

**\*A Supplement, for Illinois applicants, to  
Access to Unemployment Insurance Benefits for Contingent Faculty  
May 2008**

**Q: Should I file my application online or in person?**

A: In Illinois either is permitted, but it is best to file in person at an Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) office. It is much easier to explain, briefly, your unusual circumstances in person than to try to make your situation clear on a computerized form that is not designed for your circumstances. Most IDES interviewers are friendly and sympathetic, though overworked and stressed. They will often help you clarify your application appropriately so as to maximize your chances of approval. However, you can also download a copy of the application (aka the "Employment Security Claimant Information Sheet") to fill out in advance at <http://www.ides.state.il.us/forms/benefits/appl2.pdf>

**Q: Where can I file?**

A: You can file at any office in Illinois. The list of offices is available on the IDES website at <http://www.ides.state.il.us/forms/pdf/whatuno.pdf> or in local phone books. You do not need an appointment.

**Q: What do I need to bring?**

A: You should also take the items listed on pages 27-28 of the *Access to Unemployment...* book. In Illinois you may be asked for two forms of ID, at least one with picture, in addition to your (and your spouse's) social security number. You should bring employment information for the past 18 months. It is best if you take your most recent pay check "stubs" that show your total pay for the entire base period. You probably won't need to show these last items, but take them if you can. If you get a pension, take those receipts too. If you have dependents of any sort, take their names and birth dates.

**Q: On the Claimant Information Sheet what should I list as my last day worked and my original hire date?**

A: List the last day you actually performed paid duties, such as met the class or gave the final exam. This was your last scheduled day, even if you are grading papers and turning in grades later. For the date of original hire, list the first date you were paid and required to be present to perform duties, whether a meeting or first class session. Do not use the first day of the semester or the day you came to an optional unpaid orientation or faculty meeting.

**Q: On the Claimant Information Sheet, what should I say as to why I am not longer working?**

A: Check "laid off." If asked why you were laid off, say because of lack of work available.

**Q: On the Claimant Information Sheet, how should I answer "gross pay"?**

A: Just put an estimate based on your pay for the class(es). For instance, if you are paid \$3000 per 3 credit class and you taught three classes for that employer, your gross weekly pay is \$9,000 divided by 15 weeks (if your term is 15 weeks long) or \$600. Do not worry too much about this figure. The IDES will get your exact pay from their records and from your employers' records. This question is mainly to figure the start date of your benefits.

**Q: On the Claimant Information Sheet, what should I say to question 7 about do I have a return to work date?**

A: You should say no. If they ask orally if you expect to go back and teach there in the next term, you say "not with reasonable assurance." If they ask more, say "All my assignments are contingent upon enrollment, program needs, and other factors. I am considered a temporary faculty person." Mention whichever ones are specified on the assignment form you have received in the past for work at that college. Show your new assignment form, if you have one, should you be asked, but don't volunteer the document.

**Q: On the Claimant Information Sheet, there is not enough room for all my employers. What do I do?**

A: List each employer separately and then list each semester's employment by dates separately for each employer, even though the form only allows you to list one start and stop date. Put them on the side if needed next to that employer. You may have as many as three semesters (or more if you worked summer school) for a particular employer. List them separately as paired dates. This may be important on appeal and clarifies that you are periodically *unemployed* and not on "vacation" or "semester break," which disqualifies you.

**Q: If they ask me if I am willing and able to work, what do I say?**

A: Yes to both, if true at this time.

**Q: When they tell me to look for work and keep records, what should I do? I know there is no work for me until the next semester at any college.**

A: Say, you will look for work in the prescribed manner and list yourself on the computer for job search as requested. A job search contact can be merely calling departments that hire people like you, even if you know there is no work just now. Just make the call and write it down as a job search contact on the form they give you. You do not have to look for work outside your field. DO NOT say that you know there is no work for you until next semester starts and therefore looking for work right now is a waste of time! (even though these things are true.) You only need to produce these records if requested, but make and keep them.

***Good Luck!***

\*This supplement is a work in progress and will be revised as more information and experience becomes available. Like the booklet *Access to Unemployment Insurance Benefits for Contingent Faculty*, this Illinois supplement is not meant to substitute for legal advice and is meant for encouragement and for informational and strategic purposes.

**Joe Berry**, Chicago COCAL and U of IL Labor Education Program