

## Recruiting for Diversity

About 35 MSP members participated in a lively discussion October 19 about attracting and recruiting women in underrepresented fields and faculty of color. The workshop took place at a time when we are looking forward to the campus hiring as many as 500 new faculty members in the next 5 years. Clearly, this is a very important time for the future of diversity among the faculty.

**Peg Riley** from Biology spoke in detail about how schools need to acknowledge problems, monitor changes, and reward departments for good diversity hiring. She highlighted her points with anecdotes and statistics from her 15-year experience at Yale before coming here.

**Ron Welburn** from English acknowledged that for Native Americans, demographics were hard to overcome, but discussed applicable strategies -- such as showcasing prospective candidates even if you don't have recruiting authority.

**Alex Deschamps** from Women's Studies discussed what constitutes welcoming language, how to get the most out of networking, the importance of the social climate, and how departments should set up their own databases.

**John Bracey** from Afro-American Studies talked about the importance of traditionally black colleges, understanding that the market favors minority candidates, the relationship between increasing numbers of minority students and faculty, and how to be appropriately flexible about standards.

A wide-ranging question and answer period covered such topics as:

- The conference of the Compact for Diversity
- Fighting for necessary funding for diversity hiring
- Making the area attractive to faculty of color
- The importance of expanding child care on campus
- How to read resumes to tell who is a minority
- Resolving and funding "2 body problems", e.g. spousal/partner hiring

MSP is developing a library of resources to help hiring committees. Please contact MSP if you have something to contribute or would like to know what we have available. The MSP Diversity Task Force is planning further activities. Please contact **Paula Chakravarty** ([pchakrav@comm.umass.edu](mailto:pchakrav@comm.umass.edu)) if you would like to work with the Task Force.

## Around Campus

### **Visa Fee**

This fall the campus administration announced it would be assessing a fee of up to \$2,000 for international faculty who needed their visas renewed. The MSP argued that this is a unilateral change in members' working conditions and that the University had to bargain with the union about this. As a result, the administration changed its position and will have departments rather than individuals pay this fee.

### **Mutiny on the Bounty?**

This year, the Deputy Provost offered departments a \$200 "bounty" for each student above the enrollment limit accepted into classes. A lot of MSP members were very uncomfortable with this for a range of reasons – it could dilute the undergraduate educational experience; it could erode the workload provision of our contract; it could undercut hiring initiatives. We raised this at one of our regular meetings with the Chancellor and were assured this was a stopgap measure and will not become a regular feature of campus life.

### **Expand Access to Higher Education**

The MSP Board voted to support S764/H1230, legislation that would expand access to public higher education. Currently, immigrants who are not yet permanent residents have to pay out-of-state tuition rates even if they have attended and graduated from Massachusetts high schools. This legislation would allow them to pay the same in-state tuition rates as other Massachusetts high school graduates.

### **Campus Professionals Joining MTA**

Campus professional staff voted 561 to 28 to join MTA. Having been represented by SEIU since 1989, members of this unit (and numerous others) have been dissatisfied with their representation since being placed in the newly created Local 888 in 2003. This year, SEIU acknowledged that higher education was not one of its areas of strength, and that it would make sense for members to have the choice of affiliating with the Massachusetts Teachers Association. MSP is happy to welcome 1,100 new campus employees into the MTA and looks forward to increased collaboration among the campus unions.

### **Health and Safety**

The MSP periodically gets inquiries or complaints about unhealthy or unsafe conditions faced by our members. Ultimately, we would like to start a Health and Safety Committee that could develop expertise, investigate problems, refer members appropriately, and work with other campus unions and the Office of Environmental Health & Safety.

The MTA has a statewide health and safety committee that works on legislative issues and provides support to locals like ours. That committee will be meeting on our campus December 8 at 4 PM. Would you be interested in attending this meeting and perhaps helping MSP move its own health and safety work forward? Please contact MSP at [misp@external.umass.edu](mailto:misp@external.umass.edu) or 545-2206 or if you might be interested.

## 2005-2006 DUES

Dues for this year are \$698 for those working more than half-time, or \$69.80 per month (September through June) for those on payroll deduction. Invoices for those not on payroll deduction have been sent out, and those payments are due no later than December 1<sup>st</sup>. If you would prefer to have your dues deducted from your paycheck in equal installments rather than pay in one lump sum, please contact Ferd Wulkan at the MSP office ([misp@external.umass.edu](mailto:misp@external.umass.edu) or 577-4121) and he will be happy to provide you with the necessary form.

## What Are the Rules? The Role of Personnel Committees

MSP presented a workshop for members of Personnel Committees for the first time this fall. It was made clear that the Union's primary responsibility is to support and advocate for our members, so it will not advise PC's about how to take negative actions. Still, MSP thought it could be helpful to provide a forum where people could share information and discuss issues – outside the context of a specific case. What follows are some of the specific issues and questions that were discussed.

**Candidates must be given copies of all recommendations** as they are forwarded to the next level.

**Letters from outside reviewers:** there must be at least two from people selected by the candidate and two from people selected by the department; beyond that, there is a wide range of practices.

**Consult with the Red Book** (Trustee document T76-081, the Academic Personnel Policy manual) when in doubt. It is at <http://www.umass.edu/msp/contracts.htm>

**Contract faculty** must be considered for merit increases. Also, if a contract faculty member has been on two 1-year appointments, the next appointment must be for at least two years.

**Different departments weigh teaching, research, and service differently for merit evaluations.** Quite a few represented at the workshop evaluate all 3 equally; many emphasize research more.

**The merit process for people on professional or parental leave varies.** One department, for example, averages the last 2 teaching evaluations when someone is doing research on a sabbatical.

**PMYR:** the new forms will force people to say whether they are asking for money or not. Also, people being promoted to full professor will now be eligible for PMYR funds.

**Letters from students:** While the letters are confidential, most, but not all, departments represented at the workshop tell the candidates the names of students who wrote letters. Some departments don't do this.

A packet of information was made available at the workshop. It outlines what the MSP contract mandates around Tenure and Promotion, Merit and AFRs, Anomaly Increases, Non-Tenure Track Faculty, and Periodic Multi-Year Review. Please contact MSP at [msp@external.umass.edu](mailto:msp@external.umass.edu) or 545-2206 if you would like a copy.



**On September 30, about 80 MSP members discussed the union's priorities for the year: Family Issues, Long-Term Politics, Diversity, Consolidating Faculty/Librarian Gains, and Building MSP's Capacity.**

### **Retro Payment Coming December 2!**

In mid-October, Governor Romney vetoed our retroactive pay increases for the period July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2003. Very soon after however, the legislature voted unanimously to override his veto. As a result, all individuals in the MSP unit during FY03 will receive their retroactive pay in the December 2<sup>nd</sup> paychecks. Those who retired or were terminated for any reason during this time period will receive a payment prorated to the actual time they were employed.

This is pay that has long been owed to us and which we have fought hard to win. Please take a moment to thank your State Representative and Senator for so quickly overriding Governor Romney's veto. It is also important to note that this could not have been achieved without MTA's organizational clout -- over 90,000 members across the state -- and the commitment and expertise of the MTA leadership and staff, particularly the governmental relations staff. Thanks to everyone who participated in the fight to get this money. We will of course be continuing to fight for the remaining retro piece we are owed (covering the time period July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002).

### **Nominations and Elections Commission**

MSP's Nominations and Elections Commission was elected at the September 30 general membership meeting. It will solicit nominations for MSP officers and board members in preparation for annual elections in the spring, and will seek MSP representatives to attend the Massachusetts Teachers Association Annual Meeting of Delegates May 5-6 in Boston. Please contact **Dan Clawson** (Sociology), **Kourosh Danai** (Mech. & Ind. Engr.), **Sara Lennox** (Languages, Literatures & Cultures), **Max Page** (Art History), or **Erica Scharrer** (Communication) if you are a member in good standing and are interested in running for an MSP Board seat or attending this year's MTA Annual Meeting.