



## When was the last time your work was evaluated? Adjunct faculty with strong rehire rights benefit from consistent evaluation

**EVEN THOUGH MOST** faculty contracts and accreditation standards require evaluation of part-time faculty, thorough and frequent evaluations are often not conducted, especially in colleges with a large number of part-time faculty.

"I have had a lot of evaluations performed by full-time faculty in the 14 years I have been at one college," according to a member of the CFT Part-Time Committee. "At the other college, I have never been evaluated in the 12 years I have taught there."

In the Los Angeles district, part-time faculty are supposed to be evaluated by their department chair before the end of their second semester and at least once every six semesters after that. But an informal survey conducted in the district revealed widely varying results, with some adjuncts reporting they were regularly evaluated and others stating that they rarely were. Many say they want to be evaluated and want others to be. "How else can we get feedback to help us improve?" one asked. "How else can we protect students from teachers who are performing poorly?"

John Govsky, adjunct and



vice president of the Cabrillo Federation, says evaluations "are not taken seriously because adjuncts are easy to get rid of. Rather than spend the time to evaluate adjuncts thoroughly and make improvement plans for areas in which they need help, it's easier to just not schedule them and hire someone else the next semester."

But as more local unions are bargaining for and gaining rehire rights, evaluations are playing a greater role. "They're inextricably linked," says Govsky. "The stronger the rehire rights, the stronger the evaluation process needs to be." Evaluations are more rigorous and more frequent when they are being used to decide whether an adjunct will make it onto the rehire list. The stakes are high for the employee whose job security depends on a satisfactory evaluation.

In the UC system, AFT negotiated rehire rights for the continuing appointments of

lecturers after their sixth year. Since the 2003 agreement, grievances and arbitrations on evaluation have been fairly frequent. "At first, there were a few 'bad' departments who conducted unfair evaluations," says Sandy Baringer, field representative for UC-AFT Riverside, "but because we have binding arbitration and a staff that is knowledgeable about processing grievances, the process is going more smoothly now."

Baringer says it's important to have clear procedures that include a way to deal with biased evaluators. "A record of

### TakeAction to save public services

**The colleges cannot afford to lose more instructors! Students cannot afford to pay higher fees!** Demand that cuts to education stop. Contact your state legislators and ask them to vote Yes! to pass the tax extensions that will help avert more devastating cuts to public education and other public services.

See **Evaluation** back page

## FIRST PERSON: Linda Sneed

Adjunct English instructor at Cosumnes River College and member of Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

**“WE HAVE THE NUMBERS;** where is our power?” At this year’s CFT Convention, veteran part-time activists staged a dynamic roundtable discussion, “Mobilizing the Silent Majority,” to answer that question. The panel and audience explored ways of finding, consolidating, and using our power to strengthen our rights as part-time faculty in the California community colleges.

Sociology instructor Sabrina Santiago from San Diego’s AFT Guild began by arguing that effective part-time activists need to assess political and economic forces in local and state

# How can we mobilize *The Silent Majority*?

## Panel discussion at CFT Convention yields new ideas



SHARON BEALS

Committee Chair Phyllis Eckler, left, moderated the panel with Pete Virgadamo, College of the Canyons; Sabrina Santiago, San Diego; and John Govsky, Cabrillo.

part-time culinary faculty who’d like to contribute to a hosted meal? Will your local

Excluded from his district’s full-time-only local, Virgadamo and his colleagues worked to build a movement in support of forming a local for part-timers, now several years old. “Extensive person-to-person outreach and sustained mentoring are what made this victory possible,” he said.

Virgadamo suggested that

“capable, energetic, and brave people with expertise” — even those with political affiliations we might not have thought compatible with union interests — can emerge as leaders of our growing movement. He also agreed with an audience member who urged us to build alliances with classified employees on our campuses, actively promoting mutual respect and support.

The panelists agreed, as did audience participants, that connectedness and involvement with each other and our larger campus communities, including their decision-making bodies, will be crucial to the strength of our movement to ensure dignity and equity in our work.

“Stand up, stand together, speak out!” was not only the theme of this year’s CFT Convention but a fitting summation of the message of this panel.

**“If part-time activists really want to inspire others to get involved and to develop a movement, they need to embody activism as a life-enhancing choice.”**

government and unions, as well as the working conditions and needs of part-time faculty. Santiago urged us to be mindful of faculty perceptions about the effects of the split labor market within higher education. She argued that we need to build solidarity among part-time and full-time faculty to serve our long-term interests.

Digital media instructor John Govsky from Cabrillo College offered concrete strategies to connect with each other and create a sustainable movement for part-time faculty rights. Govsky named “food, fun, and funding” as key to organizing and solidarity and encouraged us to create social opportunities for part-time faculty.

“Does your campus have

cover basic costs of a part-time faculty get-together?” Govsky asked. “Having some fun while working on serious issues is not to be discounted. If part-time activists really want to inspire others to get involved and to develop a movement, they need to embody activism as a life-enhancing choice. In addition, increased adjunct participation on campus may help part-timers by showcasing our many skills, our collegiality, and our dedication to affordable public higher education.”

History instructor Pete Virgadamo from the College of the Canyons shared the bittersweet details of his struggle to organize part-time faculty at the Santa Clarita college in the face of overwhelming opposition.

## Adjunct action at CFT Convention

**PART-TIME FACULTY** advocates joined with 600 other elected delegates at the 69th annual CFT Convention on March 18-20 in Manhattan Beach to share strategies to tackle the issues facing faculty in California.

The CFT Part-Time Committee succeeded in passing a resolution calling for compensation of part-time faculty who are elected to CFT office and do not receive payment for their union service from their locals, with the sum to be determined by the CFT Executive Council.

The four incumbent part-time representatives to the Community College Council — John Govsky, Cabrillo College Federation; Amy Roberts, Los Angeles College

Faculty Guild; Linda Sneed, Los Rios College Federation; and Susmita Sengupta, San Francisco Community College Federation — were reelected from a field of seven. The Council approved the Part-Time Committee’s motion to pay these elected representatives a stipend. Part-time faculty member Kathy Holland was re-elected secretary of the Community College Council.

At a packed breakfast meeting, part-time faculty heard updates on the activities of the Part-Time Committee, current legislation affecting part-time faculty (see page 4), and news from the CalSTRS Part-Time Retirement Task Force and the state chancellor’s Part-Time Advisory Committee.



## Glendale Guild improves rehire rights

**REHIRE RIGHTS AT** Glendale College had been based on receiving excellent evaluations, but the highest rating of “exceeds standards” that part-timers were expected to achieve was not entirely objective and in many cases not being given. The new language allows adjuncts to get one “meets standards” and one “exceeds standards” on two evaluations to pass onto the

hiring pool list for assignments.

The Guild also established a catastrophic illness leave pool for part-time faculty. Adjuncts who fall ill during a semester may run out of sick days and cannot apply for unemployment benefits while sick. Part-timers and full-timers can now donate their banked illness days to adjunct faculty, as can part-timers in the CalSTRS Cash Balance Plan who retire with unused sick leave.

### UPDATE: CalSTRS Part-Time Task Force considers “load model”

**THE TASK FORCE** charged with examining issues that affect part-time faculty in the CalSTRS defined benefit plan is making progress. Issues involve the accumulation of service credit, the calculation of final compensation, and the conversion of unused sick leave to service credit, all made more complicated when adjuncts work for multiple employers.

At the March 15 meeting, members of the task force focused attention on a “load model,” which would use the assigned teaching load as reported by the employer to determine benefits for full- and part-time faculty members of CalSTRS. Although more complex to implement than the current defined ben-

efit plan, it would simplify employer reporting and the resulting benefits would more accurately reflect part-time faculty service.

“This model is the best alternative because it provides the greatest number of part-time faculty the best opportunity for accurate reporting of their service credit,” explains Sharon Hendricks, a member of the task force from Los Angeles. She says the constituent groups and CalSTRS staffers all want “to be deliberate and accurate so we can solve a majority of the problems.”

The task force reconvenes in early summer to resolve questions about the load model and craft board-sponsored legislation to be introduced in the state Legislature next year.

## Part-time faculty advocate

### CFT endorses Sharon Hendricks for community college seat on CalSTRS Board

**SHARON HENDRICKS**, a member of the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild and the local’s retirement liaison, is the union’s endorsed candidate for the CalSTRS Board.

Hendricks has worked as a part-timer in the colleges. “The retirement issues of part-timers are important to me,” she says. “It’s critical that local unions, districts, and CalSTRS partner to ensure that part-time faculty are getting fair and accurate calculations of their service credit, final compensation, and other factors that impact their retirement. As the elected community college representative to the CalSTRS Board, I will advocate for part-time retirement issues and make sure your interests are protected.”

Cliff Liehe, a part-time para-legal instructor at City College



of San Francisco, says, “As a part-timer who is very familiar with our retirement issues, I

wholeheartedly endorse Sharon for the CalSTRS Board. She is an active member of the CalSTRS Part-Time Task Force, understands the complexities of part-time retirement issues, and consistently advocates on behalf of part-timers on those issues. Her presence on the Board would ensure a strong voice on our behalf.”

In recent months, Hendricks has been speaking to CFT local unions about retirement and CalSTRS issues.

> To contact Hendricks about visiting your union or campus, email [sharon4strs@att.net](mailto:sharon4strs@att.net) or go to [sharon4strs.com](http://sharon4strs.com).

## Cast your vote by mail this fall

**Part-time and full-time community college faculty** who are active members of CalSTRS can vote for their representative on the CalSTRS Board by mail ballot between October 1 and November 30. Watch for your ballot and be sure to do your part to help elect CFT-endorsed Sharon Hendricks to the Board!

## Part-time faculty at Allan Hancock College win retroactive pay

**LAST YEAR** the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College learned that some of its members had not been advancing on the salary schedule so were being underpaid.

“Our union immediately



Mark James Miller

informed the Human Resources Department and asked it to rectify the issue,” says

Mark James

Miller, president of the Santa Maria local. “As a result, all affected members were placed at their proper step for fall semester.”

But those members who had been underpaid were legally owed retroactive pay. After

negotiation with the union, the administration agreed to the legal limit of three years retroactive pay, with 2.67 percent interest. In January, the district paid more than \$62,000 to the part-time faculty impacted by the error.



# CFT sponsors three bills to correct inequities

SEVERAL IMPORTANT CFT-SPONSORED bills affecting part-time faculty are wending their way through the legislative process in Sacramento, thanks to the diligent efforts of the CFT Part-Time Committee and CFT legislative staff.

*“The committee continues to advocate successfully for sponsorship of legislation that impacts adjuncts,” says Phyllis Eckler, a part-time dance instructor and chair of the committee. “We can be very proud of our work. Now we need to keep up the efforts by advocating for passage of these bills.”*

## Mirror salary schedules

**SB 114** (Yee, D-San Francisco) would require that part-time community college faculty be placed on comparable salary steps as are their full-time colleagues with similar academic preparation and years of experience. Some districts — notably San Francisco, Los Rios, and San Jose/Evergreen — have created pay schedules that mirror those of full-timers.

The bill would not require that districts provide pro rata pay — a huge cost item — but simply that salary schedules be transparent. Of more immediate benefit is the bill’s requirement that districts report part-time faculty salaries to CalSTRS as a percentage of full-time load. This would help to alleviate reporting inequities

that have occurred in the calculation of retirement service credit, particularly for adjuncts who work in more than one district.

**Status:** SB 114 passed the Senate Education Committee in March and is headed to the Senate Appropriations Committee. To mitigate concerns about district costs to rate in part-time faculty, a provision was added to provide a one-time payment to help districts fund this.

## Limit extra load for full-timers

**AB 383** (Portantino, D-LaCanada) would limit extra assignments for full-time faculty. The bill would give a one-time stipend to districts that include provisions in their collective bargaining agreements that prohibit

a full-time instructor from being assigned a teaching workload that exceeds 50 percent of a full-time workload in any semester.

**Status:** After a hearing of the Assembly Higher Ed Committee in April, AB 383 turned into a two-year bill for further research and revisions.

## Require re-employment rights

**AB 852** (Fong, D-Cupertino) would require districts to give adjunct faculty

re-employment rights. An adjunct employed in a community college for at least four of the preceding eight semesters or at least six of the preceding 12 quarters and whose last evaluation, if any, was satisfactory, would be given the right of first refusal for an assignment in that district. If two or more temporary faculty members claim the same assignment, it would be offered in order of seniority. (If stronger provisions exist in a district, those would prevail.)

**Status:** AB 852 cleared the Assembly Higher Ed Committee on a 6 to 1 vote, and moves to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

## Evaluation

*Continued from page 1*

good evaluations in the early semesters makes a bad one in the key semester stick out like a sore thumb, so part-timers may want to request extra evaluations, early in their employment, from people they know will be fair.”

Some part-time faculty believe the evaluation process is being abused to terminate their rehire rights unfairly. “Whether those cases have merit or not, what does seem clear is that part-time faculty can be particularly vulnerable,” says Linda Sneed, adjunct English instructor and member of the Los Rios College

Federation of Teachers.

“The more isolated part-time faculty are from their colleagues, the more likely they are to perceive that evaluation processes have been used against them for ulterior motives. If they haven’t had regular communications with their closest colleagues — especially full-timers — about teaching, they may be in for some surprises in their evaluations.”

Sneed believes that documenting one’s work might make it more difficult for a single class observation to decimate an adjunct’s rehire rights. Most bargaining agreements limit what is grievable in evaluations to “process violations” and not

content, so faculty do not have much recourse when they think they’ve been given a raw deal.

However, protections have been written into many contracts. In Los Rios an adjunct has to have two less-than-satisfactory evaluations in a row to lose preference status.

At some colleges, adjuncts are evaluated by their department chair, their dean, and a peer of their choice if they desire. One adjunct remarked, “I like the way it’s done more or less, but after receiving glowing evaluations, long-time part-timers wonder, ‘If you can’t find any fault with my work, why can’t you give me a full time job?’”

## On the Web

>To track bill progress and contact your legislators, go to [leginfo.ca.gov](http://leginfo.ca.gov) or [cft.org](http://cft.org) and click on Legislation.



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