

## FACCC STATEMENT ON PART-TIME FACULTY EQUITY

The California Community Colleges system has historically treated part-time faculty – also variously referred to as contingent faculty, as adjunct faculty, or by other labels – as an academic underclass. Part-time faculty comprise 70% of community college faculty members throughout the state, and they meet the same minimum qualifications and teach the same classes taught by full-time faculty, yet they work for lower wages and generally with significantly less, if any, job security and far fewer benefits. Their situation is, as stated by Los Rios part-time faculty member Paul Baltimore (2020), “a structural issue that demands attention on the state and national level.”

The Faculty Association for California Community Colleges, or FACCC, has long supported more equitable treatment for part-time faculty. In this context, equity would have a very simple meaning: equivalent compensation for equivalent work and equivalent access to services and resources provided by academic institutions and the state. Unequal pay, job insecurity, inadequate or no health benefits, and a variety of other inequities have long characterized the situation of part-time faculty (Kezar et al., 2019). Part-time faculty are indispensable members of the California Community Colleges system’s instructional workforce that prepares students for both work and leadership in the future of the state and its communities. Therefore, their colleges, their colleagues, the community college system, and the state of California owe part-time faculty dignity, respect, and fair and equitable treatment.

### **The following issues are frequently-stated common concerns regarding the treatment and status of part-time faculty:**

- Pay parity and teaching load: Part-time faculty teach the same classes as full-time faculty, with the same obligations for grading and preparation, yet are compensated at a significantly lower rate. Furthermore, they are limited by law in the number of courses they may teach in any given district at one time. As a result, many part-time faculty are forced to teach at multiple institutions in order to pool together full-time work with a living wage. This situation is not only a matter of part-time equity and fairness but also impacts student success, as part-time instructors have less time on campus to work with students due to the necessity of travel time and their commitments among different institutions.
  - One proposal for addressing this situation is based on a model adopted by Vancouver Community College. Under this model, part-time faculty members’ employment is called “term” and full-time faculty members’ is called “regular.” According to Frank Cosco, “The workload of all instructors, regular and term, is set departmentally through approved workload profiles (Article 6). These profiles are prorated for full- and part-timers. If an instructor’s department calls

for 16 hours of instruction and 9 hours of other duties for a full-time regular, as a full-time term the instructor would have the same workload; as a half-time term, the instructor would have 8 hours of instruction and 4.5 hours of other duties” (Hoeller, ed., 2014, p. 204). This proposal may be controversial, but it offers one model for equitizing the pay structure for all faculty within the system.

- The issue of a part-time pay structure is, admittedly, an economic matter for California community colleges, which are underfunded in any case. College administrators generally count on the lower pay rate of part-time faculty in order to balance their instructional budgets. However, while the economic concerns involved with this issue are real, they should not be allowed to automatically override the equity and student success concerns that are equally urgent.
- Lack of benefits: In many community college districts, part-time faculty are guaranteed little or no access to health and wellness benefits. Again, this situation is a significant cost-savings and thus an economic issue for districts. However, the necessity of health care benefits in modern America, as well as the simple dignity and justice of providing such benefits to a deserving workforce, demands that this issue be addressed.
- Access to Facilities, Resources, and Time to Serve Students: Many districts do not offer paid office hours for part-time faculty. The state budget has sometimes included funding for part-time office hours that must be matched by districts, but many districts choose not to match this funding, and the funding itself is provided inconsistently. Even worse, at many institutions even part-time faculty who would voluntarily meet individually with students are not provided with office space to do so. Part-time faculty are in some cases also denied equitable access to technology and equipment that is necessary for effective performance of their job duties. This inequitable situation again connects with student success and student equity concerns, especially when one considers the preponderance of part-time faculty in English and mathematics departments who frequently teach classes with students who are underprepared and very much need direct access to their instructors.
- Professional Development: Part-time faculty are frequently provided with at best limited access to professional development activities and funding. Many districts build professional development activities around the needs of full-time faculty, thus excluding consideration of the majority of their instructional workforce. Even if part-time faculty are included in professional development activities, they frequently find their participation limited or their voices dismissed. In addition, their participation in professional development activities generally does not grant them access to advancement in professional status or salary.

These issues are only a few of the equity challenges facing part-time faculty.

FACCC supports efforts to address these inequities through statute, regulation, funding, and processes and would welcome the opportunity to engage in such discussions.

### **References**

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