

Days without a contract: 518

I would like to thank members who participated in actions the Chapter has taken this semester. I know many members had bought tickets or wanted to attend the 150th Anniversary Gala at the Sheraton-Ferncroft, but instead honored the Salem Chapter's vote to boycott the event. Also many thanks to those who participated in informational picketing at the Gala, the Salem Winds concert, the College's Board of Trustees sub-committee meeting, the September 29th "day of outrage," and the October 30th Open House. The day bargaining team would also like to thank you all for your support towards securing a fair and equitable contract.

The status of bargaining has not changed much: it is still going poorly. The MSCA bargaining committee has been meeting regularly with the employer with very little progress. The economic package has not changed; it remains across-the-board raises of 0%, 1%, 1%, 1% over four years.

The State College Council of Presidents (COP) and the Chairpersons of the Boards of Trustees, in consultation with the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE), recently commissioned a salary study. This study showed that the shortfall with our peers for all ranks is substantial: on average, our faculty earn \$13,367 annually less than their peers, that is, they are competitively underpaid by approximately 19%. **And still the economic offer remains the same.**

Governor Romney's managers recently were given pay raises that could go up to 7% annually (not including a market minimum adjustment that could be as large as 18.5%). From the Management Compensation Reform user's guide: "The primary value in changing the pay methodology and its infrastructure is to identify and retain the best and the brightest managers within the Commonwealth." OK, how about retaining the best and the brightest faculty and librarians! **And still the economic offer remains the same.**

State-wide, non-union administrators at the state colleges were given pay raises averaging 4.15% and ranging up to 15% in some cases. **And still the economic offer remains the same.**

Not only is the economic package terrible, the proposed language changes to the contract on the table are equally insulting. The only part that has been removed from the table is the "respect our students" language. Still on the table are such unacceptable proposals as: abolishing the agency fee requirement, changing the academic year, limiting the use of sick days, restricting waivers/tuition remission for children, abolishing the current governance structure, waiting longer for tenure, and changing the evaluation criteria and including Deans in the process. We had asked the Council of Presidents to remove this language so as to speed up bargaining. **And still most of the language remains the same.**

Bargaining dates have been scheduled for November 29th, December 6th, and December 15th. I will keep you informed. Breaking news is posted on our websites: www.mscaunion.org (statewide MSCA web page) and www.MSCAunion.org/~salem (Salem chapter web page). Information is also transmitted via e-mail.

At their last meeting, the MSCA Board of Directors voted that MSCA members not perform any voluntary activities that college administrators ask them to do, beyond responsibilities outlined in the contract. If a member is asked to perform voluntary work, you should politely inform the administrator that you would like to do the work (if in fact you want to do it) but say you cannot, because of the difficulties in obtaining a fair contract. We will still serve on the College-wide committees that were staffed by the MSCA/Salem Executive Committee; we will also continue to work on departmental curriculum and peer evaluation committees. Also, college-wide promotion and tenure committees should continue. But we are calling on faculty members to halt volunteer service such as open houses, school-wide committees such as strategic planning committees, program review committees, non-faculty search committees, etc. All volunteer work, unless covered by Article VI, VII, and VIII of the contract, should stop.

In addition to the above action, on Friday, December 3, 2004, members from across the state will picket and leaflet BHE Chairman Stephen Tocco's office at One Financial Center, South Station, Boston. The Chapter has hired a bus to take members to Boston. The bus will pick up members outside each campus at the following times:

Meier Hall, North Campus - 10:30 a.m.

Central Campus - 10:40 a.m.

South Campus at 10:45 a.m.

The picketing will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The bus will leave Boston for Salem at 1:00 p.m. If at all possible, please try to join your colleagues at this important event. Caps and gowns, if you own them, should be worn – if not, come as you are.

On a positive note, our Grievance Officer, Maggie Vaughan was elected Chair of the state-wide grievance committee - congratulations to her!

Professional Development Money

The deadline (December 31, 2004) is approaching for submission of requests for professional development money. If you have not submitted your request, please do so soon, keeping in mind that the college will be closed over the holidays. It would be best to submit the form before you leave for semester break. Academic Affairs will accept the form if it is postmarked by December 31st.

Appointments – Promotion Committee

The Chapter Office received two nominations for the two vacancies on the Committee on Promotions. The Chapter Secretary, Nancy George, has cast a single vote for Benjamin Gross (ART) and Barbara Nicholson (SWK).

The complete committee consists of:

Thomas Billings (EDU), Caitlin Corbett (SFL), Benjamin Gross (ART), Marie Jensen (NUR), Barbara Nicholson (SWK), Susan Sturgeon (LIB), and Robert Wang (CHE)

Many thanks to all those willing to serve on this important committee.

Executive Committee Meeting

There will be an MSCA/Salem Chapter Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, November 30, 2004 at 2:00 p.m., Heritage Room, Ellison Center. The agenda includes: update on bargaining, grievance report, and treasurer's report. This meeting is open to all unit members.

Holiday Party

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I wish you and your families a happy holiday season. I hope to see as many of you as possible at the MSCA/Salem Chapter's Holiday Party on:

**Wednesday, December 8, 2004
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Veterans Hall, Ellison Center.**

Miscellaneous

Address Changes:

Please inform the MSCA/Salem Chapter office if your address has changed. We forward this information to the MTA/NEA for mailings of membership cards, etc. Contact our office by calling extension 6920, or drop a note to MSCA/Salem Chapter, HB-121.

E-mail:

If your SSC email mailbox goes over quota, your name is automatically dropped from our e-mail database. If this occurs, please contact our office so we can reinstate your address. At various times, the Chapter sends information to its members via the e-mail system. If you are a new member, please call Mary Buckley, Chapter Secretary, at extension 6920 and let her know your Salem State e-mail address.

Contracts Available

Day and evening contracts are available in the union office during normal business hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Did You Know ...

that in addition to the ten days of sick leave you accumulate each academic year, you also receive one personal day (7.5 hours) for the spring semester and one for the fall semester? If the personal time in the spring semester is not used, the hours credited for the spring semester will be carried forward to the ensuing fall semester. However, if this time is not used by the end of the calendar year, it is forfeited.

Personal leave was first added to the contract in 2001, to allow unit members the opportunity to, for example, schedule doctor and dentist appointments during the school day. You may use this time in half-days or full days, but not hourly. You do not need permission to take a personal day but it is important that your department chair or secretary know you will be absent.

If you would like to learn more about personal leaves, or other types of leaves (paid and unpaid) review Article IV -- Supplemental Benefits and Holidays in the 2001-2003 collective bargaining agreement (pages 32-47). Or stop by the MSCA Union Office in the Harrington Building on South Campus, to pick up a copy.

Maggie Vaughan/Grievance Officer
MSCA /Salem Chapter