



UPDATE

September 18, 2008

www.santarosa.edu/afa

Welcome Back!

by Warren Ruud, Regular Faculty in the Mathematics Department, AFA President and Negotiations Team Member

Stop me if you've heard this one before. As we return for the fall semester, this year's State budget remains largely unresolved, and funding for the College is uncertain. One certainty exists, however, and that is we will have to do more with less. We must teach our classes, run our programs, and do our long-term planning — all without the benefit of stable funding. We must tighten our belts again, even though they remain dangerously cinched up from the last fiscal crisis. In order to keep our College above water, we must increase our enrollment to capture additional State revenue.

It seems far too many academic years start with this dire message. Those of us who have muddled through the parade of financial emergencies over the last few decades risk becoming fatigued and developing a cynicism about our profession.

The problem is with the system. California community colleges are under-funded even in good years, and we are forced into chasing enrollment growth to keep a barely adequate stream of revenue going to SRJC for our programs and departments. Proposition 92 would have gone a long way in solving this systemic problem, but it was defeated by a large margin last February.

That's the bad news. What's the good news?

At the top of the list, AFA and the District concluded negotiations last May, earlier than the previous two years, with a number of achievements for faculty:

- An overall salary adjustment to maintain Rank Ten standing in the State at the designated benchmarks, based on the AFA 2008 Salary Study, with proportionately greater increases for the lower salary steps and for adjunct faculty.

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2008-09 Negotiations: Back to the Negotiating Table — Soon!

by Janet McCulloch, Regular Faculty in the English Department, AFA Chief Negotiator and DTREC Co-Chair

On August 27, the AFA Executive Council approved what we refer to as our "Sunshine List," those articles of the Contract that we will open for negotiations with the District in 2008-09. On September 9, AFA presented its list of Contract re-openers to the Board of Trustees, which means that by law we can begin formal negotiations with the District thirty days after that date. (See Sunshine Lists on page 2.)

As always we will strive to maintain Rank 10, preserve fully-paid medical coverage for regular faculty, and push for the survival (in whatever form) of the adjunct medical benefits program; however, in a year when the State Budget looks particularly grim, we

are planning to focus on a wide array of non-monetary items. We will finish up some items left over from the 2007-08 negotiations including Article 9—Academic Freedom, Article 15—Faculty Service Areas and the ripple effects in Article 23—Reduction in Force. In Article 18—Leaves, we will create language around the agreement with the District to allow the use of Sick Leave for the purposes of Parental Leave. We will also continue to clarify the language in Article 21—Professional Growth Increments so that everyone will understand the expectations of the PGI Committee and the District *before* a faculty member submits documentation for salary movement. As always we

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Negotiations *(cont. from page 1)*

will be trying to open a discussion with the District about the disparity between and among the workload factors outlined in Article 31. Even though there is no budget for making workload adjustments, we hope that we can all agree that major disparities exist throughout the College.

Since we have already settled salary and benefits for the 2008-09 academic year, we will be spending a lot of time reorganizing and clarifying Article 14—Evaluations, and in strengthening the concept of College Service & Professional Development in Article 30—Tenure Review. As both of these important articles are the shared responsibility of AFA and the Academic Senate, all of the faculty will have ample time to discuss and adjust the language in these articles.

Over the last few weeks, the AFA Negotiating Team has been meeting with the District Team in

informal study sessions. An extremely important point of discussion has been the implementation of the new Education Code language which allows a maximum load of 67% for adjunct faculty and sets aside the existing statute limiting those loads to 60%. We still have much research to do to clarify the loading of substitute work and to better understand the unintended consequences of the move from 60% to 67%. When we have more answers to our legal questions, we will certainly share that information with all of you.

In the meantime, I pledge to communicate with the faculty on an on-going basis. Please feel free to contact me or other members of the AFA Negotiating Team with your questions and concerns. I can be reached at (707) 527-4494 or jmcculloch@santarosa.edu. (Log onto <http://www.santarosa.edu/afa/> for AFA Negotiating Team contact information.)

AFA's 2008-09 Sunshine List

Article 8—Academic Calendar

Article 9—Academic Freedom

Complete 2007-08 negotiations.

Article 10—Benefits *

Article 13—Departments Chairs

Article 14—Evaluations

Article 15—Faculty Service Areas

Complete 2007-08 negotiations.

Article 17—Job Descriptions

Article 18—Leaves

Complete 2007-08 negotiations.

Article 21—Professional Growth Increments

Complete 2007-08 negotiations.

Article 22—Professional Development

Article 23—Reduction in Force

Complete 2007-08 negotiations.

Article 24—Retirement

Article 26—Salary Schedule Development *

Article 29—Substitutes

Article 30—Tenure Review

Complete 2007-08 negotiations.

Article 31—Working Conditions

Article 32--Workload *

(* These articles are automatic reopeners.)

The District's 2008-09 Sunshine List

Article 1—Agreement to the Contract. The District has an interest in limiting the number of contract “reopeners” in future years so that negotiations can be concluded in a timely manner.

Article 8—Academic Calendar. The District has an interest in revising the academic Calendar to ensure that faculty members have sufficient time to address student learning outcomes assessment and to allow flexibility in scheduling summer sessions.

Article 10—Benefits. The District has an interest in continuing to ensure high quality health and welfare benefits for eligible faculty and in working with AFA to implement health benefits cost-sharing for full-time faculty.

Article 13—Department Chairs. The District has an interest in revising the department chair formula to more accurately reflect chair workload. The District has an interest in revising the chair evaluation process to be more fair and meaningful to chairs.

Article 14A, 14B, and 14C—Faculty Evaluations. The District has an interest in reorganizing and revising the current faculty evaluation article to make them easier to administer and to strengthen the role of supervising administrators.

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- A total of \$110,000 in salary enhancement for Unit A adjunct faculty teaching many of the non-credit courses.
- A continuation of fully-paid medical and dental benefits for regular faculty and their families.
- The survival of the adjunct medical benefits program for this year and next, even though its support from the State has been further reduced, and the Board has been stubbornly reluctant to offer any continuing support for this vital benefit for those who need it most.

Also, because enrollments are up this semester, the College should receive some growth revenue once the State budget is completed.

Now, what can faculty do to help get the College through this current hard stretch?

- We need to continue our partnership with the District in increasing enrollment and retaining our students. (See *Partnership for Enrollment Efficiency* below.)
- We need to pursue all potential savings in our departments that do not affect negotiated employment conditions and compensation, or our instructional and support programs.
- We need to recognize we are all in this together. We can advocate for each other's programs as the District deals with the college's financial problems,

and can share our resources with other programs so that every dollar has its maximum impact on teaching and supporting our students.

- Finally, we can make the case to the Governor and our state legislators that the best way to reverse the present financial difficulties in California is to build a high-skilled, high-wage workforce that pays taxes, and the best way to do that is to fund the programs in California community colleges. Visit the AFA web page at: <http://www.santarosa.edu/afa/> to find out more about how you can contact your legislators.

I've been a teacher at SRJC for over twenty-five years. My good semesters weren't necessarily the ones in which my department was supported financially to my liking. For example, in one recent semester, my students in a beginning algebra class came together and pulled each other through the course, working and achieving well beyond even their expectations. During another, a new technology made teaching multivariable calculus exciting again for me. I'd bet we all have examples like these. Those good semesters are the reason we keep a passion for teaching and our profession, despite a chronic lack of adequate support.

So, welcome back to a new year at SRJC. I hope you have a good semester.

Partnership for Enrollment Efficiency

As part of last May's Tentative Agreement, AFA and the District agreed to work in partnership this fall to strengthen enrollment numbers, to improve the efficiency of enrollment with respect to scheduling, and to work harder on student retention. The goal of this faculty effort is to increase College revenues through FTES growth during the current State financial emergency. As a result of this agreement, \$190,742 was added to all of the salary schedules.

In return, the District has agreed to:

- Support a marketing campaign and conduct outreach activities (e.g., Wednesday Night Market booths and continuation of the new Welcome Center);
- Open approximately half of the restricted sections (2% of the class schedule);
- Generate additional growth by scheduling short courses to the full instructional hours;
- Add courses into the schedule based on student

needs as classes have begun to close; and

- Schedule "late start" general education sections to help assure students can get the classes that they need, particularly if the student must drop a course or registers late.

AFA has agreed* to encourage faculty to:

- Take students on the wait lists;
- Allow one or two additional students to add closed sections of a course;
- Work to retain students in classes and to help students succeed in courses while maintaining high standards and academic integrity; and
- Identify at-risk students early in the semester and get them connected with support services (Tutorial Center, DRD, etc.) or reenrolled in a more appropriate course.

**Participation by instructors beyond the normal contractual requirements is strictly voluntary.*

Adjunct Faculty Medical Benefits Program Applications Due Sept.30

At the beginning of September, the Human Resources Department mailed out a packet of materials regarding the Adjunct Faculty Medical Benefits Program to the home addresses of all adjunct faculty actively employed this semester. Continuation of this program was one of AFA's top priorities in the previous negotiations cycle. It is included in the May 2008 Agreement between AFA and the District, and is effective until September 30, 2009.

Completed applications must be postmarked or delivered to the Human Resources Department by Tuesday, September 30. Coverage will be effective October 1. Even if you are currently enrolled in the program, you still must complete and submit forms by the deadline. (Note: Read the forms carefully as some of the eligibility criteria and plan options have changed. Contact Susan Muskar in Human Resources at 524-1624 or the AFA office at 527-4731 with any questions.

District's Sunshine List

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Article 17—Job Descriptions. The District has an interest in revising the existing faculty job description to include required duties essential to the academic programs and to include language more applicable to distance education. Further, the District has an interest in evaluating the possible restructuring of chair duties.

Article 21—Professional Growth Increments. The District has an interest in revising the PGI article to clarify criteria for growth increments and required documentation.

Article 24—Retirement. The District has an interest in revising the eligibility requirements for early retirement as a future cost savings measure.

Article 26—Salary Schedule Development. The District has an interest in continuing to discuss and refine the rank ten methodology to arrive at a fair and sustainable method of comparison among faculty salaries in the State.



AFA Executive Council Vacancies Get Involved! Make a Difference!

The AFA Executive Council has the following vacancies:

- Seats for two Adjunct Faculty representatives (each expiring in August, 2009).
- Seats for two Regular* Faculty representatives (each expiring in August, 2010).

To be considered for these positions, email a brief statement of interest to afa@santarosa.edu by **5:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 23.**

Eligibility Requirements

A candidate must:

- be an AFA member for five months prior to selection,
- be able to attend Executive Council meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from 3 – 5 p.m. (typically on the Santa Rosa campus), and semi-annual retreats, and
- submit a statement of candidacy of up to 250 words upon request.

Preferred Qualities

Candidates should possess:

- a desire to represent ALL faculty,
- an ability to be an active advocate for AFA and its missions and goals,
- a willingness to represent AFA on District-wide committees,
- a sensitivity to the confidential nature of negotiations and grievances, and
- a potential for future leadership roles in AFA.

Based on the response, the Executive Council may make an appointment, call a special election of the membership to fill each of these seats, or delay filling the seat until its regular election in the spring. Details for this process are found in Article II of the AFA Bylaws at: <http://www.santarosa.edu/afa/Misc/bylaws.pdf>.

*Probationary and Temporary Faculty members are also eligible for these seats.