



A resource created by **The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success**

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Investing in Part-time Faculty at Montgomery College

2022 Winner of the Delphi Award

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From the Delphi Project database of

Example Best Practices to Support Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

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Example Best Practices in Process to Support Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

- ✓ Leveraging Stakeholder Relationships
- ✓ Continuous Organizational Learning

Montgomery College (MC) is a community college with campuses across the state of Maryland. The Institute for Part-Time Faculty Engagement and Support (IPTFES) was created in 2015 and pioneered by the late Dr. Antonio “Tango” Thomas. IPTFES was created to expand, improve and build upon policies and practices that support part-time faculty (PTF), which MC recognizes as essential members of the campus community and integral to the student success mission. In the IPTFES’s first four years (2015-2019), they were able to create orientation and on-boarding sessions for new part-time faculty, establish resource centers across all their campuses, and establish a professional development fund to compensate part-time faculty who are trying to improve their teaching. Since their 2019 Delphi Award finalist recognition, the IPTFES has taken on new leadership and expanded their supports for part-time faculty. In what follows, the process the IPTFES used to create their supports is highlighted in more detail, and newer services, programs and supports the institute is offering are foregrounded.

Example Best Practices

Leadership and Advocacy Opportunities

IPTFES, in partnership with MC academic departments, has created a campus-based faculty associates program to assist part-time faculty in becoming acclimated to the various resources offered by the college. Part-time faculty serve as faculty

associates; these part-time faculty associates (PTFAs) are appointed by their dean and approved by the IPTFES director. They are expected to remain abreast of information concerning PTF at the college, answer questions and direct PTF to appropriate resources, serve on the governance council, and meet with PTF during designated office hours. There are many benefits to serving as a PTFA, such as enhancing their CV, gaining a strong perspective about the college and their department, being invited into spaces that have been historically roped off for PTF, opportunities to plan programs for PTF, and compensation.



PTF can also serve as coaches for students in various areas/programs as part of the Achieving the Promise Academy. The academy is designed to decrease drop, fail and withdrawal rates in highly-enrolled courses. PTF who serve as coaches are compensated for their work.

Recognition

Each month, the IPTFES spotlights one part-time faculty member as a way for the PTF community to learn more about their PTF colleagues in different colleges and to recognize the contributions of PTF. These spotlights are deeply personal. The spotlighted PTF member gives quotes about their work, their personal and family lives, and things that bring them joy. This initiative shows PTF that they are appreciated for their contributions to the college while also attempting to build a community among PTF that extends beyond their work.

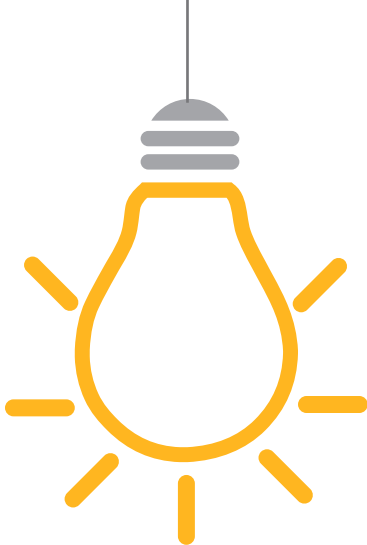
PTF are also nominated by their department chairs and deans for annual outstanding faculty awards in teaching, counseling/advising, and scholarship. Winners of these awards, along with the PTF member of the year award, receive \$2,000 and \$5,000 respectively.

Since 2019, the IPTFES has implemented improvements around benefits, compensation and courseload stability.

Professional Development and Community Building Opportunities

Since 2020, the IPTFES has offered the Shoenberg Fellowship (named after Dr. Robert Shoenberg, member of the Board of Trustees and Foundation Board) to qualified PTF members interested in pursuing full-time faculty positions in higher education. The fellowship supports a fully paid, one-semester sabbatical for up to three PTF members. To be eligible for the fellowship, PTF must have a terminal degree in their field and have taught at MC for at least four semesters. Applicants are asked to submit a plan to complete a research-based project within the sabbatical term. And fellows are provided with mentoring and professional development support during their sabbatical.

The IPTFES also holds a bi-annual conference on the Saturday before the professional week for the college. The Dr. Antonio Thomas Part-Time Faculty Conference is an onboarding experience for new faculty, as well as a conference for returning PTF where they can take advantage of numerous professional development workshops and hear updates from MC administration. Topics from a recent conference included:



- Tips and Tricks from the Library to Support Student Success
- Classroom Management and the Blurred Lines of Student Behavior
- Creating Conversations that Matter

Additionally, representatives from across campus (e.g., Information Technology, Registrar Office, Human Resources) and the Service Employees International Union - Local 500 are present for the conference. Time is also carved out for PTF to connect with their dean/department chair. PTF receive \$100 compensation for participating.

The IPTFES also hosts several community-building events. Most notably, the Article Club, which explores different issues affecting the campus and higher education broadly. The Article Club is an informal gathering with coffee, tea and other treats and an opportunity for PTF to gather as a community.

Improved Benefits, Compensation, and Courseload Stability

Since 2019, the IPTFES has implemented improvements around benefits, compensation and courseload stability. For example, PTF are now eligible for partial gym/wellness reimbursement equivalent to full-time faculty. They are also eligible to receive \$1,000 toward external professional development programs (i.e., conferences, workshops and related travel).

PTF can also apply for Good Faith Consideration, allowing them to receive the same number of classes provided in previous semesters. If a PTF member is not granted that request, they can inquire about the circumstance(s) that caused the loss and gain another opportunity to regain the lost equivalent semester hours in another semester.

As of spring 2022, qualified PTF are eligible for a full-time course load (15 credit hours) for one semester upon immediate or emergency needs in the department. If this assignment pushes the PTF beyond the course load outlined in their contract, the PTF member will be eligible for pro-rated benefits. This further professionalizes PTF and affords them benefits in line with their teaching contributions.

Example Best Practices in Process

Leveraging Stakeholder Relationships

Several stakeholders were pivotal in developing the IPTFES and its subsequent programs, services and supports. Some key stakeholders include:

- E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching Excellence (ELITE) Center
- Human Resources
- Office of Equity and Inclusion
- Library
- Writing, Reading, and Language Center (WRLC)
- Student Affairs
- Governance
- Service Employees International Union - Local 500 (SEIU)
- Part-Time Faculty

By leveraging these relationships, the IPTFES became an institutionalized center. In addition, the IPTFES can better extend its reach and ensure that PTF receive the support they need to feel part of the campus community and meaningful contributors to MC's student success mission.

Continuous Organizational Learning

The IPTFES also utilizes continuous organizational learning to create new supports and improve existing supports. They are committed to program evaluation and maintaining productive working relationships with liaisons from the Labor Management Committee (HR and SEIU) and the Senior Leadership Committee (Director of the IPTFES, Union president, and senior vice presidents). In doing so, the IPTFES can keep a pulse on the broader campus climate, re/assess the needs of PTF, and design supports accordingly. Through continuous organizational learning, The IPTFES has shifted focus from mere academic support to meaningful career and personal development.

Efforts from the IPTFES has also resulted in MC's broader organizational learning, which has led to the rethinking of other policies, practices and programs. For example, HR created a policy around being more inclusive of PTF regarding advancement and rank.

Visit The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success for more example practices and a wide range of resources and toolkits to better support faculty off the tenure track at: pullias.usc.edu/delphi.

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