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Positioning Part-time VITAL Faculty for Success with 360° Wraparound Support at the Community College of Baltimore County

2025 Finalist of the Delphi Award

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From the Delphi Project database of

Example Best Practices to Support VITAL Faculty

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- ✓ New Adjunct Faculty Orientation
- ✓ Dedicated Adjunct Spaces and Support Personnel
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- ✓ Equitable Policies, Recognition, and Advancement Pathways
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Introduction

The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) is a large, multi-campus institution serving more than 51,000 students across credit-bearing and continuing education (CE) programs each year, positioning it as one of the largest two-year institutions in Maryland. The college operates across three main campuses: Catonsville, Dundalk, and Essex. CCBC relies on a broadly-distributed instructional workforce to fulfill its mission of transforming lives through accessible, high-quality education. In addition to 433 full-time instructors, CCBC employs nearly 1,000 part-time VITAL faculty, who are fairly evenly split across credit-bearing and CE courses. The Institute for Transformative Teaching, Learning, and Leadership (The Institute) was established in 2023 as a centralized hub for faculty development. CCBC's strategic plan explicitly names faculty equity, pedagogical innovation, and workforce sustainability as institutional

priorities, anchoring its commitment to comprehensive adjunct support. This institutional context — large-scale, mission-driven, and structurally complex — provides the foundation for CCBC’s multi-layered approach to better supporting part-time VITAL faculty through faculty development, governance inclusion, and long-term organizational learning.



Example Best Practices to Support VITAL Faculty

Collaborative Recruitment Events

The Institute works collaboratively with human resources (HR) to promote, plan, and host virtual part-time faculty recruitment fairs. These events offer opportunities for potential applicants to connect with HR representatives, to learn about hiring processes and compensation, and to hear from departmental representatives about position expectations. Additionally, these events provide an introduction to institutional procedures and opportunities for support and development. By tailoring these events specifically for potential applicants to part-time roles, CCBC conveys that they value this population.

New Adjunct Faculty Orientation

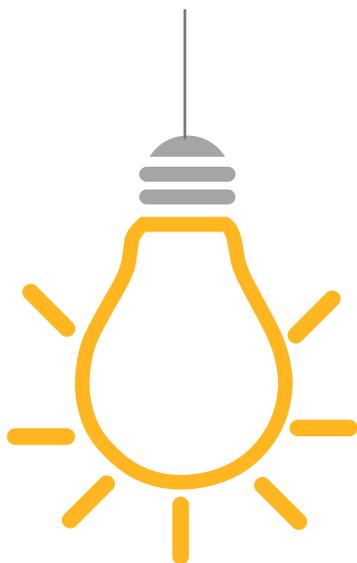
CCBC offers the New Adjunct Faculty Orientation (NAFO) as a voluntary orientation, with compensation for part-time participants. In addition to introducing new part-time faculty to classroom technologies, effective pedagogical practices, and support resources, the orientation provides an overview of the enrolled student population, so that new instructors can provide tailored support to students. The Institute leads synchronous, two-hour orientation sessions both on campus and virtually. In addition, they have recently developed an asynchronous online version that new part-time faculty can complete on their own time. This flexibility in format ensures that adjunct faculty can engage with essential pedagogical, technological, and institutional content regardless of their schedules.

Dedicated Adjunct Spaces and Support Personnel

Each CCBC campus has an Adjunct Faculty Center, spaces that are available 24/7 to part-time VITAL faculty. The Centers offer amenities including workstations, printing, and refreshments. Additionally, CCBC has four part-time project assistants who work in the centers; these personnel oversee operations, maintain supplies, and provide ongoing assistance and a reliable point of contact for the part-time faculty who visit the centers. Assistants also produce newsletters for part-time faculty; plan and host events including Adjunct Faculty Center open houses, the Winter Adjunct Conference, and the Adjunct Awards Ceremony; and create promotional materials for the Institute’s activities. The Adjunct Faculty Centers thus function not only as physical workspaces but as intentional community hubs where project assistants provide informal mentorship, resource navigation, and day-to-day encouragement. These centers also create opportunities for connection with part-time colleagues that help counter the isolation, uncertainty, and logistical barriers often experienced by adjuncts.

Inclusion in Shared Governance

In 2022, CCBC’s college senate voted to include part-time faculty representatives to that body. While this change is still being implemented, the vote was an important step signaling that the voices of adjunct faculty opinions are valued in the shared governance of the college.



Compensation and Benefits

CCBC has institutionalized equitable policies related to compensation and benefits for part-time faculty. The college regularly ensures that part-time salaries are competitive within the state of Maryland, including overall pay increases of 33% over the past five years and regular cost of living adjustments. Additionally, part-time faculty earn a higher pay rate as they continue working at CCBC. Pay levels are determined by the number of credits taught over time as well as participation in professional development activities. Part-time faculty also accrue hours for necessary absences through CCBC's Safe and Sick Leave policy, which has been in place since 2018. These efforts demonstrate how targeted investments in infrastructure and human-centered resources cultivate a culture in which adjunct faculty are valued as essential partners in the academic mission, rather than treated as peripheral or expendable labor.

Professional Development

The Institute offers two professional development opportunities specifically for part-time faculty. The Adjunct Teaching, Learning and Scholarship (ATLAS) learning community promotes pedagogical inquiry using a cohort model; participants design an implementation project for one of their courses, and participants who complete their project earn a stipend. The Institute also holds an annual Winter Adjunct Conference that begins with a resource fair, followed by dinner and breakout sessions, some of which are led by part-time faculty presenters. CCBC has also recently initiated a Faculty Fellows program that provides an opportunity for fellows to spend one year as an adjunct faculty member followed by one year as a full-time visiting lecturer with ongoing mentorship and professional development. Finally, CCBC supports part-time faculty in attending the annual statewide conference organized by Maryland Consortium for Adjunct Faculty Professional Development at no cost to the faculty member.

Part-time faculty are also invited to participate in the Institute's professional development ecosystem, including Fall Focus events, Teaching and Learning Fairs, curated Go2Knowledge course tracks, and ACUE certificate programs. As a whole, the suite of professional development opportunities available to part-time faculty provide them with structured pathways to strengthen evidence-based teaching and deepen pedagogical confidence, while earning rewards such as digital badges and certificate, completion stipends, and higher levels of per-credit pay. These programs signal that the institution not only expects excellent teaching but is willing to invest in adjuncts' long-term growth.

Example Best Practices in the Change Process

The Building Capacity Through Ongoing Focus

The CCBC case illustrates that sustainable transformation for part-time VITAL faculty emerges not from isolated reforms but from cumulative, iterative, and strategically-aligned efforts over time. The college has included initiatives that focus specifically on part-time faculty in successful proposals for funding. For example, a grant from Achieving the Dream in 2016 initiated the Adjunct Faculty Centers, and funding from the Mellon Foundation in 2024 was used for the Faculty Fellows program. This process demonstrates a deliberate organizational learning cycle in which each initiative builds capacity for the next.

Evidence-Based Refinement of Adjunct Support

Longitudinal engagement data collected through the Adjunct Faculty Centers and professional development platforms function as continuous feedback mechanisms that inform planning, resource allocation, and program refinement. These data help the institution identify emerging needs, monitor participation trends, and ensure that support structures remain responsive and well-targeted. These practices reflect a coherent theory of change grounded in distributed leadership, attentiveness to faculty voices, and deliberate alignment between institutional mission and faculty experiences. The outcome is a more robust suite of programs and a cohesive organizational culture in which adjunct faculty view themselves as fully integrated members of the academic community, supported by systems intentionally designed to meet the realities of their professional lives.



Learn more about the Community College of Baltimore County's efforts to support all faculty through their **Institute for Transformative Teaching, Learning, and Leadership** at <https://www.ccbcmd.edu/About/Administrative-Offices/Academic-and-Student-Affairs/Institute-Transformative-Teaching/index.html>

Visit The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success for more example practices and a wide range of resources and toolkits to better support VITAL faculty at pullias.usc.edu/delphi

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