“Billionaires” emote at 2010 CPFA conference

CASUALTIES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

From eliminating tenure and stifling academic freedom to relying on a corporate curriculum, recent developments at community colleges have taken their toll.

By David McKay Wilson

BRUSH FIRES over academic freedom can flare up in the most unexpected places. Southwestern College journalism professor Max Branscomb was handing out programs for a May 2009 awards assembly at the community college’s suburban San Diego campus when Raj Chopra, the college’s president, strode into the lobby of Mayan Hall. Chopra was apparently fuming over Branscomb’s performance as adviser to Southwestern’s award-winning student newspaper.

A student editorial had just called for Chopra’s resignation, citing a litany of alleged transgressions, including the usurpation of faculty power, financial mismanagement, and disrespect of students.

“After I shook his hand and offered him a program, he grabbed my hand really tight and pulled me close to his body,” recalls Branscomb. Chopra, in an e-mail, acknowledged inviting Branscomb to lunch but denied warning Branscomb that he was on a destructive path that would ruin his career.

Whether a jab or a lunch invitation, that incident presaged Chopra’s haysmaker last October, when he suspended three tenured Southwestern faculty members after they joined a student protest against budget cuts that included eliminating hundreds of classes.

Two weeks later, the suspensions were rescinded, following an outcry from students, the National Education Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, and Southwestern faculty, the latter of whom received advice from the AAUP’s West Coast office in Berkeley and from the staff of Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure in Washington.

The contretemps at Southwestern College comes as community colleges across the country take the national stage, coping with surging enrollments in the face of financial constraints caused by our nation’s economic downturn. Academic freedom is currently under threat at many of these public two-year schools, which serve almost one-half of the nation’s first-year college students. The growing reliance on part-time faculty exacerbates the problem, with many adjuncts feeling muzzled for fear of losing their jobs. In 1987, 54 percent of community college faculty worked part time. Twenty years later, 69 percent worked part time, compared to 32 percent at four-year colleges, according to a 2007 U.S. Department of Education report. Only 7 percent of community college faculty are in tenure-track positions, with 14 percent in full-time nontenure-track positions.

The problem of academic freedom at community colleges in the twenty-first century is much more than the structural limitations placed on the adjunct faculty. At some of the nation’s community colleges, faculty control over curriculum design is threatened by corporations that dictate course material for degree-granting training programs. These programs have become increasingly common tools for local workforce development initiatives. Elsewhere, faculty face growing demands by accrediting agencies to design protocols to test student outcomes, which some fear will lead to a more standardized curriculum. In other institutions, faculty members are asked to adopt a “customer service” approach to teaching, with instructors pressured to make students satisfied purchasers of their educational product.

Community colleges have become such a central part of the nation’s education network—with 1,260 colleges serving close to seven million students, or 43 percent of the nation’s undergraduates—that NBC last fall created a prime-time situation comedy called Community that is set on a fictional campus, Greendale Community College. President Barack Obama last summer traveled to Macomb Community College, thirty-five miles north of Detroit, to announce his administration’s proposal to invest $12 billion in community colleges over the next decade through its American Graduation Initiative. That money would have been used to upgrade college facilities, develop plans to boost graduation rates, and support the creation of interactive computer software for online learning, but only $52 billion remained in the bill for community colleges after it passed and emerged from reconciliation.

See pages 6 and 7 for a photo journal of recent part-time faculty events.
College Education, NOT!

Robert Yoshioka’s article in the Spring 2010 issue inspires response

Online is a trade-off

Dear Editor:

I read your [Sandy Bariniger’s] “Editor’s note” at the end of Robert Yoshioka’s article about Phoenix, DeVry, and their ilk. You seemed to be offering something of a corrective by citing a US Dept. of Education meta-analysis concluding that students who took all or part of their class online performed better than those who didn’t. I tracked down the study, and “performed better” seems to refer to student understanding at the end of the term. Having experimented with teaching hybrid courses a few times at Glendale Community College, I think this misses the point.

Our local studies have shown that success rates in courses with some online component are about the same as those without ONLY in computer-oriented disciplines like Business Office Technology and Computer Science. In other disciplines, success rates (% of students at census who eventually earn an A, B, or C) average about 10 percentage points lower for courses with some online component (the drop-off was most pronounced in math, which is my specialty). A major driver of these lowered success rates was more students dropping the sections with an online component. Thus, I think the synthesis of our local results with the study you cited would be that courses with an online component are harder for students (for one thing, they require more motivation). This leads to less success which at the college level, as opposed to K-12, translates into more drops (but teach a course or two in the university time professional employment elsewhere that the term is more appropriately used in part-time to earn added income).

6) Instead of ‘Part-Time’ (PT) to refer to PT instructors who depend on this source of income, especially to PT instructors who depend on this source of income, I think this misses the point. In my case, I think of the “Part-Time” (PT) designation as a euphemism for reemerging contingent faculty (in order to imply professional prestige while masking the extensive exploitation and instability of our work lives. I recommend that we stay clear of this delusion by rejecting “adjunct” and retaining ‘part-time’.

Cynthia Mahabir

Mahabir is the part-time faculty representative for the Peralta Federation of Teachers at the Peralta Community College District in Oakland, and teaches at Laney College. Her email address is cmlaney2003@yahoo.com.

Article was great

Dear Robert:

Just wanted to say I thought your article in CPFA News was interesting and very important. Glad you’re not afraid to say it like it is. Keep up the good work.

Mari Guerra

CEFA VP.

Article was ludicrous

Dear Editor:

Despite it being a propaganda rag, I admit to reading every edition of CPFA News, especially because we at Gavilan College in Gilroy who even teach one class are being forced into the union racket this fall. The article by Robert Yoshioka in your Spring 2010 edition about for-profit on-line colleges was as ludicrous as its title (which inferred that it is not even education). It was the typical union lie, with a sentence or two of truth thrown in to keep the straw man upright. I taught on-line and was treated just as fairly there as at the public-funded community college. Several of my peers at my regular job have acquired a fine education on-line; in fact, in said “tightly focused” curriculum their time (and money) was not wasted taking irrelevant, forced G.E. courses that have nothing to do with their career or major. (The only career path of such courses is to teach said courses, since there is no real-world career application, but I digress.) The only reason I didn’t like the on-line teaching is because I spend too much time already in front of the computer at my regular job. I prefer the classroom setting. It’s much more fun.

So I will end with this parting thought: What about private on-line education does Yoshioka fear, not being able to foist his sick political agenda (indoctrination) into the curriculum, or just not being able to force the instructors to pay union dues (to fund, said agenda)?

Alan Viarengo

Viarengo, a 23-year statistician and part-time instructor at Gavilan College, is an inveterate writer of acerbic letters to various publications. It does appear that he’s unhappy with the symbiotic relationship he shares with Robert Yoshioka . . . Viarengo “will never, ever join a union” while Yoshioka enjoys the unusual distinction (with several of his compatriots at Alameda-Hancock Community College) of having been thrown out of one. Their local was decertified from the union ranks, which was a “first,” according to officials at PERB. Yoshioka still treasures his official de-cert letter.

Viarengo’s email address is withheld by request.

Don’t paint LaVerne with the same brush!!

Dear Editor:

I teach a 1-unit class so I receive the CPFA News. I don’t check my faculty mailbox regularly—‘m very bad about that—so I just got the Spring 2010 edition today. I noticed that in your article about privatized online instruction, you mentioned “La Verne University” as one of the examples of for-profit career colleges.

I certainly share your skepticism about many of the schools you listed. University of La Verne, however, does not belong on that list. La Verne is an accredited, private, non-profit university that’s been around since 1891. It is a Hispanic Serving Institution and has a high percentage of first-generation college students. It’s a small, liberal arts institution with a focus on teaching. While it does have professional programs, off-site programs, and online courses, it is not in the same category as Kaplan or University of Phoenix. You can find more details at laverne.edu, and I encourage you to check it out. I’ll look forward to future issues, which I will fetch from my faculty mailbox on a regular basis. Thanks!

Name and email withheld by request

“Name Withheld” is a former University of La Verne staff member and current community college administrator.
With some disappointments come new goals and continued determination

We succeeded in getting AB 1807 out of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, but we needed help from CWA, CTA, CFT, and FACCC. After we met with these groups and refined our language and our goals there was solidarity, but we need to go beyond this.

While CPFA will continue to advocate our principled goals such as rehire rights for all, we must increase our efforts to educate the public about how our often sub-standard working conditions affect not only our livelihoods, but also our student’s success.

To do this we must tap into the energy of the 45,000 contingent faculty teaching in this system, and educate them about what CPFA can do with their support. We need to increase our membership in order to be heard in Sacramento. Therefore, in the next 12-18 months, we will focus our efforts on membership building.

The time has come for CPFA to take advantage of our already existing numbers. We need to replicate what the other state organizations have achieved. Indeed, our population is downright scary (in a positive and powerful way). Part-time faculty grossly outnumber the entire population of full-time community college instructors in the state of California.

Sacramento we must rethink our strategy. That in order to have a greater impact in the student’s learning conditions and their success.

CPFA acknowledges and thanks Drs. Barbara and Jack Price of the Coast College District CCA local for their gracious and generous support of CPFA. Barbara, who is president of the Coast Community College part-time faculty association and a long time member of the education and labor community, served as host for the 2010 CPFA Annual Conference which was held on the Orange Coast College campus and did an outstanding job of coordinating publicity, facilities and arranging the food services provided by the colleges award winning culinary arts program.

We urge each CPFA member to take just a few minutes and invite one person each week and join us to fight for better working conditions. When you do, be sure give them a copy of our new journal, a copy of our brochure, and a membership form. If you need more of these items, please contact David Donica at ddonica@cpfa.org and he’ll get them to you. We’re happy to plan a lunch or dinner in your area to explain more about what membership in CPFA can mean to you and your colleagues.

Please help CPFA improve your rights and your working conditions. These are strongly connected to our student’s success.

I’ve reminded of these words from Chris Stampolis, our keynote speaker at the 2010 conference: “There are 40,000 to 50,000 contingent faculty in the state of California. This translates into serious political power . . . if you choose to use it.”

John Martin, jmartin@cpfa.org

Chancellor considers re-establishing PT faculty advisory committee

The CPFA board and the part-time representatives of other faculty associations and unions have believed for years that this situation should change. In December 2009, Robert Yoshioka and David Milroy spoke personally with Chancellor Jack Scott to bring this concern to his attention. CPFA followed up with a written request, along with letters of support from CCA and CWA, to establish a Part-Time Advisory Committee within the Chancellor’s Office system.

Following this request, a task-force group consisting of representatives from CPFA and all of the major faculty groups: CCCI, CCA, CFT, CWA, and FACCC met with Vice-Chancellor Barry Russell. The Academic Senate, the Student Senate and the Chief Instructional Officers were represented as well. This part-time task force met on April 30 and July 30, 2010, and both day-long meetings were very productive and successful in establishing the critical need to create an advisory committee for the numerous part-time faculty issues.

In these two meetings, the participants identified not only an extensive list of part-time issues including the 67% cap, lack of office space, seniority, and benefits, as well as exclusion from committees, senate and shared governance, but also started to formulate possible solutions for these problems.

Part time faculty know them all, because we live and experience them on a daily basis and have done so for decades. Even the smallest changes and improvements, which have been achieved in the past decade, have come very slowly and with much effort.

The conclusion of the part-time faculty participating in this task-force was that a standing part-time advisory committee should be established to advise the chancellor and that this advisory committee should eventually have a voice at the Consultation Council.

Vice Chancellor Russell brought a summary of the task-force efforts to the Consultation Council meeting and the report was discussed.

Three of the part-time task force members, Robert Yoshioka, David Milroy, and Cornelia Alsheimer, were present and spoke out urging the Council to continue this successful collaboration of part-time faculty across all statewide groups.

Since more than half of all classes at community colleges are taught by part-time faculty, by improving the working conditions for part time faculty we will surely improve our student’s learning conditions and their success. Consultation Council members listened attentively, though not all of them voiced an opinion.

Among those who did, there was considerable support for our issues and concerns. The representative of CCA, Vice-President Lynette Nyaggah, spoke passionately of CCA’s support of forming a part-time advisory committee so that we can have our own voice for our issues. The CCCI representative suggested that allowing part-time faculty to make their voices heard in some new form would work better than whatever has been happening for the past thirty years.

By now, most you know that AB 1807 (Fong, D) died in Sacramento in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Both the League and several districts claimed that this bill would cost California too much money, even though it was clearly a no-brainer. If AB 1807 had passed out of Sacramento, it would have mandated rehire rights for part-time faculty throughout the community college system.

This disappointment makes it clear to us that in order to have a greater impact in Sacramento we must rethink our strategy.

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TRUSTEES RECOMMEND: CREATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR BOARDMEMBERS

One BOT president speaks
Mona Field, Trustee, LACCD

NOTE: THIS IS WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR AS AN INDIVIDUAL, AND IN NO WAY REPRESENTS THE POLICIES OR VIEWS OF THE LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OR ITS BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Having been a community college trustee for over eleven years, I feel able to share some thoughts about how boardmembers function and how part time advocates can communicate effectively with their local board.

First of all, each of our 72 districts has its own culture and community setting. Large, small, urban, rural, and in between --- all of them have a different history of board elections, board member behavior and so forth.

The first task of part time leaders is to create their internal unity --- through the local union and through CPFA/El Chorro. As in all things political, numbers matter. And although part timers are the majority of faculty, if they are not organized, they appear scattered and will be ineffective.

So, find the colleagues who care about part time issues and be sure to create some internal community: even a handful of committed people can make a difference (to paraphrase Margaret Meade’s famous statement).

Once you have at least 4 or 5 folks who know the issues, and are willing to spend some time, here are some basic ways to create relationships with your board. Get involved BEFORE they get elected. Find out who is running, and work with your local union to support good candidates. Sometimes “good” and “incumbent” are not synonymous, but since incumbents generally have the edge, you should consider working with them and educating them along the way.

Be aware that helping someone get elected is NO guarantee of their future voting behavior, but most elected officials, even college boardmembers, will try to be accessible to those who help them get elected.

T hey are speaking to you.

Mona Field is the president of the Los Angeles Community College District Board of Trustees. Throughout her professional career, Field has been a leader in furthering causes of social responsibility, positive labor-management relations, and excellence in education.

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Get involved with your board.

When speaking to the Board, always be respectful, calm and DO NOT BLAME THEM for what is going on at the state or district level. Chances are that they have no idea about the issues --- the fact is that BOARD-MEMBERS ARE THE LAST TO KNOW what is going on, in most cases.

Work with your local union. The FT faculty probably have a seat at the table (literally or figuratively). Do your best to get your concerns on their list for negotiations.

This is often very difficult, but that’s where the solidarity and support of CPFA can help.

With a few exceptions in the state, most local unions are FT/PT (aka “wall to wall”), and PT leaders must continuously struggle to gain acceptance and authority within their locals. In a PT-only local, the struggle is different, but still exists.

Mona Field, mona.field@gmail.com

(This is the first in a series of articles by and about college trustees. Future themes include the “moral expectations” for trustees . . . what are the mandates from the community? Are trustees supposed to [or allowed to] communicate with faculty? Should they have as much contact with faculty as they do with district administrators? Should administrators keep the BOT sequestered from the college community? When making financial decisions should they consider what is best for the college student or for the district’s bottom line? If you are interested learning more or writing about these themes, please write a letter to editor@cpfa.org)
This is such an outrageous injustice that I am embarrassed and shamed by my tenured colleagues’ widespread inaction.

Peter D. G. Brown

I MUST confess right off that I did not become a contingent labor activist until I turned 60, a mere six years ago. And then, I was a fairly typical senior professor, passionately involved in teaching my students and interacting with my tenured colleagues on a variety of faculty governance committees; I had also pursued a fairly active research agenda. In addition to publishing my own scholarly articles, I have edited over a hundred books dealing with modern German literature, Jewish history and women’s studies. This year saw the publication of the third book I have written on Oskar Panizza, the 19th-century German author.

When I began teaching at Columbia and Barnard in the 1960s, almost all the positions in their German departments were tenure-track. I came to SUNY New Paltz in the 70s, when there were only a couple of virtually silent and invisible part-time adjuncts among the 35 teachers in the entire Foreign Language Division. It was not until a few years after the dawn of the new millennium that I, like Rip Van Winkle, “awoke” after decades to a brand new reality: the number of tenure-track faculty in my department had shrunk to a mere 10, while some two dozen adjuncts were now teaching the bulk of our foreign language courses, with some as far away as Puerto Rico.

As everyone in academia now knows, the professoriate has experienced a radical transformation over the past few decades. Those skilled professionals — the contingent faculty — we call them ad-cons — include tenure-track colleagues, by United University Professors (UUP), America’s largest higher education union. Tenure-track faculty, ad-cons, union members and other government officials urgently need to work together to assure that unemployed college teachers can finally receive unemployment compensation, just like workers in other professions. The need is particularly acute in difficult times like these with critically high rates of unemployment, foreclosure and bankruptcy.

Those contingent colleagues who were unfamiliar with my previous work have no choice but to work together to assure ad-cons that they have a future. If they make them work, they will certainly not be paid the salaries and benefits that they need to live above the poverty line. They will be even more likely to have a future in academia.

The exploitation is indeed filthy, but for me and my tenured colleagues, this scandal is neither little nor secret: the vast majority of those well-educated, skilled professionals who daily teach millions of students in our classrooms are actually being paid far less than the workers who nightly clean them.

I confess to having served as an emergency midwife at the birth of New Faculty Majority: The National Coalition for Adjunct and Contingent Equity. NFM’s latest project is a major national initiative to remove impediments at the state and federal level, which, since the 1970s, uniquely and systematically deny unemployment compensation to ad-cons when they become unemployed.

I came to SUNY New Paltz, for instance, adjuncts’ compensation when adjusted for inflation has plummeted 49 percent since 1970, while the president’s salary and those of the university’s top executive-level wages, have grown to generally mistrust, if not puzzlement at working with me, a member unfamiliar with my previous work. They have always been my friends, but I now see that they have always been my friends, but I now see that they are not my friends.

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Nationally, adjuncts and contingent faculty — we call them ad-cons — include part-time/adjunct faculty; full-time, non-tenure-track faculty; and graduate employees. Those contingent colleagues who were unfamiliar with my previous work have no choice but to work together to assure ad-cons that they have a future. If they make them work, they will certainly not be paid the salaries and benefits that they need to live above the poverty line. They will be even more likely to have a future in academia.

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I am also asked by tenured faculty why on earth I would be spending so much time and effort advocating for a group of people whose fate I have never shared. I suppose this is a perfectly legitimate question, but I find it a bit odd. Why wouldn’t I insist that these precarious colleagues be allowed equitable compensation, job security, fringe benefits and academic freedom? And why shouldn’t I want them to have equitable access to unemployment compensation, profession-
WITH A MASTERS in English with a TESOL Concentration, Fraser has been a freewy flier since 1993, a situation which led her to become one of the founding members of CPFA. She has served as the statewide part-timer representative for CFT, as a member of the State Chancellor’s Part-timer Committee, as a member of the Little Hoover Commission’s study on community colleges, and as a member of CPFA’s executive board. She is currently teaching five classes in English composition—from remedial to advanced composition/Literature—for Sierra College and Sacramento City College. Her two mini dachshunds, Pixie and Meriwether ("Meri" for short), keep her sane and entertained.

A “charter” activist looks back

Not too long after the formation of CPFA, I was asked to write a brief history of this adjunct advocacy organization. (See "The Evolution of CPFA" at cpfa.org.) The following is an update with a twist.

AUGUST 7-9, 1998: Twenty-five dissatisfied and downright angry part-timers representing 30 colleges from all over California met at El Chorro Park in San Luis Obispo. Why? The unions and faculty organizations weren’t representing part-timers adequately, and in some cases if at all. So who better to represent part-timers than those who really understood part-timer issues, the part-timers themselves? And voila! CPFA was born.

REACTIONS FROM the established unions and organizations? ANGER: We were called upstarts. How dare we embarrass the establishment?

SMOTHER-MOTHER REACTION: We were told that without the money and services the larger organizations could provide (but usually didn’t) that we couldn’t possibly understand, and we needed both protection and guidance.

RIDICULE: CPFA was just a flash in the pan. We were simply a bunch of powerless, disgruntled part-timers.

DISBELIEF: WHO would take us seriously? How could part-timers possibly understand and see the big picture? Being disgruntled: We were told we shouldn’t bite the hand that feeds us. (Perhaps, but part-timers cannot live on the crumbs they are being fed to us.)

In part, the negative reactions of the groups that were necessarily a result of our independence. In part, the negative reactions of the groups that were merely a result of the fact that CPFA was representing part-timers.

We created a newspaper that comes out twice a year. It was and still is distributed to most of the community colleges throughout California, and at some schools, the presidents and boards of trustees get copies, too. Past history shows that unions and faculty organizations are gung ho for a particular cause for two and possibly three years. Then these other groups move on to the next worthy cause.

We also have our own listserve, where we have shared some lively discussions, and we have a web site so that we can keep up with issues affecting part-timers. CPFA’s past history in greater detail, the constitution and by-laws as well as the Little Hoover Commission Report, etc. can be found at cpfa.org.

And, from the beginning, we were not only being seen, but we were also being heard. The Little Hoover Commission studying the California Community College system invited a CPFA member to be on the commission and to submit a written report about part-timer concerns.

CPFA members were invited to speak before the Senate Higher Education Committee as well as the Joint Committee for Higher Education. Although never invited, CPFA members also attended the State Board of Trustees’ meetings.

CPFA and other educators participated in two lively demonstrations on the steps of the Capitol.

For the longest time, the unions and faculty organizations refused to recognize CPFA as the voice of part-timers. Nevertheless, and despite opposition from other faculty organizations, a CPFA member was invited to be on the State Chancellor’s Part-timer Committee, which consisted of representatives from administrators, unions, and faculty organizations.

CPFA played a huge albeit "unofficial" role in getting the State to set aside $5.7 million for part-timers. At the discretion of each college receiving the funding, the money could go toward higher pay, paid office hours, health insurance, etc. for part-timers.

Because of CPFA’s efforts, unions and faculty organizations created part-timer committees at the local and state levels. Next came elected part-timer representatives to serve on executive boards/councils, again at both local and state levels.

CPFA had a banner year in 2009. As most part-timers are aware, if they teach over .5 FTE for a certain period of time, Ed. Code requires the colleges make those part-timers permanent employees. And of course, the colleges don’t want to do that.

Colleges often keep the maximum part-timer load at .5 to .58 FTE, limiting those teaching 3- and 4-unit classes to two classes (.4 FTE) and those teaching 4- and 5-unit classes, to just one class.

CPFA fought long and hard against this limitation. After much wrangling, the unions agreed to come onboard if the FTE were reduced to .67, and in 2009 AB 591 passed and was signed into law.

Thus far in 2010, CPFA has scored in a big way. For years CPFA has sought membership in the Council of Faculty Organizations (COFO), where most of the power for dealing with community college issues lies. At long last, CPFA has finally been officially recognized and is now a member of this powerful group.

One issue of great concern is the issue of part-timers for part-timers.

This year CPFA spearheaded the introduction of AB 1807, which would have given part-timers more security in the form of sake rights. Although AB 1807 died in committee this time, it is important to remember that getting a bill introduced is no small feat in itself, and CPFA managed to get bills introduced two years in a row, and one of them passed. So, why didn’t it this last bill pass? Political shenanigans and most sadly, a shortage of CPFA members to do damage control.

Where do we go from here? CPFA really has only one problem. It needs more members—and not just any kind of members but more active members. At any given time, most of CPFA’s accomplishments rest on the shoulders of some 8 to 10 people, who are dedicated, seriously overworked, and under-appreciated individuals.

At some point, these brave souls may burn out or simply retire. Unfortunately, CPFA has few standing in the wings to carry on the cause. I would hate to think that after almost twelve years that our naysayers will be proved right, that CPFA is a group of disgruntled upstarts with no staying power.

Lin Fraser, lovelylin62@yahoo.com
Dramatically—owing to the recession and high unemployment—adult education enrollment was increasing, just as many classes or entire programs were decimated. With a demanding open-door policy in effect at its inception, adult education, unlike K-12, was truly self-supporting—rather like working on commission—meaning if teachers couldn’t keep their classes full and couldn’t generate enough ADA money to pay the bills, they lost their jobs. To keep classes packed with up to 50 pupils per year, these teachers have to really dazzle, dazzle, and satisfy students. Adult education has no captive audiences. How does this impact the public? How often have you left a business or hung up the phone and said, “My God, that employee couldn’t speak a word of English?” Don’t kid yourself. Most of those immigrants struggle sincerely to learn English, but it is almost impossible when adult education is deemed as disposable as Kleenex. Also don’t kid yourself into believing that the state does not need adult education because the state will never achieve long-term economic or social success without waking up and counting the immigrants. Want some legitimate evidence? Google “California’s Adult Education System” and you will find the state report. In affluent neighborhoods, we have 30% to 40% dropout rates. In a ghetto or barrio, that percentage can reach 75%. The majority of California’s future workforce is past high-school age, so K-12 can’t help them. And what is the flood of immigrants with inadequate education and minimal language skills supposed to do? Are they going to replace the knowledge and expertise of retiring baby boomers? Are they going to head south again to their motherland?

With the focus inevitably on K-12, most people are unfamiliar with the scope, breadth, or importance of adult education, so the enrollment numbers might stun some folks: In fact, state-wide, adult education serves about two million students. And actually experts estimate that of 5.3 million people who need adult education courses, many have no access to adult schools or courses.

Sixty percent of these students enroll in adult basic education, ESL/citizenship, or GED. Salinas serves 21,000 students while Monterey’s programs served over 6,000 last year. Combined, Sacramento, San Francisco, Monterey, absorbing cataclysmic cuts in career and technical education. Even evening and weekend programs, including some who have taught there for 30 years. Some layoffs were rescinded in the last year. Eureka Adult School has canceled all classes for the current school year. Combined, Sacramento, San Francisco, Monterey, absorbing cataclysmic cuts in career and technical education. Even evening and weekend programs, including some who have taught there for 30 years. Some layoffs were rescinded in the last year. Eureka Adult School has canceled all classes for the current school year. Combined, Sacramento, San Francisco, Monterey, absorbing cataclysmic cuts in career and technical education. 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Three Myths about the Academic Workforce: Let’s Get Real

Rosemary G. Feal, MLA Executive Director

The MLA has taken a forward-looking and forceful stance. The academic workforce should look like (see the Executive Council’s recommended standards and guidelines in the MLA issue brief “One Faculty Serving All Students”).

While some people think it’s unrealistic to expect that faculty members be paid a living wage or that faculty members with long-term commitments to teach the majority of courses, we at the MLA believe that the minimal standards we have endorsed are worth fighting for.

But to fight together, we must engage in some myth busting concerning the academic workforce. Clinging to these myths is getting in the way of our creating “one faculty serving all students.” Here, from my perspective, are the top myths:

Myth 1: Nothing has really changed over the decades.

The academic workforce has always had members who are not on the tenure track or employed full-time, so what’s different now? Put simply, we’ve passed the tipping point of an acceptable and functional proportion of full-time permanent faculty members to all others. Ironically, the academic workforce has grown significantly over the last several decades.

But as the data in our Academic Workforce Advocacy Kit show, that growth has occurred almost entirely off the tenure track. Our academic workforce needs to be rebalanced, and long-term, appropriately compensated employment should be the hallmark of academic appointments.

Myth 2: All contingent labor is alike.

Say “contingent,” “adjunct,” “part-time,” or “temporary,” and we often conjure up the image of the freeway flier, eligible for food stamps and stringing together four or more courses per term at a rate of pay far below the MLA recommended minimum.

The reality is that we have an academic workforce in which virtually all the job growth is off the tenure track, that the majority of courses in many institutions are taught by faculty members off the tenure track, and that the future is drying up for those who aspire to make a career in teaching and research in the humanities.

I’ve said it before: the problem isn’t the performance of individual adjunct or contingent or part-time faculty members. But these terms signal a hundred different things: the “professor of the practice” who receives a salary commensurate with his or her qualifications and experience, who has job security and benefits, and who is fully integrated into the life of the department; the full-time, non-tenure-track, three-year visiting professor hired to teach Chinese as a college determines student interest and program sustainability; the senior editor from a major newspaper who teaches an occasional course on journalism; the part-time English instructor who is not seeking a full-time job and whose annual household income exceeds $100,000.

Of course there are too many contingent faculty members who are inadequately compensated and who would prefer full-time work, as data in the advocacy kit show. We would be wise to remember that there is an appropriate role for all these faculty members.

The keys are balance in the workforce and appropriate working conditions for all. We must ensure that the majority of courses are taught by faculty members who have long-term, full-time commitments from the institutions that hire them and who receive appropriate pay and benefits; and we must also ensure that contingent faculty members receive fair treatment in all ways. It’s really that simple.

Myth 3: The interests of tenure-track faculty members are in opposition to the interests of other faculty members.

This is a myth that tenure-track faculty members are content with the status quo and are indifferent to the lack of tenure-track jobs for those who aspire to them, to the poor pay for those who are not adequately compensated, or to the lack of institutional belonging to which all faculty members have a right. Most tenure-track faculty members suffer from a form of survivor’s guilt, and they’d like nothing better than to see the system change.

But this problem is overwhelming, and that’s where the leadership of department chairs, deans, provosts, and presidents—as well as scholarly and professional associations—comes into play. Call me simplistic, but if we start with having the information we need to call things by their name, then working to make things how they ought to be.

I’ve said it before: the problem isn’t the performance of individual adjunct or contingent or part-time faculty members, I’m not calling them out—quite the opposite. They are helping keep higher education as good as it can be under the circumstances and deserve respect.

The problem is that we have an academic workforce in which virtually all the job growth is off the tenure track, that the majority of courses in many institutions are taught by faculty members off the tenure track, and that the future is drying up for those who aspire to make a career in teaching and research in the humanities.

Is this a future any of us can embrace? The academy has changed beyond recognition. Time to give up the myths, get real, come together, and make sure our institutions face facts and take action.

Rosemary G. Feal, reprinted by permission from the MLA newsletter.
No Medical or Prescription Drug Coverage?

Find the savings you need with BenElect and Keenan Saver Rx Plans!

BenElect, specially designed for employees of Community College districts, offers benefit choices to help meet your healthcare needs by providing unique and affordable plans to fit your lifestyle:

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- **PatientPlus Card.** A Healthcare savings program with price comparison tools.

These four plans provide 10 – 40% discounts on healthcare services. The Keenan Saver Rx Card is a free pharmacy discount card that lets you access prescription drugs at a significant discount. The card can be used by ANYONE with a valid prescription but is especially valuable for:

- part-time employees
- friends and family members who are un-insured or under-insured
- retirees who have reached the Medicare “donut hole”
- employees with pharmacy benefits when purchasing any non-covered pharmaceuticals.

The easy to use Keenan Saver Rx Card is:

- Entirely free
- Accepted nationwide
- Offers discounts of 5 – 40% on pharmaceuticals

Keenan Saver Rx is administered by Envision Rx Options, and BenElect is administered by Ternian Insurance Group.

For information about Keenan Saver Rx and BenElect, and how to start saving today, go to [www.faccc.org](http://www.faccc.org). Under Part-Time Faculty, click on Keenan Saver RX or BenElect, and enter the Group Name: FACCC.
THE OVERLOAD DEBATE

How Olympic College leveled the field, sort of . . .

Still plenty of sauce for geese . . . ganders continue to seek solutions
by JACK LONGMATE

ON JUNE 11, 2009, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) declared a financial emergency in response to deep state budget reductions. The declaration gave colleges the extraordinary power to lay off tenured faculty.

One year later, however, only one of Washington’s 30 college districts, Bates Technical College in Tacoma, has done so. The June/July 2010 issue of the AFT Washington’s Union Spotlight reported that “severe cuts were managed through use of contingency funds, cuts in extras such as sabbaticals and professional development, not filling vacancies, and early retirement incentives, among other strategies.”

No mention was made of the number of non-tenured adjuncts who may have lost their jobs during the period.

College administrations cherish the ability to use adjunct faculty: adjuncts enable colleges to offer courses which, if filled by enrollment, convert assured profit for the college, but if not filled, can be cancelled without significant repercussions for the institution.

Of course, there are repercussions for adjunct faculty. When courses assigned to adjuncts are either cancelled or reassigned to tenured faculty, adjuncts are out of a job (and possibly more than one job if they had to forego another opportunity to provisionally accept the offer that was cancelled).

At Olympic College in Bremerton, Washington, its Collective Bargaining Agreement ratified in December 2009 introduced a course cancellation fee, which provides a payment of 10% of the salary for the course “to an adjunct faculty member whose course is cancelled within the week before the start of the class or after the start of the class.” This provision applies whether the cancellation is from low enrollment or displacement “from a class by another faculty member … unless the adjunct faculty member is given a replacement class.”

The displacement “from a class by another faculty member” refers to the process of being “bumped” by full-time tenured faculty. Bumping can be the result of the tenured faculty’s own classes not receiving sufficient enrollment, and thus the college, under obligation to compensate the tenured faculty, displaces the adjunct. Bumping can also result from a tenured faculty’s own decision to teach an additional course or courses beyond his/her normal teaching load, which are called teaching overloads. Overloads or “moonlighting.” According to the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, in 2008 the state’s 3,129 full-time instructors taught enough course as overloads to equal 415 additional full-time loads, which means roughly 12 percent of all classes delivered by tenured faculty were overloads.

Whenever full-time faculty in Washington state teach course overloads, they are paid, not on a time and a half basis, but on the discounted adjunct pay schedule. That fact underscores how the practice takes away adjunct jobs and constitutes a direct conflict of interests to adjunct faculty.

While the low wages discourage some tenured faculty from teaching course overloads, some do, and some do so to a considerable extent, the enticements being that this additional income usually does not require travel to a new job site and oftentimes no additional course preparation. Administrators encourage this practice since it saves having to pay an adjunct for health insurance. Some tenured faculty come to see teaching overloads as their privilege. But, as a former union president of Green River Community Faculty Phil Jack once pointed out, the willingness of full-time, tenured to teach course overloads makes it difficult to claim they are overworked and deserving of higher wages. To offset the real pay disparity between full-time ad part-time faculty, the Washington State legislature over the years has made part-time faculty salary improvement appropriations, which are traditionally supported by both the Washington chapters of the NEA and AFT.

While the state budget language stipulates that these funds “are provided solely to increase salaries and related benefits for part-time faculty,” the system uses those funds to pay full-time, tenured faculty whenever they teach course overloads.

Some observers feel that, while workers deserve to be paid when they do extra work, the source of that payment should not be drawn from an account whose purpose is “to continue to close the pay gap between full- and part-time instructors,” to use the words of Earl Hale, the former Executive of the State Board for Community and Technical College’s letter to the Governor of 15 September 2004.

The new Olympic College collective bargaining agreement imposes a limit on course overloads that tenured faculty may teach. Assuming a full-time teaching load as 100 percent, Olympic College tenured faculty “may not work for more than 167% of their quarterly annualized load.”

In response to this new contractual provision, one full-time faculty member bemoaned the hardship that this new workload limitation (no more than 167 percent) would impose on her family.

In the spring of 2010, some 8 of the college’s 116 tenured faculty exceeded the contract’s overload limits, ranging from 175 percent to a whopping 289 percent (nearly 300 percent) of their load limitation (no more than 167 percent).

Still plenty of sauce for geese . . . ganders continue to seek solutions
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Fortunately, that was the only voice raised in opposition to our proposal and the overwhelming support was for supporting the establishment of an advisory committee to provide part-time faculty a voice at the table. Chancellor Jack Scott will be announcing his decision regarding the establishment of a part-time faculty advisory committee and the process for increasing awareness of part-time faculty issues at an upcoming Board of Governors meeting.

Dr. Cornelia Alsheimer has taught accounting at Santa Barbara City College since 2001. Prior to that time she taught business administration and accounting in Germany for 14 years.
Who are the BILLIONAIRES? Check our “BILLIONAIRES” on Facebook, especially the “BILLIONAIRES for a Billion dollar attack on CCC” (http://www.facebook.com/billionaires.geek). The “BILLIONAIRES” voice, moving in solidarity with micro college, is in touch with Clifford Stone, a less well known tax attorney with the same BillofRights movement. He wrote the (oft a not so long, as you will and Parisian of our millionaires. Unfortunately, we recognize the leadership of this opposition our more quickly after the fact. We especially thank Dennis Haskel, that is one reason why it is our purpose to mobilized to protect our interests, even though we hold our part, our rights. We also understand how hard we will not own.

Recognition and great appreciation for her country. In the dedication of this hard work, legislative activity, and leadership in COCAL, the CPFA Executive Board awarded the Leadership of HR, the CPFA past president. Stacey Burks an appreciation award for her ten years of service. Thank you, family, we miss you!

Visco and our favorite, COCAL keynote speaker, Chris Stampolis.

Mirov, Govsky, Martin.

John Sullivan presents “Knowing your PERB rights” workshop.

A new Faculty Majority member at COCAL.

Chancellor’s PT Advisory Committee Discussions.

Cocoweb Shopper, Menlo Park.

New Faculty Majority members at COCAL.

Sandra Donovan, President of the PT.

Audra Sims (CPFA) Camilla Alkonen (CPFA), Robert Yoshikawa (CPFA), John Gold (CSU).