

Keeping Part-timers Visible: What Next?

— *Lin Fraser*

A growing concern revolves around the issue of how part-timers can remain visible so that our voices are heard. With that in mind, a group of part-timers—and one full-timer—representing unions and faculty organizations met at the State Chancellor’s Office on March 14, 2005. Attendees included Lin Fraser, Robert Yoshioka, and David Milroy of CPFA; Michael Bertsch from CWA, Deobrah Dahl-Shanks from FACCC, and Cathy Crane McCoy, president of CCA/CTA. Representing the Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor Jamilla Moore and the representatives of CCA, FACCC, CWA, and CPFA sat down to discuss what part-timers can and cannot do. (CFT withdrew its representative the evening before the meeting.)

At the meeting, part-timers asked about creating a California Community College Part-Time Faculty Committee separate from the Human Resources Advisory Committee. Under the aegis of the Chancellor’s Office, this committee could hold regularly scheduled meetings coinciding with BOG meetings so that part-time faculty may attend and participate in the following: CoFO (Council of Faculty Organizations), Consultation Council, and the Board of Governors.

Vice Chancellor Moore agreed that part-timers need greater visibility but said the Chancellor is not empowered to create such a committee. She further stated that while what our suggestion is not unreasonable, achieving it will be complicated. And, says the Vice Chancellor, “If you are to get the support of the Chancellor, you must do your homework first.”

To get a part-timer appointed to the BOG involves both BOG members as well as the Governor’s Office. First, part-timers will need to convince current board members that there is a need for such a position. Then the Chancellor must put in an application with the State Office of Administration because such a position is State funded. Finally, the governor must be persuaded to create this position.

A part-timer then asked, “Why couldn’t the BOG member be ex officio, thus eliminating the steps above?” That suggestion was not adequately addressed in the meeting.

Getting the BOG members’ approval also means going to CoFO and Consultation and getting their support. This, too, will be challenging since participation in the Council of Faculty Organizations is by invitation only—and at present, CWA is not allowed to participate even though the union only represents part-time faculty. Likewise, CPFA, a voice for part-timers for almost seven years, has been denied admission to CoFO. Similarly, getting Consultation behind creating a part-time BOG position will be difficult since Consultation includes not only faculty but also administrators, students, and classified staff.

The solution? Form a large group of part-timers to rotate through the meetings. CoFO meets once a month (ten meetings, usually one day long.) Consultation meets the day before the BOG meetings (every two months) and BOG meetings last two days. Have at least one part-timer at every BOG meeting (five meetings per year). Start networking among the members of the various groups.

Make part-timer presence felt and when possible heard.

Then be prepared for a long re-education campaign.