

Dear Governor Brown:

As you may be aware, 70% of California Community College instructors are classified as “temporary” employees, or more commonly known as “adjuncts” who are employed from term-to-term on a contingency basis, or simply as need demands. The term “adjunct” itself implies that such instructors are “ancillary,” or “non-essential,” when in truth these instructors are often responsible for the majority of instruction at given community college. They may be “adjunct” in name, but clearly essential to the community college system.

One of the greatest challenges to such instructors is that most of these instructors, even when classes are available, have no sense that, *even if they do exemplary work in the classroom*, they can reasonably expect to be rehired. At many colleges, instructor can simply be fired without cause, or as it is politely put, not offered a class assignment for the following term.

On a personal level, for these instructors, many of whom teach at multiple campuses working as self-called “full-time part-timers,” it means a life lived where one can rarely plan out beyond six months in advance. In one notable case, such an adjunct has worked as a so-called “temporary” worker since 1963. In all it means dreams deferred for adjuncts and their families. With regard to the California community college system, it has meant high faculty turnover, stressed faculty, and significantly impacted instruction, particularly as the system aspires to the notion of ‘student equity.’ In some colleges, the annual turnover rate for adjuncts is over 25% of the entire adjunct faculty. With such turnover, such colleges lose the long term institution knowledge and the value of veteran teaching needed to provide educational integrity.

Presently the legislature is considering a bill (**AB 1690**), which if passed will provide adjuncts who have taught successfully for six semesters with rehire rights. Moreover, it will establish rehire priority on a seniority basis, consistent with how full-time public educators are treated. Furthermore, it will provide those instructors who might stumble in their work a one-semester improvement plan of great benefit to incoming instructors who might struggle to find their footing initially, but who then become great adjuncts and sometime, even better full-time instructors.

Some argue against such a bill, claiming that it takes away an administrator’s flexibility to schedule classes, but in a number of colleges have negotiated similar rehire policies and administrators were still able to schedule classes. Another argument made is that **AB1690** would prevent local unions from negotiating better rehire rights, but **AB1690** only sets a minimum base, and one far better than what many districts have been able to negotiate. In truth, what a lack of rehire rights creates, beyond the aforementioned problems, is the potential for nepotism and unchecked discrimination, which is not what California aspires to.

The passage of **AB1690** will not end adjunct instructors being hired on an “as needed” basis, but it will provide adjuncts with the notion that under reasonable conditions they can expect to keep teaching when they do a good job, and that these good adjuncts will be available to help students achieve their goals.

Sincerely,

Address:
