

Talking Points

Campus Equity Week

Teachers' Working Conditions are Students' Learning Conditions

◆ Parity and Professional Status

Part-time community college instructors teach the same classes, have the same qualifications, and are expected to maintain the same professional standards as full-time instructors. Yet we are treated as second class citizens by the community college system.

◆ Equal Pay for Equal Work

Part-timers receive an average of less than fifty per cent compensation for teaching the same classes as full-time faculty, because we are on a separate, hourly salary schedule and usually receive no health benefits. Part-time community college instructors want pro-rata pay and benefits. The state has set aside some money to help districts reduce the full-time/part-time pay gap, but many districts are not applying the money as intended.

◆ Office Hours

Part-timers are expected to be available to answer students' questions and help them with their work. Yet most community colleges did not offer pay for office hours until the passage of AB 420, and many part-timers still do not have paid office hours or space to meet students. And now, due to the state budget problems, even this inadequate pool of money has been reduced. We need full funding of state monies for districts to pay for office hours.

◆ Rehire Rights

One of the most fundamental supports for a quality education for community college students is a stable, consistent relationship with teachers. But few colleges have significant rehire rights for part-time instructors. This is not only poor educational policy, it is also poor employment policy. Part-time instructors suffer from continuous anxiety over whether they will be rehired, and must always be looking "down the road" for their next job. This does not improve their concentration on their work. At most campuses you can find people who have taught for fifteen or twenty years as "temporary" part-time instructors.

◆ Contingent Employment

Part-time community college instructors have advanced degrees. We expect to have a career in our chosen field. When we are treated as casual labor, eventually we are forced to consider work in other fields. Aside from personal disappointment, it is a loss to public higher education and the people of California if the people who want most to teach are discouraged from doing so.

◆ Part-timer Legislation

AB 420, which created funds for office hours and health benefits, has been reduced. These funds need to be adequately maintained.

Words and Concepts to Use

Freeway Flyers • Road Scholars • Casual Labor • Academic Perma Temps • Intellectual Migrant Labor • On Probation Forever • Contingent Employment



California Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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www.cft.org