

# Parsing parity for part-timers

The statistics show clearly what is happening to higher education throughout the country: less and less full-time tenured teachers with reasonable salaries and attendant benefits, more and more part-time teachers with lower (usually much lower) salaries and few if any benefits. Such a system penalizes both students and teachers and cannot be sustained without increasingly negative consequences to both. What to do?

The Part Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College was created by part-timers with the hope of dealing with this problem. Our first aim was to achieve parity: equal pay and equal treatment for equal work. While we have improved our situation in certain important respects and have established a voice that school authorities are obliged to listen to, we are still far from our goal of parity.

How can we get to parity? Here are a couple of approaches that have either been tried or are being seriously proposed. We invite you to offer others.

## Parity of salary and benefits

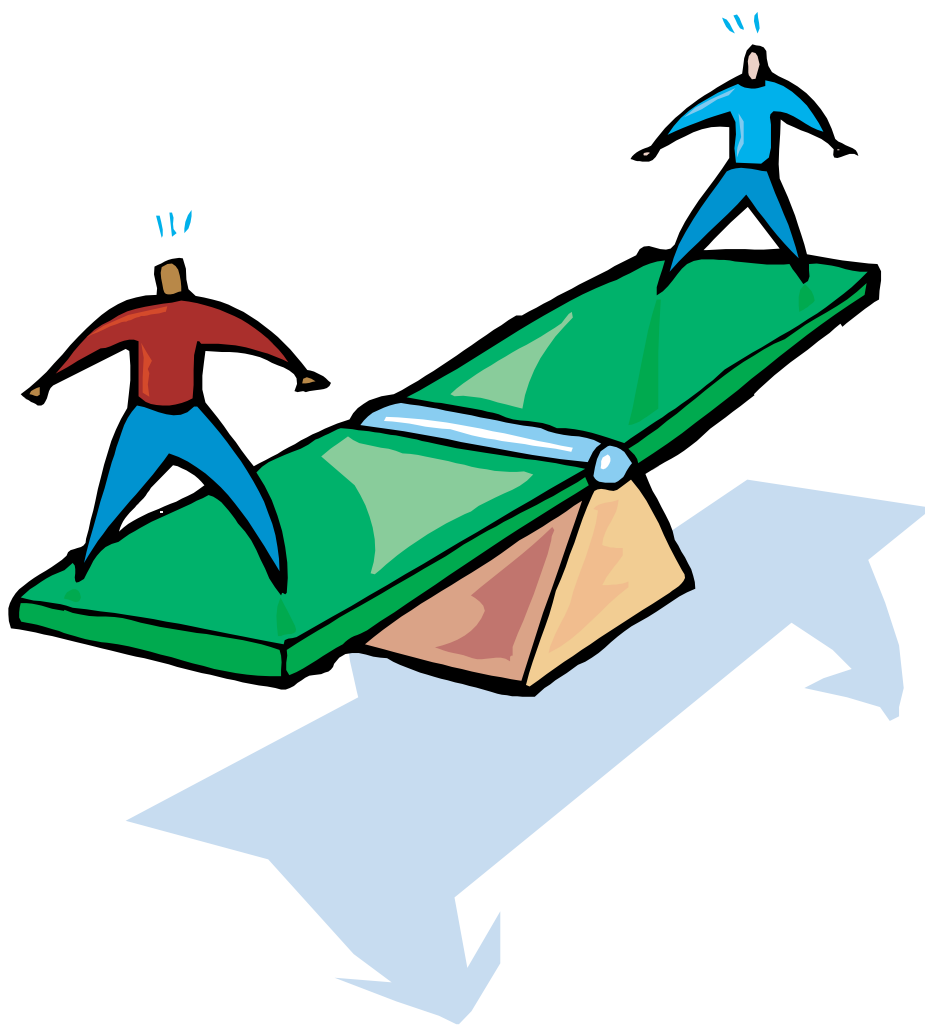
Recognition that parity must include *both* salary and benefits, that part-time teachers should receive exactly the same pay, including benefits, per class as full-time teachers with the same qualifications. They should also have the same responsibilities.

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The improvement of part-time salaries and benefits should never be at the expense of lowered salaries for full-timers. Clearly this can only be done if more money becomes available to higher educational institutions for part-time faculty salaries and benefits (highly unlikely) or if less money is spent in non-teaching areas, namely in administrative costs. One proposal is that administrative costs for higher education should be capped at a certain percent-

age, somewhere between five and ten percent has been suggested, and that the

salary differential between teachers and administrators should be diminished or abolished. Our Social Security System is currently administered at less than four per cent of its income and it is generally agreed that it is one of our best-administered social programs. (American education is the most bureaucratic in the world. A study done some years ago showed that there were more administrators in the New York City schools than in the entire French school system!)



## Parity of job security

Recognition that part-time teachers should not only have parity of salaries and responsibilities, but also parity of job security. A large community college in British Columbia dealt with this problem head-on. They simply got rid of the division of faculty into full-timers and part-timers. Everybody who teaches is faculty. Pay, benefits, and responsibilities are proportional. The big stumbling block to the adoption of this system here is health care costs (in Canada there is universal health care) which most higher educational institutions are simply unwilling to pay, though some do. (How do some do it when Hancock can't?) Of course if California goes to a universal health care system, this problem will simply disappear.

—Roberto Armstrong