

CCRI Part-Time Faculty Association Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the CCRI PTFA?

The PTFA owes its existence to one simple idea: that part-time faculty, regardless of their backgrounds, gender, or race, are stronger together; that we can achieve more as a collective than as individuals.

We work to represent the interests of part-time faculty at CCRI. One way we do this is by negotiating contracts with administration and with the Council on Post-Secondary Education. These contracts protect our status as regular employees, guarantee a fair and transparent system of assigning classes and ensure that we receive pay increases on a regular basis. Furthermore, we assist and represent part-time faculty who wish to file grievances or need help with some other matter. We also meet regularly with the administration, advocating for the interest of our members. Lastly, we work with other unions on important state-wide issues like greater access to healthcare or more funding for education.

Who is in the union?

Everyone who teaches part-time at CCRI (except for administrators) is in our “bargaining unit” i.e., eligible to be a member of the PTFA. However, only persons who have filled out a membership form are considered “members.”

Are non-members covered by the contract?

The contracts the PTFA negotiates cover everyone teaching part-time at CCRI (except administrators). For instance, everyone benefits from pay raises, and non-members can file grievances. However, non-members are not allowed to vote on contracts or elect officers. Furthermore, a non-member who requests a service from us or from NEARI will be charged a fee. While we must represent non-members, we do not have to do so for free.

As a non-member, do I pay dues?

No. Per the Janus v. AFSCME decision, only members pay dues.

What are the benefits of being a member?

As a full member, you are eligible to vote at our meetings. You also do not need to pay anything if requesting a service from us. Furthermore, you are entitled to [additional benefits from NEARI](#). Most importantly, by being a member of our local, you ensure that we as a union remain relevant and successful. When we bargain for a new contract, or stand up for our rights, we are only as strong as the strength of our membership.

How do I become a member?

Contact me (zjuskuv@ccri.edu) or Pat Crowley, at NEARI, (pcrowley@neari.org). We would love to talk to you about the how we can work to make positive changes at CCRI.

What are the dues members pay?

The National Education Association RI collects dues which are roughly 3% of an instructor's pre-tax pay each semester. In addition, our local collects a flat fee of \$40 a year in local dues (\$20 in the fall, and another \$20 in the spring). Lastly, any PAC money you've chosen to pay is withdrawn each semester.

How are dues takes out?

Dues are deducted by payroll. You don't need to do anything.

If I do not teach in a semester, do I pay dues?

No, you do not. You only pay dues if you teach. Nor are you billed for past dues if you come back the following semester.

Are dues tax deductible?

Yes, union dues are tax deductible.

What are dues used for?

NEARI's dues go to support the work that its staff does on our behalf. When we negotiate contracts, or pursue grievances, their staff provides us with invaluable advice and guidance. Moreover, NEARI provides numerous professional development opportunities (free of charge) to all its members. In some instance, NEARI will pay for legal representation when a member is accused of a crime, and pays arbitration and mediation fees for our local. Lastly, NEARI works in the statehouse lobbying for such things as health insurance for part-time faculty, or more funding for higher ed.

Our local dues go to pay stipends for officers, as well as other costs associated with running our local.

How are courses assigned?

Courses are assigned by availability, qualifications and seniority. Seniority is based on classroom teaching time. For example, a 3-credit course accrues you 2.5 hours of seniority. A chair will begin at the top of the list, assigning one, two or three courses to each instructor. Before

courses are assigned, you must turn in your availability form, which indicates which courses you can teach, in order of preference.

What if a full-time instructor takes one of my courses prior to the beginning of the semester?

There's nothing we can do there. It's against the law for us to tell full-time faculty how they are assigned courses (and vice versa). However, any-instructor "bumped" by a full-time faculty member can bump another part-time instructor with less seniority. If you are bumped in this way, you cannot in turn take a class from someone else.

Why is my name not on the seniority list?

Most likely for one of two reasons: 1) Because you just started teaching at CCRI. Your name appears on the list after you teach two 3-credit courses (or the equivalent of). 2) Because two calendar years have gone by without you teaching two 3-credit courses (or the equivalent of). When this happens your status in the department is revoked. You can ask for classes again, but you will begin at the bottom of the list.

What do I do if I feel that my department incorrectly assigned classes?

Please contact our VP and Grievance Chair Joel Gluck. You can email him at ccriptfa@gmail.com.

What do I do if I have been accused of a crime or misconduct?

If your chair or the administration contacts you, please do not reply. Instead, immediately notify us. If your chair asks to speak with you about some serious matter, make sure a union representative goes with you.