

Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team

Final Report

February 29, 2008

The Adjunct Faculty Support Design team was charged with the following tasks: research adjunct faculty design systems at other community colleges, establish a philosophical framework for adjunct faculty at MVCC, identify and define components of an effective faculty support system, conduct a needs assessment and survey adjunct faculty for their perceptions and needs, research and identify areas for improvement and/or modification to current practices, and define a comprehensive system for adjunct faculty support. Since receiving our charge, the Team has met bi-weekly to complete our tasks. The following summarizes our work on each task.

1. Research:

The Design Team was asked to research the practices at Metropolitan Community College, Johnson County Community College, and Prairie State Community College. These schools were contacted by phone by members of the Team. We also gathered information from SUNY Morrisville. In addition we were able to get the text of a presentation by Johnson CCC on their Adjunct Certification Training Program which was given at the NCSPOD Conference in October. The gathered information was then shared with the team members. A common practice at each of these schools is that there is a system in place for adjunct support. Many of our observations are included in our recommendations that follow.

2. Philosophical Framework:

As our starting point the Team developed the following philosophy statement:

PHILOSOPHY FOR ADJUNCT SUPPORT INITIATIVE

An engaged faculty is essential to a learning-centered community college. Because some 20% of the courses at Mohawk Valley Community College are taught by adjunct faculty members, they are as important to the students and the college as full-time faculty in maintaining a high level of academic integrity and consistency, in developing students' skills and knowledge of content areas, and in modeling scholarly and professional behavior. At the same time, adjunct faculty members tend to be on campus less often, have fewer opportunities for engagement with other adjuncts and full-time faculty, and have less access to formal and informal professional development networks. In order to bridge the gap between a generally lower level of overall institutional involvement and a higher level of expectations for academic outcomes, we believe that special, formalized efforts are needed to engage and support the adjunct faculty member.

3. Key Components:

Our research on adjunct support systems identified these components. There is a person (or persons) who has responsibility for coordinating support for the adjuncts across all departments. Communication is fostered by means of a web site and/or a newsletter which provides current information on the changes within the college and policies that affect those teaching. At the start of each semester there is a meeting that includes refreshments, a focus on teaching, and department specific information. There are workshops provided that explain teaching strategies, campus information systems, syllabus preparation, evaluation, and assessment issues. Professional growth is encouraged with opportunities for coursework and travel. These components have helped to form our recommendations as noted in item 6.

4. Survey:

A survey was developed by the Team and distributed to about 140 adjuncts involved in teaching at MVCC in the fall 2007 semester. There were 36 returned for a 26% rate of return. Many of the survey questions were open ended which made for difficulties in collating the responses. However, each team member was given all the responses to read and make conclusions. Several themes appeared. The adjuncts are generally happy with their MVCC experience, the rate of pay needs to be improved, there is a need for better communication, and a desire of earlier notice for courses. Also, information was gathered from other colleges in the area relative to rates of pay. The data clearly supports the perceptions of the adjuncts.

5. Identify Areas for Improvement:

Since there does not exist a comprehensive system for adjunct support across the College, the first recommendation would be to put such a system in place. Our findings are summarized in part 6 below.

6. Define a Comprehensive Adjunct Faculty Support System:

The Team recommends that the College establish a comprehensive support system for adjuncts. In order to provide for that system, the team recommends that the position of Adjunct Coordinator be established with responsibilities as below.

Adjunct Coordinator:

1. Be an advocate for adjuncts.
2. Assist in the design and upkeep of a Website for Adjuncts.
3. Establish a monthly newsletter to include a summer issue.
4. Update the General Policy Handbook for adjuncts.
5. Develop topical workshops - scheduled by need, appealing to a broad audience such as teaching strategies, classroom management, and College procedures and policies.

6. Develop a mechanism for increased departmental interaction such as department specific topics, course review, and best practices.
7. Develop a semester survey of Adjuncts to get input on course related issues and general college policy.
8. Establish a liaison plan with full time faculty that is department specific.
9. Advocate for adjunct rank advancement and increased compensation to a level competitive with area colleges.
10. Establish a budget to support travel and professional development.
11. Arrange for fall and spring convocations.
12. The Adjunct Coordinator should be a 10 month appointment to report to the Vice-President for Instruction to coordinate with the fall and spring semesters.

Minimum Adjunct Qualifications*:

In order to bring the hiring of adjuncts back into the departments, we need to look at a set of minimum qualifications that can be used to hire adjuncts by the department head. Any recommendations would be reviewed solely by the VP for Instruction. In this way the hiring of instruction would lie within instruction.

For all departments:

A Master's Degree in the discipline will be approved by the department head.

For all departments:

The department head may approve an adjunct faculty member with a Bachelor's degree in the field and a Master's degree in some other area in consultation with the Vice-President for Instruction.

For Art; Engineering Technology and Trade; Engineering Computer Science and Physical Sciences; Life Science; Mathematics; and Nursing Departments:

The Department Head may approve a Bachelor's degree in the field after consultation with the Vice-President for Instruction and the President.

For all other degrees/certificates:

The Vice-President for Instruction and the President must approve these in advance.

***These qualifications are for hires after the date of adoption of this policy by the appropriate parties.**

Advisory Committee:

In order to support the role of the Adjunct Coordinator the Design Team recommends that an Advisory Committee be established to work with the coordinator and to provide guidance and advice on issues as they arise. The membership of the committee should include, but not be limited to: 2 department

heads, 2 full time teaching faculty, 6 adjunct teaching faculty, 2 clerical support persons, a person from the Registrar's Office, and the Coordinator.

Adjunct Coordinator Search:

The Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team would like to be involved with the search for the adjunct coordinator.

The survey of area colleges in regard to compensation and a blank form of our adjunct survey will be attached as separate documents. If there is a need for the completed adjunct surveys, then they can be made available.

**MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADJUNCT TEACHING FACULTY SURVEY**

Please elaborate as much as needed upon your response.

1. Was an orientation offered prior to the start of classes?

Yes Did you attend? Yes No

If you attended, what was useful?

What was lacking?

No Would an orientation been helpful? Yes No

2. Would it be useful to be invited to attend department meetings?

Yes No

3. What are the objectives of your department?

4. What are the activities/projects in your department that further these objectives?

5. What do you feel is expected of you in your department?

6. How has the academic area for your office been helpful?

7. How have your colleagues been cooperative and helpful?

8. What do you need in terms of physical facilities and equipment?

9. What do you need in terms of personal development?

10. What else do you need from the college to perform your job?

11. What have you done to exercise your own judgment in your classes?

12. Do you feel a sense of accomplishment in the type of work you do at MVCC?
_____Yes _____No

13. How do you find your work at MVCC interesting and challenging?

14. What are your job satisfactions?

15. Would a newsletter be helpful? _____Yes _____No

16. Would an adjunct information center website be useful? _____Yes _____No

17. What could be done to promote a better feeling of connection to the college?

18. What do you value most about teaching at MVCC?

19. How many years have you taught in higher education? _____ years

20. How long have you been teaching as an adjunct with MVCC? _____ years

21. What days and times are you available to teach at MVCC?

22. Do you teach at any other colleges, universities or high school in addition to MVCC? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please list:

23. Check ALL that describe your academic preparation:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> high school diploma | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional designation(e.g. CPA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> some college | <input type="checkbox"/> Juris doctorate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate degree | <input type="checkbox"/> A.B.D. (all but dissertation) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree | <input type="checkbox"/> other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> certificate | |

24. Do you participate in scholarly activities related to your discipline or teaching? (e.g. publishing, lecturing, consulting?) _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please specify the type of activity.

25. What discipline(s) or field(s) do you teach at MVCC?

26. On the average, how many sections do you teach at MVCC each semester?

27. How often do you spend time with the following members of this institution?

	very often	often	sometimes	hardly ever
part-time faculty	_____	_____	_____	_____
full-time faculty	_____	_____	_____	_____
department heads	_____	_____	_____	_____
administrators	_____	_____	_____	_____
non-teaching staff	_____	_____	_____	_____

28. Where would you place yourself on the following taxonomy? (adapted from Biles and Tuckman, 1986)

_____ retired

_____ student

_____ hopeful full-timer (would like to secure a full-time teaching position)

_____ full-time elsewhere (currently work 35 or more hours per week at one job elsewhere)

_____ part-time elsewhere (currently work less than 35 hours per week)

_____ homemaker

29. Do you hope to eventually hold a full-time teaching position at MVCC specifically?

_____ yes

_____ no

If yes, in how many years? _____ years

Comments:

Name _____ (optional)

Thank you.

Question	Utica School of Commerce
1. Requirements for teaching adjunct minimum degree requirement? what is it? teaching experience required?	yes master's no
2. Number hours/classes allowed to teach maximum number of classes per semester maximum number of credit hours per semester	2 6
3. Limit hours per calendar year allowed to teach? if limit, what is it?	no
4. Orientation session required? if, yes, paid to attend?	yes no
Information covered in orientation:	run by VPA covers USC student/faculty handbook communications topics/ "how to..."
5. Evaluation of adjuncts by students by peers by department head	yes yes
6. Compensation rate at which you pay Do all receive the same rate?	varies person, degree, subject minimum: \$25 per contact hour no, based upon degree, experience, level of course
Raises?	based upon performance and experience
Benefits?	no

Note: Herkimer CCC pays \$480-\$585 per cr. hr.
Utica College pays \$800 per cr. hr.

Cazenovia College
yes
master's or BA w/ experience
no

3
8
6
16 hr; 6 classes

no

yes

yes

\$2200 3 credit course
\$2900 4 credit course
no, occasionally negotiations

merit

no

SUNYIT

yes
master's
no

5

no

no

yes

yes

\$700/ credit hr undergrad.
\$1000/ credit hr for grad.
no

annual

if at least 2 courses can receive
medical, dental, vision insurance

MVCC

depends upon discipline

no

10

30 hours

no

yes

yes

yes

\$470-490/ credit hr -lecture
\$420-440/credit hr -lab
5 scales based upon experience

degree or experience

no

DEPARTMENT HEAD AGENDA

Wednesday, March 3, 2008

IT 218- 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Transfer Day
(5 minute) J Maio
5. Coca-Cola Scholarships
(10 minutes) SB Lardie
6. Adjunct Faculty Support Charter
(15 minutes) D Willner
7. Snow Cancellation
(2 minutes) S Engel
8. Campus Conversations
(5 minutes) S Engel
9. Marketing
(10 minutes) S Engel
10. Payment Vouchers (Subbing for Adjuncts)
(2 minutes) R Jubenville
11. Distance Learning Recap
(10 minutes) J. Lynch

Recorder – Rich Pucine

Timekeeper – Donald Willner

Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team

Update

November 6, 2008

(Developed by Dr. Maryrose Eannace and Susan Smith, with the assistance of Rich Pucine)

The Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team has made significant progress since its Final Report was issued in February, 2008. The following summarizes the work that is in-progress or has been completed on each task:

1. Research:

Information gathering has continued as we develop the data to support the rationale for making changes in a variety of areas that affect Adjunct Faculty, including compensation; understanding of the College culture and climate; student interactions; recruitment and retention of Adjuncts; professional development; and engagement and better integration into the life of the College.

Among those areas that have been researched or where data has been obtained, are the following:

- Compilation of 2006-2007 and Fall 2008 statistics concerning the percentage of credit hours taught by full-time faculty and adjunct faculty, as well as the percentage taught as over load (compiled by R. Pucine at request of S. Smith);
- In-progress discussion to address the issue of adjunct pay and office hours. In 2007, just under \$60,000 was paid to compensate adjuncts for holding office hours to meet with students. There is no mechanism currently to ensure that all Adjuncts hold these hours. A proposal is in development that will address both this issue and the comparatively low compensation provided to Adjunct Faculty. What is proposed is an across-the-board, per contract base pay rate for all adjuncts of approximately \$86, combined with contractual language that delineates the following expectations:
 - a. that Adjunct Faculty will hold 1 scheduled office hour weekly, per course taught, unless otherwise specified by the Department Head, and;
 - b. that Adjunct Faculty will communicate with students via MVCC email as needed.

2. Philosophical Framework:

The Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team recommended that someone be hired to coordinate support for adjuncts across all departments. In accordance with that recommendation, the following has occurred:

- An Adjunct Coordinator was hired. Susan D. Smith, MA, an adjunct in the Dept. of Humanities since 2004 and a trainer for the Corporate and Community Education Department since 2007, assumed these duties on September 22, 2008.

- The first Adjunct Convocation was developed and held prior to the start of the Fall 2008 semester, with 55 adjunct faculty members attending. Adjuncts received a packet of information about College policies and procedures and had the opportunity to meet with representatives of many of the support services available on campus. A meal was provided, which also afforded the opportunity for adjuncts to meet and mingle with Department Heads and other adjunct colleagues. The Convocation was designed and implemented by members of the Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team;
- The creation of and Adjunct Faculty Email Group and a comprehensive list of current Adjunct Faculty who either teach currently or are deemed to be part of each department's active Adjunct Faculty pool was compiled and developed to aid in ongoing communication between the Adjunct Coordinator and Adjunct Faculty from all departments on the Utica and Rome campuses (compiled by S. Smith with assistance from J. Yager, N. Chrisman and Department Heads and Coordinators);
- A meeting with Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team members D. Willner, W. Hysell and M. Ramos occurred in October 2008 to review the Fall 2008 Adjunct Convocation results and to begin planning for Spring 2009 Adjunct Orientation, which is tentatively scheduled for the Utica and Rome campuses during the week of January 12, 2009;
- A personal letter was written and disseminated by the Adjunct Coordinator to all Adjunct Faculty, explaining services and assistance available, and providing contact information for the Coordinator (see attached);
- An inquiry was submitted by the Adjunct Coordinator to Adjunct Faculty who regularly use the Adjunct Office (AB 156) concerning adequacy of the existing office space. Adjuncts enthusiastically responded and offered the following needs for consideration:
 - a. Office telephone (there isn't one in the Adjunct Office);
 - b. Desk chairs and side chairs that are in good condition;
 - c. A wall-mounted holder that allows students to drop off work for adjuncts;
 - d. Better access to copier cards during times when dept. offices are closed;
 - e. Bookshelves and file cabinets to store/share teaching materials;
 - f. Access to standard, consumable office supplies in the Adjunct Office, especially for adjuncts whose departments are not located nearby;
 - g. Audio speakers for computers and a local printer connection;
 - h. Cleaning supplies or a regularly scheduled office cleaning;
 - i. Coat rack or hooks to hang coats, scarves, hats;
 - j. Clock
 - k. "accent touches" – MVCC framed posters or student artwork for walls.
 - l. Cork board/Bulletin board to display notices
- A meeting of the full Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team has been scheduled for November 19 to plan the Spring 2009 Adjunct Faculty Orientation program. The group will consider the results of the Fall 2008 Convocation for Adjuncts and make additions and changes as appropriate. The group will also develop a calendar to develop future Fall and Spring Convocations and Orientations and the Adjunct Coordinator will create a template to facilitate planning.

3. Minimum Adjunct Qualifications:

The Vice President for Learning and Academic Affairs and Adjunct Coordinator are working with the Human Resources Department to develop more specific advertising that will fulfill Academic Department requirements to enlarge the pool of qualified Adjunct Faculty, especially to teach during the daytime. The following has occurred or is in progress:

- Advertising copy was developed by the HR Department and revised by the Adjunct Coordinator in concert in consultation with Department Heads to attract Adjunct Faculty for the Spring 2009 semester for specific courses and for general enhancement of the academic and non-credit Adjunct pool. The ad will appear in the Observer-Dispatch and Daily Sentinel on 11/9 and 11/16. It is already posted on the MVCC web site;
- The Adjunct Coordinator is developing a list of recommended print and electronic outlets to advertise Adjunct Faculty positions. This list will supplement already-existing advertising venues. In addition, some nontraditional methods for attracting Adjuncts (via local companies that have established collaborative relationships with the College) will also be considered and proposed as part of this effort;
- New contract language is in development by the Vice President for Learning and Academic Affairs that addresses changes to Adjunct Faculty contracts in base pay, with an added requirement of the minimum of 1 hour of scheduled office time and an expectation of ongoing student communication using email when and as appropriate. The suggested language will be submitted to the appropriate departments and divisions for approval prior to insertion in the Adjunct Faculty contracts.

Also under consideration is a system where the Adjunct Coordinator will schedule assist department Heads in scheduling Adjunct Faculty office hours to ensure compliance with the new contract language. A search for additional, appropriate areas where Adjunct faculty may hold student conferences – e.g., the Libraries on the Utica and Rome campuses, the Learning Centers on each campus – is under consideration. These spaces, with the assent of the Library Director and the Learning Center staff, would enable Adjunct Faculty and students to meet in areas outside of the designated Adjunct Office, and would also expose students and Adjuncts to resources useful to students and their instructors.

4. Further Items to Be Addressed:

The recommendations proposed by the Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team are off to a promising start. It is anticipated that prior to and during the Spring 2009 semester, the following activities will occur:

- The Adjunct Coordinator will set up a mechanism to ensure ongoing communication with Department Heads and faculty who are engaged in working with Adjuncts (December, 2008);
- Creation of a recurring newsletter for Adjuncts, to be distributed monthly (including the summer) and including information specific to teaching as an adjunct at MVCC as well as useful tips and ideas that Adjunct Faculty may use to improve their teaching. Adjunct and Design Team input will help determine the best format – print or electronic (or both) to ensure that all Adjuncts receive and benefit from the newsletter. It is expected that the first newsletter will be distributed at the start of the Spring semester. Its appearance online should coincide with a Web page for Adjuncts (mid-January 2009);

- An annual Adjunct Survey instrument will be developed, designed and disseminated by the Adjunct Coordinator, with input from the Design team as well as the Director of Institutional research to ensure survey validity and that the timing of its release and analysis does not conflict with other College surveys (tent.: March/April 2009);
- The Adjunct Faculty Support Design Team and the Adjunct Coordinator will discuss and collaborate on the development of workshops and a timetable for launching them, with an eye toward Fall 2009 as the kick-off time for this activity (planning to occur in February/March 2009).