

## Main Identity

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**From:** "Mass. Society of Professors" <msp@external.umass.edu>  
**To:** "All Unit Email List" <allunit@external.umass.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2007 11:24 AM  
**Subject:** [Allunit] MSP Bargaining Update

Dear MSP Members,

Here is the bad news: we still haven't heard about economic parameters from the Governor's Administration and Finance officials. That means we have not yet begun to negotiate our salaries, professional development monies and other economic aspects of our contracts. It is understandable, given that we have a new Governor, but it is also frustrating since we have made getting our contracts completed early this spring a priority. Today I wrote to President Wilson insisting that he redouble his efforts to get economic parameters from the Governor. He is, I believe, honestly frustrated as well.

We have had two local (i.e. Amherst-only issue) negotiations since I last updated you on bargaining. Here is a brief summary of where things stand:

1. Family Issues: The Family Issues Committee, which is negotiating separately with the Amherst administration, has made very good progress toward achieving an understanding on several key proposals: protecting parental leave and allowing for the automatic postponement of the TDY (with the option to restore it later), attaining a new office to address work/life issues at UMass, a child care subsidy for new faculty, and a formal joint union/mgmt. committee that would meet regularly to discuss and make recommendations related to work/life issues on campus. The Committee is also working hard to gain improvements to the parental leave rights for contract faculty, and to develop a formal dual-career policy.
2. Contract Faculty: The administration has responded positively to our insistence that we extend some of the job security gains for full-time contract faculty -- e.g. multi-year contracts -- to those below full-time. However, they want to extend them only to faculty with 50 to 100% appointments. We believe faculty who are here year after year teaching, say, a single course, deserve a similar level of job security. We are also discussing the possibility of moving the Senior Lecturer promotion to the member's seventh year of service, as opposed to the tenth we negotiated in the last contract. This would allow lecturers to receive a substantial salary bump several years earlier. There are also discussions around adding in another promotional opportunity after Senior Lecturer. Finally, we are also fighting hard to increase the lecturer salary floor, so that our members will be on par with the per-course rate at the four colleges.
3. Health Insurance for New Hires: Faculty arrive at UMass and often work with no health insurance for two months or more. In our bargaining survey, you resoundingly urged that all our new members be insured from the moment they arrive. Because of the bureaucratic difficulties of trying to change the GIC rules, we have insisted that the University set aside a small sum to cover those new faculty members who don't have alternative means of coverage (e.g. a spouse's policy). Because this has cost implications, the administration is resistant right now. But we are, not surprisingly, persistent.
4. Anomalies: Several colleges, most notably Social and Behavioral Sciences and Humanities and Fine Arts, have funded very few anomaly raises over the past several years (indeed, SBS approved none for several years, and HFA will not fund any this year and probably next year because of a budget crisis) despite there being dozens of legitimate claims. We have insisted that there be a centralized pool to take care of these anomalies. We also believe there needs to be greater

transparency about the process by which these decisions are made. The administration concedes that the current method of anomalies produces inequitable results among the colleges.

5. Academic Calendar: I already notified you about the resounding "NO!" that you all registered in our online poll about the Chancellor's calendar proposal. The Faculty Senate's paper poll yielded similar results yet this has not resulted in the withdrawal of the proposal and the Chancellor is now proceeding with a poll of students; if they seem to support the change, he intends to move forward, despite the outcry from faculty and from other colleges in the area. We will continue to insist that this is a bargainable issue and that our members reject the change.

6. Phased Retirement Policy: The Administration is seriously considering the idea of developing a policy similar to those at a number of other public universities -- all researched with expert sophistication by our bargaining team member Sharon Domier. We expect to get more details about the kind of system they would like to implement at the next session.

7. Computer Replacement Policy: We have insisted that beyond gaining new computers this contract cycle from an enlarged professional development pool, the university should do what so many other institutions do: implement a computer replacement policy, so that faculty and librarians have a new computer -- obviously an essential tool for every member of the MSP -- every three to five years.

8. Research Bridge Money: We have a proposal (crafted by bargaining team member Randy Phillis) that the central administration set aside a small fund from grant revenue in order to assist research faculty who often experience gaps between research funding cycles. Although we consider the costs of this proposal to be relatively low, the administration's position right now is that it is too costly.

We will return to all of these topics at the next session, and will also return to an issue that has garnered a lot of interest from our members: a full-year sabbatical at 3/4 pay.

Our next session is at the "main table" (with the full bargaining teams of Amherst, Boston, and the administration) on March 23rd.

All the best,  
Max Page  
MSP President