

The public media unevenly represents the hierarchy among academic employees and academic work in general.

Studying our [Collection 1](#) (82,324 articles from U.S. journalism mentioning “humanities”) with a topic model ([C-1.250](#)) and “counting” data-notebooks (see [S-7](#)), we discerned that the media tends to overvalue the economic profit of humanities labor, while taking for granted or obscuring its unquantifiable aspects (see [KF-4-9](#) and [KF-4-10](#)). Building on these findings, we conclude that public news media unevenly represents the hierarchies, work, and struggles of academic employees.

This conclusion is apparent from the media’s inconsistent representation of hierarchical positions in academia. The word *adjunct* (referring to part-time work in the lower tiers of the university) appears in the collection only 2,758 times in 1,828 documents. It is among frequent words only in two low-weight topics ([37](#), [52](#)). Topic 37 appears mainly in campus newspapers, whereas topic 52 appears prominently in a mix of university and mainstream newspapers. By contrast, the media overrepresents *professor* (referring to tenured or full-time work in the upper university tiers). This is among the collection’s [top 30 terms](#), appearing 66,921 times in 30,634 docs and prominently in 30 topics. This is the top word in topic 52.

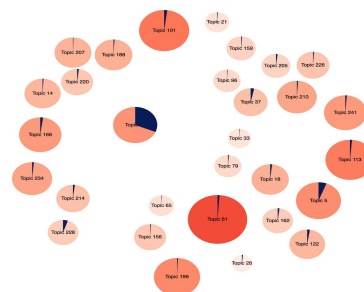
The word *work* appears 103,102 times in 57,779 docs and 50 topics, and ranks among the top 30 words in the collection. *Work* can denote employable jobs, physical or intellectual activities, functionality, and artistic compositions/installations. Because the media represents *work* in all these senses, it is difficult to gauge the values associated with it. The word *labor*,

meanwhile, appears 9,463 times in 15,108 docs, and prominently in [topics 93](#), [115](#), [182](#), [204](#), and [224](#). In addition, the articles most associated with these topics typically understand *labor* in the economic sense of jobs and unions. Notably, the phrases *labor union* (95 occurrences in 210 docs) and *union* (15,462 occurrences in 9,350 docs) appear only in the low-weight [topic 115](#).

These observations suggest that public media does not grant university employees and their urgent labor demands any sustained narrative visibility. We suspect that the media’s tendency to impose economic merits on humanistic pursuits (see [KF-4-1](#)) obscures the lived experiences and social positions of academic workers.



Topics 37 & 52 in [Topic Bubbles](#). Dark blue indicates how many times “adjunct” appears. ([Larger image](#))



“Professor” appears in 30 Topics. ([Larger image](#))

Document collection studied: [C-1 \(start page\)](#)
 Topic model studied: [C-1.250](#) (250 topics)
 Interesting sample Topics: [37](#), [52](#), [93](#), [115](#), [182](#), [202](#), [224](#).
 Representative articles: [a](#), [b](#).
 Evidentiary documentation for this key finding: [Team 4 Report](#).