departments?* The study focused on perspectives of support since most of the recommended policies and practices put forth in the research attempt to create a supportive environment. Support is defined in the study as providing policies or practices that help NTTF in conducting their work (e.g., provide sample syllabi), sustaining them (e.g., professional development), and overcoming barriers (e.g., involvement in governance). Basic definitions of support usually describe these facets—helping with work, sustaining professionally, and overcoming barriers (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). The use of qualitative methods and the importance of having NTTF tell their own stories about their experience and meaning making is further supported by the conceptual framework chosen for the study—symbolic interactionism and/or social constructivism, reviewed in the following theoretical framework section.

Why is an understanding of how NTTF socially construct support or lack of support important? As outsiders often marginalized within higher education, NTTF experience still remains largely non-normative and, therefore, they are unlikely to have a sense of reality that is shared with tenure-track faculty and department chairs. Thus, their views are likely assumed rather than understood. Chairs may assume that putting certain supportive policies in place will lead faculty to feel they are in an empowering environment, but this may not indeed be perceived as the case by NTTF. A better understanding of the individual and institutional factors that shape the way NTTF construct their environment as supportive or unsupportive can help institutional leaders to better understand the perspectives of individuals rather than treat NTTF as a broad, abstract class and lead to an informed perspective that can generate greater support for NTTF. Also, a myriad of studies demonstrate that employees, as well as specifically faculty, perform better when they are in an environment that they perceive supports them in terms of various dimensions, ranging from support that impacts their capacity (e.g., training, and evaluation), opportunity (e.g., resources, professional development, and materials), and willingness (e.g., motivation/satisfaction) to perform (Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2006; Blumberg & Pringle, 1982; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; Johnsrud & Heck, 1998). Perhaps the most cited author on this topic is Herzberg (Herzberg et al., 1959), who referred to many of the support elements as hygiene factors (aspects of the work environment), including pay and benefits, company policy and administration, relationships with coworkers, supervision, status, job security, working conditions, and personal life. Herzberg et al. (1959) and others over the years (later authors

are summarized in Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2007) have demonstrated that these conditions shape satisfaction that affect performance. Thus, faculty performance and students' resultant learning conditions are connected to NTTF perceptions of support. The "objective" environment does impact performance, *and* perceptions of support also shape satisfaction that alters performance. Both are important to higher education meeting its mission of student learning, and both need our attention as researchers.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, I review three key areas of literature: (a) the theoretical framework applied to the study—symbolic interactionism/social constructivism; (b) studies of employees using symbolic interactionism/social constructivism, illustrating it has been fruitfully used to better understand employees' divergent perspectives; and (c) studies of NTTF using qualitative methods that demonstrate that their perspectives appear to be shaped by their social experience, suggesting the value of the theoretical framework and approach.

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM/SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

The study is framed by the theory advanced by Berger and Luckmann (1966) that reality is socially constructed, as well as the broader sociological tradition of symbolic interactionism described by Blumer (1969), Denzin (1987, 1989), and Stryker, (1980). Symbolic interactionism that was later made prominent and echoed in the work of Berger and Luckmann (in the social constructivist tradition) is based on four main premises:

1. People make meaning daily and produce symbols that illustrate this meaning-making process that can be captured in people's stories and discourse.
2. Interaction between the individual and society is constant and ongoing. These joint acts create identity and self. (There is no self alone.) Experience informs meaning.
3. Because people make meaning constantly through interactions, the social world is perceived as being in flux; meaning and reality formation is a process.
4. Engagement with the empirical world and discussion with individuals is crucial to understand and can help document this interactive process of meaning making (Blumer, 1969; Denzin, 1989).

While social constructivism is an evolution of symbolic interactionism, social constructivism was chosen to frame this particular study because of the emphasis on reality construction rather than the symbolism and discourse focused on within the broader framework of symbolic interactionism (Denzin, 1989). Yet, as described below, both emphasize shared assumptions about the social construction of reality and the necessary interaction of individuals within society to meaning construction that undergird this study.

Symbolic interactionist and social constructivist scholars argue that people make meaning based on their experience and form their sense of reality based on these experiences (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Blumer, 1969). They emphasize that because people within society tend to share certain self-reinforcing experiences, such as dominant social values, schooling, and passing down of generational knowledge, individuals tend toward a more shared experience and sense of reality. Yet, symbolic interactionist and social constructivist scholars' work also points out that individuals who do not experience the same social forces may develop different views of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The pivotal argument is that a person's sense of reality is impacted by his or her social contexts and experiences. Rather than seeing different views of reality as distortions or a false sense of consciousness, symbolic interactionist and social constructivist scholars advanced that more personal views of reality (those that do not match shared views) are merely a result of different social experiences. Personal views are also less commonplace because of the many self-reinforcing social forces (for example, socialization and education). These scholars argue for a more subjective sense of reality and question the naturalness or assumed sense that people should share a similar reality. Constructing reality is merely a social process, not the natural order of things. Symbolic interactionism and social constructivism challenge the notion of essentialism or universalism that undergirded much of the social sciences prior to their work (Blumer, 1969; Denzin, 1987). These frameworks also challenged positivist, scientific notions that there is a single shared reality. Instead, the framework advances the study of people's socially constructed views of the world as a legitimate topic (Denzin, 1987).

Symbolic interactionist and social constructivist researchers focus on discovering the ways in which individuals and groups participate in the construction of their perceived social reality. This process involves looking at the ways social phenomena are conceptualized, created, and institutionalized to seem natural over time. The social construction of reality is an ongoing, dynamic process reproduced by people acting on their interpretations to create or recreate constructions. Because social constructs as facets

of reality and objects of knowledge are not “given” by nature, they must be constantly maintained and re-affirmed in order to persist (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Furthermore, when groups are outside the norm, their views of reality often differ, are not part of given dialogue and assumptions within the institution, and are not captured unless solicited directly. While social constructionism/symbolic interactionism can be brought to the study of many phenomena, it is particularly helpful in demonstrating two key points: (a) how people can shape reality (intentionally and unintentionally) because the process of social construction means that views can be altered through experience, and (b) being attentive to individual interpretation of reality through experiences is key to understanding social processes. This study will draw on these strengths of this theory by being attentive to the views of individual NTTF members, as well as advance how department chairs and other change agents can reshape support by being aware of how others socially construct support.

STUDIES OF EMPLOYEES USING SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM/SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Both symbolic interactionism and social constructivism have been applied to studies of worker/employee perspectives focused on identity (Shamir, 1991), work relationships (P. Tierney, 1999), role perception (Hoelter, 1983), psychological well-being (Dietz & Ritchey, 1996), perception of communication (Freitag & Picherit-Duthler, 2004), role expectations (Yaconi, 2001), motivation (P. Tierney, 1999), employee turnover (Yang, Wan, & Fu, 2011), and experiences with discrimination in the workplace (Stets, 1995), among many other topics. These studies illustrate how various constructs often considered or identified as universalistic are much more multifaceted and complex once they are considered more deeply from the perspective of employees. For example, when examining employee turnover, studies have typically attributed certain organizational features like salary or management style. By allowing employees to describe and tell their stories about why they left a company, many other salient features emerge that may be important only to certain groups; features such as monotony of work, conditions related to that particular industry climate, and changes in business philosophy were identified (Yang et al., 2011). Another study examined the way that existing employees shape new employees’ perspectives to the workplace, the critical role of insiders to socialize new employees, and the way that both parties change through the interaction (Reichers, 1987). The study also showed how individuals of different gender, race, etc. may have different interchanges with insiders that uniquely shape their socialization. Another study examining employee motivation found that Herzberg’s theory was

relevant, but that, based on the culture (looking at differences in nationality) and background of the employee, the factors and conditions had more or less salience (Stottrup & Sorensen, 2009). These types of studies provide a foundation and support for this study, using symbolic interactionism/social constructivism as an approach and the value of understanding faculty (as workers/employees) perspectives of support and how faculty might be differentiated based on their experience.

In this study, I examine how NTTF construct the notion of support or lack of support, and how this characterization or sense of reality is influenced by their life experiences and their social situations, being sensitive to individuals' interpretation of reality. One of the reasons it is particularly important to look at how NTTF socially construct reality is that they tend to be conceptualized as a uniform mass of workers. By better understanding how their differences, not only contract type (part time and full time) but also social experience, impact their views of reality, researchers can grasp the complexity of trying to create a positive working environment for this set of employees. Supporting tenure-track faculty is often easier because they often have more similar socialization and backgrounds, resulting in the opportunity for more continuity when trying to create an environment that leads to performance and productivity. The study builds on four prior studies (detailed next) that view NTTF as heterogeneous individuals who construct reality uniquely, rather than as an abstract and homogenous mass. The studies include Gappa and Leslie (1993), Levin and Shaker (2011), Shaker (2008), and Hart (2011).

STUDIES OF NTTF AS HETEROGENEOUS

The earliest works that explored NTTF as a heterogeneous group attempted to develop typologies that demonstrated they had multiple motivations. The most well-known typology was developed by Gappa and Leslie (1993), who proposed four broad categories of part-time faculty: (a) career enders; (b) specialists, experts, and professionals; (c) aspiring academics; and (d) freelancers. Career enders included those individuals who were not only in the process of retiring, but those who are retired. Many of them had established careers outside of academia before deciding to continue in academia for a combination of various reasons: the supplemental income, keeping "a hand in the field," or simply because they enjoyed the experience. "Specialists, experts, and professionals" are those who are employed full time elsewhere and come from a varied range of careers. They are hired for their specialized knowledge or success in certain fields, be it the arts or business. Rather than relying on the faculty position for income, these faculty members often take the position simply because they enjoy teaching. The category "aspiring academics"

takes into consideration those faculty members who are looking for tenure-track positions. Finally, there are the “freelancers,” predominantly faculty members who supplement the part-time positions with other jobs not in academia, or they may be caretakers at home and are using the position for supplemental income. This important early study helped introduce the notion that NTTF were not all alike and may need distinctive policies and supports, setting Gappa and Leslie’s work apart from that of most research that treated NTTF as a homogenous group.

Levin and Shaker (2011) interviewed full-time non-tenure-track faculty (FTNTTF) to examine their academic identity, agency, positionality, and self-authoring. Their study points to the way FTNTTF worlds are multiple and divided among several units, fields, or communities—discipline, program, department, and the university. NTTF sometimes teach in multiple fields, departments, and types of institutions so their experiences are much more complex than the usual faculty member who has a more singular and homogenous professional identity. Levin and Shaker note, “FTNTTF world is characterized by dissonance, where one set of values or norms is not congruent with another” (p. 13). This situation is likely even more complex for part-time NTTF who often have other professional lives outside academe. The majority of faculty in Levin and Shaker’s study described themselves as possessing incoherent or conflictive identities. “They are divided selves, chameleon-like: they both accept and reject aspects of their professional roles and status; they live in the present but also in a future that is projected as better than the present; and they have to adjust to be appropriately FTNTTF” (p. 18).

In an earlier study, Shaker (2008) examined the experience of FTNTTF in English composition and proposed a model for understanding their world views, particularly through differences in experience; personal preferences (prioritization of personal life, commitment to students, and love of teaching); personal characteristics (age, educational degree, career path, and time at institution); organizational forces (departmental and institutional environment, workload, salary, and reappointment and promotion processes); and academic conditions (faculty stereotypes and conceptions, disciplinary context, and tenure versus nontenure). She noted that while they experienced many commonalities due to being within composition at the three institutions, their experiences varied by these conditions (e.g., personal preferences) and it was hard to speak about a normative NTTF experience.

Hart (2011) developed a similar finding to Shaker in her study of 40 NTTF women at a single institution. The work climate for NTTF was disparate, and they experienced their worklives in differing ways depending on the department in which they were housed, changes that occurred

over time within the department, and their own changing and emerging views about equity or marginalization. Hart anticipated that she would hear more uniformly marginalized or equity-oriented stories. Instead, women described how their context and experiences created an incoherent and fragmented environment—neither marginalization nor equity was constant. Instead, conditions changed based on new department chairs, turnover in leadership, and relationships.

These few emerging studies on NTTF worldviews/experiences suggest that they are socially constructing their world in a complex and fragmented environment and that an understanding of this complexity is essential to better understanding and integrating NTTF into the academy. None of the researchers approached their studies with this understanding, nor with the intention of studying the issue. One of the main recommendations of Shaker's (2008) study (one of the first to extensively study the lives of FTNTTF from their own perspectives) is the need to understand the fragmentation of NTTF worklives so that we can provide better policy responses and ultimately try, where possible, to create more coherence in their experience. Through the study of a much larger group of faculty across a host of disciplines, this article sheds light on the complexity of NTTF social experience and the way it affects their perspectives. This particular paper focuses on the notions of how they socially construct support or lack of support—a fundamental aspect of work performance (Blumberg & Pringle, 1982).

METHODOLOGY

CASE STUDY AND SAMPLE SELECTION

The study employed a multicase study approach using typical case sampling. The overall study examined departments that had made changes in policies and practices to support NTTF, compared to those that had not made changes, in order to investigate the impact on faculty performance and perspective.² Case study is particularly well suited to the study of practices (such as worker performance/perspective) because it allows the researcher to understand a setting in depth and in context (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Stake, 1995). This same approach is also ideal for understanding the worldview of people (beliefs about support) within context. As noted earlier, the researcher adopted a constructionist paradigm that suggests that the most salient issue is how individuals make meaning of their experience and this shapes behavior and reality. Also, constructionism suggests that human beings largely have an accurate understanding of their own experience, particularly with regard to issues they are close to (Crotty, 1998; Stake, 1995).

In terms of determining the sample, studies of NTTF are better able to make recommendations if they are context based and focus on a particular institutional type. I examined four-year institutions, as two-year colleges have already been the focus of many studies. Also, four-year institutions have had less time to address the shift in faculty to NTTF than community colleges that experienced this trend earlier, so the findings have current policy implications. I identified three four-year public institutions that are Master I according to the Carnegie Classification scheme. Larger public institutions face state budget deficits, making the employment of NTTF increasingly prevalent. It should be noted that four-year institutions—like Master I—are relying heavily on NTTF, with close to 40% of faculty nationally being NTTF within this sector, likely higher now given state budget declines in revenue and the recession (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). By choosing a single type of institution that is largely represented in the higher education landscape, I achieved both breadth and depth. I choose a multi-institution case study to ensure that findings were not due to unique history or context features, but represent salient trends that are transferable to other similar contexts. I decided on three institutions as it would allow me to see trends across institutions, while also examining enough individual departments, which were a major focus of the study, to make meaningful statements across a range of disciplines.³ Another important criteria for site selection was identifying typical institutions not known for having particularly positive policies in place for NTTF, but having made some changes at the institutional level so that I knew that some departments might have altered their practices in support of NTTF.⁴ This sampling would result in the most transferable findings as most institutions across the country are not exemplary, nor have they done absolutely nothing to consider the role of NTTF. Also, to have comparison departments, the institutions needed to have made some progress at the overall institutional level.⁵ I cannot list details of the three institutions, as is often common in case studies, because the individuals interviewed are extremely vulnerable, given their contingent status, and I need to protect their anonymity. Yet, I provide a table—Appendix A—with some key contextual features that do not reveal their identities. It is important to note that all of the changes that have been made to campuses to support NTTF emerged from the unions on these campuses (supportive policies are noted in Appendix B). However, these policies are at the campus level and are often not translated down to departments, which is one of the issues that this paper explores in focusing on how faculty experience departmental life and support. While their perspectives on unions were not the focus of this research question/article because faculty opinions of this feature did not differ, it is important to note that unions shape beliefs or feelings of support.

WITHIN SAMPLE SELECTION

We also know that discipline/department makes a significant difference as NTTF in the professional fields have traditionally been included in departmental activities and treated more as equals on some campuses (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Also, departments vary significantly in size, structure, and culture. Therefore, disciplines should be matched so that comparisons between supportive and unsupportive policies are of similar size, structure, and history related to NTTF. Furthermore, I wanted to represent all the key academic areas and ensure issues were relevant within different disciplines. Some commentators claim that problems are isolated to the humanities and that other areas are more immune to these trends (Lee, 2004). I obtained a sample of science, social sciences, humanities, and professional fields (25 total departments). I matched up departments across the three institutions by disciplines, but also paired departments with unsupportive policies to ones with supportive policies⁶ to ensure that other types of issues were not impacting faculty members. If I chose a professional school with supportive practices, such as journalism, I compared it to another journalism department with no supportive practices.⁷ Having three institutions made the match of similar departments more amenable.⁸ I had an informant at each institution to help me identify a list of supportive and unsupportive departments, which I then investigated myself for confirmation.

Contract type also makes a significant difference, with part-time faculty and full-time faculty having different experiences and expectations. Therefore, within each department selected, I spoke with at least 4–6 people representing these varying contract types (full time and part time) to make sure I understood the departmental policies and practices from the different perspective of NTTF. Thus, in each sample department, I spoke to both full-time and part-time faculty unless they had only one contract type within that department. Typologies are important as well (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). While I could not sample specifically on these categories, as it was difficult to identify prior to the interview, each person was identified and categorized after the interview. Of the part-timers in the sample, four were career enders; 21 were specialists, experts, and professionals; 19 were aspiring academics; and 14 were freelancers. All FTNTTF interviewed had teaching roles rather than administrative or research roles. Over half of the FTNTTF were aspiring for tenure-track positions; the other half were satisfied with nontenure positions. Within departments, I emailed individuals randomly chosen from departmental rosters. When I had difficulty getting responses, I used snowball sampling within departments where individuals who agreed to be interviewed

recommended and encouraged others. Given the difficulty, noted in the literature, with gaining access to NTTF, snowball sampling people to recommend NTTF members who might be willing to be interviewed (Hart, 2011; Shaker, 2008).

Appendix A provides an overview of the sample. In total, I interviewed 107 NTTF, comprised of 58 PT and 49 FT, across the three institutions in 25 departments (14 unsupportive and 11 supportive). This is among the first studies to be attentive to these important differences of institutional type, department, and contract/motivation. The table designates which departments were chosen, their designation as supportive or unsupportive,⁹ and the number of people interviewed who had each contract type within each department.¹⁰ Also, some departments hire only full- or part-time NTTF, so I was restricted in who could be interviewed. I recruited participants through a well-networked informant on each campus who was a NTTF member with whom I developed a relationship. These individuals also helped me identify supportive and unsupportive environments based on their history and connections on campus. They sent out an invitation to faculty in the departments to participate in my study and encouraged their involvement.

Data Collection and Analysis

I conducted one-to-one interviews with NTTF as the main source of data collection. One-to-one interviews were 60 to 90 minutes and focused on the following areas: (a) general background about the interviewee's role, discipline, and background; (b) the interviewee's perspective on the institution, department, existing policies, and whether the interviewee found these to be supportive or unsupportive (if not addressed, brought up specific areas of professional development, communication, orientation, hiring practices, curriculum input, planning, control, advising practices and possibilities, space to meet, and support for technology); (c) impact of these policies on their performance; (d) description of their teaching and advising practices and relationship to departmental policies; (e) role and interaction with others in the department (communication, collegiality, information, and networks); and (f) open-ended space for interviewees to add in anything else and for me to ask for other people I might interview.

Case study also often entails observation and document analysis. Prior to interviews for each campus, I reviewed the institutional website and key documents, including self-study for accreditation that often spoke to working conditions for NTTF, strategic plans, faculty handbooks, union contracts, and departmental websites and materials. Prior to each interview, I conducted observation of the department office, departmental

postings (most departmental hallways had listings of faculty and faculty information), and faculty offices and spaces. I observed student interactions and office hours within departments.

For this paper, data analysis was inductive, using grounded theory data analysis techniques from a constructivist perspective (Charmaz, 2006).¹¹ While I was aware of Shaker's hypothesized four conditions that may affect NTTF members' worldviews, given there was only one study on the topic, it seemed important to be open to inductive findings and not move to a rigidly deductive lens on a topic with so few studies. I began with open coding in which I read the transcripts fully, memoed about themes, and then drew up a broad and comprehensive list of codes that included 86 initial codes. These initial codes were then examined for relationships and interconnections and refined into categories. Over time, the codes were refined through focused coding following Charmaz (2006). Appendix C provides an overview of all final categories and related codes. I also conducted axial coding, examining relationships and categorizing data as individual and institutional (Charmaz, 2006). I also explored for trends such as whether certain conditions tended to shape perspective as supportive, unsupportive, or both. After codes were solidified, all the data was coded using N6 (NUD*IST 6, a software product from QSR International; see <http://www.qsr.com.au> for more details). N6 was used to code interview transcripts with the final selected codes, reports were run to examine data for rich quotes and any further subthemes, and I examined trends across different sources of data at a more macro level. For example, I sorted and examined for differences by contract type (full time and part time), department type (social science, humanities, sciences, and professional), supportive versus unsupportive departments, and institution. From these reports, I created data tables (see sample in Appendix D) to synthesis relationships (differences by NTTF contract status, institution, etc.) and compare data by code and category.

Trustworthiness and Limitations

The careful attention to sample selection that is part of the case study process helps to ensure the trustworthiness of the data (Stake, 1995). By interviewing both full- and part-time NTTF, I ensured that the data represents both perspectives. By examining a set of different disciplines, I ensured that the findings are not particular to a single field or area of study. The large number of people interviewed also helped ensure trustworthiness. The few interview studies of NTTF have relied on a small set of interviews (8–20), often within a single discipline or only FTNTT. The data became saturated (same themes were repeated within interviews) at

all three institutions across departments, contract types, and motivations. Another way I ensured trustworthiness was having an informant at each institution to help me gain access and review findings. This individual also reviewed findings in order to ensure the findings described were accurate within their context, and the individual also noted whether findings resonated with his or her own understanding, providing a member check. I also had a subset of NTTF (23 individuals) who reviewed findings and provided a member check. Given multiple responsibilities of NTTF, it was not possible to have all 107 review the data.

In terms of limitations, the study originally focused on understanding how supportive and unsupportive departments shape faculty performance, and it was not designed on the outset to study the social construction of support, which was an emergent finding. While inductive findings are common in qualitative research, the study design would have focused less on case study and context and examined faculty at a broader set of institutions (breadth versus depth) had it been designed solely for the purpose of understanding the social construction of NTTF. Thus, the findings about social construction may only be transferable to Master 1 institutions. Additionally, all three of these campuses were in the same state, so the findings may be more applicable to that state context than others. Also, no empirical outcome data on performance related to support was collected. Furthermore, it is difficult to obtain consistent performance outcome data on non-tenure-track faculty from institutions as this is not tracked in any way. In fact, institutions are not amenable to researchers collecting this form of data because it will potentially demonstrate problems of institutional decision making or support. Not having performance outcome data is a limitation to the study and its recommendations.

FINDINGS

The main findings of the study are that individual life conditions, such as career stage, and organizational features, such as history of the department, shape the way NTTF construct support at any given time and that this process of constructing support is dynamic and changing over a career. The findings have been divided into two overarching conditions: individual and institutional conditions that appear important to NTTF social construction of support.¹² In addition to examining the conditions that shape perceptions of support, I also explored contradictions (when NTTF feel supported in an unsupportive environment; or unsupported in a supportive environment) as these are important for campus leaders to understand. The findings begin with the individual aspects that

shaped the way they socially construct support, followed by the institutional conditions. *It is important to note that the individual and institutional conditions are often hard to separate and sometimes overlap.* For example, the relationships formed in the department (an organizational feature) are shaped also by life phase and status. But as a heuristic device, they are separated to organize the conditions. To highlight the ways that these findings illustrate the principles of social constructivism, I have developed two tables (Appendices E and F) that chart how the individual and institutional conditions shape NTTF *experience* and how that's connected to their *views/perspectives of support*. I also summarize some key differences by contract type (full time versus part time) in Appendix G; these are described throughout the various sections on individual and institutional conditions.

INDIVIDUAL CONDITIONS

Comparison Group

Comparison groups are collectives that NTTF had in mind that shaped how they perceive the department related to support. These varied from comparing their conditions to the tenure-track faculty, to another department within the institution, to other institutions they worked at, or to a more national picture of NTTF working conditions. It was more common for FTNTTF to compare themselves to the tenure-track faculty and, as a result, feel that the department might be unsupportive even when it had many positive policies and practices in place to support NTTF. Part-time faculty spent less time around tenure-track faculty and perceived them less as a comparison group, but FTNTTF often considered their needs and situations as closer to tenure track. Faculty with tenure-track career aspirations were also likely to express that they felt less supported. One FTNTTF member explained how she thinks about support and how it is in relationship to what tenure-track faculty support systems are in place:

In terms of not being supportive, I had a colleague who was a tenure-track faculty member and she was provided with formal mentoring when she started, lots of money to travel to conferences and encouraged to attend, and she's been offered lots of opportunities to work in high visibility grants and projects. You can really see that they want her to be successful and provide just tons of support. She had opportunities, money, and they really invested in her. But she ended up leaving because she got a better opportunity. But I can't get any mentoring, support for conferences, and even the grant project I worked on with her

was taken away from me when she left. So sure, people might find the department supportive because we have autonomy in our teaching, and control over the curriculum, and support for professional development around teaching, but I look at what she had and I feel unsupported.

As this quote suggests, many of the FTNTTF that I spoke with compared themselves to tenure-track faculty, especially if that is the position that they were aspiring to obtain. Many of these faculty talk about the irony of the FTNTTF being around for 10 or 15 years, but there is a perception in the departments that they are short term, so there is no reason to invest in support. They also talked about how, in today's more market-driven environment for hiring, tenure-track faculty members are more likely to leave and be less invested, but are provided with tremendous support.

Another comparison group that NTTF (particularly PT) noted was another department or institution where they had worked that might have either much worse or much better working conditions. Faculty gauged support based on the other departmental context. As noted in the literature review, NTTF have complex lives with multiple work locations. One FTNTTF member commented:

I probably don't see things exactly the same as other faculty in this department because I also teach over in the school of engineering and they treat lecturers really well—their names are up on the walls, they're highlighted in the newsletters, you're given a nice office, and any materials or supplies—just ask and you get it. These are just a few examples, but through this I can see the kinds of things that would be nice to have in this department that we don't have. It's not that things are bad here; it's just that things are that much better at engineering.

For part-time faculty, the issue of comparing institutions was quite prominent because they are often teaching at multiple institutions. So, comparisons among institutions were quite common in terms of thinking about support. A PT faculty member described this issue:

When I hear people complaining about our department, it just shocks me. Because I teach at X institution and the conditions for NTTF are just so bad. We are completely disrespected and I would say disdained. The chair goes out of his way to schedule so that we can't ever get benefits; he starts to make people's life [*sic*] difficult as they get close to their fifth year so they won't

receive entitlement, which would mean they would get benefits. He also works to keep the pay below market rate. Our department here has a completely different ethic where the chair is doing everything he can to try to include and support NTTF. We are included in curriculum discussions, invited to meetings. We are scheduled so we can get benefits, and the chair checks with us when scheduling our classes so that it doesn't conflict with the other institutions we teach at. Sure, things could be even better, but I guess unless you have been someplace as bad as where I also teach at, you can take these items for granted.

Departmental and institutional comparisons provide NTTF a broader perspective for developing beliefs about support, which makes them more knowledgeable, perhaps more discriminating, and perhaps feel less supported as they have information to suggest there are better policies and practices that can be in place. NTTF also develop the perspective that an unsupportive or supportive department is neither fixed nor natural. They see that different approaches can be taken to the management of departments that lead to different opportunities for performance.

Life Phase

Another condition that shaped whether NTTF felt the department was supportive was their phase of life and what their priorities were at the time—this included caregiving, early career, and being new to teaching. The caregiving finding was influenced by gender as women spoke about this issue extensively while men rarely mentioned it. Also, part-time faculty members were more likely to discuss life phase related to caretaking and families. Female faculty members who had children felt that their lives in the department were supportive when they were caring for children, even if the department lacked the characteristics in the literature that are important to support faculty performance, such as professional development, benefits, job security, or involvement in governance and curriculum. Female NTTF (more often married) thought of support quite differently when they had family as a priority. One woman faculty member spoke about this issue:

I felt the department was supportive for a long time because I was bringing up our children and so the lack of job security and second-class treatment just mattered less to me then. But now my children have grown up and it's as if I see the department differently now and I recognize that I'm not treated as a professional and this isn't a supportive environment and now [I] want to go someplace else.

While care for children was brought up most often, faculty also described caring for elderly family members or sick family members. But, the general pattern of caregiving made an individual less focused on departmental supports.

Another life phase issue was career phase for both male and female faculty who talked about early career being quite different from mid- or late-career. In the early career, NTTF are often willing to sacrifice because they simply love teaching and the students. Therefore, they didn't feel that departments were unsupportive even if they didn't provide basic and fundamental working conditions for their success or equity in pay or benefits. A part-time faculty member in chemistry described this issue:

When I was just out of school and young, I lived on whatever small money I received; that seemed fine at the time. I had a really small apartment; I liked what I was doing, and so the lack of money didn't matter that much. But now I'm married and have different expectations for my life, and the environment seems really unsupportive. But, I must admit, I found it a great place to be six years ago.

Consistently though, faculty changed their views as their priorities altered over their lives. The poor working conditions were not sustainable, and NTTF talked about how they saw many aspiring faculty change careers after five years of teaching. Five years was usually the point they began to see that the lack of support was not a passing phase, but a permanent aspect of their careers that would impact their ability as professionals:

I think early career faculty just do not think about how the department will impact them; they feel autonomous, but then they have three or four bad experiences with other colleagues, of losing all classes for a semester and being without income, or have a health scare and then they realize this is not going to be something they can continue, no matter how much they love teaching.

Another group of faculty (new to teaching) had quite a contrasting view about early career and support that should be provided. Some newer faculty members (usually part time) felt strongly that they needed supports in place, so when those supports were missing, the environment felt less supportive than those who had been teaching for years and may not care whether there is orientation, mentoring, sample syllabi, feedback, or evaluation. A new faculty member described how he realized that the lack of support impacted him more than others in the department who have been teaching for years. He felt it was hard to raise concerns because

others did not feel a lack of support because they did not need the same kind of support that he needed as a new faculty member. Because he was older and had been a professional for years, other faculty just assumed he knew how to teach, even though this was his first teaching job. He commented on this issue:

I get it; most of the part-timers in the department have been here for a while. We're a small department and we don't get a lot of turnover. That has its advantages in that I get to know people, but in terms of providing support for new faculty, they just don't recognize the need. So no one told me about the institution-wide orientation, so I missed that. There is no orientation in the department and the chair couldn't see any reason for me needing [*sic*] any information. I felt like I was constantly nagging to get information to just survive that first year. So support really varies by what your needs are.

Therefore, newness to teaching and the desire for support in this new part of one's professional experience often made faculty feel unsupported, even if their other colleagues found the same department quite supportive.

Credentials

The credentials that people held also impacted the way they considered and perceived support. Particularly, NTTF who went back to obtain their doctoral degrees or already had doctoral degrees possessed different expectations of support than those who did not. Individuals with master's degrees did not have the same expectations around support and felt comfortable with an environment that lacked the supports described in the literature. Many faculty had obtained their doctoral degrees while in a NTTF position so that they would receive greater support and perhaps the opportunity for a full-time position or tenure-track role. One part-time faculty member in a professional field described this issue:

So I went to the whole effort to get my PhD and now six years later I still don't have a full-time job. I really thought I would be considered for jobs, but they pass me up. I also thought I would be treated differently and have input into the curriculum. I just published a textbook used in my area and they will not even consider it, and it is used by several institutions nearby. I keep trying to go to conferences based on my dissertation topic and I'll make a request and get turned down again and again. When you go to

all this effort, you think that you'll be included more or considered more of a professional and given those kinds of supports.

This factor works both ways where a faculty member who obtained her PhD did receive more support than other NTTF members in the departments. One NTTF describes how her situation changed:

The tenure-track faculty members treat me different when I finish my dissertation, like I had joined this club with them. I notice that I am treated better than some of the other NTTF. It's little things, like conversations that you can have about classes or getting information about conferences. I notice I just get perks now that I didn't before.

Therefore, credentials can shape the felt support in nonuniform ways, resulting in more or less support from colleagues.

External Employment

Some NTTF have significant status and prestige within their careers in industry, business, government, or profession, and department chair or tenure-track faculty sometimes treat them differently. Their status from these external sources resulted in support that others are often not aware of, such as preference in scheduling courses, higher pay, access to clerical support, access to resources and materials, and more time and attention from the chair. All of the additional benefits led the NTTF with status to feel more supported than their colleagues who do not receive the support. Their experience was socially constructing their view of the department that is otherwise often considered unsupportive:

I have quite a career in government and am known across campus as someone who can place students in national, state, and regional positions. I guess I have a reputation, and certainly that has resulted in some supports that I don't think others in the department receive. I hear people complaining about clerical support for class, scheduling at the last minute . . . and those are things I never really deal with. So, I must be treated differently than others.

There was an assumed naturalness that those with status would receive greater support, and there was no sense that this might be inequitable or impact performance for those who did not receive a similar level of support. It is important to note that FTNTTF were more likely to already have a PhD and so they were not often going back for a degree. However,

because they had equal credentials to the tenure-track faculty, they were less likely to feel supported within the department. This issue did not shift and change though as it did for PTNTTF who went back for degrees or had been teaching while in a degree program.

Others focused on how, through their other jobs, they had access to offices, clerical staff, up-to-date equipment and computers, and colleagues, so the lack of any of these items within their department did not feel unsupportive to them because they had access to it at other places:

I suppose I'm different from most of the NTTF in the department because I've got a state-of-the-art office with everything I need and I've even got a secretary to input my grades or schedule calls with students. So I guess I just never thought about support coming from the department as I have that all in place. So I never perceived it as unsupportive, but now that you ask about this issue, I could see how others might.

These faculty members also perceived lack of pay for office hours, advising, or service to be less of a problem. They had outside substantial income, so if they had to volunteer their time for the department, that was not considered unsupportive. In the eyes of NTTF who relied on the position for their income, this was considered extremely unsupportive.

But not all faculty employed outside the institution had status within their professional careers and would be awarded perks. Furthermore, sometimes their external experiences were not valued, and they were not provided additional status and described feeling unsupported. Those that felt less supported in their conditions often emphasized the lack of inclusion or not being treated as a professional within departments as they are in their outside professional roles:

So, 30 hours a week, I am a professional journalist and considered an expert in the field. I hobnob with all sorts of influential people and have done some really impressive national projects. Then I come here 10 hours a week and teach my classes and am treated as if I possess no expertise or knowledge whatsoever, so clearly that is not supportive and the department certainly does nothing to capitalize on the expertise.

Career Path

Other faculty members described how their career paths shaped perceptions of support. About 10 of the faculty members I spoke with had been on tenure-track faculty lines previously, often as part of a dual-career

couple and one spouse had to give up a tenure position for them to be together. FTNTTF who have previously been on tenure-track lines usually felt much less supported than other NTTF because previous positions had provided tangible supports that were no longer available, such as access to professional development funds, academic freedom, autonomy, mentoring and socialization, grant money for summer pay, and the like. These NTTF (typically FTNTT) understood that it was hard for them to feel supported, even in a supportive environment:

I don't know if I'll ever quite get used to it. First, there is the second-class status and that doesn't make you feel supported. Then you suddenly realize there are [*sic*] a host of hidden support that you used to get as a tenure-track faculty member that is no longer there for nontenure track. And I get it; I'm not in a particularly bad department. It's been eight years now but I still feel the same, not supported.

In addition to NTTF who were once tenure-track faculty, there are those that aspire for a tenure-track job (already presented within the comparison groups) and, like the people who previously held tenure-track jobs, find it difficult to feel supported.

The varying life experiences of NTTF—by comparison group, life phase, credentials, external employment status and prestige from prior career or career path—all shape different notions of support and influence their attitudes to their departments and feelings about whether they have the appropriate mechanisms in place to perform.

INSTITUTIONAL/DEPARTMENTAL CONDITIONS

Faculty tended to focus on departmental characteristics (departmental history, size, and relationships) that shape experiences of support or lack of support rather than broader institutional characteristics, such as institutional budget or the student body. While few of the broader features of a campus were noted in their perceptions of support (reaffirming studies that show faculty life is most closely shaped by departments at four-year institutions¹³), two institutional areas were identified and noted as related to the conditions described below (see Appendix A for an overview).

Faculty culture as fragmented, versus tightly knit, impacted the degree to which faculty in departments at these institutions could develop relationships with other faculty and administrators. A fragmented culture was characterized by few regularly scheduled faculty communal events, limited faculty communication in person or via technology, and little value among faculty for interaction and communication; whereas, a tightly knit

faculty culture was one characterized by: regularly scheduled faculty communal events, ongoing faculty communication in person or via technology, and strong value among faculty for interaction and communication. This is related to the findings described in the results where relationships with departmental colleagues lead to greater feelings of support. Faculty on Campus B, which was more tightly knit, described their experience with developing relationships to assist in creating support and this was less common at Institutions A and C. Campuses also differed in being top down versus collegial and collaborative. The top-down culture had an administration that made decisions with little input from faculty and had hierarchical communication and relationships between faculty and the administration. A collaborative/collegial culture was characterized by faculty having input on decision making and two-way, open communication and relationships between faculty and the administration. Furthermore, a top-down administrative culture led to more difficulty in developing a relationship with the department chair at Institution A, whereas faculty were much better able to develop relationships with department chairs at Institutions B and C. Their comments, as well as trends when examining differences in the institutions, lead to this conclusion. This does not mean other conditions may not be playing a role and the areas that did not emerge should be explored in future research. I mention these connections between broader institutional characteristics and departmental characteristics to demonstrate there are two meaningful linkages.

While this paper focuses on experiences that differentiated faculty members' perspectives, there were also some key institutional conditions that led to greater feelings of support among NTTF. Most notably, the presence of unions on all three campuses was noted as impacting a more positive or supportive environment for NTTF. For example, one PT faculty member described the relationship between the faculty union that included NTTF as members and feelings of support:

While my department chair has changed several times, knowing the union is there and is negotiating to get us professional development days and paid office hours makes me know that things are getting better, that I will be better able to do my job. You have to know what the union is doing though, as department chairs don't always make sure you know.

Unions did not emerge as a category that impacted their social construction "differentially"; it was more a facet that was generally accepted as shaping a supportive environment. Also, it emerged less often as people tended to focus more on immediate features within their department.

It is also important to note that faculty unions have excluded NTTF members in the past, so some longtime NTTF distrusted the union and questioned its interest in supporting them.

As I begin discussing the departmental features highlighted by NTTF, I begin with more macro issues, like size and history, and then move into more focused issues like relationships and department chair status.

Departmental Size

Departmental size appeared to shape the way faculty socially construct their understanding of support and impacted part-time faculty significantly as they tend to be in larger departments than the FTNTTF. Departments that are large, such as English and mathematics, may have 100 or more NTTF members. Within these much larger environments, support is more challenging to create and needs much more systemic attention—even details like scheduling and managing over 100 faculty members. The sheer size of the department can impact an individual's sense of support or even the ability to create support. Two NTTF members commented on this issue of size:

This is a really unsupportive department, but I have to recognize that part of that has to do with the way they treat NTTF members, but also has to do with the incredibly large size. You just can't run into other people in the mailroom and people don't know each other. I can go to meetings, but I do not know anyone so I would be afraid to talk. And when people don't know each other, it is hard to form a supportive environment.

And

The thing is that our size is just unmanageable, and I don't know that you can create support in this kind of environment. So, the chair just focuses on the tenure track faculty and ignores the lecturers, and so we do not get any support. Maybe the size issue means we need to fundamentally shift the structure—have an adjunct advocate or something.

Within smaller departments, there is the opportunity for relationships to create informal support, and faculty might be more likely to socially construct an environment of support. Thus, departmental size appeared to shape views of support, with smaller departments often feeling more supportive and larger departments feeling less supportive, regardless of the actual policies and practices in place.

Departmental History

Another issue that made a difference in perspective is how long NTT faculty members had been at the institution and whether they had experienced a historical change in support within the department—essentially the department history around support. Across all three institutions that I interviewed, NTTF perceived they were treated with much more support 20 years ago than they are today. Eighteen of the faculty members interviewed had been at their institutions long term (over 20 years) and virtually all of them identified this major shift. The longtime NTT spoke about “the old model” in which NTTF were professionals with expertise brought in from the field and considered equal colleagues. They contributed to curriculum development, actively advised students, were invited to meetings, and could be involved in the life of the department as much as they desired. These NTTF all noted how, in more recent years, chairs and tenure-track faculty have shifted the way they interact with NTTF, treating them less as equals, excluding them from departmental committees, and not capitalizing on their expertise. This historic shift made them feel less supported than other faculty who are new or who do not have the comparison to an earlier time period and any expectations of greater support. One of the longtime part-time faculty members in a law department spoke about this issue:

Over the years, curriculum development has exclusively gone to the tenure-track faculty and I’m not allowed input anymore. They also told me I’m no longer allowed to officially advise students. They even took away working with the law club on campus. This lack of support made it to the point of ridiculous when they turned off NTTF phones without telling anyone because they decided that they didn’t want NTTF to have phone privileges anymore. It was complete chaos here. This is just so weird because it used to be the department was collegial and we’d meet over the summer and retool our classes together, lecturers and tenure-track faculty side by side. We even had substantial input on the department vision and planning processes. Now we are not invited to departmental meetings, and if I spoke up I would be shut down. And I’m somebody who’s taught with the department for 20 years. But new people, they seem happy and supported.

Most often, the shift has been to less supportive departments, but in a few cases, faculty members also spoke about being in a department that was historically very negative but became better over time:

So many of the new faculty feel this is an unsupportive place, but because I've been here a long time and I saw how bad it was before the current chair, I feel supported. Maybe I wouldn't feel this way if I had started more recently, but now we can attend meetings. I know we can't vote and this really bothers people, but we didn't even use to be allowed to [attend] meetings. And I know the benefits aren't great, but at least now we have the opportunity to get some minimal benefits.

In these instances, NTTF found the department to be more supportive than it might "objectively" be when looking at actual policies or practices that could be put in place to help improve faculty performance.

Relationships

NTTF members often develop relationships with other tenure-track faculty and the department chair, or may have even graduated from the program and have special relationships with people so that their sense of support is quite different based on these relationships. These relationships led them to feeling supported even though they recognized they may be in an otherwise unsupportive department. This finding overlaps and is related to the issue of size and faculty culture already reviewed. A few faculty members commented on this issue:

I consider it [the department] mostly supportive, but I think that's because I was a student here and I got to know a lot of the faculty, and then I eventually moved over from a teaching assistant to a NTTF position. So, I've always had a mentor who's really looked out for me over the years and made sure I got all the support to be successful in my teaching and that I have a voice in the department. I'm not sure other people find our department supportive, but I do.

And

Well, I was recruited and hired by a couple [of] tenure-track faculty members I have known for years and they always looked out for me. So, I think that makes a difference in that I have people to get information from and who I can go to with problems. So, if I end up with a course that is not right for me, I have someone to appeal to, but I know others do not. So, having an avenue to problem solve is pretty critical to feeling supported, and I don't think other people have that.

Through these informal relationships, the NTTF are able to forge many aspects of support that are not offered formally through the department. While mentoring is not available, they create informal mentors. While professional development is not available, they use contacts to develop and build their skills; information that is not available to others can be accessed through their social networks. Thus, informally, they create support even though it does not exist formally through departmental policies and practices.

Department Chair

Another factor in how NTTF socially construct notions of support relates to changes or turnover in the department chair, as well as the values held by department chairs. Chairs were noted as having a significant impact on the experience of NTTF, and new chairs brought the promise of increasing or decreasing support. Part-time faculty, in particular, spoke about the chair being their only point of contact and not knowing any other faculty in the department. One faculty member, who had long been in a department that was extremely unsupportive, described how the new chair has changed her view about support, even though the actual policies and practices of the department remain the same:

My contract came in wrong and I contacted her [the department chair] and she acted upon it immediately, contacted the dean to make sure that my contract was amended. In the past, I could not depend on anyone to follow up on these issues and often they fell through the cracks, leaving me without benefits or the wrong pay. So, I feel like I can come to her with any issue or problem and she will address it. It really makes me feel supported.

So, while the department has not changed much in terms of its overall policies and practices (they still exclude NTTF from meetings and governance; they still provide low pay; there is no orientation, professional development, etc.), NTTF felt supported by a department chair who seemed to be making an effort at helping NTTF. Similarly, a chair can come in and treat NTTF with disrespect and the hard-fought efforts of years developing good policies and practices can be undermined. A faculty member described this scenario:

It feels like a completely different department and the chair has only been here a year. Our last chair fought hard to get us invited to meetings, to make sure we were communicated with regularly, to provide us with input on the curriculum and textbooks,

to access advising information, to keep our class sizes down, and provide us with as much job security as possible. And those things are still in place, but the new chair just doesn't respect NTTF. So even though I can show up at meetings, I do not feel like I want to. Even though I can have input on curriculum, I wonder if it's really going to be used. Nothing has actually changed in terms of policy, but it doesn't feel like a supportive place to be anymore.

NTTF members' comments highlight the importance of department chairs for the social construction of support and lack of support. The beliefs and views of chairs had a significant impact on the experience and perspective of NTTF support.

Policy

Another institutional issue that impacted how support was socially constructed is whether there are written policies related to NTTF. When policies were written down and publically available, NTTF had expectations that a certain level of support would be provided. Many departments did not have written policies related to NTTF, and this meant that chairs could change practices when considered necessary and the change would not be apparent to others because none of the policies are written anywhere. This practice of not writing down policies resulted in people feeling more supported than they actually were. Particularly, new people who may come in have no understanding of positive policies or practices that might have been in place a year ago that are no longer being practiced and, therefore, have no expectation for this practice. One faculty member commented on this issue of lack of written institutional policies:

I have been here for a while now and the chair tries to pigeon-hole me as an outlier because I don't think the department is supportive and I think we used to do a lot better. But, he keeps hiring in new people who are not familiar with some of the helpful kinds of practices we used to have in place like mentoring, team teaching for first-time faculty, non-tenure-track involvement in the curriculum. He decided these things were expendable, and new faculty don't know what they're missing out on, so they say they feel supported, but they aren't.

The findings have been presented as separate conditions, but clearly some people had multiple conditions operating—yet the great majority of the time, a single condition appeared strongest in shaping their view of support at a given time.

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study offers new knowledge about NTTF, building on earlier research on typologies by Gappa and Leslie (1993) and recent research, particularly by Shaker (2008), that suggests they are a heterogeneous, not homogenous, group and their experiences and identities are fragmented and complex, as asserted in symbolic interactionist/social constructivist theory. The study suggests the importance of chairs and NTTF leaders being aware of typologies (career enders; specialists, experts, and professionals; aspiring academics; freelancers) that have been developed by examining NTTF motivation while layering on the findings from this study. One could not understand the social construction of support with earlier typologies alone, which focus only on a narrow set of individual characteristics. This study introduces new key factors that those concerned with improving the working conditions of NTTF should be aware of, including newness to teaching, comparison groups, life phase, credentials, career path, and other key information not captured in earlier typologies. This study also emphasizes the overlap of many of these personal and institutional categories that is not captured in typologies, but better captured in the overlapping circles offered in the recent Shaker (2008) framework. While typologies are a helpful start in the process of seeing the NTTF as a heterogeneous group, they may not provide enough nuances to help shape policy issues, such as creating a supportive environment for faculty.

Furthermore, the study suggests the importance of Shaker's (2008) hypothesized set of conditions that shape the perspective of NTTF—personal preferences (prioritization of personal life, commitment to students, and love of teaching); personal characteristics (age, educational degree, career path, and time at institution); organizational forces (departmental and institutional environment, and workload); and academic conditions (faculty stereotypes and conceptions, disciplinary context, and tenure versus nontenure). These conditions are deeper and richer than typologies and suggest a robust way to think about a NTTF member's worldview. Social constructivism highlights the breadth of experience that shapes perspective, and this comprehensiveness is captured in Shaker's framework that expanded earlier typologies. The findings in this study provide *empirical* evidence for the importance of these four hypothesized aspects (personal preferences, personal characteristics, organizational forces, and academic conditions) that shape experience and serve as a heuristic device for thinking about dimensions to be taken into account when making policy. Furthermore, this study provides evidence of these features among a much larger sample across varying disciplines.

This study also found most of these same areas as significant for shaping a NTTF member's social construction of reality and suggests this as a strong framework for guiding chairs and NTTF leaders in policy development. While a few of the specific items did not emerge in the study—workload or commitment to students—most were directly relevant. As notions of personal characteristics versus personal preferences did not come out as strongly in this study, leading me to use the broader notion of individual conditions, future research should continue to explore whether there are more dimensions of personal preference that might be important or relevant. Shaker's (2008) study was specifically focused on NTTF identity where some of these features may be even more salient.

While this study was framed using theory from social constructionism and the literature on NTTF as a heterogeneous and fragmented group, some of the conditions that emerged within the study also suggest that theories of underemployment are important to understanding ways to create support for NTTF. Underemployment is “when an individual holds a job that is somehow inferior to or of lower quality than a particular standard” (Maynard & Joseph, 2008, p. 141). There are several types of underemployment dimensions: more education than is required for the job, involuntary employment in a field outside of one's area of education, more skills or experience than required by the job, involuntary employment in part-time or temporary work, and low pay relative to a previous job or others with similar educational backgrounds. Individuals who are underemployed are expected to be less satisfied and to have a variety of negative outcomes, such as poor job attitude and job performance, and adverse effects on their family and social relationships (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Maynard & Joseph, 2008). Applying this concept to NTTF, if individuals compare themselves to tenure-track faculty, they are often likely to feel underemployed. If they shift from having multiple priorities—for example, parenting and another job or vocation—to only teaching, they may shift their expectations for their positions. As their credentials change, they may develop expectations for different support or involvement. All of these issues suggest that chairs need to check in more often and in more depth with NTTF as faculty members' priorities and expectations may change and they may fall into feeling underemployed, which can result in negative organizational outcomes, such as lack of commitment, poor morale, or turnover. To optimize performance, chairs need to be more aware of changes among faculty, particularly as they relate to underemployment.

The findings from the study also provide important interpretative power for the confusing findings within national studies by unions, such as the National Education Association (2010) and the American Federation

of Teachers (2010), that faculty within the same institutions and departments register being satisfied and unsatisfied and have different views of support. While they have documented these differing responses, they have had no way to interpret or make sense of the data. Unions have been trying to understand why union organizing has been so difficult with this population and why individuals have such different perspectives related to the same working conditions. By understanding faculty members' different socially constructed views toward these working conditions, unions may be better able to frame their arguments for unionization. While the message of equity for all employees should resonate, understanding that some faculty have relationships that allow support and greater satisfaction can help union organizers in making these faculty members recognize that their situations are unique and that there is a broader problem that they should be concerned about. It should be noted that most NTTF members I interviewed felt their experience could be generalized; they themselves tend to be unaware of their heterogeneity. They can also use this data to help faculty see how often fragile their existing support is when it is based on a chair, friendship, or life phase that will pass.

The findings about the multiple and complex ways that NTTF socially construct support within their departments have several implications for practice.¹⁴ Department chairs may take the pulse of a few faculty members to register how people perceive the department, particularly NTTF with whom they have a relationship, and the result may not be very representative of the climate within the department. As noted earlier, NTTF members who have developed relationships tend to feel stronger support than the typical NTTF member. Department chairs often do not recognize the heterogeneity of the NTTF, and should recognize the limitation of speaking to only one or two NTTF members to understand support within the departments. The study findings suggest that to understand the complex, multifaceted beliefs around support that are shaped by varying individual and institutional conditions, chairs might meet with the entire NTT faculty once a year in an open forum to discuss support or to anonymously survey all the faculty. A survey of faculty may be even more productive since those who feel unsupported may be less likely to respond in an open forum, but might provide input if they can be anonymous. It is uncommon for departments to survey their NTTF members and, given the very unique ways that they construct support, it will be hard to understand their various perspectives without proactively seeking them out. The study also points to the importance of chairs influencing the climate of support. Institutional leaders will be better served if chairs are trained and given information about how to support all faculty members because chairs, more so than other institutional leaders, shape

the way NTTF members feel supported or not. In addition, departmental size needs to be examined, as department sizes are swelling due to a move by campuses toward the use of more NTTF. This alteration in structure should be examined for functionality. However, the study does not provide empirical evidence that faculty performance is impacted by large departmental size, so this recommendation is offered with caution.

The study also demonstrates that NTTF often have a wealth of ideas about ways to create a more supportive environment from comparisons they have from other departments or institutions. None of the faculty interviewed had ever been asked for ideas about improving the support or climate for the department, and 60% of the faculty I interviewed had comparison data from other settings that would have helped to improve the department. There may very well be opportunities in situations where chairs are open to change, but do not realize that the NTTF have ideas for improvement.

NTTF leaders also need to be more aware of these differences in perceptions of support so they might better respond to needs. While chairs have responsibility for shaping the departmental culture, within many institutions NTTF members are playing a leadership role to create needed support because there is often a leadership vacuum. NTTF leaders who play this role are often long-term faculty on a full-time contract. Because of their own experience and the way they socially construct support, they may lack awareness of the needs of faculty new to teaching, of part-time faculty with professional experience, and of faculty who compare themselves to tenure track or who have aspirations for tenure track.

Also, it is important not to see colleagues as static and instead recognize that their needs for support may change over time—for example, faculty after raising their children, mid- or late-career faculty, NTTF teaching in retirement, or faculty who recently obtained a new credential. Not only NTTF leaders, but chairs also need to be aware of the changing needs and support of NTTF members over time. While this is true for tenure-track faculty as well, the fragmentation of NTTF careers means that their pathways are more dynamic than the typical tenure-track faculty member. The dynamics of their career trajectories are often overlooked by those creating policies and practices. This study also suggests that NTTF should push for written policies since the lack of written policies was used as a way to create lower expectations around support.

Given the severe budget problems and hard financial times for institutions, critics might suggest that chairs will have little time to spend to better understand their personnel and work to create greater support for NTTF. Yet, one of the primary roles of department chairs is human resource management, and, as research demonstrates, when faculty have

appropriate policies and practices in place, they can indeed perform better and create a better teacher and learning environment (Gappa et al., 2007). In addition to striving to implement what we know are positive policies and practices offered up by Gappa and Leslie (1993) and Baldwin and Chronister (2001), chairs also need to realize that their faculty may experience these conditions in different ways and try to be as responsive to these differences as makes sense (for example, moving a part-time faculty member to full-time once his or her child grows up, or asking about historical policies or policy from other institutions that might inform departmental policies). Sometimes, this may only be acknowledging frustration about underemployment until the situation can be resolved.

Future research should look at how chairs and tenure-track faculty view departments and compare this perspective to the perspective of NTTF. This might help shed light on disparities in perspective and explain why existing departmental environments are often not as supportive as they could be. Also, more studies that examine and understand the perspective of NTTF will continue to help develop information about this population whose experiences are new and quite different from tenure-track faculty, who form what is still the norm. As noted in the literature review, only a handful of studies have been conducted to date that involve speaking with NTTF members and understanding their worldview. Also, this study focused on faculty members' perceptions of support at the departmental level. Studies that explore how NTT faculty members perceive institutional support might identify other features that shape their perceptions. While faculty and administrative cultures emerged within this study as shaping perceptions of support at the departmental level, other features may emerge as important when faculty are asked to focus on feelings of support at the institutional level. While disciplinary differences were not prevalent in the data (and the data was analyzed for such differences), this may be an artifact of Master 1 institutions where disciplinary differences are not as pronounced in the culture or of these particular institutions. At research universities, there are likely differences in perceptions of support based on being in a science, social science, or humanities area. For example, science disciplines are often more hierarchical and NTTF members may feel less supported than the humanities where less hierarchy and a longer history with NTTF exist. Based on previous research on faculty, disciplinary differences seem to be an important area for continued research even though it was not a significant issue in this study. In addition, it was difficult to decipher instructional conditions, such as lower versus upper division courses, large versus small courses, remedial versus nonremedial courses, and online

versus non-online courses that may shape perspectives of support because NTTF often teach across these various conditions. It was hard to isolate a NTTF member who taught only in person or only in upper division, for example. There was some indication in the data that instructors who taught online courses felt they had less support than does the faculty teaching in person. Examining these types of instructional conditions that may impact their feelings of support is important in future research.

In closing, many will have the burning question: If we know from previous research that certain policies are more beneficial than others, why is it important to know how the NTTF will perceive these policies once implemented? I remind readers that research demonstrates that satisfaction with working conditions has been found to shape performance and simply putting in policies may not ensure faculty perceive them as supportive and are satisfied. Also, as noted above, there are several ways that this information has practical, not just theoretical implications. Leaders can create policies and practices that are more attentive to the specific concerns of faculty in their department. Global recommendations might note the importance of orientation. This may not be very important compared to professional development within a specific setting though, and only by knowing faculty locally will this priority become apparent. Furthermore, chairs can use this knowledge of NTTF as a heterogeneous group to better communicate with NTTF members on a host of issues, from scheduling to professional development to evaluation, recognizing that they will have different priorities based on these conditions. Also, as they try to implement certain policies and practices, they may get more buy-in from faculty if they communicate their awareness that different NTTF members have varying concerns and needs. Thus, understanding how NTTF socially construct policies and practices helps leaders to implement these very policies and practices more effectively—prioritizing the right policies, marketing changes better, communicating more cogently, and illustrating an awareness of this new majority of faculty.

Notes

1. For readers unfamiliar with these two studies, the following summary is offered because these are the most often cited and comprehensive studies about these populations. Gappa and Leslie's (1993) study drew on several sources—case study of 18 institutions, review of 1988 NCES data on faculty, and review of state law and legal cases related to part-timers. Case studies involved interviews with administrators, tenure-track faculty, and part-timers. Their study identified problems with the emergence of part-timers and the need for campus policies. They offered a comprehensive set of recommendations. Baldwin and Chronister (2001) also drew on a rich set of data but focused on full-time non-tenure-track

faculty: 1988 and 1993 National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty; a survey of a cross section on institutions and their use of and policies related to FTNTTF; a review of institutional policies for FTNTTF; and a case study of 12 four-year institutions. Similar to Gappa and Leslie's (1993) study, they interviewed administrators, tenure-track faculty, and full-time non-tenure-track faculty. Their study developed a picture of who these faculty members are, terms of employment, and institutional and individual consequences of this employment type; it also catalogued problems as well as exemplary policies to support FTNTTF.

2. This article is part of a larger study that compared how faculty in contrasting departments (those that have supportive policies and those that do not) perceive their performance is impacted by support or lack of support.

3. It is important to note that while these campuses are similar on three dimensions, two of them are unavoidable as they are set by the state—budget and union contract type. The percentage of NTTF being similar is part of national trends where these types of institutions tend to have that percentage of NTTF so finding variability is hard. These campuses represent conditions of many Master 1 institutions.

4. Based on earlier research on a much larger sample of institutions, I knew that these three institutions had made some changes at the institutional level for NTTF—for example, increased professional development, created multiyear contracts, and allowed NTTF to participate in governance campus wide.

5. It is important to note that while faculty in the study focused their discussion on these three institutions, they taught at many other institutions, as is typical of NTTF. Thus, they commented on 10 private four-year colleges, 4 technical colleges, 16 community colleges, and 8 other four-year Master 1 institutions. Isolating a pure departmental and institutional experience is difficult for this group of faculty. In fact, this article focuses on highlighting this fragmented and multiple experience of NTTF.

6. As a reminder, supportive is defined as those departments with policies and practices in place to support faculty and unsupportive is those departments that have not put any such policies or practices in place.

7. Occasionally, I had a third program to match and decided to conduct interviews to obtain additional data. Often, I was unsure I might reach my goal of 4–6 interviews per department and this allowed me to ensure I would more readily meet this goal and provided additional interview data.

8. The informants were typically in a leadership position (two were actively involved in the unions and one was head of academic senate) on campus. This way, they had access to and understanding of the full campus and unions, which I interviewed the informants in order to understand the context.

9. It is important to note how these designations were developed. I began with the informant designation, and then conducted interviews to find out views of people within departments. I also observed and developed my own interpretation. These three sources were used to develop the designation as supportive or unsupportive.

10. In a few instances, I had fewer than four individuals who volunteered for the study, but I chose to keep a few departments as they provided interesting data.

11. Constructivist grounded theory does not claim to develop theory in the same way that traditional grounded theory does, as noted by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Furthermore, even grounded theory studies emerging out of positivist approaches to grounded theory typically do not result in a new theory. Most studies using grounded theory stop short of meeting the objective of creating theory (Charmaz, 2006).

12. These are not all the conditions that emerged in the study, but they are the most predominant. Given space considerations, it seemed prudent to emphasize those that emerged often and were registered as having a significant impact.

13. See W. Tierney and Bensimon (1996) for faculty departmental influence.

14. It is critical to underscore that this paper is not endorsing the idea that because certain faculty do not perceive lack of support (for example, early career faculty or faculty with parental responsibilities) conditions should not change within the department.

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Appendix A: Institutions for Case Study

Institutional Feature	Institution A	Institution B	Institution C
Location	Suburban	Urban	Rural
Percentage faculty by type	50% NTT; 50% TT	44% NTT; 56% TT	48% NTT; 52% TT
Union status	Wall-to-wall union (both TT and NTT in same union)	Wall-to-wall union	Wall-to-wall union
Faculty culture	Fragmented faculty	Tightly knit faculty	Faculty are not very active
Administrative culture	More top-down administrative culture	More collaborative administrative culture	Collegial culture
Campus culture	Would be considered politically moderate, but not conservative	Would be considered liberal and progressive	A fairly progressive culture
Student body	Has a diverse student body and is largely commuter	Has a diverse student body and a mix of commuter and some residential students	Has a more homogenous student body
Resources	Constrained and have made cuts to expenses in recent years to accommodate shrinking state budgets	Constrained and have made cuts to expenses in recent years to accommodate shrinking state budgets	Constrained and have made cuts to expenses in recent years to accommodate shrinking state budgets
Faculty governance and power	Has a weak senate	Has a strong senate	Has a fairly weak senate
History with NTT and leadership among NTT	Not a long history of supporting NTT; more recent leadership among NTTF has led to changes	It has a much longer history of supporting NTTF, even if in very minimal ways. And, it even had some administrative support for NTTF changes that did not exist on the other two campuses.	The NTTF have played a leadership role in recent years, making important changes, but these are not always translated into departments.
Changes made by unions to support NTTF	Salary increases, benefits, professional development, promotion scheme, and evaluations	Participation in governance, salary increases, benefits, and promotion scheme	Salary increases, benefits, promotion scheme, and evaluations
Governance structures	NTTF are not included in formal campus governance policies related to faculty senate. Informally, some departments include NTTF in governance.	NTTF are included in campus governance policies based on union negotiations. NTTF are included as part of the faculty senate and department level activities.	NTTF are not included in formal campus governance policies related to faculty senate. Informally, some departments include NTTF in governance.

Appendix B: Sample Table

Department	Institution A Number of People	Institution B Number of People	Institution C Number of People
Humanities: English/ Composition	Unsupportive; 6 (3 full time and 3 part time)	Supportive; 5 (3 full time and 2 part time)	Unsupportive; 4 (1 full time and 3 part time)
Science: Mathematics	Unsupportive; 6 (2 full time and 4 part time)	Supportive; 5 (1 full time and 4 part time)	Unsupportive; 4 (2 full time and 2 part time)
Social science: Communications	Supportive; 5 (3 full time and 2 part time)	Unsupportive; 4 (2 full time and 2 part time)	
Science: Chemistry	Unsupportive; 4 (2 full time and 2 part time)		Supportive; 3 (2 full time and 1 part time)
Science: Computer Science	Supportive; 2 (2 part time)	Unsupportive; 2 (1 full time and 1 part time)	
Professional field: Criminal Justice/ Law	Unsupportive; 3 (3 part time)	Supportive; 2 (2 part time)	Unsupportive; 4 (4 part time)
Social Science: Business		Unsupportive; 4 (2 full time and 2 part time)	Supportive; 5 (2 full time and 3 part time)
Humanities: Arts	Supportive; 4 (1 full time and 3 part time)	Unsupportive; 4 (1 full and 3 part time)	
Social Science: Psychology	Unsupportive; 4 (2 full time and 2 part time)		Supportive; 4 (1 full time and 3 part time)
Professional field: Kinesiology	Unsupportive; 3 (3 part time)	Supportive; 2 (2 part time)	
Professional field: Journalism		Unsupportive; 3 (3 part time)	Supportive; 4 (2 full time and 2 part time)
Total department cultures	6 unsupportive; 3 supportive = 9	5 unsupportive; 4 supportive = 9	3 unsupportive; 4 supportive = 7
Total people	40 people	35 people	32 people

Appendix C: List Of Final Category And Codes

CATEGORY: COMPARISON GROUP

Codes: Tenure-track comparison (CG-TTC); Work colleagues in same department (CG-WCD); Work colleagues in a different department; (CG-WCDD); Work experience in another institution (CG-WIC); Work experience in a different department (CG-WED); Personal – friends or spouse (CG-P); National picture or trends (CG-NP)

CATEGORY: LIFE PHASE

Codes: Caregiving (LP-CG); Early career (LP-EC); New to teaching (LP-NT)

CATEGORY: CREDENTIALS

Codes: Doctoral degree (C-DD); No doctoral degree (C-NDD); Obtained doctoral degree while teaching (C-ODD)

CATEGORY: EXTERNAL EMPLOYMENT

Codes: Status within previous profession (C-P); Status within current profession (C-CP)

CATEGORY: CAREER PATH

Codes: Previous tenure-track role (CP-TT); Dual career (CP-DC); Aspiring TT (CP-ATT); NTTF working outside academy as well (CP-OE)

CATEGORY: RELATIONSHIPS

Codes: Tenure-track colleague (R-TTC); Department chair colleague (R-DCC)*; Graduate of program (R-G)

CATEGORY: DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Codes: New department chair (DC-N); Constant turnover of department chair (DC-T); Stability of department chair (DC-C); No institutional norms for department chairs (DC-NIN)

CATEGORY: POLICY

Codes: Publically available (P-PA); Not publically available (P-NPA)

CATEGORY: DEPARTMENTAL SIZE

Codes: Large department (DS-LD); Medium department (DS-MD);
Small department (DS-SD)

CATEGORY: DEPARTMENTAL HISTORY

Codes: Historically less support (DH-LP); Historically more support
(DH-MS)

***WHILE DEPARTMENT CHAIR IS LISTED AS A CODE AND A
CATEGORY, THIS REFERS TO TWO DIFFERENT PHENOMENA
THAT ARE RELATED TO DEPARTMENT CHAIRS WHO PLAY A
PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF SUPPORT
BY NTTF.**

Appendix D: Sample of Data Analysis Table

Code	Quote Taken From Transcript	Supportive or Unsupportive	Institution; Department; Gender/Race	Contract Status
Comparison group: CG-WED	I probably don't see things exactly the same as other faculty in this department because I also teach over in the school of engineering and they treat lecturers really well—their names are up on the walls, they're highlighted in the newsletters, you're given a nice office, and any materials or supplies—just ask and you get it. These are just a few examples, but through this I can see the kinds of things that would be nice to have in this department that we don't have. It's not that things are bad here; it's just that things are that much better at engineering.	Unsupportive	Institution A; Math; Male, non-White	FTNTT
Life phase: LP-CG	I felt the department was supportive for a long time because I was bringing up our children and so the lack of job security and second-class treatment just mattered less to me then. But now my children have grown up and it's as if I see the department differently now and I recognize that I'm not treated as a professional and this isn't a supportive environment and now [I] want to go someplace else.	Historically supportive, currently unsupportive	Institution B; Business; Female, White	PT
Career path: CP-TT	I don't know if I'll ever quite get used to it. First, there is the second-class status and that doesn't make you feel supported. Then you suddenly realize there are [sic] a host of hidden support that you used to get as a tenure-track faculty member that is no longer there for nontenure track. And I get it; I'm not in a particularly bad department. It's been eight years now but I still feel the same, not supported.	Unsupportive in supportive environment	Institution C; Biology; Male, White	FTNTTF
Departmental history: (DH-LP)	So many of the new faculty feel this is an unsupportive place, but because I've been here a long time and I saw how bad it was before the current chair, I feel supported. Maybe I wouldn't feel this way if I had started more recently, but now we can attend meetings. I know we can't vote and this really bothers people, but we didn't even use to be allowed to [attend] meetings. And I know the benefits aren't great but, at least now we have the opportunity to get some minimal benefits.	Feels supportive, but because historically much worse	Institution A; Journalism; Male, White	PT

Appendix E. Individual Conditions That Contribute to NTTF Perceptions

Condition That Informs Perspective	Connection of Experience to Perspective	Connection to Support
Comparison group	Different groups and individuals have better or worse working conditions than participants.	This can lead to feeling unsupported in a supportive environment or supported in a nonsupportive environment, depending on the comparison group.
Life phase	Being early in one’s career or new to teaching may make an individual feel more levels of stress and ambiguity; having family responsibilities can change priorities from work and alter perspective.	Being early in one’s career or new to teaching makes one feel unsupported even in a supportive environment; having family responsibilities leads to feeling more supported than the environment based on having other priorities.
Credentials	Credentials can open the door to opportunities; having a degree leads to certain expectations among professionals.	Opportunities are limited without a degree, leading to feelings of support even in unsupportive environments; earning a degree may lead to feeling unsupported and underemployed even in a supportive environment.
External employment	Employment outside the academy provides a different work experience, which shapes one’s view of work and sense of support within academe.	Having more perceived prestige in external jobs can lead to feeling unsupported in higher education; lack of prestige in external jobs can lead to feeling supported in higher education due to respect given and support offered.
Career path	Having previously held a tenure-track position or aspiring to one makes one feel less supported compared to tenure-track faculty.	Those in supportive departments can feel less supported as they compare their circumstances to tenure-track faculty who are typically much better supported.

Appendix F. Institutional/Departmental Conditions That Contribute to NTTF Perceptions

Condition That Informs Perspective	Connection of Experience to Perspective	Connection to Support
Departmental size	Large departments can feel impersonal and can make it difficult to find or understand support.	Individuals may feel less supported even in a supportive environment in a large department or more supported in a small department even though it is unsupportive.
Departmental history	A history of a negative or positive culture within a department can create dissonance when the culture changes.	An otherwise unsupportive environment can feel more supportive if it has a history that is negative. A historically positive culture can make changes toward being even more supportive, but not seem as supportive as it truly is.
Relationships within department	The ability to create close relationships with tenure-track faculty, department chair, and departmental staff can create greater feelings of support.	Relationships can make people feel supported in environments that may be otherwise unsupportive to other individuals who do not have these relationships.
Department chair	New department chairs may exhibit greater or lesser degrees of support for NTTF, shaping their day-to-day experience; patterns of stability or turnover can foster more or less norms for department chair values.	An unsupportive department chair can make an otherwise supportive department feel unsupportive; a supportive department chair can make an otherwise unsupportive department feel more supportive.
Policies	Having written policies helps faculty to better understand the parameters around support, shaping people's experience and their notions of support.	Without written policies, there is not a clear understanding of what support should be in place and faculty may feel more supported than the environment actually is; written policies may lead to feeling less supported than actuality because of higher expectations for what should be in place

Appendix G. Differences by Contract Type—Full Time and Part Time

Condition	Part time/how shaped—supportive, unsupportive, or both	Full time/ how shaped—supportive, unsupportive, or both
Comparison group	Institution and department—both	Tenure track—unsupportive
Life phase	More likely impacted by having children—supportive; Tend to turn over more in teaching roles—unsupportive	
Credentials	PT often obtain degrees and then feel underemployed—both supportive and unsupportive	Tend to have PhD and be seeking tenure track—unsupportive
External employment	Professionals in community—supportive	
Career path	Professional in community—both supportive and unsupportive	Tenure-track hopefuls, dual career/former tenure track—unsupportive
Relationships		More likely to have—supportive
Size	More likely to be in large departments—unsupportive	

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