American Philosophical Association

Guidance for Non-Tenure Track Faculty
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Aims and Definitions
This document is directed specifically to non-tenure track faculty, not to the institutions that hire them, and is aimed at providing support to a group of philosophers in academic positions in which they have little say or power to negotiate for terms of employment that are fair and commensurate with their qualifications.

“Non-Tenure Track Faculty” (NTT faculty) in this document refers to fixed-term full-time or part-time academic employees (excluding those on post-doctoral fellowships) who teach in institutions of higher learning (four-year and two-year colleges and universities), community colleges, and technical colleges. Such employees are normally hired on contracts to teach one or more courses for a single semester or longer, up to two years, and include those who are hired as replacements for faculty on sabbatical or other long-term leave. The contracts may be renewable only for a limited number of times, and there is no expectation of permanent employment. Research and service are usually not explicitly included among responsibilities of the employee. Depending on course load, benefits may or may not be offered in addition to salary.

This document is not written for more permanent faculty on non-tenure earning tracks, namely those who have contracts of two years or longer that are renewable after routine evaluation, which puts them in roughly the same position as tenure-track faculty working towards tenure. Many universities now have either teaching tenure-track or non-tenure-earning faculty who are hired to teach with little or no research expected. These positions are designed for philosophy PhDs who want to dedicate their professional lives to teaching undergraduates. Universities who employ such teaching faculty usually see the benefit of retaining excellent teachers who are not merely hired on a short-term basis to meet teaching needs but are valuable contributors to the undergraduate program. They have greater job security and are given more favorable terms of employment as they are not budgeted as visiting positions.

Note: Throughout this document, when we refer to “tenure-track faculty,” we mean that term to include both those who have earned tenure and those who are on the tenure track but have not yet earned tenure.

A. Keeping the NTT job
1. Meeting expectations for renewal
Contracts for NTT faculty usually include a clause explicitly stating that there is no commitment to further employment at the end of the contract period. What you should know is that while you should be on the job market looking for a more secure position, you could also work on getting another contract for the same job so that you have employment if your job search does not pan out.

Many of the things you can do to keep your job are described more specifically later in this document. The main consideration for getting a new contract and perhaps a longer-term one is to meet and exceed the expectations for renewal. Since NTT faculty are hired to teach—often specifically to teach large lower-division classes—it is important to show interest in doing the job and a desire to take on other classes in areas of need. This starts on the first day of hire.

Starting at a new place of employment is challenging, especially when you are financially challenged. Make use of all the resources that the university has to offer, such as the Teaching and Learning Center. Talk to faculty to get a sense of the type of students you will have in your classes, and how to design classes that work well at that university.
Students who take large introductory philosophy classes taught by NTT faculty are usually not philosophy majors and are in your class to meet general education requirements. Since they are not vested in the philosophy program, it is quite unlikely that they will voice their support for the continued employment of any NTT faculty. Nevertheless, they will have their say in end-of-semester course evaluations, and positive evaluations that compare well with some of the tenure-track faculty are likely to serve you well at the time when renewal is being considered.

It will definitely be useful to have the tenure-track faculty speak up for you to be renewed. (See 4. WORKING WITH COLLEAGUES AND MENTORS.) If it is not standard at your university for NTT faculty to be observed in class, invite two or more of the tenure-track faculty to your classes each semester. Even if you are not renewed, their letters will help you in your next job search and you will benefit from their advice. And if there is a possibility to seek promotion, e.g., from lecturer to senior lecturer, you should ensure that you have the required number of classroom visits from appropriate faculty by checking the requirements for promotion with your department chair or by consulting the department handbook.

You should look out for opportunities to offer classes that are not regularly taught, especially on topics you are well positioned to teach because you have taught them before or they are in one of your areas of specialization. What courses are in the catalog but have not been recently offered? If you are interested in teaching one of these courses, let the department chair know before the next semester's course offerings are finalized.

Keep the department chair informed about your situation and plans. Do not let the department assume that you are not available in the future. You should create the impression that you like the department and the university enough to want to stay on if possible.

Before the end of the semester, be proactive. Do not wait for your department chair to ask you whether you would like to be considered for further employment—say so early on. Do not be worried about being perceived as needy or a burden by proactively offering that you are interested in renewal, as department chairs are often interested in this information. Universities usually have a separate pool of funds for employing NTT faculty in areas of high demand, so there may be opportunities for “off-budget” hires. However, contracts need to be drawn up and signed in time for the next semester.

2. Offering new courses and diversifying

In many universities, NTT faculty are normally assigned to teach specific courses—often those that are not viewed as the most desirable by the tenured and tenure-track faculty. These may include large lower-level classes that tend to be taken by students who are not philosophy majors, and that are taken by those students to fulfill general education requirements. Alternatively, many philosophy departments have courses that are viewed as “service” courses—courses that are taught to fulfill requirements of some other department, e.g., bioethics for nursing majors or business ethics for business majors.

Since NTT faculty are often hired to fulfill very specific departmental needs, you may not have much discretion over the specific courses that you are assigned to teach. Be aware that departments may have a repository of previous syllabi and this can be a useful source of guidance on how the course tends to be taught at that department as you design your own course. Nevertheless, the department should be willing to recognize instructors’ academic freedom, and therefore should not require any specific syllabus to be
used. When there is little guidance on what should be taught, you should use the opportunity to design a syllabus you would like to teach.

Sometimes, as NTT faculty, you might have the option of choosing to teach courses you have taught elsewhere or to offer new courses. The main reason for you to refrain from offering new courses and diversifying your course offerings is the substantial workload that accompanies offering a course that you have not taught in the past. This workload includes doing sufficient background preparation in order to devise a new syllabus, as well as preparations for each new individual class session. In addition, teaching new courses also takes a heavier cognitive and emotional toll in that you won’t be sure how your course will be received by the students and whether the class will fill. And there is no guarantee that the course can be offered again, so it may be a lot of preparation for a course that is taught just one time.

On the other hand, teaching the same course multiple times allows you to dramatically cut down on preparation time and tweak courses based on previous experience regarding what topics and readings students find interesting and what approaches to teaching specific material are the most effective. Teaching a class multiple times will also help you to gain confidence in the classroom because you are teaching topics that are very familiar to you.

The main benefit for NTT faculty of offering new courses is gaining experience in teaching topics that might be crucial for getting a job somewhere else and increasing the range of courses you can teach at your current institution. Another advantage is the increased excitement in teaching. While preparing to teach a course you have not previously taught requires a lot of work, this may be compensated for by the enjoyment you get from developing a new course in your specialization or learning about an area of philosophy outside of your previous competence. If teaching the same class repeatedly can make life easy, it can also make life boring.

If there is an opportunity to teach an online class, you should be open to doing so. The ability to teach online is becoming more important as many universities seek to recruit non-traditional students, including working people who need flexible scheduling. Experience teaching online will help you to be retained in your existing job or to be an attractive hire when you return to the job market. You may also be able to take up NTT teaching at another university without physically moving there for a semester if you can offer to teach the class online from where you are.

3. Working with students
As NTT faculty are hired specifically for teaching positions, working with students is a large part of the job. This part of the job presents both opportunities and challenges, including some that are specific to teaching philosophy. For example, in contrast to most other subjects, few if any students in an introductory philosophy class will have had previous exposure to philosophy as an academic discipline. A second distinctive feature involves the methods and intellectual standards employed in philosophy courses. Many students will recognize relatively early in the semester that these methods and standards are different from the ones that apply in their other courses. And some of these students will realize, as well, that they are being encouraged to develop cognitive abilities that they have not previously had the opportunity to exercise. Connecting with such students can go far towards adding to your job satisfaction as an NTT faculty member. In addition, some of these students may go on to take courses with your colleagues, where they may be in a position to provide positive feedback about their experience with your course. Since
departments often use such informal feedback along with course evaluations and classroom observations when making decisions about course offerings and NTT faculty positions, these students can help strengthen the case for renewing your position if renewal is a possibility, and, in some cases, for considering you for a more secure position if one becomes available.

To make the most of this opportunity, you have to deal with an especially challenging aspect of undergraduate teaching in philosophy: setting an appropriate bar for the difficulty of the course, in terms of the complexity of lectures and the material covered, the difficulty of exams and the stringency of grading standards, and the amount of assigned readings. There are clearly no one-size-fits-all answers to these questions, and different instructors may find different ways to strike the right balance at the same institution. In general, it is best when in doubt to err on the side of greater simplicity and leniency, since most philosophers tend to overestimate the general accessibility of topics we spend a lot of time thinking about, and since it is generally easier and less stressful to ramp up the level of intricacy if doing so is warranted (e.g., by adding supplemental discussion topics as the semester progresses, or with supplemental handouts) than it is to dial down the intricacy once the course is underway.

Office hours are valuable for establishing a rapport with individual students; for getting a sense of which material students find especially challenging; and for helping conscientious students who want to do better and/or who may be struggling with the material. While it is important to get the most out of time spent meeting with students, you should not feel obliged to hold more office hours than the department or institution officially requires. If there is no official requirement, use your professional judgment about what seems reasonable in the circumstances, given your teaching load and what the norm is for other faculty. Finally, while it is important to make an effort to accommodate students whose class schedules prevent them from attending regular office hours, all faculty, whether NTT or tenure-track, should feel empowered to set and uphold appropriate boundaries to protect time for other personal and professional responsibilities (e.g., childcare, research).

4. Working with colleagues and mentors

Advice about mentoring, much like advice about other substantive personal relationships, is bound to be controversial. It is worth noting, however, that mentorship relations need not be explicitly conceived as such—indeed, some believe that it is detrimental for them to be formalized—nor is there any clear limit to the number or variety of mentors one might have. Rather than seeking to prescribe how to choose a mentor, it is likely more useful to note several considerations you as NTT faculty might keep in mind as you develop mentorship possibilities.

First, the tasks of understanding the institution at which you work, the market in which you are seeking a job, and the discipline in which you aim to publish are each exceptionally complex. It would be quite unlikely if a single person had unique or uniformly good advice about any of these matters, much less all of them. Additionally, while it would be a very good thing if individuals who supply the best advice in these areas were also sources of the best emotional support, there is no guarantee that those who provide the most useful professional guidance are also those best able to help you deal with personal challenges. There is reason to believe that most of us will require a diverse number of mentors, and you should not feel any reservation in seeking out mentorship relations that specifically promote personal well-being alongside mentorship regarding strictly professional concerns.
While some philosophers might be able to find mentors within their home departments, there is often good reason to look beyond your own department—e.g., if you require mentorship in dealing with difficult departmental colleagues. Under such circumstances, there may be a university or college-wide mentoring program available to you. Alternatively, you might consider asking whether a departmental colleague or an administrator could introduce you to a faculty member, perhaps with relevant experiences, from a different department. Such introductions and subsequent discussions are a natural place for fostering healthy mentorship relations.

Developing mentorship relationships is a worthwhile goal as you spend time within a new department, but it is not the only one. Developing productive and stable working relationships with your new colleagues is no less important and, in many circumstances, it can prove to be the more difficult task, especially if you are working on more than one campus and cannot be on campus outside of class and office hours. Moreover, as NTT faculty, you may be left out of department meetings and many of the social events of the department.

It is useful to keep in mind that priorities, interests, and expectations can vary across backgrounds and career stages, but, beyond platitudes, there is little good advice for navigating the challenges that come with being a co-worker. It is important, however, to remember that there is no excuse for co-workers violating the expectations set out in the law, the regulations of the university, or of general decency. Tolerating harassment, bullying, or other unacceptable behavior towards yourself or others is not part of “getting used to the department” or “learning the ropes.” If you are concerned that a colleague's behavior is illegal or violates professional standards or university regulations, you should report it to a suitable party. More often than not, there is someone on campus whose job it is to deal with such issues. This might be your chair, the head of your academic unit, a Title IX coordinator, or an ombudsperson. If you are unsure whom to contact, the Human Resources Department at your college or university is likely to be able to provide some guidance. If you have questions about what to reasonably expect of your department and colleagues, consult your department's and institution's handbooks for faculty.

5. Service on committees and non-teaching-related work

Until recently, most academic departments did not expect NTT faculty to perform departmental service, and most colleges and universities did not expect NTT faculty to perform college or university service. There was—and continues to be—at least one good reason for them not to expect such service. Namely, if your employer is not investing in your future, then you will probably not have very much reason to invest in your employer’s future. Since employers (departments, colleges, and universities) know this, they can reasonably conclude that any service you perform will probably not be guided by an interest in the good of the institution, but rather by an interest you have in creating the impression of being useful. And service performed with that aim will often not be very productive.

But, as reliance upon NTT faculty has increased in recent years, employers have increasingly turned to NTT faculty to perform more of the services needed for the institution to function. Some departments, colleges, and universities have begun to expect service of NTT faculty. If your employer demands such service of you, you should figure out the answer to this question: Is your employer (department, college, or university) willing to invest in your future to the same degree that it is asking you to invest in its future?

If your own professional interests do not coincide with your employer's interests, you may not wish to compromise research or teaching that contribute more to your future professional plans. You may have to
consider whether by devoting more energy to service than the minimum required, you may make it likely that your employer will expect more NTT faculty to do service work. On the other hand, there are benefits to taking on some types of service if you have the choice to pick among service opportunities. You might develop relationships with undergraduates, especially philosophy majors (e.g., by serving as a liaison to the undergraduate club or helping to organize undergraduate events) or colleagues. A willingness to take on service and mentorship roles can also demonstrate your commitment to the department, which might increase your odds of being rehired. Some service roles are multi-year (e.g., departmental initiatives, teaching and learning grants, or university committees) and could therefore be leveraged towards a renewal of your existing contract. And of course, service and mentoring may also be personally rewarding.

6. Adjusting to life after moving to a new location
   a) Adjustment to a new institution
   Review the institution’s faculty handbook, particularly sections relevant to you and your position in the institution. Be sure to participate in all orientation and training sessions for new faculty. However, there are a number of aspects of the institution that may not be directly addressed in orientation and the handbook, including norms around admitting students into classes, scheduling final exams, collecting and submitting grades, the location of counseling services (if available), textbooks and course-packs, photocopying, parking, clerical and technological support, and campus resources for faculty including childcare options, eligibility for grants to attend conferences, faculty access to campus cafeteria meal plans, and library resources. As knowing such things may be critical for your successful onboarding, you should consult colleagues on such matters where possible.

   b) Finding housing
   For short-term housing, some institutions have temporary faculty housing or other types of short-term housing (for graduate students and staff). There are some websites (e.g., sabbatical.com) that advertise subletting opportunities from faculty on sabbatical—although availability varies depending on school size. Different towns and cities have different turnover rates and lease rental terms, and opportunities for short-term rentals vary. Sometimes, apartments and houses advertised on Airbnb, and other websites where people rent out their homes for a few days, can be negotiated for longer stays of many months. It is important to know the law and what your rights are as a renter.

   c) Adjusting to a new location beyond campus
   Depending on your previous experiences, you might be moving to an area with more or less infrastructure. Local institutions to seek out (if the town has them) include the public library, the main transit system hub, bus and train stations, car-share programs, the nearest Department of Motor Vehicles (many states/provinces require you to transfer your driver license within 30 days of becoming a resident of that state, and if you are a non-citizen, you will need your immigration documentation to obtain a driver’s license in some states/provinces), religious organizations, non-profit organizations, and public spaces including parks. Depending on the cost, it may be better to join recreation centers that are near to where you live than to use the facilities on campus. This would also enable you to meet people outside of the academic world in which you work, which may be particularly important if you are moving into the neighborhood without a spouse or family.
B. Improving the conditions of NTT work

1. Salaries and terms of employment

a) Salaries
Ideally, NTT faculty should receive a living wage, and should not have to accept offers to teach for less than that. What constitutes a living wage depends, of course, on the cost of living for the region in question. Unfortunately, many universities pay so little for teaching a course that NTT faculty have to teach 10 courses or more a year just to make the equivalent of $15 per hour, which is the minimum wage that progressive parts of the US have implemented.

You should consult living wage figures in your region and use that figure to determine what would be fair compensation for any course that you are being hired to teach as NTT faculty. Obviously, the fight for paying NTT faculty a living wage is not something an individual can win, and unionization of NTT faculty will enhance bargaining power by presenting a united front. But awareness of what is a fair wage should inform your decision about which job offers for NTT faculty you should accept if you have more than one offer to choose from.

b) Contracts and renewals
You should not be expected to make commitments of availability to your employer that are in excess of the time to which your employer makes commitments of employment. Thus, an NTT employee who is offered a two-semester contract is not committed to being available to teach for any period beyond those two semesters. And because many NTT employees must lease living space near campus to be able to teach there, and those leases often need to be renewed before the summer, you should ask for commitments of employment in time for you to renew the lease if you wish to do so. And if there is an offer of further employment in the next academic year, the possibility of summer employment should be explored, especially as such employment in some universities is paid for directly from tuition revenue, unlike salaries in the regular academic year that come from an annual budget.

Offers that have been accepted in writing cannot be revoked legally, except under conditions that are explicitly specified by the employer, but note that it is often written into the contract that the class that you are employed to teach may be cancelled due to low enrollment. It might be useful to do some research on enrollment in past semesters and find out what the demand is for classes at various times, especially if you are assigned evening and late Friday classes.

c) Benefits
Federal law requires that NTT faculty with a teaching load equivalent to at least a half-time position receive health insurance. Some institutions also provide retirement benefits to part-time employees. We urge NTT faculty who are not offered such benefits to seek legal advice. Colleges and universities know that by shortchanging their NTT faculty, they are also shortchanging their students—but this is not something that they will necessarily consider unless you and other NTT faculty are prepared to defend your legal rights as workers.

2. Teaching load
While conditions for NTT faculty vary across institutions and states or provinces, recommendations regarding preferable—if not ideal—teaching loads can be helpful when attempting to make decisions on where and how many classes to teach.
Your needs as an individual must be taken into consideration. Whether you are a graduate student, a long-term adjunct, a primary care giver, or someone who chooses to take an NTT position in a specific location for family or similar reasons, you will have to decide how heavy a course load is best suited to your situation.

- If you are a graduate student who still has funding from your graduate program, a 1-1 course load is often best. This allows you to build relationships with nearby faculty and institutions while also ensuring that you have adequate time to finish your dissertation. While you might be tempted to take on more classes to build your CV, doing so can often impair your writing process, which ultimately slows down your advancement on the job front. Given that many tenure-track jobs are now hiring individuals who have defended, or are about to defend, their dissertations, attempting to go on the market ABD as a result of a longer completion schedule could hinder your chances of securing a tenure-track job.

- Graduate students who do not have funding, or who have run out of funding, may want to consider part-time jobs outside of academia in lieu of additional teaching if teaching is only available in large survey or intro classes with heavy grading responsibilities.

- Primary care givers will need to weigh the pros and cons of time distribution. If you have considerable help or the employer has campus child/dependent care, then a full load might be a workable option.

- If you are adjuncting in order to remain in a specific location or you are a long-term NTT faculty who is not thinking of going on the academic job market, you do not have to be limited by teaching loads typical of faculty who also have research expectations. As such, you may want to consider a larger teaching load.

Ideally, you should look for institutions with unions and/or contracts for adjuncts. These institutions usually have guidelines or standards regarding course contract reliability, course loads, benefits for instructors who are at least half-time, and resources such as office space and travel funds. The following course load recommendations mirror the guidelines and recommendations from some NTT faculty unions:

- If possible, seek to secure a full-time teaching load at a single institution. While institutions vary on what they deem full-time, typical guidelines recommend either a 3-3 or a 4-4 teaching load; or 1 more course per semester than a typical tenure-track professor’s course load. This load is recommended to ensure that the instructor has sufficient income while also avoiding exploitation through the over-assignment of classes.

- When possible, seek teaching opportunities (even if not full-time) at a single institution rather than several different institutions. More courses at one institution will put you closer to the limit for receiving benefits (if they are available for NTT faculty) and office/library/administrative access. And if you can limit your teaching to one institution, you won’t need to race between campuses to teach courses.

- One way to attain a full-time adjunct schedule might be to reach out to departments well in advance to inform them of your availability for the upcoming year and the courses you are qualified to teach. Because departments tend to plan the upcoming semester, or academic year, months in advance, you will have the opportunity to put together a suitable teaching schedule ahead of time if you can
get your availability discussed during department meetings. Additionally, informing departments of your availability can often stave off the undesirable situation of being offered a course at the very last minute, such as the week or day before classes start. While these instances do arise, it’s best to arrange courses beforehand when feasible.

- If possible, NTT faculty should also seek out institutions that offer secure one- to three-year contracts. Depending on your history teaching for an institution, you might be able to request such contracts to provide some stability. These contracts do not always come with benefits, but sometimes they do. Securing a longer-term contract may require being a bit more proactive regarding your relationship with the department. One way to inquire about this is to ask the department chair to request such a contract type from the provost given an established history of hiring or knowledge of future need for NTT instructors. While NTT faculty are typically very vulnerable, such inquiries are, by and large, reasonable to make.

- Another way you can build a full-time teaching load is through promoting yourself as someone who is capable of teaching interdisciplinary courses. So someone who specializes in feminist philosophy might be able to make connections with a Women’s and Gender Studies department to see if there are any courses available. If you are currently on the academic job market or intend to be soon, you should consider how interdisciplinary courses, such as Introduction to Women’s Studies or African Diaspora courses, might be viewed by various hiring departments. Some hiring institutions may be eager to hire candidates with interdisciplinary teaching experience or to hire candidates into joint appointments, while other institutions might not.

- Finally, you should inquire into the placement records of potential employers. Some institutions work diligently to aid their NTT faculty in finding tenure-track jobs, including writing letters of recommendation. If you intend to seek tenure-track positions in the future, it may be advisable to teach fewer classes at an institution that will offer support for your job search, rather than to teach more classes at another institution that won’t provide that support.

3. Office space, computers and printers, and admin support

   a) Office space

   If you are teaching one or two courses, it is unlikely that you will be provided with an office of your own, but you should have a place to go to prepare your classes and to hold office hours. For example, the department might provide an office or set of offices for NTT faculty to share. A shared office would offer limited space to keep books and teaching materials, and you should not keep confidential material there. A shared office would also mean that the faculty using it must make an effort to get along and structure their time so that they can use the office without conflict.

   If you teach three or more courses, you will be spending quite a lot of time on campus, and in such cases you should attempt to get an office for yourself. However, it is possible that office space is at a premium, and NTT faculty may be given the lowest priority. It is also possible that there is office space outside the department, but there may be pros and cons to taking it. The downside is that you are not amongst colleagues in the department, and students will be made aware of the difference in status between you and
tenure-track faculty. But having a private, dedicated space available to you on campus can be very helpful, regardless of where it's located, and you can take steps to minimize the downsides, such as regularly stopping by the department to check in with colleagues on your way to or from your individual office.

If you have issues with the space provided to you and it affects your ability to fulfill your duties, speak to the department chair or your mentor (if you have been assigned or found one).

b) Computers and printers
It is ideal for you to have a computer available to you on campus (in your office, if you have one). A shared NTT faculty office may have a desktop computer available for those in the office to share, and you should have a computer to use even if you are the only one in the office. If your institution does not routinely provide computers to NTT faculty, look into how computer purchases for tenure-track faculty are handled. Many universities upgrade the workstations of tenure-track faculty on a regular basis, and you could ask the department about obtaining one of the computers being replaced, especially if the machine would still be fairly new.

It used to be common for tenure-track faculty to have printers linked to their workstations in their offices, but many universities now have printers shared by the entire department in a separate room. It is unlikely that a printer will be provided to NTT faculty as the cost of ink cartridges is a big drain on the equipment and supplies budget. However, you should be able to send your documents for printing on the department's shared printers. (This obviously is a disadvantage if your office is not in the department.)

c) Administrative support
Usually, administrative personnel in a department serve NTT faculty in the same ways that they serve tenure-track faculty, and you have every right to ask for their help. All faculty know that it is important to have a good working relationship with office staff, and you should take the time to build such relationships. Office support staff are a good source to find out how things are done when issues come up in your classes or when you first arrive.

If you are teaching at more than one campus or are on campus only on certain days, it may be more difficult to get things done quickly. However, you should be able to get support via email regardless of whether you're on campus, and you will probably want to provide your mobile and/or home phone number to the office staff so they can reach you whether or not you are on campus on a particular day. If there is hard copy material that you have to see urgently when you aren't able to be on campus, request that the office staff scan and send those items to you.

4. Getting benefits
Getting benefits beyond only the salary is easier or harder depending on what kind of NTT position you hold. If you hold a position considered to be full-time, you should receive full benefits commensurate with the standard benefits received by tenure-track faculty at the institution.

The story is different for those employed in NTT positions that are part-time. For many such faculty, there are limits placed on teaching load precisely to prevent them from being able to claim benefits that the university provides to full-time employees. For example, a university might write into its contract that adjuncts may teach no more than two classes a semester, which prevents them from being treated on par
with full-time employees. This is not true of all schools (that is, there are part-time NTT faculty who do receive health insurance), but it is often the case.

Independently paying for health insurance of comparable quality to what universities provide is usually more expensive, because universities have bargaining power due to their size. Consequently, depending on your situation, it might be worth it for you to forgo a higher upfront salary at one place for a lower salary that provides benefits at another institution.

The benefits that you can receive as a university employee are not limited to health insurance. A very important element of benefits is retirement savings plans. If your NTT employment is over a long period, this becomes increasingly important, as such savings plans are important for when you eventually retire from teaching. While you may save independently, one major benefit of such plans is that many employers contribute to the plan beyond what they pay the employee upfront, and the employer manages the plan for you. Even if your institution doesn’t provide matching contributions for NTT faculty, if you have the opportunity to contribute pre-tax funds to a retirement savings plan offered by the institution, you would be well served by doing so.

Other, less well-known benefits that some full-time NTT employees receive include moving expenses, paid leave, recreation discounts, and legal resources. These benefits can in some situations be worth quite a lot for the NTT employee. Again, when deciding which teaching opportunities to take, consider the value of benefits offered in addition to salary.

5. Working on multiple campuses and getting sufficient work

Many who have neither a tenure-track position nor other full-time academic appointment face the prospect of inadequate teaching opportunities at a single college or university. Teaching at multiple institutions—perhaps more than one in the same semester—may be one viable option to generate adequate income. For many, this is exceedingly challenging, even demoralizing. The following are recommendations that may be helpful.

To the extent feasible, planning ahead may pay big dividends: if you are already teaching at an institution, get as much information as possible as early as possible—your department chair is likely your best source—about what your employment prospects may be for the coming academic year. This information, especially if obtained early, may be invaluable for planning your employment strategy. Be sure to check institutional and/or departmental websites frequently to find out about current job postings. And you may do well to look for job opportunities in non-philosophy departments or schools. For example, business ethics courses may be taught in business schools, aesthetics courses may be taught in art history departments, and courses in feminist philosophy may be offered in gender studies departments or programs. Community colleges often offer general humanities courses for which a philosophy graduate student or recent PhD graduate may be qualified to teach.

It is a good idea to contact department chairs to not only express interest in possible employment, but also find out what may be in the offering and when. Such personal contacts may help you to stand out from a crowd of other applicants. Moreover, for a variety of reasons, departments may find themselves in need of replacement faculty on short notice, and may need to move quickly, obviating the need to go through an elaborate search process. Prior contacts with a department chair may enhance the likelihood that you will be the one to whom he or she reaches out with an offer.
If working on multiple campuses simultaneously, commute time and scheduling could be especially pressing matters. Early contacts may help to not only secure employment as soon as possible, but also enhance your ability to arrange an acceptable schedule. Be sure to talk with your chairs about your scheduling challenges: they could have some flexibility in adjusting their requirements to accommodate yours. Also, discuss with your department chairs matters such as parking, administrative support resources, and office availability.

You will need to look out for your own best interests here. Working on multiple campuses simultaneously can be very stressful, and the goal here is to arrange matters so as to make transitioning from one campus to another as seamless as possible. In order to mitigate the challenges of being a “freeway flyer,” try to schedule classes and office hours at different campuses on different days. If that is not possible, schedule morning classes and office hours at one campus, and afternoon and/or evening classes and office hours at another campus. You also need to be aware that administrative policies may vary from one institution to another, and it may prove frustrating to have to navigate these differences. Early discussions with your department chairs and administrative assistants will help to mitigate these challenges.

C. Preparing to return to the job market

1. Obtaining student evaluations

Be sure to secure and collect student evaluations for all courses you teach. This serves two purposes: first, it ensures that you have resources to shore up your re-application for part-time employment; and second, student evaluations can prove to be incredibly significant resources for you if you later seek tenure-track positions. Given that the majority of available tenure-track positions are at teaching-centered schools or for teaching-centered positions, your collection of evidence of ongoing teaching, excellent evaluations, and pedagogical improvements is pivotal. Moreover, student evaluations will often be reviewed by hiring committees, which can prompt further questions regarding student learning outcomes (SLOs), so it is important to ensure that there are ample evaluative resources to answer SLO questions. Below are recommendations to guide NTT faculty in their collection of student evaluations.

Many NTT faculty are in positions at their current institutions that include them in the regular dispersal and collection of student evaluations, which typically also includes institutionally produced data regarding where an instructor’s rankings place them in relation to other faculty on campus. It is imperative that you have your students complete these evaluations and keep personal copies and records of them for future use.

However, some NTT faculty are either not included automatically in the institution’s student evaluation process or their student evaluations are not handled with the same efficacy. You should check with your department chair and HR contacts to determine if your student evaluation process is identical to that of full-time faculty. You should also make sure to retrieve any institutional data related to your student evaluations so that you can provide it to potential future employers or use it when seeking contract renewal.

Mid-term evaluations are becoming increasingly popular among faculty and institutions (though these remain unstandardized and are usually individually constructed), and you may want to consider implementing them in your courses. Because mid-term evaluations are typically self-constructed, they have the advantage of addressing teaching and pedagogical issues and questions that the standard end-of-
semester teaching evaluations do not address. Moreover, these mid-term evaluations, in conjunction with end-of-semester evaluations, provide more data on SLOs.

The University of Texas at Austin’s Faculty Innovation Center is a good source of advice and information regarding mid-term evaluations and how they can be administered. Additionally, this website offers variations of “standard” mid-term evaluation forms, depending on your needs. Additional mid-term evaluation forms can be found with a simple internet search; there are numerous fruitful resources available.

2. Getting letters of recommendation

If you received your PhD several years ago, it may be worthwhile to solicit letters of recommendation from academics who were not on your dissertation committee and are not affiliated with your PhD institution. Reach out to professors at any departments where you’ve recently worked who have knowledge of your research and teaching. Consider also reaching out to more senior professors in your field with whom you have interacted at conferences or over email.

It is highly advisable for at least one of your letters of recommendation to speak to your teaching credentials. Such a letter should come from someone at an institution at which you have taught recently (whether or not it is your PhD institution). Plan for this in advance by asking a colleague to visit your classes—ideally, multiple courses. While a letter from a permanent and/or more senior faculty member may get more attention from hiring departments, you may also consider asking another NTT faculty member who is better able to assess your teaching in the context of the work conditions of NTT faculty, especially if you are applying for another NTT position.

When applying for a new position, it is worth notifying letter writers well in advance. If you plan to apply to jobs in the fall, write to them by July or August. Send your CV, research statement, and a summary of recent accomplishments that they might wish to refer to in their letter. You might also send along your writing sample.

3. Making teaching experience count

Building your teaching portfolio goes beyond student evaluations. Whether it is a required document for your applications or not, it can be a good idea to write a teaching statement to help you focus your thinking about your teaching. When you talk about your teaching experience in a job situation, do as much as you can to communicate what it is like to take a class with you, how you teach, and why you teach that way.

It can help to take note of very specific experiences in your class for teaching statements and interview questions. The more specifically you can talk about your experience, the more a hiring committee will have a concrete idea of what kind of a teacher you are. Do not just expect that you will recall all of this when you’re ready to prepare applications; work on this throughout the year, even if you do not anticipate applying for jobs in the next year. What was successful? Take particular note of things that worked for equity and inclusion in the classroom. Rather than talking broadly about diversifying your syllabus, have specific ideas about what you would include and why.

It can be hard to take risks when you are in a precarious employment situation, and also hard to find the time to further develop your teaching methods when you have a heavy teaching load. However, minor experimentation can be worthwhile, as it can help you find out what works for you and your students. Try
making small, manageable changes and see how your students respond. For ideas about what you might improve, talk about your teaching with others, whether in person or online. You might get new ideas for readings, or for different kinds of assignments, or even totally new ways to perform assessment in the classroom. Making the class your own, rather than a carbon copy of a class you took as a student, will help you talk about the class in a memorable way in your teaching statement and in interviews. This does not mean you have to totally reinvent the wheel, however; look at others’ syllabuses for ideas about readings, or ask for suggestions in online forums.

The APA now has Teaching Hubs at all its divisional meetings—multi-day mini-conferences devoted specifically to teaching, co-organized by the APA Committee on the Teaching of Philosophy and the American Association of Philosophy Teachers. Consider attending one or more of these events to learn about how others are teaching philosophy, explore what you can do to improve your skills as NTT faculty, and get advice about the academic job market.

D. Professional development

1. Publishing

Advice about publishing is bound to be controversial. Some useful things to keep in mind can be found in the APA guidance documents related to the academic job market. There are, however, some important respects in which your approach to publishing might be modified in virtue of being NTT faculty. For those seeking to transition into a tenure-track or permanent position, here are four issues that deserve some careful consideration.

a) Timeline and venue

Delays in the publication process are infamously difficult to avoid. Many journals state an aim of issuing a decision within three months of submission, but the editorial and refereeing processes are rarely an optimal affair. Throw in the fact that articles typically go through one or more rounds of revision and resubmission plus the time required to revise your paper, and you are now looking at seven months or more from submission to acceptance. And, of course, that’s assuming your paper is accepted at the first venue to which you submit it.

Since one of the main ways in which you can increase your appeal as a candidate for many tenure-track positions is through publications, the urgency of putting work through the pipeline is substantial. This means that working on more than one paper with an eye towards raising them to publishable standard is the most efficient use of your time. It also means that making reasonable decisions about where to send your work is critical for ensuring that your paper appears in a timely fashion. You should actively seek out advice from philosophers publishing in your field about where to send your work. Few philosophers are so lucky as to produce a paper acceptable by *Philosophical Review* in their first few efforts or while under the burden of a massive teaching load. To avoid losing critical time, think carefully about what you can reasonably expect for your papers. And, when revising for publication, especially in light of referee comments, seek out guidance from two or more senior philosophers about how to undertake the revision process—in particular, ask to see a few examples of how philosophers respond to referee reports.

b) Whose standards?

For obvious reasons, the culture and standards of the department in which you work play a profound role in shaping your attitude towards and decisions in research. In some cases, there might be some prospect of
being hired permanently into the department where you teach part-time. When making research plans and deciding about publishing, it is important to keep in mind that your present department is just one department among many that might hire you. While your current department might be delighted if you publish anything and does not care at all about the venue, there is reason to question whether their standards are universally shared. Consistently ask yourself whether your decision reflects an interest in meeting standards lower than those you would expect from hiring committees.

Although you might be tempted to compare your publication goals and accomplishments to those in permanent positions at your current institution, keep in mind that you are far more likely to be compared to other job candidates you are competing with, many of whom may have substantial research track records.

c) Conveying progress
In shaping how departments view your candidacy, you should think carefully about how to represent your publications in your CV, on your website, and in other materials. (By the way, you should have a website, and a good one, too.) It makes good sense to convey the nature of the projects you are working on and the publishing outcomes connected with them. At the same time, more is not always better. Intensive and sustained focus on three or so paper projects in various degrees of completion shows that you are not bouncing wildly between projects that might take ten years to complete. Enumerating eight or nine disparate papers has the potentially different effect of suggesting that you are not yet at a point where you can carry projects through to completion. Always be clear in your CV which papers are published or accepted, and which are only in progress.

d) Local resources
Transitioning to an NTT faculty position often means leaving behind the (hopefully) supportive and extensive philosophical community that you relied upon in graduate school. Along with the demands of teaching, losing this network of feedback, discussion, and accountability can prove a major hurdle to continuing your research and professional development. Ideally, your current department can mitigate this loss, but sharing work and its challenges with those who hired (and might keep hiring) you can be awkward or otherwise unappealing. In addition to online communities, consider a weekly or bi-weekly coffee and chat about research plans and goals with other junior or NTT faculty. (Since this is mostly about plans and goals, these colleagues need not be philosophers, or even necessarily from the school where you teach.) Keep things regular enough to stay on track but light enough that you can spend time building community with faculty in other departments and nearby institutions. This can be a rewarding and valuable chance to learn about your college and other disciplines and schools. Celebrate vigorously when things go right.

2. Conferences
Getting yourself out to philosophy conferences and seminars will be of great help in trying to stay viable as a candidate for tenure-track or permanent positions in philosophy. Conferences and seminars are about learning from others, getting feedback, and improving your work. But there is much more to be gained as a job seeker. You will meet various people from your field and from all over the discipline. Some of these people may wind up on a hiring committee for a position you want (or may know someone doing some hiring); a hiring committee member having a positive personal and professional impression of you could mean a lot in securing an interview. At a big, generalist conference such as an APA divisional meeting, go to
sessions involving people working on things you are interested in, and engage them constructively as best you can.

Also try to get to smaller conferences and seminars in your areas of expertise so you can learn from others, get criticism, and build up papers for publication. These seminars also provide opportunities for networking and forming relationships with people who can help you down the line reading drafts or writing letters, or who may even play a role in a job or post-doc position you are applying for.

Beyond presenting and publishing, another way to get a little more prominence in your area of focus is by getting involved in small societies, like the affiliated groups that have their own sessions at APA divisional meetings. There are lots of these, including societies focused on German idealism, analytical feminism, philosophy of time, philosophy of sport, Mexican-American philosophy, and philosophy of emotion, just to name a few. Many of them are quite small, with officers (president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, etc.) who are nominally elected but are essentially serving on a volunteer basis. A position as officer in a society related to your area of focus will look good on your CV, raise your profile in your AOS, and give you a lot of opportunities to interact with potential colleagues and collaborators. It is often easier getting a paper accepted for presentation on the affiliated group program than on the divisional program at an APA meeting.

Of course, getting to non-local conferences and seminars requires funding. Whether you are a senior grad student, VAP, adjunct, affiliate, or something else, go to your department chair and ask about travel support. If support is not available from your department, go to the Dean and the Provost. The worst that can happen is that you are turned down, while conveying the impression of being an enterprising, research-active scholar. In exploring external funding ideas, consider visiting the APA’s “Non-APA Prizes, Grants, and Fellowships” page; some of these could include money usable for travel.

3. Finding time for research

It goes without saying that carving out time for productive research is a major challenge for most job seekers, and especially for NTT faculty who need to carry heavy teaching loads to pay the bills. Frequent relocation, adjusting to new academic environments, and teaching new courses all add to the challenge. To keep your research program on track, it is important to establish a productive writing routine early in the academic year. A few suggestions may be useful.

Once you find out your weekly teaching schedule, and before the term begins, identify the main blocks of time you can use for writing, and make it a priority to get writing done during those times in the first or second week of classes. You are more likely to remain productive throughout the semester if you build in research time early on, and if your first few writing sessions feel productive. These writing sessions are probably more likely to be productive if you continue work on a project that is already well underway, rather than starting a new project. You can also take some time to think about how you will approach your project, which will make it easier to start your writing routine. But if there is another project that you are especially keen to start, it is worth turning to it when progress on an existing project slows.