
AFA NEWSLETTER

OCC Adjunct Faculty Association IEA/NEA

<http://www.oaktonafa.org>

Office Room # 2470 - Ext. 2193 Thurs 1 – 3 p.m.

DATE: December 1, 2008

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MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOVEMBER 2ND AT HACKNEY'S.

A few years ago we used to have 20 members for our AFA dinner. We had 65 members and guests last month! Although at times we had to compete with a Halloween Party in the adjoining room, we had an enjoyable time talking to each other.

Oakton AFA President Barb Dayton introduced a panel of the NEA/IEA union presidents from Harper College, the College of Du Page, Triton College and Roosevelt University. Each union has a different definition of who belongs to the Bargaining Unit. For example, an adjunct at Oakton who teaches 6 or more credit hours in a semester becomes a member, while at Roosevelt an adjunct becomes a member of the BU in her second semester. COD has a goal of once an adjunct is in the BU, he always remains a member regardless of his current hours.

Each president agreed that their union needs more help than the 5-10 activists who do most of the work. (Hint: Barb again asked for AFA members to volunteer to attend a monthly Board meeting – contact the AFA office.)

What did each president value most in his recent contract? At Oakton Barb cited “super seniority: for adjuncts who have taught 22 semesters and have priority in getting a second course if they so desire. At Roosevelt adjuncts have “length of service” considered - but technically do not accrue seniority since

officially they are “terminated” after every semester. The current contract gave Roosevelt

adjuncts a good pay raise (3 ½%) and detailed procedures for remediation of adjunct faculty whose teaching skills are allegedly inadequate. At COD the president took pride in adjuncts getting personal offices, while at Harper it was the inclusion of Fair Share members in the BU. At Triton adjuncts now get assignment priority according to pools of length of service and also have a health savings account.

What was each president’s priority for the future? At Oakton and COD it was some form of health insurance. At Roosevelt adjuncts want a better assignment process regarding notification for the following semester. At Triton remediation was at the top of the list.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCES.

Adjunct faculty are eligible for approved travel and expenses for professional conferences, workshops and meetings, with higher priority for those meeting in the Chicago area. Each request for professional development support must be made in advance, through the division secretary, to the Dean, who in turn will forward the request to the Director of the Learning Center. Professional Development stipends normally are for \$100. (see AFA contract, section 2.10, p. 11.)

THE AFA DIRECTORY is now out with 162 faculty entries, thanks to Dave Arieti and Olivia Cronk.

Over

AFA SURVEY RESULTS. 168 adjuncts responded to the survey, a rate which indicated strong support of the AFA. Some abbreviated highlights of the survey:

1/3 of OCC adjuncts teach elsewhere. 17% this

semester teach over 7 credit hours at Oakton and elsewhere.

21.6% have FT jobs elsewhere, 23.4% are semi-retired, 28.1% teach at several schools, and 16.8% only teach PT at Oakton. 19% hold two master's degrees, and 27% have a doctorate.

37.5% have applied for a FT teaching job at Oakton. Nearly half strongly feel that an adjunct with 3 years of Oakton experience should be given an initial interview. 1/3 are not interested in a FT teaching job. 60 adjuncts admitted applying for at least 86 positions. Half of the adjuncts never were interviewed, while a third were. A common sentiment was little hope of ever getting a FT job: too many applicants for a few slots.

12% had a course cancelled this semester. Of these, 1/3 had the cancelled course replaced with another. 74% got both the courses and schedules they requested.

Of the 20 priorities, adjuncts rated as most important a salary increase at or above the cost of living. Next in importance were a salary commensurate with full-time faculty and also job security. Finally, there was major support for an increase in limits on credit hours an adjunct can work.

Other priorities ranked high for specific sub groups of adjuncts. For example, an increase in stipend beyond the present \$30 is very important for the 27 percent of adjuncts with a doctorate. Health insurance is very important for many adjuncts, excluding the semi-retired and those working FT elsewhere or already covered. Long term adjuncts supported a salary increase beyond the present, 11-year-step cap. More senior adjuncts were concerned about grievance procedures. In short, there was a diversity of self-interests among adjuncts, as a result of their differing career expectations, more so than for FT faculty who are all on the same career ladder.

Suggestions and comments by individual

adjuncts emphasized the need for adjuncts to be respected and included in the life of the college. Adjuncts seem to feel that they are considered expendable and are ignored in the official decisions.

SELECTED ADJUNCT COMMENTS:

“I went to a Division meeting and felt completely left out. The agenda was totally concerned with full-time and administration issues.”

“I haven't been informed of any meetings this semester in my department.”

“I have attended committee meetings. Am I supposed to be paid for this?”

“Last spring in our Division no meetings were announced to the adjuncts. This semester we are getting notices.”

Thanks to Keith Johnson (Div 4) for his time and expertise in designing, tabulating and interpreting the survey results. The AFA Board is still reviewing the results and may release a more detailed report in the weeks ahead. Thanks to all of you for your input.

**HAVE A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON AND
A PREACEFUL NEW YEAR!**