



## DCE Successor Agreement Meeting March 29, 2017 at Mount Wachusett, Devens Campus

*“We don’t want to engage in a philosophical discussion”—management comment when pressed on whether they can support the principle of equal pay for equal work*

Management gave our side very short notice (we were notified after 5:00 the prior Friday) of the location of the March 29 meeting, with an eye to limiting our efforts to mobilize members who may wish to attend. The major topics of bargaining during the march 29 meeting were salary, professional development, and contact time.

### SUMMARY:

- **Salary**—Management refused to engage in a discussion with us concerning our demand for pay parity. We reiterated that their prior “offer” of a zero increase to the negotiable years of the contract (a 4% increase for the current year was negotiated in prior bargaining) was unacceptable, and an insult to the hard working adjuncts who instruct Massachusetts’ students. We then pressed them on whether DCE members—who provide the same instruction as Day faculty—deserve the same level of pay. They refused to meaningfully respond. While their spokesperson indicated that he did not want to engage in a “philosophical” discussion, we explained that there is nothing philosophical about the very real struggles of DCE members who lack significant job security and receive such poor pay that paying for bills and food a challenge.
- **Professional Development**—we had a constructive, interactive discussion about professional development. We proposed that each college establish a fund, totaling \$100 per member per college, to be used for professional development opportunities that are related to members’ areas of instruction. We expressed frustration with their delay in furnishing us with a counter-proposal, as they expressed mild enthusiasm for the idea in principle on October 17<sup>th</sup> but have yet to respond with a proposal. Nonetheless, we had a meaningful discussion in which they expressed some concerns (e.g., certain individuals “hogging” the opportunities while others received nothing), and indicated that they would present a counter proposal at our next session. They seemed sympathetic to the idea that our proposal would bolster adjuncts’ sense of respect and autonomy, and make for more developed/informed faculty who feel a greater connection to their colleges.
- **Contact Time.** We reiterated our proposal that would give defined parameters to: the number of weeks in a semester; a clear and unequivocally demarcated end of a work semester; an increase in pay for any work in excess of the defined semester; and an increase in pay for extra contact hours during the semester. While they asked some questions about our proposal, they indicated that they would furnish us with a counter at our next session.

### OTHER ISSUES

- **Insufficient frequency of meetings.** We expressed frustration at their refusal to commit to more frequent meetings so that we can accomplish more. While they rebuffed our insistence, nonetheless we agreed to three more dates: April 20, April 24; and May 3.

- **Management Contributions to OBRA—they still refuse to bargain this matter!:** At our last session, they refused to bargain this topic, and explained that they would furnish us with a letter that explains their legal rationale. They did finally furnish us with that letter—mere hours before we met. While their rationale lacked reference to any legitimate legal authority and appears flimsy to us, nonetheless the MTA legal department is reviewing it. **Most workers in the country have a matching employer retirement contribution—if 7-11 can do it for their employees, then Colleges must do it for their dedicated adjunct faculty!**

**(QUASI) OPEN BARGAINING:**

While we invited members to be present, due to the short notice Management gave us regarding the venue and the place and time of negotiations, only one observer was able to attend the March 29th session. When our observer entered the conference room, Management reiterated its objection they registered at the start of our prior session regarding observers, but we nonetheless proceeded. We indicated that notwithstanding their objection, we believe that our members have a right to witness the deliberations that will shape the terms and conditions of their working lives. The individual who attended remained for the first half of our session, and we appreciate her presence.

**Our next session tentatively will be on Thursday, April 20 at Quinsigamond Community College. The session will start at 10 (we will meet as a team one hour prior). We encourage you to attend, and we'll even supply snacks!**

Linda Grochowalski  
DCE Bargaining Chair