



Benefits of a Unified Faculty Model for California Community Colleges

California's community colleges currently operate under a two-tiered faculty system, with distinct categories of part-time and full-time faculty. This structure presents significant challenges:

Negative impacts on students:

- Limited access to consistent instruction and mentorship
- Reduced opportunities for out-of-class engagement
- Insufficient student-faculty interaction hinders student development and success

Disadvantages for part-time faculty:

- Lack of equitable compensation, benefits, and job security
- Required to teach at multiple colleges to earn a living wage
- Lack of designated space, time, and resources to support students
- Limited opportunities for professional development and growth
- Limited voice in participatory governance

The Unified Faculty Model offers a solution by creating a single faculty tier. Key elements include:

- Elimination of distinct part-time and full-time roles
- Compensation parity - all faculty on the same salary schedule with prorated benefits
- Job security and due process rights for all faculty
- Proportional workload expectations based on assigned load
- Equal access to professional development opportunities
- Enhanced capacity to support students through increased interaction and mentorship
- Uniform hiring practices and performance review processes
- Equitable leave benefits and retirement credit calculations

Potential benefits of the Unified Faculty Model:

For faculty governance and curriculum:

- Equitable opportunities to participate in the academic senate
- Expanded opportunities to develop curriculum and contribute to program review
- Increased protection of academic freedom
- More inclusive and representative decision-making processes
- Greater capacity for faculty leadership development and institutional continuity

For student success:

- Continuity of instruction and support throughout a student's academic journey
- Integration of all faculty voices into assessment and planning efforts
- Increased availability of faculty for office hours and student advising
- More equitable access to well-supported faculty for all students
- Enhanced capacity for faculty to engage in high-impact practices linked to student achievement
- Improved student completion through consistent access to faculty guidance and support
- Development of more robust student-faculty relationships and a sense of academic community
- Enriched learning environment with diverse faculty contributions in and out of the classroom

How do we get there?

Transitioning to this model will require a multi-pronged approach involving legislation, collective bargaining, and state funding commitments. While not without challenges, the Unified Faculty Model represents a significant step toward promoting student success and equity for faculty across the California community college system. Academic senates, unions, and the Chancellor's Office must collaborate to advocate for this structural change.

By uniting faculty under a single employment framework, California's community colleges can better advance their educational mission and more fully contribute to student achievement and equitable outcomes. The Unified Faculty Model merits the strong support of all who believe in the transformative potential of public higher education.