



Help us build a strong Adjunct Faculty Organization and a better College!

Adjunct Faculty Organization News

<p>HFCC-AFO AFT Local 337 AFT, AFL-CIO</p>
<p>February, 2010 Volume 3, No. 3</p>

Membership Meeting Agenda Includes Budget Review, Second Contract Bargaining Strategy

Winter General Membership Meeting
 Friday, April 16 @ 3:30 p.m.
 in the Ghafari Room
 T-123 of the Technology Building
 (Directly behind the College Bookstore)

Agenda

- Status of AFT charter application
- Process and timing for awarding the first "Joe Sorokac Memorial Scholarship"
- First year financial report
 - Audit plans
- Second year budget recommendations
 - Operating expenses
 - Dues and agency fees
 - Charitable contributions
 - Motions and vote to approve or amend budget as recommended
- Timing and plans for negotiating second contract
 - Process for establishing bargaining priorities
- Fall 2010 Officer Elections: Vice-president and Treasurer
 - Open floor for nominations

The general membership meeting is the legislative body of the AFO. Make your voice heard by attending this important meeting!

Light snack provided. Children welcome!

Even though the ink is barely dry on the first contract between the Adjunct Faculty Organization and the College, the time to begin negotiations on a second contract is rapidly approaching. Bargaining committee chair Tom Anderson has already begun to draft proposals for the second round of talks. He plans on discussing those proposals and the timetable and strategy for bargaining at the Winter 2010 general membership meeting which is scheduled for Friday, April 16 at 3:30 (see agenda for details).

"We're going to give the entire membership a chance to determine our bargaining priorities by participating in an on-line survey and we will share the results of that survey and vote on our bargaining priorities at our general membership meeting next fall. I'm proud of what we accomplished with our first contract, but we need to build on it. We know the next round of negotiations will be difficult. We anticipate that the College will point to the continued economic uncertainties it faces when we present our economic proposals, but the administration needs to recognize that we continue to be the lowest paid community college teachers in the state and that we would still be a bargain even if they doubled our pay," Anderson said.

Other significant issues on the agenda for the winter membership meeting include a first fiscal year financial report and the rec-

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Fall Organizing Campaign Concludes Successfully and Winter Campaign Gets Underway

The AFO Executive Board congratulated Staff Organizer (and AFO Recording Secretary) Bill Norris during its regular December meeting. The congratulations came when Bill reported the results of the Fall, 2009 AFO organizing campaign—over 600 adjuncts, nearly 85% of those eligible, had chosen membership. AFO President Mary Beck said, “This achievement was no accident. Bill spends a lot of time writing letters and visiting classrooms to explain the benefits of membership both to the individual and to our organization. He is frequently called on to explain our contract to members and administrators. He helps members with issues of various sorts, and organizes our database. He even finds time to occasionally clean and organize the office. The AFO is a stronger organization and more capable of achieving its goal of improving the working conditions of adjuncts because of his hard work.”

Bill accepted the congratulations and acknowledged that he had worked hard, but added “I enjoy what I’m doing and am grateful for the opportunity to serve the AFO. We are fortunate that so many adjuncts rec-

ognize the fact that by becoming members they make the AFO stronger. A lot of the credit for our organizing success during the fall can be attributed to the fact that we were able to negotiate a good first contract. We were able to do that because Mary put together a solid bargaining committee led by Tom Anderson and supported by a committed membership.”

Although Bill was able to bask in the glow of the compliments he received from his fellow Executive Board members over the semester break, he won’t get much of a chance to rest on his accolades: over 75 newly hired adjuncts have joined the bargaining unit this semester and Bill will also be kept busy mobilizing the membership in support of the AFO’s upcoming second contract campaign.

Many of the new hires have chosen membership while others have either opted for agency fees or have not completed forms. Bill plans on talking to as many of them as possible in the coming weeks to make sure they understand the benefits of membership. He noted that “The difference between dues and fees is minor—only a \$1.50 on every \$1,000 of earnings. That \$1.50 gives you the right to partici-

pate in the democratic decision making process of the AFO and even more importantly makes us a stronger organization that can more effectively bargain a second contract that builds on what we’ve accomplished so far.”

Members Urged to Attend Winter Meeting

(Continued from page one)

ommendation and approval of a second fiscal year budget. The AFO Executive Board submitted an application for an American Federation of Teachers charter in November of last year along with an application for a four-year reduction in the per capita payments the AFO pays to the AFT that is often granted to locals with a significant number of “contingent” employees. Treasurer Bill Breger says that he expects both the charter application and the dues reduction to be granted by the AFT’s Executive Council when it meets in February and “assuming the hardship reduction in per capita payments is approved, we should have a modest surplus at the end of the fiscal year” (June 30). Breger and Financial Records Secretary Sherry Morgan are preparing a second fiscal year budget which will be reviewed by the Finance Committee before being submitted to the general membership during the April 16 general membership meeting.

Other agenda items include a report from the governing board of The HFCC-AFO Founders’ Scholarship Fund (see Dottie Pelton’s article on the back page) and nominations for the offices of Vice-president and Treasurer. The terms of incumbents Glenn O’Kray (Vice-president) and Bill Breger (Treasurer) are set to expire on November 30 of this year.

AFO President Mary Beck said, “This is an important meeting and we hope as many members as possible make the extra effort needed to attend the meeting. I know a lot of people are working or have other obligations on Friday afternoons, but given the realities of our part-time teaching schedules, there is no ideal time for a meeting. The more who do attend, the stronger we are.”

Benefits Advisory Committee Takes Shape

Paragraph G of Article XVIII of the contract between the Adjunct Faculty Organization and the College specifies that “A joint committee of the College and the Union will be established to explore benefit options available for purchase by Employees. The committee findings are not binding, but advisory to the College and the Union.”

In keeping with that contractual provision AFO chief negotiator Tom Anderson has asked College administrators to name their representatives to the joint committee and to agree to a meeting schedule. In addition, more than a half dozen AFO members responded to an invitation to participate in an ad hoc Benefits Advisory Committee authorized by the AFO Executive Board. Members of the Benefits Advisory Committee will have an opportunity to provide input to the joint committee and some will directly participate in the talks with the College. Tom said that “many of our members, including all of those who have stepped forward so far have expertise that should prove invaluable as we try to find a solution to our benefits issues. We also hope to capitalize on the experience of a similar committee that has been working at Wayne State University. Our ultimate goal is to give our members an opportunity to purchase health insurance at group rates with their own pre-tax dollars.”

The AFO Benefits Advisory Committee is an open committee. Any interested member who missed the initial invitation is urged to contact AFO Staff Organizer Bill Norris by calling the AFO office (313.845.9707) or emailing AFO@hfcc.edu.

Contract Enforcement Is the AFO's Number One Goal



AFO Chief Grievance Officer Tom Anderson

Even though we are beginning to work on our strategy for the second round of bargaining with the College,

we haven't lost site of our number one short term goal: enforcing our existing contract. The most problematic issue we are confronting involves the seniority lists and class assignment process. We are pleased that the College has thus far acted in good faith and we recognize the huge challenge Beth Davis's human resources department faces in building and correcting the lists, but we are nonetheless less than satisfied with the progress made to date.

While we will continue to put pressure on the College to get the lists corrected and updated, it is equally important to remember that you have some responsibilities as well. All of us, from those who have been at the College for thirty-something years to those hired this semester, must pay attention to our divisional class assignment process. Associate Deans are free to develop a specific process that meets their needs so long as it conforms to the general guidelines laid out in the contract. If an adjunct fails to get an assignment because she ignored the process established by her division, we have no grounds to file a grievance on her behalf.

In addition to learning and following your division's class assignment process, you are also partly responsible for ensuring that your service is accurately credited on your departmental seniority list (or lists, if you qualify for more than one). If you worked as an adjunct prior to the fall, 2009 semester, your name *should* appear on a seniority list. If you are unsure of how service points are calculated, consult Article XIII of our contract. You might also refer to the news bulletin we published in November, "Seniority and Class Assignment." Both are available on our web-

site—www.hfcc-af0.org. Any problems should be reported to your Associate Dean with copies to Beth Davis in Human Resources and the AFO.

Those of you who have not achieved senior adjunct status and/or step four on the salary schedule should also take responsibility for making sure you're credited with the proper number of semesters towards senior status and the proper number of credit hours toward the next step.

I've said this before: this is a first contract and we need to be patient

with everyone—College administrators, Associate Deans, and individual adjuncts—as we work our way through the glitches. While we do need to be patient, we also need to get this right while we can.

If you have a question or a problem, reach out to me, any steward (steward hours are posted on our website) or our staff organizer, Bill Norris. If you have the time and interest, we need more members to volunteer as stewards. Step up and help us build a strong AFO and a better College!

Take Advantage of Your Professional Development Fund

Article XVII of the contract between the AFO and the College requires the College to establish a fund each year for professional development. The fund will equal a fraction (.0028) of the annual adjunct budget and once it is exhausted, no further claims will be processed. While funds last, eligible employees (everyone covered by our contract) can claim up to \$100 for professional development activities. Employees taking courses through the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation may claim \$25 for each hour of instruction or up to \$100 to partially cover the cost of professional conferences, books, or periodicals. The "Preparing to Teach Online" course is funded separately and the professional development payment is increased to \$300 for those who successfully complete the course. Professional development claim forms must be signed by your Associate Dean and are readily available on the AFO website, www.hfcc-af0.org.

HFCC Adjuncts Invited to Participate in On-Line Survey

Your voice as a part-time instructor is needed as part of a study Wayne State University English instructor and Union of Part-Time Faculty Member Raye Robertson is conducting. Robertson plans on presenting the findings of her [Adjuncts in Academia-2010](#) survey at a conference next month in a paper titled "Add-on Voice: Adjuncts in Academia." Participating in the survey will take fewer than ten minutes of your time. Links to the survey can be found on the front page of the AFO's website (www.hfcc-af0.org) or from Raye's blog: www.theadjunctvoice.blogspot.org. Please visit our home page or Raye's blog today to have your say: together we can have more of a voice in our academic lives and careers!

AFO Executive Board Approves Open Meeting Policy

The AFO Executive Board approved a motion at its December meeting to adapt an open meeting policy. President Mary Beck said, "The AFO is a democratic institution and we believe democratic institutions need to operate in a transparent manner. Board meetings aren't always exciting—most of our business is fairly routine, but if any member or associate member in good standing is interested in sitting in—or wants to address the Board—he or she is welcome to come to a meeting. All of us on the Executive Board want to encourage member involvement and we hope this new policy will do just that." The AFO Executive Board normally meets on the second Friday of the month at 2:00 p.m. in the Local 1650 conference room (in suite A-201 of the Learning Technology Building) during the fall and winter semesters. The spring-summer meeting schedule may vary. Notice of upcoming Executive Board meetings will be posted on the AFO website, www.hfcc-af0.org.

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Help us build a strong Adjunct Faculty Organization and a better College!



Bill Norris
AFO Staff Organizer

AFO Office Hours

Mondays: 9:00—10:00
1:00—7:00
Tuesdays: 12:00—7:00
Wednesdays: 9:00—10:00
1:00—4:00
Thursday: 9:00—12:00
Friday: 9:00—10:00
1:00—5:00

If you need assistance and the office is closed, call 248.977.8897

Board Plans to Award First “Joseph A. Sorokac, Jr. Memorial Scholarship” in June

My family and I are very grateful to the Adjunct Faculty Organization for establishing the Joseph A. Sorokac, Jr. Memorial Scholarship in memory of my late husband. Joe was passionate about his teaching and he loved his students. He was a great believer in the value of education and found intrinsic rewards in teaching psychology at Henry Ford Community College for over 30 years. He would be the first to tell you that he wasn't teaching because the College was treating him to a “big piece of the pie;” rather, it was for the love of teaching and the joy of knowing that he was helping students achieve their career and life goals.



Scholarship Fund Board members: Clockwise—Chair Dottie Pelton (seated on left), Mary Beck, Sherry Morgan, Michael Thomas, and Colin Houston

I especially value the AFO membership, because so many have been very generous with their time and resources. I am fortunate indeed to have such dedicated and caring colleagues serving on the Board of Directors of the HFCC-AFO Founders' Scholarship Fund with me. We have successfully established the Scholarship Fund as a 5013-C non-profit corporation. This was accomplished before the end of December because of the diligence of the Scholarship Fund Board of Directors—Mary Beck, Colin Houston, Sherry Morgan and Michael Thomas and the stellar help from Bill Breger, Bill Norris and Glenn O'Kray. To date, more than two thousand dollars in tax deductible contributions have been received from AFO members and friends.

Currently we are busy working on establishing the criteria and procedures for awarding the first Joseph A. Sorokac, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. We hope to finalize the process and criteria in time to award the first scholarship to a deserving AFO member, child or grandchild in June of this year. Joe was a great supporter of the AFO and worked tirelessly to help it get recognized as the legal bargaining agent for HFCC adjuncts. I am sure he is smiling down on us now as we honor his memory with this scholarship in his name.

Your tax deductible contribution can make a difference in the life of a fellow adjunct. Please consider making a donation in support of this effort. Checks should be made payable to “The HFCC-AFO Founders' Scholarship Fund” and sent to the:

**Joseph A. Sorokac Memorial Scholarship
HFCC-Adjunct Faculty Organization Office
A-024 Learning Technology Building
5101 Evergreen Road
Dearborn, MI 48128**

Thank you everyone!

Dorothy “Dottie” Pelton, Chair

The HFCC-AFO Founders' Scholarship Fund Board of Directors