

Oakton AFA News

Oakton Adjunct Faculty Association NEA/IEA
AFA Website: www.oaktonafa.org
Office: Room 2470—ext. 2193

Special points of interest:

- OCC Looking at austerity measures
- Delegate needed to travel to New Orleans
- Membership meeting coming in April



AFA Board Discussing Austerity Measures with OCC Administration

The AFA board has been meeting with the leadership of other OCC unions and the administration to discuss ways to save money in the 2010-2011 fiscal year budget. The administration has announced an expected shortfall of \$4.5 million dollars due to the State of Illinois not meeting its funding obligations.

The college is not in dire straights due to a large reserve fund, totaling in the many tens of millions of dollars, having been created since the college's founding, though the use of that fund for operating expenses is unlikely. Multiple OCC Board of Trustee members have already publically said that is not a route they'd like to consider and the college's top administrators have echoed that opinion.

For the present school year, the state only provided two of its four scheduled payments, and

there is an expectation no more is coming.

At the Tuesday, February 16th OCC Board of Trustee meeting, the president, Dr. Peg Lee, asked the board for a \$6 dollar per credit hour tuition increase.

Other area colleges will be raising rates also, so Oakton will remain as one of the more affordable higher education options in the area.

The administration is in the process of creating a substantial revenue stream from the leasing of a college asset, an airwave license. Other, smaller revenue generators such as small student fees are being inspected too.

Much of the needed money will need to be found through cost-savings, which will affect us all. Small items such as college-supplied coffee in the division offices will be on the way out,

while we may notice our average class sizes increasing. This is not to be through a change in maximum number of students, but careful planning of sessions times by deans and chairs.

As of this writing, there has not been a direct discussion of items which would alter our contract, but your union is watching for such items.

For now, please watch for cost-saving measures which may have been overlooked and pass them up through your administrators.

While it is not good news, we do know that we're not alone. All Illinois colleges are looking at their missing appropriations and planning for difficult years. Oakton is more secure than most, and we can appreciate the administration has asked us to the table.

New Members

Presently, 70% of adjuncts who are eligible to join the unit are members. Even in just the last couple of weeks, we have welcomed several new members. As always, we are recruiting new union members. If you are teaching six hours or more, you can join. Local dues only add ten dollars to the fair share already deducted. In fact, new members receive a tote-bag, and can attend our Riggio's membership dinners. It's a win-win. Contact Cheryl Brown through division two or four, or call the adjunct faculty union office at the numbers on the masthead.

Membership Meeting at Riggio's Approaching

The Spring Membership Meeting, an event that keeps gaining popularity, will be on Sunday April 11th at 4:30. We will be returning to Riggio's Pizza on Oakton at Milwaukee. AFA

members eat free, and can bring partners for a small fee.

Invitations requesting an RSVP will be sent soon. Please reply to Chester Kulis in Division IV when

Chronicle Article Worth Reading

The Chronicle of Higher Education ran another article on Adjuncts, reporting on a trend of increasing unionization during hard times. The article ran on December 14th, but is still active on their website. Try <http://chronicle.com/> and search the article "Surge in Adjunct Activism. It, similar to the article featuring Oakton Adjuncts last Fall, has inspired many responses, some vociferous, following the article.



Nominate Yourself to Be a National Delegate—Election March 3rd

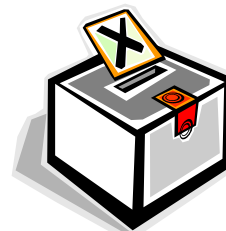
Fourth of July in New Orleans

The AFA is looking for a member or two members who would be willing to represent us at the National Representative Assembly this summer in New Orleans. For the last several years, Barbara Dayton and Cheryl Wollin have made sure we were noticed on the National level. Now, this is your chance.

The conference will be held on July 1 through 6th, and votes will be taken on important policy affecting the NEA and thus national education policy. The travel expenses will be paid through our IEA dues, and the representative will be expected to attend meetings, but will also have access to great social functions.

If you are interested, please contact Donna Ryan in Division four, who can place your name on the ballot for a March third election (campaigning not required!). If you are only interested, still contact Donna Ryan who can provide more information.

All members should vote for our National RA's on March 3rd. Balloting material will be in each of the adjunct offices. Please read the directions next to the ballots and follow them carefully.



Committee Positions

Recently, members were sent an email by the union asking for someone to serve on a college diversity committee being created by Dr. Gregory James. If you would like to take advantage of this opportunity, please contact Barbara Dayton, in Division IV.

Periodically, the administration asks the union to suggest names for committee service. If you would like to be considered, but can't serve on the diversity committee, please simply send a note to Barbara Dayton.

First Pay Issue

As reported in the last newsletter, many members were seriously impaired by the delay in the date of first paychecks in recent semesters. Our AFA president, Barbara Dayton, has been meeting with the administration discussing the problem and is optimistic that a solution can be found for next Fall.

UIC Grad Students' Set to Strike

Last Monday, Feb 15th, the graduate students at UIC voted, with a 96% majority, to file an intent to strike. This union represents 1400 contingent employees. They are seeking promises in writing that their tuition and fee waivers will not be a target of budget cuts.

This is a matter of interest to us not only because they are in our union fraternity, but they are knowingly taking a stand at a time when the Illinois University system is in a fiscal crisis. Their results should bear watching.

To learn more, their own website is at www.uic-geo.net.