

FAN

Faculty Association Newsletter

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MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

December 5, 2005

<http://www.monroecc.edu/go/FA>

President's Corner

Charlie Clarke, FA President



The newly approved Bylaws are now posted on the Faculty Association Website. I encourage all members to review them. One of the central changes in the Bylaws was expansion of Faculty Council to sixteen members. Consistent with these new Bylaws, I have appointed and the Faculty Council has unanimously consented, the following new council members. They will serve until June 30th. At that time, newly elected members of Council, based on the 2006 election cycle, will take office. (See chart on page 2) The following appointees may choose to run again for their appointed council seats, but all members of the Faculty Association have the right to run for these positions.

I want to highlight individuals filling these positions. First of all Bethany Gizzi, who teaches Sociology full time, has resigned her position as Adjunct Chair and will now fill the new Membership Chair position. Bethany was a member of the negotiation team of our present contract. The Adjunct Chair position that she vacated is being filled by Patti Dano. Patti has been an adjunct teaching member of the Health and Physical Education Department for the past six years. Patti has also recently retired from MCC after a distinguished career as a civil service employee at MCC. During her career she held many leadership positions, including President, in the Civil Service Employee's Association. The CSEA is the union representing all civil service employees.

In turn, the new Damon Campus and Extension Sites Director position is filled by Kathleen Baxter, who is a Coordinator in the Student Services Department at the Damon City Campus. Kathleen has been a student, student employee, and Advisor at MCC. This new position reflects our commitment to more mindfully represent faculty working at the College's many venues of service.

We have also added a second Professional Staff and Teaching Director positions. Paul Wheeler, Assistant Director of Purchasing, brings years of government public service and health care experience to Faculty Council. Paul was a member of the most recent negotiations team and continues to be a member of the Joint Committee on Labor Management Cooperation. Last, but not least, Tim Tatakis will fill the additional Teaching Director position. Tim teaches Biology and is Chairperson of the Department. Tim will enhance his fellow chairs' knowledge of and sensitivity to contractual issues. I welcome the expanded pool of talented, wise, and committed leaders of MCC's Faculty Association.

Charlie Clarke, President; **Taine Vinci**, Vice President; **Scott Vrooman**, Secretary; **Chris Otero-Piersante**, Treasurer; **Michael Goho**, Teaching Director; **Tim Tatakis**, Teaching Director; **Randy Rezabek**, Professional Staff Director; **Paul Wheeler**, Professional Staff Director; **Bethany Gizzi**, Membership Chair; **Patricia Dano**, Adjunct Chair; **Angel Andreu**, Grievance Chair; **Joe McCauley**, Contract Chair; **Ellen Mancuso**, Legislative Chair; **Lauren Pivnick**, Benefits Chair; **Jeanne Hinkelman**, Institutional Chair; **Kathy Baxter**, Damon Campus and Site Extension Director

Faculty Council Members in the 2007 Cycle

President 2005-07
Charlie Clarke

Vice President 2005-07
Taine Vinci

Teaching Director 2005-07
Michael Goho

Personnel Chair 2005-07
Lauren Pivnick

Institutional Chair 2005-07
Jeanne Hinkelman

Prof. Staff Director - NEW
2006-07 1 year
Paul Wheeler

Adjunct Chair-Change
2006-07 1 year
Pat Dano

Damon/Site Director- NEW
2006-07 1 year
Kathy Baxter

Faculty Council Members in the 2006 Cycle

Treasurer 2004-06
Christopher Otero-Piersante

Prof. Staff Director 2004-06
Randy Rezabek

Secretary 2004-06
Scott Vrooman

Legislative Chair 2004-06
Ellen Mancuso

Grievance Chair 2004-06
Angel Andreu

Membership Chair - NEW
2004-06
Bethany Gizzi

Contract Chair
2005-06
Joe McCauley*

Teaching Director - NEW
2004-06
Tim Tatakis

*special one year term
due to resignation of C. Clarke

Wheeler, Dano, Baxter would run in April 2006 for a one year spot - making the term - July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007
McCauley would run in April 2006 for a two year term beginning on July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2008
Gizzi and Tatakis would run in April 2006 for a two year term beginning on July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2008

Working in a Union Environment

*Regina Fabbro,
Instructor in the English/Philosophy Department*

*I've asked newer faculty to react to working in a union environment. Here is the first in our series.
Charlie Clarke, FA President*

As a graduate teaching assistant at Eastern Michigan University in the late 90's, I often heard stories of the union for graduate students just a few miles away at the University of Michigan – stories of health care benefits, fair wages, and most importantly, a voice in labor issues on campus. These were inspiring tales to me, to say the least, as a member of a group trying to gain support for a graduate union at EMU. After earning my M.A. in English, I continued teaching at EMU as an adjunct instructor and was privileged to be among the first to benefit from the union that non-tenure teachers had formed the previous year. Having experienced the struggle for recognition of the rights of labor firsthand, and having benefited from the work of those who struggled before me, I now feel proud to be a part of MCC's Faculty Association. MCC's FA has a reputation for fighting diligently for workers' rights, from winning equitable pay for women in the 80's to supporting probationary tenure-track faculty in recent years. Sharing in the FA's longstanding commitment to maintaining a democratic workplace affords me recognition for my work and meaningful investment in my job.

Understanding Your Contract

Article 11 – Parental Leave

Charlie Clarke, FA President

As a result of multiple inquiries, there appears to be some confusion regarding parental leave as it relates to childbirth and adoption. Several have asked how much paid leave with full benefits does an individual receive when they have a healthy newborn child or have recently adopted a child? The short answer is none, although your options vary with childbirth or adoption.

A woman who has delivered a baby is considered medically disabled because of the physical condition of having delivered a baby. By custom and practice it is expected that a woman will be fit to return to work in six weeks if the pregnancy is not complicated and 8 weeks if it is an uncomplicated Caesarean section birth. However, it is up to the women's doctor to determine when she is able to return to work. All of these leave days may be charged to one's sick leave balances (Article 10). If your sick leave balance is exhausted, you may access the catastrophic sick bank. We encourage members to be cautious in the use of this bank of 90 days, since once it is depleted it is no longer available to you for the rest of your career at MCC.

After a doctor determines that a mother is able to return to work, she may charge your vacation leave (Article 9) or personal leave (Article 15) banks to support more extended parental leave to care for a healthy newborn. Similarly, an adoptive parent may use vacation or personal leave credits to care for an adopted child.

Independent of the recent birth or adoption of a child, all faculty (female and male) may utilize their accumulated sick leave for care of a dependent family member. The College may and usually does, in cases of extended illness of dependent family member, require medical verification.

In terms of recent adoption or continued care of a healthy child, we do not have a paid parental leave benefit. Faculty do have the right to apply for and receive non-compensated Leave (Article 19, section C). This benefit is consistent with and extends the College's obligation under the Family Medical Leave Act (<http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/>). When on non-compensated leave, you can maintain health insurance benefits at your individual expense.

Historically, the existing benefits articulated above have not been brought forward as inadequate in our contract research and faculty surveys. However, given the number of recent inquiries about well child parental leave, I will champion the negotiation of some form of paid leave for healthy newborns and recent adoptions in the next contract. The outcome of such an endeavor will be dependent on the good will of the College. For now there is no paid parental leave benefit.

Faculty Council Chair Reports

Contract Chair

• Joe McCauley

As contract chair, my role is to assist in the development, review and revision of future contract proposals. My work includes assisting in the preparation of initial contract proposals and working closely with the negotiating team during contract negotiations. The results of the recent survey will lead to the assignment by Faculty Council of additional contract research initiatives. At that time, I will encourage fellow union members to join committees to begin research for the next round of contract negotiations.

Finally, as Contract chair and with each member of Faculty Council, I will listen to your concerns and bring them forward for consideration and appropriate future action.

Institutional Chair

• Jeanne Hinkelman

The function of the Institutional Chair is to consider matters related to other organizations at the College or college committees that may require a FA response or action. Presently, in my capacity as Institutional Chair, I've been attending Senate meetings and have learned of issues that are of interest to both organizations. These issues include: academic freedom – clarifying its definition and constraints; full-time to adjunct faculty ratio – The CUNY Master Plan goal is 70 percent of courses be taught by full-time faculty. The Board of Regents' Statewide Plan also states a goal of 70 percent of SUNY faculty be full-time. Presently, the ratio at MCC is 65/35. Other areas of interest include the Student Bill of Rights and the Higher Education Act; evaluation, promotion, and retention issues, and the academic calendar.

Recently, the FA and Senate Executive Committees met to discuss some of these issues. As a result of our meeting, the issues of academic freedom and the Student Bill of Rights emerged as discussion items

for the upcoming Senate Professional Development Seminar scheduled for January 17. To assist the Senate, the FA has arranged to have a speaker from the American Federation of Teachers' Higher Education Department make a presentation on both of these issues at the seminar. We hope you'll consider attending.

Benefits Chair

• Lauren Pivnick

With the recent approval of changes to the Faculty Association Bylaws, the position of "Personnel Chair" on Faculty Council has been reconfigured as "Benefits Chair." The change allows the chair to focus specifically on providing members information about our contractually negotiated benefits. In this newly defined role, I am currently seeking individuals to join me in forming a team of "benefits experts" who will become known to our members as an available resource for their benefits-related questions.

The scope of our benefits is wide and their complexity sometimes daunting, but by sharing our collective wisdom I believe we can assist one another in gaining clarity, perhaps even in the murky waters of the Flexible Spending Account!

Faculty Council Meeting Schedule for Spring Semester 2006

Wednesdays 3:10 p.m. Board Lounge

February 1, 15
March 1, 15, 29
April 12, 26
May 3, 17

Members are welcome!

Dues Deductions and the Change to Banner

Marlene Goho, Administrative Director

Last fall in the 10/27/04 edition of FAN (available on the FA Website, (<http://www.monroecc.edu/go/fa>), we detailed how payroll deductions would change due to the College's switch to Banner.

One of the changes is that in months where a 3rd pay date falls, as will occur in December 2005, deductions for health insurance, life insurance, 403(b) contributions, flexible spending and disability insurance will not occur.

However, dues and agency fee deductions will take place as well as other deductions such as state and federal taxes, FICA, and long-term care premiums. This year, dues and agency fee payments have been scheduled over 20 pays occurring from September 22 to June 15. Typically, we've opted for 20 deductions to occur each year. Next year, dues and agency fee payments will occur over 19 pay periods to bring us into the same cycle as Banner. As we prepare to move to the 19 deduction cycle, we will have updates and reminders in the FAN.

FA Office Closing for the Holidays

The Faculty Association offices will close at 4:30 on Wednesday December 21 and will reopen on Monday, January 9, 2006. If you have business of an urgent nature during the time we are closed, please contact FA President Charlie Clarke at 585-748-2132.

Thanks and have wonderful holidays and a great break!

Save the Date: Senate Professional Development Day regarding Academic Freedom and Student Bill of Rights with a speaker from the AFT. January 17, 2006.

THE AFT POSITION ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND THE STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Excerpts from AFT.org, the national affiliate of the Faculty Association at MCC

Faculty and professional staff must be able to exercise independent academic judgment in the conduct of their teaching and research. Academic freedom is important because society needs "safe havens," places where students and scholars can challenge the conventional wisdom of any field—art, science, politics or whatever. This is not a threat to society; it strengthens society. It puts ideas to the test and teaches students to think and defend their ideas.

Recent measures introduced in state legislatures around the country under the guise of a "bill of rights" for college professors and students, however, raise concerns about preserving academic freedom. These measures are modeled after the "Academic Bill of Rights" and the "Student Bill of Rights" promoted by the California-based Center for the Study of Popular Culture, headed by conservative activist David Horowitz. In the U.S. Congress, a bill introduced by House Republicans to reauthorize the federal Higher Education Act includes a section with similar language. The AFT vigorously opposes both state and federal bills that incorporate language of the so-called bills of rights. Such measures create unnecessary and inappropriate government interference to our academic institutions and impose an ideological litmus test on hiring, curriculum and teaching.

(This entire article is available on AFT.org, "Hot Topics" then Academic Freedom).

Homeowner Tips for Surviving Freezing Weather

Heavy snow and bitter cold can lead to serious problems for property owners, including frozen pipes and home fires. To help ride out the winter's storms, MetLife® Auto & Home offers a free brochure, "Surviving Severe Cold Weather," which explains how to avoid much of the distress and inconvenience that winter weather can bring. The brochure is available by calling MetLife at 800-638-5433.

"The best defense is preparation," explained Bob Smith, Vice President and Chief Claim Officer of MetLife Auto & Home. "Most winter insurance claims that we receive are related to frozen pipes and downspouts, ice dams on roofs, and frozen tree limbs that fall on vehicles and homes. Experience has shown us that some of these problems could have been prevented, which is why it's important to take precautions to ensure the safety of your property and, most importantly, your loved ones."

Tips to avoid damages from winter weather:

- Keep sidewalks and entrances to your home free from ice and snow.
- Keep the house heated to a minimum of 65 degrees.
- Keep cupboard doors open below sinks.
- Turn on hot and cold faucets enough to let them drip slowly.
- Identify the location for the main water shutoff in your home.
- Keep garage doors closed.
- Remove dead tree branches that could damage your house.
- Close flues in fireplace when not in use.



In addition, according to the National Fire Prevention Association, nearly two-thirds of all residential fires occur during the winter months. From too many lights plugged into an outlet to a portable-heating device placed too close to curtains or a blanket, there are many opportunities for a fire to start. Many of these fires could be prevented simply by considering some basic issues of home fire safety. To help property owners rekindle their knowledge of the basics, MetLife Auto & Home offers a free brochure called "Up in Smoke!," which is also available by calling 800-638-5433.

MetLife Auto & Home is endorsed by New York State United Teachers Member Benefits. For free, no-obligation auto and home* insurance quotes that include special group rates**, call 800-GET-MET 1 (800-438-6381). Please have your current policies on hand when calling.

* Home insurance is available in most states to those who qualify.

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Coverage, underwritten by MetLife Auto & Home, is available in most states to those who qualify. In Texas, real property policies are provided by Metropolitan Lloyds Insurance Company of Texas, Irving, TX. In Texas, auto policies are provided by either Metropolitan Property and Casualty Insurance Company, Metropolitan General Insurance Company, Metropolitan Casualty Insurance Company, Metropolitan Direct Property and Casualty Insurance Company, all of Warwick, RI, or GAINSCO County Mutual Insurance Company, Fort Worth, TX, through an arrangement with Metropolitan Property and Casualty Insurance Company. In some instances, special arrangements for coverage have been made with other carriers.

MetLife Auto & Home is a brand of Metropolitan Property and Casualty Insurance Company and its Affiliates, Warwick, RI. L0301CV00X(exp0107)MPC-LD

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