

April 2015

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The AFA

What is the AFA? The AFA is *your* union, protecting and fighting for the rights of all adjuncts covered under the bargaining agreement between the college and the AFA (anyone teaching at least six LHE's in any three previous terms.

Please Attend the Board of Trustees Meeting Tuesday April 28 at 7:30

Feel forgotten? Not heard? Come to the April 28th Oakton Board of Trustees meeting. Show the board some of the faces of the 70% of Oakton's faculty that is adjunct at 7:30 in the Board Room. Come early and give your name to Barb Dayton so that she can introduce you.

March Dinner Meeting

Nearly fifty adjuncts and their guests attended last month's AFA dinner meeting, where Camille Grant from the IEA answered questions about the annuitant situation.



Camille said that she felt that at this point, rather than legal means, organizational and political avenues need to be explored. Informational picketing is a possibility, as well as involving students.

A committee was formed to determine what additional actions to take regarding the annuitant situation, with Steve Brody as its chair. Got ideas? Get involved! Contact Barb Dayton to sign up.

Various topics came up: Despite the amendment to the Biss law creating an exemption for annuitants receiving annuities of \$10,000 or less, Oakton will not even consider rehiring those annuitants although no penalty can be incurred. At the apparent

insistence of attorneys and being risk adverse, Oakton simply does not want to track hours.

The administration's decision to not re-hire the annuitants was unilateral. In response, the AFA has filed a Demand to Bargain Letter. There have been two meetings so far between the AFA and the administration without result. Therefore, there is a plan to file an Unfair Labor Practice as the administration is not bargaining in good faith.

Many at the meeting saw this as an attempt to simply get rid of older teachers and bring in "new blood." Others see it as an attack on the seniority system itself.

Congratulations!

New affiliates have been appointed for the 2014-2015 academic year, giving them the opportunity to participate in Oakton health insurance. Congratulations to all of them.

Help Needed

Volunteers – at least four - are needed to serve on a committee to assist the AFA with revising its by-laws. Please note that this is not a paid position. However, *paid* help is needed in other committees as well at Oakton. AFA has fought to have adjuncts

represented in the wider college. Here is your chance to have a voice at Oakton; contact AFA for more information.

Board of Trustees Election

Two positions were on the ballot for the Oakton Board of Trustees in the April 7 Cook County Consolidated General Election. Incumbent Robert Stafford and newcomer Benjamin Salzberg were elected. They will be seated during the April Board Meeting.

How SURS Credit is Reported.

This writer is still trying to figure out what the last memo from HR actually means in plain English (see the March newsletter, available on the AFA website); however, it does appear that if one teaches a late start class, one will not get full credit from Oakton for that semester. Don't think that dates will be adjusted by Oakton in the interest of fairness. Think ahead and accept classes accordingly if every bit of your future pension will be important.

The Arbitration

There was a hearing in February regarding the grievance filed last summer involving Chet Kulis. Both sides are writing briefs and a decision is expected in May or early June. This decision will color subsequent actions regarding the rest of the annuitants.

Tell Your Students!

Many students are in the process of registering for Fall

2015 courses. Are they aware that some teachers who have been recommended to them will not be here in the fall because they are annuitants? That great Shakespeare teacher? The watercolor instructor (check out the Student Art exhibit in the Koehline Gallery)? Educate your students about what is happening here – this affects them too!

Adjuncts in the News

The April 15 Huffington Post posted an article noting how many adjuncts seek out government aid. Census data was analyzed by the University of California–Berkeley's Center for Labor Research and Education: 25 percent of "part-time college faculty" and their families now receive some sort of public assistance, such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, or food stamps. The article notes that fast food employees and home care workers have it worse, but a good number of us are "basically working poor."

Grievance Corner

What should I do if I think I may have a grievance?

While it is not believed that Chairs, Deans and other Administrators often violate the contract, it sometimes does happen. Possible violations range from loss of a course within one week of a start-up date, to loss of seniority rights, to not receiving a course assignment at all. Whatever the case, the AFA will help you

determine if you have a case.

What to do? First, read our contract (see the AFA website, afa@oakton.edu, and contact the AFA. Call the office at 847-635-2193 and leave a message, drop by the AFA Office in Rm. 2470 in Des Plaines during office hours, or email us at info@oaktonafa.org. You'll be contacted as soon as possible. Most importantly, document or provide *proof* that there has been a violation of the contract. Plan ahead: keep all emails, texts, tweets, memoranda, and so on; document days, times and dates of any conversations and note the names of those involved or present, as well as the gist of the conversation; if your concern regards obtaining courses, keep a copy of your preference form along with its date. Arranging information on a time-line is helpful.

We will try to settle informally, but you need to contact us as soon as you have a concern of any contract violations; an informal discussion may resolve the situation or the grievance process can be begun. If you need to speak with the administration, it is always your right to have an AFA representative present.

Do contact the AFA office immediately if you have been asked to do something with which you are uncomfortable, you are not sure is contractual, or you know or someone else has suggested is a violation.