



## **Faculty Building Access Proposal**

**Prepared for the Academic Senate by Robert Simpkins, Academic Senate President  
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### **Background:**

In the past, Porterville College faculty were able to access their buildings, classrooms, and offices without restrictions using keys and alarm codes or key cards. In more recent years, this access has been reduced such that key cards no longer work and faculty are reliant upon M&O staff to open buildings or rooms during more limited hours. They are required to make advance requests to gain access outside of the hours M&O opens and closes the rooms, and thus restricted in their access to when M&O staff are able and available to grant it to them. They have been told that they may not have any form of access outside of these hours, and that these hours should be sufficient to complete their duties.

### **Impact:**

Faculty have diverse schedules, with some teaching very early, and some very late, and this, combined with other campus assignments, means that faculty rarely work a traditional schedule, and most faculty complete significant portions of their work outside of conventional 'business hours'. Some faculty have to do important class prep, grading, lab set-up or clean up, and committee work or other professional obligations very early or very late in the day on weekdays, and sometimes on weekends – not by choice, but because that is the only time when they can complete it. In addition, some work must be done on campus because of the need to access campus facilities and resources, including offices and labs, computers and other materials, or official and work-related activity that occurs outside of normal campus hours, including nights and weekends. And for some faculty, their work is best done on campus because of the need for a quiet workspace that is not available at home or elsewhere. For work that requires significant time or has specific timing associated with it, such lab prep work for morning classes, it is not always possible to complete this work before the end of the work week on Friday, and weekend access is sometimes essential. Faculty additionally report difficulties and delays in gaining access when needing M&O staff to provide it, resulting in lost work time and inefficiency, and sometimes lost class time. Faculty whose classes end late need time to clean up or finish up work after the class is over and before leaving campus, and cannot always leave immediately when class ends. Adjunct instructors may need access to campus resources before they leave campus, and due to their schedules and other employment obligations, may not be returning to campus for days after their class meetings ends.

As building access relates to work conditions, the following passage from the KCCD-CCA 2021-2023 Faculty Contract is relevant:

### **KCCD Contract Article 15 – Work Environment**

#### **15 B - Environment Conducive to Professional Activity:**

*Faculty shall have access to instructional spaces and assigned offices. Outside of normal assignment hours, faculty shall have access to instructional spaces and assigned offices according to the process at each college campus. Access must be related to professional duties.*

This language clearly indicates that faculty should have access to their instructional spaces and offices, including outside normal assignment hours, while conducting professional duties.

### **Comparison:**

Queries to other community colleges, colleges, universities, and K-12 public schools in the region have shown that these restrictions are *not* experienced among our neighboring educators, raising the question of why *our* college is different. Our faculty are professional, hard-working, and willing to invest the extra time into being prepared, diligent, and thorough. We only ask to be treated with the same respect our colleagues at other institutions receive, and to be granted greater access and autonomy in performing our work according to our professional judgement and individual schedules. Under current processes at our campus, we are working with constraints that limit our ability to complete our work according to our professional judgement.

### **PC Faculty Testimonials:**

A request to faculty for examples of their experiences with building access produced the following as examples:

#### **Faculty Quote:**

"My office is behind a main campus door that remains locked most of the time. A door to which I do not have access (key or pad). It is held open via a velcro strap. Maintenance is pretty good about getting the door open for me at a reasonable time, but if the velcro gives way - I am locked out of my office. This usually happens at least once a week. Additionally, I have office hours until 5pm. The division office is also locked and I cannot access the files or supplies I need if I stay past 5PM. Please be clear - maintenance lets me in - I just always have to ask."

#### **Faculty Quote:**

"Before the pandemic, faculty were able to unlock and lock the laboratory doors and the lobby on the first and second floors of SMSS. Being able to lock and unlock the lab provided greater flexibility during a lab or an exam. Also, we have expensive laboratory equipment [...] that could be stolen if the rooms are left unlocked with no faculty or staff on the floor. When the pandemic hit, all of the codes were changed. I only have access to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor lobby, presumably to access the printer/copier."

#### **Faculty Quote:**

"I do have concerns over not being able to lock my classroom in the event of an emergency. I have also arrived at my classroom in the morning or evening to find the room locked. Students had to wait outside in the cold before personnel could come unlock it for us, which also can cut into class time."

#### **Faculty Quote:**

"The academies need access during weekends. It was a struggle to get M&O to open buildings (especially on Sunday). We were told that building and alarm access could not be granted. After several incidents where my students were locked out, M&O finally granted our program access."

#### **Faculty Quote:**

"I have been teaching night classes for [several] semesters, and I have generally found myself locked out of my classroom several times each semester (excepting the COVID online semesters). As an adjunct, I am not on campus during the day to set up my labs, so I have to come early to do so. Being locked out wastes precious prep time.

The situation changes each semester. There have been times that the janitors have locked the door, not realizing that the next instructor (me) does not have access to the room. There have been times that full-time faculty members have locked the door, assuming that no one else had a class that day. Now the building doors are automatically locked at night, and so the room is always locked when I get there. Generally, I am able to enter through the offices lobby (unlocked until 10pm) and go through a

locked, but not closed door to the lab prep room which leads into my classroom. This is working pretty well now, but did not for the first 3-4 weeks of this semester when most classes (not my lab class) were online, and I was the only person in the building at night. There is always the possibility that someone will close the prep room door and I will not be able to get to my classroom.

An improvement has been small rubber door stoppers that were fastened to the inside of the classroom doors a few years ago. These allow the door to be inconspicuously propped open. Before those were installed, but when the doors were locked, I had to prop the doors open with trash cans to allow the students to enter (obviously not good for heating/air conditioning, and outside distractions).

Additionally, it is embarrassing to be locked out in front of my students -- it hardly builds their confidence in me. Also, it is rather insulting not to be entrusted with a key. If the college trusts me to teach, why not trust me to have a key to my classroom? One of the janitors once told me that the PC electronic keys can be set to unlock specific rooms and can be deactivated at the will of whoever does that. I cannot understand why adjuncts are not given this courtesy."

**Faculty Quote:**

"On Tuesday evenings, I occasionally have to use the printer/scanner that is downstairs in SM. The entire downstairs was locked last Tuesday evening (around 7 pm), so I could not get in."

**Faculty Quote:**

"In the past when the science department has not had a lab technician (someone quit/ position wasn't filled) it would be my responsibility to do the lab prep. Prepping is a large portion of the lab technician's job. There were times I needed to come in on the weekends to stay up with the prep. Our lab technician is [not always available and] I will need access at various times to prep my class [...] Since I teach load and my classes are at various times, I need larger chunks of time for prep [which must be] done at specific times. I'm just being proactive with saying I will need weekend access [in the future]. I've [...] had to cover the lab technician position a few times."

**Faculty Quote:**

"I need access to my office when custodians are unable to open it, particularly on weekends. As a coach, I'm up against whatever times the custodians are there and finishing their responsibilities and then have to wait for them to stop by my office, whether that's in 2 minutes or 15 minutes. I'd like to be able to have access to the rest of the athletic buildings so I can continue to complete my job to the best of my ability."

**Faculty Quote:**

"I have never had full access to campus on the weekends and have adjusted my teaching accordingly. Additionally, the recent removal of our key card access has made accessing or working on campus even more difficult. The current protocol is not ideal and I feel my teaching would greatly benefit from greater flexibility. Please see below for a few things which come to mind.

- Weekend access to demo and review laboratory materials and activities. There have been times, especially when teaching courses for the first time when I need to verify the availability of materials or supplies. Further time is also needed to perform experiments outside of class to test the feasibility and troubleshoot. As of now, this must all be done within normal hours and be planned well in advance. Greater flexibility would allow last-minute modifications, space my workload, and give me more time to develop my curriculum.
- General access during normal operating hours outside of the semester dates. There have been times when I come to campus before the semester or after the semester has ended and it has taken over 30 minutes to access my office as I must coordinate with M&O to let me into the building. Because of this, I end up putting off or compiling my need to access my office or the stockroom.
- Each day I must walk out of my way through the offices and stockroom to prop open my doors for my students. My office is right next to my classroom but I cannot enter as I do not have access. Similarly, the exterior door near my office is not unlocked automatically. Because of this, I have to remember to prop it open each day so that I as well as my students have access to this entry. While these issues are trivial, they are a daily nuisance that could be avoided by allowing me to unlock these doors.

**Faculty Quote:**

"As Division Chair, I have been given access to the exterior locks on the building. I am the only instructor in the building that has a means to lock exterior doors in case of emergency. I feel that instructors should be trusted with building access for both professional and safety reasons."

**Faculty Quote:**

"I haven't taught on campus since March 2020, so I'm not sure how helpful my contributions will be. However, as a faculty who regularly taught night classes, I frequently ran into issues with my classrooms being locked. This meant finding someone from facilities management to come unlock our door, which would sometimes cut into class time. Occasionally, the door to the copy room would be locked and sometimes the LRC/language arts hallway was inaccessible, which was difficult for those of us who needed to access the adjunct office or printer. I'm not sure if these issues still exist, but I thought I would share."

**Faculty Quote:**

"Last night, around 8 pm, [we] were taking a quick break [and] were [...], locked out of all rooms (classrooms, offices, everything). We knocked on the door for a student to let us in...However, professors should not be completely locked out (even for a minute) of the building, especially during class time."

**Faculty Quote:**

"I would like to be able to access campus on Saturdays. Fridays are often filled with meetings. Therefore, it is difficult to complete too many instructional tasks on that day. If I could access campus on Saturday's I certainly would use that extra time. Along with campus having printers and copiers, I have many lab activities and it is difficult to bring items home to work on them."

**Faculty Quote:**

"Faculty always had working keys to lab rooms and the prep room. Since Covid this has been denied. This is an inconvenience when bringing back science equipment and demonstration materials from the forum to the prep room - one has to leave the cart of materials on the west side of the building then walk around to the east side and walk through the building to open the door."

**Faculty Quote:**

"My concern with the lack of access is the inability to secure our instructional space. I need to be able to lock and secure my classroom when I need to and at my discretion. If I feel as though a situation is vulnerable or risky, I want to be able to act quickly to secure the safety of myself and my students immediately, without bureaucratic steps and without the entire campus needing to be locked down."

**Faculty Quote:**

"I came to campus at 8:00 AM on a Friday. I was preparing for a meeting. The building was locked!. We had to find someone to let me into the building. Another faculty came at 8:05 for an 8:30 class. The doors were still locked to the entire building."

**Proposed Solution:**

Our faculty understand that our administration is opposed to fully unrestricted access to campus buildings, but request that we:

- have our access hours be expanded, according to the proposed schedule below
- have the ability to access buildings, classrooms, and offices ourselves, using our keys and key cards when buildings are locked, as we previously did and faculty commonly do at all levels of education institutions across the region

**Requested Access:**

- One hour prior to the start of classes and one hour after the end of the last class, proposed 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., Monday through Thursday
- Friday access, proposed 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Saturday access, proposed 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday access, by prior arrangement

Day	M-Th	F	Sat	Sun
Open to Faculty	6:00 AM	6:00 AM	7:00 AM	By Arrangement*
Closed to Faculty	11:00 PM	7:00 PM	5:00 PM	By Arrangement*

**Training:**

Additionally, we recommend that all faculty receive training on building access and responsibilities prior to access being granted, and pledge that divisions will follow-up on that training with reminders of our professional responsibility to our institution. Information on access policies should be available for all faculty to reference as needed. Faculty who are found to have failed to follow building access policies and protocols will be required to meet with their division chair for a review. Faculty who violate policies a second time will have their access reviewed by their division chair and area administrator. Depending upon the severity of the violation, direct access in the form of key cards and keys may be revoked and those faculty would require access to be provided by arrangement of their division chair and M&O.

We believe that through this proposal, faculty will have a greater ability to complete their duties efficiently and according to their individual schedules, without placing faculty or the college at risk. We request that our College President grant of access according to the conditions listed here, and that doing so will improve faculty performance and provide benefits to our students, without placing safety and security at risk.