

# The Voice

Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College • Parity & Fairness Through Advocacy



## LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS



Our theme for this year is “Finding Solutions.” At the Part-Time Faculty Association we are, and have always been, committed to finding solutions to the problems we face. We are dealing with declining budgets and skyrocketing enrollments. (The

most recent figures we have seen indicate enrollment is up 11.4% at Allan Hancock College, and in other community colleges in the state it is even higher) In these challenging times, how do we continue to pursue our goals, especially that of reaching parity?

Simply pointing out that a problem exists is not enough. We have to be willing to help find answers as well. And that is precisely what we intend to do in the weeks and months ahead.

—Mark Miller

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# Welcome to the Spring semester

**MARK JAMES MILLER, PFA President**

## Welcome Back!

As always, there is a great deal to cover in this, the first edition of *The Voice* in the New Year.

## Part-Time Orientation a success

On January 22, for the second time, the Part-Time Faculty Association took part in the New and Returning Part-Time Faculty Orientation. I was able to give an update on our Association's present situation and where we intend to go from here. We are happy to be part of the program and feel it represents a positive step forward.

## AFT Higher Education Program and Policy Council meeting

From January 23—25 I attended the AFT's Higher Education Program and Policy Council meeting in Washington,

educational system declined from 33% to 27% of the total. The greatest loss was in community colleges, where the figure fell from 21% to 18%. At the same time, however, the number of administrators increased by 41%.

This is not happy news. The question is: What can be done? The problem is huge—bigger than Santa Maria, bigger than California—it is nationwide. But again the question returns: Is there anything we can do about it?

Perhaps the first step is to increase awareness. The public in general does not know about this (neither do students). Ask the average person and they will likely tell you they think most of the instructors at Allan Hancock College, or any other college or university, are full-time. If they have children in college or approaching college age,

national rather than a local problem, you might want to check this blog out.

## Bargaining update

Slowly but surely we are working toward a conclusion of this year's round of off-year negotiations. The attitude on both sides is open and optimistic. We are confident that the final result will make our collective bargaining agreement better and stronger for our members.

## State budget workshop

On January 28, Gary Aston and I traveled to Ventura to hear a presentation

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**From 1997-2007, the number of Full-Time, Tenure-Track instructors in the entire U.S. higher educational system declined from 33% to 27% of the total. The greatest loss was in community colleges, where the figure fell from 21% to 18%. At the same time, however, the number of administrators increased by 41%.**

DC. While the weather was cold, the gathering was warm and the conversation often lively. I was struck, as I always am at these meetings, by the similarity in the stories I hear of part-time and contingent faculty. From Alaska to Florida the story is the same: Part-timers report disparity in pay, lack of benefits, inadequate office space, and above all, the increase in the use (and sometimes abuse) of part-time instructors.

In fact, the latter point is becoming one of the dominant issues in all discussions of higher education. Despite more consciousness of the problem, the over-reliance on part-time faculty, non-tenured full time faculty, and graduate students continues to increase. In the 10 year period from 1997-2007, the number of Full-Time, Tenure-Track instructors in the entire U.S. higher

they know the cost of higher education is going up, fast getting to the point where education may be out of reach for middle-class families. So one way to begin is to start letting people know that while they are paying more to send Johnnie or Janie to college, the system they are sending them to is mired in an over-reliance on contingent faculty.

## Want to tell your story?

Putting a human face on a story is the best way to make it seem real. (Remember the faces of the victims of Hurricane Katrina.) AFT has a Web blog called FACE, at [www.aftface.org](http://www.aftface.org), that is actively seeking stories of part-time faculty, the challenges they face and what they are doing about them. If you have a story to share, or would like to read more about the issue of part-time instructors as a

## The Voice

Volume 11, Number 5

*The Voice* is published by the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College, Local 6185, California Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The PFA's goal is to attain respect, achieve parity, and improve working conditions for our bargaining unit members.

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# Parsing parity for part-timers

The statistics show clearly what is happening to higher education throughout the country: less and less full-time tenured teachers with reasonable salaries and attendant benefits, more and more part-time teachers with lower (usually much lower) salaries and few if any benefits. Such a system penalizes both students and teachers and cannot be sustained without increasingly negative consequences to both. What to do?

The Part Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College was created by part-timers with the hope of dealing with this problem. Our first aim was to achieve parity: equal pay and equal treatment for equal work. While we have improved our situation in certain important respects and have established a voice that school authorities are obliged to listen to, we are still far from our goal of parity.

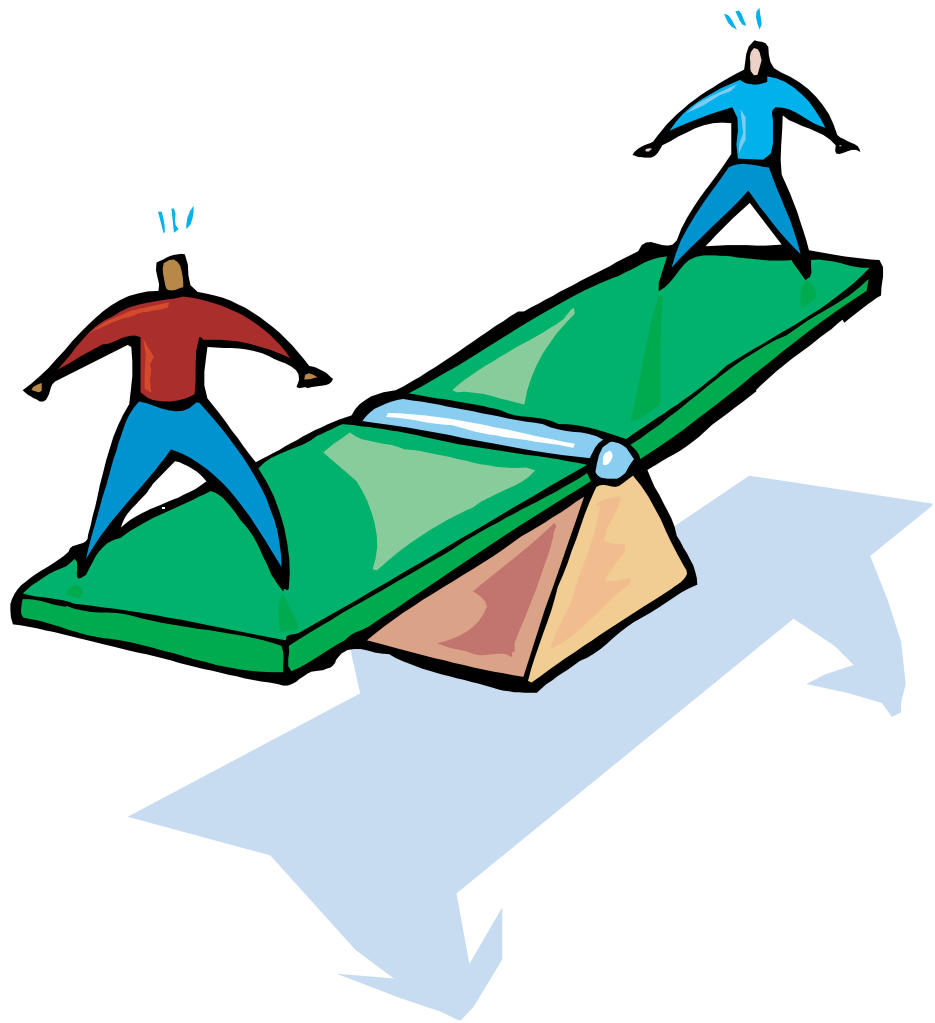
How can we get to parity? Here are a couple of approaches that have either been tried or are being seriously proposed. We invite you to offer others.

## Parity of salary and benefits

Recognition that parity must include *both* salary and benefits, that part-time teachers should receive exactly the same pay, including benefits, per class as full-time teachers with the same qualifications. They should also have the same responsibilities.

The statistics show clearly what is happening to higher education throughout the country: less and less full-time tenured teachers with reasonable salaries and attendant benefits, more and more part-time teachers with lower (usually much lower) salaries and few if any benefits.

The improvement of part-time salaries and benefits should never be at the expense of lowered salaries for full-timers. Clearly this can only be done if more money becomes available to higher educational institutions for part-time faculty salaries and benefits (highly unlikely) or if less money is spent in non-teaching areas, namely in administrative costs. One proposal is that administrative costs for higher education should be capped at a certain percent-



age, somewhere between five and ten percent has been suggested, and that the

## Parity of job security

Recognition that part-time teachers should not only have parity of salaries and responsibilities, but also parity of job security. A large community college in British Columbia dealt with this problem head-on. They simply got rid of the division of faculty into full-timers and part-timers. Everybody who teaches is faculty. Pay, benefits, and responsibilities are proportional. The big stumbling block to the adoption of this system here is health care costs (in Canada there is universal health care) which most higher educational institutions are simply unwilling to pay, though some do. (How do some do it when Hancock can't?) Of course if California goes to a universal health care system, this problem will simply disappear.

—Roberto Armstrong

## State budget workshop

*Continued from page 2*

on the state budget by CFT President Marty Hittelman. About 30 leaders from CFT locals in Ventura, Santa Barbara, and Lompoc attended. The continuing theme from the CFT leadership is that our state needs to do more than apply band-aids and stopgap measures to the recurring budget problems. Long-term solutions have to be found. The CFT leadership has a number of proposals it is presenting to lawmakers in Sacramento. Go to [www.cft.org](http://www.cft.org) to view these.

### New meeting day

For the rest of the Spring Semester, we will be holding our regular executive board meetings on Wednesdays rather than Thursdays. The time will remain at 4:00 p.m. As always, members are welcome!

### Surveys

Information from and about our members is vital for us as we seek to improve working conditions for part-time faculty. In the near future we will be asking you to fill out a couple of (brief, I promise) surveys that will help us a great deal. Please take the time to fill them out and return them to us. A few years ago we did a survey of our members asking how many had health benefits. We received a wonderful response and the information we got from it was helpful in assessing how the part-time instructors at Allan Hancock College deal with the issue of health care. So please, once again, take some time to answer these questions. All answers are treated confidentially, and privacy is always respected.



### Teachers in action

Do you have a picture of yourself, or another teacher, at work with his or her students? If so, we would love to see it for possible inclusion in our newsletter. A picture, as we all know, is worth a thousand words, and a picture of a teacher in the classroom while on the job will help us to increase understanding of what teaching really is. So if you have a picture of a teacher at work and would like to share it with us, please contact our office at 805-352-0145 or by e-mail at [ahcpfa@verizon.net](mailto:ahcpfa@verizon.net).

### A new feature "Things to Think About"

As I said in the cover page article, our theme for this year is going to be "Finding Solutions." When I teach persuasive

writing I tell my students you have to do more than just complain about a problem—you need to present a solution as well. As part of that effort at finding solutions, we are instituting a new feature in our newsletter, "Things To Think About," in which we will present facts, figures, statistics, and information relating to part-time issues that we feel will either call attention to the issues we are dealing with or will present ideas that will help us as we search for solutions.

### New Members

- Marianne Angel
- LeeAnne Del Rio
- Eugene Slattery

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