

## Cuesta College Federation of Teachers



# Newsletter

Advocacy • Activism • Professionalism



**AFT local 04909**

CCFT has started negotiating the 2025-2027 faculty contract or Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The process began with the district and CCFT agreeing on “reopeners”, which means sections of the contract that will be considered for modifications. The following CBA articles have been reopened: Article 4: *Compensation*, Article 5: *Work Hours, Work Year and Workload*, Article 6.20: *Unpaid Workload Exchange Leave*, Article 7: *Evaluation Procedures and Tenure Review Process*, Article 9: *Disciplinary Action*, and Article 13: *Grievance Procedure*. For a more detailed explanation see the [document](#) presented to the September 2024 Board of Trustees meeting.

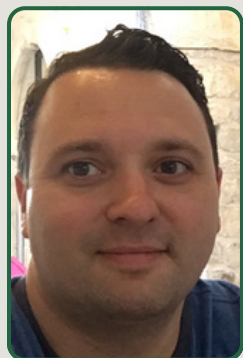
## Negotiations Team Leaders



### Greg Baxley

CCFT President, Chemistry Faculty

Greg focuses on solving problems in a collaborative way, which helps people feel valued and reduces the need for costly legal help. He also reviews contracts and data from other colleges to ensure that CCFT is providing equitable and responsible representation for the membership.



### Mike Mogull

CCFT Vice President, Math Faculty

As lead negotiator, Mike has been communicating with the district regularly and proposing contract language modifications that he brings to the EB, CoR, and negotiations team for discussion. In order to better represent all faculty, he designed a survey for them which will inform the negotiation team’s priorities.

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### New Members

### CCFT Updates

In spring 2025, Mike will be on sabbatical, so Greg will take over as Lead Negotiator, and Heather Tucker will be acting CCFT Vice President. The Council of Representatives (CoR) approved these appointments at the October 24, 2024 meeting.

# Meet the Negotiations Team

Full-time and part-time instructional and service faculty from various disciplines collaborate to best represent faculty interests and improve compensation and working conditions. Some of the members participate in negotiation sessions with the district, and others help with research, data analysis, and writing proposals.

## Heidi Webber

*FT Academic  
Counseling &  
Division Chair*



In addition to academic counseling, Heidi is the Interim Division Chair for Student Service faculty. This is Heidi's second term on the Negotiations Team. She previously served during the spring of 2023. She is honored to support the lead negotiators and advocate for the needs of Cuesta College Faculty!

## Nancy Steinmaus

*PT Kinesiology  
Faculty & Division  
Representative*



Nancy joined CCFT at its inception and was on the EB for seven years, representing PT faculty. She has been on multiple CCFT negotiating teams. Advocating for PT issues is her primary role, but of course advocating for all faculty is important. Her superpower is extracting and evaluating the district team's intentions to help navigate the process and strategize.

## Lisa Schicker

*PT Biology  
Faculty & Division  
Representative*



Lisa presents ideas for reaching PT/FT pay parity and equity as well as advocates for other ways to increase PT compensation and improve working conditions. She investigates ways for PT faculty to boost earnings, such as increased steps on the salary scale, more office hours, better substitute pay, and lab/lecture parity.

## Kate Porter

*FT Counseling  
Faculty & Career  
Center Coordinator*



Kate's role on the team has been to help with research on comparable colleges. She has focused on service faculty specific items in negotiations. She also rotates with Heidi in negotiation sessions.

## Jen Shellhorn

*PT Geology  
Faculty, CoR Co-  
Chair, Division  
Representative*



Jen has been involved in CCFT for several years as CoR Co-Chair and Physical Science representative. She observes and takes notes on negotiation sessions with the district, which serves as a reference for the team.

## Dina Hallmark

*FT Counseling  
Faculty &  
Articulation Officer*




Dina's focus on the team is conducting research and analyzing data that will better inform and prepare the negotiations. CCFT welcomes Dina to Cuesta!

Much of the work involved in negotiations happens behind the scenes. The team researches contracts at other California Community Colleges (CCCs), communicates with division representatives at the CoR, and meets monthly to discuss progress and strategies. Several of the team members also meet regularly with the district's team to negotiate specific items. Other work includes editing and reviewing contract language and seeking legal advice as needed. Regular updates of the negotiation progress will be posted on Cuesta's Human Resources (HR) website throughout this year.



# Compensation

Securing appropriate financial compensation for faculty is always a priority of negotiations. Because CCFT represents all full-time and part-time faculty at Cuesta, there are many divergent interests. In order to gather input on negotiation priorities, faculty were sent a survey on 10/28/24 and asked to rank items that are most important to them. Some of the survey topics include:



The survey was sent by baxleygreg@gmail.com via Survey Monkey. Please complete it by 11:59pm on 11/4. Your input is important!

**PT pay parity:** PT faculty per unit teaching pay is currently 83% of the FT rate. An increase in compensation applied to the PT pay scale would reduce this gap. A differential pay increase for PT faculty could be applied, which as was done in the 2023-2024 academic year.

**Adding steps to the PT salary schedule/ FT overload schedule:** PT faculty are paid on the same lecture/lab schedules as FT overload, and currently there are 12 steps on this pay scale. Faculty advance in steps based on length of service and units taught. The FT salary schedule has 21 steps (15 of which provide a salary increase). Adding steps to the PT salary schedule would allow further advancement opportunities. It is important to consider that out of 72 CCCs, 52 have 11 or fewer steps on the PT salary schedule, and the average is 8 steps. Cuesta has 7 columns on the PT scale, while the average number is 4 among the CCCs.

**Salary only increase:** CCFT can focus on increasing salaries alone and not benefits. Until recently, across the board percentage raises have been sought. This approach can appeal to a larger number of faculty, but it does not address systemic inequities.

**Fringe benefit:** Some compensation can go towards the district's monthly contributions to health plans, which would reduce faculty's monthly out-of-pocket costs. The district offers health benefits to FT and to PT faculty loaded more than 40%.

**Retirement health benefits** can bridge the gap to Medicare eligibility. Currently, Cuesta does not offer faculty any retirement health benefits.

**Longevity:** Assignment and load stability from semester to semester is uncertain for PT faculty. The language in the CBA could be modified to consider length of service when offering PT faculty teaching assignments.

## Comparable Colleges

These are colleges that the district, CCCUE, and CCFT agreed to use for comparison eight years ago. This list contains single-college districts that are similar to Cuesta in terms of size, demographics, or location.

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Allan Hancock   | 6. Hartnell           |
| 2. Antelope Valley | 7. Monterey Peninsula |
| 3. Cabrillo        | 8. Mt. San Jacinto    |
| 4. Citrus          | 9. Santa Barbara      |
| 5. Desert          | 10. Victor Valley     |

## Additional Negotiation Items

**Clean-up items** include areas where mistakes in the CBA have been identified and need to be corrected. They also involve adjusting the CBA to incorporate changes approved in current MOUs. Some of the work already underway is described below:



- The number of work days for service faculty (Librarians, Counselors, DSPS) is not accurate as listed. The salary schedule states that service faculty should be paid 1.1 times the amount as 10-month faculty, but now it is 1.09. The number of work days for service faculty is not proportional to salary. Reducing the service faculty 197-day contract to 192.5 days or increasing the pay differential to 1.126 would make the pay per day proportional.
- CCFT negotiated an MOU that allows part-time faculty to evaluate other part-time faculty throughout the college. This language needs to be added to the CBA.

**Finals & Office hours** are also potential negotiation items.



**Finals Week:** Currently, the last week of the semester follows a final exam schedule. Some colleges have decided against a finals week schedule and have adjusted their calendars to schedule classes in the last week just like the rest of the semester. This may be an important consideration in relation to the 16-week semester.



**Part-time Faculty Office Hours:** Part-time faculty are paid for 18 office hours per semester (1 hour per week) if they have above 40% load, and 9 office hours per semester (1/2 hour per week) if they have 20-39.9% load. In the current CBA, these office hours are required. PT faculty may want more flexibility. For example, they may prefer to offer an equivalent number of office hours as full-time faculty (1 hour per week, per every 20% load), offer fewer office hours, or have them as an option but not a requirement. Also, if faculty have a DE assignment, they can offer office hours online, but 50% must be synchronous. Face-to-face faculty must offer some in person office hours. CCFT could advocate for a DE office hour option for face-to-face classes.

### Teaching Loads at a Glance

15 lecture hours/week OR 18 lab hours/week is a full-time teaching load.

PT faculty are currently capped at 67% FT load due to legislation.

67% load = 10 lecture hours/week

40% load = 6 lecture hours/week

20% load = 3 lecture hours/week



# Meet New CCFT Members

CCFT welcomed 30 new members this fall! We asked them why they joined, and below are some of their responses:

## DEBI IKENADOR

### Part-Time Ethnic Studies

"I joined the union because I was encouraged by my mentor Dr. Mario Espinoza-Kulick, and because I understand the importance of being part of a union, as they help make sure management acts fairly and treats employees with respect in addition to helping employees negotiate for higher wages and benefits and improve conditions in the workplace."



## JEREMY SHERMAK

### Full-Time Journalism and Communications

"I joined the union because I believe in the power of solidarity and a strong faculty voice on campus. It is a pleasure to be here."

## BILLY KENISTON

### Full-Time History

"I joined the union because I am a firm believer in trade unions. As a graduate student at the University of Illinois, I was very much involved in the graduate student Union.... That Cuesta College has a strong Collective Bargaining Agreement and a strong union was one of the major draws for applying for this position."



## NOEMI VEGA QUIÑONES

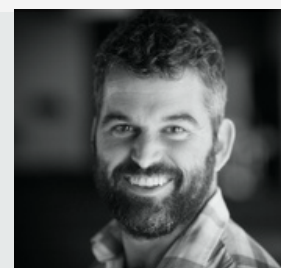
### Part-Time Ethnic Studies

"I joined the union because I believe in the collective power of each voice."

## BRANDON NAPOLI

### Full-Time Business

"I believe joining the union is important because it helps ensure fair treatment, workplace rights, and a collective voice. Through the union, I can participate in negotiations for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. Being part of a union also provides a level of job security, knowing I have a support system in place for addressing grievances or conflicts. Ultimately, joining allows me to contribute to a stronger, more collaborative work environment where employees' needs are valued and respected."



## JESSICA MIHELIC

### Part-Time ESL

"I joined the faculty union because I had heard of the great work they do for the faculty and the support they give the members."

## KAELE WAGES

### Part-Time and Lead Faculty in Nursing Assistant Program

"I joined the faculty union to support all the hard work they do for faculty at Cuesta. I hope to meet other members, learn more about faculty benefits, and to stay updated on current issues affecting part-time faculty."



# CCFT Updates

The California State Teachers' Retirement System (CALSTRS) is the retirement benefit provider for California public educators from elementary schools through community colleges. PT faculty are not required to participate in CALSTRS at Cuesta College. CALSTRS will be offering presentations at Cuesta on December 6th. General information will be presented at 11:00am, and the session at 1:30pm will be specific for PT faculty. Be on the lookout for a flyer with more information soon!



PT faculty are eligible for this benefit, but they are **NOT** enrolled automatically. If you are interested, you need to contact HR and CALSTRS.

**3% Raise:** Despite the low state COLA, CCFT was able to secure a 3% increase for all faculty, effective 2024-2025 academic year.

**Lower Dues!** CCFT has approved the budget for 2024-2025 that includes two months when membership dues will not be collected (December and May). In addition, there are no “pass through dues” this year. That means even though CFT and AFT have raised their dues rates, CCFT is not applying an increase this year.

**Treasurer News:** Neil Higgins, the new CCFT Treasurer, has been busy researching local banks to find a more suitable one that enables online banking so that CCFT can use electronic processes. He has also updated the member database, aligning it to the AFT database, which is the main tracking database for union members.

**Faculty Evaluations:** Katy Dittmer, FT Psychology Instructor and Chair of the Tenure Review Committee, wrote Peer Evaluation Recommended Practices to provide guidelines for faculty evaluators and promote consistency across campus. The Academic Senate Council and CoR reviewed the document and provided feedback, and the final version was approved by the CoR at the October 2024 meeting. All faculty evaluators are encouraged to review the guide.

**Elections Committee (EC):** In spring 2025, there will be an election for CCFT officers and contract ratification. Nichol Santisteven, Rachael Barnett, and Kerry Bailey were approved as EC members at the October 2024 CoR meeting.



If you are not already a CCFT member, join us! Read about the benefits of becoming a member and complete the membership form.