

Oakton AFA News

Oakton Adjunct Faculty Association NEA/IEA
 AFA Website: www.oaktonafa.org
 Office: Room 2470 on the Des Plaines Campus, extension 2193

Special points of interest:

- > Membership Dinner on October 10th—please RSVP
- > Know the contract—Tier II adjuncts

Membership Meeting—Sunday, October 10th

All AFA members are encouraged to attend our semi-annual membership meeting. It will be held at Riggio’s Restaurant, at 7530 W. Oakton on Sunday, October 10th. (Riggio’s is on the Northwest corner of Oakton and Milwaukee.) The meeting will be at 4:30.

In addition to regular union business, Paul Johnson, a counselor in Oakton’s Student Development office, has agreed to speak on an issue we each

face at some point in our careers, the disruptive student. You can also count on Riggio’s pizza.

We do request that you RSVP by Monday, October 5th. To do so, return the forms you receive in your mailbox to Chet Kulis in Division 4. You may also email Chet at chesterkulis@att.net. Please indicate your name, division, and email address.

This dinner is free to members, but guests are welcome. There is a charge of \$20 at the door for guests. Please indicate in your RSVP that you intend to bring a guest.

Adjunct faculty who are not AFA union members are welcome to attend and join at the meeting. Non-members, please RSVP in the same manner described above.



Know Your Contract Rights—Level II Members, Bumping, and Super-Seniority

In a continuing attempt to familiarize our membership with the contract, allow us to focus on the three levels of adjuncts the contract divides. (Next issue, we’ll look at another contract issue.)

Super-Seniority

About twenty percent of Oakton adjunct instructors have the special contractual status of having “Super-Seniority.” This means they have taught twenty-two semesters and, by clauses in the contract between the AFA and Oakton, have certain special rights. These “super-senior adjuncts should annually receive an

Adjunct Commitment Contract from human resources. Signing this is a commitment to teach six hours in each of the upcoming Fall and Spring semesters. The college, according to Article 2.6.C of our contract, then must give priority in assigning courses to these adjuncts.

Such an agreement clearly helps the more long-term union members plan ahead, and gives the college some consistency it would lose otherwise.

Level II Adjuncts

Another division in the contract separates Level I and Level II adjuncts. Level II are those with 11 semesters or more of service. Level II adjuncts have some bumping rights, called “reassignment” in the contract, over adjuncts who have taught less than 11 semesters, the Level I’s. (Summers don’t count.)

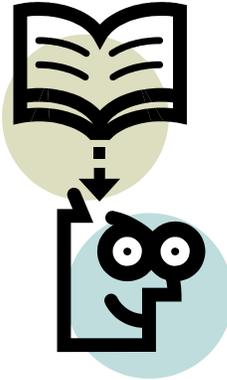
There are several details in the contract to set a procedure for this bumping. Pages 8-10 are necessary reading. In fact, all members should familiarize themselves with the contract, a copy of which is available on our website, www.AFA.org.

Recently, the union was able to invoke these contract clauses to help adjuncts receive classes after they were told none were available. In one, an adjunct with many years of Oakton teaching experience refused a class on headcount. Being a level II adjunct gave the instructor the right to six credit hours. The administration created a late start class for this instructor after union intervention. In another case, a veteran part-timer was able to bump a brand new adjunct.

Read the contract, know your rights, and contact the union when you experience any breach.

Second Call for Adjunct Book Authors

The union is still exploring the idea of sponsoring an event at which adjuncts who have published books could present them to the entire school community. If you have published a book, and would like to see this event come to fruition, please contact Chet Kulis in Division IV or stop him at the Membership dinner.



Advice to Head off Student Grievances

Our Grievance Chair, Beverly Stanis, has noted an emerging pattern of students taking complaints about instructors straight to chairs and deans, skipping any direct contact with instructors on the issue. She advises that instructors be proactive by advising students in the first weeks of a semester to come to the instructor when the student perceives some type of issue arising rather than jumping to higher levels of hierarchy. Contact Beverly Stanis through Division IV when you need advice on possible grievances.

New Members

Dues Deduction

For most of us, AFA and IEA membership fees will be deducted from our paychecks on October 29th and the following pay period. A few who teach classes which end earlier than that may have dues deducted previous to these dates. Remember, since we are a fair-share shop, members and non-members both pay the IEA share. It only costs ten dollars more to be a member!

First, welcome to all our new members, both those who are new to Oakton and those who have taught here before. As new members, please accept the invitation to attend the membership dinner. We hope you'll find it a place to learn a little more about the work the union is doing, but also meet colleagues which you may not normally encounter.

One of the challenges of an adjunct union is that our membership has a continually changing makeup as individuals move in and out of the college, and change their workloads. Because of this, we also need to meet you and hear your needs. The membership meeting is a great place to meet the union officers and even find how you can help your union.

For returning union members, please remember the Fall is when we need to build our numbers—talk up the union to the new adjuncts you meet! For membership questions and forms, contact Cheryl Brown in Division IV or stop by the union office, room 2470 on the Des Plaines campus, on Thursdays from 3-6.

Phone Books

Thanks to all our members who returned the form distributed earlier in the semester requesting inclusion in the directory the Union produces. It looks as if it will be our biggest directory yet, and we hope to have it ready for distribution at the membership meeting. Remember, only those who returned the form will receive a copy of the directory.

Levels of Retirement Benefits

The state has created a two-tier retirement system for SURS employees. This will radically alter working conditions for our future union members, those hired after January 1, 2011. Basics such as the numbers of years needed for being vested will double, the minimum retirement age will rise for these new employees, and their benefits will be calculated differently. While these changes do not alter the retirement system for us who have already started working under the SURS system, they are worth being familiar with so that we don't confuse our future colleagues in office conversations, and so that we stay familiar with the direction the state seems to be heading in its thinking on pensions.

The SURS homepage, at www.SURS.org has a link to a chart comparing the two systems. Under "Latest News," click on Public Act 96-0889: Tier II benefits.

Again, this does not alter the retirement plan for those hired before January 1st of 2011.