

SPECIAL FORUM



SECOND CLASS CITIZENS A SURVEY OF **BERKELEY LECTURERS**

Panelists: **Michael Burawoy**, Department of Sociology and co-chair of the BFA
Khalid Kadir, Global Poverty & Practice (GPP) Program, Political Economy, and the College of Engineering

Monday, October 29, 2018 • 12-1:30pm in Barrows Room 402

The last 50 years have seen a transformation in the structure of the academic labor force nationally: the proportion of tenured faculty has halved while the proportion of non-tenured faculty has doubled. Here at Berkeley, the proportion of lecturers is lower than the national average, comprising 40% rather than 65% of total faculty. Still, budgetary pressures and rising enrollments have led to increasing reliance on lecturers, who have lower pay, less job security, and fewer institutional resources to defend their interests than do ladder-rank faculty. Concerned about the status of lecturers on our campus, the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (since amalgamated into the Undergraduate Council) conducted a survey into the conditions and experiences of lecturers. The report can be found here: https://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/divco_on_ugc_lecturer_survey_report_w_encl.pdf

Compared to other institutions of higher education, Berkeley lecturers are better off - whether measured in terms of income and benefits or in terms of job security. At the same time, the material conditions of lecturers are substantially inferior to those of the tenured faculty. Yet, like tenured faculty, lecturers at Berkeley almost uniformly have PhDs, mostly from highly regarded programs. Many have made important contributions to research, and most are distinguished teachers.

That said, the complaints evinced in the survey with monotonous frequency reflected their status as “second class citizens,” invisible to their tenured colleagues. They reported a vast array of slights: exclusion from departmental functions, mailing lists, office space; arbitrary and last minute assignment of courses; irregular reviews; informal channels of recruitment; dependence on capricious student evaluations; lack of recognition for outstanding performance in teaching or for serving students in manifold, unpaid ways; denial of rights to be their own principal investigator in conducting research. All this only further contributes to their sense of insecurity.

The report notes the considerable variation across schools, colleges, and departments in lecturers’ experiences. This suggests that concrete steps taken at the unit level can significantly improve the well-being of these important members of our intellectual community. Still, the complaints do raise a ticklish question concerning the relations between non-Senate lecturers and Senate faculty – common front in the fight against bureaucratization and marketization, shared commitment to provide the best education for students, or divided interests due to the advantages one group secures at the cost of the other? These are some of the issues we will discuss at the forum.

Sponsored by
the **Academic Senate**, the **American Federation of Teachers (UC-AFT 1474)** & the **Berkeley Faculty Association**