

**Starting from the fundamental insight that teacher working conditions are student learning conditions, we seek to restore dignity and humanity to the educational process by making common cause between students—who are in many cases *also* workers—and the contingent academic workers of our institutions.**

**Our goal is to facilitate mutual education between students and faculty, fostering cooperative political action around concrete issues, informed by the larger structural issues framing our common situation, always with the understanding that quality, accessible education is a human right and a public good.**

**We will work together to generate hope for a more equitable future.**

### Core Principles and Practices

1) Talk to other adjuncts! Organization is key, and isolation is the enemy. Build a culture of connection through casual events. Make sure to reach out to diverse groups of contingent faculty, especially faculty of color, women and LGBTQ faculty, with the recognition that they are over-represented among adjunct faculty. Ask each person what his or her concerns are, and listen.

- a) One-on-one conversations are key
- b) Host coffee hours
- c) Adjunct appreciation days
- d) Any excuse to get together!
- e) Identify classes of educators, like civics professors, who might be particularly amenable to being active on and connecting with students about Adjunct issues.
- f) Hold open roundtables to discuss adjunct issues—announced and frequent
- g) Connect with committed and/or sympathetic tenured faculty
- h) Host parties
- i) Use visuals to attract new participants and members—don't underestimate the power of a balloon (or a puppet!)
  - Fliers should be catchy because you are competing with so many other events.
- j) If you feed them, they will come.
- k) Generate hope: be prepared to tell stories of Adjunct successes, either local or from somewhere in North America
- l) Survey all contingents about issues that are most important
- m) Be cognizant of “invisible” adjuncts, i.e. those who teach remotely. Develop methods for connecting with remote/web-based adjuncts, such as virtual conferences, door-knocking where possible, emails and listservs, #adjuncttalk

2) Connect with students and existing student associations—both formal and informal—around shared concerns. Ask students what their concerns are, rather than telling them what the issues are. Listen; don't just talk. Build trust through one-on-one conversations, and respect and support student issues. At the same time, inform students about adjunct issues by pointing out connections between the two. Support existing student work, and work together on joint actions. Always be sensitive to imbalanced power dynamics and attempt to mitigate them—or better yet, to share authority as much as possible—

wherever possible.

- a) Again, one-on-one conversations are key
  - b) Reach out to formal student organizations (like government) but also informal and underfunded student organizations, which are more likely to be amenable to coalition work
  - c) Reach out especially to mentor groups, etc. for students of color, women's groups, LGBTQ groups, 1st-gen college student groups
  - d) Integrate actions with those of the students, for example by being an advisor to student government and student activity
  - e) Be proactive in thinking about and understanding the issue of student debt
  - f) Issues in which students and faculty may have a mutual stake:
    - Unpaid office hours
    - Make education free!
    - Abolish student debt!
    - Need for more academic support
    - General quality of public education
    - Reject budgetary austerity
    - Quality of general education courses
    - Diversifying the university
  - g) Identify and connect with regional, national and off-campus student groups
    - For example: United Students Against Sweatshops and National People's Action, United States Student Associations
  - h) Host informal, open lunches for student activists; provide pizza; publicize what was discussed
  - i) Connecting with or helping to build student newspapers and other media such as radio—this can function as pressure on the administration
    - Potentially add an Adjunct corner to the student newspaper, depending on the relationship with the student publishers of course.
  - j) CFA and others have developed paid, student internship programs. If you have a progressive union leadership, this is an excellent tactic to consider.
  - k) Pre-professional organizations
  - l) Develop easy actions that empower people to be a part of the process—something simple such as wearing a union pin.
  - m) Build and enhance relationships with international allies, specifically indigenous groups, for example: ASSE, Idle No More
  - n) Connect with “invisible” students, i.e. remote/online students
- 3) Build for the long term—generate and sustain momentum. Conversations, both with fellow faculty and with students and student groups, should be the first of many. Follow up. Saying hi or working together once is not enough.
- a) Many one-on-one conversations, over years
  - b) Form a coalition organization that has memory beyond particular individual participants (with written records)—this helps to address the issue of student transience, since they will only be at the university for four years
  - c) Build a steward system with regular, expected activity—such a leadership structure can be built even in a non-union context.

- d) Strategic planning through scenario building and making concrete plans on five- and ten-year timelines—act rather than react.
- e) Develop roles for people at all levels of time and skill level—even someone with 30 minutes per week should have a role to play.
- f) Organization should arise out of concrete activities, rather than as a prerequisite for them.

4) Think strategically about framing and visibility. Be thoughtful about what to disclose and when and how to disclose it. With that in mind, work to create visibility for adjuncts and student concerns on campus. Hold our institutions responsible for things they say out loud. Be transparent about what goes on campus inside and outside of the classroom, both generally (structural issues) and specifically (your personal experience).

- a) Campus Equity Week: Using classroom as way to educate and learn from students about what's happening in higher education, but students could do teaching
- b) Use social media, but use conscientiously and in the context of face-to-face interaction and organization-building
- c) Class announcements
- d) Teach-ins
- e) Stamps or stickers for graded papers
- f) Engage students in arts activities, such as guerrilla theater and performance art
- g) Attend board of trustees meetings—faculty and students can do this together
  - Work to get student and contingent representation on boards and other formal university entities whenever possible—seek positions of power at the university
- h) Recruitment and orientation centers are sites of potential actions
- i) Creatively, sensitively educate students in the classroom about the conditions of contingent faculty labor
  - Note: some people think this is an unwise tactic, especially if not done delicately.
- j) Learning to discuss neo-liberalism/capitalism—transforming personal problems into public issues.
- k) The contradiction between rising student tuition and lowered faculty salaries
  - Graphically represent this with a pig!
- l) Push for open negotiations and/or conversations with administration
- m) Analyzing university institutions—this is a form of research from below
- n) Attaching non-helium balloons to adjunct cars, so that the proportion of contingent laborers is visually represented in public
- o) Littleisis.org—a tool for “following the money” at universities
- p) Push for open contract negotiations, in the case that a formal union is in place

5) Always seek to learn more about the changing conditions of Adjunct labor and the changing student experience.

- a) If you have a union, stay informed about and involved with internal activities; understand your contract
- b) Connect with adjuncts in other places via national and international listservs
- c) Study regional labor law

- d) NFM, COCAL are essential to staying informed and not feeling isolated—connect with and learn from activists via these formal networks.
  
- 6) Identify other parties to work with in the community, including parents, unions students—who again are often also workers—might already be in, houses of worship, and other civically-minded, socially-conscious organizations.
  - a) Identify ways of connecting with students' parents
    - Someone has created an app for parents that shows them how their tuition dollars are used.
  - b) Working to build long-term relationships in the community is key to having an actual labor *movement*. Don't reach out until you are willing and able to build for the long term (see item 3!)

\*\*\*This document was prepared by the "Student Issues" Working Group of COCAL XI. Feel free to email [theadjunctproject@gmail.com](mailto:theadjunctproject@gmail.com) with any questions, or better yet, join our new student issues listserv: [cocalxistudentstrategies@googlegroups.com](mailto:cocalxistudentstrategies@googlegroups.com)\*\*\*