

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
SB0006**

State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Nontenure Track Faculty

February 05, 2026

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

I am Dr. John Macintosh. I work as a full-time non-tenure-track professor (or to use my unit's terminology, a professional track lecturer) of English at University of Maryland, College Park. My scholarly expertise is in contemporary American literature, particularly fiction that represents labor or finance. I am also one of two non-tenure-track members of the Executive Committee of United Academics of Maryland (UAM), an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Our organization is trying to secure collective bargaining rights for faculty in Maryland's public four-year institutions. As someone who has been at UMCP since 2011 as a graduate student and since 2019, as a professional track faculty member, I am one of only very few Maryland public employees without these rights.

All faculty deserve collective bargaining rights, full stop. However, non-tenure-track faculty are particularly vulnerable. I teach a wide variety of courses, from general education classes all students across the university are required to take (e.g., Academic Writing, Business Writing) to specialized courses in my areas of expertise taken by upper division English majors. Since all of these classes are writing intensive, they are often smaller in size, but labor intensive, as I provide personalized feedback on all student writing. Because of the relationships formed in these smaller classes, I am also tasked with a good deal of informal advising that I am not compensated for. I write several letters of recommendation a year for students applying for jobs, internships, and graduate and professional schools. I do this despite being on one or two year contracts and being paid by the course. Students are rightly shocked when I tell them I may not be in this role the next year should they want to tell me their good news about an acceptance or job offer (or when they need another letter the following year). My department has improved in recent years in terms of the continuity of number and type of classes granted, but there are still no guarantees. Even if I sign a contract for a certain number of courses, if the anticipated number of students fluctuates, I may lose a class (and thus a quarter of my income) a week before a semester begins. I am a team-player in my department and have more than once taken on classes mid-semester when colleagues have to take unexpected leave. I am not asking for handouts or preferential treatment. I simply want the stability of employment and compensation that all workers deserve.

University administrators will no doubt point to shared governance as the solution to these issues. I wish we had it, but in the contemporary university it exists purely as an ideal. I strongly believe that collective bargaining is the only guarantee that faculty voices, especially non-tenure-track faculty voices, will carry any weight. The status quo is that high-level administrators make all the decisions, especially monetary decisions, and faculty has only an advisory role that can be--and most often is--ignored at will. Shared governance, even in its ideal form, is not a substitute for collective bargaining. All we are asking for is a voice.

Non-tenure-track faculty are central to the educational mission of the university. Along with graduate student workers, we provide the bulk of teaching on campus, especially in terms of "service courses," meaning courses that are meant to help students excel in other courses

throughout their academic careers. For instance, I often teach Academic Writing, a required course that prepares students of all majors to learn how to conduct effective scholarly research and to write in various academic genres. Similarly, I teach Business writing, which prepares students for the kinds of writing they will be asked to do in the workplace and on the job hunt. The skills learned in these classes help students to succeed in their subsequent coursework and, ultimately, in their careers. This is work that provides value not just to students, but the local community and the state of Maryland. I do this work despite short term contracts, lower pay per course than tenure-track faculty, and a full teaching workload, which in my unit is defined as four courses per semester for non-tenure-track faculty. I often teach five per semester for a small pay bump, as well as a course in the summer to supplement my income.

The right to collectively bargain--a right afforded to almost all other Maryland Public Employees and USM peer institutions--gives non-tenure-track faculty (and soon, all faculty), the voice that we deserve in our workplace. I ask you to allow us to use this voice.

Sincerely,

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This testimony has been submitted on behalf of this individual by the United Academics of Maryland (UAM).