

President's Message - James Gubbins

Bargaining for New Contract: Amy Everitt (Chair, MSCA Bargaining Committee) will lead a forum about the bargaining progress and answer questions:

Wednesday, October 25, 2017, MLK Room, Ellison Center, 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

The administration seems to be feeling pressure from the union, and has agreed to hold bargaining sessions every Monday from now until Thanksgiving.

The union is still observing Work to Rule. We can send an explanation of what that means to all who are interested. We will be calling on the membership to display our desire for a new contract. The next event: Meeting of the Board of Trustees, **Wednesday, November 29, 2017** at 5:00 pm in the Petrowski Conference Room (room 210) of Marsh Hall. Please come with your buttons or shirts, and if you need either, we will give those to you prior to the meeting.

If the bargaining is going poorly, we will get the word out and have an action: Open House for Applicants, Saturday, November 18 at 8 am, Central Campus in front of the Bertolon School. Look for announcements on whether this action is happening or not.

The union is unhappy with many proposals from the administration that we find unacceptable and taxing. Here are a few:

- 1) Extend the 15% cap on courses taught by adjunct faculty to 25%;
- 2) Discontinue the formulary increases which offset salary inversion and compression, and gender-based inequities in pay;
- 3) Create a new category of full-time, non-tenure-track with reduced credentials and experience;
- 4) Require faculty to conduct increased assessment without compensation or release time;
- 5) Consider factors such as student enrollment and retention in classes in faculty evaluations;
- 6) Give Administrators partial control of which faculty and librarians serve on governance committees;

We have also received an unfair economic package which places State University faculty and librarians, current and future, at a disadvantage in relation to our colleagues, and the State Universities at a disadvantage in relation to their competitors.

To find out what is happening with bargaining and the statewide MSCA, please go to mscaunion.org

Board of Trustees Meeting 10/11: The university ended with a \$6.4 million deficit for the last fiscal year (July 1 2016-June 31 2017). This fiscal year (July 1 2017-June 31 2018), due to a low state allocation and lower enrollment, the university is expected to run a deficit of around \$2 or \$3 million, which means the total deficit by the end of this fiscal year is expected to be around \$8.4 or \$9.4 million.

Our graduation rate is now up to 54%, which is 20% higher than it was nine years ago. Students are graduating in fewer years which is good for them, but hurts the university's overall enrollment numbers and thus finances. The university has hired a firm to help determine how to increase enrollment. The major problem is a demographic dip that all colleges are confronting.

The trustees expressed concern about racist and biased actions on campus. Two trustees attended the Black, Brown and Proud forum on October 10 and spoke of how compelling it was and how it demonstrated a need to change. The board allowed two students to speak on the issue of racism on campus. Among other things, both students urged serious action now by the Board and the institution.

Around 10 members of the union attended the Board of Trustees meeting, displaying union t-shirts and buttons. President Keenan mentioned the faculty in the audience and our desire for a new contract.

Grievance Officer Report - Joanna Gonsalves

Differential Student Fees: The Chapter filed a grievance contending that the administration did not follow Article VII of the day contract which articulates a process for shared decision making. At the September Chair's meeting MSCA members became aware that the university implemented differential fees for some undergraduate majors (Art, Communications, Computer Science, Music, Dance, Theater, Geography, and Geology) in addition to the existing fees charged for Biology and Nursing. These new fees, which range from \$125 to \$500 per semester, were approved by the Salem State University Board of Trustees on June 7, 2017 without prior consultation with the All-University Committee, the Budget Advisory Committee or department chairs. Per Article VI, chairs play a key role in recommending the resource requirements needed to carry out their departments' programs of study. An additional concern is the lack of transparency about the purpose and oversight of these new fees. At other universities, such as UMass Amherst, students are provided with information about how program fees are used by departments to support program costs.

DGCE Instructor Evaluation and Course Assignments: In response to allegations that a DGCE faculty member was removed from teaching assignments for disrupting the status quo, the Chapter filed a grievance raising issues about academic freedom, course evaluations and the DGCE hiring process. One positive outcome is an agreement by the administration to follow the contract which stipulates that new DGCE faculty "shall be evaluated during their first instructional period of teaching". Thereafter, each DGCE faculty member shall be evaluated after teaching in their 6th semester. Good communication about teaching performance and classroom management is essential to the professional development of our DGCE faculty and establishing a solid track record for future hiring opportunities.

Tenure & Promotion Denials: A number of faculty were denied tenure or promotion during the 2016-2017 cycle. Reasons cited included irrelevance of faculty members contribution to their field of study, inability to evaluate the impact of faculty contributions, and student evaluations.

Five individual grievances were filed with mixed results (one tenure denial was overturned, two promotion denials were upheld, and two decisions are headed for mediation). In each of these cases, we are concerned that peer evaluations (Chair and PEC evaluations) were not given the weight they deserve in the decision making process. For faculty up for personnel action in future years we recommend that they specifically ask their peers to assess "the quality, significance and relevance of that faculty member's continuing scholarship" (CBA Article VII).

Grievance Process

Faculty members who believe a violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement has occurred and wish to discuss a potential grievance, should contact our Grievance Officer, Joanna Gonsalves, for assistance with initiating the process.

Step I - is a hearing with the Grievant, Chapter Representative and the Provost

Step II - is a hearing with the Grievant, Chapter Representative and the President.

NOTE: Step I grievance forms must be submitted within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of an alleged breach of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (or from the date the grievant learned of the breach.).

The End of Agency Fees - Dan Mulcare

In 2016, Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell blocked President Obama's appointment of Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court, which opened the doors for ultra-conservative Neil Gorsuch to be placed on the bench. This development will likely result in serious repercussions for public sector unions like ours, as our ability to collect agency fees will be compromised.

Unlike normal dues, in which the money taken out of our paychecks goes to support our collective efforts to negotiate contracts, file grievances, appoint members to contract and non-contract committees, and donate to political campaigns, agency fees are a way for those who do not support the union's political viewpoints to forgo supporting these donations. Agency fees are also a way to prevent "free riders."

Unions are required by law to represent every worker within their jurisdiction, and without mandatory dues, members could reap the benefits from these efforts without paying their fair share. Indeed, without mandatory dues, union's ability to function would be severely compromised. Those who endorse agency fees argue that it is within the interest of the state to manage the workplace, and agency fees are one way to quell labor disruption.

For the last few years, Supreme Justice Alito has signaled that he wants to end agency fees, and with the announcement that they plan to head *Janus v. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Council 31* the conservatives on the court will likely accomplish this goal. Along with the political goal of taking away major donors to Democratic candidates, the legal challenge revolves around whether agency fees violate the First Amendment. The argument is based on the assertion that dues force workers to fund practices or governmental policies that they do not support, and people should not be compelled to endorse positions in which they disagree. While this theory ignores the fact that every union member votes on leadership who shapes these policies, which does give the membership voice, it is nearly certain that the conservative majority will strike down agency fees.

As public union members, we must realize that we may face an existential crisis in the future. Not only will our funding be a risk, but as our contract negotiations are revealing, management seeks to employ more temporary workforce that has less institutional power. Our next step as a union is to organize so that these forces do not undermine our ability to have a significant voice in how our workplace operates.

Statement on Racist Incident - Issued 10-4-2017

The Executive Board of the MSCA writes to publicly condemn the deplorable white supremacist graffiti that appeared on our campus this past weekend. On college campuses and in communities throughout the nation, an immensely dangerous strain of racial politics has become legitimized. As such, it is particularly important that we as a faculty unequivocally affirm the values that animate Salem State's multi-ethnic community.

The white supremacist graffiti scrawled on our baseball field pledged fealty to some of our history's most heinous practices: slavery, Jim Crow segregation, lynching, voter suppression, and a racially inequitable criminal justice system. This form of intimidation was meant to compromise our community's ability to learn and work. We expect the administration to be transparent in its sharing of information, to treat the assault on our campus as a hate crime, and to hold the person(s) responsible fully accountable.

This episode is an affront to Salem State University's mission of empowering students, faculty and staff "from a wide range of races and ethnicities, cultures, political, and social worldviews, religious, and spiritual beliefs." It is absolutely essential that we stand firm against the most scurrilous racist behaviors and ideologies, but the Salem State Chapter of the MSCA recognizes that there is much more to be done on our campus to achieve racial justice than speaking out against overt act of white supremacy. As we come together as a community to reject this nefarious hate crime, we must not be blinded to the more subtle forms of racial inequity on our campus.

Lastly, we encourage you to join with us, other students, staff, faculty, and administration officials at forthcoming events on racial justice. These public conversations are a critical step to show that the Salem State community will act in support of all of our members and our values.

New from around the State Universities - Tiffany Gayle Chenault, Director

Overt Racist Actions across Campuses:

There have been numerous times in the last three weeks in which I have heard : "It's 2017", "It's Massachusetts", " It's Salem State". At the October 11th Board of Trustees meeting several of the Trustees also made comments such as " How deep does this go (referring to racism) and "We should just be able to educate people".

Westfield State - They have been facing racist actions from nooses being found in a shower to racist signs written on their campus. The Westfield State President has received racialized emails.

Framingham State - The Black Student Union on campus was targeted in an October 13th racial incident, and racial graffiti was written in permanent ink on a student's dormitory door. The President of the Black student Union, Destinee Morris, wrote, "Framingham State University is "working" to get this under control but it's dangerous; they live there!! The person clearly does not care at all....something needs to happened NOW."

Other News from around the State :

Bridgewater State - HR has investigated several faculty without giving them notice or information for why they are being investigated. Seventeen new administrator positions that have been filled and no monies to hire new faculty.

Fitchburg State University - All university committees have been dissolved. They have a university wide advisory board. The Vice President is addressing faculty about issues not addressing the union as a whole (as the representative body). The Vice President has allowed the faculty to form a committee to evaluate the Deans.

Framingham State - They have standing committees and university wide advisory committees.

Mass Art - experienced budget cuts without logic through academic affairs, which came as a complete surprise to the faculty. The faculty made it clear that if are funded at a certain level then they can't do certain things. After faculty made a stand, some of the budget has been "magically restored".

MCLA - Their president said he would apply pressure to the BHE for a contract.

Massachusetts Maritime –The new Dean is very supportive of union and having a contract.

Westfield State- They have advisory and ad hoc committees. They are not creating any new committees. Faculty made it clear to the Provost that they aren't doing their (Provost) jobs for them.

Officers

President: James Gubbins
Acting Vice President: Juditha Burchsted
Acting Treasurer: Lisa Chen
Secretary: Gretchen Sinnett
MSCA Director: Tiffany Chenault
Acting Grievance Officer: Joanna Gonsalves

Executive Committee

Area Representatives

A: Juditha Burchsted (BIO), James Cullen (GLS)
 B: William Cornwell (PHL), Jeff Theis (ENG)
 C: Bethany Jay (HIS), Martin Krugman (PSY)
 D: Rebecca Hains (COM), David Goodof (MGT)

At-Large Representatives Andrew Darien, Paul Kelly, Lorri Krebs, Dan Mulcare, Peter Walker, Ronald MacTaylor

MSCA Chapter Office

Office Location: Sullivan Bldg., Room 202B
Telephone: 978-542-6366
 Mary Buckley, Chapter Secretary, x6920
mbuckley@salemstate.edu
 Christine Melin, Executive Assistant to Statewide Grievance Chair, cmelin@salemstate.edu

Upcoming Meetings

October 25 Bargaining Update
 Ellison Center (MLK Room) 9:00 a.m.- 10:00 a.m.

November 29 Salem State Board of Trustees
 Petrowski Room (Marsh Hall 210), 5:00 p.m.

November 15 MSCA Executive Committee
 Sullivan Building 202B, 12:30 p.m.

November 29 Salem State Board of Trustees
 Petrowski Room (Marsh Hall 210), 5:00 p.m.

December 11 MSCA Executive Committee
 Sullivan Building 202B, 10:00 a.m.