

Q_{uestion}:

What is a Non-Collective-Agreement Faculty position, and what does the position feel like in the context of the Collective Agreement?

A_{nswer}:

The CAAT(A) Collective Agreement currently recognises “full-time” teachers and “partial load” teachers as members of the Collective Agreement (CA). “Partial Load” teachers teach a minimum seven hours per week to a maximum of twelve hours per week.

A “part-time” teacher is not considered a member of the Collective Agreement if they teach less than seven hours per week, or if they teach more than twelve hours per week.

Source: “A Day in the Life of a Non-Full-Time Faculty” by Pat O’Connor, CAAT(A) Local 125
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A day in the life of Non-Full-Time Faculty

Pat O’Connor, Local 125

We are referred to as adjunct or associate faculty. These are palatable labels for the wasteland of insecurity and uncertainty in which we exist, living from paycheck to unemployment cheque.

We pray and often beg to get partial-load hours (7-12) in order to receive a decent, livable, hourly wage with some benefits for our families. Could someone please tell us how an enlightened, educational institution can justify paying us half the salary when we teach six hours as opposed to seven, or thirteen hours as opposed to twelve? Some deans at some colleges have made it their mission to ensure that no partial-load hours are assigned in order to keep their budgets for adjunct faculty down. We wonder: do deans receive bonuses or salary increases on the backs of part-time and sessional faculty?

Associate faculty are often verbally praised for our contribution to the colleges, but the institution’s actions prove otherwise. We are told that, although we are amply qualified to teach our subjects on a part-time basis, we aren’t qualified to teach the same subjects on a full-time basis. In what world do years of experience not qualify an individual for the very position that he/she already holds?

We are told to make ourselves at home in our communal offices but to keep a box handy because we must clear out at the end of each contract. We do accumulate seniority (very slowly), but seniority is often ignored when teaching assignments are doled out. If we have a partial-load contract, we are members of the bargaining unit and can file a grievance when seniority is ignored. However, filing a grievance could ensure that one won’t be invited back.

Many of us signed union cards years ago in hopes that the OPSEU could negotiate wage parity with the partial-load position for part-time and sessional teaching loads. However, the colleges are doing everything within their considerable power to ensure that we don’t organize. This is a blatant attempt to keep this pool of under-paid teachers around for as long as the institution can successfully exploit its most vulnerable group of workers.

We love teaching and want to make it our life’s work. Many of us have spent thousands of dollars pursuing degrees to qualify ourselves for full-time teaching positions when they become available which are few and far between, while at the same time earning low wages,

Please don’t view us as being bitter; we are just realistic about our situation and need to be heard, understood, and cared about by the various colleges in which we work.