



MSP Chronicle

February 2007

JANUARY BREAK? NOT AT MSP!

The MSP has been in high gear over break! We began contract negotiations on January 5, have led the effort to found a new statewide public higher education coalition, and continue to try to salvage the 250 Plan. Many members have been helping in one way or another. For those not lucky enough to be on the front lines, we hope this newsletter gives you a flavor of these efforts and inspires you to plug in.

FULL-YEAR SABBATICAL AT 75% PAY: GOOD FOR THE UNIVERSITY *Max Page, MSP President*

The MSP/FSU has proposed that eligible faculty members could apply for a full-year sabbatical at 75% of their pay. This would be good for the university for several reasons.

It would provide faculty the added time necessary to complete major research projects. Research demands and expectations are growing; yet faculty are burdened with increased duties due to the decline in the number of colleagues and support staff. This new policy would make clear the administration's support for research, and thereby dramatically improve faculty morale and aid in faculty recruiting and retention. It would show that the university truly believes in the goal it repeats time and again: to make UMass a top-ranked research university.

Full-year sabbatical policies are common at both public and private institutions. The following are a few examples; many are on the list of our peer institutions. Illinois and Berkeley are on the list that Chancellor Lombardi has chosen as the benchmarks for UMass-Amherst faculty.

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PHENOMENAL! *Ferd Wulkan, MSP Staff*

That's the kind of public higher education system MSP wants to see in Massachusetts. That's what our citizens deserve, and that's why MSP has helped found a new coalition: PHENOM – the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts.



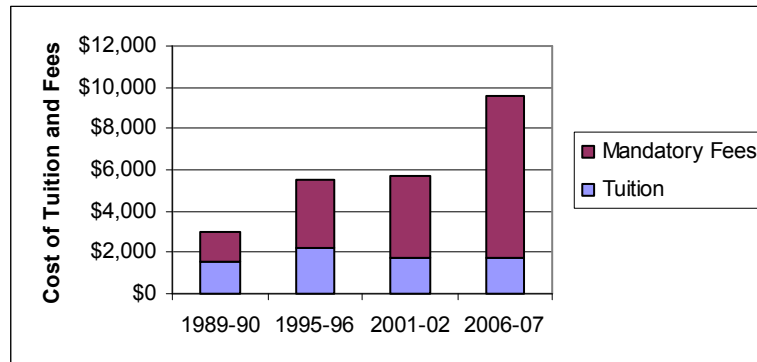
- In September and October we worked with students on this campus to register 1,600 new voters.
- In November, we helped elect a pro-higher education governor, invited him to a Higher Education Summit, and co-authored a "Roadmap" for higher education (found at www.phenomonline.org)
- On December 1, our campus coalition hosted the summit attended by 800 people, discussed higher education for an hour at a private meeting with Deval Patrick, and realized we had an historic opportunity to advance the cause of quality affordable higher education.

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WHY FEES SHOULD BE COVERED BY TUITION REMISSION

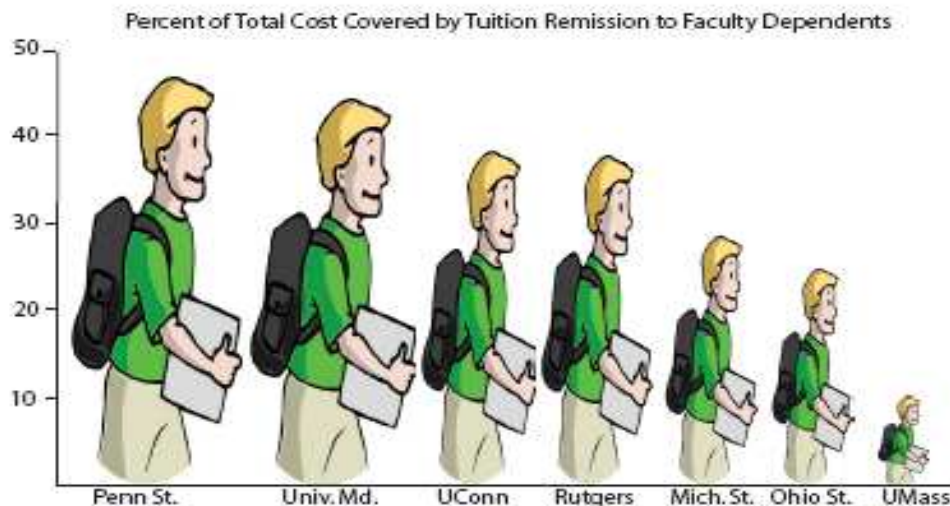
Randy Phillis, Biology Department

Members of the MSP receive a waiver of tuition for spouses and dependents enrolled in degree programs at UMass. Similar tuition remission is a nearly universal benefit for employees in higher education, and has a long history at this institution. However, the value of this benefit compared to the total cost of attending the university has been severely eroded during the past decade. It is important for our members, and for retention and recruitment of future faculty, that this benefit be increased to be competitive with peer institutions and significant with respect to the costs of a UMass education.



A new faculty member arriving at UMass in 1989 learned that his or her tuition remission benefit would cover more than 50% of the cost of tuition and fees for UMass attendance for their newborn child. Eighteen years later, when that child first enrolls in a UMass Amherst degree program as a freshman, the benefit covers less than 20% of tuition and fees (and only 10% of the total cost of a UMass education). The cause of the collapse in benefit value is largely due to the huge increase in student fees that have been put in place as state appropriations have decreased.

A survey of peer institutions clearly shows that UMass fails to match the level of benefit offered for faculty who compete for our hires and hire away our most productive professors.



ON-LINE EDUCATION: NEW RULES?

Naomi Gerstel, Sociology Department

As many of you know, the University is proposing a significant expansion of on-line education, and a new set of rules.

Let me summarize these rules: The University is asking faculty to develop courses which will then be “licensed” to the university. Faculty who participate in this program commit to developing the course (for \$2,500), teaching the course (with payment at the usual Continuing Education rates, which depend on enrollment), and then revising the course (for an additional \$2,500). Faculty sign an agreement giving the course “license” to the university. If the course is offered after the first set of revisions, the faculty member who developed the course will be offered the first chance to teach it. If that faculty member chooses not to do so *for the compensation offered by Continuing Education*, then administrators may designate anyone they choose to teach the course, using the syllabus, lectures, exercises, and exams developed by the faculty member.

The Associate Dean, who explained this new program, noted that it is, at least in part, a response to the shortage of tenure track faculty. If regular UMass students are closed out of classes they need, they would now have an opportunity to take those classes on-line. In order to do so, however, the student has to pay an additional fee.

I want to emphasize that the issues these new rules raise are not about the technology of on-line education. Imagine if the administration offered faculty \$2,500 to develop a face- to-face course—to write the lectures, exams, syllabi—and then declared that this belonged to the university, that it could be taught by anyone, and that the university charge students an additional fee to take it. Imagine the resistance.

Here are some issues to consider:

- The conditions under which on-line courses are being offered exacerbate the already existing move to hire part-time, adjunct, and non-tenure track faculty. On-line courses are money makers for the university in part because it can hire cheap instructors with less training to teach courses they have not (and perhaps could not) develop themselves.
- Class inequalities between students are reinforced. Those who can pay extra will get the courses they need. Less affluent students will have to wait for those courses covered by their tuition.
- The licensing of on-line courses raises issues concerning intellectual property rights: The University is now proposing that it own the courses that faculty members develop.
- On-line courses often require considerable labor but are not counted as a part of the faculty member’s regular load. Will the operation of the program be used to show that faculty are volunteering, for little money, to teach course over-loads?

I and others in MSP think that the university’s on-line initiative raises serious issues that faculty need to debate and include in collective bargaining. GEO, the union representing graduate teaching assistants, is now discussing some of the problems these on-line proposals raise. It’s time for the MSP to further this discussion as well. I would like to hear, and the MSP office would like to hear, about your experiences and thoughts. Remember that our main concern is not the pros or cons of on-line education in general, but rather the pros or cons of the particular form the administration is proposing.

ADVANCING PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: PHENOM'S PRINCIPLES

1. Fund public higher education so it can serve the Commonwealth

First to be cut, last to be restored, our state colleges and universities are chronically under-funded by the state. In good times we gain back only a portion of what was lost during budget crises. In the best of times, the system has not been funded at a level for us to achieve our common goal: creating one of the top systems of public higher education. The Commonwealth must provide a substantial increase in year-to-year operating budgets, funds to address long deferred maintenance of buildings, and a means to ensure stable state funding for public higher education.

2. Make higher education affordable

Students have been asked to pay dramatically more to make up for the deficiencies in state funding. As a result, the poor, the working class, and increasingly the middle class are being squeezed out of higher education, at exactly the same time that college is becoming increasingly necessary for the well-being of our residents and for the economic future of the state. All residents of the Commonwealth should be able to afford public higher education, and all costs associated with higher education - from tuition and fees to housing charges to textbook costs - should be made affordable for all. In the long run higher education should be free - just as high school is.

3. Make higher education accessible to all

All our institutions of public higher education should serve the full range of students in the Commonwealth; for example, neither race, class, disability nor age should serve as a barrier to attending and completing college. Today students of color and working-class students are less likely to attend and graduate from college than their white middle-class peers. There should be a place for every motivated learner, with a high school diploma or equivalency, in a public college or university. The Commonwealth should actively provide clear pathways, appropriate supports, and greater resources to ensure that underrepresented youth and adult learners have access to, succeed in, and graduate from our public institutions of higher education.

4. Hire more teachers, researchers, and staff

Over the past decade the number of full-time faculty and essential support staff at virtually every single one of our state colleges and universities has been in decline, despite a constant number of students. The steady decrease in the number of full-time faculty and staff is undermining the teaching, research, and economic development mission of our public higher education system. An outstanding system of higher education is founded on teachers and researchers who are given the compensation and resources to do their best work. Our system of higher education has become dependent on a contingent workforce that is poorly compensated and too often lacks basic supports such as health insurance. Our public colleges and universities must hire sufficient numbers of full-time research and teaching faculty, for whom salaries and benefits should be competitive nationally, and improve the conditions under which part time and non-tenure-track faculty work, resulting in better service for our students, our communities and our economy. As we rebuild the faculty we must also hire the staff needed to support both students and faculty.

5. Honor and expand democratic institutions of governance for public higher education

Unions and governments increase the democratic capital of a community. The state should respect collective bargaining by making timely salary offers and honoring union contracts negotiated in good faith and agreed to by the parties. Colleges and universities should respect the autonomy of campus governance bodies, particularly student governments and student organizations, and increase democracy on campus and throughout public higher education. Changes to institutional structures should support and increase the influence of the stakeholders of public higher education, and persons appointed to higher education governance bodies should champion public higher education.

Adopted by PHENOM General Assembly 2/1/07 at Framingham State College

PHENOM *continued from page 1*

- In January we did lots of outreach, speaking at union and student meetings wherever we could get an invitation.
- And on February 1, MSP President Max Page gave the introductory talk at the coalition's first statewide meeting which made plans for a Founding Convention and Lobby Day at the State House on February 14.

And so PHENOM was born. The Roadmap was distilled into a Statement of Principles (see previous page). Our principles began to serve as the basis for discussions with leaders in the Legislature and the higher education system. And our student-staff-faculty coalition became a model for a statewide coalition.

Bringing students, staff, faculty, alumni, and other stakeholders together in one organization is not without tensions. But we share common goals and all recognize we are much stronger when we debate our priorities together and then advocate with one loud unified voice.

There is a lot of interesting higher education legislation being filed this year; we are studying all the bills carefully and expect to be actively supporting those pieces that move us closest to the coalition's principles. But this coalition is not just about one legislative session; it has grand long-term visions and we hope it will become the consistent voice of public higher education that has been missing in Massachusetts.

This spring we expect to call on all of you to sign cards, distribute materials in classes, and come to a major State House Lobby Day. Until then, contact the MSP office (545-2206, msp@external.umass.edu) if you are able to join us at the State House on February 14 or if you have skills or interests to share in the cause of well-funded accessible, affordable, well-staffed, democratic public higher education.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND STATE WORKERS

The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) reduces the earned Social Security benefits of an individual who also receives a public pension from a job not covered by Social Security. The Government Pension Offset (GPO) reduces public employees' Social Security spousal or survivor benefits by 2/3 of their public pension.

The National Education Association (NEA), our national union, has for a long time been trying to build momentum toward repealing these laws. The 110th Congress took office January 4, 2007, with the change in leadership offering a real opportunity to make progress toward repeal.

See <http://www.nea.org/lac/socsec/060905test.html> for more information on these provisions. Receive the latest news from MTA on the Government Pension Offset /Windfall Elimination Provision. Sign up at:
http://www.massteacher.org/career/retired/retired_2003_gponews.cfm



MSP President Max Page with Governor-Elect Deval Patrick and Rep. Ellen Story

UMASS PROVOST CALLS FOR MORE MENTORING AND SUPPORT FOR FACULTY... BUT 250 PLAN STALLS

The author is a faculty member who attended the mentoring conference.

On November 30 and December 1, 2006, a group of invited faculty along with some deans and chairs of departments met with Provost Charlena Seymour to discuss the topic of mentoring and the needs of "new and under-represented faculty". Dubbed as a conference on "mutual mentoring", the event was organized by Provost Seymour's office and the Office of Faculty Development. Handouts from the conference mention that Provost Seymour met with a program officer from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in summer 2005 to apply for a "planning grant proposal" on "mutual mentoring" that is "a network-based model of support for new and underrepresented faculty at UMass". The efforts of Provost Seymour and her co-PI's were successful and UMass received the planning grant in spring 2006. The Office of Faculty Development then selected four departments/programs (Psychology, History, Anthropology, and Women's Studies) and Blacklist, a network of female faculty of color from UMass and the Five Colleges, as recipients of \$5,000 pilot grants.

During the five-hour conference, both faculty members and UMass administrators agreed that in order to recruit and retain faculty, mentorship and other forms of professional and personal support

are necessary. There was an evident consensus that in order for new and underrepresented faculty to succeed at UMass, there must be a "work-life balance" that would be addressed by such things as more affordable child care near campus; more research and travel support; clear policies for partner hires; better departmental mentoring for new and untenured faculty; and transparent and consistent tenure policies.

While a discussion of new and untenured faculty concerns was at the forefront of the conference, there was no mention of how these mentoring plans would be connected to the Amherst 250 Plan initiated by the MSP, a plan that envisions the hiring of 50 new faculty per year for the next five years and the regeneration of UMass as a research institution. Sadly, there was a disturbing and deafening silence on the part of Provost Seymour, her co-PIs and the administrators at the conference regarding the Amherst 250 Plan. It seems the UMass administration is applying for Mellon monies for "mentoring" and supporting the Provost's specially chosen projects or departments, but not everyone will be beneficiaries of these Mellon funds. Is this university-initiated mentoring program merely a band-aid for an already hemorrhaging institution?

SABBATICALS *continued from page 1*

Rutgers University: Full-year at 80% after six years. [After four years, faculty may apply for a one-semester leave at 85%.]

University of California, Berkeley: faculty accrue sabbatical credits that can be used for a semester or a year, at various rates of pay. For example, faculty can take a full year at full salary after 9 years of service, or a full-year at 78% of their salary after 7 years. UMass's sabbatical of full-year at 50% after 6 years occurs after only 4-1/2 years at Berkeley.

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign: Full-year at 66% after eight years.

Locally, **Mt. Holyoke, Amherst, and Smith** all provide at least 80% for a full year after six years.

The beauty of this proposal is that it would achieve these goals at a cost **savings** to the university. Currently, about 80% of people who take sabbaticals take a semester at full pay. This results in no savings for the campus. Very few take a full year at half pay, but we know that many more would do so at ¾ pay. We presented numerous scenarios at bargaining showing the range of savings, even taking into account the cost of hiring part-timers to teach some or all of the courses usually offered by faculty on sabbatical. For example, if 70% took the full year, and half their courses were replaced, the savings would be about \$375,000. Talk about a win-win proposal!

WORK AND FAMILY ISSUES

Eve Weinbaum, Labor Studies

Whether you have a small child, a partner looking for a job, an elderly parent or someone who may need you to be their caregiver, you need to be able to balance work and family. Our bargaining subcommittee has been hard at work researching policies on work-life issues at campuses around the country, and advocating for more support for these issues at UMass. The administration has expressed interest in moving forward in this arena, and making UMass a more family-friendly campus and a more flexible work environment. But as of yet, they have not been willing to devote any resources to support the rhetoric.

The proposals MSP has on the table include:

- **Parental leave.** We want to maintain the right to take paid parental leave that we won five years ago. We are asking that full-time contract (non-tenure-track) faculty get paid parental leave after four months of service, as librarians do. Other professional staff are entitled to paid parental leave after six months at UMass, while full-time contract faculty are forced to wait six years to be eligible.
- **Dual-career hiring policy.** Unlike most research universities, UMass has no policy guiding the hiring of faculty and librarians when both partners need jobs, resulting in charges of arbitrary and discriminatory decisions by individual departments or units. MSP has proposed language that would create opportunities for dual-career hires in cases where the department(s) request such hires, and with the goal of increasing the hiring of under-represented groups and women.
- **Office of Work-Life Issues.** A work-life coordinator would advocate around issues including affordable housing/mortgage subsidies, expanding childcare availability, dual-career hiring, facilitating visas for non-US citizens, and more. The office would also study gender equity at UMass and maintain databases to inform faculty about opportunities in the area.
- **Childcare.** On-site childcare has been proven to increase productivity, save energy and commuting time, and make it possible for faculty and staff to work full-time while their children are young. UMass should expand on-campus childcare to make it available and affordable.
- **Elder care/caregivers' leave.** We are advocating for faculty who have care giving responsibilities to be eligible for leave without pay, stopping the tenure clock, and/or modified duties including course release. No one should be penalized when they must take primary responsibility for the care of another.

All of these proposals will make it easier for UMass to recruit and retain faculty and librarians. If you have stories to share, or any input to assist our committee, please contact Eve Weinbaum at weinbaum@lrrc.umass.edu. We will need your support to win an excellent package of work-life policies.

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Union dues are tax deductible if you itemize your deductions. If you were full-time on payroll deduction for all of calendar year 2006, you paid \$712.40 in dues.

Academic Calendar Chancellor Lombardi has proposed, and the Faculty Senate is currently reviewing, a revised calendar arrangement beginning with Academic Year 2009-2010. Under this proposal the Spring Semester would begin the second week of January and commencement would be held in the second week of May. This proposed change would effectively abolish the Winter Session (J-Term). Before entering into discussions with the administration about this, the MSP would like to know how you feel about the proposed change so we've created a short (it will literally take only a moment of your time) survey to gauge our members' sentiment. The survey deadline is Friday, February 9th and you can log on by using the following link: <http://massteacher.org/surveys/msp.htm>.

As we promised at the October general faculty meeting to discuss the fate of the 250 Plan, MSP will be publicizing the administration's financial priorities. This is the first piece for your consideration.

NO MONEY FOR 250 PLAN...BUT LOTS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Stephanie Luce, Labor Studies

This campus pays almost \$4,000,000 more to top administrators now than it did 3 years ago. The number of administrators, as well as the total of the salaries they receive, have steadily and dramatically increased over the past few years. As this chart shows, the 22% increase in administrators, and 51% increase in their total salaries, dwarfs the small increase in tenure-track faculty positions and salaries.

	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	Percent change, 2003/2004 to 2006/2007
Number of administrators	66	72	78	80	21%
Total administrator salaries	\$7.6 million	\$9.5 million	\$10.7 million	\$11.5 million	51%
Average administrator salary	\$114,839	\$132,456	\$136,843	\$143,239	25%
Number of tenure-track faculty	921	921	960	967	5%
Total tenure-track faculty salaries	\$72.3 million	\$77.9 million	\$75.9 million	\$82 million	13%
Average tenure-track faculty salary	\$85,716	\$85,441	\$85,044	\$90,880	6%

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