
MASSACHUSETTS **C**OMMUNITY **C**OLLEGE **C**OUNCIL

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MCCC: Busy Year Ahead

The year ahead promises to be a demanding year. With higher education reform, a furlough court case, impact bargaining on a number of issues, fact finding, early retirement and health insurance issues in the legislature, and an internal MCCC assessment, this year will be extraordinarily busy. The following is an overview of activities which the MCCC will be most involved. The remaining issues stated above are covered elsewhere in the *Newsletter*.

- Fact finding begins August 30 and continues September 27 and 28. The items in fact finding relate to the monetary components of our contract: salary increases, promotions, health and welfare contributions, travel expenses, and sick days for Blue Hills unit members (leftover from merger). In addition to the fact finding process, the union will be trying to convince legislators to incorporate a salary increase along with the higher education reform package.
- Impact bargaining over the reorganization of departments between

Roxbury Community College and the Boston Business School.

- Impact bargaining over the idea of a one-college concept. With the explosion of DCE courses throughout the day college, it has become necessary to discuss the impact this has had on the unit.
- Community and state colleges have completed the court presentations of their furlough court cases. The remaining segments should be completed by the end of September. Judge Tuttle will then have to make

a decision on his next step after he has received the arbitrators' decisions.

- Attempt to resolve the differences which have resulted in numerous grievances in the DCE unit, mostly dealing with Article 10, Reappointment with management.
- MCCC will conduct an internal assessment using the NEA Assessment Team. This will provide the MCCC with an opportunity to be able to evaluate and assess the job it is doing. ■

Higher Education and the Legislature

This year the higher education unions, along with the other state employee organizations, will be spending a significant amount of time working with legislators. Monitoring the educational reform process will be time-consuming in itself. Also coming up again, however, will be an early retirement proposal and a proposal to increase our health care contributions.

- **Early retirement.** This proposal is expected to surface again this Fall. Rep. Kevin Blanchette, chair of the Public Service Committee, has been a major opposition to an early retirement provision. It appears, however, there is enough support to possibly bypass Rep. Fitzgerald. Though the senate leadership and governor support an early retirement proposal, it is important to remember that the senate's proposal

of adding five years of service or five years of age incorporated a provision which prevented the refilling of those positions. This is a serious problem for higher education; it perpetuates the fast-evolving California model of full-time workers being replaced with part-time workers. One of the major objectives of the MCCC and other unions is a full-time work force.

If an early retirement proposal eventually passes the legislature, it will be due in large part to the constant and persistent work of MTA lobbyist Jack Flanagan. His two major issues have been an early retirement package and no increase in our health costs.

- **Health care costs.** The governor wants our health care costs to be

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Higher Education and the Legislature

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increased to 25 percent; the legislator is reluctant to acquiesce. The problem, of course, is that the governor will persist, and it will be up to us to convince our legislators to resist. The governor, however, will be looking for a quid pro quo somewhere. It is important to remember that the senators and representatives are in the same situation in terms of furloughs, salary increases, and health insurance costs as we.

*General ideas and great conceit tend
always to create horrible mischief*
Goethe

In a recent article in the *Boston Globe*, Scot Lehigh wrote that Governor Weld "increasingly looks like an ideological manticore, the confusing creature possessed of a man's head, a lion's body, and scorpion's tail." We have to understand that by his own admission, Governor Weld is a libertarian, a... "filthy supply-sider" whose diminishment of government seems to be random and without regard to the consequences, just a broad, general reduction. In discussing his declared income of \$3 million for this past year, he reminded us that 9 out of his 10 close friends make more than he. Our work is cut out for us; we must all work to get the governor and his people to understand the importance of public higher education. Everyone has got to get political. ■

Know Your Contract

- Sept. 6** Faculty post office hours
- Sept. 12** Colleges send out notice of accumulated sick leave
- Sept. 13** Faculty submit course materials to department chairs

N.B. Dates vary depending on first day of classes. Also, most of these dates are "last date" standards. In many instances, the action can be accomplished before the date indicated.

Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1990

Awhile ago, Congress passed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA 1990) requiring that part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees pay into Social Security unless they are members of a state pension system which meets federal requirements.

At the present time in Massachusetts, anyone employed after April, 1986 has had only the Medicare portion of the FICA—1.45%—deducted from his or her check. Knowing that this bill had passed, and knowing that the state did not have a pension plan for part-time employees, some colleges began to institute this deduction which ranged from between 6.0% and 7.65% and was to be retroactive to July 1, 1991.

On August 13, 1991, however, a letter was sent from state comptroller William Kilmartin informing department heads that, in fact, the "Commonwealth will be implementing an alternative pension plan in order to be in compliance with OBRA 1990." Negotiations evidently have taken place between the Social Security Administration and the Commonwealth, and it appears that there will be a pension plan for part-time employees.

According to a spokesperson at the state comptroller's office, the pension plan for part-time employees probably will begin January 1, 1992, and deductions **will not be retroactive** to July 1, 1991. The impact of this new deduction is yet unknown, but the estimated number of employees affected is 11,500.

This new law most likely will affect all of our part-time and DCE employees. It is unclear as of this writing whether there will be a separate pension system for these employees or whether they will be part of the present pension system.

A statewide meeting is scheduled for August 28, 1991, at Bunker Hill Community College with a number of state agencies and a representative from the Internal Revenue Service. The September issue of the *Newsletter* will report on the results of the meeting and the ramifications for public higher education part-time employees. ■

Nota Bene

- The Division of Continuing Education employees will be receiving a ten percent salary increase in their Fall checks. In addition the lab ratio will increase from 2:1 to 1.75:1. The dues year began at the first summer session; therefore, anyone who has paid his or her dues after the beginning of that first session are paid for the 91-92 academic year and should **not** fill out the dues form which they will receive from the college DCE office.

- The cost-savings agreement which was negotiated last year to encourage early retirements, leaves of absence, or sabbaticals has been extended for another year beginning this September. Employees should receive information from the administration concerning the details of this agreement if the college will be participating. Similar to last year, there will be deadlines for the exercising of some of these options.

- At the NEA Representative Assembly in Miami this past July, the delegates voted to spend over \$200,000 in seed money for the creation of a Higher Education Research Center. The NEA will begin developing what is hope will become the center for statistical information in higher education. ■

State and Community College Reform Eminent

The merging of the six universities into one system under the University of Massachusetts was finalized in June, and the state and community college reform debate will begin this Fall.

A 19-member Commission on the Future of the State College and Community College Systems has been formed and was sworn in by the Governor on August 8, 1991. The two unit members representing faculty are David Grayer, Esquire from Bunker Hill Community College and Haddie Mooreland from Fitchburg State Col-

lege. The charge to the Commission covers four areas: mission, governance, programs, and finance. It has set an ambitious agenda; approximately two meetings per month beginning in September with a report to be framed by mid-November. The final recommendation is due to the Governor, Higher Education Coordinating Council, and legislature on January 1, 1992. Because of the narrow time frame the Commission has set for itself, there has been much speculation as to whether the report is already written, or will this

Commission actually come up with an original proposal of reform. Once the Commission completes its report, then similar to the higher education reform bill presented by the governor last spring, the Education Committee will have public hearings and will draft proposed legislation. Throughout this process, the state and community college unions will be monitoring the progress of the Commission and the drafting of the proposed legislation, and we will keep all unit members informed. ■

MCCC Vacancies

- With the resignation of MCCC Vice President Michael McSweeney on August 12, 1991, to take an Assistant Dean's job at Bunker Hill Community College, a vacancy now exists on the MTA Board of Directors for the community college representative (MCCC bylaws do not provide for filling of vice president's position). According to the bylaws of the MTA, a notice will be mailed to all MCCC unit members soliciting nominations to fill out the remainder of his term. Once nominations have been received, the unit members who were delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting in May will vote. Since Michael was just elected this past May, the vacancy goes to June, 1994. In addition to attending approximately six weekend MTA meetings per year, the Board representative is also required to attend the monthly MCCC Board of Directors meeting.

- Other vacancies within the MCCC are: Nominations and Elections Committee (1); Finance Committee (1); Bylaws and Rules (5); and Affiliate Evaluation (4). If anyone is interested in filling any of these vacancies, a letter must be sent to MCCC President James Rice, Quinsigamond Community College, 670 West Boylston Street, Worcester, MA 01606. **Deadline is September 19, 1991.** ■

Higher Education Coordinating Council Named

With the passage of the partial higher education reform bill in June, the regents were replaced with a successor group called the **Higher Education Coordinating Council**. This new council will consist of 10 members, including one student, appointed by the governor plus the Education Secretary Piedad Robertson who will serve as a voting chair. This council will have the same duties and powers of the regents unless otherwise outlined within the law. Since the reform bill separated the university system from the state and community colleges, the council will be the employer of the state and community college employees while one board of trustees will be the employer covering the six university campuses. Except for a few areas such as program approval and fiscal budget requests, the operations of the university system will reside with its trustee board. Budget allocations will differ in that the university system will receive its appropriation directly in one sum. Funds appropriated for the state and community colleges shall be disbursed by the council. This council will be examining many areas of public higher education, and it will be necessary to carefully monitor its proceedings which will hopefully have a cooperative not a singular agenda.

The only concern which has been

raised to date about the council is that all appointees come from within the 495 belt except for Mary Lou Anderson, former regent, and a dean at Assumption College in Worcester. There is no representation beyond Worcester. Maybe the Council will at least get a student from the West. ■

TEAM Proposes Two Petition Drives

This Fall TEAM will be collecting signatures for two ballot questions, one which will mandate a constitutional change. During a two-month period, middle of September to middle of November, petitions which will (1) mandate that corporations report the amount of tax they pay (presently, law does not permit reporting), and (2) a petition which will appear on the 1994 ballot which would allow citizens to vote on a graduated income tax. Since the new law has made the collection of signatures much easier, petitions will be distributed on your campus and quite possibly mailed to your homes. More information. ■

Can You Believe . . .

• During the four-day final exam period in the Fall, 1990 semester, the Dean of Academic Affairs David Feeney personally walked the campus and noted empty classrooms where finals were scheduled. He then sent a letter to faculty who he believed had not given a final exam. He arbitrarily quoted a section of a 1975 policy handbook mandating that final exams be given and handed in to the administration. This policy not only was superseded by a systemwide collective bargaining agreement but violated all academic freedom standards. He told the faculty to discuss the situation with his or her divisional chair. The chapter at **Bristol Community College** filed a grievance and, as usual, lost at Step I. During the Step II hearing on June 24, 1991 Dean Feeney and Director of Personnel Jack Wiburg represented management. While MCCC Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald was outlining faculty rights under the academic freedom article, Mr. Wiburg suddenly interrupted, and apparently referring to the rights of all faculty in the community college system, opined, "When the inmates start running the asylum, then we will all be in trouble." So much for collegiality.

The Step II decision is now overdue and the case has been certified for arbitration.

• Prior to her leaving to become Education Secretary, Piedad Robertson

oversaw personnel actions at the last meeting of her Board of Trustees at **Bunker Hill Community College** on August 12, 1991. In light of five nonreappointments this past year, the Trustees approved salary increases, job reassignments, or new positions for 13 employees. Total cost of these swaps and switches came to \$60,306.86. This total was exclusive of the salary increase the acting president Kathleen Assar will receive or the fringe benefits which will go with the president's assistant as she goes out on loan to the new Secretary. Some highlights from that final meeting:

- The Trustees approved a 50 percent increase in the emergency fee from \$50 to \$75 for 1 to 6 credits and from \$100 to \$150 for 7 credits and above. In relationship to full-time tuition, the increase is 14 percent.
- The college nonreappointed five unit members this year.
- The Trustees approved new jobs even though some of these postings were never seen by the chapter leadership.
- The Trustees voted to assist the new Secretariat (Robertson) by allowing her assistant to be temporarily assigned to Robertson for six months. Bunker Hill will pay the salary of \$22,516 (fringe benefits not calculated into the

cost). This proposal was developed and recommended by Vice President of Human Resources Mon O'Shea.

- Two positions which had closing dates of August 14, 1991, were filled and approved by the Trustees on August 12, 1991.
- New jobs were created but were called "reassignments".
- Administrative salary increases ranged from \$1,200 to \$9,120 with an average salary increase of \$3,779.

• Administrators are being hired on commission plus a weekly draw. Two of the seven new administrative positions which have been posted at **Mass. Bay Community College** incorporate a new type of administrator. The Director for Business and Industry will receive a draw of \$300 weekly and a commission on programs and contracts obtained beyond actual cost of program operation. The second position of Director for Continuing Education and Community Service will also draw \$300 weekly with a commission on all short-term and community service activities and programs (after costs) that are designed and scheduled/staffed by the individual. ■



MCCC Newsletter

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