

Retention of adjunct faculty in community colleges

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As community colleges struggle with keeping their disciplines and programs up-to-date, offer more courses to an ever-increasing student population, and battle shrinking budgets, adjunct faculty save the day (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1995). To retain quality part-time faculty members already employed in community colleges, as well as new hires that offset retirement of full-time faculty, careful strategies are absolutely necessary. The authors discuss a number of successful strategies.

Introduction

Community colleges are challenged, even more so than in the past, to meet greater demands with shrinking resources. The challenge has resulted in the increased hiring of adjunct faculty. Steadily escalating enrollment and expanded program offerings in community colleges seem to be the most important reasons behind the rise in hiring part-time faculty (Leslie, 1998). Overall, from 1970 to 1995, the number of faculty members at two-year institutions grew by 210 per cent, compared with 69 per cent at four-year institutions (Schneider, 1998). Banachowski (1996, p. 1) indicates

In 1978, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) reported that part-timers comprised more than one-half of all faculty in two-year colleges (Leslie, Kellams, &

Gunne, 1982, p. 19). In 1980, nearly 60% of the faculty in two-year colleges was employed part-time, 63% in 1990, and 65% by 1993.

In the past two decades there has also been a slow, but steady, evolution from the term “part-time faculty” to the term “adjunct faculty.” Cohen (1992) indicates:

The switch from the term “part-time” to the term “adjunct” is symbolic of change to a perception that I believe is more appreciative and fair to adjunct faculty. They are, in Webster’s terms, “something joined or added to another thing.” When they’ve been at the same campus for ten years or more, when they teach as many as three sections per semester, or nine per year, there hardly seems to be anything partial about the service. (p. 1)

However, at many community colleges the two terms convey subtle differences in meaning. An *adjunct* faculty member is defined as one employed on a per term basis with no guarantee of being rehired for the next academic year or term. A *part-time* faculty member, on the other hand, can be defined as one who teaches from term to term and year to year literally becoming a “permanent” part-time faculty member. For the purpose of the following discussion, however, the terms *adjunct* and *part-time* will be treated as the same to denote faculty hired on a contingency basis.

Part-time faculty demographics

Part-time faculty members are, indeed, a diverse lot. Their characteristics differ depending upon local conditions, institutional size, and other unique characteristics of a college. There are, however, some general traits that describe the group. In summarizing the findings of a survey performed by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC) as well as the National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty performed by the National Center for Education Statistics in 1992-93, Leslie and Gappa (2002) give the following descriptions of part-time faculty members in community colleges:

1. Part-timers are equally likely to be men or women. They are likely to be both older and younger than full-time faculty.
2. Part-time faculty average five to six years of teaching experience. Over half of all part-time community college faculty have five or more years experience at their current institution.
3. Fifty-two percent of all part-time faculty members in community colleges hold a master’s degree. Eleven percent hold a doctorate degree. Part-time instructors are more likely to teach occupational or professional subjects for which a doctorate is not relevant.
4. Most part-timers are “specialists, experts, and professionals” with their primary occupations outside of academe, those who

prefer to work simultaneously at different occupations, or those who are migrating from established careers outside of higher education. Few part-timers are aspiring to become full-time faculty.

5. Fifty-one percent prefer to teach part-time for a variety of reasons such as family caretaker responsibilities or being currently place-bound and unable to participate in national searches. Two-thirds teach part-time to be “in the academic environment,” and sixty-three percent work part-time to supplement their income.
6. Part-time faculty in community colleges are stable professionals with substantial experience and a true commitment to their work. They love to teach. (p.60-63)

In addition, adjunct faculty frequently provide student academic advising, participate in curriculum development and even program coordination, as well as other administrative duties (Gappa, 1997).

Part-time faculty hiring

Community colleges have always relied heavily upon part-time faculty for a variety of reasons. First, they save the college money—part-time faculty cost less than full-time faculty in salaries and benefits. “Colleges can hire up to two dozen part-time faculty members for about the same amount as it costs to hire one full-time faculty mem-

ber” (Stephens & Wright, 1999). Second, they provide the college with flexibility in meeting the demands of enrollment particularly for new skill-related technology courses. Third, part-time faculty members bring real world experience to the community college classroom (Banachowski, 1996).

Other factors drive the hiring trend. In the 1990s, the literature (Wyles, 1998; Freeland, 1998; Rifkin, n.d.) predicted that up to one-half of the then-current full-time community college faculty would retire by the year 2000. Rifkin further predicts that at least 80 percent will retire in the first 20 to 25 years of the 21st Century. Coupled with significant—even traumatic—budget and funding problems over the past decade, the retirements demand increased hiring of adjunct faculty. The trend also reflects the U.S. economy where one in three workers is part-time (Pederson, 2001; Wyles, 1998), yet higher education appears to have surpassed industry. As David Leslie in Schuett (1998, p. 30) indicates, “Our use of part-time and temporary faculty, especially in the community colleges, is far above that of whatever norms we might find in business.”

Other factors which contribute to the increases in hiring of part-time faculty include (a) the expanded need for remedial and specialized courses, (b) replacements for full-time faculty on sabbatical or other types of leave, (c) benefits that allow retired full-time faculty to teach one or more

classes, and (d) encouraging prospective full-time faculty members by offering part-time assignments to the spouse.

Retention

As community colleges struggle to stay up-to-date, offer more courses to a larger student population, and battle shrinking budgets, they rely upon adjunct faculty in greater numbers to save the day (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1995). Despite strong feelings in the literature concerning the use of part-time faculty, only a limited amount of evidence supports the contention that part-time faculty are less effective teachers (Spangler, 1990; Feder, 1989). Banachowski (1996) and Leslie & Gappa (2002) suggest studies indicate no significant difference in student success based on instruction from a part-time or a full-time faculty member (e.g., Bolge, 1995; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Gappa, 1984; Grubb, 1999; Lombardi, 1992; McGuire, 1993; Swarder, 1987; Wyles, 1998). Because the literature indicates no significant difference in student success, the current discussion focuses on the retention of part-time faculty.

Staff turnover is expensive, including both direct and indirect costs. Direct costs may include administrative expenses, advertising, or hiring costs such as interviewing. Indirect costs include training or a drop in efficiency of new faculty members until they are acclimated. Excessive turnover could be seen as a barrier to quality education. Ad-

ditionally, turnover often burdens full-time staff with extra workloads during shortages or acclimation of part-time faculty. Leslie, Kellams & Gunne (1982) confirm:

...while using part-time faculty may appeal to many institutions on economic grounds, those who have examined the question in depth tend to find that the gains may be illusory. Many institutions employing large numbers of part-timers incur significant administrative costs in the employment process and in supervision; to staff with part-time faculty frequently requires additional administrative work. (p. 3)

Quite often strained relationships develop between part-time and full-time faculty because of unclear administrative policies for hiring, retention, and management of part-timers (Freeland, 1998; Langenberg, 1998; Leslie, Kellams, & Gunne, 1982). "Almost always personally sympathetic to the plight of the part-timers, full-time faculty members are also struggling to maintain their positions in increasingly bureaucratic and bottom-line oriented institutions" (Murphy, 2002). The attitudes that result from strained relationships among faculty affect students' perception of the part-time faculty members and, ultimately, their education at the institution. For example, a student in a Midwestern community college was overheard saying, "You don't have to pay attention to him, he's not a 'real' faculty member, he's just a part-timer." As Roueche,

Roueche, & Milliron (1996) point out,

...it is ironic that these 'invisible faculty' trends exist in community colleges—those institutions that claim (a) to be of and about building community, (b) to promote egalitarian and inclusive values, and (c) to provide access while simultaneously achieving excellence in higher education. (p. 107)

Since part-time faculty members are here to stay, there is no point in arguing over how many should be employed. Community colleges must seriously consider strategies to retain part-time faculty members. Though most strategies are not new, some have not yet been studied sufficiently to verify their effectiveness over time.

Organizational learning

Considering that employee retention is a key indicator of employee satisfaction, a high turnover rate in the ranks of part-time faculty could well be an indicator of an unresolved problem at the institution. Based upon the seminal work of Forrester and Argyris, Senge (1990, 2000) advocates organizational learning as more than just another management fad. According to Senge, taking a learning orientation

...means involving everyone in the system in expressing their aspirations, building their awareness, and developing their capabilities together. In a school that learns, people who traditionally may have been

suspicious of one another...recognize their common stake in the future of the school system and the things they can learn from one another. (p.5)

As Gappa & Leslie (1993) state, "It is time for cooperation and making a common cause. That common cause is academic excellence, which can only be ensured when the best faculty members, both full- and part-time, are working together" using numerous methods to develop students' capacities. The personal visions of each instructor should blend into a shared vision of the principles, practices, and future they seek to create. Collectively, the faculty can achieve common goals by drawing on a cumulative intelligence, an ability greater than the sum of individual members' talents.

Faculty, administrators, and the community must use concepts of organizational learning if they are to meet the challenges of education today and in the future. The primary focus must be on systemic sharing of information. Steps toward developing a learning organization include creating a strategic intent to learn, creating a shared vision, encouraging systems thinking, encouraging personal mastery of the job, and developing team learning. Equally important is action learning, which encourages creative thinking while working on real time case studies, and learning from failures.

Catalyzing change doesn't happen by accident; it requires time

and careful planning. Administrators can begin the process by forming task forces, committees, or focus groups. If change is to occur, it must be supported at the highest levels of the organization. Without upper administrative support and leadership, even the most innovative plan will fail (Roueche & Roueche, 1996). Until an organization thinks and acts together as a whole, the methods of retention discussed below in broad categories will have limited meaning or impact. The learning organization could, indeed, be considered the primary method of retention.

Integration/inclusion

Community colleges must develop policies to integrate the part-time faculty into the life of the college. McGuire (1993) points out that

...the biggest problem appears to be institutional neglect of part-time faculty, who are routinely treated as second class citizens—the “neglected majority.” In large part, part-time faculty have been excluded from the collegium. They are not so much a neglected majority, as an excluded majority. They are not invited to faculty division meetings, are not included in faculty development activities, do not participate in textbook selection, do not advise students, and do not participate in developing or approving curricula. (p. 2-3)

Scheutz (2002), in quoting Grubb (1999), further confirms the

need for integration/inclusion:

Good teachers were likely to be strongly connected with other faculty, even teaching jointly, while ineffective teachers were generally alienated from their peers....In many departments, a large number of part-time instructors slip in and out of their classrooms without much interaction with the rest of the institution. They are hired casually, and rarely are they reviewed by other faculty.... Without contact among colleagues, there are few discussions about instruction, no forums where the special pedagogical problems of community college can be debated and resolved, and no ways to bring problems to the attention of administrators. (p.42)

Community colleges have a responsibility to integrate part-time faculty members as seamlessly as possible into the complete life of the institution. Anything less is a disservice that weakens the community spirit (Roueche, 1999).

Socialization

Community colleges must provide the opportunity to learn about the culture and mission of the college. Because organizational norms and values are rarely transmitted through faculty handbooks, Scott (1997) and Roueche & Roueche (1996) suggest personal presentations by upper administrators and one-on-one conversations.

For example, administrators can

facilitate integration of part-time faculty members by including them in college-wide and/or departmental committees, work projects, and curriculum discussions; faculty organizations, including faculty senate and collective bargaining units; social events such as an all-faculty dinner where part-timers and full-timers can interact (Roueche, 1999; Roueche & Roueche, 1996; Scott, 1977; Spinetta, 1990; Kelly, 1990); grant writing and grant directing (Wyles, 1998); and college celebrations such as graduation and cultural or social events such as Martin Luther King Day activities, annual fund raisers, and athletic events. Listing the names of all established part-time faculty members in the college catalog, and where possible, listing part-time faculty by name in the schedule of classes rather than as "staff" is particularly effective (Scott, 1997; Gottfried, 1995). Cohen (1992, p. 3) further confirms the idea in her study of part-time faculty at Prince George's Community College: "There was an accompanying strong sentiment for wanting more recognition within the faculty. 'What's your title after seventeen years? TBA!' said one focus group member."

Establishing a mechanism to recognize contributions of part-time faculty may include rewarding part-time faculty for excellence in teaching (Parsons, 1998; Roueche, Roueche & Milliron, 1996). One college presents an Outstanding Adjunct Faculty award in the school's end-of-the-year awards ceremony which recognizes faculty,

staff, and administrators nominated and selected by their peers (Wyles, 1998).

Some colleges arrange for division deans or department chairs to work late one evening a week and rotate the evening in order to maintain contact with all evening part-time faculty members; others hold evening department meetings for part-timers (Kelly, 1990). At Richland College (Dallas), part-time faculty members have their own liaison to the administration and their own faculty council (Stephens & Wright, 1999).

Towson University in Maryland has delegated overall responsibility for part-time faculty policies and communications to the office of the provost. It produces a newsletter for part-time faculty; holds receptions that include the president, provost, deans, and department chairs; and sends faculty invitations to major college events (Haeger, 1998).

Above all, college full-time faculty, administrators, and staff need to talk to part-time faculty. David Leslie in Schuett (1998, p. 28) states: "You would be astonished at the number of times we heard part-timers say, 'You know, I'm here several days a week. I use the Xerox machine. But when other people come to use the machine, nobody ever says anything to me.'" Even small human gestures can make an enormous difference in the way part-timers feel about their work and the college.

Induction

Community colleges need to provide mandatory, but flexible, high-quality orientation. Sessions should go beyond the usual, but necessary, “nuts and bolts” of parking cards, keys, class lists, salary, etc. Anything from the history of the college and its values to how to handle medical and other emergencies to providing a comprehensive services/responsibilities directory might be included. Some schools have produced videos for part-time faculty who cannot attend any of the scheduled sessions. Ask part-time faculty to help plan and deliver the orientation sessions (Roueche, 1999; Roueche & Roueche, 1996). Some schools hold orientation during the evening or on Saturday to avoid conflicts with the schedules of those who work at other jobs. They include a keynote speaker from the part-time ranks, a question-and-answer exchange, and an open discussion of relevant academic or instructional issues (Wyles, 1998).

Providing a part-time faculty handbook with “nuts and bolts” information needed to begin and complete teaching assignments is a key component (Parsons, 1998; Wyles, 1998). A tour or workshop regarding the availability of student services enables part-time faculty to refer students for assistance.

Resources

Community colleges must provide obvious necessities such as

telephones, voice mail, computer and internet access, e-mail, copying services, office supplies, faculty library cards, and clerical support. Since community colleges typically lead the way in the use of technology, part-timers should have access to the teaching technology along with proper orientation and training for its use (Scott, 1997). Office space where the part-time faculty member can conduct office hours and meet with students is essential. Some colleges have evening part-timers share offices with day-time full-time faculty who typically do not teach in the evening, thereby allowing privacy when consulting with students (Kelly, 1990).

Salary

If one asks, “What is the number one strategy for attracting and retaining part-time faculty?” one would receive a resounding, “Pay them!” Yet, as Wyles (1998) asserts:

...those who depend on part-time teaching for income or as entrée to a career face the reality of one-term contracts, median pay of \$1500 for a typical three-credit course (Avakian, 1995), a static pay scale, and only rare opportunities to convert their jobs into full-time appointments. (p. 89)

Quality is not served by the current practice of choosing part-time faculty for cost purposes rather than for educational purposes. In spite of today’s economic environment, community colleges must

assess their current methods of compensating part-time faculty members to determine if they are based on equitable compensation for the work performed. College administrators must recognize that pay clearly states worth (Freeland, 1998). If we are going to ask part-time faculty members to contribute as broadly to the college or department as we do the full-time faculty (e.g., committees, curriculum development, and other college activities), then we must pay them equitably.

The majority of institutions, according to Gappa & Leslie (1997), use one of two salary alternatives: a flat rate (such as \$1,500 per course), or an established range, often determined by qualifications and/or seniority. Dividing full-time faculty salaries by the number of classes taught to determine compensation for part-time faculty is another strategy (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1996). Yet another might be to pay part-time faculty the same rate it pays full-time faculty for teaching extra courses (Stephens & Wright, 1999). McGuire (1993, p. 2) feels that "at contract time, it is critical to raise their salaries proportionately when full-time salaries are raised."

Prince George's Community College changed its pay schedule to an initial rate based on college degrees earned, but provided step increases based on the number of hours taught. So now, part-time faculty may improve per-hour pay on the basis of longevity (Cohen, 1992). Kelly (1990) reports a recom-

mendation that colleges provide equitable pay and status for part-timers who have been certificated by the institution after a three-year probationary period. Regardless of the method(s) used to compensate part-time faculty members, they must, indeed, receive equitable pay.

Benefits

The literature shows that very few colleges provide benefits for part-time faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1997; Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1996; Gottfried, 1995). When they do, it is usually the result of collective bargaining (Gappa & Leslie, 1997). In 1995, Gottfried studied 159 community colleges in eastern, midwestern, and southern regions of the United States and reported that only 18% provided retirement contributions, 12% tuition remission, 2% health insurance, and 1% life insurance (p. 34). Very little has changed in the ten years since that study.

While many part-timers have full benefit coverage from their primary employers, others do not. Lack of benefits is the issue that received the highest response for dissatisfaction among part-timers on the 1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1997). Because of the burgeoning numbers of part-time faculty and their dissatisfaction with the status quo, more union organizations pursue the right to collective bargaining (Mattson, 2000).

As Lane (2002) reports, benefit coverage is an active issue.

In California there is a bill pending in the state Legislature that would enable community college part-timers to contribute to retirement benefit plans such as Social Security or an alternative plan. The bill also would establish a minimum matching contribution for the colleges to make to the retirement funds. (p. 6)

Because most colleges use part-time faculty to save money—and given the current economic constraints, including double-digit increases in health insurance—it is understandable that community colleges haven't stepped to the plate. However, the swell of dissatisfaction is growing. If the concerns of part-time faculty are not addressed soon, community colleges will begin to feel pressures from unions and even state legislatures.

Hiring practices

As faculty retirements and the need for additional part-time positions continue, well-defined recruitment policies and selection criteria must guide employment and retention of the most qualified instructors who are truly interested in part-time work.

Colleges need to seriously consider establishing a part-time faculty pool. Since it is obvious community colleges are going to use part-time faculty over the long haul, it is advisable to honor the

commitment of individuals with some understanding (Schuett, 1996). The "understanding" would, of course, be for those part-timers who have demonstrated their commitment and abilities rather than the occasional hire for a personal enrichment class. It would give them some sense of employment security. The literature indicates that part-time faculty members who work semester to semester on a contingency basis—and can be bumped at any time—harbor powerful resentments (Freeland, 1998; Schuett, 1996; Roueche & Roueche, 1996; Roueche, Roueche & Milliron, 1996; Kelly, 1990).

John Roueche in Schuett (1998) advises colleges to advertise future part-time teaching positions in local newspapers. He says:

Applicants could be interviewed as full-time faculty are interviewed. They could take a course entitled "Community College Teaching," as a kind of pre-condition for their employment. In other words, a college could build up a pre-qualified, pre-trained work force before a crisis occurs. (p. 12)

Creating a pool of well-prepared faculty members who know they're going to be teaching a class well in advance would eliminate the last-minute hiring of part-time faculty and decrease resentment on their part. Todd (1996) suggests a part-time faculty committee whose charge would be to rank members of the pool according to certain criteria, thus relieving the

department head of the burden of deciding who receives teaching assignments and how many.

Recruiting and hiring practices need to be as consistent and serious for part-time faculty as for full-time faculty. The only exception to the complete recruiting/hiring process would be those individuals hired to teach specific personal enrichment classes. Addressing diversity within the faculty ranks is essential for providing positive role models to students and a visible support system for the increasingly diverse student population. Colby and Foote (1995, p. 4) indicate that “minority faculty are essential to the multicultural campus, where they act as role models, advisors, and advocates for minority students while they expose majority students to new ideas.”

To assure a qualified, diverse faculty the following strategies gleaned from a number of researchers (Roueche, Roueche, & Milliron, 1996; Colby & Foote, 1995; Freedland, 1995; Rifkin, n.d.) can help address the search for full- or part-time faculty members:

- Develop a complete database using business and industry contacts and advisory committees, prospects from participation in local/regional job fairs and networking within professional organizations and other institutions. Focus on applicants with “real world” experience who want to teach part-time. Make the database easily accessible for department
- chairs or search committees in the hiring process.
- Ensure that the recruitment process coincides with the academic calendar.
- Establish sound selection criteria. The academic, economic, and social diversity of the college students should drive the recruitment effort. Although the college should never hire a part-time faculty member who is not qualified or lacks a genuine interest in and understanding of students, the job description should indicate the minimum preferred qualifications. Use the same selection criteria for hiring part-time and full-time faculty to ensure high quality instruction and continuity of standards. Be sure that qualifications are inclusive as opposed to exclusionary. A comprehensive job description will help maximize the pool of potential candidates and permit maximum flexibility during the screening process.
- Train interviewers, particularly department chairs.
- Require portfolios from candidates, including samples of course requirements, former students’ work if they’ve taught before, letters of recommendation, etc.
- Where applicable, require a teaching demonstration by the candidates. Ask the candidate to grade a student paper.
- Those selected for future assignments should be sent

a letter of "acceptance" and informed that if their services are needed, they will be contacted within a certain length of time prior to the beginning of a new semester.

Staff development/evaluation

Community colleges do a better job of evaluating the performance of part-time faculty than compensating them. Gottfried (1995) indicates that almost 95% of the colleges in his study of 159 community colleges indicated they had some system in place. He also indicates a variety of mechanisms are used to help part-time faculty become more effective in the classroom. They include an adjunct faculty handbook (88%), printed materials to improve teaching (80%), professional development programs (72%), mentors (46%), grants to improve teaching (18%), and individualized teaching consultation services (11%) (p. 35).

Staff development

Part-time faculty development programs encompass a wide range of activities which allow faculty members to improve their instructional skills and materials, keep abreast of new technology and methods, and network with colleagues. Grant & Keim (2002) group faculty development activities into four categories: professional, personal, curricular, and organizational. The professional category might include funds for travel to professional meetings and training, tuition-free courses,

learning grants or, in rare instances, sabbatical leaves. Development programs for the improvement of teaching range from year-long focused programs of skill training, classroom observation, and assessment to one-day workshops on student learning and model teaching strategies (Alfano, 1994).

The personal category might include in-service workshops on interpersonal skills, stress management, and time management. The curricular category might include training on general and departmental instructional practices, curriculum development, and even linkages with universities for the benefit of student transfer and continuing education of the faculty. The organizational category basically involves orientation sessions, faculty handbook, policy updates, and management techniques.

Many new part-time faculty members have little or no formal background in teaching. In an effort to support these instructors and to assure the quality of instruction, the literature suggests a mentoring program (Luna & Cullen, 1995; Hosey, 1990; Kelly, 1990). Individual college mentoring programs may vary according to the character and size of the school. In general, however, experienced, full-time instructors are teamed with new part-time faculty members to provide instructional support, to improve coordination of instruction between full- and part-time faculty, to improve evaluation of part-time faculty, to strengthen the professional relationship be-

tween full- and part-time faculty, and improve retention of students by improving the performance levels of part-time faculty (Hosey, 1990). Some colleges even pay mentors for their services or give them slightly lessened teaching loads.

Yet another method to support new part-time faculty and help assure the quality of instruction is an Associate Program for Adjunct Instructors. Gerda, Walker, & Richardson (1991) report that the program emphasizes the development and evaluation of skills rather than the dissemination of information. Scott (1997) reports that at the College of the Canyons, Los Angeles, once a part-time faculty member completes the program—in this case three consecutive semesters—an “Associate Adjunct” status is granted along with a pay increase. There are additional benefits. The part-timer gains rich teaching knowledge and establishes more permanent bonds with the full-time faculty and the college (p. 37).

Evaluation

Most community colleges perform a systematic evaluation of part-timers. It may take the form of classroom visits by a peer or department chair, student feedback, or even videotaped observations. Some community colleges tie faculty development to the evaluation process. As an example, Oklahoma

Junior College links peer coaching, in a non-threatening environment, to a complementary staff development program (Alfano, 1994).

Regardless of the methods used, faculty evaluation has two purposes. First, the results are used to make personnel decisions about reappointment and salary, and second, the results are used to support faculty development, growth and self-improvement (Rifkin, n.d.). Unfortunately, faculty members often fear that the evaluation is used solely for summative purposes, i.e., dismissal, rather than improvement purposes.

Conclusion

From an impressive collection of strategies for the retention of part-time community college faculty, the choices must be compatible with “institutional character”—fit the strategy to the distinctive nature of the college (Scott, 1997).

Part-time faculty is like any other group; it is comprised of individuals with different weaknesses and strengths. Part-time faculty members bring a variety of talents, perspectives, knowledge, and experience to the educational arena. And in a culture where knowledge and diversity are valued, such a variety should be celebrated, not condemned. We need to recognize our part-time faculty as true partners in the education of our students.

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