

Montgomery College FAQ: Your Union, Your Membership



As the part-time faculty bargaining committee has negotiated our first contract, we have also been signing people up for union membership. *Becoming a union member is the single most important thing you can do to build our collective strength.*

Simply sign a membership card to become a member of your union.

By joining with us and becoming a member, you send a message to the College about our determination to make changes in our workplace. You demonstrate that the part-time faculty speaks with a strong, united voice that the College must listen to. Support for your union evidenced by your membership is how we win at the bargaining table – see Contract Highlights. It is also how we continue to move forward and ensure that the gains we've made persist and those that we envision for the future are realized.

Q. When will I start paying membership dues?

A. You will not pay dues until after the contract is ratified by the part-time faculty and the Board of Trustees, and you have begun to receive the benefits contained in the contract.

Q. How much will the dues be?

A. Membership dues will be \$12.92 per pay period when you teach at Montgomery College. There is a reduced dues amount of \$9.23 per pay period for those earning under \$5,500 annually from their part-time teaching at Montgomery College.

Q. What if I only teach one semester per academic year?

A. As a member, you pay \$12.92 per pay period ONLY during the time you are teaching (or \$9.23 per pay period if your total annual earnings from part-time teaching at Montgomery College is below \$5,500). When you are not receiving a paycheck from Montgomery College, you pay nothing.

Q. How can I pay?

A. You may pay dues through payroll deduction or per semester by check.

Q. Will I have to join the union?

A. Your contract contains a modified "fair share" agreement, similar to agreements in the contracts of both the AAUP (MC's full-time faculty union) and AFSCME (MC's supporting staff union). Membership is voluntary.

Once 50 percent plus one of part-time faculty covered under the contract have signed up for membership, an agency fee provision will be put into place. This requires part-time faculty covered by the contract to contribute their share of the cost of providing representation, by either belonging to the union or paying an agency fee.

All part-time faculty members receive representational support and services from the union and share the benefits negotiated in the contract. In fact, the union is required by law to provide representation under the contract to all faculty covered therein, regardless of membership status. Therefore, the costs of that representation are shared among all.

The agency fee amount is currently 85% of the union membership fee. The fee is reset each year, based on an outside financial audit to determine the percentage of your union's budget that goes to representation costs.

Q. Will I have to pay an initiation fee?

A. The initiation fee of \$15 is waived for individuals currently employed by Montgomery College.

Q. Why should I become a member of the union?

A. Strength is in numbers and unity. Your membership sends a strong message to the College that it must work with part-time faculty now and into the future. Our collective ability to bring positive changes to Montgomery College depends on your active support, including union membership.

On an individual level, as a union member, you can take part in internal union elections and run for union office. In addition, only union members will have the opportunity to vote in future contract ratifications.

There are also many discounts and advantage programs available to union members through the Union Plus program, including discounted car insurance, legal services, and tax preparation service; savings on home heating oil (averaging \$200 - \$300 annually); discounts on car rentals, health savings program, health club discounts, movie tickets and much more. For details, visit www.unionplus.org.

Q. Will there be deductions for health insurance or retirement?

A. No. Part-time faculty members currently do not have access to health or retirement plans at Montgomery College. The contract establishes a joint committee to explore options for health care coverage for part-time faculty. We anticipate the opportunity for part-time faculty to access health plans at some point in the future when revenues allow.