

Know Your Benefits

Sick Leave Transfer

Faculty who worked part-time or full-time at another CA school or college (K-14) and whose break in service within the CA systems did not exceed three years may have their accumulated unused sick leave transferred from any qualifying previous employer to our district. This can obviously help if you get sick since sick leave accumulates in a bank until you retire. Additionally, it can help improve your pension since unused sick leave counts towards service credit (if you are in the STRS Defined Benefit plan). To transfer unused sick leave, just contact the District Payroll Department. (You will also need to contact the schools/colleges from which you need to transfer the sick leave for verification.)

Save the Date: UF Benefits/Retirement Conference April 8

Political Action Report

UF PAC Student Internship Program Now Recruiting

Our spring PAC internship program is now recruiting students. If you know students who are interested in political advocacy, please refer them to the UF Office at 925-680-1771 or uf@uf4cd.org. The UF sponsors six paid internships every spring that include training and support for student advocacy. Our interns attend the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC) Advocacy and Policy Conference in Sacramento, Feb. 28 and 29; meet with state legislators; and help with voter registration drives.

Budget Advocacy

The main focus of faculty advocacy between now and May will be the state budget. The Governor's budget proposal includes \$29.3 million for a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) of 0.47% and \$114.7 million to fund 2% enrollment growth. There is no augmentation for Student Success and Support Programs (SSSP), Equity, or full-time faculty hires, nor is there any base augmentation, as there was last year, or additional funds for part-time pay equity or office hours. By far the biggest piece of the community college budget, \$248 million, is allocated to "workforce & CTE pathways." There is also \$30 million dollars allocated to basic skills for programs that help students make the transition to college-level courses, particularly in math. In all, the Governor's budget allocates an additional \$400 million in ongoing funds and \$380 million in one-time funds to community colleges.

The overall numbers are encouraging in that they reflect increases born of a healthy economy (and due in large part to the increased state revenue provided by Proposition 30), and most analysts agree that the Governor is underestimating revenues and budgeting conservatively, as has been the case for the last couple of years. The debate in Sacramento over the next several months will focus, therefore, on priorities (and whether the Governor's division of funds really reflects the needs of the system) and on how additional money should be allocated, if more revenue becomes available by the time of the "May Revise." Most faculty advocates agree that the single biggest weakness in our system is still the exploitation of and overreliance on part-time faculty, which the current budget proposal does little to address. Increasing per-student funding allows for smaller classes with more full-time faculty and full-service part-time faculty (offering proportional office hours and other student services). Furthermore, if the State does not provide enough new ongoing and unrestricted revenue so that college districts can afford the mandated increases in STRS contributions (not to mention predictable, annual benefits premium increases), they are really cutting funding and making it hard for local districts to address local needs. 0.47% COLA is inadequate.

President's Message

On Changes, Transitions and Reform

First, I want to offer congratulations and thanks to Chancellor Helen Benjamin, whose retirement announcement last week took us all by surprise. Helen can boast a great many accomplishments during her tenure in our district, and she certainly has won wide respect not only statewide but nationwide, but what stands out most to me is Helen's unwavering commitment to collegiality. That word is sometimes taken for granted. But I mean it in the truest sense of being committed to colleagues and to relationships with colleagues. Helen is one of the busiest people I know, but she makes time to dine with colleagues and attend their events. When UF leaders have been honored in Sacramento by FACCC or have won awards, Helen has often attended. Usually, she is the only manager (let alone chancellor) in the room. She attends faculty concerts and lectures. She likes to meet over breakfast, and she always wants to chat about personal things before she gets down to business. Even when bargaining becomes contentious, Helen always comes back to collegiality and the importance of relationships. I recall one time a few years back when we seemed to have hit a wall. Everyone was angry, and Jeff had vented frustration at a Governing Board meeting, which had upset Helen. She came into negotiations the next day personally to make clear, she said, that this was not an atmosphere in which she wanted to work. She helped us clear the air, and then she stayed with us to bargain until we broke our deadlock. It wasn't the issue that had her upset. (I don't even remember the issue.) It was the breakdown in collegiality.



Donna Wapner

As 4CD begins the search for a new chancellor, the UF will be putting together a letter to the District Governing Board outlining some of the qualities we think are most important, and I think this commitment to collegiality should be at the top. Unfortunately, many in management throughout California only pay lip service to collegiality. It will not be easy to find someone who invests as genuinely in relationships as Helen. We may not always have agreed, but we will certainly miss her – and I look forward to finishing some projects with her before she departs.

Of course, there are many important qualities for a new chancellor, and the UF will be seeking broad faculty input before we finish our letter to the Board. We have also been asked to provide input into a new Accreditation implementation plan for reform. At a recent FACCC Board Meeting, we discussed the steps necessary for finding a new accrediting agency. Somehow I don't think we will miss the ACCJC.

I look forward to the UF's 40th anniversary celebrations. From negotiating benefits for domestic partners to the fight for accreditation reform to our budding "equity hour program," the UF has often been a leader and innovator in California. We work in uncertain times and face real threats to pensions and collective bargaining, but our commitment to students and to one another keeps us strong.

United Faculty Executive Board Members	
Contra Costa College	Los Medanos College
Vern Cromartie	Milton Clarke (Vice Pres.)
Beth Goehring	Marco Godinez
Jeffrey Michels (Vice Pres.)	Luis Morales
Aminta Mickles	Ursula Velonis (PT Rep)
Elvia Ornelas-Garcia	
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Diablo Valley College	
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Table Talk

The Newsletter of the United Faculty of Contra Costa Community College District

February 4, 2016

News at a Glance

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- **Part-Time Faculty Issues:** *Equity Hour Planning Gets Underway*
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United Faculty Turns 40, Plans Events to Celebrate

The United Faculty of Contra Costa Community College District turns 40 this year, with much to celebrate. Founded in 1976, our UF was the first independent community college collective-bargaining agent in California, and for four decades, we have been statewide leaders in protecting faculty rights and fighting to improve faculty working and student learning conditions.



1976-2016

As 4CD faculty's "exclusive representative," the UF negotiated the first contract, which expanded over several years in an unprecedented "public process," to which UF leaders were (and remain) committed. In the late 1970s, particularly following the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, which led to significant funding cuts, faculty leaders struggled to maintain a climate that included collegial relations with management and broad transparency and trust between the District's faculty and the union's executive board. To stay connected to our members, the UF was one of the first faculty unions in the State to establish an office with a full-time secretary and a regular newsletter, *Table Talk*.

When Prop 13 prompted the District to take unilateral actions that included raising class sizes, increasing teaching loads, canceling sabbatical leaves, revoking release time and cutting instructional programs, the UF pushed back by completing a comprehensive, expanded contract proposal that covered all these issues. It took years to work out the details, but the result, in the words of then UF President Bill Harlan, "enhanced communications between faculty and administration" and set a model that other districts sought to emulate.

To celebrate the union's 40th anniversary, the UF plans to publish and share with all faculty a complete history, and we're planning a number of events as well, including spring barbecues on all three main campuses, and a gala dinner party off-campus with featured guests, past union presidents, rock stars, elephants, yodelers...the works! We're going to share some new and vintage UF schwaag too. Our union has fought difficult battles, and there are more ahead, but we think it's worth taking a moment to remember what we have achieved together and to celebrate our amazingly dedicated faculty!

Inside Negotiations

Spring 2016 Negotiations Begin February 5



Jeff Michels

The big news in negotiations, of course, is always the budget, because whatever else we are working on, we are always aiming to improve compensation. Last year's raise was good, but we still have a long way to go to make up for the cuts and freezes of past years. Faculty salaries have not kept up with the cost of living; and it is simply too hard to raise a family in the Bay Area on a professor's pay. Plus we have too many part-time faculty who are grossly underpaid, and while last year's new money for full-time hires was terrific, it was a small step up a long, steep hill. We certainly need another good year with more money for salaries and new full-time hires, not to mention all our other priorities and needs.

Unfortunately, the state budget news so far seems pretty bleak. New money for a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) in the Governor's budget is less than half a percent (a big disappointment since earlier projections were much higher), and there is no new ongoing money allocated to raise our base or hire new full-timers (like last year). There is 2% for growth, but it's not clear that our District will be able to earn our share of that money, and of course, the District's STRS contributions are increasing as will benefits premiums.

Our situation is far from hopeless, however. The Proposition 98 guarantee ensures that total allocations to our district are still rising, and there may be millions of dollars we received last year as "one-time money" that is quietly becoming "ongoing." Our District also has substantial reserves, which may create some opportunities. For example, if we take steps now to reduce our long-term benefits liabilities by offering incentives in a wellness program or by offering some kind of optional buy-out whereby some employees might sell their retiree benefits back to the District, this could free up some ongoing dollars that we now set aside. Furthermore, the Governor's proposal is not the budget. With advocacy from groups like FACCC and CCCL, things may look better after the "May revise."

In the meantime, we are starting negotiations this Friday with an ambitious list that includes the compressed calendar; science-lab load; compensation for certificated program leads, departments chairs and coaches; workplace safety and security; part-time office hours and pay equity; and benefits. Our Benefits Workgroup, which includes representatives from Local 1, which represents 4CD classified staff, met over the winter break and will continue to meet this month. So far, we have covered several key areas including wellness; long-term care insurance and savings from raising medical copays.

It seems likely that this will finally be the year we implement a wellness program that will begin by paying employees a cash-incentive to participate in regular health screenings and reporting. By year three of a four-year pilot program, the incentive will probably change to include a disincentive (where there is also some cost for not participating). Wellness programs raise some concerns, of course; even when privacy is fully protected, the whole idea can seem intrusive. But of all the ways to control costs in health benefits, wellness still seems by far the best option. Even so, we are also reviewing options to cut premiums by raising copays. The "Cadillac Tax" has been delayed by at least two years, so the pressure to make sweeping changes has diminished, but benefits costs are still out of control and using up all the new money. A modest increase in copays could probably save a million dollars in premiums that we could spend on other faculty priorities.

This Friday, we will start with the compressed calendar, including hours for non-instructional faculty and a one-time stipend for converting classes.

Hot Topics

New Evaluation Forms that Spell Check Now Available

All faculty evaluation forms have been revised to reflect minor changes in language negotiated last year. The new classroom observation forms and summary forms will also now spell-check and paginate correctly. There are, however, a few new quirks, so there will be a small adjustment period while faculty learn to navigate the new forms. There are different forms for MAC and PC users, and there is a bit of a trick for filling in blanks with names and dates and also for checking boxes. We strongly recommend that all faculty read the one-page instruction sheet posted on the UF and District websites along with the new forms. If you have questions or need help, just call or email the UF Office: 925-680-1771 or uf@uf4cd.org.

Supreme Court Hears Challenge to Public-Sector Unions

The US Supreme Court is expected to rule in June on the case of Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association, which calls into question the right of public sector unions, like United Faculty of 4CD, to charge non-members a fee to cover the costs of collective bargaining. In California, as in 22 other states, workers can be required (if the majority of employees so vote) to pay a "fair share service fee" or "agency fee" on the grounds that even non-union members benefit from the collective-bargaining agreements that the unions negotiate. Unions like ours also have a "duty of fair representation" to assist equally all employees, whether they have elected to join the union or not. When a faculty member calls the UF for advice or help or because he or she wants a union representative present in a meeting with management, we do not ask if he or she is a union member. We represent all faculty, and all faculty therefore can be required to contribute financially to the union.

In 1977, in the case *Abood vs. Detroit Board of Education*, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that it was constitutional to require non-members to help pay for the union's collective bargaining efforts to prevent freeloading and ensure "labor peace." Political activity, such as contributions to candidates, was specifically excluded, which is why the UF has a Political Action Committee (PAC) fund and collects PAC contributions separately from dues or agency fees. Only members of the UF contribute to our PAC (\$2.50/month for full-timers and \$0.42/month for part-timers), whereas all faculty pay dues or an agency fee that is the same amount as dues.

The current case asks the Court to reconsider *Abood* based mainly on the argument that public-sector bargaining is inherently political. When a teacher's union asks for higher salaries, say opponents of *Abood*, they are taking a political stand about how tax dollars should be spent. Thus Friedrichs argues that forcing non-members to support unions in the public sector violates the First Amendment by forcing some faculty to subsidize political speech with which they disagree. CTA has responded by painting the case as a partisan attack on the financial and political clout of unions and as part of a growing effort to shift power from workers to management.

It is unclear what the Court will decide and how it might affect the UF. At present, almost all full-time faculty in the District are members of the UF. It is mostly part-time faculty (who must elect to opt in and join the union) who pay agency fees, and this is not the bulk of the UF's income. We also receive some financial support directly from the District, which makes sense since the UF plays an important role in our system, not only through collective bargaining, but in helping resolve disputes by working with deans and HR. Much of the work we do (like revising the evaluation forms and procedures) has little to do with politics or salaries. Still, we will be working this semester with FACCC and CCCL to better understand the legal issues in Friedrichs and to explore our options should the court rule to overturn *Abood*.

Full-Time Faculty Issues

UF Seeks Progress as Load Task Force Meets February 10

The Load Task Force started as a great idea. First, we adjusted load levels in the contract to recognize that not all "lab" assignments require the same amount of preparation and grading as others. Then, we put together a group of senior administrators and faculty, and agreed that they would direct small teams to meet with faculty in every department to review assignments (particularly lab) to make sure that loads were assigned fairly. These teams, we said, would report back to the Task Force, which would agree on recommendations to the bargaining teams. This approach, we figured,



Milton Clarke

would make change easier and better since we would have solicited input from faculty at the department level. By the time recommendations got to the negotiating teams, we assumed they would have too much support from Task Force faculty and managers to stall.



Marina Crouse

Alas, the work has moved more slowly than we expected, and even just pulling together the members of the Task Force into one room (and coordinating the schedules of college vice presidents and UF leadership) has proved challenging. The Task Force decided to start with science departments only, but then got stalled in bargaining as some negotiators asked "what about other areas?" The District and UF are still committed to the process, but we're hoping to see a renewed sense of purpose when the Task Force meets Feb. 10. Addressing load inequities is a key faculty interest, and our work needs to be more productive this year so we can start to see some real progress. The issue of Program Leads, for example, is complicated, but that doesn't mean it should take years to resolve.

Part-Time Faculty Issues

Equity Hour Planning Gets Underway

The Equity Hour described in last year's collective bargaining agreement will likely result in training available to *all* faculty (full-time as well as part-time), and planning for both professional development and other activities associated with the program is still in early stages, but most importantly from the UF's perspective, for part-time faculty, the plan will mean new opportunities to be compensated for time spent working with students.



Doug Dildine

The details (except for the \$500,000 committed to part-time faculty district-wide in last year's agreement) are still fuzzy because they need to be worked out individually by equity committees on each college campus (and connected to each college's equity plan, with accountability measures in place to comply with state funding requirements), but here is the time line: first, this semester, the local equity committees will establish work groups to map out plans for the Equity Hour Program. By the end of this semester, we hope, probably in May, the plans will be made public, and part-time faculty will be invited to sign up to participate in the 2016/2017 academic year. In fall of 2016, paid training will be offered (dealing with outreach strategies and best practices for closing achievement gaps and helping support underserved and at-risk students). And starting spring of 2017, part-timers who have completed the training will begin being paid for "equity hour" activities. These may include face-to-face meetings with students, group work, communication by phone, email or text... Those are the details the local equity committees will be discussing this semester. Stay tuned.