

Presidential

POV

IT SEEMS ONLY a short time ago, during the 2015 fall flex day event, that we were introduced to our new chancellor, Dr. Jowel Laguerre. Like many of you, I was impressed by his energy, enthusiasm, and vision concerning future changes to Peralta.

Chancellor Laguerre was aware of the “Peralta Way” and all of its negative connotations. His push for a “New Peralta Way,” and his enthusiasm to make positive changes, was a breath of fresh air and uplifting.

My initial contacts and dialogue with the chancellor were positive and productive. He is a good listener, and he reacted quickly to issues that were brought to his attention, at both the colleges and district office. He did his best to navigate the system and solve problems that required changes. All this again brought hope that changes could be formulated in a manner to improve working conditions for our faculty, polish our programs, and allow faculty to better serve our students.

All of this began to change last semester as we began to note the increasing number of administrative hires throughout the district. While we have great respect for the chancellor’s vision and his attempts to improve the system, these administrative changes began to reveal some troubling patterns. Above all, the changes were entirely at the whim of the chancellor—the district’s formal planning structures didn’t figure into



PFT representatives Scott Hoshida (English Dept., Berkeley City College) and Helen Curry (Cosmetology, Laney) joined 45 of their union sisters and brothers at the Sept. 20 meeting of the Peralta Community College District Board of Trustees. Faculty came out en masse to let trustees know about their frustration with working conditions at the colleges, the slowness of negotiations, and the runaway expansion of the administration. Since fall 2014, Peralta administrative salaries have gone up a dizzying 30%, even as enrollment declines and the district continues to cut classes aggressively (see Negotiations Update, inside).

the decisions, and none of the official consultative bodies had input.

Faculty understand that a large, complex organization will need to adapt and restructure from time to time. And I’m among many who truly hope these reorganizations among district personnel will result in dramatic improvements. At the same time, apparently arbitrary shakeups that show little regard for the processes and plans many of us have worked years to implement are counterproductive.

Further, PFT is concerned that board policy on hiring and review is not being followed. Skirting normal hiring procedures is only permissible in emergency situations, and we certainly don’t feel that the recent rash of hires falls under this category. PFT strongly cautions the chancellor to follow the board policy as written.

Another disturbing trend is the administration’s policy of cutting classes two or three weeks before

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Peralta Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1603 represents over 1,000 teachers, counselors, librarians, and nurses at the College of Alameda, Berkeley City College, Laney College, and Merritt College. PFT is an affiliate of the California Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. AFT represents more than 1.5 million members nationwide.

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Teacher Working Conditions Are Student Learning Conditions

By Jennifer Shanoski
Grievance Officer

AS THE DISTRICT keeps increasing its ranks with more and more management hires (see Negotiations Update, next page), the rank and file at the colleges continue to struggle with a variety of issues that have yet to be adequately addressed by our administration.

While PFT recently settled a grievance regarding the poor lighting near the F Building at Laney College, faculty continue to report that there is insufficient illumination throughout the campus, which affects their safety and the safety of their students.


As noted in a recent edition of the *Laney Tower*, water and sewage leaks have interrupted the operation of the Laney College Cafeteria. But the cafeteria is not alone, and other classrooms have been similarly affected. Faculty on all four campuses report insufficient custodial staffing, which results in trashed classrooms poorly maintained restrooms—that is, unacceptable teaching and learning environments.

In addition to the facilities crises, faculty report continued problems associated with the start of each semester: it's difficult to obtain keys for classrooms, there's no place to get copies of your course materials, and students can't enroll because of glitches in the Passport system.

And as the semester progresses, the issues just keep piling up. DSPS students are to be provided accommodations by law, but no official test proctoring is offered at Laney College; instead, faculty must proctor DSPS exams themselves, or navigate through a list of contingency plans. And if they're part-timers, all this extra work is uncompensated.

While the district updated a number of classrooms with "smart" technology, the need for these resources far outpaces their availability. As a result, many faculty are forced to drag heavy carts from place to place in order to teach (further adding to the unpaid time spent on a course). When a problem occurs with classroom technology, the lack of IT staff can mean that faculty members are forced to adjust their curriculum in order to teach without the resources they've planned for.

The problems outlined here are just a few of the myriad complaints that the PFT offices get on a daily basis. The district operates separate from the daily workings of the classroom, and "student success" has become a buzzword with little meaning.

So, from the out-of-touch district perspective, it's easy to see how another vice chancellor might seem the appropriate solution. But for us, the immediate needs of our students always come first, and we know that priorities need to be shifted. 

Are you retiring this year?



Peralta Retirees Organization

is open to membership to all district retirees!

Learn more at the PRO website:

www.PeraltaRetirees.org

Vote PFT November 8!

Matt Freeman

PFT COPE Chair

THE TIME to get political is NOW. Faculty have a lot at stake in this election, and we don't have a lot of time before Election Day on Nov 8.

The PFT COPE (Committee on Political Education) needs all hands on deck to help get Proposition 55 passed and Karen Weinstein elected to the Peralta Board of Trustees.

Prop 55 will extend for 12 more years the modest Prop 30 state income tax increase on the richest Californians: singles who make \$250K and joint filers who make \$500K pay an extra 1–3%. Budget forecasts show that unless voters extend the taxes on the wealthy, which would continue to bring in an average of \$8 billion in annual revenues, California public schools—including community colleges—will lose nearly \$4 billion in the first year alone. The time to get involved is NOW. As the campaign says, “Help education thrive...Vote Yes On Prop 55!” To get



Left: CoA's Maurice Jones and Drew Burgess at a recent phone-banking session at PFT HQ.




Right: PFT President Ed Jaramillo and PCCD Board Pres Bill Riley get the word out on Prop 55.

involved and find out ways you can help, go to: cft.org/yeson55

In addition to getting Prop 55 passed, we need to work to get Karen Weinstein elected to the Area 6 seat on the Peralta Board of Trustees. Karen is a strong advocate for the interests of our membership and is running on a platform to increase transparency in board actions. Karen wants to prioritize improving wages and working conditions for faculty and staff at Peralta. And as a trustee, Karen will fight for student equity, access, and achievement.

PFT has endorsed Karen's candidacy and strongly encourages everyone in Area 6 to turn out and vote for Karen Weinstein. To learn more about Karen's campaign, how to get involved, and more about the broad coalition of labor and progressives supporting her, go to: karenweinsteinforperalta.com

Be sure to use this nifty online tool from our brothers and sisters at CFT: cft.yourvoterguide.com Just type in your address, and you (and your family and friends) will get all the union-backed picks for the November 8 election. 

Did You Know?


Full-time faculty get paid for one office hour for every three units, up to a maximum of five office hours for a full load (15 equated hours). Part-time faculty, on the other hand, are paid for one office hour per semester—if they have a load of six units or more. If they work less, they are not paid for any office hours; if they work more, they don't get paid for the additional time.

All faculty know that office hours are central to student success. But part-time faculty are forced to balance their desire to support students with their need to manage their own time. Many place the needs of their students first and provide support for students without compensation.

This system is obviously unfair, and PFT presented it as such to the district negotiating team a year ago. At that

time, a number of different strategies for funding part-time office hours in an equitable manner were discussed. At a recent negotiations session, however, the district stated that it couldn't afford to compensate part-time faculty for their one-on-one work with students beyond the current inadequate level.

How many vice chancellors have been hired since the issue of office hours was brought up to the district? More than enough to pay for this most fundamental component of real student success. But, sadly, the district prioritizes administrative expansion over student learning.

A petition is currently circulating with a resolution from PFT demanding that the district fund part-timers' office hours proportional to load, the way full-timers' are. Please talk to your campus PFT representative and sign this petition. 

Negotiations Update

By Rick Greenspan

PFT Chief Negotiator

AROUND the negotiation table, I'm usually referred to as the "glass half full" guy, because of my optimistic outlook. So I should start by saying that we have made some progress in negotiations during the last year—in areas such as the counseling assignment process, evaluations, and faculty rights when being investigated.

But if you are interested in the bottom line, financially, the district has only offered a paltry 1% raise for employee groups. With enrollment dropping (meaning less state funding in the long run) and with the possibility that Prop 55 could lose in November, Vice Chancellor of Finance Ron Little says that the district cannot make any real long-term commitments to salary increases.

But here's the funny thing. The district has found plenty of money to hire new administrators. And new administrative hires represent just as much of a "long-term commitment" as any faculty and staff salary raise.

How much have they spent on administrators? Last spring, we asked VC Little



Chief Negotiator Rick Greenspan, as seen on a boardroom monitor, addresses trustees at PFT's action at the September 20 board meeting.

for a list of all district administrators who were working in fall 2014 (including salaries), and another list of all administrators (and administrative positions) in fall 2016 (including salaries).

We've posted the actual salaries on the PFT website, but the chart on this page sums things up pretty well.


Overall, spending on administrative salaries has gone up astronomically. According to the figures we got from VC Little, from F14 to F16, administrative salaries in Peralta went up a whopping 30%, from \$8.7 million to \$11.5 million. That includes a 63% jump in CoA administrative salaries between 2014 and 2016, putting CoA's

administration salaries a full 14% above the average of Merritt and BCC.

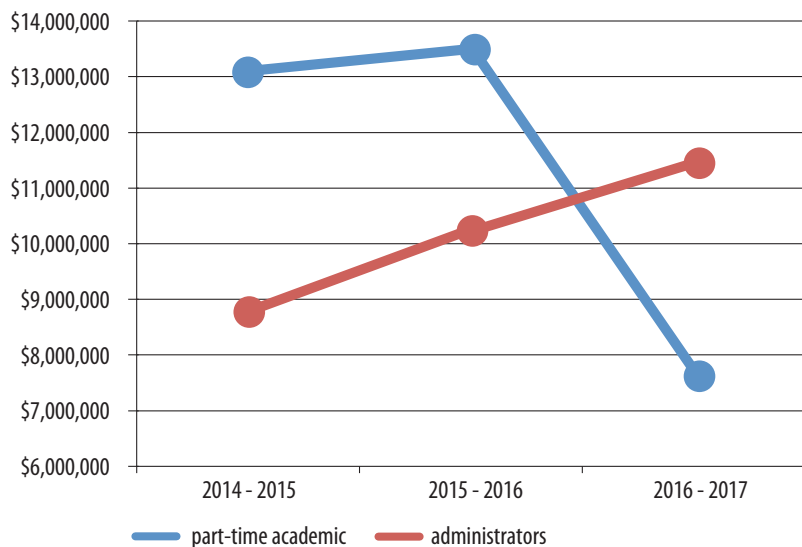
But rising administrative salary costs at the colleges shrink in comparison with the admin spending spree underway at the district office, where total salaries rose from \$3.79 million in 2014 to \$4.96 million this year. And the projection is that it will rise to \$5.86 million in 2017-18—a massive 55% jump in just three years!

Essentially, Peralta's top brass have decided to combat a drop in enrollment by giving raises to many current administrators and hiring a bunch of new ones—rather than by offering more (smaller) classes, which would bring students into our colleges. Classes are being cut, part-timers are losing their jobs, and spending on administration at PCCD has skyrocketed.

If Peralta wants to know where it can get the money to make a long-term commitment to faculty and staff needs, it can look no further than a bloated administration.

PFT believes it's time to freeze administrative hiring, roll back administrative salaries to 3% above what they were getting in 15-16, and eliminate all "interim" administrative positions before they are made permanent. The money saved should be used to fund more class sections and to give overdue salary increases to faculty and staff. 

Redlining management costs



Part-time Update

Cynthia Mahabir

Part-time Faculty Representative

BY CURRENT count, we are 722 part-time faculty members—66.3% of the faculty.

After a year of vigorous advocacy by faculty activists across the state, there is some promising legislative news to report: the enactment of SB 1379, a community college part-time faculty job security bill, effective beginning in January 2017. The specifics of the law are:

- Districts must negotiate job security in order to receive SSSP funding.
- Districts “shall negotiate in good faith” with the collective bargaining representative of part-time faculty.
- The district shall establish minimum standards for reemployment rights. These standards “shall include” the following: years of service, number of courses taught, evaluations, availability to teach and policies for termination, among other things

This law is significant in that it provides labor protections in a statute instead of in administrative policies, which are more typical elsewhere. Still, the protections are minimum standards—a floor for negotiating policies above that floor. That is our goal and obligation as the collective bargaining unit for faculty in our district.

Another key collective bargaining item for part-time faculty is parity in wages on the current faculty salary schedule. Following a contract agreement signed in 2000-2001, for example, teaching wages were determined to represent 75% of a contract faculty member’s base salary. Salary parity for part-time instructors was therefore set to be 75% of a contract faculty member’s hourly wage for teaching. This means that for

teaching work contract and part-time counterparts would earn the same hourly wage.

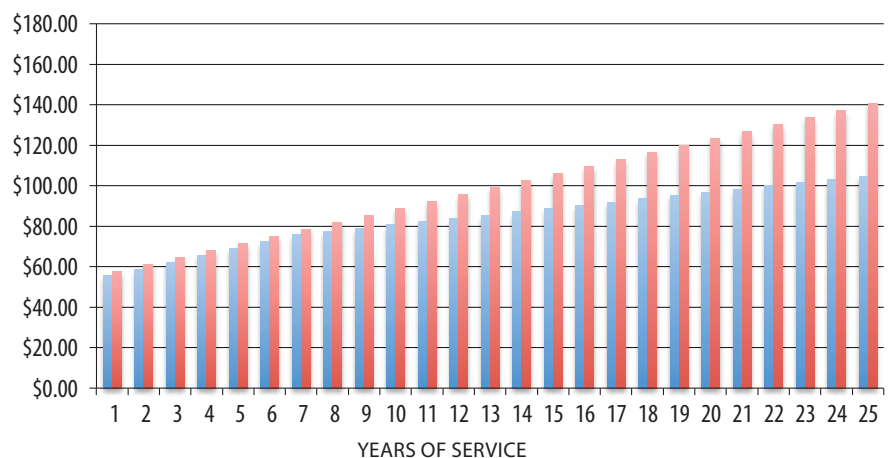
Faculty salaries are based on two criteria: column placement (credentials; 5 columns: A-E) and step placement (experience and service; 25 steps). In 2013, the ceiling on part-time faculty step advancement (despite the length of service) was lifted from Step 7 to match contract faculty’s 25-step salary schedule. However, the hourly step rates fell below the 75% parity. The two bar charts below display the trend gaps in full-time/part-time hourly wages for current

rates (blue) and parity rates (red) for two columns—A (the lowest) and E (the highest). The graphs make clear the widening gaps as one moves up the salary steps.

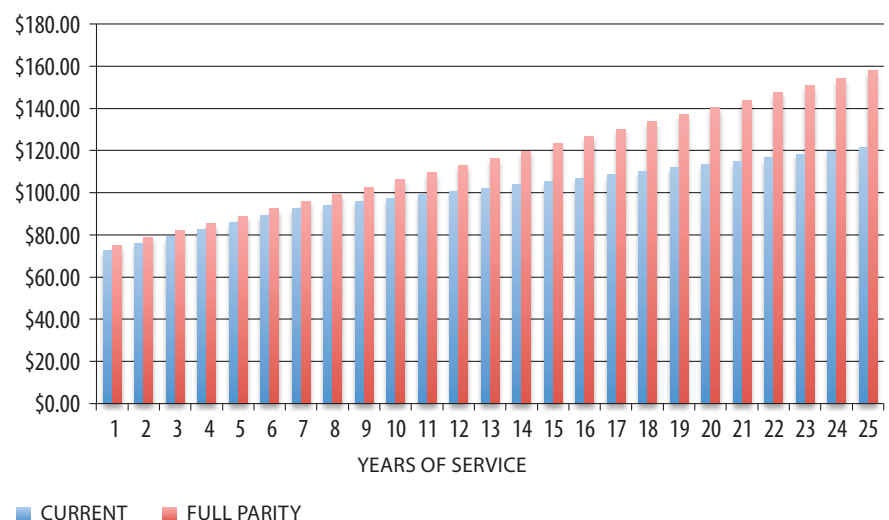
Establishing FT-PT teaching salary parity by closing the gaps shown in the charts is a priority for part-time faculty. It will fulfill the critical need to recognize all faculty members, despite differences in employment status, as faculty, with equal pay for equal work.

For further information on the items above, you may contact me at: cmlaney2003@yahoo.com

Column A Full-time/Part-time Parity



Column E Full-time/Part-time Parity



Grievance Report

By Scott Hoshida

Berkeley City College Rep and Interim Grievance Officer

OUR UNION fights for members both through informal resolutions and the formal grievance process, which is outlined in Article 19 of our contract. If the parties do not resolve the issue informally, PFT files a written grievance on behalf of its members. The grievance proceeds from the college president to the VC of Human Resources to the chancellor, moving up the chain of command if an agreement cannot be reached at each step. If PFT and the chancellor can't work things out, the union can bring the grievance to arbitration. Since our last update, we've resolved a number of issues.

- Secured benefits for part-time faculty assigned a full-load schedule. When part-time faculty are asked to work full loads, PFT has fought to have them compensated at the same rates as full-time faculty

based on CA Ed Code 87815. Additionally, we have demanded the district provide back-pay and benefits reimbursement for those who worked a full load and were underpaid in spring 2015, fall 2015, and spring 2016, and the district has agreed.


- Clarified the district's policies and procedures for investigations.
- Ensured that tenure-track faculty are moved past the probationary period based on the evaluations given during that time.
- Secured full-time status for part-time faculty who were loaded above 67% for three semesters or more.

What we're working on:

- Faculty Evaluation Inquiry: Last year, the District Academic Senate and PFT agreed to support an inquiry to better understand faculty experiences during the evaluation process. The intent is not to change contract language, but to better understand how to make these high-

stakes evaluations more meaningful and valuable. During the fall 2016 flex day, a small group of faculty met to discuss some suggestions that have come from the inquiry. We will continue this work in the spring!

- Column Advancement: PFT is trying to better understand issues with column advancement for faculty, and we are working on more than one case to clarify and resolve this issue.
- Step Increase: PFT is completing research into how part-time faculty are awarded step increases.
- Stipends: PFT has filed a grievance on behalf of faculty who were initially denied their contractually guaranteed stipends.

PFT will continue to solve problems and work on behalf of its members. Please don't hesitate to contact your college reps or the PFT office if you have any questions. 

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instruction starts, thus not allowing faculty time to promote and advertise their classes. One class PFT intervened to save went on to enroll 36 students. We now have the district's assurances that it will take a more considered approach—a plan for much needed enrollment management is moving forward. We can only hope this effort is coordinated with our colleges and faculty.

Deteriorating infrastructure at our colleges continues to be a significant problem, a decline that adversely

affects working conditions for faculty and staff and, of course, undermines the learning conditions of our students. Many of these infrastructure problems have been brought to the attention of our chancellor, and I feel he's sincere in his efforts to rectify these problems. But without significant improvement, the administration will face an increasingly restless faculty, and, what's more, a barrage of working-conditions grievances.

Beyond the district, PFT will be partnering with our parent union, CFT, to assist and ensure the passage of Proposition 55. We are all aware this critically needed funding is

extremely valuable for our programs. Please join us for phone banking at the PFT offices. In addition, PFT COPE has voted to support Karen Weinstein in her campaign for PCCD BoT Area 6, Cy Gulassa's seat. (Cy, a longtime faculty friend, is retiring at the end of the current term.) Again we urge you to join in our phone-banking efforts—they're great fun and you'll get fed, too!

Please follow future PFT communications for more details on your local chapter meetings, general membership meetings, negotiations, and other important news.

Ed Jaramillo

President, PFT, AFT Local 1603