



**Contact:** Caprice Lawless  
Co-president, AAUP Colorado Conference  
[coloradocaprice@gmail.com](mailto:coloradocaprice@gmail.com)

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**For Immediate Release**

## **What is the wage for the part-time instructors (adjuncts) in the Colorado Community College System?**

Recent buzz on campus is that CCCS adjuncts are being paid more than \$50 an hour for their work. Nothing could be further from the truth; adjunct hourly wages are half that amount or lower! In fact, newbie Tier One adjuncts teaching the standard, 3-credit-hour lecture courses at Colorado Community College System's Front Range Community College (FRCC) are paid \$25.67 per hour. Experienced, Tier Three adjuncts teaching lecture courses (the final tier attainable after many years of teaching and completion of numerous, in-house professional development requirements) are paid \$27.25/hour.

So how did such a rumor start?

What appears to be misleading many now is the [2022-23 Front Range Community College Part-time Instructor Pay Matrix](#) and other shortcuts that calculate the wage incorrectly. For example, the FRCC chart makes no mention of the [IRS Guidelines](#) for calculating adjunct hours or how the [CCCS Board Policy 3-80](#) formula follows the IRS Guidelines to the letter:

“For purposes of the Affordable Care Act, instructor weekly work hours shall be measured by crediting the instructor with a total of 2.25 hours of service per week (representing a combination of teaching or classroom time and time performing related tasks such as class preparation and grading of examinations or papers) for each hour of teaching or classroom time. In addition, an instructor will be credited with one hour of service per week for each additional hour the instructor spends performing other duties he or she is required to perform (such as required office hours or required attendance at faculty meetings).”

To calculate otherwise leaves all their other work required of adjuncts -- syllabi preparation, grading, communicating with students, uploading documents on D2L and Banner, generating grade and attendance reports to department chairs -- to be considered as unpaid labor. Indeed, most adjuncts believe the 2.25 multiplier insufficient to accurately capture the number of hours they spend teaching a course. Adjuncts, their peers, lawmakers, and members of the press are therefore unaware of how the college, in fact, includes the IRS

multiplier, and is thus free from providing healthcare benefits to nearly 4,500 adjunct faculty (who outnumber full-time faculty in the CCCS three to one).

To determine what your college is paying adjuncts per hour, keep in mind the [IRS Guidelines](#) for calculating adjunct hours. Higher education officials circumvent the 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA) that requires employers to provide healthcare benefits to those who work over 30 hours per week. Under extreme pressure from higher-education administration lobbyists, the 2015 IRS Guidelines were written to allow higher education officials to credit an adjunct, per week, for working 1 hour and 15 minutes for each hour in the classroom, adding those hours in the classroom, plus one hour for office hours or other work. For a 3-credit-hour course, therefore, the college is reporting to the IRS that the adjunct has worked only 7.75 hours. That calculation freed the nation's 5,300 colleges and universities from paying healthcare benefits to hundreds of thousands of adjunct faculty. This is why, shortly after the passage of the ACA, the CCCS hired approximately 1,500 more adjuncts and cut class loads to them wherever possible.

One day the CCCS might be more transparent and publish on its massive website the compensation charts for all workers in the 13-college system. Until then, adjuncts might find helpful a quick chart to understand their pay in the CCCS. One is included on page 21 of [The Adjunct's Guide to Working in the Colorado Community College System](#), published by the AAUP Colorado Conference. To determine the hourly rate, per credit hour, use the CCCS SBCCOE BP 3-80/2015 IRS Guidelines. Here is an abbreviated breakdown:

Adjunct Wage per credit hour	Semester wage listed in FLAC	Credit hours	Total Hours per week (IRS Guidelines/CCCS BP- 30) = # hours in class x 2.25 plus 1 extra hour	Total Hours per Semester (15 weeks)	Wage per hour (Divide FLAC by Total Hours per semester)
\$300	\$900	3	7.75	116.25	\$7.74
\$500	\$1500	3	7.75	116.25	\$12.90
\$800	\$2400	3	7.75	116.25	\$20.64
\$900	\$2700	3	7.75	116.25	\$23.22
\$1000	\$3000	3	7.75	116.25	\$25.80
\$1100	\$3300	3	7.75	116.25	\$28.38
\$1200	\$3,600	3	7.75	116.25	\$30.96

Each CCCS college president, per [SBCCOE policy 3-05](#), sets wages for that college. Adjunct wages, therefore, vary widely from Lamar to Lakewood and in every corner of the state.

Unreported is the effect of so many CCCS adjuncts turning to the taxpayers for utility bill assistance, food stamps, food banks, subsidized housing and healthcare. The living wage for a single person in the Denver metro area, 2022, is \$42,241 per year, according to the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator](#). By using the conservative figure of \$3,600/per 3-credit-hour course, and assuming the adjunct is

teaching six courses a year (the average number adjuncts are allowed to teach), it leaves the adjunct paid \$21,600 per year, or \$20,641 BELOW the living wage for Denver County. Note that the MIT Living Wage Calculator is used by the [National Education Association](#). and is considered to be definitive measurement for calculating a living wage in each county across the United States.

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