
AFA NEWSLETTER

OCC Adjunct Faculty Association IEA/NEA

<http://www.oaktonafa.org>

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

DATE: September 29, 2008

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**MEMBERSHIP MEETING SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 2ND AT 4:30 P.M. AT
HACKNEY'S ON LAKE AT WAUKEEGAN
RD IN GLENVIEW.**

All members of the association are invited for free. For \$15 extra you can bring a spouse/significant other. If you are a Fair Share bargaining unit member, you can sign an IEA membership form at the dinner and for \$10 extra in local dues you get BOTH the dinner and an IEA tote bag – what a deal!

HIGHER-ED CONFERENCE. 2008 IEA Higher Education Conference, “Advancing Our Contributions to Education” will be October 3 & 4, 2008 at the Double Tree Hotel in Bloomington, On-line registration now at www.ieanea.org. AFA will reimburse members’ registration and hotel expenses. Let Barb Dayton know if you’re interested.

VOTE AGAINST CON-CON.

IEA recommends that you vote against the Constitutional Convention (Con-Con) proposal. The primary reason is that a new Illinois constitution could put at risk public pensions protected by the current state constitution, since some citizens feel that public employees should not get fixed pension benefits, especially as the economy worsens. The current Illinois Constitution was adopted in 1970 after lengthy and costly preparation. Today such a constitutional convention would cost taxpayers as much as \$100 million. Ten amendments have been added to the current constitution, so there is no need to

redraft the whole document. Bad behavior in government should be dealt with through the

legislature enacting reforms, not by drafting a new constitution.

AFA DIRECTORY. Please return your info form to Dave Arieti ASAP. Only those who submit the form will get the directory.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY. The membership survey will be distributed shortly, as we approach negotiating a new contract with the administration. If you have any specific suggestions for the survey or would like to help in formulating it, please contact Chester Kulis or Keith Johnson in Division 4.

Most eligible Oakton adjuncts have signed IEA membership forms and are members of the AFA. However, some adjuncts in the Bargaining Unit are Fair Share members who haven’t signed an IEA membership form, even though they get the pay and other benefits negotiated by the AFA. If you are Fair Share, please contact the AFA office to get an IEA membership application and return it ASAP to show your enthusiastic support for YOUR union.

IEA REPRESENTATIVE DELEGATE. The Adjunct Faculty Association (AFA) will be electing two local delegates to the 2008 IEA Representative Assembly in Rosemont, to be held Thursday-March 12 through Saturday-March 14. You are expected to attend all sessions. All expenses will be paid. Contact Donna Ryan, election chair of the AFA, dryan@oakton.edu, to request a nomination form which must be returned to Donna in Skokie by October 10.

AFA CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS.

Donna Ryan is also chairing a committee to review the AFA Constitution and Bylaws. If you have a legal background or an interest in this committee, please contact her.

SURS RETIREMENT. Most adjuncts have no clue what their SURS pension benefit will be. Each year you should get a contribution summary from SURS indicating how many years of credit you have in the system. Keep in mind, though, that since adjuncts are part-time employees, that figure (and consequently your pension) will be reduced by statute.

OCC reports a 15% credit for each 3-hour course taught each semester. The highest credit you can accumulate is 1.0 annually, even if you were to teach at several schools.

The years of service credited and your wages earned will form the basis of your pension benefit. Under the "Minimum Benefit" formula most adjuncts who worked little are entitled to \$25 per month for each year of service. Under another formula (the "General Formula") adjuncts who earned more, perhaps by teaching at more than one college simultaneously, will get a somewhat larger pension benefit. *NOTE: the pension benefit under either formula will be reduced due to our part-time employment.*

If all this sounds confusing, it is. SURS simply is not geared to reporting adjunct benefits on its forms. Adjunct work loads can vary so much from not teaching at all, teaching up to the maximum just at Oakton, or also teaching at another college as well. Let's consider a real life case.

An adjunct recently retired under SURS. Since academic year 1992 he had taught at Oakton a total of 16 years. His last SURS statement gave him 13.0 years of credit, as reported by Oakton and another college where he had worked.

SURS then further reduced the 13.0 years by 2.5778 years due to his PT status, so that the

adjunct by statute was finally credited with 10.4222 years of service.

Under the Minimum Formula the adjunct would have received \$25 per month x 10.4222 years of service = \$260.56 per month. Most adjuncts who teach one or two courses a semester will only get the Minimum Formula benefit.

However, this adjunct (who had taught a total of four or five courses a semester between Oakton and another college) qualified for the more generous General Formula. Under the General Formula table, the adjunct with 10.4222 years of service received a pension equal to 22.9284% of his average earnings for the past four years (\$16,350) = \$3,749 annually or \$312.42 monthly.

LESSONS LEARNED: You can increase your pension by teaching extra courses at another school. You could also decrease your pension under the General Formula by teaching fewer courses in the years before you retire. Most important, as an adjunct, don't quit your day job! Your SURS pension will pay the utility bills but not much more.