

Hello.

I am an adjunct instructor at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, OR. I was informed that you were interested in comments pertaining to the instructors being ineligible for unemployment compensation due to cancelled classes. I had this exact experience happen two summers ago. It placed an extremely difficult hardship on my family. Not only was I counting on the supposed income from the class, I was also caught completely off guard, and had turned down other job opportunities. When I tried to claim unemployment I was told that I was ineligible. I was forced to frantically search for another means of income for the next three months. This was not an easy feat and the difficulty was enhanced by the lagging economy. Eventually I was forced to borrow money from my parents in order to stay in our home.

According to a recent study by the College Art Association 75.5% of faculty at colleges and universities in the United States are adjunct or contingent faculty. Many times these positions have no basic job protections or benefits. Being an adjunct is an entirely different situation than being a k-12 school employee off for the summer. Since you are on a term to term basis, you do not have the option of having your income distributed over a 12 month period through the school year. You are afraid of your enrollment not meeting minimum requirements, and whether or not the school will have enough classes left (after the full time and retired faculty get their pick) to need your services. Many times by the time you find out your class has not made other financial opportunities have passed. This constant worry and uncertainty is a stress on both your morale and teaching.

I urge you to vote to extend the unemployment eligibility over the Summer terms for part time instructors.

Thank you for your time,
respectfully,
Richard Cutshall