

REMARKS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF HIRING FULL-TIME FACULTY

by

Dr. Eduardo Jesús Arismendi-Pardi

Dear President Hornbuckle:

I wish to begin my remarks by quoting a visionary leader, the Chancellor of the Miracopa Community College District in Arizona, Dr. Rufus Glasper, who sees the value of full-time faculty in terms of quality education and student success. He recently stated that “we determined that for us to achieve our completion goals in 2020 and beyond, we need to make a commitment to increase full-time faculty.” Dr. Glasper further stated that full-time faculty take on numerous advisory roles in sponsoring student clubs, academic advisement, curriculum development and evaluation, and office hours—full-time faculty are on campus every day and they have a positive impact on the overall success of students.

I would like to point out from my perspective why we should not minimize the importance of full-time faculty in terms of our dedication and commitment to student success. Full-time faculty, unlike part-time faculty, are integral parts of two very important components of a premiere educational experience in terms of academic success and service to our community. These two components are Instructional Activities and Professional Activities. Under instructional activities full-time faculty are actively involved in curriculum development, periodic syllabus reviews, joint teaching with colleagues, interdisciplinary participation, involvement in the development and evaluation of honors curriculum, general education, and organization of extracurricular activities for students. Under professional activities full-time faculty are actively involved in participation in educational associations, discipline associations and organizations created for the propagation of innovative instructional strategies, community college associations, service as department chairs, and institutional committee service. Assembly Bill 1725 delineates and clearly explains how these components are essential in achieving the mission of the community college because quality instruction cannot be achieved without sufficient members of the full-time faculty.

Finally, full-time faculty are the backbone of the campus, creating a climate indispensable to attracting and retaining students. Part-time faculty do a good job and I am not here to minimize their supplementary role. However, the ontological reality of the colleges in our District concerning part-time faculty is that many or the majority of them come and go. This reality limits or makes it difficult and at times impossible to fully participate in campus life and activities. Increasing part-time faculty in lieu of hiring full-time faculty is at high cost to quality education and is in the short-term interest of doing more with less funds. This is a form of exploitation of the academic work force which perhaps makes fiscal sense, but in no way is at all consistent with maintaining and improving academic quality and ensuring student success. Any movement that facilitates using part-time faculty over hiring additional full-time faculty is a movement in the wrong educational direction.