

NECCPA – October 20, 2025 Chapter Meeting Notes

Northern Essex Community College Professional Association



NECCPA Director Laura Mondt called the meeting to order shortly after 12:30 PM on Zoom on Monday October 20, 2025. About 42 members attended.

- 1. Day Contract Ratification** – Laura reported that the Day Contract was ratified by the membership 613-10. Non-financial provisions are effective as of July 1, 2025. There will be a pay raise of 3.5% effective January 2026. So long as the Legislature passes a supplemental budget providing for the raises, the raise should appear in January 26 paychecks. This is a one-year contract effective July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

The committee for the bargaining for the Day Contract effective July 1, 2026 is being formed. A priorities survey should be going out soon. Laura urged members to apply to join the bargaining committee or bargaining priorities survey committee if interested and certainly to respond to the priorities survey.

- 2. Learning Management System Conversion** – Steve Russell reported on discussions at MACER regarding the conversion to Brightspace. Questions posed at MACER and the responses from Academic VP Austin Gilliland are as follows:
 - a. Will faculty who have only face-to-face courses be required to take the Brightspace training? Austin replied that they would be encouraged to do so, since many use the LMS for those classes. They would not be required to teach on-line, except if it was necessary to do so to make a full-time load. Everyone is required to at least post their syllabus in the LMS.
 - b. Will there be adequate time and resources for CIT to perform the necessary reviews? Austin replied that every effort will be made to ensure that CIT has the resources to do so.
 - c. Will those faculty who begin the training in November and December be eligible to teach their courses in Brightspace for the Winter Intersession and Spring? Austin replied that no, they will continue to teach their courses in Blackboard. Only the faculty who were in the Pilot program will teach their courses in Brightspace in the Winter Intersession and Spring. The reason for this is that CIT would not have the resources in place during the spring to support those faculty and students.

Members seemed to question the wisdom of this. If someone takes the training in November and December, they will probably forget much of what they learned by March when the review takes place.

In any case, summer courses will be in Brightspace and certainly Fall 2026 courses will be.

- d. Will Pilot faculty be compensated for converting their fall courses? Austin is working on that.
- e. When faculty develop on-line or hybrid courses in the future, will they be compensated for that as they are now? Austin replied that no change to that practice is being considered.

The conversion payment for **each course** will be \$200, notwithstanding the number of venues (i.e., hybrid, fully on-line, 7 week, 15 week. Members seemed to think that this was insufficient. It is difficult to estimate what would be fair, given that only the pilot people have converted. Steve estimated that it takes about 10 hours over and above what one would do any way to convert a course each semester in Blackboard, for example. At \$45 per hour, the contractual rate for faculty doing extra work, that would be \$450. Beyond conversion, faculty are expected to ensure accessibility standards compliance. That really was not emphasized in the pilot, so that is unknown. There was some discussion among the group that \$500 would be fair. Anyone with further thoughts on this should contact one of the NECCPA Executive Board members. It's important to note that the whole conversion effort promotes redesign, simplification, etc. So that takes time too.

- f. Austin was asked that a "Demo Student" account be provided to all members. Austin said she would look into that.

- 3. **Class Scheduling** – At MACER Austin explained some of what is being planned as part of the new scheduling initiative to be effective in the Fall of 2026. Much of this is being done to maximize space utilization. Currently, 4-credit and 3-credit classes, for example, can have different start and end times and the goal is to standardize those times so that classrooms are not unused for long periods of time, especially during peak hours in the morning. She also hoped that students will be able to schedule classes more closely to avoid long breaks between classes.

In some cases, classes that meet for longer periods will have time added to them to account for breaks that are necessary and to meet the instructional time requirements. She did not emphasize any substantial shift toward mid to late afternoon classes.

Individual members should express their concerns to the NECCPA Executive Board members for further discussion at MACER should be taken up with deans or chairs/program coordinators.

4. **Calendar Change** – At MACER Austin Gilliland indicated that given the late Labor Day in 2026 (September 7) she is looking into having the fall semester start before Labor Day. This would avoid having grades due September 26. Presumably, Convocation would also occur before Labor Day. The contract allows a start date as early as September 1. Comments from the membership indicated that many people were opposed to starting before Labor Day. One member pointed out that this was not the first time that Labor Day occurred so late and the college seemed to manage it before. These comments will be discussed at MACER on November 20.
5. **Bookstore** – There were comments relative to the search bar on the bookstore app. These presented barriers to students ordering books on time.
6. **Equity Study** - Laura reported that an RFP (Request for proposal) for the equity study has been prepared despite stalling. There are four bills pending in the Legislature on this issue.
7. **NECHE Standard on Libraries** – Laura advised that members should be on alert about proposals by NECHE to eliminate library standards as well as DEI initiatives.
8. **Political Action Liaison** – Laura advised that this position is open and a \$350 stipend will be available for that person.
9. **DCE Bargaining** – Bargaining is still in process for a new DCE Contract. The last one expired June 30, 2024.
10. **Remote Work** – Professional staff concerns about remote work were discussed. Some members feel that denial of remote work days is punishment by management for the perception that they are not doing enough work and need better surveillance.
11. **New Call Center** – This is designed to route calls for basic information regarding registration and financial aid and to elevate them to proper staff as needed. This does not affect the jobs of any MCCC members.
12. **Day After Thanksgiving** – Professional staff were reminded to mark time sheets for that day as AOCAD and not to volunteer for work on that day. Per the contract, no reporting of activity for that day is required.

Meeting ended at about 1:30

Next Chapter Meeting is Monday November 24, 12:30 on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen Russell, Ph.D.
NECCPA Secretary