

# Making Administration's Exchange Value Visible

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## Introduction: Seeing and Counting

The scholarship of Writing Program Administration (WPA) has already taken a valuable turn towards making visible the labor that is writing program administration, through time use diaries and other descriptive and quantitative measures, e.g. Graziano et al. (2020) and Ianetta (2015). In broader academic contexts, several authors have examined the time use of academic workers (e.g. Ziker 2014; Misra et al. 2011, Link, Swann and Bozeman 2008; Winslow et al. 2012, Barrett & Barrett 2010), as well as examining how faculty describe their time allocations in official reports (e.g. O'Meara, Kuvaeva & Nyunt 2017). However, what remains elusive is a measure of the value of this work in our institutional contexts. That is, which elements of this labor “count” a lot, and which “count” a little? This gap in our research and institutional discourses means that it is often difficult to answer the following questions: What should faculty be spending their time on? What do we do with the imbalances between what takes up our time as WPAs, and what is recognized and rewarded at our institutions? In my proposed answer to these questions, I frame WPA labor using the Marxist concept of “exchange value,” which describes the commodification of labor. Karl Marx, in *Capital*, defines exchange value as “a quantitative relation, as the proportion in which values in use of one sort are exchanged for those of another sort, a relation constantly changing with time and place.” (55). The term highlights the degree to which labor and its products are *recognized* as having value within a particular market, not just in terms of how the products of that labor are used, but in terms of how they might be

exchanged for other commodities within that market. Exchange value, then, is an abstraction away from how useful a thing actually is, and the labor that went into its production. In the context of this essay, the “market” is the market of academic labor and rewards systems. I apply the term “exchange value” to the value of administrative labor as a commodity which can be exchanged for some kind of reward, following the definition in Bauer (2002), who describes academic exchange value as “value formally recognized as worthy of formal rewards like salaries, promotions, and special benefits” (Bauer 2002, 256, cited in Bird, Litt & Wang, 2004, 201).

While the application of Marx’s concept of exchange value to WPAs, a group that is, effectively, a managerial class (see, for instance, Strickland 2011) shifts the original concept’s application, in doing so I follow a number of authors who have productively applied the term exchange value in the context of academic labor, including the labor of Writing Program Administrators, in understanding how academic administrators function as workers, and how their labor as such is and is not valued.<sup>1</sup> For instance, Bird, Litt and Wang (2004) use the concept of exchange value in the context of women’s service labor in academic institutions. Using the definition from Bauer (2002) cited above, they discuss how little exchange value service work in universities has, particularly for women and faculty of color, as they undertake it. The lack of exchange value for the service labor of faculty, especially those who are minoritized, has also been discussed by, for instance, Martinez Alemán (2014), Hogan (2010) and Horner (2007), who suggests that WPA and other academic administrative work must be considered to be “social” labor, and thus subject to being rendered invisible because it cannot be so readily commodified as individualized “intellectual” labor (168). Furthermore, the term “exchange value” is used in

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<sup>1</sup> Thanks to Kay Halasek and one anonymous reviewer for helping me to work this framing out.

the WPA Council's statement on "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Program Administration in its consideration of how WPA work might or might not "count" in the academic rewards system: the statement describes academic work, if it is to be rewardable with tenure and promotion, as needing to be recognizable as "the production of specific commodities—albeit scholarly commodities—with a clear exchange value, perhaps not on the general market but certainly in academic institutions" (WPA Council). The statement goes on to explain that academic work is rewarded when it "recognizable and conventional forms to which value can be readily assigned, and [whose] valuations are likely to be recognized and accepted by most colleagues and academic departments," and acknowledges that service and administration are rarely accorded exchange value in our institutions, "no matter how highly they might be valued on an individual basis by fellow faculty, by administrators, or society" (WPA Council). The statement goes on to connect the exchange value of WPA work with that of intellectual work, which is well-recognized and understood in our systems of academic rewards.

Importantly, for this discussion, exchange value must be considered in contradistinction to use value, the use to which people may put a commodity, and the value of that use to an individual or community. As our academic institutions demonstrate, via their continued inclusion of "service" in criteria for reappointment, tenure and promotion and their continued reliance on faculty administrative labor in the running of essential programs, the use value of faculty administrative work is well-understood. The issue I explore, then, is the extent to which such labor is accorded exchange value in the reappointment, tenure and promotion marketplace: how is the labor of academic administration valued? While this study draws on data and documents taken from a specific institutional context - my own - the literature indicates that the problem of how to value service and administration is a common one, especially for members of minoritized

communities (Bird, Litt and Wang 2014 ; Massé & Hogan 2010; Heijstra et al 2017, Ianetta 2015, Horner 2007, Misra et al. 2011, O'Meara, Kuvaeva & Nyunt 2017, Gutierrez y Muhs et al. 2013, Hall 2017, Kynard 2019, Perryman-Clark & Craig 2019 and the list goes on).

While the articulation of the meaning of exchange value in the context of WPA labor in the WPA Council's statement on Evaluating the Intellectual Work of WPA is very useful for this project, my goal here differs from that articulated in that statement. In "Evaluating the Intellectual work of Writing Program Administration," the authors make an argument for treating WPA work as equivalent to scholarship because these "service activities" are "'tied directly to [WPAs'] special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity'" (WPA Council, citing Boyer, 1990, p. 22). As Gillam (2003) writes, "Despite the invaluable contribution of the WPA position statement on 'Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration' in validating WPA work, it reifies the distinction between intellectual and emotional labor and ignores the less visible and commodifiable aspects of our work" (123), a point also taken up in Horner (2007). Rather, my goal is to take steps towards valuing administrative work as its own entity, connected with service, and using my own local campus experience to consider how institutions might create explicit local discourses of administrative "exchange value." I leave to the side, at least at the outset, the question of intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci 2010), whereby people do things because they bring them personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Such motivations have been shown to be exploited by institutions to extract uncompensated labor from faculty who are people of color and white women (e.g. Tokomitsu 2014, Hogan 2010; Schell 1993), even as they may be valuable for individuals from minoritized groups on a personal level. In this essay, rather, I focus on the realm of extrinsic motivation, where labor is motivated by the promise of rewards from external actors. In most academic

institutions, rewards take the form of reappointment, tenure and promotion; some institutions may also have systems of merit pay or some type of institutional award system. However, alongside the invisibility of administrative labor in systems of workload accounting, the connection between administrative work and institutional rewards is complicated by the fact that administrative work is often “compensated” with time reassigned from teaching duties, which is often the only part of a faculty member’s workload that is routinely quantified.

In order to make the argument here, I present data and documents from my own institution and department, of which I was chairperson from 2016-2019, and at which I served as the Writing Program Director from 2011-2016. At CUNY, department chairs do not only chair department-level reappointment, tenure and promotion (RTP) committees; all chairs, alongside other academic leaders of the institution, also serve as the college-wide RTP committee. From this vantage point, I saw first hand the mismatch between the time faculty were spending on administration, their perceptions of what they could claim as notable labor, and the labor for which they would actually be rewarded or recognized. In particular, I saw the lack of clarity among newer faculty at the college, about what administrative and service activities they should put forward as activities with exchange value in the RTP process. On the level of my department, and as one of the academic chairpersons, I worked with colleagues to put in place various documents and structures that articulated the value of administration and service. I believe that it is in its administrative documents, more than in its vision and mission statements and formal articulations of institutional values, institutional learning objectives and collective bargaining agreements, that an institution lays out its values, particularly as they relate to employees.

In order to develop the discussion here, I examine time-use diaries completed by faculty in the English Department in 2016 to find out what people are doing with their time. I also

discuss documents that faculty at my institution use to argue for, or commodify, their service and administrative work's exchange value as part of the reappointment, tenure and promotion process, and the response to these documents written by department chairs in the 2018-2019 academic year<sup>2</sup>. And finally, I consider the document in which my own service as English Department Chair from 2016-2019 is valued, by my college president, in the form of a "thank you" letter.

Together, these documents and data highlight the "institutional housekeeping" (Bird, Litt & Wang 2004, 1) or "academic housework," (Heijstra et al 2016, 765) that is at the heart of success in administrative work in higher education. In particular, my thank you letter affirms one of the contentions that I will develop in this essay, whereby I suggest that administrative work has little to no exchange value in the reappointment, tenure and promotion market, because the "institutional housekeeping" which, as Graziano et al. (2020) show, makes up so much of the labor of the administrative jobs, is already "compensated" by reassigned time, and so does not need to be rewarded. Instead, what is rewarded and recognized is service labor that somehow individuates the faculty member within established systems of "legible" (Ianetta 2015) faculty work.

### **Time Use Diaries**

In Fall 2017, following upon an Academic Program Review in the English Department where we established that the faculty in that department perceived a high degree of gendered and racial imbalance in the amount of service, administration, advising and mentoring work undertaken by

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<sup>2</sup> This document is currently under review at CUNY Central's Office of the General Counsel and so cannot yet be distributed.

full-time faculty,<sup>3</sup> I asked faculty to record their administrative, service and mentoring labor for three months. Participation was voluntary, and the logs were collected in September, October and November 2017. The survey asked faculty to describe their non-teaching, non-research work, and estimate how much time they were spending on each area in the month. The goal was an impressionistic, rather than scientifically-valid accounting; in order to be more valid in this way, I would have followed methods such as those used in Ziker (2014), where faculty recorded their activities in small increments over shorter time spans, or something like the Toggl timer tracking used in Graziano et al (2020). This method is, however, more fine-grained than that used in O'Meara, Kuvaeva and Nyunt (2017) which uses an annual institutional reporting system to examine faculty self-reports of administrative and service labor.

In the table below, I present average hours per week and month that English Department faculty spent on administrative, service and mentoring tasks in the Fall 2017 semester, based on the time use diaries that I collected. I received twenty-nine reporting forms in total, 12 from September, 11 from October and 6 from November, at which point reporting fatigue had set in, especially among those faculty who were not in designated reassigned time-bearing roles. Ten reports came from faculty who were not receiving administrative reassigned time (AdRT) and nineteen came from those receiving AdRT. As the sample was so small, the results that I present are not statistically valid, and so I present findings based on impressions drawn from the data. The reporting form provided the categories that are included in the top row of the table. The full form is available in Appendix A.

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<sup>3</sup> The survey was closely modelled on the instrument used the MLA's Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession report entitled "Standing Still," which examined roadblocks to advancement for women at the Associate Professor level.

	committee or other meeting	planning and logistics for service and mentoring work	student advising	other student mentoring (fieldwork/in dependent study students; student clubs)	mentoring other faculty	other emotional labor	service to the profession	Other (email, recommendat ion letters, supervising staff, etc.)	Total
Average hours <b>per month</b> for faculty with AdRT	16.5	12.3	3.9	6.0	6.7	5.6	4.1	18.5	107.8
Average hours <b>per week</b> for faculty with AdRT	3.7	2.7	0.9	1.3	1.5	1.2	0.9	4.1	24.0
Average hours <b>per month</b> for faculty without administrative reassigned time	3.64	2.15	0.85	0.18	2.30	0.15	6.25	2.30	17.8
Average hours <b>per week</b> for faculty without AdRT	0.81	0.48	0.19	0.04	0.51	0.03	1.39	0.51	4.0

Table 1: Average hours of service, administration and mentoring labor spent by faculty



Most faculty received either three or four hours of administrative reassigned time per week, equivalent to one course, and the fact that these faculty are involved in meetings, meeting planning and faculty mentoring reflects, I believe, the work that they were doing in these reassigned time position. Certainly, the data suggests that these areas are the primary areas in which faculty administration takes place. However, these data also show they were doing significantly more of the “pastoral care” (Barrett & Barrett 2010, 143) of the department than those faculty whose workload hours were only counted by teaching. The disproportionate amount of advising of students in the major, student mentoring and other “emotional labor” (Hochschild 2012) reported by the faculty members receiving AdRT can only partially be accounted for by their administrative roles; advising, for instance, advising students in the major is written into the job description of every faculty member, and yet the faculty with AdRT were doing four times as much of this work than faculty not receiving AdRT.

Furthermore, these data are skewed in several ways: for instance, one of the faculty members who was not receiving AdRT was receiving reassigned time for their editorial work on a journal and organization of conferences in their discipline; hence, their service to the profession numbers were much higher than anyone else’s in the sample. Eliminating this response from the sample creates a still greater disparity between the mentoring and service load born by faculty who are receiving AdRT, and those who are not. Faculty receiving AdRT were also more likely to count time spent on attending department meetings than those not receiving AdRT. These data may also be exhibiting some bias in the sense that, in this particular semester, those faculty doing administrative work in the English Department were those who had shown themselves to be more engaged with service, advising and mentoring than those who did not receive reassigned time, and certainly, because reassigned time has been seen as a “reward,”

those who perform well in service and mentoring roles tend to be offered administrative positions that come with reassigned time, because they have indicated interest in and demonstrated the skills necessary for succeeding in those roles.

The time use diaries also highlighted for the faculty exactly how much time their reassigned time “costs” faculty administrators, in terms of time that is not being spent on areas that have well-established exchange value in the university. The time use diaries revealed the large amount of pastoral care and academic housekeeping which form an important-to-see part of the labor that our institutions value, but do not reward; that is, labor with use value but little exchange value. However, the fact of this low exchange value is not necessarily understood or accepted at my institution. In the next section, I develop this contention via the examination of a list of “Routine Responsibilities” developed by York College Department Chairpersons, which we developed after reviewing how faculty attempt to commodify routine academic work in their reappointment applications.

### **Routine Responsibilities and Academic Housework**

O’Meara, Kuvaeva & Nyunt (2017) examined annual faculty reports of service to examine issues of inequality in campus service activities in order to review faculty articulations of their non-teaching, non-research labor in official institutional documents. At CUNY, tenure-track faculty are reappointed annually; they must apply to be reappointed and then achieve a positive vote at two committees (department- and college-level), as well as the College President’s recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Reappointment letters, addressed to the College President, form part of a reappointment packet that also includes an online curriculum vitae (CV) and the department chairperson’s “Memorandum of Evaluation (MOE)”; candidates for third

reappointment and tenure and promotion (separate decisions in the City University of New York (CUNY) system) prepare a portfolio of scholarly or creative works. Candidates respond, in a “Candidate’s Letter” to a “prompt” published in the college’s Faculty Handbook, which instructs candidates to address “the nature and value/scope of the teaching, scholarship/creative work, and service during the year under review,” and to outline plans for activity and “improvement” over the coming years<sup>4</sup> (York College Faculty Handbook). Notable about the prompt to which faculty respond is that administrative work is completely elided: faculty who do administrative work must create a fourth category if they wish to describe initiatives and successes in that area. In the candidates’ letters, faculty generally devote one paragraph each in the two-page letter to their discussion of administrative and service contributions to the college. The necessity of educating colleagues and RTP committees about what administration entails and how it can or should be counted is, of course, well-known; the WPA Council’s “Evaluating the Work of Writing Program Administration” document, as well as essays such as Reid (2008), speak directly to that necessity. However, the necessity of educating junior faculty about what service is tends not to be explicitly discussed.

In our examination of reappointment applications from the 2018-2019 cohort, as part of our service on the college’s RTP committee, another Chair and I noted that many of these letters made claims to “service” which seemed to misinterpret what “service” is. We extended this conversation to include all department chairs at my college, and from this conversation, we set out to create a document that describes what might “count,” and to describe the activities that we consider to be the foundations for service, but which don’t “count” as service itself. The list we created indicates what counts as “service” in specific contradistinction to the routine “academic

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.york.cuny.edu/president/institutional.../faculty.../04-faculty-handbook-1>

housework” of a faculty member at the college. That is, this document is an attempt to indicate explicitly the labor that has significant use-value, but which has no exchange value in reappointment, tenure and promotion decisions. We included as routine the following activities:

Attending on-campus events

Attending Department Meetings

Advising Students \*

Conducting teaching observations\*

Proctoring exams (make-up or other)

Staffing tables/making presentations at Open Houses and Accepted Students’ Receptions

Holding office hours

Assessing Programs and courses

Writing recommendation letters

The routine activities listed above certainly reflect what faculty spend the bulk of their time on campus doing, as the time-use diaries discussed in the previous section attest. So in that sense, if we consider that service is the non-teaching, non-research labor that makes the institution function, then the work that these colleagues describes absolutely falls into that category. However, our institutions also foster a tacit understanding that there is a difference between “service” that counts and the routine responsibilities that I will name “academic housework,” following the definition offered in Heijstra et al (2016):

All the academic service work within the institution that is performed by all academic staff, both women and men, but that receives little recognition within the process of academic career making or within the definition of academic excellence. (Heijstra et al. 2016, 765)

Heijstra et al (2017) go on to include “tasks relating to giving back to the community, administrative and committee work, gender equality initiatives and various teaching and research-related activities such as student interactions and the organization of conferences” (203) as examples of academic housework. Horner (2007) writes, “... exchange value is conferred through recognition, and hence is ideological” (172). The fact that, on our campus, this “academic housework” cannot be recognized within the RTP system—that is to say, it cannot have exchange value conferred upon it—reveals the ideology of service as something that individuates a faculty member, an entirely appropriate commodification in academic capitalism. The fact that these faculty members were offering examples of “academic housework” as evidence to support a claim of adequate and meaningful service highlights the problem that I am discussing in this chapter: that our institutions do a poor job at articulating the types of service that “count” for RTP, thus leading to situations where early-career faculty in particular are claiming routine faculty work as service, perhaps because these things take up so much time. Furthermore, it sets up a situation where doing administration well—that is, attending to “academic housework” such as staffing courses, evaluating instructors, evaluating course equivalences, etcetera—is also not visible because it does not individuate the faculty members who undertake it. Hence, the only service and administration that is recognized is that which few or no other people on campus do: its exchange value emerges from relative scarcity, and, more troublingly for administrative work, because the work is otherwise “uncompensated.”

Importantly for my purposes in this chapter, the Routine Responsibilities document also reveals slippage in two areas: when routine responsibilities might become service, and when routine responsibilities may never become service. In the letter, we identified three “grey areas.” They are described as follows.

- Advising students in the major, or conducting teaching observations are notable as service if the advising load is particularly high (>50? or the number of teaching observations is particularly high (>5? and is not accompanied by administrative reassigned time in a coordinator position) (emphasis added),
- While mentoring research students or providing professional mentoring to students does count towards our teaching workload, the amount to which it counts is very minimal. Therefore, we consider such mentoring as a hybrid of teaching and service, and could be mentioned in either category.
- We have also drawn a line between administrative work that is compensated with reassigned time, and administrative work that is not. So faculty members contributing to assessment efforts and who are receiving reassigned time would describe this as “administration,” rather than service.

In these areas of slippage, the Chairs' Routine Responsibilities document reveals a deep confusion and tension between compensation and reward for administrative labor. This confusion and tension mean that administrative labor has little to no exchange value in reappointment, tenure and promotion processes, because there is often no category for it within which to be considered AND because the release time from teaching that faculty often receive for conducting administrative work is seen as compensation for that work, rather than a necessary allocation of time for this work to get done. Administrative reassigned time makes administrative labor invisible in our rewards and recognition systems; viewing reassigned time as compensation rather than as an appropriate allocation of workload time also has the consequence, I suggest, of rendering the work invisible in our recognition systems, whereas

service, which shares many functional similarities with administration, is “uncompensated” labor and therefore can be considered to have exchange value.

### **Can Administration Be Valued?**

So how can administration be valued? Are the routine responsibilities of a WPA different enough from the routine responsibilities of faculty members listed above that they can individuate the WPA who does them? These responsibilities include “managing programmatic budgets, designing and implementing transfer equivalency policies, hiring, developing, and firing contingent faculty, or advocating for the writing program at institution- or leadership-level meetings” (Napolitano, Frank. Email message to Author. August 5, 2019), as well as participation in the architecture of academic capitalism as described by John Trimbur: “strategic planning, performance reviews, focus groups, benchmarking exercises, outcomes assessment, high-stakes testing, or total-quality management of one sort or another” (Trimbur, 2008, xi). Scholarly discussions such as those included in Enos & Borrowman (2008) do not suggest much reason for hope. For instance, as Reid (2008) discusses, excellence in administration is not easily (or, indeed, willingly) evaluated as equivalent to excellence in teaching, and the problems of evaluating administration as equivalent to research, as is suggested by “The Intellectual Work of Writing Program Administration,” are well known (e.g. Snyder, 2010). Assessing and counting excellence in administration requires, as Reid (2008) suggests, an extensive education campaign for evaluators, something that untenured and otherwise vulnerable faculty do not have the institutional stature or networks to necessarily do. Reid writes, “Despite my good fortune and the optimism of the WPA Statement—“The Council of Writing Program Administrators is convinced that WPAs can be evaluated on the basis of their administrative work” (my

emphasis)— translation of possibility into a local institutional reality remains a significant, time-consuming, unmapped challenge” (2008, 209). Furthermore, Kathleen Blake Yancey’s response to Reid’s and other essays in Enos & Borrowman (2008) does not provide much optimism, suggesting that successful WPAs might well be those who keep their WPA work “invisible,” with “with classes staffed, budgets small, and initiatives as insubstantial as possible” (Yancey, 2008, 214).

Ianetta’s (2015) proposal for the articulation of administrative labor as part of a faculty administrator’s curriculum vitae suggests that in order to assign exchange value to administrative work, there must be an independent process of recognition and reward which is, nonetheless, tied to the RTP system, which is the only value system that “counts” in institutions of higher education. Such a system would require an agreed-upon job description which is understood at all levels of evaluation, and against which success is measured. In this way, the work of an administrator can be individuated. However, such an approach still runs the risk of eliding and devaluing the academic housework, which, as Graziano et al (2020) describe, can take up the bulk of a WPA’s time and which should, I suggest, be not only grounds for evaluation, but also the basis for reward. In considering this point further, I will turn now to an examination of my own “thank you for your service” letter, which I received at the end of my term as department chairperson. This letter highlights the problem of the mismatch between the realities of administrative work, and the activities for which administrators may receive recognition and, in particular, the disjunction between administrative job descriptions and our academic reward and recognition structures.

### **“Thank You For Your Service”**



The responsibilities of Department Chairpersons are articulated in the CUNY bylaws, and include such tasks as running department meetings, creating the schedule of classes, keeping departmental records, evaluating faculty and “Generally supervis[ing] and administer[ing] the department” (Board of Trustees Bylaws, Section 9.3). I include the Bylaws in full in Appendix D). In addition to these responsibilities, informal internal documents, shared among Chairs and by Deans, outline what needs to be done. There is also an unofficial “Chair evaluation” process that includes self-evaluation on a number of metrics accompanied by a brief narrative from the school dean and the Provost. However, this evaluation has no place in the broader RTP process, should a Chair put themselves forward as a candidate for promotion.

My time use diaries from Fall 2017 shows that the bulk of my time in September-November 2017 was spent in meetings, on prepping for meetings, creating and staffing schedules, mentoring faculty and supervising staff, writing curriculum grants, and responding to emails: in other words, “generally supervising and administering the department,” (BOT Bylaws, Section 9.3.12(a)). However, at the end of my term as department chairperson from 2016-2019, I received a letter from the College President as a thank you for my service (Appendix C). The letter specifically thanks me for the following two accomplishments, written as follows:

- Your leadership on the College's LGBTQ Committee that successfully launched compliance protocols, as well as, expanded the culture of acceptance in and out of the classroom; and
- Serving actively on the Personnel and Budget Committee that reshaped the guidelines for promotion and tenure.

The letter concludes with the following sentence:

I am sure that others will have their own highlights, but for me, these are some of the identifiable achievements; and I thank you for them.

This “thank you” letter suggests that the responsibilities outlined in the CUNY Bylaws are invisible in terms of exchange value: the administrative labor that differentiates a good chair from a mediocre or poor one, cannot be commodified. Instead, the only labor that has exchange value, in terms of recognition or reward, is labor that goes beyond the duties that are articulated in the Bylaws. And the role of department chairperson is a much more institutionally-visible, and well-articulated role than that of the WPA. Nonetheless, this thank you letter demonstrates that the issues that prevail in trying to establish the visibility of WPA work are also true of chair work. As Ianetta puts it, “When I frame my work in terms of my colleagues[’] previously-held values, the system of representation based on their work, not mine, all the things that make me awesome—things on which I spend most of my time—disappear” (2015, 153). We see this disappearance in full force in my thank you letter. Horner (2007) writes, “In practice ... WPA work is virtually impossible to identify as a set of individual accomplishments” (168). The College President, in this letter, has picked out two items that can be seen as individual accomplishments, but which have little-to-nothing to do with my effectiveness as a department chairperson or, indeed, my fulfillment of the stated responsibilities associated with the position. The accomplishments that the President notes are ones of which I am proud, but I am probably less proud of them than I am of the thank you letter and half-pound of beef jerky given to me by an adjunct faculty member who, in her letter, said that I had made the adjuncts in my department feel respected and safe.

## **Conclusions**

In this chapter, I do not challenge prevailing models of the value placed on academic administration and labor; I do, however, offer such a challenge in Robinson (forthcoming). Rather, here I suggest that, within the strictures of academic capitalism under which faculty work across the globe, our institutions must do a better job at articulating what they value in terms of faculty administration and service, and so guide faculty who are seeking “rewards” within that system as to how to spend their time. Making administration visible is important, and establishing its exchange value in our reward systems is important, because otherwise we require people to do this work for “love” or other intangible “rewards” that have little to do with ensuring their professional success. It is not enough to make administration visible. Our institutions and our RTP committees need to establish metrics for success in administration, and contextualize administrative work within a specific institutional context and broader discourses of success. To adapt an idea from Bird, Litt & Wang (2004), it is necessary for administration to assign exchange value to administrative labor in our institutional reward or recognition systems.

The argument that I have presented here focuses on ways in which our institutions fail to establish explicit exchange value for administrative labor, but accompanying this argument is a challenge to the low exchange value of certain administrative and service labors that I have shown in this chapter. When the exchange value of administrative work is visible, faculty can make better choices about what to do, and when to embrace failure as an alternative—because our rewards and recognition structures do not have any way to value our administrative success, and yet continue to ask this labor of us, because it is what makes the university run.

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#### Appendices:

- A. Service and Administration Labor reporting sheet
- B. Routine Responsibilities document
- C. Thank you letter
- D. CUNY Board of Trustees Bylaws, Duties of Department Chairperson

