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"Cutting-Edge" or "Ridiculously Isolated"?: Charting the Identities, Experiences, and Perspectives of Full-Time, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Engaged in Service-Learning

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This article discusses a phenomenological study that investigated the complexity of identities and experiences of 11 full-time, non-tenure-track faculty in five different career tracks engaged in service-learning at a large public research university in the southeastern United States. The study employed interviews and focus groups from which key themes and findings emerged. Non-tenure-track faculty participants reported: feelings of uniqueness/isolation based on their roles but also enhanced flexibility to incorporate service-learning from intrinsic motivations; difficulty carrying out scholarship on service-learning, despite an interest in doing so; lack of recognition compared to tenure-track colleagues; the acquisition of expertise around the pedagogy; and finding particular value in the support and professional development offered by the institution's service-learning office. The authors discuss the findings in the context of prior research on non-tenure-track faculty roles and settings, service-learning faculty involvement and motivation, and implications for institutional policy.

***Keywords*:** non-tenure-track faculty, service-learning, faculty identity, higher education climate, phenomenology

In the decades since service-learning (SL) emerged within higher education, concerns around challenges, perceptions of legitimacy, and professional identity have arisen for faculty involved in the pedagogy. Involvement in SL has been characterized as holding certain risks for its pioneers and practitioners, ranging from feelings of marginalization to difficulties achieving faculty rewards, such as tenure, to even facing the closure of their community-oriented programs (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). However, in the current national postsecondary landscape, not all faculty roles provide equivalent opportunities, protections, rewards, or access to resources for engaging with such community-oriented work. For instance, what does it mean to be a non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) member working within the "inequality regime" of higher education (O'Meara, 2016, p. 99), where status differences are embedded in the institutional fabric and manifested in stratification, division of labor, everyday interactions, and reward structures (Levin & Shaker, 2011)? How do NTTF roles and settings constrain or encourage who choose to undertake SL, and why? Who is recognized for it, who is marginalized by it, and how? How do faculty members in non-tenure-eligible roles perceive, explain, and negotiate their identities and positionalities? Such questions point to the complexity of the intersections of personal, institutional, and contextual factors that characterize the modern higher education landscape, especially for community-based work undertaken by NTTF.

The current study sought to bring the voices of such faculty to the service-learning research literature as valuable and explicitly acknowledged players. Focusing on the experiences and working environments of faculty in full-time NTT roles can help illuminate "how these more or less inclusive vs. exclusive environments impact faculty perceptions of [SL]" (Russell-Stamp, 2015, p. 45) and can make their roles, involvement, and contributions more visible. Drawing on data from one university's faculty, this phenomenological study centered on the experiences and perspectives of NTTF and how they frame their work and identity (Levin & Shaker, 2011) as SL practitioners, particularly within the liminal positionality of their career tracks and roles.

Background and Theoretical Framework

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty in Higher Education

Across the United States, part-time and full-time faculty members in NTT positions make up approximately 75% of the instructional faculty in higher education institutions (Delphi Project, 2013; Kezar & Maxey, 2013). While this number includes many part-time or adjunct instructors, most campuses also host a substantial group of full-time NTTF, representing an estimated 30% of the teaching faculty nationally (Kezar & Maxey, 2013). Nearly two decades ago, Baldwin and Chronister (2001) catalogued some of the internal and external factors within the higher education landscape associated with the growth in such faculty positions, including perceived declines in tenure-track faculty productivity, changing student characteristics, and rising costs; others (e.g., Orphan & O'Meara, 2016) have characterized this growth as part and parcel of the rise of the "neoliberal university". Institutions have hired an increasing number of faculty in NTT roles not only to reduce costs and maintain perceived flexibility of staffing, but also to bring on "specialized hires" (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001, p. 35) with desired practical expertise (e.g., Kezar & Gherke, 2014; Ramsay & Brua, 2017).

While there is substantial variation in roles and titles across institutions (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Kezar, 2012), full-time NTTF may be hired, for example, as lecturers, research scientists, clinical faculty, or "professors of practice." Additionally, in contrast to the traditional tenure-track (TT) system, in which professors are expected to engage in all aspects of the institutional missions of teaching, research, and service/outreach, NTT positions are often "unbundled" (Bland, Center, Findstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2006, p. 96). This allows for specialization and the functional alignment of these faculty lines and roles with institutional needs and priorities, such as a 100% teaching appointment. Nationally, NTTF tend to be compensated at lower rates than their TT peers, and they often face inequitable institutional policies related to hiring practices, access to resources, professional development, and governance, all of which point out their status differences (Kezar, 2012; 2013a). Despite these challenges, many NTTF confirm having intentionally selected these faculty roles (Kezar, 2012), report overall high levels of satisfaction with their work, generally have substantial longevity in their roles, and express their intention to remain at their institutions (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001).

NTT Faculty and Service-Learning

Does being on or off the tenure track actually have any relevance to SL? Levin and Shaker's (2011) broad warning that the scholarly literature often "either bypasses this group or is prefaced on assumption-laden theories… [and] offers mistaken characterizations" (pp. 1462-1463) is applicable to SL as well as community engagement publications. While full-time NTTF have been included in some SL studies, their voices have not been presented clearly. For instance, a study may mention NTTF as part of the overall sample but neglect to address possible differences based on faculty types (e.g., O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009), or full-time NTTF may be lumped with part-time NTT adjuncts (e.g., LaFave et al., 2016). Other studies have appeared to gloss over these positions or characterize them in ways that may not accurately reflect their faculty identities (e.g., Vogelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar, 2010).

Likewise, the extant literature has presented an inconsistent picture of the differences between TT and NTT faculty practitioners of SL. For instance, Furco and Moely (2012) found that some NTTF (characterized as adjuncts and instructors) rated SL's value higher than did TT faculty. Antonio, Astin, and Cress (2000) found that NTTF reported greater personal commitment to the community and were more likely to include community service in their classes. Russell-Stamp (2015) hypothesized that NTTF who specialize in teaching might have more time and fewer divergent workload demands than tenure-track faculty, potentially leading to greater involvement in pedagogies such as SL; however, Abes, Jackson, and Jones (2002) found similar percentages in both tracks involved in SL. While Abes and colleagues found minor differences in perceived deterrents to involvement with SL pedagogy, Russell-Stamp reported no significant differences in the perceived benefits of and barriers to SL. Yet, in surveys of NTTF at one institution, Matthews (2017) found that 80% of respondents reported that they perceived

differences between TT and NTT faculty in terms of their experiences teaching SL courses. In that study, 84% of NTTF felt there were at least some differences across these roles regarding faculty motivation for taking part in SL, and believed that institutional supports, rewards, and incentives for taking part in SL were often different for NTTF versus their TT colleagues:

> Generally, these NTTF respondents felt that, compared to TT faculty, NTTF have more interest in teaching service-learning, put more effort into these courses, and possess equal or greater skill level in working with the community in these courses. Likewise, they perceived similar or lower levels of institutional support, rewards, incentives, and recognition for teaching compared to TT faculty. Nearly half also felt that NTTF would be more likely to face negative consequences if something went wrong in the service-learning course, compared to TT faculty. (Matthews, 2017, p. 57)

Faculty Identity, Professionalism, and Legitimacy

The concept of *professional legitimacy* (e.g., Gonzales & Terosky, 2016) is central to understanding and conceptualizing the identity and experiences of NTTF engaged in SL. "Legitimacy involves fitting in and gaining standing as an acceptable and viable member of a field… [and] is conferred by professional endorsement, such as through appointment type, tenure, and awards" (O'Meara, 2016, p. 98). The ways in which NTTF enact their faculty identities and are identified (by themselves or others) as professionals influence their alignment with their role, discipline, and institution, and have implications for faculty well-being and productivity (Kezar, 2012; 2013a). NTTF perceptions of their identity and roles are also influenced by their context, from socialization during graduate training to disciplinary expectations and departmental and institutional cultures (e.g., Abes, Jackson, & Jones, 2002; Kezar, 2013a; Levin & Shaker, 2011; O'Meara & Jaeger, 2006; Reybold, 2003). Kezar's (2013a) research, for instance, demonstrated that individual departments (characterized as "inclusive," "neutral," or "destructive") and their chairs played a key role in whether the climate for NTTF fostered their capacity and willingness, and created opportunities, to perform to their potential.

While TT faculty often tie assessments of professional legitimacy to research productivity (Gonzales & Terosky, 2016), most NTT faculty are not appointed for research (Kezar, 2012) and thus are typically more focused on excellence in teaching and working with students (Waltman, Bergom, Hollenshead, Miller, & August, 2012). Additionally, their professional identity can be diminished by perceptions of lack of respect and inclusion from other faculty and from their institution, as well as de-professionalizing terms of employment that highlight their less privileged status (Waltman et al., 2012). In their investigation of the self-representations and identities of full-time NTTF, Levin and Shaker (2011) characterized these faculty as possessing "hybrid and dualistic identities," with conflicting experiences of working in a purportedly professional role while being de-professionalized:

> Their identity is dualistic because as teachers, they express satisfaction, whereas as members of the professoriate, they articulate restricted self-determination and self-esteem. This troubled and indistinct view of self-as-professional is problematic both for [full-time non-tenure-track] faculty as they go about their daily work and for their institutions, which are in no small part responsible for the[ir] uncertain conditions and identities. (p. 1641)

Legitimacy and identity issues are also important in considering NTTF involvement with SL. The hurdles posed by community-engaged work (e.g., Saltmarsh et al., 2009) reflect how academia's "organizational practices [are] set up to legitimize some work and devalue other work within higher education [and] constrain professional agency" (O'Meara, 2016, p. 97). In general, faculty of all types report taking part in SL for reasons that include the pedagogy's impacts on students, departmental or disciplinary culture, commitments to particular organizations and causes, as well as its personal importance to the faculty member or its centrality to a particular institutional mission or context (Abes et al., 2002; Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Blakey, Theriot, Cazzell, & Sattler, 2015; Campbell & O'Meara, 2014; O'Meara & Niehaus, 2009). However, even TT faculty who take part in community-based work may struggle with demonstrating the value of this work and how it "fits" within the traditional academic rewards system: "Legitimacy is of everyday concern for engaged scholars, as much research has shown

engaged scholars are advised to spend less time on engaged work and more time on traditional scholarship to move up in systems of academic legitimacy" (O'Meara, 2016, p. 98). What about faculty not eligible for the protections of tenure? In what ways does professional legitimacy in SL intersect with faculty career track? As O'Meara (2013)) suggested, "the influence of appointment structures on faculty motivations for service learning and community engagement remains a very important area for future research" (p. 235).

The environment and institutional context in which NTTF operate have substantial effects on their identity, agency, satisfaction, and behavior (Levin & Shaker, 2011; Kezar, 2013a, 2013b). Similarly, in their edited volume on the "next generation" of publicly engaged scholars, Post, Ward, Longo, and Saltmarsh (2016) and their contributors advocated for and demonstrated the value of personal narratives and lived experiences in illuminating the breadth and complexity of faculty practice. Levin and Shaker (2011) highlighted the need to attend to NTTF "self-representations" (p. 1466) to understand the complexities of their positions and perspectives. Clearly, to begin "acknowledg[ing] the important functions that this large component of the American faculty is performing" (Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011, p. 1506), investigations of particular institutional contexts and cases (Kezar, 2013a) are needed to foster greater understanding of this group's experiences and perspectives. In this study, therefore, we focused on the voices of full-time NTTF as practitioners of SL at one institution, with particular attention to how they characterized their identities and professional legitimacy in this work.

Methodology

Method of Inquiry

This study was a phenomenological investigation focused on perceptions and experiences of full-time NTTF teaching SL courses at an institution in the southeastern United States. Phenomenology involves "understanding the essence of experiences about a phenomenon" (Creswell, 1998, p. 65) and seeks to explore the structure of lived experiences in people's everyday lives (Crotty, 1998; van Manen, 1990). This qualitative approach allows the researcher to address the research questions from the perspective of participants' lived experiences. "Phenomenology is, on the one hand, description of the lived-through quality of lived experience, and on the other hand, description of meaning *of the expressions* of lived experience" (van Manen, 1990, p. 25, emphasis in original).

Phenomenological data analysis (Creswell, 1998) includes several steps in identifying "structures of experience" (van Manen, 1990, p. 79) that represent participants' perspectives. Qualitative data sources, such as focus groups or interviews, provide significant participant statements. After clarifying their own relevant positionality and personal experience with the phenomenon in question, researchers review the data to create clusters of meanings, developing descriptions and themes to characterize the "essence" of the experience and its underlying structure:

> Phenomenological themes may be understood as structures of experience. So, when we analyze a phenomenon, we are trying to determine what the themes are, the experiential structures that make up that experience…. [I]t is lived experience that we are attempting to describe, and lived experience cannot be captured in conceptual abstraction. (van Manen, 1990, p. 79)

Setting and Institutional Context

Kezar and Gherke (2014) reported that, compared with other institutional types, public research universities have among the highest rates of full-time NTT faculty. The setting for the current study was a public, comprehensive research-institution in the southeastern United States. This large university (enrolling about 37,000 students, including some 28,000 undergraduates at the time of study) is a land- and sea-grant institution, holds the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, and is an institutional member of several organizations oriented toward community engagement (e.g., The Research University Civic Engagement Network, Campus Compact, etc.). The institution has had a dedicated office supporting SL since 2005, and all of the university's 17 schools and colleges offer SL coursework, representing over 400 course sections per year. Each of the university's schools and colleges also employs

full-time NTT faculty members. The university recognizes eight different NTTF career tracks with promotion rungs and specified responsibilities (e.g., lecturer, research scientist, academic professional, clinical faculty); collectively, this NTT group represents about 41.7% of the approximately 3,000 full-time faculty at the university (University of Georgia, n.d.). During the decade from fall semester 2007 to fall semester 2016, the number of full-time faculty in NTT roles grew by 17.4%, versus a growth rate of 3.4% for tenure-track roles (University of Georgia, n.d.).

Participants and Data Sources

Potential participants in this study included any faculty member in any full-time NTT role at the university who was the instructor of record for at least one SL course from fall semester 2013 through summer semester 2016. We analyzed internal records from the university's Office of Service-Learning, which revealed that 97 (or about 31%) of the total number of instructors teaching SL courses during this period fell into the latter category (Matthews & Wilder, 2016). As a follow-up to a separate but related study (Matthews, 2017), respondents to an online questionnaire (sent to 82 potential participants and completed by 26) were invited to participate in individual interviews or small-group focus sessions conducted around structured questions. Eleven faculty members (see Table 1) subsequently took part in these discussions, responding to a set of semi-structured questions oriented toward understanding their perceptions and experiences in greater depth. Questions focused on participants' positions and roles; how they got started with SL; perceptions of positive outcomes as well as challenges or difficulties encountered in their SL work; ways in which NTT roles made it easier or harder to take part in SL; examples and anecdotes from their experiences; and suggestions for the Office of Service-Learning regarding needs or supports.

Four study participants took part in individual interviews, while seven participated in two focus groups of four participants and three participants, respectively. Each focus-group session lasted up to an hour. Participants were all White and most were female, and they represented five different faculty career tracks. Each faculty member was based in a different unit or department, with the sample as a whole representing disciplines across seven of the university's schools/colleges, including area studies, art education, disabilities studies, educational psychology, English, entomology, environmental education, human development, law, marine science, and social work. Prior to their involvement in the study, most participants had taken part in the year-long Service-Learning Fellows faculty development program or served as a Senior Scholar for the office.

Table 1. Participant Demographics (N = 11)

Faculty Career Track	Count	Gender	Race	Involvement with SL Office
Academic Professional	4	All Female	White	3 Service-Learning Fellows; 1 no prior involvement
Public Service Faculty	3	All Male	White	1 Senior Scholar; 2 no prior involvement
Lecturer	2	Both Female	White	Both Service-Learning Fellows
Clinical Faculty	1	Female	White	1 Service-Learning Fellow
Instructor	1	Female	White	No prior involvement

Participant responses were transcribed and entered into NVivo software for analysis and to help organize and visualize the data, themes, and findings. A first cycle of analysis employed in vivo, or inductive, coding consistent with phenomenological practice (Saldaña, 2015); subsequent coding cycles employed pattern coding to categorize emergent themes and concepts. The study was conducted with informed participant consent and with approval from the university's Institutional Review Board.

Bracketing our Positionality

We are both long-standing non-tenure-track faculty who have spent our academic careers in various roles at the institution where the study took place. We are both senior academic professionals, the third and final tier of promotion in the university's academic professional career track, which focuses on administration and program development but also includes instruction, research, and/or outreach. We provide administrative leadership to the campus Office of Service-Learning, including leading faculty development, teaching service-learning courses, tracking institutional data, conducting research, developing and leading programs, and supporting campus-wide initiatives. Additionally, one of us has been substantively involved in recent on-campus work relating to policies, conditions, and guidelines for NTTF. In part due to our own positionality, we intentionally design and advertise our office's programs and awards to be open to faculty in any career track; in fact, about 40% of the faculty members who have taken part in the past 12 cohorts of the year-long Service-Learning Fellows professional development program have served in NTT roles. From our own experiences and awareness of campus dynamics around faculty roles and opportunities, and as SL practitioners and researchers ourselves, we have noted the relative lack of attention paid to the experiences of SL faculty off the tenure track, which served as the genesis of our interest in this topic.

Since phenomenology entails bringing fresh eyes to examine an experience and its meaning, it was important for us to maintain openness beyond our own opinions about what it means to work in SL as an NTT faculty member. Although we have relevant personal histories, we recognized that we cannot understand the perspectives characterizing this group's experiences without listening to other NTTF, particularly given the diversity and variability among these roles on our campus. For this study, "bracketing" our positionality (Creswell, 1998) entailed acknowledging that our own assumptions do not speak for the entire set of NTTF practicing SL. We also acknowledge that over the past decade we have worked closely with many of the faculty who agreed to participate in the study; we therefore enlisted a third party (a doctoral candidate with an assistantship in our office) to conduct and transcribe the participant interviews and focus groups. Even though we satisfied the inclusion criteria for participation, we did not include ourselves in the data pool for the study, to avoid inserting our assumptions. Additionally, data analysis was oriented toward emergent themes that came in vivo from the participants' own voices, rather than from assumptions we carried into the study.

Findings

Thematic analysis of participant comments from the two focus groups and four interviews found several key themes characterizing the NTT faculty members' experiences and perspectives vis-à-vis SL. Figure 1 depicts these thematic nodes, offering a sense of the relative frequency of the themes in the dataset; likewise, Table 2 provides examples of participant comments that illustrate each theme.

Figure 1. Thematic nodes for NTT faculty perspectives on service-learning involvement

Table 2. Sample Participant Quotations Illustrating Themes

Quotation	Participant	Theme
"I feel like the lone person doing this where I am."	Lecturer B	Lone Wolf
"I think they see me, not necessarily in a negative way, but as a little bit of an oddball because I'm the only one doing [SL]."	Public Service Faculty C	Lone Wolf
"So I feel that even though there are a lot of challenges, I feel that this is a more progressive teaching approach in higher education and that's rewarding to me, to feel that you are on the cutting edge of something rather than the back out…."	Clinical Faculty A	Motivation
"I do service-learning because I want to do it."	Academic Professional B	Motivation
"I feel like I have more flexibility with my teaching time."	Clinical Faculty A	Flexibility
"I think being in that role of emphasizing teaching lends itself to doing service-learning work."	Lecturer A	Flexibility
"Nope. Haven't published at all. Not because I don't want to."	Public Service Faculty C	Scholarly Activity
"I have data that I have gathered a few years ago, that I did present on, but I just sat down two weeks ago to try to write it	Lecturer A	Scholarly Activity

Quotation	Participant	Theme
up, and I thought, didn't get very far. [*laughs*] I have final exams to grade."		
"I'm not eligible for certain awards and honors within this institution. To my knowledge, [there are] a very, very limited number of awards for non-tenure-track teaching, at my college level and the university."	Academic Professional B	Lack of Recognition
"There are not nearly as many opportunities for advancement or recognition, as a non-tenure-track people."	Lecturer A	Lack of Recognition
"[Service-learning has] given me a new niche of expertise that I wouldn't have had otherwise."	Lecturer A	Leaders and Experts
"They like it that this is the work that I do, because myself and one other colleague are the only people doing it. So, it's kind of like an added bonus. They can say 'Yes, we have people doing service-learning work in [this department].'"	Lecturer B	Leaders and Experts
"I think the group that we had that year as Service-Learning Fellows, we worked together then and now. It was very helpful to make connections"	Academic Professional C	Finding Community
"But you know, I think you find your people, y'all are my people. Knowing that there's people in other departments and units that you can chat with, who get it, and have done it [SL]."	Clinical Faculty A	Finding Community

The first salient theme that emerged—related to identity around SL work—was that participants often reported a feeling of uniqueness or of carrying out SL in relative isolation from other faculty members in their units: "I think in my college, I am the only non-tenure-track teaching faculty…. I truly am the lone wolf, so to speak" (Academic Professional B). Public Service Faculty A characterized himself as "ridiculously isolated" since he was the only NTTF in his career track in his college. Another participant shared the perception that her tenure-track departmental colleagues "think I've landed from Mars somewhere" (Academic Professional A), based on how different her community-engaged work was from the sort of work they undertook. Likewise, Clinical Faculty A noted, "I think that in my unit I am the only service-learning oriented faculty member, and so I'm an island, in lots of ways." This sense of isolation or uniqueness, whether due to their NTT role, their interest in SL, or both, carries both negative and positive connotations—being misunderstood, for instance, but also minimizing constraints and giving them agency to carry on this work.

This awareness also flowed into the second set of themes, which explored the interplay between motivations for SL and the NTT positions. Participants indicated that SL was a good "fit" for NTT roles, as Lecturer A suggested: "I think being in that [NTT] role of emphasizing teaching lends itself to doing service-learning work." Public Service Faculty B asserted, "With my service appointment of my job, tied with my instructional appointment as well, it's almost a perfect marriage of service-learning built into my position." Participants indicated that their NTT role created space for taking part in SL without the pressures of seeking tenure, thus providing some flexibility, though still bounded by their overall faculty roles: "I have this flexibility because I'm a non-tenure track person to do that stuff, but I still have those other responsibilities to balance" (Lecturer B). Academic Professional D explained, "In our department, the publications and the research are valued more so than the teaching. [New tenure-track faculty are] pretty much told, 'Don't do anything but research,' for those first two or three years they're on campus." Similarly, Lecturer A explained, "One of our faculty members in [my department] taught a service-learning class before me and she was one of the first Fellows in the Service-Learning Fellows cohort, and

she was advised by our former head to stop teaching service-learning classes, specifically because she was going up for tenure, and that was going to take up too much time."

However, participants clarified that they did not engage in SL as a requirement of their NTT position. Academic Professional D asserted, "I think, for so many non-tenure-track faculty, particularly lecturers, their teaching load is just so heavy. It requires so much time, it's just so labor intensive, it's just hard for them to really do much else. You really have to kind of be a special person to really step out [to do service-learning]." Instead, they engaged in SL primarily out of their intrinsic motivation to enhance student learning: "People that do service-learning, tenure-track or non-tenure-track, [do it] because it's philosophical. It's a pedagogy that they adopted, they really appreciate it, they understand it, they get it, and they would do it regardless" (Academic Professional B). As Clinical Faculty A explained:

> I just don't think I could be happy in my career if I was someone that took a more traditional lecture approach to teaching, I don't see the value in that. And I think we know now from the literature that's not the way students learn best. So I feel that even though there are a lot of challenges, I feel that this is a more progressive teaching approach in higher education, and that's rewarding to me, to feel that you are on the cutting edge of something rather than the back out.

The flipside of filling NTT roles without time budgeted for research was the perceived constraint on participants' ability to carry out scholarship around their SL work. For instance, referring to her SL activities, Clinical Faculty A explained:

> I know it's a rich area that I want to publish [in]. I probably could, but because publication isn't as important for me, I just haven't prioritized that compared to some of the other programs kinds of things, teaching things, and other things that bubble out and take precedence over publications.

This orientation toward priorities other than research productivity also seemed to reinforce NTT participants' feelings of isolation. For instance, Lecturer B noted that she was "in a department where everyone else is tenure-track faculty members, and really, I mean there aren't many conversations about teaching in my department, to be candid. Everything is about the grants, the buyouts, research, and productivity."

Two other themes around professional identity and legitimacy emerged from the interviews and focus groups. First, participants clearly conveyed the perception that opportunities for professional recognition were inconsistent or lacking due to their NTT status. As Academic Professional D noted, "It's just ironic—those positions like lecturers are all instructional, you know? These people are not eligible for [most campus] awards…, yeah, it's an issue." Although their NTT roles meant that there were fewer institutional opportunities for recognition and reward for the time and effort invested in SL, they indicated that their involvement in this pedagogy created a pathway for developing expertise, demonstrating agency, and gaining at least some recognition. Soon after being hired, Clinical Faculty A realized that

> [there were] not nearly as many opportunities [as an NTTF] to be recognized, to have a pathway, to build towards success and promotion, that service-learning was one of those first pathways that I found. And I found it to be not only rewarding in terms of the alignment with my teaching pedagogy and outcomes for my students. But it's allowed me a vehicle to show that I'm valuable within my unit, my college, and a lot of the work that I've been doing is probably going to provide the foundation for my dossier for when I do go up for promotion.

Academic Professional B shared that SL had even provided her recognition off campus:

> There are a lot of my peers [at other institutions] that really admire what we've been able to do at [this university] through service-learning. Just getting so many students involved with something that they may have never, ever been involved with…. It's like my peers seeing it, and wanting to learn more about it, and trying to convince their administrators to maybe adopt this.

Finally, the participants who had taken part in structured Office of Service-Learning programs, such as the Service-Learning Fellows program, explicitly cited the value of finding their "people" —i.e., others involved in SL—as well as the importance of resources, such as faculty development, for combatting their perceived isolation. Academic Professional A, for instance, contrasted the support she received from her department with that of the campus service-learning office: "When I applied for the Service-Learning

Fellows, I couldn't even get my department chair to send my letter over—it was eight weeks or six weeks late. I think they do well in the [service-learning] office, and I can go to them anytime." Lecturer B asserted that in her department she "did not have that kind of place to talk about teaching things. I have to find a place to do that. I can do that with other Service-Learning Fellows who share the same value with what they are doing professionally."

Discussion

Phenomenology seeks to examine the lived experiences of participants as well as the meanings that participants make of those experiences in order to explain their essence or underlying structure. In the current study, a set of themes emerged helping to clarify the intersections between the NTT status of these 11 participants and their involvement with SL, both reinforcing and expanding prior work in these areas.

As in other studies on faculty motivation, this study's NTT participants valued SL as a way of enhancing student and community outcomes (Abes et al., 2002; Russell-Stamp, 2015), and they persisted in engaging in it despite logistical challenges and/or minimal departmental support. Abes et al. (2002) found that, across career tracks, faculty who taught using SL tended to perceive teaching as personally more important, and research and publication as less important, than did faculty not involved with SL. Similarly, Waltman and colleagues (2012) found that a primary motivator expressed by NTTF was the satisfaction derived from effective teaching. In the present study, similar to the NTT experiences of community engagement related by Green, Harrison, Jones, and Shaffer (2016), participants expressed that their involvement in the pedagogy was not required nor necessarily rewarded by their NTTF roles. However, they perceived SL to fit well with such positions' orientation toward teaching and/or service, as well as their lack of what Russell-Stamp (2015) called "the added pressure of the tenure 'clock'" (p. 45).

The focus of NTT participants on SL, however, also appeared to impact their professional identity by creating a perception of being an outsider compared to more conventionally oriented faculty peers. Being a "lone wolf" brought both benefits and drawbacks; it made NTTF feel isolated yet also allowed them freedom to implement the pedagogy—if not the time to undertake SL research or scholarship. While being off the tenure track may provide relief from some sets of responsibilities (Waltman et al., 2012), this study's participants' concomitant lack of time allocated for research also led to conflicted feelings, that is, recognizing that scholarly productivity is valued but feeling unable to engage due to time constraints. In her work focusing on faculty agency and challenges faced by community-engagement scholars, O'Meara (2016) argued that "legitimacy systems devalue community engagement" and that rewards are principally "bestowed upon those involved in the most traditional scholarship" (p. 103). Likewise, Gonzales and Terosky (2016) characterized university professors' professional legitimacy judgments as "overwhelmingly connected to faculty research/productivity and the type of institution in which professors worked" (p. 16), and their expectation for demonstrating legitimacy was linked to faculty ability to "produce work that could be counted." At a research university like the study site in particular, not engaging in this form of "academic currency" (Fogarty, 2009) thus also appears to have reinforced NTT faculty members' feelings of uniqueness.

Participants perceived the differences in status and professional identity often associated with NTT roles (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Kezar, 2012; Waltman et al., 2012), noting for instance the unequal access to awards, funding, and departmental support available to their positions and work. Policies and practices that "impact capacity and opportunity" for professional performance (Kezar, 2013a) have been shown to shape NTTF job satisfaction, identity, and activities (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Cunningham, 2014; Kezar, 2012). While the NTTF in Levin and Shaker's work (2011) were characterized as having conflicted identities (i.e., deriving satisfaction from their work yet lacking respect, autonomy, and agency in their positions), many participants in the present study did express agency and autonomy related to their SL involvement. While Russell-Stamp (2015) found that NTTF were significantly less aware of campus resources for SL than tenure-track faculty, this did not seem to be an issue for this study's participants, who were very engaged with these resources. Despite challenges and isolation, they chose to take part in the pedagogy, creating a "niche" where they could flourish. In "finding their people" and

developing recognized expertise through SL programs and activities, they at least partially counteracted their isolation and the status differences accorded by their faculty track, reasserting their value to the institution and demonstrating agency as professionals.

Clearly, the availability of professional development networks and the institutional resources and support provided by the campus Office of Service-Learning were important to this group of otherwise potentially marginalized faculty. On the campus where the current study took place, SL resources (e.g., faculty development programs, awards, funding, etc.) are available explicitly to all career tracks; however, this is not the case for some faculty development programs offered through other units and offices at the institution. Thus, NTTF in the current study may have especially valued SL due to lack of opportunities or resources in other areas. That is, since many traditional pathways for demonstrating excellence and leadership may only be open to tenure-track faculty, the more inclusive offerings allow NTTF to develop and demonstrate agency and excellence through SL, creating a self-reinforcing "virtuous cycle."

Institutional Implications for Supporting NTT Faculty in Service-Learning

The current study highlights the value and importance of considering the complex ecosystems of experience where SL and NTTF concerns intersect. It also presents several institutional implications for practice.

Because of their orientation toward student learning, teaching expertise, and alignment of their position responsibilities, NTTF may have particular interest in SL pedagogy. Therefore, universities with full-time NTTF in instructional roles should be aware that such faculty members may be particularly well-suited for involvement with community-based teaching and learning, if invited, recruited, and included. Campus SL support offices should ensure that they are (and remain) attuned and attentive to this group, and that their programs and offerings are open explicitly to NTTF participation. In fact, the first "call to action" for supporting community-engaged scholars proposed by Green and colleagues (2016) is to "create awareness of how community engagement can be part of alternative positions" (p. 151), including NTTF roles.

As in the current study, NTTF may otherwise feel isolated and marginalized due to their unique position or role within their departments. Departmental culture—whether "destructive," "neutral," or "supportive" (Kezar, 2013a)—is outside the control of individual faculty members; having access to a supporting group with shared values, especially in less ideal unit climates, may serve as a protective factor for enhancing these faculty members' motivation and resilience, helping them to "find their people." As O'Meara (2016) noted, such "peer networks provide a place for intellectual engagement, strategies, and professional growth for engaged scholars and are necessary scaffolding to support this work" (pp. 105-107). Since SL offices and personnel often are explicitly oriented toward social justice and values of democratic, participatory, and less hierarchical norms, intentional alignment with and consideration of the needs of NTTF—an often marginalized faculty group—can be a particularly appropriate fit.

Support for professional development is considered a critical factor for enhancing the motivation, working conditions, and professionalization of NTTF across the board (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Kezar, 2012). Participants in the current study likewise identified this as very important for their involvement and development. Since NTTF on some campuses may be less aware of available SL resources (Russell-Stamp, 2015), it may be necessary to actively reach out to include this group. The study participants used their SL expertise as a lever to enhance their legitimacy and make themselves more "invaluable and irreplaceable as well as organizationally influential" (Levin & Shaker, 2011, p. 1481). This involvement can pay dividends not only for individual faculty, but also the institution by expanding the set of community-engaged practitioners campus-wide. Indeed, on the campus where this study took place, over a decade of intentional inclusion of NTTF in professional development and resources for SL attests to the potential benefits that accrue, both to the faculty members and to the institution, when NTTF are welcomed and included.

Limitations and Future Research

Phenomenology focuses on the experiences of a particular set of participants. The small overall number of participants in this study may limit confidence in the level of "saturation" achieved in the data available. This study was based on a single U.S. campus and as such may not be generalizable to other countries or to other campuses, especially across institutional types (e.g., Gonzales & Terosky, 2016). Other identity characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age, length of faculty service, etc.) also likely influence participant experiences but were not investigated here. Perspectives might also be different for NTTF in disciplines/departments not represented in the current study's sample; in other non-tenure career tracks (e.g., research scientists) not represented in the sample; or in other faculty placements (e.g., administrative units rather than academic departments). Likewise, the current study focused exclusively on full-time NTTF and thus is not necessarily representative of the experiences of part-time, adjunct, or other conditional faculty roles. Future research would help extend and clarify the robustness and generalizability of the findings across these variables.

Conclusions

Full-time, non-tenure-track faculty represent a substantive segment of those engaged in service-learning (Matthews, 2017). Hence, exploring and validating their experiences and perspectives helps explain an important piece of the institutional landscape in which SL takes place, similar to other efforts to capture the lived experiences of community-engaged practitioners (e.g., Post et al., 2016). Questions of identity, motivation, and legitimacy reveal the complexity and nuance of their experiences. Both the inequities inherent in NTT roles and the challenges of community-based teaching and learning can contribute to potential isolation and de-professionalization of NTT SL practitioners. However, when supported, NTTF can also leverage their roles, create peer networks, and counteract marginalization, reclaiming agency and reasserting their professionalism and value to students, community, and the institution through the pathway of SL expertise.

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