

# **Final Report for Leadership Institute: Adjunct Appreciation Reception**

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## **I. Overview of Project**

The underlying goal of this project was to enable part time faculty to form closer connections to the College, and thereby to become more integrated into the College community and to become more aware of resources available at the College. The mechanism chosen to carry out this goal was envisioned as a first step: a reception to thank part time faculty for their contributions and dedication to students and the College. As stated in the proposal for this project, the reception strove, "to extend a warm welcome to part time faculty and demonstrate that the service they provide to the College is important, recognized and appreciated."

## **II. Project Steps**

This project began with a hunch based on anecdotal and personal experience that part time faculty at the College do not feel sufficiently integrated into the College community and that this disengagement is not a positive component of the academic environment. The initial step in this Project, then sought to determine whether academic research supported or refuted this hypothesis. The research reviewed clearly indicates that part time faculty feel more engaged when recognized for their efforts and, conversely that faculty dissatisfaction can directly impact student achievement.

Reinforced by the results of our research, the work of planning the reception was undertaken. The first, and crucial step was obtaining financial support for the reception which was secured at a meeting with the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Next, to include all interested, postings were placed on the department head list serving soliciting volunteers to help with the project. Several individuals responded and ideas were exchanged via email. The mechanics of the Project also involved scheduling a room, facilities requirements, coordinating music, invitations, handouts and food. The day of the event necessarily involved dealing with last minute slip-ups with facilities.

### **III. Future of the Project**

The Project planners feel strongly that development of adjuncts has long been overlooked in College plans for faculty development and in plans to enhance student learning. Accordingly, the continuation of an event, at least annually or each semester, should be scheduled specifically for adjuncts to show appreciation for their efforts and to provide professional development opportunities. The logical place for this project is within the College's professional development division. The planners of this Project are willing to work with other on adjunct appreciation and development activities in the future.

### **IV. Individual Summaries**

**Kathy Smith**

I have had experience in planning previous events at the College, but did learn a little more about planning larger scale events. The most important thing that struck me was the untapped talent we have at the College. I met adjuncts from many disciplines and greatly enjoyed my conversations which reinforced my belief that such events lead to a richer working environment which fosters the development of each other as resources.

### **Deb Rossi**

This project provided me with the opportunity to research the impact of part-time faculty in the community college setting. It was an excellent learning experience in working with Kathy on coordinating the many variables involved in planning the adjunct reception. It was reassuring to see the interest and support from full-time faculty and the administration by their attendance at the reception. Meeting the adjunct faculty was also a rewarding experience.

### **V. Assessment results**

We asked attendees to complete a brief evaluation form. The twenty one completed forms indicated that the attendees represented all levels of seniority from less than a year to over six years and three academic departments. All of the evaluations indicated satisfaction with the event, and several noted that they best liked "the thought behind it." Many attendees also indicated that the opportunity to meet others was valuable. Three attendees all in the geography discipline exchanged phone numbers to continue their discussion about classes. Other part time faculty

members who were unable to attend expressed appreciation for the opportunity and the hope that similar events will be held in the future.