



MSP Chronicle

May 2006

THREE YEARS OF MSP – AND THE FUTURE

by Dan Clawson, outgoing President, MSP

I've been president or co-president of MSP for the past three years; July 1, Max Page (of Art, Architecture, and History) begins his term as president, so I'm taking this chance to sum up and look forward. We've won some remarkable victories:

Financially:

- ✓ 15.96 percent pay raise in January 2004 - a long-delayed victory for what should have been ours in 2001. [All figures are averages for campus faculty and librarians.]
- ✓ \$1,625 per full-time member in Professional Development funds, in June 2004
- ✓ 7.98 percent of 2001 pay, paid in April 2005 as a lump sum for retroactive pay covering July to December 2003
- ✓ 10 percent of 2001 pay, paid in December 2005 as a second lump sum retro payment, covering July 2002 to June 2003
- ✓ Doubling the raises for promotion to associate professor (to \$8100) and full professor (to \$10,650)
- ✓ 6 percent salary increase (over 2004 pay), to be paid starting June 2006 – the raises for 2005 and 2006
- ✓ 4.75 percent of 2004 pay, to be paid in mid June 2006 - lump sum retro for 2005 and 2006
- ✓ Reduced health care costs: 15% of premiums for those hired before 2003 (down from 20%), 20% for those hired afterward (down from 25%), a savings of about \$600 a year for those on a family plan

Faculty improvements:

- ✓ The chancellor's, and maybe the legislature's, public commitment to a plan to add 250 tenure-track faculty, the result of an impressive MSP campaign.
- ✓ For full-time state-funded contract faculty, guaranteed contract lengths, protection from arbitrary replacement, and the ability to be promoted to Senior Lecturer, with a \$5000 pay increase.

How we did it:

With one exception (the promotion increments), every one of these victories was a result of an impressive level of mobilization. Literally hundreds of us took action to get the contracts funded, and almost as many were involved in the campaigns for payment of retroactive pay. The campaign for 250 more tenure-track faculty involved a hearing, a dozen people's testimony, a report with lots more people's testimony, members hand-delivering the report to almost every member of the legislature, tons of press coverage, 35 people filmed over 7 hours to produce an 8 minute DVD, and dozens more members going in to show that DVD to every Senator and many members of the House. When bargaining for contract faculty rights was stalled, 70 people marched on the chancellor during the week of July 4, the absolute dead of summer.

What we still need to do:

There are a number of specific items we have supposedly won that still need to be nailed down: the last retro payment, Professional Development funds for this contract, and (definitely the most difficult) making sure that the 250 plan becomes a reality (for librarians as well as faculty) instead of getting lost in the shuffle.

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WHERE ARE THE LIBRARIANS?



Ratio of full-time undergraduate students to librarians, 2004.

Institution	Full-time UG students	Librarians	Ratio (students/librarian)
University of Massachusetts, Amherst	19,629	55	357
University of California, Berkeley	29,379	222	132
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	36,879	186	198
Indiana University, Bloomington	33,105	164	202

Does this look like a problem? Now consider that the number of librarians at UMass Amherst has dropped by 30% since this data was compiled! Based on this, other significant data, and many anecdotes, it is clear we need more librarians on campus. MSP has begun working with our librarian members to prepare and present this argument in the most compelling manner. If you have a story you would like to share about how you or your students have been helped by librarians, or about other services you wish the library staff could provide, please contact **Emily Alling** at ealling@library.umass.edu

RAISES COMING (FINALLY)!

The negotiated salary increases for FY05 and FY06 will appear in your June 2nd paychecks. Each year's raise will include a 2% across-the-board increase plus your merit award (from a 1% pool). The April 2005 merit award covers work done during the 2002-03 academic year; the January 2006 merit award is for work done in 2003-04. The June 16 paycheck will include the retroactive portions of those pay increases.

The final salary increase of this current contract is due January 2007 and will include a 2% across-the-board increase and a 1% merit pool (awards from this pool will cover activities performed in 2004-2005).

However, there is still money owed to us from the 2001-04 contract. Retroactive payment for 7/01-6/02 has still not been authorized by the Legislature. This is what members of all the campus unions will be discussing with our local legislators when they come to campus Friday, May 12.

ADVANCING FROM OUR RETREAT

by Max Page

16 MSP members participated in a "Strategic Directions" retreat organized by the MTA the weekend of April 1. Through an intense weekend of reflection, discussion, and strategizing (that can hardly be summarized in a short article), participants arrived at interesting conclusions that are being recommended to MSP as a whole.

1. Our priorities should be reflected in a broad two part program for the coming year:

a) The improvement of our university through the internal process of a contract campaign. Pending our bargaining survey in the fall, this might include

- proposals to move the university forward in its research capacity and quality (250 Plan; salaries and professional development; child care as a recruiting tool; diversity recruiting) and
- proposals to make the university more equitable (contract faculty rights, salary anomalies; child care and parental leave).

b) The improvement of our university through the external efforts of statewide advocacy.

2. A new clarity about the centrality of member-to-member conversations as the core of our job for the next several months, and beyond, as a way of deepening relationships, being in touch with members' interests, and building the capacity to take action.

3. A solid commitment to our timeline: a determination to be ready to launch a contract campaign in September, begin bargaining in January 2007, push for a settlement in time to get the contract *funded* before the current one expires in June.

4. Some good ideas on structure which the officers and Board will be discussing in the next few months.

Participating in the retreat were:

Arlene Avakian
Mark Brenner
Steve Brewer
Dan Clawson
Leda Cooks
Alex Deschamps

Isabel Espinal
Jerry Levinsky
Stephanie Luce
Steve Olbrys
Max Page
Erica Scharrer

Jim Smethurst
Allen Tsang
Eve Weinbaum
Robert Zussman
Lori Reardon
Ferd Wulkan

TALES FROM BEACON HILL

Which of these things describes lobbying?

a) easy b) important c) fulfilling d) all of the above and more

Yup, you guessed it: the answer is "d". "*But lobbying can't be easy!*" you protest. It sure is. My car of four blazed into Boston in the morning, met with legislators during the middle of the day, and blew on out of there before rush hour. Everyone we talked to was smart, personable, receptive, and willing to listen. As for importance, our meetings drove home the fact that personal contact makes a difference. In fact, all the people we talked to told us so. Directly. If we want the legislature to do something, we need to ask them to do it in person. Period. And being able to ask for our retro pay and for funding of the Amherst 250 plan? Well, that's fulfilling, and I encourage all other members to give it a try. You'll be glad you did.

Jenny Adams, English

ACCOMMODATING UNIVERSITY FAMILIES

by Eve Weinbaum

What would you do if your elderly parent became ill and needed your help for substantial periods of time? What would you do if you had finished your 3-month parental leave but couldn't find any childcare available for infants? What would you do if your department wanted to hire a star researcher but she couldn't come to Amherst unless her partner could also get a job?

Nearly everyone at UMass is affected by family issues in one way or another. In our last round of contract negotiations, the MSP won a new Family Issues Committee that has the right to meet with the administration on a regular basis in order to raise issues, solve problems, and discuss our needs and concerns.

In preparation for meeting with administrators, a group of faculty has been meeting to map out priorities and a strategy. The issues we are addressing include:

- Partner hiring. Many universities have explicit policies in place so that when a new hire has a partner who is also looking for a job as a faculty or librarian, support and resources are available. The MSP is working on creating such a policy, which may also include the possibility of "job-sharing" for couples.
- Child care. UMass has an excellent childcare center, but it has a long waiting list and it has become prohibitively expensive. At \$14,000 a year for one toddler, it is unaffordable for junior faculty most likely to have young children. UMass has no infant care or emergency care.
- Elder care. We are looking at issues related to faculty and librarians taking time off to assist family members who become ill.
- The "family gap." Research shows that faculty with family responsibilities, especially women, are likely to earn less, have a harder time with tenure and promotion, and fall behind men in their field. We are looking at ways of addressing this at UMass, in order to make sure that faculty are never penalized for having families.

We are looking into some new issues as well, including family housing (as housing in the area becomes prohibitively expensive for junior faculty with children) and adoption assistance for faculty and librarians adopting children.

As UMass tries to position itself among the top tier of public universities, and as we expand the faculty by 250 in the next few years, we want to make sure that faculty and librarians have the support we need in order to do our work. Other universities that we count among our peer institutions are instituting family-friendly policies in order to recruit and retain the best faculty.

The University of California, for example, has added a second semester of teaching relief for women who have babies, and unprecedented part-time teaching options for tenured and tenure-track faculty with significant care giving responsibilities. Their policies also allow stopping the tenure clock to care for family

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TALES FROM BEACON HILL

When I get the call to lobby I always have other things to do, but there is also this dull, sometimes strange sensation that good things will come from saying yes. Cultivating that sensation, I realize it's not about better salaries or more support for the university. On the road it becomes even more intense: it's about colleagues I get to know better, where to park in downtown Boston, or even that the statehouse is not that far if you are traveling with the good souls who generally make up the lobby groups.

John Brigham, Political Science

Family Issues continued from page 4

members, and reduced work responsibilities without the approval of the dean or administration. UC President Robert Dynes says that accommodating university families is an “entitlement” that is “***fundamental to an equitable and productive academic environment***”. If UMass faculty are expected to set benchmarks and compete with faculty at the best public universities, we need the policies that make it possible for us to have both families and flourishing careers.

If you have work-family issues and you think the union could help, or if you have a few hours to help with the work of our committee, please contact Eve Weinbaum at weinbaum@lrrc.umass.edu.

PARENTAL LEAVE: WE NEED YOUR HELP

Four years ago, MSP won one of the best parental leave policies anywhere in the country. Faculty and librarians have the right to take one semester’s leave, with full pay, for the birth or adoption of a child. We want to make sure that we maintain this right for everyone in the next contract. In order to do that, the MSP is collecting information on who used the leave and what impact it had. **We need your help!** If you have taken a parental leave in the last four years, please contact the MSP so that we can make sure we have accurate information on who benefited from the policy. We also need to hear from people who were eligible for parental leave but did *not* use it, for whatever reason. Is there anything we can do to make it easier for faculty and librarians to take the leave they deserve? All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Please contact Lori Reardon at 545-2206 or lreardon@external.umass.edu.

5 YEAR CONTRACTS: MYTH AND REALITY

Prior to last year, there were contract faculty who had been on campus 15 and 20 years, always on one-year contracts, never knowing whether they’d be back the following year.

In contract negotiations, the MSP proposed that contract faculty with six or more years of service be offered five-year contracts. The administration refused, and told us that for reasons having nothing to do with the MSP, they intended to avoid offering five-year contracts in the future if at all possible. The contract guarantees that faculty with six years of service will receive at least a three-year contract – and this was a good victory.

Recently, the MSP office has heard reports of contract faculty whose departments requested that they be given five-year contracts, but were informed, in writing in some cases, (1) that they

were being given three year contracts “*per MSP contract*” and (2) that five-year contracts are no longer being offered to non-tenure track faculty. Both statements are false; the first is outrageous.

MSP would of course be delighted to have faculty receive five-year contracts. And in fact, despite whatever misinformation various administrators may be putting out, some faculty still are receiving five-year contracts.

Most of the time the MSP and the administration get on very well; administrators behave honorably and we try to do so as well. But once in a great while – as here – we get pretty upset when administrators put out misinformation and falsely blame their own decisions on MSP. If you or your department is being misinformed, please be in touch with the MSP office.

MTA MEMBER RETURNS FROM IRAQ AS ANTI-WAR ACTIVIST

by Ferd Wulkan

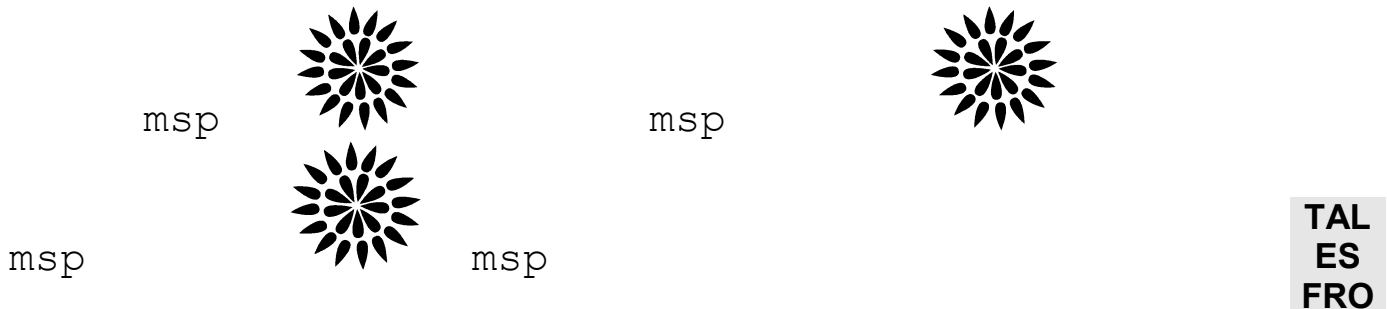
Andy Sapp's family has served in every American war since the Revolution. Andy, an active MTA member at Concord-Carlisle High School, is no different, having recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq. Back in the classroom, he now also speaks to groups about why he opposes this war.

Andy spent the day at UMass Amherst April 4, having been invited by *UMass Labor Against the War*. He spoke to 300 students in 2 large classes and at a staff/faculty lunch of about 60 staff, mostly members of the 3 MTA units on campus. His whirlwind tour was sponsored both by campus unions and academic departments.

Fluent about all the geo-political aspects of the Iraq war, Andy speaks mainly about his personal experiences, and the impact the war has on soldiers and their families. His audiences were spellbound when he said that

- 40% of marriages of Iraq veterans haven't lasted.
- Half the members of his platoon are being seen for post-traumatic stress or other extreme anxiety.
- The Veterans Administration, cut by the Bush administration, won't provide services to families.
- One third of civilian Iraqi deaths are attributable to the American military – and what an awful impact that has had on the soldiers themselves.

Andy is soft-spoken but passionate, equally loving toward his fellow-soldiers and distressed by his government. He describes the soldiers with whom he served as genuinely wanting to do good, to improve the lives of the Iraqi people. But the context of the war, with 80% of Iraqis agreeing that the U.S. should leave, taints their best efforts. Only if the U.S. military leaves Iraq, Andy has concluded, is there a chance that reconstruction help could be truly helpful. Most of his audiences at UMass seemed to agree.



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M BEACON HILL

I am a retired faculty member (2002) and have lobbied a number of times over the years. I really have enjoyed each experience very much. First of all, on the drive to Boston and back you get a chance to chat at length with your fellow agitators in a way that we rarely do on campus. This year I was paired with Will Fischer, a graduate student in Astronomy, whom I never would have gotten to know otherwise. He spoke for the future of the university, and I for the past -- i.e. to remind legislators to give many retirees the pay raises we never got, a fact which for four years has reduced our pension benefits. As we met with legislators or their aides, I told them, *"I am sure you all wish this group of retirees would lose heart and shut up, move away, or die, but I'm not planning to do any of the above."*

Will and I had three appointments, but since we had extra time, we spontaneously popped into other offices to leave off materials. Senator Edward Augustus met with us personally and gave us good advice on which other legislators to contact. We made a point to call on our own legislators (Rosenberg, Kocot and Story); our warmest reception was by Ellen Story, who not only spent at least 15 minutes with us, but made it a point to meet with Jenny Adams and Erica Scharrer, the other members of our lobbying team. Lobbying is exhausting, but also very satisfying -- instead of just kvetching, you are doing something concrete. Being at the State House also acquaints you with the many other demands made upon our legislators: wheelchair-bound constituents, parents of autistic children, etc., which brings home the fact that we are not the only game in town. It's a day well spent.

Nina M. Scott, Professor Emerita of Spanish

MSP SUPPORTS TENURED FACULTY REQUEST

by Jenny Spencer

Should a tenured professor, fully supported by her own department and department chair, be allowed to extend for ONE SEMESTER a previously granted LWOP (Leave Without Pay) in order to accommodate difficult family circumstances? Or a related question: Can a faculty member, engaged in significant collaborative research that brings recognition to the University, ever be granted a one-semester LWOP to continue that research at a foreign university? In either case, if a faculty member has the full support of her chair and department personnel committee, and if that request creates no financial burden for the University (and may, in fact, save money), on what possible grounds might an administrator deny that request? It is admittedly hard to fathom.

Unfortunately, this situation currently faces one of our colleagues in Humanities and Fine Arts. In January of this year, a female associate professor (one of only two tenured women in her department) had the temerity to ask for a one-time, one-semester extension of her one-year unpaid leave. The administration has repeatedly stated its eagerness to retain and accommodate qualified women faculty through "family-friendly" policies. Yet her fully supported request was flatly denied by the administration. The leave extension request was made a full seven months before the scheduled return, more than enough time to replace the faculty member on a temporary basis or reschedule courses. In response, the faculty member was given less than one month to make a decision: return in the fall or resign now!

Since January, the MSP has attempted to find out, through our usually collaborative relationship with

the administration, a single reason why this compelling LWOP request has been denied. But we have hit a wall. The denial of such a request is highly unusual, particularly for a respected faculty member who has clearly indicated her intent to return to the university. For example, the other tenured woman in this department requested an extended leave some years ago and was granted a LWOP for five consecutive semesters. A current faculty member in the social sciences is in his seventh year of LWOP, and faculty who are hired elsewhere are routinely granted a LWOP in the hope they may change their minds and return!

In the face of strong faculty, department, and MSP support, the administration has remained consistent: no discussion allowed. At this point in time, it is not even clear who, exactly, has made the decision. Without the courtesy of a conversation, much less an explanation, we are left with the bitter taste of an arbitrary, capricious, and discriminatory administrative action. We deserve better.

As we leave for the summer, our unhappy colleague is suffering with the weight of this untenable situation. She cannot easily return on the administration's deadline; yet she is committed to her career at the University and will not resign. The MSP, on the other hand, has been given no grounds to hope for any resolution. For this reason, we think it is important to put all faculty on notice. Whatever our colleague finally decides to do, the MSP position is clear: a tenured faculty member cannot be "forced" to resign or be terminated without just cause. And we see no justice in the case so far.

3 Years of MSP *continued from page 1*

There is a list of specific items we may push for (depending on the results of next fall's member survey): addressing salary inequities; securing the money we need for conference travel, computers, and a thousand other uses; child care; family (not just parental) leave; adequate start-up money; extending gains to part-time contract faculty. **But by far the most important** is building our ability to help shape the university's goals and direction, and to win the support of students, parents, legislators, and the public for a first-rate research university accessible to all residents of the Commonwealth. To paraphrase Clemenceau, the university is far too important to be left to administrators (or legislators, or the governor). Most of us would much rather be teaching and doing research, but if we don't speak up, and act, the university will continue to be squeezed and

deformed. The question we all need to answer is: do we care enough, and have hope enough, to be part of a campaign to win the resources and support needed to create the university the Commonwealth deserves?

MSP VOTES

The following positions were filled in MSP elections this spring:

President:	Max Page (Art History)	Executive Board:	Steve Brewer (Biology)
Vice-Presidents:	Arlene Avakian (Women's Studies) Dan Clawson (Sociology) Stephanie Luce (Labor Studies) Steve Olbrys (Communication)		Harris Freeman (Labor Studies) Naka Ishii (Library) Bob Paynter (Anthropology) Dean Robinson (Political Science)

The following elected delegates attended the MTA Annual Meeting:

Allen Barker (Plant, Soil, Insect Science)	Jerry Levinsky (Legal Studies)
Steve Brewer (Biology)	Steve Olbrys (Communication)
John Brigham (Political Science)	Max Page (Art History)
Leda Cooks (Communication)	Erica Scharrer (Communication)
Haivan Hoang (English)	Jim Smethurst (Afro-Amer. Studies)
Ingrid Holm (ESL)	Jenny Spencer (English)
Holly Lawrence (Management)	Emily West (Communication)

At the Spring General Assembly meeting, MSP members approved a budget for next year that includes a \$5/year increase in our local dues.

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