

Standard Five: Faculty

The institution develops a faculty that is suited to the fulfillment of the institution's mission. Faculty qualifications, numbers, and performance are sufficient to accomplish the institution's mission and purposes. Faculty competently offer the institution's academic programs and fulfill those tasks appropriately assigned them.

DESCRIPTION

Full time faculty roles are clearly defined in the statewide collective bargaining agreement between the Maine Community College System and the Maine Community College Faculty Association. At the time of hiring, full time faculty are provided with a faculty appointment letter stating roles, responsibilities, and duties. As our mission is that of a comprehensive community college, full time faculty serve many roles. Faculty fulfill this mission within our technical/vocational/career track programs as well as our liberal studies/transfer program. Adjunct faculty are used and serve a critical role at the College. In accordance with the statewide collective bargaining agreement, adjunct faculty are permitted to teach nine credit hours or fewer per semester. Adjunct instructors are largely drawn from the pool of professionals working in the greater Washington County area, and are assigned teaching duties in the field in which they work. Adjunct faculty are provided with an orientation to clarify their roles and responsibilities at the College. Currently the college employs 22 full time faculty members and utilizes the services of approximately 19 adjunct faculty. Of the full time faculty, two hold Doctorate degrees, six hold Master's degrees, seven hold Bachelor's degrees, and 12 hold professional licenses in their area of expertise. In the career education programs, all faculty hold Doctorate or Master's degrees. The median age of the faculty is 56 years old with the youngest faculty member being 27 years old and the oldest being 73 years old.

Faculty teaching loads are determined by the statewide collective bargaining agreement. Currently, faculty teach between 6 and 18 credit hours per semester, with an average teaching load of 13 credit hours. The standard teaching load is 15 credits per semester. The lower numbers reflected this academic year include faculty who are presently receiving release time to allow them to serve in professional capacities such as department chairs and distant education coordinator. Faculty teaching loads may also, depending on program, be

determined by course contact hours. In addition to teaching duties, faculty regularly contribute to the College through student advising, course and program scheduling, and service on standing committees, such as the curriculum committee. Faculty members have participated in faculty development activities by sharing with colleagues the work they are doing in their programs. Faculty, particularly those teaching in the trade programs, also contribute significantly to the College by actively and aggressively recruiting prospective students and fostering relationships among Maine's secondary trade schools and industry across the state.

The College employs an inclusive approach to recruiting and hiring new faculty. All faculty and staff hiring committees include, at a minimum, one faculty member. These hiring committees also include representatives of administration and staff, typically including members of the College's bargaining units. The process for hiring new faculty involves the hiring committee reviewing applications and then interviewing qualified candidates. When interviews are completed, the hiring committee makes a recommendation to the President. Often the top two candidates are forwarded to the President, who conducts a final interview with each candidate before making a hiring decision. Newly hired faculty are provided with specific details about their roles and responsibilities in the College through their initial faculty appointment letter and the collective bargaining agreement. This hiring procedure has proven to be very effective. The College has hired faculty with outstanding qualifications and diverse academic and professional backgrounds. The College is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. This is communicated clearly through postings within the College, in the College catalog, and on the College website.

College faculty contracts are controlled by the statewide collective bargaining agreement. During the current academic year the median salary for faculty is \$57,147.49. This includes a low salary of \$34,575.00 and a high salary of \$66,249.00. In accordance with the collective bargaining agreement, faculty are financially rewarded for length of service to the College and attainment of advanced degrees.

The basic scheme for faculty assignments and workloads is determined by the statewide collective bargaining agreement. Additional refinement of faculty assignments and workloads is negotiated at the College level and is reviewed periodically or upon request of faculty or administration. The College employs a

faculty management team, consisting of representatives of the faculty and the administration to oversee this review of assignments and workloads. While research and scholarship activities are not necessarily part of the College's mission and purpose, opportunities for professional growth are provided within the College, through faculty wide professional development days, and outside of the college, through financial support of faculty coursework, sabbaticals, and other professional development opportunities. Over the past five fiscal years, the College has spent \$81,335.07 on faculty professional development. The College uses adjunct faculty to augment teaching in many programs. For the fall 2008 semester the College employs 19 adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are primarily used to fill teaching assignments for evening courses, which are required to fulfill the mission and purpose of the College, and in areas where growth within the College has been slower than anticipated. There have been several instances in recent years of adjunct faculty eventually joining the College as full time faculty members. The overall quality of the adjunct faculty pool is very good. A number of the College's regular adjunct faculty instructors have advanced degrees, including Doctorate degrees, and professional certifications. Where needed, such as in our medical assisting program during the 2008 – 2009 academic year, the College utilizes temporary full time faculty. Temporary full time faculty members are afforded all of the benefits of full time faculty status, as set forth in the statewide collective bargaining agreement, but are hired for a finite period of time.

The responsibilities of faculty and the criteria for their recruitment and appointment are spelled out in the faculty appointment letter utilized at the time of hiring. Faculty evaluation, promotion, and tenure are all set forth in the statewide collective bargaining agreement. The process for faculty evaluation is clearly articulated in the statewide collective bargaining agreement. Faculty evaluation is recognized as a cooperative effort between administration and faculty and has the express purpose of facilitating excellence in effective and purposeful classroom instruction. Tenured faculty members are evaluated formally on an annual basis, with new faculty being evaluated each semester. Faculty members are notified in advance of formal observations and are provided with the criteria by which they will be evaluated. Student evaluations of faculty performance are also sought at the end of every course. Adjunct faculty are evaluated by the Academic Dean and the faculty department chair for the department in which the adjunct faculty instructor is teaching.

In many programs at the College, faculty are responsible not only for the classes they teach, but also for the program they run. Faculty insure program responsiveness to student and professional needs through annual Advisory Committee meetings. These Advisory Committees are comprised of individuals from within the College's local community as well as individuals throughout the State who have a vested interest in the success of the College in fulfilling its mission and purpose with respect to specific College programs. Faculty also work with and comprise the majority of the Curriculum Committee, along with staff, and administration, to insure that courses within each program are appropriate to the College's mission and purpose. The College supports faculty opportunities for continued professional development by paying for faculty coursework toward advanced degrees and credentials. The College also fully budgets for an academic sabbatical each year. Both of these methods have been utilized by faculty. Since 2006 two faculty members have utilized the sabbatical funds. One earned an advance degree, while the other took coursework in her area of study. One other faculty member earned an advanced degree with coursework paid for by the College, while maintaining a full time teaching load. Faculty members have earned advanced degrees and gained increased academic competence in the areas they teach by utilizing both of these approaches. The College allocates Carl Perkins funds for the express purpose of faculty education in both the career and technical areas.

The statewide collective bargaining agreement directly addresses academic freedom of faculty members, recognizing the fundamental need to protect faculty from censorship, threat or restraint, and guaranteeing faculty full freedom in classroom presentations and discussions. The expectation of the College that faculty act responsibly and ethically is clearly stated in the collective bargaining agreement and appointment letter, as well as being broadly defined in a number of institution policies.

In an effort to meet the College's mission and purpose, faculty employ an eclectic approach to instructional techniques and delivery systems to deliver coursework to students. In addition to traditional lecture, lab, and shop classes, faculty utilize distance education through use of WebCT and interactive television, field placements and internships, digital recordings, smart classrooms, and more. This varied approach to knowledge building has led to strong cohorts of students from program to program and has encouraged supportive environments throughout the College. The College sees significant retention in its certificate programs, and

continues to work to see that same retention in the more traditional academic programs.

Faculty members are responsible for advising students within their respective programs. This is possible given the small size of our College and has proven to be very effective. Faculty are primarily responsible for all of the students in any given program, and have the opportunity and ability to closely monitor their progress within the College. This past summer, the College instituted Admitted Student Days for newly accepted students. With support from the College staff and almost universal participation by faculty, this proved very successful in getting new students off to a strong start at the College.

Academic integrity is of paramount importance to the administration and faculty of the College. Academic integrity guidelines are spelled out in the student handbook and reinforced by faculty in each academic area. Additionally, each faculty member addresses academic integrity in their classes and specifically in their syllabi. As a result of discussions between the College faculty and the Maine Community College System's attorney, the System will be undertaking to standardize academic integrity guidelines across the System. The College monitors institutional effectiveness both formally and informally. As described above, formal monitoring of effectiveness takes place through course evaluations, faculty evaluations and program evaluations.

APPRAISAL

The faculty and adjunct handbooks are in the process of being updated to bring further clarity to the faculty roles. The College is in the process of developing a more formalized statement of ways in which adjunct faculty are and will be utilized to best fulfill the mission and purpose of the College.

The College has experienced vast changes as it has evolved from a strictly vocational technical school model to its current status as the area's only comprehensive community college. A number of the career tract faculty are fully credentialed in the field of study or training in which they teach, but do not necessarily hold advanced degrees. It has been the College's policy that new hires within the trades are required to pursue, at a minimum, a Bachelor's degree. Of the two new hires in 2008 in the trades area, one is near completion of a Bachelor's degree, while the other will be starting that work this year.

As reported in the CIHE data, the College has gone from 26 to 22 full time faculty members over the past five years. This is a reflection of a number of changes at the College, including suspension of the boat building program located in Eastport, Maine in 2007. The median age of 56 years old for the faculty indicates that there will be a number of faculty retiring in the next few years. This will present the College with both a challenge and an opportunity. While the College will lose a great deal of experience and institutional memory with the loss of these experienced faculty members, the process of hiring replacements for retiring faculty members will give the College the opportunity to hire new faculty with advanced degrees. While some senior faculty members have not taken advantage of the opportunity for support in continued professional development, namely pursuit of advanced degrees, many of faculty teaching within the trades have successfully attained professional and industry accreditations in their respective areas of expertise. The opportunity to hire faculty will allow the College to ramp up expectations for faculty in both of these areas.

Generally the College seeks to bring on more full-time faculty as growth permits. The College has utilized adjunct faculty extensively in the areas of science, social sciences, and liberal studies. The College has identified a need to eventually hire more full time faculty in these areas. The faculty handbook is in the process of being updated and clarified for the purpose of offering further specific guidance to faculty members regarding their roles, responsibilities, evaluation, and promotion. The adjunct faculty handbook, which outlines roles and responsibilities of adjunct faculty, was instituted a number of years ago. That handbook is also in the process of being revised to better fulfill this goal.

Given the size of the faculty, it is a challenge for one person, the Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, to schedule timely evaluations of all faculty members and select staff members. Those faculty serving as department chairs have assisted the Dean of Academics and Students by evaluating adjunct faculty. Current full time faculty have expressed an interest in exploring a move away from faculty evaluation and toward a more formalized “peer mentoring program” model within the College.

The College will continue to support the academic and professional growth activities of faculty, and to encourage faculty who have not availed themselves of these opportunities to do so. The College recognizes a need to better systematically assess the effectiveness of instruction. To that end, the College has

devoted in house professional development resources and time to this area. The College and its faculty continue to work on better methods of learning. Along these lines the faculty has discussed forming a Faculty Senate to deal with academic and teaching issues.

As the College and faculty become more adept at using technology, such as our portal, as a tool for student advising and registration, students will continue to benefit from an increasingly seamless transition from accepted student, to registered student, to graduate of the College.

PROJECTIONS

1. The College will continue to support faculty educational attainment and professional development and commit to provide increased professional development to faculty in the area of instructional technology.
2. The College will assess faculty needs in a more systematic way in discipline areas and finding more effective ways to address those needs.
3. The Dean of Academic and Student Affairs will work with the department chairs and faculty to develop a plan by the end of the 2009/2010 academic year to explore alternative evaluation models that better support faculty and management needs and lead to excellence in effective and purposeful classroom instruction.
4. The College will work to develop a succession plan to support both faculty and management in smoothly transitioning through upcoming retirements and new faculty hires.
5. The Dean of Academic and Student Affairs will work with the department chairs and faculty fostering ways to support current assessment of student learning, and to use that assessment to provide meaningful feedback to the College demonstrating student learning. This will be an ongoing two year focus.