

# The Voice

Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College • Parity & Fairness Through Advocacy



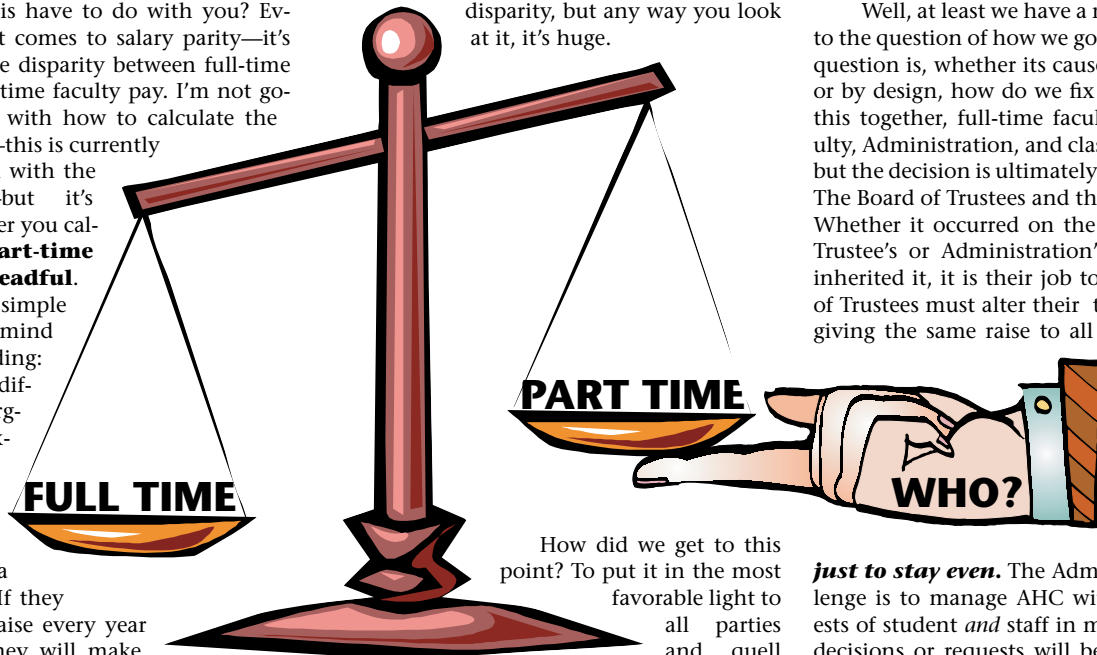
## PARITY DISPARITY

*Compound*—a seemingly boring and benign little word. Look it up in a dictionary and the definition related to finance is usually last on the list, something like *to pay (interest) on both the accrued interest and the principal, or to add to*. Today, it's the Rodney Dangerfield of financial speak. It gets no respect, but with today's minuscule passbook interest rates that's not unexpected. Small amounts compounded daily are still small amounts. Definitely not sexy or controversial enough to make the news. So what does this have to do with you? Everything when it comes to salary parity—it's at the root of the disparity between full-time faculty and part-time faculty pay. I'm not going to bore you with how to calculate the actual disparity—this is currently under discussion with the administration—but it's clear that however you calculate it, **for part-time faculty it is dreadful**.

There is one simple rule to keep in mind with compounding: Over time little differences grow larger. A simple example (bear with me): Take two people making \$20 and \$25, respectively—a \$5 gap to start. If they both get a 5% raise every year over 10 years they will make \$32.60 and \$40.75, respectively. With a 5% raise over 20 years they would make \$53.00 and \$66.25, respectively. What started out as a \$5 gap is \$8.15 after 10 years, and \$13.25 after 20 years. Note that after the first 10 years the gap grew by \$3.15, but over the second 10 years (after 20 years) it grew by \$5.10. Again, over time a little gap grew larger.

So how should AHC pay instructors for a given class? All philosophical reasons and rhetoric aside, if two instructors are teach-

ing the same class, their pay should be paid the same—equal pay for equal work. To meet students' needs the class must be taught at an acceptable level so they learn the material. Students don't (and needn't) know whether their instructor is full or part time. They want a quality education to meet their current and future goals. After all, the units transfer the same. But at AHC full-time faculty pay is nearly double that of part-time faculty pay to teach the same class. One can quibble over the exact disparity, but any way you look at it, it's huge.



How did we get to this point? To put it in the most favorable light to all parties and quell

any paranoid rumors, unfortunately the law of compounding is not immune to the law of unintended consequences. At some time in the past, full-time faculty were probably paid a little more than part-time faculty. But, with rare exceptions, the Board of Trustees has been wedded to the principle of giving equal raises to all groups. While this egalitarian stance seems fair on the surface, and works when pay is equal at the start, this coupled with compounding has made a small difference grow

and grow until the salary gap has expanded to an unconscionable amount.

This problem is not happening only at AHC. Throughout California, community colleges have relied on part-timers to meet the demand for teachers. However, most, but not all, community colleges have followed the private sector into the ethically questionable tactic of hiring part-timers not to meet fluctuating demand, but because it costs less for the same result.

Well, at least we have a reasonable answer to the question of how we got here. The harder question is, whether its cause was unintended or by design, how do we fix this? We're all in this together, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, Administration, and classified employees, but the decision is ultimately up to two parties: The Board of Trustees and the Administration. Whether it occurred on the current Board of Trustees' or Administration's watch, or they inherited it, it is their job to fix it. The Board of Trustees must alter their thinking and stop giving the same raise to all parties. This will not be an easy task; **currently, a part-timer's raise needs to be twice that of a full-timer's**

**just to stay even.** The Administration's challenge is to manage AHC with the best interests of student and staff in mind, even if their decisions or requests will be unpopular with certain groups or the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees' and Administration's current tactics are inconsistent with AHC's strategic plan to recruit and retain quality instructors. It took years to get to this point, and it will probably take years to correct, but solutions must be implemented now. Sticking with the status quo or moving slowly is not acceptable because it just compounds the problem.

—Dorran Nadeau

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# Marching forward

MARK JAMES MILLER, PFA President

## Pink Friday events

On March 13, nearly 27,000 K-12 teachers in California received layoff notices. Across the state, K-12 teachers, led by their unions, protested at various events. Here in Santa Maria the state's other major teacher's union, the California Teachers Association, held a march and rally in front of Santa Maria High School, and invited us to take part. 1,000 plus people attended, and I was honored to be one of the five speakers. What struck me as especially significant was the number of students from the high school that were there, speaking out in support of their teachers and in support of education itself. I was also impressed at the amount of community

California now ranks 48th in the nation in spending per pupil. According to several speakers I have heard recently, we are on our way to being 50th. The comparison that is often made is that we now rank with Mississippi. Soon, it appears, we will sink below Mississippi. And what happens in K-12 echoes in higher education. The exploitation of part-time and contingent faculty continues unabated, not only here, not only statewide, but nationwide. The politicians are fiddling while the educational system implodes.

## Convention 2009

The annual CFT convention was held in Sacramento from March 20–22. This

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support—drivers going past honking their horns and waving. The CTA members were also extremely pleased to have us there.



Pink Friday rally in Santa Maria, March 13.

year the Executive Board elected to send two delegates, Gary Aston and me. For us, the highlight was the Communications Awards. But the convention is much more than that. One of the most important facets is being able to meet and interact with other members of our union, and other part-time faculty leaders, many of whom share stories and experiences similar to our own. There is also a great deal of camaraderie—we sang union songs and watched videos of California labor history. The delegates heard speeches from CFT President Marty Hittelman, AFT President Randi Weingarten, California Lt. Governor John Garamendi, and Art Pulaski of the California Labor Council.

Part-time issues continue to play a major role in every discussion about higher education, and the convention was no exception. During one of the sessions Carl Friedlander, President of the

CFT's Community College Council, reminded us of why this is so: In the California Community College system there are at present 2.7 million students and 60,000 instructors. Of those 60,000 teachers, 17,000 are full-time, 43,000 are part-time. This translates into a ratio of 29% full-time, 71% part-time, consistent with nationwide averages of 27% and 73%. The implications of this for higher education are profound, and we will continue to examine them in future issues.

For a complete report on the CFT's 2009 convention, go to [www.cft.org](http://www.cft.org).

*Please see Cooperative, page 3*



## The Voice

Volume 11, Number 7

**The Voice** is published by the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College, Local 6185, California Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The PFA's goal is to attain respect, achieve parity, and improve working conditions for our bargaining unit members.

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# Payroll Payoff

The results are in and the PFA members voted overwhelmingly in favor of the new payroll procedure. The procedure is scheduled to start in the fall and will allow part-timers the option of having 10 of their 12 paychecks direct deposited into an account of their choice. These 10 paychecks will be paid on the last working day of the month, with the remaining 2 paychecks paid on the 10th as they currently are.

This is a step forward in part-timers achieving parity of working conditions at AHC. We thank the administration, and in particular Richard Carmody, Director, Business Services, for their help in making this a reality. Thanks also to the PFA members who voted—your input is greatly valued. (For those of you who still aren't PFA members, we will have a membership drive in the fall, but why not do it now when things are less hectic? Just contact the PFA office.)

We will pass along any information regarding the paperwork necessary to sign up for direct deposit when we receive it.

—Dorran Nadeau



## Cooperative work experience

On May 7 we signed off (with the administration) on an addition to the collective bargaining agreement that integrates cooperative work experience into the college curriculum. Starting this fall, Hancock will implement a work experience program that will enable students to get college credit for working. Each

student will choose their instructor. Best of all, by mutual agreement supervising students in this program will be considered an ancillary activity and will not count toward the instructor's teaching load.

## More honors for our newsletter

In our last issue, we told you how proud

instructor Valerie Kline that appeared in an issue last year), 2nd place for best newsletter overall, and 3rd place for best editorial or column ("In Defense of Unions" published last year).

To win awards on a state level is outstanding; to win on a national level is remarkable. Competing with locals from all over the country is daunting, and we are all proud of what we have done. But our board has no intention of resting on its laurels—we are constantly striving for ways to make our publication even better.

Congratulations to all involved: the board members who wrote the articles, Dorran Nadeau and Gary Aston who edit *The Voice*, and our newsletter committee: Dorran Nadeau, Roberto Armstrong, Vivian Bryan, Susan Case, and I.

**If you are interested in supervising a student while he or she is in this program, you can earn \$100 per semester for each student you supervise.**

student who decides to take advantage of this new program will need a faculty member to supervise them. If you are interested in supervising a student while he or she is in this program, you can earn \$100 per semester for each student you supervise. The administration will be announcing this new program in the fall and will be requesting that those instructors who are interested in taking part submit their names (the stu-

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## New Members

- Wayne King
- Eric Shiers
- Why Not You?



# Focus On: Unemployment information

BY DORRAN NADEAU

Many of you have had questions about unemployment benefit claims and we hope this information will help. Because there are nuances to unemployment that we can't possibly cover in this short summary, and because each case is different, this article will focus on providing you with information on the basics: Resources, when to file, how to file, and appeals. First, you might be eligible for unemployment benefits between semesters or terms, if you have no assignments during a semester or term, or your load is reduced from previous semesters or terms. Even if you are employed elsewhere, you might be eligible for unemployment benefits—it pays to investigate! Be aware, however, that you can file a claim only once a year, so discuss this with someone at the California Employment Development Department (EDD).

## Resources

Both Santa Maria and San Luis Obispo have EDD offices that not only have staff who can answer your questions, but also provide:

- helpful brochures
- direct lines to file your claim by phone
- computer terminals to file your claim online (fastest way to file)

### In Santa Maria:

1410 South Broadway  
805-614-1224

### In San Luis Obispo:

4111 Broad Street, #A  
805-788-2696

These offices are open from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

EDD also issues *A Guide to Benefits and Employment Services* booklet that you may pick up during your first visit.

## When to file

As far as your employment at AHC is concerned, as a part-timer you are eligible for unemployment benefits at the end of your assignment. The day after the end of your assignment, you should file a claim using one of the methods mentioned below. (If you are employed elsewhere,

you might still qualify if your wages from other employment do not exceed a certain amount).

## How to file

You can file a claim by phone by calling 800-300-5616, online at [www.edd.ca.gov/eapply4ui](http://www.edd.ca.gov/eapply4ui), or by fax at 866-215-9159 (after filling out a form DE 11011 obtained online or from a local EDD office). The easiest is online, but some of the questions might be confusing. Note that if you call at the beginning of the week, or from home, you will most likely spend a considerable time on hold; the phones at the EDD offices seem to connect you quicker.

To file a claim you will need the following information:

- Your Social Security number
- Name and address of your last employer
- Your last day of employment
- Your union local (Part-Time Faculty Association of AHC, AFT Local 6185)

Among other questions, you will be asked why you were terminated. Tell them that you are no longer employed (and are filing for unemployment insurance) because, as part-time temporary faculty, your job (assignment) has ended. It is crucial that when you are asked if you have a contract that would guarantee your continued employment, you answer "no." What you have as temporary part-time faculty is a tentative offer based on enrollment and other factors. You do not have a guaranteed contract position. Many temporary part-time faculty have been mistakenly denied benefits because they mistook their assignment letter to be a contract and answered this question incorrectly. Remember, when asked if you have a contract, just say "No!"

## Appeals

If the EDD denies your application, you should immediately file an appeal—you **have 20 calendar days from the date of the EDD decision to file a written appeal**. The appeal may be filed at the office that processed the claim or at any EDD or board office. If you mail the appeal, send it to the address on your Notice of

Determination, and make sure it is postmarked before the end of the 20th day.

Whether you file an appeal at an EDD office or by mail, you can use the following sample language taken from the Community College Part-Time Faculty Unemployment Compensation Handbook by Robert J. Bezemek:

I hereby appeal from the decision denying me benefits. The basis of my appeal is that the decision and its rationale misstates and misapplies the facts, and misstates and misapplies the law. I believe I am entitled to benefits because I am a part-time, temporary community college faculty member. At the conclusion of any given academic term I have no reassurance of continued employment because any future assignments are contingent upon enrollment, funding, being bumped by a full-time or permanent or probationary employee, or because I can be terminated due to lack of funds or because of program changes. As such, I have no legal reassurance of re-employment in accordance with the decision *Cervisi V. Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board*, 208 Cal.App.3d 685, 256 Cal.Rptr. 142 (1989).

Use the following links for a much more detailed explanation of your rights, sample letters of appeal, along with a California Part-time Faculty Association member's experience:

Unemployment Compensation Handbook by Robert J. Bezemek:

<http://www.cpfa.org/bezemek.html>  
<http://www.cpfa.org/bezemek.rtf>

Unemployment Entitlements from CPFA:

<http://www.cpfa.org/unemployment.html>

Good luck, and always remember we are here to help, so please contact us if you have any questions.

Note: this information is as accurate as our research would allow, and was current at the time this article was written, but please contact the California Employment Development Department (EDD) to ensure that you receive the most accurate and current information.