

## SETTING THE BARGAINING TABLE

### Day Unit Contract Team Cautiously Optimistic Entering Talks with Patrick Administration

By C.J. O'Donnell, Chair,  
MSCA Bargaining Committee

With the 2004-07 day collective bargaining agreement set to expire June 30, the MSCA Day Bargaining Committee has been working to prepare a comprehensive proposal to initiate bargaining on a successor agreement.

After being formed in early October, the team put together an anonymous, confidential bargaining survey that ran online via the MTA Web site in November. This was the first time the day unit ran its survey online. More than 600 responses were received, a 20 percent increase from the 2004 survey. The electronic format allowed for an instantaneous compilation of results to the multiple-choice responses and a rapid sorting of the 36 pages of written comments. There were a significant number of comments regarding salary, post-tenure review, and evaluations—areas of contentious negotiations in the past.

The team began meeting with **Donna Sirutis**, MTA consultant to the day unit, early in November to review the existing agreement. Once the survey results were reviewed, a comprehensive proposal was crafted. This proposal was reviewed, amended and approved by the MSCA Board of Directors Feb. 2. A summary of this initial asking package will be made available to members through the locals once it has been presented to management.

In December, Sirutis notified new BHE Chancellor **Pat Plummer** that the MSCA wanted to begin negotiations on a successor agreement by mid-January. Plummer replied the BHE would not have a team in place or be ready to begin meeting until March. The MSCA has, through the Employee Relations Committee, let the Council of Presidents know we are eager to begin negotiations, even if early meetings deal only with routine issues such as scheduling. We hope the COP will relay this interest to Plummer.

The COP has conducted an updated review of state



Members of the day unit negotiation team comprise, seated (l-r), **Donna Sirutis** (MTA consultant), **Sam Schlosberg** (Mass College of Art), **Glenn Pavlicek** (Bridgewater) and **Ann Mrvica** (Fitchburg); standing (l-r), **Alan Feldman** (Framingham), **Pat Markunas** (MSCA President), **Len Paolillo** (Mass College of Liberal Arts), **Amy Everitt** (Salem), **C. J. O'Donnell** (chairperson/Mass Maritime), **Cheryl Stanley** (Westfield) and **Dan Shartin** (Worcester).

college faculty salaries and will provide MSCA and the bargaining team with it shortly. The team remains committed to implementing all the recommendations made last summer by the joint MSCA-COP Committee on the Study of Salaries. For a full account of those recommendations, see *Perspective*, Oct 2006.

While we are aware of the state's \$1- to \$1.2-billion structural deficit, management must address the fact that faculty are paid significantly less (a double-digit percentage) than our peers—no matter how our peers are defined—a conclusion drawn by every salary study conducted over the last several years. Low salaries have resulted in newer unit members leaving for better financial offers and searches being unable to secure top candidates.

The team is hopeful that a new administration on Beacon Hill will pay dividends at the table in several ways. First and foremost, we do not expect to see onerous and offensive proposals placed on the table

similar to those made under previous administrations.

We expect an offer would be forthcoming early on, and that it will not take a year or longer for the Office of Administration and Finance to authorize the management team to proffer an offer; and we expect that offer to be greater than the zero percent for three years that was initially offered in the last several rounds.

Finally, we do not expect the interference at the gubernatorial level that we have faced in the past. The MSCA has had a ratified agreement kicked back to the table (Weld); had a deal reneged on after a tentative agreement and a handshake (Celucci/Carlin); and been forced to agree to further concessions after a tentative agreement was reached (Romney). We have had periods with no salary increase after administrations delayed bargaining, all the while insisting that no retroactivity would be paid (Weld, Celucci, Swift and Romney).

This time around, we remain optimistic that we will not face such costly delays.

## Members Overwhelmingly Approve New Graduate & Continuing Ed Contract

MSCA members on all nine campuses ratified by a wide margin a new Division of Graduate and Continuing Education collective bargaining agreement. The new contract takes effect retroactively Sept. 1, 2006 and runs through August 31, 2009. The vote was taken Friday, Feb. 2 and tabulated the same day; in all, 117 ballots were cast:

**Yes – 94**

**No – 1**

Twenty-two voided or challenged ballots were not counted; no blank ballots were cast.

Significant changes to the agreement include:

- A more restrictive definition of “contract courses,” whereby it becomes more difficult for colleges to contract with outside, non-unionized agencies to offer courses.
- A member, once admitted to the Continuing Education Pool, to remain in the pool until he or she has not taught for three consecutive years.
- The per-credit stipends will increase 3 percent at the beginning of spring term in each of 2007 (the current instructional period), 2008 and 2009. The graduate stipend will remain 107%.
- Evaluation will now take place during the instructional period in which the member teaches any sixth, rather than fourth, course.
- A mediation step was added to the grievance process between steps 2 (the president) and 3 (arbitration).

Congratulations and thanks to the bargaining team, led by C.J. O'Donnell (Mass Maritime) and comprising **Jean Stonehouse** (Bridgewater); **Jack McKeon** (Fitchburg); **Sue Dargan** (Framingham); **Ben Ryterband** (Mass Art); **Len Paolillo** (MCLA); **Nancy Schultz**, **Paul McGee** and **Marty Krugman** (Salem); **Jack Shea** (Westfield); **Dan Shartin** (Worcester); **Pat Markunas**, MSCA president; and **Bob Whalen**, MTA consultant.

—Brett M. Rhyne

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What's All This Talk about University Status?

Patricia Markunas, MSCA president

Longtime observers of Massachusetts politics and public higher education are reading the signs again: a reorganization of the statewide governance structure for higher education is in the works. The election of Deval Patrick as governor, the departure of Steve Tocco from the Board of Higher Education with no permanent replacement in sight, the lack of a job search for the next chancellor, the departure of David Driscoll as education commissioner in August, and the appointment of Dana Mohler-Faria as special adviser on education to the new governor—all of these elements add up to a system in a state of flux and ripe for change.

Is one element of that change state university status for the state colleges? I honestly don't know. I first heard about state university status for Salem State College in January of 1980, my second semester there. Over the years at Salem, state university status has been an issue that has increased in intensity and then faded back into the woodwork several times. It intensified last spring, when President Nancy Harrington announced that it would be a top priority of hers, but has become less certain with the announcement of her retirement this coming June.

Because the Salem State College faculty and librarians have discussed and debated university status for close to three decades, support there is strong for a regional state university focused on teaching and applied research and for remaining within the state college bargaining units. There is little interest in becoming either a research-oriented university or part of the University of Massachusetts system.

What is new is that, for the first time, a bill has been filed by Rep. Peter Koutoujian (D-Waltham) that would allow state college boards of trustees to change the name of the institution from a state college to a state university if Carnegie criteria for a comprehensive university are met. Rep. Koutoujian is a Bridgewater State College graduate, Bridgewater being the other state college where interest in state university status has emerged during the past few years. The bill, House Docket 3716, is reprinted on this page.

Does this bill have a chance of passage? I honestly don't know that, either. I doubt that the bill will see any action until the reorganization plans for public higher education have been announced and considered by the legislature. It is important to note that the bill provides only the possibility of a name change for state colleges that seek one—no changes in contractual relationships, governance, mission, degree-granting authority, faculty workload and the like are included in the bill.

At the present time, the MSCA Board of Directors has no position on this bill or the issue of state university status. I have no public position either, except to say that I am committed to the preservation of the state college bargaining units—both day and DGCE—and would oppose without hesitation any bill or proposed reorganization that would disrupt those contractual relationships. The MSCA Board of Directors shares that commitment. Further, no contractual changes could occur on individual campuses without bargaining with the entire MSCA Bargaining Committees.

There are models of mixed systems—colleges and universities—in other states, where a master collective bargaining agreement has side agreements that govern different working conditions on individual campuses. In a real way, the MSCA already has that situation, with the inclusion of numerous special contractual provisions for Mass Maritime and Mass Art, special provisions for graduate programs in social work at Salem, Bridgewater and Westfield, and a different teaching workload at Framingham, to cite only a few examples.

At the invitation of the state college Council of Presidents, three members of the MSCA Board—MSCA Vice President C.J. O'Donnell, Westfield chapter President Ken Haar and I—will meet on a regular basis with three state college presidents to discuss these issues informally. I will keep the state college faculty and librarians informed about statewide reorganization proposals. When the time comes, the MSCA leadership will work to ensure that any and all changes to the state colleges, including any change by all or some to a state university, will be to the benefit of our members and to the students we serve.



Patricia V. Markunas, President

The "University Status" Bill

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

Be It Enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives, etc., as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 5 of chapter 15A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2004 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting the following subsections:-

Section 5A. Any public institutions in the system of higher education, as listed in section 5 of chapter 15A, may be designated as a university if said institution meets the criteria set forth by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for either a doctorate granting university or a masters' degree granting college or university, pending the approval of the board of trustees of said institution, as defined below:

(a) *doctorate granting university* - if said institution awards at least 20 doctoral degrees per year - excluding doctoral-level degrees that qualify recipients for entry into professional practice, including but not limited to the JD, MD, PharmD, DPT, and doctoral-level degrees from special focus institutions and tribal colleges.

(b) *Masters degree granting college or university* - if said institution awards at least 50 master's degrees per year - excluding special focus institutions and tribal colleges

MSCA Board Meetings Spring 2007

Regular meetings of the MSCA Board of Directors begin at 10:00 am and usually adjourn around 3:00 pm. Meetings are open to all MSCA members in good standing—full-time, part-time and DGCE. Time is set aside on the agenda each month for visiting speakers. If you are an MSCA member and wish to address the Board on an issue of concern, please contact the MSCA President's Office <Pmarkunas@aol.com> to request a place on the agenda or with any other question about Board meetings.

Mar. 2	MTA Regional Office Auburn Large Conference Room	April 28	Delegate Assembly Mass. College of Art
Mar. 30	MTA Regional Office Auburn Large Conference Room	May 11-12	MTA Annual Meeting, Boston
April 27	Mass. College of Art Trustees Room, Tower Building	June 1	Westfield State College TBA

Get Retirement Credit for Working as a Contract Employee

Members with 10 years of creditable service with the State Employees Retirement System who formerly worked as "contract employees" may be eligible to purchase that time as creditable service toward their retirement.

For more information and an application, contact the State Retirement Board:  
[www.mass.gov/treasury/srb.htm](http://www.mass.gov/treasury/srb.htm) 617-367-7770 1-800-392-6014 (within Mass.)

- You need to research your personnel files first and complete Part A of the application to the best of your ability (attaching copies of any proof of service: i.e., W-2 statements, pay stubs, letters, etc. for state service only).
- Human Resources will try to help you complete Part B and assist you in researching any old records the college has to find any documentation that will help you meet the State Retirement Board's requirements.
- Once the State Retirement Board notifies you that you are eligible to purchase contract service you have 180 days after the notice to either: 1) purchase the service via a lump sum payment or, 2) enter into an installment payment agreement. All service must be bought back while you are "actively employed". The Buy-Back unit of the State Retirement Board may be deluged by applications, and their review of each application may be delayed by the volume of applications received.



Before you complete the application, make sure you meet the following requirements:

- You must be a current member in service of State Employees Retirement System with at least 10 years of state service.
- The contract employee service being purchased must have immediately preceded membership or re-entry into SERS.
- The contract service being purchased must have been service to the Commonwealth, not service to a city, town, county or other governmental entity.
- The job description of the contract service position must have been substantially similar to the job description the member held upon becoming an employee and a member of SERS.
- The maximum amount of contract service eligible to be purchased is four (4) years.

## Union Prevails in Grievance over Limitations on Sections Taught by Part-Time Faculty

Patricia V. Markunas, MSCA president

For nearly 20 years, the Massachusetts State College Association/Board of Higher Education contract has included a provision that limits the number of sections in certain academic departments that can be taught by part-time faculty members. The intent of this language, agreed to by both parties, is to maximize the hiring of full-time faculty members, especially tenure-track faculty, under the agreement. Pedagogical reasons for doing so have been suggested in a recent article cited in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, which demonstrated a negative correlation between the number of courses taught by part-time faculty and the graduation rates at community colleges.

The limitation, which can be found on pages 254-255 of the current agreement, applies only to departments with six or more full-time faculty members and includes only three-credit courses (though some departments do include four-credit courses as well). The limit is 15 percent of the total number of three-credit courses taught in the department over the entire academic year for all colleges except Mass Art, where the limit is 20 percent.

Important to note are the exceptions to these limits: courses taught by part-time faculty hired to replace unit members on sabbatical and unpaid leaves of absence; on re-

duced teaching loads, alternative professional responsibilities and other release time; and for unforeseen emergencies. The parties have interpreted this language to mean that all of these sections in any given department do not count against the 15 percent (or 20 percent, at Mass Art) limitation.

Table 1 shows that several colleges have been in violation of this language for years. This consolidated grievance was first filed in academic year 2001-02, but

was not adjudicated until AY 2005-06. To her credit, President Janelle Ashley, then chairperson of the state college Council of Presidents, ruled in favor of the MSCA and directed each college's administration to reduce its improper reliance on part-time faculty so that each college is in compliance no later than the end of AY 2008-09.

Table 2 lists the departments at each college that failed to comply with the contractual limitation at the

end of the academic year 2005-06. It is notable that at all five campuses, the English department (which is called "languages/literature" at Worcester State) consistently exceeds the 15 percent cap. There is no shortage of doctorate-holding professors of English or part-time faculty teaching English who would like to have tenure-track positions. There is also no dispute about the importance of the English department in the curriculum of every college and university and in the education of every student, regardless of major.

As with the consolidated grievance concerning excess workload credits (see the November/December issue of *Perspective*), the MSCA needs the vigilance of all of its members to uphold these important contractual provisions.

Thank you for your support and cooperation in this regard.

### Departments in Excess of the 15% Cap on Part-Time Faculty Sections, By Campus (Article XX, C.10)

Table 1 – AY 2001-02 to AY 2005-06

College	AY 2001-02	AY 2002-03	AY 2003-04	AY 2004-05	AY 2005-06
BRI	5	unknown	8	7	9
FIT	unknown	unknown	none	none	none
FRA	2	1	1	5	2
MCA *	2	3	1	3	none
MCLA	none	unknown	1	2	none
MMA	none	unknown	none	none	none
SAL	3	unknown	6	7	5
WES	2	unknown	unknown	4	2
WOR	none	2	2	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>N.A.</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>

Table 2 – AY 2005-06, Specific Departments By Campus

College	AY 2005 - 2006	Departments
BRIDGEWATER	9	ART (36%), COM (32%), ENG (24%), MUS (39%), PSY (34%), SOC (24%), GEOG (17%), SPED (16%), THA (22%)
FRAMINGHAM	2	ENG (16%), HIS (16%)
SALEM	5	COM (29%), ENG (50%), HIS (22%), MGT (18%), MAT (29%)
WESTFIELD	2	ENG (34%), MUS (39%)
WORCESTER	2	BUS/EC (17%), LANG/LIT (16%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	

### MSCA Perspective

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### Nominations Open for 2007 NEA Representative Assembly

The 2007 Representative Assembly of the National Education Association will be held June 30 – July 5, 2007 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

All MSCA members who are in good standing on January 15, 2007, and who pay their dues to the NEA through the appropriate MSCA Chapter, may seek election as MSCA local association delegates to the NEA-RA. Stipends may be available to assist with travel expenses.

Only members who pay their dues to NEA through the appropriate MSCA Chapter will be entitled to vote in the election for MSCA delegates to the NEA-RA. Members teaching in day or DCGE who pay dues to NEA through another MTA local Association (e.g., MCCC, APA, or a K-12 Local) may seek election as a local association delegate only through that association and will be entitled to vote only in the other local association election.

Individuals who join NEA through MSCA or another local Association after January 15, 2007 will

not be eligible to seek election as a delegate to the 2007 NEA-RA.

The specific number of delegates allocated to the MSCA will be established after January 15, 2007. The specific number of seats will be sent to all candidates and will appear on the ballot, if a run-off election is necessary.

The election timetable is as follows:

- Nomination deadline: March 12, 5:00 p.m., regardless of postmark or indicated fax time.
- Ballots mailed: week of March 15.
- Ballots return deadline: April 1, 5:00 p.m.

Questions should be directed to:

Nancy George, MSCA Secretary  
Salem State College  
352 Lafayette Street, Salem, MA 01970  
(978) 542-7182  
(978) 542-7284 FAX  
[nancy.george@salemstate.edu](mailto:nancy.george@salemstate.edu)

#### NEA NOMINATION FORM: DEADLINE - March 12, 2007

Name of Candidate (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Institution Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to place my name in nomination as a candidate for MSCA delegate to the 2007 NEA Representative Assembly.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a biography statement (not to exceed 50 words)

Send completed form to: Nancy George, MSCA Secretary  
Salem State College, 352 Lafayette Street, Salem, MA 01970

## THRIVING IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

## Teaching: The Best/Worst Job There Is?

By Jim Gubbins, contributing editor



Jim Gubbins

This mystery is at the center of college teaching:

One, how is it that the path to college teaching can be a harrowing gauntlet, yet some senior faculty are neither careworn nor weary, instead exuding youthful energy? Two, how is it that a person who trains for years, learning more and more

about progressively narrowing topics, may, once tenured, carve a surprising career path far afield of their training? And three, how is it that some professors see themselves in a constant battle against pressure to provide high quality education, and yet these same professors agree with *Money's* poll that places college professor as one of the top two jobs in the country?

Bothered by these questions, I determined to solve the mystery. The key, I believe, is a kind of genius. Not genius within one's discipline, though that may help, but a genius for mentoring and being mentored.

It may seem obvious that academics are good at learning from others—being mentored—and good at teaching (mentoring). But the reality is not so simple. Those who may be placed over us as mentors may be ill-suited for the task or simply ill-suited for us. Those we are assigned to mentor may be less than ideally suited for us. Who believes the myth that a teacher can be all things to all people, the best teacher for all students; or that someone could be the best mentee for all possible mentors? Even the Apostle Paul who coined the phrase “become all things to all people” admitted that thereby he “may rescue *some* of them,” not *all* of them. So it is not overblown to label as genius the skill some faculty have for finding the right mentors and mentees.

To solve the mystery, I identified eight college professors—four men and four women—who have this genius for mentoring and being mentored.

They all have over 10 years at their institutions and are widely respected on their campuses as dedicated to making their institutions do a better job of educating students. They comprise Fitchburg State College's **Margot Kempers**; the University of Maine's **Virginia Nees-Hatlen**; and Salem State College's **Tad Baker**, **Rob Brown**, **Patricia Buchanan**, **Rod Kessler**, **Steve Matchak** and **Jeanette Sablock**.

#### Creative Career Paths

Most of the eight have taken a series of medium-sized steps on their career paths. For example, **Rod Kessler** was hired to teach creative writing. Twenty years later he has become the coordinator of the Honors Program; and so has gone from the “creative writing guy” to the “Honors Program guy.” **Virginia Nees-Hatlen** went from teaching and scholarship in her field to directing the Center for Teaching Excellence, while still holding her associate professorship.

**Jeanette Sablock**, a geologist, is a campus leader on assessment and teaching portfolios. Her new endeavor is teaching master's-level courses to middle school science teachers. In this, she is improving K-12 science education and encouraging women in the sciences—two goals dear to her.

**Patricia Buchanan** went from teaching and scholarship to chairing her English department. As chair, Patricia intensively mentored younger faculty. Since relinquishing the chair, she has taken on the department's secondary education minor and continues to mentor younger faculty.

**Steve Matchak's** career has gone from the narrow interests of a new faculty member in geography to the broader interests of a department chair, a senior faculty member and someone doing geography-related work in the community. Through his careful hiring and mentoring, his department has become more cohesive, dynamic and substantial.

**Margot Kempers**, chair of the behavioral sciences department, began her teaching career rather contained in her heavy teaching load and her sociology scholarship. Over her 20 years at Fitchburg State, her work has slowly expanded to encompass the wider campus. She and others began the women's studies minor. Margot carried lessons learned from that process into her role as the faculty chair of the NEASC self-study of Fitchburg State.

Two of the eight have taken rather large steps in their careers. **Rob Brown**, a professor and a writer, has moved from the corporate to the academic world. This mix of expertise gives Rob a unique and valuable perspective as he helps lead his communications department and mentors younger faculty. **Tad Baker** moved from directing a museum into academia. As chair, Tad is credited with building up the history department through diligence and generous, meticulous mentoring of faculty, as well as serving the larger college in various capacities.

#### Genius in Mentoring and Being Mentored

Capsule bios convey neither the accomplishments nor the heavy lifting these eight have done over the years, but we can see how far they've come. Close examination reveals how each step resulted from a push-pull process in which the person was offered a better-suited opportunity for mentoring and being mentored.

Here is where the genius comes in. The genius combines insight into oneself and others, courage, and hard work. It takes knowledge of self and others to select sound mentors and suitable mentees. It takes courage to be vulnerable, to seek help and guidance from a mentor, as well as to invest your heart and energy into a mentee who may betray all you've given. It takes time and hard work to aid a mentee and perform the tasks a mentor may suggest.

The genius, too, knows how to learn from bad experiences with mentors and mentees, resolving not to repeat the mistakes or walk away bitter or resentful.

There is a progression in the cycle of mentoring in academia. New faculty start by mentoring undergraduates and being mentored by older colleagues. In time, those with a genius for mentoring come to a point where they are the senior colleague, and are no longer mentored. They mentor their peers and younger faculty. Such persons become more involved and effective in the wider college community, and see themselves on a broader stage. Several of these eight spoke of how they see themselves fighting to make public higher education as good as possible, and doing their part to help the next cohort of professors and the next generation of Americans.

So let's return to the three questions at the top.

1. These senior faculty know the gauntlet they've run. They know in detail the multiple, shifting, conflicting, contradictory and self-contradictory demands placed upon faculty from students, parents, other faculty, staff and administrators. But they have an eye on the greater good that public higher education contributes. These senior faculty also know they are needed for mentoring colleagues through this gauntlet.
2. Senior faculty are premier lifelong learners and don't mind shifting from their Ph.D. specialization. More importantly, their careers are in large part guided by where they find the best opportunities for mentoring and being mentored.
3. These faculty know the battlefield of public higher education. They see themselves “in the trenches.” They may know elite institutions where resources seem to flow like water, yet they believe in the tremendous good that public higher education contributes to the broader society.

Finally, they know the hundreds of students and scores of faculty they've helped bring along. They'll say with a wide, genuine smile, “I have a great job.”

—*Jim Gubbins teaches in the Interdisciplinary Studies Department at Salem State College.*

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