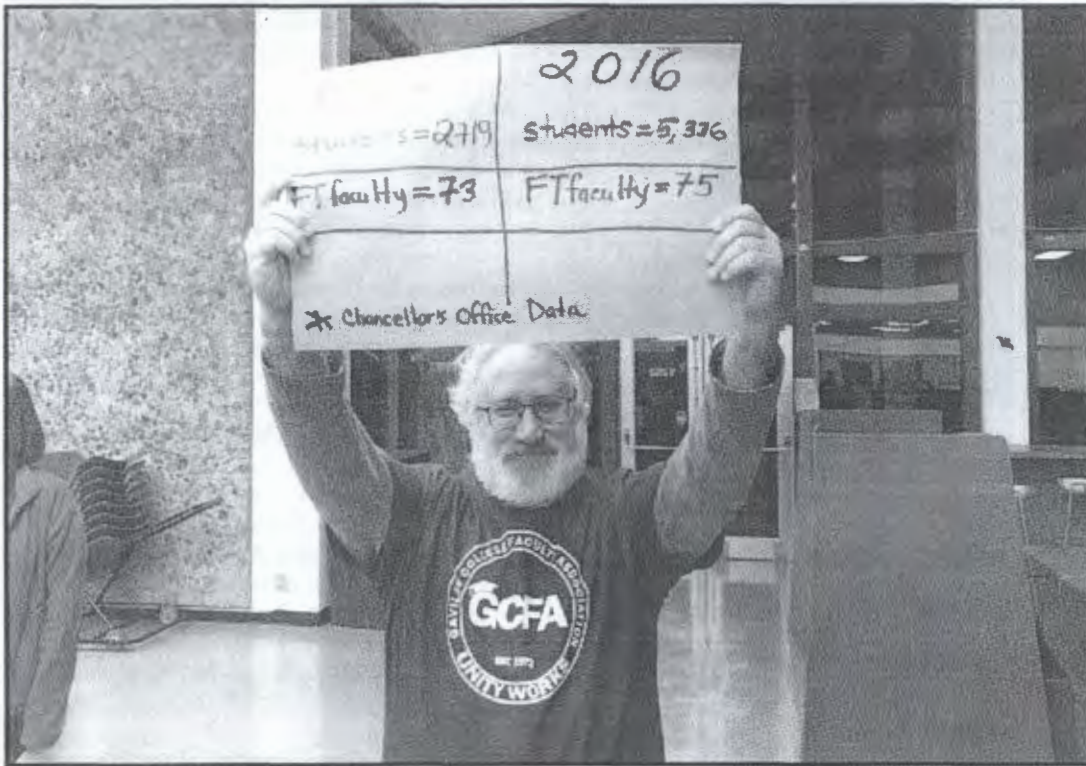


GCFA

GAVILAN COLLEGE FACULTY ASSOCIATION Spring 2018 Issue VIII



Gavilan College's student body has nearly doubled since the 1990s, but the number of full-time faculty hasn't grown with it. That means many of GCFA's bargaining unit members juggle part-time work at multiple campuses and do without health care, adequate office space, and wages that match the Bay Area's high cost of living. These conditions create stress for student and faculty alike, which affects morale and effectiveness across the campus.

Scott Sandler (left), Rep Council member and full-time English Instructor, attended a board meeting last year to let the district know he cares about improving working and learning conditions on our campus. A good place to start—more full-time hires.

Stronger Union = Better Contracts

Recognize signs of a healthy union

A strong union can change your life. Gavilan College faculty spend many hours each day preparing for, thinking about, and meeting the needs of the people they serve; this has a big effect on our mental and physical health and family and social relationships alike.

When the union is strong, we can create the conditions that enhance our effectiveness, productivity, and, ultimately, our well-being. That's because things that have a direct impact on our working lives—things like our responsibilities, wages, and health care—are made explicit in every contract. Negotiating a fair contract with the district is a key GCFA responsibility.

At the negotiations table, our team does all it can, presenting solid reasoning about how salary increases and access to health care have a direct impact on the classroom environment and the campus climate as a whole. But without the strong voice of members, it's easy for the District to dismiss these goals and concerns.

This year is no different. So how can we know the GCFA has the strength necessary to win a fair contract?

IS YOUR UNION STRONG?

Recently, Gavilan faculty belonging to more than one union shared insights gained from their other job sites, identifying the following as important signs of a union's health and effectiveness:

- Communication between members and union leadership is consistent, clear, and ongoing.

- Members are and can expect to be in-the-know about things like negotiations, elections, voting procedures, and open positions.

- Everyone is encouraged to ask questions and given opportunities to learn about union processes, various contract articles, and other definitions and terms that affect their lives.

- Leadership is bigger than one person or one personality, so responsibility for union work must rotate and should be distributed among a diverse range of people who develop expertise and pass on what they know.

- Advocacy extends beyond the contract with the union playing a role in informing members about things like job openings, professional development opportunities, leadership development, and how to apply for unemployment benefits and health care.

see "Strong Union" page four

Negotiations: What they are and what to expect

CONTRACTS: WHAT ARE THEY?

Each year, the district and GCFA meet to refine, revise, and make changes to our contract.

The contract outlines what the District is responsible for providing us and what we are responsible for providing the District. Though many things outside our contract can have big impacts on our working conditions, the contract is a key tool to remedy such problems and create a more healthy and productive work environment for all. It is a legal document, providing a foundation for accountability on all sides.

NEGOTIATIONS TEAM

This cycle, Cherise Mantia will be joining the negotiation team, which already includes Lead Negotiator Rob Overson, Rey Morales, and Nate Osborne. Sabrina Lawrence will consult and attend meetings regarding distance ed, an issue each side has already agreed to consider.

WHAT WILL BE DISCUSSED THIS CYCLE?

Other issues the District and GCFA have agreed to negotiate during the upcoming cycle include: Article 22 Workload; Article 23 Salary; Article 25

Other Duty and Compensation; Article 27 Employee Benefits; Article 29 Department Chairperson; Article 30 Retiree Benefits; and Appendix H: Academic Calendar.

In addition to these articles, the GCFA also wants to open Article 6,

“If the school district is not aware of an informed strong, united group of educated members, waiting in the wings to support their bargaining team, the chances are good faith negotiations will not occur.”

—California Teachers Association

Association Rights, in order to implement the intent of AB 119, which would allow the GCFA to meet with new hires during new faculty orientations.

Our negotiation team gathers its strength at the negotiation table from the collective power of our membership.

This is why it's of great importance that we keep each other informed and engaged throughout this upcoming cycle.

HELPFUL TERMS

The Massachusetts Nurses Association provides definitions for some terms that make the negotiations process more understandable and easier to follow.

Action: Direct action occurs when any group of union members engage in an action, such as a protest, that directly exposes a problem, or a possible solution to a contractual and/or societal issue. Union members engage in such actions to spotlight an injustice with the goal of correcting it. It further mobilizes the membership to work in concerted fashion for their own good and improvement.

Articles: Clause or section of a contract.

Bargaining Unit: A group of employee titles or classifications (job descriptions) in a workplace that share a community of interest for labor relations matters and that is represented by a union or association in negotiations and other labor relations matters. A unit may also be unrepresented, in which case it is simply a “unit.”

Cafeteria Plan Benefits: A benefit program that offers a choice between taxable benefits, including cash, and non-taxable

see next page



When negotiations with the district slowed last year, more than a dozen GCFA members attended a board meeting to share their concerns. Cherise Mantia, former vice president part-time and current negotiation team member, strategized with GCFA President Ken Wagman, and Faculty Members Jane Maringer, AEC faculty and Erik Medina, Math Instructor, about how to effectively address board members, show our strength, and build more understanding about the relationship between our working conditions and student success.

health and welfare benefits. The employee decides how his or her benefits dollars are to be used within the total limit of benefit costs agreed to by the employer.

Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA): A written agreement or contract that is the result of negotiations between an employer and a union. It sets out the conditions of employment (wages, hours, benefits, etc.) and ways to settle disputes arising during the term of the contract. Collective bargaining agreements usually run for a definite period—one, two or three years. At times, the term is used synonymously with Memorandum of Understanding or MOU.

Fair Share: In a union security clause of a contract, the amount a non-union worker must contribute to a union to support collective bargaining activities. This arrangement is justified on the grounds that the union is obliged to represent all employees faithfully.

Tentative Agreement (TA): Issues that are agreed to during bargaining on a labor contract and set aside as tentatively agreed subject to agreement on all outstanding issues of the contract. TAs are signed or initialed by both parties with two "originals" – one for each party. Tentative agreements have no force or effect until and unless all of the issues on the bargaining table have been resolved and are therefore not implemented until all issues have been settled and ratified.

Sunshine Agreement: Jointly developed initial proposals.

Representative Council

Allied Health	<i>Open Position</i>
Counseling	Vania Parakati
CTE	Phil Williams
AEC	Stephen Gaitan
English	Scott Sandler & Megan Wong
ESL	<i>Open Position</i>
Fine Arts	Maria Amirkhanian & Albert Marquez
Kinesiology	Eric Lopez
Library	Dana Young
Math/Natural Sciences	Marla Dresch
Non-credit	Martin Rodriguez
Social Sciences	Nicholas Park

Negotiation Team

Rob Overson, Lead Negotiator, Rey Morales, Nathan Osborne, and Cherise Mantia, Sabrina Lawrence, Distance Ed Consultant

Executive Board

Ken Wagman, President
 Open Position Part-time Faculty Vice President
 Kimberly Smith, Full-time Faculty Vice President
 Dana Young, Secretary
 Open Position, Treasurer
 Open Position, Membership Chair
 Nikki DeQuin, Academic Senate President (non-voting)

Election Committee

Marc Turetsky and Leslie Tenney

Organizing Committee

Andy Van Tuyl, Co-chair, Jen Penkethman, Co-chair and Rep Council Liaison, Lisa Rivoallon, Leslie Tenney, Kimberly Smith

MEMBER CHECK LIST

The GCFA is only as strong as its members are active. Use this check sheet to get a better sense of your role, range of responsibilities, and what you can do to become more involved.

- Wear and help distribute "I Love Fair Contracts" stickers, which brings visibility and support for our negotiation team.
- Make sure you're a voting member by reaching out to our new Membership Chair, who we hope to appoint at our next meeting.
- Provide GCFA with a non-Gavilan email and make sure to check it regularly for news about actions and negotiations.
- Read GCFA email and pay attention to negotiation updates, calls for action, and contract issues explanations and information.
- Know your area's representative, reach out with your concerns, be generous with your feedback, and respond to their surveys, questionnaires, and requests for your signature on petitions.
- Participate in on-line discussions in ways that strengthen our community and build leadership capacity.
- Vote for the Vice President, Part-time, and Treasurer candidate of your choice. Elections forthcoming.
- Attend a Board of Trustees Meeting and participate in tabling events as they occur.
- Attend an Executive Board meeting and share your insights, expertise, and concerns.
- Join the Organizing Committee.
- Take on a leadership role by joining the Representative Council or running for an Executive Board position.
- Hold leaders accountable by understanding the issues and sharing your insights, expertise, and concerns in ways that strengthen community and build leadership capacity.

THE NUMBERS

\$7,357 = Difference between the average salary of college faculty in Texas, who lack collective bargaining rights, and their union represented California counterparts who have collective bargaining rights and earn significantly more*

\$1,083 = Difference between the average pay per course of part-time faculty in Texas, who lack collective bargaining rights, and their union represented California counterparts who have collective bargaining rights and earn significantly more*

2.9% = Average amount salaries fell for faculty at two-year institutions nationwide between 1995 and 2015**

3% = Average amount that salaries increased for faculty at two year institutions in California between 1995 and 2015**

0 = Number of GCFA Organizing Committee meetings prior to Fall 2016

35 = Approximate number of GCFA Organizing Committee meetings since Fall 2016

25 = Approximate number of GCFA members who attended and addressed trustees at meetings since Fall 2016

9 = Number of active GCFA Representative Council Members as of Fall 2016

12 = Number of active GCFA Representative Council Members as of Fall 2017

1 = Open GCFA Executive Board position in Fall 2017

3 = Open GCFA Executive Board positions in Spring 2018

* June and Newman
** Miller and Topper

"Strong Union" from page one

● People treat each other with respect, are transparent in their actions, and are encouraged to voice dissent while focusing on the common goal of making the union stronger.

If all these things aren't in place within the GCFA right now, it doesn't mean it's

time to abandon our union; it means it's time to get more directly involved.

We stand the best chance of developing all aspects of a healthy, high-functioning organization, one that meets members' needs, when a wide and diverse range of faculty invest their time, energy, and understanding in making it so.

CALENDAR

Negotiations Update
August 22 (FREE LUNCH)
12-1 p.m. Adaptive PE Gym

On-line Voting for Full-time VP
Coming soon! Look for Marc Turetzky's email.

Executive Board Meetings
To be determined

Representative Council Meetings
To be determined

Board of Trustees
Second Tues. of the month 7 p.m.
(usually on the main campus)

Improve your life; get involved



Do members' actions make a difference? Two examples from previous negotiation cycles show they do.

Until members spoke up at a Board meeting last year, the District refused to go beyond a 2 percent raise, but an extra .5 percent was added to our salary schedules after faculty expressed a desire for greater fairness. Likewise, in an earlier cycle, the District refused to put in writing a commitment to negotiating health care benefits for part-timers. But after more than a dozen GCFA members showed up at a Board meeting and voiced their concern, the District changed its position and put promise to paper.

When we share our stories, the district has a better chance of recognizing the relationship between faculty working conditions and student learning outcomes. Our actions create a more positive climate and openness to our perspectives.