

Supporting California's Community College Teaching Faculty:

Improving Working Conditions, Compensation
and the Quality of Undergraduate Education



*Celeste Solis (Counseling) and Kelly Diaz (Psychology),
associate faculty members at the College of the Sequoias.*



Photo credits: above, Don Nikkel, College of the Sequoias; cover, Berkeley Federation of Teachers.



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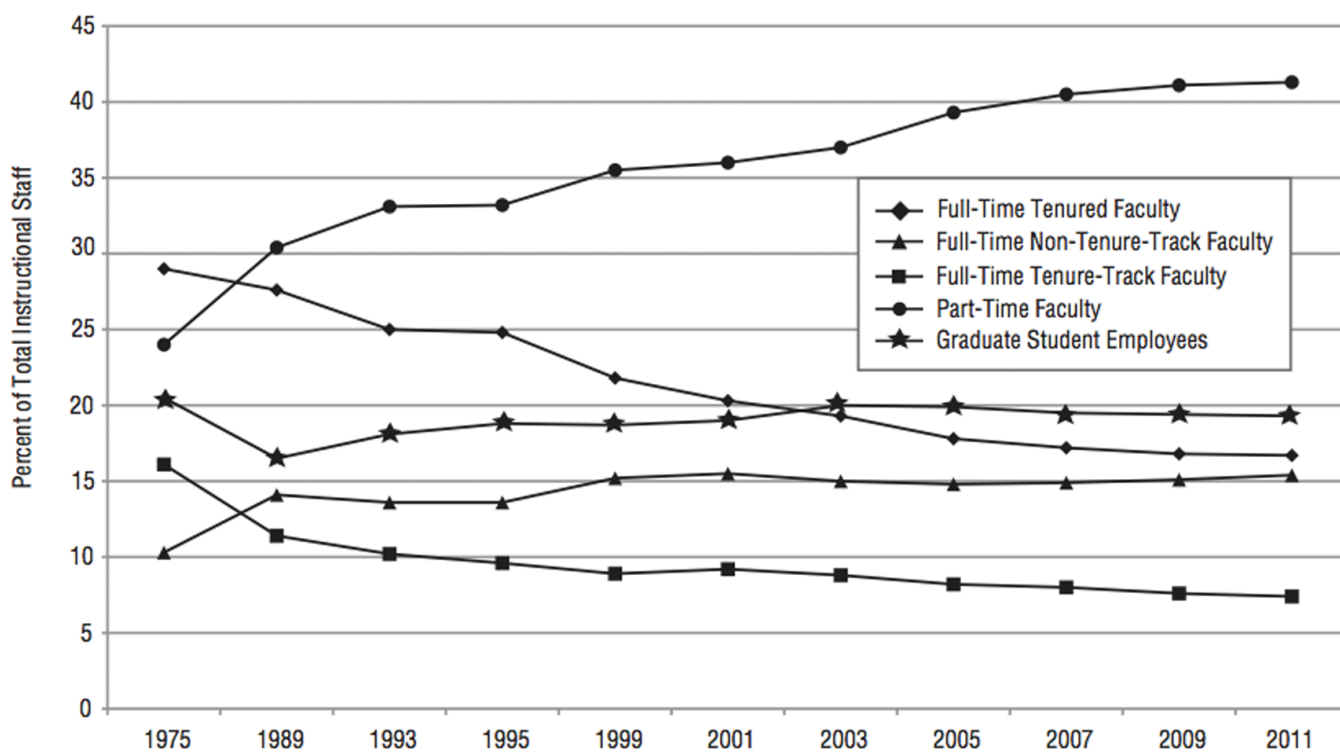
KEY FINDINGS

- **Associate faculty, make up the vast majority of faculty nationally and at California's community colleges.** Associate faculty are non-tenure track, part-time positions, and are sometimes referred to as "adjuncts" or "contingent" faculty. Nationally, 75.5% of all faculty are non-tenure track. In California, 68.9% of faculty at community colleges are part-time/contingent faculty, while only 31.1% of faculty are full-time. This is the highest percentage of associate faculty working at California's community colleges in over three decades. As a result, the academic workforce has largely become casualized. In contrast to tenured and tenure-track faculty, such faculty have little job security and often do not know whether they will have classes to teach from term to term, making their lives economically precarious.
- **Despite a 1988 system-wide goal that 75% of classes at the community college level be taught by full-time faculty, this goal remains unmet.** In 2012, 56% of all classes were taught by full-time faculty, while 44% were taught by part-time faculty.
- Associate faculty at California community colleges **earn on average half (55%) the salary (excluding benefits) of tenured and tenure-track community college faculty** for the same work. Essentially, a system of unequal pay for equal work prevails with regard to faculty salaries in the community college system in California.
- Associate faculty at community colleges in California are **generally very low-paid: on average they earn \$66.58/hour of in-class teaching, or \$3,595/course.** A common teaching load is two or three classes taught per semester, or between four and six courses taught per academic year. Teaching six classes earns associate faculty only \$21,570 per academic year, just above the federal poverty level for a family of three (\$19,530/year).
- This low pay makes associate faculty teaching at community colleges **the lowest paid faculty at California's institutions of public higher education.**
- When health and retirement benefits are considered, associate faculty at California's community colleges clearly make much less than what their tenured and tenure-track faculty counterparts earn. **One quarter of associate faculty have no health insurance.** Approximately 17 percent of associate faculty report that their community college employer pays for their health insurance. The remaining associate faculty receive health insurance from their partner, spouse or a non-teaching employer. **Most faculty do not receive retirement benefits through their academic employer,** while those who do report that their retirement benefits will not be enough to live on upon retirement.

Nearly a third of associate faculty at California's community colleges teach more than three courses.

- Despite the existence of the 67% law restricting associate faculty to teaching no more than 67% of a full-time teaching load at any one community college per semester, **a sizable minority of associate faculty piece together a living by commuting between community colleges to teach more than 67%**. Nationally, a third of all associate faculty teach more than 67% (3-unit classes are the norm; three three-unit classes comprise 60% of a full-time load while two five-unit classes make up a 67% teaching load). Though more comprehensive data is needed, the available data suggests that nearly a third of associate faculty at community colleges in California also teach more than three courses.
- **Despite the poor working conditions and low pay, associate faculty at community colleges in California highly value teaching.** Some of associate faculty's working conditions, however, have the potential to harm the quality of education for community college students. The lack of office space and paid office hours, as well as teaching appointments made at the last minute, in particular, may harm the quality of education.
- If policy makers wish to improve the compensation and working conditions of associate faculty at community colleges, one clear option is for the state of California to **mandate the funding and hiring of a greater percentage of tenure-track faculty**, as well as the **conversion of associate faculty to tenure-track faculty**.

FIGURE 1: TRENDS IN INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT STATUS, 1975-2011 (all institutions, national totals)



Notes: Figures for 2011 are estimated. Figures for 2005 have been corrected from those published in 2012. Figures are for degree-granting institutions only, but the precise category of institutions included has changed over time. Graduate student employee figure for 1975 is from 1976. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: US Department of Education, IPEDS Fall Staff Survey. From American Association of University Professors, "Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2012-2013."

INTRODUCTION

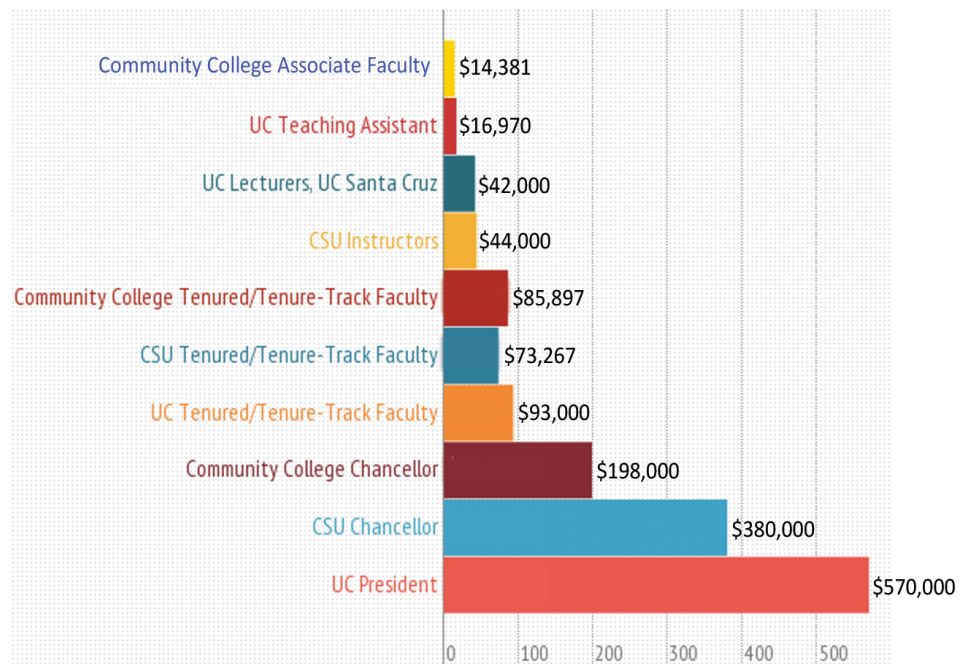
It is an increasingly well-known fact that, nationally, higher education heavily relies on associate¹ faculty to do much of the teaching at colleges and universities. Yet the specific working conditions and compensation of the associate faculty who do a large part of the teaching of undergraduate students remains obscure.

Over the past few years, university and college administrators have hired a vastly expanding number of associate faculty; doing so saves money and provides much more flexibility than hiring tenured and tenure-track faculty. In comparison to their similarly qualified associate faculty counterparts, tenured and tenure-track faculty at all levels of higher education receive much higher pay, better health and retirement benefits, better working conditions, and greater job security. Contingent faculty now make up 75.5% of college instructors nationally, with an average pay of between \$20,000 and \$25,000 annually.²

This increasing reliance on underpaid associate faculty, according to one author, has resulted in the “inexorable casualization of the teaching workforce,”³ and has profound implications for the future of higher education in the United States.

The poor working conditions and low compensation of associate faculty have recently received greater attention, especially due to a recent article in the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, “Death of an Adjunct” by Daniel Kovalik. The article discusses the life and death of Margaret Mary Vojtko, who taught French at Duquesne University as an “adjunct” faculty member for 25 years. Kovalik writes, “Even during the best of times, when she was teaching three classes a semester and two during the summer, she was not even clearing \$25,000 a year, and she received absolutely no health care benefits.” With no retirement benefits, at 83-years old Vojtko was still teaching. When her course load was reduced to just one class per semester, she made well below \$10,000 annually. Diagnosed with cancer, she also had massive medical bills.

FIGURE 2: PAY INEQUALITY IN PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA, FACULTY V. ADMINISTRATOR PAY



Community college associate faculty, teaching four classes per academic year: \$14,381; annual salary of UC teaching assistants teaching three classes per academic year at the quarter schools, teaching half-time, \$16,970; annual salary of UC lecturers, UC Santa Cruz only, \$42,000; annual salary of CSU instructors, \$44,000.

From Coalition on the Academic Workforce, “A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members,” June 2012, http://www.academicworkforce.org/CAW_portrait_2012.pdf



Community college faculty educate about 2.5 million students, more than any other system of public higher education in California.

Kavolik proclaims that Vojtko was reduced to “abject penury.” She took an evening job at an Eat n’ Park restaurant. When Vojtko could not afford heating bills, she attempted to sleep in her office during the day—until the police ejected her. Mary Margeret Vojtko passed away on September 1, 2013 after suffering a massive heart attack while standing on her front lawn.⁴

Vojtko’s story is tragic. But her economic situation is not unique. This report examines the working conditions, pay, and benefits of associate faculty at California’s community colleges. There are 112 community colleges in 72 districts throughout California. The faculty at these community colleges educate approximately 2.5 million students, more than any other system of public higher education in California.⁵ Community colleges, moreover, serve a disproportionate number of poor and working-class students, as well as students of color.

This report, in part, compares associate faculty working conditions and compensation across California’s systems of public higher education: the University of California, the California State University system, and the community colleges. It concludes that associate faculty at California’s community colleges value teaching immensely, a profession for which they are poorly compensated. While associate faculty at all levels of public higher education in California have trouble making ends meet, the situation for associate faculty at community colleges across California is particularly dire, and thus deserves urgent attention by policy makers.

RESEARCH ON FACULTY CONDITIONS

This report is based on extensive secondary and primary research. A multiplicity of reports commissioned by various governmental bodies and faculty advocacy organizations were particularly useful. At the national level, the Department of Education provides some useful information through its Integrated Postsecondary Education System (IPEDS). Until its funding ceased in 2004, the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) provided more elaborate data about faculty conditions. Clear that there was a lack of sufficient information about the conditions of contingent faculty, the Coalition on the Academic Workforce,⁶ a faculty advocacy group, circulated a survey in the fall of 2010 to contingent faculty nationally. This survey asked these faculty about their working conditions, salary, and benefits, marking “the first time any organization other than the United States Department of Education has attempted to gather these data on a national scale across all sectors of higher education.” The coalition issued the results in a June, 2012 report.⁷

While the Coalition on the Academic Workforce and other national reports provide national data that serves as a point of comparison for a discussion of associate faculty conditions in California, this report relies heavily on data and reports specific to the conditions of California associate faculty. Salary data issued by the Chancellor’s Office of California’s community colleges is particularly useful. The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) provides some historical data about the working conditions and compensation of associate faculty in California. However, the CPEC closed its doors on November 18, 2011 due to a budgetary line item veto by Governor Jerry Brown.⁸

While various faculty associations and unions in California have also collected information, it was necessary to draft and circulate a survey for this study.⁹ Nearly five hundred faculty from a cross-section of colleges responded to the survey, which asked questions about faculty working conditions, salary, and benefits. Of the nearly 500 respondents, over 400 respondents were non-tenure-track/associate faculty at community colleges in California. While not a representative sample of associate faculty, the survey results nonetheless help to supplement the preexisting research by providing a helpful portrait of the working conditions and benefits of associate faculty at California’s community colleges.

“IT COULD ALL CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE”: THE LACK OF JOB SECURITY FOR ASSOCIATE FACULTY

- ▶ “There is no job security. Each semester I hope for a schedule.”
- ▶ “After 23 years... I was one of the senior part-time faculty, but I still lost all of my classes.”
- ▶ “I have worked continuously at the same campus for 10-11 years now and really like what I do, yet the paperwork I routinely receive and complete classifies me as ‘temporary.’ I legally and contractually have no job security semester to semester.”
- ▶ “Now part-timers are guaranteed one course per semester. In the past, job security was horrible! And the full-timers let you know they could take your class. This lack of job security negatively affects every aspect of one’s life.”¹⁰

The above quotes reflect what one author has called the “permanent lack of permanence” that many associate faculty experience working at colleges and universities across the U.S.¹¹ Associate faculty generally have little to no employment security. According to a report issued by the Center for the Future of Higher Education, “contingent faculty can be hired at

a moment’s notice, with no review process, and their appointments can be ‘non-renewed’ with little or no justification, regardless of their performance.”¹² In contrast, tenure, which is provided to faculty on the tenure track after a period of four to six years, while not a guarantee of future employment, prevents arbitrary dismissal. If department chairs or the college administration wish to fire tenured faculty, the tenured faculty member has due process; cause must be shown before dismissal.

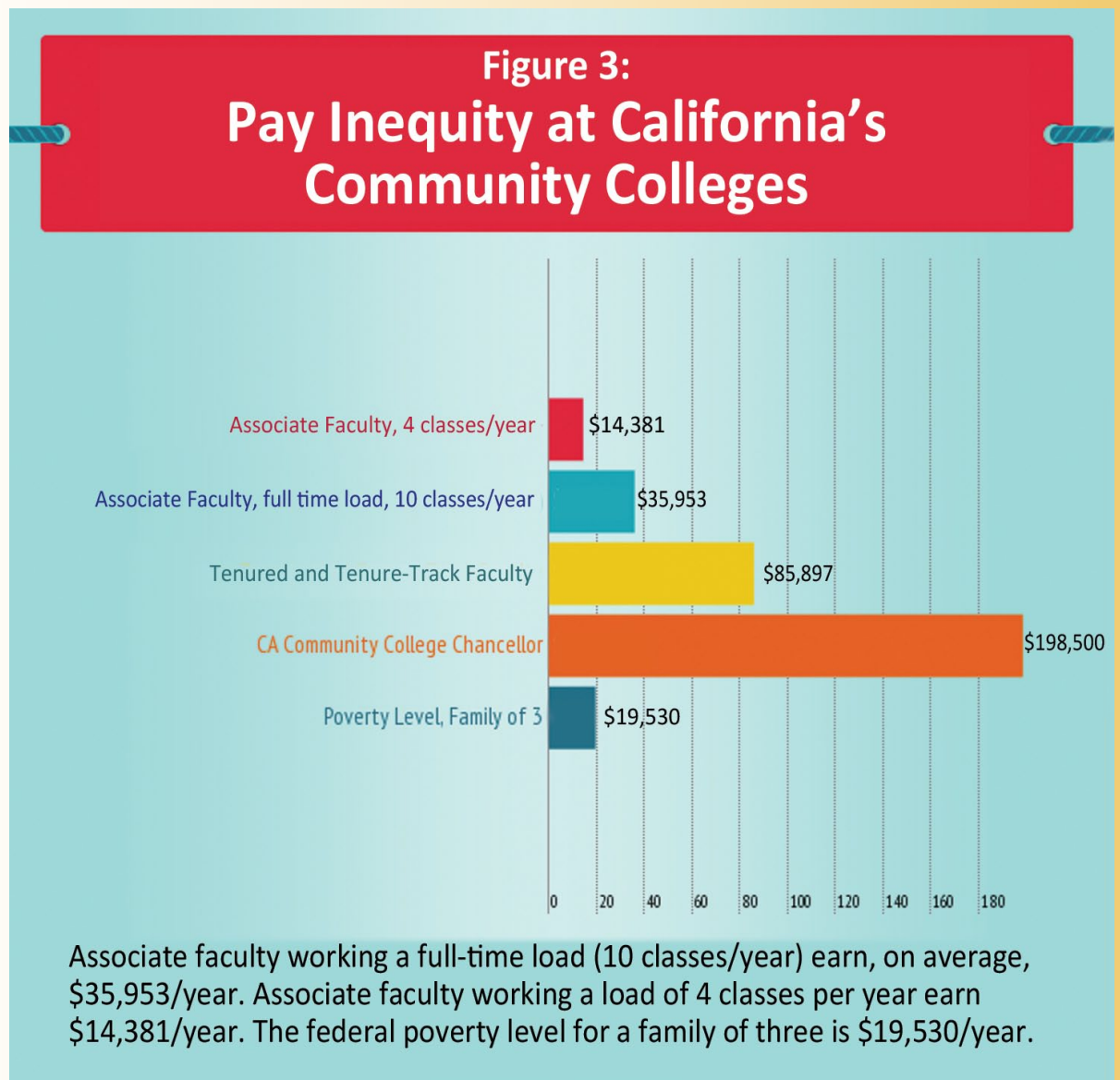
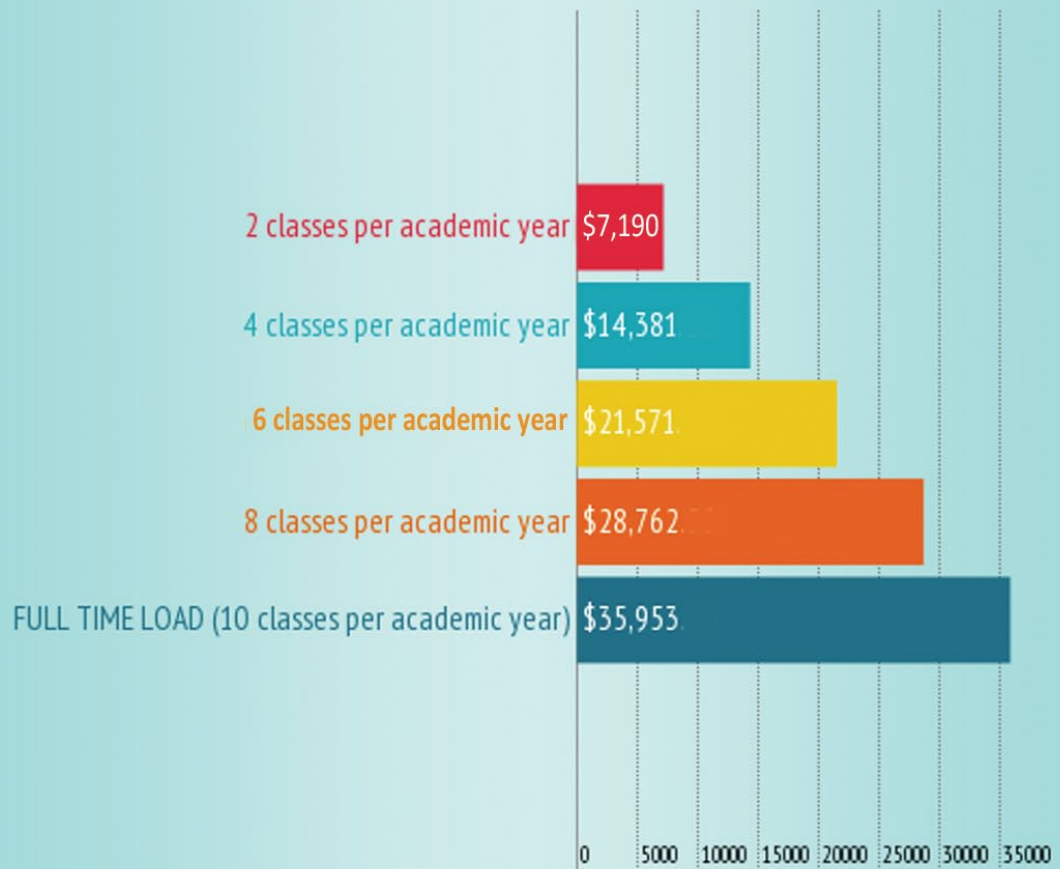


Figure 4: Annual Salaries of Associate Faculty at Community Colleges in California



Based on an average pay of \$3,595 per course. Source: 2013 Salary Study, All Faculty Association at Santa Rosa Junior College.

Additionally, the case for academic tenure has historically been linked to the promotion of academic freedom.¹³ With the security of employment that comes with tenure, faculty are less likely to restrict what they say in the classroom out of fear of being fired. Rather, tenure fosters a diversity of opinions and less inhibited intellectual conversations in the classroom.

Nationally, the percentage of contingent faculty compared to tenured and tenure-track faculty has been gradually increasing over the last several decades (See Figure 1). The most recent figures indicate that 75.5% of instructors at colleges and universities were off the tenure track. This number includes part-time faculty, full-time non-tenure-track faculty, and graduate student teaching assistants. In other words, tenured and tenure-track faculty members comprise only 24.5% of the academic workforce (see Figure 2).¹⁴ Just a few years earlier, in 2003

“part-time” faculty comprised 66.7 percent of faculty appointments.¹⁵ In fact, between 1975 and 2011 contingent faculty appointments (including graduate student Teaching Assistants but not post-docs) have increased by 300 percent.¹⁶

CREATING A PERMANENT UNTENURED FACULTY

In California in 1967, Senate Bill 316 passed, allowing community college districts to hire non-tenure track, ‘temporary’ faculty to supplement the full-time tenure-track faculty. The bill allowed California to receive federal funds for public higher education without hiring additional tenure-track faculty who “might bankrupt the system when the extramural funding ended.”¹⁷ This law specified that the hourly “temporary”¹⁸ faculty could not become probationary employees if they taught under a 60% course load. This became known as the “60% law,” laying the groundwork for the creation of a class of permanent untenured faculty at California’s community colleges.¹⁹ More specifically, the 60% law limited the number of classes ‘temporary’ faculty could teach to three three-unit courses or one five-unit course and one three-unit course (a full course load is 15 units). However, in 2008, the 60% law was adjusted by the state legislature, becoming ‘the 67% law.’ The change now allows part-time/associate faculty to teach two five-unit courses, a common situation for faculty teaching languages and a few other fields.²⁰

Like the rest of the nation’s, at California’s community colleges the majority of faculty are contingent. In 2012, tenured and tenure-track faculty made up 17,248 of the total faculty, while associate faculty comprised 38,135 of the total faculty. In other words, 68.9% of the faculty at California’s community colleges are associate, while only 31.1% of faculty are tenured/tenure-track (see Figures 3 and 4).²¹ This is the largest percentage of associate faculty teaching at community colleges in over three decades.²² Not all faculty classified as “part-time” by the Chancellor’s Office of the California community college system actually teach the number of courses consistent with that designation. Many associate faculty, known as “freeway flyers,” attempt to piece together a full-time teaching load by commuting from college to college.

In 1988, the California legislature passed Assembly Bill 1725 which set a system-wide goal that 75 percent of all classes at the community college level should be taught by full-time faculty. This goal continues to be unmet, however. In 2012, 56% of classes were taught by full-time faculty members, while 44% of all classes were taught by part-time faculty.²³

In 2001 the California Postsecondary Commission issued a comprehensive report on the compensation of part-time community college faculty, including data about the “freeway flyer” phenomenon: between 16% and 18% of part-time instructors taught at more than one community college district, most of them teaching at only two districts. Additionally, approximately 6% of part-time faculty worked at multiple districts in order to exceed the 60% (now 67%) law.²⁴ A survey conducted by the faculty union at Cabrillo College (in California) of its members in the Spring of 2013 revealed that while 48% of associate faculty worked at just one institution, 32% worked at two institutions, 9% worked at three institutions, and 1% worked at four or more institutions (10% of respondents did not answer the question.²⁵ Just under half (42%) of all associate faculty at Cabrillo College taught at more than one campus.

A 2013 survey of associate faculty conducted for this report reveals that 59.5% said they taught at only one college, while 27.5% taught at two colleges, 7.5% taught at three colleges, and 1.2% taught at four colleges. Of the faculty teaching at more than one college, the vast majority, if given the opportunity, would prefer to teach at one college: 80.4%, or 209 people, said they would prefer to teach at just one college, and 11.2%, or 29 people, responded with



Nearly 69% of California’s community college faculty are associates, the largest percentage in over three decades.



“maybe.” Of the 8.5%, or 22 people, who said they would not prefer to teach at just one college several justified their answer by referring to the insecurity of associate faculty appointments at community colleges. If one college arbitrarily dismisses them they would still be employed at another college.²⁶

While the data from 2001 is the most comprehensive available, this more recent information indicates that a perhaps more sizable minority of associate faculty now teaches at more than one community college in order to make a living. The time spent traveling from college to college makes life more difficult than it has to be. The respondents to the 2013 survey, for example, report that the time spent traveling is “exhausting,” they complain that the cost of gas strains an already tight budget, and the time spent traveling means more time away from family. One respondent remarked, “I would prefer the consistency and connection to just one institution.” Another respondent commented that teaching at just one college would mean making it “easier” to be available to students requiring additional assistance, thereby improving the quality of education for undergraduate students.²⁷

Associate faculty in California commute between multiple colleges due to two important factors: 1) the 67% law restricts their ability to teach a full-time load at any one college; and, 2) community college districts choose to rely on associate, part-time faculty to save money. Thus new tenure-track faculty lines seldom open up, forcing associate faculty who value teaching to attempt to piece together a living. Though most associate faculty teach part-time, many would prefer to teach full-time. Nationally, a majority (71%) taught one or two classes during the fall term in 2010. A full third of all faculty taught more than three courses during the fall term in 2010.²⁸ In California, the 67% law stipulates that associate faculty cannot teach a full-time load at any one-community college. However, many associate faculty still teach more than 67% of a full-time load by commuting to different colleges: 27% of survey respondents indicated teaching more than three classes, or more than 67% of a full-time load. Significantly, in response to the question, “If you generally teach part-time, would you prefer to be hired full-time?” 61% of the respondents said yes, while 24.3% said maybe, with only 24.3% of respondents say that they preferred to teach part-time.²⁹ This data suggests that the current arrangement of relying increasingly on associate part-time faculty to teach classes at community colleges does not work

for educators.

Overload in California’s community colleges is one factor inhibiting the ability of associate part-time faculty to find a sufficient number of classes to make a living. Overload occurs when a full-time faculty member teaches additional classes on their own campus, usually for either more money or for future release time from teaching. When asked if overload was common at their community college(s), 46.1% of associate faculty respondents said yes,

Many associate faculty teach at more than one community college in order to make a living.




11.3% responded with no, and 42.6% were unsure. When asked if overload has impacted associate faculty's ability to teach a "sufficient number of classes," 41.9% responded no, 28.5% said yes, and 29.6% responded maybe.

While this report's scope cannot be taken as representative, it underscores the fact that many associate faculty members experience the negative consequences of overload. Interestingly, of the faculty who responded with "no," some said that they were already teaching the maximum number of units for part-time faculty anyway, and while they would prefer to teach more classes that was not an option. Others replied that their community college had so many associate faculty and so few tenured/tenure-track faculty that overload was not a significant problem. Several associate faculty members who experienced the negative impacts of overload recounted how full-time faculty could choose their first preference of classes to teach, leaving associate faculty with "left over" classes. For example, one respondent commented, "The full-timers get first pick then the adjuncts get the left overs. Often time you take the classes that are available to teach and not what you really, really like and research." Perhaps most importantly, associate faculty report that when full-time faculty teach overload classes less work is left for them. Overload makes an already insecure working environment more uncertain. In addition to overload being an issue during the regular academic year, several faculty members remarked that because full-time faculty taught overload during the summer and winter semesters, few to no classes were left for associate faculty, leaving many jobless.³⁰


When so many faculty members lack the security of employment inherent in tenure, the quality of education can suffer. This at-will employment often means, for example, that associate faculty receive last-minute notification of their teaching appointments. Seventeen percent of the respondents to a survey circulated to contingent faculty nationally in the fall of 2011 by the Center for the Future of Higher Education reported having less than two weeks' notice of their teaching appointment before the start of class while 18% received between two and three weeks' notice. In other words, more than one third of the respondents reported *receiving less than three weeks' notice of their teaching appointment*.³¹ With so little notice, these associate faculty members had less time to prepare their classes, as well as more economic insecurity.

FACULTY ISOLATION, DIFFICULTY FOR STUDENTS

Associate faculty at community colleges in California are frequently not provided with office space on campus, or, if they are, they share their offices with other associate faculty. While 36.6% of associate faculty respondents are provided office space, 40.2% are not provided with office space, and 23.2% asserted that they are "sometimes" provided with office space. One faculty respondent commented that he or she shares a "small space with 40+ other part-timers." One faculty member wrote, "I have a corner in a big meeting room for my office." Another simple but telling response: "I am an adjunct instructor. I am not given an office." Others commented that they use their cars as their office space. The absence of office space, as well as the lack of private office space, is a reflection of the substandard status accorded to the associate faculty who make up the majority of the teaching staff. It makes associate faculty feel isolated and detached from the life of the community college. The lack of office space also makes it more difficult for faculty to meet



Associate faculty report that that the time spent traveling between community college jobs is "exhausting," and time spent traveling means time away from instruction.





Alexis Weisbrod, a dance instructor at Mt. San Jacinto Community College.

with students who need additional help outside of the classroom.³²

Associate faculty, in California and nationally, are often not paid for office hours or are paid for a very minimal number of office hours. This negatively impacts the ability of associate faculty to provide the kind of additional help outside of the classroom that many of their students need. Nationally, at community colleges only 15.7% report being paid for office hours, while 54.4% hold *unpaid office hours*. In California in 1997, the legislature established the Community-College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program in order to improve access to associate faculty for their students. The program pays for one office hour for every two classes, or 40 percent of a full-time assignment.³³ This means that the program does not benefit the many associate community college faculty members who teach one class at one community college. Additionally, because this program left it up to each community college district to opt in, the lack of paid office hours remains widespread. In 2001, 40% of community college districts reported compensating associate faculty for non-teaching instructional activities, including grading, preparing for class, and holding office hours.³⁴ In response to the survey conducted for this report, 34.8% of associate faculty respondents said they held paid office hours, while 65.2% did not.

In contrast, 58.1% of respondents held unpaid office hours, while 41.9% reported not holding unpaid office hours. Fifty percent of the associate faculty reported holding eight or more unpaid office hours. The fact that so many associate faculty members held unpaid office hours reflects their commitment to their students. In contrast, the lack of a universal policy of paying for associate faculty office hours reflects poorly on California's commitment to high quality education at the community colleges.

UNEQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

- ▶ “Part-time teaching doesn’t cover all of my expenses.”
- ▶ “I can’t survive on just my teaching salary.”
- ▶ “Teaching doesn’t pay enough to live.”
- ▶ “Need to make a living. \$35,000 is near poverty in the bay area (sic). It does not pay the bills. I cannot keep my head above water.”
- ▶ “My pay as a college instructor is not high enough for me to meet all my bills.”
- ▶ “I doubt my retirement pay will be enough to live on as my current salary is not enough to live on.”

Both nationally and in California, similarly qualified associate faculty earn less than half the pay of tenure-track and tenured faculty for doing the same work. The pay of associate faculty working at community colleges is significantly less than the pay of associate faculty at public four-year universities and private not-for-profit universities. These low-paid associate faculty members at community colleges serve student populations disproportionately comprised of low-income and minority students. Though some associate, part-time faculty teach as a supplement to their other primary work, many work other jobs only out of necessity due to their low pay as college teachers.

One associate faculty member reported, “My teaching salary is too low to live on,” in response to a survey question asking why respondents relied on non-teaching employment to

make a living. Responding to the same question, another associate faculty member wrote, “I couldn’t live on \$26,000/year with two small kids.”³⁵ The low pay of associate faculty, combined with the fact that most associate faculty do not receive health coverage or retirement benefits through their teaching employment, makes it challenging to make a living. Many associate faculty members find themselves living at or below the federal poverty line, and an increasing number of associate faculty rely on welfare to supplement their teaching income.

Nationally, for associate faculty the median pay per course is \$2,700. At community colleges, the pay is even less: the median pay in the fall of 2010 was \$2,250 per course.³⁶ According to the Coalition of the Academic Workforce, more than half of contingent faculty reported earning less than \$35,000/year, while two-thirds reported an annual income of less than \$45,000.³⁷ However, this is total personal income, and includes non-teaching related employment. If one considers just the annual income of associate faculty based on only teaching-related employment, according to a survey circulated by the American Federation of Teachers, a plurality (46%) of part-time faculty earn less than \$15,000 from teaching, with just 35% reporting earning more than that.³⁸

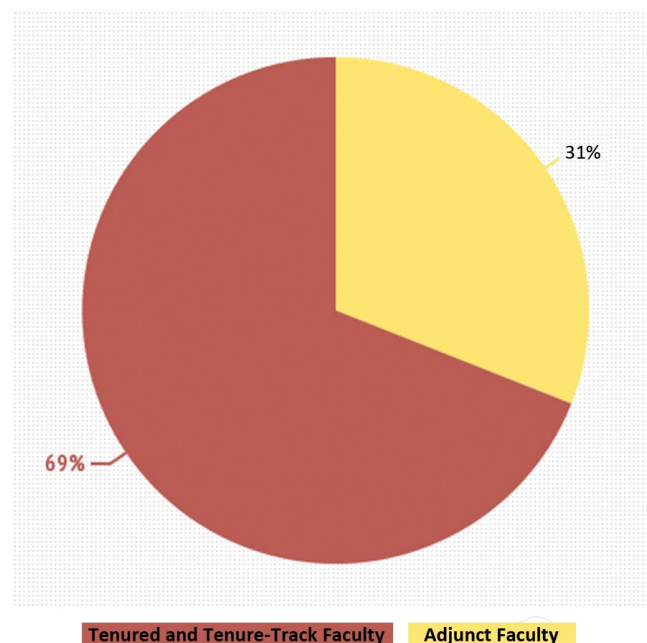
If a associate faculty member were able to obtain a full-time load of five classes per semester for the academic year, at only \$2,250 per course their gross annual teaching income would total just \$22,500. However, most associate community college faculty members do not teach a full-time load and make much less than this. A more common workload is two or three courses per semester, meaning four or six courses per academic year. A course load of six courses per academic year comes out to just \$13,500/year. The federal poverty level for a family of two is \$15,510, placing many associate faculty in poverty.³⁹

Compare this to the average annual salaries earned by tenured and tenure-track faculty nationally. At private research universities the average pay for tenured professors in 2012-2013 was \$167,118, while at public research universities the average pay for tenured faculty was \$123,393. The average pay across all ranks for faculty at private colleges was \$99,771, and at public colleges, it was \$80,578.⁴⁰ Given the huge disparities in pay between associate and tenured faculty and the fact that associate faculty far outnumber tenured faculty, however, this average pay across ranks tells an imprecise story: the well-paid tenured faculty making tens of thousands of dollars more than associate faculty per year slant the average pay across ranks upward.

Though associate faculty at community colleges in California are generally paid more than their counterparts nationally, their low

Both nationally and in California, similarly qualified associate faculty earn less than half the pay of tenure-track and tenured faculty for doing the same work.

FIGURE 5: CONTINGENT V. TENURED FACULTY AT CALIFORNIA’S COMMUNITY





Peggy McCormick (Geography) and John Martin (History), part-time faculty at Butte Community College.

pay must be considered in the context of the higher cost of living in many areas of California. Additionally, like the situation at the national level, the disparity between the pay of tenured faculty and associate faculty means that tenured faculty in California still make more than twice the total pay of similarly qualified associate faculty for doing essentially the same work.

The average pay per hour of in-class teaching for associate faculty at California's community colleges is \$66.58/hour, while the average annual salary of tenured and tenure-track faculty is \$85,897.⁴¹ Note that this hourly pay is only for the hours associate faculty spend *in class teaching*. It does not include time for class preparation, grading or office hours. In other words, converting associate faculty pay to average

pay per course would come out to \$3,595 per course.

The annual full-time associate faculty salary would be \$35,953/year, compared to \$85,897 for tenured and tenure-track faculty. Of course, most associate faculty are unable to obtain full-time work as community college instructors; but, even if they were able, they would be making only 30% of what tenured track faculty make for doing similar work. However, tenured faculty have non-teaching service responsibilities that should be taken into account.⁴² If we assume that 25% of their time is spent on service obligations, tenured and tenure-track faculty's average annual salary just from teaching would be \$64,422.75. This means that associate faculty members still only earn 55% of the salary of tenured faculty for teaching. If you consider the total compensation package (e.g. health and retirement benefits), and not just salary, the disparity between associate faculty and tenured faculty is much larger (see below). This reflects the systematic undervaluing of the teaching performed by associate faculty in comparison to tenure-track and tenured faculty.

Though the average pay for associate faculty at community colleges is \$66.58/hour (or \$35,953 for a full-time load), pay rates are determined by each community college district, and thus can vary widely (see Figure 6). Thirty-one community college districts pay less than \$60/hour of in-class teaching; 20 districts pay between \$60-70/hour; 9 districts pay between \$70-80/hour, while 8 districts pay more than \$80/hour. In other words, most community college districts actually pay much less than the average.

Not only that, but the vast majority of associate faculty, though they would prefer to work full-time, are unable to piece together a full-time teaching load; therefore, their annual salary from teaching is generally much less than the average annual salary for teaching a full-time load (\$35,953/year). Of the associate faculty at community colleges in California responding to the survey conducted for this report, 20.2% reported teaching one course in either the spring of 2013 or the fall of 2013; 28.1% taught two classes; 19.8% taught three classes; 9.8% taught four classes; 16.8% reported teaching five or more classes; and 5.5% taught no classes.⁴³ Figure 4 lists average annual salary according to the number of classes taught per year. Associate faculty teaching two classes per semester, and four classes per year make, on

“My teaching salary is too low to live on.” Another associate faculty member wrote, “I couldn’t live on \$26,000/year with two small kids.”

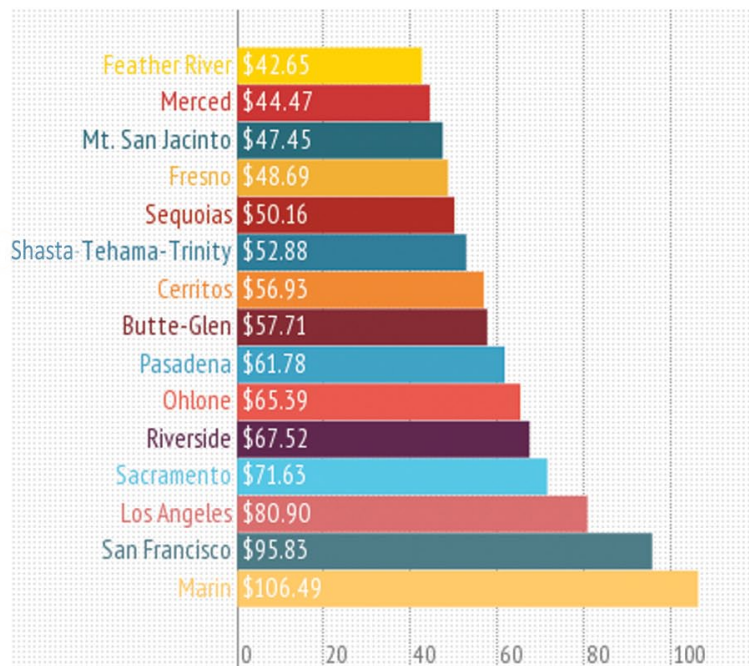
average, \$14,381.28. This places those who rely on a salary from teaching under the federal poverty level for a family of two, which is \$15,510 per year.

To put the pay of associate faculty at California's community colleges into perspective, it is instructive to compare their pay to administrator salaries and the pay earned by associate and tenured faculty at other institutions of public higher education in California (see Figure 2). The annual salary of the chancellor for California's community colleges, Bruce Harris, is \$198,500 per year plus benefits (see Figure 3).⁴⁴ Classified administrators working at community colleges in California make, on average, \$98,821/year. Not only that, but 43.58% of classified administrators make more than \$100,000, compared to 17.25% of tenured and tenure-track faculty who earn above \$100,000 per year.⁴⁵

At the University of California, in 2006-2007 the average annual salary for full professors was \$125,096; \$81,896 for associate professors; and \$72,876 for assistant professors.⁴⁶ The approximate annual salary for lecturers at UC Santa Cruz was \$42,000 in 2011.⁴⁷ Though the full-time pay rate of graduate student teaching assistants is \$33,939 for teaching one class per quarter in an academic year, TAs are restricted to teaching 20 hours per week. As a consequence, their annual salary comes out to \$16,969.50 per academic year.⁴⁸ In contrast, the current president of the University of California, ex-secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, makes \$570,000 per year. On top of her annual salary, she received a one-time moving cost of \$142,500, she receives an extra \$9,950/month for her housing costs, and annually an extra \$8,916 for car expenses. This does not include benefits such as health insurance and retirement benefits. At the California State University system, the average salaries by rank for professors in 2006-2007 were: \$89,421 for professors; \$70,194 for associate professors; \$60,186 for assistant professors; and \$44,132 for 'instructors.'⁴⁹ The annual salary of the CSU chancellor is \$380,000.⁵⁰

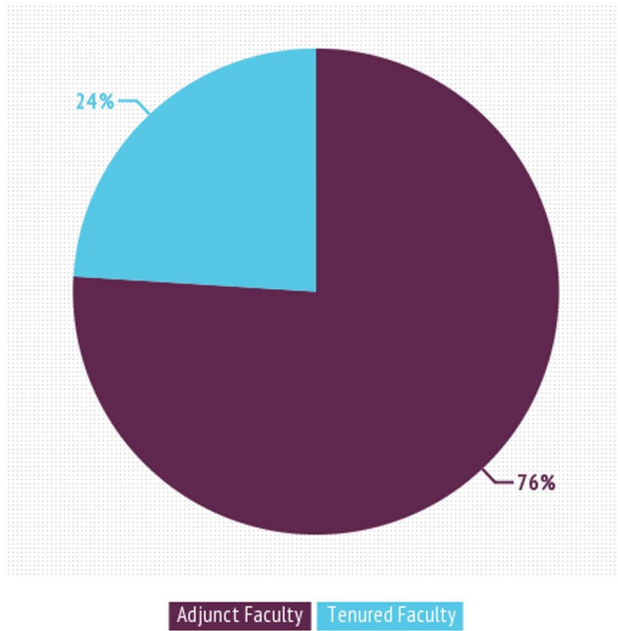
This data is significant because, 1) it reveals that the pay rate for associate faculty at community colleges is far below the rate paid to other associate and tenure-track instructors (including teaching assistants at the UC) at all levels of public higher education in California; and, 2) the data

FIGURE 6: RANGE IN AVERAGE HOURLY PAY: CONTINGENT FACULTY AT CALIFORNIA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES



Average pay per hour of in-class teaching, excluding preparation, grading time and office hours. Most classes consist of 3 hours of weekly in-class time.

FIGURE 7: RATIO OF CONTINGENT FACULTY TO TENURED AND TENURE-TRACK FACULTY NATIONALLY



Source: Coalition on the Academic Workforce, "A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members," June, 2012.

demonstrates that top administrators generally make far more money than educators. This data suggests, moreover, that there are two ways to remedy the low compensation paid to associate faculty at California's community colleges: 1) allocate state funding specifically to increase the salaries of associate faculty and mandate the opening up of more tenure-line faculty positions; and, 2) reconsider salary priorities within the various systems of public higher education, allocating less money for top administrators, in particular, and more money to associate instructors.

Salary is just one component compensation: health insurance and retirement benefits also comprise part of total compensation. While tenured and tenure-track faculty have access to health and retirement benefits, associate faculty at all institutions of higher education tell a different story. Nationally, though 77.4% of associate, part-time reported having access to health insurance, only 22.6% received insurance from their academic employer. Of this 22.6%, only 4.3% reported that

their health benefits were covered entirely by their academic employer; 14.6% said they shared payments for their health benefits with their academic employer; and 3.6% said that their employer provides access to health benefits, but they pay the cost of it out of pocket. Thirty-seven percent of associate faculty received health benefits through their partner or spouse, and 17.5% received health benefits from a non-academic employer.⁵¹ According to a 2010 survey conducted by the American Federation of Teachers, fewer associate faculty reported receiving benefits at community colleges, with only 16% receiving benefits.⁵²

In California, the state legislature attempted to provide some incentive to community college districts to provide health insurance to associate faculty. In 1996, the legislature established the Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance Program, which encourages community college districts to provide medical benefits to part-time faculty by reimbursing the district for up to one-half the cost of the benefits. The program only applies to faculty teaching at least a 40 percent workload (two three-unit classes per semester).⁵³ Despite the fact that the state is willing to offset half the costs of medical insurance for part-time associate faculty members, according to a 2001 report only 17% of part-time faculty reported receiving health benefits from their community college employer, while 58% received benefits from an alternative source. This means that a full 25% of associate faculty at California's community colleges did not have any health insurance.⁵⁴ More recent but less comprehensive data from 2013 about access to health insurance indicates that a similar number of associate faculty receive health insurance from their community college employer as they did in 2001.⁵⁵

Nationally, 41% of contingent, part-time respondents to a survey indicated that they have some access to retirement benefits through their academic employer. However, of that

figure, only 5.3% indicated that their employer paid for retirement, 26.9% reported that the cost of retirement benefits was shared with their academic employer, and 9.2% of respondents said that their academic employer provided access to retirement benefits but that they paid for those retirement benefits completely out of pocket.⁵⁶ However, in response to a survey question posed to associate faculty at California's community colleges asking whether or not their retirement benefits will be "sufficient to live on upon retirement," many report that their retirement benefits would in fact be inadequate.

For example, one person simply said, "College pays into fund. Will not be enough to live off of." Another person commented that her retirement benefits would be "seriously inadequate!! I'm 49 but have about \$40k in the bank." Another respondent reported that though their college pays a 4% matching grant into a retirement plan, upon retirement, "Primarily I will rely on my husband." Another commented, "I will need to continue working until I am 70 or until I drop dead before I receive sufficient retirement benefits from STRS (State Teachers Retirement System)." Another faculty member commented, "My retirement benefits are such that I will never be able to retire."⁵⁷

IT'S TIME TO VALUE OUR EDUCATORS

The associate faculty who make up 69% of the teaching workforce at community colleges in California are poorly compensated for their work. Their low pay makes it difficult to make a living in California. Most community colleges, moreover, despite a state-sponsored incentive program to do so, do not provide health insurance or satisfactory retirement benefits. As a result, one quarter of associate faculty have no health insurance, and many predict that they will not have enough money to live on at retirement. In addition to their poor compensation, the vast majority of associate faculty at community colleges in California have little to no job security, making their lives that much more economically precarious.

Despite their low compensation, the vast majority of associate faculty at California's community colleges find teaching the most satisfactory aspect of their jobs. In other words, they value their students and seek to provide high quality education to disproportionately under-served community college students under difficult circumstances. If the state of California values its educators at California's community colleges, policy makers must act to improve the working conditions and compensation for associate faculty.

Associate faculty, who make up the majority of the teaching workforce at California's community colleges, deserve job security, retirement and fair wages.



David Bacon, photo

NOTES

¹ Different terminology is used to refer to associate faculty. The use of “adjunct” is common, but given the majority-status of associate faculty the word “adjunct” is inaccurate. Associate faculty are central rather than peripheral to teaching at colleges across the U.S. The use of “part-time” to refer to associate faculty is also common and is often the official designation for associate faculty, though this term also seems imprecise given that many associate faculty actually work a full-time load. The word “contingent” refers to the insecurity very common in non-tenure-track associate faculty appointments.

² Claudio Sanchez, “The Sad Death Of An Adjunct Sparks A Labor Debate,” National Public Radio, September 22, 2013. <http://www.npr.org/2013/09/22/224946206/adjunct-professor-dies-destitute-then-sparks-debate>.

³ Frank Donoghue, *The Last Professors: The Corporate University and the Fate of the Humanities*, 1st edition (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), xvi.

⁴ Daniel Kovalik, “Death of an Adjunct,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 18, 2013, <http://www.post-gazette.com/stories/opinion/perspectives/death-of-an-adjunct-703773/#ixzz2fvTZmnKz>.

⁵ Community College League of California, “Fast Facts 2013,” <http://www.ccleague.org/files/public/FF2013.pdf>.

⁶ The Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW) describes itself as a “group of twenty-six higher education associations, disciplinary associations, and faculty organizations committed to working on the issues associated with deteriorating faculty working conditions and their effect on the success of college and university students in the United States” (Coalition on the Academic Workforce, “A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members,” June 2012, www.academicworkforce.org/CAW_portrait_2012.pdf).

⁷ CAW, “A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members.”

⁸ California Postsecondary Education Commission, “News Release: California Postsecondary Education Commission to close doors on November 18,” November 14, 2011, accessed on September 26, 2013. http://www.cpec.ca.gov/PressRelease/CPEC_Final_Release.pdf

⁹ This survey was sent out over email to faculty unions and faculty associations at community colleges across California, a number of which sent the survey out to their membership. It consists of both multiple choice and open-ended response questions.

¹⁰ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California’s Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

¹¹ Joe Berry, *Reclaiming the Ivory Tower: Organizing Adjuncts to Change Higher Education* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2005), 4.

¹² Steve Street, Maria Maisto, Esther Merves, and Gary Rhoades, for the Center for the Future of Higher Education, “Who is Professor ‘Staff’ And How Can This Person Teach So Many Classes?,” August 2012, [http://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/profstaff\(2\).pdf](http://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/profstaff(2).pdf).

¹³ See the American Association of University Professors Policy Statement, “Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure,” issued in 1940, found here: <http://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>

¹⁴ CAW, “Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members.”

¹⁵ Amy Liu, “Sources and Information: Community Colleges and Part-Time Faculty,” *New Directions for Community Colleges*, no. 140 (Winter 2007): 83.

¹⁶ American Association of University Professors, “The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2012-2013,” *Academe*, March-April 2013, <http://www.aaup.org/file/2012-13Economic-Status-Report.pdf>.

¹⁷ Robert Yoshioka, “Part-Time Faculty in California: Successes, Challenges, and Future Issues,” *New Directions for Community Colleges*, no. 140 (Winter 2007): 42.

¹⁸ Many contingent faculty are officially classified as “temporary” despite their long tenure as instructors.

¹⁹ Martin M. Goldstein, “Legislative History of ‘The 60% Law,’” California Part-Time Faculty Association, <http://www.smca.org/index.php/documents/43-part-time-postbox/274-recent-history-of-the-sixty-percent-law-m-goldstein>.

²⁰ Scott Jaschik, “California Raises Ceiling on Part Timers’ Work,” *Inside Higher Ed*, July 14, 2008, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/07/14/cap>.

²¹ Faculty Association of California Community Colleges Education Institute, “Faculty Profiles 2012, California Community Colleges,” http://www.faccc.org/images/2012facprofile_report_final.pdf.

²² Beginning in the late 1970s, the number of part-time faculty hired at community colleges in California increased rapidly. See various reports for historical data: California Postsecondary Education Commission, “Faculty Salaries in California’s Community Colleges, 1982-1983 Academic Year,” June 1983; California Postsecondary Education Commission, “Faculty Salaries in California’s Community Colleges, 1992-1993,” September 1993; California Postsecondary Education Commission, “Report on Part-Time Faculty Compensation in California Community Colleges,” April 2001. These reports can be found at <http://www.cpec.ca.gov>.

²³ Faculty Association of California Community Colleges Education Institute, “Faculty Profiles 2012, California Community Colleges.”

²⁴ California Postsecondary Education Commission, “Report on Part-Time Faculty Compensation in California Community Colleges,” April 2001. <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/completereports/2001reports/01-01.pdf>

²⁵ Sharon Took-Zozaya and Sadie Reynolds for the Cabrillo College Federation of Teachers, “A Profile of Cabrillo College’s Adjunct Faculty, Spring 2013,” <http://cftcabrillo.org/news/issues/adjunctsurveyreport051913.pdf>.

²⁶ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California’s Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

²⁷ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California's Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

²⁸ CAW, "Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members."

²⁹ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation, 2013.

³⁰ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California's Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

³¹ Center for the Future of Higher Education, "Who is Professor 'Staff' And How Can This Person Teach So Many Classes?", 5.

³² Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California's Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

³³ California State Auditor, "California Community Colleges: Part-Time Faculty Are Compensated Less than Full-Time Faculty for Teaching Activities," June 2000, <http://www.bsa.ca.gov/pdfs/reports/2000-107.pdf>.

³⁴ California Postsecondary Education Commission, "Report on Part-Time Faculty Compensation in California Community Colleges," 2001.

³⁵ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California's Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

³⁶ AAUP, "Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2012-2013."

³⁷ CAW, "Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members."

³⁸ American Federation of Teachers, "A National Survey of Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty," *American Academic*, Vol. 2 (March 2010), http://www.aft.org/pdfs/highered/aa_partimefaculty0310.pdf.

³⁹ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, "2013 Poverty Guidelines," <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/13poverty.cfm#thresholds>.

⁴⁰ AAUP, "Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2012-2013."

⁴¹ All Faculty Association Santa Rosa Junior College, "2013 Salary Study." Based on faculty salary schedules published by each community college district on 12/15/12, the study can be found here: http://www.santarosa.edu/afa/Contract/Statewide_Study/2013_AFA_Study.pdf.

⁴² The non-teaching responsibilities of tenured and tenure-track faculty include attending departmental meetings, curriculum development, and committee work, among other things.

⁴³ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California's Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

⁴⁴ Terence Chea, "California Community Colleges Names New Chancellor," *Associated Press*, September 27, 2012, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/california-community-colleges-names-new-chancellor>.

⁴⁵ California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, "Report on Staffing for Fall 2012," http://employeeata.cccco.edu/statewide_summary_12.pdf.

⁴⁶ California Postsecondary Education Commission, "Faculty Salaries at California Public Universities, 2007-2008," <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/completereports/2007reports/07-15.pdf>

⁴⁷ University of California Data Analysis, <http://ucpay.globl.org/>

⁴⁸ Salary Scale, Table 18, Student Titles, Teaching Assistant and Equivalent, Other, 2011, http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel/_files/1112/table18.pdf.

⁴⁹ Larry Gordon, "UC leases housing at \$9,950 a month for president Napolitano," *Los Angeles Times*, September 15, 2013, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-uc-rental-20130916,0,4554134.story>.

⁵⁰ Tyler Kingkade, "Timothy P. White, New CSU Chancellor, Requests Pay Cut to Balance Budget," *Huffington Post*, November 15, 2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/15/timothy-p-white-csu-chancellor-salary-cut_n_2136625.html.

⁵¹ CAW, "Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members."

⁵² AFT, "A National Survey of Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty."

⁵³ California State Auditor, "California Community Colleges: Part-Time Faculty Are Compensated Less than Full-Time Faculty for Teaching Activities," June 2000.

⁵⁴ California Postsecondary Education Commission, "Report on Part-Time Faculty Compensation in California Community Colleges."

⁵⁵ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California's Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.

⁵⁶ CAW, "Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members."

⁵⁷ Survey of Working Conditions and Compensation of Associate Faculty at California's Community Colleges, 2013, Conducted by Sara R. Smith.



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