

Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College

PARITY & FAIRNESS THROUGH ADVOCACY
CFT LOCAL 6185



Dear Colleague,

We would like to tell you a story about why the Part-Time Faculty Association, (PFA) was created, and how you can assist the PFA to make positive changes at Allan Hancock College.

A Tale of Two Colleges

In the not so very long ago, there once lived an idealistic Instructor who accepted part-time teaching positions at two community colleges in nearby cities. The Instructor was thrilled of course, believing that all institutions of higher education were havens of equity, justice, and professional dignity. However, the Instructor quickly became dismayed by the huge difference in the way Part-Time Faculty were treated at each of the colleges.

The Cuesta College Part-Time Faculty Association was provided with offices, complete with computers, telephones, bookshelves, and paid office hours. They participated in the shared governance process by sitting on important policy-making committees and serving on the Academic Council. They had the freedom to choose their own textbooks, and they could teach more than the regular part-time load from time to time, in accordance with state law. The Instructors teaching a 50% load or more received health benefits, or if they already had health coverage, the equivalent monies were deposited into a TSA account. Their names, office numbers, and phone extensions were listed in the college directory, the same as Full-Time Faculty. They were encouraged to attend department meetings for which they received flex credit. They had a sense of job security and continuity because class assignments were based on date of hire and how many classes they had previously taught. They were treated, in short, like the professionals they are.

At Allan Hancock College, however, it was a very different story. Part-Time Faculty had no paid office hours, no offices, no computers, nor any place to store their books and extra assignments. Those who helped students after class had to meet with them on the campus lawn or in their cars. Allan Hancock College Part-Time Faculty could not participate in the shared governance process, and they had no representation on the Academic Senate. They were not encouraged to attend department meetings, nor were they given flex credit if, as Professionals, they felt doing so was important. Some who tried to attend department meetings were made to feel unwelcome and told their participation was inappropriate. They could not freely choose their own textbooks, and their names were not listed on the college directory. Health benefits were not provided to the Part-Time Faculty. They were not allowed to teach over the regular part-time load limit, as the law allowed, even if it meant having to bring in a substitute teacher to teach the last two weeks of a semester course. The Part-Time Faculty had no job security or re-assignment rights, and never knew from one semester to another if they would be rehired. Some who had been teaching for ten years or more, with good student evaluations, lost classes to new-hires with no teaching experience? And, on top of all this, they were paid less per hour at Allan Hancock College than at Cuesta College and most other Community Colleges in the state.

In short, at Allan Hancock College, the Part-Time Faculty was treated like cheap spare parts that could be plugged into place with the least amount of effort, care, or cost, and removed on a whim.

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 achieve parity with the full-time faculty by improving pay, benefits, and working conditions of its bargaining unit members.

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Organizing for Professional Equity

Why was the Allan Hancock College Part-Time Faculty so neglected? Unlike the Cuesta College Part-Time Faculty, the Allan Hancock College Part-Time Faculty did not have a union to represent them during contract negotiations. Professional equity, justice, and respect, don't just happen in the workplace, even at institutions of higher learning. We have to work for them. This is why the Part-Time Faculty at Allan Hancock College joined together to create the Part-Time Faculty Association (PFA). Since winning our first contract in June 2001, we have made many improvements, including, wage increases totaling more than 50%; paid office hours for credit lecture courses; representation on the Board of Trustees, Academic Senate, and all district shared governance committees; a grievance and evaluation process; payment for cancelled classes, travel time between district campuses; a process for assigning classes to a member based on criteria that includes date of hire; a better retirement option; improved sick and personal necessity leaves; and a host of other benefits. We have now rehire rights and a new evaluation process.

While we've accomplished a lot over the past years, we still have a lot of work ahead to create parity between the Part-Time Faculty and the Full-Time Faculty of Allan Hancock College. With these changes we can be more competitive with Cuesta College and other community colleges across the state. We still have a long way to go before we can say that we truly have achieved professional equity. That's why we need your help. Please join us in making a difference on our campus.

Why You Should Join the PFA

The reason you should join the PFA is to create a professional community and to promote professional equity for all Part-Time Faculty and to have a representative voice in the campus policy-making and budget-making process. To guard against the institutional indifference and bottom-line thinking that compromises sound employment and teaching practices. To put your idealism, your values, and your belief in the democratic process into practice.

As a PFA member, you will enjoy many rights and benefits. You automatically become a member of both the California Federation of Teachers and our parent union, the American Federation of Teachers. You have the right to vote for association officers. You have the right to vote to ratify each new contract and yearly contract amendments. You have the right to attend Association Executive Board meetings and make your voice heard about issues that directly affect you. And there are many other benefits as well.

Recent news of corporate misconduct is a timely reminder that leaders at the top of large organizations do not always look after the welfare of those at the bottom. This means we must be responsible for our own welfare and for the welfare of fellow PFA members. We can't expect anyone else to do this for us. But accepting this responsibility is not without a price. It requires commitment, hard work, solidarity, and the willingness to pay our fair share of the monetary costs.

PFA membership dues are only 2.3% of your monthly income. Dues will be deducted automatically from your paycheck. This is a small price to pay for professional equity, and, in any event, the Association dues are the same as the service fee so why not join your fellow instructors and take advantage of all the benefits membership in the Association has to offer? Please fill out a membership application and return it to the PFA office. If you have any questions, please contact us. Additional news and information is also available at our Web site: www.pfaofahc.com. We have an email address for your convenience: ahcpfa@verizon.net.

Respectfully submitted by the PFA Governing Board