

BEST PRACTICES FOR CARING FOR SVSU ADJUNCT FACULTY

1. **Treat the adjunct faculty members as professionals.** The adjunct faculty at SVSU provide a valuable service to our University. As such, they deserve to be treated with respect as professionals and should also be expected to act as professionals. Research shows that when adjuncts are treated professionally, they are most likely to follow departmental procedures, behave appropriately in class, and become valued colleagues (Matte, 2003).
2. **Create an inclusive department.** Adjunct faculty often feel isolated and alienated from their departments. Therefore, it is important to find ways to connect your adjunct faculty with your department. If possible, invite them to department meetings or ask them to serve on departmental committees. Ask them for input on textbook selection, include them in departmental activities, or plan an event where the adjuncts can interact with the full-time faculty. This is an important practice because it helps in creating a more integrated, committed department.
3. **COMMUNICATE!!!** A good way to communicate with adjunct faculty is to include them on your department's list-serve so they can be privy to all of the departmental activities addressed in e-mail. If your department has special programs or competitions for your students consider including the adjunct faculty in all notifications regarding these activities. The more you communicate with your adjunct faculty the better informed as instructors they will be.
4. **Educate adjunct faculty on departmental standards and practices.** Adjunct faculty should be informed of departmental norms related to textbook selection, syllabi, grades, testing information, departmental and General Education assessment information, etc... A helpful way to facilitate this would be to create a departmental toolkit which has examples of syllabi and exams, printed explanations for assessment procedures, instructions regarding photocopying, etc... (Murray, 2007).
5. **Provide mentoring.** Mentors can help adjuncts be better teachers and help them learn about how departments and the colleges operate. Mentors are valuable resources for adjunct faculty. Mentors can visit the instructor's classes and offer assistance with varying teaching techniques. Mentoring is especially important classes that include General Education assessment. In such instances the mentors can assist the adjuncts in utilizing the appropriate assessment tools at the appropriate times. These mentors can also help in closing the General Education loop by providing feedback to the adjunct instructor regarding how their students assess. If changes are necessary then discussions regarding techniques for change can occur between the mentor and the adjunct faculty.

6. **Provide office space if possible.** This space should have a desk, two chairs, a computer, and other equipment. Adjunct faculty often feel invisible and that their contributions to the university are not valued. By interacting with full-time faculty their presence is often recognized and they feel more in the loop with department activities. This also allows the adjuncts to have a suitable space where they can meet with their students.

If office space for your adjuncts is not a possibility for your department, other spaces are available. The following is a list of the space that has been made available for SVSU adjunct faculty:

- The Office of Adjunct Faculty Support Programs is located in **SE201**. The office has wireless internet, five computers, and mailboxes for adjunct faculty. This office has a phone for outgoing calls, a bottomless coffee pot, and an assortment of tea!
 - Office space is also located in **SE235**. It has wireless internet and three computers.
 - Other open adjunct locations are **B309**, **SW309**, and **ES225**. Each of these locations has been fitted with computers and printers.
 - Finally, should adjunct faculty like to reserve space on the third or fourth floor of the library for office hours or student study sessions they may make arrangements through the library to do so. Our office has three laptop computers that may be checked out for these purposes.
7. **Plan the next semester early.** By doing so you will be able to let adjunct faculty know which courses they will be teaching during the next semester, which will give them adequate time to do a thorough job preparing for their classes.
 8. **Have an *Adjunct Faculty Handbook* and a packet of hiring forms available on hand at your first meeting with new adjuncts.** These materials are essential in preparing adjunct faculty for employment. Such materials can be requested by contacting the Office of Adjunct Faculty Support Programs at 964-4050 or adjunct@svsu.edu.
 9. **Tell them about our office!** Send adjunct faculty to our office in Science East 201 for information regarding semester orientations, technology training, and teaching and learning workshops. Adjunct Faculty are paid \$25 for each professional development activity they complete.
 10. Visit the “**Department Chair**” link at www.svsu.edu/adjunct. A listing of articles and ideas will be located at this site to help you work with adjunct faculty.

Works cited:

Matte, Nancy L. (2003). *Win-Win: Providing Support to Adjunct Faculty*. Retrieved January 30, 2008 from *Department Chair Online Resource Center*. Web site: www.acenet.edu/resources/chairs/docs/Matte_Win-WinFMT.pdf.

Murray, John D. (2007). *Managing Temporary Faculty*. . Retrieved January 30, 2008 from *Department Chair Online Resource Center*. Web site: www.acenet.edu/resources/chairs/docs/Murray_temps.pdf.