

Date of Hearing: January 9, 2018

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 310 (Medina) – As Introduced February 6, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Part-time faculty office hours.

**SUMMARY:** Requires, on or before August 15 of each year, each California Community College (CCC) district (CCD) to report the total part-time (P/T) faculty office hours paid divided by the total P/T faculty hours taught during the prior fiscal year; and, to prominently post said information on its Internet Web site.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires that each CCD, with the assistance of the CCC Chancellor, establish and maintain institutional research to evaluate the effectiveness of the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP), as specified, and of any other programs or services designed to facilitate students' completion of their educational goals and course of study. Specifies the metrics for said research shall include, but be not limited to the following:
  - a) Prior educational experience, including transcripts when appropriate, as determined by the chancellor;
  - b) Educational goals and courses of study;
  - c) Criteria for exemption from orientation, assessment, or required counseling or advisement, if applicable;
  - d) Need for financial assistance;
  - e) Disaggregated data by ethnicity, gender, disability, age, and socioeconomic status, to the extent this information is available;
  - f) Academic performance, such as the completion of specified unit thresholds, success in basic skills courses, grade point average, course completion outcomes, transfer readiness, and degree and certificate completion; and,
  - g) Any additional information that the chancellor finds appropriate (Education Code (EC) Section 78214).
- 2) Requires the CCC Board of Governors (BOG) to develop a formula for allocating funding for the SSSP in order to implement services, as specified (EC Section 78216).
- 3) Defines "faculty" as those employees of a CCD who are employed in academic positions that are not designated as supervisory or management, as specified. Faculty include, but are not limited to, instructors, librarians, counselors, community college health services professionals, handicapped student programs and services professionals, and extended opportunity programs and services professionals (EC Section 87003).

- 4) Defines any person who is employed to teach for not more than 67% of the hours per week considered a full-time assignment to be a temporary (P/T) employee (EC Sections 87482.5 and 87882).
- 5) Requires the CCC BOG to adopt regulations regarding the percent of credit instruction taught by full-time (F/T) faculty and authorizes CCDs with less than 75% F/T instructors to apply a portion of their "program improvement" funds toward reaching the 75% goal (commonly referred as "75/25") (EC Section 87482.6).

The state has stopped providing program improvement funds and the BOG has since required CCDs to provide a portion of their growth funds to hiring more F/T faculty.

- 6) Expresses that the Legislature finds and declares that community college P/T faculty are required to fulfill the same teaching responsibilities as F/T faculty although students have little or no access to P/T faculty outside of the classroom; that the Legislature intends that students have the same opportunity for academic assistance and guidance without regard to whether a course at a CCC is taught by a F/T or P/T faculty member; and, that the Legislature intends that CCC P/T faculty teaching a minimum number of courses be compensated for providing academic counseling and assistance to students outside of the classroom (EC Section 87880).
- 7) Creates the Community College P/T Faculty Office Hours Program for the purpose of providing community college students equal access to academic advice and assistance; and, authorizes the governing board of a CCD to provide compensation for office hours to P/T faculty (EC Sections 87881 and 87883).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown; however, according to the Senate Appropriations Committee on a measure virtually identical to this measure, negligible state costs.

**COMMENTS:** *Background.* Part-time faculty have been expected to provide the same high quality instruction as their F/T colleagues, but often times are not able to provide regular student office hours and are not necessarily compensated for professional responsibilities linked to student success.

*Student success and support.* Senate Bill 1456 (Lowenthal), Chapter 624, Statutes of 2013, was enacted to implement some of the Student Success Task Force recommendations. Among other things, SB 1456 revised and recast the Seymour-Campbell Matriculation Act of 1986 as the Seymour-Campbell Success Act of 2012 in order to target funding to services such as orientation, assessment, and counseling and advising to assist students with the development of education plans. It also required that students define goals, required that students declare a course of study and mandated student participation in assessment, orientation and education planning.

At a regulatory level, the BOG has approved regulations that provide enrollment priority to students who have participated in assessment, orientation and who have developed an education plan. A revision of Title 5 regulations is in progress to implement provisions of SB 1456 to require students to complete core services as well as to declare a course of study. Additionally, in 2012 the Board of Governors adopted enrollment priorities and, in Spring 2013, districts are required to notify students that accumulating 100 degree applicable units or being on academic or progress probation for two consecutive terms will result in the loss of enrollment priority.

Finally, as of Fall 2014, students who complete orientation, assessment, and have a student education plan, will receive a higher enrollment priority.

The Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012 also specifies that hiring F/T faculty, including counselors, and providing for P/T faculty support, are "essential educational priorities that contribute to student success."

*Importance of faculty office hours.* Various studies have shown that office hours play a vital component of higher education; providing invaluable means for students to interact with faculty outside of the classroom and/or lecture hall. Office hours have been shown to provide students with confidence and motivation. Many students describe office hour visits just as important as attending a class. Additionally, office hours have been linked to student retention.

*Need for this measure.* According to the author, "The Legislature has previously acknowledged the importance of this issue [the need for P/T faculty office hours]. In 1997, it created the Community College Part-time Faculty Office Hours Program to provide funding for office hours. However, funds for this program were cut during the recession, although some funds were allocated for this purpose in last year's budget compromise. Part-time faculty hold office hours as negotiated by their contracts. Thus, if these contracts do not include office hours, which many do not, then office hours are not offered."

The author contends, "While the Student Success Scorecard collects and reports various metrics that affect student success, it does not collect information on office hours offered by part-time faculty. This information is also not readily available on community college district websites."

The author argues that, "As mandated in statute since the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012, community colleges must collect information, such as prior student educational experience, financial need, and educational goals. This information is then compiled and published by the Chancellor's Office in the annual Student Success Scorecard. One item not collected by community colleges is provision of office hours by part-time faculty. Given the importance of office hours on student performance, and the significant proportion of classes taught by part-time faculty, this metric should be available to facilitate student choice and to help policymakers better understand the drivers of Student Success."

This measure will require that P/T faculty offered office hours be reported on the community college district website.

*Previous legislation.* AB 2069 (Medina) of 2016, which was vetoed by the Governor, was virtually identical to this measure.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

California Federation of Teachers  
California Teachers Association  
Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (Sponsor)

### **Opposition**

None on file

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