

**2018 Best Employment Practices For  
Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty  
Resolution 17-03-22**

**Workgroup  
Additional Faculty Perspectives on Best Practices  
December 2018**

On March 23, 2017 the State Board approved and adopted Resolution 17-03-22 to improve student outcomes through continued support of the best practice principles affecting the employment of part-time/adjunct faculty. The resolution stated, in part, "...the State Board shall convene and facilitate a workgroup that includes faculty, faculty union representatives and college administrators to draft collective bargaining language reflecting the best practice principles that local bargainers may use in their negotiations."

While the faculty and administration representatives on the Best Employment Practices for Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty workgroup were able to agree on many things, the faculty representatives had a number of additional points that we believe are important for local negotiators, the SBCTC system, and the State of Washington Legislature.

This report presents these additional considerations and recommendations of the faculty representatives to the workgroup, organized by Best Practice. Those elements of the discussions that were agreed to by both faculty and administration are in the main report and are not repeated here.

This additional report is best used as a supplement to the main report.

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## I. Best Employment Principles

***Best Practice 1: Salary. Part-time faculty should be paid a rate equal to that paid full-time faculty having the same qualifications and experience for doing the equivalent instructional and non-instructional work.***

### Consideration:

At many of our colleges, a 2-tiered faculty structure has resulted in an inequitable pay gap between part-time and full-time faculty. Part-time faculty are paid at a considerably lower rate than their full-time counterparts, despite sharing the same professional responsibilities and qualifications. Every effort should be made at the state and local levels to eliminate that gap.

The 2-tiered system can lead to the perception by part-time faculty that non-instructional work, such as office hours and program support, must be performed without pay in order to protect their continued employment. This perception makes part-time faculty vulnerable to exploitation. Federal law requires paying part-time faculty for the actual work they perform.

Pay inequities and workload limitations compel many part-time faculty to take on extra courses and/or to work at multiple institutions, leaving less time for student support. State Board research demonstrates that the resulting “lack of connectedness” between faculty and students is detrimental to student success.

The low pay offered to part-time faculty hinders the ability of colleges to attract and retain the highly qualified diverse group part-time instructors that the students need.

### Recommendations to the College Districts and SBCTC:

- Contribute local funds to achieve pay parity.

### Recommendations to Local Negotiators:

- There should be clearly established part-time faculty compensation for:
  - Continuing Education teaching
  - Under-enrolled classes (e.g., per capita course compensation)
  - Over-enrolled classes
  - Teaching an overload
  - Cancelled classes
  - Extra grading required of gen ed courses
  - Off-campus clinical visits
  - Substituting
  - Developing new (online) courses or converting an existing course to online or hybrid
  - Providing disability accommodations
  - Full-time temporary positions (establish a minimum salary)
  - Terminal Degrees
- Ensure eligibility for part-timers for re-assignment time
- Establish pay dates that reimburse part-time faculty within 2 weeks of worked performed

- Pro-rata pay tied to instructional workload threshold
- Additional pay for specialized/high demand skilled faculty
- Part-time turnover should go to part-time pay increases
- Tie part-time faculty pay rates to percentages of specified steps on the full-time faculty salary schedule. This explicit link between the two pay schedules ensures that the pay gap between part-time and full-time faculty does not get bigger and can be a subject of bargaining.
- Ensure inclusion of adjunct faculty on bargaining teams.

***Best Practice 2: Benefit Participation. Eligible Part-time faculty should receive all state mandated benefits, and college provided employee benefits proportionate to those received by full-time faculty.***

Consideration:

Eligibility for benefits is a key concern for many part-time faculty. Criteria for eligibility should be designed to accommodate the wide variety of part-time faculty work assignment patterns.

***Best Practice 3: Faculty Mix. The ratio of full- to part-time faculty at each college district should be based upon program and student need. The funding necessary to improve services to students through increasing courses taught by full-time faculty should be provided by the Legislature.***

Consideration:

In many of our colleges, part-time faculty out-number full-time faculty, may teach a majority of classes, and in some departments may be the only faculty teaching specific subjects. College administrators cite quarter-to-quarter fluctuations in student enrollment and course offerings as justification to continue the current mix of faculty. However, SBCTC's own research has determined that the overuse of contingent faculty undermines student success.

The pay inequities and chronic underemployment that result from an intensive use of part-time faculty compels many of these faculty to take on extra courses and/or to work at multiple institutions, leaving less time for student support. Research demonstrates that the resulting "lack of connectedness" between faculty and students is detrimental to student success. "Lack of connectedness" occurs at the collegial level as well, marginalizing part-time faculty from what should be a viable professional career.

Recommendations to the College System:

- Communicate the rationale behind the need to increase the full-time to part-time faculty ratio to policy makers, system administrators, and college administrators.
- Continue requesting funds to increase the percentage of courses taught by full-time instructors. Stakeholders should actively support this request.

Recommendations to Local Negotiators:

- Faculty mix is a legitimate subject of local negotiation. Progressive changes over time can be an effective approach to working toward faculty mix goals.

***Best Practice 4: Initial Recruitment and Selection. Part-time faculty should be initially selected through a structured professional process that is based on the same or similar criteria as applied to full-time faculty.***

Consideration:

A rigorous hiring process for part-time faculty is key to ending the discrimination these faculty members face from administrators and sometimes from their tenured colleagues. The false perception that part-time faculty are less-qualified or skilled can follow a person through their teaching career, closing off opportunities to become full-time.

***Best Practice 5: Job Security. Upon successfully completing a review period, regularly employed part-time faculty should achieve a form of job security.***

Consideration:

There are varying levels of job security.

- A right of first refusal to assignments gives first consideration to certain part-time faculty. Priority for upcoming assignments goes to the eligible faculty before going to those without the status.
- A right of first refusal may specify that part-time faculty have priority for a teaching assignment before full-time faculty get moonlight assignments and before other categories of employees are hired as faculty to teach.
- A multi-quarter or annual contract gives job security for a defined period of time that is longer than the usual quarter-to-quarter hiring practice.
- A guaranteed workload for an upcoming quarter or longer is short-term job security. Workload and salary are assured for a specified period of time.

There are important considerations for multi-quarter or annual contracts:

- The number of these contracts awarded should be carefully planned to reward deserving faculty and to be fiscally prudent.
- These contracts should consider not only a teaching assignment but the maintenance of benefits.
- The faculty need to be fully-informed of the conditions of these contracts before accepting one. Conditions should include, but are not limited to: whether the contract meets the legal definition of “reasonable assurance,” whether the contract can be withdrawn by either party and under what limitations, whether the contract has the

potential to impact the right to apply for Unemployment Benefits, whether non-instructional duties are included in the contract.

- These contracts should not infringe upon other faculty rights in the CBA.
- RCW 50.44.053 covers the legal definition of a “contract” and the current language on “reasonable assurance.”

Recommendations to the College System:

- Review research addressing the impact of job security for part-time faculty on student success.

Recommendations to Local Negotiators:

- While there appears to be a core of part-time instructors that regularly teach, college districts are reluctant to commit to employment beyond one quarter – citing fluctuating enrollments, difficulty in tracking instructor work patterns, and a need to retain flexibility. The system can make improvements without losing flexibility. The system can also reap financial rewards by reducing turnover of faculty and reducing hours spent by staff on work related to faculty turnover.

***Best Practice 6: Performance Review. Part-time faculty should be evaluated using comparable criteria, standards and procedures which are applied to evaluate full-time faculty.***

Consideration:

Part-time faculty evaluation is part of accreditation standards. While colleges are focused on those requirements, there are significant opportunities to improve part-time faculty evaluation processes, content, administration, and appropriate use of results.

Recommendations to Local Negotiators:

- Evaluation process considerations include
  - Who develops and/or updates the evaluation criteria and measurements
  - Training for those conducting part-time faculty evaluations
  - How often student evaluations will be conducted and for what classes
- Evaluation intent considerations include
  - Ensuring a standard of instructional quality and professional conduct
  - Supporting good teaching
  - Providing clear expectations
  - Encouraging continuous improvement
  - Determining professional development needs and funding priorities

***Best Practice 7: Professional Development. Colleges should assist part-time faculty to identify and address their development needs in ways which are accessible and affordable.***

*No additional consideration or recommendations.*

***Best Practice 8: Support Services. Part-time faculty should be treated with the same professionalism as full-time faculty and provided the necessary support services to do their jobs.***

Consideration:

Part-time faculty fulfill the same instructional role as full-time faculty. Institutional attitudes and practices with respect to part-time faculty need to recognize the contributions of these faculty in their professional roles. A cultural shift may be necessary in some cases.

Recommendations to Local Negotiators:

- Include part-time faculty representatives in groups that plan or evaluate faculty or employee support services.
- Give specific weight to part-time faculty needs in designing support services and the ways in which faculty access those services.
- Ensure inclusion of adjunct faculty on bargaining teams to ensure that their support needs are met.

***Best Practice 9: Communications. Part-time faculty should be afforded easy access to communications from the college and have the means to communicate with the college community.***

Consideration:

Part-time faculty are an integral part of instructional operations. College communications will be more effective and better received if communication content and design takes the wide variety of part-time faculty into account.

Recommendations to Local Negotiators:

The full text of RCW 41.56 reads

*The employer must provide the exclusive bargaining representative reasonable access to new employees of the bargaining unit for the purposes of presenting information about their exclusive bargaining representative to the new employee. The presentation may occur during a new employee orientation provided by the employer, or at another time mutually agreed to by the employer and the exclusive bargaining representative.*

***Best Practices Principle 10: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Washington Community & Technical Colleges are committed to advancing inclusive excellence by promoting equitable policies and practices to dismantle systemic barriers created by oppression, power, and privilege in order to build and sustain institutions that ensure students' success and honor the unique identity and lived experiences of our diverse community.***

Consideration:

Equity, diversity, and inclusion with respect to part-time faculty deserve the same level of attention as any other employee group.

***Best Practice 11: Best Practices Report. The best practice principles should be used in making state and local decisions and agreements affecting part-time faculty. The "Part-Time Faculty Best Practices Report" will be published and distributed to all college presidents, human resources directors, trustees, and local faculty union presidents. At least annually, each college should conduct a review of their actions related to achievement of these best practices.***

Consideration:

Part-time faculty should be directly involved in the data collection related to any reporting on these Best Practices.