

The Delphi Project Database of  
**Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Example Practices**

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**William Rainey Harper College Center for Adjunct Faculty Engagement**

Institution and Program Websites: <http://goforward.harpercollege.edu/>  
<http://goforward.harpercollege.edu/about/offices/cafe/>

- ✓ Faculty Evaluation
- ✓ Instructional Resources
- ✓ Awards and Recognition
- ✓ Professional Development
- ✓ Access to Shared Office Space
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Shared Governance

**Harper College's Center for Adjunct Faculty Engagement (CAFE)** was initially created to standardize and improve adjunct faculty teaching evaluations and provide access to better professional development opportunities. The institution's provost had raised concerns about the inconsistent evaluation of adjuncts across departments, which led to the creation of the center. The center was established with one associate dean and two assistant deans; the planning for its services started with developing a mission statement, exploring example practices implemented at other institutions, and the development of professional development programming and evaluation rubrics. The success of the center not only in providing important services for non-tenure-track faculty, but also in building relationships among adjuncts, tenure-track faculty, administrators, and professional staff in other offices on campus has resulted in additional changes that have improved working conditions and support.

Below, we present additional information about some of the main programming and service offerings of CAFE, followed by a description of additional benefits that have been realized.

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**Teaching Evaluations by Administrators**

CAFE was primarily created as a response to concerns about inconsistent teaching evaluations and evaluation processes across departments. So, this was a main focus from the beginning. In determining priorities for achieving goals to improve evaluations, the center's associate deans reached out to adjunct faculty. These individuals often discussed their desire to enhance their teaching skills and knowledge of pedagogy, create opportunities for critical thinking in their classrooms, and to learn about support services for students or funding for instructional technology.

The center developed a common rubric for evaluating adjunct faculty members' teaching and consolidated the evaluation process under one roof. CAFE serves more than 700 faculty members and each of the CAFE administrators takes responsibility for a working to provide a subset of them with an individualized evaluation and feedback using an eight-question rubric. New adjunct faculty receive evaluations in their first two semesters; depending on individual needs, they are evaluated again during their third semester or transition to receiving feedback

every other year. The evaluation process includes at least one hour of classroom observation and a thirty-minute post-conference so specific feedback can be given addressing areas for improving instruction.

Adjuncts at Harper College have reported the attention to improving teaching evaluations has led to improvements in student evaluations, as well as instructors' confidence in the classroom and knowledge about pedagogy, development opportunities, and services available to their students.

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### **Professional Development and Communication**

Through working to improve teaching evaluations, CAFE also was able to identify common areas where professional development opportunities were needed. By working with faculty, the center determined there was a need for programming to address topics such as ways to engage small groups in the classroom, utilize instructional technology, and better understand pedagogical practices. The associate deans also conducted outreach to various offices across the campus to ensure adjunct faculty were knowledgeable about support services available for students through offices such as disability services

Today, CAFE typically offers around 20 workshops per year; each lasts approximately 90 minutes and is offered during normal business hours, but also in the evening. Currently, all of the workshops are offered in-person on campus, although future programming may be expanded to include online professional development. The workshops are often led by other adjunct faculty, which has increased their ownership of the programming and interest in participating. Although the center's budget has not allowed for participants to be compensated, the adjunct faculty members presenting workshops do receive a stipend and meals are provided for those attending.

CAFE has also worked closely with human resources to obtain a complete list of email addresses for adjunct faculty to ensure notifications about these programs are received. A newsletter is also distributed through the mailing list to share other announcements. Program chairs and coordinators have also been very influential in helping to promote participation in the workshops, so the center's associate deans meet with these leaders during orientation week, plus one other time each semester. A webinar was also sponsored to help program chairs and coordinators to understand how to provide better support for adjunct faculty; nearly a third of the chairs and coordinators participated.

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### **Instructional Resources and Access to Shared Office Space**

The CAFE office, which is open from 8:00am to 8:00pm on most weekdays, has become a place where adjunct faculty on campus can go to access copiers, resources, computers, and telephones. The center frequently hosts open houses; faculty members regularly visit the space and are welcomed by an accommodating staff that is committed to serving them. There are also two offices available in the center for faculty to reserve to use for student meetings or other purposes. The center will soon relocate to a more central location on the campus, which will make it more accessible. Also, the new location is adjacent to the offices of the center providing

similar services for tenure-track faculty and will create new opportunities for creating additional programming that allows tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty to interact and get to know one another.

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### **Other Outcomes: Shared Governance; Awards and Recognition**

The efforts of CAFE's associate deans and staff to build relationships across campus, enhance the quality and recognition of adjunct faculty members' teaching, and improve administrators' knowledge about how to support instructors has also helped to achieve additional improvements. The center's associate dean meets with the college's Deans Council biweekly and also meets with representatives from the Adjunct Association. Recognition of the capabilities, ideas, and commitment of adjunct faculty among tenure-track faculty and administrators has led to planning to include one or two adjuncts on many committees which make up the institution's shared governance plan.

The center has also worked with human resources to recognize adjunct faculty service and include them in consideration for awards. Until recently, tenure-track faculty and non-tenure-track faculty were recognized in separate events, but those events have been combined. Now, all faculty members are recognized together in an event attended by the college president and other leaders.

The broad recognition of Harper College's Center for Adjunct Faculty Engagement has resulted in recent increases in the center's budget and future planning promises to continue the highly beneficial and valued programming offered.

#### **Additional Information:**

For additional information about the Harper College Center for Adjunct Faculty Engagement, visit the center's website (<http://goforward.harpercollege.edu/about/offices/cafe/>). The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success also offers a wide range of resources and tool kits through our website (<http://www.thechangingfaculty.org>).

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