

FA FRIDAY FACULTY FOCUS – March 31, 2023

The Quest for Equity for Part-Time Instructors – CFT’s Resolution to End the Two-Tier System in Community Colleges

In 2022 the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) Part-Time and Higher Education Issues Committees passed a resolution to develop a plan to end the two-tier faculty system in California Community Colleges: <https://aft1493.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Resolution-Remove-Two-Tier-System-scaled.jpg>

In 1969 nearly 80% of faculty members were tenure or tenure track. Recent studies suggest that up to ⅓ of faculty are contract – either part-time or non-tenure track full time (Harris 2019). Part-time faculty are the gig workers of academia, numbering 37,000 in 2022 – which was down from 2019 when the ranks were over 41K (Peele, 2022). Until recently very few industries found any benefits to hiring mostly seasonal or part time labor (agriculture, mall Santa, etc.), but then the “sharing economy” brought us Uber, etc. Full time employees are critical for most businesses – how did academia in California become so part-time dependent? Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC) Director Evan Hawkins points to the Proposition 13 limitations on property taxes as the “game changer” (La Tour 2019). It resulted in an underfunding that persists to this day. Districts began to balance their budgets on the back of part-time faculty, making them able to manage their budgets nimbly in terms of expansion or contraction. Part-time faculty have become academia’s method of meeting the demands for instruction without the cost of full-time faculty obligations. This has created a permanent “caste system” of instruction.

There have been efforts made by faculty advocacy groups: FACCC (Faculty Association of California Community Colleges), CCCI (California Community College Independents), CTA (California Teachers Association) and CFT (California Federation of Teachers) to create legislation that would address this vast inequity. However, many of these efforts, even when supported by legislators, die in Appropriations Committees (determined to be too expensive) or recently in the hands of the Governor (who vetoed increasing the maximum instruction load to 80%). And when changes are made, such as the very encouraging 2022 budget line to pay for part time health care, system wide failures can make them less effective (or in the case of the health monies – completely stagnant). This leads to a great deal of frustration, and, of course, resentment.

Part-time faculty have representation, and their own committees, in the above-mentioned advocacy groups. Their voices are growing louder, but in order to gain truly equal voices, radical change is required, and this is what the CFT resolution proposes. Gaining a lot of attention is the “Vancouver Model” of “one faculty”. It’s based on a practice of increased job security, giving longer term higher load part timers the opportunity to achieve a “regular status”, a form of part time tenure. The hiring process is similar to that of hiring full-time faculty since the college knows there is the potential for a longer-term obligation. These part timers are expected to participate in college culture – committees, student organizations, curriculum, etc. – as they work through their regular status process. In this way part-time regular faculty could have more seniority than newer full-time hires. Part-time faculty with regular status earn an exact proportion of the full-time salary (e.g., a regular part-time who has hired at 50% course load would earn 50% of the full-time salary).

Vancouver Community College began this transition to a new model by identifying the various inequities in the two-tiered system and mapping out a “Program for Change”. The issues at hand: differential protections for academic freedom, seniority rights, differing policies for hiring, evaluation processes, departmental equity and participation, right of representation, differing layoff protection,

unpaid leaves, sabbatical, reassigned time, salary, fully prorated office hours, etc., professional development, equitable health benefits, right to strike. In 2016 a transition map was used to identify the benchmarks for addressing the inequities: <https://vccfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/ProgramForChange-Chart.pdf>

The Vancouver Model shows a lot of ingenuity as well as a commitment to change. But like with many model systems, there is the problem of scalability. Vancouver Community College has around 13K students, far short of the 1.8 million California's community colleges service. We are a heavily micromanaged system, with legal definitions of classes of faculty embedded in Education Code and Title V. Despite this uniformity, we do not have a common union representing all faculty (unlike the CSU system). That's 72 districts interpreting state statutes in their own way and reflecting that in their different bargaining agreements. It would take state law to create any parity across the system. And the challenges to that are outlined in paragraph 3.

If we were to work within our system to create a similar type of security for part-time faculty, say a form of part-time tenure, the biggest issue implementation issue would most likely be whether or not to grandfather in current seniority rankings, or throw them out and "start over". Regardless of how that debate resolves, the most likely outcome would be a smaller part-time faculty population. It would have fewer entryway points, but for those who are in, the experience would most likely be better – higher wages, more security, more integration into college and district decision making. But in some way, this will be the experience of part-timers across the state this Fall. Many districts took the opportunity of continued state funding to negotiate new contracts for faculty. These districts also expect to reduce course offerings in 2023-4, so in effect we will experience higher salaries for part-time faculty, but fewer part-time faculty all around.

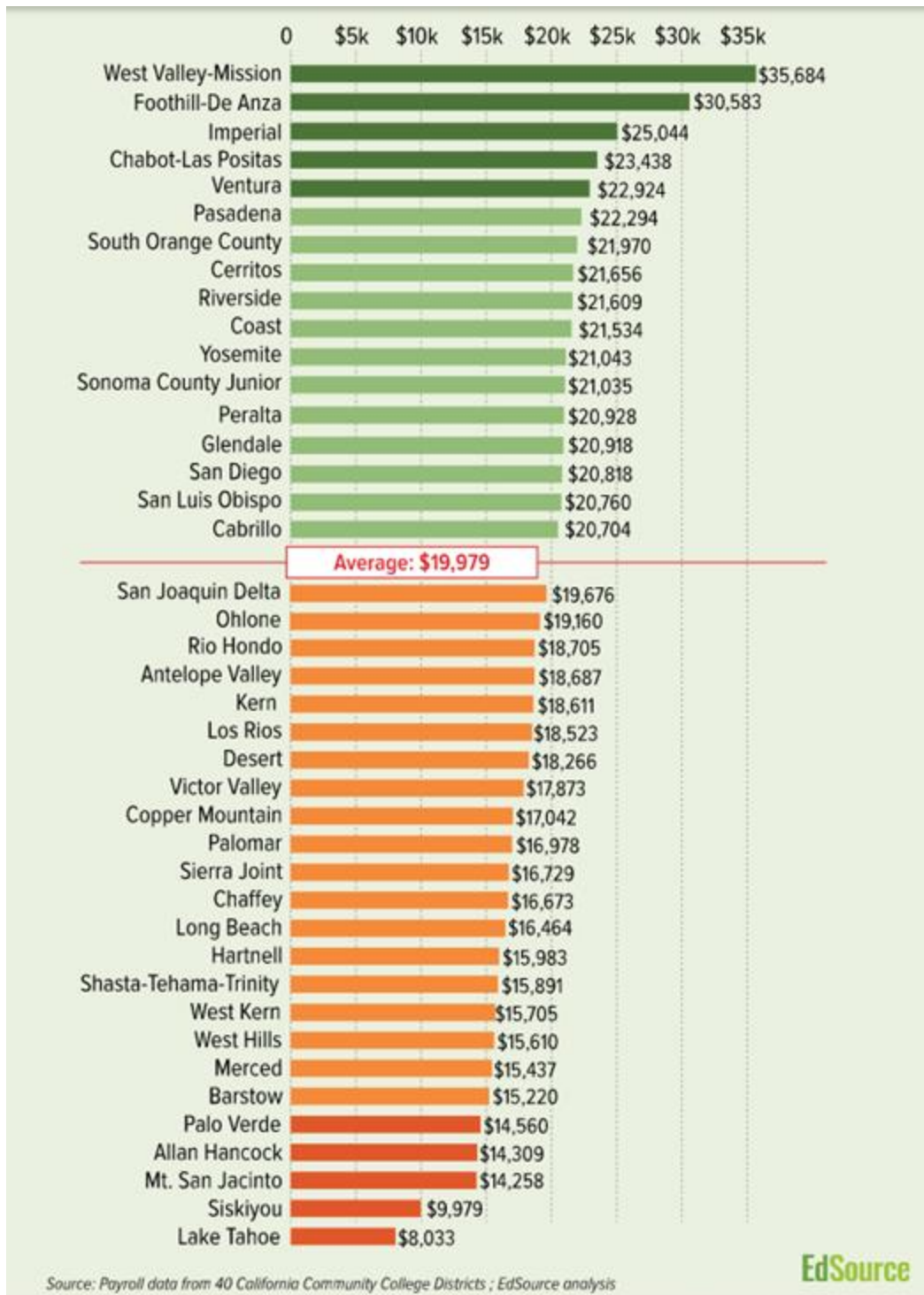
These challenges shouldn't mean that we shrug our shoulders and complacently move on with business as usual. For a system committed to equity, with a system committed to social justice, we should not condone this form of labor exploitation. Especially as we still struggle as a system to diversify our faculty. "From 1993 to 2013, the percentage of underrepresented minorities [in non-tenure-track part-time faculty positions](#) in higher education grew by 230 percent. By contrast, the percentage of underrepresented minorities in full-time tenure-track positions grew by just 30 percent." (Harris 2019) Creating more stability in our part-time faculty, if done thoughtfully, could significantly improve our students' access to a broader range of faculty.

While Chabot/LPC is among one of the better paying districts for part-time faculty (even before our latest contract – see below), we need to be ever diligent in advocating for statewide solutions to address our faculty caste system. The decision of the CLPCCD Faculty Association to become a contract district member of the Faculty Association of California Community College (FACCC) demonstrates that commitment.

California Community Colleges average adjunct pay by district

Part-time faculty were paid an average \$19,978.7 in 2020

Daniel J. Willis and Yuxuan Xie



Links to referenced articles:

The Death of an Adjunct <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/04/adjunct-professors-higher-education-thea-hunter/586168/>

The Gig Workers of California Community Colleges Face Worsening Conditions
<https://edsource.org/2022/the-gig-workers-of-california-community-colleges-face-worsening-conditions/666835>

The Exploitation of Part-Time Professors <https://fullertonobserver.com/2019/05/07/the-exploitation-of-part-time-professors/>

A Canadian College here Adjuncts Go to Prosper https://www.chronicle.com/article/a-canadian-college-where-adjuncts-go-to-prosper/?cid2=gen_login_refresh&cid=gen_sign_in

Vancouver Community College Faculty Association Program for Change <https://vccfa.ca/program-for-change-2/>

Collective Bargaining Agreement VCC <https://vccfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Collective-Agreement-Apr-1-2019-Mar-31-2022.pdf>



United Faculty Benefits and Retirement Conference Friday May 5 9:00-2:30pm

Workshops on retirement planning, investment strategies, long-term care insurance, wellness plans, and district health benefits will be available.

https://faccc.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com_jevents&task=icalevent.detail&evid=65&year=2023&month=003&day=008&uid=e4cb4e69b91d61afd2ab254b560fbf4e

Reading for the Week: Why Making Cal Grants an Entitlement for Community College Students is So Important

<https://edsource.org/2021/reform-cal-grant-and-invest-in-community-college-students/655906>



There is a new requirement that all classes will be given a Canvas shell from this point onward and that the shell (or other type of course management shells) need to be open to evaluators to see regardless of the mode being used for teaching. Note that faculty are not required to use the Canvas shell that is created but during evaluation, evaluators need to be allowed to get into that shell or other LMS that come from other sources such as publishers, etc. The purpose of this is to give the evaluator just a general sense of how these are used for students to navigate through the course, not to dictate how a faculty member would use them. This provision is found in 14F.2.b. and 15f.2.a. It is also found in the part time faculty article in 18I.2.

**Meet your Faculty Association Part Time Representative, Kelsey Paiz,
Communications Studies, Chabot College**



Greetings CLPCCD! I have been teaching Communication Studies at Chabot College as a part-time faculty member since 2017 and have also taught a handful of classes at Las Positas. I received my master's degree in communication studies from CSU Long Beach and a bachelor's degree in the field from Sacramento State, but I actually started my studies right here at Chabot College! With the support of my instructors and the mentors that I met here, I found my passion for teaching and my love of Communication Studies. I joined the FA as the Part-Time Representative for Chabot College last July and I have been working closely with a number of my fellow adjuncts to protect their interests. I have worn many other hats in my career, including Assistant Director of Forensics, Part-Time Representative for Faculty Senate, and Guided Pathways Navigation Guide. Outside of work, I enjoy traveling with my fiancé, hosting game nights with our friends, cuddling with our cats on the couch, and planning our wedding this summer.

See past Faculty Focus Newsletters www.clpcfca.com

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