

MCCC



News

208

The Official Publication of the Massachusetts Community College Council / Volume 6, Issue 27 / September 2008

Chairman Clark Takes Heat at Williamstown: BHE Approves 4 Percent Administrative Raises

Chairman of the Board of Higher Education, Fred Clark, attended the Higher Ed luncheon at the MTA Summer Conference at Williams College and made a presentation to the gathered members. He got high marks for his willingness to appear, but with negotiations stalled for most of the higher ed. units, there was much frustration in the audience.

Clark opened his presentation with some humor which diffused the tension in the room. He then went into some significant statistics about educational levels both nationally and internationally. The U.S. is fifth in the number of 18-25 year olds with high school diplomas, but we are 17th in rate of high school graduation, and 16th in rate of college completion.

Another statistic he focused on was that the rate of college attendance is dropping among young people. Yet, over 60 percent of the 90,000 vacant jobs in the state require a college degree. By the year 2020 the standard of living in Massachusetts is projected to decline by \$1100. Education is the only way we can sustain our economy.

Clark stressed that he sees public higher education in Massachusetts is at a crossroad. There is an awakening in the state of the importance of public higher education. Critics often cite the high percentages of students attending private colleges in the state, but only about 40 percent of the students at these colleges are Massachusetts residents. Meanwhile 90 percent of the students at our public colleges are residents. And, very importantly, they stay in the state and contribute to the economy.

But, Clark said, "We should be ashamed of where we are." The state has chronically underfunded the system, and he recognized the devastation that has caused. Having spent many years involved in the system, he said, "This is the first governor I have seen who has made higher education a priority." That is a first step.

The second step is identifying the needs



BHE Chairman Fred Clark speaks at the higher ed. Luncheon at MTA Summer Conference. (Photo by Don Williams)

within the system and then finding ways to fulfill those needs. He asked for some patience from the audience while he discussed some solutions and added, "before you beat the tar out of me."

The reason for his trepidation was the stalled contract negotiations for most of the higher ed. unions and the recent announcement that the Board of Higher Education has approved 4 percent "merit" raises for non-unit administrators. These would come out of the colleges' operating budgets.

In a memo to all of the colleges, Acting Chancellor Patricia Plummer authorized a 4.00 percent merit pool at each college from which they could determine how to distribute the salary adjustments. No minimums or maximums were set, but the stipulations were that they be merit based and that no college exceeds the 4 percent. However, the colleges were left to determine

how to establish merit and award the increases, and also that they could be retroactive to July 1, 2008.

Attendees were respectful and appreciated Clark's willingness to appear and discuss these issues, but they did press him on the contradiction that the state cannot make an economic offer on union contracts, and yet other employees are freely awarded increases that exceed what has been seen by the unions in recent years.

Clark responded by saying, "I hear your frustration." But he noted that the Bureau of Labor Statistics determined that the consumer price index in the Northeast for this year has gone up by 4.2 percent, and that he sees a 4 percent increase as appropriate. "I'm not embarrassed by a cost of living increase."

He went on to say that achieving equity for faculty and staff salaries was on his agenda, implying that cost of living was an insufficient benchmark for contract negotiations. "There is not a monolithic state workforce," he said, noting that there should be different raises for different employee categories. Recruitment and retention of qualified personnel could justify going above the standard parameters for state employee raises.

However, it is not in his power to appropriate the funding. He said that he had been in contact with Leslie Kirwan, Secretary of Administration and Finance (A&F) to work on establishing financial parameters that recognize the unique situations in higher ed.

He did point out that the state budget has a structural deficit and that the picture is not good for the immediate future. Noting that legislators have a growing awareness of the importance of public higher education, he pointed out that 84 state reps and senators are graduates of public colleges.

The luncheon ended on positive notes. Clark stressed his respect the faculty and staff and his commitment to strengthening the system. The attendees echoed their respect for him and the efforts he has made and is continuing to make. ■

Mark Your Calendar

**MCCC
Fall Conference
Monday, Oct. 6**

Crowne Plaza Worcester

10 Lincoln Square
Worcester, MA 01608
Phone: (508) 791-1600

Coffee and Registration
begins at 3:30

Register on line at
[http://mccc-union.org/
FallConference](http://mccc-union.org/FallConference)

DIRECTIONS

From Mass Pike take Exit 10 to Route 290E, take Exit 17-Rt 9. Take a left at top of exit. At 2nd set of lights at bottom of the hill, go left onto Worcester Center Blvd. Hotel is on the right.

From Route 495 take Exit 25B, Route 290W. Take Exit 18-Rt 9. Turn right at Lincoln Square/Worcester Center Blvd. Hotel is on the right.

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MTA Summer Conference: Higher Ed Contracts Stalled

The annual MTA Summer Conference at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass. was held Aug. 3-7. While MTA membership and therefore conference attendees are overwhelmingly K-12 teachers, higher education was well represented with MCCC itself sending over 30 members.

The conference provides an opportunity for members across employment areas and across the state to network and share information, techniques, and strategies.

Wednesday had a concentration

Continued on Page 2

Defeating Question 1: MTA's First Priority

The afternoon portion of higher ed. day at Williamstown was devoted to organizing against the ballot initiative to abolish the state income tax.

Donna Sirutis, MTA higher ed. consultant, led a presentation along with Arthur Pippo, Director, MTA Division of Higher Ed, to inform attendees about the ballot question, its potential impact, and the MTA strategy to defeat it.

Question 1 is being promoted by Carla Howell, a libertarian who leads a group that believes in small government. These are the same people who put the question on the ballot in 2002. That year it got 45.3 percent of voters' support.

The small government group believes that they have 45 percent support for this year's initiative – and 46 percent oppose it.

Groups opposing it believe there is a hardcore 40 percent who definitely will support it.

They claim that abolishing the tax will save the average taxpayer \$3,600 – although the respected Mass Tax Foundation says it is more like \$1,506 per taxpayer. Their website has a very inaccurate voluntary poll where out of 681 participants, over 40 percent say that they believe 60 percent of the state budget is waste. Their website is www.smallgovernmentact.org.

The proposal would cut the present income tax from 5.3 percent in 2008, to 2.65 percent in 2009 and completely eliminate it in 2010. Currently the income tax provides 40 percent of the state's revenues. This equals about \$12 billion.

Continued on Page 3

MCCC Newsletter
27 Mechanic Street, Suite 104
Worcester, MA 01608-2402

The Autumnal Equinox: Not Yet Harvest Time



*Donnie McGee,
SAC Chair &
MCCC Vice President*

On September 22, 2008, our sun, Old Sol, will perform its annual balancing act. The autumnal equinox will take place as daylight and nighttime hold equal sway. Summer's end will then be heralded by autumn's splendid colors and crisp fall air. Harvest festivals will reign across our state.

Autumn's energy and sense of purpose are evident on college campuses as well. Capital projects are unfolding and enrollments soaring. Enthusiasm is everywhere. Our colleges are not yet ready for harvest celebrations, though. The academic year has just begun. And educators and administrators must not only focus on the academic journeys students hope to take, but also respond to the funding challenges our colleges face. Student success and the integrity of academic life are both at risk if funding shortfalls become reality. Much work remains for us this fall.

Key among the funding challenges we face is the Question 1 ballot proposal to

eliminate the personal income tax in Massachusetts. This initiative would eliminate 40 percent of current budget revenues and remove more than \$12 billion from state coffers when fully enacted. Proponents argue this would shrink state government and put cash back into the hands of struggling tax payers.

True, such a proposal would shrink state government, but in the process it would decimate state services and support. The income tax repeal initiative has been likened to a going out of business sale for the state. What would the state not fund? How would communities and residents survive? Our cities and towns rely on state support for public education, infrastructure needs, and community security.

It is also true that Question 1 would return some welcome cash to burdened taxpayers, but not without great long-term costs to everyone. Property taxes would increase to salvage community life and provide support for police and fire departments and local schools. Schools would be consolidated, though, and teachers, let go. Services to seniors and the disabled would be curtailed or funded through new charges. Fees would have to replace taxes to pay for what the state could no longer afford.

Taxes are the price we pay for the well-being of our cities and towns. Communities established a Commonwealth to ensure that highways are maintained;

bridges, safe; and schools and colleges, effective. Taxes enable residents and businesses alike to be protected and secure. Diminished state taxes means limited state support and increased costs for every community. Are residents willing to absorb \$12 billion in lost state revenue by increasing property taxes and instituting new local fees?

Reducing state spending by 40 percent would spell disaster for state colleges and universities. These institutions have been chronically underfunded by the state for the past decade. Capital construction projects would come to a halt. Campuses would close; academic programs would end. Faculty and professional staff as well as security, clerical and custodial staff would be laid off. Pension and health insurance benefits would be reduced while costs to remaining employees would soar.

Consider what reducing state support by 40 percent would mean for students enrolled at our colleges and universities. Students are already been burdened with unprecedented increases in tuition and fees to make up for the state's grossly inadequate support for these institutions. With income taxes repealed, students would have to pay far more for public higher education – to attend campuses with far fewer academic resources, programs, and services.

Educators must act now to inform students, colleagues, and administrators of

the true costs and consequences of Question 1. We must work with student leaders to organize voter registration campaigns on every campus. College Presidents, too, must get involved in this fight to defeat the income tax repeal. If enacted, Question 1 will surely diminish every aspect of campus life, compromise our mission, and affect countless academic programs and capital projects statewide.

Many families across the state are struggling to make ends meet. We are frustrated with cost-of-living increases and our inability to get ahead. We want a feel good, immediate solution to address such concerns. But this proposal would not ease our pain, reduce our frustration, or lessen our financial strain in the long term. It would simply transfer the responsibility for services from the state to the communities – or end life as we know it in this Commonwealth.

The autumnal equinox and the characteristic urgency of the season remind us of the important work before us and the balance we, as educators, must maintain between our professional lives and our engagement in political life. Our colleges' open door policy and its promise of opportunity to all cannot continue without adequate and reliable state funding. Question 1 will totally deny us that. Know that the integrity and well-being of your colleges and your communities are at stake when you vote on November 4. ■

Higher Ed Contracts Stalled . . .

Continued from Page 1

of higher ed. related activities, and the morning was devoted to an open Higher Education Leadership Council (HELCC) meeting. HELCC is comprised of the presidents of the several MTA higher ed. locals. Besides the MCCC and two locals in the state colleges, this group is largely made up of UMass groups that range from faculty to support staff. Any member who wished could attend this open meeting.

The primary issue for the meeting was the stalled contract talks for all of the units except the MCCC. Our contract expires June 30, 2009, but the other units negotiated one-year contracts in the last round that expired June 30, 2008. These unions had hoped that a new governor would put them in a more favorable negotiating position.

The UMass and state college unions had hoped that under Gov. Patrick they could begin talks in the early spring and could begin new contracts by the expiration dates of their old ones. They were very disappointed when talks were not productive.

By August there still were no financial offers on the table for any of the contracts. The union leaders expressed frustration at the HELCC meeting because there was not even an indication that financial offers were coming.

C. J. O'Donnell, new president of the MSCA (Mass. State College Association), representing the faculty and librarians at state colleges, said he was planning to file charges of "failure to bargain in good faith" against the Board of Higher Education at the Massachusetts Division of Labor Relations. He felt that there was support from within the state administration and that this move

would give those people some leverage.

Max Page, president of the MSP (Mass. Society of Professors), representing UMass Amherst faculty, agreed that this action had a lot of merit. He noted that two unions won such cases in 1997. Subsequent to the meeting, on Aug. 28, eleven MTA higher ed. locals filed charges against the BHE and the Trustees of UMass.

Arthur Pippo, Director of MTA's Division of Higher Ed., reminded everyone of the 800 pound gorilla in the room: the ballot initiative to end income tax. With the state already having a structural deficit of over \$1 billion, the potential of losing an additional \$12 billion in revenues has to put a chill on the Patrick administration's ability to commit to funding contracts.

In a presentation on legislative action, MTA lobbyist Arline Isacson, noted that Gov. Patrick had taken a different approach from his predecessors by asking the legislature to appropriate a pool of funds for contracts that have not yet been negotiated. The legislature cut this to only provide for commitments already made.

That the legislature did not find ways to raise revenues was a disappointment. But there were a number of major legislative wins. Chief among them was maintaining health insurance contribution levels. She also mentioned the tax cut ballot initiative and how a similar initiative in 2002 getting 45 percent of voters' support cast a large shadow over the legislature. They are afraid of the public perception if they did do anything to raise revenues. Yet without increasing state revenues there is no way to advance the MTA's higher education agenda. ■

New Full-time Faculty Retirement Options

Newly hired full-time faculty (and only full-time faculty) have a choice in pension systems to join. One option is the State Employee Retirement System (SERS), a defined benefit plan, which is the only choice open to other full-time employees. The other is the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), a defined contribution plan.

Newly hired faculty have 90 days from date of hire to finalize their

choice. Once that time has passed, you are locked into the chosen system and cannot change. It is important to ensure that you have made the correct choice, and it is worthwhile to contact a financial planner if you are not sure what to do. The Board of Higher Education has a website that has more detailed comparison: www.mass.edu/test/foremployees/orp/comparisonfaq.asp ■

Description	Optional Plan	State Employee System
Plan Type	Defined Contribution	Defined Benefit
Employee Contribution*	9% of salary to \$30,000, plus 11% of salary above \$30,000	9% of salary to \$30,000, plus 11% of salary above \$30,000
Vesting	Immediate 100%	After 10 years of service
Pre-retirement Survivor Benefits**	Group term life insurance provided by Board of Higher Education	Income may be payable to surviving spouse and minor children
Disability Benefits	Long term disability insurance provided by Board of Higher Education	Disability pension payable to participants with 10 years of service or fewer if disabled on the job
Benefits Payable	Anytime after terminating employment with the Commonwealth	Eligible for retirement with 20 years of service or if 55 with at least 10 years of service
Benefit Amounts	Benefit is based upon account balance and distribution method selected	Amount of income is based on: – age – length of creditable service – payment option
Payment Options	Variety of payment options ranging from income for your life to lump sum distributions	Lifetime income, payable under options which can provide survivor benefits
Plan Investments	Participants select the investment for their own accounts; returns directly affect level of benefits	Overseen by the State Retirement Board
Retiree Healthcare	Provided by the Group Insurance Commission for employees with at least 10 years of creditable service and sufficient account funds	Provided by the Group Insurance Commission for employees with at least 10 years of creditable service
Re-employment	A former ORP participant may participate in the ORP immediately upon re-employment	Can buy back any prior service that was refunded for state service of six consecutive months or more which did not have retirement contributions withheld. Must redeposit the appropriate contribution plus accumulated interest

*Contribution rates for participants hired on or after July 1, 1996

**Employees may also purchase life insurance through the Group Insurance Commission

The Promise of A Free Education

By Max Page

Yes, Massachusetts, public higher education should be free.

Dismay. Disdain. Panic. Cheers. I expect all of those reactions.

Imagine a socialist fantasy – is it Cuba? China? – where every child wakes up and goes to a government-funded school which is completely free.

Oh, right, that's your town. That's everyone's town.

If you send your child to a public school, it is free. So are a bunch of other things that make your life, well, livable: the roads you drive on, the parks you play in, the sidewalks you walk on, the police who protect you, the firefighters who save you, and on and on. Of course, I don't mean free. I mean that we, together, as a community, according to the incomes we earn and the values we articulate, make "free" via our taxes public services and functions we deem essential to the operation of this ongoing project called civilization

It was here in Massachusetts that Horace Mann declared and then convinced the state that education should be universal – that is, we decided that basic education belonged among the set of activities that we should pay for – and even do – together. Horace Mann only argued for elementary education. Later, we – all of us, via the imperfect mechanisms of democratic government – decided that a basic education meant schooling beyond the elementary level. Then we decided it meant all of high school. That is, it needed to be free and universal.

And now, we are about to recognize – I hope we recognize it in the next few years, but perhaps it will take a decade or more –

that as the governor recently said, beautifully and succinctly, in his Readiness Project report: "Success in a 21st century global economy requires more than a high school diploma." Back in 2006, a few weeks after he was elected, Governor-elect Patrick met with faculty, staff, and students at UMass and heard the group (which has come to be known as PHENOM) call for dramatic reforms in public higher education, including a commitment to provide two years of college for every Massachusetts citizen. Little did PHENOM know that the governor would take this on as one of his signature proposals for higher education.

Recognizing the obvious – we have few natural resources other than cranberries and some very nice beaches – the Readiness Project report argues that we must dramatically commit to improve the one great natural resource that has made Massachusetts become one of the wealthiest states in the nation: our human resources. An educated citizenry is the product of a just society, and, as it happens, an educated citizenry is also good economic development policy.

Now, that we all agree that some level of higher education should be free, let's deal with the immediate next question: "How could we possibly afford it? There is no money for this kind of new social program."

Let me be succinct again: There is money for anything we want to do.

When people say there is no money, they mean there is no money for you and your project. I am loathe to even mention the amount it would cost to pay for two free years of college, because it doesn't matter:

If we care about it, we will find a way to pay for it. (OK, OK: One estimate puts it at between \$56 and 70 million a year - about one quarter of one percent of the state's budget. The cost of paying a year's tuition for every single public university student in the United States - that's 75 percent of all college students, by the way - is about \$23 billion. An awesome sum? Yes, but we spend that amount every couple of months in Iraq. If it is deemed a priority, we can and do find the money).

Let's remember: Massachusetts is one of the wealthiest states in one of the wealthiest nations in the world. And the people with the wealth have more of it now than they had a decade ago. The difference is they are asked to share less of it with the larger community. The "structural deficit" we hear from the political noise machine, is a deficit of our own making: It is the product of a decade of tax cuts that has left the state without the resources it needs to serve its citizens.

When we need to lure film companies with tax credits, we have hundreds of millions of dollars available. When we knuckle under to corporations who want to further lower their taxes (as happened this budget season) we have hundreds millions more. When we "need" to spend \$7 billion a month invading a nation that had nothing to do with a terrorist attack on our soil and thereby encouraging the growth of terrorism there and elsewhere, we find it.

Budgets are political documents. As a community – town, state, nation – we debate what we think is important. Where we put our collective money – i.e. taxes – is one of the best indicators of what we think

is important, and, equally, who has power to decide.

In many ways, this is the worst of times for higher education: College costs have skyrocketed; financial aid covers less and less of the total cost of attending college, leaving graduates mired in debt; state funding of higher education continues to stagnate; and the credit crisis has left some students without loans at all. Indeed, the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority just announced it would make no loans to Massachusetts students and their families this fall.

But this is also the best of times: Wealthy colleges have been shamed into starting to spend a tiny fraction more of their multibillion-dollar endowments to make themselves more affordable; the Pell Grants have been increased; Congress had a remarkable debate about a new GI Bill, which produced a new bill which dramatically expanded college benefits for returning veterans; and Barack Obama has made an education tax credit a centerpiece of his higher education platform.

With his proposal for a minimum of two years of college for every Massachusetts citizen, as a birthright, Deval Patrick is attempting to make Massachusetts a leader in public higher education, and to change the terms of the debate over how we together pay for college. For that alone, the Readiness Project deserves applause.

Public higher education should be free.

Max Page is president of the Massachusetts Society of Professors and on the Executive Committee of PHENOM (the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts). ■

Defeating Question 1 . . . Continued from Page 1

Putting it into perspective, Sirutis pointed out that the state only provides \$1.2 billion for all of higher ed. If every state employee were fired, it would only save \$6 billion. Much of the state budget is "non-discretionary" – federal mandates, debt-service, etc. So the discretionary parts of the state budget (like higher ed) will take higher than a 40 percent reduction.

Massachusetts does not have high taxes. In 1980 we were 2nd in the state and local tax burden. We dropped to 18th in 2005, and now we are 23rd.

What would this mean to us? First off, the legislature would have to make severe budget cuts. They will cut local aid, so property and other taxes will have to go up along with a whole range of new "user fees."

Since the shocking 2002 vote they have been very reluctant to do anything to raise revenues. Think about what kind of raises we have had since 2002!

If this passes, we can forget about raises along with many of our jobs. Part-time faculty will increase, student fees will have to increase, and facilities will suffer.

Even if it doesn't pass, but gets a significant percentage, the legislature will be chastened, and continue the skimpy budgets for higher ed. and other discretionary items.

Pippo pointed out that many voters don't believe that the legislature would actually enact this proposal, so it's safe to vote for it. But it will be law. And if they try to modify it, they will be under terrific

outrage and possibly court orders to enact it.

Some people will vote for it even though they don't want it to happen and don't think that it will pass, believing that it will "send a message" to the legislature.

As one person put it, "You're going to vote for something you don't believe in, and have faith in someone you don't trust, to not do something you don't want them to do."

As MTA's new executive director David Borer put it, "This is not a message people, it's a huge tax cut!"

There is a very real threat that it will pass. But given the current economy, this initiative may be very attractive to members of the public who are financially stressed – despite the devastation it would create. Even if it doesn't pass, if it gets better than the 45 percent 2002 vote, the legislature will be even more reluctant to do anything to enhance revenues in the future. So the more voters we can get to oppose it, the better off we will be.

The strategy to defeat Question #1 has been developed by a number of organiza-

tions, but MTA is a significant player. Sirutis explained that the first phase was to organize the membership. This would continue through September. She pointed out that around 25 percent of MTA members supported the initiative in 2002, and although member support for the initiative is much lower now, we need work towards zero member support.

One very important activity is for every member to talk to ten other people about the negative impact of this initiative. Personal contact is much more persuasive than any amount of advertising and signage. Pippo said that Higher ed. will probably be more negatively affected than K-12 because many requirements there are statutory, so our members have an even larger stake in defeating the initiative.

In October a public campaign will begin which will be coordinated with the other groups in the vote no coalition. Members will be asked to participate in these activities also. The coalition website is: votenoquestion1.com. ■



Arthur Pippo, Director of MTA's Division of Higher Education, and consultant Donna Sirutis explain the dangers of the Question #1 tax cut initiative.

(Photo by Don Williams)



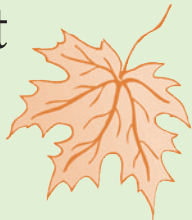
New MTA Executive Director-Treasurer David Borer (left) with MCCC Vice President Donnie McGee and President Joe LeBlanc at Williamstown Conference.

(Photo by Don Williams)

Know Your Day Contract

October 2008

- Oct. 1** Tenure eligibility list distributed (p.38)
 - Oct. 1** Sick leave bank open (p.19)
 - Oct. 2** Furnish employer with dues to be deducted per employee (p.16)
 - Oct. 6** Supervisor shall return Course Materials to faculty members by end of fifth week of semester. Members have 14 calendar days to respond to supervisor's concerns (p.49).
 - Oct. 13** Columbus Day holiday observed.
 - Oct. 24** Accrued professional staff vacation time in excess of 64 days (480 hours) converts to sick time. This now occurs twice per year, falling on the end of the last pay period of April and October.
- N.B. Dates may vary depending on the first day of classes. Most of these dates are "last date" standards. In many instances the action can be accomplished before the date indicated. All cited page numbers are from the 2006-2009 Agreement. ■*



DCE NEWS

Know Your DCE Contract

Fall 2008

The DCE Collective bargaining agreement is available on the MCCC website <http://mccc-union.org/> or a copy can be obtained from your local MCCC chapter.

Reappointment Rights and Seniority

Reappointment rights are effective after teaching five courses over three consecutive fiscal years at the college. These courses do not have to be in the same department. Teaching two or more courses per year in a work area at the college earns one-year seniority. One course in one area and one course in another area in a year provide one-year seniority in each work area. Loss of accrued seniority results after a two-year break in service at the college. Canceled courses do not count toward a break in service.

Salary

You will move from the step one salary to the step two salary upon teaching your sixth class and move to step three upon teaching your eleventh class. You will advance to step 4 effective upon attaining 8 years of seniority at the college. New faculty at the college start at step one, but may start at step 2 or 3 of the salary schedule based on degrees, qualifications and experience.

Fall 2008

(3% increase from fall 2007)

Step 1	\$845.00
Step 2	\$906.00
Step 3	\$975.00
Step 4	\$1,023.00

The laboratory component of a course will be paid at the rate of 1.5:1 (1.5 contact hours per week during a regular semester = 1 credit salary).

Unit members compensated on an hourly basis shall receive a 3% increase to their current hourly rate for assignments.

Faculty will be paid, at a minimum, three times during the fall and spring semesters. This timeframe will be approximately at one-third intervals throughout the semester.

Appointment

Faculty with reappointment rights will be provided a course interest and availability form. A tentative appointment for one course shall be assigned first to those unit members with the longest seniority. You should, under normal circumstances, be notified of your tentative assignment five weeks prior to the beginning of classes. You should be given a contract indicating the course(s) and salary to which you have been assigned. Your course must run in the event that an administrator who hires, fires, or evaluates DCE faculty is teaching a course in DCE.

Course Material

Faculty must submit the course syllabus within one week of the beginning of classes. This should include the items appearing on the course material checklist contained in the collective bargaining agreement. Please note that faculty enjoy academic freedom which provides for professional latitude in fulfilling one's contractual obligations in this regard.

Instructors have the right to choose the text book(s). The exception to this is when it is a departmental selection and you are given an opportunity to participate in the decision making process, or when the appointment is made as the semester is to begin.

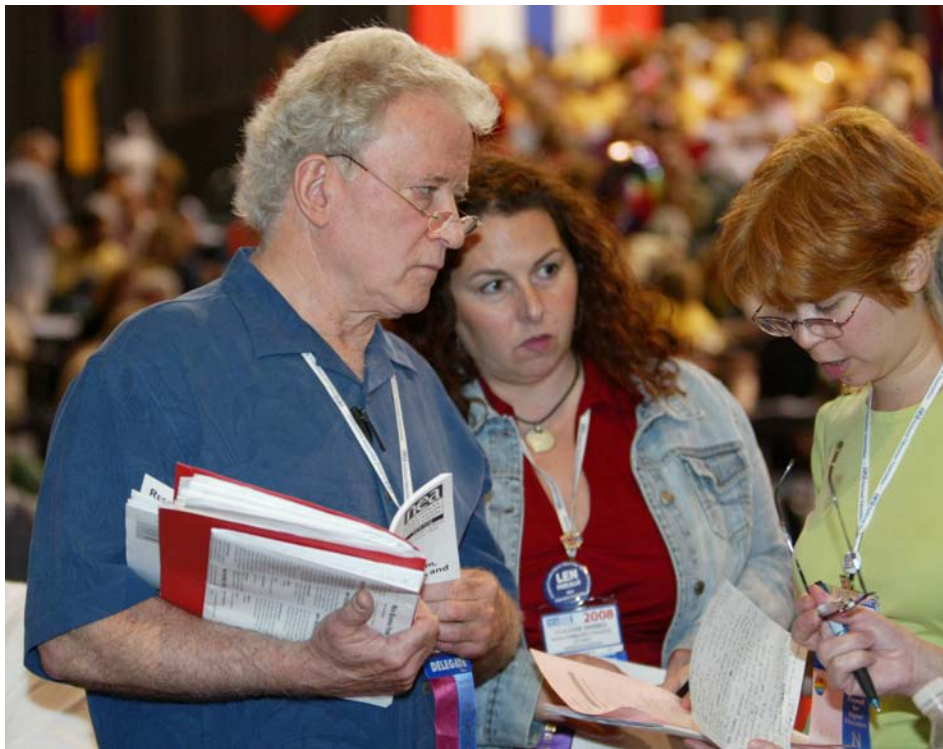
Evaluation

Student evaluations are conducted each semester and are conducted during the second or third to the last week of the course. A classroom observation must be conducted prior to the unit member attaining reappointment rights. Classroom observations can only be conducted after that point for stated written reasons. The evaluator must use the classroom observation form found in the DCE contract.

Professional Development

DCE Faculty have the opportunity to participate in a number of professional development activities. Check with the Professional Development Office on your campus.

If you have any questions on the DCE contract, call DCE Grievance Coordinator Joe Rizzo at 603-898-6309 / Grievance-DCE@mccc-union.org ■



Jim Rice of Quinsigamond Community College consults with Claudine Barnes of Cape Cod (center) and Andria Schwortz of Quinsigamond at the NEA Representative Assembly. (Photo by Cathy Boudreau)



MCCC News
<http://mccc-union.org>

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The MCCC News is a publication of the Massachusetts Community College Council. The Newsletter is intended to be an information source for the members of the MCCC and for other interested parties. Members' letters up to 200 words and guest columns up to 400 words will be accepted and published on a space-available basis. The material in this publication may be reprinted with the acknowledgment of its source. For further information on issues discussed in this publication, contact Donald Williams, North Shore Community College, One Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923. e-mail: Communications@mccc-union.org

MCCC Fall Conference Oct. 6

The annual MCCC Fall Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Worcester as it has for the past three years. This year there is an exciting agenda featuring keynote speaker Noah Berger, legislative awards, and a series of informative workshops addressing members' needs.

Noah Berger is the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, a think tank that focuses on state revenues and finances. His address titled "Education, Taxes, and the State Budget: Can We Build the Economic Future We Want?" will explain the condition of the state budget and the problems we face in the future.

Awards will be presented to three legislators who have been strong supporters of public higher education: Sen. Robert O'Leary, Rep. Kevin Murphy and Rep. Marty Walsh.

Breakout sessions will address contract essentials for both Day and DCE, trends in distance education, retirement planning, strategic action initiatives, MTA Benefits, professional staff appeals process, an a forum for chapter presidents.

A buffet dinner will be provided, and MTA Benefits will be providing five \$100 door prizes. As in the past, there will be something for everyone. You may register online at <http://mccc-union.org/FallConference> or by contacting MCCC Communications Coordinator Don Williams at Communications@mccc-union.org. ■

In Memoriam



Geraldine M. "Geri" Curley died Friday, Aug. 30, after a long battle with cancer. Geri graduated from Bunker Hill CC and Tufts University and worked for many years as a professional staff member at BHCC. Geri's dedication to the MCCC and the struggle for professional staff equity are legendary. Earlier this year our boardroom was named in her honor. In 2004, Geri received the Raymond c. Lemieux Award for her service and leadership to the MCCC.

The longtime union activist served on the MCCC's Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and the Bargaining Team. Along with MCCC Past President Susan Dole and others, Geri worked to make the Bunker Hill Professional Association a chapter marked by a special sense of caring, strength and solidarity. ■