



A Union of Professionals

ACADEMIC STAFFING AND THE FACE CAMPAIGN: MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

WHEREAS, only 42 percent of the instructional workforce at U.S. institutions of higher education was employed full time in 2007 and only 29 percent of the instructional workforce was employed full time and on the tenure track; and

WHEREAS, contingent faculty and instructors now account for more than two-thirds of the instructional workforce in higher education and teach more than half the undergraduate courses at public U.S. colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS, part-time/adjunct faculty members earn less than \$2,800 on average for teaching a full-term college or university course; and

WHEREAS, in 2007 the American Federation of Teachers launched the Faculty and College Excellence (FACE) campaign, a local, state and federal effort to (1) win financial and professional equity for instructors teaching in contingent positions and (2) increase the proportion of undergraduate classes taught by full-time faculty on the tenure track; and

WHEREAS, the economic downturn of the last two years has dramatically affected higher education budgets at the state and institutional level, resulting in job loss for many contingent faculty members and further reductions in the number of full-time faculty on the tenure track due to hiring freezes, early retirement incentives and layoff; and

WHEREAS, the current short-term response to the economy at the state level—higher education disinvestment and cutbacks—has the potential to significantly exacerbate current academic staffing trends; and

WHEREAS, higher education has been recognized by the Obama administration and Congress as critically important to national economic recovery, demonstrated by recent federal efforts to boost student financial assistance; and

WHEREAS, this investment has not been matched by a concomitant investment in higher education instructional staffing as the Delta Cost Project demonstrated in its report *Trends in College Spending*, which demonstrates that the share of higher education spending dedicated to classroom instruction has decreased and that the fastest enrollment growth is occurring at the institutions that spend the least per student; and

WHEREAS, a growing body of research has begun to draw correlations between investment in instructional staff and the success of students as measured by transfer, major selection and graduation:

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers recognize that strengthening investment in all aspects of academic staffing including improvements in salaries, benefits and job security for contingent faculty is more important than ever in a time when enrollments are growing and the importance of a college education is increasingly accepted; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT develop and actively pursue strategies to increase public understanding and maintain momentum on academic staffing despite the current difficulty in winning comprehensive legislation at the state level; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT expand its efforts to communicate the importance of addressing the academic staffing crisis through print publications, online communications, social media and other outlets and work with state and local affiliates to assist them in communicating that need as well; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT encourage and assist local higher education affiliates to:

- Utilize the recently published FACE Collective Bargaining Toolkit to incorporate long- and short-term academic staffing objectives into their collective bargaining campaigns;
- Utilize AFT's "Stronger Together" campaign to strengthen the ability of affiliates to mobilize all elements of the faculty and staff around academic staffing issues;
- Meet with representatives of K-12 labor organizations to educate them on the state of academic staffing in higher education and engage them in AFT's Just Ask! campaign designed to educate students, parents and counselors about academic staffing; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT, at the national level:

- Work with institutional researchers and public policy organizations to develop more comprehensive research and models to explore the connections between investment in higher education instructional staff and improving student success;
- Educate federal policy makers to recognize that higher education support programs must address issues of academic staffing in order to fulfill the federal objective of advancing student access and completion;
- Advocate at the federal level to ensure that accrediting agencies have consistent and enforceable standards for the proportion of full-time faculty, the treatment of contingent faculty and the inclusion of all faculty in institutional decision making; and
- Build broader coalitions with other labor organizations, graduate employee organizations, disciplinary groups, public policy groups, community organizations and student organizations around improving academic staffing; and

RESOLVED, that at the state level the AFT encourage and assist:

- AFT state federations to build coalitions around legislation that will lay the groundwork for a systematic improvement of academic staffing conditions over time, including advocacy for legislative resolutions and intent language, better data collection systems on academic staffing and the establishment of legislative committees to study academic staffing in the state;
- Public policy organizations and researchers at the state level to develop research on the impact of the academic staffing crisis in particular states;
- AFT state federations, other labor organizations and faculty groups to establish state-level policy summits to develop strategies and plans for addressing the academic staffing crisis at the state level.

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