

COMMUNITY COLLEGE JOURNAL

Advocate • Educate • Legislate

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SSTF REFORMS WILL HURT THOSE WHO NEED COMMUNITY COLLEGE THE MOST

By Leah Halper

How do you ruin a state? Gut its education system. How do you get away with it? Quick knife work.

A small group of political appointees in Sacramento who have mounted an unprecedented attack on California's incomparable community college system is carving fast. By May, unless we defeat some nefarious bills, we will be inaugurating a new era of inequity and social upheaval.

Community colleges deservedly enjoy popular support for educating millions of diverse students with varied goals. People appreciate that we educate inexpensively, comprehensively and well. We help so many people realize dreams, especially those who need extra support or a few basic skills. A hundred years ago, most of these people — veterans, single parents, retirees, high school dropouts, immigrants, students with disabilities, working folks — weren't considered college material. The community college system proves that all kinds of people, given a chance, can benefit from and succeed in college.

But somehow community colleges have been reframed in Sacramento. Suddenly our students' many accomplishments won't do. Now we are told to focus resources on students who already have college skills. If we focus on those students, the reasoning goes, we will have oodles of "success" — that is, large numbers of degrees and certificates.

This ignores the fact that even very bright students often are new to the rigors of academia. They must learn how to "do" college before they can do well. That's two-thirds of my students, many of them first in their families to attend college. The proposals would make college a race, penalizing students who linger too long in a rationing

Illinois salary increase: 45%

Let's all move to Illinois. McHenry County College, a community college in beautiful Crystal Lake, Illinois realized they were paying their adjuncts far less than surrounding colleges. In the most recent contract between the Board of Trustees and the Adjunct Faculty Union they included language that will phase in over the next three years an increase of 45%. This will affect 180 faculty members.

The pay for a teacher with a bachelor's degree is currently \$1,584. That will increase to \$1,815 in August and will reach \$2,400 by the 2014-2015 academic year.

The key here is that the adjunct faculty union is separate from the full-time union. The union was able to address many more issues for the McHenry County College faculty such as more professional development opportunities and more flexibility in the

see "Illinois salaries" PG. 2 »

system that creates scarcity where scarcity need not exist.

It's sickening to hear these proposals described as promoting student success. It's heartbreaking to see tough but temporary budget problems used to permanently, disastrously change a great system. The reality is that these proposals are part of a larger movement of educational reformers to enact a college version of No Child Left Behind, which penalizes schools for students' performance. The college version will endanger California's economic future just as community colleges gear up to train the new workforce.

The bills:

- **Senate Bill 1456** would give the colleges' Board of Governors vast powers to change their mission without public debate, limit financial aid eligibility, reduce enrollments and classes, and focus scarce resources on

or give preferential treatment to a subset of students rather than fairly serving all.

- **Senate Bill 1062** would strip power from local boards and hand frighteningly broad powers to unelected appointees, eliminating civil service safeguards and sweeping away salary limits for some officials.

- **Senate Bill 1560** would redefine how community colleges are funded, with more reductions likely in a system already scraped to bone. A new funding formula would reward colleges for having students complete classes, rather than simply enrolling in them. It sounds good — we all want students to finish. But this could force huge cuts, as instructional costs are fixed whether 40 or 400 students pass a class. It also could lead to various measures to pre-select "successful" students and turn away those without a track record — the very students we should

be encouraging.

Real student success reform would preserve access, funding and choice. Student success isn't about watching the best-prepared students soar. Real student success happens when a student overcomes academic, physical, emotional or financial adversity. It sounds unlikely. It is unlikely. Yet it happens constantly at community colleges.

How do you ruin a life? You gut the dreams. How do you get away with it? Maybe, if people speak up in time, you don't.

Leah Halper teaches history at Gavilan College and is president of the Gavilan College Faculty Association. This piece was originally published in the San Jose Mercury News.

For more information on Halper's resources, visit www.gavfaculty.com/GCFAAdvocacy.html

New Law Would Allow Colorado's Public Colleges to Offer Some Adjuncts Multiyear, Enforceable Contracts

By Audrey Williams June

A bill moving through the Colorado General Assembly could lay the groundwork for improved job security for some faculty members who aren't on the tenure track.

The legislation, which has passed the House and [was] considered [recently] by the Colorado Senate's Education Committee, would give the state's public colleges and public-college systems the option of offering some adjunct professors multiyear, enforceable contracts. Adjunct professors at Colorado's public institutions have long been hired under short-term contracts that, by law, are not legally enforceable—meaning such professors are technically "at-will" employees who could be fired, or quit, at any time.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Randy Fischer, a Democrat, said he altered his legislation—which failed to get any traction when he offered it a year ago—in response to colleges' concerns. Offering multiyear contracts is voluntary, and the bill does not apply to part-time faculty (defined as those who teach less than half-time). Mr. Fischer also eliminated a provision in last year's version of his legislation that would have required colleges to tell non-tenure-track faculty in writing why their contracts weren't being renewed and to give them an option to file a grievance.

"Administrators went ballistic about that," says Raymond L. Hogler, a professor of management at Colorado State University at Fort Collins, who is also vice president for legislative affairs for the Colorado conference of the American Association of University Professors.

But even with the changes, the proposed legislation, which allows contracts of up to three years at a time, could help many faculty

members, he says. "If you make a contract, it will be a contract."

An 'Extra Level of Security'

Professors on both sides of the tenure line support the bill that includes a provision allowing colleges to back out of the agreements if a financial crisis arises. And colleges, which typically lean on annual contracts as a way to manage fluctuating enrollment, haven't opposed it, as they did a year ago.

The Colorado State University system is on record as a supporter. Vicki L. Golich, an administrator at Metropolitan State College of Denver, also favors the optional contracts.

"What this bill does is allows us to say to our faculty who have pretty secure jobs—some have been here 20 or 30 years, one annual contract at a time—here's a contract that will give you an extra level of security," says Ms. Golich, the college's provost and vice president for academic affairs. Metropolitan State has about 100 full-time, non-tenure-track faculty members who would be likely to benefit from the bill, she says.

The certainty of an enforceable contract would lessen the fear that non-tenure-track faculty members have about doing something that might jeopardize their employment status, says Don Eron, a senior instructor in the program for writing and rhetoric at the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he has taught for 23 years.

"It will allow them to test themselves and to teach with more confidence," says Mr. Eron, who has had to constantly reapply for his non-tenure-track job over the years. "It would empower them to speak up in faculty meetings. It would just give them a little breathing room."

Mr. Fischer, who has worked on contingent-faculty issues since his election in 2006, says he is "hopeful" that the bill will be approved

in the Senate. "I've heard so strongly from non-tenure-track faculty that something like this could go a long way toward providing an all-around better academic environment on college campuses and providing continuity for the students."

A Colorado State assistant professor of English who was once an adjunct faculty member agreed. In written testimony, Sue Doe said that the new type of contracts would set the stage for institutions to reverse most of the negatives that go along with being a contingent faculty member. Among them are being hired just a few weeks before classes begin—which leaves adjuncts with little time to prepare for courses—and the lack of academic freedom that stems from a fear of being "let go for any reason or no reason at all," Ms. Doe wrote.

Ms. Doe, who was hired at Colorado State after teaching off the tenure track for more than 25 years, wrote that the legislation could "make a positive change" in the lives of faculty who "perform extremely well in spite of their circumstances, rather than because of them."

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AB 1826 (Hernandez) Limits on overload clears first hurdle

Dear Editor:

We did it! A big thanks goes out to Judy Michaels, our CFT Lobbyist extraordinaire, our committee members Lisa Chaddock and Linda Sneed who took time out of their busy schedules to be at the Legislature to testify at the hearing, and to Carl Friedlander who always knows just what to say to move mountains.

The bill now goes to the Assembly Appropriations committee with possible amendments. The amendments being suggested would allow leeway for higher overload for rural colleges which have trouble finding qualified adjunct faculty in the local area, and also in Career Technical Education (such as electrical engineering, plumbing, and computer fields). If you have any information you can share that would help us get a clearer picture of whether these amendments are needed or not please send them to me or Judy Michaels.

Phyllis Eckler, Chair

CFT Part-time Committee
peckler@glendale.edu

Dear Editor:

I'm happy to announce that AB 1826 (Hernandez) -- limit on community college faculty overload -- passed the Assembly Higher Education Committee March 27 on a 7-2 vote. Assemblyman Hernandez, a former part-time community college instructor himself (Rio Hondo), did a fine job presenting the bill and responding to questions by members of the committee. A special thanks goes to CFTers who precisely divided the six minutes granted us by Chair Block: Carl Friedlander (LACCD), President of the Community College Council, CFT; Linda Sneed (Los Rios), English Dept. & CFT VP; and Lisa Chaddock (SDCCD & Cuyamaca) Earth Sciences & member of CFT's Part-time Faculty Committee.

Also testifying in support were the FACCC and the California Labor Federation. We had opposition from West Kern College and from Antelope Valley College, and Mr. Hernandez agreed to discuss crafting amendments that would address the unique concerns of rural colleges and career technical education as the bill moves forward.

All bill documents, that is, versions of the bill, committee analysis, votes, can be found at <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery>.

The Assembly Higher Education hearing (which lasted from 1:30 pm until 4:45 pm) was captured by the California Channel <http://www.calchannel.com/> and, though it is not yet posted on the site, no doubt will be soon. With Assemblyman Hernandez assistance, we will secure a DVD of the section of the hearing pertaining to AB 1826.

Also, a big thanks to those of you who telephoned the committee and contacted your Assembly representative.

Illinois salaries ...

» continued from PG. 1

number of hours taught. Additionally, the contract continues to offer office space, tax-sheltered annuities and tuition waivers for faculty, faculty spouses and/or dependents. A stipend of 1/8 of a contact hour is also provided for adjuncts that prepare classes and discover the class is cancelled. They also provide two calendar days of paid leave per semester. —DMR

If you can respond to me about your contact, we can begin compiling a list that will help us maintain that relationship/network as the bill moves through Appropriations and on to the Assembly floor.

Now it's on to the Assembly Appropriations Committee!

Judith Michaels, Lobbyist

California Federation of Teachers
jmichaels@cft.org

Dear Editor:

Limiting OL is not just about PT jobs. It is about what is best for students, the education system, as well as the faculty role in shared governance. If you have 50 people doing the work of 100 — then it is harder to justify that they need to hire more FT faculty because obviously their work load is not too tough.

There are many wall-to-wall units who have already negotiated OL limits from none to a maximum of 150% per academic year (or semester). And although it is true that this was not done to protect PT jobs (except in the case of CCSF), it was done to recognize the reality that one cannot do an adequate job at a work load above 150%.

Deborah Dahl Shanks

ddahlshanks@cpfa.org

Responses to Miller's "In Defense of Unions" (Fall 2011)

Dear Editor:

Repeat the lie long enough and often enough and the sheeple will eventually take it for truth. That is the essence of the pap by Mark James Miller.

Why are unions in decline? Because people are fed up with their sick, perverted politics. The best way to force the reform is right-to-work legislation, and across all 50 states! Then, the unions will actually have to pursue their members' best interests rather than charging them to fund campaigns for perversion.

Alan Viarengo

(Viarengo is a 23-year statistician and part-time instructor at Gavilan College.)

To the PT faculty of Alan Hancock:

Good for you. Unions are often not the perfect "watch dog" that is necessary to protect all employees, especially when one is in a FT/PT wall-to-wall unit.

That said, I am proud that you had the courage to rise up and organize. Further I am proud that you had the conviction to respond to the PTER who did not philosophically believe in belonging or supporting a union which exists to protect "her backside" and negotiate fair and equitable working conditions and wages.

Frankly, I totally agree with you --- if she doesn't like what the union is negotiating for her, then she needn't accept anything they gain on her behalf.

Although California is a "right to work" state, it should not be a "right to exploit" state. PT faculty are not only exploited by administrations and some

We must ask ourselves what lesson students are taking about the value of the educational enterprise itself when teachers are not deemed worthy of a basic modicum of occupational respect ... and when students see that this is what an advanced degree will get you. In what ways are we inadvertently contributing to an increasingly skeptical populace that will see less and less value in education generally and higher education in particular? --a portion of Dr. Sue Doe's 2.15.12 written testimony, House Committee on State ... Affairs, Colorado General Assembly, regarding "enforceable" contracts.

FT-dominated unions, but institutionally as defined in the Ed Code. This exploitation does not support student success, nor does it do anything to encourage people to become teachers.

Certainly if we lived in a perfect world in which bosses and colleagues treated each other "as they wish to be treated" ala the 'Golden Rule', then we would not need unions. In fact, we would not need the Ed Code or our volumes of laws.

Laws, unions and contracts exist because people basically won't do the right thing due to greed or a need for power, fame, or control.

Deborah Dahl Shanks

ddahlshanks@cpfa.org

Program for Change offers transformational roadmap

Hi all,

Instead of calling for more full-time appointments, the "Program for Change: 2010-2030" is a roadmap to transform the working conditions of the non-tenured into regular employment. It identifies over 30 discrete goals. Some of those goals, like equal pay, require funding and realistically could take 20 years to accomplish in incremental steps. But most require either no or nominal one-time funding and could be implemented immediately, such as establishing a seniority system, job security for non-tenured faculty, or a fair and systematic and transparent instructor evaluation system.

The Program for Change has undergone minor revisions, and the current version is now posted at the website of the Vancouver Community College Faculty Association at <http://www.vccfa.ca>.

While at the VCCFA website, I'd recommend also looking at the Seniority listing. All faculty, whether full-time or part-time, permanent (regular) or probationary (term), accrue seniority and are in the same scale. At VCC, a part-timer can be senior to a full-timer, and have a hiring preference, an idea that is so foreign to us in the US who are accustomed to the two-tiers of tenured and non-tenured faculty.

Also at VCC, all faculty are compensated according to a single salary schedule: a part-timer who teaches at 50 percent of a full-time load gets 50 percent of the pay.

Jack Longmate

jacklongmate@comcast.net

Part-Time Faculty Association

of Allan Hancock College

The Voice

- for Parity & Fairness
- which advocates for part-time faculty



A Union of Professionals

Part-time Faculty Association
of Allan Hancock College

P.O. Box 1257
Santa Maria, CA 93456-1257

Phone: (805)352-0145
Email: ahcpfa@verizon.net
Website: <http://ca.aft.org/ahcpfa>

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Editor, Publication Design

Pamela Hanford

Editorial Board

David Donica,
John Martin, David Milroy

CPFA Executive Council

John Martin, Chair

jmartin@cpfa.org

David Milroy

Director of Administration
dmilroy@cpfa.org

Robert Yoshioka,

Legislative Analyst
ryoshioka@cpfa.org

Pamela Hanford

Director of Publications
phanford@cpfa.org

David Donica

Director of Membership
ddonica@cpfa.org

Kristie Iwamoto

Northern Regional Director
kiwamoto@cpfa.org

David Milroy

Southern Regional Director
dmilroy@cpfa.org

Lin Chan

Greater L.A. Regional Director
lchan@cpfa.org

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TELEPHONES:

CPFA Headquarters: 916.572.2732
CPFA Editorial Offices: 916.572.7732



CPFA Chair: IMHO

By John Martin

Regular readers of this Journal know that CPFA supports AB 852 (Fong) and is working with our allies CCA, CCC, CWA, CCCI, and FACCC, who also support this bill. AB 852 is currently sitting in the Senate Education Committee and will be heard sometime in June.

However, omissions made last summer diminish the heart and soul of the original language, and do not make sense for those of us who teach on a consistent basis. One important segment was removed, that part-time faculty "shall be entitled to a procedure providing due process" when being denied a future class(es) for the next term. By eliminating this, a department chair or a division dean can destroy your livelihood by simply omitting your name for any future schedules without any explanation. No justification is required.

To make matters worse, you might discover that the new hire is married to a full-timer or is related to someone in administration – or simply that the new person was hired at a cheaper rate. Instances of this kind of capricious hiring take place throughout the system. Denying due process and re-hire



rights is not only demoralizing, but it should be illegal as well. AB 852 as originally written would have given part timers some modicum of security and rehire rights in academia—something that our full-time colleagues have.

If this bill does not include mention of due process, then these changes will

have to occur piecemeal through local bargaining – hardly a satisfactory solution. So, do we content ourselves with a cup half empty, or decide to go back to the drawing board and start all over again?

IMHO if "due process" is not put back in, then we should seriously NOT spend any more time on this legislation. Let the chips fall where they may. Any thoughts, Part Timers? We need to hear from YOU. Write to me at jmarting@cpfa.org.

For the complete text of this revised bill, go to our website. Then call Assemblymember Paul Fong's office, (916) 319-2022, and Senator Alan Lowenthal's office at (916) 651-4027 and ask that "due process" be reinstated. Do this today! Be sure to keep an eye on the

Colorado bill passes due to intervention of "unlikely hero"

Here is an update to the Colorado legislation we highlighted on the front page. Colorado House Bill 1144, the so-called "Contingent Faculty Bill," was passed by the Democratic-controlled State Senate, 22-12. This followed on the heels of the dramatic, and surprising, 36-29 victory last month in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives. House Bill 1144 is now on the desk of the Democratic governor, who is expected to sign it.

This legislation, as well as the "Program for Change" Jack Longmate discusses in our Letters on page 2, are blueprints for the work we need to continue in California. One Colorado state senator called the

circumstance of contingency an "open wound," a "malignancy," and referred to contingent faculty as the equivalent of "indentured servants." This echoes the sentiments your CPFA board members heard CA Representative Mervyn Dymally express when arguing in favor of changing the 60% law: "Part-time faculty are treated no better than farm workers in this state." (Dymally once marched with César Chávez, so knows whereof he speaks).

One of the part-time activists who campaigned for the Colorado bill noted, "when academia's 'dirty little secret' is told and discussed outside of academia, when the conversation is with parents, alumni,

EIChorro list for updates and actions to take.

Speaking of our EIChorro list serve, if you are not on it, it's probably because you are not a member of CPFA. Check with our Director of Membership David Donica at ddonica@cpfa.org to see how to join, or simply go to our website and click "membership."

In other news from around the state: The Communications Workers of America (CWA) has represented three Community Colleges (Butte, College of the Sequoias and Mt. San Jacinto) for over a decade. To date, all three have been affiliates of CWA's Local 9414.

Over the last year, these affiliates have been in talks with CWA's Local 9119 (UPTe which currently represents 12,000 University Professional & Technical Employees as well as employees of the Lawrence Livermore National Lab and Los Alamos National Lab in New Mexico) to discuss a merger and is currently being voting upon. This is exciting news!

Stacey Burks, president of Butte's Part-time Faculty Association (and a recipient of the Robert Yoshioka Part Time Faculty of the Year Award), says this merger will enable the affiliates to engage in more productive activism due to the new Local's considerable size and resources.

Stacey is excited and notes that "CWA will now play a much larger role in part timers' legislative efforts."

employers, legislators – progress will follow."

During the testimony before the House, the questioning of witnesses was sometimes aggressive. A lobbyist remarked that she had "seldom seen witnesses treated with such disrespect by legislators."

One witness was "bullied" by a Republican representative who later "not only voted for the bill in committee (his change of heart swung the legislation) but, at the risk of alienating his caucus in an election year, spoke persuasively on the floor of the House on its behalf." Described as an unlikely hero, he convinced three other Republicans to "cross partisan lines and support the contingent faculty bill" as well. --PBH



ADJUNCT MONEYBALL

by Isaac Sweeney

I watched *Moneyball* recently. It's about how the Oakland A's changed the way Major League Baseball teams spend money on players. A scene early in the movie shows a bunch of scouts sitting around a table with the team's general manager, Billy Beane (played by Brad Pitt).

Beane has just learned that his three star players were bought by richer teams and that the A's won't give him money to buy big talent.

In the scene, the scouts are talking about potential players, commenting on things like throwing styles and athletic build and heart. Beane stops them, saying they talk too much about useless things. They don't understand the problem, he says, which is that in the league "There are rich teams and there are poor teams, then there's 50 feet of crap, and then there's us."

According to the movie, baseball had become about money and it was unfair for teams that didn't have money. So teams, like the A's, started looking at statistics of undervalued players and they figured out how to mine wins from the players' strengths.

As I watched this, I began to think of adjuncts. There is a whole segment of the profession out there that is often undervalued — adjuncts. They usually have a lot to offer, but schools aren't willing to spend the "big bucks" on them by giving them full-time jobs. Part of the reason is because adjuncts are already devoting themselves to teaching, and they are doing it for pennies. But part of the reason is also because many schools still have age-old ideas about what a professor should be.

Statistically, an adjunct may be a good bet — solid evaluations, innovative in the classroom, getting students to learn what departments want them to learn, etc. But institutions seem to undervalue them for a variety of biased reasons — too young, too old, no terminal degree, too noncompliant, not enough publications. One of the characters in *Moneyball* says that baseball teams spend a lot of money buying players when they should be spending that money buying wins.

In *Moneyball*, the new system looked for players that could get on base; all the other stuff didn't matter.

When hiring full-time faculty members, instead of buying degrees, publications, and a long teaching history, it seems many colleges should look for faculty members who can teach in line with their respective department's goals.

Should anything else really matter?

By not hiring from the adjunct pool, many institutions are missing out on some "wins."

Isaac Sweeney is an Assistant Professor of English at Richard Bland College, a junior college in Virginia. Before that, he was a full-time adjunct for three and a half years at various institutions, teaching composition and literature.


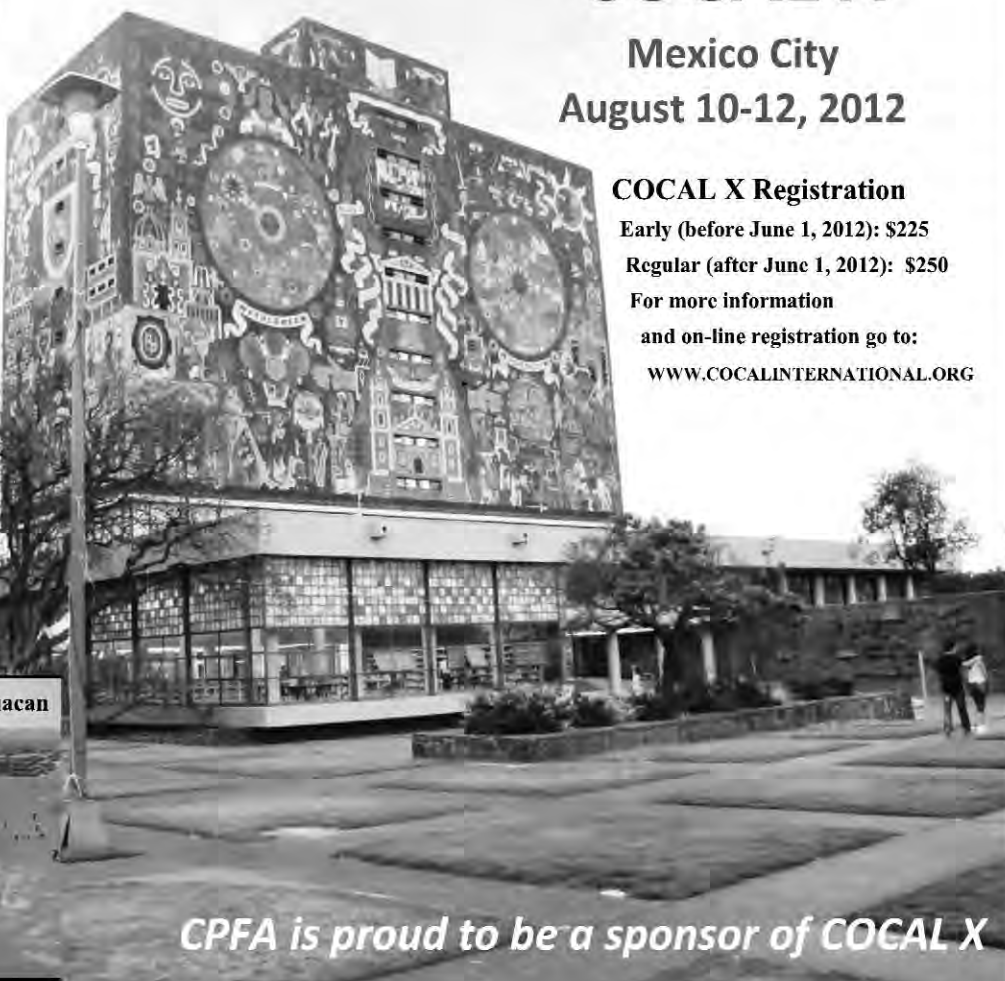
He blogs at The Chronicle of Higher Education and is the author and publisher of the short ebook *Students Losing Out: four essays on adjunct labor in higher education*.

Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor


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THE LIBRARY SUCCESS TASK FORCE

(based on the Student Success Task Force Report circulating at a community college near you)

BY LITA KURTH

I know most faculty, much less students, will not have time to read the Student Success Task Force Report's recommendations which propose "reforming" community colleges. My general impression is that, with a few exceptions, the measures proposed will be harmful to the poorest and bar them from college by assuming they aren't making an effort if they cannot succeed within needlessly early deadlines even if they are learning and growing. So to illustrate the way it works, I imagined applying it to another realm: the public library.

RESERVING LIBRARIES FOR THOSE WHO CAN MAKE BEST USE OF THEM: THOSE WITH TIME, SKILLS, AND MONEY

Centralize to Economize

We in Sacramento and corporate California have determined the reading needs of everyone in the state. We'll be distributing appropriate books to local libraries and taking back the ones you have. This will save approximately \$89 million which we will spend on technology developed by a private corporation.

Our central website will answer all your questions, thus reducing the need for librarians and even libraries.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| If you have a question... | Go to the website. |
| Is the website down? | Go to the website. |
| Can't understand the website? | Go to the website. |
| Don't have a computer? | Go to the website. |
| Can't afford a computer? | Go to the website. |

Preserving Valuable Resources

We can't have people wandering around the library, picking up books, browsing a few minutes, and putting them down. Once you pick up a book, you are required to read it to the end. You have two weeks to finish it.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| What if I don't like it? | Go to the website. |
| What if I can't understand it? | Go to the website. |
| What if I get sick? | Go to the website. |
| What if I have to work 2 jobs? | Go to the website. |
| What if my car breaks down? | Go to the website. |
| What if I can't find childcare? | Go to the website. |
| What if I change my mind? | Go to the website. |

There will be a required group meeting on Saturdays to assist you in managing your time and learning to balance priorities.

Why You Should Read and What You Should Read

In order to ensure your reading success, you are required to map out a pathway for reading within a year of applying for a library card. Decide what kind of books you'll be reading and what your goals are. (Example: chicken books; be a chicken farmer)

After intensive research, we have determined that twenty books a year is plenty for any citizen. After reading 110 books, the number we have determined to be appropriate for your lifetime education, you should go to the bookstore.

Standardized Tests: the Key to Knowledge and Skill

If you are not being assessed, you are not learning. You will be required to take a quiz on every book you read. If you cannot pass the quiz the first time, you may read the book again. After three failed quizzes, you will have to wait until everyone else who passed the quiz has checked out all the books they want. If there are any books left, you may check out another, but remember: it must be within the area you designated as your goal and you may not change your goal! At a certain point, you will have demonstrated that you are just wasting your library card, and it will be revoked so that those who know how to use it and have chosen a path can go ahead.

Here are some questions you might usefully ask:

- What kind of job will this book get me?
- Can I prove I gained a skill from this book?
- How will it help California businesses if I read this book?
- How much money will California save if I stay home instead of going to the library?
- Shouldn't I give my card to someone who is already a proficient reader?

Here are some deeper questions to consider:

- Why are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness inappropriate in this context?
- Why are democracies not really dependent on an educated citizenry after all?

Here are some questions that are pointless to ponder:

- What if I gain a job skill but someone in India can do it more cheaply?
- What if I will always work a low-level job but I believe my mind is worth cultivating?
- Isn't it about a thousand times better for society if I take community college classes of any type whatsoever instead of watching TV, getting high, getting drunk, or committing crimes?
- What pathway did Einstein map out?

Final Assessment

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Who can I talk to about this? | Go to the website. |
| Why is this happening? | Go to the website. |

This piece originally appeared on the website for Tikkun magazine: www.tikkun.org/tikkundaily



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Using Leverage: How Archimedes Can Help in Collective Bargaining

By Mark James Miller

The attorney's face glowed with rage. "How dare you?" she said, not shouting but stopping just short of it. "How dare you do such a thing? This is a complete betrayal of trust. It undermines the very foundation of bargaining in good faith! If you ever do anything like this again you will be sorry, I promise you."

The administrators who sat on either side of her and whose faces, like hers, were masks of the most righteous indignation, nodded their approval. For me it was extremely difficult to suppress a smile, and the same was true for the other members of our bargaining team. This was better than we had hoped.

It was 2004 and negotiations between us—the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College—and the College District had hit a brick wall. Day after day we sat at the negotiating table, and day after day the District's bargaining team robotically repeated "No" to everything we proposed. They offered not one compelling or even plausible reason for their intransigence; they simply said no and let it stand at that.

We had tried reasoning with them, and gotten nowhere. When we pointed out that our bargaining unit was one of the lowest paid in the state, the administrators shrugged. When we told them that every year Allan Hancock College lost excellent part-time instructors who took their talents elsewhere, the administrators yawned. When we pointed out that a stable pool of experienced, dedicated part-time instructors was an asset to the college and of immeasurable importance to the students, the administrators twiddled their thumbs.

Clearly, having right, logic and reason on our side wasn't enough, and appealing to the better angels of the administrators' nature was not making any impression. If we were going to get anywhere in this round of bargaining (our entire contract was up that year), something more was needed. But what?

The administrators and their attorney were like six deadweights—immovable, impenetrable, and impervious to argument. If we were going to move them, we had to find a lever of some kind.

Archimedes had said to Hiero of Syracuse that with a big enough lever he could move the earth. But where could we find a lever big enough to make these administrators move?

As negotiations dragged on, we used to wonder why these well-paid deans (each made

a salary in excess of \$90,000 a year, some over \$100,000, with the attorney and her firm raking in much more than that) seemed to have nothing better to do than come in and say "no" to us day after day. Didn't they have departments to run? Didn't they have people to supervise, reports to write, or any of the other administrative duties that deans are famous for? True, they engaged in a great deal of dolorous caterwauling about how heavy were their workloads: They had so many meetings to attend, and their lives

were frequently complicated by ungrateful part-timers who had no loyalty and who quit at a second's notice at the worst possible times, leaving them to scramble to find replacements, the ingrates—such was the difficult lot of college administrators in

the early 21st century. But as bargaining continued it was becoming plain to us that their strategy was to drag it out as long as they could, costing, in the process, the college (and ultimately the taxpayers) a great deal of money that could have been better used some other way, like improving education.

In the bad old days of the Robber Barons, people like John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie and Henry Ford used to spend more money fighting a union than they would have spent had they given their workers the raise in pay they were asking for. Incredibly, we were facing

a similar situation: The administration was willing to spend a great deal more opposing us than it would have spent had it simply agreed to the modest increase we were asking for. And since the rest of our proposals had nothing to do with money but with seniority (the dreaded "S" word) and other matters that would improve our bargaining unit's working conditions, this deadlock was about more than money—it was about power. The administration had it and was not about to give it up, not unless

it was forced to.

After another day of fruitless, frustrating bargaining we decided another approach had to be taken. With the blessing of our local's executive board, I went to a nearby radio station. For surprisingly little money I recorded a 30 second commercial to be played on the air the following week, leading up to our next scheduled bargaining session. It called on the president of the college to live up to her public statements and start treating her part-time faculty fairly.

The response was better than could have been expected. When we arrived for the next bargaining session the administrators and their attorney were beside themselves. As we sat smiling secretly, I wondered if they had any idea that they had played right into our hands. Their threats were laughable, for there was nothing they could do, and I sensed they knew that. This could not have been better, and since one commercial had worked so well, we reasoned, two must be better, and the following week I made two more commercials and gave an interview to one of the radio station's talk-show hosts.

The administration must have realized how foolish they were, for the next time we sat down to bargain they said nothing about our going public.

But a strange thing did happen: They became more reasonable. They stopped saying "no" and started saying "yes." Bargaining began to actually be bargaining and not an exercise in frustration, and we emerged with our contract stronger than before and a raise for our members. At long last we had found the lever we needed to move the administrators in the direction we needed them to go.

Archimedes would have been proud.



Mark James Miller is President of the Allan Hancock College Part-Time Faculty Association, California Federation of Teachers Local 6185.

Why I won't fight to protect tenure

By George Bailey

I am a part-time community college teacher, a current member of the AAUP and my faculty union, a card-carrying Democrat, and dyed-in-the-wool liberal who has believed for decades that academic freedom and tenure were joined at the hip — necessarily inseparable.

I no longer believe that. I still very much believe in, and practice, academic freedom. I just no longer believe in tenure.

In this I am not alone; there is a clear sense that the moment is upon us, that which the traditional right-wing enemies of tenure who hate the pointy headed liberals protected by it have been waiting for.

Liberal academic journals and books, some of which have been reviewed recently in this Journal, have revealed the low quality of most college teaching, and tenure is one of the causal factors. If it doesn't lead to better education, the heart of the liberal cause (and it doesn't) and if it protects people the right doesn't like — then who's going to fight for it?

Those who have it? Why bother? — just keep it until you retire and let someone else worry about it. Those who don't have it — myself and my 42,000 colleagues (and many ex-colleagues)? Why fight for what you don't have and never will have? Administrators and Trustees? Please. They'd love for all of us to be at-will. Flexibility, you know. Efficiency, like the for-profits.

So it's clearly a system at risk; if collective bargaining rights can be taken away, as happened in Wisconsin, then so can tenure, certainly for the next generation. And this is no accident, as the Marxists used to say and probably still do; it's a system I believe deserves to die, to be replaced by something better, more equitable and fair to all. If I thought it was something worth fighting for,

I would fight for it. But I don't, and I won't.

I'll never get it, regardless, no matter how hard I try — and I have tried many times in fact, with nary a nibble. I'm an excellent teacher by any standard, but it's not in the cards for me and for most of us in the system. We're too old or too young, or too white or too black, too male or too female, too straight or too gay — whatever we are or are not, we're just not the one in hundreds of applicants who grabs the brass ring or gets the golden ticket to the chocolate factory. We cannot get promoted, only anointed, and we are not worthy.

But we all know that no real difference exists in terms of qualifications or job performance, class for class, between full time and part time teachers. Full-timers just get paid more and have more job security and benefits for doing the same thing we do — and that's not fair. What you have is simply a class (or perhaps caste system) where some people benefit and others don't. It's unethical, and whether it is possible to educate an ethical citizenry in an unethical system is a question that bothers me more than it should.

And beyond unethical, it's irrational. Imagine for yourself someone working in, let us say, a law firm, credentialed and trained appropriately, who has worked in the firm for ten years (or perhaps even twenty) acquiring skills and experiences in his or her profession.

Then someone half their age, with none of their experience, gets a position well above them at twice the yearly pay with far more benefits and job security — doing essentially the same job that s/he has already done and done well for years. Well, if that happened to you, you'd quit — and 25% of part-time teachers do every year, so maybe there's some connection. It's a

system that punishes idealism.

And when people are given a privileged position where they are excluded from outside judgment, the main thing they will do is try to keep it. And those they let into that position in the future will be judged primarily on how they will affect that system — whether they threaten it, or those in it already in it. It is a system whose main function is maintaining and sustaining itself, rather than doing the job at hand, educating the public.

Further, within this system, if you can't get fired for doing a bad or perhaps mediocre job, why bother to do a good job? What's the incentive? Why bother to be innovative or creative or even committed? Many are, regardless, but some are not. And they both get paid well and have full job security. That really doesn't make organizational sense. In such a system, mediocrity, rather than excellence, wins out.

And if something comes in that is bad for the system, like massive numbers of part-time teachers essentially diluting the ability of the system to work well (i.e., teach kids) — but doesn't actually affect your job, since you have it for life — you tend not to worry all that much about it. What's more important to this normal person: their own job, and their ability to take care of themselves and their families, or the system they work in? You know the answer.

The problem isn't people; it's the system they work in — one we, the people, set up, and can change. Business doesn't work this way: nobody has tenure in that world, and it does quite well, at least as judged by efficiency. And if some idealistic ivory tower sense of decency and fairness is what academe is about (and I wish it were) — then letting such a systemic decline occur as has happened in higher ed over the last thirty years — from two thirds tenured to one third now and falling fast — surely excludes them from such

consideration. If tenured academics were so good and so wise, they would not have let this happen, because it is bad for education, which is bad for our society. They were instead the proverbial good men doing nothing — because they were immune from the consequences.

As for academic freedom, as a certified red-diaper baby, I've been a supporter of free speech and free thought for a long time, and nothing I have or don't have by way of job security is really going to change that — for me or for any other citizen. I have rights. We all have rights, to free thought and speech. It's in the Constitution; it's in our culture. Tenure does not change that, one way or the other. You don't need tenure to speak freely. You just need guts.

What's next? Public education is part of the democratic experiment we live in, and a good part of it. It's about instilling a public culture and educating a public to function in a democracy. It is a good and decent thing to do, the right thing if we want to have a good and decent society, and the people doing that educating need to be treated decently. The reasonable job security of a civil service type system is more than justifiable. Teachers should have the same kind of due process job security everyone else should have.

And in the CC system, most don't. The two-thirds of us who are part-time are, with rare exceptions, "at will" employees with no rights to be re-hired from one semester to the next. There is no "due process" if we are not re-hired; we're not "fired" after all, since we never had a job in the first place — just a class, or two or three (but not more, god forbid) for a semester, and then, if you're lucky and good, especially to those who

» continued, PG.7

The Absent Presence: Today's Faculty

by Brian Croxall

This year was to be my fourth year attending MLA in a row. I spoke in 2006, interviewed in 2007, spoke and interviewed in 2008, and had hoped to speak and interview this year [2009] as well. When the interviews did not materialize, I made the difficult decision to not attend the convention given the financial realities of being an adjunct faculty member. I regretted not having the chance to speak—especially on a panel titled “Today’s Teachers, Today’s Students: Economics”—but the panel chair volunteered to deliver my paper in absentia:

The Absent Presence: Today's Faculty

I’m sorry that I can’t be delivering these comments in person, and I thank Prof. Cavanagh for her willingness to read them on my behalf. Hearing talks delivered by the person who did not write them is only slightly better than having to be the person who is reading a talk she didn’t write, so I’ll be brief. At the same time, however, I can think of no more appropriate way for me to give a talk in a panel titled “Today’s Students, Today’s Teachers: Economics” than in this manner.

After all, I’m not a tenure-track faculty member, and the truth of the matter is that I simply cannot afford to come to this year’s MLA. I know that we as a profession are increasingly aware of the less than ideal conditions under which contingent faculty members (and graduate students) labor while providing more than half of the instruction that undergraduates receive across the nation, a fact that *The Chronicle of Higher*

Education (see articles from December 2008 and May 2009, as just two such examples) and other publications have reported on throughout the last twelve months.

If we are talking about “today’s teachers,” then more of them look like me—at least in a professional sense—than look like the people who will be on the dais at the Presidential Address later on this evening. And that means that most of the students in America are also taught by people that are like me. In a very real sense, I—and the people situated in a similar professional and economic quandary—are today’s teachers of today’s students. And for the most part, we’re not at the MLA this year.

Again, I’m not at the MLA this year because it’s not economically feasible. I had hoped to be here for job interviews—as well as to speak as a member of this panel discussion. This was my third year on the job market, and I applied to every job in North America that I was even remotely qualified for: all 41 of them. Unfortunately, I did not receive any interviews, despite having added two articles accepted by peer-reviewed journals, five new classes, and several new awards and honors to my vita.

According to my records, applying to those 41 jobs cost me \$257.54. I was prepared to pay the additional expenses of attending the MLA (\$125 for registration, \$279.20 for a plane ticket, approximately \$180.00 for lodging with a roommate at a total of \$584.20) out of pocket so that I could have a chance of getting one of those 41 jobs [1]. I was even luckier than most faculty

(remember, most of today’s faculty are contingent) in that my institution was willing to provide me with \$200 support to attend conferences throughout the academic year. But once it became apparent that I wasn’t going to be having any interviews, I could no longer justify the outlay of \$400.00 out of a salary that puts me only \$1,210 above the 2009 Federal Poverty Guidelines [2]. (And yes, that means I do qualify for food stamps while working a full-time job as a professor!)

I can’t imagine that I’m alone in this dilemma of not attending this year’s convention due to finances and the anemic job market. After all, as *The New York Times* reported on 17 December, the number of listings in the MLA’s Job Information List was down 37% from 2008’s numbers, the sharpest decline since MLA started tracking job ads in 1974. It’s not like 2008 was a banner year, however. The listings a year ago were down 26% from what they had been in 2007.

Landing a job in the professoriate has been difficult for well more than this decade, but the recent economic crisis has necessitated (or allowed, if we’re feeling cynical) administrators trimming budgets so that fewer and fewer tenure-track faculty are hired. What this means is that more and more contingent faculty are employed to teach the increasing number of students who are matriculating at the nation’s universities.

So...perhaps it’s not that employment is going down for humanists with the PhD. Rather, it is sustainable employment that is evaporating (I’m looking at you, California). After all, the demand for contingent faculty

labor will probably rise sharply as the number of students enrolling in colleges rises due to the nation’s recent economic crisis. And since we can’t expect other schools to be as generous as mine with travel funds for contingent faculty, there should be fewer and fewer faculty members at the MLA in the future because fewer and fewer of the nation’s faculty will be able to afford to get here.

“But”—the administrators say—“the MLA is only a conference, one where people read papers at each other. What difference does it make whether you attend or not?” Such questions are of course misleading since it’s not as if my department is willing to give me more money to travel to other conferences instead of the MLA. So the problem of not being able to afford to attend the MLA is really the problem of attending any conference, other than a hyper-local one. And attending conferences is critical for one’s scholarship since doing so allows one to hear the latest research in one’s field.

I especially appreciate how large the MLA is since I can find opportunities to attend panels that represent the full 150 years of American literature that my research covers. Attending this conference (or others) keeps me abreast of the latest scholarship and helps me produce scholarship that pushes the state of my fields forward.

As one of today’s teachers, attending conferences helps me be more prepared to teach today’s students these new developments, preparing them to be more

continued next page

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Gary Aston Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College they@verizon.net
Sandy Baringer UC-AFT Riverside sbaringer@ucaft.org
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Absent Presence, continued

effective readers of literature, whether they are English or biostatistics majors. Moreover, it is at conferences that I am most likely to have the opportunity to meet with old and new colleagues whose work intersects most closely with my own. Schools only need so many Shakespeare scholars; not so the MLA!

Yet attending conferences isn't just about seeing old friends; the relationships formed with colleagues at conferences again help us produce scholarship. For just one example, the panel that I spoke on last year has resulted in a book-length collaboration among the four panelists, none of whom had met previously. When the majority of faculty (who are, again, contingent faculty) cannot attend the MLA (or any other conference), it results in a faculty that cannot advance, that does not, in other words, appear to be doing the things that would warrant their conversion to the tenure track. Our placement as contingent faculty quickly becomes a self-fulfilling event.

But having a faculty majority comprised of

contingent faculty means a lot more than just conferences being less and less attended. In my case, it means that my students cannot easily meet with me for office hours since contingent faculty don't really have offices. It means that they do not get effective, personal mentoring because I have too many students. It means that I cannot give the small and frequent assignments that I believe teach them more than a "3-paper class" because I do not have time to grade 90 students' small and frequent assignments. It means that the courses they can take from me will not be updated as frequently as I think is ideal because I will be spending all of my spare time looking for more secure employment—or working a part-time job.

In other words, when we short-change (pun-intended) today's teachers (the majority of us who are, finally and for the last time, contingent and not present at this year's MLA), we simultaneously short-change today's students. And those students will be that much less likely to become literature professors in the future.

Why should they? It's not currently a

sustainable profession; but even more so, they will have had that many fewer chances to have those interactions with teachers that lead to today's students wanting to become tomorrow's teachers.

[1] The profession as a whole needs to find a better method for interviewing candidates. One that does not burden those who are already at the bottom of the ladder with additional expenses.

[2] Fun facts: In 2007, I applied to 45 jobs at a cost of \$270.07. In 2008, I applied to 66 jobs at a cost of \$313.19. Both of these figures do not include the costs of attending MLA. In three years on the job market (2007, 2008, and 2009), I have received 3 MLA interviews and 0 campus interviews.

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Brian Croxall is CLIR Postdoctoral Fellow and Emerging Technologies Librarian Emory University's Robert W. Woodruff Library. In this position, he is helping to establish the new, Mellon Foundation-

sponsored Digital Scholarship Commons (DiSC). Along with developing and managing digital scholarship projects, he teaches "Introduction to Digital Humanities" and works to integrate digital technologies throughout the library.

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WHY I WON'T FIGHT TO PROTECT ...

» continued from PG. 5

give out such jobs (full-timers) – you'll get them next semester. Maybe.

There are places where this is done better, with rehire rights and near pay and benefit equity, but for the most part, the life of a part-timer in the CCC system is a true Hobbesian state of nature: solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

It's no way to live, another reason why so many part-timers quit the system each year, a kind of turnover that can hardly be good for the education of CC students -- an issue the recent Student Success Task Force glaringly overlooked in its specious analysis – funded, I'm told, by a \$500,000 grant from a foundation whose donors are technology companies eager to replace cheap teachers with even cheaper machines, so no wonder.

Teachers' working conditions truly are student learning conditions. If it's bad for teachers, it's bad for students. And that kind of insecurity and unpredictability is bad for everyone.

We need something a lot more fair, less elitist, and more sensible -- more like Civil Service perhaps than K-12, since people will come into the system at all ages, for varying amounts of time, with varying specialties, rather than the normal K-12 career pattern of starting young and working a career in the system.

However it works, it should value good work with security, benefits and pay commensurate with that. It should be professionalized for all, and I believe it will be. Whether it is done well or badly, however, is up to us.

George Bailey is the pseudonym of a part-time teacher currently working in the California Community College system.

A NOVEL DEPARTURE ...

» continued from PG. 8

saying that the novel made me sad. After reading the novel, I'm sad also because relatively few of us are doing more than complaining to air. Cyrus Duffelman and *Fight for Your Long Day* cast light on this situation. I hope the novel is popular enough to make a big change; it has already changed me.

(See Isaac Sweeney's bio on page 3 below his article "Adjunct Moneyball.")



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A Novel Departure: *Fight for Your Long Day*

By Isaac Sweeney

I laughed at parts of *Fight for Your Long Day*, a new novel by Alex Kuderer. At other parts of the novel, I felt inspired. But most of all, *Fight for Your Long Day* made me sad. Part of my sadness came because Kuderer writes elegantly and has created an insightful, tragic, sometimes comic protagonist (I dare not call him a hero) named Cyrus Duffleman, whom the narrator calls "Duffy." He reminds me of Hamlet—a bit of an introverted whiner, but the kind you love to hear whine. I'm sad when Duffleman is sad. I'm even sadder when he has bits of hope, like when there's the prospect of an affair with an attractive student, because I know it won't work out for him. As with any other effective tragic character, there's something satisfying in watching his tragedy unfold.

The bulk of my sadness comes from my ability to relate to Duffleman. As I write this, I am a full-time nontenure-track instructor in Virginia. I teach four first-year writing courses at James Madison University and one composition course at Blue Ridge Community College. I supplement my teaching income with freelance writing and editing. *Fight for Your Long Day* is set in Philadelphia, and Duffleman, like me, is a contingent instructor (I dare not call him a professor). He, too, teaches at multiple colleges and universities. He supplements his teaching income with a tutoring job at the corporatized University of America and with shift work as a security guard at another college.

Duffleman often struggles to make it to class on time because he has to rely on public transportation or walk. Only brief moments of the novel are set in the classroom. The few classroom moments we do see are filled with all manner of students who don't recognize Duffleman as a bottom-rung, shift-work employee. It's no wonder.

In the classroom scenes, we see Duffleman as a knowledgeable, caring instructor, though his mind does tend to wander as students talk; he thinks about catching the train or paying the rent or how he's going to help a troubled student, all without focusing as much as he should on lectures and discussions.

Most of Duffleman's students think highly of him. A few even throw him a little birthday bash during his security shift, though this sets up a tragic scene in the novel. Even if the novel spends little time in the classroom—a fitting metaphor for Duffleman's situation, I think—we realize Duffleman's students are always there, somewhere, around a corner maybe, protesting at a local rally, or just in Duffleman's mind as he walks and rides the train and walks some more.

Duffleman is concerned about how administrators perceive him, so he thinks a lot about how to avoid them. In the few interactions Duffleman

has with those above him on the institutional ladder, readers, at least, realize that these people

he tries so hard to avoid don't care much about him at all, so long as he doesn't get sued. In one scene, Duffleman discusses with his department chair a troubled and troubling female student who had cried rape and made racist remarks. Duffleman had tried to lead the student to on-campus counseling, and she had refused. He worries that this student will harm his ability to teach the class. His department dean,

Seward, says he can call the cops if she gets violent. She hasn't been violent, just very disruptive, so Duffleman is in a quandary. "Seward has all the answers," the narrator tells us, "but Duffy, slow learner, is catching on. Unless he calls the cops on the girl, he's stuck with her in class. Her rantings were so disturbing that he feels immediate dread at the prospect that she would stay and continue to participate in this way. He isn't paid enough for such hassle and pain. But before he gets visibly angry and verbally abusive, he remembers his top priority is to appear as if he can handle the situation."

Duffleman is figuratively lost. He wants to read and write and teach. He wants to be "scholarly," but when is he supposed to do that with no time (especially on Thursday, his long day), and how is he supposed to do that with no money? All he has time to do is teach and run himself ragged. When Duffleman is ecstatic over ten minutes of free time in a train station (which he uses to get a cup of coffee and catch up on grading papers); when he wants so desperately to help his students learn, despite a hierarchical system that doesn't allow him to advance in pay or status; when he realizes that he is largely to blame for his career position—these are my moments.

I'm not as downtrodden as Duffleman. I like most aspects of my life, my jobs included, my family especially. A family probably also gives me even more obligations than Duffleman. The thing about Duffleman and me is that we're up against seemingly insurmountable odds to work in and for (I dare not say against) the businesslike structure of academe. And we have been charged with inspiring and enlightening young minds all the while.

Duffleman's (and Kuderer's) insights are profound at times, as in the description of his camaraderie with his fellow security guards: "They were lost in the funhouse of capitalism's creative destruction in an economy so elastic it

could expand with the optimism of a televised blimp floating above corporate-sponsored stadiums and then contract like Saran Wrap to the size of a man's genitals and squeeze out the last productive drop." But it is Duffleman's hope in the face of adversity that is inspiring to a fellow contingent faculty member. I am better for reading it.

Then there's the ambiguous ending.

I can't reveal the ending, of course, but taken one way, it's a metaphor for the institutionalized structure of the academy, which shoots down student progress. Taken another way, it reveals how students can get what they want or need out of academe, as long as they don't rely on the help of contingent faculty members. Yet another interpretation reveals that people like Duffleman, nontenure-track instructors with little more than student progress as incentive, people who recognize their lowly positions and keep on trucking, are the ones who can save higher education from itself, if only others would realize this, too. Maybe your interpretation is different from these or an amalgamation of them all. I guess this is the beauty and pain of an ambiguous ending.

I want to change the situation in which many contingent faculty members find themselves. I aid this change the best way I can, by writing. I started this review by

» continued, PG 7

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Colleen Harvel, Stacey Burkes and Petra Petry participate in a discussion on issues facing part-time faculty at the CPFA Part-time Summit XI.



Sharon Hendricks, Pamela Hanford, and Kristie Iwamoto watch last-minute preparations before the Summit begins.



Cornelia Alsheimer and Behrooz Farhangi contributed their concerns to the discussion on legislation facing community colleges.

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CPFA Editorial Offices
P.O. Box 1836
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916.572.2732

www.cpfa.org

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About California Part-time Faculty Association (CPFA)

CPFA has been advocating for Part-time faculty in California since 1998. This group spearheaded AB591, which passed the state legislature and allows contingent faculty to teach 67%. We currently advocate for AB 852, the due process, rehire rights bill. Please join us in our effort to improve teaching and learning conditions in California.

Check online for workshop updates, agenda, and dinner info!