



MSP Chronicle

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Massachusetts Society of Professors
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UMASS/Amherst 01002

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CALL TO ACTION!

- ✦ Lobby Day is Wed Oct 22! The bus to Boston is free but you must sign up - call MSP X52206 or email msp@external.umass.edu
- ✦ 120 legislators have signed letters to Thomas Finneran supporting legislation to fund the contract.
- ✦ Did you know faculty are entitled to a 15% raise (9% across-the-board & 6% merit)?
- ✦ Funding the contracts would add \$25 million to the UMass/Amherst base budget

ROBERT REICH ON NOVEMBER 12TH

Former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich speaks on "UMass and the Future of Public Higher Education" on November 12 at 5pm in Mahar Auditorium. The event kicks off a public forum series, sponsored by the MSP, on specific challenges for public education in the next decade. MTA members and friends are invited to continue the conversation with Reich at a reception that evening from 7-9 in the Lord Jeffrey Inn Ballroom in Amherst. For more information, call 413-545-2206.

Contact Laetitia Lafollete 549-1517 or Naka Ishii 265-8336 for more information on this.

MSP CALENDAR

Wednesday, Oct. 22:

Lobbying Day on Beacon Hill
Buses leave Haigis Mall at 8:00 a.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 22:

Department Meeting with
Communication Disorders

Thursday, Oct. 23:

Department Meeting with
Economics

Monday, Oct. 27:

PMYR Workshop/brown bag
Noon, Hampshire House
Conference Room

Tuesday, Oct. 28:

PMYR Workshop/brown bag
Noon, Hampshire House
Conference Room

Wednesday, Oct. 29:

Department Meeting with SOM

Thursday, Oct. 30:

Faculty Senate Meeting
3:30 p.m., Herter Hall

Thursday, Oct. 30:

All Union Meeting
Noon, Student Union Ballroom

Wednesday, Nov. 5:

MSP Executive Board
8:30 a.m., CC 904-08

Wednesday, Nov. 5:

MSP General Assembly
4 p.m., CC 174-76

Thursday, Nov. 13:

Faculty Senate Meeting
3:30 p.m., Herter Hall

Wednesday, Nov. 19:

MSP Executive Board
8:30 a.m., CC 904-08

THE CONTRACTS ON A BUS TO BOSTON

For this fall, our “fund the contracts” approach is an inside-the-legislature strategy. Our statewide union, the MTA, has taken the lead and done a terrific job. The problem is how to get Speaker Finneran, the absolute power of the House, to go along. We’ve gotten 120 legislators (out of 160), well over two-thirds of them, to sign a letter to Finneran asking the contracts be brought up for a vote.

But legislators who signed need to see that WE care, not just that our union has good lobbyists. They need to be convinced that people on campus – not only faculty, but also students and their parents – give a damn. They need to be pushed to push Finneran.

Please: be on the bus to Boston, Wednesday October 22, leaving Haigis Mall at 8:00 a.m. and returning by 5:00 p.m. Please talk about the issue with your students and with your colleagues. If people can’t be on the bus we’ll have other ways to weigh in, by email or postcard or phone, but showing up in-person is BY FAR the most effective.

Here are reasons it matters:

- Funding the contracts adds \$25 million to the Amherst campus base budget.
- The legislature needs to honor the contracts. Bargained in good faith and agreed upon by all parties, contracts are debts to be paid, not discretionary spending. (Note: Legislators are not refusing to pay Fleet Bank or the bondholders.)
- To recruit and retain top-quality faculty we need to pay competitive salaries.
- It’s not just our contracts; it’s all workers on campus. The average clerical worker earns \$29,971 and many custodians and food service workers earn much less. Many of them need the raises to make ends meet. Our presence helps all the higher ed unions get their due.

Everyone has been discouraged; the feeling is “been there, done that, it seems nothing works.” But the MTA has moved mountains and we have a real chance to win, better than at any time in the past two years. If we could mobilize an on-campus and in-the-community effort that matched the lobbyists’ effort, I think we’d win.

And winning now through a “be nice and lobby” strategy is LOTS better than the alternatives: (a) never get the contracts funded and watch the university slide downwards or (b) this spring get disruptive and engage in various militant actions. If you don’t like those alternatives, BE ON THE BUS TO BOSTON – and bring your students with you.

Dan Clawson, sociology and MSP Vice-President,
clawson@sadri.umass.edu

SOME GOOD NEWS...SPREAD IT AROUND!

Our contracts have not yet been funded. The university has been hit with three years of cuts. It sometimes feels like it isn't much support for what we do.

Fortunately, the MTA, our parent union, recently conducted a poll of 500 Massachusetts citizens about their views on public higher education. The results might be surprising to you. They also provide excellent support when you meet with legislators or contact them by phone.

The basic message – expressed by nearly two-thirds of those polled – is that the state must honor the contracts with faculty and staff, that the raises we negotiated are fair, and that the high quality of our public universities is directly tied to good salaries for those who make our university run.

Sixty percent of respondents had a very favorable view of Massachusetts public higher education in general. Nearly two-thirds believed faculty at Massachusetts universities were good or excellent.

Finally, a full half of the respondents had a direct connection to the Massachusetts university – either they attended one, had a relative attend one, or live in a

household with someone attending one. This is striking: half of Massachusetts citizens have a real connection to – and feel an investment in — one of our campuses.

So, Massachusetts citizens support our work and believe in the sanctity of collective bargaining. Now we need to convince our legislators and our governor.

We need 100 faculty to come to Boston to lobby for our contracts on October 22. If you are absolutely unable to get there that day, here are three other things you can do:

1. Distribute postcards calling on the legislature to fund the contracts to students and colleagues, neighbors and friends. Contact Lori Reardon in the MSP office (misp@external.umass.edu; 545-2206) and she will have a stack brought over to you.
2. Participate in Virtual Lobby Day next Wednesday, October 22. Add to your colleagues' efforts in Boston by sending a letter to your legislators at www.massteacher.org

Max Page, art history, mpage@art.umass.edu

SEND A STRONG MESSAGE TO THE STATEHOUSE

By now, you should have received in your home mailbox three postcards from MTA to sign and send regarding the funding of the contracts in this legislative session: one for your Senator, one for your Representative, and (perhaps most importantly) one for Finneran. Please sign and send them in as soon as possible, adding your own message if you wish.

MSP also has 10,000 generic postcards that we need faculty to help distribute to students, family and friends. This is only one aspect of the current contract campaign, and perhaps the easiest way to get involved. Similar cards designed specifically for K-12 teachers have been sent to every MTA member in the state, and teachers and staff are fully supporting us in this struggle. Together, we can send a very strong message to the Statehouse.

You may pick up postcards at the MSP office in 121 Hampshire, or we can send them to you directly at your request.

The following is also a direct link to the Email Alert on the Contract Campaign:

http://capwiz.com/nea/ma/mail/oneclick_compose/?alertid=3662511

This is a new, easy, one-step system. The visitor will be asked to add her/his name and address to a message in support of the Contract Action Campaign. The visitor's address and zip code will be used to direct the message to her/his state legislators. Visitors can also circumvent the preformatted message and compose an email of their own.

This is also a quick and easy way for the public, students, and other supporters who will not be receiving the postcards to participate in the campaign.

Email your legislators today! The state must honor its signed contracts.

WHY DON'T LIBRARIANS GET TO ENROLL IN TIAA-CREF?

The inclusion of librarians in the TIAA CREF option actually has to be done through a change in state law. [All of this relates to retirement, which is not a topic the union can bargain about, but is determined through state legislation.] That said, the MTA has a bill pending to amend the law to add librarians and other education professionals that we represent. We have lobbied this hard, and the colleges and University have lobbied for it too. We will not take this one off our radar screen, because it is terribly unfair that you are not included.

Beth Boyer
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SICK LEAVE BANK

October is the open enrollment period for the MSP/Sick Leave Bank. Sign up now if you aren't yet a member—it's like free short-term disability insurance. Call us for info or forms at 5-2206.

New Faculty at UMass/Amherst – WELCOME!

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Michael Sugerman | Anthropology |
| Amanda Seaman | Asian Lang. & Lit. |
| Todd Tripp | Astronomy |
| Karsten Theis | Biochem. & Molec. Biology |
| Tobias Baskin | Biology |
| Jeffrey Davis | Chemical Engineering |
| Sankaran Thayumanavan | Chemistry |
| Paula Chakravartty | Communication |
| Mark Corner | Computer Science |
| Peter Skott | Economics |
| Shederick McClendon | Educ. Policy, Research & Admin |
| Sabina Murray | English |
| Suzane Daly | English |
| Bing Liang | Finance & Operations Mgmt. |
| Sheila Bair | Finance & Operations Mgmt. |
| Laura Lovett | History |
| Thomas Hilbink | Legal Studies |
| Bernie Jones | Legal Studies |
| Christopher Potts | Linguistics |
| Thomas Ernst | Linguistics |
| Erin Conlon | Mathematics & Statistics |
| Jeffrey Blanchard | Microbiology |
| Wilmore Webley | Microbiology |
| James Holden | Microbiology |
| Brenda McComb | Natural Resources Conservation |
| Karen Nolan | Nursing |
| Mary Wilde | Nursing |
| Hilary Kornblith | Philosophy |
| Kyle Cave | Psychology |
| Gianpaolo Baiocchi | Sociology |
| Cuong Le | Sociology |
| Jill McCorkel | Sociology |
| Heinrich Sonntag | Sociology |
| Eduardo Negueruela | Spanish & Portuguese |
| Dominique Alfandari | Vet & Animal Sciences |
| Miliann Kang | Women's Studies |
| Dayo Gore | Women's Studies |