

# GCFA Newsletter October 2012

## President's Message

October is crazy sometimes. I'm taking some deep breaths, myself, but this October we have reason to celebrate: our members, and then the District Board of Trustees, approved one of the best contract packages I've seen in my years at Gavilan. Now we'll be busy implementing. Thanks to everyone who contributed to an online discussion, and everyone who voted.

The negotiations team is gathering information about what you want us to stand up for next, and members will be getting a link to a survey in late October so they can weigh in on what matters to them. Last year ONE person's suggestion led to a new section of the contract, so don't skip this, thinking you don't matter. We are particularly interested in suggestions regarding flex day/s, calendar, and start days.

I'm keeping busy building membership, encouraging participation, and recruiting and training leaders. But as I talk to many faculty about these issues, I see a looming crisis. There is much to be done, but there are not enough people who can and do take on leadership roles at our college. The reasons are many and varied, but the results are that the faculty are NOT as strong as we need to be to advocate for students and constituents. So I have written up a report of my findings about why people can't participate or don't choose to, and what we might do about it. I'll be blunt--the younger you are, the more these issues may affect you if we develop a full-blown leadership gap. Let's not go that route. If you'd like to see the whole report, you policy wonk you, it's on the GCFA webpage: <http://www.gavfaculty.com/documents/leadership2012.pdf>

Among my recommendations, for those who like to skip to the grist:

1. The college should prioritize hiring FT faculty replacements and continuing with a five-year plan for new FT faculty as soon as is financially feasible.
2. The Faculty must become interested, informed, and involved in shaping policy and implementing new requirements at the local, state and federal levels.
3. The union, Academic Senate, and Administration of the college should collaborate in designing training and mentoring programs for all faculty, inside and outside the classroom.
4. Mentors should be trained, incentivized, and recognized.
5. Meetings should be paid for PT faculty; minimally, mileage should be provided from the appropriate department or committee budget so PT faculty coming to campus just for a meeting do not lose money.

6. A college hour that is carefully implemented, with clear guidance on appropriate activities, set meetings of key groups, and someone who schedules one-time events and activities, is desirable in terms of boosting participation and a sense of belonging and investment in Gavilan College among faculty.
7. A weekly or twice-monthly newsletter from the Office of Instruction should outline current activities and discussions of interest to faculty.
8. All key meetings should allow a distance-participation option available to any member or stakeholder with an internet connection.
9. When appropriate, meetings or parts of meetings that are information-heavy rather than participation heavy, should be recorded for posting online so people can "attend" at their convenience.
10. Every faculty leadership position should have a replacement-and-mentoring component built in; duration of terms should be clear where appropriate.
11. An ad hoc group should gather and publicize Best Practices for departmental involvement of PT faculty (including communications, scheduling, evaluations, etc).
12. Orientation for all new faculty should stress engagement, participation, and leadership opportunities, and should involve more returning faculty in related activities. Part time faculty should help plan this event, and it should be incentivized with gas cards or some other attractive deal.
13. Faculty and administrators should make no distinctions between qualified FT and PT faculty on the basis of load status in hiring or appointments for leadership positions.
14. Questions about participation outside the classroom should be part of all faculty hiring processes, though part time faculty who are "freeway fliers" should not have a lack of experience or time held against them.
15. Similar efforts should be undertaken regarding student and classified staff participation.

What did I leave out? What more needs to be done? And do you wanna help? Co-creating our workplace is the way to make it a humane, diverse, supportive place for students and employees alike. So I invite you in. Contact me if you'd like to find out more about any of these initiatives, make a contribution, or ask about union leadership. We can't do it without you. And we shouldn't.

Leah Halper

### **Part Time Vice President's Message**

Are you being evaluated this semester? If so, please consider this an opportunity to get useful feedback from your chosen full time faculty evaluator. The part time evaluation process is still relatively new, and you should take the initiative to keep things flowing in a timely manner. Contact anyone on the GCFA executive

board if you have questions.

The question of compensation for office hours for part time faculty recently came up at a GCFA executive board meeting. Gavilan used to pay part time faculty for office hours at an hourly rate of about \$8.50. A few years ago, Gavilan gave all part time faculty a significant hourly raise and included compensation for office hours in that raise. I had a conversation with a Cal-STRS retirement counselor about this issue and was told that since hourly pay rate is a factor in determining one's retirement benefit, having a lower hourly rate of pay, even for a few office hours, would decrease the monthly benefit. So in the long run, we are better served with the current arrangement.

Thinking about using your travel/conference funds this year? You have \$200 per year which may be carried over one year to accumulate up to \$400. If you're interested in part time faculty issues including advocacy, retirement, and unemployment, FACCC has a conference in Pasadena on Nov 3. They are also sponsoring one on Veteran's affairs on Dec 6-7 in Redwood City. Go to [www.faccc.org](http://www.faccc.org) for more information. CTA sponsors several including GLBT in January, Equity and Human Rights in March, and more. Check out their website at [www.cta.org](http://www.cta.org).

On November 6th, CTA recommends YES on proposition 30, NO on proposition 32, and NO on proposition 38. Become informed and advocate for community colleges- it's your job on the line.

Please direct your questions and concerns to me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Jane Rekedal, VP for part time faculty. [jrekedal@gavilan.edu](mailto:jrekedal@gavilan.edu)

### [Grievance Officer Message:](#)

DID YOU KNOW:

There is one official personnel file for each faculty member locked in the Administration offices on the Gavilan College campus?

"ARTICLE 13: PERSONNEL FILES

13.1 Materials in personnel files of employees, which may serve as a basis for affecting the status of their employment, are to be made available for the inspection of the person involved."

Article 13 of the GCFA contract states what materials are allowed to go into your file, what you can do with the materials in your file, as well as who can view your file. You are entitled to review any derogatory material before it enters your file, as well as be given the opportunity to enter and attach your comments to such materials.

Get the specifics by reading Article 13 of your GCFA contract.

Also available at the GCFA website:

[http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA\\_Files/gcco.html](http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA_Files/gcco.html)

### **Employees of the Month Rock!**

Congratulations to Susan Dodd, employee of the month for August 2012, and Scott Sandler, employee of the month for September. They both have outstanding careers and are also changing lives. Here's what GCFA president Leah Halper plans to say about them at the upcoming board meeting: I want to congratulate two of my very favorite colleagues for being selected as faculty of the month. Susan Dodd is someone I've looked up to since I came to Gavilan. She is hardworking, sensible, and wise. She is also a pillar not only in her own department but in the entire curriculum process and to many students. She's worked successfully with wildly diverse populations; for example, she teaches many ESL students to swim. And she is kind, supportive, and upbeat as a colleague. Susan deserves any recognition we can give her. I also was pleased to read that Scott Sandler was selected. Scott is a teacher's teacher--when I have a teaching problem or challenge, he is the person I go to. He is so humane, so creative, and so experienced in bringing excitement to his lessons that I always come away inspired to do better and with some concrete ideas about what to try. He is also so active on campus that sometimes I want to give him a year's pass so he can take a break. We are very lucky to have them both.

### **Your Education, Your Money, Your Vote, Your Pizza**

The GCFA-sponsored events October 9-10 were very successful. The League of Women Voters and AAUW registered fifty students in two days and were delighted with their totals. Also around 500 students ate pizza, talked to members of the Democratic, Republican, Green, and Peace & Freedom parties, and took literature. (The Libertarian party was invited but didn't come.) Please remind your students to register to vote--they can even do it online and you can link to the page [Visit the library page (See Voter Research Guide or by clicking on the Vote symbol on the library homepage for non-partisan information) and the GCFA page (<http://www.gavfaculty.com/Advocacy.htm> for a mix of partisan and non-partisan information)] and then give them extra credit for voting!

### **Feeling the stress?**

December is a stressful time. Instead of spending more on events, we are trying something new this year: we are hiring a massage therapist to give fifteen minute therapeutic massage sessions on campus to members who sign up in advance. We'll be sending out an email with details; we will ask a \$10 co-payment and appointments will be available to all members (so if you aren't a member, maybe it's time to join!) Watch your email--we believe the spaces will go fast. We're hoping for the week of December 3, before finals week.

## And...

Ever wish you had time to just hang out with colleagues? OR get some hike the hill on campus before it gets dark? OR share a passion like making raviolis, meditating, singing opera, or riding motorcycles? Whatever you like doing for fun and fitness, there is probably someone else at Gavilan who would like it too. Next semester we'll be inviting all staff to join our own campus version of Meet Up, where members of the staff can post activity proposals and invite others to join them on weekdays or weekends. The more who join, the more we'll do, the more community we'll build, and the healthier and happier we'll be--that's the theory anyway. Contact a member of the Social Events Committee (Sabrina Lawrence, Mary Ann Sanidad, Andy van Tuyl, Dana Young, Leah Halper) if you want to propose an activity, and we'll be signing you up soon.

## Mayan Calendar and You

The GCFA's social committee will be putting on a fun event December 5 in the afternoon, so save the date. And hint--the theme is Mayan Calendar, so you may want to come for hot chocolate and pan dulce, or to speculate about what the Prophecy really meant.

## Lock Up Optional

If you work at night at either the Hollister or Morgan Hill campus, you may be asked to lock up. Please read the important information about lock-up and security at <http://www.gavfaculty.com/nightlockup.htm>

## You Have Sick Leave!

In case you missed the announcement to all faculty, sick leave is now operational for all part time faculty. Please bookmark

[http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA\\_Files/PTSickleave.html](http://www.gavfaculty.com/GCFA_Files/PTSickleave.html); to get the latest information about how it works--and/or contact our HR department.

## CCCs Have a New Chancellor

Dr. Brice Harris was named early this month as the 15th head of the community college chancellor's office. The chancellor's office has considerable power to reform our system for better or worse, and it was hopeful to see that the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, FACCC, heartily endorsed the appointment. Read more about Harris here

<http://education.nationaljournal.com/contributors/brice-w-harris.php> and here <http://www.siskiyous.edu/ia/publicrelations/pressreleases/2012->

[2013/September/New%20Chancellor%20-%20Brice%20Harris.pdf](#) and click here to see what FACCC said about him early this month: "Yesterday, FACCC representatives joined with other faculty, management, trustee, classified, and student leaders at a press conference announcing the appointment of Dr. Brice Harris as the 15th Chancellor of the California Community Colleges. For nearly 16 years, Dr. Harris served as the Chancellor of the Los Rios Community College District where he facilitated a positive relationship with faculty leaders. Over the years, FACCC has worked closely with Dr. Harris on issues of statewide concern, particularly the development of Proposition 92, The Community College Initiative, which appeared on the ballot in February 2008. Dr. Harris begins his term as Chancellor in November. Executive Vice Chancellor Erik Skinner remains in the role of Interim Chancellor until then."

### **FACCC members for Medical Coverage?**

Did you know that for \$5 a month, part time faculty who join FACCC have access to health insurance options under a BenElect pooled plan? See FACCC's benefits page at <http://www.faccc.org/New/Membership/MembershipIndex.asp>, and stay tuned as we are considering inviting a FACCC representative to campus to go over the options for our members. We are also hoping to convince current vendors to offer coverage, even if it requires out of pocket payment, to our part time faculty.