

San Marcos Chapter News, September 22, 2005

A Snag in Bargaining Our Next Contract

Join Pres. John Travis for updates on bargaining and CFA's campaigns against Schwarzenegger's attack on public employees! Thursday, 9/22, 2:30pm, Library 3010

CFA was disappointed recently to announce that a raise for the faculty hit an unacceptable obstacle. Representatives of the administration had approached CFA informally with an acceptable plan to implement a 3.5% across the board General Salary Increase (GSI) while continuing negotiations over other issues. CFA applauded them for their initiative and for recognizing the severity of the faculty salary problem.

However, in the short time it took the CSU team to formalize the proposal, they added objectionable conditions. They demanded that faculty contribute part of future general salary increases to an unspecified merit pay plan and to pay for junior faculty Service Salary Step Increases (SSIs).

This switch from a straight forward offer of a 3.5% raise to an offer with strings attached was a dismaying and erratic change in direction. As a result of this development, the CFA bargaining team called for a "cooling down" period in negotiations and has temporarily broken off bargaining.

Attaching strings to a salary proposal is not an unusual tactic in collective bargaining. But the CSU administration's actions at the bargaining table contradicted the chancellor's recent email communication to all faculty promising quick salary relief.

CFA feels a strong response was required considering that strings were placed on raises only for the faculty. Management personnel (MPPs) in the Chancellor's office received a more generous 3.65% across the board salary increase – no conditions, no merit pay, and similar agreements with other groups are expected. CFA is not willing to let faculty be singled out and treated worse than other CSU employees.

Both sides recognize that the CSU junior faculty have an exceptionally serious salary problem and should receive an SSI. However, the CSU negotiators offer is to fund an SSI only by reducing the General Salary Increase for everyone else.

First, the compensation budget includes plenty of money in so-called "salary savings" (from retirees and other sources) to cover SSI's. It simply is not necessary to

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What's Wrong with the Assigned Time Policy

Faculty returned to campus this year to rumors of a change in the workload policy. The rumors were confirmed when, on Sept. 9, the Provost and the deans of the colleges released a policy document titled "General Fund Assigned Time Guidelines for Instructional Faculty." An accompanying memo announced the imposition of a new system of accounting for workload at CSUSM. And it quietly alerted faculty that they could be forced to teach additional classes if it is determined that they are not productive enough.

Faculty will be required to submit an

"application" for assigned time each fall. The, in May, we will be required to submit a retrospective annual report. Finally, and this is the real sticking point, the policy document states that "Faculty not fulfilling their proposed assigned time activities jeopardize eligibility for future assigned time." The policy does not specify who will assess fulfillment and make decisions about denying applications. Worse, it makes no provision at all for an appeals process.

The CFA has several objections to this policy and the way it was rolled out.

Stop the SSI Rip-Off!

Unlike most other public sector employers, the CSU administration has made the faculty pay for its own service step increases (SSI) for years. SSI's do not cost the CSU any new money, but they use money earmarked for raises to "pay" for them.

Think of our salary system as a staircase. Each of us is on one of the steps. Each step represents a stack of money that pays everyone on that step. Every year everyone moves up one step. At the top, senior faculty walk off the staircase into retirement. At the bottom, newly hired faculty enter at one of the lower steps.

The money that funds the steps is always in the budget. Assuming the usual rate of retirements, the only new money added to the steps is the across the board raises (GSIs). So the SSI's are really a no-cost item for the CSU administration.

If we agree to pay for SSIs out of the salary pool that has been designated for faculty raises in the upcoming contract, the Chancellor and the campus Presidents will get to keep the money AGAIN.

Chancellor Reed has the money, he just doesn't want to put it in our paychecks.

**Service Step
Increases (SSIs)
do not cost the CSU
any new money.**

Bargaining Update (*continued from p. 1*)

reduce the GSI to pay for it.

Second, in state civil service positions as well as in city and county governments throughout the state, SSI increases occur every year for eligible employees. The money for these SSIs is never charged against general cost-of-living increases. In truth, the CSU can afford both a 3.5% across-the-board raise and an SSI for junior faculty.

The bottom line is that the administration's position on compensation increases is intentionally divisive. It is designed to set junior faculty against senior faculty and is an attempt to divide the CFA. We can't allow them to succeed.

Another major issue on the bargaining table is merit pay. Before the cooling-off period was called, the CFA agreed to take a serious look at new and creative approaches to merit pay. The CSU bargaining team proposed a joint CSU/CFA committee to study the feasibility of a merit plan. CFA is not opposed to all merit pay programs in principle. However, we insist that a merit pay program be fairly and objectively applied to prevent bias, favoritism, or caprice. We will not return to anything like the previous programs we endured and fought to end. We are open to discuss ways to implement a fair, open, and equitable plan.

CFA does not support any merit plan that is funded from GSIs. General salary increases are necessary just to keep all faculty up with the cost of living and must not be treated as a pool from which to reward only a few.

For more on the problems with merit pay plans please see CFA's Insiders Guide to Collective Bargaining at www.calfac.org/insiders.html

We encourage faculty members, our families and supporters to advise the administration as to the importance of agreeing to the GSI now with no strings attached.

CFA leaders will try to meet with the Chancellor to make our case for an immediate 3.5% GSI. But we will not let the immediate need for a faculty salary increase be used us to divide us, or to manipulate our bargaining team into making concessions that would be harmful to the faculty as a whole. We will not agree to a quick raise if it is conditioned on agreements that are bad for the faculty in future years.

CFA did the right thing two years ago. We agreed to a salary freeze when the state budget crisis was at its worst. Now we want the salary increase we deserve without conditions that would guarantee the continued slide in faculty salaries.

Janet Powell, Chapter President

**The administration
is trying to set
junior against
senior faculty.**

Jason Williams Exonerated

Last year, faculty and student activists took up an important fight. On Oct. 20, 2004, sociology major Jason Williams, one of fewer than 200 African-American students at Cal State San Marcos, was pulled over by campus police after he rolled through a stop sign on campus.

A November 4 town hall meeting was called to discuss the case and the larger issue of campus policing techniques. Almost 200 members of the community assembled to hear Williams describe the arrest and his subsequent experiences. Williams described how the officers searched his car illegally and abused him both physically and psychologically.

When Williams finished his statement, Prof. Sharon Elise asked the audience whether they had similar experiences to share. It was as though a dam had burst. For two hours, people told stories of being intimidated by campus police officers, often when they were alone at night.

A consistent pattern quickly became clear:

over several years many women and people of color at Cal State San Marcos have experienced situations in which they felt certain that they were being intentionally harassed by campus police.

As a result of this meeting and the activism it inspired, a task force was formed to review campus policing procedures. It made a wide range of recommendations for change, including the institution of a permanent community review board to monitor the campus police.

Now, Williams, whose case started this campaign, has been cleared of all charges. On September 15, Vista Superior Court Judge Runston G. Maino ruled that campus police violated Williams' rights by searching his car without probable cause.

This is a huge victory for Williams, and for the community as a whole. It puts the campus police on notice that racial profiling and harassment will not be tolerated. And it shows the power of collective action to win justice.

Many women and people of color felt harassed by campus police.

Assigned Time Policy (*continued from p. 1*)

First, the administration cannot simply impose a new workload policy, even under the guise of "guidelines." The CFA and the administration had been working on a workload policy document for several years, but the results of that collaborative process were unilaterally discarded. The CFA's participation in designing the policy and approval of the final product are required by the CBA.

The policy consistently refers to assigned time WTUs as being funded by the state's General Fund. This is a misrepresentation of the budgeting process. The state funds the CSU for generation of FTES, not WTUs. And the faculty at CSUSM generate above average per capita FTES.

The policy fails to account for a wide range of faculty activities that impact workload, such as large class sizes, independent studies and graduate theses, course development, advising, etc.

The policy circumvents the established methods of peer review and opens the door to arbitrary administrative punishment of individual faculty members.

Finally, this policy reverses the prevailing method of decentralized, flexible management across the university. Instead, it imposes a "command-and-control" regime that will stifle the collegial and cooperative environment we have worked so hard to develop.

The new policy is scheduled to "go live" on October 14th of this year. Before then, the Provost will hold a series of meetings for the faculty at which he will field questions. We encourage all faculty members to attend these meetings and to voice their opposition to the implementation of this punitive and unfair policy.

Faculty should voice their opposition to this punitive and unfair policy.

San Marcos Chapter Information

Academic Hall 103
Cal State San Marcos
333 South Twin Oaks Valley Road
San Marcos, CA 92096-0001
760-750-4009
cfa@csusm.edu
www.csusm.edu/cfa

President: Janet Powell
Vice President: John Halcon
Secretary: Lance Newman
Treasurer: Linda Holt
Faculty Rights Rep.: David Avalos
Lecturer's Rep.: Mayra Besosa
Professional Staff: Jackie Teepen
Student Intern: Cheyenne Barr

A campus chapter of
the California Faculty Association
www.calfac.org

Why You Should Join the CFA.

As a CSU faculty member you already pay 70% of union dues as an "agency fee." So why should you formally join the CFA?

A union is only as strong as its members. We are in a period of intense contract negotiation that will determine our collective working conditions for the next several years. The CFA is fighting for meaningful salary increases, clear workload limitations, a streamlined grievance procedure, and other improvements in our day to day work lives. Strong membership shows the administration that we are united behind these demands.

Our dues fund important union work besides contract negotiations. The CFA also 1) actively defends academic freedom, campus diversity, and other faculty concerns, 2) represents members in grievances against the administration, and 3) lobbies state legislators about educational funding and policy.

Upgrading from fee payer status to full membership also gives you access to a wide range of benefits, including free professional liability insurance, attorney referral service, and a range of financial and insurance services.

Please join today!

US Labor Against the War

The CFA is affiliated with the nationwide organization, US Labor Against the War (USLAW), which helping to organize demonstrations calling for the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq.

On September 24th, there will be major demonstrations in Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, and other cities around the world.

The CFA Peace and Justice Caucus urges CFA members to participate in the USLAW contingents at the LA, SF, and SD demonstrations.

The labor contingent will gather in LA at 11:30 AM, 9/24, on Olympic Boulevard between Broadway and Hill.

In San Diego, the labor contingent will march from Santa Fe Station to Balboa Park, starting at 12:30 PM.

For more information, contact Lance Newman at lnewman@csusm.edu

There will be demonstrations against the Iraq war in LA, SF, and cities around the world.

Fall 2005 Calendar

Special Events:

Thursday, 9/22, 2:30pm, Library 3010
John Travis, CFA President on Bargaining Our New Contract

Tuesday, 11/1, 5:30 pm, Arts 240
Peter Camejo on the Crisis in California

Thursday, 11/3
Roy Weatherford, United Faculty of Florida on defeating Jeb Bush's attacks on higher education and faculty rights.

Regular Meetings:

Executive Committee Meetings:
11am, Tuesday, 10/11, 11/8, and 12/6
Academic Hall 103

Department Representative Meetings:
11am, Tuesday, 9/27, 10/25, and 11/15
University Hall 458.

Meetings are open to all members. Lunch is served at Department Rep meetings.

Come see CFA President John Travis for a report on the bargaining for our new contract.