



Council of Representatives

Approved Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2009, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Room # 5402 Cuesta College

Attendance according to the sign-in page (*p* = present, *a* = absent):

Academic Skills/DSPS

(None)

Biological Sciences

Michael Holmes (*p*)
Ron Ruppert (*p*)

Business Education

Marilyne Cleeves (*p*)
Jack Sullivan (*p*)

Counseling

Dana Gough (*p*)
Julie Smith (*p*)

Engineering and Technology

David Fernandez (*p*)

English

June Beck (*a*)
Matt Fleming (*a*)

English as a Second Language

Madeline Medeiros (*p*)

Fine Arts

Michael Burns (*p*)
Douglas Highland (*a*)

Health Center

(None)

Human Development

Margie Perez-Sesser (*p*)

Languages and Communication

John Arno (*a*)
Betsy Dunn (*p*)
Tony Rector-Cavagnaro (*p*)

Library Services

Kevin Bontenbal (*p*)

Mathematics

Denise Chellsen (*p*)
Julie Hoffman (*p*)
Pat Hughes (*p*)
Barbara McGee (*p*)

Nursing / Allied Health

Mary Ann Ambrose (*p*)
Cathy Cyr (*p*)

Performing Arts

bree valle (*a*)

Physical Education

Mike Napoli (*a*)

Physical Sciences

Debra Stakes (*p*)

Social Sciences

Peter Dill (*p*)
Kathryn Logan (*p*)
Mark Weber (*p*)

Student Life and Leadership & Health Center

(None)

Workforce Development

(None)

CCFT Executive Board

Allison Merzon – President (*p*)
Peet Cocks – Vice-President (*p*)
Mark Tomes – Sec.-Treas. (*p*)
Victor Krulikowski –
Co-Grievance Officer (*p*)
Peggy Wright –
Co-Grievance Officer (*p*)
Andrea Devitt –
COPE Chair (*p*)

Visitors

Joel Carlson, VP CCCUE



Merzon opened the meeting at 3:09 p.m. after a quorum was reached.

1. Approval of Minutes

Merzon introduced Joel Carlson, Vice President of the Cuesta College Classified United Employees, who is attending this meeting to learn about union operations.

A motion was made (Fernandez/Holmes) to approve the draft minutes from the February 26, 2009 Council of Representatives meeting. It was approved unanimously.

2. Negotiations Update

Merzon reported that she recently had sent a negotiations update email to the membership via the listserv. Articles 4, 5, and 7 will be the next set for the teams to discuss. Those articles are the more substantial articles of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and might take more time to complete. Issues to address include how Needs Improvement Plans are forwarded to the next semester's evaluation team, evaluating short course instructors, which forms should be submitted to evaluation committees at different stages of the process, and many others. Merzon asked that concerns, issues, sample language, etc., be sent to her.

The CCFT Negotiations Team is meeting this Sunday, March 15, 2009 to prepare for upcoming sessions. In answer to a question, Merzon stated that Mike Holmes is being reimbursed for his work on the Negotiation Team; he is a part-time instructor and an invaluable part of the team. His reimbursement is being paid by a 50/50 split with the district.

A question was asked regarding whether a first-semester part-time instructor must be re-hired the following semester if they receive a Needs Improvement and a subsequent Needs Improvement Plan on their first evaluation. The answer was no, an instructor in this situation has no reassignment rights; a chair or director could just not assign them a course for the following semester(s), if they chose.

Merzon reported that the Distance Education Task Force is meeting and examining evaluations and other issues for distance education faculty members.

3. Grievance Update

Merzon reported that various issues are being settled as we speak.

The employee constituent group leaders met to discuss a list of possible budget cuts. They agreed to not publish items that are negotiable. Merzon had

sent a “cease and desist” letter to the district to stop Dr. Pelham from discussing negotiable items with faculty members. Pelham did stop; he also described the fact that managers are not in a union as “unfair.” Merzon tried to explain to Pelham the reasons that we have unions.

In response to a question, Tomes stated that while the EB has the authority to make the penultimate decision regarding negotiations (until a contract ratification vote by the membership occurs) and cannot commit to any particular item coming to the Council and/or membership for discussion, certainly Council members will have opportunities to discuss substantial issues, such as salary issues. Carlson stated that the same is true for CCCUE.

It was noted that course sections are the easiest item to cut when trying to solve budget problems, although they are not necessarily the best item to cut.

Stakes reported that certain sections are being scheduled in larger rooms in order to combine sections, generate more FTES, etc. However, problems arise. The equipment and facilities in some of these large rooms are obsolete. Also, a faculty member must reach 75 students before the additional large lecture stipend begins. If a faculty member previously had 35 students in the same section, then they are being asked, in effect, to teach two courses for the pay of one.

4. **Secretary-Treasurer’s Report**

Tomes reported that the CCFT treasury has \$14,569.70 in it, the SESLOC Club Account holds \$59.53, and the COPE fund has \$1647.19 in it (with 30 faculty members now donating a total \$210 monthly to the COPE fund). Tomes noted that the COPE donations are good news, but still far from meeting our goals for a healthy election fund.

The CCFT Constitution mandates that divisions hold Council representative elections this semester. Tomes asked that the results be forwarded to him.

Rector-Cavagnaro reported that the majority of the Languages and Communications division CCFT members support all four dues change proposals: eliminate the minimum dues, assess overloads, assess summer session work, and assess dues all 12 months.

It was noted that the 12-month paycheck issue is not a ballot issue, but rather it is just something the district needs to fix.

Tomes outlined the various proposals and reminded the Council representatives that he had sent to them in January 2009 a spreadsheet that showed the estimated amounts to be gained or lost from each proposal. A total estimated increase of about \$21,000 per year would occur if all four proposals were implemented. About \$7000/year would be gained by CCFT by raising the percentage of salary assessed to 1.25%.

In response to a question, Tomes stated that the dues structure was kept very low when we chartered as a union 15 years ago because the faculty was concerned about the costs of affiliating. Also, the structure worked well for about six years, but then the CCFT income could not keep up with inflation and large one-time expenses.

It was noted that the entire contract is in effect during summer session. Although there are sections in the contract that exclude summer (such as evaluations), the contract still must be enforced every day of the year.

The idea of sunseting any dues increase was discussed. Tomes stated that a \$40,000 to \$60,000 treasury reserve served CCFT well in the 1990's, but as Treasurer, he estimates that a \$75,000 average over three consecutive months would be more realistic.

It was reported that the Social Sciences CCFT members support assessing all salary and that they wanted the ballot to be clear that there were opportunities to not change the Constitution.

Another idea offered to address CCFT's budget difficulties was a short-term increase in the dues percentage, similar to a special assessment.

It was reported that some of the Nursing/Allied Health CCFT members met; four of the five members support a dues increase.

Merzon noted that we need an income increase if we are going to be a full-service union, one in which faculty members receive stipends for work done, we have a healthy reserve for expensive legal cases, etc.

It was asked how we can pay off a \$70,000 legal debt last semester and now not be building up a reserve. Tomes stated that some reserve can be built up, but it tends to get wiped out soon by legal bills, affiliate dues increases, inflation on stipends and release time, and other expenses. Our organization's income is such that it just cannot keep up with normal expenses.

Tomes reported that some previous Treasurers were using the more expensive AFT invoice to pay the per capita dues rather than using the CCFT database. He was asked to pursue a reimbursement from the affiliates. [Tomes after the meeting retracted this assertion. – MT]

Fernandez reported that a majority of the CCFT members in the Engineering and Technology division supported a dues increase, although there were some that were "adamantly against it."

It was suggested that the Executive Board address what a dues increase would be used for and to explain how the EB is cutting expenses. It was noted that non-members would be welcome at the upcoming dues forums.

A Human Development division representative noted that part-timers cannot afford a dues increase.

Tomes responded to a question by stating that AFT and CFT do not look closely at their locals' budgets, although CFT requires a quarterly budget report as part of its Staff Funding program (which CCFT is a part of), and AFT will respond to members' accusations of a local's budget problems or malfeasance.

It was noted that a percentage dues increases does not address the pass through mandate from AFT.

Many representatives appeared to endorse having one proposal, as opposed to multiple proposals, for a dues structure amendment on the ballot.

Cleeves reported that some full-time Business Education division faculty members are giving up their overloads so that part-time faculty members do not lose their loads.

5. **Committee Reports**

Constitution/Bylaws Re-Write Committee – There was consensus (no opposition) by Council members to keep in the draft Constitution language that requires a 55% majority of the members voting for a dues change amendment.

Part-Time Faculty Committee – Cleeves reported that the plight of the part-time faculty will be the subject of an article in the Cuestionian and that the Part-Time Faculty blog on the CCFT website is now running.

Benefits Committee – Merzon reported that a forum with Blue Cross, Blue Shield, and SISC representatives will be held in Room 5402 on Wednesday, April 1, 2009. There will be a polycom connection from the meeting to the North County Campus.

Calendar – Merzon noted that late start courses in the spring semester are “shorted” because spring break and finals week are included in the number of weeks. Representatives noted problems with holidays affecting MWF more than TR courses and asked why we have spring break after Easter instead of mid-semester.

Peace and Justice – United States Labor Against the War, of which CCFT is a member, has had much activity lately; members have received their email announcements.

Evaluations – Merzon and Stakes were asked to repeat their “Evaluation Best Practices” workshop in the Fall semester. A packet of the best practices is being completed and will be distributed electronically.

Distance Education – This group is working on draft language for evaluation of online instructors. Virtual office hours might be an issue for negotiations. Merzon reported that she held a live chat via CourseStudio for an exam review for a Health Education class that she teaches and found it very successful; she had 19 students join the chat at one point.

6. **Division Concerns/Issues**

A variety of issues were brought up. R25 class scheduling will be used soon. Part-time faculty are concerned about full-timers taking over their courses. AS/DSPS was supposed to have only two of four courses at the North County Campus cut this summer, but apparently all four were cut after an administrators-only meeting was held to see what NCC rooms could be shut down over the summer to consolidate courses in certain buildings. This procedure violated the shared governance procedures that were agreed upon for course cuts. Ed Maduli, VP for Administrative Services, has resigned from his position, effective April 17, 2009. His departure will probably affect negotiations.

The meeting was adjourned at about 4:40 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Tomes, Secretary-Treasurer.