

4C's Part-Timers Committee

Meeting of November 5, 2011

Attendance: Robyn Brooks, Lorraine Li, Fred Odell, Greg Hager, John Allen, Rebecca Cormier, Bill Searle (chair)

The chair called the meeting to order and we all indicated our happiness at meeting in a place with lights and heat! We also welcomed Fred from Manchester, and John indicated that he is the official representative from Housatonic now.

Issues facing part-timers. We continued our regular discussion of the many issues facing part-time faculty and staff. It is unfortunate that we do not have contract negotiations for a number of years because some of these issues will require collective bargaining resolution. All members are requested to discuss issues with part-timers on their local campus before our February meeting. The February meeting will be devoted to discussing these issues with ideas about how to proceed without doing collective bargaining.

Part-time faculty office hours. As a reminder, last month Bill reported that he has filed a grievance at Asnuntuck regarding the administration's assertion that they can require an hour of office hours per 3-credit course. The grievance has not been resolved. Bill thanked the committee for the extent of their input and ideas. It may be that two other colleges have a similar requirement, although faculty at Middlesex indicate they have not heard of it. At Manchester, the dean took back the "one hour of office hours" requirement last spring, although they have a form that requests faculty to indicate their office hours.

Excellent points brought up, in addition to the fact that the collective bargaining agreement does not require a specific amount of time, or even say that part-time faculty should have office hours. Among the key points were that many part-timers maintain a course website that gives students regular information in a better fashion than office hours. Additionally, many part-time faculty regularly read and respond to email communications. It would be unfortunate in the extreme if we were limited to both read and respond to these for an hour or less per week.

We also discussed the ramifications of this issue for other aspects of work that part-time faculty do, and the difficulty of implementing any rigid policy. In addition, we briefly discussed ideas about how part-time faculty maintain contact with students now, and the best ways of doing so.

Based upon the importance of the issue, and the fact that colleges seem to be developing forms that at least strongly imply that part-time faculty are supposed to have office hours, the committee will continue to discuss this issue. We will also bring it to the attention of the full Delegate Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Searle
Acting Secretary

November 7, 2011