

# A Profile of Cabrillo College's Adjunct Faculty Spring 2013

Sharon Took-Zozaya and Sadie Reynolds, CCFT

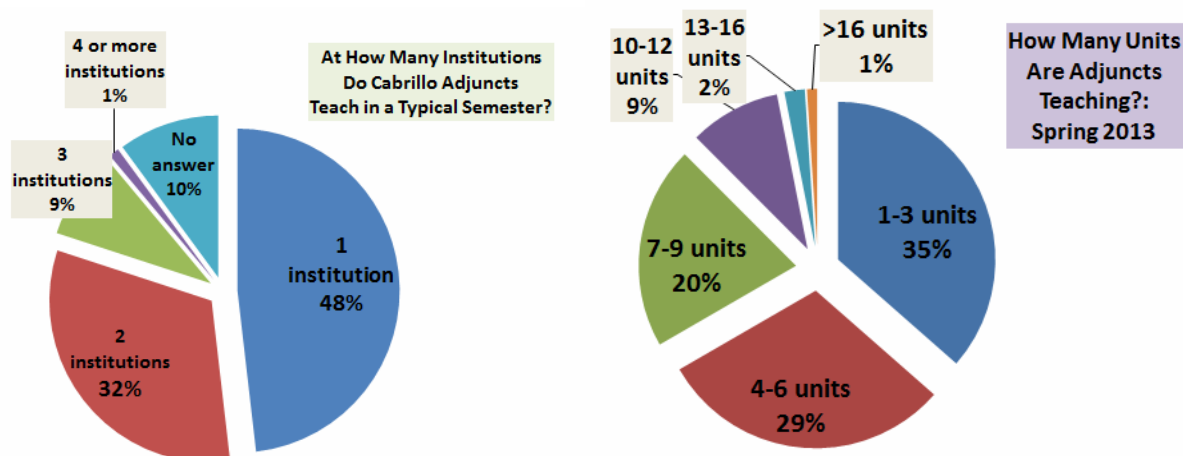
**INTRODUCTION and BARGAINING UNIT OVERVIEW:** This survey provides detailed insight into current conditions affecting part-time faculty at Cabrillo College. We undertook this survey to obtain information that could inform contract negotiations and to provide the entire faculty and administration with a window into adjuncts' concerns and experiences.

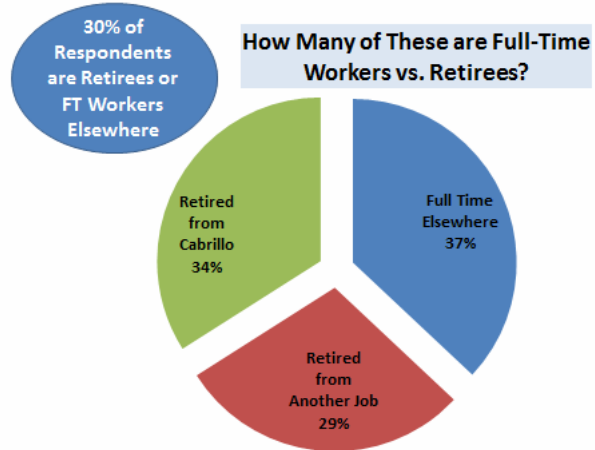
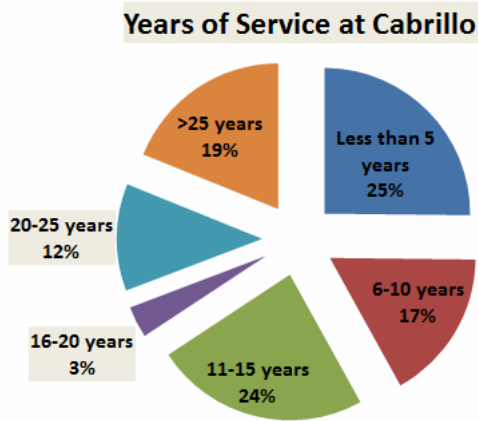
Cabrillo currently employs 588 faculty, of whom two-thirds (387) are adjuncts. Of these, 145 completed this survey. This thirty-seven percent response rate is high compared to previous adjunct surveys at Cabrillo and we are delighted that so many busy people took the time to respond. Quantitative data in the form of graphs shown below indicate some clear trends. We also report respondents' qualitative comments in summary form. Some representative comments appear throughout this report in italics and a complete list appears at the end.

## KEY FINDINGS:

- Fifty-eight percent of respondents have taught at Cabrillo for more than ten years.
- Fifty-one percent of respondents said Cabrillo is their primary source of income.
- Forty-one percent of respondents have experienced unit cuts in the last few years.
- Forty-two percent usually receive fewer units than they would like to teach.
- Thirty percent of respondents are retirees or full-timeworkers elsewhere.
- Twenty-eight percent either have no health insurance or pay for it out-of-pocket.

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORY AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS:** Cabrillo adjuncts' employment at other colleges and universities includes: CSUMB, DeAnza, DeVry, Gavilan, Hunting College, Mission College, MPC, SJSU, UCSC, West Valley College and others. "Other employment" includes a wide variety of employed and self-employed positions such as: Bookkeeper, Building Contractor, Choreographer, Consultant, Dentist, Fire Fighter, Human Resources Specialist, Landscape Architect, Musician, Nurse, Physical Therapist, Resort Chef, Teacher, University Professor, Videographer, Visual Artist, Web Designer, Writer, and others. Additional working hours range from two hours a week to full-time, at Cabrillo and elsewhere. Eighteen (twelve percent) said they are also self-employed.





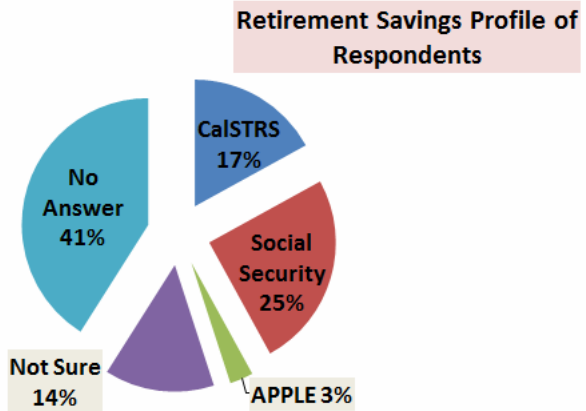
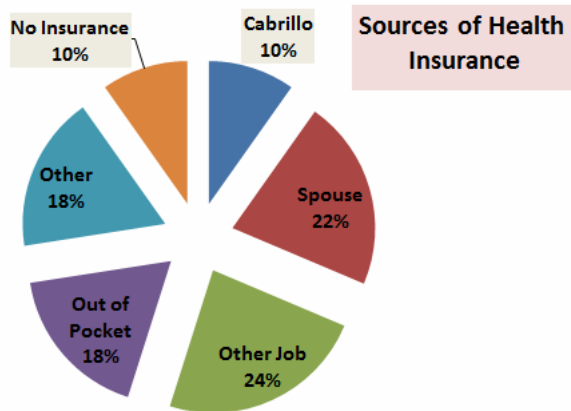
## BENEFITS

**Health Insurance:** Twenty-eight percent either have no health insurance or pay for it out-of pocket. The main responses to what would be required for them to have health insurance are: a lower threshold to establish eligibility, a lower unit load required to maintain eligibility, and affordability. There is a need for insurance stability. Suggestions to increase the percentage of adjunct faculty coverage are:

- Establish a low cost buy-in option for those who are ineligible due to lower unit loads
- Lower the unit load requirement for eligibility
- Lower the unit load requirement to maintain insurance

*“Health benefits for spouse and children would be great. I have to buy insurance out of pocket for family, taking up 25% of my income.”*

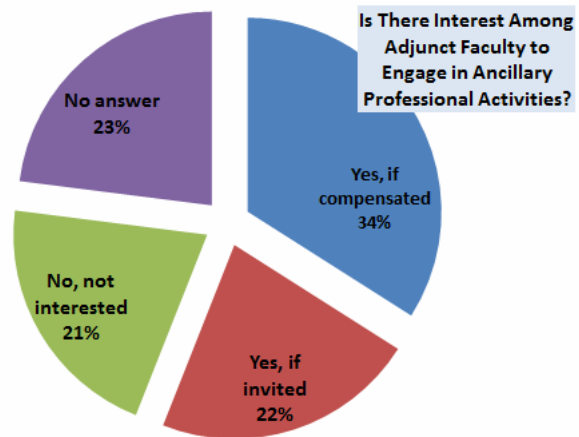
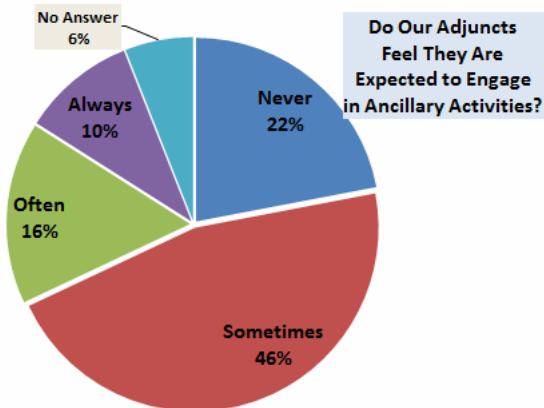
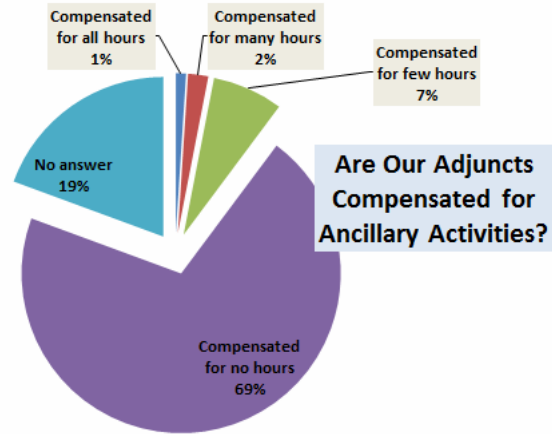
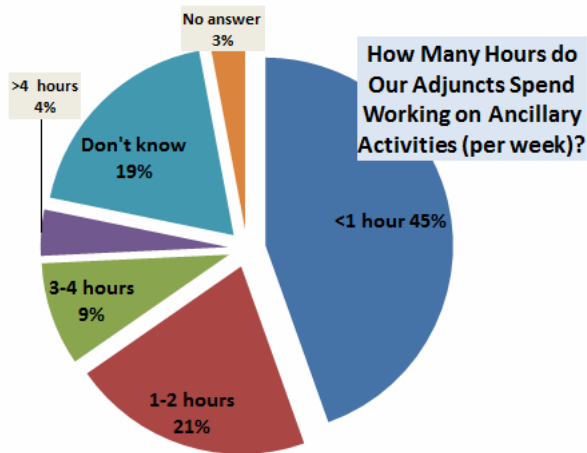
## RETIREMENT



## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES IN DEPARTMENTS, DIVISIONS, AND COLLEGE-WIDE

Seventy-four percent of adjuncts participate in non-coursework related professional activities at Cabrillo. Sixty-nine percent of this work is not compensated. Ancillary activities include: College governance and hiring committees, student advising, organizing special events for students, department and division meetings, curriculum development, SLO work outside of normal coursework, etc.

Some mentioned that compensation was not adjusted upwards when the additional work required to assess and report on SLOs was added to expected workloads

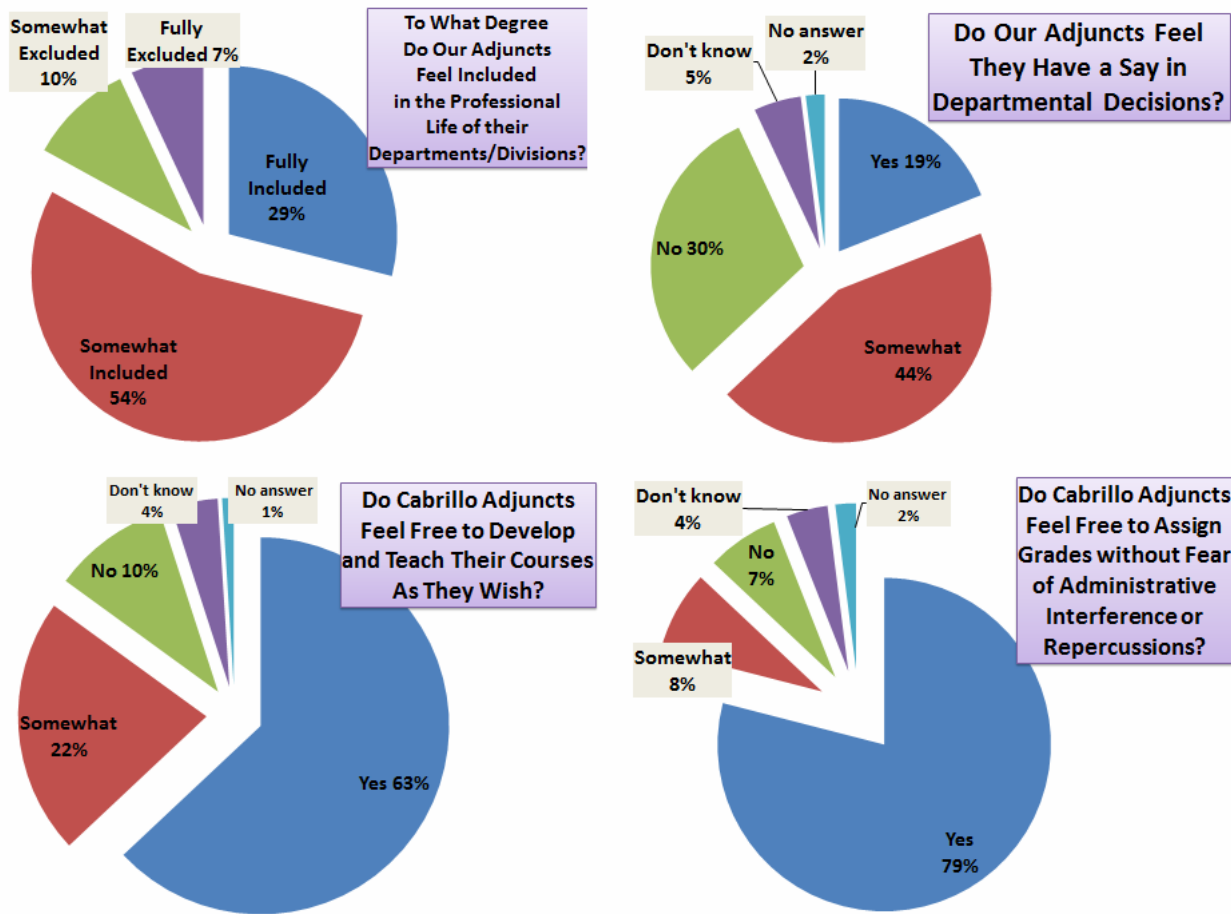


## PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Sixty-three percent reported that they are free to develop and teach courses as they wish, while twenty-two percent said they are somewhat free to do so. Seventy-nine percent said they are free to assign grades without external interference and eight percent answered 'somewhat'. This indicates that most faculty experience academic freedom in these particular areas.

However, a handful of faculty said they had been directly asked by colleagues or department chairs to change low grades or not to assign them in the first place. A comment was also made that new state priorities on student success create undue pressure on faculty to pass students.

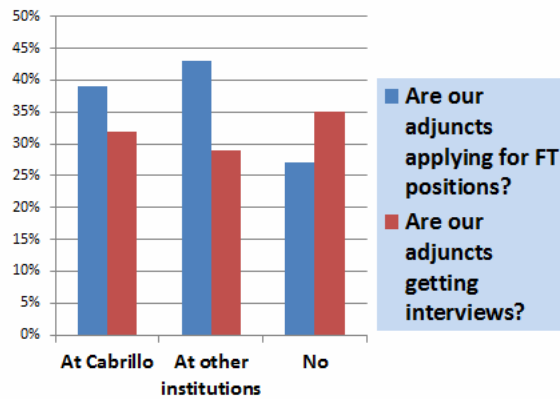
While most respondents said they feel ‘somewhat’ to ‘fully’ included in the professional life and decision-making of their departments, over one third did not. Thirty percent don’t believe they have a say in decision-making and five percent are not sure. Only thirty-six percent reported voting in the last election for their program chair and some didn’t know that this was an option. Since adjuncts make up about two-thirds of our faculty, departments should consider finding ways to include more adjunct input to departmental decisions.



**FULL-TIME ASPIRATIONS:** Seven respondents said they believed they had experienced discrimination in hiring procedures. Age was the most commonly cited factor. Other factors mentioned were: disabilities; being labeled permanently as ‘adjunct’; gender; and other factors officially external to the hiring process. Some reported that they had not been interviewed for full-time positions in their departments, despite consistently positive evaluations over a period of years. A number of respondents mentioned that they feel discouraged about applying for full-time positions. Some of these said they have stopped and some are still applying. Sample comments:

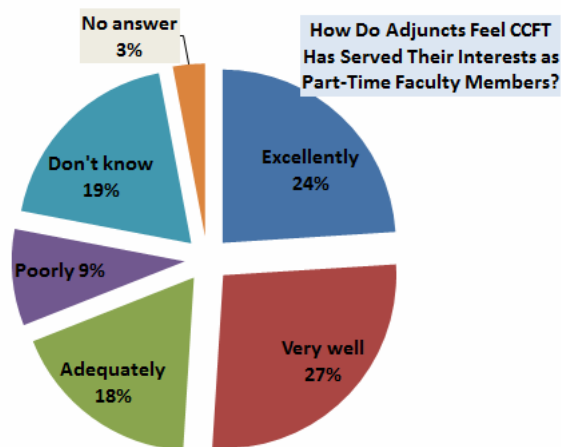
- *I've been an adjunct for more than 20 years and I think hiring committees now see me as solely adjunct material.*

- *It seems the department is interested in “new blood” rather than hiring experienced part-timers. Very disheartening!*
- *For every full-time teaching position in my field there are probably 75 qualified applicants. I'm trying to keep hope alive, but . . .*
- *PhDs are usually hired, not Masters level.*

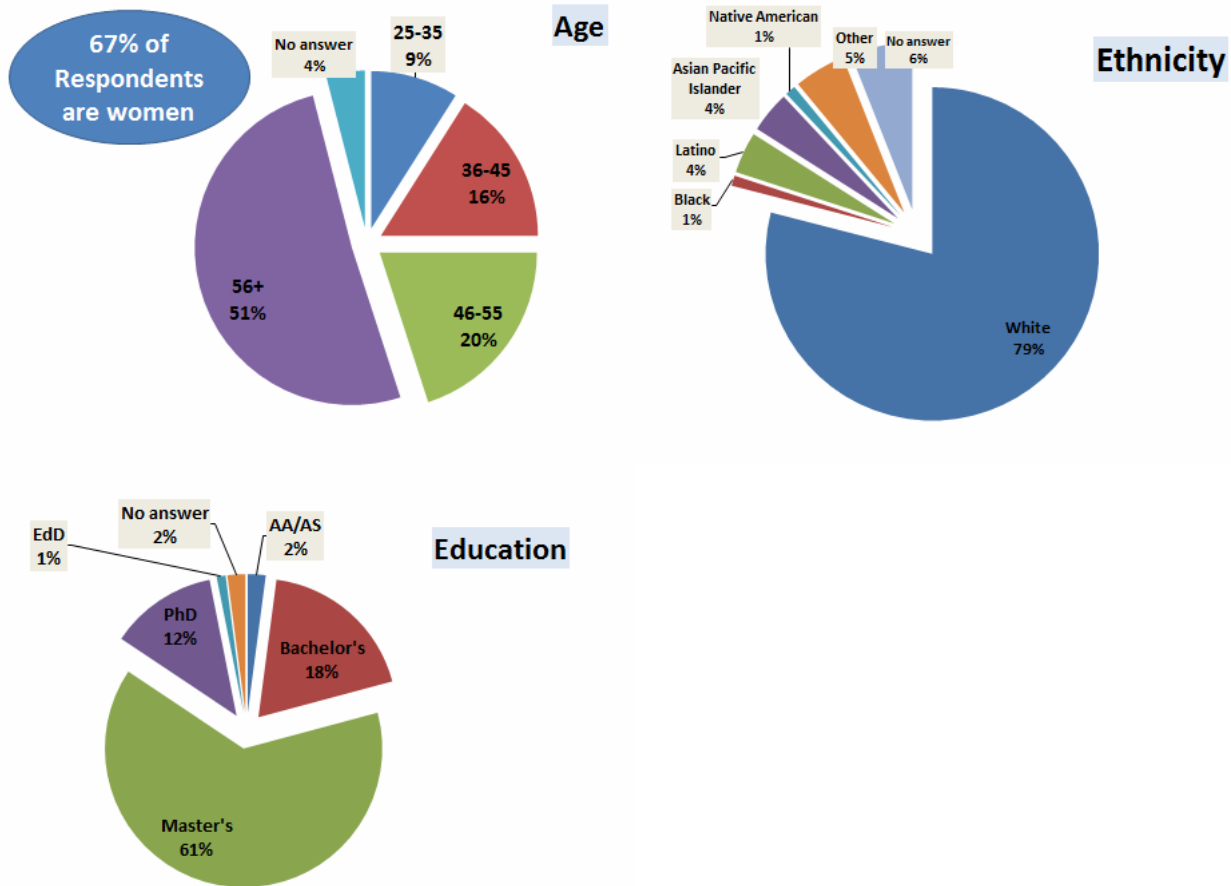


**RELATIONSHIP TO CCFT:** Ninety-one percent of respondents are members of CCFT, four percent are fee payers, and five percent are not sure whether or not they are members. Several respondents thanked us for providing this opportunity to share their views and experiences.

*...In the span of six years that I have taught as adjunct, no official entity has ever elicited a conversation about my reality....*



## DEMOGRAPHICS



### “ADDITIONAL COMMENTS” REPRODUCED IN FULL and SORTED BY TOPIC

Overall, adjuncts are dedicated and highly qualified faculty, dedicated to student success. They work hard, often at several jobs and locations. Although some have full-time jobs or are retired, many struggle to make ends meet, particularly those with no healthcare.

#### On the Role of Adjuncts

- Part-time permanent employment!!! Job insecurity takes years off of my life. Collecting unemployment is embarrassing and degrading and would be unnecessary with permanent employment and parity. Most organizations pay ‘per diems’ or un-benefitted employees more per hour, not less!
- Given that adjuncts represent such a large percentage of the faculty it would be nice if administration actually viewed us as professionals who are qualified at what we do. The union could help make admin aware of our problems.
- I'm not sure how the union can address this, but I came into the school with very high morale, went to division parties, took part in curriculum meetings, etc., way beyond what was expected - but gradually encountered so much unconscious condescension from full-timers I finally stopped. So many issues were discussed as if adjuncts simply were not real members of the

school. Our situation and interests, or the different rules which occasionally apply to us were not even considered. The image many full-timers have of us is that we are truly what our contracts say - temporary - when in fact for a huge number, Cabrillo is the primary focal point of our teaching careers - in many cases for decades. One example: upon retirement full-timers get lifetime parking at Cabrillo. Adjuncts do not, regardless of service.

- I am very sorry to be leaving Cabrillo College. I would love to stay. Despite overwhelmingly positive student evaluations, peer evaluations and an enthusiasm to be working at Cabrillo, I am left with no choice but to leave the college. Maybe someday, I will be invited back as a full-time faculty member.
- I feel the College is very inclusive of part-time issues. I feel very respected at the college and in the department. Compared with other colleges, Cabrillo works hard to be responsive to and inclusive of adjunct faculty
- I love Cabrillo. I love what we do and what we stand for. The students we serve are bright stars we can send on into the universe. I just wish we could offer them more than part-time support. Cabrillo's full-time/adjunct faculty ratio is way off the Code standard. It's shameful. I attended a faculty senate meeting where a standing member of the senate referred to "slicing the adjuncts a little thinner this semester". Despite the laughter of my colleagues, I found this statement to be disparagingly disrespectful and desperate. I volunteer at Cabrillo. Too much, I realize, but when students are standing outside my office door I cannot disrespect them by leaving. Our students deserve to have their college to be 100% there for them. We cannot continue to load the backs of the part-time at-will faculty and expect to survive as a community's college. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to these issues.

### **On Health Insurance**

- The State of California is abusing part-time faculty. I have been working 3-5 classes/semester (a full-time load) without health benefits. 1/3 of my income pays for coverage. As a full-time employee of the State of California I feel I have earned health coverage – routinely paid to other full-time Community & State College instructors.
- Health benefits for spouse and children would be great. I have to buy insurance out of pocket for family, taking up 25% of my income

### **On Ways to Improve Conditions for Adjuncts**

- I often consider the need for systems thinking approach to institutional improvement at Cabrillo and wonder how the various groups on campus (CCFT, CCEU, Admin, students) can consider the agendas of the others and the whole campus community when moving forward with their goals.

### **On Participation in Ancillary Activities and Inclusion in Departmental Decisions:**

- I would participate in more activities outside the classroom if the time was paid.
- For my own professional development, I very much want to be involved in professional activities and governance, but am generally unaware of what opportunities there are. I could do more to find out and to insinuate myself into meetings, although the last time I showed up to a department meeting I was the only adjunct there and it was a bit strange. Sometimes in division meetings I hear it said that "obviously" adjuncts would be welcome to have participated in X activity, but it's usually the first I've heard of it.
- Participation in developing SLO's, course and program assessments need to be compensated. Especially as these duties have expanded in recent years.
- It's just a matter of time – my outside commissions are very demanding.

- LOVE [MY DEAN]. Would be more involved if I was not so busy with our other clients.

### **On Teaching Assignments and Hiring Practices:**

- Neither seniority, past practice or other contract policy seem to be applied in my department, resulting in high job insecurity. Fall 2013 schedule is still not finalized. This issue is the highest priority for me.
- See above as to why I didn't even get an interview...Also, I did not get a chance to vote for my chair as I recall. Although with three emails addresses to check, 2 jobs, 2 Full-time kids and being a single mom I may have missed it. I would have voted for her, she's usually extremely professional. This semester and the "error" of my losing a class like this just seems very unfair and quite unlike her.
- I have taught all over the Bay Area, and Cabrillo has a reputation for treating its adjuncts poorly. In my department (English) it is known that adjuncts will not be hired on as full-timers (despite working hard for many years) There is a deep divide between adjuncts and full-timers. Many adjuncts feel mistreated and ignored.
- I've been concerned about not getting hired full-time over 11 years, but also understand the competitive atmosphere of Cabrillo. I'm highly qualified, earning a doctorate, & will continue to interview for positions in the Eng. Dept. at this school.

### **Additional Comments:**

- I love teaching at Cabrillo. It is a great community. However, I would like contract work and benefits. I would be happy to participate more, contribute more, even though my time is split between teaching at 2 colleges and making art.
- [My Department Chair] has made life for the adjuncts under him wonderful.
- Part-time employment is difficult (anywhere). A lot of time spent prepping for class/grading/planning for labs is completely unpaid. Much of my time is spend traveling to and from multiple institutions. And the fact that I'm never sure of whether I'll get an assignment or not is demoralizing. However, I do it (as I'm sure many of us part-timers do) because we love teaching!!
- I think it is important that feedback be provided on request when someone is interviewed for a job and not hired. It can be a summary of the entire committee's views/comments. It is painful to continue working with colleagues (and students) who have discussed one at length and to not know what they said. Also, if the applicant is not going to be working @ Cabrillo at all, feedback can be helpful for future professional development. Making an application is a time consuming process & making an offer to support Cabrillo. Feedback is a way of expressing gratitude/appreciation for that effort.
- Biggest concern is not being able to work after retirement for 180days/6 mo. Who can live on retirement \$ - this is a very poor ruling of affects those getting ready to retire & no other resource for 6 months!?!?
- Filled out survey online. Please conserve paper.

### **On CCFT and this Adjunct Survey:**

- Thanks for all you do!
- Thank you for representing adjunct employees.
- You asked if I felt represented, but didn't ask why? Kind of answers the question. I get very tired of working as hard or harder than full-timers and not be compensated. The extra work most full-timers say separate us is very over rated!



- I think that the options for Anglo-American and/or Northern European are ridiculously boiled down to "White," whereas that is not the case for other groups. That is hardly how folks "identify."
- I don't care for the blatantly democratic/liberal bias in the CCFT publications and political support pushes.
- Thank you for continuing to advocate for adjuncts, and thank you for the unemployment guidance and workshops!
- Thanks for representing adjuncts!
- Thank you for the great work you do for us!
- Thanks for doing the survey. You're Welcome! (in response to the thanks at the end)
- I believe in and support unions. However – full-time faculty don't seem to be willing to fight for part-time & part-time can't do it alone.
- Thank you for all your hard work.
- I appreciate the opportunity to give this feedback. In the span of six years that I have taught as adjunct, no official entity has ever elicited a conversation about my reality. To be a teacher in this manner has been a struggle and a challenge. From the beginning, but having a place to respond makes this a little less of an isolating experience; I don't feel as much reason to feel ashamed, as if the struggle is my fault. Thank you!